



ORMSBY AND ARMSTRONG PARKS

Improvement Plan
SPRING 2025

Acknowledgments



Pittsburgh Department of City Planning

Marti Battistone Principal Planner
Thomas Scharff Senior Planner
Isabella Gross Principal Planner

Consulting Team

Pashek + MTR, Lead Consultant
Sara Thompson
Alexzandria Zwega

Advisory Committee

Alicia Carberry, *Office of Council District 3*
Bob Charland, *Council Member for District 3*
Cara & Adam Jette, *South Side Slopes Neighborhood Association*
Claire Pro, *South Side Kids*
Joyce Pagan, *Office of Council District 3*
Kathleen Petrillo, *South Side Community Council*
Kitty Vagley, *Friends of South Side Park*
Marya Pittaway, *Department of Public Works Park Ranger*
Mike Clark, *South Side Community Council*

Special Thanks

The project team extends its sincere thanks to the Advisory Committee members and organizations for their consistent involvement during the planning process. The team also thanks the additional organizations and community groups that extended time, space and support to the process, including the South Side Planning Forum, South Side Community Action Network, Birmingham Foundation, elected officials, and everyone who participated.

Contents

Introduction/Summary.....1
Context Map..... 5

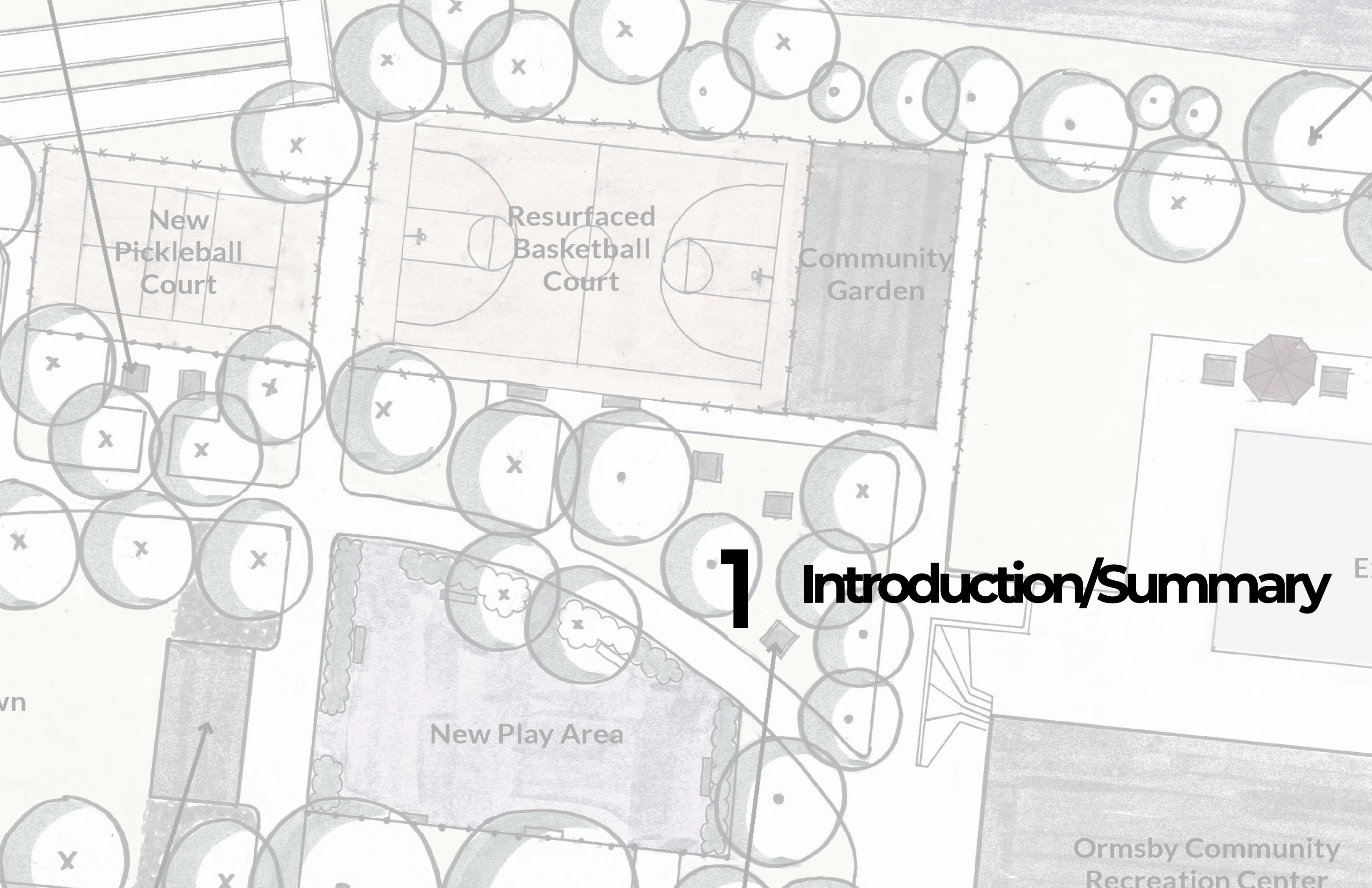
Public Engagement..... 7
Meetings and Schedule 9
Public Engagement Summary 10

Armstrong Park 15
Existing Conditions..... 17
Final Concept Plan..... 21
Recommendations..... 23
Phasing Plan 27
Cost Estimate Summary..... 29

Ormsby Park 31
Existing Conditions.....33
Final Concept Plan..... 37
Recommendations..... 39
Bird’s Eye Perspective 43
Cost Estimate Summary..... 45

Next Steps..... 47
Programming 49
Wharton Street Parking Lot.....49
POGOH Station at Ormsby 49
Intersection Safety Improvements.....49
Public Street Art 49
Funding..... 49

Appendices.....
See other report document on the EngagePGH page link for Appendices
<https://engage.pittsburghpa.gov/armstrong-ormsby-park-planning>



1

Introduction/Summary

Ormsby Community
Recreation Center

INTRODUCTION

Ormsby Park and Armstrong Park are located in the South Side Flats of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Ormsby Park is along S 22nd Street, close to many community amenities including the Ormsby Recreation Center, Pool, and South Side Library. Armstrong Park is located between S 12th Street, S 13th Street, and Sarah Street. It is near Esser Plaza and the South Side Market House. These parks are highly utilized and provide important recreation amenities for the South Side residents. South Side Flats is a relatively dense part of the city where green spaces are highly valued. Ensuring environmental justice and equal access to green spaces is crucial in Ormsby and Armstrong Parks because these areas, with high percentages of low-to-moderate income residents and significant environmental burdens, need equitable access to safe, clean recreational spaces. (See Appendix for detailed information). Surrounded by residential and commercial development, the parks are highly accessible and visible to the surrounding community. They include ball fields, basketball and dek hockey courts, playgrounds, walking paths, a spray feature, and buildings. The primary goal of this project is to develop a concept for each park highlighting improvement options based on public input.

SUMMARY

The new concepts for Ormsby and Armstrong Parks expand upon the previous work of Armstrong Park completed by the “South Side Local Development Company” in 2010 and align with elements of the City’s OpenSpacePGH Plan adopted in 2013, which proposes directing resources towards improvements to Ormsby and Armstrong. The purpose is to look at the two parks as a whole, to create a better understanding of the desires and needs of the community, and identify updates to existing amenities.

The new concepts for both Ormsby and Armstrong Park are based on the previous design work, analysis of existing conditions, public input, research, and funding.

Based on community input, Ormsby Parks needs to be reimagined in its entirety due to the awkward placement of the dek hockey court, the park’s central location, and age of the facilities, while Armstrong Park needs updates to existing amenities.

Vision

To develop a plan for Ormsby and Armstrong Parks to create a connected park system that meets the needs and desires of the South Side community.

