

August 2025



# the Awesome Spot Playground



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Dreaming of play without limitations & barriers





# Dreaming of Play Without Limitations & Barriers

On November 15, 2007 our family was blessed with our second son, Tommy. At birth, we knew that Tommy would face many challenges in his future. Tommy was born with severe physical abnormalities and congenital deformities that would require many years of therapy, surgeries, and unknowns. With the love and support of our family,



Tommy Loredo Sr. and Jr. enjoy a roller slide designed specifically for social play, accessibility, and proprioceptive sensory stimulation. (Banner) Tommy Jr. plays in a cozy cocoon designed for social play and sensory respit. (Above)

friends, and community, Tommy has flourished and grown into a funny, witty, charismatic, loving, and all around amazing young man. Through it all, Tommy has always been positive and so strong. He has endured more, to date, than most will endure in a lifetime. **One of the biggest challenges Tommy has faced, is his ability to get around physically.** With the help of a wheelchair and walker, Tommy has gained a level of independence, and can now move around and get where he wants to go without assistance.

As a family, we have always treated Tommy the same as we would any little boy growing up, allowing him to try any activity or sport he desires. We have always remained active outside of the home with visits to playgrounds and family trips to the beach. You name it, and we do it to

the best of our ability. As Tommy has grown, visiting playgrounds has proved more challenging than it was when he was young and small. **Tommy wants to be independent and play with his peers, without the embarrassment of Mom or Dad needing to carry him to the play structure, and hover around to make sure he stays safe.** As a result, visiting local playgrounds became less fun for Tommy, and more difficult for us to enjoy as a family.

In April of 2015, I came across a news story that a friend shared with me. The report was about a brand new inclusive playground in Palo Alto, CA named The Magical Bridge Playground. The article noted that the City would be celebrating the playground's grand opening that following weekend. In an emotional moment of sincere

gratitude, I sent an email to one of the founders of that amazing project, thanking them for creating such a magical place for children like Tommy to play side by side with his peers, without limitations, or barriers. Within minutes, I received a response inviting our family to come and take part in the Grand Opening ceremonies. Tommy was invited to hold the key to the playground, that was then handed



Tommy Jr. plays in a merry-go-round designed specifically to remove physical barriers and foster social play.

over to the Mayor of Palo Alto, CA. **Our experience as a family that day will forever be etched in my mind as the first day I realized how important accessible play spaces for children, and adults, are for our society.** I left the playground that day on cloud nine, and also extremely inspired to bring an awesome playground like that to our hometown in Modesto, CA.

In May of 2015, I visited with the Modesto Parks & Recreation Department and told them of my dream to bring an amazing playground to our own town. With their amazing support, as well as the support of family, friends, community, City Council members, O'Dell Engineering, and Shane's Inspiration, we are now turning this dream into a reality. When this playground is completed, the Modesto community will be an inspiration to surrounding communities, and an example of the importance of inclusive playgrounds worldwide.

With your support, we know that this playground will help to enrich the lives of all children and families who visit The Awesome Spot Playground.

Rachel Loredo





# Social Inclusion & Sensory Play

The design process, brief as it may be, must yield lasting benefits to society. Each design should focus on these benefits through aesthetics, universal inclusion, and social progress through interactive relationships and experiences.

Across the country, hundreds of inclusive playgrounds are being built and many children are enjoying them. Somewhere during the design process however, the very purpose for creating these play spaces (children’s play) often gets lost in the details of Americans with Disabilities Act regulations, ASTM safety standards, equipment selections, and budget restrictions. These issues are important but they are peripheral to the design process and should not be the focus! Far too often, attempts to plan for children with mobility impairments overshadow the necessity of a comprehensive approach that includes social and emotional inclusion, sensory integration, graduating levels of physical and

mental challenges, cognitive simplicity, and opportunities for discovery and exploration. Comprehensive inclusive play spaces are effective when approached with an activity based approach founded on evidence based research and design.

