Welcome to our presentation on redesigning Waterloo Park for Children. I’m Megan, I’m Andrea, and I’m Patricia. We hope you enjoy our presentation.
Our goals for these three areas is to create a place where children can take control of their own play space, while also providing them with an environment that offers opportunities to promote language development that is suitable for many diverse backgrounds. Further we hope to create a place that encourages children to partake in many different forms of play that will allow them to create many memorable experiences.

Picture Links:
The first area of the park that we will be focusing on today is the Eby farmstead area.
To make the area cohesive and engaging for children, we have decided to go with a theme that centers around the integration of a farmer’s life and the growing city. This theme promotes the idea of pretend play within children as they are able to take objects and events they already know and use their imagination to create a story of their own. Some benefits of pretend play for the ages of 1 to 3 years old include increased cooperation and collaboration, introduction to sharing and negotiation as well as the development of creativity, emotional regulation and social skills (Gray, 2011).

**Photo Links:**
Here we have a diagram showing where all of the new features will be placed. As seen, we plan to separate the center circle into three main areas and have the former pig statue area transformed into a farmer’s Market area. We also proposed to create a new proposed pathway to connect center circle to Farmer’s Market.

Image taken from google earth Edited by Patricia Colaco
For now, we will focus on the center circle. At the moment, the Eby Farmstead pathways are very limited and bare, making it very hard for children to explore the park and express themselves. We have decided to restructure the pathways by expanding the diameter of the center circle to create a larger space for features that contribute to pretend play. The circle will also be divided into three main play areas by small pathways which allows easy access to all elements of the park. To fit in with our theme, the pathways will be painted to imitate a road design which will also contribute to a clear flow and encouragement of movement throughout the Eby Farmstead area (Wortham & Wortham, 1989). Additionally, there will be miniature stop signs located within the circle and some seating areas within one of the smallest sections to make the area safer and more comfortable for the children.

**Picture Links:**

**Sidewalk Road Design:**
Within the largest section the center circle, we will feature a small barn house which will include several windows as well as interactive images to promote pretend play. These images will serve as a modeling and repetition topic between a caregiver and child where adults can state what the meaningful images are and ask the children to repeat, stimulating a conversation (Wing et al., 2007). We have decided to move two of the pig statues to this area and place them within a pig pen that surrounds the structure to emphasize the theme.

**Picture Link:**

**Farmhouse:**

Within a smaller section of the center circle, we will also add a playhouse to tie in the growing city theme. This playhouse will feature an interactive door and window which will help encourage pretend play and cooperation. Some examples of pretend play that children may engage in is playing house and adopting familial roles as well as closing and opening of doors and windows. Before the age of 2, children may develop interest in their peers and want to stay close to them but will not engage in social and pretend play (Wortham & Wortham, 1989). Therefore, the manipulable features, such as the doors and windows of the playhouse, are enjoyable for younger toddlers.

**Picture Links:**

We have also created a diagram to help show the area in more detail. This just helps with demonstrating where each feature will be placed.

Photo taken and Edited By: Patricia Colaco

Photo Links:
Stop Sign: https://static.turbosquid.com/Preview/001157/340/KX/stop-sign-3D-model_600.jpg

Playhouse: https://images.costco-static.com/ImageDelivery/imageService?profileId=12026540&imageId=100692014-847_1&recipeName=350

Farmhouse: https://whatshed.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/6-x-6-Windsor-Dutch-Barn-Playhouse-Painted.jpg
Moving on from the center circle, we will quickly focus on connecting the areas of the park. In our redesign, we have included a series of pathways that are branching off the current paved way that will promote cohesion of the areas. The first pathway will connect the farmer’s market section to the center circle, and it will be painted as a pedestrian walkway to help tie in with the theme. We also plan to add smaller, curved steppingstones between the toddler’s playground and main pathway to encourage exploration and movement. Having less direct routes, and secondary paths encourages children to explore and navigate throughout the area. (Natural Learning Initiative, 2012).

**Picture Links:**

**Picture Taken and Edited By:** Patricia Colaco  
**Stepping Stones:**  
https://i.pinimg.com/originals/9f/00/78/9f0078dfdc135308e9d0c0bbb83bec43.jpg
The final area of Eby Farmstead will be the Farmer’s Market area. It will feature two market stands with empty shelves and several small wooden crates scattered around the area. This will allow children to take advantage of the space by collecting objects and filling the shelves and crates to their desire. We also propose to add a small moving truck with an empty loading back. Again, this will allow the children to fill it with small objects and climb into the driver’s seat to engage in pretend play. By presenting this set-up, we hope to provide children with a sort of “stage” where they can engage in pretend play and say things they have heard in familiar settings. Often it is not just the parents talking to the children that will help stimulate their growth but the actual act of taking conversational turns (Gómez, & Strasser, 2021).

