



Inver Grove Heights Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee

Wednesday, January 8, 2025 at 7:00 PM

8150 Barbara Avenue, Inver Grove Heights, MN 55077

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Presentations**
4. **Announcements**
 - A. Regular Meeting – Wednesday, February 12 at 7:00 pm
5. **Consent Agenda**

All items on the Consent Agenda are considered routine and have been made available to the Commission at least two days prior to the meeting; the items will be enacted in one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Commission member or citizen so requests, in which event the item will be removed from this Agenda and considered in normal sequence.

 - A. Approval Agenda
 - B. Approve Minutes from November 13, 2024
6. **Public Comment**

Public comment provides an opportunity for the public to address the Commission on items that are not on the agenda. Comments will be limited to three (3) minutes per person.
7. **Unfinished Business**

Items that are brought back to the Commission for action from a previous meeting
8. **Regular Agenda**
 - A. Archery Range - South Valley Park
 - B. Southern Lakes and Veteran Memorial Community Center Park Playground Replacement
9. **Administrative Presentations**
 - A. Department Happenings
 1. Parks and Recreation Update
 2. Recreation Superintendent Update
 3. Parks Update Superintendent Update
10. **Commission Comments**
11. **Adjourn**

January 8, 2025 - Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee Agenda

**Inver Grove Heights
Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission
City Hall Police Conference Room - 8150 Barbara Avenue
Wednesday, November 13, 2024 - 7:00 p.m.**

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Cook called the November 13, 2024 Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL:

Present: Vice Chair Niki Barker; Commissioners: Kurt Stangler, Bill Skar, Sandy Christensen, Ben Stone, Tracy Mulcahy, Abby Heidenreich, Willie Krech

Absent: None.

Others Present: Recreation Superintendent Julie Dorshak, Parks Superintendent Brian Swoboda, Parks and Recreation Director Adam Lares

3. PRESENTATIONS:

A. Amy Powers-Johnson, Spartan Prevention, Advocacy, and Resource Coalition (SPARC)

Amy Powers-Johnson presented on SPARC's alcohol, marijuana, and vaping prevention programs. The goal of the grant is to reduce misperceptions about substance use among youth to improve community health: students, parents, school staff, and community members think that vaping is much more prevalent than it actually is, and this misperception is a risk factor for substance use. In her role as Positive Community Norms Grant Coordinator, she promotes positive messaging ("most youth do not use") as a protective factor. Other aspects of this work involve updating curriculum, policies, and resources. She thanked Parks and Recreation Staff for their partnership in hosting safe and healthy activities for youth. She asked for the Commission's help with spreading awareness that most Inver Grove Heights students are not vaping.

Chair Cook asked how messaging is being spread.

Amy Powers-Johnson answered that her office is in Simley High School, so she has daily interaction with students, school staff, and parents. She also coordinates a youth group, and members attend community events to spread prevention messaging.

Chair Cook asked about partnership with police.

Amy Powers-Johnson said District Resource Officer Erica Eid is very involved and has great insights to offer.

Willie Krech asked what the Parks and Recreation Commission can do to assist with SPARC's work.

Amy Powers-Johnson said it would be helpful to add signage in parks encouraging parents to talk to their kids about substance use.

Commissioner Mulcahy asked about the length of the grant.

Amy Powers-Johnson said it a five year grant; it goes through the 2025-2026 school year. She shared that there is a possibility for a five-year extension through Dakota County.

Commissioner Mulcahy asked whether SPARC is working with other school districts as well.

Amy Powers-Johnson said that eight communities in Minnesota got this grant, and Inver Grove Heights and Forest Lake are the largest of these by far; most are further north in smaller communities.

Chair Cook asked about efforts to share SPARC's work.

Amy Powers-Johnson said that SPARC meets regularly with other communities who have received this grant, and they also meet with Department of Human Services to learn about what is working well.

