



Date of Board P+C:

Date of Board Approval (for CAC's only):

Date of Most Recent Update: 11/23/2025

Staff Lead: Michael Jones

Department or Division: Planning

Project Name: Harrison Park Playground and Park Improvements Planning Process

Engagement Level: Consult (*See Engagement Assessment attached*)

This plan serves as a guide for the community engagement process for the *Harrison Park Playground and Park Improvements Plan*. The plan may be modified as circumstance warrants during project duration. Substantial modifications are to be communicated to stakeholders and the MPRB Board of Commissioners.

As required by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Community Engagement Policy, this project requires a Community Engagement Plan because the project falls under the *consult* category of community engagement for which MPRB is required to obtain stakeholder feedback on project, initiative, or program analysis, alternatives, or decisions. This CE Plan was used with a GARE Racial Equity Tool Kit framework.

Key Stakeholders should be engaged in the creation of this plan. Please explain who was engaged:

The Harrison Park Playground and Park Improvements planning work will build upon the vision outlined for Harrison Park within the 2017-approved North Service Area Master Plan (NSAMP). A Community Advisory Committee (CAC) was created and made final recommendations on the plan at that time.

Because the design already went through a formal CAC process in 2017, and also because staff want to ensure we ask the community to weigh in on the current conditions, uses, and issues at the park site, staff anticipates that this project will fit under the Consult category.

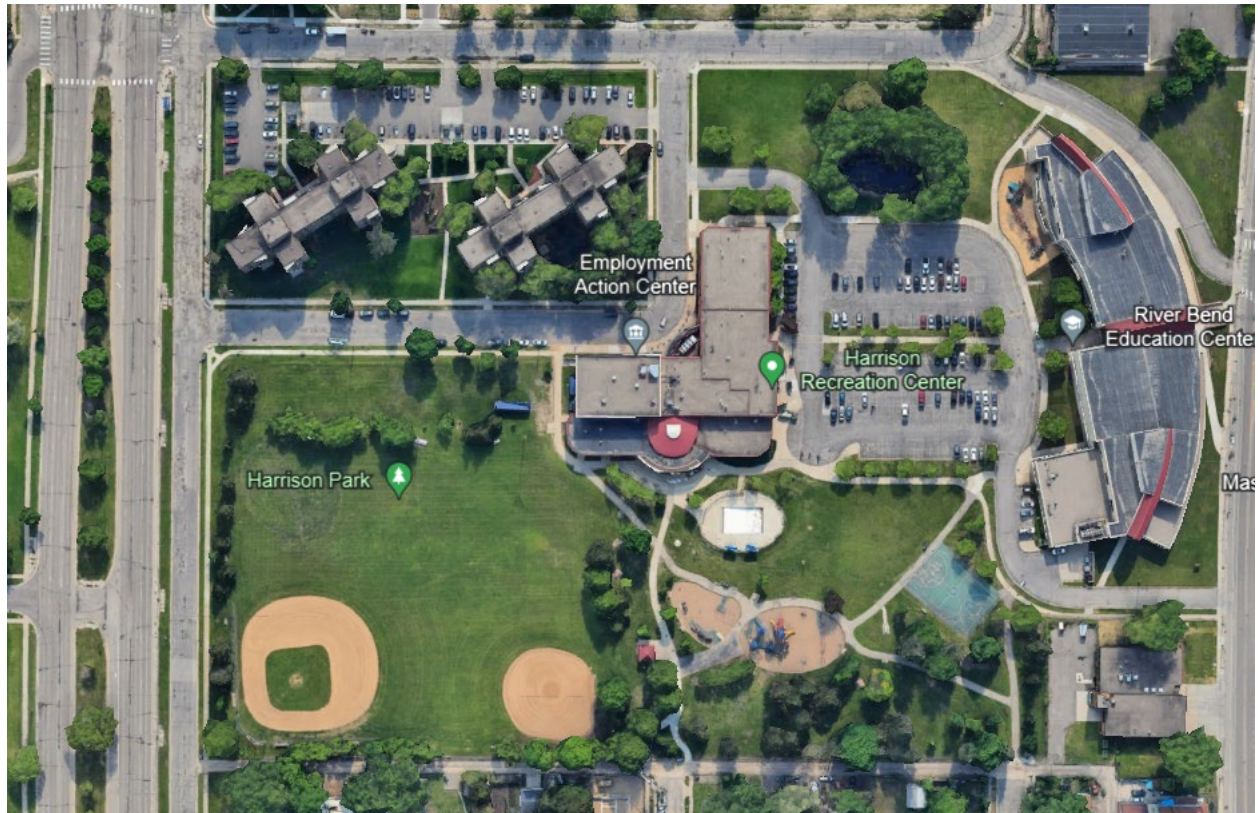
Staff anticipates working with Harrison Neighborhood Association and other stakeholder/residents to identify priorities for the upcoming improvements while using the NSAMP design as the current framework for engagement and improvements.

