

Linden Hills Playground Project - Phase 2 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)



September 2021

1. Will additional play equipment be installed in either the 2- to 5-year-old or 5- to 12-year-old areas?

2-5 area: A "Cozy Dome" playground climber will be added in Spring 2022. This component was purchased with \$10,000 in available project funds.

5-12 area: space is available for an additional play component or for an extension of the existing play structure. All existing play equipment must remain.

Additional play equipment must meet **space requirements** and **safety zone use** guidelines and be **funded by the community**.

- Eligible play equipment: MPRB is working with Flagship Recreation on options for both the 2-5 and 5-12 areas.
- Funding: MPRB is working with Linden Hills Neighborhood Coalition (LHiNC) to engage the community and serve as an intermediary for donations for play equipment. (Funds from park dedication fees cannot be used because the playground is not a new amenity).

2. Where did funds come from to add the Cozy Dome?

Although unforeseen costs of drainage work at the site used up project funds, MPRB staff found a way to be resourceful with other project elements: For a protective barrier on part of the park's south border (near 43rd Street), plants and shrubs will be used instead of more costly fencing. This freed up \$10,000 to fund the Cozy Dome.

3. Can the Cozy Dome be reevaluated in favor of a larger structure for the 2-5 area?

The Cozy Dome will be added because it is included in the approved final concept for the playground. Additional play equipment can be added based on available funding, space requirements and safety guidelines (see Question #1).

4. Can a different designer or playground contractor be used to add play equipment?

MPRB's contract with Flagship Recreation does not allow for additional designers or contractors; that would also add to project costs. Flagship is already familiar with the project and has the necessary site plans and CAD files.

5. How can community members stay up-to-date with the project as Phase 2 proceeds?

- Project website: minneapolisparks.org/linden-hills-play-area-and-site-improvements
- Survey to be posted online - visit the project website.
- Regular project updates send by email (visit the project website to subscribe)
- Francisca Pass, MPRB project designer: fpass@minneapolisparks.org; 612-230-6577
- Flyers posted on doors/windows at Linden Hills Recreation Center



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6. Was research done on the average number of children who use the playground vs. the capacity with the new equipment, and whether the new equipment would be sufficient to meet demand?

MPRB must follow playground safety requirements that include performance specifications for equipment and standards for playground surfacing. The former play equipment in the 5-12 area allowed for a higher capacity and met safety requirements at the time it was installed, in the early 1990s; however, it was replaced because it had aged beyond its intended life span and didn't meet current safety requirements or ADA accessibility requirements.

7. What is a "Nature Play Area" and how would that be funded?

Linden Hills Park's approved master plan includes a nature play area, with a location proposed on the east side of the existing 2-5 play area. Nature play focuses on connections between natural materials/elements and child development and wellbeing, including imaginative play.

A nature play area at Linden Hills Park could incorporate natural elements such as rocks, sticks, sand, water, mud, balancing and stepping logs, or an outdoor play kitchen. Park dedication fees could be used for funding, since a nature play area would be a new amenity. Future allocations for Linden Hills Park from MPRB's Capital Improvement Program could also be used.

8. Why was shredded bark used for the playground surfaces instead of sand?

Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) is standard material in Minneapolis parks systems, for several reasons. Unlike mulch, wood chips or sand, EWF meets all accessibility guidelines and absorbs a high amount of impact and force from falls from play equipment – a significant cause of injuries to children. It's also low-cost, easily installed and provides a firm and slip-resistant surface.