## SOCIAL INCLUSION

Inclusive play environments follow seven principles of design to remove the physical and social barriers to all children fully participating in play. Inclusive play environments and equipment are designed for equitable use to (1) Be Fair for all kids; designed for flexibility in use so all kids can (2) Be Included; designed to be simple and intuitive so all kids can (3) Be

Smart; designed with perceptible information where all kids can be (4) Be Independent; designed to be tolerant of error to (5) Be Safe for all kids; designed to require low sustained physical effort so all kids can (6) Be Active; and designed with the appropriate size and space for approach and use so all kids can (7) Be Comfortable.

“You always hope for things like that in your town. As special-needs parents, you have to travel to things, because they’re rare. To have something that our daughter can play in at the same time as our son, to have that interaction, is exciting.” Mike Reynolds

Comprehensive inclusive play environments are created by following these principles and thoughtfully considering the child and their strengths and ability to

which supports movement. The proprioceptive sense is a child’s sense of body positioning which supports motor planning.

## Boundless Play For Everyone



Playgrounds and recreational spaces are for everyone, not just kids! We urge everyone, parents, teenagers, aging adults, and children alike, to take advantage of opportunities to play together and improve family health and wellness!

participate in play independently and equally with their friends, siblings, and neighbors. The emphasis is not on helping the child with a disability to adjust to and accept the play environment, but rather designing the play environment to accommodate the needs and abilities of the child. Inclusive play environments are a fundamental statement about social values and a child’s right to play. These play environments encourage equality of play opportunity, full participation in play, and the independence of the child.

## SENSORY INTEGRATION

Play spaces, when properly planned and designed, can be a rich source for playful sensory experiences where children personally experience and explore their many senses. Design of play spaces should not stop at the traditional senses of sight, sound, taste, touch and smell, because comprehensive inclusive play spaces support children’s less well known proprioceptive and vestibular senses. The vestibular system contributes to balance and sense of spatial orientation,

A comprehensive inclusive play space supports the integration of all of a child’s senses that are ultimately necessary to support the developmental needs of the child, including social, cognitive, and sensory motor development. Play spaces which are universally designed to support a diversity of sensory stimuli, allow children to use their abilities to seek their needed stimuli for developmental growth.

## INTERGENERATIONAL PLAY

Intergenerational play is more than a structured formal gathering with people of multiple generations. “Productive intergenerational play, collaborative work between parent [grandparent] and child... is characterized by exchange of expertise between the parent and the child around shared intentions.” Expanding on this statement, a truly intergenerational play environment will include diversity in play complete with interaction and a playful atmosphere. It should involve “teasing, story-telling, exchanging of significant objects, as well as games.” A study in 2008, focused on play

between grandparents and their grandchildren, discovered several common themes that occur during intergenerational play. These themes included: a desire for adults to share family history with the younger generation; participation in activities that generate a sense of magic, science and fun; and a generational connection through the use of food.

## TEAM MEMBERS

- ◆ Rachel Loredo (Community Advocate)
- ◆ Kelly Gloria (Community Advocate)
- ◆ Nathan Houx (City of Modesto)
- ◆ Chad Kennedy (Westwood)
- ◆ Marlene Champlin (Campbell & Assoc.)
- ◆ Katherine Lewis (Westwood)
- ◆ Craig Harris (Harris Builders, Inc.)



Westwood





OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY SPONSORS ARE SHOWING THEIR SUPPORT!

Many local companies and groups have sponsored the project through monetary or in-kind donations. The project partners that jump-started this project are listed below in no particular order. Other sponsors and donors are listed in subsequent pages. Will you join these sponsors and support the cause?

PROJECT PARTNER SPONSORS

City of Modesto



On February 12th, 2019 The City Council approved a \$380,000 contribution of in-kind materials and services, and general fund allocations to support the project!

Stanislaus County



On January 29th, 2019 The Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors approved a \$250,000 contribution to support the project!

Full Throttle Motorcycle & Gun Shop



Full Throttle was the first sponsor for this project and is the heart and soul of the effort to bring equal play to all children in our region. The owners have spent countless hours dedicated to moving this project forward and continue to support this project as it moves through each step.

THE CENTURY EVENT & WEDDING VENUE



The Century has been a project partner from the beginning, having donated an amazing venue for public meetings, fundraisers, and the design unveiling of the project.

O'Brien's Market



In 2017 O'Brien's Market joined the "B Green" Community movement to support this project. The proceeds generated from recyclables collected at O'B Green Recycle Days (4 events per year) are matched by the O'B Green fund.

