Design Services for Village of McFarland
Special Needs Park
Proposal for Landscape Architectural Services

Prepared By:
Learning Landscapes Design LLC
Portland OR and Milwaukee WI
503.347.4523
2/28/20
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Jim Hessling - Director  
McFarland Department of Public Works  
5915 Milwaukee Street, PO Box 110  
McFarland, WI 53558

Jim Hessling and McFarland Village -  
Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with this proposal for landscape architectural services. Learning Landscape Design LLC provides innovative site design for nature playgrounds, parks and childhood environments. Our team has eighteen years of experience with play and learning projects from community involvement, through conceptual development, construction documents, and construction management. We have brought in Let Kids Play! accessibility consultants to assist us on this project. We work with Mara often and appreciate her unique view and expertise in universally accessible design. This proposal is based on your RFP as well as our experience on similar projects.

We are passionate about creating spaces where all children can play and learn together. While ADA addresses mostly physical mobility issues, Universal design meets people where they are in their cognitive, sensory, social and physical development. A number of years ago Mara of Let Kids Play! gave our team one piece of paper that forever changed how we look at accessible play. It showed four families with varying abilities through the group. She asked us to consider how these families could use the space. This simple shift to considering people instead of guidelines and rules changed everything. We have conducted multiple interviews with parents of differently-abled children to truly understand their needs and desires. We have sat in focus groups fighting back tears as parents described their children’s experiences. It is amazing how small shifts in design and approach can completely change how families experience the space. Our design experience is coupled with an extensive understanding of safety, maintenance, and construction of children’s spaces. Our company is built on our ability to listen and we excel at crafting a process and design that fits your community’s unique needs and project conditions.

You should work with Learning Landscapes Design because:

1. We specialize in landscapes for play. We spend all of our time working to better our understanding of this project type. Kids interact with spaces in a very different way than adults. They think and learn differently and we specialize in finding ways to let kids connect with their environment and their community.

2. Over time we have developed strategies to address the unique safety, access, and construction challenges that often accompany custom and universally inclusive play areas.

3. Our designs are maintainable and practical. Maintaining an alternative play area can be daunting. We are the only design firm that offers an extensive management plan and set of safety inspection documents tailored to our designs.

4. Our approach involves your team and your whole community to create community and staff buy-in and support. We enjoy our work and have fun engaging the community for input. We listen, respond, and plan for on time, on budget and highly successful results.

Kerry White will be your project manager and Michelle Mathis the principal and contract authority. We are a small firm and all staff members touch every project. If you see it in our resume our key personnel has supported, designed, and steered the project over the finish line. You will find our resumes in the following information. This proposal outlines the tasks that are proposed to assist you in creating a vision for your universally inclusive playground. These tasks are arranged to create a design everyone can get behind and develop a plan for moving forward. We have successfully used this project approach on similar projects. We are willing to adjust, move, and add tasks to suit your vision of the process. Consider this a starting point and an outline of our abilities and strengths.

Sincerely,

Michelle Mathis RLA  
Principal, Learning Landscapes Design  
503-347-4523  
michelle@learninglandscapesdesign.com
Learning Landscapes Design LLC
A design firm specialized in creating inspiring spaces for learning and play

Learning Landscapes is a design and sustainability firm specializing in creating inspiring spaces for engaged learning and play. We have seen the drastic change in children’s lives in the last few generations. Youth are disconnected from each other and increasingly ‘plugged in’. Our children are experiencing higher rates of obesity, disability, and behavioral disorders. Our firm aims to create spaces for our forward thinking clients where all children, regardless of ability, can connect to one another and nature while engaging in meaningful play experiences that excite them. Our fast paced culture is trickling down to our children who are over scheduled, nervous, stressed and constantly compared and evaluated. Free play is an equalizer. It resets cognitive functioning, offers opportunity to strengthen and test our physical abilities, and if provides deeply effective opportunities for brain development.

The standard playground equipment is no longer meeting the needs of today’s children. Learning Landscapes Design rises to the challenge and responds with relevant designs including; natural playgrounds, universally accessible play areas, hands-on interpretive spaces, learning gardens, and sensory gardens. Coupled with landscape architecture our staff have rich backgrounds including; education, playground safety, parks operation, sustainable design, permaculture, child development, and parenting.

Our Clients
Our clients are public parks agencies, schools, early childhood providers, and operators of other family destinations such as zoos and museum. Our client list includes large and small organizations as well as large and small projects. Please refer to the following relevant projects for more specific project information.

Proven Track Record
We help our clients through every stage of the design process from concept design and public involvement, through detailed design and permitting through to construction administration. We achieve relevant and successful projects by listening and observing then responding with a design that fits the site, the client and community needs and those of the unique end user. To optimize opportunities for wise use of resources, we use a sustainable lens on every project. We pride ourselves in delivering projects on time and on budget.

Financial Statement
Our company is financially stable and has operated successfully for 7 years. We have no outstanding loans and financial projections look good for continued success and stability. We can provide a Profit and Loss statement if requested.