Goals

- Align proposed park improvements with community priorities for the future parks.
- Improve connections and pedestrian safety through and around the parks.
- Provide more functional parks.
- Improve and expand existing facilities.
- Provide new amenities for desired uses and future programming.
- Coordinate amenities and uses between the parks.



CONTEXT MAP

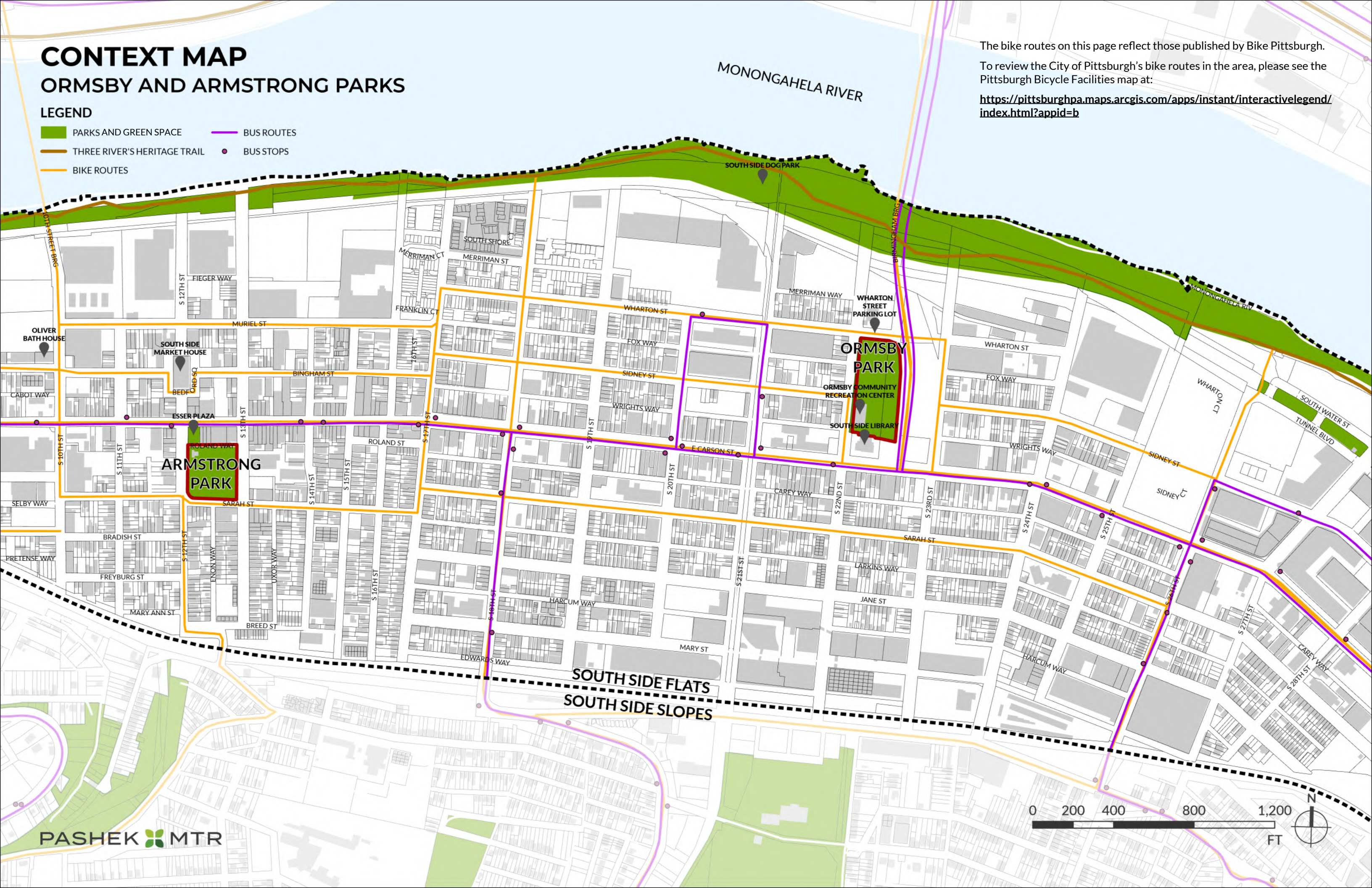
ORMSBY AND ARMSTRONG PARKS

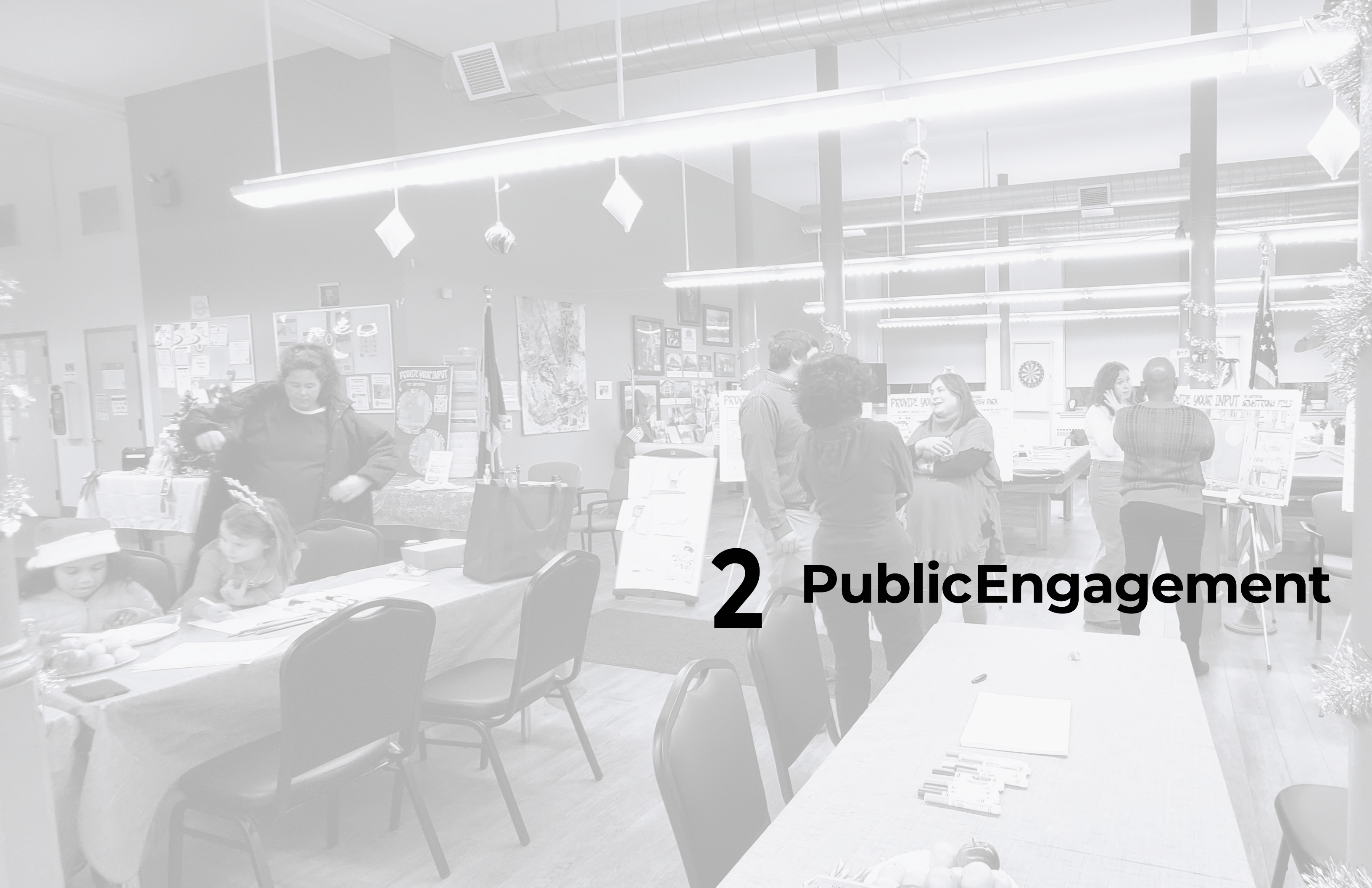
- LEGEND
- PARKS AND GREEN SPACE
 - THREE RIVER'S HERITAGE TRAIL
 - BIKE ROUTES
 - BUS ROUTES
 - BUS STOPS

The bike routes on this page reflect those published by Bike Pittsburgh.