Westwood Professional Services

Westwood

To date, WEstwood has donated in-kind services to get this project started and to help keep it moving along. Some of the services provided have included Topographical survey, public outreach, graphic design, fundraising support, grant writing, conceptual playground design and complete construction drawings for permitting and building.

Harris Builders, Inc.



Harris Builders, Inc. is donating general contractor in-kind services to get construction of this project started and to help keep it moving along. Services will include contracting with the City with a memorandum of understanding, bidding, construction scheduling, and project construction oversight.

Campbell & Associates, Inc.



Campbell & Associates has been involved with the project since very early on. They have coordinated fundraising efforts, and have been key in securing private sponsorships.



Fundraiser Sponsors & Donors

Thank you to the many individuals, corporations and organizations who have so generously supported the project thus far!

MARKETING SPONSORS



FUNDRAISER SPONSORS

Bike Bands & BBQ / Trunk-or-Treat / & many more...



GoFundMe Donors

- Dan Goldstein,
- Carrie Munroe
- Sue Pedro
- Carol Solario
- Larry & Sherry Bailey
- Hunter & Cooper Boyett
- Harry Boucher
- Katy Coronado
- Jonathan Boyett
- Kirstin & Sigrid Halstead
- Kim Clark
- Mary Davis
- Trish & Aaron Heffner
- Jason & Sarah Bratton





# Celebrating Our Sponsors & Donors!

It is only because of the generosity of our sponsors and donors that this project will become not only feasible but a reality!

PLAYGROUND / AREA NAMING SPONSORS

EQUIPMENT SPONSORS

1 PLAYGROUND AVAILABLE

3 PLAY AREA OPTIONS AVAILABLE



Swamp Spinner

Chitter Chatter

Expression Swing

Motorcycle Rocker

Lion Climber

Balance Mounds

Picnic Table

Swamp Spinner

Interactive Sona

Global Motion

Handrail Sponsor

# Project Design Sponsors

Electrical Engineering



Geotechnical Engineering




Structural Engineering




# EQUIPMENT SPONSORS


Entry Gate




Weenotes Set




Liberty Swing




Disc Swing




Leaf Bench




Sensory Rainstick




Park Signs




Swamp Spinner




Picnic Table




Integrated Spinner





Sensory Grotto




Lion's Den Slide




Rainforest Art




Safari Truck




Leaf Bench




Wee Saw




Hippo Climber




Rainbow Rhino




Music Touch Sensors




Lighting Sponsor




Roller Slides




\$50,000 Sponsor




Crocodile Climber



Climbing Arches



Seagull Swing



Leaf Bench



## ADVENTURIST SPONSORS



## WILDLIFE FENCE SPONSORS



## BERG INJURY LAWYERS



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**Emily Benefield**  
**Elizabeth Green**  
**Penny Stewart**  
**Mickey & Katherine**  
**Fernandez**  
**Robert and Sally Tanaka**



**Serendipity Antique Club**  
**Todd Barton**  
**Bob's Take-N-Bake Pizza Inc.**  
**Stephen and Nan Jacobs**  
**Heather Sutton**  
**James & Kristin Baker**  
**Modesto Lions Club 500**  
**Kevin & Neda Tazelaar**  
**Violet Hardin & Stephanie Conway**  
**Bukh Arkady**



The Awesome Spot Playground team has hosted two public meetings to solicit input from the community and to gauge public support for the project.

After receiving enthusiastic approval from the City Council to design and build a new playground at Beyer Park, the Awesome Spot Playground team has been hard at work activating interest in the community. In response, **the Modesto community has shown a great deal of interest through amazing attendance at both public meetings and sponsorships** before the project even got off the ground.

The first public meeting was designed to educate the community on the value of socially inclusive play and the need for the improved play venues within the City. This was accomplished through the presentation of a self-guided tour of play, which allowed interested community members to learn about

the many facets of play at their own pace. Project team members and City staff were available to discuss, answer questions, and guide as necessary. In addition to the tour of play, the community was invited to join in a real-time interactive polling session to provide feedback on topics related to the playground theme and desired play elements.

The second meeting was held to show design progress and to gauge acceptance of the process to date. The community was overwhelmingly supportive of the direction the project is headed!

