



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** June 27, 2019

**CONTACT:**

Missoula Parks and Recreation: Nathan McLeod, Parks & Trails Design/Development Coordinator | 552-6261 | [mcleodn@ci.missoula.mt.us](mailto:mcleodn@ci.missoula.mt.us)

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Montana: Jesse Zentz | 406-422-3039 | [jesse\\_zentz@bcbsmt.com](mailto:jesse_zentz@bcbsmt.com)

KaBOOM!: Tamara Grider | 202-464-6196 | [tgrider@kaboom.org](mailto:tgrider@kaboom.org)

## **Missoula Kids Get Creative and Imagine Bright Futures Filled with Play**

Kids Design the New Playground Coming to Memorial Rose Garden Park in August

Kids from the Rose Park neighborhood will put crayons to paper on Monday, July 8 to draw their dream playground for Memorial Rose Garden Park, which will become a reality later this summer with support from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Montana and KaBOOM!, the national non-profit dedicated to giving kids the childhood they deserve through great, safe places to play.

BCBSMT, KaBOOM!, the Rose Park Neighborhood and the City of Missoula are collaborating to replace the aging, outdated playground equipment at Memorial Rose Garden Park, 800 Brooks St. The new equipment will increase the playground's capacity, play value and accessibility.

Missoula Parks and Recreation, the Rose Park Neighborhood Leadership Team, and KaBOOM! project managers will host a playground Design Day on Monday, July 8, at St. Anthony Parish, 217 Tremont St. Design Day is the first meeting that brings the community together to plan all aspects of the playground build project and to factor in ideas from the kids who will benefit from the new playspace.

The Children's Design Session at 3 p.m. is a chance for local kids to draw their dream playground as inspiration for the final playground design. From 5 p.m. to 8 p.m., adult community members will use the children's ideas to help choose specific playground equipment options and develop a layout of the playground that will be installed at a Community Build Day on Saturday, August 17.

The total project cost is estimated at \$125,000, with about 80 percent funded by BCBSMT. The remaining \$25,000 will be funded by the City's capital improvement program and park impact fees from development.

This playground is part of a broader effort led by BCBSMT and KaBOOM! to meet an urgent need to make play the easy choice for kids and families. It will be the sixth build led by BCBSMT. Through this partnership, KaBOOM! is creating an oasis where kids feel valued and loved, and where their potential is supported, nurtured and celebrated.

Parks and Recreation, BCBSMT and KaBOOM! will host a Community Build Day for the playground on Saturday, August 17. For more information visit [www.missoulaparks.org](http://www.missoulaparks.org).

**WHEN:** **Monday, July 8**

3 – 4 p.m. Kids design their dream playground. Parents/caregivers should plan to accompany children under age 9.  
5 – 8 p.m. Community volunteers participate in planning meeting

**WHERE:** **St. Anthony Parish**  
217 Tremont St., Missoula

**INFORMATION:** [www.missoulaparks.org](http://www.missoulaparks.org)  
406-721-PARK (7275)

###

**MEDIA NOTE: PLEASE SEE ATTACHED BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

**About Missoula Parks and Recreation**

Missoula Parks and Recreation provides places, programs and services essential to our quality of life; reflects community values; fosters a sense of place, and develops and preserves infrastructure and lands that are critical to supporting a healthy community.

**About Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Montana**

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Montana (BCBSMT) is a division of Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual Legal Reserve Company and Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. BCBSMT is the largest and longest-standing statewide, customer-owned health insurer and full-service health benefits administrator in Montana. BCBSMT has provided high-quality health insurance plans and administrative services to Montanans for nearly 80 years. BCBSMT is committed to ensuring its members — no matter where they are on the health spectrum — achieve maximum health. For more information about BCBSMT, visit [www.bcbsmt.com](http://www.bcbsmt.com).

