

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: CARR PARK AGILITY COURSE

BACKGROUND:

As part of the City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), Parks and Recreation replaces several pieces of playground equipment each year. Staff has been working on diversifying the types of equipment to be installed in the parks in order to provide a variety of offerings. Playground equipment in Inis Grove Park was up for replacement (Shagbark Shelter) and a new installation (Red Oak Shelter) and during this past CIP budget cycle, staff shared the idea of an agility course which an example is shown below:



These pieces of equipment along with a concrete base and rubberized surface costs approximately \$265,000. Total funding available for this project is \$277,500 (\$77,500 for Inis Grove playground replacement and \$200,000 of General Fund Carryover). Additionally, there is funding in FY 2022/23 for putting a new piece of playground equipment in Carr Park.

The Parks and Recreation Commission did not want to place any more destination amenities in Inis Grove Park due to the popularity of the Barnes Family Inclusive Playground and the Rotary Club of Ames Miracle Field. The Commission asked staff to look for a different location. By placing the agility course in Carr Park, the funding for the new equipment in Carr Park can be used for playground equipment in Inis Grove.

At the May 2021 Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting, staff presented evaluation criteria for selecting a location of the equipment and the Commissioners approved the criteria.

At the September Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, staff presented a report outlining potential sites for the equipment, the evaluation criteria used to review each potential site, feedback from two public input sessions, emails from neighbors, and how staff plans to address some of the concerns expressed by the neighborhood. Also, two neighbors of the park attended the meeting and presented feedback as to their desire to keep the park in its current state and add educational programming for youth that utilizes the current amenities of the park like the river and other natural areas to educate youth about the benefits of nature.

At the October Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, Commissioners recommended to City Council approval of the Agility Course Equipment to be added to Carr Park.

LOCATION SELECTION CRITERIA:

When developing criteria, staff looked at what could be measurable and thus compared as objectively as possible. The Parks and Recreation Commission reviewed these criteria at its May 2021 meeting and agreed it should be used for evaluating the potential locations. The following criteria, not in any order, was used to review potential sites:

- Out of flood plain
- Fits with park philosophy
- Space available
- Relatively flat space
- Parking available
- Visible from road
- Safety
- Community/Park equity
- Accessibility

LOCATION OPTIONS:

The City manages 38 parks and all of them were reviewed at a high level as possible locations for the agility course. The aforementioned criteria were used to narrow down the locations for the agility course. The parks listed below best fit the criteria:

- Brookside Park (east of loway Creek)
- Moore Memorial Park
- Carr Park
- Northridge Heights Park
- Emma McCarthy Lee Park
- Tahira and Labh Hira Park

EVALUATION OF LOCATION OPTIONS:

Staff reviewed each site against the determined criteria and listed a “yes” if it met the criteria and a “no” if it did not. The table below compares the potential locations for the agility course with the identified criteria.

Park	Out of Flood Plain	Safety	Fits w/Park Philosophy	Space Available	Flat Space	Parking Available	Visible from Road	Community/ Park Equity	Accessibility
E. Brookside	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No/ No	No
Carr	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes/ Yes	Yes
Emma McCarthy Lee	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes/ No	No
Moore Memorial	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No/ No	Yes
Northridge Heights	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes/ No	Yes
Tahira & Labh Hira	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes/ No	Yes

PUBLIC INPUT:

Any time something is proposed for a space, staff does public outreach to inform people of the proposal and to gather feedback on the potential project. There were four opportunities for individuals to express their opinions regarding the proposed location of the project.

August 11, 2021: A public input session regarding the project was held virtually. A postcard was sent out to approximately 150 households in the Emma McCarthy Lee Park neighborhood and 180 to Carr Park neighbors notifying them of the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the proposed agility course location. An overview of the proposed project and location were presented to approximately eight people in attendance. Feedback received from that meeting is included in Attachment A.

August 26, 2021: A second public input session was held in the Community Room at Homewood Golf Course after staff received comments from neighbors of Carr Park that didn’t attend the first meeting and wanted to have an opportunity to discuss their concerns with the project. A letter (Attachment B) was sent to approximately 400 households regarding the meeting, as well as, providing more information about the project.

Comments from the second meeting are included in Attachment C. A petition from Carr Park neighbors was also submitted at this meeting and is shown in Attachment D.

September 16, 2021, Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting: The staff report was emailed to all individuals who provided feedback on the proposed location along with the additional correspondence staff received after the two public input meetings, shown in Attachment E. The Commissioners were in favor of placing the Agility Course Equipment at Carr Park. Staff stated that a recommendation to the Commission would be presented at the October Parks and Recreation Commission meeting.

October 21, 2021, Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting: The Commission Action Form was sent to all individuals who provided feedback on the proposed location. Staff received one additional correspondence from a neighbor of the park requesting again the park be kept in its current state and provided an alternative idea for the park, shown in Attachment F. The Parks and Recreation Commission approved recommending to City Council the placement of Agility Course Equipment in Carr Park.

NEIGHBOR'S CONCERNS:

Safety:

Carr Park neighbors expressed concerns in the meetings as well as in emails sent to staff regarding safety of the proposed equipment. Comments included the following:

- **Increased liability for the City of Ames**
 - City staff confirmed with the City's insurance carrier regarding increased liability with this equipment. A representative from the insurance company stated the following, ***"I don't see a problem with this, and would see it as play equipment; therefore, no additional liability charge."***
- **This type of equipment is for thrill seekers and has a high degree of injury potential**
 - This equipment is manufactured by the same company that supplied and installed the equipment at the Miracle Park in Inis Grove Park. All playground manufacturers are required to develop equipment that meets or exceeds safety standards set by many entities including Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), American System of Testing Materials (ASTM), and International Playground Manufacturers Association (IPEMA). Injuries can take place at any playground due to accidents or if individuals are using equipment improperly, however, there have been very few injuries reported from individuals using playground equipment in Ames parks. Since this equipment will be new to the park system, signs will be posted to ensure all individuals are aware of how to properly use the equipment.
- **Increased traffic (number of people) to the park**

- The number of people coming to the park when the Agility Course is installed will most likely increase. However, that number will be less than when Carr Pool was open.
- **High rate of speed of cars traveling along Meadowlane Ave., and not stopping at the stop sign located at Carr Dr. and Meadowlane Ave.**
 - Staff has communicated these concerns to the Police Department and is continuing dialogue for potential solutions.
- **Delinquents hanging out in the park after hours**
 - Park hours are 6:00 a.m. to 10:30 p.m., however, most playground equipment does not get played on after dark. When we have had issues in the past regarding bad behavior in the park, staff has asked Police to increase patrol of the area. Staff also encourages all residents to call the police if they witness behavior that is against the law. There have been other times when Parks and Recreation staff will go to a site and talk to individuals about appropriate behavior.

Annual Maintenance:

Staff explained during the meetings that each piece of playground equipment is inspected on an annual basis. All inspections are completed by a staff member that is licensed by the National Recreation and Park Association as a Certified Playground Safety Inspector. If deficiencies are identified, the equipment is repaired immediately or the play piece is closed until repairs can be made. Additionally, funds are budgeted in the operational budget to replace/repair equipment as needed. For more expensive items (i.e., replace surfacing), these would be programmed into the Department's Capital Improvement Plan.

Carr Pool Bathhouse:

Comments included issues with homeless individuals, graffiti on the exterior of the building, the building becoming dilapidated, and why it hasn't been repurposed or demolished. Staff explained that repurposing the building was cost prohibitive due to the way the building was constructed. After hearing these comments and concerns, staff estimates the cost to demolish the building to be approximately \$12,500 and hopes to proceed with demolishing the building this winter.

Future Plans for Carr Park:

Future plans for the park include adding fourteen raised garden beds and a water source for gardens in FY 2021-22. Additionally, a shelter and restroom building will be constructed in FY 2023-24.

Aesthetics:

Staff received comments that the proposed agility course equipment displayed in the presentation pictures was not attractive (bright colors) and neighbors didn't want to look

out the windows of their home and see the structure. During the second meeting, staff stated there are multiple color schemes of what the equipment and safety surfacing could look like and if this equipment does go into Carr Park, staff would work with the neighbors to get their feedback on a color scheme.

Lighting:

Additional lighting to compliment the agility course will not be added to this project. When the shelter and restroom are constructed, security lighting will be included in the structure.

Parking:

Staff received comments that adding this piece of equipment would increase parking pressure on the park and individuals would have to park in the street. The parking lot has approximately 30 spaces as well as two accessible parking spaces. Based on observations over the years during the various seasons, the park is able to accommodate this amenity with the current size of parking lot. Staff will also look at the parking lot design to ensure the parking lot lines are painted to maximize parking. Also, there was a comment that the parking lot needs resurfaced. Staff reviewed the condition of the asphalt and determined resurfacing is not warranted at this time but will be continually evaluated.

Lack of Sidewalk in Carr Park:

The sidewalk along Meadowlane Ave. is not continuous and has resulted in a mid-block crossing and ped-ramp in front of a house which has eliminated some on-street parking. As part of this project, staff will install a portion of sidewalk making the sidewalk continuous and eliminate the mid-block crossing and ped-ramp.