Press coverage has also been amazing as both social media and the Modesto Bee have helped spread the word about this project.

## IMPORTANT DATES!

- ◆ 11/16/16 - Design Unveiling
- ◆ 2017-21 - Fundraising & Design
- ◆ July 2022 - Ground Breaking
- ◆ Fall 2025 - Goal for Grand Opening

*Self-Guided tour of play presented at the first public meeting. (Above) Children drawing and playing with Lego's at the second public meeting held at The Century. (Below)*





# The Rainbow Rhinoceros

Fox Carlton Hughes (Tommy's Great Grandfather) was a professional artist, children's book author, and illustrator, who said, "parents can begin to promote self-confidence in their children at a very early age by encouraging them to celebrate and embrace their own uniqueness." His illustrated children's book, *Rainbow Rhino*, uses the story of an unlikely hero (a Rhinoceros named Homer) with an unusual appearance to teach kids that, **"it is often our differences that make us special"**. In *Rainbow Rhino*, kids also learn that, **"even though we all may look a little different from one another, it's really okay."** Hughes, further emphasized, "Children need to be reminded that how we look on the outside does not define who we really are on the inside".



Mr. Hughes' vision continues to this day as Homer (a life size statue) has been chosen to be the greeter at the Awesome Spot Playground.



## Developing the Awesome Spot

The Awesome Spot playground was designed around a nature theme transporting children into a rain forest, swamp, and savanna where creativity alone limits the fun.



The existing project site has earth mounds that will aid in the building of the new playground. (Above) The proposed entry to this destination playground will be on the Northeast side of Beyer Park and will be redesigned with accessible parking and a fun new look! (Right)

