

# Sullivan Lake Park – Survey Two Questionnaire Write In Responses

Sullivan Lake Park  
Columbia Heights, Minnesota  
ISG Project Number: 25-33476



## Comments on Concept A

- I like that the lawn separates the fitness area from the playground and helps to differentiate the spaces. I also like how the climbing area is closer to the other play areas.
- "Climbing things are terrible when a child could fall off the other side. Example the park at McKenna has a ""mountain"" all the little want to go on top.of but a parent cannot catch them when the fall of the other side.. horrible park. It also has a telescope pointed at a bedroom window... if its even attached.
- The basketball court would have been better but the city ripped it out"
- Love the perimeter fence. Would it be possible to have a small dog run included in this plan? Thank you!
- I appreciate how the design is cohesive between the fenced and non-fenced areas. And that the shade seating is placed in an area that promotes inclusivity, instead of being pushed into the corner like in Concept B.
- "I love the artificial stream idea and how it makes the whole play area feel like one cohesive outdoor play zone.
- I like how both emphasize incorporating landscaping areas for natural features.
- I like how it feels a bit separate from the picnic tables creating different areas in the park.
- Side note, how about a small dog run in the park (obviously not near the kids area) so dogs can run around?"
- Is there any reason an adult without children would find this an attractive place to visit? Are there enough children living near enough to utilize this space to its full potential?
- Seems to spread out. Taking away more regular green space from the park itself
- To close to the potential apts
- Love it! Go get 'em Mitchell & Kyle!
- I like how A is laid out, but I would guess that the townhome owners will complain because it's so much closer to them. So, Concept B would be a good "meet in the middle" choice
- Incorporating nature-based design and concepts would be really great for the kids
- What the heck is a dry river bed?! Don't do that! It sounds like a rocky hazard for children to cut their knees on! There's nothing playful about a dry river bed in the midst of a playground. For the sake of children's safety and enjoyment, please eliminate the terrible dry river bed idea as a playground addition! Also, please get rid to the new Fitness Court! NOBODY USES IT! And why would anyone use it when Planet Fitness is just down the road. What an absolute waste of my taxpayer money! Please return that Fitness Court back to Mother Nature. I'd rather it be a field of green grass than the huuuuge slab of anti-natural environment material that has ruined that area of land!
- can't tell a thing from these visuals.
- It uses the space better in my opinion. A longer rectangular lawn play area is more useful.
- More picnic are or tables.
- I like the natural river bed.
- I would like to see less lawn and more area for native plants. I like the dry river bed. Also stormwater features with native plantings. Demo gardens with native plants. Less impervious surfaces.
- Play areas seem closer and more continuous, especially since the "perimeter fence" doesn't actually go all the way around.
- The play area for younger children is too far away from the pavilion.
- " +. Restrooms/outhouses are away from the townhomes and nearer to the pavilion
- play equipment too close to townhomes"
- I like that concept A uses more of the space. It appears to be have more play areas for both younger and older kids. My child outgrew the original Sullivan Lake play structure before she was in kindergarten. It would be nice to have larger toys to play on. I like that you can see the playground area from the fitness court and the

pavilion. I like the benches with the backs more than the "modern" ones without backs or the low rocks. I like that the area is fenced in to keep kids out of the parking lot. I like that the bathrooms will be more hidden from sight (hate portapotties in all my photos). I like to see more shade and trees. I would definitely like to see some shade over the fitness area, as it gets really hot. I like leaving the sidewalks around for accessibility and so I have some place to walk while my kid is playing.

