PRIORITY PARK CASE STUDY: NEIGHBORHOOD PARK + BLUFF

Roosevelt Park Lodge

ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT

TIER 1 (Lodge Interior)

1. Outdoor visibility poor due to damaged/deteriorating windows
2. Existing seating- folding/movable chairs only
3. Inactive lift from the parking pavement to basketball court is located at the west side of the building
4. Basketball court not sound proofed
5. Poor building ventilation
Other notes:
   » Main entrance to Lodge is split-level, with no barrier-free access to either level.
   » Bathrooms located on both levels (locker rooms on ground floor)
   » No windows to exterior at lower level

TIER 2 (Lodge Exterior)

1. Path to splash pad, restrooms, picnic shelter, playground
2. Path to upper parking area
3. Barrier-free access point to patio
4. Movable picnic table seating
5. Concrete patio (poor condition), ~ 4,500 sf
6. Parking along east and north side of building
7. Stairs to patio
8. Path to park entry road
9. Vegetation visually blocking building

BUILDING AREA: 11,056 SQUARE FEET
EXISTING CONDITIONS
» The Lodge is currently programmed for youth basketball on the upper level, and the Gear Library on the lower level
» A facility condition index was completed in 2018, deeming the building sound to withstand upgrades
» Both levels of the split level building and the sunken patio are not barrier-free accessible
» The upper level includes a full-length basketball court, bathrooms, maintenance closet, and restrooms. The lower level includes a large open space, storage room, office, and locker rooms
» Poor street visibility and lack of lighting often creates a feeling of lack of safety within the park space. Illegal activity in the parking lot is not uncommon.
WHAT WE HEARD

“Event space for birthdays, art center, mixed-use space, movable furniture, basketball, bathroom, kitchen outlets”

“Ventilation, sound proofing, visibility”

“Senior center/youth center, classes”

“Kitchen to use for weddings or quinceaneras”

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The first step in understanding the community’s potential support of the Lodge was to talk with a small group of stakeholder neighborhood leaders to determine 1) if there neighborhood interest in investing in it as a community amenity, 2) could the existing footprint be modified to meet current community needs, and 3) should an alternative location or new building be considered. Stakeholders agreed that the Lodge in its current location has the potential to be a transformative addition to the health and wellness of the neighborhood.

In a series of three input sessions and an online survey, residents showed their excitement for Lodge renovations and programming through dot polling, mapping, and conversation. Spanish translators were present at each session, often gaining in depth feedback when there otherwise would have been a language barrier.

In regard to the physical condition of the Lodge, neighbors want a more welcoming feel, with a heightened sense of arrival. Wayfinding and accessibility are less then adequate. Currently, there is little to no natural ventilation in the building causing a uncomfortable experience. While there are some windows, most are broken or discolored with low visibility. Everyone felt the locker rooms in the lower level were unnecessary. With no existing acoustical separation between the lower level and the upper level, the lower level is almost unusable socially due to the high noise levels from above.

Roosevelt Park residents would like to see the Lodge reemerge as a safe, multifaceted community asset that celebrates the diversity and talents of their neighbors. Most conversations involved a concern for safety and a hope for a flexible space to host a range of uses and events.

A balance of recreational/sport activities with event space flexible for various scales, accessible for lease or rent was desired. Basketball led the way in recreational/sport activities. Residents also discussed futsol, indoor soccer, and dance. A rental space for family-focused events such as Quinceaneras, birthday parties, and baby showers, and weddings was a high community priority. Multi-generational activities such as bingo, small concerts, neighborhood parties, and youth and senior classes, was also important. Several people felt it would be worth considering a small library, vending, access to technology and wi-fi, art space, as well as a kitchen for users to utilize during events.
BASIC NEEDS THEMES

**CONNECTION**

Gathering Spaces / Local Art / Programming & Activation

“Opportunities to experience things together”

“Live entertainment to bring life and groove into the neighborhood”

“This is what we all want, there just isn’t enough community spaces”

“Exchanging/trading and growing of harvest. Harvest festival”

“Local artists, inviting events”

“Nurture the creativity of our community”

**BELONGING**

Neighborhood & Community / Family-Focused / Local Culture, Talent & Cuisine

“More for people to do that is constructive and inclusive”

“Coming together as a neighborhood ‘family’, belonging with the community”

“Kids belong in all spaces!”

