



222 Lewis Street
River Falls, WI 54022

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**AGENDA MEETING OF THE
PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
Wednesday, May 18, 2022 at 5:15 p.m.
City Hall Training Room**

5:15 p.m. CALL TO ORDER

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of minutes from April 20, 2022 Park and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting

PUBLIC COMMENTS – Non-Agenda Items

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Outdoor Recreation Plan Steering Committee#3
2. Wells Park Survey results
3. Update on current Park projects

ACTION ITEMS

CALENDAR

Next Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting June 15, 2022

ADJOURNMENT

NOTE: Any person who has a qualifying disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act that requires the meeting or materials to be in an accessible location or format, may contact City Clerk Amy White at (715) 426-3408 or in person at 222 Lewis Street, for accommodations. Requests for accommodations should be made at least three (3) business days in advance of the meeting. Every effort will be made to arrange accommodations.

Council members may be in attendance for informational purposes only.

No official Council action will be taken.

Post: City Hall Bulletin Board 05/13/2022



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PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES
Wednesday, April 20, 2022 at 5:15 p.m.
City Hall Training Room

Members Present: Patricia LaRue (chair), Brandon Dobbertin, Brenda Gaulke, Matt Janquart
Melissa Pedrini

Members Absent: Alyssa Mueller (Council Rep)

Staff Present: Cindi Danke-Recreation Manager; Brenda Rundle-Recreation Assistant; Scot Simpson-City Administrator; Mike Stifter-Public Works Director; and Kendra Ellner-Planner

Others Present: Sean Downing and Ben Fochs

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting convened at 5:15 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MSC Gaulke/Pedrini to approve the minutes of the March 16, 2022 Park and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting. Carried 5-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – Non-Agenda Items

Sean Downing thanked Park Board for their time over his years on the Park Board and encouraged Park Board to support building an ice-skating rink.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

City Administrator Scot Simpson discussed the City's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding of \$1.6 million (we have already received about half), and City Council needs to decide the best use of the money. It can be used for any local government services with very few exceptions. There was a City Council workshop to discuss how to use the money. Council leaned towards using it towards existing CIP priorities and they were also given recommendations from City staff. Some projects discussed were the Powell Avenue bridge reconstruction (the City portion), Wasson Lane reconstruction (the City portion), playgrounds, police cars, and weather siren replacement. At the April 12th Council meeting, a final project list was recommended by City Administrator Scot Simpson based on previous workshops, but an amendment was made requesting that \$100,000 of it be used towards an outdoor ice rink which passed by council 4-3. The mayor later vetoed requesting that the focus remain on existing CIP projects and wait for the results of the outdoor recreation plan to determine the merits of an ice rink. The estimate for a very basic ice rink is \$50,000-\$60,000. The 2018 Master plan of Glen Park had a sports court that can be flooded in the winter for about \$200,000 and a basic warming house would be about \$500,000.

Park Board members shared their thoughts about having an ice rink, likely at Glen Park because of the last park plan, but it was not high enough on the priority list to get completed in the first or second phase of Glen Park plan. Though an ice rink is on the Park Board wish list there are higher priority items they would like to see developed in the parks. After much discussion, it was unanimously decided that they are in favor of putting in an outdoor ice rink if the funds are available. To override the mayor's veto at the April 26th Council meeting, it would take a vote of at least 5 out of 7 City Council members.

2. Planner Kendra Ellner shared an update about the Outdoor Recreation Plan. An existing park facility inventory has been completed and a list was shared with Park Board members to review. There will be pop-up events in April and the next steering committee meeting will likely be in May.

3. Mike Stifter says orders have been placed for some playground equipment at four playgrounds: Brandon's, Spring Creek, Knollwood, and part of Glen Park (with some donated funds). Staff also recommends replacement playground equipment at Westdale and Collins with ARPA funds. The Wells Park neighborhood recently received a survey about their neighborhood park and what amenities they desire.

4. The Glover Schoolhouse at DeSanctis Park is being updated and prepared to make it rentable. It should be ready to use in summer. Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) will have some ideas for historic photos to hang in the schoolhouse. There are plans to have a historic potbelly stove and desk in the corner.

5. Cindi Danke passed out the list of Hoffman Park camping rules for review. The campground opened Friday April 15th, and it will be full this weekend due to the Chamber's Bluegrass Festival.

6. Patricia LaRue would like each park board member to visit some parks a few times this spring and early summer and speak with park-goers. This will be discussed again next month.