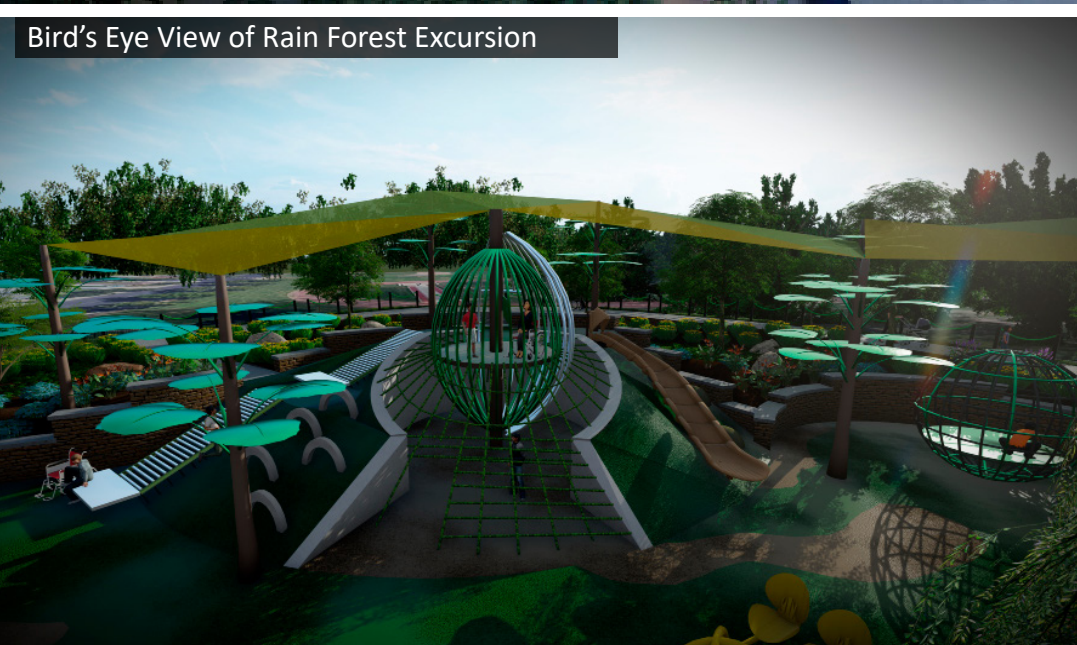




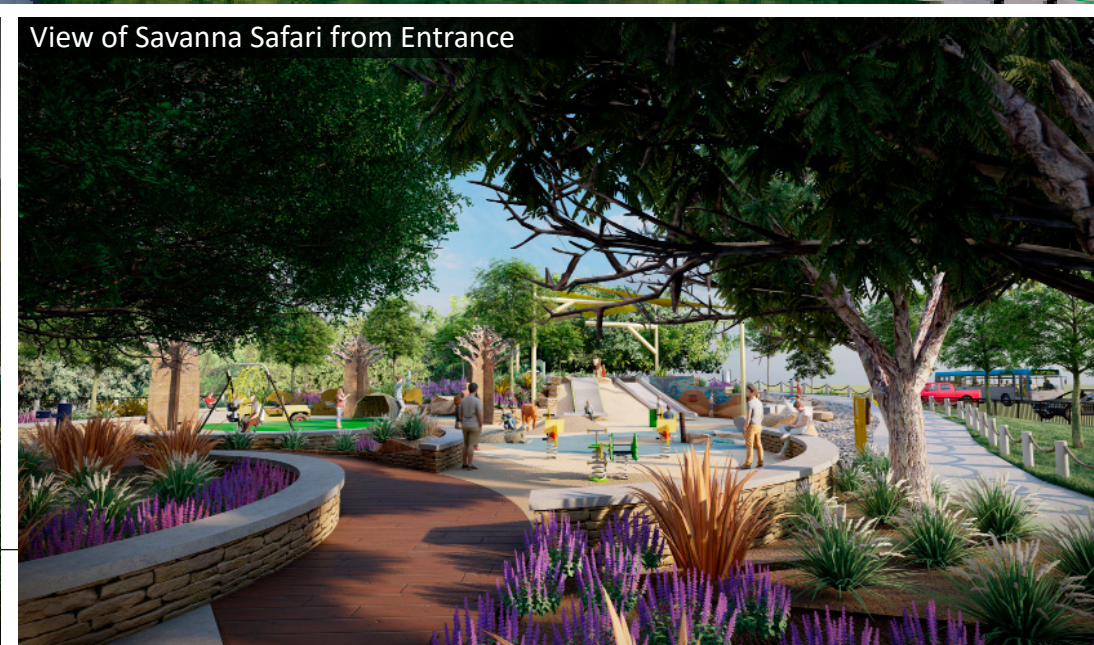


# Developing the Awesome Spot

These graphics depict the conceptual intention for what the playground will become and what features will be included.



Bird's Eye View of Rain Forest Excursion



View of Savanna Safari from Entrance



View of Swamp Cruise from the Picnic Area





# Awesome Spot Playground Theme

The local community chose a nature theme which has been implemented through a rain forest, savanna, and swamp inspired design. Below are some ways that you can support this fun project!

## PLAYGROUND NAME SPONSOR \$500,000

This sponsorship is the most prestigious sponsorship for the project. As the main sponsor for the project, the following will be provided:

- Recognition on website
- Dedicated posting on active social media sites
- Recognition on Awesome Board
- Naming Option for the Playground\*
- New playground name will be referenced at all public presentations, as well as in all project marketing related materials (both *printed and digital format*).

\* Though the name for the playground will remain "The Awesome Spot", the sponsor will be given the option to add a name of their choice to the playground title which will be located at the playground entrance. (The name will be subject to approval by City and project staff.)

## RAIN FOREST EXCURSION SPONSOR \$250,000 (2 available)

This sponsorship is for the largest and most visible area, the 5-12 year old area within the playground. This area includes the "Mother Tree", perch, aviary, and other unique rain forest play features. It is a focal spot upon entry into the playground and includes opportunities for all types of play. As a sponsor for this area, the following will be provided:

- Recognition on website
- Dedicated posting on active social media sites
- Recognition on Awesome Board
- Prominent recognition within the rain forest playground area

## SAVANNA SAFARI SPONSOR \$200,000 (2 available)

This sponsorship is for the second largest and highly visible area, the 2-5 year old area within the playground. This area includes pride rock, the lion's den slide, a unique safari experience, and other play features. It includes opportunities for all types of early childhood play. As a sponsor for this area, the following will be provided:

- Recognition on website
- Dedicated posting on active social media sites
- Recognition on Awesome Board
- Prominent recognition within the savanna safari playground area

