

Downers Grove Park District

WALNUT PARK

2021 "PLAN YOUR PARK" OPEN HOUSES

SEPT. 28 • OCT. 6 • OCT. 9



WALNUT PARK OPEN HOUSE *Summary*

Community Input

Community input is a vital component in developing new recreation amenities to meet the current and future needs and desires of residents living in Downers Grove.

Over the last decade, Downers Grove Park District has gathered input from the community regarding the development of the Walnut Park site. Community feedback has been collected through a community-wide survey (2020), a needs assessment (2017), public open house (2017), stakeholder interviews (2017) and focus group discussions (2013). This past input indicated a high demand for an indoor sports facility featuring artificial turf and other recreation amenities in addition to enhanced natural areas.

Envisioning the Future

Since the beginning of 2021, the Downers Grove Park District has worked with the design team at Wight & Company to create conceptual design plans for the site at no cost to the District. In September and October, the Park District invited the community to attend one of three "Plan Your Park" Open Houses to preview the concepts, share ideas and give feedback to guide the long-term master planning process for the Walnut Park property. For those unable to attend an Open House, information is available on our website including conceptual drawings, frequently asked questions, the board presentation and a link to the online feedback form. This information will continue to be available to the public and will be updated throughout the master planning process.

"Plan Your Park" Open Houses

55 TOTAL OPEN HOUSE VISITORS

- **SEPT. 28:** 18 in attendance
- **OCT. 6:** 22 in attendance
- **OCT. 9:** 15 in attendance

**56 COMPLETED
FEEDBACK FORMS
ONLINE AND IN PERSON
AS OF NOVEMBER 2021**



Outreach



PRESS RELEASE

Sent to 4 local news outlets
Patch • [My Suburban Life](#)



WEBPAGE

1,517 page views from
Sept. to Nov. 2021



EBLAST

Two eblasts sent to
13,960 subscribers with a
52% open rate and 931 clicks



SOCIAL MEDIA

8 posts reached 6,600+

Q1 Which amenities in the draft plans are you most interested in or excited about?

Answered: 52 Skipped: 4

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Pickleball Pickleball courts. Other villages have pickleball indoor courts, but DG only has them at the Fitness Center.	10/28/2021 9:37 PM
2	Pickleball Pickleball	10/28/2021 2:53 PM
3	splash pad The potential splash pad (although my kids are older now a great community addition). Being able to host bigger indoor tournaments.	10/16/2021 9:18 AM
4	Natural areas Sports Indoor courts and nature preserves.	10/15/2021 8:48 AM
5	Disc golf Disc golf	10/14/2021 6:07 PM
6	Natural areas Nature Pavilion - Our kids enjoy the programs at Lyman Woods and I know we would make use out of the new nature pavilion. We frequently go to The Morton Arboretum and other nearby nature centers. It would be nice to have another nature pavilion with educational materials in Downers Grove.	10/14/2021 5:41 PM
7	Sports Super excited about potentially growing the sport of rugby in the downers Grove area and an indoor facility would really help given this Midwest weather! I like that there is potential for pickle ball courts but hoping for tennis courts indoor	10/14/2021 9:25 AM
8	Indoor tennis Sports Indoor sports courts.	10/14/2021 8:45 AM
9	All looks great All lot of it	10/13/2021 8:04 PM
10	Sports Inside space	10/13/2021 5:01 PM
11	Opposed None	10/13/2021 1:53 PM
12	Dog Park Sports Walking Paths Walking paths and sports dome, dog park(there's no dog park in dg!)	10/13/2021 9:58 AM
13	Indoor tennis Indoor tennis courts	10/13/2021 8:50 AM
14	All looks great Looks great!	10/12/2021 2:56 PM
15	Flexibility Sports Splash pad and convertible fields for sports	10/10/2021 10:56 AM
16	Sports pickleball courts	10/8/2021 9:38 AM
17	Tourism hotel tax revenue from sports tourism opportunities	10/8/2021 9:26 AM
18	Playground splash pad Splash Pad and an outdoor park.	10/7/2021 8:31 AM
19	Playground splash pad Playground/Splash Pad	10/6/2021 1:58 PM
20	Playground splash pad The splash pad & playground	10/6/2021 1:40 PM
21	Sports Tournaments Indoor volleyball and basketball courts - enough to host park district teams, local clubs, and even tournaments.	10/3/2021 1:52 PM
22	Playground splash pad Playground and splash pad	9/29/2021 11:29 AM
23	All looks great All-looks good! Nice combination of active and passive uses for the land.	9/29/2021 11:29 AM
24	All looks great It all looks great!	9/29/2021 11:27 AM
25	All looks great Natural areas Sports Both indoor and outdoor activities. I like the trail proposal. and indoor multi use space looks very good. Very nice ideas for use of property that has been inactive for a long time.	9/27/2021 3:15 PM