1. Project Description

1a. Project Overview:

The Harrison Park Playground and Park Improvements planning work will build upon the vision outlined for Harrison Park within the 2017-approved North Service Area Master Plan (NSAMP). The scope of the

project includes specific funding for playground improvements and funding to support additional improvements on the remaining phases of the park.

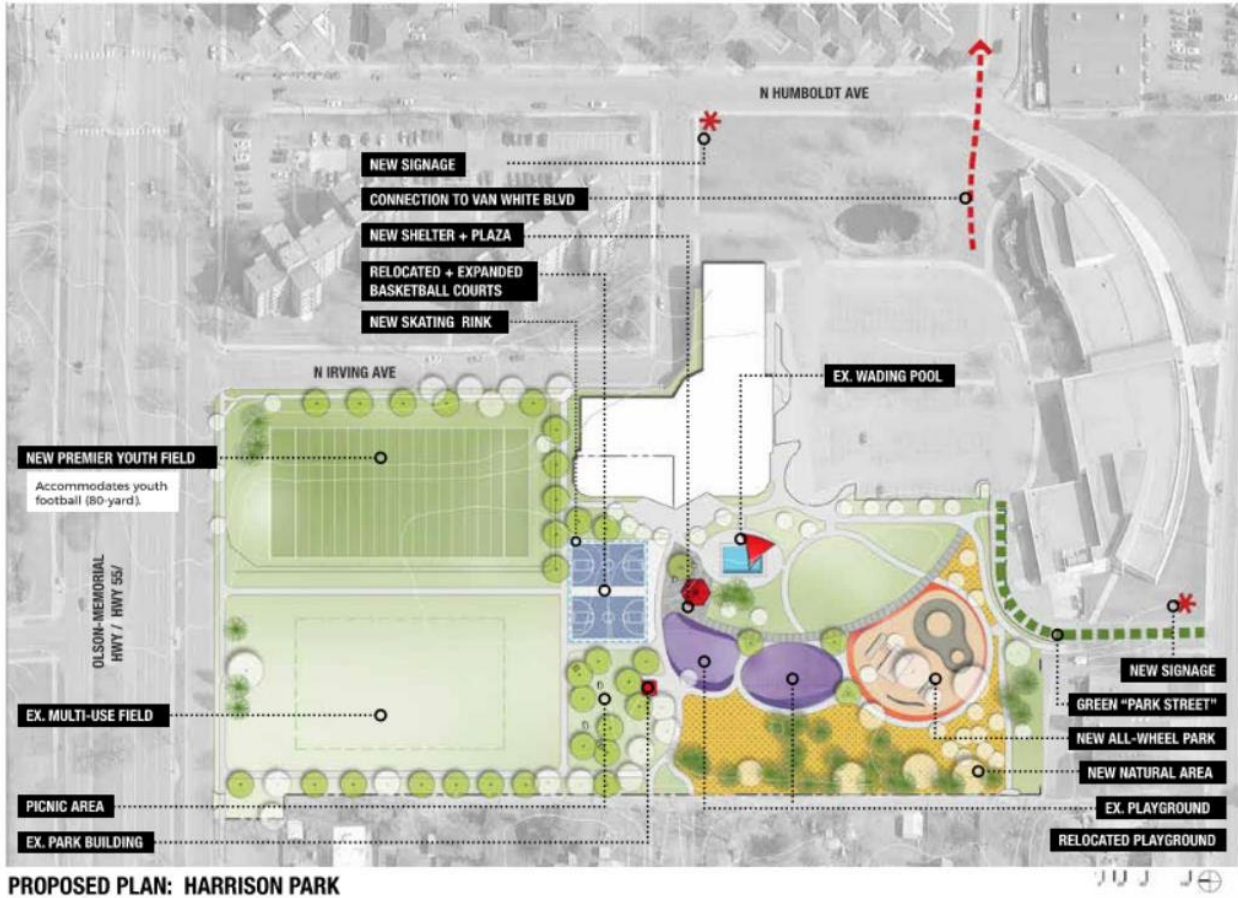


Harrison Park Engagement and Project Area Scope

The park sits adjacent to Hwy 55 on the west and N Irving Ave on the north. The location of this neighborhood park is unique to many other neighborhood parks in the MPRB system as its Recreation Center is connected to the Harrison Education Center. Neighboring agencies that will be key stakeholders include River Bend Education Center, W. Harry Davis Academy, and the local Harrison Neighborhood Association.

The Harrison Park Plan outlined in NSAMP proposed retaining the existing wading pool and green open space and proposed a number of improvements to the park that include:

- A new Premier Youth Field
- New All-Wheels Park
- Moving the basketball court and expanding to two basketball courts, which includes an ice rink
- New Shelter Area and Plaza
- Adding naturalized areas



Since NSAMP’s adoption in 2017, improvements have been made to the recreation center that include a new “Spark’d” studio, along with building improvements that are well used and loved by park users.

1b. MPRB Outcomes (What goals, strategies, or values in the MPRB Comprehensive Plan does this project, program, or initiative relate to?):

Goal 2: Steward and continuum of nature and recreation

- Strategy 2: Support the preservation, management, and increase in acreage of natural and naturalized areas for ecosystem benefits and for public benefit.
