“The measure of any great civilization is in its cities, and the measure of a city’s greatness is to be found in the quality of its public spaces, its parks and squares.”

John Ruskin
2.1 Design Principles

Three design principles support the goals of Vision 2030 Strategic Plan, the 2017 PROS Plan and the EPS Plan, and provide the foundation for the guidelines that will steer the design of all publicly accessible parks and public spaces within the EPS Study Area, and throughout Montgomery County.

ACCESS & CONNECTIVITY

Public spaces must be open and inviting to everyone. They should be centrally located and easily accessible - within a 10-minute walking distance - and link street and open spaces networks. Urban public spaces are well-defined and framed with fronting streets and buildings providing synergy of uses and making the space a focal point of a larger area or neighborhood.

SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Public spaces are the physical, social, cultural and environmental “heart” of communities. They are the places of community identity, value, pride and social interaction. They must be attractive, safe and engaging with a range of experiences for gathering, relaxation and recreation.

URBAN ECOLOGY

Public spaces must support the social and environmental well-being of the greater community. They inherently promote health and habitat by helping clean and filter the air and water, keep places cooler, and contribute to community resilience by acting as green infrastructure. In addition, public spaces encourage greater environmental stewardship, education and responsible interaction with natural habitat.
## 2.2 Design Guidelines

While the three design principles are at the core of all public spaces in Montgomery County, public space design should be considered through the lens of the following five design guidelines that shape the public realm framework of parks, streets and other public spaces within the EPS Study Area. Each guideline contains a series of topics to be considered and addressed during the design process. Table 2.1 summarizes the design intent of each design guideline, and its associated topics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guideline</th>
<th>Design Intent</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. CONTEXT</td>
<td>Incorporate Site Context in the Design of Public Spaces</td>
<td>Adjacencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Existing Conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Planned Conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. PLACE</td>
<td>Celebrate and Incorporate Community Identity</td>
<td>Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Community-Driven Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. COMFORT</td>
<td>Make Public Spaces Comfortable and Inviting</td>
<td>Enclosure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Amenity Design and Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. VARIETY</td>
<td>Provide Flexible Spaces for a Diversity of Activities and Experiences</td>
<td>Space Flexibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Diverse Programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. CONNECTIONS</td>
<td>Enhance Community Connections</td>
<td>Access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Multiple Choices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wayfinding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.1 - Matrix illustrating Design Guidelines, their Design Intent, and Topics
A. CONTEXT

Intent: Incorporate Site Context in the Design of Public Spaces

To create vibrant public spaces that are distinctive to the location, a site’s topography and unique traits, and its surrounding community’s existing and planned physical form and architecture should be considered in the design of the public spaces.

1. **ADJACENCIES:** Ensure public spaces relate to adjacent streets, open spaces, architecture and landscape.
   
a. **Public Realm:** Reinforce and integrate new parks and public space into the public realm of adjacent streets, trails and parks networks.

b. **Architecture/Landscape:** Respond to adjacent building entrances, unique building forms and/or landscape masses.

c. **Defined Space:** Design urban parks and open spaces as “living rooms” of our neighborhoods, towns and cities by including streets and walls that define the space.

d. **Views:** Capitalize on views and important axes to and from the site - design places to see and be seen. Frame important signature elements of the public space with landscape, trees and/or topography. Frame views out from the park towards landmark buildings, building entrances, and/or major view axes with pathways, landscapes, rows or bosques of trees or topography.

*Pentagon Row Plaza, Arlington, VA. The centrally located plaza is a public space framed by buildings and landscape features. The central green space allows visual connections to and from the park, and also from the surrounding ground floor retail and residential units. The space caters to the needs of the visitors and residents. Source: Federal Realty Investment Trust*
“A sustainable park is a park that’s made to preserve natural resources and promote quality of life for the people around it. It uses existing native plants and geographic features to be more efficient, while also enjoyable.” - Meeting of the Minds

“Streets and their sidewalks, and the main public places of a city, are its most vital organs.” – Jane Jacobs

2. **EXISTING CONDITIONS:** Take advantage of existing geography, landscapes, topography and microclimate. Use existing topography to inform park design and to minimize extreme excavation or grading. Consider balanced terracing to accommodate major grade changes and to enhance important views.

