

City of Evanston, IL

Larimer Park Improvements

Community Open House #1

Nichols Middle School

Wednesday January 18, 2023 6:00pm - 8:00pm

Feedback
Summary



Community Open House #1

Nichols Middle School

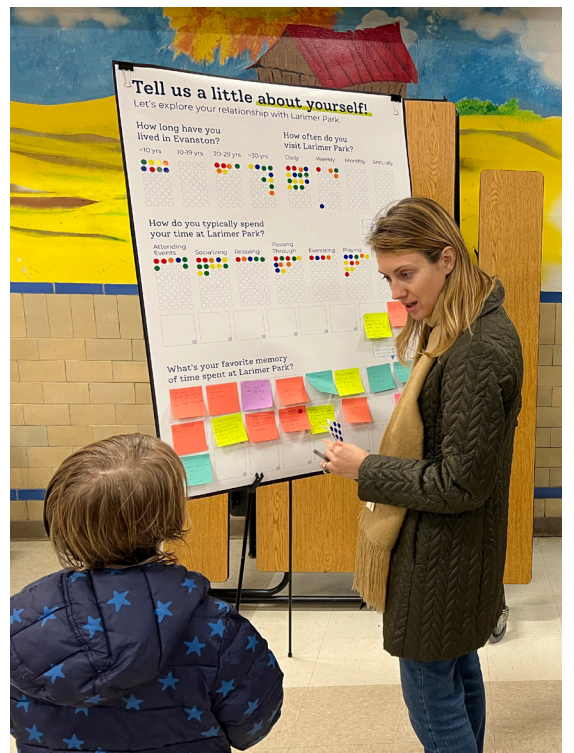
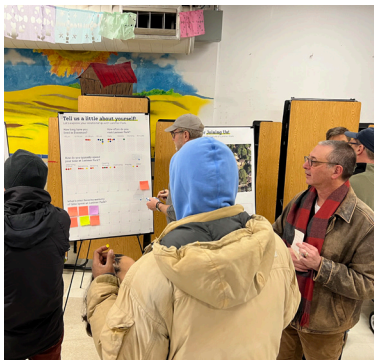
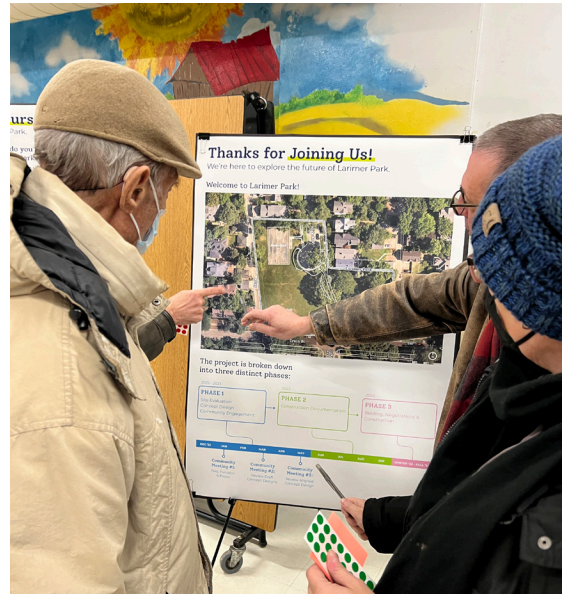
Wednesday January 18, 2023 6:00pm - 8:00pm

Larimer Park | Look, Feel, & Focus

The planning team hosted an open house style meeting with the Evanston community at Nichols Middle School on Wednesday January 18, 2023. During the event, which ran from 6p-8p, attendees participated in a series of interactive exercises designed to introduce the project, explore their relationship with the park, and envision what the future could hold for this beloved community space. This input, along with the planning team's site analysis and field work, form the foundation upon which design concepts for the park will be built.

The following pages document the input received during the event. This is the first of three community engagement touchpoints that will be held during the planning process.





Tell Us A Little About Yourself!

Let's explore your relationship with Larimer Park.

How long have you lived in Evanston?

(41%) >30yrs

(33%) <10yrs

(26%) 20-29yrs

How often do you visit Larimer Park?

(76%) Daily

(24%) Weekly

How do you typically spend your time at Larimer Park?

(23%) Socializing

(22%) Playing

(18%) Passing Through

(14%) Attending Events

(8%) Relaxing

(9%) Exercising

(5%) Other

What's your favorite memory of time spent at Larimer Park?

(7) Kids playing at the playground

(7) Dogs playing together

(4) Skating

(3) Riding bikes

(3) Social events

(3) Playing Baseball



Top Response(s)

(X) *Number of mentions in comments

Tell us a little about yourself!

Let's explore your relationship with Larimer Park.

How long have you lived in Evanston?

<10 yrs	10-19 yrs	20-29 yrs	>30 yrs
●●●●●	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	●●●●●	●●●●●
●●●●●	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	●●●●●	●●●●●
○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○

How often do you visit Larimer Park?

Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually
●●●●●	●●●●●	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
●●●●●	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○

How do you typically spend your time at Larimer Park?

