



proud past, promising future

Tower Crest Neighborhood Park Public Comment Form Summary

Comment Period: March 1-28, 2010

Number of Comment Forms Mailed Out: 750
Total Returned: 86 (75 paper; 11 electronic)
Overall Return Rate: 12%

Please note that this is a summary of comments received and is not a word-for-word transcript of all written comments. The original comment forms are available for public review upon request at the Clark County Public Service Center in Vancouver. Please call Jilayne Jordan at (360) 397-6118 x. 4949 for more information.

Question 1: Please tell us how important the following neighborhood park elements are to you.

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Don't Know/ No Opinion
a) Walking and biking trails	55 (66%)	25 (30%)	2 (3%)	1 (1%)
b) Open grassy fields for playing catch, touch football, Frisbee, etc.	34 (41%)	26 (32%)	19 (23%)	3 (4%)
c) Additional trees, landscaping, etc.	22 (28%)	25 (31%)	29 (36%)	4 (5%)
d) Screening and privacy plantings for adjacent neighbors	38 (48%)	20 (25%)	13 (17%)	8 (10%)
e) Playground equipment	40 (48%)	22 (27%)	17 (20%)	4 (5%)
f) Basketball half court/sport court/small skateboarding spot	31 (37%)	14 (17%)	33 (40%)	5 (6%)
g) Picnic tables	29 (35%)	29 (35%)	22 (27%)	2 (3%)
h) Park benches/seating areas	43 (52%)	25 (30%)	13 (16%)	2 (2%)

NOTE: Not everyone who sent in a comment form responded to this question, and not everyone who responded marked a box for each item.

Most Important Park Elements

More than 50% selecting “Very Important”

1. Walking and biking trails 66%
2. Park benches/seating areas 52%

- The majority of respondents wanted to see the park stay as natural as possible, with only minimal improvements made (i.e. trails and benches only).
 - Playground equipment and screening plantings for adjacent neighbors received an equal amount of support, with 48% selecting “Very Important.”
 - The least support was for a basketball half court, sports court or small skateboarding spot with 40% selecting “Not Important.”
 - Also, the majority of respondents didn’t think additional trees or landscaping were a priority.
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Question 2: Have you ever visited this undeveloped park before? If you answered “Yes”, what did you do there?

YES: 66 (75%)

NO: 20 (25%)

- Respondents said they engaged in the following activities:
 - Walked.
 - Rode bike.
 - Picked blackberries.
 - Walked dog(s).
 - Son rode his bike on the BMX track.
 - Played with own children.
 - Played in the snow.
 - Watched birds and other wildlife.
 - Enjoyed the foliage.
 - Walked through the park to get to Kunze Farm.
 - Watched children ride bikes on BMX track.
 - Broke up fights between gangs and local children.
 - Picked up litter.
 - Explored.
 - Played.
 - Some respondents did not answer this question.
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Question 3: Is there something special about this park you would like to preserve during the upcoming park development process (i.e. trees, views, access points)?

- Some respondents did not answer this question.
- 7 respondents said there was nothing about the park they wanted to preserve.

- Features that other respondents said they'd like to preserve included:
 - Current hours of operation.
 - Trees (48 respondents).
 - Underbrush for wildlife habitat.
 - Views.
 - Access points.
 - The forested setting.
 - Wildlife and its habitat.
 - Privacy for adjacent neighbors.
 - Bike trail.
 - Noise buffer between adjacent property and park.
 - BMX bicycle track.
 - Open feel.
 - The open area.
 - Existing gates from neighbors' properties into the park.
 - Safety.
 - Access to Kunze Farm store/road.
 - The topography.
 - The main access point.
 - Natural surface trails.
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Question 4: Local youth have created an informal BXM bicycle track in the park and on the adjacent city Public Works property, south of the water tower. Would you support allowing this activity to continue on the park property?