- The shade sails are central to the play structures which allows caregivers to begin the center of the action. This way the kids can have a more independent play experience.
- With both designs, I enjoy the cluster of features and the trees and nature intermingled"
- "A: Play Lawn - I prefer this over Concept B, provides a longer distance to run off energy
  - B: Shade Sails W/ Seating – this is a nice vantage point to be able to see both play structures.
  - C: Seating element – Could use an additional seating area south of the swings
  - D: Loop Walk – No comments
  - E: Landscaped areas – No comments
  - F: Natural Play Feature – In the SE corner, is that a climbing structure?
  - G: Fence – No comments
  - H: Picnic seating – Is this necessary with the existing pavilion?
  - I: Restroom – Is this the current location of the restrooms? If not I prefer the location of Concept B
  - J: Lighting – no comment
  - K: Swings – with local daycares in the area that utilize this park, please ensure there are enough adaptable/young child swings as well as swings available for school age children. Keeping the swing area together would be beneficial for parents with multiple children as well as the local childcare providers.
  - L: Large play area – no comment
  - M: Small play feature – may have to adjust if you keep the swings together
  - N: Climbing feature – no comment"
- My biggest suggestion for both is going to be making sure that it is accessible making sure wheelchair users can use it, maybe having a core vocabulary board that some parks have so that non-speaking children can communicate while using it and lots of sensory elements.
- The dry stream area seems unnecessary. Concept A takes more green (grassy) space.
- Dry Creek bed isn't practical. Rocks will be thrown and bed will be overgrown with weeds. The play area to the north will accommodate the apartment buildings more than park visitors. Most likely to become a hang-out/loitering area. Not enough lighting on the north side.
- Play areas closer to pavilion and away from townhomes to the east. Restrooms closer to pavilion and concealed. More natural layout.
- I love how integrated it is with the lake around it

#### **Public Engagement Comments:**

- Keep more green space
- More green area
- Keep bathroom open 7am-10pm
- No rock very dangerous
- More plant buffer at fitness court
- Shade at Fitness Court
- Rocks are very dangerous
- Rocks are excellent play structure

- Fence only south and east side - both plans
- Play areas should be shaded
- Like idea of walking path – need clear sightlines

## Comments on Concept B

- Play areas are closer together. This is nicer for families who have kids who want to play in both areas.
- Possibly add more covered seating. Both are great options, and very excited to have the park updated and back for our kiddos to play at. Spring - Fall we typically walk around the lake and stop at the playground multiple times a week.
- More seating. Drinking fountains and water fill station.
- I don't like how the climbing area is behind the lawn.
- "Climbing things are terrible when a child could fall off the other side. Example the park at McKenna has a ""mountain"" all the little want to go on top of but a parent cannot catch them when they fall off the other side.. horrible park. It also has a telescope pointed at a bedroom window... if it's even attached.
- The basketball court would have been better but the city ripped it out"
- Concerned that the non-fenced space immediately north of the fenced area will result in underutilized/wasted space, as the only real amenities in that portion are two small play features and an oversized picnic seating area. I see that area being underutilized by park-goers if Concept B is chosen.
- I like the concept but the lack of fencing around the whole playground is a concern for me.
- Is there any reason an adult without children would find this an attractive place to visit? Are there enough children living near enough to utilize this space to its full potential?
- Seems a little confusing but possibly smaller space being utilized.
- More buffer/shrub around blue eyesore
- Open green space is a plus. Moving play areas slightly further away from the townhomes.
- N/A
- Your surveys are phrased incorrectly for legitimate surveying. You're forcing skewed responses that don't recognize true responses from participants. The main reason for my choice for Concept B is because it does not have a dry river bed added into it. That's the only reason I picked B, but the multiple choice options are skewed to only your bias of your selected own preferences. I actually think Concept B is overblown with too much crap. Just give the kids a swing set and a jungle gym and that's about it. No need to clutter up the park with too much junk! Just leave it alone as all green grassy fields. Adding plastic, metal, floor-like materials, and all that junk is just making a garbage dump out of Mother Nature!
- Less useful and chopped up.
- It's ok but not as ok as A
- I like the location of the restroom being central to everything. I feel like it flows better and proportionally makes a lot of sense!
- I like that the play lawn is smaller in B. I think there is enough lawn in the park and space should be taken up more by native plantings.
- The brown "L" sections seem completely set apart from the rest of the play area, especially because of the long "perimeter fence." The brown "M" section is way too much apart from the rest of the play area since the play field is between that and most of the structures. I do like that it seems to have larger swing areas.
- I like this plan