Grab a post-it note and share a bit more!

Attending Events	Socializing	Relaxing	Passing Through	Exercising	Playing	Other
●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●	●●●●●
○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○	○ ○ ○ ○ ○

<p>Dog Playdates!</p>	<p>Daytime</p>						<p>BRINGING OUR PUPPY TO PLAY WITH OTHER DOGS AND FORMING FRIENDSHIPS WITH THEIR HUMANS</p> <p>SOCIALIZING WITH OTHER DOG OWNERS</p> <p>• GAME</p>
-----------------------	----------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

Grab a post-it note and paste it on the board!

What's your favorite memory of time spent at Larimer Park?

<p>TEACHING MY DAUGHTER HOW TO RIDE A BIKE ON THE SIDEWALK</p>	<p>Skating with my sisters, ca. 1975.</p>	<p>to hang out with my dog</p>	<p>JOSS RUNNING</p>	<p>YUCA HED took classes in summer. Dog playing encourage interaction with neighbors</p>	<p>Playing basketball with my cat and playing with our dog</p>	<p>Ice skating & softball</p>	<p>• SEE GRASSHOPPER PARADE they invade the stadium lights</p> <p>• PLAYING HANDBALL</p> <p>• BRINGING OUR PUPPY TO PLAY IN THE LOT</p>
<p>parties @ the pavilion</p>	<p>My daughters playing soccer, learning to ride bikes and socializing outside during early Pandemic. Dog playing w/ others. Skating w/ daughters</p>	<p>1. TAKING KIDS TO PLAYGROUND 2. T-BALL AND BASEBALL MATCHES 3. SKATING</p>	<p>• BLOCK PARTY - Socializing w/ DOG OWNERS - LOVING TO RIDE IN DISCREET CORNERS</p>	<p>Talking my kids to the park & having them meet other kids & make friends. Pick up baseball games with neighborhood kids!</p>	<p>MOVIE IN THE PARK</p>	<p>Playing baseball</p>	<p>Starlight movie concerts / kids bringing their children to play in the lot</p>
<p>Meeting new families with kids - we just moved here</p>	<p>WATCHING KIDS PLAY IN THE BASEBALL FIELD - DAVE GUINNEA THE FIELD</p>	<p>Old dog chasing balls in the field</p>	<p>AYSO - soccer practice</p>	<p>Playing handball for 39 years</p>			
		<p>• PETS with our pet during time learning</p>	<p>Skating rink Daytime</p>				

Come Take A Look Around!

Let's explore Larimer Park together!

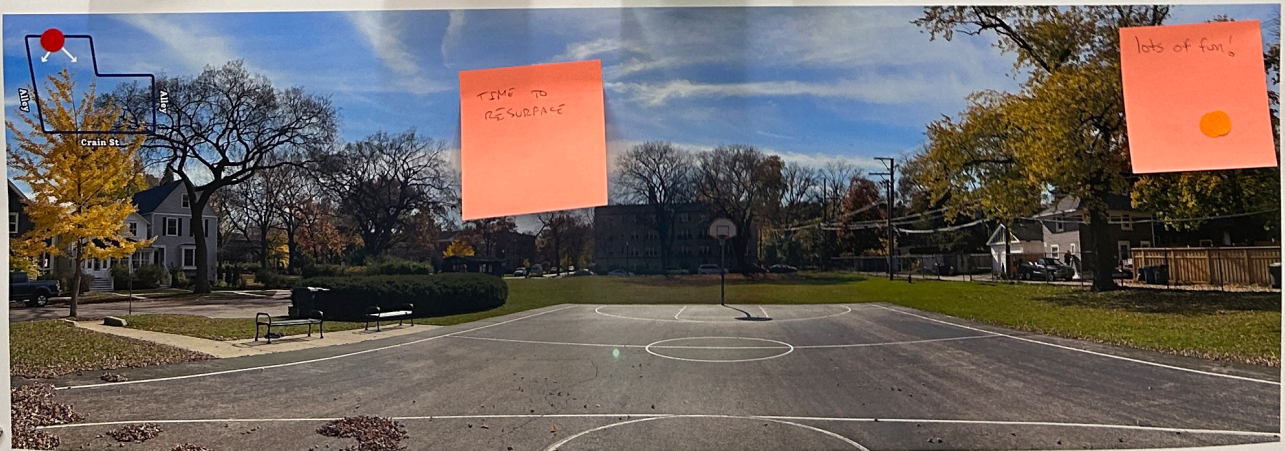
What do you notice about these photos?

- (2) Comfortable and enjoyable tree canopy and shade in summer
- (2) Great open space for play
- (2) Lack of seating
- (2) Small and outdated play structures
- (1) Outdated pavilion needs work
- (1) Appreciate the existing fence style
- (1) ADA concern for play structures
- (1) Outdated basketball court needs to be repaved



Top Response(s)

(X) *Number of mentions in comments



What's Working Well?

Let's explore what you love most about Larimer Park!