Neighborhood vs. Community Park:

City of Ames defines the service area of Neighborhood parks to be within ½ mile of the park. Community Parks serve residents within a two-mile radius and include amenities that may serve the entire community. Amenities commonly found in Community Parks include baseball/softball fields, tennis courts, park shelters, playground structures, and a restroom. Amenities in Neighborhood parks typically include a shelter, water fountain, playground structure, and a basketball court. Carr Park is already a gateway to several community parks as you can access North River Valley Park, East River Valley Park, and Inis Grove Park. Because of this fact, Carr Park is already attracting people from across the community making Carr Park more of a hybrid park based on current use.

Disruptive to Nature:

Staff received emails and comments on how adding this amenity would disrupt animal habitat. The space proposed for this equipment is an open turf area that once was the location of a swimming pool. No designated wildlife areas or refuges will be disrupted by adding this amenity. Also, wildlife adapts to their surroundings. An individual can go to almost any park in Ames and see wildlife and our hope is that individuals will be able to do the same at Carr Park if the agility equipment is constructed.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve placement of Agility Course Equipment in Carr Park.
2. Do not approve placement of Agility Course Equipment in Carr Park and direct staff to determine a different park location for the equipment.
3. Refer back to staff for analysis.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Staff has been working on diversifying the types of equipment to be installed in the parks to provide a variety of offerings. Installing the Agility Course equipment will provide youth and adults the opportunity to enjoy the equipment. Carr Park is a great location to install the equipment because it meets all the evaluation criteria as well as offers the opportunity to add play equipment to an area of town that is underserved as far as playground amenities.

In response to the aforementioned concerns raised by the neighbors of Carr Park, staff will work towards demolishing the bathhouse with the possibility of that occurring yet this winter; add sidewalk in order to make a continuous walkway along Meadowlane Ave; complete maintenance on the agility equipment on a regular basis; review the parking lot to ensure efficient use of the lot; and work with the neighborhood in providing equipment with colors that fit into the existing landscape of the park.

The Parks and Recreation Commission at its October meeting approved to recommend to City Council the placement of the Agility Course Equipment in Carr Park. Therefore, the City Manager recommends approving Alternative #1, as stated above.

The Ames Parks and Recreation public information session regarding the addition of an agility course to the park system began at 7:01 PM.

Participating Staff: Keith Abraham & Joshua Thompson

Thompson opened the session with a slide presentation which explained what an agility course is and the department's criteria for the location of this project. He also reminded the participants of the department's goals to diversify our park offerings and offer new programming opportunities. He explained how this amenity would meet both goals. Thompson also explained the philosophy of community equity and accessibility. Thompson showed slides of the possible locations for an agility course and how each potential location fit the within the criteria for determining the best location. He informed the audience that Carr Park checked all the boxes for these criteria.

Audience Participation:

Tracy & John stated that they live across from the proposed site and lost some on-street parking in front of their property during street improvements and the addition of ADA compliant curb cuts for the path. They want to know what the department can do to guarantee on-street parking will be open for their own use instead of being used by park users. They also stated there is a consistent use of the existing building by the homeless.

Thompson informed them of the plan to replace the former bath house with a new shelter house and restroom facility. The restrooms will be fitted with access control and sensors so they automatically lock when the park closed and will remain lighted if someone is in the facility. When a police officer drives by they will instantly know someone is in the facility and can stop and ask them to leave. The shelter will be an open shelter instead of the enclosed bath house.

Tracy & John asked why is one of the criteria listed "visible from the road"?

Thompson replied that the department wants people who use this amenity to feel safe. Needs to be visible.

Tracy & John informed Thompson they purchased this property because the pool was no longer across the street, and it would be quiet. Tracy does not want to see this structure from her window.

Thompson informed them that when the pool was demolished, the goal was to replace with a shelter, restroom facility and playground structure in this area. That has not changed.

Tracy & John complained that people run the stop sign all the time and that the street is supposed to be a 25-mph speed limit. They want the department to consider kids and traffic.

Thompson informed them that they can call the police regarding traffic control.

An unidentified person said they have seen this area under water and challenged how the department can call this area out of the flood plain.

Thompson informed the caller that the area proposed for the amenity is on the north or high side. Thompson stated that the parking area and the garden plot area has flooded, however the higher ground has not

Wolfgang, who stated he lives on Ross Road, asked where the splash pad was going to be located.

Thompson informed him that it was to be built in Daley Park.

Wolfgang said the pickleball area is good. He saw in this presentation where the agility course would go if McCarthy Lee was chosen. He does not want to disturb the green space where people pay pick up soccer in McCarthy Lee Park. If McCarthy Lee was chosen for an agility course, there would need to be a new place for people to play soccer.

Thompson informed him that there was room for both in that area.

An unidentified participant wanted to know the target age group of the agility course and would it be ADA compliant.

Thompson answered that the course would be mostly targeted to age 12 through adult. Some of the components can be ADA compliant. There could also be some additional amenities for younger individuals.

Abraham stated no other hands have been raised.

Thompson gave his contact information.

The meeting concluded at 7:26 PM.



Dear Neighbor of Carr Park

You are invited to attend a neighborhood meeting to discuss the proposed Agility Course to be placed in Carr Park, 1704 Meadowlane Ave. The meeting is **Thursday, August 26 at 5:30 PM** in the greenspace on the west side of the former pool bathhouse. There will be a short presentation to discuss the project followed with an opportunity to present questions, comments, and concerns regarding the project. In case of inclement weather, the meeting will take place at the Homewood Golf Course Clubhouse. Contact the Parks and Recreation Hotline, 515-239-5434, after 4:00 PM, August 26 to confirm the location of the meeting.

One of the goals relating to the department is to diversify the types of playground equipment in the park system. As part of the City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), funds were approved to help achieve this goal by adding an agility course to one of the City's parks. An agility course has multiple play pieces that allows individuals (kids, teens, & adults) to utilize their upper and lower body strength to complete multiple activities which may include cargo nets, over-head ladders, balance beams, ledge hanger, spider walk, and others. Examples of Agility Course equipment is included with this letter and you can also find at the following links:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oSEsaJJEtys>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGNOh5wdhpk>.

These play components would have a rubber safety surfacing, similar to what is at the Inclusive Playground at Inis Grove Park, 2500 Duff Ave. This equipment is manufactured by reputable and established playground equipment manufacturers, the same manufacturers of the playground equipment you see in the parks in Ames.

Carr Park was chosen using the following criteria:

- Out of the flood plain
- Flat park space available
- Parking availability
- Visible from the road
- Safety
- Community/Park Equity
- Accessibility

Other improvements that will be taking place in the next couple of years at Carr Park include the demolition of the bathhouse and constructing a shelter with a restroom. Those improvements are included the FY 2023/24 CIP.

Please feel free to bring lawn chairs if you would like seating and I look forward to meeting with you to discuss the proposed addition of an Agility Course to the greenspace of Carr Park.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at 515-239-5364 or joshua.thompson@cityofames.org.

Sincerely,



Joshua Thompson, Parks & Facilities Superintendent
City of Ames

Agility Course Layout Example:



Quintuple Steps:



Spiderwalk:



Vertical Cargo Net:



Angled Overhead Ladder:



Ledge Hanger:



Carr Park Neighborhood Meeting

August 26, 2021

5:30 PM

Homewood Golf Course

Comments Regarding the Proposed Agility Course:

Would like to see the money spent on taking care of what we already have in the park system.

I think this idea is good because it is not just for kids but also adults and older adults can use it.

I don't think the traffic from the agility course is going to be comparable to what traffic was like for when the pool was at the location and feel this would be a great addition to the park.

If the agility course is really popular is there available space at the current site for it to be expanded?

Are the components interchangeable, meaning can they be switched out and replaced at some point?

Why didn't the City take care of the bathhouse by repurposing the building when the pool closed? That building was constructed to be a 100 year old building.

Does this playground increase the City's liability?

Is the City receiving requests for this type of equipment to be installed in the City?

I have been stuck in the middle of folks need help from drowning in the Skunk River to drunk college students arguing in the parking lot as well as encountering homeless individuals camping out in the bathhouse. I am going to be a good citizen and help when necessary, but this type of equipment is going to increase activity that me and my neighbors may have to respond to.

Individuals speed up and down Meadowlane Ave and this type of equipment is only going to add to the traffic issues on Meadowlane.

Our family thinks this agility course is a great addition to park as it allows older kids to play as well. There are not many playgrounds in Ames where older kids can play.

We loved when Carr Pool was there because we were able to hear all of the joyous sounds of the individuals utilizing the pool, and we miss having that, so we would like to see the park revitalized again.

Why wasn't the pool bathhouse taken down prior to now?

I have two children and they love to play on playgrounds but adding this agility equipment in Carr Park is going to negatively affect nature. I remember during one of the floods, me and a friend pulled a picnic table off the bank of the river because the bank was about to collapse. Are you worried about the west bank of the river being damaged by floodwaters that could directly affect the area where the playground will be built?

We have had construction in this area of town for so many years, can't we just let the area heal from all of the work that has been completed?

Is there a possibility of the parking lot being expanded if this becomes really popular?

When will the parking lot be resurfaced?

With the equipment you are proposing would it require more maintenance as it may be used by adults which would cause more stress to the equipment versus equipment used by mainly children?

I am in favor of anything that gets people outside and active.

Could the shelter and restroom be closer to the road and equipment be closer to the river?

Our family thinks it is a great idea and can't wait for it to be installed.

We love the idea and know our grand kids will love it!

