

Lowe Park Master Plan

Marion, Iowa

MAY 16, 2023



Project Overview

THANK YOU!

...to our amazing volunteers and the passionate City staff in Marion. This master planning process has been a pleasure to be a part of and we are confident in the ability of leadership across the City to champion this, along with future projects that will continue to shape this growing community! Lowe Park is in great hands and will remain a critical link to the health and well-being of residents in Marion and the region beyond.

Marion Parks & Recreation Department

Seth Staashelm	Director of Parks & Recreation
Brent Neighbor	Deputy Director of Parks & Recreation
Darcie Coberly	Administrative Assistant of Parks & Recreation
Karlene Hummel	Recreation Superintendent

Steering Committee

Nicolas AbouAssaly	Mayor/City Council Member
Amy Hussel	Park Board Member
Jay Moore	Friends of Marion Parks
Katie Lowe-Lancaster	Lowe Family Member
Jill Ackerman	Chamber Staff
Vic Klopfenstein	Community Member
Tiffany Hermsen	Community Member
Ahmed Elsayy	Mayor's Youth Council
Fuf Renfer	Arts Council Member
Phil Pfister	Master Gardeners
Sara Mentzer	City Council Member
Seth Staashelm	Director of Parks & Recreation
Brent Neighbor	Deputy Director of Parks & Recreation
Karlene Hummel	Recreation Superintendent

Acknowledgements

Technical Committee

Amber Bisinger	City – Communications Manager / Event Coordinator
Kesha Billings	City – Associate Planner
Mike Cimprich	City – Arborist
Kylee Pusteoska	Programmer – Marion Public Library
Lara Moellers	Programmer - Marion Public Library
Andy Parke	Building & Grounds Supervisor Linn-mar Schools
Darin Andresen	Assistant City Engineer
Seth Staashelm	Director of Parks & Recreation
Brent Neighbor	Deputy Director of Parks & Recreation
Karlene Hummel	Recreation Superintendent

Stakeholder Groups

Youth Baseball
Art Council and Friends of the Park
Recreation Staff
Senior Programming and Encore Café
Master Gardeners
Chamber and City Events
City Council and Park Board





Introduction

Why was there a desire to update the Master Plan?

1 Document of Discovery

What are the key built and natural aspects of Lowe Park today?

2 Conceptual Design Options

Establishing options outlining park programming, layout and character.

3 Master Plan

Advancement of the preferred option from the conceptual design process.

4 Approval Process – Final Master Plan Documents

Presentation material to the City Council and other local leadership.

Appendix

Additional documents supporting or connected to the Lowe Park Master Plan Update.

Introduction

Why was there a desire to update the Master Plan?



Project Introduction

Intent of the Master Plan Update

The City of Marion Parks & Recreation team aimed to create an updated master plan for Lowe Park, a well-recognized park in the heart of the Marion community. The goal of this planning effort was to respect the past, understand the present and dream for the future. During this process, the team analyzed previous planning efforts, newly implemented park features, contextual adjacencies and current projects adding amenities within the city, and had several check points listening to community feedback. The park is currently home to the Arts & Environmental Center, the Klopfenstein Amphitheater, community gardens, multiple playground facilities, water play, baseball and softball fields, art and several trails.

The master plan process evaluated how the park is used today, what updates can be made to serve the community needs today and how to maintain the essence of the park as it stands today.

Original Park Vision (August 2011)

Lowe family agreement with the City as a conditioned gift to create a major community park.

Lowe Park is a unique destination that welcomes and captivates individuals, families and the community in a sustainable way, focused on the health of people, place and community.

Updated Park Vision Considerations (September 2022)

“Create an urban oasis, community treasure, nature-inspired park.”

RDG Focus Areas

1. Help develop a plan that is truly Marion’s plan.
2. Create a thoughtful master plan based on community feedback and need.
3. Take the appropriate time to get the plan done right.

