



THE PARK PLANNING PLAYBOOK

All great projects start with a plan, and your park is no different.

Our playbook covers every component you need to consider before designing a community outdoor gym. From the site selection to the lifetime project costs, all 12 factors are equally important and will impact your project's outcome, longevity, and success.



Site Selection

Choose a location for the equipment in a visible, accessible, and well-lit area of the park. Proper visibility will lower the chance for vandalism and increase the equipment's level of use.



Group Exercise Stations Together

Research tells us people are more likely to use equipment when grouped together. Grouped equipment encourages circuit training, variety of exercise adoption, longer usage times, and more social interactions.

BONUS POINT

People prefer to do all their strength training at once or all of their cardio at once, instead of doing a set of strength training, then 5 minutes of cardio, and repeating.



Replicate the Design of an Indoor Fitness Center

The typical layout of a commercial fitness center includes cardio equipment, strength training equipment, and the stretching area in separate gym areas. Design your outdoor gym after an indoor commercial fitness center to maximize its level of use.



Real Exercise Value

If the outdoor fitness equipment doesn't provide real exercise value, people won't continue to use it after the novelty of a new installation wears off. An unused outdoor gym looks bad for the city and department who installed it as these funds could have gone towards other projects.



Cost Sensitive – Save Costs with a Small Footprint

The costs associated with an outdoor gym increase as your outdoor gym's footprint increases. Outside of the equipment cost, many other project costs are tied to the number of square feet, such as site prep, installation, surfacing, and shade system.



Space Sensitive – Save Room for Other Amenities

Choosing equipment with a small footprint allows for other popular amenities in your park. Outdoor fitness equipment doesn't need to take up a lot of space to provide real exercise value to multiple people.



Biomechanically Correct Exercise

Eliminate opportunities where bad exercise form can occur by checking that the equipment is biomechanically correct with the manufacturer. Biomechanically correct exercise stations look after the user's safety by ensuring they are in the proper position to do the exercise, minimizing the chance of injury.





Give Users a Total Body Workout

First-time users and dedicated workout enthusiasts alike should strengthen their entire musculature for balance and prevent problems down the road. Make sure exercises are available for shoulders, chest, upper back, abdomen, lower back, biceps, triceps, thighs, and calves.



User Safety

Do your due diligence to ensure the equipment you buy is free of pinch point, crush zone, or entrapment areas. If the outdoor fitness equipment isn't compliant with the ASTM F3101-21a safety standard, you incur a liability risk and put your community in danger.



Weatherproof

Not all gym stations and systems are created equal. Outdoor fitness equipment that isn't 100% weatherproof, and doesn't cover coastal installations under their warranty, is a sign that the equipment will have higher maintenance costs down the road.



Lifetime Project Cost

The build quality and the materials of the outdoor fitness equipment will affect how much money and maintenance it will need in its lifetime. Equipment made from heavy-duty steel and painted with super durable polyester powder is less likely to need ongoing maintenance, saving you thousands of dollars of potential future costs.



Check Out References

You want equipment that has been tested and proven to be durable, safe, and weatherproof. Ask for references and check how the equipment has fared over time. Get suggestions for changes they would make next time – different pieces, different groupings, or other considerations.