- Keeps away from existing townhomes!!!
- "+. Restrooms/outhouses are NOT in anyone's front yard, but nearer the pavilion
- only one light??"
- It feels like there is more picnic and open play area in B, for people to use space as they want
- I don't like that the playground area in concept B seems smaller and more confined. Utilize the top area more.
- "A: Play Lawn -I prefer concept A for the length of space to run.
  - B: Shade Sails W/ Seating – I think concept A has a better vantage point for caregivers to see more areas of the park
  - C: Seating element – Could use additional seating options throughout
  - D: Loop Walk – No comments
  - E: Landscaped areas – No comments
  - F: Fence – No comments
  - G: Picnic seating – Is this necessary with the existing pavilion? Feels like too large of a space.
  - H: Restroom – Is this the current location of the restrooms?
  - I: Lighting – No comments
  - J: Swings – with local daycares in the area that utilize this park, please ensure there are enough adaptable/young child swings as well as swings available for school age children. Keeping the swing area together would be beneficial for parents with multiple children as well as the local childcare providers.
  - K: Large play area – no comment
  - L: Small play feature – may have to adjust if you keep the swings together
  - M: Climbing feature – no comment"
- It seems a little more open and natural, which I think fits with the vibe of the park.
- My biggest suggestion for both is going to be making sure that it is accessible making sure wheelchair users can use it, maybe having a core vocabulary board that some parks have so that non-speaking children can communicate while using it and lots of sensory elements.
- Concept B looks like a great use of space. The bathroom location right next to the small kids area seems like a better location, than right next to the pavilion. The play areas make sense, and very little unused space. Good mix of accessible areas with poured texture, and natural fiber chips. Please choose colors that blend with nature. No need to use fluorescent oranges, greens. Stick with blues and greens.
- "I like that play areas are closer to the pavilion.
- In both concepts, I like the position of the restrooms."
- This feature ensures that neighboring houses are not right next to children having fun and can still enjoy their seating areas.
- "Don't like the placement of the swings and climbing feature on the south side next to the parking lot. Move those features closer to the others and extend the play/free space area to the parking area.
- Will additional parking be added? Will there be ""No Parking"" signs posted on the residential sides of the park?"
- Large play areas too close to townhomes to the east.
- Too close together

#### Public Engagement Comments:

- Accommodate older kids
- Keep as much green space as possible
- Green buffer and fence around fitness court

- Shade for fitness area
- More green area
- Keep green space big
- Turtle crossing
- Fence between park and apts 12'

