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## New Cosmo Park playground blasts into future while keeping an eye on the past

ADAM VOGLER *13 hrs ago*



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Children play at the S.C. "Si" Steinberg Playground at the Cosmopolitan Park on Tuesday. The playground, which has been under renovation since last fall, will be dedicated during a Friends of the Park event at 4:30 p.m. Friday. The event will include a ribbon cutting ceremony at 4:45 p.m. Parks and Recreation Director Mike Griggs said one feature of the playground, a new version of the Cosmo Rocket, was requested by residents who remember playing on the original. "It was important to Columbia residents," Griggs said.

COLUMBIA — The months-long makeover to Cosmopolitan Park's S.C. "Si" Steinberg Playground is finished, and the Columbia Parks and Recreation Department will celebrate at 4:30 p.m. Friday with a ribbon-cutting, games and food.

The renovations replaced worn out equipment, brought the playground up to the current playground code and increased accessibility for people with disabilities.

All of Columbia's parks comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Parks and Recreation Director Mike Griggs said, and the Steinberg Playground exceeds the requirement.

"We want to make sure that there are no barriers, no matter what your abilities," he said.

The project was funded with \$500,000 from the 2010 Parks Sales Tax. The Columbia Disabilities Commission contributed an additional \$18,000 to the project; the department used that money to install more rubber tiles and poured-in-place rubber walking surfaces, which offer greater accessibility than wood mulch.

The playground has a time-travel motif with components that range from prehistoric to the future. Children can dig make-believe dinosaur bones out of the sand and play on structures that have dinosaur and space themes.

In a nod to history, planners included a jungle gym reminiscent of the Cosmo Rocket that stood in the playground for decades. Some residents still remember playing on the original, Griggs said. "It was important."

When the planners saw a piece of playground equipment that was similar to the original rocket, Griggs said they jumped on it.

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