To review the City of Pittsburgh's bike routes in the area, please see the Pittsburgh Bicycle Facilities map at:

<https://pittsburghpa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/interactivelegend/index.html?appid=b>

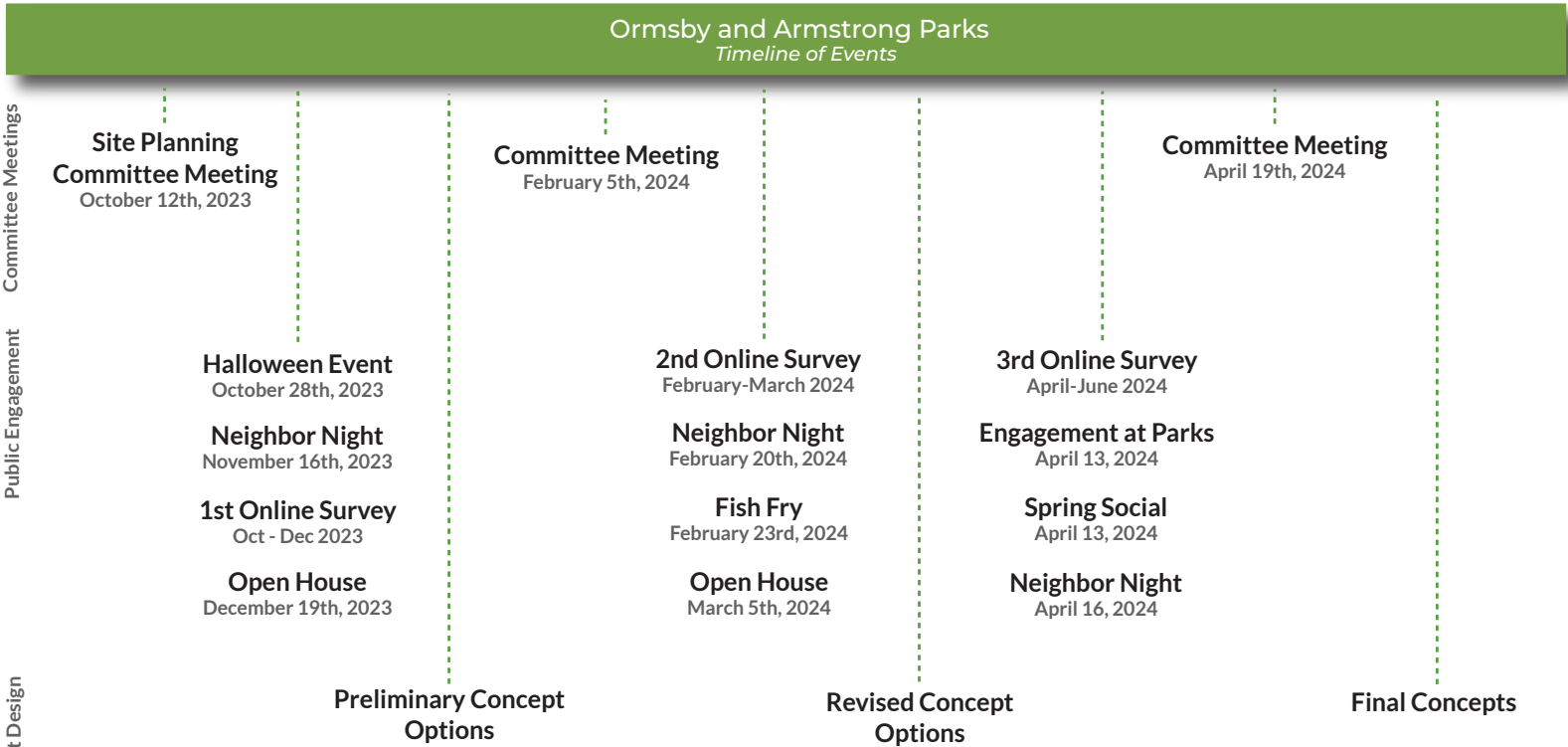




2 PublicEngagement

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The design team conducted multiple engagement events, surveys, and meetings to gather input and feedback during all stages of the design process. Events were advertised through newsletters, social media, digital and physical flyers, yard signs, and announcements at other events. Stakeholders and community members were actively involved sharing their thoughts and vision for the parks, as well as defining issues and concerns. Although the visions of the community did not always align with one another, the end goal was always the same, to improve the existing parks to be better utilized by everyone.



EngagePGH Webpage Data
<https://engage.pittsburghpa.gov/armstrong-ormsby-park-planning>

1042

135

42

Visitors

Contributors

Followers

Advisory Committee

The advisory committee helped oversee the process, coordinate events, get in touch with helpful contacts, and give feedback on designs. The committee consisted of stakeholders in the community including representatives from: South Side Community Council, South Side Slopes Neighborhood Association, South Side Kids, Friends of South Side Park, and The Council District 3 member and staff.

Below is a summary of input received. See the Appendix for detailed meeting minutes.

Site Planning Meeting

The project team and the advisory committee met on site at both Ormsby and Armstrong Park to discuss existing conditions, design wants, challenges, and maintenance.

Ormsby Park Take-Aways:

- Ormsby Park is the heart of South Side, this park should be the focus of a more extensive design.
- Desire for amenities such as garbage cans, lighting, seating, and community spaces.
- Dek hockey is obtrusive and blocks sight lines.
- Intersection at S 22nd Street and Sydney Street is dangerous.
- The existing play equipment is old.
- The community garden is well used but needs water access.
- The existing field is rarely used.
- Noise and visual buffer needed along Birmingham Bridge.
- Possible future PennDOT pedestrian ramp connection project along Birmingham Bridge.

Armstrong Park Take-Aways:

- Desire for amenities such as increased seating, more shade/trees, and walking paths.
- A less obtrusive fence with better connections and site lines.
- Connection to Esser Plaza.
- Safer connections across road intersections.
- Updates to existing amenities: playground, courts, building, and bathrooms.
- The playground and basketball courts are highly used.
- The current ball field area is used primarily as a dog park, but field is rented out/permitted periodically.

Advisory Committee Meeting - February 2024

The project team and the advisory committee met in February of 2024 to discuss public engagement thus far and the initial concept plans. The project team reviewed general notes and takeaways from the first round of public engagement events and the survey responses for both Ormsby and Armstrong Parks. The team presented the initial concept plans and received feedback from the committee. Both the project team and the committee discussed next steps for presenting the initial concepts to the public.

Advisory Committee Meeting - April 2024

The second committee meeting met in April of 2024 to review the second round of public engagement as well as the revised concepts for both Armstrong and Ormsby parks. The committee commented on the revised concepts and discussed priorities and next steps.

First Round of Public Engagement:

The first round of public engagement expands upon the 2010 Armstrong report and received feedback from the surrounding community on the needs and priorities for both parks.

Main Events::

- Halloween Event at Ormsby Park (October 2023)
- South Side Community Action Network (CAN) Neighbor Night (November 2023)
- Open House Public Meeting (December 2023)
- Engage Page Online Survey (64 responses)

Other Events:

- Neighbor Night Announcement of Project Kick-Off (September 2023)
- South Side Planning Forums (Monthly from September to December 2023)

General Take-Aways:

- Both are heavily used parks, especially Ormsby.
- There is an overlap in park users.
- The length of stay is longer at Ormsby.
- Pickleball courts should be added.
- Both are served well by transit, walking/rolling, or biking.