## SWAMP CRUISE SPONSOR \$150,000 (2 available)

This sponsorship is for the third and final themed playground area. This area includes the picnic area, an interactive air boat, spinners, and a crocodile climber. This play area acts as a highly inclusive transition between the 2-5 and 5-12 year old play areas. As a sponsor for this area, the following will be provided:

- Recognition on website
- Dedicated posting on active social media sites
- Recognition on Awesome Board
- Prominent recognition within the swamp cruise playground area

## PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT SPONSOR \$5,000-\$130,000

Sponsors have the option of purchasing specific pieces of equipment to be installed in the playground. See the following pages for purchase options. As a sponsor for equipment the following will be provided for their support:

- Recognition on website
- Dedicated posting on active social media sites
- Recognition on Awesome Board
- Recognition on or near equipment (*Final placement and design of equipment will be determined by the design team and City staff.*)

## CONSERVATIONIST, ADVENTURIST & RANGER SPONSORS \$5,000-\$20,000

Sponsors will receive the following:

- Recognition on website
- Social media posts
- Recognition on Awesome Board (Priority location and sizes based on sponsor level)

## AWESOME SPONSOR \$1,000

Sponsors will receive the following:

- Recognition on website
- Recognition on Awesome Board

## WILDLIFE FENCE SPONSOR \$500

Sponsors will receive the following:

- Sponsor's name on a fence gap insert at the playground entry.

## RAINBOW SPONSOR \$250

Sponsors will receive the following:

- Recognition on website

## Sponsorship Opportunities

- \$500,000 - Playground Name Sponsor
- \$250,000 - Rain Forest Explorer Sponsor
- \$200,000 - Savanna Safari Sponsor
- \$150,000 - Swamp Cruise Sponsor
- \$5K-130K - Playground Equipment Sponsor
- \$20,000 - Conservationist Sponsor
- \$12,000 - Adventurist Sponsor
- \$5,000 - Ranger Sponsor
- \$1,000 - Awesome Sponsor
- \$500 - Wildlife Fence Sponsor
- \$250 - Rainbow Sponsor

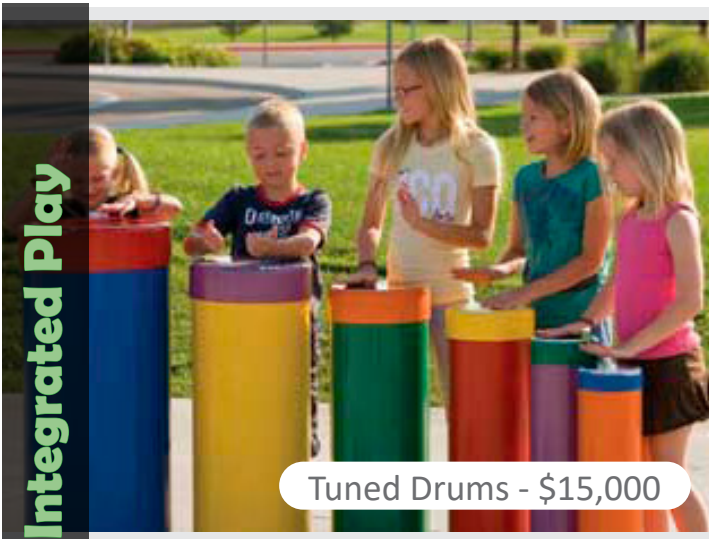
For an online donorship opportunity please visit the website at <http://www.theawesomespotplayground.com/donate-now.html>

