



proud past, promising future

Sorenson Neighborhood Park Public Comment Form Summary

Comment Period: Jan. 14 - Feb.1, 2011

Number of Comment Forms Mailed Out: 1,442
Total Returned: 254 (244 paper; 10 electronic)
Overall Return Rate: 18%

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	192 (76%)	37 (15%)	18 (7%)	4 (2%)
b) Open grassy field for playing catch, touch football, Frisbee, etc.	156 (63%)	73 (30%)	13 (5%)	4 (2%)
c) Additional trees, landscaping and other habitat enhancement	106 (44%)	81 (33%)	49 (20%)	7 (3%)
d) Screening and privacy plantings for adjacent neighbors	56 (23%)	69 (29%)	89 (37%)	28 (11%)
e) Playground equipment	113 (46%)	73 (30%)	53 (21%)	7 (3%)
f) Basketball half court / sport court	60 (24%)	62 (25%)	109 (45%)	15 (6%)
g) Small skateboarding spot (1,500 square feet or smaller)	32 (13%)	36 (15%)	159 (64%)	20 (8%)
h) Picnic tables	102 (41%)	105 (43%)	33 (13%)	7 (3%)
i) Park benches/seating areas	180 (72%)	60 (24%)	6 (2%)	4 (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

“Very Important” selected (more than 50%)

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|-------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Walking and biking trails | 76% |
| 2. Park benches/seating areas | 72% |
| 3. Open grassy field | 63% |

“Very Important” AND “Somewhat Important” combined (more than 50%)

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|------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Benches/seating areas | 96% |
| 2. Open grassy field | 93% |
| 3. Walking and biking trails | 91% |
| 4. Picnic tables | 84% |
| 5. Trees and landscaping | 77% |
| 6. Playground equipment | 76% |
| 7. Screening plantings | 52% |

- The least support was for the small skateboarding spot (64% selecting “Not Important”) and the basketball half court/sports court (45% selecting “Not Important”).

Question 2: Have you ever visited this property before?

Yes: 193 – many people said they visit the park regularly (1+ times per week)

No: 53

If you answered “yes,” what did you do there?

- Walked dog(s) or let dogs run/play off the leash (a very large majority cited this activity)
- Walked around the property
- Hiked up the hill
- Sledded the hill in the winter
- Played with children/grandchildren
- Explored
- Watched dogs playing
- Played football
- Played waffle ball
- Picked berries and plums
- Enjoyed view from the top of the hill
- Played baseball/softball/catch
- Climbed trees
- Hit golf balls
- Enjoyed nature
- Stargazing
- Played tag or hide and seek
- Ran through
- Rode bikes
- Flew kites
- Played Frisbee or disc golf

- Birdwatching
 - Walked or drove past
 - Watched the sunset from the hill
 - Nothing, because it's not developed yet
 - Watched neighborhood fireworks on Fourth of July
 - Picnicked
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Question 3: Is there something special about this park you would like to preserve during the upcoming development process (i.e. trees, views, access points)?

140 people responded to this question (55%).

The primary features the majority of respondents wanted to preserve were:

- Existing trees, including the plum trees
- The small grove of trees
- The hill in the northeast corner (for the views and sledding opportunities)

Additional features/elements respondents were interested in preserving were:

- Views from adjacent homes
 - Using the property as an off-leash dog park
 - Open spaces
 - Peacefulness
 - The thicket near the east side of the park
 - Blackberry bushes
 - Open feeling
 - Grassy areas
 - Everything
 - The access from NW 26th Avenue
 - Existing topography
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Question 4: Do you have any concerns about this upcoming park development project? If so, please explain.

109 people responded to this question (43%).

Most of the concerns respondents expressed were about:

- The need for additional on- or off-street parking.
- Providing additional access points on the east or northeast side of the park.
- Support for continuing to allow dog owners to use the property as an off-leash dog park in some way. (Note: Off-leash use of this property is currently prohibited by Clark County Code as stipulated on the park rules sign.)
- Opposition to including a skateboarding facility in the park because of concerns with after-hours use, increased crime and vandalism, too much noise and potential conflicts between users in such a small space.

Other concerns were:

- Don't overdevelop it – keep it simple and natural.