- Some respondents did not answer this question.
- Yes: 50 (72%)
No: 19 (28%)
- Comments in favor:
 - It's a good outlet for local children.
 - Prefer they ride in the park than in the street.
 - Only if it is well maintained.
 - Only if there can be other park amenities also.
 - Only if it's safe; don't allow them to ride into the street anymore.
 - The children spent a lot of time building it. Their initiative and hard work should be rewarded.
 - These children are getting exercise and socializing, which is a good thing.
 - The users are courteous to people walking their dogs.
 - It gives teenagers something to do.
 - Close it if the children don't help keep it looking nice.
 - Only if it's not abused.
 - The children love it.
 - If it's OK with Public Works/water department.
 - This sort of activity is very healthy for the children.
 - Only if you don't add a skateboarding spot also.
 - Bike trails are a great park amenity.

- Only if park rules are actively enforced.
 - It's a safe place for children to expend some energy.
 - Only if it's open to everyone, not just the people who built it.
 - Locate it next to the water tower.
 - Keeps the children out of mischief.
 - Only if it's separated from the rest of the park amenities in its own area.
 - The county should consider developing a bike park.
- Comments against:
 - The people who use it are littering, smoking and breaking glass.
 - The people who use it are riding out into the street, which is extremely dangerous.
 - The people who use it are rude and swear a lot. This would not be appropriate around small children.
 - Might support it only if it can be safely combined with uses for people of all ages, like walking trails, a playground, etc.
 - The paths are ugly and take up too much space.
 - The paths are too steep and slippery during the wet season.
 - The people who use it cause too much damage to the park.
 - It could be dangerous for other park uses if not contained in one specific area.
 - This type of activity attracts an element we don't want in the park.
 - It creates too much noise in the park.
 - Neighborhood vandalism has gotten worse since this track was built.
 - Unsafe for walkers and young children.

***NOTE:** The property located directly south of the water tower belongs to the city Public Works Department, and is not part of the park. Decisions about whether or not any bike tracks or jumps located on non-park property will be allowed to stay in place will be made by Vancouver Public Works.*

Question 5: Do you have any concerns about this upcoming park development project?

- Some respondents did not answer this question.
- Some concerns involved safety and security, including:
 - Prevent children from riding their bikes and jumping the embankment along NE 54th Street and into the road. This is extremely dangerous.
 - This park is very dark at night.
 - That crime will increase.
 - People playing ball may try to climb the fence around the water tower to retrieve stray balls, etc. This should be prevented.
 - Traffic speeds on NE 54th Street are very high.
 - The park will attract drugs and homeless people.
 - This is a very dark section of NE 54th Street. Please install street lights.
 - Install speed humps.
 - This area is already used after dark for partying.
 - Create more open space for better visibility. This park feels unsafe currently.
 - Keep gangs out.
 - Anything you put in the park will be vandalized.
 - Install lighting in and around the park to prevent after hours use of the park.
 - Law enforcement will need to patrol the park regularly.

- Vandalism and graffiti.
- This park already attracts criminal activities and drug use.
- Benches, picnic tables and playground equipment will just give drug dealers/users a nicer place to hang out. Don't provide things that will encourage this.
- Need law enforcement to patrol/visit the park on a regular basis.
- The park needs to be fully fenced.
- Current bad behavior in the park will continue unless the park is supervised or the park rules are actively enforced.
- Other concerns included:
 - Provide handicapped parking spaces so those with disabilities can access the park.
 - Don't overdevelop it/keep it simple.
 - Don't pave most of it and destroy animal habitat.
 - The embankment along NE 54th St. is eroded due to bicycles.
 - The only available parking is in front of people's homes.
 - That it not be developed solely for children. Provide things for adults as well.
 - Do not allow dogs off the leash.
 - Increased use means increased litter.
 - Increased noise.
 - Very excited.
 - Do not remove any trees.
 - We need to preserve our natural areas.
 - That children living on 66th Avenue will not be able to access the park.
 - Not sure there's enough room for the BMX track and other uses. The BMX track would need to be separated from other, family uses.
 - Purchase additional adjacent property to make it bigger.
 - Leave it the way it is now: a nice wooded retreat.
 - Thrilled it's going to finally be developed.
 - Waste of public funds.
 - Find a way to engage local youth in constructive activities, not just loitering.
 - Keep active use areas visible and close to the street.
 - Clean up the area around Kunze Farm where teenagers go to party, and leave the rest of the park alone.
 - Level the large hole in the middle of the park. It's a hazard.
 - Fix the erosion problem on the front of the park caused by children jumping their bikes into the road.
 - Prevent neighbors from dumping trash and yard waste into the park by putting up fencing.
 - Worried that the park won't be maintained well.
 - Include lots of garbage cans.
 - Include a dog waste station with bags.
 - Make sure the park meets the needs of multiple generations, not just children.
 - Keep it cost effective and low maintenance.
 - Noise pollution.
 - Skateboarding areas are noisy and require constant supervision to be successful. Don't include one here.
 - Light pollution.
 - Add new amenities to existing open areas and leave the rest alone.
 - Removing any of the trees in the park could cause instability of the remaining trees.
 - Need to maintain wildlife habitat in this quickly developing area.
 - Privacy for adjacent neighbors.
 - Including a basketball or skateboarding area in the park will decrease the value of our home.
 - BMX bike use in the park could conflict with people who just want to take a peaceful stroll.

