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Boundaries and Enclosure

Assess site features to determine appropriate boundaries and levels of enclosure



Inspiration: Secure boundary - decorative wood and metal post and rail fence with wire-mesh infill



Inspiration: Provide post and rail or split rail fencing to protect environmentally sensitive areas



Image Credit: Seattle Parks and Rec
Jefferson Park, Seattle WA

Inspiration: Planting areas surrounding play areas provide permeable boundaries that help define the space and separate use zones



Inspiration: Public art integrated with chain link fence

Background & Rationale

- The relationship of park playgrounds to surrounding park uses and elements can directly impact playground use and perceptions of safety.
- Types of playground boundaries and enclosure should be informed by the park context and playground classification.
- Placement, choice of enclosure type, and extent of fencing are important to consider to provide safety, while avoiding the playground being overly divided from the broader park.
- Many public engagement participants shared concerns about safety. Providing physical barriers or visual cues to define playground boundaries may help discourage unsafe activity close to playgrounds.

Design Standards

- Use a combination of boundary types to surround playgrounds, including secure boundaries, permeable boundaries, and no boundary:
 - » Secure Boundaries: non-climbable chain-link fencing or decorative wood and metal fencing.
 - » Permeable Boundaries: split-rail fencing, bollards, vegetation.
 - » For Community and Neighbourhood Parks, select secure and permeable boundaries (exact types to be determined on a site-by-site basis).
 - » For Nature Park Playgrounds, integrate permeable boundaries. Avoid the use of chain link or metal fencing or metal bollards, which are not consistent with the character of natural areas.
 - » Where playgrounds are located well away from roads, parking lots, or non-compatible park uses (e.g., dog off-leash areas) integrate no boundary or alternatively, consider permeable boundaries to define the playground area, including planting or bollards.
 - » Where playgrounds are within immediate proximity to roads, parking lots, or other non-compatible park features, provide secure boundaries between the playground and non-compatible feature (non-climbable, 1.2m high fences and gates).
 - » Provide secure boundaries to fully surround universally accessible playgrounds (see Standard 1).
 - » Provide split rail fencing adjacent to environmentally sensitive areas.
- Avoid placing horizontal elements (e.g., benches, seat walls) abutting secure boundaries which can be climbable and render them ineffective.
- Consider opportunities to integrate public art or play features within fences or boundaries to provide opportunities for placemaking.