3. **PLANNED CONDITIONS:** Consider nearby planned development and infrastructure improvements to design with the flexibility to integrate those assets and constraints into a cohesive neighborhood plan. Within all existing or new neighborhood or site plans, the park or public space should be considered a central “room” within the larger mass of building frontages and blocks.

Schenley Plaza, Pittsburgh, PA. This is an example that takes advantage of existing adjacent institutional buildings facing the central lawn area by creating visual and physical connections, making it a central focal point for the surrounding development. Source: Sasaki
B. PLACE

Intent: Celebrate and Incorporate Community Identity

Public spaces are places that bring economic and social value to their surrounding communities through social interactions. Linking physical, historic, cultural, and natural features together creates a unique sense of place. Each public space should celebrate the special features that provide its unique identity and help the community engage and learn.

1. **IDENTITY**: Incorporate physical, social, cultural and natural features of the site into the design of the park or public space.

2. **FEATURES**: Design features that will attract people to the public space and make it a destination, or community focal point. Make special features visible to invite people to use the space and, when appropriate, tell a story. All features should be designed as an integrated system with clear circulation connecting to defined spaces and physically or visually featuring artistic, historic and/or programmed components.

   a. **Signage**: Where appropriate, consider special signage or branding that reflects the historic, cultural or natural character of the community. Provide opportunities for interpretation of unique community features such as wetlands, tree groves, or historic elements.

   b. **Public Art**: Integrate public art into the designs of parks or public spaces. Art can be a featured piece, or part of the architectural elements of the spaces such as the paving or a paving feature, the light poles, an interactive water feature, furnishings, signage and/or an element of the landscape. Artwork should be designed by an artist, who engages the community in the design process. Interactive art features are preferred to non-interactive art features.

   c. **Historic Features**: Reuse or renovate existing historic or cultural features where feasible in or adjacent to parks and public spaces.

   d. **Natural Features**: Incorporate and/or create settings and resources that bring nature into the design of the public space.

      i. To the greatest extent possible, use native plants and tree species that thrive in our climate. Native plants are typically drought tolerant, are hospitable to native fauna and help to create a natural link between our parks, open spaces and natural resources.

      ii. Consider the use of a diverse palette of plant and tree species that provide different colors.

Indianapolis Cultural Trail, IN. This is an 8-mile linear park and trail that connects six cultural districts. New features incorporate public art and lighting, allowing use of the space at night. Source: visitindiana.com
forms and textures throughout all the seasons. Diverse plant types also minimize potential expansive destruction from pests or harsh climate conditions.

iii. Consider annual plantings to heighten spring, summer and fall experiences in important focal areas within parks.

iv. Bio-swales, rain gardens, conservation landscapes and porous pavers, as well as green roofs on buildings, should be incorporated into park and open space designs to mitigate stormwater runoff. Provide a design solution that balances both recreation space and habitat restoration/conservation.

v. Where possible, use recycled or recyclable materials and materials with low environmental impacts.

vi. Consider interactive design solutions to enhance the relationship between people and elements of the natural environment.

“By turning ‘spaces’ into ‘places’ we can take a step towards providing inhabitants with access to interesting, equitable and attractive settings to meet various needs and facilitate more interaction in the urban life.” Source: Global Public Space Toolkit: From Global Principles to Local Policies and Practice (2016), UN-HABITAT
3. **COMMUNITY-DRIVEN PROCESS:** Engage the community early in the design process to ensure the design is meaningful and reflective of community identity. Engage stakeholders such as property owners, developers, non-profit groups, community members, artists, and public agencies to collaborate in delivering creative design solutions and development strategies.

   a. **Temporary Places:** Consider short-term/temporary design solutions that reflect community identity where possible as pilot public spaces before long-term development occurs.

   b. **Performance Surveys:** Consider ways to gather information on the use of the public space. Data-driven analysis provides information on the use of facilities and can help improve future design solutions for the space.

   c. **Environmental Stewardship:** Work with the community and schools to develop early advocacy for programs and activities to encourage nature appreciation, education, and stewardship.

