

Sullivan Lake Park – Survey Questionnaire Write In Responses

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



Are there any concerns you have about your least preferred location? (Optional)

- Location A is too close to the water & wildlife, plus has less visibility to the street.
- C does not have any shade, which is tremendously helpful to have established at play areas. It's also right on the parking lot, which can feel risky for many families.
- My biggest safety concern is it being so close to the water. My kids are disabled and this playground would be completely inaccessible and out of the question if it's by the water. It's questionable if it would be accessible in area C, so close to cars and parking.
- A being the furthest from parking could be more difficult for people with larger families or who need to carry multiple things.
- Concerns for C is that it is too close to the parking lot and too close to the fitness court with would be enticing to kids and may not be a safe space for them to play.
- It looks like you would need to cut down more trees and disrupt wildlife for location A.
- Don't remove the existing pavilion. It gets used a lot.
- I think we should not disturb anything near the water and keep the playground a little bit away from the walking path. People who come to have a peaceful walk or have a dog shouldn't have to walk by the playground.
- Yes - it will be trashed and not taken care of the by the complex you want to put there. It won't feel like its a residents park - but it will feel like it belongs the apartment complex. Why am I paying taxes to feel like a 2nd class citizen? I use this park every day and you are taking the best parts away.
- Too deep in the park. Easier for smaller children to wonder off without being seen, and trail close by to have them taken. A fence can be put up parking lot side to prevent sneaking out on back side away from pavilion. Putting the playground closer to the new development, will only benefit their tenants. It needs to remain on the south end of the park, so all of the park users, and handicapped people have easy access to it.
- Those areas are further away from the trail.
- Please don't take down any trees to put in a new playground if it can be avoided. A and B will require tree removal which would be an absolute tragedy.
- I am concerned about removing mature trees.
- No
- Not right next to traffic or the lake. More shade as long as you plan around the trees rather than cutting them down-- please don't cut them down!
- That you have to chop down green space with treason in it for no good reason
- I would keep existing shade trees (areas A and B) as it will take years to regrow those. Might as well construct on area C which was recently modified. Additionally, Location C is close to the sport court.
- Worried about drowning if too close to water, little kids/disabled kids wandering off
- I'm concerned about lack of shade in location C and how close it is to parking
- I prefer B over A and C because with little kids, I would rather be a little farther from both the lake and the parking lot so I have a little extra time to catch the kiddos who like to wander off.
- closest to the lake should be left open for other activities.
- "C ~ too close to townhomes
- too far from pavilion
- if there's an emergency, the kids need to be near their parents, and not the park residents"
- "Yes !!! Extremely important to keep the noise level/crime down for the surrounding neighborhood . Sport courts and lounge areas would only bring in more homeless people which has already been a problem for years along with possible fights and late night basketball games !
- Keep the playground small and enhance the greenery of Sullivan Park."