Ormsby Park Take-Aways:

- People love this park. Having the park near the recreation center and library makes it a destination.

- People walk to this park or take transit. Parking can be an obstacle.
- Concern about safety at the S 22nd Street and Sydney Street intersection. Need for traffic calming and a better border/boundary around the park.
- Update the playground equipment and recreational facilities.
- More shade and seating at the pool.
- Need accessible bathroom access and changing room.

Armstrong Park Take-Aways:

- Some folks come down from the South Hilltop to use the park.
- Update the existing building and bathrooms. Want consistent bathroom access.
- Update/improve existing spray park area with non-slip surfacing, push-start button, and more spray features.
- The existing playground is underutilized/smaller, should be updated.
- Contention over use of the field as a dog park. City policies will not support this small of a field to be sanctioned as a dog park.
- More seating and a rentable shelter are desired.
- The basketball court is used often, including for tournaments, and should be updated.
- The other existing court is not used, because it is not lined for regulation tennis or pickleball.
- High fencing restricts circulation within the park and is an uninviting and overpowering visual barrier.
- The baseball field is not frequently used, due to mud and dogs. Comments that the field should be updated and would be better if broken up to provide more walking paths, trees, etc. while keeping larger portion for open play.
- Horseshoe pits not used.
- Safer crosswalks and traffic calming at surrounding intersections.

Using this information and feedback from the committee, the project team created preliminary concept designs for Ormsby and Armstrong Parks.

Second Round of Public Engagement:

The second round of public engagement provided input on preliminary concept designs. The design team shared an overview of the first engagement and then presented two



concepts for Ormsby Park and one concept for Armstrong Park describing the proposed goals and improvements for the concepts.

Main Events:

- South Side Community Action Network (CAN) Neighbor Night (February 2024)
- Fish Fry (February 2024)
- Open House (March 2024)
- Engage Page Online Survey (65 responses)

Other Events:

- South Side Community Council Spring General Meeting Update (March 2024)
- South Side Planning Forums (February and March 2024)

Ormsby Take-Aways:

- Division between keeping the existing ball field (Option 2 Preliminary Concept Drawing) or removing the field, having a formal lawn, and adding a pickleball court (Option 1). A majority preferred Option 1, the formal lawn and pickleball court.
- Pedestrian safety is a high priority.
- Make the play area larger.
- Like the pavilion and increased seating areas.
- Like how moving dek hockey opens visuals, but it is farther for the after-school programs.
- Bathrooms and changing area are a high priority.
- Like the shade and seating by the pool.

Armstrong Take-Aways:

- Want a stronger connection to Esser Plaza.
- More seating areas.
- Basketball is a high priority.
- Like lowering the fence to improve sight lines.
- Like the playground expansion and expanded spray feature.
- Building and bathrooms need to be updated, and to include a working drinking fountain.
- Needs more shade.
- Pedestrian safety is a high priority.
- Division between pro or against pickleball. Some want access to a pickleball court, and some believe pickleball will be too noisy for residents and should be a half basketball court instead.

- Division between making the field area an official dog park or removing the fence to prevent off-leash dog use. (Note: City policies will not support this small of a field to be sanctioned as a dog park.)
- Division between dividing the ball field to create a lawn/picnic area and a smaller ball field or keeping the ball field area as is.

Overall, 80% of people felt that the concept plans for Ormsby and Armstrong Park meet the needs of park users. The project team used this information and feedback from the committee to update the concept plans.

Armstrong Conceptual Plans Updates of Note:

- Increased connection to Esser Plaza through an expanded raised crosswalk and removing fencing.
- Include a half basketball court due to demand and variety of age groups.
- Larger field area than previous concept.
- Low fencing around field.

Ormsby Conceptual Plans Updates of Note:

- Option #1 preferred option.
- Larger formal lawn area.
- Expanded play area.

See Appendix for Preliminary and Draft Concept Plan Options.

Third Round of Public Engagement:

During the third round of public engagement, the project team received feedback on the revised concepts.

Main Events:

- Engagements at Armstrong and Ormsby Parks (April 2024)
- Spring Social (April 2024)
- South Side Community Action Network (CAN) Neighbor Night (April 2024)
- Engage Page Online Survey (9 responses)

Other Events:

- South Side Planning Forum (April 2024)

Ormsby Take Aways:

- Priorities: Playground, Open Field, Moving Dek Hockey, Pavilion, Accessible/Updated Bathrooms, Basketball Court, Pickleball Court, Pool Shading, Traffic Calming.
- Concern of safety and kids running from open lawn to the road.

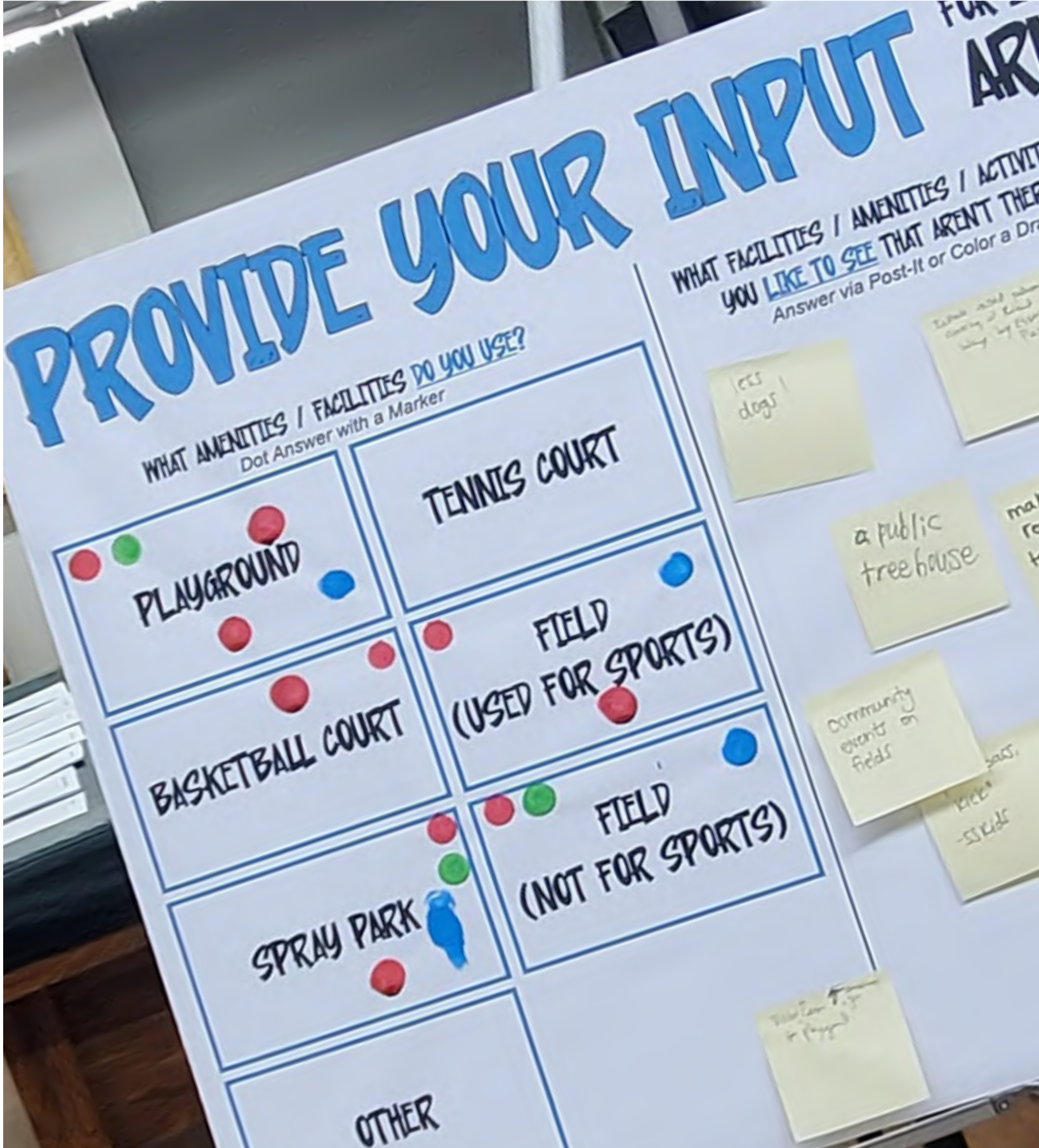
- Division of opinion about removing the field and relocating all field activities to Armstrong.
- Like pickleball.
- Like courts by the bridge. All courts get/will get a lot of use.
- Like moving and updating dek hockey rink.
- Like pavilion, open lawn, and play area combo. But should move pavilion to create path from playground to lawn space.
- Like picnicking areas.
- Bike ramp could possibly be a bike runnel on staircase and add more tree buffer.
- Idea to have food trucks come to the park or a snack bar at the pool.
- Like the pool area seating and shade.
- Like the buffer of trees and increased vegetation.
- Would like a water fountain.
- Would like updated lighting and additional lighting on other courts.
- Importance of traffic calming, pedestrian safety, and parking.