- It will only appeal to a few people.
 - Children will be allowed to keep digging holes throughout the park.
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Question 6: Do you have any other comments about this project?

- Some respondents did not answer this question, or said they didn't have any other comments.
- Summary of general comments:
 - Want a place to go and read or play ball with children/grandchildren.
 - Good idea.
 - The neighborhood children need a safe place to play.
 - Cut back all the brush to improve visibility into the park from the road.
 - Put up barriers to prevent bicyclists from racing into the street from inside the park.
 - Install sidewalk along the 54th Street to get pedestrians out of the street.
 - This park is needed.
 - Leave it alone.
 - Integrate it with the Kunze Farm.
 - It would be nice to have access to a developed park.
 - Keep it as natural as possible.
 - Looking forward to this park being developed.
 - Brush clearing over the last few years has made the park feel safer.
 - Remove some of the trees.
 - Can't wait.
 - Our family would love to volunteer to help with this park.
 - There are no sidewalks in the neighborhood. The park provides a great place to get some exercise safely.
 - Don't replace big trees with little, young trees. The older trees provide more valuable habitat.
 - Make security of immediately adjacent neighbors a priority.
 - Open it up, but keep as many trees as possible.
 - Provide privacy screening for adjacent neighbors.
 - Remove the ivy and fill in the holes.
 - Open the park up more for better visibility.
 - Separate the active use areas based on age and area of interest (i.e. one space for children and teens, one space for families and adults and one space for senior citizens).
 - Keep all the trees.
 - Glad a park will be developed so close to our home.
 - This would be a great spot to meet neighbors and develop a better sense of community.
 - Make it a dog walking park with improved natural surface trails and nothing else.
 - The park will be a welcome addition to the neighborhood.
 - Jorgenson Woods Neighborhood Park is a perfect blueprint for how to develop this park.
 - Take into greater consideration the opinions of the immediately adjacent property owners.
 - Great project.
- Specific features respondents asked be included in the park:
 - A small open lawn area in the middle.
 - Access point from the west side near Kunze Farm.
 - Lighting.

- On street parking.
- Paved trails.
- Groomed trails and trashcans.
- Bat houses in the trees.
- Multiple access points.
- Sunny area to play in.
- Shady spots throughout and green grassy areas for blankets and babies/small toddlers.
- Space for a community food garden (would be willing to assist with setting it up and running it).
- Off-leash dog park.
- Basketball half court.
- Small parking lot, so people don't park on surrounding streets.
- Tennis courts.
- Dog waste bag dispensers.
- Full court basketball.
- Multiple pieces of playground equipment for area children.
- Ferns and small native shrubs replacing tall undergrowth.
- Natural privacy screens for adjacent neighbors.
- Lots of playground equipment, swings, slides, etc.
- Disc golf course.
- Two small off-leash dog runs, one for large dogs and one for small dogs, with benches.

END