Year Established: 2012

Office Locations:
Portland, Oregon
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Services:
Landscape Architecture
Concept Design
Public Involvement
Designing with students,
Design Detailing
Construction Documents
Permitting
Bidding
Construction Administration,
Safety Review
Staff Training

Specialty:
Natural playgrounds
Universally accessible play
Designing with kids
Maintenance guidelines for
natural play areas

Awards
• Oregon ASLA 2019 Honor Award
Preparing the Next Generation:
Design Curriculum
• 2019 Pop Up Place Competition
Winners: Design Week Portland
from the Portland Department of
Transportation
Oxbow Regional Park ‘Oxbow Adventure’
Metro - Gresham, OR

The Sandy River draws swimmers, rafters, kayakers and drift boats carrying anglers as it weaves through Oxbow Regional Park. Twelve miles of trails invite visitors to explore an old growth forest with ravines carved by volcanic and glacial flows. Many of these treasures and stories are being missed by young visitors whose families came to the day use areas and don’t explore the nature trails surrounding them. The Oxbow Adventure Concept is a plan to engage young people of all abilities with the natural wonders and the history of the floods and quickly buried old growth forests in the park through play and exploration. Two nature play installations, accessible trails, base camp kiosks, signage and a kids information booklets offer the support needed for brave adventurers to leave the play area and explore the park.

Fifty climbing logs emerge from the sand next to a series of water tables. Park programs use the area to tell about a flood that happened on site and buried the forest with 40’ of sand. The buried forest is still under the play area! Elevated water play, climbing for any ability, access to raised loose parts tables, an open sided accessible drift boat and simple machines sand play ensure everyone can engage no matter their ability or interest.

Through community meetings with families experiencing disability, we targeted the experiences and features these families needed to feel safe and included in play. Visitors can play in the camp kitchen, test out the tent fort structures and build shelters from natural materials. The vision is that young visitors leave with a little more excitement and knowledge of the natural world around them. Young people must learn to love a place, before they can effectively learn facts about it. With this groundwork they can become stewards of our wild places. Metro aims to inspire tomorrow’s steward through play at Oxbow Adventure.

Construction Cost - $450,000
Date of Completion – 2019
Montclair Pre-K is the heart of a vibrant, diverse, and inclusive community. With a strong focus on a play-based curriculum a discovery playscape was the approach that fit the schools playground renovation dreams. This preschool focused site is a public park on evenings and weekends, expending the communities recreation options. The design is organized around a loop path with mature trees and six themed play zones. Each zone offer fully accessible play experiences that exercise the mind, body and imagination. Only one zone focuses on physical play and climbing. With 5 other zones to explore, every child can find something that matches their interest and ability. During the design phase the preschool students offered ideas and built models to show how they enjoy playing. The playscape was built from their ideas and the types of play they were drawn to with a healthy balance of realistic maintenance needs and safety mixed in.

The Edible Garden - Where classroom exploration moves outside to edible plants.
The Discovery Garden - With sensory planting and imaginative play.
The Performance Grove - Where a stage and instruments offer performance & musical play.
The Artist Nook - An outdoor art studio with a variety of art materials and mediums.
Adventure Playscape - A climbing, swinging, and spinning zone that feeds the vestibular system and large motor play needs.

**Construction Cost** - $450,000  
**Date of Completion** - 2019  
**Services Provided** - Landscape Architectural Concept Design, Accessibility Consulting, Community Workshop, Cost Estimating, Construction Documents, and Construction Assistance
Legacy Grove Park Adventure Play Area  
Winchester, KY

The Greater Clark Foundation strives to make Clark County, Kentucky, one of the best places in the country to live, work and play. Their redevelopment of this hospital site centered around a 2 acre playscape and adventure area. Learning Landscapes Design started the design process with a series of STEM (Science Technology, Engineering and Math) based classroom workshops with local youth and a hands-on community workshop. The design grew out of the ideas generated by the youth. The elements were organized in an effort to meld the two local bio-regions Appalachia and Bluegrass together through play. The goal was to offer active and creative play. Activities include; an exploration creek, boulder and log climbing, custom dulcimer climber, swinging, spinning and a loose parts building area. The exploration creek is a recirculating water feature that mimics a local creek and offers chances to get your feet wet, dig and explore. The loose parts building maze is a section of the park with posts on a regular grid over undulating hills. Park visitors can use loose fabrics, sticks and other elements to build maze and fort elements. This part of the park is designed to be creative and dynamic. It allows for free play and will be different every time the child visits. In a society where screen time and scheduled activities are the norm, Legacy Grove offers a chance for families to escape the hectic day to day and relax while connecting to nature and neighbors. The project is universally accessible, nature based, and the central feature for this new community park.

Construction Cost - $1,500,000 for the playground, $2,500,000 for the park  
Date of Completion – Winter 2018  
Percent Completed by LLD - 85% Learning Landscape was the lead consultant.
Spinning equipment with a supported back helps include users with lower core strength. Rocking and spinning equipment stimulates the vestibular system. Pathways with a variety of textures and even small bumps let users participate at their own level. A variety of sensory experiences add interest for everyone and shift the play focus away from physical abilities.

References
The following reference can give you a good idea of the Learning Landscapes Design Team's skills and expertise. Two Reference letters have been included for your use as needed pages 23-24.

Rod Wojtanik, Metro: Parks and Nature Planning Manager
503-797-1846 Rod.Wojtanik@oregonmetro.gov
PLL and Lets Play recently finish the Oxbow Regional Park project with Rod Wojtanik. This design included 2 fully accessible nature play areas at this Portland Metro area park. Rod can speak to our overall character, conceptual design, project management, community involvement, quality and buildable construction documents, and construction support.

Ken Warner Parks and Recreation Director: City of West Linn OR
503-742-6049 kworcester@westlinnoregon.gov
In the last few years LLD has worked on 3 play area projects for Ken (White Oak Savannah, Sunset Park, Sahallie Park). He can speak to our overall character, conceptual design, site selection, community involvement, construction documents, and construction support.