Commissioner Skar said that afterschool events help students stay out of trouble; he commended SPARC for the Fifth Quarter event. He said he has noticed a positive shift in student perceptions of SPARC's messaging.

Commissioner Krech expressed interest in adding signs to City parks with the goal of reducing smoking and vaping.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares thanked Amy Powers-Johnson, Recreation Superintendent Julie Dorshak, and Recreation Coordinator Rachel Mikel for their work in prevention programming. He added that in the hockey arena, there is already a banner with positive messaging. He clarified that last year, an ordinance was passed to forbid smoking/vaping in parks, and there is currently signage in City parks indicating that.

Chair Cook thanked Amy Powers-Johnson for sharing her work.

B. Anna Ferris, Unity Trail - Dakota County

Anna Ferris, Park Outreach Coordinator with Dakota County Parks, presented on the Unity Trail project, a collaboration between the City, Inver Hills Community College, Dakota County Parks, Dakota County Library, and Dakota County School Districts, with funding from the Metropolitan Council's Equity Grant Program. The grant includes funding for the creation of a five-mile interpretive trail in Inver Grove Heights as well as outreach programs, learning circles, and materials development to highlight the themes of the Unity Trail. The seven stops on the trail will add interest to existing paved trails by recognizing contributions and experiences of Black people, Indigenous people, and people of color. There will also be a free bike share pilot program and bike programming to increase access to the Greenway.

The project is currently in the planning phase, with implementation (installation of interpretive and wayfinding elements) scheduled for January 2025 to May 2026.

Public engagement involved events and an online survey, with a focus on gathering youth input. Public art and places to sit/gather were two priorities identified from community input, so mosaic art benches are the proposed format for installations. (There will also be sidewalk poetry inlays near some sites.) People also expressed interest in highlighting Inver Grove Heights residents and telling locally-focused stories of activism, resilience, and social change.

The City of Inver Grove Heights will have two sites with art benches: Veterans Memorial Community Center and Simley Island Park. The bike share docking station will be at VMCC (tentative anticipated start date: Spring 2025). The City is providing a \$15,000 cash contribution to the construction of elements at these sites.

Two Joint Powers Agreements will be pursued between Dakota County and the City:

- 1) Fabrication, installation, maintenance of wayfinding and interpretive elements
- 2) Bike share program lending station at VMCC

Commissioner Krech suggested signage encouraging bikes to use the bike trail rather than the road.

Chair Cook asked about the distance between the interpretive stops.

Anna Ferris said that the goal is to make stops roughly equidistant. She shared that the stops along the Mississippi Greenway are placeholders pending further study.

Chair Cook asked about the theme of the trail.

Anna Ferris said that artists will be asked to create a proposal that responds to public input and engage students in their design process.

Chair Cook thanked Anna Ferris for sharing her work.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- A. Work Session - Wednesday, January 8, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.
- B. January Meeting - Wednesday, January 8, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

5. CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. Approval of Agenda
- B. Approval of the Minutes from October 16, 2024 Meeting

Motion by Commissioner Barker, second by Commissioner Mulcahy, to approve the October Minutes and the Consent Agenda as presented.

Ayes: 9

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT:

There were no public comments.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

There was no unfinished business.

8. REGULAR AGENDA/ADMINISTRATIVE PRESENTATIONS:

A. Department Happenings

1. Parks and Recreation Director Update

Parks and Recreation Director Lares shared that the VMCC/Southern Lakes playground replacement open houses had good turnout with lots of engagement. There will be some revision of the Southern Lakes design to expand the play container, which is currently relatively small and does not meet the current needs of the community. PRAC will see the new designs at the work session in January.

He added that the final design and signage for the Archery Range at South Valley has been approved by the City Attorney and the League of Minnesota Cities (insurer) and will be brought to PRAC and then City Council in January 2025.