My favorite things about Larimer Park are _____ because _____ .

(7) Open space for play and events

(7) Separated playgrounds for kids

(6) Basketball court

(5) Baseball field

(4) Pathways

(2) Pavilion for parties and events

Where are your favorite places in Larimer Park?

(11) Baseball field / Open field

(8) Playground

(7) Basketball court

(4) Shaded field area

(3) Gateway area

(2) Pavilion



Top Response(s)

(X) *Number of mentions in comments

What's Working Well?

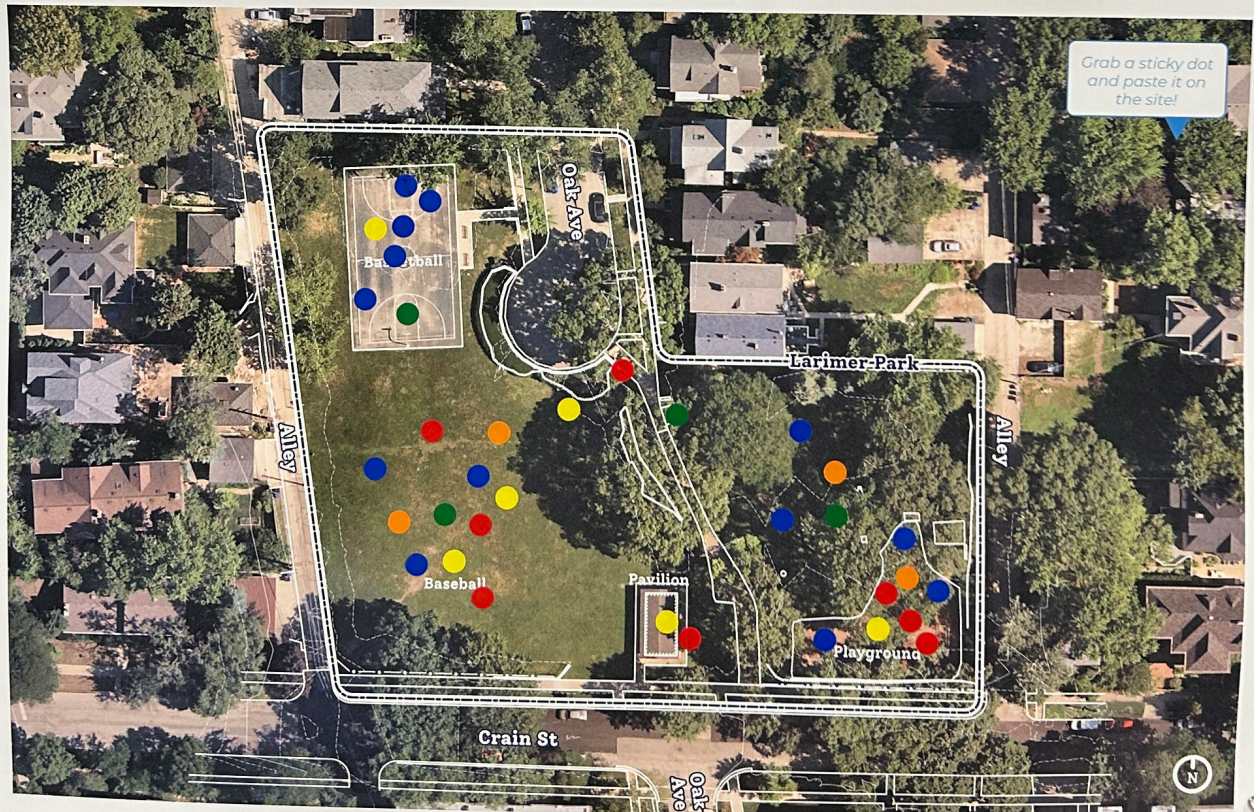
Let's explore what you love most about Larimer Park!

My favorite things about Larimer Park are _____ because _____.

Grab a post-it note and paste it on the board!

Open space for play and events	BASEBALL FIELD BECAUSE VISORS USE IT INFORMALLY 2. PARK LOT	Walk through pass - walk ways - Play ground equipment - Base ball field - Summer croquet - Base ball use gathering		THE SHADED PLAYGROUND AND THE LARGE OPEN FIELD - nice	the basketball court because I'm in a basketball team. - E/10	It's nice! Basketball playground fields
- BASKETBALL COURT - PAVILLION FOR PARTIES - SEPARATED PLAYGROUND - OPEN FIELD NEAR				The Basketball Court and the community of thoughtful, well-meaning dog owners	Dog training area with beds under trees both of playground	Shaded area on east side, but it needs better seating
		TREES			Unique entry, gateway, nice walk path from bike area	Field Area to play and run of kids and dogs
	Like the drinking fountain	Basketball court field playground		Walking Baseball & old Basketball court	SPEED BUMPS IN ALLEY MANY FAMILIES ON ONE RIDGE ENTER THE PARK FROM THE ALLEY BECAUSE THERE ARE TREES	* Preserve open space (Basketball field) * Keep ground walking surface at Crain

Where are your favorite places in Larimer Park?