See below for sponsorship level details and benefits



# Options for Supporting the Cause

Specific play features available for sponsors to purchase



Tuned Drums - \$15,000



Weenotes Set - \$10,000



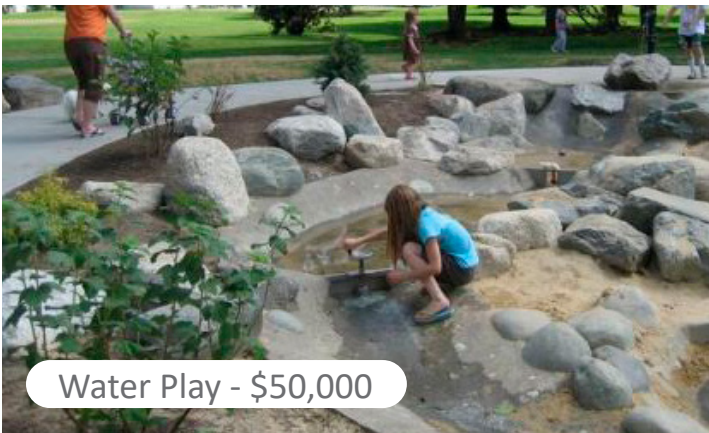
Rainstick - \$5,000



Chitter Chatters - \$5,000



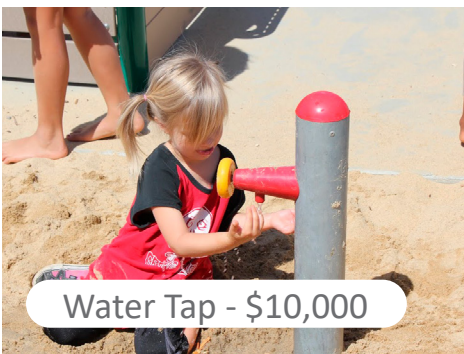
Music/Touch Sensors - \$50,000



Water Play - \$50,000



Sway Fun Boat - \$40,000



Water Tap - \$10,000



Sensory Grotto - \$20,000



Rockers ( 2 available) - \$10,000 each

Auditory Integrated Play



Cozy Hut - \$40,000

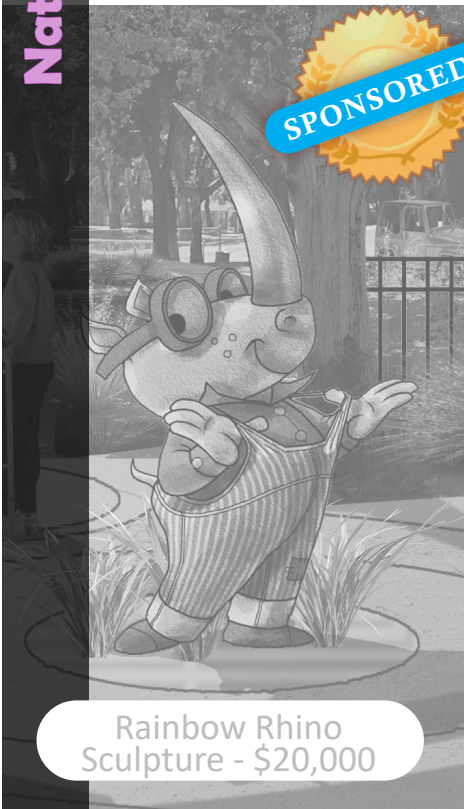


Safari Truck - \$50,000



Lion's Den Slide - \$20,000

Nature Themed Play



Rainbow Rhino Sculpture - \$20,000



Rain Forest Tree Art - \$25,000



Lion Climbers \$20,000



Steel Safari Views - \$10,000



Hippo Climber - \$20,000



Croc. Climber - \$25,000



Interactive Sona - \$30,000



Baobab Tree Art (3 available) - \$15,000 each

## Play Element Purposes

### AUDITORY & SENSORY INTEGRATED PLAY

Sensory integrated play was carefully programmed to provide options for self-regulated sensory input. Designed and selected play items address the primary five senses through various musical/auditory instruments, varied and distinct textures and colors, and interesting combinations of motion and cause and effect activities. All these items expose children to opportunities for sensory input at intervals that they themselves control and determine.

### NATURE THEMED PLAY

Dramatic play is a key component to developmental play. As nature is a completely versatile medium to accomplish dramatic play, it is fitting that it is the theme for this imagination rich playground. Through a variety of nature themed elements and land forms, children can transform their play environment into any geographic location, time period, or fairytale.



