



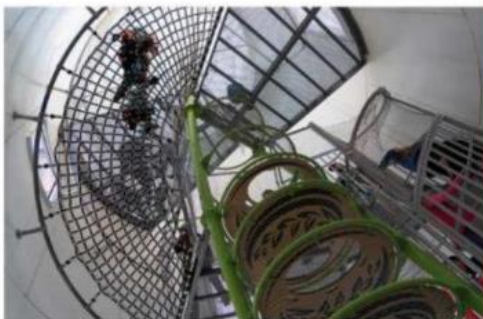
**LEFT**  
The park's silos were salvaged from a roadway project and moved to the park site.

**BOTTOM**  
Custom climbing features fill the inside of the 50-foot silos.

## PASTORAL PLAYGROUND

**IN FORT COLLINS, A FARM-TURNED-PARK DRAWS ON THE SITE'S AGRICULTURAL PAST.**

BY BRIAN FRYER



There are the requisite baseball and soccer fields, a one-acre dog park, and even a BMX racetrack at the new Twin Silo Park in suburban Fort Collins, Colorado. But it is around the two namesake silos where landscape architects and planners responded to community requests to keep some of the site's "wildness" and connect to the area's agricultural history. "We couldn't and didn't want to re-create a farm, but we thought there was value in creating farm-like experiences in a park," says Craig Kisling, ASLA, a landscape architecture apprentice for the city's Park Planning and Development Department.

Completed in the fall of 2017, Twin Silo Park is the seventh of nine community parks in the city's master

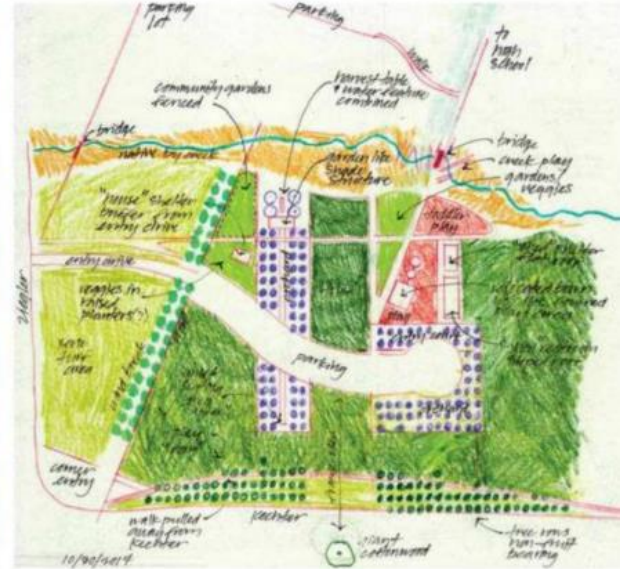
plan. The 54-acre brownfield site (once a sheep farm but more recently vacant) is bisected by a creek and bordered by roads on the south, east, and west, and by a school property on the north. City planners, working with the Denver-based landscape architecture and urban planning firm Civitas, identified six experiences they wanted to create in the park: driving down a long driveway, growing a garden, picking fruit in an orchard, playing in a barn, sitting on a porch, and playing in a creek.

The two 50-foot-high, 18.5-foot-diameter silos were moved to the park from the site of a road-widening project elsewhere in the city. Designers at Cre8play of Minneapolis packed them with custom climbing play elements, some reaching



**ABOVE**  
Eroded creek banks were regraded and replanted.

**BELOW**  
Playing in a creek was one of six experiences designers wanted to create in the new park.



as high as 33 feet, and connected the silos with a slide. “We did some pretty precise measurements and 3-D modeling of the silos,” says Todd Lehman, Cre8play’s lead designer and owner. “There is a tremendous amount of active play in the silos, but you don’t realize it’s there until

you step inside. We wanted elements that draw your eye up so you can see just how high these things are.”

The team fabricated a twisting, double-helix climber with an adjacent cargo net as well as a spiral staircase. “That twisting gives it motion,” Lehman says. “We also wanted this to be intergenerational and available to different ability levels. You can have a kid climbing the net or helix, and the parents or grandparents can be on the stairs. There are different routes that push the limits and allow kids to be challenged in different ways.”

Cre8play also designed climbing, sliding, and interactive play features in the “play barn” near the silos. Outside the barn, large pipelike sections disguise more interactive features. “It was purposely built to look like a deconstructed farm implement,” Lehman says. “We wanted something that looked like it might have been a big piece of old farm machinery in the yard.” ●