Commissioner Skar asked about purchasing a showroom piece for the VMCC playground.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares said that this was considered, but it was decided that it would not be the best fit for the VMCC playground given the scale and budget. He commented that engineered woodchip fibers will be used at both playgrounds instead of poured-in-place rubber.

Chair Cook asked about other elements of Phase 2 for South Valley.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares said maintenance staff were able to complete lots of work at South Valley due to the mild winter. He said the archery range is one part of Phase 2 that will meet two needs: recreational programming for youth/families and public usage.

2. Recreation Superintendent Update

Recreation Superintendent Dorshak updated the Commission on the following:

- There has been lots of arena usage in the VMCC
- Efforts to streamline communication, operations, and maintenance processes/systems are ongoing
- The boys' swim team has 80 members this year
- The Joint Powers Agreements (for the Unity Trail project) are coming together
- The Ghostly Gathering was Friday, October 25, there were about 700 people in attendance
- Holidays in the Heights events are coming up:
 - Tree Lighting Friday, December 6th at 6:00, followed by Skate with Santa
 - Breakfast with Santa, December 14th
 - Cookies and Canvas, December 14th
 - Frosty's Open Swim, December 13th
 - Letters to Santa (new this year - bring a self-addressed stamped envelope and letter to Santa Claus, receive a reply), November 25th to December 13th
- Registration opens for winter programs November 21st

Parks and Recreation Director Laress said that Maple Grove is renovating their community center, and their director commented that having ice rinks, aquatics facility, and a gym all under one roof is pretty unique. Inver Grove Heights is half the size of Maple Grove in terms of population and has had the Veterans Memorial Community Center as a community hub for over twenty years. He commended Julie Dorshak for her and her staff's efforts to keep it all running smoothly.

3. Parks Superintendent Update

Parks Superintendent Swoboda updated the Commission on the following:

- Building and irrigation winterization is complete
- Leaf cleanup (fence lines, backstops, etc.) and final mowing are taking place
- Tree trimming continues
- Use of tractors to push back vegetation encroaching trails and maintain open sight lines continues
- Equipment changeover is underway (switching from brooms to blowers; getting hose reels and the tank truck ready; getting summer-only equipment cleaned, washed, oiled, and put away for the winter)
- Forestry mowing continues at Harmon Reserve under the Natural Resources Management Plan
- Preparing for flooding season continues (sandbags or berms to keep ice in rinks, spreading sand on concrete to prevent ice buckling)
- Banners and lights for holidays will be going up on Cahill Avenue soon
- The ash tree removal contractor is wrapping up removal of 250-300 trees in City right-of-ways and parks
- The Council approved the replacement of two 16-foot mowers and two 360 (smaller) mowers; these will be ordered in December
- Pickleball nets will stay up for at least another week due to mild weather

Chair Cook commended Parks Superintendent Swoboda and the Parks staff for their behind-the-scenes work.

Commissioner Mulcahy asked what the next steps are at Harmon Reserve.

Parks Superintendent Swoboda said that there will be lots of invasive species control for two to four years before native species can be planted. Buckthorn seeds are viable for 5-7 years in the soil, so there may be herbicides or goats used to control combat buckthorn's return post-mowing. Then, prairie grasses and native trees can be planted.

9. COMMISSION COMMENTS:

Commissioner Barker wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving.

Commissioner Krech asked about remaining dead ash trees in a particular area.

Parks Superintendent Swoboda said that this area is the Association's responsibility; there is a different maintenance agreement in place due to the narrower streets. The president of the Association is hoping to get approval to get them removed in the coming month.

Commissioner Mulcahy expressed excitement about all the work done over the past year.

Commissioner Skar wished everyone happy holidays. He said that it had been a great year for Parks. He said his kids are hoping to use the sledding hill this year.

Commissioner Krech asked about putting in a City boat launch at Heritage Village.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares said that at a recent Council meeting, SEH Consulting was hired for a feasibility study on a 62-year agreement with River Heights Marina to create and maintain a free boat launch. However, the right space needs to be identified, and there are DNR guidelines and requirements that will need to be met.