- I am female, and I was flashed by a man in the park a few months ago (to the left of the photo, by the lake). I would prefer the playground be in a safe and visible location.
- Location B is my least favorite as it sits about 50 feet from my front door. I bought my townhome because of the view of the lake. I don't want to look at a playground. B location would be right next to the west side Parkside townhomes. I think C would be close to the parking area, and would be very visible from the shelter. Also would like to see the portable bathrooms near the parking lot.
- Requiring additional trees (shade, habitat, etc) to be removed.
- Yes, A is WAY TOO Close to the walking path, unless there would be a tall barrier between the new playground and the path, I think there would be a lot of kids on the path causing issues for walkers, riders, pets and wild animals.
- "Yes. Keep the play area away from the nature area. We will be losing wildlife thanks to the new housing no one in the area wants. Plus, the more visibility, the safer children will be."
- No
- Location c being close to the lot/cars feels like it would be the least safe for kids.
- Don't put it adjacent to the path around the lake where there are hazards like runners, dogs and bicyclists.
- Too close to water.
- Too close to the road. Too sunny
- I'd prefer location c to have pickleball courts since it's flat and that's what's popular now.
- If the playground could be fenced in that could be a nice feature if it's a playground designed for younger kids. I don't know the demographic in the neighborhood to know what age range it will target.
- A - too close to lake and main walking path
- To far away from pavilion to watch kids while having a gathering in the pavilion
- Close to townhomes
- Spot A is too close to the lake.
- Kids might drown in water
- Dont want to eliminate dog running space.
- Option C is too close to the parking lot and street - easy for kids to run off into traffic unless there was a fence. It's also the furthest away from the pavilion - especially if there is an event being held there and caregivers want to watch their children on the playground nearby.
- Cutting down even more trees
- Too close to the water/bike path
- Too far away from parking lot and police patrol
- Coyotes
- C is a little close to the parking lot which means I'd have to watch to make sure the kids don't run into there while playing.
- Yes, I'm concerned that options A and B would become hangouts after dark due to their location further into the park.
- Location C invites possible child abduction due to the proximity of the parking lot.
- The others are too close to the neighboring townhouses, and farther from the pavilion.
- Please plant more tree and make option A and B area more picnic and family gathering space also install benches and table with improvements in grass quality
- Mostly concerned with the unkept under brush areas where people hang out ,especially between the bridge and lake area. I quit going to this park, way too many stragglers hanging out in the underbrush. Silverwood is much safer.
- Get rid of the silly gym thing. Return the courts.
- I would not want to remove trees from B or A and A seems too close to the lake.
- C seems really close to the parking lot and doesn't offer much shade options. For us the shade is a big must because we all burn so easy from the sun and just don't find it super enjoyable in the hot sun.

- Have you ever played with a toddler near a lake?
- Houses nearby.
- It's should be a resident park not an apartment complex park. Leave it on the residential side for us - who are paying taxes.
- Not to close to the lake
- You idiots better put the fricking tennis courts back.
- Too close to water
- It's far too close to that body of water that's there. Unless the playground is fenced it, Location A is not a great location.
- Closer to the lake is windy. It's windy in the pavilion too.
- i do not like that any of the locations are in a good line of sight from the fitness pad. cannot watch our kids while working out
- Close to the picnic area- away from parking and away from the path.
- Cuts out view of the lake from resident's lakes gn of sight. Too far away from parental supervision.
- Too close to residential property leading to noise that is intolerable for those ingredients in homes.
- The new playground shouldve been left in the old apot, where the fitness court currently is.
- I think the old tennis location has a nice amount of space but there are no trees around that area. It will be very hot and won't be nice to use in the middle of the summer. Also, it is close to the street which will make it a little more dangerous and a bit noisier.
- It would be nice to keep the larger trees and green space in areas A and B.
- All three locations seem fine to me.

Other (Play Equipment)

- To be a truly inclusive playground experience there needs to be a fence around the perimeter of the play equipment for children with cognitive disabilities
- Nature play & pretend play, not themed (the pirate ship at Ostrander is dumb); not pastel or fluorescent...use natural colors.
- Bathroom facilities IN the playground area
- Upper body hanging bars like the old one had to develop arm strength
- Basketball court
- Ones like the old playground and put it in the old spot
- We also enjoy natural play structures as well as bridges and telescopes, large netted climbing structures
- Soccer
- Fence for elopers
- see saw, basketball court
- play area for bigger kids - all CH parks are built for young kids

What is your connection to Columbia Heights (Other)

- Teacher in Columbia heights answering these questions for my students and as a parent for my own kids
- I live on the park
- Grew up in Columbia Heights, parents still live here, I work here.
- One of our children goes to a private school there.
- I'm familiar with the area
- Work by the park and take the children here for a variety of activities including nature walks around the pond

- In the CH school district and use these parks
- I live in Fridley but used to live in Columbia Heights and still have friends there
- I am a nanny in Edina and part of a large nanny group. We frequently are looking for new, safe parks-especially parks that are fenced in.
- In laws/family live in Heights