Amy Dorr Executive Director : Montclaire Community PreK
973-509-4500 Ext. 13 amy.dorr@montclairprek.org
Amy is the director of the Montclaire Community PreK. Her vision was to create a facility that functioned for her preschool and served the entire community off hours. The resulting space is focused on young children and is accessible. She can speak to Kerry's project management skills as well as the firms work from concept through construction.
Project Understanding
The Village of McFarland understands that access to play should be a universal right for all children. The addition of a single inclusive element in a playground adds interest, but leaves some users without a sense of togetherness that is so important in building community. Universally accessible playgrounds are playgrounds that offer broad-spectrum solutions that produce environments that are usable and effective for everyone. This is inherently different than accessible, inclusive, and ADA compliant spaces. Learning Landscapes strives to create spaces for people of all ages and abilities to play, interact, and learn. We put children and their families at the center of the community and build amenities that attract them and meet their play and learning needs at any level. We will start and end the design with “Community togetherness through play.”

Like many communities the Village of McFarland and the surrounding communities offer some accessible recreation opportunities peppered within their current system. Depending on installation, maintenance and design these amenities can vary in their effectiveness. Many parents and caregivers are frustrated when a website states ‘inclusive play’. Parents of differently-abled children are used to speaking up and advocating for their children. They do so tirelessly. It is our duty to truly listen. Our team will respond with designs that are truly universally accessible. By designing spaces that are comprehensive and create whole experiences with lots of options. Our designs are dynamic and engaging. We meet each child where they are and provide opportunities for them to grow.

Design Approach for Main Project Issues
Universally Accessible Play Area Knowledge and Depth of Understanding
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) aims to make sure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else. We understand that ability is a spectrum and people land at each point along the spectrum. It is hard to define national design solutions that work for everyone. ADA design solutions focus mostly on physical access for people with mobility and vision issues.

We have found these to be greatly lacking in addressing the daily issues of families experiencing disability. Learning Landscapes Design has conducted numerous interviews and sat at tables with groups of accessibility advocates and parents. Through conversations and many design alternatives we have developed a deeper understanding of what families need to support community togetherness. Some are big, expensive changes and some are small, thoughtful details. Below are examples of the range of solutions and features we will review and evaluate.

Lila is 12, she is the oldest of 3 children in her family. Her severe cerebral palsy has left her wheelchair bound and mostly blind. She loves speed and feeling the wind on her face. Her parents find it frustrating when a playground is posted as accessible but has only one component that may or may not be a fit for Lila. They wish slides had a longer run out at the end so they had time to move from the top to meet Lila at the bottom of the slide in order to support her transition out of the slide. She can see changes in light and dark so placement of vegetation for shade and tunnels (solid or vegetative) add interest to her experience, which can tend to be more upward facing.
Carson’s mom finds lots of support in other families experiencing disability. Her playground goals are for play and building community. Carson is a very active 4 year old with spina bifida. His mobility has been supported by a wheelchair, walker, and leg braces. Lately he does not use any support devices! His low sensory input in his legs makes him tend to ‘beat them up’ or test them by jumping from high points and looking for lower extremity sensory input. For Carson, having a high jump point with surfacing that exceeds the minimum ‘impact attenuation’ need protects him as he challenges himself.

Vivian has sensory processing disorder. She is oversensitive to things in her environment. She loves to play with other kids and is very creative. Her parents find ways to support her experience including ear protection to minimize the noise of play and full boots to reduce irritating foot sensations. Playgrounds that work well for Vivian have quiet corners where she can have parallel play with peers. A controlled amount of sensory input helps her increase her range of abilities. She does not want wet feet, but she loves to pump the water pump for her friends in the sand pit.

Universal accessibility does not come in one size, shape, or solution. It is about people and meeting their needs for access, joy in play and togetherness. We will help you address your community’s needs with effective and specific design solutions. This happens from concept design and location of elements through to construction detailing. Mara Kaplan will provide a second set of expert eyes on the accessible components of the design at location selection and concept stage of the project. Good design begins with a conversation and carefully listening to your community.

Experience Working with the Community - Public Involvement
The more we design play spaces the more important we think it is to involve the community in the design. Kids understand the feeling of a place, they have unique ideas and make the design truly reflect the community. We like workshops where people of all ages and abilities can review ideas and photos and can give hands-on design ideas. Model building stations offer young people a chance to express their unique ideas while getting sensory and play opportunities. We will have stations for more quantitative feedback and conversations. This helps solidify the findings from what we see and hear in the play activity.

Our team has proven ability to appeal to a wide audience and incorporate public comment into plan. Through intimate conversations with various community members, we can develop unique solutions and approaches. Anyone can pick out accessible playground equipment in a catalog. Our solutions are unique and reflect the community they serve.

For example, a Kentucky community voiced their frustration with large play structures and ramping systems. They felt ramps were hard to negotiate and serving only one wheelchair user at a time. Those that could not transfer out of their wheelchair and slide often had little to do once they reached the top. They felt elevated platforms were too small and children in mobility devices were ‘in the way’ once they reached the top. Our design solutions included a series of low features where play could happen under, next to, and around the main feature. Children in mobility devices were never very far away from peers. This custom dulcimer instrument spoke to the local bluegrass culture and had places for quiet retreat and musical sensory investigation as well as physical play. (see progressive design imagery to the right)
Experience working with Public Agencies
Public agencies make up our biggest client sector. We understand you have a responsibility to your community to provide services at a reasonable cost and to be able to maintain those services over the lifetime of the improvement. Understanding the level of service of surrounding parks and play areas will help us frame and support the need. Public agencies typically have an approval process with liability and permitting check points. We use National ASTM standards on all playgrounds and have certified playground safety inspector (CPSI) registered staff. Public bidding is something we help many of our client navigate. With custom components, a clear set of construction documents (CD) becomes your agreement with the contractor about what they are getting paid to build. Learning Landscapes Design compiles complete CD sets that meet permitting requirements and are buildable by local contractors. We have very few issues in construction that stem from unclear drawings or specification requirements.