Chair Cook mentioned the upcoming State of the City event.

Parks and Recreation Director Lares said at this point the event is full, but it will be recorded and streamed.

10. ADJOURN:

Motion by Commissioner Skar, second by Commissioner Barker to adjourn the meeting at 8:09 p.m.

Ayes: 9

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

Minutes prepared by Recording Secretary Wilfred Clashe



Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission Staff Report

SUBJECT: **Archery Range - South Valley Park**

MEETING DATE: January 8, 2025

ITEM TYPE: Regular Agenda

CONTACT: Brian Swoboda, Parks Superintendent, 651.450.2582
 Adam Lares, Parks & Recreation Director, 651.450.2587

PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED

The PRAC is asked to review the final design of the South Valley Archery Range and provide recommendation to the Council for approval.

BACKGROUND

The final design and signage for the archery range at South Valley Park has been reviewed and approved by the city's insurance and legal teams. On September 11, 2024, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission (PRAC) was provided with the proposed design for feedback. The finalized design and signage is now ready for the PRAC's final review and recommendation for Council approval.

As a refresher, the range is developed by USA Archery Level 5 coach Richard Cockrell, the design incorporates safety regulations and signage and aligns with the South Valley Park Master Plan approved in March 2020. The project aims to meet the community's growing interest in recreational archery, providing a safer and more engaging experience compared to the current setup at Groveland Park. Staff seek PRAC's recommendation to advance the project to the next phase.

The final design and signage is attached for the PRAC's review.

FISCAL IMPACT

The estimated project cost is \$100,000, and staff recommends utilizing the Park Acquisition and Development Fund to cover the expense. This fund has a healthy balance and is specifically intended to support the development of new park amenities within the city's park system.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the PRAC recommend to the council to approve and fund the project.