   “Cultural representation and diversity in neighborhoods are determinants of community resilience. Preservation of cultural diversity helps social systems better adapt to and cope with change. Consequently, integrating local input into decision making is essential to preserving cultural assets.”

   Source: Inclusive Healthy Places, Gehl Institute

   Benito Juarez Park, City of Maywood, CA. This 40-foot-long mosaic dragon is a popular centerpiece that animates the park. It was inspired from traditional Oaxacan art and created by local artist Jolino Beserra. Located in the most crowded and park-poor community of Los Angeles County, the park is “a neighborhood icon created in the cultural vocabulary of its largely Mexican-American residents” - Trust for Public Land. Source: Trust for Public Land
Wunder Garten in the NoMa BID, Washington DC, is an example of adding a variety of pop up events and program elements to serve the community’s need for parks and public spaces. Source: Top: optoro.com; Bottom: Wundergarten DC

Urban Flower Field, St. Paul, MN. This interim park and mural was created through collaboration between the City of St. Paul Parks and Recreation, Public Art Saint Paul, the University of St. Thomas, Minneapolis College of Art and Design and Neighborhood Volunteers. This temporary space will remain in place while a permanent park is planned and designed. Source: City of St. Paul
C. COMFORT

Intent: Make Public Spaces Comfortable and Inviting

Great parks are comfortable to people of all ages, ethnicities and economic backgrounds. Parks and public space design should address the elements of human scale, enclosure and scenery by providing desirable amenities. People need to feel attracted to the space, welcomed in, feel comfortable to stay, and delighted to come back.

1. ENCLOSURE - Frame spaces and/or pathways within parks with landscape, trees and/or light fixtures to define the spaces, create edges or to establish a transition from space to space. In parks over ½ acre, provide different spaces and experiences that encourage multiple park uses and users through the creation of different spaces, landscapes, park edges, programs or furnishings.
   a. Adequate Building Frontages: Make sure buildings surrounding the central public space have frontage and publicly accessible areas that face the space to encourage human interaction and activity at the street level. Provide visible access to building entries. Refrain from creating separate “back door” entrances for persons with mobility limitations.
   b. Streets: Ensure that public spaces are bordered by at least one street and that adjacent streets have sidewalks to promote access and circulation from its other edges.
   c. Space Hierarchy: Provide a sense of hierarchy through parks. All parks and open space should have at least one primary space with smaller spaces, pathways and alcoves feeding off them. This hierarchy should encourage greater circulation through the parks and provide multiple experiences such as places to gather as a group, throw a frisbee with friends, take a leisurely walk or jog, and/or to read a book alone.
   d. Surroundings: Integrate public spaces with sidewalks, streets and alleys, circulation routes, recessed entries, courtyards, plazas, through-block connections, and weekend street closures.
   e. Scale: Create opportunities for lively, pedestrian-oriented open spaces to attract interest and encourage interaction with the site, adjacent buildings, and street grid. Provide human-scale places to pause and contemplate views, to play and be active, and to gather with friends, family and community.
   f. Microclimate: Take advantage of microclimate elements to make the best use of the site and bring comfort to pedestrians.
   i. Wherever possible in parks and open spaces, plant large native tree species with expansive canopies as iconic objects in the space. Large trees maximize evapotranspiration of rain and runoff, minimize heat island effects in the summer and provide shade for park users and adjacent buildings. Provide a balance of shaded and sunny areas.
   ii. Consider solar exposure and natural ventilation in the placement of park spaces, paths and amenities. These elements are important in promoting park activities throughout different seasons.
   iii. Add features to mitigate undesirable microclimatic conditions, such as structures to provide shade, and screening to buffer wind and noise.

2. AMENITY DESIGN AND LOCATION: Amenities should be located in places that maximize use. Furniture, sports amenities and special features should all support the overall park or open space concept and design.
Ellsworth Plaza, Silver Spring, Maryland. Retail frontage surrounding the plaza provides eyes on the space, promoting a safe and comfortable space for users. Source: M-NCPPC.

Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The trees, benches, and shrubs provide well-defined boundaries, and separation from the hustle and bustle of the adjacent streets and shopping area, while also allowing visibility of the space. Source: PlanPhilly.com.


Sister Cities Park, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Areas of respite created through tree shade and strategic placement of seating and other features under the shade provide relief from weather and also let visitors stay outdoors and enjoy the public space longer. Source: M-NCPPC.
2. Furnishings:

i. Seating and Tables: provide a variety of arrangements using comfortable and durable materials that are accessible to all ages and abilities. Permanent seating should be located at the edge of spaces and along connecting pathways where desired. Locate seating to promote views and lines of sight across spaces. Consider movable furniture that allows visitors to make choices and to gather in smaller or larger groups when desired.

ii. Trash and Recycle Bins: Place in strategic locations with convenient access for collection and maintenance.

iii. Bike Racks: locate near transit stops, adjacent to building entries, near shared parking areas and/or next to play areas. Design bike racks to be attractive, playful and functional.

iv. Drinking Fountains: Provide drinking fountains near areas of physical activity that are accessible to all such as playgrounds, multi-use courts, trail heads, and exercise equipment. Design drinking fountains to be attractive, playful and functional.

b. Visitor Facilities: In larger parks or open spaces that allow for additional park facilities such as bathrooms or concession stands, design them to be adjacent to primary circulation routes and to maximize safe use.

i. Restrooms - consider providing public restrooms, especially if the public space is a regional destination and cannot rely on surrounding uses to provide service.

ii. Concession/ kiosk - should be located in a way that maximizes use yet minimizes interruption of primary park spaces.

iii. Wi-Fi - wherever possible, consider providing Wi-Fi access in public spaces.

3. SAFETY: Provide programming, visibility and active uses to encourage human interaction and promote a sense of personal safety.


b. Lighting: Provide adequate lighting to highlight the public space as community focal points and to highlight special buildings and features throughout the day and evening. Consider seasonal lighting and provide adequate light levels to support pedestrian safety and security at central spaces and pathways at night. Light levels and the direction of lighting should maximize safety yet minimize night sky light pollution in the surrounding neighborhood.

c. Ground Floor Transparency: Provide adequate transparency at the ground level, especially at gathering areas and building entries and view corridors. Transparency provides the pedestrian (Top and bottom) The Porch at 30th Street Station, Philadelphia, PA. Through creative seating with swing seats and shade canopies, as well as pop up events, visitors enjoy the space and socialize in a comfortable setting. Source: universitycity.org
the ability to see or perceive certain activities and spaces in and around the public spaces.

d. **Landscape:** Along walkways and more isolated play areas, provide appropriate native tree species with high canopies and low shrub species to maximize sight lines and minimize places to hide. Maintain landscape so that there is permanent visibility across open spaces.

e. **Maintenance:** Design the spaces to allow efficient access for operations and maintenance with support facilities (if needed) integral to the overall design. Incorporate maintenance needs from the beginning of the park design process. Provide access to water, maintenance vehicles where needed and appropriate infrastructure year-round.

“Many successful plazas have one common element: a sense of continuous enclosure. Think of it as an outdoor living room with the surrounding buildings as walls. You’re walking down the street and you suddenly enter this large open gathering space bordered by buildings. Without this sense of enclosure, you feel exposed to traffic and other flows of the city. An enclosed plaza feels more like a space to stay than a wide corridor to walk through.” Source: Projexity Blog (2015)
D. VARIETY

**Intent: Provide Flexible Spaces for a Diversity of Activities and Experiences**

Parks and public spaces allow people to gather in a common place and share a range of activities and physical experiences that can be either active or contemplative. Urban parks and public spaces should encourage a diversity of uses by delivering unique spaces and features that accommodate social interaction. A variety of programming options should be employed at these spaces to serve different audiences.