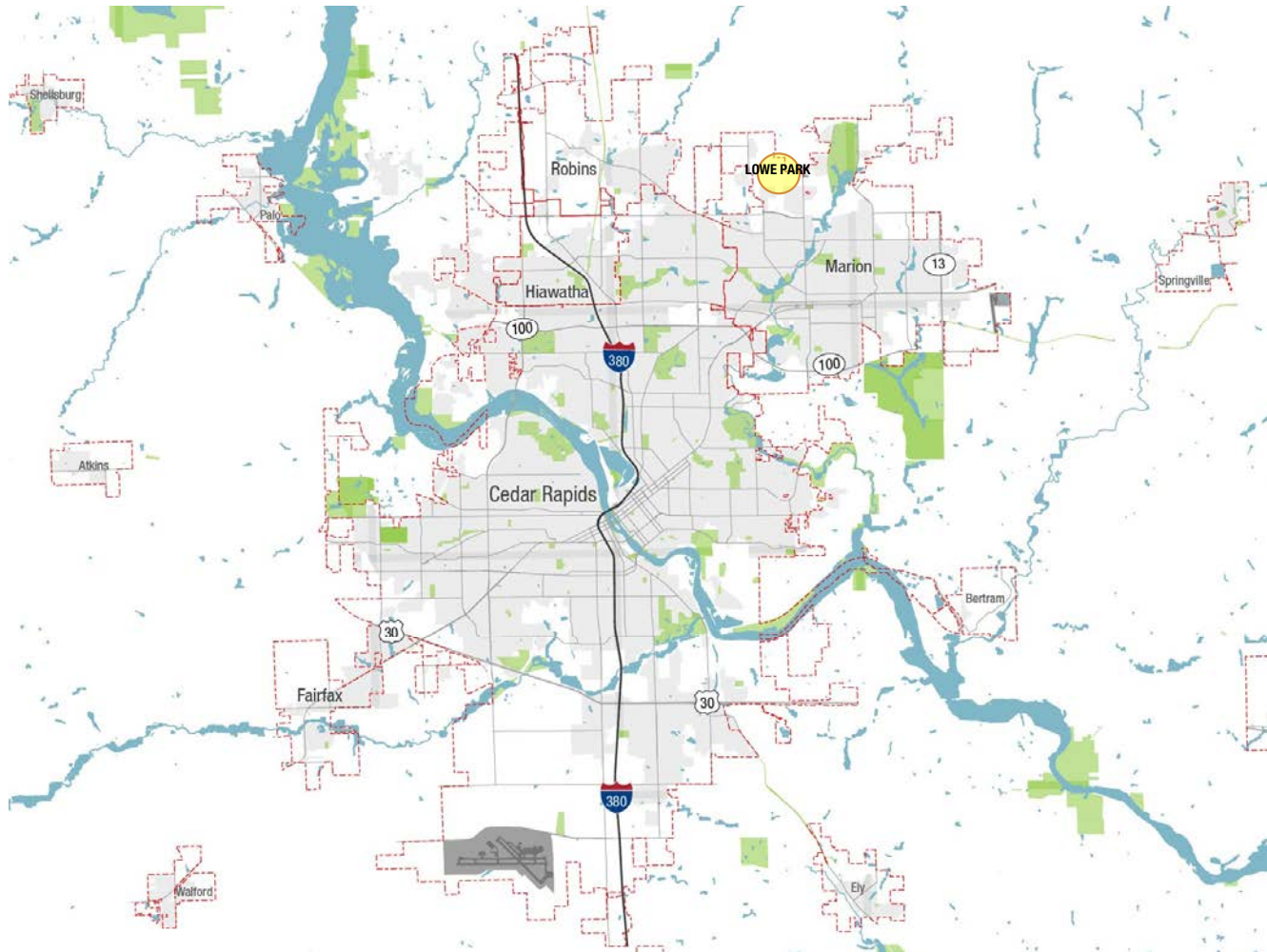
Project Intent



Project Introduction

Project Location

Local Context of Lowe Park



1

Document of Discovery

What are the key built and natural aspects of Lowe Park today?