**About KaBOOM!**

KaBOOM! is the national non-profit dedicated to giving all kids – especially those living in poverty – the childhood they deserve through great, safe places to play. KaBOOM! inspires communities to make play the easy choice and works to drive the national discussion about the importance of PLAYces. KaBOOM! has collaborated with partners to build or improve more than 17,000 playspaces, engage over 1.5 million volunteers and serve nearly 10 million kids. To learn why play matters for all kids, visit [kaboom.org](http://kaboom.org) and join the conversation at [twitter.com/kaboom](http://twitter.com/kaboom), [facebook.com/kaboom](http://facebook.com/kaboom) and [instagram.com/kaboom](http://instagram.com/kaboom). #playmatters #PLAYceforKids

## June 2019: Memorial Rose Garden Playground Project - Additional Information

### Project Description

On June 24, 2019, the Missoula City Council approved an agreement between KaBOOM!, a non-profit playground advocacy organization and the City of Missoula to replace the aging, outdated playground equipment at Memorial Rose Garden Park, 800 Brooks St. The new equipment will increase the playground's capacity, play value and accessibility.

The project is a result of a "Build it with KaBOOM!" grant that pairs a funding partner, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Montana (BCBSMT), with the Missoula community to build a new playground. KaBOOM! provides the funding and project management and utilizes the community-build model to design and build the playground.

Social equity was a major factor in selecting a playground location for the KaBOOM! grant. The Rose Park Neighborhood is located in Ward 3 of Missoula. Approximately 21 percent of neighborhood residents live below the poverty line. Providing a new playground within walking distance for residents will be especially impactful on the lives of low-to-moderate-income children.

### Project Benefits

The opportunity to collaborate with KaBOOM! to build a new playground that provides an increase in play value and capacity is a great benefit to the Rose Park Neighborhood and Missoula.

In 2015, Missoula Parks & Recreation conducted a system-wide playground inventory and analysis and identified Memorial Rose Garden Park playground as in need of updating or replacement. The playground contains outdated equipment that does not meet current ADA standards. The current playground does not provide for the eight types of play identified by the National Institute For Play.

The new playground will have a significant increase in play value, and an approximately 67 percent increase in capacity. In addition to the new play features, ADA access will be provided to the playground and a new picnic area will be installed adjacent to the play space. Benches and tables will be constructed as part of the volunteer project, and are funded by the KaBOOM! grant.

(more)



The graphic features the KaBOOM! logo at the top right, which includes a starburst graphic and the tagline "play matters for all kids". Below the logo, the text "We're building a playground!" is displayed in a large, bold, purple font. Underneath that, a smaller line of text reads "We need your help to get ready for this exciting day". The main content area is a white box containing text about the project. At the bottom, there are two columns of text with corresponding icons: "Design Day: Monday, July 8" (with an icon of a pencil and paper), "3 - 4 pm Children's Design Session" (with an icon of a child drawing), "6 pm Adults' Planning Meeting" (with an icon of an adult), and "Community support is essential to making this project a success. Attendees will learn more about working with KaBOOM! and have the opportunity to sign up to be on the planning committee for the playground Build Day. They will also use the children's drawings to help pick out playground equipment and colors for the new custom playground." (with an icon of a group of people). To the left of the text is a photo of a young child in overalls looking through a telescope. To the right are the City of Missoula Parks & Recreation logo and the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Montana logo.

## Opportunities For Public Participation

The playground project will be community driven and volunteer constructed.

### **Design Day – July 8, 2019 • St. Anthony Parish, 217 Tremont St., Missoula**

Design Day is the first meeting that brings the community together to plan all aspects of the playground build project and to factor in ideas from the kids who will benefit from the new play space.

The Children's Design Session from 3 to 4 p.m. is a chance for local kids to draw their dream playground as inspiration for the final playground design. Parents/caregivers should plan to accompany children under age 9.

From 5 p.m. to 8 p.m., adult community members will use the children's ideas to help choose specific playground equipment options and develop a layout of the playground that will be installed at a Community Build Day.

### **Community Build Day: August 17, 2019**

200 volunteers are needed. Watch missoulaparks.org for sign-up information, coming soon.

## Time Frame

Project design and site prep: July 1 – August 16

Build Day: Saturday, August 17

## Project Costs and Funding

The total project cost is estimated at \$125,000, with about 80 percent funded by BCBSMT. The remaining \$25,000 will be funded by the City's capital improvement program and park impact fees from development.

The City's contribution includes an \$8,500 match for equipment purchase and approximately \$16,000 for necessary on-site infrastructure upgrades. No increase in maintenance costs are anticipated.

## Documents

- [Build It With KaBOOM! grant program overview](#)
- [Site Plan](#)
- [Existing playground](#)

(end)