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

- I would like to see modern, inclusive equipment that still fits into the park's natural surroundings. Incorporation of music and sensory activities is a huge bonus for this of us with young kids. Safety in the park is a large concern, especially with additional housing planned. With unhoused individuals already staying in the park and a number of violent incidents in the last few years, visibility from the street is a necessity.
- While I have no children at home, I have 16 grandchildren and bring them to our CH parks for swimming or play. Having an outdoor pickleball court as well as skateboard gentle structures would arch a variety of age levels. Inclusive playground equipment is a must! Musical features provide serenity.
- I never see anyone using the blue fitness area. The space could have been used for something else. The playground always had children at it. I hope the new one is just as good as the one that was removed.
- Please make sure your design is site sensitive and respects the critical root zones of existing trees in order to have some natural shade around the playground.
- "Please consider fully enclosing the playground with a fence. If the aim is for this is to be an inclusive playground, there needs to not only be accessible swings and other play equipment, but also a fence. Many neurodivergent children are elopers and are drawn to water, especially bodies of water. They do not understand the consequences of running away from the park and would likely run straight into the water. It's especially imperative considering the lake is right there. I grew up in Columbia Heights and I'm now raising my family here. My children are disabled (Autism Spectrum Disorder) and it's a bummer having to drive down to Richfield for a fully enclosed playground so they can be themselves without an adult hovering over them. I cannot safely take them to any playground in Columbia Heights by myself. And if not this park, please consider this information with the next playground that gets redone. Families in the disability community are tired of getting looked over and forgotten."
- This space needs to stay community focused. I am very concerned about the impact of the proposed multifamily units in terms of parking, environmental impact, and overall safety of the area.
- I'd love to see some elements of a nature playground like Tamarak Nature Center.
- I have grandchildren so I would like to use the park for them.
- Kids and adults love swings! Let's have several! A playground with several "towers" or platforms is always fun. Woodchips seem messy. Well drained artificial turf is nice. They have it at Valleyview elementary. Shade is important, even mildly hot days can cause playgrounds to be miserable in the sun.
- Question number 4: I answered that in respect to the whole park. Currently we have a great tree canopy and natural area for the park to feel like are aren't in a first ring city. Don't destroy!
- Playground structures should never been removed from old location. Sport Court is now mostly used by children as play/climbing structure. Unsafe situation! Court should have been in another location or another park. Not an asset to this park's natural environment. Each park has it's unique environment and purpose. Sullivan is valued for it's nature. The planned extreme high density housing adjacent is going to be detrimental and erode the natural environment. City certainly did not listen to residents.
- A fence around the playground is ideal for us.
- "Walking path needs to be replaced, not replaced. water quality of lake needs improvement
- Work out area was a waste of money, nobody uses it, other than kids use it for a jungle gym. Play ground should have been left where it was, and workout area put towards east side of parking lot
- Trees can be planted to shade areas.
- I have a feeling no matter what is suggested by the present residents. The city council will, or have already decided what is best for them and what the developers of Medtronic's want."
- Move the fitness court and put the playground there if feasible.