WALNUT PARK MASTER PLAN FEEDBACK FORM

26	Opposed None	9/26/2021 8:45 AM
27	Opposed I absolutely oppose the building of an indoor sports center. The only thing of any interest to me is the native plant buffer. The entire area should be native plants. DO NOT build another recreation center!!! If one is so necessary, consider finding a site that is already vacant and NOT a natural habitat. How about one of the many vacant lots littered all over the village???	9/26/2021 7:17 AM
28	All looks great The new athletic center looks awesome as well. Can't wait for it to get underway!	9/24/2021 8:20 AM
29	Natural areas Nature areas and open space with Prairie plants/native plantings	9/23/2021 10:33 PM
30	Opposed Higher taxes. Just cancel this unnecessary expense.	9/23/2021 9:38 PM
31	Opposed None. There is a very well equipped rec center about a mile away. There is no need to build this monstrosity.	9/23/2021 9:30 PM
32	Opposed Not many. Seems to be serving the amenities we already have in our other parks.	9/22/2021 8:46 PM
33	All looks great Sports The dome and indoor facilities. But...surprised that the survey results - both for indoor AND outdoor - list Tennis courts as in the top five most desired - yet they aren't anywhere to be found.	9/22/2021 11:36 AM
34	Natural areas splash pad Literally all of it! But the nature path and splash pads are nice bonus features.	9/22/2021 10:41 AM
35	All looks great All of it really	9/22/2021 9:20 AM
36	Unsure Where is our dog park?	9/22/2021 8:53 AM
37	Sports More sports fields. Indoor turf fields.	9/22/2021 8:37 AM
38	Sports The indoor facility	9/22/2021 8:29 AM
39	Natural areas the nature center, buffer and prairie	9/22/2021 8:02 AM
40	Natural areas Natural area walking path bike path and dog park.	9/22/2021 7:44 AM
41	Sports Tournaments The dome needs to be able to host softball games. All suburbs are putting up domes to lure girls teams. Look at Rosemont dome and it's packed all winter for these tournaments. Have a strong Wi-Fi signal, food, drinks and it's a revenue machine for the county.	9/22/2021 6:29 AM
42	Sports The sports complex and playing fields.	9/22/2021 12:22 AM
43	Sports The dome	9/21/2021 11:24 PM
44	Natural areas Walking Paths walking and biking and natural areas	9/21/2021 8:54 PM
45	Pickleball We really need pickleball courts in Downers Grove. All the other towns have them and they are packed. This is an incredibly fast growing sport.	9/21/2021 8:32 PM
46	Unsure Why no pool? Not sure where all community feedback is coming from ? Do not see community outreach on this!	9/21/2021 7:36 PM
47	Natural areas Natural areas	9/21/2021 7:27 PM
48	Walking Paths Walking path/nature trails	9/21/2021 7:18 PM
49	Natural areas Sports Walking Paths Outdoor recreation. Specifically, I would like to see a community pool.	9/21/2021 5:59 PM
50	Walking Paths i really think a walking path and outdoor bathrooms as well as in would be helpful	9/21/2021 5:58 PM
51	Opposed None of them. We don't need this. Expensive.	9/21/2021 5:40 PM
52	Natural areas Sports Nature area, sports fields	9/21/2021 5:38 PM

Q2 Do you have any suggestions or thoughts about the plans or the process?