1 Document of Discovery

Music Under the Moon

On August 13th, we were able to set up a tent and talk to individuals attending the Music Under the Moon event hosted in the park. It was a very well attended event and people stopped in with both compliments on the park today as well as potential opportunities for the future. We spoke with between 75-125 people during the event and had just over 40 comments on the boards at the end of the night.

The event had a great turnout of all ages and boards shown expressed the previously established footprint of the Environmental and Art Center and the park.



Public Engagement



1 Document of Discovery

Key Areas of Interest

People appreciate the Park for its:

- Natural feel
- Trail system
- Tree plantings
- Place to star-gaze
- Multi-generational use
- Connectedness to adjacent neighborhoods
- Community gardens
- Family events

Architectural Programming Considerations:

- Library Services
- Bathroom facilities on both ends of the park
- Additional Indoor Space

Site Programming Considerations:

- Playground Additions
- Splash
- Energy
- Environmental Education
- Mini-Pitch
- Pickleball Courts
- Pump Track
- Parking Addition
- Expanded Event Opportunities
- Seasonal Programming (Winter Focus)
- Baseball Addition
- Ponds
- Rentable Spaces



Public Engagement

1 Document of Discovery

Site Tour Imagery

Several team members toured the park and surrounding neighborhoods at various points from August through October 2022, to better understand the layout and observe the park in its current state. There are several features that have been installed per the original master plan, some new and unique additions that differ from the plan, and other items that have yet to be implemented. The early stages of data collection and research centers around a thorough understanding of the existing features and design parameters. We look for opportunities, site constraints and challenges to ensure we're considering all factors when the design process begins.



Data Collection & Research



1 Document of Discovery

Site Tour Imagery



Data Collection & Research



1 Document of Discovery

Existing Park Limits

The existing park limits map includes the most current aerial available as well as property lines and topography but focuses more on the park itself. It shows what land is currently part of the overall 180+ acres that make up the park. This visual also gives a very quick understanding of the current hardscape and softscape makeup.

Site Aerial & Topography

The site aerial map includes the most current aerial available as well as property lines and topography. The importance of this visual is understanding currently built features as well as the adjacent context of the site. This gives us a “starting point” to help lay out future programming and park amenities while keeping the current state in mind.

Data Collection & Research



1 Document of Discovery

2011 Master Plan

The 2011 Lowe Park Master Plan will be used as a reference throughout the planning process. We will use this in combination with what has been implemented in the park via other drawings to ensure we reflect well on previous efforts while designing the future park.

