Potomac Triangle Park

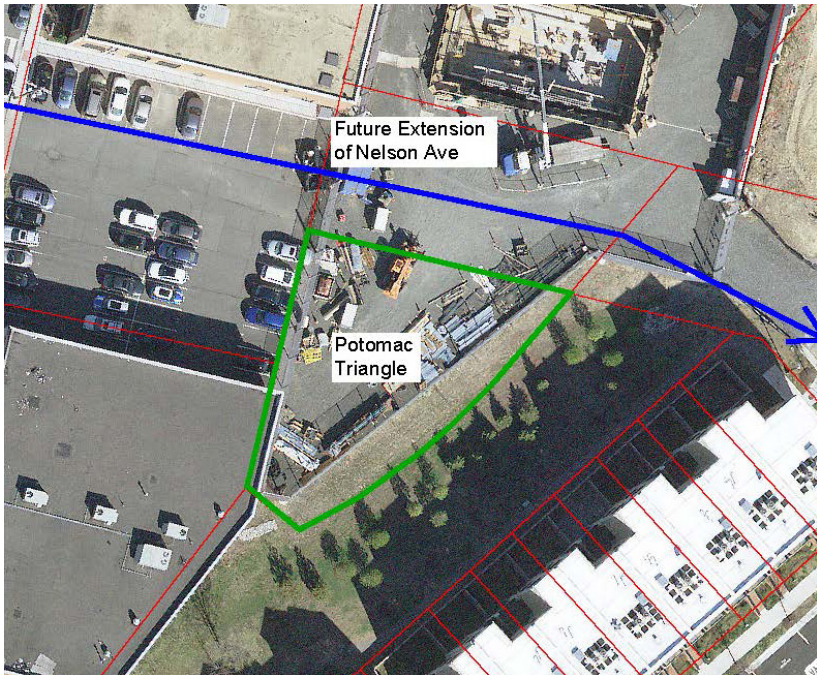
History and Character

Potomac Triangle Park is a future park located one block south of Eugene Simpson Stadium Park near East Nelson Avenue and the Monroe Avenue Dog Park. There are no documented historic sites within the future park.

Dominion Energy purchased an irregularly shaped parcel in 1999 to build a new substation for the underground 230 KV transmission line. Because of the irregular shape of the parcel, Dominion Energy and the City negotiated a “land swap” that creates a more regularly shaped lot for Dominion Energy and that resulted in a portion of land that will become a new City park. The land swap also provides land for the potential future extension of East Nelson Avenue in the space between the new park and the Dominion Energy lot.

The surrounding neighborhood is diverse and includes a large apartment complex, residential homes, and a small commercial area along East Monroe Avenue and Leslie Avenue.

Existing Conditions Map



Endorsed by the Park and Recreation Commission on February 20, 2020

Potomac Triangle Park

What park elements would you like to see in Potomac Yard Triangle?
Trees
Play space for toddlers
Water fountain
Excited to see a park in this area! If the parcel can fit it, a small playground for younger kids, along the lines of the Judy Lowe Neighborhood Park on Del Ray Ave., would be fantastic for this spot.
Tot playground like the park at the corner of Del Ray and Commonwealth. Thoughtful landscaping that adds to the park without removing too much useful recreational area, since it does not look like a very large parcel.
Capital bike share dock Water fountain with dog component and water bottle filler As many trees as possible Benches Solar powered lights
It could use some trees and seating as it is currently a patch of grass. Drainage should be improved as there currently is pooling at two spots on the parking lot that adjoin the park. Nice looking bollards along the parking lot would go a long way in improving the look of the park.
Trees, and some barrier to prevent drivers from entering.
A barrieror low gate between the park and parking lot. No thru road. Gravel replaced by concrete. A gate blocking people from driving into the area (we've had numerous people think this is a thru street and pull u-turns on the grass damaging the sod). No dogs! The neighborhood is littered with dog waste and there are few places for people and kids to play without stepping in it. There is a dog park adjacent to the pocket park so the dogs have ample space of their own. If not, The Ample signage to pick up after dogs and cameras to detect irresponsible dog owners. There are SO many in our area. Many of them are from the apartment building next to the dog park. A few benches would be nice. Some trees (like the ones on Van Valkenburgh Lane) along the substation wall to soften the anesthetic of the brick and gravel. Removal of the terrible drain attached to the storage facility, that drowns the pocket park during rain and storms. Thank you
I would like shade trees and benches, a fence, a no-dogs allowed sign, and I would not like a street put in but instead a pedestrian walkway.

