

W Crestline Dr

### LEGEND

- ① Open Recreation Lawn
- ② Existing Playground
- ③ Nature Based Play Area
- ④ 30 Person Pavillion
- ⑤ Basketball Court
- ⑥ Portalet Enclosure
- ⑦ Picnic Area
- ⑧ Historical Interpretation



Topography is Illustrative



39th St

Whitaker Dr

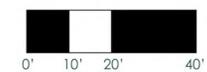


**LEGEND**

- ① Open Recreation Lawn
- ② Multi-Use Pathway
- ③ Secondary Bike Skills Path
- ④ 5-12 yr Playground
- ⑤ Multi-use Pickleball/Basketball
- ⑥ 40 person Pavillion
- ⑦ Information Kiosk
- ⑧ Native Vegetative Buffer
- ⑨ Portalet Enclosure



North



Topography is Illustrative



## PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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# Ninkpata and Whitaker Parks

## Master Park Plans Narrative • January, 2019

### Overview & History

In 1948, the Farviews neighborhood was designed with the help of Landscape Architect John Roys Paterson, who created the plan and vision for the neighborhood park system. A brochure for the then county sub-division tells that, “Farviews is a carefully planned, wisely-protected residential development within ten minutes’ drive of Missoula.” Eventually annexed by the city, the sub-division became part of the Farviews-Pattee Canyon Neighborhood. The parklands were designated, but development of the parks was left to be done by the neighborhood. The majority of the parks within the neighborhood remain in a “natural” state, and contain only primitive trails. Many of the original easements designed for park access are overgrown, have no signage, and are unused.

The Master Plan for Ninkpata and Whitaker Parks is a result of a public process with the Farviews Pattee Canyon Neighborhood. In 2007, the FPC Neighborhood Council secured a neighborhood grant from the City of Missoula to initiate a study of the existing park system. The study reviewed the existing conditions and potential for improvement of parklands, and the sentiments of residents towards the potential changes. Those efforts lead to the award of a second grant, in 2008, to translate this work into a master plan for park and trail improvements within the neighborhood. The 2008 FPC Park Master Plan consists of a trail map showing neighborhood connectivity, and conceptual plans for all 11 parks.

In September 2018, Missoula Parks and Recreation and the FPC Neighborhood Council held a public design workshop to develop master plans for Ninkpata and Whitaker Parks. The following Plans are a result of this public process.

## Existing Conditions

Whitaker and Ninkpata parks are ¼-mile apart, each are approximately 2.5 acres in size and both offer areas of relatively flat topography. The defined service area of a neighborhood park is all parcels within ½-mile of the park. Ninkpata and Whitaker Parks service areas overlap by 32 percent.

### Ninkpata Park

Ninkpata Park is currently undeveloped, and minimally used. The park contains three water tanks previously used by Mountain Water. Upon the city's acquisition of the water utility the tanks were deemed redundant and are scheduled to be removed. Removal will likely happen by 2022. The park offers a large area of flat ground in a neighborhood with mostly steep topography. Throughout the park, there are excellent views of the Rattlesnake Mountains, Mount Sentinel, and Mount Dean Stone. There is one unmarked access easement off Pineridge Dr. to the north.

### Whitaker Park

Whitaker Park is the most developed park in the system. The park consists of irrigated turf, and contains a small basketball court, and a playground. Fifteen percent of the park has mature shade trees in good condition. Throughout the park are good views of Mount Sentinel and the Missoula Valley. Two park access points to the north, off W. Crestline Dr. are overgrown and unmarked.

In the uppermost portion of the park is a 1936 USFS Radio Building also known as the "little white house". The National Park Service lists it as a historic site. In 1975, the USFS gave the structure to the City of Missoula for \$1. It is maintained by Parks & Rec but is otherwise not used. The City is in the process of finding a new home for the structure.

In 2016, funding through the 2014 City-County Parks and Trails Bond was used to upgrade the playground in Whitaker Park. The original playground was removed, and a new ADA accessible playground designed for ages 2-10 was installed.

## Master Park Plans

The Master Plans for these parks is driven by findings from the Sept 12, 2018 neighborhood design workshop where neighborhood residents participated in group activities to share their values and visions for Ninkpata and Whitaker Parks. In general, participants identified privacy for the surrounding homes, preserving views, enhancing the community, and providing natural space for wildlife as main values and interests. Residents ranked flexible open space, providing play space for older children, a picnic pavilion, basketball court, and multi-use trails as high-priority amenities for the parks. The individual park designs are based on the neighborhoods highest priority amenities for each park.