### Are there specific elements from either concept that you would like to see combined or modified?

- N/A - just looking forward to this update and having the playground back this season!
- No surrounding fence. Its a maintenance nightmare and makes the park less accessible
- "I like the looping track to encourage exercise and exportation
- Some local art would be nice like what was done in the exercise area."
- Was there any reason to think that the existing facilities were a waste of limited resources? Were they under-utilized given the number of people living nearby?
- Honestly seeing it as an actual picture instead of bubbles
- Would be great to have the design have natural features and some musical features, as well as inclusive play equipment
- Just to add native plantings for either design (maybe a pollinator area). Also signs discouraging people from feeding ducks and other wildlife since that's an ongoing problem at the park
- Get rid of the Fitness Court! The beautiful space that could've been just greenery is now suffocated by artificial materials as a huge slab over the ground and unsightly metal structures protruding up out of that flooring! I go to Sullivan Park every day, and I have NEVER seen anyone ever using the Fitness Court! Whose dumb idea was that Fitness Court?!! ... Don't blame the public for that dumb idea, ... as I can see by how you construct surveys, I can bet 100% that the option to explain how the Fitness Court is a bad idea, was probably never offered as a multiple choice survey answer option! And now we're stuck with a Fitness Court that nobody ever uses! And Mother Nature is saying "ouch!" every day for the harm you've done to her! Shame on you!
- go visit the Lions Coon Creek Park in Coon Rapids. Kids HAVE FUN THERE. No need to reinvent anything, copy what's been proven to get used and families like.
- The rectangular play area is preferred.
- "Is there any shade in the picnic seating for Concept 2? Or will those just be tables in the open? I feel like that area should be intentional about either being grass and wide open for activities, or tables with shade, and not just picnic tables in the grass as an afterthought. Just my two cents!
- Thanks for all that you do for our communities!
- –Husband of a Landscape Designer"
- Less impervious surfaces. Lots of natural/nature focused play areas.
- More swings from B, but less "separation" from elements like A.
- Make lots of shade spots away from the sun!
- See above.
- "More lighting near the townhouse edge of the park
- Will the restrooms be enclosed in both plans?"
- I don't really understand the purpose of a dry riverbed as a play area for children, so I'd be fine seeing that removed. I like the more modern play structure versus piles of wood to climb on. Different swing options for adults and larger kids would be nice. Kid wants a tall slide, zip line (like lions park in New Brighton), rope bridge,

and taller monkey bar options. I'm curious how close the plants will be to the sidewalks. Will there be "little" and "big" kid areas to help protect smaller kids?

- I prefer concept A and think it would work well for our community. I would like to see a few additional seating options scattered in, including near the south entrance to the park/along the play lawn. When we go to the park, I want the kids to run off energy, but I like options for seating based on where they are playing. I like to keep an eye, but they are old enough to play independently. The Moore Lake Park in Fridley is nice, but I always feel like it's hard to find a seat there.
- Wrought iron fencing around the playgrounds needs to be simple and clean. One of the photos showing fencing had cutouts of children on the fence. That would be unnecessary and another thing to maintain. Please don't put in stating that isn't easy to maintain. That molded seating shown in photos seems like just another thing for kids to climb on, stay with traditional benches and picnic tables.
- "Fencing on the north and east side of park to indicate ""City"" park property. People from the apartments can enter from the front of the park like everyone else. The concern is that 2000 new residents in the apartments are going to think that this is their own private park and other Heights residents will stay away!"
- More lighting is needed throughout the park."
- I would like there to be some consideration for a fenced in area to serve as a small dog park. The path around the lake is very popular for dog walking, and currently people simply do not leash their animals. I use the path for jogging, and have had an unleashed dog jump on me a handful of times and have been bitten once. Having a designated area for them to be off leash would be great.
- "Dry river bed is a nice feature. Walking and green space are a must.
- You do not show where the lift station will move. Please ensure it is not near the townhomes neighborhood to the east of the park...object to noise, smells . And, ensure no backup of sewage!"
- Add a basketball court and/or pickle ball court

### **Please share any thoughts or preferences regarding play equipment.**

- New, modern, and safe
- "Ninja course style items would be awesome
- Slides that do not hurt to go down like at valley view..Kids do not need to bounce side to side
- Don't put in spinning items if your just going to rip them out because they spin too fast"
- "A mix of natural (wood, etc) and synthetic materials is always nice.
- ids love things that encourage imagination (wood boats, cars, etc)"
- If the equipment doesn't look fun and challenging, there's no reason to use it.
- Having an area for both smaller children and older to play. Make music. Play make believe (like a fake counter for "store" or a "snack shack" with a little table.)
- Natural looking equipment that ties in with the surrounding features.
- "To write proper opinion spans for surveys, use balanced, clearly labeled scales (like 5 or 7 points) with descriptive anchors (e.g., ""Strongly Agree"" to ""Strongly Disagree""") for consistency, ensuring options are mutually exclusive and cover the full range of potential opinions, often including a neutral midpoint, and always testing them first to prevent confusion and bias.
- This current survey is garbage because it doesn't follow proper data gathering protocols. Please use a Statistics major to write your surveys! This absent-minded surveying technique you're currently using is how we wind up with failures like the Fitness Court being built."