What Needs Some Love?

Let's explore how we can make Larimer even better!

The things I most want to improve about Larimer Park are ____ because ____.

- (7) Dog run
- (5) Fencing and screening of the park
- (5) Playground equipment
- (5) Baseball field/open field
- (3) Seating and outdoor dining
- (3) Landscaping
- (2) Basketball court needs repaving
- (2) Trash receptacles
- (2) Pavilion
- (2) Lighting configuration
- (1) Cul-de-sac retaining wall
- (1) Community garden
- (1) Skating
- (1) Splash Pad

Where needs the most tender loving care?

- (12) Playground
- (11) Baseball field
- (5) Pavilion
- (2) Shaded field area
- (1) Gateway area
- (1) Basketball court
- ↓
- Top Response(s)
- (X) *Number of mentions in comments

What Needs Some Love?

Let's explore how we can make Larimer Park even better!

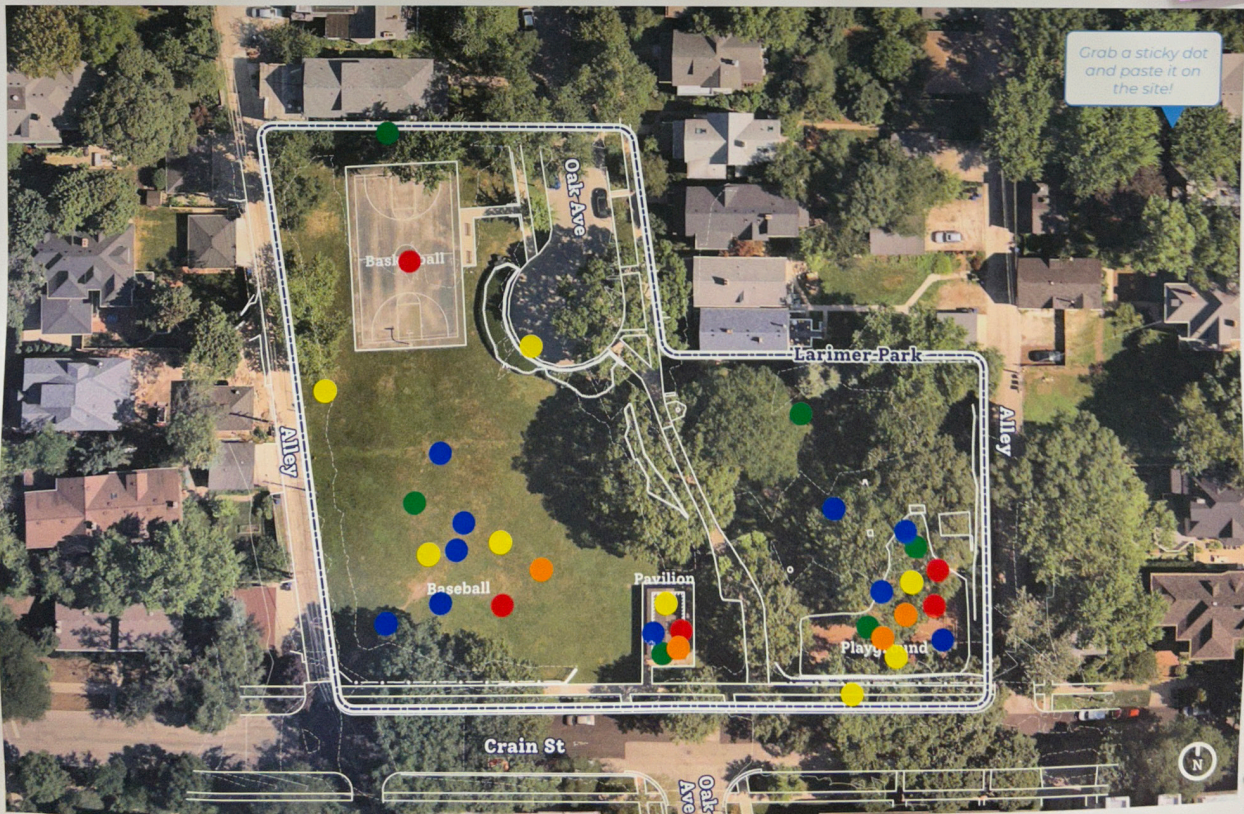
The things I most want to improve about Larimer Park are _____ because _____.

Grab a post-it note and paste it on the board!