Picture Links:
Truck:
https://www.google.com/search?q=kids+semi+truck+ride+on&tbm=isch&ved=2ahUKEwiH6daf2LbzAhU_g3IEHWkHC6oQ2-cCegQlABAA&oq=kids+semi+truck+&gs_lcp=CgNpbWcQARgBMgUIABCABDIFCAAAQgAQQBAgAEB4yBggAEAgQHjIGCAAQCBAeOgQIABBDoOggIABCABBxAzolCAAQsQMQgwE6BwgAELEDEENQwMgCWMyCA2CzlwNoA3AAeACAAYUCiAHvEJJBjguMTAuMZgBAK
Produce Stand Picture:
https://www.google.com/search?q=kids+produce+stand&tbm=isch&ved=2ahUKEwjFkZ_a17bzAhXgqHIEHZXsDP8Q2-cCegQIABAA&oq=kids+produce+&gs_lcp=CgNpbWcQARgAMgUIABCABDfICAAQCBAeOggIABCABBCxAzolCAAQsQMQgwE6BAgAEEM6BwgAELEDEEM6BggAEAUQHIChvghYItAIYIHeCGgAcAB4AIABtwGIaQLkgEDNi43mAEAsAEggELZ3dLXdpei1pbWfAAQES&sclient=img&ei=MA9eYcW5JuDRytfmpldmz-A8&bih=615&biw=1349&client=firefox-b-d&hl=en#imgrc=MaSvh4W5pD8DM - produce stand picture

Farmer’s Market Sign:
https://www.google.com/search?q=farmers+market+sign&tbm=isch&chips=q:farmers+market+sign,g_1:clipart:mfHQK81TpE8%3D&client=firefox-b-d&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjf7dzU17bzAhWlr3IEHZPZBWwQ4IYoAHoECAEQEA&biw=1349&bih=615#imgrc=LhRDeboKf-upjM - farmer's market sign picture

Child-sized patio: https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/497084877621339219/ - child sized patio set
This is a more in-depth diagram that shows all of the features and their placement of the farmer’s market area.

**Photo Taken and Edited:** Patricia Colaco

**Picture Links**
Farmers Market [https://st.hzcdn.com/simgs/4d51e1830c5df2b8_4-6025/home-design.jpg](https://st.hzcdn.com/simgs/4d51e1830c5df2b8_4-6025/home-design.jpg)


Crate of apples: https://thumbs.dreamstime.com/b/red-apples-wooden-crate-d-illustration-40950164.jpg

Barrel: https://alacraterentals.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/ALaCrate-Rentals-Whiskey-Barrel-Rustic-Cocktail-Table-Wisconsin-WEB-600x600.jpg

Bench: https://hw.menardc.com/main/items/media/MWTRU012/ProductLarge/2722110.jpg
Now, we are going to move on the next section of the park, the farmhouse swings.

Photo taken by: Patricia Colaco
When looking at the Farmhouse Swings area, we can see that it consists of a slope, surrounded by an abundance of trees. Therefore, to allude to a woodland forest we decided to include various paths where children can explore and develop their conversations by not only perceiving but also taking part in an adventure. By creating numerous paths, we are giving the children the ability to choose their preferred route while still providing safer and easier access for their accompanying parents.

**Picture Links:**
https://images.unsplash.com/photo-1592859600972-1b0834d83747?ixlib=rb-1.2.1&ixid=MnwxMjA3fDB8MHxzZWFyY2h8Mnx8Mnx8Zm9yZXN0JTlwcmFucyJ9fQ%3D%3D&ixid=MnwxMjA3fDB8MHxzZWFyY2h8Mnx8Mnx8Zm9yZXN0JTlwcmFucyJ9fQ%3D%3D&w=1000&q=80
In the picture in the slide, we have the park overview. As you can see, we will be focusing our attention on the hill region below the actual swing area. In this park overview, we can see the paved way, rope bridge, mulch stairs, slide, climbing adventure, bike rack and family/picnic area from left to right, each section with a designated number.

*Picture Taken and edited by: Patricia Colaco*
In the first section, we plan to have a paved path on the left bordered with hollow logs and trunk steps. It will curve up the hill in a figure-eight whilst curating an adventure where children can climb, jump, or crawl their way up, while caregivers with strollers or younger kids can follow along.

At a young age, children are beginning to become more interested in animals and through this adventurous path that is decorated with figures and images of animals, children will learn more about the natural world (Strommen, 1995; Patrick & Tunnicliffe, 2011).