Armstrong Take Aways:

- Priorities: Courts, Spray Feature, Updated Bathrooms, New Playground, Field, Traffic Calming.
- Like half-court. Basketball is used often.
- Like new pathway connections such as openings in the fence at desire lines and common access points.
- Like having a field that could be better utilized at Armstrong. Should make the space as large as possible to not limit the events.

The project team used all of the information gathered from the public engagement events, committee feedback, and input from DPW and DOMI to create a final concept plan for both Ormsby Park and Armstrong Parks.

The final plan drawings were shared with community members at Goat Fest (July 2024), National Night Out (August 2024), and South Side Community Action Network's October 2024 Neighbor Night following the conclusion of the third round of Public Engagement. The project team also shared updates with the South Side Planning Forum from May 2024 into fall 2024.



A wide-angle photograph of Armstrong Park, showing a large grassy field in the foreground, a chain-link fence, and a row of trees and buildings in the background under a cloudy sky.

3 Armstrong Park

EXISTING CONDITIONS

History

In 1952 the original park included a building, basketball court, and baseball field with fencing. In 1953 the city rebuilt Armstrong Park to include a playground, spray feature, table tennis area, horseshoe area, a hard-surface volleyball court, and a memorial monument. The monument memorialized the United States military and Arch Herron, a resident active in the neighborhood’s recreation pursuits.

In 1984 the city updated the playground and court areas to include new surfacing for the courts, fencing, updated planting, light fixtures, new playground equipment, updated memorial plaza, and relocated horseshoe court.

In 1993-1994 the city updated the building to include new bathrooms and updated the playground with new equipment and surfacing.

In 2017 the city updated the playground area with new safety surfacing and updated playground equipment and upgraded the spray feature, as well as repainted the existing courts.

Existing Park

Today Armstrong Park is a widely used 1.55 acre park that contains a ball field, basketball court, paved surface court, playground, horseshoe pits, a building with bathrooms and storage space, and a memorial monument and plaza. This park is an important community hub for South Side and South Hilltop residents. It hosts community events and provides play and recreation space for youth, families, and others.

The park has two spaces: 1) the field area and 2) the court, playground, and building area. Fencing surrounds the park, a 20ft tall fence surrounds the field on the eastern side of

the site, and fencing varying from 4ft tall to 10ft surrounds the court and playground area on the western side of the site. Half of the park includes a large grassy area for the ball field and the other half is impermeable surfacing. Armstrong Park also contains some of the neighborhood’s largest canopy trees.

Three public rights-of-ways border the park including S 12th Street, Sarah Street, and S 13th Street. Esser Plaza and Roland Way are located on the northern border of the site. Roland Way provides service access and limited parking to businesses on East Carson Street. Residents also use it as a cut through to avoid traffic at the 13th and East Carson Intersection. Esser Plaza is a .25 acres public plaza created in the 1990’s and later dedicated as a memorial to Cindy Esser, a long-time resident, business owner, and member of the City of Pittsburgh’s Planning Commission. Esser Plaza is being renovated by the South Side Community Council in coordination with the City.

This is a well loved and well used park. The residents utilize the existing amenities, but Armstrong Park is in need of upgrades and repairs. The residents of the South Side use the basketball court heavily, causing the pavement to crack. Additionally, the hoops are located too close to the edge of the court causing injuries. The other existing court used to be a hard-surface volleyball court and now is no longer usable. A large fence blocks the existing ball field from the rest of the park and has mud and dog waste from use of the area as a make-shift dog park. There is an existing horseshoe pit that the community no longer uses. The spray feature surfacing is slippery, and the timer button does not work. The building needs repairs and maintenance per the city condition assessment. There is limited pedestrian access from the sidewalks and there are concerns of pedestrian safety at the surrounding intersections. There is also a lack of shade, seating, and walking path connections.



Armstrong Park Building



Entrance Plaza and Memorial



Playground



Spray Feature



Ball Field



Open Field and Fence



Basketball Court



Hard-Surface Volleyball Court

ARMSTRONG PARK - EXISTING CONDITIONS PLAN



ARMSTRONG PARK

ORMSBY AND ARMSTRONG PARKS

Concept Plan

LEGEND

1

Updated Building

- Family bathrooms
- Indoor / outdoor community room
- Outdoor drinking fountain
- Bike racks

2

Playground

- Existing play structures to remain
- Existing swings
 - Updated belt swing seats
 - Toddler swing seats
 - 'Swing along' seat
- Expanded play surface with new toddler play structure

3

Spray Feature

- New push button start
- New ground sprays
- Picnic tables
- Funnel ball hoop

4

Basketball

- Resurface existing basketball court
- New half court basketball
- Benches
- Picnic tables
- New hoops
- Update court lights

5

Entrance

- New park sign
- Existing statue
- Benches

6

Ball Field

- Kickball / tee ball
- Multipurpose lawn
- Existing bleachers, benches, and backstop

7

4' Fence

8

10' Tall Chain Link Fence

9

Esser Plaza

- Construction by others
- Pathway connection to reflect design

10

Continuous Sidewalk

11

Intersection Safety Improvements

- Opportunity for Public Art

12

Paving Mural



RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on the analysis and feedback provided by the community and advisory committee. The plan expands upon the current uses of the park by upgrading existing amenities and providing additional public desired amenities. This plan also improves pedestrian access to and through the park as well as increasing site lines. The plan features: expanded toddler playground, updated basketball court and a new half basketball court, updated spray feature and surfacing, renovated building and plaza, upgraded ball field, shortening and opening of surrounding fences, and intersection safety improvements.

Entrance

The existing entrance includes an existing memorial statue, benches, flower beds, and large shade trees. Due to the abundance of fencing around the park, this primary entrance is relatively hidden and not well defined. The removal of fencing and the addition of a new park sign will emphasize the primary entrance.

Playground

The City updated the existing playground in 2017. The existing equipment is for 5-12 year olds and there currently is no equipment for toddlers. Through community outreach, the public explained that the horseshoe pits are not used, and they would prefer an area for toddler play. The concept plan shows an expansion of the existing play area to include a toddler play structure, replacing the horseshoe pit area.

The plan proposes relocating the ADA swing to the toddler bay and adding a group swing in its place. The bays would be as follows: Bay #1 would have the group swing, Bay #2 would contain the belt swings, and Bay #3 would include both a toddler swing and the ADA swing.



Spray Feature

The existing spray feature includes a flower that sprays water down the petals. The city updated this feature in 2017. During the public engagement, the community mentioned that this spray feature was a big commodity, but the surfacing was slippery, and it runs when it's not supposed to. The concept plan expands the spray feature by adding ground sprays around the existing flower, replacing the push button start, and updating the concrete surface with a more slip resistant surfacing. Additionally, the plan offers more seating space for both the spray feature and the playground.



