



Merriam Park: Design Advisory Committee Meeting #2 - Priorities & Precedents

NOTES:

The following is a summary of interpretation of items discussed and action items. If there are any corrections or additions to the summary, please inform Project Manager, Mary Norton at mary.norton@ci.stpaul.mn.us to issue updated notes.

Introductions:

- **Participants:**
 - Barb Thoman: Lives nearby and had kids who used the park.
 - Greg Johnson: Lives on Carrol Ave and spends time at Merriam Park.
 - Lon Stousland: Resident on Marshall Ave, has lived in the neighborhood for 3-4 years.
 - Richard Kim: Business owner near Merriam Park.
 - Leah: Union Park District Council
 - Niko and Mary: Representatives from the City of St. Paul.

Meeting Overview:

- **Shared Design:** City Project Manager discussed the design, funding (\$2M from Common Cent Sales Tax), and key dates.
- **Scope of Work:** Focus on existing program areas (tennis, playground, basketball, ball fields), circulation, and accessibility.
- **Route Walked at 1st DAC meeting:**
 - Observed underutilized areas, including batting cages and an area by the building corner.
 - Discussed court stripping, tree management during construction, and site access/circulation.

Key Items Discussed:

- **Park Design:**
 - “Heart of the park” Park identity, site details (bike racks, water), gateway by Prior, trees.
 - Discussed the park's "front" (access from Prior Ave) and circulation issues (fence creating a barrier).



- Backside of the building seen as a service area, with unclear connections and lack of windows facing the park (concerns during later in the day if someone is alone).
- Wayfinding and map signage for better orientation within the park.

Feedback Heard:

- **Macro Lens Priorities:**

- Current playground safety current playground is in rough shape (lots of young kids).
- Baseball fields: Concerns about usability, safety of benches, lighting, and drainage issues.
- Little league usage and field rental considerations. (Ask rec staff about usage, local leagues HGRA)

- **Secondary Priorities:**

- Parking concerns near Prior Ave.
- Interest in adding crosswalks or blinking lights.
- Signage and wayfinding improvements (opportunity to create a branded entrance by Prior).

- **Micro Lens Priorities:**

- Shade, fencing near sidewalks (softening edge by either adding plantings, and consider moving the fence back) cultural value of existing trees (Oaks are an important aspect of the project).
- Succession planning for oaks is important, tennis court usage, and multi-use court considerations.

Design Precedents and Improvements:

- **Baseball Fields:**

- Discussion over lighting priorities.
- Discussion on how paths are lit and opinions on lighting in general.

- **Court Improvements:**

- Interest in vibrant court designs, with preference for clean colors and multi-stripping for flexibility.

- **Playground:**



- Positive feedback on playground precedent images.
- Suggestions for age-scalable features, wide balance, and fitness aspects.
- **Flexible Spaces & Visual Landmarks:**
 - Potential for creating a striking visual around Prior Ave or something to help with better identity for the park.
 - Consideration for using the south corner as a gathering space and defining the "heart of the park."

Action Items:

- **UPDC Yard Signs:** Leah to follow up on the 9/21 event.
- **Historical Resources:** Barb has a collection of old articles about Merriam Park that could be interesting to explore.
- **Team Invitation:** Leah to send a Teams invite for follow up.

Mattocks Park - the 'daily hangout' scenario would be wonderful. Lots of shade, shared toys/community experience. High-quality play equipment

Have a list of places / improvements for people to visit within the City

Find an example of a tennis/pickle ball court



MERRIAM PARK

Site Improvements Project



SAINT PAUL
MINNESOTA

Saint Paul Parks and Recreation

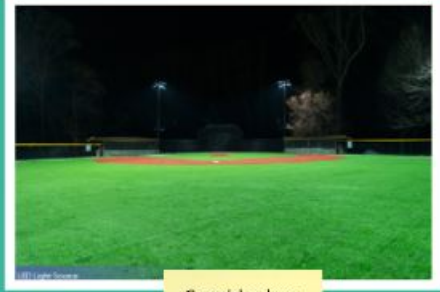
A PORTION OF PROJECT
FUNDING PROVIDED BY



COMMON THREADS

- Trees!
- Wayfinding & Circulation
 - Park 'Front' & Access
 - Prior Ave.
- Underutilized Spaces
- Amenity Improvements
 - Courts
 - Playground
 - Ball Fields

Baseball Fields



E-W
path, is it
well lit?



Consider low-level lighting if needed. Cut-off fixtures IDA Compliant

Court Improvements (Basketball, Tennis, Pickleball)

Colors are clean, like this look



Multi-sport is an option, gives flexibility



Playground

DESIGN PRECEDENTS



Consider interests and ages for variability

What can scale with age?



Examples: Climbing things that feel high, but are safe

Examples: Shoreview - Parkour style play

Adult Fitness/exercise equipment



Flexible Spaces and Visual Landmarks



Project for Public Spaces was thrilled to bring placemaking to the Fulton County Library System. During the opening launch of the All Access Library, 100s gathered to enjoy a live music show centered around the joy of reading. Credit: Fulton County Library System

SE Corner of Bldg - What if it could be more celebrated for gathering?