ATTACHMENTS

1. SouthValleyPark
2. Archery range rules (1)
3. Shooting line safety

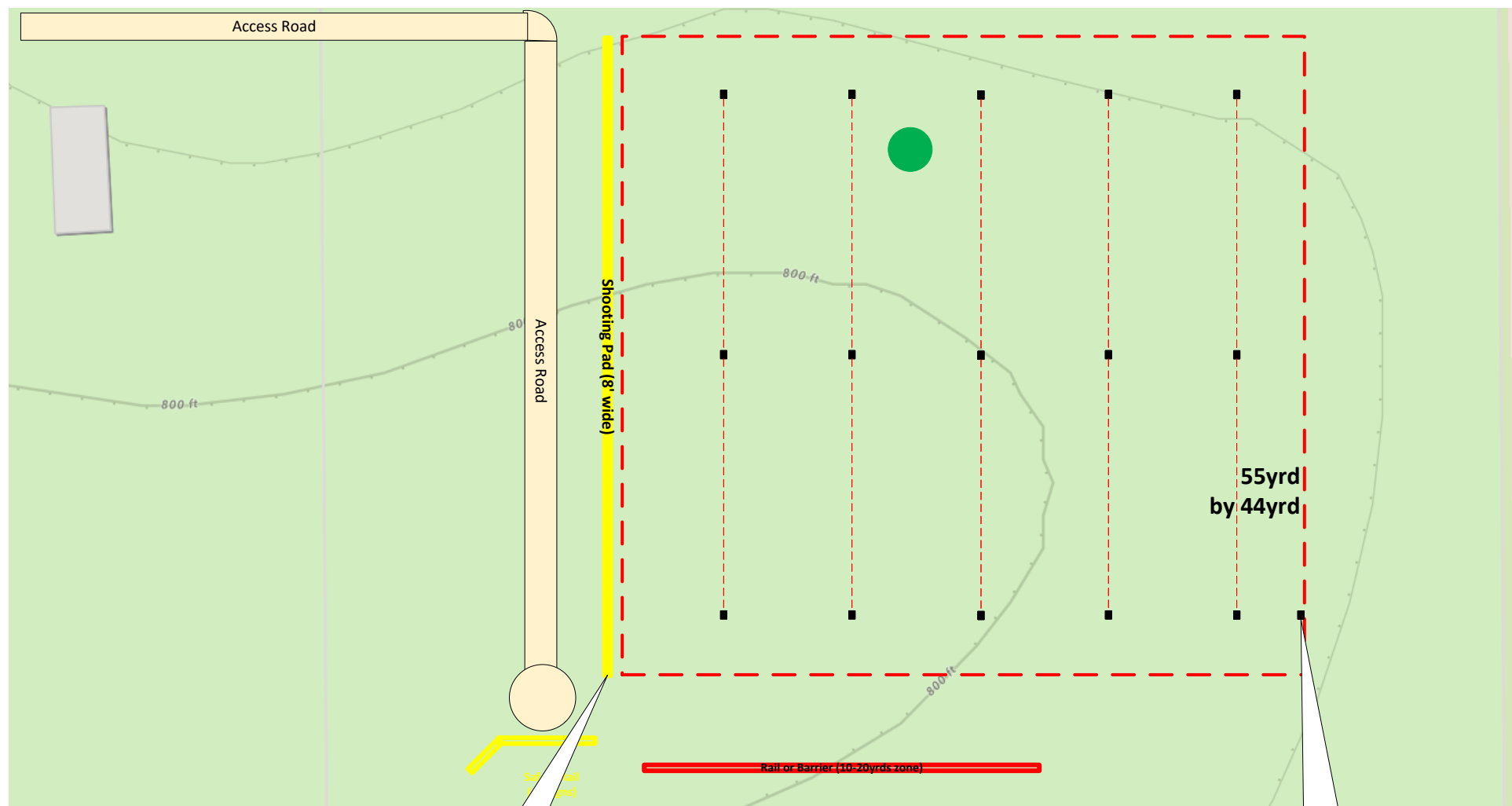
South Valley Park Archery Range

Perimeter Controls

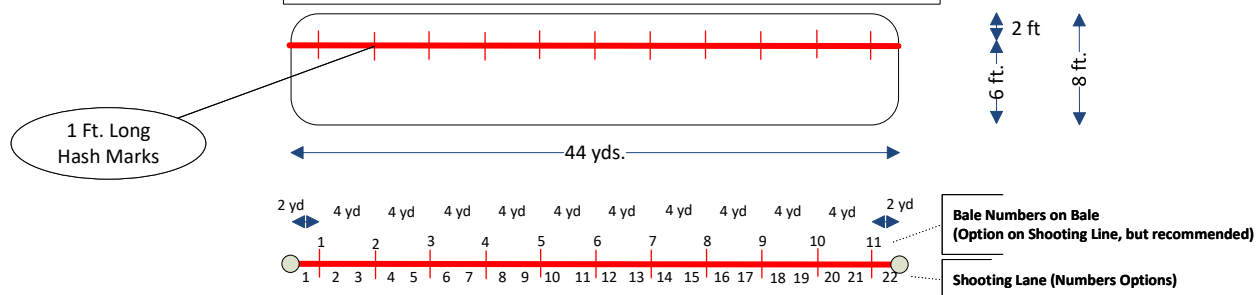
