



# GROWING KID-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

Fall Planning Workshop

Houston-Galveston Area Council Fall Planning Workshop  
Friday, December 3, 2021 – 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

## AGENDA

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- 9:00 a.m.**                    **Welcome**
- Jeff Taebel, FAICP, Houston-Galveston Area Council
- 9:05 a.m.**                    **Creating Child-Friendly Communities**
- Nikita Luke, WRI Ross Center for Sustainable Cities
- 9:35 a.m.**                    **[Natural Playgrounds: Focus on “Risky Play” and Compliance](#)**
- Adam Bienenstock, Bienenstock Natural Playgrounds
- 10:05 a.m.**                    **Designing for Urban Childhoods – Tools & Methods**
- Dr. Sara Candiracci, Arup
- 10:35 a.m.**                    **Block by Block: Minecraft as Participatory Design Tool**
- James Delaney, Block by Block
- 11:05 a.m.**                    **Panel Discussion/Q&A**
- Jeff Taebel, Moderator
  - Adam Bienenstock
  - Dr. Sara Candiracci
  - James Delaney
- 11:30 a.m.**                    **Closing Remarks**

# TODAY'S PRESENTERS

## JEFF TAEBEL



Jeff Taebel, FAICP, is Director of Community and Environmental Planning at H-GAC, where he oversees the agency's community planning, environmental planning, disaster recovery, economic development, socioeconomic modeling, and sustainable development initiatives. He has 39 years of experience in urban and regional planning, including 35 in his current position. Actively involved in community service, professional development and planning education, Mr. Taebel is a former President of the Texas Chapter of the American Planning Association and in 2008 was inducted as a Fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners. Mr. Taebel earned a Master of Urban Planning from Texas A&M University and a Bachelor of Science in Life Sciences from the University of Nebraska.

## NIKITA LUKE



Nikita Luke is a Senior Project Associate for Health and Road Safety at WRI Ross Center for Sustainable Cities. Her work includes supporting global research and safe infrastructure projects, particularly in areas of sustainable transport, public health, traffic safety, cycling and walking, and application of the Safe System approach to road safety. Ms. Luke is an architect and urban planner with a specialization in sustainable urban environments. She is also a certified LEED Green Associate and TRUE Advisor specializing in zero-waste management. Prior to joining WRI, she worked for Youth Build, Boston, as a Lead Designer. There, she led the team in developing a community vision for the redevelopment of dilapidated parks in the neighborhood of Roxbury. She has also mentored underserved youth in Boston on the skills needed to successfully enter the construction industry. Ms. Luke believes that humanizing cities and their streets is the key to collective physical and emotional health and resilience of communities—now more than ever.

## ADAM BIENENSTOCK



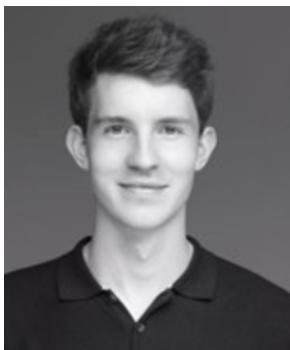
Adam Bienenstock is an internationally acclaimed designer, builder, and researcher of nature-based play spaces and the founder of Bienenstock Natural Playgrounds. He has worked on many papers and publications including "What is the Relationship between Risky Outdoor Play and Health in Children? - A Systematic Review in 2015." Mr. Bienenstock has traveled globally to advocate for children's rights and nature play and to design natural parks and playgrounds. His comprehensive experience in design, advocacy, education, research, and construction makes him one of the most thoroughly seasoned veterans in the nature play industry. Mr. Bienenstock has collaborated on the development of city-wide Nature Play Standards and developed and delivered hands-on nature play training across all city departments, including Chicago; San Francisco; Dayton, Ohio; Austin; and Denver.

## DR. SARA CANDIRACCI



Dr. Sara Candiracci is an Associate Director in Arup, where she leads the work on Inclusive and Resilient Cities, including the portfolio on child-centered design and planning. She is an urban planner and researcher, with 20 years of professional experience in the field of sustainable urban development and planning across Africa, Latin America, and South East Asia, working with the UN, Development Banks, and INGOs. Dr. Candiracci is part of the Cities4Children Alliance's Steering Group and Arup's technical lead for the Real Play Coalition. She has a Masters Degree in Urban and Regional Planning in Developing Country Cities from Università Iuav di Venezia, and a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Heritage-based Urban and Regeneration and Planning from University Federico II, Italy, with Penn School of Design, University of Pennsylvania.

## JAMES DELANEY



James Delaney is the founder and Managing Director of BlockWorks, a collective of designers, artists, and developers from around the world with a shared passion for Minecraft. BlockWorks has grown from an informal group to a global design studio that has pioneered the use of Minecraft as a design tool with film studios, marketing firms, and educational institutions. In 2019, Mr. Delaney joined the Block by Block Board, bringing his architectural background and understanding of the Minecraft community to help Block by Block connect with this global network of creators and players. He participated in Block by Block projects in Surabaya and Addis Ababa and helped prepare the Minecraft assets for workshops in Beirut and a presentation at Habitat III in Quito. Mr. Delaney holds a degree in Architecture from Cambridge University. He is an elected fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and has given talks at the International Spatial Development Forum, The Bartlett School of Architecture, and the British Library.

**Presentations from today's webinar will be available at**

[h-gac.com/sustainable-development-workshops/fall-planning](https://h-gac.com/sustainable-development-workshops/fall-planning)

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