7. Cindi Danke and Scot Simpson told Park Board about a recent community project funding grant for five projects in Rep. Ron Kind's district, and there was a very short deadline to apply, so City staff applied for grant monies to be used on swimming pool as it was already on a project list but did not have the monies to complete it previously. We will likely hear a decision later this summer.

ACTION ITEMS

None

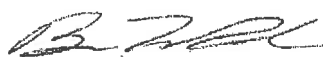
CALENDAR

The next Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting will be May 18, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT

MSC Dobbertin/Janquart to adjourn the meeting at 6:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Brenda Rundle
Customer Service Representative

RIVER FALLS OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING #3

Wednesday, May 18 | 5:15pm

1

INTRODUCTIONS

- Introductions and Icebreaker
 - o What is the one recreation amenity/space/etc. that you wish was in River Falls?

2

KEY THEMES AND GOALS

- Comprehensive Plan Update – Recreation Element
- Key Themes Review
- Goal Structure and Intent

3

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

- Earth Day Pop-Up Events
- Upcoming Pop-Ups

4

OUTDOOR RECREATION INVENTORY

- Outdoor Recreation Inventory

5

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- 5-Year NRPA Needs Assessment Process
- Long Term Needs Assessment

6

NEXT STEPS

- Pop-Up Events

Community Development Department

222 Lewis Street
River Falls, WI 54022
715.425.0900
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Mike Stifter, Public Works Director and Cindi Danke, Parks and Recreation Manager

FROM: Kendra Ellner, Planner

RE: Wells Park Survey Results

DATE: May 9, 2022

This memo is being provided to share the Wells Park survey results and findings to help the decision-making process for the Wells Park improvements. No recommendations will be made from this memorandum unless requested by supervisors. Appendix of the summarized results can be found on page 6.

Background

The City has slated funding for numerous park improvements around River Falls within the upcoming years, noted in the 2022-20226 [Capital Improvement Plan](#). This includes approximately \$50k or more for Wells Park. The capital funds, in addition to possibly the America Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds may be applied to achieve the necessary park improvements. City staff have begun discussions on the possibilities for upgrades to this park, including a new sidewalk that leads to the park, is projected to be installed on the southside of Kennedy St. However, since this is a neighborhood park that is an integral part of the community, it is pertinent to include community engagement to get feedback of resident's thoughts.

On March 25, 2022, Planner, Kendra Ellner, created a 10 question survey on the City engagement platform, EngageRF.org and sent a physical survey letter to 150 properties within approximately a 2-mile radius of the park including the Peregrine Circle development for feedback, see Exhibit 1.

Exhibit 1 – Wells Park Aerial



Analysis

The deadline for the residents to complete the survey was April 8, 2022 (two-week period) (some physical surveys were received after the deadline and still counted). After the deadline there was 46 responses with a return rate of 31%.

The analysis will be a highlight of the findings, upon compiling the results of this survey. The full results can be found as an appendix (page 6) to this memo. Along with the link to the [excel spreadsheet](#) for the aggregated raw data.

Findings:

- From the results of this survey it was found that the neighborhood is a mix of two adults and at least one child or two adult households with no child. There was a variety of children ages with the most kids being older than 13 years old, but the younger children were on average, ages between 2 and 6 years old.
- Most people lived within a quarter mile radius of Wells Park with 91% of respondents noting that they lived 0-1/4 miles away from the park. According to the results most people visited the park at least weekly on an annual basis with 30% of respondents marking that answer.
- Staff have previously discussed some park improvement options and begun working with a playground manufacturer to secure an early deal on potential playground equipment. The rendering of the proposed playground equipment was shared on the survey where the

residents had an option to select their thoughts through an emoticon, see Exhibit 2 below. Most respondents reported that they could “live” or had neutral feelings towards the proposed playground equipment while the next highest answer reported was that respondents loved it, see exhibit 3 and 4 of the graph and chart below.

Exhibit 2 – Proposed Playground Equipment Survey Question

- 7. Please review the proposed play equipment below, to potentially be added to the existing playground set, let us know what you think.