Data Collection & Research



1 Document of Discovery

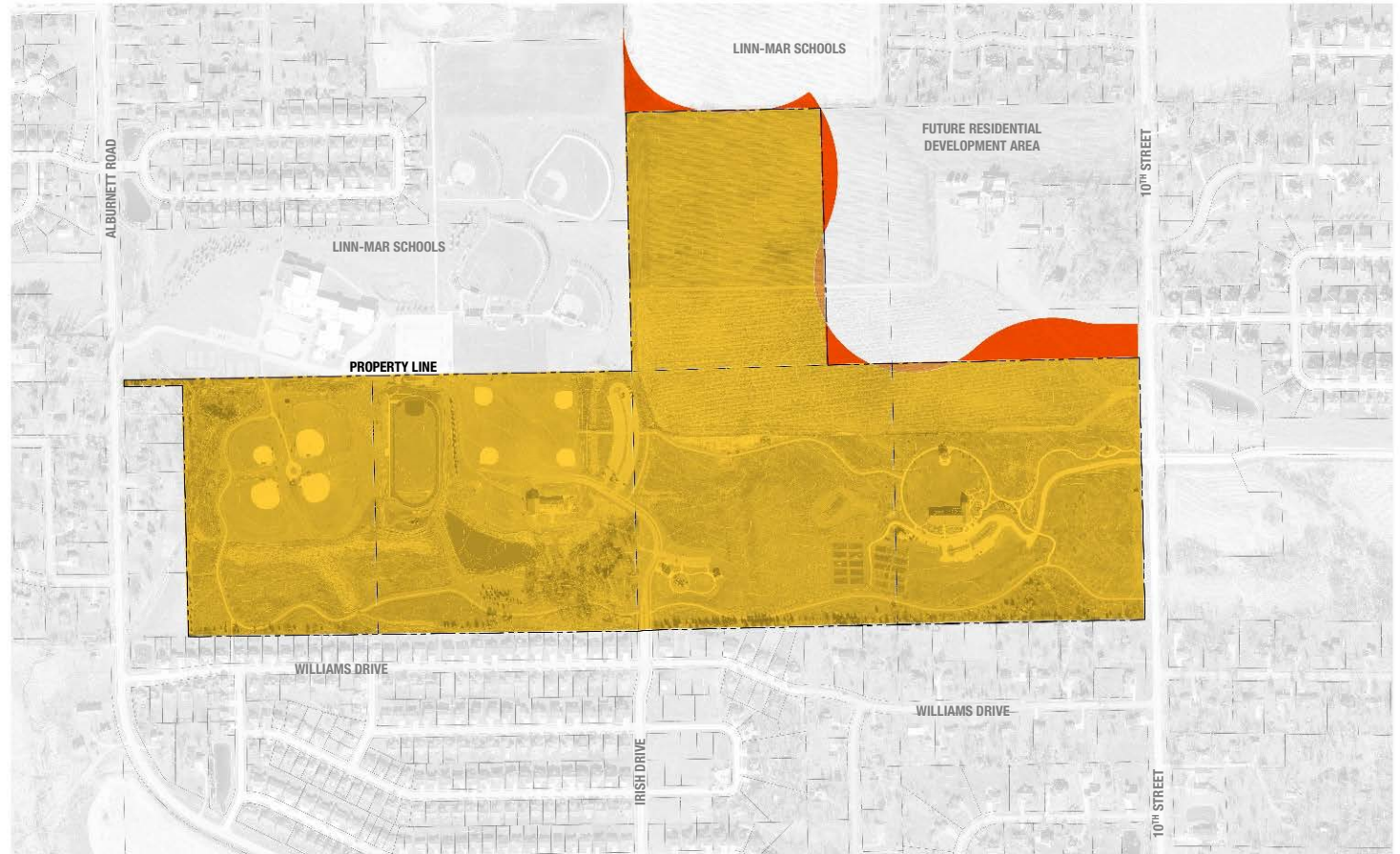
Previous Planning Boundaries

One critical piece discussed in the early master plan update design meetings was the previous park planning boundaries. This map shows extents of the park that stretch beyond the current limits as well as the future development zones within the park. Balancing potential land acquisition is extremely important to the future edges of the park as well as the overall impact of development adjacent to it.

+/- 181.4 AC
Existing Park Limits

+/- 0.4 AC
Development Within Park

+/- 6.1 AC
Outside Current Property Limits



1 Document of Discovery

Site Slopes

Site slopes are essential when planning for ADA accessibility, preserving and enhancing meaningful view corridors and understanding site drainage related to the watershed study. This visual shows overall existing topography with GIS 2' contours. Areas where the contour lines are closer together illustrate steeper slopes; areas where the lines are further apart indicate flatter, gentler slopes.

Data Collection & Research



1 Document of Discovery

Stormwater Management

One of the key elements of the park is its natural systems. Stormwater management is a critical piece that relates all the way back to the initial vision for the park. Being good stewards of our land and water is important. This map defines two of the primary watersheds that the park lives within and speaks to what opportunities the park holds for water storage. Ponds and wetlands can carry significance in managing stormwater as well as providing additional programming.