- Strategy 6: Improve overall quality of multi-use field and diamonds, including expansion of premier fields throughout the system.

Goal 3: Provide core services with care

- Strategy 11: Design and implement parks that are welcoming, climate resilient, ecologically healthy, playful, beautiful and safe as they age.

Goal 5: Expand focus on health equity

- Strategy 12: Increase opportunities for winter activity through outdoor recreation offerings and outdoor features.

Goal 6: Strengthen ecological connections

- Strategy 3: Preserve, protect and restore natural areas in parks for wildlife and habitat purposes.
- Strategy 12: Enhance connections to natural spaces in our park system.

1c. Project Timeline:

Winter 2023: Initial project scoping

Spring 2024: Community engagement with stakeholder and residents

Summer 2024: Design Concepts and Project Scope Identified

Fall/Winter 2024: Final Design Concepts and Detailed Construction Documentation

*Spring 2025: Tentative Construction Begins

1d. Project Funding:

<u>Capital Sources</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Expiration</u>
Neighborhood Capital Levy	\$175,000	none
NPP20	\$1,024,000	none
Park Dedication	\$164,842	none
Neighborhood Capital Levy (Playground Improvements)	\$390,000	none
TOTAL	\$1,753,842	

2. Project Data:

2a. What are the boundaries of the community engagement area? *(For regional facilities include neighborhoods adjacent to the park and city/regional boundaries.)*

Harrison Park exists entirely inside the Harrison neighborhood. The focus of community engagement will consist of residents and businesses/agencies within the boundaries of the neighborhood.

2b. What are the demographics of the community engagement area? *(Please refer to percentages of the population when possible and note the sources of the data.)*

As of 2020, there were over 3,200 residents living in the neighborhood.

