



2026 CITY OF SAINT PAUL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT BUDGET **COMMUNITY PROPOSAL PROCESS DETAILED APPLICATION**

IMPORTANT: The first step of the community proposal process is to complete the simplified application online: engagestpaul.org/cib2026

This form has been made available online for informational purposes, however we recommend applicants wait until initial eligibility is determined on their proposal before completing.

Thank you for submitting a 2026 Community Proposal!

This application may be completed once your proposal is determined eligible in initial review. While optional, it is strongly encouraged to provide additional data, context, and justification information.

Deadline: Wednesday, March 18, 2026

Wednesday, March 18th is the final day to submit detailed applications and to sign up to present for the CIB Committee.

Submit this completed form by emailing it to CIB-Proposals@ci.stpaul.mn.us by the deadline.

Links and Resources

- [2026 Community Proposal Process webpage](#)
- [Community Proposal Process Description](#)
- [Scoring Guide and Rubric](#)

Please contact us at CIB-Proposals@ci.stpaul.mn.us with questions.



PROPOSAL NAME: Westgate Commons Park - Solar-Integrated Shade & Public Safety Infrastructure

DETAILED PROPOSAL QUESTIONS

The detailed proposal form will be provided to the CIB Committee along with your initial application to provide additional context to support your project. [The scoring rubric is available online.](#)

CPTED: Crime Prevention through Environmental Design

How does this project advance the principles of [Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design \(CPTED\)](#)?

What data supports the public safety concerns that your proposed project is intended to address?

The four principles of [Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design \(CPTED\)](#) are:

- Natural Surveillance,
- Territorial Reinforcement,
- Natural Access
- Physical Maintenance and Activity Support.

Westgate Commons Park | Location: 717 Berry Street, Saint Paul, MN 55114 (Ward 4)

Westgate Commons Park is a recently constructed City-owned park serving a rapidly densifying residential corridor. Despite strong daily use, the park was delivered without permanent shade or pedestrian-scale lighting. These infrastructure gaps reduce environmental comfort, limit legitimate presence during peak heat and evening hours, and weaken natural surveillance.

This proposal directly advances Saint Paul’s CPTED framework by strengthening visibility, increasing positive activity, and addressing documented environmental design gaps.

Natural Surveillance - “Eyes on the Street”

Solar-powered, pedestrian-scale LED lighting will eliminate dark zones at playground, picnic, and trailhead areas. Low-glare fixtures will improve visibility from adjacent multifamily housing and surrounding streets, strengthening informal monitoring and extending visible hours of use.

Natural Access - Permanent shade canopies will define gathering nodes and organize pedestrian circulation between the playground and Wabash Spur Trailhead. Clearly defined, well-lit areas support safe and intuitive movement for seniors, families, and trail users.

Territorial Reinforcement - Permanent steel canopy structures anchored to concrete footings signal long-term City investment and stewardship. Defined shaded nodes channel activity into visible areas and reinforce shared ownership.

Physical Maintenance and Activity Support - In 2023, SAPCC surveyed 168 park users and nearby residents (138 completed the full survey). The absence of shade was overwhelmingly identified as the park’s primary infrastructure gap. Respondents described the space as “too hot to stay” and “exposed” during summer months. Field observations during 2025 activation programming confirmed reduced linger time during peak heat and limited evening presence due to lighting deficiencies.

By mitigating heat exposure and extending usable hours, this project increases legitimate activity - a proven CPTED strategy that strengthens safety outcomes.

Community Impact, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion

Please describe the impact this project will have on the community.

As applicable, address issues such as:

- Potential to enhance neighborhood stability or quality of life,
- Right fit (supports or enhances the cultural characteristics of the surrounding community),
- Proximity to Area of Concentrated Poverty where 50% or more of residents are people of color ([ACP50 Map](#)),
- Art/aesthetics,
- Unmet need
- Accessibility,
- Potential long-term positive/negative effects on community,
- Historical or cultural significance of asset,
- Public safety,
- Equitable and inclusive design

Westgate Commons Park directly serves adjacent 62+ senior housing residents, deeply affordable housing communities, a dense multi-generational population, a significant East African community, households without access to private yard space, and daily trail users and pedestrians. For many nearby residents, this park functions as their primary outdoor gathering space.