Basketball Courts

As stated in the public engagement section, basketball is a highly utilized amenity. The community noted that the courts are overcrowded and do not accommodate enough space for the use it receives. The community also shared that the surfacing is cracking, and the existing hoops are too close to the out-of-bounds line.

There is an existing hard-surface court next to the existing basketball court. This court was originally designed as a volleyball court, but since a hard-surface volleyball court is not common practice anymore it has become unusable. Additionally, the fencing and lines of these courts create a very narrow entrance into the rest of the park from the primary entrance plaza.

The concept plan addresses these concerns by resurfacing the existing basketball court, replacing the existing hoops and adding cushions on the posts as recommended by the community, and changing the hard-surface volleyball court to a half basketball court. The plan also includes a funnel ball hoop located to the side of the courts to create a 'hoop' space for younger children. Having a full court, half court, and funnel ball hoop will allow all levels of basketball players to be able to enjoy the space and not feel overcrowded. The half-basketball court, being a smaller court than the original hard-surface volleyball court, and requiring less fencing, also creates a larger and more open entrance path from the plaza to the rest of the park. Additionally, the concept plan includes benches and picnic tables to accommodate the spectators that frequent the basketball courts. The concept plan also recommends updating the existing court lighting.

During the public engagement process, some community members expressed a desire for a pickleball court at Armstrong. However, the final plan includes a pickleball court at Ormsby Park instead. This decision was made because Armstrong has a high demand for basketball, and pickleball is already available on the second floor of the South Side Market House. Additionally, placing the pickleball court at Ormsby Park helps to minimize potential noise conflicts with nearby residents.



Ball Field

The community uses this large open field for occasional organized sports, pick up sports, picnicking, and general recreation. There is significant community interest in having this space remain a large multipurpose field with only minor updates. Retaining the full field allows for both small-scale and large-scale sport activities to occur in the field. However, the community explained that the existing large obtrusive fencing divides the park in two, blocking the field from the rest of the park.

The concept plan shows updates to the existing field including new protection fencing and infield mix along the baselines, mound, and home plate for the kickball/tee ball field, removed fencing to open the field to the other side of the park, and lowered fencing to 4ft tall surrounding the rest of the field. Lowering and creating openings in the fence makes the park feel more open while still providing a buffer from the surrounding streets.

Note: Many in the community desired a formal dog park at Armstrong. However, current City policy will not allow a park under 1.5 acres to be permitted as a dog park due to maintenance issues. The field at Armstrong is 0.75 acres. In addition, South Side Dog Park along Three Rivers Heritage Trail is located less than one mile from Armstrong Park.



Updated Building

The “Armstrong Park Building” is approximately 1000 square feet, last renovated in 1993, and considered in fair condition during a condition assessment in 2017. During the engagement process, the community told the design team that they want bathroom access, but the bathrooms are not open often. The design team also heard that the building is in a poor location and blocks the visual connection to Esser Park, but it is an important amenity to keep. A community space or shelter was another desired outcome of the community engagement process.

The concept plan shows an updated building that includes all the necessary updates from the condition assessment of 2017, as well as other improvements to address community comments. The existing storage area would become an indoor/outdoor community room. The exterior walls would incorporate additional windows and doors for both visual and physical access to the community room from the playground side of the building. The existing bathrooms will convert to family bathrooms and include a new timed locking system for easier community access.

The concept plan also shows updates surrounding the building including a new outdoor drinking fountain as well as bike racks outside the building. Planting areas around the building will soften the concrete and brick building and plaza. Additionally, removing fencing surrounding the front of the building will provide a better visual and physical connection to Esser Plaza, which was desired by the community. The Esser Plaza renovations, completed by others, will provide an urban plaza and seating space that the community desired.



Intersection Safety Improvements

One of the primary concerns of community members was intersection safety and traffic calming surrounding the park. DOMI provided the recommendations for pedestrian safety through investigation and analysis of the intersections. These recommendations include: creating sidewalk bump-outs and piano key crosswalks on both Sarah and S 12th Street and Sarah and S 13th Street, providing continuous sidewalks at the eastern and western edges of Roland Way, and evaluating Sarah and S 13th Street for all-way stop control. DOMI will also continue to investigate right of way control at the adjacent Sarah Street intersections with a focus on improving pedestrian safety. All of these recommendations would need to be funded through the capital budget and executed by DOMI. However, the piano key crosswalks can be incorporated into the DOMI budget and implemented soon.

There are also opportunities for public art at these intersections. The sidewalk bump-out areas could have a color or mural design. Additionally, the paving area connecting Armstrong to Esser Plaza could include a ground paving mural to better connect the two parks. The community would have to install and maintain all murals. The art pieces would have to follow DOMI guidelines and be approved by DOMI. The community would also have to remove and replace the artwork every 3 years.



CHARACTER IMAGES

These images show city standard amenities.



PHASING PLAN

The phasing plan shown below outlines the priorities for Armstrong Park. The cost estimate is divided based on these priorities.

