Place It: Engaging the Public through Art-Making and Play
Place It Workshop: Don’t Ask, Imagine!

- Stimulate Innovation
- Deeper Engagement
- Trust
- Action
Theory:  
Everybody is a Planner

• Lived Experiences
• Remove Barriers
• Equalize Participation
Method:
Art Making as a Planning Tool

- Imagine
- Investigate
- Construct
- Reflect

Art Making Transforms Lives
Venue: Play

- Inquiry
- Experimentation
- Collaboration
- Fun
No Abstract Tools

- No Maps
- No Numbers
- No Words
- No PowerPoint's
- No dots or post-it-notes
- No Selfies
Task 1: Set Up
Task 2: Ask a simple question?

- EXAMPLES
  - Build your favorite childhood memory
  - Build your ideal Park
Task 3. Build

Self-Reflection
  • Inquiry
  • Memories/Experiences
  • Imagination

Details that matter
Task 3. What do you like to do in the City?
Task 3. Build your favorite Childhood Memory
One-Minute Presentation
A childhood memory: Grandmother’s House in Puerto Rico
Breaking down barriers
Mother and Daughters bonding through planning
Bonding through story telling
Problem Solving
Validation

• Where we come from
• Who we are
• What we value
Workshop Topics:

Step One: 
Individual Activity
• Icebreaker
• Reflection
• Empathy
• Validation

• 15-30 minutes

Step Two: 
Group Activity
• Collaboration
• Consensus building
• Idea Generation

• 20-35 minutes
Step Two: Collaboration

Detroit improving access
COLLABORATION: STRONGER TOGETHER

• Diversity of Experiences
• Different Talents
• Different Perspectives
NEGOTIATION:
Working for a common goal

• Different Needs
• Scarce Resources
• Understanding how our ideas impact others!
Step Two: Group Activity Challenges

Tangible

• Mobility
• Urban design
• Bike
• Pedestrian

Fuzzy

• Health
• Economic Development
• Social Equity
• Sustainability
1-2 minute team presentations
Woman transforming Pershing Square
Document: Pictures, Notes, Video
Visioning Communities through Interactive Models
Plaza Latina Market

DISEÑA SU PARQUE IDEAL

DESIGN YOUR IDEAL PARK
The Importance of “Informality”
Rethinking — And Relaxing — Park Regulations Can Make Parks More Accessible and Inclusive

In May of 2015, University of Oregon students, the Latino Civic Participation Project, and James Rojas conducted public participation workshops at Latino Family Fun Night in Bethel, Festival Latino in Springfield, Plaza Latina Supermarket in Eugene, and at several educational programs for Latinos.

We talked to more than 350 people about what they like about the city’s parks and community centers, and what they would change. This is what we found:

Many people expressed a desire for:

- Safety and Security
  - Some people said there should be more public safety officers in parks and public spaces.
  - Others expressed a desire for more enforcement of nuisance regulations, such as prohibitions on smoking and unleashed dogs.
  - Several workshop participants said they would feel more comfortable using parks at night if they were more well-lit.

Issue of safety and security should involve:

- Community Participation
  - Community policing models can be a good alternative for creating a sense of safety and security in parks.
  - Latino participants pointed to Petersen Barn as a positive example of a community center where they felt welcomed.

Workshop participants described:

- Uncertainty About Park Rules
  - Many people had questions about how to reserve park facilities and what kinds of activities are permitted.
  - When asked about Eugene’s community centers, many participants were unaware of their location or unsure about what they could be used for.
  - Conflicts around park rules and regulations contribute to a sense of not feeling welcomed.

The Parks and Recreation Departments could satisfy:

- Relax Regulations and Permits
  - Make it easier to use picnic pavilions and community centers for family parties and celebrations.
  - Ensure that existing regulations are easily accessible to all community members (and that they’re available in both Spanish and English).

Informal Communal Events

- Create more opportunities for informal communal activities, such as “pick up” soccer, or for public performances of music, dancing, and theater.
- One workshop participant described the presence of food trucks in her ideal park. The city could help to create a more festive park environment by making it easier for vendors to operate.

"I used to play with a Latino team in a soccer league, but that just got too expensive."

-- A participant in the Festival Latino Workshop, 5/30/15
Mexico: Planning in the Rancho
San Francisco: Reimage
Columbus Avenue
Application: Creating a Park in Tijuana
Reimagine a Chicago Parking lot
Twister or urban planning? The LA River
Using the body as a planning tool
Use found objects to show us your design! Then stroll the gallery, built with your ideas!

Recreate a childhood memory in an outdoor public space. OR What does the complete street of the future look like?

ALSO: Check out the protected bike lane, digital engagement tools and more!

PLACE/MATTERS

PLACE IT! INTERACTIVE PLANNING
Next Steps: Moving Forward

• Educate Participants
• Inspire Participation
• Increase Planning Capacity
• Collect data
• Kick off to Long Term Engagement
Synthesis:
What do the actions represent?

• Interpreting what was Built/Said
• Creating values not a list
• Learning from the community!
Similar Approaches:

• Participatory Planning
• Public Interest Design
• Human Center Design
• Social Practice Art
Client List Includes: Non-Profits, Art, Education and Municipalities

Urban Planning Agencies
Parks and Recreation
Transportation
Health Departments
Youth Groups
Latino Organizations
Elected Officials
Museums
Art Galleries
Festivals
400 Workshops
75 Interactive Models
6,000 participants

JAMESTROJAS@GMAIL.COM
WWW.PLACEIT.ORG
Imagination Creates and Takes Power