“Representation of neighborhood culture”

“Open free access to the space (indoor and outdoor)”

“Food brings us together”

**SAFETY**

Lighting & Visibility / Safe & Clean Access To & Within the Park

“City work with us so we can know each other and have a relationship. If I know you and my neighbors there is safety”

“We need more lighting, too dark”

“Lights for more security at night”

“Increase visibility”

“Safe/better access to the park from Tulip/Coate”

“Safe and clean sidewalks”

**RECREATION**

Family-Friendly Activities & Events / Walking / Music

“Safe parks to enjoy with my family and friends”

“Basketball courts for the youth”

“Going for walks with my family”

“Breakdancing sounds fun!”

“Live music is a great way to enjoy the weekend”

“Kids nature exploration events/activities”
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DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on community feedback, a design for the revitalized Lodge was created that addressed safety and accessibility issues, improved visibility and ventilation, offered flexible space for community events and activities at multiple scales, and is adaptable to evolve with community needs and cultural character as it is customized and detailed in further planning processes. At the heart of the design, the Lodge is centered around the sense of community, belonging, and inclusivity.

UPPER LEVEL
LODGE BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS
A NEW BUILDING FACADE
B NEW SHATTER PROOF WINDOWS
C IMPROVED LOWER LEVEL VISIBILITY
D BARRIER-FREE ACCESS FROM PARKING
E FRONT PORCH

VIBRANT LOCAL ART
EXPANDED ROOF
IMPROVED NATURAL LIGHT

LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS
A AMPHITHEATER SEATING
B FLEXIBLE PATIO SPACE
C AMPHITHEATER STAIRS
D BARRIER-FREE RAMP TO PATIO
E BARRIER-FREE PARKING
F SHADE TREES
COST ESTIMATES

Rehabilitation cost estimates for the lodge have been grouped in building improvements and site work:

Lodge Renovation & Expansion: $3,000,000
» Renovated interior (both levels)
» Basketball court sound barrier
» East expansion & entry sequence
» New windows
» New exterior facade

Site Work: $750,000
» Plaza with amphitheater seating
» Barrier-free pathways
» Trees & landscaping
» Renovated parking lot

TOTAL LODGE IMPROVEMENT COST: $3,750,000
TEST PROJECT

Initial stakeholder meetings for the park master plan, and past engagement sessions for recent park improvements, identified the lodge as a desired community venue for indoor basketball, community events, birthdays, and celebrations. The neighborhood often speaks of a lack of family-friendly space to host events, other than nearby school gymnasiums.

The project team asked participants to select a test project that could temporarily enhance the exterior of the building, and imagine programming uses for the building interior. Top priorities were a stair mural to add color and link the front door and lower lodge plaza, an outdoor sculpture in the park, and outdoor work spaces with shade and reclining seats for comfort with views of the lawn area. The majority of participants reinforced that an event and programmed “drop-in” space for art and classes was desired. Finally, one participant mentioned winter uses at the park for skating and sledding and using the lodge as a warming house.

Given the seasonality and timing of the test project, and in close collaboration with area stakeholders including the Southwest Business Association, Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Association, and Grandville Area Arts and Humanities, park activation was selected as a test project. To activate the park, a community Christmas Tree Lighting was held, and extensive seasonal lighting was placed throughout the park with a focus on a lit path from Grandville Avenue to the lodge, which for some, was an unknown park feature.

A local community leader was hired by the project team to help coordinate the event, which included hot chocolate, music, crafts and a fire pit with the Gear Library. The project will help raise awareness about the park and lodge, and return the space to one for community events and cultural celebrations.