Experience Meeting Project Schedules and Budgets
Schedules and budgets are the framework in which design and development work happens. Our entire team is highly dedicated to meeting your schedule needs. We have yet to miss a deadline. We also know that schedules change and adjust when effected by outside forces. Our team can be flexible if your needs change. Budgets for equipment are pretty straight forward, but on custom playscape features costing can be tricky. We have constructed features in many ways and can help you decide which approach fits your budget. We have an extensive library of bidding and estimating costs that we can apply to your materials and elements. Our billing rates are at or below the average for experts in our field. We work efficiently in order to make the most of your project funding.

Method For Completing The Scope of Work
Our method for approaching your work is three fold.

- **Understand What is Existing and What is Needed** - This will be a combination of our *Existing Level of Service Site Inventory* (task 1.2), program discussion with your core team (task 1.3) and community listening session (task 2.2).

- **Careful Site Evaluation to Identify Opportunities** - What each site offers will greatly effect the possibilities both of the spatial organization and the approach to inclusivity and play. We will look closely at three sites and provide site diagrams that show the opportunities and character of three different approaches to inclusive design (task 2.1).

- **Thoughtful Design So Intent is Carried Through** - Learning Landscapes Design is skilled at taking the program, site and play feedback and layering it into one concept design that is buildable and maintains the intent shared by the community. While many universally accessible details are developed later in the design phase, organization of space and intent plays out in the concept level designs (task 3.1)

Here is a quick example how this may play out. The inventory shows that there are some ADA play components but no universally accessible sensory play features within a 20 mile radius on one side of the village. Staff and community members review the *site evaluations and design approaches* and agree that a sensory trail design option located in the ‘play defect area’ meets many of their needs. Learning Landscapes Design creates a concept plan from these conversation that considers each families experiences from leaving their car, through a loop trail with a variety of play stations, using support facilities and opportunities for building community.
**Scope of Work**

**Task One: Project Start Up**

**Task 1.1  Project Start Up Meeting - Phone Call**
We will talk over your vision and goals for the project. We can look over this proposal, scope, and how the project will be structured. Finally a discussion about our initial site visit and meeting would help us prepare for the coming tasks. This will include the organization of the core team meeting and how best to get feedback from your team. We will review any other existing documents about the sites, foundation, and relevant community issues that you can supply.

*We need from you: Signed contract and any background information. We will deliver: Meeting notes and meeting outline*

**Task 1.2  Background Review and Level Of Service Inventory**
We will review existing site documents including, but not limited to, Parks and Open Space Plans, Comprehensive Plans, Strategic Plans, and Annual Budget as applicable in order to get a comprehensive understanding of your community and it's playground needs.

**Level of Service Inventory:** We will complete some in-person and some digital reviews of existing playgrounds in your community and in the surrounding area. This will allow us to identify any play or accessibility gaps and opportunities. We will review websites for site attractions and web description content ‘value’ and will follow up with site visits for the most inclusive sites. Our Level of Service Inventory will review or consider:

- Type of play (Physical, Sensory, Imaginative, etc.)
- Amount and quantity of accessible play components
- Graduated levels of challenges (is the equipment provided meeting a varying level of different skill levels)
- Surfacing
- Age range served
- Character of the design or space
- ADA support services (accessible pathways, rest rooms, drinking fountains, parking spaces, wayfinding, fencing, etc.)

*We will deliver: Level of Service Inventory diagram at the core team meeting. The diagram will show locations of select parks in the surrounding area and their existing universally inclusive and ADA play and site amenities based on the considerations listed above.*

**Task 1.3  Initial Site Visits and Core Team Meeting - In Person Visit**
An initial visit will help familiarize us with your team, your goals and your sites. We propose that this first visit is a core team meeting and extensive site investigation visit.

Nest swings offer supported group swinging for everyone!
Site Tours and Observation: We will take time getting familiar with your park system and the sites you would like to consider for the play area. We will look at elements such as views, vegetation, drainage, slope, and lines of access. This will give us a better idea of the spaces and possibilities.

Core Team Kick-off Meeting: We would meet with your core team and discuss the project. This may include; village planning/public works staff, facilities staff (CPSI staff member if possible) and other stakeholders. We can narrow down the appropriate topics together. They may include;
- Introduction to Learning Landscapes and how we work.
- The basics behind Inclusive Design (Input from Mara Kaplan @ Let Kids Play!)
- Common accessible design features with lots of imagery
- Project examples
- A discussion of the spectrums of play and the scope of the project
- Then we will discuss the design in depth. What are the goals of the project? What are the key site elements? What are the site opportunities or constraints? What materials are regionally available and make sense to use on the project? What is the correct balance of off the shelf vs. custom equipment?
- Through discussion of these topics the group will develop a preliminary program, design themes, and initial design parameters.

We need from you: Organize the meeting and gather stakeholders.
We will deliver: Meeting notes including; program preferences and site observation list.