THE BENCHES NEED HELP - ONE HAS BEEN HIT BY A TRUCK!	OFF LEASH DOGS 4-6 hours / 7 minute intervals	Trash removed more frequently, esp in summer	Keep the Baseball Field for Dog Space to honor Tom King	Baseball Field - should be improved by... (handwritten notes)	COMMUNITY GARDEN SPACE - New Pavilion - Solar Panels - More tables - Small trees	Barber (Community Garden, etc.)	Maybe a designated area for dogs? - (handwritten notes)
Want to improve baseball field because it isn't needed and not used	would love to see the skating rink in winter	A dog run - build a community every dog! Outdoor fitness stations - space for kids	Urban habits - create a dog run	Red lights at west side of baseball field need to be reconfigured - better on east side of lot for (west side) are lit up waste by light fixture	NEED MORE FREQUENT REPLACEMENT OF WOOD CHIPS UNDER SWINGS (ie. sanding to keep fresh)	More playground equipment - More challenge!	
McGraw YUCA personal kids use here - please talk to them.	bad basketball at night - lots of swearing - bo		The baseball field - does frequency of use justify that much space? Better as a dog area	Maybe put Butterfly Garden to replace lawn in butterfly garden	Playground for kids - base will sell for games & events - walk thru to train	Small group - walk thru club performance movies?	Area for dogs to be off leash
The playground needs an upgrade, the grounds need a nice refresh fencing needs to be replaced.	landscaping, esp. by the alley & play lot	play structures - need refresh - pavilion - benches - better lighting	Cell-de-sec Stone wall	Playground equipment Pressure court	FENCING COULD BE IMPROVED - PLANT TREES WHERE THE DISCARDED E-LAS CAME DOWN	Playground equipment needs updating - base will sell for movies - better lighting	*Please replace the fence on the west side of the park near the baseball court - see plan

Need to screen the alleyway

Where needs the most tender loving care?



Where Should We Focus?

Let's explore what we should prioritize improving!

If you only had \$100 to spend improving Larimer Park, what would you spend it on?

(33%) Providing more ways to experience nature

(20%) Providing more ways to rest and relax

(17%) Providing more ways to play

(17%) Providing more ways to come together

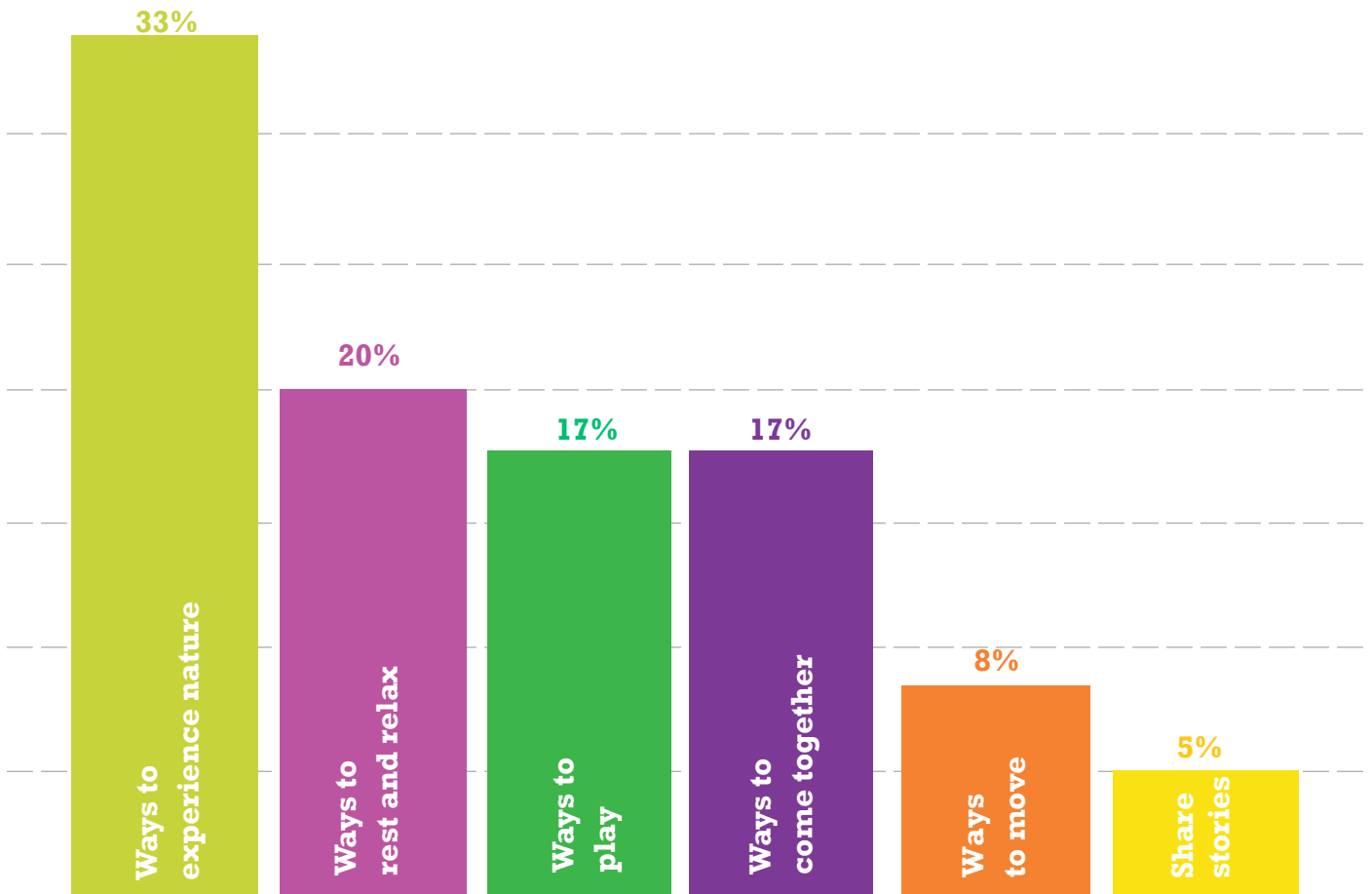
(8%) Providing more ways to move

(5%) Providing more ways to share stories



○ Top Response(s)