We the citizens of the neighborhood of Carr Park ask the city to NOT install an Agility Course in Carr Park

We are concerned about the following:

- Increased Noise

We live in a quiet neighborhood with a walking trail by the river. People use the trails in our area to experience nature. A highly structured sports facility would devalue that experience. The yelling and shouting would be a nuisance

- Extra traffic pressure in an already busy residential street with children
- Increased crime. The facility will attract delinquents looking for adventure
- Extra parking pressure in the neighborhood

People often park on Meadowlane Ave even though there is a parking lot available. At times the parking lot is already full and overflow parking will spill out elsewhere.

- Safety issues as the structure won't be supervised or controlled

Printed Name	Signature	House Number	Street Name	Date/Year	Phone Number
Kendall McKenna	[Signature]	1711	Meadowlane	8/12/21	515-520-4860
Karl McKenna	[Signature]	1711	Meadowlane	8/12/21	515 450 0730
Lauren Worrel	[Signature]	1724	Meadowlane Ave	8/12/21	515-204-5371
Jenny Worrel	[Signature]	1724	Meadowlane Ave	8/12/21	231-215-1737
Tracy Stajcar	[Signature]	1703	Meadowlane	8/12/21	
R. Erickson	[Signature]	1809	Meadowlane	8/12/21	232-1272
L. Wilson	[Signature]	1822	Meadowlane	8/12/21	515 785-0292
MARK A. PIERSON	[Signature]	1816	"	"	
Beverly Crompton	[Signature]	1810	"	8/12/21	515 451 3542
Emily Tyndal	[Signature]	1903	Meadowlane	8/12/21	515-291-0544
Megan Peterson	[Signature]	1904	Meadowlane Ave	8-12-21	515-451-8070
Peggy Farnsworth	[Signature]	424	Paulson Dr	8/12/21	515 450-3765
Steven McBreen	[Signature]	1723	Meadowlane Ave	8/12/21	515 291 6197
Inda Kingbury	[Signature]	1524	Meadowlane Ave	8/13/21	(515) 231-0473
Karen Manner	[Signature]	1511	Meadowlane	8/13/21	515-231-7611
Ande Dyblin	[Signature]	1508	Meadowlane	8/11/21	515-444-2304
Andrew Marden	[Signature]	1502	Meadowlane	8/13/21	515-232-1394
Stephen Marden	[Signature]	1502	Meadowlane Ave	8/13/21	232-1394
Carol Beizer	[Signature]	1501	Meadowlane Ave	8/13/21	233 1197

We the citizens of the neighborhood of Carr Park ask the city to NOT install an Agility Course in Carr Park

Printed Name	Signature	House Number	Street Name	Date/Year	Phone Number
Rich Berg	[Signature]	1431	Meadowlane Ave	8/21	
Sandra J Baker	[Signature]	1425	Meadowlane Ave	8/14/21	
Sherry Rapay	[Signature]	1408	Meadowlane	8/14/21	
Vicki Kaprecky	[Signature]	320	Meadowlane	8/14/21	2)
Sally Medford	[Signature]	1605	Crestwood Cir	8-14-21	
Barbara Coul	[Signature]	1631	Crestwood Cir	8-14-21	
Art Stanforth	[Signature]	1634	Crestwood C	8-14-21	
Vanessa A Seaton	[Signature]	1626	Crestwood	8.14	
John Sorenson	[Signature]	1703	Meadowlane Ave	8/26/21	(515) 450-6657
Marlene Emswiler	[Signature]	1809	Meadowlane Ave	8/25/2021	

24 HOUSES

28 People

R. D. M. Carter 1809 Meadowlane Av. Please Build

Hi Keith,

I recently got the postcard about the Agility Course being considered for Emma ML Park. I wanted to give some feedback.

In general, I would oppose installing an Agility Course anywhere. When I travel around Ames I frequently notice play areas not being used. I am curious if people requested this and if so, what percentage of the population. It seems to me we don't need another play area, or at least a play area made of unnatural materials. This summer I have been saddened to see so many natural areas of Ames being turned into roads or just getting wiped out (the purpose of which is unknown to me, for example the areas off of Duff Ave). It at least feels like, to me, we are wiping out so many trees and natural areas for our own convenience; to save a couple of minutes drive. I recognize some of these are not Parks and Rec areas but I would hope that Parks and Rec would work to preserve natural areas.

What I would LOVE to see done with the money for an Agility Course would be to use those funds to create programs that get kids out of the school during the day and into nature. For example, paying naturalists to provide outdoor programs for kids that they are able to get credit for and can be integrated into the curriculum. Or perhaps create more natural, unpaved trails in the forested areas we have so that people have more places to walk, hike or trail run. Or perhaps we could use that money to get rid of the garlic mustard that is taking over Munn Woods. We have spent hours and hours pulling this weed and we are definitely losing the battle.

If the AC is a done deal, I would vote for it to not be in EML Park as it will create more noise pollution for the houses and animals in the area and I'm assuming it will disrupt more of the natural areas of that park. I also think it will not be used very much. I suppose the same is true for Carr Park, but I feel that area has less residents surrounding it. What about somewhere closer to the Rec fields over by Carr Park off of 13th? And if EML is chosen does that mean there will be that and Pickle Ball?

Are there any areas in Ames that can be turned back into nature which have been developed? That would be amazing!

Thanks for asking for feedback and sending out those postcards. It's helpful to be informed. I appreciate you listening and I know from our walk several months ago near the new bridge that you care very much for nature.

Best,

Elizabeth Wade

Hi Joshua,

I might not be able to attend Thursday night's meeting but LOVE the idea of the agility course at Carr Pool. We live in the area and think it would be very beneficial to the neighborhood and the rest of Ames. I have seen these in other cities and they are really cool and usually busy. Hopefully we can get this done and enjoy one for our city!

Thanks,

Kenny Carey

Hello Joshua!!

Hope this email finds you well! I wanted to write in an express my EXTREME excitement for the agility course coming to Carr Park! I live at 619 E 13th St , on the corner of E 13th and Meadowlane.

This will bring so much excitement to our neighborhood and give the kids another outlet to get alllll the energy out (and adults alike!) Just like the addition of Miracle Park, this will be a super place to bing kiddos!

I am ONE HUNDRED percent in support of this addition to our neighborhood! Please let me if there is anything I can do to move this project forward!

Erin Carey

Hi Josh,

I just got your letter about the presentation at Carr Park with discussion about the Agility Course. I probably will not be home in time to make the meeting, so if that happens, I want you to know I think the Agility Course is a fantastic idea and I would love to see it built at Carr Park!

I hope the other neighbors feel the same way!

Becki Christensen

Hello Josh and Keith,

I wanted to address a few concerns I have about the proposal to build an Agility Course in Carr Park.

- My first big concern is safety. Living across the street from Carr Park I have been stuck in the middle of folks needing help with anything from a drowning in the Skunk River to less serious injuries to having to listen to drunken college students finish an all night argument on the bridge crossing the river when I am trying to get my 3 miles in every morning. I enjoy the opportunity to be a good citizen when these things happen, but there are far too many "opportunities" already and I feel that an Agility Course will increase that number to an undue

burden. When I heard your presentation I heard about the bathrooms having limited access after a certain hour of the day, but did not hear about the Agility Course itself having any required supervision or time based restricted access. Also I address the homeless population that inhabits the park with some regularity below.

- Concern #2 is largely based around maintenance and a maintenance budget. I moved to this location almost 10 years ago, the pool was just being torn out and the pool building was either going to be torn down or rented out as a pavilion, neither of which happened. The pool house has simply gone into a greater and greater state of decay with every storm and freeze/thaw cycle. Paint peels, mildew/algae grows seasonally and the homeless kick the door in and camp there until either me or my neighbors need to call and inform the Police Department that people are camping out there. Someone usually comes out and screws a highly attractive piece of plywood on to the door somewhere, it gets the job done but is unsightly at best. I can't say nothing has gone right here, the North side of the paved trail and the area around the low water dam both look great right now although it was a long and tedious journey to get there. Back to the budget, I heard you talk about a couple of hundred thousand dollars to build this project, but never once heard you mention any kind of operating budget to take care of maintenance or keeping the course renewed to keep interest up on the Agility Course. this seems like it did not make afterthought status.
- Neighborhood culture — We have a quiet neighborhood where people enjoy the ability to obtain some silence and enjoy a walk through the trees, or garden, or run, walk, ride their bikes or just enjoy the new benches at the low water dam and take in the sounds of roaring water. It is a pretty nice place. The proposal of an agility course does not sound like it fits with the neighborhood culture very well. I am not able to find out much about a course like this online other than the ones for dogs, but I suspect it will be America Ninja-Lite-like, the need for more lighting and having more than a few injuries take place is not out of the question. One can only look forward and guess how the Agility Course may increase traffic levels and pose parking difficulty on the area. Parking can currently be somewhat limited depending on what is going on at the park on any given day, will parking spill over into the street? Will people take my only parking space in front of my house after the new ADA ramp went in? The additional traffic is worrisome as the neighborhood seems to have high populations of kids in multiple different areas. The field directly in front of the pool house is currently a great area for people with dogs to play fetch and to do some dog training and would be even better without a pool house there. One additional comment on lighting: I walk every morning around 5AM-ish usually around 3 miles or so, did you know there is so much ambient light in Ames that on a cloudy night I do not need a headlamp to walk on the trail? That is no sun coming up on the horizon, no moon, lots of clouds and no stars out and there is enough reflective light from the city to walk through the woods! We don't need more artificial lighting.
- A good alternative location would be in Homewood Park to the West of the badminton courts (extremely unlikely to flood), it is quiet, lights would be less likely to bother folks later in the evening and it could even be accessed by a beautiful 1 mile walk from Carr Park if access between Carr Park and the Agility Course were absolutely necessary.