The animals will be depicted interacting with the path by sitting on a log or digging beside it, while others will rest in their dens showcasing their actual homes. The goal is to create an area that promotes talk by making an interactive forest narrative that will facilitate conversation between caregivers and children as they explore together.

For children in strollers, the pavement will have the story of the tortoise and the hare painted along it and an interactive board at the start. This story will be told using pictures with only key words, for the parents. Therefore, this paved path will provide a universal narrative that will help facilitate storytelling and abstract language skills.
(Tompkins et al., 2013).

**Picture Links:**
- **Tortoise and the Hare:** [https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Aesops-Fables-The-Tortoise-and-the-Hare-Clip-Art-Set-3212903](https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Aesops-Fables-The-Tortoise-and-the-Hare-Clip-Art-Set-3212903)
- **Tree Stumps:** [https://www.ecoparent.ca/eco-parenting/why-natural-playgrounds-are-better-structured-playgrounds](https://www.ecoparent.ca/eco-parenting/why-natural-playgrounds-are-better-structured-playgrounds)
- **Hollow Trunk:** [https://www.pwap.com/playgrounds/nature/4-6-hollow-logs](https://www.pwap.com/playgrounds/nature/4-6-hollow-logs)
Adjacent to the paved way, we intend to add a rope bridge which offers children the opportunity to develop their motor skills and increase interaction with caregivers. Additionally, children can play with peers by climbing the rope bridge side by side and discover different exploration opportunities that could cater to varying level of difficulty, interests, challenges, and stimulations (Little, & Eager, 2010). Considering the rope bridge is designed to be a more challenging structure for children, they may require more guidance from caregivers, allowing for natural conversation to occur while their caregivers walk alongside them through the mulch stairs.

**Picture References:**

Rope Bridge:
https://i.pinimg.com/736x/2a/0f/89/2a0f89591f7e45d079f06e2b92a71659.jpg
(original photo link; edited by Patricia Colaco)
Next, we will discuss the mulch stairs that is located between the rope bridge and the slide. This area provides children an easy access point to run to the top of the hill to get on the slide. The mulch also gives parents and caregivers an opportunity to watch their children as they climb up the rope bridge, and potentially facilitate some conversation.

**Picture Links:**

Mulch stairs:
https://i.pinimg.com/736x/50/2a/bb/502abbcaa4b3c9cb91e0ed7e94da4563--landscaping-a-hill-natural-landscaping.jpg
(4) Slide

- Slide located in between the mulch stairs and climbing adventure
- Tadpole to frog evolution theme
- Gradient slide colour from blue to green to add to the frog cycle
  - Going from water to earth
- Keeps the kids moving and also questioning about this frog cycle

The slide acts as an active play zone, where children can engage in running and sliding. In terms of child development, slides can aid in the development of balance, strength and flexibility, spatial awareness, coordination and even the development of social skills (Stanfel, 2018; Wilson, 2007). Children can run up the hill through the mulch stairs and slide down, while learning about the cycle of the frog (Wilson, 2007). On the right side (as you can see here [using pointer]), we will have a long billboard that follows the curves of the slide, where children can view as they slide down the blue to green gradient, which depicts the transition from water to land. It tells the story of the frog cycle from an egg to a tadpole and finally an adult frog. We hope that this biological narrative will be universal for caregivers and their children to discuss.

**Picture Links:**

**Slide 1:**
https://i.pinimg.com/originals/aa/20/52/aa2052c6f1f87896379cfb3c0cca86fa.jpg

**Slide 2:**
https://cdn02.plentymarkets.com/2f9pfxypna0o/item/images/1866/full/rutsche-gruen.jpg


Photos edited by: Patricia Colaco
The last pathway of the Farmhouse Swings design is known as the climbing adventure area. This section will consist of wooden trunks of varying sizes that will begin adjacent to the bottom of the slide and move upwards ending at the top of the hill. Midway, a tunnel bridge structure will be located to encourage pretend play, such as, acting as an explorer (Wilson, 2007). Sand will be allocated both within and surrounding the tunnel bridge as it is soft material that ensures the safety of the children.

**Picture Links:**


**Tree Trunk Staircase:** https://i.pinimg.com/474x/96/a4/8c/96a48cb0da19423f69e03cf25c7fcf9c-natural-playgrounds.jpg
Picnic areas will be at both the top and bottom of the hill which will provide places for families to enjoy a meal, where parents can watch and interact with their children as they explore. These picnic areas will provide spaces for snacks/meals, and in doing so, will provide opportunities for families to sit and engage in extended talk. We also intend to include bike racks and areas for parents to park their strollers.