Description: 1) Swing set- One set of toddler swings + one set of older child/adult belt swings. 2) Interactive- memory reaction light up play panel. *

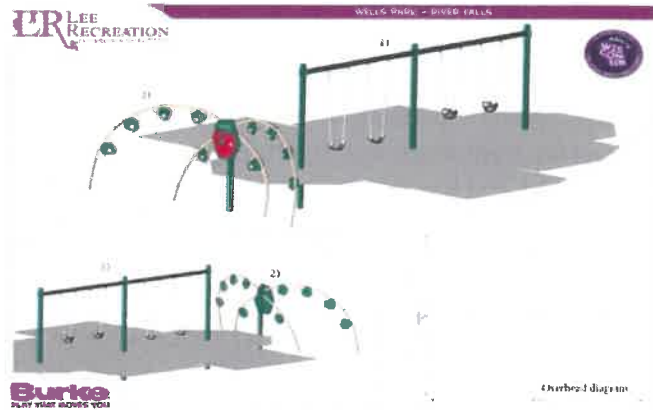


Exhibit 3 – Respondent’s feelings towards proposed playground equipment chart



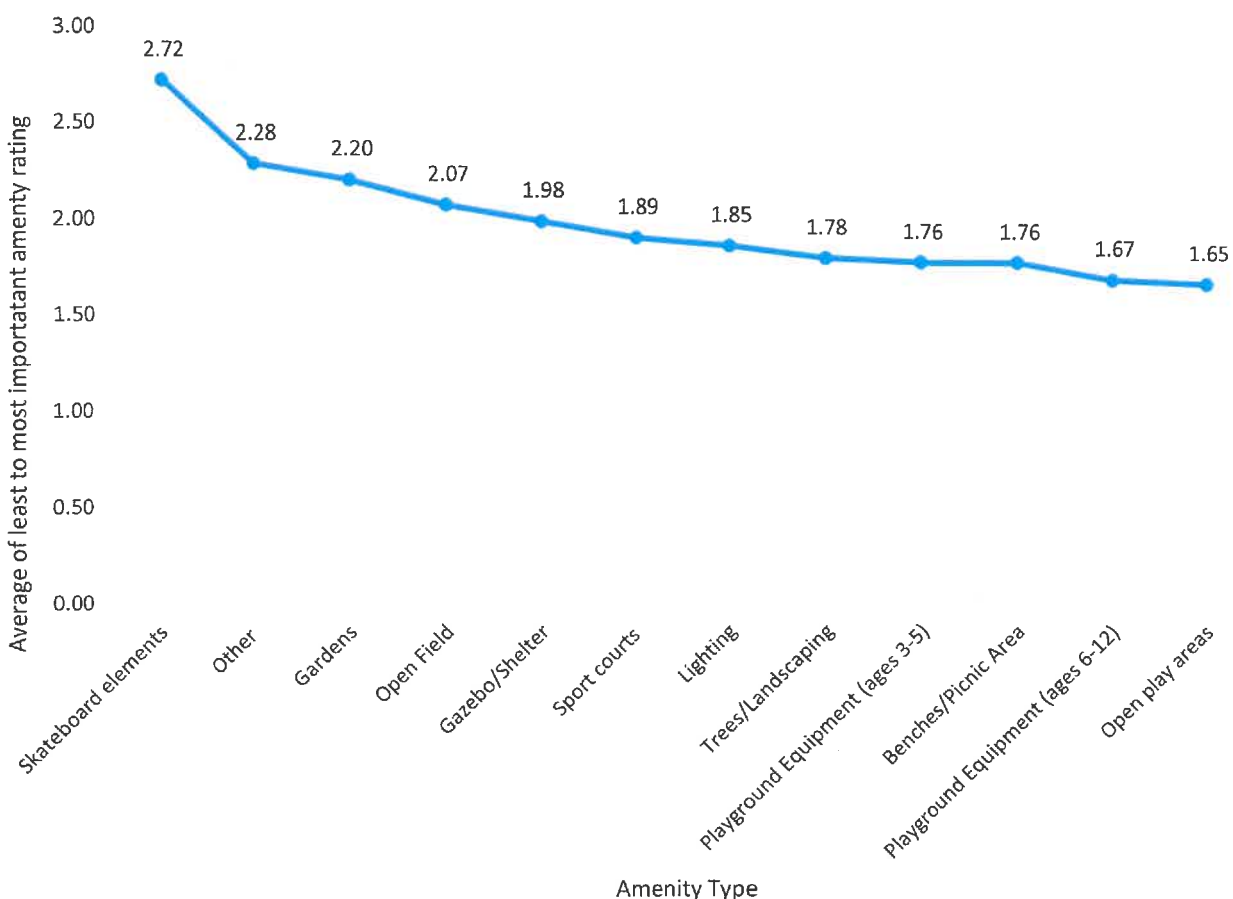
Exhibit 4 – Respondent’s feelings towards proposed playground equipment table

Proposed Playground Equipment

Feelings towards playground equipment	# of votes
I can live with it.	21
I love it!	18
I don't like it	7

In addition to the proposed playground equipment residents were given an option to rate the amenities that the City could also potentially fund to be included in the park improvements. The results of the ratings concluded that open play areas and playground equipment ages 6-12 were a top priority for the neighborhood. Shown by Exhibit 5 and 6 in the graph and table below.

