



May 2019

## Neighborhood Park Engagement Summary—Pelbrook Park

### Process

CWPD embarked on an effort to get neighbor input and opinion about their local, neighborhood park. It started with a guided-discussion in September of 2018. The main question was, “*What would entice neighbors to visit the park more often?*” Hitchcock Design Group led the group conversation in the fall, and followed with a compilation of the comments and the data about the immediate neighborhood.

From that meeting, Hitchcock presented a report to the Park District showing the desired elements, ranked in order of importance. The report was accompanied by a concept layout of the park, based on the residents’ comments.

### Verification

In May of 2019, all neighbors were invited to come to the park to have a look at the concept layout, and to take a look at the priorities from the fall event. Twelve families, including children attended the May session. About 30 people, in all, attended. They were asked to look at pictures representing possible improvements, and the concept drawing. Six of the 12 families had not attended the fall meeting.

The neighbors’ comments on May 6 are summarized as follows:

- Regarding the concept, eight marked “*Great*” and three marked “*Okay*”. None rated it “*Not so good.*”
- The top rated suggestions were the following:
  - Benches and picnic tables
  - More trash receptacles
  - Update the playground
  - Pollinator Patch/natural plantings
- Closely behind the top four were: Paved Path to Playground; Shade around Playground; Drainage Tiles\*; Bike Rack; and, Maintain Open Space.
- Asked to pick just one thing for CWPD to do, about half of the neighbors picked the Paved Path to Playground.
- In fall, CWPD learned that neighbors refer to the park as “Cloverbrook” not Pelbrook. Asked if they’d prefer renaming to Cloverbrook, 100% of the May visitors said *YES!*

## **Patterns and General Consensus**

Simultaneous to the Pelbrook process, CWPD conducted a neighborhood engagement process at Willowbrook Park, using a different consultant. While there were specific differences and preferences regarding the future of the two parks, there were many similarities. Patterns from the two groups' input may give good overall direction for the future of neighborhood parks. The similarities can be listed as follows:

- Un-interrupted, lawn space for open play is valued for a variety of self-directed play (Frisbee, touch football, tag, etc.)
- Both groups see the neighborhood parks as places for children to play, and for parents/grandparents to visit with children
- People like shade trees in the parks, especially around the playgrounds
- Where the playground is set well back from the street/sidewalk, a paved path from sidewalk to playground is highly desired (for strollers, toddlers, older people, bicycles, wagons, etc.)

In addition, residents at both parks were effusive with their thanks and expression of appreciation for a process that actively sought their input and ideas.

## **Next Steps Recommended for Pelbrook Park**

In 2019:

1. Change the name to Cloverbrook Park
2. Pave a path to the playground
3. Update the playground (using the neighbor input process used at other parks)
4. Add bench(es) and picnic table(s) and trash receptacles
5. Plan for small pollinator patch
6. Assess and plan for improving rainwater drainage
7. Tree planting (also, large cottonwood trees to be evaluated by arborist for treatment or replacement)

Follow up improvements may include additional tree planting, hard surface play court, bike racks, and activities.

\*The selection, drainage tiles, refers to addressing parts of the park that tend to hold rainwater, making the turf wet and muddy.