- Sullivan park has so much potential, however it feels the city has abandoned it. The amount of garbage in the area, especially in the water is concerning. We definitely need a playground, but we also need a basketball court, trail repairs and more garbage and recycling receptacles. It would also be great to have covered pavilions or gathering spaces for groups and/or families.
- Turf has been shown to cause cancer as much of it is made from old tires. It's not a safe option. I live within walking distance and spend a lot of time in this park, I hope we can find something that supports all park users :)
- Anything that promotes nature play would be great!
- Bathrooms please
- I had kids and I took them to play at nice playground behind the high school. LOTS of kids playing and having fun. I walk my dog around Sullivan Lk daily and I always saw parents with young kids using the old playground. NOBODY uses the new Pullups monstrosity; huge waste of money. At least put something FUN on the rubber flooring. Pullups stations are not FUN. Please don't attract teenagers, they discourage families from bringing their young kids.
- You could get rid of that "fitness court" that I Ave not seen one person use. Everyone walks up to it and says what is this and how do you use it.
- Make it practical and nature inspired, not something that looks out of place or will be outdated in 5 years, and low maintenance so it doesn't need to be replaced again in 10 years.
- This is my first time with my comments. I live a block away and I used to be able to see people using the tennis courts from kitchen window. Hope the area where the tennis courts were will have the use that it once had when my five children and their friends used it a lot. I remember when there was no park there when we moved into this area and after it was developed it served our family well for many years.
- I would like to see some of the Medtronic property turned into a large off-leash dog park with space to throw balls. Add a water fountain / spigot outside the bathrooms for dog dish.
- Thank you for improving our parks!
- We would like playground equipment that's for a mix of ages, not just a toddler playground and not just an older kids playground.
- We were disappointed to see the courts go. My kids loved watching the neighbors play volleyball there and it brought a lot of life to the park and the neighborhood. We would like to see those come back.
- I would like to see improvements to the lakeshore and water quality.
- The outhouses MUST be moved from Parkside residents' front yards. Their current placement is offensive, smelly, unsanitary, and an insult to the residents of the townhomes. The removal of one of 2 is most appreciated, but none of you would like even 1 in your front yard! Thank you so much for your understanding and consideration!
- I don't have children at home but my grandchildren play at the park often. Ages 8 to 12.
- This entire surrounding neighborhood has been frustrated from day one!! The fitness court was decided without any notice to the surrounding homes!! This choice unfortunately does not enhance the natural habitat we love . The city is hurting the surrounding wildlife that we have loved watching each day!! There are many other larger parks in Columbia Heights that have the space to install basketball and sport court to fit the need!! Stop cutting down important trees and shrubs that our park needs! Rebuild the playground and been done !!
- We can't wait!!!
- Ensure safety alongside the lake. People say there are animals like snakes and coyotes.
- Please try to keep as much green space as possible. Families enjoy playing volleyball, frisbee, soccer in the open areas. Please don't place the playground equipment in B or on the south side of area C. Those locations would be directly in front of the Parkside townhomes, and would be right next to our front doors. Use the old tennis court area where parking is close, and it would be visible from the shelter.
- Keep it family and community friendly, well lit and have law enforcement drive through often, including around the lake trail. (Due to homeless and teenage shenanigans. I walk the trail daily and enjoy the beauty of the lake and park and love to see it busy with families. Maybe add a skating rink for winter
- Need to provide a variety of physical activities for young children for the playground. A one hoop basket ball would be nice for older youth 7-14 and an activity for a child and parent to do together.
- No
- I have grand kids that visit.
- Please have a Pickleball court.
- A fence around the playground is helpful for safety.

- "A fence would be nice.
- Off topic but it would be great to have a dog run in the area maybe in the park here.
- A wooden ship would be fun. Goes with the theme of the pond"
- Based on what people are playing now in Columbia Heights I think pickleball makes sense. Also Ecuadorian volleyball courts get used a lot it seems.
- I would love to have a pickle ball court
- You should have built the Fitness Pad in the Tennis Court spot so the kids have something to do while the adults work out. The survey should have been sent out prior to the playground being torn down.
- "It is very important to replace the playground at Sullivan. This park is used by many. It would be wonderful if there was a court still for basketball / pickleball / volleyball but most importantly a large playground
- It would also be nice if the lake was clean out a bit. It's so mucky and overgrown"
- No pickleball. I actually play pickleball but the park is too close to my house and I don't want to listen to it all day.
- Pick some different color combo for your next post card mailing. Hard to read. No basketball court. Playground away from housing. Outhouse away from housing. No tennis or pickled all. Built on a swamp.
- It would be nice to have an inclusive shaded park for people disabilities
- We're really excited about a new park in this area!! Thanks
- Shade is important with the sun being so powerful.
- Leave lots of green space. No pickleball or basketball. Too loud and disruptive.
- I think it is so great to have this survey!
- Incredibly appalled that you ripped out the children's playground that was used all the time and put in a fitness court that isn't even safe for the kids to use. Kids going there and only having that are going to get hurt trying to use it, because they aren't going to read all the stuff on it, they're just going to play on it because there isn't anywhere else for them. The city is already incredibly inaccessible for people to be outside with a lack of sidewalks and crosswalks, and you've made it worse. This also shows kids that fitness and exercise is more important than play, and at their age, that's not true.
- It would be nice to have this started/completed ASAP. We were bummed that the fitness area went in first. We live very close to Sullivan park and was our go to playground.
- I am very negative on the basketball court. In other neighborhoods they have been a magnet for trouble particularly after dark.
- Please include both big kid and little kid play structures
- "I am retired from a K-8 Chinese Immersion School. I played a big part in designing a \$350K playground on school property. During that time I used to manage recess for 3 hours a day. I know what children like to play on. I would be willing to volunteer my opinion/experience with this project.
- Also, I ride my bike through the park at least once a day in good weather. With the last meeting at the park with Kevin Hansen there was a strong request to have the weeds along the walk/bike path trimmed back so there would be more room for walkers and bikers."
- "Is there any possibility of moving the portable toilets closer to the pavilion/fitness court/play area? Especially now that the tennis courts are gone?"
- Is it possible to leave the tennis court location as a grassy area?"
- No pickleball courts, please!"
- Plant more trees and make it shaded and if possible construct decks and sitting areas around the lake by extending the paths around the lake.
- Definitely would like a basketball court. If tennis court is not an option, a pickle ball court would be great as well
- Bring back the tennis court please!!
- Monitor the park for unleashed dogs and folks hanging out in the underbrush. This park is a hidden spot so visibility is helpful. Now that Medtronic is gone, I no longer feel safe walking on the trails at this park. It's a beautiful area, hopefully it is developed to bring in more families and maintenance near the bridge area near the lake so people don't hide out there for whatever reasons.
- The gym thing is silly, put playground equipment there and apologize for letting consultants ruin things.
- We need field soccer game...to much kids and young need field for play soccer....pleaseee 🙏🙏🙏
- Intention around slide materials so they don't get super hot!

