



# WE GOT THE BEET

“The sugar beet symbolizes a rich component of the Fort Collins story and will really resonate in this park located in the historic heart of the sugar beet industry. It was important to us to reference the past in a unique, fun way for the community to enjoy.”

- Craig Kisling

This climbing structure was not just purchased off the shelf at the local playground equipment store—its unique form comes from the shape of sugar beets. The seeds of this idea were sown through meetings with the Northside Neighborhood Advisory Committee, artist Mario Miguel Echevarria, and staff in the Park Planning Office. The sugar beet is a natural fit for the theme and location of a new park at the intersection of Vine Drive and 9th Street, near the historic site of the Great Western Sugar Factory where sugar beets were processed.

The structure reflects both current trends in playground equipment design and the City’s goal of highlighting historic connections to its playgrounds. It takes advantage of the latest manufacturing capabilities that allow custom design using natural materials. It provides history and context to the location and reinforces a feeling of authenticity in the park.

Parks staff worked with Mario Miguel Echevarria, an Art in Public Places artist from Longmont, to develop the initial concept of what the sugar beet might look like. Earthscape, an award-winning playground company, took Echevarria’s drawings and began to develop concepts based on his ideas. They produced several concept drawings before settling on a final design that would go to fabrication.

We are grateful to Earthscape for its partnership and generous support of this exhibit. The beet will leave our gallery for its permanent outdoor installation in the summer of 2019.

Climb into the past and slide into the future!