# Options for Supporting the Cause

Specific play features available for sponsors to purchase

Spinning and Balance Play



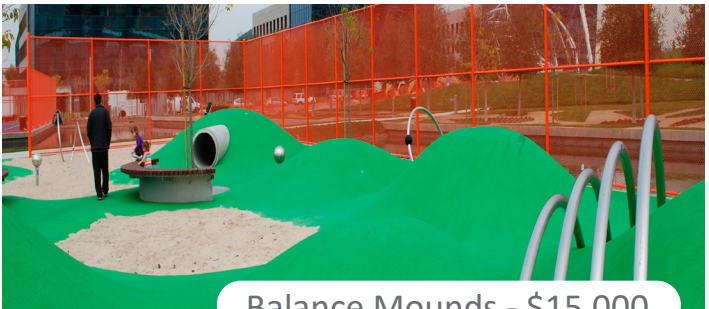
SPONSORED!

Swamp Spinners (3 Sponsors) - \$3,500 each



SPONSORED!

Integrated Spinner - \$65,000




Balance Mounds - \$15,000



SPONSORED!

Wee Saw - \$15,000



SPONSORED!

Liberty Swing - \$30,000



SPONSORED!

Expression Swing - \$10,000



SPONSORED!

Disc Swing - \$12,000



SPONSORED!

Seagull Swing - \$20,000



SPONSORED!

Global Motion - \$25,000

Swinging and Rocking Play



Roller Slides - \$50,000

SPONSORED!



SPONSORED!

Leaf Bench (4 sponsors) - \$6,000 each



SPONSORED!

Picnic Tables (4 sponsors) - \$6,000 each



Shade Sails (2 available) - \$60,000 each



Shade Sails (2 available) - \$60,000 each

Slides, Climbers and More...



SPONSORED!

Entry Gate - \$50,000



Slides (3 available) - \$25,000 each



SPONSORED!

Signs (4 sponsors) - \$5,000 each



SPONSORED!

Climbing Arches - \$25,000

## Play Element Purposes

### SPINNING, BALANCE, SWINGING AND ROCKING PLAY

In addition to the five standard senses (touch, taste, sight, sound, and smell) the lesser known proprioceptive, vestibular, and interoceptive senses were key in determining what elements are included in the design. These senses are primarily tied to balance, pressure and sense of location. Children need to engage in activities that test the boundaries of these senses through dizziness and spinning, navigating up, over and around things, social swinging, and rocking up and down, jumping, and bumping into things.

### SLIDES, CLIMBERS & MORE

Many of the other play features selected and designed for the project were chosen for purposes of promoting social interaction, regulating body temperature, simplifying movement within and around the playground, and to meet basic needs such as digestion, thirst, hunger, and rest.

Other play equipment is also available for purchase. Contact a project member for additional info.

The sponsor's name and business (if applicable) will be permanently and prominently displayed as a thank you for their generosity in supporting the project and socially inclusive play.





# Our Local Children Thank You for Supporting Equal Play in Modesto!

Socially Inclusive play spaces are a fundamental statement about social values and children’s right to play. We love our dedicated sponsors who do so much!



Slides, Climbers and More...

Water Fountain - \$15,000



Family Restrooms - \$400,000



Aviary & Sensory Perch - \$150,000



## Sponsorship Form

Enclosed is my gift to support socially inclusive and developmentally appropriate play by helping to build:

### The Awesome Spot Playground at Beyer Community Park

This donation is tax deductible, as available by law. Administration of the project is through a 501c3 and the City of Modesto. Please complete, detach this form, and send to the address on the back side:

Sponsor Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Donation Level:**  
☐ \$500K - Playground Name Sponsor  
☐ \$250K- Rain Forest Explorer Sponsor  
☐ \$200K- Savanna Safari Sponsor  
☐ \$150K- Swamp Cruise Sponsor  
☐ \$5-\$130K - Multiple Sponsor Levels  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ / Play Item \_\_\_\_\_  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ / Sponsor Level \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ \$1K - Awesome Sponsor  
☐ \$500 - Wildlife Fence Donor  
☐ \$250 - Rainbow Sponsor  
☐ \$ Other

**Payment Info:**  
☐ Check (Payable to “VMRC - The Awesome Spot Playground”)  
☐ Credit Card  
\_\_ Visa \_\_ MC \_\_ Discover \_\_ AMEX  
Card #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Exp Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ CSC #: \_\_\_\_\_  
CardHolderName: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Other:

**Sponsor Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_





The Awesome Spot Playground  
[info@theawesomespotplayground.com/](mailto:info@theawesomespotplayground.com/)  
<http://www.theawesomespotplayground.com/>

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