Picture Links:

**Stroller:** [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stroller_parking.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stroller_parking.jpg)
**Picnic Table:** [https://www.dansoutdoorfurniture.com/7-Master-Picnic-Table-with-Seats-p/m84pt.htm](https://www.dansoutdoorfurniture.com/7-Master-Picnic-Table-with-Seats-p/m84pt.htm)
Here is a recap of the different proposed area for the hill below the farmhouse swings.

Photo Taken and Edited by: Patricia Colaco
Photo taken by: Daniela O’Neill
Our theme, or rather focus for this area is nature and how we can tie our ideas into the surrounding land. Our hope is that through our ideas of action and educational signs we can draw attention to the world around them, without impacting or disturbing it. Which is also why our idea on how to connect Victoria Garden to the Playground will do it in a way that is still in line with our theme of nature and will not take away from the surrounding area.

In order to connect the playground with the garden, our idea is to have wooden stepping stones placed along the ground to form a path. On these stepping will be the alphabet interspersed with pictures. The pictures will be of simple things that begin with the letter they follow as well as being things that are commonly found in a garden. Examples of this would be "B" for butterfly, "L" for ladybug, "S" for sunflower. The age range this area is aimed at covers an age where children are at various stages of learning when it comes to reading. As such this path will be aimed at the younger ones in that group that are still working on their letters and recognizing how they fit into words (I.e. butterfly starts with a "b").

Picture links:
Butterfly: [https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/666392076082825427/](https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/666392076082825427/)
Within the circle of the Victorian Gardens, the pathways are currently bare and have limited interactive aspects for children and their caregivers. The garden currently has a "look but don't touch" feel that does not really make it very fun for young children. To make the area more welcoming and to help children be aware of their surroundings as well as provide aids for their language development, we will be adding several signs to decorate these pathways. These signs will be deemed as “sign-mon says” signs or more simply put, action signs. To demonstrate they are an action sign, they will be colored green. On the signs, there will be an action word like “hop” coupled with an image that will help represent the word. For example, in the picture above, the sign says, “Hop like a bunny,” with a bunny hopping. The language used will be simple enough for young children to read and will hopefully create a fun way for them to learn new words and animals. Consequently, we believe that this is a noninvasive way to introduce conversations between children and their caregivers without disturbing the actual garden, while still allowing them to enjoy their surrounding environment.

Picture Links:
Bunny: https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=http%3A%2F%2Fclipart-
Sign:
We also want to encourage children to explore and observe the surrounding wildlife. At a young age, many children are beginning to learn about the different organisms such as plants and animals. In school, many early grade-schoolers are also beginning to learn about their environments, the basic needs of living things and the interactions between nature (Ontario Education, 2006). They begin to investigate and evaluate the differences between plants and animals by observing the physical characteristics (Ontario Education, 2006).

In the garden, we intend to add blue-coloured signs that would be dispersed around the outside of the garden. These signs will contain information about the different flowers that can be found in the garden and some general facts about nature. For the signs containing the different flowers, we intended to have short dialogues and a picture of the characteristics of the flowers. Beside each flower, there would dialogues such as "Hi my name is [Common name for flower]. Please come and find me. I like to hang out during [months of bloom]" On each sign, there will be a number of flowers, so that each sign has at least one flower in season.

Through these signs, we hope to help children to identify some of the common flowers within the garden by encouraging them to observe the different basic features of plants. We hope that we can facilitate in their learning about how these plants may interact with other organisms such as bees. For example, bright flowers
attract the bees, the bees collect pollen and distributes the pollen, allowing for our environment to flourish.

Picture Links:

**Flower 1:** https://i0.wp.com/www.habicurious.com/wp-content/uploads/RoundaboutFlowers-1.jpg?resize=960%2C576&ssl=1

**Bumblebee:** [https://www.bigrivermagazine.com/br.graphics/Rusty-patched-2.jpg](https://www.bigrivermagazine.com/br.graphics/Rusty-patched-2.jpg)

**Within the Edited Sign:**
**Canadian Golden Rod:**
https://www.wnps.org/components/com_rsdirectory/files/cache/800x800/2315ab9d21aacf826763fce40805a205.jpg

**New England Asters:**
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/bd/Symphyotrichum_novae-angliae3.jpg


**Sign:** https://panniergraphics.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/18449391_1492828310762314_3737941975170331017_0-1.jpg
Sign Locations

- Green dots depict the “sign-mon” says signs
- Blue dots depict the educational signs

This is just a rough idea on where the signs could be placed. With the green dot representing the actions signs and the blue ones the educational signs.

Image taken from Google Earth. Edited by Andrea Cretu.
Thank you for Watching!

Image Link:
https://www.engagewr.ca/survivor-garden
References

- Ontario Education. (2006). The Ontario Curriculum Grades 1 to 8 Language (Grade 1) [Program of studies]. http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/oeap/curriculum/elementary/grade1.html