

Reimagine Sunnyside Park Project

ENGAGEMENT REPORT | April 2025



Public Lands
Parks | Trails & Natural Lands | Urban Forestry | Golf



PROJECT BACKGROUND



In November 2022, Salt Lake City voters approved an \$85 million Parks, Trails and Open Space General Obligation Bond (the Bond).

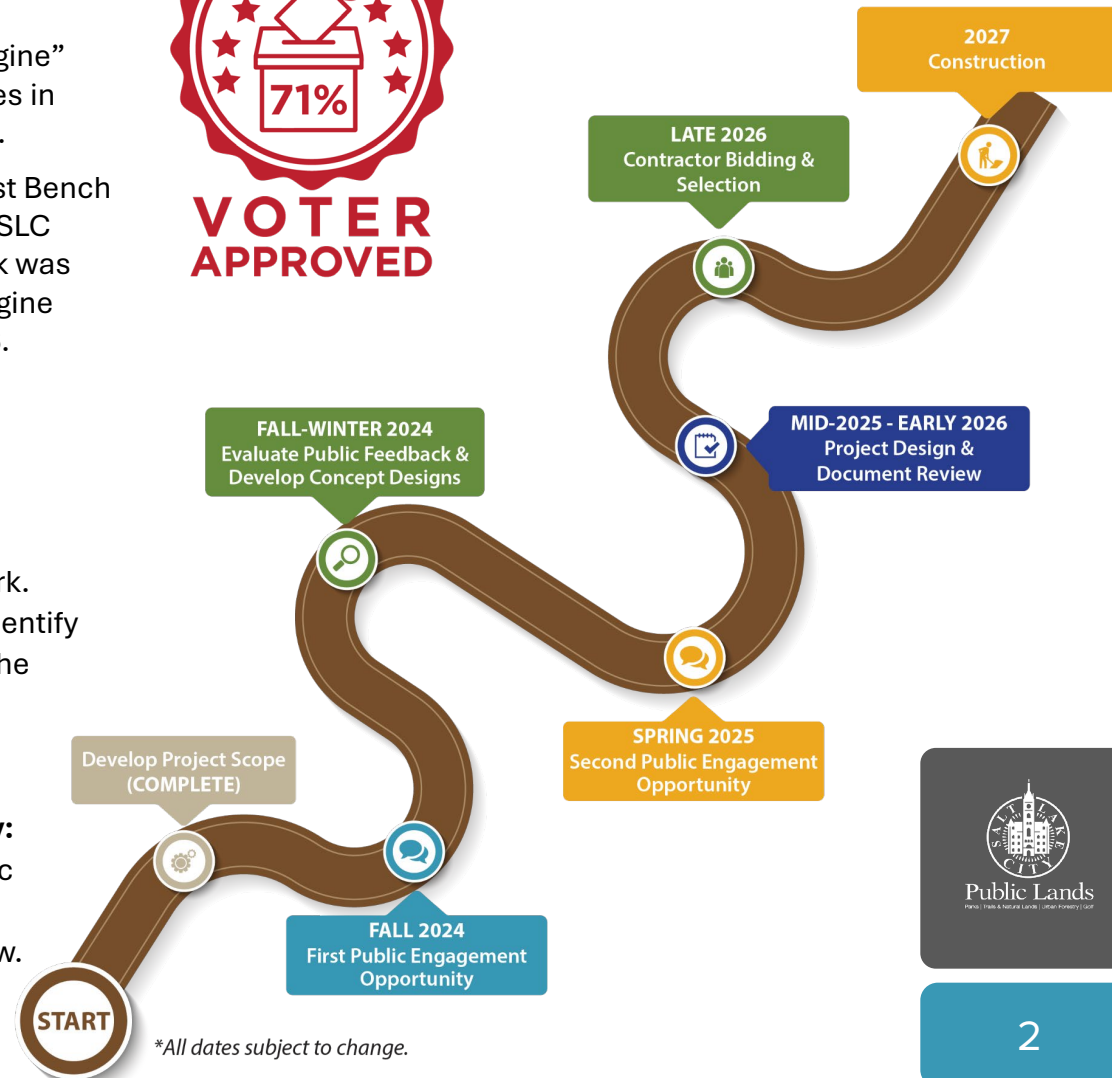
One of the Bond projects plans to “reimagine” about a dozen parks, trails, or open spaces in each of the City’s seven Council Districts.