Task Two: Site Evaluations and Design Approach Options

Task 2.1 Evaluation of Three Locations
Once we have met with your team we will evaluate three of the sites, that we narrowed down as a team, and develop a design approach option for each site. These design approach options will be presented in the form of a bubble diagram. Site Evaluation and Design Approach Options will consider site characteristics such as:
- Grading
- Existing vegetation
- Location in the community
- Existing rest rooms, parking, and other accessible amenities
- Ecological value
- Phasing opportunities for future development and layering of needs

We need from you: Pertinent surveys with topography, architectural and existing/future landscape plans
We will deliver: (1) bubble diagram with a unique list of program elements for each site, for a total of (3) different site evaluations and design approach options.

Our public meetings go beyond sticker voting on pictures and include sensory and creative opportunities.
Task 2.2 Meeting to Review Site Evaluations - Digital Meeting
The three site evaluations and design approaches will be presented and discussed with your core team. We can talk over specifics of the options. At this point we can identify any changes that need to be made in development of the final graphics and we can talk over how the options effect resources and construction approach. Together we will:
- Decide if the options meet the site characteristics.
- Discuss the variation in options and the character of the resulting spaces.
We will deliver: Meeting notes and any changes before the public meeting.

Task 2.3 Community Listening Session Open House- In Person Meeting
Learning Landscapes Design excels at community involvement. We focus on meeting the community where they are and providing a fun and engaging process. We believe it is critical to connect with the community and the target audience through the design process. We will help lead a hands-on community workshop with multiple interactive stations for engaging in conversations about what will be best for the park including model building and sensory stations. We will work with City staff to make reasonable accommodations for community members with varying abilities to participate. This may include additional staff to assist in describing and reading elements. Room organization with lots of open space for maneuvering and basic services provided.
We need from you: Gather materials that are too large for us to bring (sticks, log slices, sand, etc.). Don’t worry we will give you a list and lots of time to prepare.
We will deliver: Images for sharing and voting, play elements and supplies for the workshop. Lots of excitement and energy. Notes from the public meeting.

Task 2.4 Community On-Line Surveys
We know families lead busy lives and evening meetings interfere with dinner and home work. Weekends are often full with prior commitments. Families with children experiencing disability can often find in person meetings exponentially more challenging. We like to offer families a chance to offer ideas and comments online. We will develop a short online questionnaire to gather feedback.
We need from you: Gather the names and contact information of members and organizations in your community that want to participate or would be beneficial in participating in the survey. Distribute the survey link via email or on your municipal website.
We will deliver: An online survey with a short list of questions to gather public input. We will collect and analyze survey results.

Task Three: Concept Designs
Task 3.1 Develop Draft Concept Plan and Design Imagery
After the above project start up we will have chosen a site and will have a good sense of what the design will include and how the elements might be structured. We will prepare a schematic site plan identifying the locations, sizes, and relationships of elements. This includes horizontal and vertical geometries, preliminary playground design and parking area layout (if needed). This will translate the vision into a buildable concept that fits the site characteristics. These site plans will be roughly 1” = 10’. Accompanying the plans will be imagery that describes the character of the different features and areas.
1- The concept plan will be based on direction from the park district but will also consider liability and safety. We can help identify the major concerns for any play areas so they meet the ASTM (American Standards of Testing and Measurement) and CPSC (Consumer Product Safety Commission) guidelines.

While maintaining a natural feel, this play creek offers three points of flush access including places to hold your hand in rushing water.
2- **Long term maintenance** will also be considered in the design. We have 18 years of experience designing play, park, and school environments and can help identify areas that will require more maintenance as well as develop design approaches that will reduce maintenance input.

3- The design will consider **Universal Accessibility** and account for users with a wide range of abilities. We utilize some of the ways ‘Let Kids Play!’ thinks about universal accessibility including; access, having some level of play that challenges everybody, making sure the most exciting element is accessible to all and providing clear online information for visitors to self evaluate if the park is right for them and prepare for their visit.

4- We will develop a spreadsheet with quantities and elements in the design. We will provide estimated costs for any features, surfaces, and playground equipment. We have extensive experience estimating costs of equipment, surfacing, and accompanying elements.

*We will deliver:  Schematic plan, preliminary costing, accompanying imagery board, perspectives and imagery of all equipment for one site.*

**Task 3.2  Draft Concept Review Meeting - In Person Visit**

The plan will be presented and discussed with your core team of stakeholders. We can talk over specifics of the design. We can discuss each element and the overall organization of play zones. We will check in to confirm that we are meeting the project’s program and accessibility goals.

*We need from you: Provide a single set of comments*

**Any large scale changes that are made after this point will be considered an additional revision to the plan. These revisions will be billed hourly in addition to the total of this proposal.**

This is an example of how log climbing was provided at a park for a variety of abilities. Low steppers for young users and those that need less challenge. You can see the bottom of the transfer handle (grey) in the photo. Mid height logs that are a variety of heights and tall pieces with lots of room to jump. At Oxbow Regional Park the sand is 40” deep and offers a wonderful existing impact surface for a climbing area. But, we know sand is not accessible for people with many mobility issues. In order to balance budget and meet a wide variety of play needs a sand surface was used under the more challenging features and a compatible artificial turf surfacing was used under the features designed for use by people with reduced mobility.
Task 3.3 Final Concept Plan and Costs
Our team will develop a final universally accessible play area concept plan for the project. This plan will incorporate any feedback received to this point. The plan will be a color rendering at roughly 1" = 10' scale. This plan will be appropriate for sharing the site vision and marketing. It will include photos or graphics to appropriately convey the experience and design ideas. The ability to construct from this plan, based on the detail, will be limited. But, the plan will have imagery to show character and will clearly label all elements.