Note: For all the responses to the survey can be found in the appendix.

Community Feedback

In Fall 2018, staff collected community feedback to understand how the park is used and how it could be improved in the future. The following information summarizes what we heard through an online survey and community workshop. Over 400 people responded to the survey in total, 24 of which were specific to Potomac Triangle Park. Staff used the collected information to develop the draft park plans.

In 10 years, I would like this Park to…

(Top 3 rankings shown, based on a weighted score)

1. *Be a safe place for children to explore*
2. *Be a place to create social connections with neighbors*
3. *Help reduce environmental impacts from urban surroundings*

The image above is an example of an explorer garden, or sensory garden. Explorer gardens are designed to provide opportunities to stimulate the senses. Explorer gardens have a wide range of educational and recreational applications.

Many explorer gardens provide experiences for multiple senses such as sound, scent, or touch.

Potomac Triangle Park

Which of the following existing proposed park elements do you love, like, or not like?

Recommendation	Park welcome sign	
Number of responses	45	
Value	**Count**	**Percent**
I love it!	20	44
I like it	18	40
I don't like it	7	16

Recommendation	Natural play area	
Number of responses	45	
Value	**Count**	**Percent**
I love it!	31	69
I like it	5	11
I don't like it	9	20

Recommendation	Explorer gardens	
Number of responses	44	
Value	**Count**	**Percent**
I love it!	26	59
I like it	11	25
I don't like it	7	16

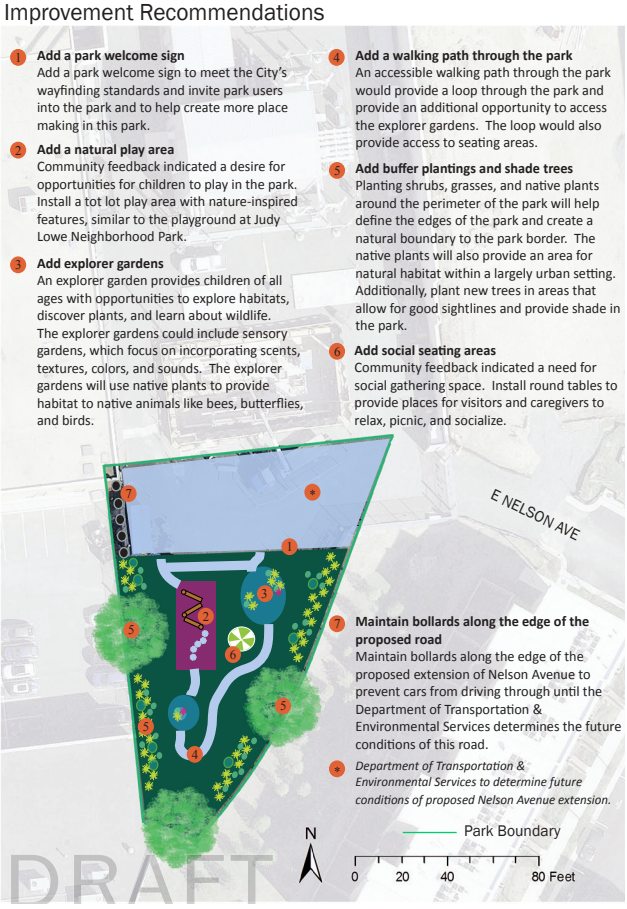
Recommendation	Path	
Number of responses	45	
Value	**Count**	**Percent**
I love it!	40	89
I like it	4	9
I don't like it	0	0

Recommendation	Plantings & trees	
Number of responses	44	
Value	**Count**	**Percent**
I love it!	40	91
I like it	4	9
I don't like it	0	0

Recommendation	Seating	
Number of responses	45	
Value	**Count**	**Percent**
I love it!	33	73
I like it	7	16
I don't like it	5	11

Recommendation	Bollards	
Number of responses	44	
Value	**Count**	**Percent**
I love it!	27	61
I like it	16	36
I don't like it	1	2

Improvement Recommendations



In the summer of 2019 RPCA staff collected community feedback on the draft recommendations for improving this pocket park. The following information summarizes what was heard through online surveys and community feedback (see appendix for full results). Over 700 responses were collected in total, --- of which were specific to 48 S Early Street Park.