- Don't develop it at all.
- Prune the plum trees and remove dead trees.
- Keep the hill and the foot of the hill open for sledding – avoid adding obstacles.
- Don't plant trees on the hill.
- Improve visibility and get rid of any hiding places by removing brush.
- Make it a walk-to/bike-to park only. No cars/motorized vehicles.
- Do not allow access from NW 109th Street and 21st Avenue on the east side of the park.
- Don't block adjacent neighbors' views with landscaping or structures.
- Concerned that there won't be anything for teenagers to do in the park and that it will be focused only on small children and adults.
- Ensure that any lighting installed in the park is properly shielded to shine at the ground only and don't use "acorn" style lights.
- Would prefer to see property taxes reduced and the park left undeveloped.
- Funding should go to other programs, like education.
- There are no sidewalks on NW 21st Avenue and it's unsafe to walk on.
- Concerned that the park will attract drug dealers, vandalism gangs and other crime.
- Need to provide a skateboarding spot to help get kids out of the street.
- Don't flatten the hill.
- Concerned it won't be maintained well due to lack of funding.
- Concerned that the park will become a hang-out for teenagers and others at night.
- There already are parks and school properties in the area with playgrounds, basketball and soccer facilities. Keep this one more natural and passive.
- Concerned that any formal, irrigated lawn areas will attract organized sports teams to the park that will disrupt the neighborhood.
- Don't encourage after-hours use of the park.
- Concerned that visitors will park on adjacent roads and block residents' driveways.
- Don't take up valuable park acreage for a parking lot.
- Ensure neighbors' privacy.
- This park isn't needed.
- Don't close it off to bikes.
- We can't afford it.
- Use as little pavement as possible.
- Concerned about increased traffic in the neighborhood because of the park.
- Keep maintenance costs low.
- Park rules should be changed to anticipate the need for long-term camping for homeless people when the economic recession worsens.
- Would like the Sheriff's Office to patrol the park regularly.
- Stop allowing off-leash use of the park. It is potentially dangerous.
- Teenagers have begun hanging out and partying in the "tree house" area of the park. Concerned that this will worsen.
- Don't want to pay more taxes.
- Make the park open and visible to help prevent criminals from hanging out there.
- Some dog owners fail to pick up after their pets, creating unsanitary conditions. This type of use should not be allowed and the scoop laws should be enforced.

Question 5: Do you have any other comments about this project?

- Don't make it another "cookie cutter" park.

- Don't use impervious pavement – retain the current level of inflow to our water table and avoid “mitigation.”
- We need more dog parks, not more play parks.
- Work with the Vancouver School District to see if access to, and interim use of, their undeveloped property is possible.
- The plum trees in the park provide a link to this area's agricultural past. Don't remove them.
- Make sure the park blends in with its surroundings.
- Provide things for older children to do.
- Very excited about the new park.
- Emphasize the natural environment with places for quiet play and reflection.
- Build it sooner. We've been waiting a very long time.
- Put a placeholder in the plan for a restroom/portable toilet and let the community raise money to install and maintain it.
- Keep it dog friendly.
- Make this park like Kate and Clarence LaLonde Park on NE 99th Street.
- There is a huge need for an off-leash dog park on the west side of town. Put one here and work with DOGPAW to maintain it.
- This park will be a wonderful asset to the community.
- This is a good use of our tax dollars.
- Parts of the park are wet and muddy during certain times of the year.
- Would like to use the park for large family reunions, organization meetings or weddings, but would need adequate parking and restrooms.
- A hedge on the east side of the park would improve the view.
- Provide something for all youth to enjoy that's close to home.
- Don't make this a dog park.
- Don't encourage bicycling on the hill because of erosion problems.
- Level a portion of the property so the hill doesn't take up quite so much space.
- We don't need any more parks.
- Use permeable concrete walking paths for stormwater management.
- The schools already provide places for teenagers to congregate. Keep this park family-friendly.
- Provide playground equipment for older children that is more “extreme.”
- Use native plants and limit watering.
- Provide lighting to allow for evening use of the park (watching the sunset and stargazing from the hill).
- Dogs should be kept on the leash in the park.
- Spend as little as possible on development and maintenance.
- Provide a nice quiet place for picnics.
- The park's focal point should be the playground and a walking trail.
- Other local parks have basketball hoops, but none have a small skateboarding spot. Please include one here.
- Make the park senior-friendly.
- Fence the playground equipment for younger children for safety.
- Screening and privacy plantings for neighbors are not important because they will create places for litter to collect, and for people to hide and commit crimes.
- This park will create a great sense of community and help us get to know each other better.

Regarding specific park features:

- Needs multiple access points

- Include a Frisbee/disc golf course
- Plant more trees and flowers
- Include a baseball backstop in the northwest corner
- Include several benches/seating areas on the top of the hill for people to enjoy the view
- Enhance the “fort-like” feeling of the small grove of trees – make it a natural play area
- Include parking
- Include a walking path around the perimeter of the park
- Add access points on the south and east sides of the property
- Plant trees and plants that provide nuts and seeds for wildlife
- Include a fenced area for dogs in the park or turned the entire park into a dog park
- Use natural colors on the playground equipment
- Include covered picnic shelters or other covered places to get out of the rain
- Include wall ball
- Include a basketball hoop
- Include lighting for security
- Include swings
- Add a pond or other type of water feature with benches
- Provide off-street parking (a parking lot)
- Include dog waste bag dispensers
- Include lots of garbage cans
- Include a restroom
- Include a skate spot
- Locate benches around the playground for parents to sit and watch their kids play
- Include a paved walking/biking trail
- Provide full-court basketball, not half-court
- Include drinking fountains
- Include playground equipment
- Locate some benches in the shade
- Provide playground equipment for all ages
- Locate walking trail around playground equipment, so parents can keep an eye on their children while they get some exercise
- Include slides
- Include tennis courts
- Include exercise stations along the walking trail
- Include BBQ grills
- Include a baseball diamond
- Include larger signs about the dog leash and scoop laws
- Include climbing, balancing and spinning elements in the playground
- Include volleyball nets
- Provide two separate playgrounds, one for older children and one for younger children
- Include swings that adults can use too
- Include picnic tables
- Provide four or more swings to avoid congestion and waiting
- Provide an open space large enough for playing soccer

END