Accompanying the final plan will be an estimate of probable costs. It will list the quantities of each material and cost assumptions. These costs can vary based on which contractor eventually installs the project, detailed design and construction approach.

*We will deliver: Final concept plan, estimate of probable costs*

Task 3.4 Community Concept Presentation
We will return to present the final concept plan to the community. This will be more of a presentation style meeting where current design thinking and direction are shared. The community will have a chance to give their feedback and opinions of how well the design meets their needs.

*We will deliver: Final concept plan, estimate of probable costs*

Task 3.5 Preparation of Final Report
We will prepare a final plan document that contains the level of service investigation, implementation schedule, detailed conceptual drawings, narrative description of recommended improvements, visual examples depicting recommendations, estimates of probable costs, and associated narrative in order to present a complete document. The final report will reference and integrate the directions and findings from the community workshop and online survey as well as the park and open space plan, comprehensive plan, and village strategic plan.

*We will deliver: Final Report in PDF format*

Task 3.6 Present Final Plan and Report
We will present the final report to the Parks Committee and Village Board. Our team will talk the group through the process that was completed to get to the recommended design from level of service to concept design and costing.

*We will deliver: Final report presentation in PPT format*
## Estimated Labor Hours

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<td>Individual Totals</td>
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Proposed Team Organization

Our team has proven experience and the ability to provide all the required services for project success.

Learning Landscapes is a team of landscape architects, educators, and certified playground safety inspectors. We specialize in play in all its forms. We will lead the design team and be your main contact. We excel at exciting and engaging public involvement. Our firm works across the US and has completed successful projects that are on time and on budget with a wide variety of public agencies.

As principal in charge Michelle Mathis will be in charge of contracts and invoicing as well as quality control and design review.

Kerry White is a skilled project manager and will be your daily point of contact and lead designer.

Other LLD production staff will be brought in as needed. We are a small firm and everyone in the firm will be closely involved in the project.

Mara Kaplan of ‘Let Kids Play!’ is a national renowned universal play specialist. We work with her often to look over designs with an accessibility lens and help select the best accessible play equipment. We enjoy working with her because she is practical, creative, and understands the issue from a parent’s perspective. Mara will look over the drawings at each submittal. She has a thorough and thoughtful checklist she will apply to the drawings to maximize play for all.
Michelle Mathis is a landscape architect with over seventeen years of experience managing and designing spaces that connect young people through play. After 5 days of biking through the mosaic of children’s outdoor spaces in Berlin her path was ever changed. She started Learning Landscapes to work on projects that reach out to diverse communities in a tactile and play based way. She has a Master’s Degree in Education with a focus on whole systems design for education, which she couples with her strong design sense to create spaces that are engaging and intrinsically support learning. Her most impressive skill may be her ability to truly listen and respond to client needs. As the leader of a small renowned design firm, she plays a part in every project the firm completes.

Professional Licenses and Affiliations
- Licensed Landscape Architect
- Certified Playground Safety Inspector - National Parks and Recreation Association
- Masters in Education - Focus on Sustainable Design for Education
- Founder and Member of Oregon Natural Play Initiative - Part of the Oregon Recreation and Parks Association
- Steering Committee Member - National Wildlife Federation’s National Guidelines for Play and Learning
- Completed the Permaculture Design Certificate

Education
- Master’s Degree in Education: Leadership for Ecology Culture and Learning, from Portland State University, Portland OR
- Bachelor of Science Degree in Landscape Architecture from The Ohio State University, Columbus OH
- Studied Studio Art at Indiana University, Bloomington IN

Awards
- Oregon 2014 ASLA Honor Award Westmoreland Park Design
- P3 Award Winner, Environmental Protection Agency Competition focusing on People, Prosperity and the Planet; 2005-2006 and 2006-2008
- Ohio State Presidents Salute to Excellence, 2002
- Landscape Architecture Faculty Award, 2000

Relevant Project Experience
- Oxbow Regional Park Accessible Adventure Playscape, Sandy, OR
- Montclair Community Pre-K and Preschool Park, Montclair NJ
- Cleveland Zoo Discovery Ridge Play Area, Cleveland Ohio
- Lake Olathe Natural Play Area
- Gilbert Children’s Museum - Inventors Yard, Salem OR
- Legacy Grove Accessible Adventure Play Area - Winchester KY
- Champoeg State Park Play Area, St. Paul OR
- Fry Family Park Watershed Playscape Canton OH
- Willow Creek Community Playscape Timball TX
- White Oak Savanna Playscape, West Lynn OR
- Touchmark Community Intergenerational Play Area
- Wild Rock Nature Meadow Playscape, Albermarle County, VA
- Gateway Park Play Area, Portland OR
- Mountainside Community Play Acre, Truckee CA
Kerry White is a landscape architect with eleven years of experience designing a wide range of projects throughout Oregon and Idaho. She has managed small and large scale projects from concept to construction documentation and implementation. She has years of experience designing, detailing, and coordinating eco-roofs, stormwater facilities, on-structure sites in the urban environment, and playscapes. Her focus is on urban design, playground design, and site planning projects that promote education and encourage a healthy lifestyle.

Kerry grew up in central Illinois and Wisconsin. Her interest in nature play design evolved from her own childhood environment, where she was surrounded by nature from a very young age. She has a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture from the University of Wisconsin - Madison, where she found her true passion for play-scape design while volunteering in playground construction and early education design workshops.

Kerry has been highly involved in the design community through her past volunteer work as an ACE Mentor. She enjoys exploring the outdoors, running, biking, swimming, and educating her children about the importance of our connection with nature - through play and exposure to the outdoors.

