The City of Cambridge invites you to design playfully...
Everybody plays. Play is something that people of all ages—not just children—enjoy, and is an integral part of great cities. Play gets people moving, spurs curiosity and imaginative thinking, and brings people of different ages, abilities, and backgrounds together.

Play can take many different forms: running, climbing, or jumping in a field; engaging with an interesting piece of public art; playing board games on a cafe table. Play does not just happen in confined spaces: the entire city can be a place for play.

Whether publicly or privately owned space, the public realm is a representation of the community’s values, and it is here that a city demonstrates and provides for the quality of life for its community members. Playful design in the public realm can make projects and places stand out, and playful places are ones that people are attracted to and want to return to again and again. A playful public realm can bring engagement, serendipity, and delight to members of a community, and it is important for everybody in Cambridge to have places and opportunities for play.
5. Spring Street Parklet, Los Angeles, CA
   http://www.flickr.com/photos/ladotpeople/

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3. Kids’ Gate at Alexander W. Kemp Playground (Eric Powell, artist), Cambridge Common, Cambridge, MA

5. Kendall Band Interactive Musical Installation (Paul Matisse, artist), Kendall Station, Cambridge, MA
   http://kendallband.wordpress.com/about/the-kendall-band/

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4. “Octo-Pied Building”
   http://cubeme.com/tag/installation/page/3/

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1. Interactive Light, Auckland, New Zealand
   http://yesyesno.com/night-lights

2. Children’s Museum of Manhattan, New York, NY

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1. Park(ing) Day 2009 Connect Four, Seattle, WA
   http://freeassociationdesign.wordpress.com/2010/06/09/user-generated-urbanism/

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4. Play Me, I’m Yours (Celebrity Series), Cambridge and Boston, MA
   http://streetscenes.com/boston2013/highlights/photos

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5. Kendall Band Interactive Musical Installation (Paul Matisse, artist), Kendall Station, Cambridge, MA
   http://kendallband.wordpress.com/about/the-kendall-band/

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5. Bocce Court, North End, Boston, MA

5.Farmers’ Market, Kendall Square, Cambridge, MA

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5. Dymaxion Sleep (Jane Hutton and Adrian Blackwell, designers), Reford Gardens, Grand-Métis, Quebec
   http://inhabitat.com/dymaxion-sleep-a-hammock-for-your-garden/

7. Wilhelm-Hamacher-Platz, Troisdorf, Germany

8. LEGO Bridge (Martin Heuwold, designer), Wuppertal, Germany
1. Before I Die (Candy Chang), Brooklyn, NY
http://beforeidie.cc/site/brooklyn/

5. Boulevard 28 de Setembro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Calçada_musical.JPG

6. Bounce Pads in Sidewalk, Copenhagen, Denmark
http://www.panoramio.com/photo/74484954

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1. Garbage Can, Bryant Park, New York, NY

2. Dragon Street Light, Copenhagen, Denmark
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Norre_Toldbod_dragon_street_light.jpg

3. Sonic Bloom (Can Carson, designer), Seattle, WA

4. Great Ormond Street Hospital, London, UK
http://alfalfastudio.com/a-nature-trail-in-an-unexpected-place/

5. Gren Street Garage Wall (Ed Andrews, artist), Cambridge, MA

6. Green Wall, Mexico City, Mexico
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Green_wall

7. Painting the Streets
http://arch442544.wordpress.com/2012/03/20/tactical-urbanism/

8. Talk Tube Bench, Cary, NC
http://landperspectives.wordpress.com/2011/01/05/kids-together-playground/

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Stormwater Channel, Aguas Calientes, Peru
http://travelinglandscapearchitect.blogspot.com/2013/03/aguas-calientes-peru-walkable-town-in.html

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1. Roombeek the Brook (studio: Buro Sant en Co), Enschede, the Netherlands

2. Roombeek the Brook (studio: Buro Sant en Co), Enschede, the Netherlands

3. Exposing Infrastructure (Sidewalk Painting)

4. Hydrant Attachment Street Art (Thor tel Kulve, artist), Amsterdam, the Netherlands
http://www.thorterkulve.nl/

5. Drinking Fountain (Mags Harries, artist), Fresh Pond Reservation, Cambridge, MA

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1. Canopy (photo: Diana Tavares), Agueda, Portugal

2. Misting Fountain (Ross Miller, designer), University Park, Cambridge, MA

3. Chalk Art in Plaza (Julian Beever)
http://www.julianbeever.net/index.php?option=com_phoca&view=category&id=2&Itemid=8

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Plaza with Movable Furniture, New York, NY

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1. Movable Outdoor Seating, University Park, Cambridge, MA

2. Parklet, San Francisco, CA

3. Outdoor Library, Bogota, Colombia
http://www.biringuilllibrarian.com/2010/02/21/paraderopa-libros-parqueparques/comentarios-page-1/

4. Park Bench (Jeppe Hein)
http://www.trendhunter.com/trends/jeppe-hein

5. Invasión Verde (Genaro Alva, Claudia Ampuero, Denise Ampuero, Gloria Rojas; photo: Musuk Nolte), Lima, Peru

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http://www.julianbeever.net/index.php?option=com_phoca&view=category&id=2&Itemid=8
BEYOND