- The last playground was for really small children. My very tall child hasn't been able to for to play on it since kindergarten. I'd like to see more inclusive play for multiple ages and abilities.
- Bathrooms accessible year round!!
- Looking forward to a new park. It would be really cool if there could be some sort of water play feature like at Mississippi Gateway Park or Springbrook Nature Center.
- Landscape structures Inc has a monopoly on the parks around town and I don't care for them. Hoping you are going with a different company.
- Sullivan is our most visited park in the city. My daughter would love monkey bars and some sort of zip line type thing seen at other parks (i.e. Moore Lake Park).
- This is my primary park - I walk the lake 1-2x a day. Hate to see the trees leaving and such a huge housing project. Why not town homes like we have now or lower 2/3 story senior apartments
- Area A allows kids to go look at the lake, and use the nearby fitness court, but it's still close to the shelter/tables.
- I would love to see a second splash pad. My friends with younger kids love those!
- Splash pad
- if you don't put the courts back in I, I swear
- Please add a fence for autistic kids who elope!
- Please put in courts for our Latino neighbors to be able to resume playing volleyball. This was going on all the time on the old court.
- Please no woodchips! Please use the bouncy turf, like the one Valley View Elementary school has in their playground. Please provide a variety of things, and make playground bigger. The previous playground was too small. We've lived here 30+ years; our children and grandchildren love that park, but woodchips are terrible for children. More seating with shade.
- I am glad the playground is returning because the sport court is weird.
- Please make it accessible and inclusion all kids deserve to play.
- I'd like to see equipment for ages 1-13. Something for everyone who come to the park to get exercise and play.
- Pickleball court!!
- Dedicate play structure for children 2-5, simulator to what Fridley recently installed
- I want to comment on placement and installation of lift station. Moving it close to east entrance places it on property line with home owners association. Noise is not welcome. Installation and or failure risks back flow to homes. Will city pay for damages due to this change? It should. Placement ignores the homes. Also toilet facilities are unsightly. Placement is offensive to neighboring homes with view of park. Place them in an obscure and fenced place. Further, the fitness court was imposed by city. It's an eyesore and a fad...that will not be used . It spoiled the walking and nature features of the park.
- The old playground equipment really wasn't that old and did not need to be replaced or moved.
- "First off, thanks for doing this. I love that you are improving the experience for kids in Columbia heights.
- I really think it is important to have a fenced off play area. It is very important for safety. If a dog gets off its leash or if there are some unsavory characters around, it really helps to keep the kids safe. Also, as a parent of twin toddlers, it's nice to know my kids won't run off into the street or the lake if I turn my back for a second.
- Good lighting would also be nice for an extra added safety element."
- Thanks for revamping the park!
- Would love to see a more natural play structure in this area. Less plastic. More wood. Features promoting open ended play, like wooden disks for balancing and jumping too, vs a plastic slide.
- Please don't use surfacing that small children are likely to attempt to eat!