1. **FLEXIBILITY:**
   a. **Design:** Spaces should be designed to be flexible to accommodate multiple types of programs and events. These programs should be able to celebrate the physical, social, cultural, and natural features of the site and respond to the diversity within communities.
      i. **Street Closure:** Design the edges of public spaces to incorporate temporary street closures, where feasible, to provide additional space for activities and events, especially during the weekends.
      ii. **All weather/season:** In parks and open spaces large and small, consider how events such as food festivals, markets, games, movies, concerts, art shows and/or sports etc. can be accommodated over different times of the year. Consider integrating seasonal planting and appropriate infrastructure for these events.
   b. **Multiple and Simultaneous Uses:** In parks and open spaces large and small, consider how events such as food festivals, markets, games, movies, concerts, art shows and/or sports etc. can be accommodated simultaneously when desired. Foster interaction opportunities.
      i. **All ages:** Provide activity areas for all ages, interests and backgrounds. Multi-generational facilities are encouraged.
      ii. **All Experiences:** Provide spaces for active recreation, contemplation and social gathering.
      iii. **Multi-Use Spaces/Facilities/Furnishings:** Give preference to multi-use spaces, play fields and courts instead of specialized uses. Buildings located inside public spaces should be designed for flexible uses to accommodate changes in the program and demographics. Consider movable seating to allow flexibility in accommodating different spatial configurations and numbers of users. Consider including space for informal community-scale events such as performances, farmer’s markets, kiosks and community bulletin boards, cafes, or street vendors.
      iv. **Community Open Space:** Create versatile spaces by providing continuous areas of lawn or pavement surrounded by paths.
   c. **Community users:** Consider female and male, kids and seniors, people walking through or lingering.

2. **DIVERSE PROGRAMMING:** Design spaces that allow a diversity of programs in public spaces.
   a. **Promote Placemaking:** “Placemaking is a people-centered approach to the planning process, design and management of public spaces. Put simply, it makes people feel good about where they live, work or play. It involves the action of looking at, listening to, and asking questions of the people who live, work and play in a particular space. When
the people come together, they experience and discover the community’s needs and aspirations. A community’s vision is then derived thorough their interactions with each other within the place.” Refer to the M-NCPPC effort and approach to placemaking: http://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/placemaking/

b. **Diverse Schedule of Operations**: Design flexible public spaces to host different activities throughout the course of the day, week or year. Design spaces for evening activity to give those who work and/or study during the day an opportunity to enjoy public spaces.

c. **Diverse Scale of Events**: Consider space for programming and events at different scales to attract diverse users.

“A space performs well when people use it—especially when those people come from diverse groups and interact with each other, which promotes inclusion. Numerous studies have suggested that exposure to people who are different from one’s self—including differences in race, sexual preference, or religion—increases tolerance and empathy toward others. Creating spaces that invite a diversity of users helps build a more inclusive and equitable community for all.” Source: Inclusive Healthy Places, Gehl Institute

(Top and bottom left) Bryant Park, New York City, NY. Bryant Park is a great example of flexible furnishings, diverse programming, and supporting amenities that allows all-season use. Source: Wikimedia. (Bottom right) Mission Dolores Park, San Francisco, has a large unprogrammed lawn area that accommodates small to large scale events. This is used for picnics and active recreation at other times. Source: SF.Curbed.com
E. CONNECTIONS

Intent: Enhance Community Connections

Successful public spaces are connected to their surrounding neighborhoods and easily accessible to all - including children, seniors and individuals with disabilities. Connections should prioritize the pedestrian experience: the arrival, the navigation of the space, and the selection of different clusters of activities and destinations, and then departure. Public spaces should be integrated to the network of existing parks, other public spaces, ecological and historic/cultural areas and community destination areas.