I understand that projects are always a priority, but honestly if someone told me they had \$250K burning a hole in their pockets and asked me what to do with it my suggestion would be to spruce what

you already have. Buildings and structures need paint, some park bathrooms are still “closed for the season” and the new items still look new, but the old items look old. A great alternative instead of an Agility Course would be for programs to get kids out of the house and into the woods and parks to discover the joys of nature. Ames is a wonder to me and I feel privileged to live here, every morning I see an endless amount of wildlife, I feel the kids would get more out of making lifetime memories learning about the plants, animals and insects of Carr Park than they would in an Agility Course that would likely get boring after a short duration of time.

If there is some opportunity for a face to face at a Pavilion somewhere please let me know. I am not against an agility course altogether, I just don't feel it fits the neighborhood well and there are likely other locations better suited for it. Again please let me know if there will be a public venue and date/time to discuss this further

Best regards,

John Sogandares

.....
Hello Joshua and Keith,

It has recently come to light that there is a proposed project for Carr Park.

The more and more I hear about this, the more and more questions I have. Much of the information I currently have come from friends and neighbors and what they have learned.

I will say I do not know of or have been able to find a single thing about this searching online, nor did we receive any notification regarding a meeting that has apparently already occurred. I was informed a postcard mailer had gone out, I work at home and collect the mail. I usually greet the mailman, but we have not seen any such notification. If you Google "agility course" it is all related to dogs...I don't even think this is being properly represented for people to consider it in the correct context.

I have many many concerns, I will list many of them here:

1. Safety.

This sounds like it will be an adult agility course, I imagine an "American Ninja Warrior" course. These are inherently risky. Others I have seen in other cities have a high degree of injury potential.

How would entry be controlled, how will younger and smaller kids be prevented from something meant for bigger or more advanced users.

2. Sport usage

By all measures, these types of courses tend to fall into the category of "Extreme Sports" or "Thrill Sports". Any of these that I have seen that are challenging and interesting are also reconfigured regularly. This is needed to keep people coming back. The ones that succeed are the ones that constantly challenge...anything less becomes a waste of money spent. People in this sport are thrill seekers...once they master this, they won't return unless new challenges are often created.

If this is outdoors, weather conditions could impact the grip of all surfaces and when people

are pushing themselves and the limits of the course...a greater risk appears...the best ones I have seen are all indoors.

Also I hear ropes will be used...in the outdoor environment ropes are a great risk factor. They can fray, they can wear, and they can degrade...even high quality ropes designed for this use have a life cycle...exposure to UV rays will accelerate the deterioration. I used to climb and we would regularly commit used ropes to home use for tying a Christmas tree to the hood, not used again for safety or climbing...constant rope replacement and regular diligent inspection would be needed.

3. Demographic user considerations.

This is a sport for many ages, but predominantly it is high school to late twenties where Thrill Sports thrive. Typically extreme/thrill sports are done with a buddy system approach and as such they will root each other on (or a larger group), yelling to go further, reach for it, go go go YOU CAN DO IT! This is typical behavior of the sport, but not part of this neighborhood. Loud extreme sport activity isn't well suited to be as close as this would be to the multiple home dwellings in such close proximity surrounding it. Many less than 100 feet away. That alone makes this inappropriate for this park/location.

4. Location & noise, fitment into a neighborhood.

I can't recall anyone in our neighborhood or community at large waiting for a facility like this to be built. I haven't spoken to a neighbor or acquaintance yet who would use it, but they all seem to think that locations closer to campus or the high school would be better suited. Again this being a younger persons sport, Brookside, near Furman Pool, a park on a bus route for college students to gain access or for bus riders to be made aware that the park even exists with an actual bus stop location near it, all would be better locations. Many of those locations have a much greater distance to homes...an easy way to curb an issue before it becomes one...before noise complaints would be regularly raised.

I've added a picture of a space near Furman Pool that has much more to offer as a location that Carr park for many of the reasons already outlined, with the added benefit to expand this in the future. Just in the area I mapped out, there is over 48,000 SQ FT available to expand onto. Parking is available in mass, and would allow ample room for attendees of a competition if one was to occur. We have lifeguards nearby should any injury occur. If lifeguards wouldn't be the first responder, we at least have people nearby that can call in the case of an emergency. Since controlled access may be a concern or determined later to be required...it could be integrated into the existing controlled access arrangement at the pool quite easily.

5. Also, I would assume lighting would be installed. Anyone doing these activities with any level of intensity will want to have a well lit structure so they don't miss their target. The amount of light and intensity needed would then not illuminate a neighborhood as it would at Carr.

I am not opposed to the idea of this, but I am very concerned about its location. It really seems to miss the mark, and there are so many more better options location wise.

I think we may have missed the target demographic that would use it, and also are limiting access to those who would use it because it is not on a bus route (kids without drivers license or ISU students).

I'd also like to add an alternative, many folks may just say no and offer no alternative. I would like to see Carr park used again...it needs purpose again. I don't think an agility course would coincide with the history of the park and its former use, intent, or historical context here in Ames. Let us remember

that it was in this location so many folks in Ames learned to swim. Prior to that the parks name was Riverside Park.

I think if any future use should reflect the name and purpose of something to do with water, or being adjacent to the river...having some type of riverside activity or scenic viewing platform to look out and enjoy the serene nature of the area. If the pool house went away and some trees along the edge of the river were trimmed back, it would be a lovely location to just watch the river roll by. Maybe a newly revitalized "Carr Landing" could be created. The portage location in North River Valley park above the old dam is starting to really show signs of needed repair. And is difficult for paddlers to get too and climb up the steep incline. The new "Carr Landing" would allow much easier access into or out of the water and the parking lot would be easily configured for long trailer parking stalls.

As far as the agility course...if a meeting could be had, the new meeting area at the Homewood Clubhouse was built for just such a meeting and couldn't be a better location for a meeting about this neighborhood as it is in this neighborhood. I think the number of attendees could space out quite easily and we could take advantage of all the new location has to offer. I would really like to be able to hear much more about the plans before any thing is finalized.

Thanks for your time,
Jim & Jaime Johnson

.....
Agility Course proposal and its impact on Carr Park; thoughts.

When I received the small postcard recently from the Ames Parks and Recreation Department informing me of the proposed agility course Zoom meeting on August 11, I had to look up the definition of "agility courses". What I found were descriptions of such courses for dogs. Then I went to the City of Ames website to find more information. Nothing there that I could find.

Then I forgot to attend the Zoom meeting on August 11. On August 12, my neighbor Tracy Stajcar came to my door with a letter she had written regarding the course (she attended the meeting), and a clip board where I could sign my name to a list of people opposing the placement of the course at the old Carr Pool site.

I just don't think we need another special interest amenity to our parks system currently. Of late we funded and built the Ames Miracle League Field and the All Inclusive Playground, and the North River Valley Low Head Dam Improvement.

There are two facilities at Carr Park/River Valley Park that very rarely get used. One is the sand volleyball court (with an ugly orange plastic fence placed to stop balls - which is not maintained) and the other is the Horseshoes Site near the Hawthorn Shelter. The only time I have seen the horseshoes site used in the past 5 years is by people who are letting their dogs play in the gated area. I have only once seen the sand volleyball court used. I have lived in this neighborhood for 25 years and visit these parks at least once a day. These two facilities are uncared for by the city. They are eye sores.

What I have seen at Carr/River Valley parks every day are families riding bikes, running or walking on the paths with or without their dogs, picnicking, sitting on the sandy shore of the river, x-country

skiing, and gardening at the raised beds. An open space is more invigorating to the imagination than a prepared site! And is more useful to more members of the community.

Are the community members who are advocating for this park from this neighborhood? Do they know there is such a course on the ISU campus that rarely gets used? Are you prepared to maintain it if it does get built? Infrastructure maintenance is costly.

Our neighborhood has been the site of major City of Ames sponsored construction for the past 5 years. The path on the west side on the river was totally unusable as the Sunk Riverbank was redirected and the Homewood Golf Course hill regraded; I know this was essential work. Still, it was very disruptive to the people and animals who live here. The paved path in River Valley Park was blocked for use during the several years that the North River Valley Low Head Dam Park was built. We need a break from construction. Let the earth heal.

Please do call or email me in you have concerns or additional information that may impact my opposition to this new construction.

Thank you. Peggy Earnshaw

.....

Dear Mr. Thompson,

We just learned last week that an agility course is proposed to be built in the Carr Park. The city plans on tearing down the pool house and building a shelter with restrooms to put a highly structured sports course between the shelter and the street.

This new city plan raises our very serious concerns:

- 1) A quiet and safe neighborhood will be deteriorated by extra traffic on an already busy residential street, particularly children safety.
- 2)The new facility will cause a number of problems; increased noise, safety of structure, and crime of delinquents, etc.
- 3)The quiet neighborhood with a highly natural environment will be devalued by a highly structured outdoor sports facility.

Already lived in Meadowlane Ave over the past 40 years, we would like to see the Carr Park remains in more natural state. We are strongly opposite to the agility course being located in Carr Park. There are other locations in the city of Ames that would work for this project.