Regional race and ethnicity (Met Council 2020):

• White	29.7%
• Of color	64.1%
○ Black or African American alone	47.8%
○ American Indian and Alaskan Native alone	suppressed*
○ Asian or Pacific Islander alone	7.4%
○ Two or more races	suppressed*
• Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	suppressed*

**Data suppression is used whenever there is chance that the information contained in a publicly available report could be used to reveal or infer the identities of specific individuals*

Over 32% of the Harrison neighborhood population is under 18 years old, which is double the average amount of youth in most Minneapolis neighborhoods. For this reason, it will be crucial to engage youth sufficiently during the engagement process. Additionally, less than 6% of the neighborhood population is over 65 which is in line with the average in the city of Minneapolis.

Almost 21% of residents in the neighborhood were not born in the United States, which is about twice the statewide average of 8%. Providing communications in languages that represent the community will also be an important factor in engaging with the neighborhood. Initial feedback from the community members indicates there is a presence of Lao and Somali in the neighborhood, which may require translators for community engagement events.

About 65% of residents in the neighborhood live in a renter-occupied housing development. To be able to reach renters, it will be critical to connect with landlords, rental associations, and community partners to ensure we connect with tenants.

Projections tell us that communities of color, youth, and seniors will double in current demographic percentages by 2040 (Thrive MSP 2040). Alongside the demographics of the neighborhood, this shift confirms how integral it is for MPRB to include a diversity of voices within the park planning processes.

2c. List any key findings or excerpts from relevant plans or policies that are informing this project, program or initiative, especially if community was engaged in the policy or plan: *The purpose of community research is to collect data that will best inform specific project decisions or strategic direction and support the policy goals of effective community engagement. Research completed in advance of and during project development may include review of previously completed directives or mandates, activity plans, master plans, community studies, industry trends and historical and demographic data. MPRB staff is responsible for determining the research data necessary to support and document decision-making for a project and building off prior community engaged planning, policy, and design.*

As outlined in the Project Overview, staff will build off the Harrison Park plan adopted the 2017 North Service Area Master Plan (NSAMP). Staff have also completed initial conversations with recreation staff and park police to acquire any observations about the issues and opportunities at hand. A scoping document has also been created by staff and is available by request.

2d. What are the data gaps? What additional research needs to be done to understand the project stakeholders and project scope?

In general across the Minneapolis system, it is not well known who actually uses parks, in terms of demographics and visitor numbers. Work is underway to better understand that reality, but currently our understanding of park users is anecdotal.

3. Community Engagement:

The MPRB supports the use of a variety of techniques to interact with and obtain information from stakeholders. Outreach and research tools and methods can be applied for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to the following:

- a. Evaluate success and measure community impact of existing programs, services or facilities.
- b. Gain stakeholder insight and perspective regarding development of a new program, service or facility.
- c. Proactively identify or explore park and recreation trends or ideas.
- d. Determine essential services to be provided for a community or park area.
- e. Query stakeholders when proposing or revising policy.
- f. Resolve persistent conflicts or problems.
- g. Educate or inform the public on proposed changes, projects, programs, and initiatives.
- h. Reflect on projects, programs, and initiatives after adoption by the Board or report on how community input has been integrated.
- i. Learn the history of local context and community.

Staff believes that alongside the Harrison Neighborhood Association, the organizations and businesses associated with the Harrison Park will be key stakeholders in helping to determine priority improvements.

- Harrison Neighborhood Association
- Harrison Education Center
- River Bend Education Center
- W. Harry Davis Academy
- MPRB Park Police and Rec staff

Additional community partners may be identified as the process moves forward.

This plan may also be informed by agency partners whose jurisdiction overlaps with or is adjacent to Harrison Park, including:

- City of Minneapolis
- Hennepin County

Engagement will respond and adapt to community and partner feedback throughout the process.