Answered: 55 Skipped: 1

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Appreciate input The sooner the better. What can we do to help?	10/28/2021 9:37 PM
2	Pickleball Downers is not keeping up with the huge interest in Pickleball. It is the fastest growing sport in the country. Need all eight courts and what about tennis courts as well?	10/28/2021 2:53 PM
3	Traffic do not want increased traffic on drendel rd	10/17/2021 7:01 PM
4	Indoor tennis Outdoor tennis Paddle tennis I am bummed to not see tennis included- I play every week outdoor and will need to go to Oakbrook to play indoors. I also really enjoy paddle tennis and it's such a great outdoor sport, wish both would be considered to be included again.	10/16/2021 9:18 AM
5	Appreciate input Please follow through with this - it looks like a huge benefit to the community!	10/15/2021 8:48 AM
6	Disc golf Disc golf- cheap and so accessible without tax increases	10/14/2021 6:07 PM
7	Dog Park Pool I am curious why the proposed Walnut Park Master Plan does not address some of the top priority needs from the community that were addressed in the 2017 Community Needs Assessment? Based on their Priority Investment Rating (PIR), the top categories the park district should consider for investment are: Walking and biking trails, outdoor swimming pool/water park, indoor swimming pool/leisure pool, and nature center and trails. The first and fourth on the list were addressed in the Walnut Park plan, but second and third (regarding pools/aquatics) were completely skipped over. They weren't even listed as choices on the forced choice survey sent out in December 2020. The district discussed why dog park (which is a medium priority investment) wasn't addressed due to concerns with disturbing the prairie, but has not addressed why aquatics wasn't even considered. How will the park district address this need/want in our community? In addition, plans for the indoor turf, soccer fields, basketball courts, gymnastics, etc. that are included in the proposed dome all rank low priority in the Community Needs Assessment.	10/14/2021 5:41 PM
8	Indoor tennis I noticed that indoor tennis courts were a request and the plan only has layout for pickle ball. Would really like some indoor courts in downers Grove!	10/14/2021 9:25 AM
9	Indoor tennis Please consider adding tennis courts. Indoor tennis especially is something that's currently hard to find in the area and is much needed.	10/14/2021 8:45 AM
10	Paddle tennis It would be nice if we could incorporate outdoor platform paddle tennis courts	10/13/2021 8:04 PM
11	Indoor tennis Paddle tennis I'd love paddle tennis and indoor tennis courts	10/13/2021 5:01 PM
12	Opposed I'm completely against this project. It will destroy the wildlife.	10/13/2021 1:53 PM
13	Walking Path Please have a walking path available for those who live on Cross and Drendel. As of now we have to walk all the way around due to the prairie paths being not accessible and unable to bring a dog. There is a small path off of drendel/prairie however the home owner continues to block it with yard waste	10/13/2021 9:58 AM
14	Outdoor tennis Please build outdoor tennis courts	10/13/2021 8:50 AM
15	Archery Golf Consider archery golf	10/12/2021 2:56 PM
16	Dog Park Where is the dog park?? There are dog parks in other towns but not one in Downers Grove. It was listed as something that had positive feedback in initial surveys, but it hasn't made it into the final design. Please reconfigure the space so that there is a dog park area. Downers is a very dog friendly town, and many residents have dogs. Please accommodate those residents.	10/10/2021 10:56 AM

WALNUT PARK MASTER PLAN FEEDBACK FORM

17	Appreciate input Very nice plans, appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback	10/8/2021 9:38 AM
18	Permeable pavers Concern: run-off from 300 space tarmac (so close to Belmont Prairie); Please consider a permeable solution.	10/8/2021 9:26 AM
19	Large playground It would be nice to see a quality outdoor playground that is large enough for the amount of kids that will be there.	10/7/2021 8:31 AM
20	Indoor tennis Paddle tennis Would like to see Indoor Tennis and Paddle Tennis	10/6/2021 1:58 PM
21	Dog Park Indoor tennis Paddle tennis I was disappointed indoor/outdoor tennis as well as a dog park were not included in the plans. Both of these were noted as items with high interest in the survey. Indoor tennis & a dog park are not current amenities DG parks offers residents. Indoor space includes an area for gymnastics. Premier gymnastics and Elite are both already in the neighborhood as well as space used at the Rec Center. Let's diversify and offer residents the ability to play/engage in sports that there is NOT already the opportunity to partake in DG. Sports trends have changed since COVID. Paddle sports have experienced a BOOM. Paddle tennis is not offered in a public or private setting in DG and would be an amazing addition to our community! I'd love to see these plans focus more on providing opportunities to our community vs. being a revenue generator with sports tourism as the focus for this space.	10/6/2021 1:40 PM
22	Appreciate input I appreciate to multiple opportunities for feedback.	10/3/2021 1:52 PM
23	Paddle tennis We are such a big village but we do not have an Platform Paddle tennis courts like Glen Elyn and Hinsdale have. It would be awesome for us to have our own team so that we can play in leagues like the Hinsdale/Glen Elyn park districts have.	10/1/2021 9:34 AM
24	Nature priority If possible to phase it in, please do walking paths, nature area and playground first.	9/29/2021 11:29 AM
25	Permeable pavers You can probably get grants for both sports projects and developing the natural areas. Consider permeable pavers instead of asphalt for parking lot?	9/29/2021 11:29 AM
26	Sidewalk Sidewalk along Walnut to Burlington would be great.	9/29/2021 11:27 AM
27	Dislike dome Well I have been very impressed with many projects by Wight & Co. over many years. The look of this dome is just very ugly I know its preliminary, but no its just ugly. Has to be better design. Why not more natural light?	9/27/2021 3:15 PM
28	Opposed No need for another facility. One is enough.	9/26/2021 8:45 AM
29	Opposed Do not proceed with the plans. I can not think of a bigger waste of time and money. We do not need more indoor recreation buildings, we need more nature and open areas for native wildlife.	9/26/2021 7:17 AM
30	Bungee fitness I would love to see a bungee fitness class.	9/24/2021 8:21 AM
31	Nature priority I actually visit this park nearly everyday with my dog, or as a destination to ride my bike to. Sometimes I go there for a short walk and often have lunch there with my kids. Currently it's a very quiet, lovely green space home to free roaming deer and other wildlife. It's unfortunate the village wants to build another athletic facility here. There are very few spaces like Walnut Park in Downers Grove. If you must transform it why not do something that integrates community gathering with culture, like a sculpture park similar to the Papajohn Sculpture Park in Des Moines. We would benefit from a public space that isn't designated for sports or shopping or restaurants. It is an ideal location and topography for an outdoor venue that is educational, interactive and cultural. It would take vision but would bring something special to Downers Grove.	9/24/2021 8:19 AM
32	Appreciate input Looks good to me.	9/23/2021 10:33 PM
33	Opposed Cancel the project. Taxes are too high already.	9/23/2021 9:38 PM
34	Opposed Cancel it and sell the excess land. The profit can be used to lower Real Estate taxes.	9/23/2021 9:30 PM
35	Amenities seem out dated and not keeping pace w what other towns offer. Seems centered around youth sport activities and not adults.	9/22/2021 8:46 PM
36	Indoor tennis See above for tennis. Surprised. It shows up on top 5 most desired	9/22/2021 11:36 AM