Based on information from the summer input phase, staff updated the plan to best represent current and future community needs. This park plan experienced several changes after internal meetings. The most significant change is the redesign of the path to loop around the recommended explorer gardens. Additionally movable seating was added around the path and at the very edge is the proposed natural play area. The addition of trees was added along the six foot sidewalk on the north end of the park.

Note: This plan is conceptual and when the park is redeveloped, will be designed more precisely.

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Improvement Recommendations

1. **Add a park welcome sign**
Add a park welcome sign to meet the City's wayfinding standards and invite park users into the park and to help create more place making in this park.

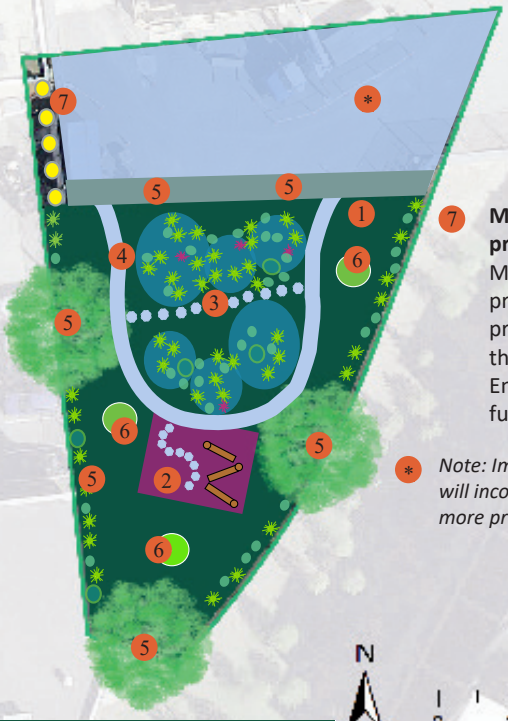
2. **Add a natural play area**
Community feedback indicated a desire for opportunities for children to play in the park. Install a tot lot play area (ages 2-5) with nature-inspired features, similar to the playground at Judy Lowe Neighborhood Park. Note: playspace at Glendale is for ages 5-12.

3. **Add explorer gardens**
An explorer garden provides opportunities to explore habitats, discover plants, and learn about wildlife. Consider including sensory plantings that focus on incorporating scents, textures, and colors. The explorer gardens use native plants that support pollinators bees, butterflies, and birds.

4. **Add a walking path through the park**
An accessible walking path through the park provides a loop through the park and provides an additional opportunity to access the explorer gardens. The loop provides access to seating areas.

5. **Add buffer plantings and shade trees**
Plant shrubs, grasses, and native plants around the perimeter of the park to help define the edges of the park and create a natural boundary to the park border. The native plants provide an area for natural habitat within a largely urban setting. Additionally, plant new trees in areas that allow for good sightlines and provide shade in the park.

6. **Add social seating areas**
Community feedback indicated a need for social gathering space. Install round tables to provide places for visitors to relax, picnic, and socialize. Add a shade structure to provide additional shade in the park.



7. **Maintain bollards along the edge of the proposed road**
Maintain bollards along the edge of the proposed extension of Nelson Avenue to prevent cars from driving through until the Department of Transportation & Environmental Services determines the future conditions of this road.*

* *Note: Image is conceptual only. A future design will incorporate these recommendations while more precisely delineating park features.*

Recommendations and Rankings

#	Recommendation	Dept. Lead	Priority	Cost
1	Park signage	RPCA	Medium	$1,800 - $2,419
2	Natural play area	RPCA	Low	$8,500 - $11,423
3	Explorer gardens	RPCA	Low	$3,500 - $4,704
4	Walking path	RPCA	Medium	$7,680 - $10,321
5	Buffer plantings and shade trees	RPCA	High	$12,000 - $16,127
6	Social seating areas	RPCA	Medium	$33,400 - $44,887
7	Maintain bollard buffer	RPCA	Low	$4,800 - $6,451