

**Time frame**

Autumn 2016 – autumn 2017

Stakeholders

Political executive
 Formal education
 Extra-curricular education
 Civil society
 Spatial and urban planners
 Landscape and environmental planners
 Landscape architects

Typologies (space types)

Outside space
 Living environment
 Intermediate space

**Institutional framework****Design quality criteria**

Freedom from danger
 Accessibility
 Designability
 Opportunities to interact

**Structure-related quality criteria**

Strategic orientation
 Designing the provisions/
 living spaces
 Participation and identification

The starting point

In autumn 2016, the city of Rapperswil-Jona commissioned the Technical University of Rapperswil (HSR) and the University of Applied Sciences St. Gallen (FSG) to develop a “playground and break area concept”. Development suggestions and an all-city development concept were formulated for the individual playground and break areas on the basis of an analysis of weak points and potential. The fundamental questions were: what state are the playgrounds of the city of Rapperswil-Jona in? What level of quality do these playgrounds have, what is their potential and how could they be improved? What would be a good starting point for an integrated plan and which measures should have priority?

User needs should be included in the playground and break area concept.

The following documents served as a basis for the playground and break area concept:

- Playground survey by specialists from the cantonal Kinder im Gleichgewicht [Children in Balance] (KIG) programme from 2014/15
- Rapperswil-Jona green and open space concept 2016
- Rapperswil-Jona social space analysis 2016
- Playground evaluation 2015
- Survey of girls in public spaces 2015 by the children and young people’s agency

The project gained support from the St. Gallen canton, Office for Health Care, communities and networks department, and from the specialists of the cantonal Kinder im Gleichgewicht programme.

Aims

All playground and break areas in the entire city area to be surveyed holistically in terms of demand and user needs and optimised for attractiveness.

Target group

- Children
- Young people
- Companions and passers-by

Costs

A total of around 50,000 Swiss francs including printing costs of around 2,000 Swiss francs

Project progression

As the playground planning was seen as a cross-sectional task, the project was integrated by a cross-departmental steering group made up of specialists from the administration.

Inspections of the individual playground and break areas took place from February to June 2017. The inspections and surveys using a questionnaire were carried out by three groups of people. The kindergartens, schools and public and private playgrounds were inspected by staff and student from the HSR and FHS with support from Rapperswil-Jona youth workers.

The schools were also surveyed by the respective school social workers. The surveys were carried out at different times and on different days in order to gain as full a picture as possible of the sites.

The above aspects were systematically recorded using a survey sheet. Photos and status descriptions supplemented the surveys. Where users or passers-by were present in the playgrounds and break areas, discussions were held with them about user behaviour. The survey can provide an estimate of the utilisation of the playgrounds and break areas, but cannot make any substantiated statements about the actual usage of the sites, as this would require longer-term observation.

In addition, workshops were carried out with parents and three school classes, as well as surveys of day care centres.

Success factors

- Goals for measures to achieve the UNICEF Child-friendly City label meant that the development process could be commissioned from the administration and city council (executive).
- Support from FHO (expertise) and canton.
- Good collaboration within the administration, e.g. when data was required or public surveys through children's and youth workers.
- Many years of experience and functional networks, especially those of the department head and children's and youth officers.

Challenges

- Funding.
- Implementation in the administration.
- Correct implementation, particularly in terms of participation.

Conclusion

Against a background of low-resource planning, a strategic evaluation and prioritisation of measures for upgrading the playgrounds and break areas in Rapperswil-Jona has taken place that will extend from 2018 to 2031.

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