"heart of the park" - Where can people go as a central location?

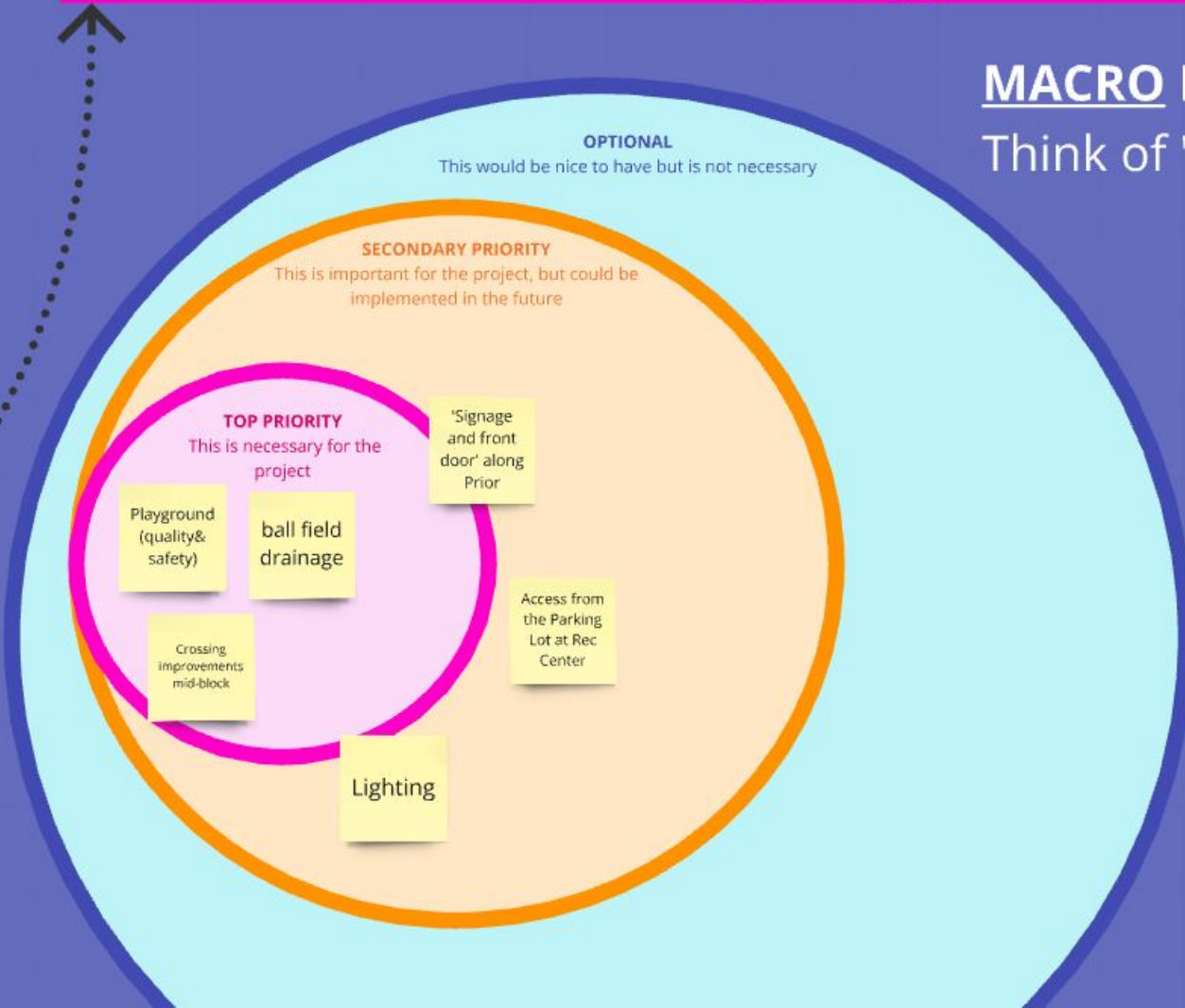


PRIORITIES EXERCISE 1

Which of these ideas are your top priorities for this project?

MACRO Lens:

Think of 'The Park as a Whole'



Ball Fields: Amenities need to be improved	Batting Cage - location issue	

PRIORITIES EXERCISE 2

Which of these ideas are your top priorities for this project?

MICRO Lens:

Think of 'The Spaces Within the Park'

OPTIONAL

This would be nice to have but is not necessary

SECONDARY PRIORITY

This is important for the project, but could be implemented in the future

TOP PRIORITY

This is necessary for the project

PG:
Shade

Cultural
resource of
the existing
trees

Fence back
from sidewalk
- more inviting
- Soften that
line

Succession
Planning
for existing
Oaks

Think about
best use and
experience of
location for
Courts





2024 Ice Cream, Peanut Butter & Jam!

Join Your Neighbors on September 21st from 12:00PM-4:00PM in Merriam Park!



- Ice Cream, PB, & Jam Event
 - (3-5 volunteers from the DAC?)
 - Handouts for surveys, encourage Q&A

UPDC: Yard signs for 9/21 event. Leah to follow-up

Can we send out the survey 1 week prior? Will help generate interest in the event too