(X) *Number of mentions in comments



Providing more ways to experience nature (33%)

- Butterfly garden
- Community garden
- Woodland or natural area
- Shaded areas with trees
- Meditation labyrinth

Providing more ways to rest and relax (20%)

- Concerned about unhoused people sleeping in the park

Providing more ways to play (17%)

- Larger and improved playground
- Taller play elements (nets, slides and climbing structures)
- Splash pad

Providing more ways to come together (17%)

- Community pavilion for social events

Providing more ways to move (8%)

- Accessibility
- Lighting along main pathways
- Improve baseball field
- Open lawn space for unstructured play
- Ice skating in the winter

Providing more ways to share stories (5%)

- Historical information about the park itself

Where Should We Focus?

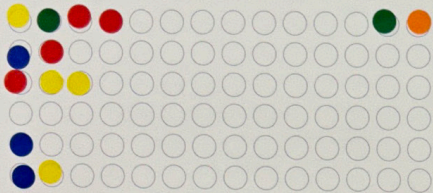
Let's explore what we should prioritize improving!

If you only had \$100 to spend improving Larimer Park, what would you spend it on?

Each sticky dot is worth \$20. Place them where you'd like to see investment made!

Providing more ways to play

Multi-generational, Nature-based, Sensory, STEM, Game Tables, Splash Pad, etc



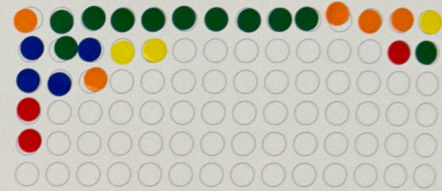
Sticky Notes for 'Providing more ways to play':

- Orange: - LARGE PLAYGROUND PONY PARK STAGE - SPLASH PAD
- Yellow: Yay! So exciting
- Orange: UPDATE PLAYGROUND, REGENERATION, REPAIRING GRASS
- Yellow: I would like a balance beam. I also like monkey bars. AMPHA 5 yr.
- Light Blue: splash pad
- Orange: LOVE THE PLAYGROUND SEAN PLAYLOT ELMDALE / GLENVIEW ANDERSONVILLE
- Orange: TALL NATURES CELEBRATES STRUCTURE
- Orange: SUPER TREE SLIDE - NATURE CHANGING STRUCTURE - SPLASH PAD - MARCH 20 100 OLD



Providing more ways to experience nature

Tree Planting, Native Plantings, Pollinator Gardens, Rain Gardens, Community Gardens, etc.

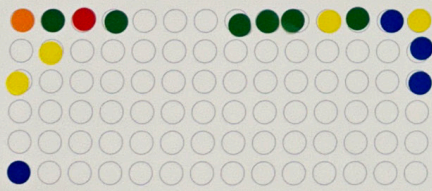


Sticky Notes for 'Providing more ways to experience nature':

- Orange: - COMMUNITY VEG GARDEN - BUTTERFLY GARDEN
- Light Blue: Woodland area - trees - no lawn
- Light Blue: Butterfly Garden
- Light Blue: NATURE WALK - MEDITATION GARDEN
- Light Blue: Nature Area like at Welles Park
- Orange: Stick with large tree concrete

Providing more ways to rest & relax

Shade Structures, Chairs, Benches, Lounges, Swings, Hammocks, Tables, etc.



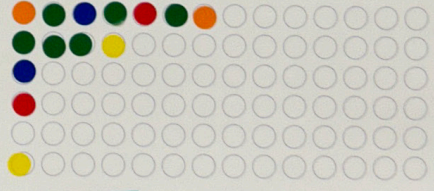
Sticky Note for 'Providing more ways to rest & relax':

- Pink: CONCERN ABOUT HOW MANY FILES STAYING IN PLACE STAYING!



Providing more ways to come together

Multipurpose Pavilion Improvements/ Replacement, Plaza, Flexible Lawn, etc.



Sticky Notes for 'Providing more ways to come together':

- Light Blue: Community Pavilion - not celebrating - using pavilion - open pavilion - divide
- Pink: What is a flexible lawn?

Other

Share any ideas you have that aren't captured below here!