Exhibit 5– Graph of the results of the average least to most important amenities.



*Note: 1 = the most important amenity. 3= the least important.

Exhibit 6 – Table of the park amenity options from least to most important

Park Amenity Options	
Amenity Type	Average Importance
Skateboard elements	2.72
Other	2.28
Gardens	2.20
Open Field	2.07
Gazebo/Shelter	1.98
Sport courts	1.89
Lighting	1.85
Trees/Landscaping	1.78
Playground Equipment (ages 3-5)	1.76
Benches/Picnic Area	1.76
Playground Equipment (ages 6-12)	1.67
Open play areas	1.65

Conclusion

In conclusion the results from the survey found that there was valuable input from the neighborhood even if all residents did not fill it out. Many residents left detailed comments that you can find in the appendix below. Most of the recommendations can be inferred from the results/findings but that does not necessarily mean that must be the course of action the City is required to take. The responses can be a valuable tool to help the decision-making process, but this memorandum will not be making recommendations unless prompted to by supervisors. If there are any additional questions, feel free to contact Kendra Ellner, Planner.

Appendix: 2022 Wells Park Survey Results – Summary

150 surveys we sent and by the deadline 46 responses were received for a return rate of 31%.

of Children living in the households:

54 children total. Typical average of 1.2 per household.

Breakdown:

24 people responded they have no child

5 people responded they have 1 child

10 people responded they have 2 children

4 people responded they have 3 children

2 people responded they have 4 children

1 person responded they have 5+ children, specifically 9

Ages of children in the household:

1yrs old=2, 2yrs old= 6, 3yrs old= 5, 4yrs old= 3, 5yrs old= 4, 6yrs old= 5, 7yrs old= 2, 8yrs old= 3, 9yrs old= 2, 10yrs old= 2, 11yrs old= 2, 12yrs old= 2, 13+ yrs. old= 7

of adults (18+) in the household:

91

Time spent in Wells Park on a yearly basis:

Daily – 13% | 6 responses

Weekly – 30% | 14 responses

Monthly – 22% | 10 responses

Rarely – 20% | 9 responses

Never - 15% | 7 responses

Distance from the park:

0-1/4 mile - 91% | 42 responded

¼-1/2 mile – 9% | 4 responded

More than ½ mile - 0% | 0 responded

Mode of transit to Wells Park:

40 respondents reported they walked

1 respondent reported that they biked

5 respondents reported “other” noting that they do not go to Wells Park

Proposed play equipment thoughts:

21 responded they can live with it.

18 responded they loved it.

7 responded they don't like it.

Amenities rated for Wells Park:

<i>Skateboard elements</i>	2 rated #1	9 rated #2	35 rated #3
<i>Other</i>	14 rated #1	5 rated #2	27 rated #3
<i>Gardens</i>	12 rated 1	12 rated #2	21 rated #3
<i>Open Field</i>	13 rated #1	17 rated #2	16 rated #3
<i>Gazebo/Shelter</i>	13 rate #1	21 rated #2	12 rated #3
<i>Sport courts</i>	17 rated #1	17 rated #2	12 rated #3
<i>Lighting</i>	20 rated #1	13 rated #2	13 rated #3
<i>Trees/Landscaping</i>	18 rated #1	20 rated #2	8 rated #3
<i>Playground Equipment (ages 3-5)</i>	23 rated #1	11 rated #2	12 rated #3
<i>Benches/Picnic Area</i>	20 rated #1	17 rated #2	9 rated #3
<i>Playground Equipment (ages 6-12)</i>	23 rated #1	15 rated #2	8 rated #3
<i>Open play areas</i>	23 rated #1	16 rated # 2	7 rated #3

Additional Comments:

- Additional small structures and/or ride on equipment for the 3–5-year-old age would be fantastic! Thanks for gathering community input for this project!
- We have lived in this neighborhood for 45 years and have not used wells park even when my children were little. the kids went to the playground in the low-income housing. We live on the South side of Kennedy. Sycamore heading East to S Sixth street there are 5 kids on our side of the street. And on the north side of the street there are only the kids that belong to the low-income housing, and they have their own park to play in. We do not see any activity in wells park at all.
- Just proper lighting
- FITNESS PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT!! (I researched Lee Recreation website)
 - Water fountain/bubbler
 - Safety surfacing
 - Volleyball nets
 - Solar lighting
 - Resurface and improve tennis court/pickleball-add solar lighting for evening play
- Please consider adding security cameras to Wells Park. Other communities have had incidents of arson to playgrounds, and it would be in the interest of this area to benefit from CCTV remote monitoring. Reviewing City of River Falls Police website, there have been very recent reports of vandalism (1) and theft (3) noted in the Spot Crime map. I've personally observed individuals/groups of teens at this park after hours; littering, smoking cigarettes, the unmistakable smell of marijuana or possibly worse dangerous drugs. I bring my grandchildren to Wells Park and I've seen condom wrappers in the grass.
- Please make this a family friendly place! Maybe a nicer fence to visually separate the cemetery from the park? I think that would help the appeal by 10-fold. Also, a sign noting what's allowed vs. what's not. Thanks!!
- If there's a shelter, I'd just want it to be a safe family spot and not a drug hangout. Sometimes I've noticed sketchy behavior with all the transitioning from the subsidized housing at Wells Park. It needs a major facelift. We'd use the park much more if it were nicer. Thank you!
- Fencing to keep kids contained in playground and seating areas for parents. Instead of sand, something less messy. The current play set is really worn down and dirty.
- Upgrading the tennis court and adding Pickleball lines. Good lighting for the nighttime.
- The open field is extremely useful for my use in training martial arts and teaching local people martial arts. I highly, highly value the large open space this park provides for the community so close to my home. I would like more trees along the street. The ones that were cut down should be replaced along that strip of land.
- Accessible restroom or porta potty
- Volleyball/tennis court would be great. There is enough play equipment outside of more swings.
- Lighting is important for safety for everyone.
- We have loved the use of the open field. We do miss the large trees on the boulevard, I'm guessing some had to come down for power lines, but it'd be nice to have some trees back.

- I hope there is more for smaller children to play with/on. Right now the park is geared towards older children and there are always much smaller children there when I visit.
- Controlling vehicle speed with increased traffic
- Safety - maybe have extra police presence / drive bys?
- Need more larger shade trees.
- Get rid of sand box. It's just a potty box for cats and other pets. Gross.
- A sign saying "Slow, children at play" Lots of speeders thru here. 😞
- Dog owners need to clean up after their dogs. So many irresponsible dog owners. 😞
- Needs to be watched more closely. Drugs are being dealt thr after dark.
- Improve/maintain the tennis court, maybe a fenced in dog play area. Is the city planning to maintain the park and anything new that they add? The tennis court could be in much better shape, so it makes me nervous that any new additions might not be maintained in the long run. I hope the city is planning for the long term as well.
- I don't think the memory light equipment is a good idea. I think it will get broken quickly and will be more time consuming to repair in the future. I think it will require more maintenance than a non-electrical piece of equipment."
- Keep it as natural as possible. We don't need an interactive light up panel for this park. Just build a better swing set and save money.
- I definitely think that the old sandbox in Wells park needs to remove. & I would be so happy to see it improved, it's the park I take my children to a lot. But we haven't been going due to their bored with it. So now I have to drive them to the tri-Angels park down on division street. But it would be nice to just be able to walk to a park similar to that one. I think that the like rubber pieces are the best for the ground around a playground. Sand & woodchips just get into everything. Just a thought for all the parents I talk to about hating how their kids track in all that wood & sand. It just gets everywhere. Lol. So just a thought.
- Cleaning up/fixing the existing playground. There are drawings on it and the interactive piece underneath does not work. Adding a dip in the curb to access the park for strollers/handicap accessibility.
- Toilets?
- Frisbee Golf
- I am most concerned about the sidewalk project that is supposed to happen this year. This amenity affects me. I live at 506 Kennedy St. I feel that if a sidewalk is necessary for our neighborhood so people can walk safely to Wells Park, should be on the North side of Kennedy, not the south side. It effects too many driveways and trees on the south side. Plus the privacy factor. If put on the north side, it effects a lot fewer front yards than if on the south side. Mostly side yards on the north. I personally don't want my front yard basically to cut in half due to a sidewalk. I don't want people walking that close to my house. Our houses aren't back from the street far enough to accommodate a sidewalk. I also don't want to lose my maple tree in the front yard. And lastly, I don't want to lose the space to park cars in the driveway due to a sidewalk. I'm sure my neighbors feel the same way. Seems like the sidewalk will have a lot less effect on people's lives that live on the north side of Kennedy than the south side. Please consider moving the sidewalk to the north side of Kennedy. Thank you, Angela Lewis 506 Kennedy Street.