Project Stakeholder <i>(students, ethnic</i>	Outreach: How will you reach out to the	Engagement: How will they participate? (i. e.	Reflecting Back: How will stakeholder groups
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<i>communities, neighborhood groups, community leaders)</i>	stakeholder? <i>(i.e. go to parks, neighborhood listserv, engage with cultural media)</i>	<i>online survey, focus group, community open house, intercept survey)</i>	be reflected back to about the project progress or outcomes? <i>(Posted on project website, ribbon cutting, e-blast, site visit, celebration)</i>
Current park users, which can include youth, cultural communities, organizations	Attend community events, present to neighborhood organizations, neighborhood listservs, flyering in the neighborhood	Online/paper survey, community open house, attend existing community events, focus groups	Website, direct email, GovDeliveries, news articles, flyers at community nodes
Local neighborhood organizations and community groups	Attend community meetings and events, neighborhood listservs	Online survey, possible community open house	Website, direct email, GovDeliveries, news articles
MPRB staff who work in the Harrison neighborhood	Connect with Rec Director to identify best process	Focus group, invite to attend community events	Direct email
Non-park users	Connect with neighborhood groups to share through their networks	Focus group, online survey	Website, Gov deliveries, news articles
Cultural communities	Community partners with focused constituents	online survey	Direct communication with partners
Seniors/elders and disability community	Community partners with focused constituents	online survey	Direct communication with partners
Renters	Community partners with focused constituents	online survey	Direct communication with partners
Youth	Park-based youth programming	online survey	Share out with youth programming staff to share with groups

If needed, describe the outreach, engagement, or reflection methods you will use that are referenced above:

3b. Advisory Committees:

Technical Advisory Committee: Staff do not anticipate hosting a formal TAC for this work, but will reach out to adjacent agency partners as appropriate including:

The City of Minneapolis

Metro Transit
Hennepin County
MnDOT

Project Advisory Committee: This roster is a list of MPRB departments and divisions that are on the PAC
Community Connections and Violence Prevention
Strategic Planning
Design and Project Management
Forestry
Environmental Management
Recreation
Asset Management
Communications
Park Police

3c. Will a Community Advisory Committee be required for this project, program, or initiative? Y/N

No, as previously mentioned, this work will be completed using the template from the 2017 NSAMP, which already had a formal CAC to advise on the final design.

4. Analysis:

4a. What questions will you be asking community to respond to in your outreach and engagement?

Do you currently visit Harrison Park?

- If yes, what activities/programs do you participate at the park?
- If no, is there a reason why you do not visit the park?

What sort of activities would you like to see at Harrison Park?

What gaps or issues currently exist that you would like the MPRB to address?

What are the opportunities for improvement at Harrison Park?

What are your priorities for immediate improvements, based on the park plan?

4b. How will your community engagement outreach, engagement, and methods make MPRB a more equitable system?

Ensuring that we are being inclusive with the voices that are represented throughout the process will help the Park Board implement improvements at Harrison Park that elevate underrepresented voices and takes everyone’s needs and interests into consideration.

4c. Identify one or more key project milestones when project evaluation will be performed (i.e. Draft design review, draft policy review, project mid-point)

Milestone #1: Complete Engagement for upcoming Improvements (Summer 2024)

5. Evaluation Summary: *To be completed at one or more project milestones as identified in 4c.*

5a. Who was engaged during the process? *(i.e. demographic info from online survey participants, the CAC, and community engagement whenever possible. Refer back to Section 2 in the CE Plan and how your engagement reflects the diversity of the community in the engagement area.)*

MPRB engaged with internal staff, park visitors, and an online survey was provided to many subscribers from the Harrison Park neighborhood park users

5b. How did the engagement inform the project outcome? *(i.e. public tabulation and amendments following a public comment period)*

The engagement informed the design and concept that was selected. It also informed slight design modifications to the final design concept to accommodate all those that participated in feedback.

5c. Please describe any new or innovative engagement methods used during the process:

We used online surveys to capture as many voices as possible that wanted to share their thoughts.

5d. What recommendations do you have for future engagement around this topic, park, or area?

Always have constant and transparent communication with park users and stakeholder groups.

5e. What, if any, were the unintended outcomes of your CE Plan?

This helped frame how we communicated to scheduled our commitment and project process.

5g. Were there any barriers to successful implementation of your CE Plan?

None for this project.

5h. Were you adequately resourced, including staff support, expertise, and funding?

Yes, we had plenty of staff willing to participate.

5i. If applicable, how can this project, program, or initiative, or MPRB continue to partner and deepen relationships with underrepresented communities?

By continuing to engage with local neighborhood and stakeholder groups. To show how strong relationships inform the design and final project.