- Lions Coon Creek Park... Always filled with kids and families.
- There are more modern equipment options out there...climbing walls and other educational options would be preferred.
- Natural play is great (Mississippi Gateway for example), but there also are good parts from larger, physically challenging playgrounds. I think the Central Park of Maple Grove playground is a good balance, and kids (and parents) love it.
- Kids love swings. They like "challenges" like monkey bars and other bars to hang onto. Climbing and slides are pretty important too.
- Make the floor woodchips to avoid big injury. Please please make the playground also for teenagers since we have no where to hang out now.
- I don't like seeing just a bunch of wood piled up for kids to play on. I don't think they're as intrinsically drawn to boring colors and yeah, natural materials. Also, we get a lot of generations and a lot of unhoused people. So it would be nice to have something that is going to withstand a variety of ages using it correctly (and incorrectly) over the years, in our extreme weather.
- Swings for both babies and children are a must!

#### Public Engagement Comments:

- No wood chips
- Use subdued Colors
- Please don't select garish colors – keep natural
- Play equipment should be maintenance free – wary of naturoscapes for that reason
- I like the idea of play areas for toddler/Preschool, Elementary. Children stay with age level and ability. Less bullying. Older kids stay in their section. Adults caregivers will be with younger age/

#### Other (what is your connection to Columbia Heights)

- Recently was a resident
- ive in fridley.kids went to heights schools
- I live down the street in Fridley
- I live against the park
- I live in the townhouses adjacent to the park

#### Do you have any other comments or ideas about the project?

- N/A
- We are really hoping the park can be ready for this summer!
- Excited for this!
- "Function over form.. it its beautiful park with a crappie play area where kids get hurt or do not enjoy playing it would be such a waste of space

- McKenna park is a good example of this... most kids are done with the play ground after a very short time. It's not an entertaining park.. nobody wants a loop of rings (teens sit on top of it) or a dangerous rock a little can fall off."
- "This is great and I really appreciate your work!
- - A small dog run located somewhere in the park so animals are encourage to stay away from the kids area
- - Sports court (basketball, pickle, etc)
- - Stop signs entering the park. People drive very fast on this street!"
- The concepts proposed here, if enacted, would change the park from a place that I occasionally visit to a place that I would have little reason to visit.
- Not necessarily
- It would be nice for teens to be able to safely hang out here too since there aren't many spaces for teens.
- Just add a swing set and a jungle gym, and leave the rest alone! You've already done enough damage with all your current projects to that park. More green space would benefit the area better than adding more clutter into the park. More green fields would allow for once-a-year festivals to use the area well. It would also allow ample area for kids to play activities in large grassy areas. Kids can bring their own ball of whatever type to play in the field. A couple can bring a picnic basket and blanket and sit in the field. Birds and small animals will appreciate the area better. Bees will thank you!!!
- I hope that that the current inventory of park equipment is weighed. Focus on the age group that is least served and create the least amount of maintenance possible. We don't maintain our amenities well enough in my opinion.
- Please enclose the outhouses now
- I think the next event for opinions should be at the library and/ or the schools (especially Valley View since it's close and the classes and their families use the park.
- I have 3 kids, all boys who live directly across from the park. The natural look playground is our favorite, think this will preserve the nature of the park and provide the area with a fun area to play.
- I think durability is helpful because we have a tight parks budget. The maintenance staff are so attentive to our parks, but funding for fixing/replacing parts is limited.

**Public Engagement Comments:**

- Keep RR structure low profile roof
- Low profile fencing
- No roof needed for outhouses