### Ninkpata Park

Ninkpata Park's defining design feature is a large open recreation lawn that takes advantage of the mostly flat site. This lawn will act as a flexible space for passive and active recreation, and is large enough to allow a 7v7 soccer game. The irrigated lawn will feature a grass mix that is durable enough to stand up to regular use while using less water than traditional sports turf.

Defining the edge of the recreation lawn is a multi-use ADA accessible path wide enough for pedestrians and bicycles. The path will be constructed from a permeable crushed rock material. Smaller secondary spur trails abut the main pathway and contain bike skills features. These features could be rock gardens, "rollers", jumps, banked turns, wooden a-frames, bridges, or logs.

Between the main pathway and the park boundary, a native buffer zone will provide privacy to the neighboring houses, and concentrate activity towards the center of the park. The buffer zone will consist primarily of native grasses and wildflowers. It will contain some small trees and shrubs to provide habitat space and shade. The northern-most portion of the buffer zone contains a large drainage swale that is designed to collect and infiltrate water draining off the park.

As indicated by the neighborhood workshop the views are an important feature of the park. The trees will primarily be Class I and II trees with a mature height of less than 50', and will be strategically located to preserve and frame the outstanding views while providing areas of shade to park users.

Included in the design is a multi-use court, sized to allow users to participate in multiple games simultaneously. Striping on the court will provide two pickleball courts and two basketball half-courts. Adjacent to the court will be a playground designed for ages 5-12. The playground is located approximately 25' from Crestline drive and is separated from the street by a boulevard with trees, a 6' wide sidewalk, and several benches.

This visual and physical separation is similar to what is provided at Bonner Park. The playground will be bordered with a concrete curb, and meet accessibility standards.

A 30-40 person capacity Pavilion with picnic tables is centrally located in order to provide visual observation of the court, playground, and recreation lawn. As requested by the neighborhood the pavilion will be constructed using natural colors and materials. The pavilion will be reservable for events, but will be available to other park users when not reserved. An information kiosk will match the character of the pavilion and can be used for park rules, maps, and neighborhood bulletins. Benches are located along the trail and adjacent to the court and playground. Along Crestline Drive, a grass boulevard containing street trees will separate the park from the street. A portalet enclosure along with trash can and mutt mitt station is located along Crestline Drive so it can be easily accessed by vehicles for routine maintenance.

The park access to the north will be marked at Pineridge Drive with bollards indicating that the path is a park access point.

### **Whitaker Park**

The design for Whitaker Park concentrates the development into the South East corner on top of the hill, adjacent to the road and primary access to the park. The defining feature of the site is currently the USFS Radio Building, which will be relocated and a picnic pavilion installed in its place. The location for the pavilion offers: good views of Missoula Valley and the park, has relatively easy ADA access, and is adjacent to the playground, court, and open lawn. With the help of historical preservation staff, the new pavilion design will contain elements of the historic “little white house”. The pavilion will be reservable for events, but will be available to other park users when not reserved. Educational panels interpreting the history of the radio station building and Whitaker Park will create a separation between the pavilion and basketball court.

It was determined that the current location of the basketball court is the preferred spot, due to concerns over construction access, and the potential for balls to get lost down the hillside. A one-basket court with striping will replace the existing court, and will act as overflow gathering and seating space for larger events at the pavilion.

The existing playground will remain unchanged, and a nature-based play area will be created in the former playground’s location. Natural materials such as logs and boulders will create a space for older children to explore and play. The existing recreation lawn will remain as is for open games. The west corner of the park currently offers shade from mature trees, has several picnic tables, and

offers a private area for small gatherings, picnics, or a quiet place to sit. These tables are to remain in that location and be designated a picnicking area.

A portalet enclosure along with trash can and mutt mitt station is located along Whitaker Drive so it can be easily accessed by vehicles for routine maintenance.

The park access points to the north will be cleared of obstructing vegetation and marked at W Crestline Drive with bollards indicating that they are a park access point. A perimeter loop path is a possibility, and will have to be carefully located to provide accessibility, maximize the central open space, and maintain some privacy for adjacent property owners.

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