

**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION QUESTIONS
APRIL 12, 2023 MEETING**

March 2023 Monthly Report

1. Will adult recreation softball play at Callahan again in the future, or is Shoreline Athletic Fields the new permanent spot?

Shoreline Athletic Fields is the new permanent location for adult recreation softball. The size of Callahan Field was reduced slightly during the construction of the Crittenden Athletic Field complex and the site is no longer suitable for adult softball. Typically, adult leagues are hosted on fields that range from 220 – 235 feet at minimum, and Callahan Field is now 190-195 feet.

5.1 Villa Park Conceptual Review and Recommendation, Project 21-61

1. How many units (by # of bedrooms) are in the 1720 Villa Street development project?

There are 226 units and 318 bedrooms.

2. Does “Natural Play Equipment” primarily refer to the material and aesthetics? Can it include swings/slides in natural materials?

“Natural Play Equipment” primarily refers to natural play structures. For example, stepping logs and climbing rocks. We can also look into swings/slides in natural materials.

3. Is the split rail fence along Villa Street only in Concept D and not in Concept E? If so, what is the reasoning?

The two concepts have different approaches to fencing the playground. Concept E fences the playground directly with a playground rated 48” tube steel fence. As the playground is fenced directly in this concept, there is no need to fence the perimeter of the park. The playground design for Concept D, however, makes it much more difficult to fence the playground directly. We thought the better approach would be to provide playground rated fencing at the frontage of the park along Villa Street, rather than fence the playground inside the park. We received comments that the fencing along the street frontage in Concept D would be better designed as a more open and natural fence, rather than a standard tube steel fence. The split rail fence would not meet playground code requirements, but could be used separately if a playground perimeter fence is used as well.

4. In the Concept D Plaza Area (#4 on the drawing), what is the surface material in the inner area of the semi-circular seating areas? Can people sitting on the seating face inward, or is the inner area comprised of plants, which would require people to sit facing outward only?

The area in question is comprised of plants, so people would need to sit facing outward as currently designed. We can entertain changing it to a walkable surface on the interior if preferred.

5. How high is the concrete retaining wall?

The concrete retaining wall is 30" at the north end of the site (at the highest point). It tapers from zero inches at the park frontage to +/- 30" at the back of the park.

6. The park grading results in a fairly sharp drop-off along the entire northern perimeter. What was the intention behind that grading?

The park site naturally has a slope with high side at Villa St sidewalk, sloping down gradually about 3ft lower on the north edge of park adjacent to the new development. Due to ADA accessibility requirements, a retaining wall was the best way to keep the site more level.

7. In Concept D, would there only be entry signage at the entry area in the southwest corner (#15)

We are still early in the concept phase, and the signage location would be finalized during later detailed design phase; but the typical plan for a mini park would be one large entry sign at the main Entry Plaza (#10), and we can look into adding additional signage as needed at the smaller entry area (#15). In this case, our consultant was demonstrating the different options for entry signage locations on Concept D (at the smaller southwest entry corner #15), vs on Concept E (at the main entry plaza #10).

8. Where are the bike racks in Concept D?

Bike racks can be added to Concept D near the park entry.

9. The Concept D and E drawings show straight lines designated as "A" and "B". What do those signify?

Lines "A" and "B" on Concept drawings D & E refer to the cross-section cut points, which are located on the Conceptual Plan Sections pages - Attachment 2, page 2 and 4.

10. Could we see a comparison of Concepts D and E in terms of:

- Size of concrete-covered area (the two differently shaped plaza areas)
(Concept D: 3,250 SF with additional area of 925 SF of permeable pavers) (Concept E: 4,830 SF)

- Size of area dedicated to native and pollinator planting
(Concept D: 5,710 SF) (Concept E: 6,070 SF)
- Number of trees
(Concept D: 26 park trees, 1 specimen tree, 5 street trees [32 trees total]) (Concept E: 23 park trees, 3 specimen trees, 5 street trees [31 trees total])
- Lawn area
(Concept D: 1,420 SF) (Concept E: 1,725 SF)

11. Could you provide more information about the following:

- Candidates for specimen tree
At this conceptual plan stage, tree selection is not finalized. We will evaluate tree selections based on final design and precise locations being determined, also after discussing short and long term maintenance with staff. We will work with Parks Staff to develop the tree palette along with the shrubs, ground covers and native and pollinators plant list. Initial thoughts for trees we might recommend for this park would be: Native Oaks, Native Maples, Native Buckeye, deciduous and evergreen, Chinese Pistache, Gingko, Crape Myrtle, Magnolia Soulangeana, flowering cherries all to be vetted with parks staff. However, I would be reluctant to commit to any trees until we have a complete palette we have vetted and collaborated on with Parks staff.
- Plant palette for the plantings not labelled “native and pollinator” and rationale for not treating the entire plant palette as mainly native and pollinator
The palette of these items can be quite vast. The city is developing a Biodiversity Strategy which will include plant recommendations and guidelines for new development including parks. Planting palettes and designs will incorporate as many native, pollinator and drought tolerant species as possible with considerations given to location, aesthetics and functionality. .

12. Does including a split-rail fence mean it could still receive an artistic treatment?

Possibly, but we would have to discuss with maintenance staff first.

13. Can you add more information about game tables? What did community members expect?

Typically game tables will have a chess/checker board inlay, this was mentioned at the community meetings. However, park visitors are free to bring their own games to enjoy on these tables as well.

14. At what stage is the actual plant palette finalized and who on staff reviews it?

Typically, the plant palette is developed in the 65% set and finalized in the 95% submittal. Parks and maintenance staff typically would review this.

15. How does this park compare in size to our other smaller neighborhood parks (such as Mora, Evandale, and Del Medio)?

(Villa Mini Park: 17,200 SF) (Mora: 18,000 SF) (Evandale Mini Park: 11,785 SF) (Del Medio: 16,460 SF)