THE

PLAYGROUND

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Street Art in East Village, New York, NY
http://www.flickr.com/photos/35034365374@N01/2434200018

Decorated Fence
http://www.flickr.com/photos/10064873@N00/galleries/72157624123168347/

Bridge, Yekaterinburg, Russia
http://yodigocontrablog.blogspot.com/2011/02/domino-bridge-domino-bridge-domino.html

Snail on Building

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Dance Party (photo: David Kong), Cambridge, MA

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2. City Museum in St. Louis, MO

3. Sidewalk Art

4. ArtPrize Festival, Grand Rapids, MI

5. Imagine That Bricolage, Grand Rapids, MI

7. Water Dances (Phyllis Labanowski), Cambridge, MA

8. Dino (Conlastic)
http://2009.gp.co.at/stayfocused/conlastic/

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2. Game Tables, Harvard Square, Cambridge, MA

3. Decorated Building, Poland

5. Whirlwind (Conlastic), Dortmund, Germany

6. Table Tennis, Old Morse Park, Cambridge, MA

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Dance Steps (Jack Becker, artist), Seattle, WA
Surfaces: Walls, Sidewalks, Streets

Planes don’t have to be plain

- Inclusive features that provide meaningful play opportunities for people with and without different types of disabilities (visual, hearing, motor, etc.)

- Elements of the streetscape that encourage outdoor enjoyment and low-impact movement by elders, such as swinging benches

- Signage, images, sculptures or other features that encourage people to think about and imagine past uses in the area, or even future uses

- Bike shops or maintenance facilities near popular bike routes

- A storm drain, stretch of curb, cycle track or sidewalk divider that is a playful shape or material

- A small “point play” element that can be spun, climbed on, crawled through, jumped over, etc.

- (create your own)
Are there elements that are child-friendly in terms of size, color, texture, design? Are there elements of the urban fabric that are inviting to seniors?

A collection of features across an area that provide the experience of a scavenger hunt, code or puzzle

A grassy hill where people can sunbathe or where children can roll down or sled in the wintertime (e.g., the front lawn of Cambridge City Hall)

Signage, bulletin boards, or other physical features that allow community members to leave messages for others

A water feature that stimulates curiosity and exploration (e.g., the “misting fountain” outside the Harvard Science Center)

Accessible restrooms (in commercial buildings, civic buildings) near spaces that attract activity over long periods of time

An outdoor area with movable tables and chairs near an area with cafés, ice cream shops, takeout restaurants
Where are the routes to schools, parks, business centers, other nodes of activity?

Spaces that can host temporary outdoor gatherings, such as seasonal farmers’ markets

Elements of the streetscape that are “child-sized,” such as benches and chairs, to encourage use by children

A painting or sculpture embedded into the urban realm in a surprising or unexpected way

A small patch of aromatic flowers

A stretching/gathering area along a running or bicycling route

An arrangement of streetscape features, such as seating, to enhance views and encourage gathering around an open space, body of water, monument, or landmark building

Elements of the streetscape that are “child-sized,” such as benches and chairs, to encourage use by children

(identify your own)
Features that offer a glimpse into engineering or science in everyday life, e.g., city infrastructure (storm drains, water system, electrical grid, etc.)

A “focal” element within a public space that draws people together to view or interact with it (e.g., an interactive fountain, sundial)

An unexpected object that encourages make-believe (e.g., chairs carved out of tree stumps)

A “trail” of elements along a sidewalk that introduces the feeling of playfulness in one’s footsteps – perhaps linking neighborhood parks with each other, or with schools

An interactive, kinetic or musical installation found in an unexpected place (e.g., the musical sculptures at the Kendall MBTA station)

An unexpected natural space, like a small grove of trees, in the middle of the city

A piece of a fence that can be manipulated in an interesting way

[create your own]
How can you make your city more playful?

Cut out the tiles from the following pages, and place them in a container. Choose 5 tiles from the container and place them face up – these will be elements to include in your playful city.
If integrated into the design process, playfulness should not interfere with function, take up extra space, or be excessively costly.
Where do people of different ages go to play? Where do people meet? Where do people linger?
Programming: Performances, Festivals, Play Days

All Work and No Play Make Cities Dull Places
Spaces: Plazas, Corridors

More than empty space
Consider “playfulness” in balance with other design factors, such as engineering performance, aesthetics, accessibility, environmental standards, and maintainability.

Are there elements that can be enjoyed equally by people with or without physical, visual, hearing, or other disabilities?
All design is artistic, whether it is done by an engineer, an architect, or a professional artist. What are the ways that design can be used to provoke thought, stimulate imagination, and convey a message about a place without the involvement of an artist?

What makes this space special? Is there a sense of discovery, curiosity or wonder to visitors or passers-by? Does it stimulate imagination, or encourage people to engage with it?
Structures:

Façades, Entrances, Transit Stations, Public Buildings

Structure(d) play