Based on the priorities outlined in the East Bench Master Plan and the “Reimagine Nature” SLC Public Lands Master Plan, Sunnyside Park was identified as a location to receive “Reimagine Neighborhood Parks” funding in District 6.



Project Timeline


- 1) Develop the project’s scope of work.
- 2) **First Public Input Opportunity:** Identify the public’s values and vision for the project.
- 3) Evaluate Public Feedback.
- 4) Developing Concept Designs.
- 5) **Second Public Input Opportunity:** Showcase concept plans for public evaluation and feedback.
- 6) Project Design & Document Review.
- 7) Contractor Bidding & Selection.
- 8) Construction.



**All dates subject to change.*



PROJECT FUNDING




A new University of Utah ballpark was announced in January 2023 with the news that the Salt Lake Bees would be moving to South Jordan. This created an opportunity for the university to find a home on-campus for their baseball team.

The University of Utah and Salt Lake City have partnered to lease the university 1.175 acres of Sunnyside Park for the new stadium. As part of this collaboration, the university will contribute \$4.2 million toward enhancing Sunnyside Park.

Using funds from the Bond (approx. \$750,000) and \$4.2 million provided by the University of Utah, Sunnyside Park will be “reimagined.”

$$\begin{array}{l} \$750,000 \\ \text{FROM BOND} \\ \text{FUNDING} \end{array} + \begin{array}{l} \$4.2 \text{ MILLION} \\ \text{FROM UNIVERSITY} \\ \text{LEASE AGREEMENT} \end{array} = \begin{array}{l} \$4.95 \text{ MILLION} \\ \text{TO REIMAGINE} \\ \text{SUNNYSIDE PARK} \end{array}$$



Using funds from the Bond and \$4.2 million provided by the University of Utah, Sunnyside Park will be “reimagined” to better reflect neighborhood needs and identities. This may include improvements to sport courts; the addition of unique elements capturing the surrounding neighborhood’s identity and history; increasing elements of placemaking; and adding wayfinding signage.



**Sport
Amenities**



**Picnic &
Leisure**



**Trails &
Pathways**



**Natural
Areas**



**Open
Space**



Playgrounds



New Ideas



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ENGAGEMENT ANALYSIS



First Round of Public Input:

From September to October 2024, Public Lands talked with hundreds of community members at events and through a survey to understand desired improvements for Sunnyside Park. We received input from over **350 residents and park users**.

Through this feedback, the public identified three priorities for the park:

- 1) **Add amenities that serve diverse interests, more age groups, and broader ability levels.**
- 2) **Maintain and enhance sport amenities by upgrading and updating what is existing.**
- 3) **Increase unprogrammed leisure areas with the addition of trees, trails, natural areas, and open spaces.**

In addition to the workshop, we engaged with the broader public through:

- ✓ An online survey
- ✓ Presentations at Community Councils
- ✓ Information booths at community events
- ✓ And a public open house

Project Updates:

CURRENT STATUS: Developing Concept Designs

Based on the input heard during the first public engagement opportunity, the city is working on developing three concept designs of the park. Community members will have the opportunity to share their thoughts and feedback on these designs in May 2025.



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Phase 1: Public Survey

How far is Sunnyside Park from your home or work?

A majority of respondents live or work within 2 miles of Sunnyside Park.

How often do you visit Sunnyside Park?

A majority of respondents visit the park on a weekly and/or monthly basis.

If you rarely or never visit Sunnyside Park, what would make you likely to visit more often? I would visit Sunnyside Park more often if...

#1 Answer: There were better/different facilities or amenities at the park. #2 Answer: I lived closer to the park and/or the park was more convenient to get to. Other suggestions: If there were pickleball and sand volleyball courts.

What do you currently enjoy or use the most at Sunnyside Park? Please rank in order, with 1 being the feature/amenity you enjoy or use the most.