ARMSTRONG PARK

ORMSBY AND ARMSTRONG PARKS

Priorities

LEGEND

Priority 1 - Playground

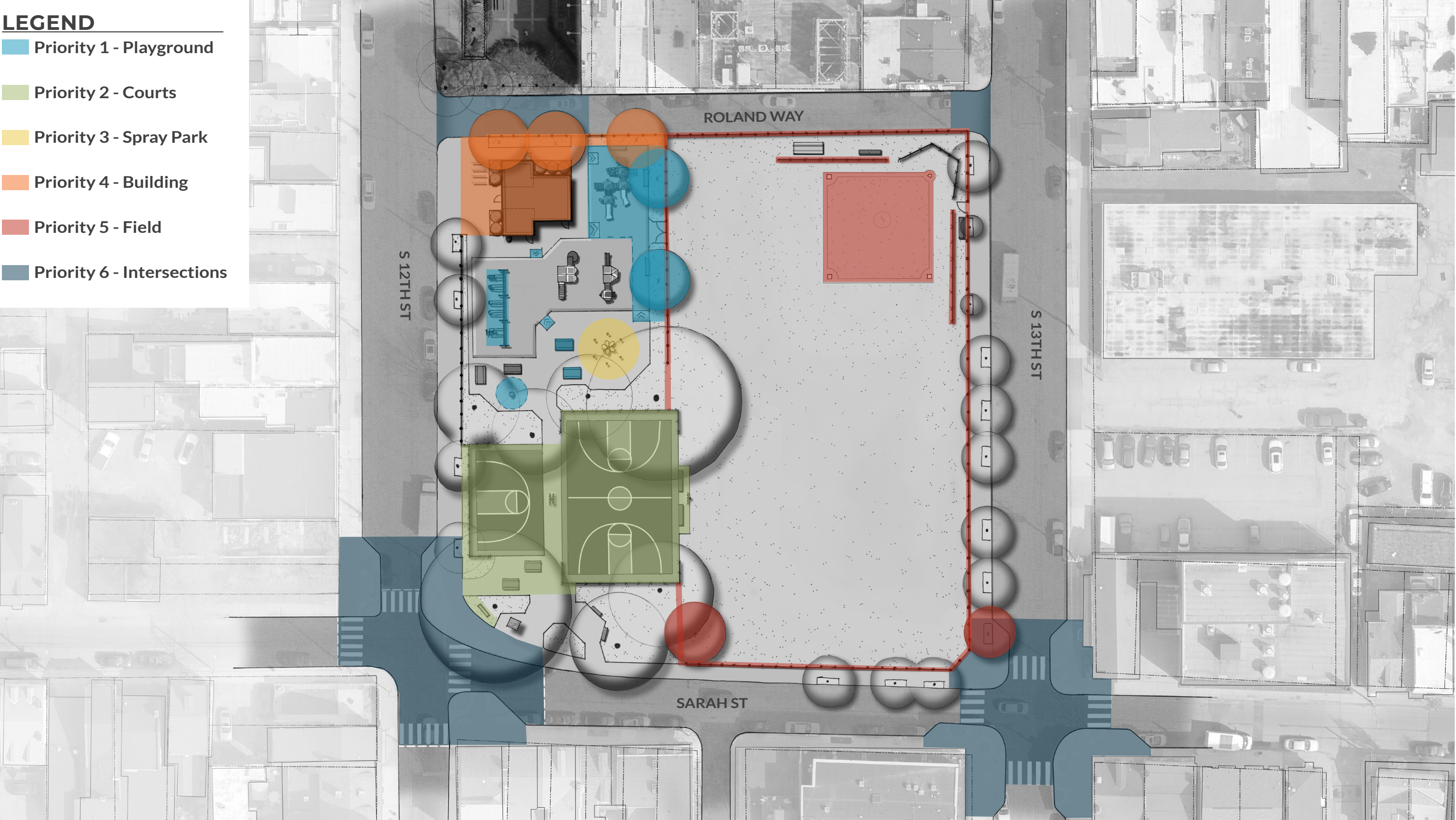
Priority 2 - Courts

Priority 3 - Spray Park

Priority 4 - Building

Priority 5 - Field

Priority 6 - Intersections



COST ESTIMATES

This cost estimate summary for Armstrong Park details the anticipated expenses for the proposed project, covering materials, labor, and contingencies.

Armstrong Park				6/25/2024
Opinion of Probable Construction Cost - Schematic Level			Prepared by Pashek + MTR	
Item Description	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Item Cost
Playground Area - Priority 1				
PLAYGROUND AREA				\$197,000
Court Area - Priority 2				
COURT AREA				\$305,000
Spray Pad - Priority 3				
SPRAY PAD				\$92,000
Building and Plaza Improvements - Priority 4				
BUILDING AND PLAZA IMPROVEMENTS				\$189,000
Field - Priority 5				
FIELD				\$119,000
TOTAL COST				\$902,000
Intersection Improvements - Priority 6				
INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS				\$302,000
Opinion of Probable Construction Costs is made based on the experience and qualifications of Pashek + MTR, Ltd and represents reasonable judgment based on familiarity with the industry. Pashek + MTR, Ltd. has no control over the cost, or availability of labor, materials or equipment, or over market conditions or the provider’s method of pricing. Pashek + MTR, Ltd cannot and does not guarantee that the opinion of probable cost provided the Owner will not vary from the actual cost experienced by the Owner.				
Construction costs are expressed in 2024 dollars. Costs include materials and labor, subcontractor overhead & profit (if applicable). Not included: design and engineering fees, permitting fees, escalation.				

All budgeting numbers should be evaluated in coordination with DPW BEFORE any Capital Requests are pursued. Capital Requests are to be submitted by DPW.



4 Ormsby Park

EXISTING CONDITIONS

History

The park was built in 1939, and the first recorded renovation of this park was in 1960. The renovated park included a ball field, basketball court, volleyball/paddle tennis court, and playground area.

In 1988 the city built a pool for the recreation center, in turn changing the surrounding plaza and walkways in Ormsby Park.

Between 1988 and 1996 there was an additional renovation of Ormsby Park that included a new basketball court, a new multipurpose court, and a new playground, while keeping the existing ball field.

In 1996 the city renovated the park to update the existing ball field, repaint the existing basketball court, add a new community garden, replace the multipurpose court with a new dek hockey rink, add court lighting, and update the playground.

Existing Park

Today Ormsby Park is the destination park of the South Side. It is a 2.25 acre park right next to multiple community amenities such as the library and the recreation center. The park includes a ball field, basketball court, community garden, dek hockey rink, playground, and swimming pool. This park is a critical community center for South Side and South Hilltop residents. It hosts community gatherings, Dollar Bank Cinema, school-events, South Side Kids events, and more.

The ball field is on the westernmost side of the park and a tall fence contains the field. The dek hockey court is located in the center of the park, the playground is closest to the recreation center entrance, and the basketball court and community garden are along the northernmost edge of the park. The pool is accessible through the recreation

center and has an 8ft tall fence. Half of the park includes a large grassy area for the ball field and the other half is impermeable surfacing with some scattered shade trees primarily around the playground. The dek hockey court creates a visual barrier from the playground to the field.

The park is bounded on two sides by the Birmingham Bridge and S 22nd Street. A steep hill separates the park from Birmingham Bridge. The library is located on the eastern side of the park and an undefined parking lot extended from Wharton Street is located on the western side. The Wharton Street parking lot next door has been used by a nearby apartment complex but is now empty.

The residents of the South Side frequently use this park. Due to its high use and age, it is in need of an upgrade. The dek hockey court is in the middle of the park preventing site lines and circulation. It also needs new surfacing and boards. The baseball field is located on the far side of the park, seldom used, blocked by tall fences, and has minimal space for spectators. The pool has minimal shade and seating areas. The active community garden is well used and needs water access. Due to its overall age and use demands, the park could use a complete overhaul renovation.



Entrance Plaza



Wharton Street Parking



Playground



Dek Hockey



Swimming Pool



Swings



Basketball



Community Garden



Ball Field

ORMSBY PARK - EXISTING CONDITIONS PLAN



ORMSBY PARK
ORMSBY AND ARMSTRONG PARKS
Concept Plan



RECOMMENDATIONS

The design team created a concept plan for Ormsby Park based on the feedback received from the community and committee members. This plan rethinks Ormsby Park as a whole and how to better organize the space and amenities desired, as well as improve connections and pedestrian safety. This plan features: a new dek hockey court, new pickleball court, updated basketball court, multipurpose lawn space with pavilion, new themed playground, expanded pool seating area and shade, updates to the existing recreation center and garden, and intersection safety improvements.

Courts

According to the community, both the basketball court and the dek hockey court are well utilized amenities. Similarly to Armstrong, the community noted that the surfacing is cracking at the basketball court, and the existing hoops are too close to the out-of-bounds line. Additionally, the dek hockey court is showing signs of aging and blocks views and site lines through the park. The public engagement events also showed that the majority of residents showed interest in the addition of a pickleball court in the South Side.

The concept plan shows a new dek hockey court, a new pickleball court, and updates to the existing basketball court. These courts are all located along the back of the property to increase site lines and provide a buffer from Birmingham Bridge. These courts will have benches, seating areas, lighting, and a drinking fountain. The updated basketball court will have new hoops and new surfacing.



Formal Lawn and Pavilion

Through both engagement and analysis, the design team noted that there is currently not enough use or programming in the South Side for two ball fields. However, the community mentioned the need for a community space for events, festivals, movie nights, etc. Therefore, Armstrong will retain a large multi-purpose sports field and Ormsby Park’s field will convert to a formal multi-purpose lawn. The concept plan for Ormsby Park shows a new pavilion and the formal lawn space for multipurpose use, such as community events, pick-up sports, or picnicking. Along the formal lawn will be a fence for safety.



Playground

As previously mentioned, the existing playground is approximately 30 years old and in need of an upgrade. The new playground shown in the concept plan is double the size of the existing playground and will include new themed play equipment for ages 2-12 and updated swings. Surrounding the playground will be community desired amenities such as picnic tables, benches, bike racks, and shade from existing trees.



Pool

The community told the design team that the pool didn’t have enough shade or seating. They also mentioned that a buffer was needed along Birmingham Bridge to block noise and vehicles from looking down into the pool. The design team implemented these ideas into the concept plan by expanding the paved area around the pool and adding shade umbrellas and picnic tables. Additionally, the concept plan includes more shade trees in the lawn and along the hill side to create a vegetative buffer along Birmingham Bridge.