Community vegetable garden
 Shared food
 More a few more

ARCHES OVER THE PATH
 People take eyes
 throughout the park
 to look at the view
 or take a picture

NOT A
 NO PARK

Don't do
 too much
 it already
 looks like it
 is a bit of a
 mess so let's
 keep things simple

TENNIS
 PICKLEBALL

Dog
 Run/Path

It's a nice
 part of my
 walk w/ our
 dog. An outdoor
 space for dogs
 be interested
 would be great

Outdoor space
 for dog owners
 See walking

NO DOG
 PARKS
 PLEASE!

better lighting
 that draws
 people out at
 night
 No more
 Flick lights

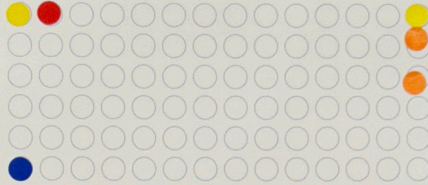
Concrete - attracts
 more dog owners
 concrete use also
 provides a nice
 surface for people
 to walk on

Pickle ball

Outdoor
 restaurant?

Providing more ways to move

Accessible paths & trails, Sports Courts & Fields, Fitness Equipment, Bike Racks/Repair Kiosks, etc.



would love to
 see the main
 park better lit

More bike
 racks
 repair
 stations
 would be
 great

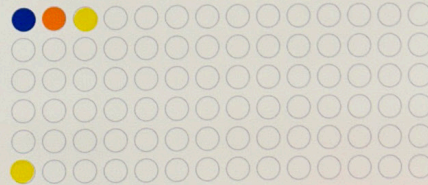
Baseball field
 use in winter
 ice skating?

Accessibility
 is not mutually
 exclusive!!
 It should be
 built in all
 things you do

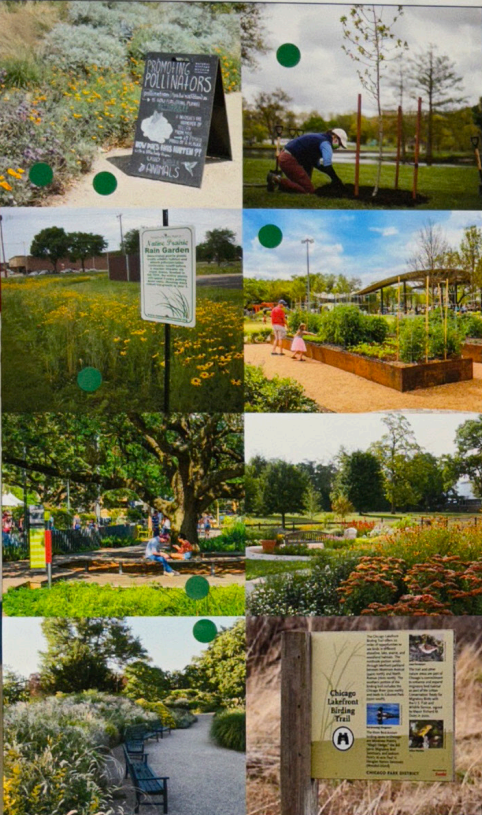


Providing more ways to share stories

Public Art, Interpretive Signage, Little Free Libraries, etc.



WHO WAS
 LAZIER?



Let's Look at the Pavilion!

Let's explore the future of the Larimer Park pavilion!

How do you use the existing pavilion today?

- (3) Family/birthday parties
- (3) Community and block parties
- (1) Socializing with other dog owners

What do you feel needs done with the pavilion in the future?

- (63%) It needs to be refreshed!
- (22%) It needs to be replaced!
- (15%) It's fine the way it is!

It needs to be refreshed! (63%)

Access to grills for cooking

More flexible style shelter and remove the solid door

Design details such as lighting to create a destination

More picnic tables for outdoor dining

It needs to be replaced! (22%)

Open sided structure

More inviting, playful and expressive character

It's fine the way it is! (15%)

Must be able to open and close according to season

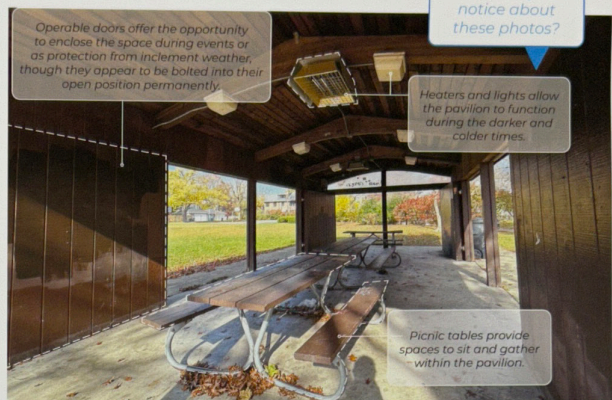


Top Response(s)

(X) *Number of mentions in comments

Let's Look at the Pavilion!

Let's explore the future of the Larimer Park pavilion!



What do you notice about these photos?

How do you use the existing pavilion today?