Sincerely,

Tsing-Chang (Mike) and Sumei Chen

.....

Good Morning Joshua and Keith,

I wanted to let you know that I spoke with 13 homeowners on Meadowlane yesterday and NONE of them are in support of the agility course. So you don't have to take my word for it they all signed a paper stating so.

Most of them didn't know about it and one thought it was for dogs.

Many had ideas for what they would like to see there.

I plan on asking more neighbors their thoughts on the project and I will share those results with you as well.

Thank you for your time,

Tracy

.....
Hello Joshua and Keith,

My family and I live at 1711 Meadowlane right across the road from Carr Park. I was not able to attend the meeting as it was my daughters 6th birthday party, but our family does NOT support having an agility park at the old Carr Pool site. I do agree with tearing down the old pool buildings as I have called or emailed a hand full of times about people breaking doors to gain access or for vandalism of that building.

Some of our biggest concerns with having an agility park.

- Traffic: Meadowlane is a highly traveled road. People use Meadowlane Ave to bypass the intersection of 13th and Duff when traveling from I-35, and it has gotten worse since the bike lane has been added from 16th going North. I understand the bike trail but at certain times of the day the intersection (16th and Duff) to go North on Duff is quite long, people can go up Meadowlane to avoid those lines. A lot of people that travel on Meadowlane do not travel the speed limit or close to the limit. There are people that seem to fly up and down the hill without consideration, I have seen countless people drive right through the stop sign at Carr Drive.

- Safety: Seems like a lot of agility courses that I have seen don't seem to be the safest place for people. Especially if kids are allowed to roam over there freely without supervision. I would always be there if my kids were over there, but I do not want to be a look out for other peoples kids.

- Location: The location might fit some criteria you had, but the location is kind of out a ways from the main population that would use the park. You are probably looking for HS, college age, and young professionals to use it.

- I would hope this park would not have lights for night playing around?

There are a lot of things that I would support over there, new building for get togethers, bathrooms, standard playground, but I do not support the agility park.

Thanks for the time as always.
Karl McKeeman

I understand Carr Park is being considered for an adult agility facility. As a homeowner on Meadowlane Avenue let me express my concerns and my no vote for such a move.

Meadowlane already has a traffic issue with cars using it as a pass through to avoid Duff and 13th. So many of those drivers do not observe the speed limit and choose to ignore the stop signs at Carr. This becomes more concerning by the day as homes in the neighborhood turn over to younger families with children.

Adding this proposed facility will only exacerbate the problem.

A more central location for this facility would also benefit those who chose to use this facility and prevent the added traffic.

I also have some concern about unsupervised use. As it is more and more bicycles and motorized vehicles are being used on the riverside trails. In spite of prohibitions being posted these activities increase including fires and fireworks being used along the river bank.

Please consider the impact on the homeowners in the area and locate the facility in an area that is not so residential and home to so many small children. We were told several years ago that a picnic pavillion and a playground would be installed in this space, a much more suitable option.

Lauren Worrel

Good Afternoon Joshua,

Thank you for the meeting that you hosted last night about the location of the proposed agility course. I appreciate the time you took to answer questions.

I appreciate all of the work that you have done especially on the north end of the paved trail. It seemed problematic. I know how much planning needs to happen to make a big project like that successful.

The low water dam project has also been an improvement to the area and is beautiful. We love having those areas of nature so close to our home to enjoy.

I have spoken to many neighbors this morning who did not know about the meeting or even the idea of the agility course in Carr Park. (We received a postcard in the mail about it that didn't look very important.)

So far none of them have been in support of the agility course. If there is interest from the neighbors about having an in person meeting would you be willing to come and listen to the concerns and answer questions? (We could do it at the park.)

In the short time that they have learned about this some of the concerns and observations from us and a few of the neighbors are:

- * Extra traffic pressure on an already busy residential street with children.
- * Having a “sports facility” in our neighborhood. People use the trail in our neighborhood to experience nature. A highly structured sports facility would devalue that experience.
- * Noise concerns that would detract from the peacefulness of the river

- * Parking pressure in the neighborhood. At times the parking lot from the trail is full and people often park on Meadowlane even though there is a parking lot available.
- * Increase in crime. The facility will attract delinquents after hours looking for adventure. (And who could blame them??!!
 - How safe will this course be? Living directly across the street will we be the one being asked to call the ambulance when one of the kids has a wreck?
- * Will parental supervision be required below a certain age and who will enforce that if so?
 - Additional excess Ambient light with any potential night time lighting

Some neighbors without knowing that Emma McCarthy Lee Park was an option, mentioned putting it there.

One neighbor stated that they had asked to be on a committee if changes were made to Carr Park and no one ever responded to them.

Thank you for taking the time to read the concerns I have so far from neighbors.

Regards,

Tracy Stajcar

Hi Joshua,

We won't be able to attend the interest meeting tonight at Carr Park but I still wanted to share some feedback regarding the possibility of an agility park.

I first heard about the possibility of an agility park one week ago, and my first thought was, "Gosh. We are so lucky to live in Ames." We have an excellent aquatic center, many wonderful parks, great trails, and so many other outdoor spaces that allow our family the space and time to play. From what I've seen, the equipment at the agility parks looks as though it would be safe and adventurous for all ages. I know my children (um and me too) :-)) would be absolutely delighted to have the opportunity to play there.

Thank you so much for the time and energy you've spent developing this plan and researching its value to the city. I sincerely hope we are able to move forward with an agility park in Ames. I believe it will be helpful for families to play together there and it will give children one more space outside to exercise, play and be outdoors. We love standard playground equipment but an agility park would add unique variety to the parks that are already present in Ames.

Side note- I worked for a summer at Carr pool and since it closed, I've hoped for that space to be transformed into something that will fully utilize all it has to offer. The agility park is such a great idea. Thanks for working so hard on this.

Take care,
Sarah Bradley

.....
Joshua,

I think the agility course is a great idea! Was hoping something might be added there. And a shelter with a restroom is a good idea also. I whole-heartedly support this proposal.

Larry

.....
My name is Eric Smidt and I live at 620 E. 14th Street. I am writing to express my support for the agility course project on Meadowlane on the old Carr Pool.

Please make this happen. :)

Eric

.....
Joshua,

I was thrilled to learn about the proposed agility course for Carr Park in my mail today. It will be a great addition. I hope there will be a variety of elements so all ages and abilities can use the course.

Also, I've noticed the north bridge in Stewart Park needs some care. Deck boards need to be replaced and bridge connection with the trail on both ends needs asphalt added to reduce the big gap between the trail and the bridge. This would make the area safer and more accessible. I'm thrilled to have the trail along the Skunk River below the golf course open!

Many thanks and I hope summer is wrapping up well for you,

Nancy

Hi Joshua,

My name is Ryan Gustafson, a resident at 1308 Meadowlane Ave. I would like to voice that I am FOR the agility course planned for Carr Park.

Thanks!
Ryan G

Hi Joshua,

My name is Tyler Larsen, a resident at 1308 Meadowlane Ave. I would like to voice that I am FOR the agility course planned for Carr Park.

Thanks!
Tyler L

Dear Mr. Thompson,

My name is Elodie Biggs. I am a 12 years old, and I think an agility course in Ames would be so much fun to have. There aren't a lot of playgrounds for people my age and older and this would so much fun and perfect! I love doing parkour and such and there isn't a great spot to do it, and this would be so awesome to have! Thank you!

Sincerely,
Elodie Biggs

Site Visitor Name: Steve Ward
Site Visitor Email: Swards6@gmail.com

Keith,
I watched both YouTube videos. Awesome!! Wow!
I think hopefully we as a city are more conscious of fitness as a way of life.

We chose our location when we moved here almost 30 years—Carr’s Pool was where our kids practically lived.

We live just 5 houses from the proposed location. I can only speak for myself, but I would love for my grandkids to experience this new park.

Steve Ward

Hi Josh,

Thank you for conducting the meeting tonight about the proposed Agility Course. I thought you did a great job explaining everything and responding to questions.

Anyway, here's my two cents.

I think it's a great idea. The course that you showed on the slide, which resembles the 13+ course from the video sent out earlier today, looks great! It would serve people like my 12 year old daughter (who was so excited when I told her about it that she sent you an email earlier) and 15 year old son exceptionally well. It would also serve many adults. The sooner it could be built, the better!

One point I didn't hear mentioned: since the agility course will be a unique attraction in Ames, it is likely to attract residents from all over town, perhaps making it a better fit for a community park, such as Brookside, rather than a neighborhood park, such as Carr. I understand that accessibility and parking speak in favor of Carr over Brookside (although I suspect that most people would park in the lot at Brookside and walk from there, making parking less of a problem, although not helping with accessibility). I just thought I'd mention this as a competing consideration--although I imagine you've already thought of this.

To be clear, I don't live in the Carr Park neighborhood, and I don't much care where the park ends up so long as it gets built.

Thanks for doing this!

Cheers,
Stephen Biggs

Good evening,

Steve has written to you and I wanted to add my 2 cents worth. I left the meeting tonight feeling more positive about the agility park. We've always felt that anything that gets kids outdoors is a positive thing. It's interesting to remember how much the skate park and Miracle Park were concerning to many of the surrounding residents. And now to see how both benefit so many people!! I look forward to the agility park in our neighborhood. Thanks for your work!

