

Foundation Meadows Playground

The current playground at Foundation Meadows Park holds a special place in the hearts of our community. Over the years, it has brought countless memories, laughter, and joy to so many families. Unfortunately, with the playground being nearly 20 years old, normal wear and tear has taken its toll, requiring significant maintenance to keep it safe and functional.

What year was the current playground at Foundation Meadows built?

Butterfly Meadows Playground was completed in 2007.

Why was Butterfly Meadows playground selected for replacement?

Butterfly Meadows has been a beloved destination for many families over the years. This community playground has experienced significantly more wear and tear compared to others in our park system, making it a priority for replacement. As part of our rePLAY initiative, we will also be upgrading Tower Park and Kirchhoff Park playgrounds. Stay tuned for updates and opportunities to share input for those projects!

Is there a way to vote or provide public comment?

Public input has been a key part of this process. Starting with our Master Plan in October 2020, we engaged the community through surveys, Zoom meetings, and in-person sessions to gather valuable feedback. After initial designs were created from the Master Plan, we held additional public comment opportunities in March 2022, which helped shape our rePLAY initiative.

For the Foundation Meadows playground, we also collaborated with staff and playground professionals to finalize the design.

Looking ahead, there will be opportunities for public input on upcoming projects, including the playgrounds at Tower Park and Kirchhoff Park. Stay tuned for those opportunities to share your voice!

Why can't the playground simply be expanded?

The existing structure needs replacement due to wear and age. Expanding the playground would also encroach on the natural habitat of The Prairie, which we strive to preserve. Additionally, expansion would come with significant additional costs.

Is the old playground still open?

Yes, the current playground will remain in place and available for use until construction begins in late spring.

Why this location for the new playground?

Foundation Meadows is centrally located within the community, making it easily accessible for residents from various parts of the city. Its proximity to schools makes it particularly accessible for children and families.

What will happen to the existing structure?

The current structure will be removed and properly disposed of. At nearly 20 years old, it is nearing the end of its lifespan. Over the past few years, our maintenance team has made several repairs, including using epoxy and bondo to fix cracks in two slides. Unfortunately, further cracking would require immediate removal for safety reasons. Some components have already been removed due to the unavailability of replacement parts. Additionally, we have a certified playground safety inspector on staff who has provided the expert recommendation for a full replacement to ensure the safety and longevity of the playground.

Will the playground foundation be the same as before?

No, the rubber mulch will be replaced with an ADA-compliant pour-and-play surface. The new surface will feature light green and light grey colors, matching what was used at ValPlayso. This upgrade ensures better accessibility, a consistent aesthetic, and easier maintenance.

Will the new playground have similar slides to the ones they enjoy now?

The current playground features 7 slides. We're excited to introduce 10 brand-new slides with a more diverse selection than just tube slides! This means you can expect a wider variety of play experiences, including some exciting new options.

Why are there no traditional swings in the new playground?

Of our 14 playgrounds, 11 already have swings, with a total of 54 swings throughout the park system. We understand that swings are a popular feature, and we considered this carefully during the design process. Given the available space for this particular playground, we incorporated sway benches as an alternative. These benches offer a gentle swinging motion while also being ADA accessible, providing inclusive play opportunities for all children.

Will shade be incorporated in the new design?

Yes, shade will be a key feature of the new playground. The existing shelters will remain, providing ample shade for children and their families. Additionally, both play structures will include shade features to protect children from the sun.

Will the age range for play remain the same?

Yes, the age range for the new playground will remain the same as Butterfly Meadow: 2-5 years on the east side and 5-12 years on the west side.

While we understand that many older children enjoyed the tall structures in the previous playground, it's important to note that the verticality of a playground does not solely determine its suitability for different age groups. The new design will incorporate a variety of play elements to challenge and engage children of all ages within the designated age ranges.

Why does the new playground at Foundation Meadows look smaller than the previous one?

The new playground uses the same footprint as the previous structure. Each piece of equipment now includes designated fall zones, which create open spaces for safety. Additionally, the new design incorporates more play components than the previous playground, offering enhanced opportunities for fun and exploration.

Does the playground have poor sight lines?

We understand that the renderings may not fully capture the design, but the playground is highly visible. Our team works closely with trusted playground experts and designers who prioritize safety. The final design ensures clear sight lines and poses no danger to children.