

Norton Park – Project Update

August 7, 2026



Last year, the City of Duluth was awarded an Outdoor Recreation Grant from the MN Department of Natural Resources. There was a four-month delay getting the grant agreement, but it was authorized by City Council on July 27 and now the project can move forward!

The project includes replacing the existing playground that is at the end of its useful life, installing a 20x20 pavilion with two picnic tables, adding an accessible route for the site, adding a concrete pad with a picnic table near the old building's location, sealing and restriping the basketball pad, regrading the multi-use field, adding stormwater management to the site to redirect water and improve drainage for the field, formalizing the turnaround for 81st Avenue West, and a new concrete pad and enclosure for a portable restroom. The existing shed and backstop fencing for the field will remain in place. Staff are finalizing the construction documents and anticipate putting the project to bid in the coming weeks. The design has not substantially changed from the community presentation in January 2026.

The playground renderings illustrate the equipment that will be installed at Norton Park. It features a play area for ages 2-5 and 5-12, which expands the age range served here from the previous equipment that primarily served ages 5-12 with two rockers for younger kids. Among other accessible elements, the new equipment features an ADA Loop Slide that has a connection at the bottom of a slide to a climbing apparatus that can be more easily navigated by children with mobility limitations.

The timing for the Norton Park project may work out for a contractor to be able to complete the project before winter, but there is also a strong possibility that the project could be pushed to construction next year. The playground equipment has been ordered from St. Croix Recreation, but the roughly 8-week manufacture timeline means installation could be in October at the earliest. Let's keep fingers crossed for a warm fall to give us the best chance at completing this exciting project this year!