- Better lighting! Wells Park has never felt very welcoming, and always so dark at night.
- We have many new multi-family residences built in the area recently - more children and teens in the neighborhood - future use may be increased.
- Pickleball has become very popular in recent years - Wells Park once had a tennis court.
- It is not used enough - so no! Money used better somewhere else!
- "In regard to sport courts: Tennis only!! No basketball. In regard to skateboard elements: No!! Too noisy.
- More signs to pick up your dog's poop. City needs to maintain more often. I'm always picking up brush and garbage. Keep the park simple and quiet!!" Wells Park is in a residential area. Basketball and skateboards are TOO LOUD. I live close to the park and want peace and quiet! Redo tennis court for TENNIS ONLY, it's a quite sport. DON'T put in lights. There will be people over there when neighbors are trying to sleep. The park should be closed NO LATER THAN 9pm! There has been young adults and teenagers in the park late at night in the past up to no good. Sex, drinking, fights etc...
- Get rid of sand box. Add something like grips or grip tape for little hands who need help going up!! We have grandkids - we go to other parks because although this is a 1/2 block away there aren't age-appropriate options.
- I would like Wells Park to remain Family Friendly. A quiet, peaceful area for young children to play and where families can spend an enjoyable time together. The way it was intended when constructed in the College View Addition many years ago when we built our home here. The Tennis Court could use an upgrade. Some trees for shade, a wildflower garden, a few more picnic areas and added small children equipment areas would enhance the Park..."I don't feel we want Basketball, Skateboard or Baseball areas in Wells Park to disrupt the Quiet, Peaceful family times AT THE PARK or IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD. They belong in separate designated areas. If these Big Box Builders wanted these amenities, they should have allowed for these ""Green Spaces"" in a different location and not invade our spaces.!
- I would also like to see more Police Presence near Wells Park and the installation of Security Cameras to deter the unwelcomed activities and people from that area.
- Thank you for asking for our input...!!
- People hanging out after hours - noisy vehicles
- ""FYI: our #9 children refer to our grandchildren
 - *Our grandkids that we bring to the park love the equipment that is already there, but it needs sprucing up
 - *Drinking fountain
 - *Tennis courts need to be fixed/improved
 - *The light up play panel in the plan is not needed, but perhaps a simple horizontal climbing wall instead
 - *More tables/benches would make it more inviting
 - *Tetherball could be nice for older kids and a half court for basketball
 - *We do not want skateboard elements
 - *We really didn't want sidewalks in our neighborhood"
- Wells Park is a wonderful park for our neighborhood. Keep it simple- basic playground equipment that is currently there has entertained two generations of our children and we don't

want that option to go. Also, the sand has seemed to harbor wasps making it difficult for children to play safely.

- Tennis court and playground equipment get used a lot but need updating and more of it. Big new open space not used so additional sports courts or playground equipment would be great. Teeter totters, musical play equipment, basketball etc. more picnic benches needed. Miss having free ice-skating area at the parks. When I was a kid there was one at Wells Park and Hoffman. Great to have for a winter outdoor activity for families. Sandbox was used but also in bad shape. A new one would need a cover animals go to the bathroom in it. Water fountain would be nice.
- Bus stop for kids: would be nice to have in area for this or shelter for the winter.
- walking path/ labyrinth. Possible jungle gym.
- The sign is covered by the hedge.
- sidewalk to enter park (ending at seating)
- We walk by almost daily in good weather. Never, ever see it being used. I believe it is the least kept up park in RF.
- Burke - "level X play system" Climbing - web style or similar climbing system.
- Access to park from the south would allow more use. (put gate in fence). A shelter with electric and picnic tables would be very nice for family/ community gathering and provide shade in the summer and shelter from rain.
- sidewalks
- Keep natural with grass etc. Updated playground equipment. The swings! Better maintenance of the tennis court (upkeep of net court, lines, etc..). Improve appearance of park via use of landscaping rocks / design / gardens. Employ interns from a university to save on costs and provide them with experience.
- Just the neglect of the tennis court and the 2 new trees planted last year. Use of tree water bags could be helpful in the future. * Speed on Kennedy. Speed bumps would help and/or be ideal! * Keep it small and neighborly. Thank you :)