Also I look forward to one day riding my bike all the way to Ada Hayden once the trail is completed!! :)

Sandi Ward

Please read this article if you have not addressed this issue in your previous research or dialogues with other recreation specialists.

The meeting at Homewood Clubhouse last night appreciated. I still believe that this project is ill-advised and inappropriate for the site chosen.

I plan to attend the September 16 meeting.

Thank you.

Peggy Earnshaw

Thanks for the interesting meeting yesterday. I have less involvement in this than the more immediate neighbors, living at the other end of Carr Dr., up on the hill where Carr built his house (one block from the river, most floodproof place in Ames!), and obviously no control over what happens anyway, but a few observations and a question:

First, a couple things I wouldn't have wanted to say in front of the neighbors: The old pool never fit into the landscape, and nobody cared. It was nice to hear comments on how quiet the neighborhood can and should be; when I first saw it a little over twenty years ago it was the noisiest neighborhood in Ames, and most people seemed to like it. (I turned down the house directly across from the pool; no yard, and too noisy.)

The idea of an Agility park has been an education for me, as it has apparently been for others; until I received your mailing a few days ago, I too thought it was for dogs. Once corrected, looks to me like you've got a nice little anklebreaker there, or in my case more like a hip. Sounds like the guy who lives across from it and spends his time rescuing injured children should get a medal, or at least a deluxe First Aid kit.

But I'm sure most people who used it wouldn't injure themselves, and my opinion is that it would be nice to see a little more activity in the area. The recent improvements to the park and river seem to have helped, once that section was finally reopened. A year and a half really was a long time.

And one thing on which I can agree with the other neighbors: For a supposedly quiet neighborhood, in the last dozen years it certainly has seen more than its share of noisy, longlasting construction, and destruction, projects.

The pool celebrated its last season the year I moved here, in the Summer of 2009. I was too busy then to go down, but planned to join the following year. Instead I had the next summer disrupted by the daily noise of a bulldozer pushing it into its own hole, as if a nationally important piece of American history (see Ames Historical Society) had never existed.

Since then, it seems to have been something nearly every year, continuing into this year with the simultaneous work on 13th and Duff. Like others, I currently have to drive north to 20th in order to reach anyplace south of 13th.

And I must agree with those who said they've considered the park, most of the time, an eyesore more than not. I was surprised to learn the mysteriously disappearing Burning bushes, which I thought were attractive, are now considered an invasive species. I was born in Ohio; I guess that makes me an invasive species. My take, sometimes you need invasive species to improve diversity.

So the Agility Course is not very important to me, as I have no children and might be a little old to give it a try, although we'll see. My question, which I wanted to ask last night but didn't as it was slightly off-topic, although not too far, is, When are we going to see an Adult Outdoor Swimming Pool, or any Adult Swimming Pool, in Ames?

I've heard a rumor there used to be one around. That multimillion dollar kiddie pool down the street is suitable for toddlers to subteens, but is four feet at its deepest, suitable for an adult to scrape chest or other tender parts, and they make you swim in lanes. I tried to swim in the only deep area, and was whistled out, told that was for diving only. That was during my one and only visit, in the Summer of 2015; I haven't been back since. I was upset enough to call the Superintendent of Parks and Rec. to complain. He was on vacation. I've always imagined him sitting next to a nice, cool pool....

I understand Story City, pop. 3400, has a nice one. So does Slater, pop. 1500. Maybe next year.

So I guess you know what I'd like to see in that space. Be a little difficult, though, as you'd have to dig the other one out first.

I will watch developments with interest. The park, at least, is better than it was last year. Thanks for reading, and for your work.

.....

Thank you! That looks pretty neat!

I live on Meadowlane (1803) and I guess I just want to say for the record that I'm all for this. I heard some of the concerns last night, but for me they are all outweighed by making our neighborhood cooler, and more fun. Property values will increase, and it will make this area an even better place to live. More traffic just means this is a great place that people want to visit!

I was here when Carr pool was here. It was awesome! Let's make it awesome again!

Thanks! I hope this happens!

.....

I was unable to attend meeting last night because of a medical situation. I would like to express my desire not to have the agility course there for the following reasons . 1. It will discourage Wildlife, my grandchildren and I saw a fox not far from that area. I'm sure he will find a new home with that put there. 2. It is very peaceful and comforting to go there. 3. Meadow Lane Avenue already has a lot of

traffic. 4. We already have the soccer fields with people who come over and park on Meadow Lane Avenue and walk between houses to go to the games. Thank you.

Sandra Y Baker

Keith & Josh,

Thanks for taking the time to gather input from the neighborhood,

Josh, I missed the change in location, but Keith kindly gave me the time to give him my feedback directly. In general, I think the agility course will be a nice addition to the Ames Parks system.

Barb Wheelock

Hi. I'm Devon Mortvedt. I'm 9 years old. I really hope you put the agility course at Carr Park, because right now it's just a field of weeds. A lot more kids would come if it was an agility course than just a normal playground. And lots more adults would come. I really like agility courses so it would be super fun in my opinion.

Sincerely,

Devon

Hi Josh,

I wanted to again say thank you for setting up the meeting last week to allow the neighborhood to give our opinion about the proposed agility course at Carr Park. While I appreciate the effort I left this meeting feeling like not only was my voice not heard and understood, but most our voices were not heard and understood. After 20 years in technical sales I know when I am being glad-handed, and I was glad-handed. It is not my intent here to create an adversarial relationship here, in fact quite the opposite is true. I would enjoy the opportunity to be a partner in what happens in the future in this area.

I enjoyed seeing the updated presentation where you added a couple of bullet points to at least convert our concerns from email in previous weeks into bullet points. What I did not enjoy is your constant deflection, of issues and concerns brought up by your customers, to being some other groups responsibility (traffic, PD, streets, etc.). You stated you had many multiple requests for an agility course, who did these come from? Was it citizens in Ames, staff in Ames, vendors...I am just curious who out of the blue would suggest this?

Here are a few clarifications/thoughts in no certain order:

- Safety -
 - You did indicate that safety was important, however you seemed to be more concerned with the liability aspect of it than the actual safety aspect of it.

- Parking in front of my house -
 - In the meeting you pretty much laughed at the idea that you somehow had any ownership in the city adding an ADA ramp in front of my house and my loss of most of the parking there because it is now a no parking zone(you indicated it was

streets/traffic's problem as I recall). I think I need to remind you that the reason the ADA ramp is there is to mate up with the ADA ramp that comes out of Carr Park, the one that was poured with the new sidewalk in the park a few years ago, prior to the street being finished. Why did this trail and ADA ramp not come down to mate up with the ADA ramp at the NW corner of Carr and Meadowlane? The guys from traffic could not figure out why this was not done? Your group does in fact own some responsibility here and the fact you laughed it off is indicative of most of the remainder of the meeting.

- Increased Traffic -
 - On multiple occasions you indicated this was PD's problem, not yours
 - You referenced the number of citations on Meadowlane
 - I get the impression you asked about violations, did you ask whether or not PD's strategy was to be a deterrent rather than giving citations. Did you ask PD if people regularly called in complaints about speeding or other traffic violations? In 10 years of living here I have only seen one occasion where PD parked on a side street with the intention to catch violators, most of the time when they are here they park in the parking lot and serve to minimize violations by being a deterrent. I am good with this, but you cannot use this as background facts if they are not representative of the situation.
 - Parks and Rec will in fact own some responsibility here if you create a draw that increases traffic to the area. Traffic violations here are already an issue whether they are cited or not, increased traffic will likely not make this any better.
- Neighborhood park vs community park -
 - I believe Carr Park is a neighborhood park(I believe you stated it was one as well) and also believe it should stay that way. Increasing traffic here will turn it into a community park, is this your intent? I still maintain that an agility course does not blend well with the feel of Carr Park. It brings a different culture than what the neighborhood is looking for. A Nature Center might be a better fit.
 - The fact that this park has a stop sign in front of it does not necessitate a correlation between other parks that also have a stop sign in front of them. We are talking about Carr Park specifically. Please let's talk in causals and not corollaries.
 - It is apparent that most of the folks within 1/4 to 1/2 mile of this park do not want an agility course.
- Maintenance -
 - You made it a bullet point and said if it was broken you would fix it, did not mention any kind of budget for this as you indicated that you did not know as this was new. Seems to be an oversight.
 - I have difficulty with the idea that rubber matting in the proposed course that needs to be replaced every 8-10 years at a cost of \$165K (7500 ft/sq @\$22 ea your figures) can get done when it is apparent that basic maintenance of the pool house and paint on structures in the park system cannot be maintained now.
- Planning -
 - Seems odd to me that you can find the money to build a new agility course, but not tear down the eyesore pool house.

- After many points that many folks brought up at the meeting (people peeing in the bushes behind the chemical shed, parking lots needs to be resurfaced, pool house continually attracts homeless population and looks horrible, etc.) it seems that the planning here is to build these projects in the reverse order to their need. Would it not make sense to do this in another order? Take care of what you have first:
 1. Tear down pool house
 2. Build bathrooms
 3. Resurface parking lot
 4. Pavillion
 5. Playground equipment

To be honest when I left the meeting last week, I was a bit irritated. I am not irritated any more, in fact I am laughing about it because the way this is happening is so absurd. I don't get the impression that multiple levels of management at the city are listening to any of its customers any longer, it is really disappointing. I don't believe that you see me as one of your customers, that too is disappointing. I also don't feel that you will accurately take my voice to the parks and rec commission when it meets later this month. It is very understandable that you have many large projects that each have many moving parts in front of you. We all do. All I am asking is that you do some real time planning, it does not seem like to you have done any in-depth research into this project. I did not hear about any studies on injuries per capita, maintenance budget/ cost over a longer time period for this project that has the potential to be the first of its kind in Iowa. All I really heard was that "you will take care of it". Most of us are not against something being built in our park, but the idea of an agility course there is not favorable to me and many others in the area local to our neighborhood park.