WALNUT PARK MASTER PLAN FEEDBACK FORM

indoor/outdoor. Yet, nowhere to be seen.

37	No	9/22/2021 10:41 AM
38	More outdoor sports It seem the outdoor activities really only relate to things that can be played on a field. I was expecting it to have more amenities like McCollum, outdoor basketball, tennis courts and a large playground. A splash pad is nice but it also said small in the presentation so is it really worth it?	9/22/2021 9:20 AM
39	Dog Park Yes, a perfect place for our Downers Grove dog park.	9/22/2021 8:53 AM
40	Indoor sports More sports fields especially indoors is way overdue in DG	9/22/2021 8:37 AM
41	Appreciate input Looks great!	9/22/2021 8:29 AM
42	Nature priority Important that the nature center be large enough for big groups and have adequate parking... Would love for it to be LEAD certified and feature a green roof, gray or reclaimed water system, solar panels, permeable pavers (in the parking lot), bioswale and other special features.	9/22/2021 8:02 AM
43	Nature priority The more open space the better.	9/22/2021 7:44 AM
44	Like the dome Keep it as a dome. Buildings won't work unless you copy the layout of TBK complex in Bettendorf, iowa. https://www.tbkbanksportscomplex.com/	9/22/2021 6:29 AM
45	Walking Path If the site plan remains the same, there should be a pedestrian crossing over the proposed wetland area. Does the nature reserve buffer need to be as big as it currently shown. I'm in favor of a buffer and understand it is needed, but seems quite large and perhaps missing additional recreational land use opportunities.	9/22/2021 12:22 AM
46	Indoor sports Indoor sports practice facilities are needed badly. Start there.	9/21/2021 11:24 PM
47	Appreciate input Appreciated the opportunity to review the masterplan presentation on the computer. Overall, I am impressed with the basic plan and how it meets different needs.	9/21/2021 8:54 PM
48	Dog Park Love the dog park.	9/21/2021 8:32 PM
49	It lacks transparency.	9/21/2021 7:36 PM
50	Disc golf Disc Golf Course! The 9 hole course at O'Brien Park is tiny and tragic.	9/21/2021 7:27 PM
51	Dog Park Add a small fenced in dog park	9/21/2021 7:18 PM
52	Pool Consideration of a community pool.	9/21/2021 5:59 PM
53	Walking Path i really think a walking path and outdoor bathrooms as well as in would be helpful	9/21/2021 5:58 PM
54	Opposed Halt, stop, cancel this expensive project.	9/21/2021 5:40 PM
55	Renewable Put solar panels in the parking lots! I've seen this done a lot in other states. Provides shade for spots and you can make money back through ComEd. And it would help increase the amount of renewable energy for the state	9/21/2021 5:38 PM