1" = 23 yds



South Valley Park Archery Range - Target Range Layout



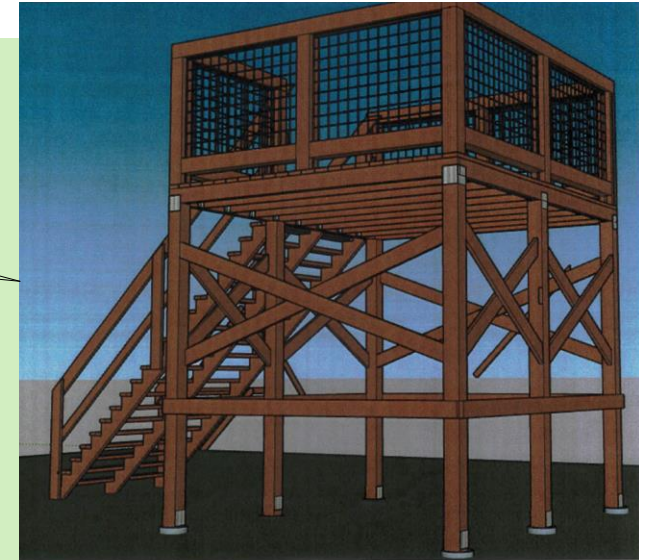
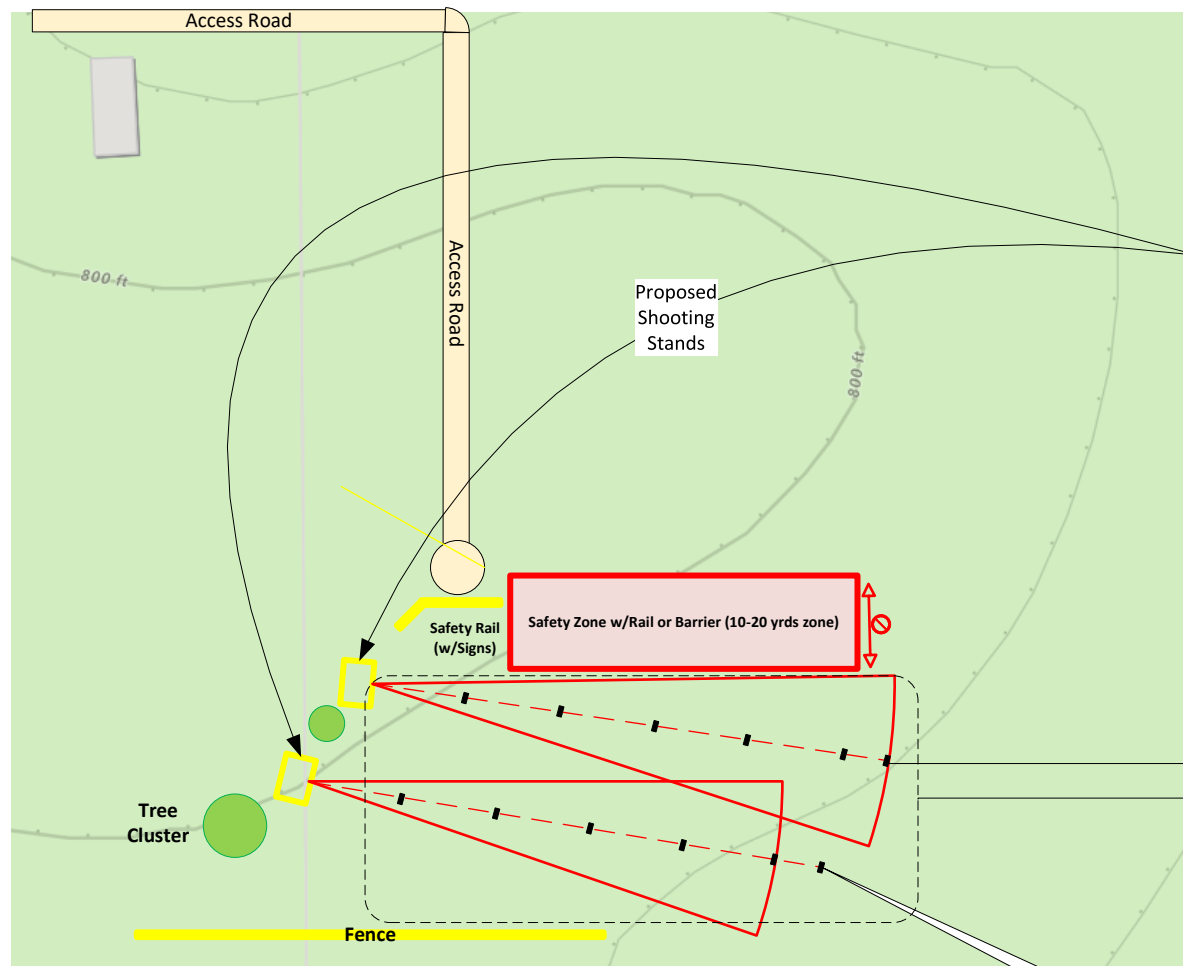
Shooting Pad: 8 ft Wide, 44 yds long