Most Enjoyed Feature: Sports fields/courts, 2nd Most Enjoyed Feature: Grassy/open area, and 3rd Most Enjoyed Feature: Pavilion/picnic areas. Least Enjoyed Feature: Playground; Other features/amenities: Dog friendly park with lots of grass, Shade trees & nature (Creekside and stream walks), Walking through the park to travel from one point to another, Restrooms, Parking lot, Tennis courts

Many respondents didn't answer the previous question correctly. Here are key themes from their answers most likely referring to features/amenities they'd like to see, but aren't currently at the park:

Sand volleyball and pickleball courts, More trails/pathways for bikers, runners, walkers and dogs around the perimeter of the park, More nature – trees, gardens, Red Butte Creek, More space for sports fields (Beehive Leagues) and Cleaner/safer bathrooms

Stakeholders

This survey was made available to all members of the general public.

Accessibility

The survey was shared on various platforms for the furthest reach.

Open Dates

September-October 2024

Participation

As of October 29, 2024 there were 335 responses to the survey.



Phase 1: Public Survey

When you do visit parks in SLC, what usually brings you out?

#1 Answer: Sports leagues, #2 Answer: Events (concerts, movies, markets, etc.), #3 Answer: Solo fitness activities, #4 Answer: Walking my dog(s), #5 Answer: Family/kid activities, Other Answers: Enjoying outdoors/picnics, pickup sports with friends, walking without a dog

Think about the parks you've enjoyed the most, whether in Utah, other states, or other countries. What made those parks your favorite? What amenities did you like?

Lots of shaded and grassy open areas/fields; multi-use sports fields and courts (skatepark, pickleball, sand volleyball, soccer, softball, etc.); lighted courts and sport fields; well maintained/clean grounds; nice bathrooms; updated, clean, and safe playgrounds for kids (or a splash pad); walking trails and bike paths; dog friendly, incorporates wildlife and nature landscapes/pretty scenery.

When thinking about the future of Sunnyside Park, what type of improvements do you think are the most important to invest in? Please rank in order of priority, with 1 being the highest priority.

#1 Answer: Sports Amenities, #2 Answer: Trails/Pathways, #3 Answer: Open Space, #4 Answer: Natural Areas, #5 Answer: Leisure Areas, #6 Answer: Playgrounds, Other Improvement Ideas: a proper traffic light for pedestrian crossing Sunnyside, skatepark, better bathrooms and drinking fountains, pickleball courts, bike park/pump track, dog park/space for off-leash, gardens, sand volleyball courts, splash pad, walkable trails, resurfacing tennis courts.



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Phase 1: Public Survey

Salt Lake City collected public feedback as part of the creation process for the East Bench Master Plan (2017) and the Reimagine Nature Master Plan (2022). Based on this feedback, the community identified several important public land features. Please rank these features in order of priority, with 1 being the highest priority.

#1 Answer: Sports Fields/Courts, #2 Answer: Playground Equipment, #3 Answer: Dark Sky Friendly Lighting, #4 Answer: Exercise Equipment, #5 Answer: Bicycle Facilities, #6 Answer: Open Space, Answer: #7 Ecological Assets, #8 Answer: Dog Play/Off-Leash Dog Areas, #9 Answer: Skateboard Facilities

Do you have any additional thoughts about Sunnyside Park? This could include what you currently like or dislike, ideas for changes, or local history and cultural assets to consider in the park design.

Walking trails, pickleball courts, a cleaner/improved/maintained park overall. Some want a dog park; others want the park to be dog free. Create a more friendly “event” space with more shade and grassy open areas. Improve soccer fields; some agree to keep the real grass and others think they should be replaced with turf fields.

What is your age?

A majority of recipients were between the ages of 28-43.

In what zip code do you live?

84105 and 84108 were the most inputted zip codes

Phase 1: Other Engagement

Stakeholder Workshop

Salt Lake City Public Lands Department kicked off the Reimagine Sunnyside Park Project in fall 2024 with a stakeholder workshop comprised of neighborhood representatives, members of the University of Utah, the Veterans Hospital, Community Councils, neighboring schools, and sports league groups that frequently reserve amenities at the park. At that workshop, stakeholders learning about the available funding from the Bond as well as the University of Utah and explored features of the park that could be enhanced to better serve the community.