1. ACCESS:
   a. Prioritize Pedestrian Circulation:
      i. Pedestrian circulation should be prioritized over other transportation uses (bicycles, motorized vehicles)
      ii. Provide direct pedestrian connections through the space to public transit and to adjacent public and private pedestrian infrastructure.
      iii. Provide ample space for pedestrian flow and circulation, especially in areas where there is already heavy pedestrian traffic or where the project is expected to increase pedestrian traffic.
      iv. Locate activity areas and programming in spaces that are centrally located in relation to view corridors, entries, public transit and the street grid.
      v. Add features to assist pedestrians in navigating sloped sites, long blocks, or other site challenges. Include exterior stairs and landings, escalators, elevators, non-slip ground surfaces, seating at key resting points, through-block connections and ramps for wheeled devices to areas for recreation, education, and habitat preservation.
      vi. Consider implementing “woonerf:” roadways shared by pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles where appropriate.

   b. Access to All: Make the public space feel welcoming to all. Meet the needs of diverse communities to promote equitable access. Integrate universal access into site design. Consider children, seniors and individuals with disabilities.

   c. Connect with Nature: Provide opportunities to connect to off-site natural areas to promote a continuous habitat and increase migration corridors wherever possible. Promote watershed connectivity through education and best stormwater management practices. Where possible, daylight and/or restore existing waterways.

   d. Gateways: Design access points with distinguished features so all visitors can be greeted and welcomed through the front door.

   e. Loading/Service Areas: Place loading/service areas away from main entries and storefronts surrounding the public space, when possible. Provide vegetated buffers to loading/service areas surrounding the public space.

2. MULTIPLE CHOICES:
   a. Integrate Mobility: Locate public spaces in proximity and accessible to transportation options and connected to a network of streets and sidewalks, trails and mid-block connections that offer safe pedestrian access and crossings to areas for recreation, education, and habitat preservation.

   b. Parking: Where multiple transportation options such as walking, biking and transit are readily available, public spaces should not contain dedicated parking lots. Provide shared parking
on streets and at nearby surface parking lots or garages where possible.

3. WAYFINDING: Provide clear and creative wayfinding to connect different spaces.
   a. Hours of Operations: Provide clear and visible signage for park operations hours and closures, a map of the park, and educational information, where appropriate.
   b. Signage: Consider graphic and visual language to connect a network of public spaces within the same neighborhood/district. Consider the use of public art and community engagement to create signage and make people feel welcomed.

“One study found that people living within a half-mile of a park participate in 38 percent more exercise sessions per week than people who live further away.”
Source: Inclusive Healthy Places, Gehl Institute

Cheonggyecheon Stream, Seoul. The Cheonggyecheon Stream Restoration project brought a dramatic transformation to an industrial eyesore by demolishing an elevated freeway and uncovering a section of the historic Cheonggyecheon Stream that was restored as an ecological and recreational asset for citizens to enjoy. The transformation also spurred economic growth bringing in growth and investment to the area. Source: M-NCPPC

University of Washington, Seattle, WA. Wider sidewalks allow comfortable pedestrian connections. Benches, trees and bike racks create socially inviting space and provide safe connections for pedestrians and commuters. Source: GGN (Gustafson Guthrie Nichol) Landscape Architects
“Safe Routes to Parks is NRPA’s campaign to implement environmental, policy, and program strategies that create safe and equitable access to parks for all people. These strategies align with the goals of the 10-Minute Walk campaign and are great tools and resources to increase access and safe walking connections to parks.” - National Recreation and Park Association. Source: NRPA

Rose Kennedy Greenway, Boston, MA. This is a linear series of parks and gardens that reconnect many of Boston’s neighborhoods. Well-connected to the street grid and transit lines, the park is easily accessible by public transportation, walking and biking. Source: Nancy Lane/Boston Herald

Clear and strategic placement of wayfinding and signage assist navigation to and within a public space. Creative and inclusive designs that are accessible and representative of the users, such as tactile or multilingual signs, can provide diverse and safe connections for all. Source: Calgary Riverwalk

Designing safe connections to public spaces for all ages and abilities enables parks to function as multi-generational and inclusive spaces. Source: Indyculturaltrail.org
High Line Park, New York, NY. The High Line is a successful example of reimagining an abandoned transportation infrastructure into an innovative and integrated system - a linear public park. Running along 20 blocks, this new space delivers an urban corridor connecting habitat, wildlife and people. A design of a new paving and planting system allowing varying ratios of hard to soft surface accommodates high pedestrian traffic flow and allows planting along its path. Each element in the design considered sustainable principles such as: material selection keeping low life-cycle costs of selected materials; native, drought-resistant plant species to fit the High Line’s micro-climates; and water recirculation for some parts of the park. Source: ASLA