**Professional Licenses Past Work Experiences**
- American Society of Landscape Architects (2004-Present)
- Licensed Landscape Architect (OR and ID)
- Certified Playground Safety Inspector

**Education**
- Bachelor of Landscape Architecture, University of Wisconsin - Madison

**Community Involvement and Interests**
- ACE Mentor, Team Captain (2014-2017)
- Grant High School Career Day Presenter (2015)
- Guest lecturer to the Art Institute of Portland’s Green Design Program (2014-2016)

**Relevant Project Experience**
- Oxbow Regional Park Accessible Adventure Playscape, Sandy, OR
- Montclair Community Pre-K and Preschool Park, Montclair NJ
- Cleveland Zoo Discovery Ridge Play Area, Cleveland Ohio
- Lake Olathe Natural Play Area
- Gilbert Children’s Museum - Inventors Yard, Salem OR
- Legacy Grove Accessible Adventure Play Area - Winchester KY
- White Oak Savanna Playground, West Lynn OR
- Willow Creek Community Playscape - Timball TX
- Sierra Expeditionary School Elementary and Middle School Playscape - Truckee, CA
- Oregon Episcopal School Elementary Playscape and STEM design course
- Touchmark Community Intergenerational Play Area - Boise, ID
- Pacific Crest Community School Site Mater Plan
- ESD 113 Sound to Harbor Early Learning Programs Pre-school Accessible Playscapes - Rainier and Elma, WA Sites
Let Kids Play!
Mara Kaplan MBA
Inclusive Play Specialist

Let Kids Play (LKP): LKP is a consulting business started by Mara Kaplan. The business focuses on working with non-profit organizations, community groups, landscape architects, parks & recreation departments and corporations to increase the amount of inclusive recreation available. Let Kids Play is also the editor of accessibleplayground.net the website and home for everything about accessible playgrounds.

Education
- Indiana University B.S., Elementary Education and minor in Gifted Education 1980-1985
- Boston University MBA with a concentration in Non Profit Management: 1988-1990

Center for Creative Play (CFCP): CFCP was founded in 1995 by Mara Kaplan and four other parents who are raising children with disabilities. CFCP was an inclusive playspace located in Pittsburgh where children with and without disabilities could come and play together. Mara was the organization's only Executive Director. She grew the organization from one staff person with a $100,000 budget to one with 18 staff and a $1m budget. She also grew the number of visitors from 1,000 per year to 45,000 per year.

Within 5 years, the organization outgrew its original 5,000 sq. foot building and purchased a building to create a 15,000 sq. ft. playspace. At this point, Mara took the organization from one with just local impact to one with national impact, by replicating CFCP in other locations, leading training sessions across the country and helping children’s museums improve their universal design. In 2007, CFCP impacted 1,000,000 children across the country by providing improved play environments for them.

Professional and Community Service
HeadStartBodyStart, Reviewer for HSBS preferred provider program 2010 Leadership Pittsburgh, Class XIV, 1998 Temple Sinai, Inclusion Task Force, Chair 2015-Current

Awards
WDEQ's Forty under Forty, 2002 Shore/Whitehill Award for Contributions to improve the lives of persons with special needs, 2002 Exemplar Congregation Union of Reform Judaism 2017

Recent Similar Projects
Client: Learning Landscapes Designs, Portland, OR
- Participated on team to design an inclusive, nature playground at Oxbow Park, a project of Metro Parks, Oregon
- Participate on team to design an inclusive, nature playground at Legacy Grove Park sponsored by the Greater Clark Foundation in Kentucky
- Participated on team to design an inclusive, nature playground at Mountclair Community PreK Park, Mountclair, NJ
- Provided training to teams
- Led session to gather community feedback
- Review design at each stage of projects

Client: PlayPower, Huntersville, NC
- Editor of the Inclusive Play Design Guide
- Manages the inclusive play program for three brands: Playworld, Miracle Recreation, and Little Tikes Commercial

Client: Greenworks, Portland, OR
- Participated on the team to design an inclusive playground in Couch Park, a project of the Portland Parks and Recreation

Client: Larkin’s Place, Champaign, IL
- Provided initial training on universal design and on collecting community input for Larkin’s Place
- Wrote Business Plan which resulted in $1m lead grant

Let Kids Play!
Because every child deserves to play
**Schedule**

The following is our proposed schedule, however we are flexible and can make adjustment to meet your needs. A more formal schedule will be prepared upon project award.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contracting</td>
<td>April</td>
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<tr>
<td>Background Review &amp; Level of Service Inventory</td>
<td>April - May</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initial Site Visit &amp; Core Team Meeting</td>
<td>May</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Three Locations</td>
<td>May - June</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting to Review Site Evaluations</td>
<td>June</td>
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<td>Community Listening Sessions Open House</td>
<td>June</td>
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<td>Community Online Survey</td>
<td>June</td>
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<td>Develop Draft Concept Plan &amp; Design Imagery</td>
<td>June - July</td>
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<td>Draft Concept Review Meeting</td>
<td>July</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Concept Plan and Cost</td>
<td>July - August</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Concept Presentation</td>
<td>August</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preparation of Final Report</td>
<td>August</td>
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<tr>
<td>Present Final Plan and Report</td>
<td>September</td>
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**Cost Proposal**

**Lump Sum Fee Proposal**

$27,005

This total lump sum fee of twenty seven thousand five dollars is a lump sum fee. It will be billed monthly as the project progresses.