- (16) Buried 8"x 8"x 1' Pressure Treated or Rail Timber flush with ground and Distance Printed on top
- Shooting Line to back of Block is yardage mark
- Yardage Marks: 10,20,30,40,50 & 55.
- Note – Only one 55yd. Block on right side of field (A 2nd is optional in middle)
- 55 yards can server as 50 Meters

South Valley Park Archery Range

Field Platform Range layout



Platform Range Direction

Actual Available
Shooting Area

- (12) Buried 8"x 8"x 1' Pressure Treated or Rail Timber flush with ground and Distance Printed on top
- Shooting Line to back of Block is yardage mark
- Yardage Marks: 10,20,30,40,50 & 55.

SOUTH VALLEY PARK

Archery Range Rules

Open sunrise to sunset

Please be safe and follow these rules:

- Archers under 16 must have adult supervision with them at the shooting lane
- Only shoot at established targets in your designated lane
- Do not approach the target while others are shooting or shoot while anyone is downrange or at the target
- Use target arrows with field points only; no broadheads
- If animals or people are in the range, hold your shot
- Only draw your bow in the direction of your target
- Be courteous of others waiting
- No firearms
- Archery range is tobacco, alcohol, and cannabis free
- Use of range is at your own risk

**EMERGENCY:
CALL 911**

Contact us with any range issues:
651-450-2480
ighmn.gov/parks



Shooting Line Safety

Open shooting line controls:

- Always stand completely behind the shooting line when not shooting
- Check the range and ensure it's clear before straddling the shooting line
- If the range is clear, loudly yell "CLEAR" and confirm "ALL CLEAR" with other archers
- Straddle the shooting line and begin shooting
- When you've shot all your arrows and others are still shooting, step completely behind the shooting line
- When all archers have shot all of their arrows, loudly yell "CLEAR" and confirm "ALL CLEAR" with other archers before retrieving arrows from the range
- Use of range is at your own risk

Keep these safety rules in mind:

- Always keep your bow pointed in a safe direction
- Always keep your finger off the bow string until ready to shoot
- Always keep your arrow off the string until ready to use

**EMERGENCY:
CALL 911**

Contact us with any range issues:

651-450-2480

ighmn.gov/parks





Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission Staff Report

SUBJECT: **Southern Lakes and Veteran Memorial Community
Center Park Playground Replacement**

MEETING DATE: January 8, 2025

ITEM TYPE: Regular Agenda

CONTACT: Adam Lares, Parks & Recreation Director, 651.450.2587

PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED

The PRAC is asked to recommend to council playground replacement for Southern Lakes and Veteran Memorial Community Center Parks (VMCC).

BACKGROUND

At today's work session, staff presented the final designs options for the playground replacements at Southern Lakes and VMCC Parks. These projects are part of the Parks 2025 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission (PRAC) is now requested to provide a recommendation to the City Council for the replacement of both playground structures.

FISCAL IMPACT

All playground replacement options are within the approved 2025 CIP Parks Budget.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the PRAC recommend to council playground replacement for Southern Lakes and Veteran Memorial Community Center Parks (VMCC).

ATTACHMENTS

None