Defined Community Need - In 2023, SAPCC surveyed park users and nearby residents. Of 168 participants, 138 completed the full survey. The lack of shade was overwhelmingly identified as the park's primary infrastructure gap. This is a community-specific, documented need.

Equity and Disparity - The absence of shade disproportionately impacts seniors and elders, residents vulnerable to heat-related illness, children and families, and households reliant on public space. Access to shaded, safe public space is a public health and equity issue, particularly in areas with affordable housing and communities of color.

Accessibility and Inclusion - Shaded seating areas increase comfort for elders and families with young children. Pedestrian-scale lighting increases usability for evening pedestrians, including shift workers and trail users. This project advances equity, inclusion, and accessibility by addressing a documented infrastructure gap in a community that relies heavily on public space.

Condition and Usage

Explain the current condition and usage of this project using the following questions as guidance:

- *How does this project remediate health or safety issues which pose a danger to others?*
- *Does this project significantly extend the life of asset, or fills a gap in the system?*
- *How is this space currently used?*
- *How will this project change the use of this space?*
- *How will this project/improvement meet the needs of the surrounding community/those who will use it?*

Westgate Commons Park was completed in 2023 and is structurally sound. However, it lacks foundational environmental infrastructure including permanent shade canopy coverage, electrical infrastructure, pedestrian-scale lighting, and defined shaded gathering areas.

Critical Health and Safety Gap - Extreme heat events are increasing in Minnesota. Prolonged direct sun exposure poses health risks, particularly for seniors and young children. The absence of lighting reduces visibility and limits perceived safety during dusk hours. This project addresses a critical and escalating environmental comfort and safety gap.

Current Usage - The park is used as a playground, picnic area, and trailhead connection. During the 2025 Summer Activation Program (funded by the University of Minnesota Good Neighbor Fund), attendance demonstrated strong community demand when programming was present. However, usage declines during peak sun exposure and after sunset due to environmental discomfort and limited visibility.

Post-Improvement Usage - Permanent shade and lighting will increase mid-day use, extend evening activity, support intergenerational gathering, improve trailhead visibility, and increase legitimate presence. The project fills a clear infrastructure gap and significantly enhances the functional life and usability of the asset.

Strategic Fiscal Investment

Describe the project's potential for innovative collaboration.

Consider questions such as:

- *Potential or established collaborative partners*
- *Innovative approaches to the identified problem*
- *Alignment with City/neighborhood goals or plans.*
- *The project's potential for innovative collaboration*
- *Have grants or other matching funds for this project been secured?*

This proposal represents a durable capital investment in City-owned infrastructure.

Permanent Infrastructure - Steel canopy structures anchored to concrete footings are designed for a 20+ year structural lifespan.

Innovative Solar Integration - Solar-powered lighting reduces long-term operating costs, minimizes underground utility requirements, and aligns with City sustainability and climate resilience goals.

Collaborative Partnerships - SAPCC has demonstrated activation and engagement capacity through University of Minnesota Good Neighbor Fund grants, the 2025 Summer Activation programming, community survey engagement, and ongoing neighborhood outreach. While no capital grants are currently secured, SAPCC believes supplemental support may be explored through the SAPC Foundation and University-based partnerships.

Alignment - This project aligns with CPTED-based public safety strategies, climate resilience and sustainability goals, equitable access to public infrastructure, and neighborhood stabilization efforts. The project is appropriate for Capital Improvement Budget investment as permanent public infrastructure serving long-term community needs.

Additional Details

•What else would you like to tell us about this project that was not addressed in the questions above?

- *What data supports the public safety concerns that your proposed project is intended to address?*
- *Has there been community engagement or support around this idea?*

Westgate Commons Park sits at the intersection of rapid housing growth, affordable residential development, and regional trail connectivity. Shade and lighting were not included in original park construction. As residential density increases and summer temperatures rise, this infrastructure gap becomes more urgent.

This proposal clearly advances CPTED principles, addresses documented health and safety concerns, demonstrates heavy current and potential usage, advances equity, inclusion, and accessibility, and represents durable, long-term capital investment.

The St. Anthony Park Community Council respectfully requests strong consideration of this proposal within the 2026 Capital Improvement Budget process.