

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

Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) 2026  
Supplemental Report



Submitted By:  
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# Project Summary

## Location & Vision

The project is located at 717 Berry Street, Saint Paul (Ward 4). The vision is to install permanent steel multi-panel shade structures with integrated solar panels and LED lighting.

## Core Goals

- Mitigate heat exposure and improve comfort.
- Increase evening visibility and natural surveillance.
- Support equitable access for a growing residential area.



# Site Context & Community Served

The park is directly adjacent to the Wabash Spur Trailhead and serves as a primary outdoor gathering space for many residents.

## Who We Serve

### **Senior Residents**

Residents of the adjacent 62+ senior housing community.

### **Affordable Housing Communities**

Families and individuals from nearby deeply affordable housing.

### **East African Community**

A significant local community with multigenerational families utilizing the park.

# The Infrastructure Gap

## The Problem

Completed in 2023, the park critically lacks permanent shade, electrical capacity, and pedestrian lighting. A 2023 survey confirmed the lack of shade as the primary deficiency.

## The Impact

The space is described as "exposed" and "uncomfortable," leading to significantly reduced use during peak sun and evening hours.



# Proposed Improvements: Shade & Solar



## **Permanent Shade & Solar Integration**

Steel canopy structures with a 20+ year lifespan will be anchored in concrete. Integrated solar panels will power the lighting system.

## **Benefits**

- Reduces long-term operating costs.
- Minimizes need for new underground utility work.
- Advances City sustainability goals.

# Proposed Improvements: Lighting & Safety

## Pedestrian-Scale LED Lighting

Solar-powered, pedestrian-scale LED lights will be installed beneath the shaded areas.

## Safety Enhancements

- Eliminates "dark zones" near the playground and trailhead.
- Improves sightlines for better security.
- Encourages "legitimate presence" during dusk hours.



# Public Safety (CPTED Principles)

The project aligns with Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) to organically improve park safety.

1

## Natural Surveillance

Better visibility through solar lighting improves sightlines.

2

## Natural Access Control

Defined gathering nodes organize park circulation and flow.

3

## Territorial Reinforcement

High-quality infrastructure signals community ownership and care.

4

## Activity Support

Increased usability and comfort encourages positive activities, deterring disorder.

# Equity and Long-Term Value

## **Equity**

Ensures vulnerable populations (seniors, those without private yards) have safe, cool outdoor spaces.

## **Investment**

Represents a permanent capital asset with a low operational burden and high community value.

## **Scalability**

The infrastructure can support future park activation, programming, and community events.

# Thank You St. Paul!

## Next Steps & Timeline

- Detailed Proposal Due: Wednesday, March 18, 2026
- Presentation Session: March 23, 2026 at Arlington Hills Community Center
- Presentation Session: April 20, 2026 at North End Community Center
- Public Input: A community poll will be opened by the City later this spring.



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