Separated bike paths provide safe connections for bikers, allowing multi-modal connections to parks and public spaces. Source: M-NCPPC

Yanweizhou Park, Jinhua City, China. The park designers delivered a bridge and path system within this park that connects the city with nature and accounts for the dynamic water currents and pedestrian traffic flow. Source: www.landezine.com; M-NCPPC

Downtown East Commons, Minneapolis, MN. Sidewalks with food truck parking bring enclosure and activity for safe pedestrian circulation around the edges of the park. Creative landscaping and seating options also create a human scale for pedestrians. Source: Hargreaves Associates
2.3 Checklist

**CONTEXT:** Incorporate Site Context in the Placement of Public Spaces

1. ADJACENCIES: Ensure public spaces relate to adjacent streets, open spaces, architecture and landscape.
   - a. Public Realm
   - b. Architecture/Landscape
   - c. Defined Space
   - d. Views

2. EXISTING CONDITIONS: Take advantage of existing geography, landscapes, topography and microclimate. Use existing topography to inform park design and to minimize extreme excavation or grading. Consider balanced terracing to accommodate major grade changes and to enhance important views.

3. PLANNED CONDITIONS: Consider nearby planned development and infrastructure improvements to design with the flexibility to integrate those assets and constraints into a cohesive neighborhood plan.

**PLACE:** Celebrate and Incorporate Community Identity

1. IDENTITY: Incorporate physical, social, cultural and natural features of the site into the design of the park or public space.

2. FEATURES: Design features that will attract people to the public space and make it a destination, or community focal point.
   - a. Signage
   - b. Public Art
   - c. Historic Features
   - d. Natural Features

3. COMMUNITY-DRIVEN PROCESS: Engage the community early in the design process to ensure the design is meaningful and reflective of community identity. Engage stakeholders such as property owners, developers, non-profit groups, community members, artists, and public agencies to collaborate in delivering creative design solutions and development strategies.
   - a. Temporary Places
   - b. Performance Surveys
   - c. Environmental Stewardship
COMFORT: Make Public Spaces Comfortable and Inviting

1. ENCLOSURE - Frame spaces and/or pathways within parks with landscape, trees and/or light fixtures to define the spaces, create edges or to establish a transition from space to space.
   a. Adequate Building Frontages
   b. Streets
   c. Space Hierarchy
   d. Surroundings
   e. Scale
   f. Microclimate

2. AMENITY DESIGN AND LOCATION: Amenities should be located in places that maximize use.
   a. Furnishings
   b. Visitor Facilities

3. SAFETY: Provide programming, visibility and active uses to encourage human interaction and promote a sense of personal safety.
   a. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)
   b. Lighting
   c. Ground Floor Transparency
   d. Landscape
   e. Maintenance
### VARIETY: Provide Flexible Spaces for a Diversity of Activities and Experiences

1. **FLEXIBILITY:**
   - a. **Design:** Spaces should be designed to be flexible to accommodate multiple types of programs and events.
   - b. **Multiple and Simultaneous Uses**

2. **DIVERSE PROGRAMMING:** Design spaces that allow a diversity of programs in public spaces.
   - a. **Promote Placemaking**
   - b. **Diverse Schedule of Operations**
   - c. **Diverse Scale of Events**

### CONNECTIONS: Enhance Community Connections

1. **ACCESS**
   - a. **Prioritize Pedestrian Circulation**
   - b. **Access to All**
   - c. **Connect with Nature**
   - d. **Gateways**
   - e. **Loading/Service Areas**

2. **MULTIPLE CHOICES**
   - a. **Integrate Mobility**
   - b. **Parking**

3. **WAYFINDING:** Provide clear and creative wayfinding to connect different spaces.
   - a. **Hours of Operations**
   - b. **Signage**