Key Takeaways from the Workshop:

Parks:

A more ADA accessible/inclusive playground, larger/upgraded playground, playground that serves a variety of age groups (younger kids and older kids), and more shade at playground

Sport Amenities:

Sport fields are routinely booked – do not decrease sport amenities, consider adding other sport amenities for more variety: pickleball and bocce ball, additional or improve multi-use fields, do not make park entirely focused on sports amenities

Trails/Pathways:

Perimeter trail around park, include exercise equipment, natural path near Red Butte Creek, dog friendly area

Natural Areas:

Nature trail, Red Butte Creek area access

Open Space:

Keep greenspace and grassy areas, add more trees and shade

Leisure:

More benches and picnic tables, upgrade pavilion or add more, and more drinking fountains/water bottle refill stations

Other:

Additional restrooms and beautify/improve entrance to park



Phase 1: Other Engagement

Community Events

Events attended by the Salt Lake City Public Lands staff attended community events to spread awareness of the Reimagine Sunnyside Park Project and encourage people to participate in the engagement opportunities. Staff attended:

- Sugarhouse Rocks
- 9th & 9th Street Fair
- Downtown Farmers Market

Public Open House

Led by Sunnyside Park, residents and stakeholders came to speak with project team members and provide feedback on September 18, 2024. attendees included individuals from the surrounding neighborhoods, and representatives from Rowland Hall, Friends of Sunnyside, East Lacrosse, Sunnyside East CC and FSCC.

See the following pages for the feedback gathered at the September 18, 2024 public open house.

Phase 1: Other Engagement

New Ideas

Sidewalks on the east and west side of Valdez Rd.

Make Sunnyside Park a quiet, contemplative naturalized nature filled landscape

Many, many, many more trees

There are 20 benches in Donner Park, there are only four in Sunnyside!

New park entrance @ Guardsman Way

Pathways connecting to crosswalks across Guardsman and Sunnyside Roads

Artwork/collaboration w/ nearby schools Bonneville & Rowland Hall

Rebalance the park - more nature centric

More shade features

Move ball fields to Regional Athletic Complex on east side

Seasonal features: summer - shade screens , water features / winter - soft mounds for sledding, cross-country skiing tracks

Art/curiosity features - enliven the park, low curb appeal

Flower/pollinator garden that attracts bees/butterflies

Sculpture+other art features (see New Orleans Sydney + Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden)

Purchase Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints property to the east - incorporate as Sunnyside Park and relocate Anderson Library to that church building.

Sport Amenities

Sticker Count (in support)

Improved/More Multi-Use Fields

7

Improved/More Basketball Courts

0

Pickleball Courts

5

Improved/More Tennis Courts

6

Skate Park

1

Roller Skating Rink

0

Improved/More Softball & Baseball

0

Bocce Ball

3

Improved/More Volleyball

2

Kids Bike Skills Park/Pump Track

1



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Phase 1: Other Engagement

Playgrounds	Sticker Count (in support)
Traditional Playground	1
Inclusive/ADA Playground	5
Splashpad	9
Themed Playscape	1
Adult Fitness Stations	5
Nature Playground	9
Open Space	Sticker Count (in support)
Grassy Fields	7
More Trees	7
Community Garden	0
Plant Education Garden	1
Dog-Friendly Areas	7
Urban Farm	5
Natural Areas	Sticker Count (in support)
Nature Plants	3
Natural Water Features	4
Wayfinding Signs	0
Nature Playground	5
Nature Trail	4
Retention Pond by Red Butte Creek (East of tennis)	3



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Phase 1: Other Engagement

Trails & Pathways	Sticker Count (in support)
Paved/Concrete Paths	0
Dirt or Mulch Paths	4
Inclusive/ADA Paths	2
Fitness Stations	3
Wayfinding Signs	0
Looped Pathways	5
Riparian Trail at Red Butte Creek	5
Tricky Back Trail	3
Picnic & Leisure	Sticker Count (in support)
More Pavilions	3
Picnic Tables	1
More Grills	0
Benches	5
Non-Traditional Seating (swings)	2
Grassy Areas	1
Hammock Posts	0
Amphitheater	2
Art Installations	2



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