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?

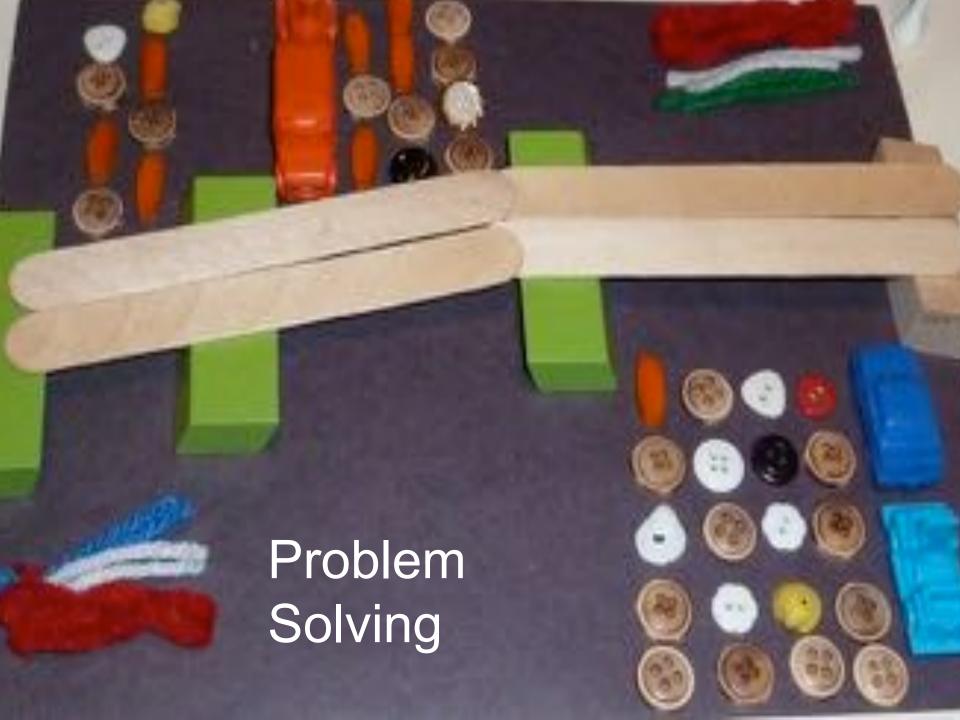**Task 3. Build your favorite Childhood Memory**

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   **Fuzzy**

- Mobility
- Urban design
- Bike
- Pedestrian

- Health
- Economic Development
- Social Equity
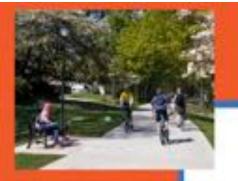- Sustainability

1-2 minute team presentations

CONCORD: Vision Zero

Woman transforming Pershing Square

Document: Pictures, Notes, Video

Visioning Communities through Interactive Models

Plaza Latina Market

The Importance of "Informality"

*Rethinking —And Relaxing—Park Regulations
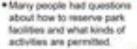Can Make Parks More Accessible and Inclusive*

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.
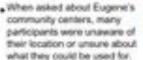
We talked to more than 350 people about what they like about the city's parks and community centers, and what they would change. *This is what we found:*
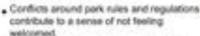
What Is An Informal Park?

For many people, the word "informal" means "jeans and a t-shirt." But informality can also mean relaxing official rules and regulations. Informal parks can help build a sense of community empowerment and create opportunities for imaginative use of public space. Some examples:

• **Regulations:** Ceding control over things like party permits to members of the community can lead to more spontaneous communal events.

• **Sports:** Some organizers, like the informal multicultural soccer club recently featured in *Eugene Weekly*, are helping people play sports without paying to join a league.

• **Vendors:** Cities like Medford have eased permitting requirements for street vendors. Other cities have created special "vendor zones" in parks.

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.

Issues 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.
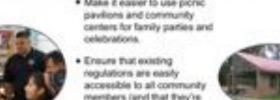
Workshop participants described:
Uncertainty About Park Rules

• 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 safely:
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).

By relaxing regulations, parks can also facilitate:
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

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

Mexico: Planning in the Rancho

San Francisco: Reimage Columbus Avenue

Application:
Creating a Park in Tijuana

ELA Station Area Planning

Reimagine a Chicago Parking lot

Twister or urban planning? The LA River

Using the body as a planning tool

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