Grab a post-it note and share more below!

socializing w/ other dog owners	Party gathering place					It was nice to have picnic tables and a building for a neighborhood gathering last fall	I don't use it, but it's creepy when the purple haze there for hours after dark	We had a block party and served food from the pavilion once
Family parties							BIRTHDAY PARTIES	Arranging parties and other community events

What do you feel needs done with the pavilion in the future?

Place a sticky dot in the appropriate box below and use post-it notes to share more about why you feel that way!

It's fine the way it is!

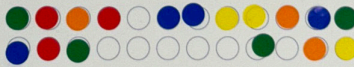


Share why below!

Do you love it the way it is? Do you think the money is better spent elsewhere?

need to open close @ summer/winter		

It needs to be refreshed!



Share what below!

What would you do to improve it's look, feel, and function?

Add facility for cookouts Needs to be larger	- COULD BE MUCH MORE CHARMING w/ SIMPLE DESIGN DETAILS - MAYBE REMOVE MORE OF THE SOLID DOORS SO IT ISN'T CREEPY TO WALK BY AT NIGHT	It's ok, kinda plain, refresh. But a new one could create identity and bring delight to the park
Place to look or get?	Assess the life span can it be extended?	It's a good community party facility - get tables get benches But it's a gathering space for the late afternoons and evenings for those who like to hang out
Better lighting?	Provide shelter last more pergola style open on sides	Lunch picnic tables Pavilion opens alot of times

It needs to be replaced!



Share where below!

Where does it belong? How does the pavilion of the future look, feel, and function?

Could be more inviting, playful, expressive	If you replace existing playground equipment - then you should replace Pavilion as well	Explore low carbon, wood structures (perhaps reusing the structure)
OPEN SIDE STRUCTURE, MORE BENCH TABLES	Park needs a pavilion but a more inviting one in better shape. Love the idea of a playful style	Replace with an open-sided picnic pavilion
Have an actual performance area on the building to encourage people to perform. But now it just looks like a community building		

Online Feedback

Record of comments received from the project website

Response #1

I am unable to attend the meeting tomorrow although I am very interested to learn what will be done in the park as I live very close. I would like to see a lot more tree's planted there & other landscaping with additional benches. Adding bird feeders or other elements that attract birds & butterflies would be great!

Response #2

I attended the open house last night, and it occurred to me afterward that the YMCA day care and summer camps are frequent users of Larimer Park, as are other summer kids' programs. (I'm sure if the notification had been posted in the summer, it would have reached them and others who only come in warmer weather.) The folks looking for input may want to reach out to the YMCA for their input, too.

Response #3

This is a great little neighborhood park! My daughter is 2.5 and we've been coming here since she could first walk to use the playground. I would love to see the accessibility improved (remove woodchips, create a path from the sidewalk to all of the play spaces so folks with walkers/wheelchairs/strollers/etc don't have to go through the grass) and it would be AMAZING to have a bathroom. I would much rather these improvements than anything fancy design-wise.

Response #4

Plant more native perennials, native shrubs and trees, especially pollinator and bird friendly. Remove non native shrubs if they are invasive. Northeast section would be most suitable area. Consider replacing turf grass with no mow or moderate traffic groundcover in NE area.

Install new, secure fencing around park adjoining alleys and Crain since playground and "ball field" is used by children and dog play area. Could also plant native border garden along fence.

What is timetable for work? Thank you!

Response #5

I own a home on the same block as Larimer Park and my daughter and her friends play there frequently. We are very excited for it to be renovated and look forward to participating in the planning process to the extent that we can. We were unable to attend the first public meeting and would like to offer some wish list items as the design team contemplates how to improve the space.

First, the park is utilized largely by dog owners and kids. It would be wonderful if there could be a clear distinction where each group can feel safe and at ease. Many dogs are let off leash in the big field but often that play makes its way towards the playground. Having a clear area for dogs and a clear area for kids would improve the overall safety of the park.

Secondly, I assume some sort of play area for kids is in the plans. We would love to see a nature inspired park in place of a traditional playground. Evanston does not currently have a nature park, so I think it could be a great resource to add to our community. If this type of park does not seem feasible, we love the play area at McCulloch Park and think that could be a great model to draw from.

In any case, we are excited to see the park improved and hope to volunteer to help should there be an opportunity.

Response #6

Hello....first of all..Thank you! We appreciate you improving Larimer Park. We would love a community garden in the corner where neighbors could reserve a plot of land and garden and grow their own veggies. It would need to be in the sun..not in the shade.

Also..the baseball field is barely a baseball field...as it is basically used now as a dog park...so maybe a fenced in baseball/dog park area?

The Pavillion weds attention...as many times graffiti is there..so the nee surface needs to be graffiti proof if possible. (maybe a mural?)

Then..the playground equipment..the back sand area (there used to be) needs improvements...and maybe some more toddler playground equipment? With it being close to nichols..think about the middle school kids and what they would want too...a few ramps for skateboarding perhaps? A bike tune up area? And bring back the skating rink!!! We have used the park for bdsy parties..and also for our girl scout ceremonies..so lots of memories there. Thanks again!

MKSK