**Additional Fees**

Hourly price to complete any additional items not identified in the above Scope of Work.

- $200/hr Universal Design Specialist
- $120/hr Principal
- $95/hr Project Manager
- $75/hr Staff Designer
Assumptions

1. Client responsibilities have been included in phases to clarify client role. It is assumed the client can complete these tasks.
2. There will be no large project changes late in the design, for example extents of the area being designed or program changes. The site program is reviewed and approved in task 2.2 during concept design review and any changes after are an additional service.
3. Client can provide concise and timely feedback at the points identified.
4. Client agrees to promptly notify contractor if Client’s schedule or budget changes. Client acknowledges that significant changes to the project construction schedule or budget, or to the project’s scope may require additional services of contractor. Fees for additional work, beyond the scope of work as outlined in this agreement, will be invoiced on a time and materials basis based on a billing rate of $120 - 75$/hr. We will notify you before performing additional services.
5. Learning Landscapes will not be responsible for parking lot layout, site fine grading, sidewalk paving in the right-of-way, underground utilities including drainage features, design of stormwater treatment structures and calculations. Excluded services are not a part of Learning Landscapes Design LLC’s services and are the responsibility of others. Excluded services include, but are not limited to, the following: Arborist report, subsurface conditions; soil issues (including suitability for plant material, soil content, level of compaction); lot line location; drainage; utilities’ location; security; lighting; and engineering.
6. Learning Landscapes shall render its services as expeditiously as is consistent with professional skill and care.
7. The Client acknowledges and agrees that proper project maintenance and inspection will be required after the project is complete. Without adequate maintenance and care on the part of the Owner, portions of the landscape may never function in the manner intended, or safety and risk opportunities may arise resulting in a design that does not achieve the original intent expressed by the designer to the Client. Inadequate maintenance may result in damage to property or persons. Learning Landscapes Design LLC cannot be responsible for conditions or events that result from inadequate or improper maintenance.
August 8, 2019

To whom it may concern:

It is my pleasure to share my experience of working with Michelle Mathis and Learning Landscapes. I have had the pleasure of working with Michelle a number of times over the past ten years. We have worked together on a wide array of projects ranging from play areas to large scale nature parks. I have found Michelle to be very customer serviced oriented delivering a quality product to her client. She is creative, thoughtful, and skilled at managing complex projects, engaging with project stakeholders, and community members in an effort to realize her client’s project goals.

I would draw attention to two projects specifically. The first being Oxbow Regional Park play area. Metro hired Michelle to develop concepts for two inclusive nature play areas. Michelle worked with our park rangers and naturalists to develop concepts for playground designs were then vetted with community stakeholders. These creative solutions were then submitted for a Land & Water Conservation Fund grant. Metro was fortunate enough to be awarded the grant; with the committee ranking our application #1 in the state. This was in no small part to the goals and concepts we were trying to deliver. Michelle then helped us develop schematic designs, construction documents and ultimately provide construction oversight. This project was opened to critical acclaim from kids throughout the region. Michelle has tremendous experience and is an incredible resource and partner at every step. She is communicative, responsive and mindful of long term management and operational challenges.

The Graham Oaks Nature Park Project was a complex project with multiple stakeholders and design objectives. Michelle, working for GreenWorks at the time, provided schematic design, construction documents, and construction administration for this $2.2 million, 205-acre regional park in Wilsonville, Oregon. Michelle demonstrated a strong understanding of the goals of our agency and our desire to provide a meaningful nearby nature connection for the local community and adjacent school. Her design took into account the desire for a timeless design and aesthetic while also providing a positive visitor experience for the user of the nature park and the regional trail that bisected the site. Michelle's design and attention to detail provides a quality experience, universal access to nature, recreational and environmental learning opportunities for local community and adjacent neighborhoods and schools, and the meaningful integration of environmental art and interpretation.

Please don’t hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about my experience working with Michelle.

Sincerely,

Rod Wojtanik, RLA
Parks and Nature Planning Manager
Metro
600 NE Grand Avenue, Portland, OR 97232
(503) 797-1846 | rod.wojtanik@oregonmetro.gov
January 24, 2020

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of the City of Olathe Parks & Recreation Department, I am pleased to recommend the professional design services of Learning Landscapes Design, LLC (LLD). Michelle Mathis and the team at LLD created a unique and memorable destination nature playground for the City of Olathe that opened in late summer 2019 and has been well received by the community.

Initially, LLD led a nature-based community engagement and educational session that included over 100 local children and their families to gather information on what the community desired. The feedback received was successfully incorporated into the conceptual design for the playground. During the design process, the City of Olathe challenged LLD to use existing natural materials from the larger park construction project, and they stepped up to the task with enthusiasm. The design team chose trees for the playground from those that had to be removed due to road construction. Stone that was already on site was also used for playground construction. In addition, LLD was remarkably conscientious of existing site conditions and provided an excellent planting plan that was easy to install and maintain going forward.

As with any construction project, the Lake Olathe Nature Playground project had its share of surprises encountered along the way. Even from afar, the team from LLD continually offered practical solutions to keep the project moving forward. With excellent cost estimating, thorough and accurate construction documents, and cooperative construction support throughout, the project was completed on time and within budget.

As design consultant for the Lake Olathe Nature Playground project, LLD performed quality work that resulted in a destination playground the citizens of Olathe can be proud of and enjoy for years to come. I would not hesitate to hire Learning Landscapes Design again in the future, and highly recommend them for your playground design and construction project.

Sincerely,

Lisa Donnelly
Park Project Planner
City of Olathe Parks & Recreation