Best regards,

John Sogandares

.....

Hi Josh!

I'm a resident of meadowlane neighborhood and couldn't make the meeting about the proposed agility park. I live at 613 E. 13th St. and wanted to let you know I am all in favor of the proposal. I know some of my neighbors are not happy about possible increase traffic and vandalism so here's my voice that yes! It's a great plan.

Thanks!

Kristin MacDonald

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Hi Joshua.

Thanks for taking the time to present to the neighborhood a few weeks ago. I appreciate the information and the transparency in the process.

I did not get my information recorded on the sheet that was being passed around, but I wanted to make sure that I sent you an email to officially have our support for this project noted. I grew up in this neighborhood, when Carr Pool was still there, and have since moved back to the same area with my own family. We use many of the area trails, and even sometimes the green space, but would love to have a park that my older kids could utilize.

Thanks again.
Blakely Mortvedt

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Thank you in advance for taking the time to read this concerning the proposed Agility Course in Carr Park.

In late July the city sent out a postcard informing people of a zoom meeting that was poorly attended.

After attending the initial zoom meeting I went door to door asking people in my neighborhood if they knew about the meeting and asked them their thoughts about the agility course being located in Carr Park. Most people didn't know about the meeting and many of them that did thought it was a course for dogs.

Considering homeowner resistance:

I visited 45 houses and found 28 people home. Out of those 28 homes 24 of the homeowners were AGAINST the agility course and signed a petition stating so. I am including this petition. Two of the 28 home occupants thought it might be a good idea. Two were undecided.

I heard many complaints about the idea from homeowners. They also spoke of their pride for the history of Carr Park and their disappointment about the removal of the pool, but none of the neighbors who signed wanted this course and many wanted the park to remain in a more natural state. Without going into too much detail here is a list of high level of concerns from the neighbors.

- We live in a quiet neighborhood where people come to experience nature. A highly structured large outdoor sports facility would devalue the nature experience. (This was openly scoffed at by the representative that someone called it a sports facility and then said, "It's a playground and once I put it in it's pretty much going to stay.") In my opinion It's certainly not an art installation or a wildflower center, and an "agility course" sure seems to go hand in hand with sports like behavior.
- Increased traffic pressure on an already too busy street with children (People use it to avoid the lights on Duff and speed through the stop sign on a regular basis.)
- Increased noise (Shouting while using the structure etc.)
- Safety issues as the structure wouldn't be supervised or controlled
- Increased crime. The facility will attract nighttime adventure seekers
- The parking lot there is often full already and will cause more on street parking (The parking lot needs to be resurfaced but there is no plan for that in the near future)
- It's unsightly

A second meeting was scheduled that was led by Joshua Thompson. I feel that our voices were not heard and 6 neighbors that I spoke with afterward felt that they had no say and that the city had already made up their mind. Here are some of my notes and thoughts about the meeting.

Concerning neighbor input:

According to the city representative, Carr Park is a neighborhood park which was defined as a service area of 1/4-1/2 mile and serves the neighborhood that it is in. My neighbors believe the "agility course" clearly belongs in a community park where more intense recreation facilities are more appropriate. The majority of the people in this neighborhood will not be using this sports equipment and signed a petition stating they did not want it in their neighborhood. (Most of the meeting attendees DROVE to the neighborhood meeting. This is yet another indicator that they would most likely not be a user of the course.)

It was stated that things change over time and that is why they try and evaluate every park space we have to say hey, what is the best spot for this. It seems to me that people would be better served if they had input into what happens in their neighborhood instead of a top down approach where someone imposes their idea on a neighborhood just because it fits the criteria for someone's random idea. Would it be ridiculous to ask the neighbors located around a neighborhood park what they would like to see there and actually listen to their ideas?

I would like to know what type of demographic study was done to ascertain whether this would be a good fit for the "neighborhood". It seems the process has been to buy this equipment and then figure out where to install it. It would seem to be more prudent to examine each park and decide what makes the most sense for that location.

Someone asked "Knowing that the neighbors around Carr Park do not support the agility course how does that fact influence the decision to place the course in Carr Park?" The reply was that he would take the feedback from the meeting to the Parks and Rec commission. (This is not an answer and I didn't see anyone from the city taking notes at the meeting)

When asked what they would like to see in Carr Park a citizen replied, "Something that people won't get hurt as much on." The reply was, "Unfortunately part of the issue is that you see things because you live across the street or don't approve of their activity. However you can go to any park in the city and people are getting hurt. And individuals that live across the street may turn their head and say, "That's their problem."

This answer shocked me.

One man (Who was one of the few there that looked like he might use the structure) asked if there were lower scope alternatives and did they need to go to this extreme? The reply was, "Like I said, it's the largest it will be. We have the space available to do it" and promptly called on another citizen. I don't see how this addressed the man's ideas and concerns.

Concerning safety:

It was stated that safety is number one. When someone asked if the agility course facility in Minnesota had been contacted to inquire about accidents on this equipment the reply was, "I guarantee you we have 100% liability insurance. We have an aquatic center that has 2,000 people per day." They went on to talk about someone who sued the city when they fell on a trail while running in a blizzard. They stated that they couldn't prevent that and one thing they do now is that they put "Limited trail maintenance" signs on the trail and that releases the city from all liability according to their lawyers. The person who asked the question was concerned about people hurting themselves not about liability for the city. They also assured everyone that the manufacturer made safe equipment.

This answer didn't deal with the issue of safety at all. The answer was about liability.

They did say that Parks and Rec doesn't do law enforcement and if you have issues with that then call the police.

In my opinion an agility course belongs indoors where it can be supervised (which would decrease injuries) and would cost less to maintain. Not to mention the many months out of the year that the structure can't be used because of cold weather. The courses like this online that I found were indoors, supervised, and charged admission.

Concerning maintenance:

It was stated that there would be a rubber base on the ground that the structures would be placed on. The rubber would cost \$20 per square foot and would last 8-10 years. It was stated that it would cover between 6,000-8,000 square feet. If it is at the low end at 6,000 square feet, where will the money come from for the \$120,000 needed in 8-10 years to replace this? There hasn't been money to maintain what is already there. That would be a quarter of a million dollars spent in 20 years for an outdoor rubber floor. We were also told that the rubber couldn't withstand flooding. I wonder how the 4 month layer of moisture from ice and snow will affect it.

No maintenance has been done on the interior of the pool house for 10 years and a minimum of maintenance on the exterior only when an event happens such as graffiti. There are homeless people living there and people use it frequently for outdoor urination. It has decayed and is growing mold. The volleyball court is an eyesore and the restrooms and horseshoe courts to the south are in a state of neglect.

Since what is already in place isn't being maintained it's not unreasonable to think that anything new will be. Making sure money is secured for maintenance regardless of which fund it is required to be taken from should be a priority before any project is considered.

There were a handful of people for it. One citizen who lives a few streets away wanted it for their 10 and 12 year old children. They argued that the fast non compliant traffic at the intersection of Carr and Meadowlane didn't matter because people were going to speed through there regardless and they warn their kids to be extra careful there.

Another citizen thought they could have classes there and another thought it would be good for elderly people to be fit to make their everyday lives easier.

I read the meeting minutes from July 15, 2021 Parks and Rec Commission meeting and see that Brookside was the most discussed choice with Northridge Heights and Hira Park as well as Emma McCarthy Lee Park and Carr Park as alternate locations. At this point the city seems set on forcing it on Carr Park. During the neighborhood meeting there was no indication from the city that it would be placed anywhere else.

Also I see that an update for the "Agility Course Location" was listed for discussion on the minutes for the meeting on August 19th under "Project Updates" but I don't see any notes regarding this item. Could someone let me know if there was a discussion or why it wasn't discussed?

I appreciate that Keith addressed the concerns about the neglected pool house and offered to remain diligent about the issue.

I have written other emails about this and I understand all of the emails from neighbors that were received by Keith and Joshua will be forwarded to the Parks and Rec commissioners. I am grateful that you will be able to read our concerns about this project.

Thank you for your time,

Tracy Stajcar

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Dear Parks and Facilities Director Thompson,

I am writing in response to the public meeting regarding the proposal for an agility course to be permanently installed at Carr Park which is co-located with McDonald/Gunder/Nutty Woods. I was unable to attend the first meeting and was glad to have had the opportunity to learn more about the proposal at the second meeting. The presentation included a list of criteria used to identify a suitable space for the proposed agility course. Following the meeting, and after further thought, I remain unconvinced that Carr Park is the only viable location for an agility course. I cannot recall the full list but some of the criteria include: grade, must be out of the floodplain, have sidewalks, have a parking lot, and visibility from the street. I want to address a few of the criteria that disqualified a few other parks.