Recreation Center

The existing “Ormsby Community Recreation Center” is approximately 17,000 square feet, built in 1939, and last renovated in 2000. In 2017, the city completed a condition assessment and labeled the overall building condition as “good”. The public engagement process has documented that the Ormsby Community Recreation Center’s locker rooms and bathrooms are inaccessible from the pool and need an upgrade. The concept plan proposes renovating the restrooms to improve accessibility and to complete all other updates proposed in the condition assessment. If renovating the existing restrooms in the recreation center building to be accessible is not feasible, consider constructing a second restroom building at the southwest corner of the pool area.

Fencing

There are two proposed fencing heights in the concept plan, a 4-foot tall fence and a 10-foot tall fence. The 10-ft tall fence is located around the renovated basketball court, the existing community garden, and most of the pickleball court. The 4-ft tall fence is located along the entrance side of the pickleball court, between the formal lawn and S 22nd Street, and along the edge of the playground facing S 22nd Street. The fencing locations provide a safety buffer from the surrounding streets.

Ramp

A proposed bike ramp allows for a connection from the Birmingham Bridge to the Park, Wharton Street Neighborway, and Three River’s Heritage Trail. Although the bike ramp is not the community’s top priority, the design team wanted to acknowledge the possibility. If the bike ramp is not feasible, installing a runnel along the existing staircase would be a cost-saving solution.



Existing Community Garden:

The existing community garden is an active and highly utilized amenity in Ormsby Park. The South Side Community Council and other engaged members of the community steward the garden. They recruit volunteers and have multiple events, including children’s events. The concept plan keeps this existing community garden in place and proposes to add water access for the garden.

Intersection Safety Improvements

The Sidney and S. 22nd intersection is a high priority for the community. S 22nd street has pick-up and drop-off areas, a POGOH (Bike Share Pittsburgh Inc) location, and multiple pedestrian crossings.

There are a variety of possible solutions proposed by DOMI to improve pedestrian safety and increase traffic calming, including: creating a raised intersection, a raised crosswalk at one entry point, curb extensions, or 2-3 speed humps and piano key crosswalks. The raised intersection is the most costly and most difficult to implement, but may have the greatest safety impact. The speed humps would be the least expensive and incorporated more quickly.

Any raised solution, including a raised intersection, raised crosswalks, or curb extensions, have an opportunity for public art. Similar to the Armstrong murals, the artwork would have to follow DOMI guidelines and be approved by DOMI. The community would have to both install and maintain the murals and replace the artwork every 3 years.

Additional pedestrian safety solutions include installing piano key crosswalks at Wharton and Sydney Street. DOMI may be able to install the crosswalks within the next year.

The community mentioned during the public engagement the lack of parking and access to the park. A possible solution is to use the existing parking lot next to the park. However, future coordination is needed for the parking lot to determine where the lease documentation is located and if the lot can be transferred back to the city to be used for the public. Moving of the existing POGOH location to this parking lot could also help open sight lines and provide a larger pick-up and drop-off area.



CHARACTER IMAGES

These images show city standard amenities and other general amenities.



ORMSBY PARK

ORMSBY AND ARMSTRONG PARKS

Birds Eye Perspective



COST ESTIMATES

This cost estimate summary for Ormsby Park details the anticipated expenses for the proposed project, covering materials, labor, and contingencies.

It is anticipated that most of the improvements for Ormsby Park will be implemented at the same time. The community would like to see the raised intersection implemented first to increase safe access to the site. The bike ramp is desired but may be harder to implement as additional funding would be required.

Ormsby Park				6/25/2024
Opinion of Probable Construction Cost - Schematic Level				Prepared by Pashek + MTR
Item Description	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Total Item Cost
Base Park and Recreation Improvements				
BASE PARK AND RECREATION IMPROVEMENTS				\$2,964,000
Raised Intersection at 22nd and Sidney				
RAISED INTERSECTION				\$223,000
Bike Ramp				
BIKE RAMP				\$749,000
Opinion of Probable Construction Costs is made based on the experience and qualifications of Pashek + MTR, Ltd and represents reasonable judgment based on familiarity with the industry. Pashek + MTR, Ltd. has no control over the cost, or availability of labor, materials or equipment, or over market conditions or the provider’s method of pricing. Pashek + MTR, Ltd cannot and does not guarantee that the opinion of probable cost provided the Owner will not vary from the actual cost experienced by the Owner.				
Construction costs are expressed in 2024 dollars. Costs include materials and labor, subcontractor overhead & profit (if applicable). Not included: design and engineering fees, permitting fees, escalation.				

All budgeting numbers should be evaluated in coordination with DPW BEFORE any Capital Requests are pursued. Capital Requests are to be submitted by DPW.

Ormsby Park



Welcome to your
Neighborhood Park.
This park is a shared public
open space provided for your
enjoyment and recreation.
There is no rental fee.
Be courteous and respectful to others,
and please keep the park clean.

Park hours are
Sunrise to Sunset
*Season facilities are permitted and so is

Playground:

This play area is for everyone to
enjoy; however, there is an element
of risk in all play. Parents and
caregivers are required to supervise
their children appropriately.

Be curious

Remember, explore, and explore
with caution in the play area.

Be safe

Do not use any equipment if you
are injured or if you have
any open wounds or cuts.
Do not climb on equipment if you
are not supposed to.
Do not use equipment if you
are not supposed to.

Be respectful

Remember, others are also here
to enjoy the park. Please be
respectful and courteous to
others.

Be responsible

Remember, you are responsible
for your actions and the actions
of others.

City of Pittsburgh
Department of Parks, Recreation &
Cultural Affairs
1000 11th Avenue, Suite 1000
Pittsburgh, PA 15222
www.pittsburgh.gov/parks



No dogs or domestic animals
allowed in the park.

5 Next Steps

Programming

During the public engagement process, several topics were discussed that are related to programming. The community expressed interest in expanding programming at Armstrong, especially in relation to use of the building, and adding vendors or food trucks for both parks. The idea is to activate these parks to reduce vandalism, increase safety (and the perception of safety), and provide additional opportunities for recreation and leisure.

City Planning will continue conversations with the Park and Recreation department and DPW regarding programming and vendors for the parks.

Wharton Street Parking Lot

There is confusion over whether the Wharton Street parking lot is currently being leased. In addition, the South Side Neighborway project completed by DOMI uses the lot to make a safe pedestrian and bicycle connection from the west side of the Birmingham Bridge to the east side. Therefore, shared lane markings are painted within the parking lot. It is unclear whether the lot could be used for parking for the park or some other expanded park use.

City Planning will continue to search for answers regarding the lease of the lot.

POGOH Station at Ormsby

During the public engagement process, the community asked whether the POGOH station located on 22nd Street near the corner of Sidney could be relocated to the Wharton Street parking lot. This would allow more space for pick up and drop off for after school programs and other activities held at the pool, rec center, and library.

City Planning will work with DOMI to assess the feasibility of relocating the POGOH station to the Wharton Street parking lot.

Intersection Safety Improvements

DOMI plans on installing the piano key crosswalks at Wharton and 22nd street, Sarah and 13th street, and Sarah and 12th street within the next year. DOMI is currently looking into options for the other improvements.

Public Street Art

Community-driven public street art can be explored in coordination with the City and DOMI standards and guidelines. As mentioned previously, the community would have to commit to both installing and maintaining the murals and replacing the artwork every 3 years. This process would involve further community engagement. Additionally, it would need approval from DOMI as well as involve a Development Activities Meeting and Public Art and Civic Design Commission Review.

Funding

City Planning will start to look for and work with DPW, DOMI, and elected officials to request designation of funding for both parks. The community would like the proposed raised intersection at Sidney and 22nd streets to be the first priority. Conversations with City Councilman Charland have started to take place regarding funding the intersection improvements through the capital budget.

DPW will start to allocate resources for improvements at Armstrong Park. Funding the full redevelopment of Ormsby Park will most likely take more time as grants may be needed to supplement the cost.

After funding is secured, construction documents will need to be developed before construction can begin.

State Funding Sources

- Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Program (GTRP)
- DCED Local Share Account
- Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Park Rehabilitation & Development





10

2

1

4

11

12