Northridge Heights Park was not considered because there is no parking lot. Northridge Heights Park has a play structure, swing set, basketball court, and shelter w/ picnic tables and grills. No parking lot yet four distinct amenities were installed at this park. Anyone who drives to this park must park on the street. It is apparent that Ames Parks and Rec does indeed install recreational amenities at parks that don't have parking lots. I will also note that this is a relatively new park which means it wasn't all that long ago that Ames Parks and Rec made the decision to create a park at this location knowing the size of the park could not or would not accommodate a parking lot.

Brookside Park didn't check all the boxes because there is no parking lot near the site where an agility course could be installed. I assume the proposed site is the large open field south of the basketball court and four tennis courts. Anyone who wishes to use those tennis or basketball courts already has

to park in the parking lot on the west side of the footbridge and walk or park along Brookridge Avenue and walk to reach these amenities. Another issue was visibility from the roadway as it pertains to policing. Obscured visibility of that area did not prevent either of these amenities from being placed there. Additionally, this area is essentially flat and is the only portion of Brookside Park that does not lie within the floodplain.

Emma McCarthy Lee Park was not chosen because there are no sidewalks along Ross Road. Emma McCarthy Lee Park features a play structure, 4 tennis courts, room for 2 soccer fields (as seen from aerial photos), a shelter, and upper and lower parking lots (including a walking path that joins the upper parking area with the lower portion of the park). A sidewalk/path access on Oakland Street provides access for those living south of the main park entrance. All of these amenities exist with Ross Road not having sidewalks. The lack of Ross Road sidewalks has not been a deterrent to patrons who visit Emma McCarthy Lee Park nor has it prevented Ames Parks and Rec from installing and maintaining recreational equipment and fields.

I have visited Labh and Tahira Hira Park twice in as many weeks. In that time I have noticed progress on the shelter and what will be paved paths. As far as plans for the park go, I can only find a short description from a February 2020 meeting which was listed on the City of Ames' Calendar of Events. According to the event, the "6 acre parcel will include a parking lot, play structure, green space, shelter, picnic tables, paths and other features". I'm not sure what "other features" might include but the parcel seems large enough that it could include an agility course. I will also note that this park is not located within the floodplain, currently has two parking lots, can be viewed from two streets as it sits on a corner lot, and Westwood Drive has a sidewalk. Another positive attribute of this former elementary school turned park is that it is nearly flat which is one of the criteria used for site selection.

In contrast to the four parks listed above, the absolute best part of Carr Park is what it doesn't have. It is largely wild, yet managed, and there are minimal permanent structures (play structures, game fields, shelters, hard surface courts, etc.) to detract from its natural beauty. Those who regularly visit the park do so because Carr Park provides an environment no other park in Ames can equal. Walking/running on paved sidewalks and unpaved trails, visiting the diverse prairie, foraging edibles, cross country skiing on groomed trails, ice skating, fishing, swimming, dog walking, a venue for cross country running practice for local schools, observing wildlife, exploring the banks and riverbed of the South Skunk River, canoeing and kayaking, and tending raised-bed community gardens are among the favorite activities enjoyed by Carr Park visitors. All of these opportunities are located within our city but the feeling you experience while you're there is akin to visiting a larger, rural county park. Due to its size and location, Carr Park offers diverse habitat for many plant and animal species. During my visits to Carr Park I have personally observed deer, foxes, groundhogs, raccoon, possums, eagles, barred owls, great blue heron, ducks, Canada geese, snapping turtles, spiny softshell turtles, beaver, muskrats, a variety of fish, crawdads, and a few species of mussels. Every effort should be made to preserve this habitat.

Given Carr Park's valuable attributes, I have real concerns regarding the proposed addition of an agility course. I am concerned a permanent structure designed for active recreation/use/training will increase traffic (vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian), increase noise from users, generate more garbage from users, decrease parking availability, result in unknown frequency of police patrol based on the park's out of the way location, and if future plans include expansion of this type of recreation,

equipment, or structures at Carr Park. Furthermore, I'm concerned about the continued disruption from more demolition and construction. Our neighborhood, and the wildlife we share it with, have endured extensive construction projects spread over a number of years. The projects have impacted wildlife habitat and disrupted the quality of life for those living in the neighborhood. The list that follows is from memory only so it is probably incomplete and events are not chronologically listed.

1. Demolition of Carr Pool and subsequent filling of the pool's void.
2. A sidewalk was installed to connect Inis Grove with Carr Park. Along with the sidewalk came new and larger concrete culverts to divert water away from the path and into the river. While some of the culverts work well, others haven't been as effective and required further sculpting to recreate a channel for the ephemeral rill originating at the golf course. In several locations along the river this work included moving a substantial amount of earth to create large draws between the sidewalk and river.
3. Machinery is almost routinely brought in to clear the sidewalk which is often covered by mud and water following heavy rains that bypass the blocked or clogged culverts and cover the sidewalk.
4. The same sidewalk has been frequently closed or impassable due to extreme erosion from the golf course. The most recent closure to mitigate the erosion problem, again, brought heavy, loud equipment which disturbs the neighborhood and causes further damage to the ground on both sides of the sidewalk.
5. Within the last several years, a few sections of the east bank were graded, jetty-type structures installed in the river, and rock added along the bank to minimize erosion. Access for that project brought heavy equipment traffic through the east entrance to the park. The equipment left deep ruts and damaged vegetation and, without question, disturbed wildlife and park visitors.
6. Unrelated to Parks and Rec but nonetheless part of the disruption to our neighborhood was the demolition and reconstruction of Meadowlane Avenue. First it was the lower, flat section of the street. The following summer it was the hill. Work began and then stalled for months before crews finally returned to complete that phase of the project. The months where no work occurred only added to the disruption of the neighborhood.
7. Just a few days ago, September 8th, a section of E. 20th Street was closed to thru traffic for the next leg of removal and replacement. This will happen in two phases, unknown if both will be completed before winter. Heavy truck traffic uses Meadowlane Avenue to transport refuse.
8. Demolition of the old Homewood clubhouse and construction of the new one.
9. Likewise, the demolition and construction of a new dam at North River Valley Park was disruptive. Technically a different park yet because it is adjacent to Carr Park, what happens in one impacts the other, especially as it relates to wildlife habitat.

Finally, I am aware that it takes years to plan, fund, design, build, and budget to commit to maintaining every one of the city's parks and venues. I appreciate the responsibility placed upon the City to thoughtfully select projects and suitable sites that compliment the wants and needs of the neighborhood residents in which amenities are constructed. As the mother of an active 12YO and 9YO and I'm not opposed to an agility course. What I am opposed to is the construction of an agility course in an overwhelmingly passive recreational park because the two do not mesh. Not only do we not need an agility course, I'm asking for strong consideration of residents and wildlife living near Carr Park. After years of construction and disruption, how much more should our neighborhood have to endure? I respectfully request the City to reconsider the location for the proposed agility course.

Respectfully,

Emily Tyndall

Joshua,
thanks for your careful and patient presentation of the plans for Carr Park at the meeting on Thursday evening, August 26.
I like the idea of seeing Carr Park enhanced, and I like the idea of giving our youth another option for activities in our park system.
I apologize for the negativity from some of my dear neighbors.
You did take it in stride, and I hope plans go forward in due time.
Blessings,
Tom Niehof

Joshua,
Thanks for holding the neighborhood meeting tonight. You are a man of exceptional patience.
I just want to voice my support for the project. We live at 1518 Meadowlane and would love to have an agility course in our neighborhood.
Thanks!

Sincerely,
Drew Delp

Attachment F

Thank you for including me in the Parks and Recreation meeting on September 16th. I appreciate the dialogue and the thoughtful questions. I have a few more thoughts I would like to share about the agility course possible location in Carr Park.

1.

At the meeting it was brought up a few times about the past and the pool. The argument was that since there was a lot of traffic and noise from children when the pool was there, extra traffic and noise shouldn't be an issue now. It was also pointed out that parks are transitional. Twelve years have passed since the pool has closed. Since then Carr Park has transitioned into a quiet natural area. Just because noise and extra traffic were accepted in the past doesn't mean that it would be welcomed now.

2.

I looked up Sunderbruch Park in Davenport where their agility course is located. It is not located in a neighborhood. It resides in a largely undeveloped 134 acre park which is a more appropriate place for an agility course to be used. I have no doubt that it is used frequently in the Davenport park. Ada Hayden would fit the bill if we wanted to follow Davenport's lead. My guess is that it wouldn't be allowed there because of the same reason my neighbors and I don't wish to have it located in Carr Park.

3.

At the meeting I was asked about alternative ideas. I made a call to a Reiman Gardens employee to get more details on an idea. There is an independent non profit organization called All-American Selections that tests new varieties of plants for home gardens. There is an AAS trial garden at Reiman Gardens that is lovely. Carr Park would be a perfect location for one of these trial gardens. Garden plots with beautiful flowers and vegetables would fit in with the community garden plots that are presently located near there. There would be space to walk through the plots and educational programs about horticulture/biology/insects etc. could be implemented.

My thought was that the city could partner with ISU horticulture students/interns to operate it. Here is a link to the AAS website. There is a FAQ that offers short and concise answers about the program. I would be happy to contact ISU to inquire further about the feasibility of this partnership with the city. Please let me know if this would be a possibility.

<https://all-americanselections.org/how-to-become-a-display-garden/>

4.

My hope is that we respect the land at Carr Park by maintaining its natural beauty.

Thank you again for taking time to consider this.

Tracy Stajcar