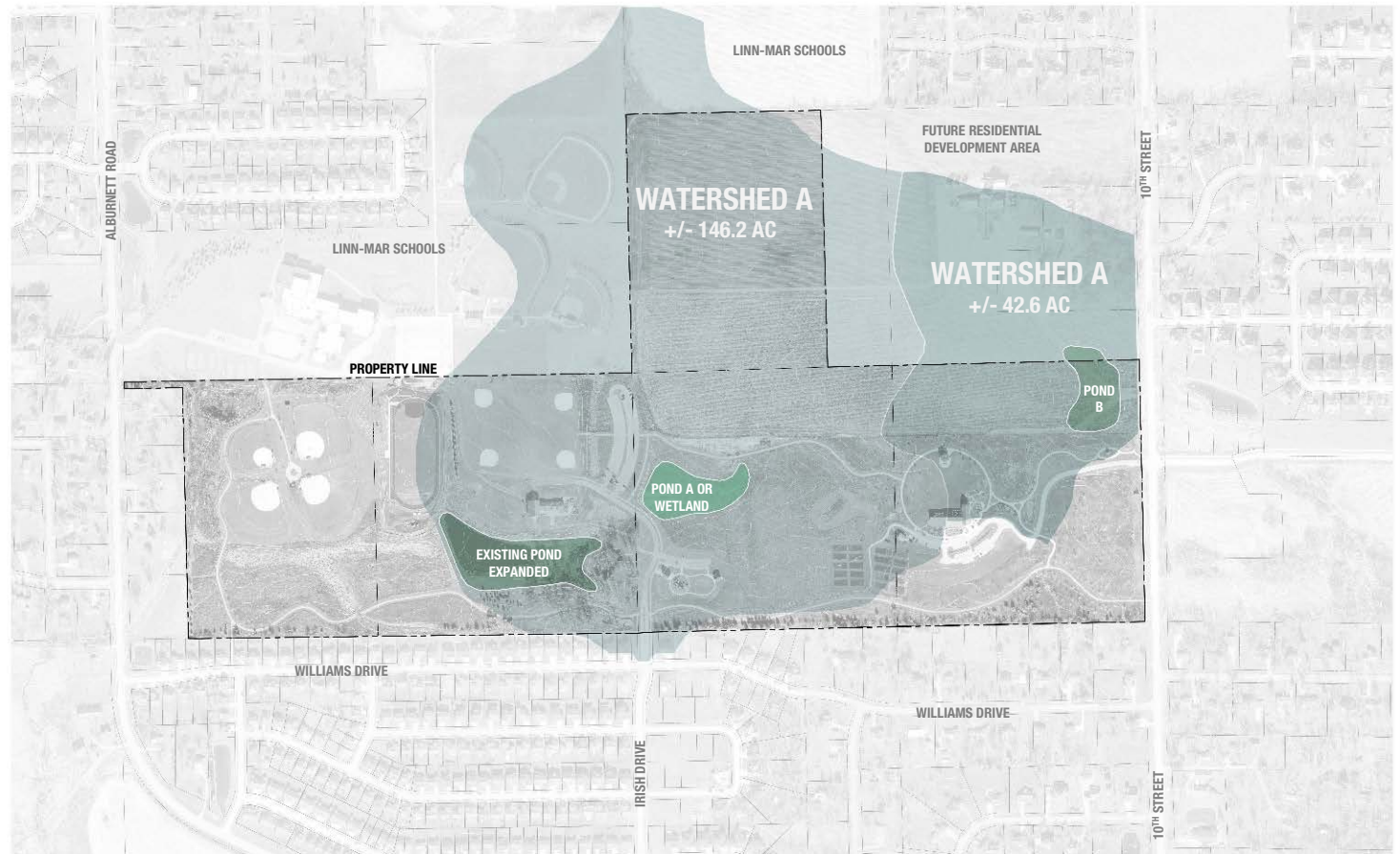
+/- 4.5 AC
Existing Pond Expanded

+/- 2.4 AC
Pond A or Wetland
(% of Watershed)

+/- 2.2 AC
Pond B
(% of Watershed)

TARGET: 4-8 %
STORMWATER STORAGE

Data Collection & Research

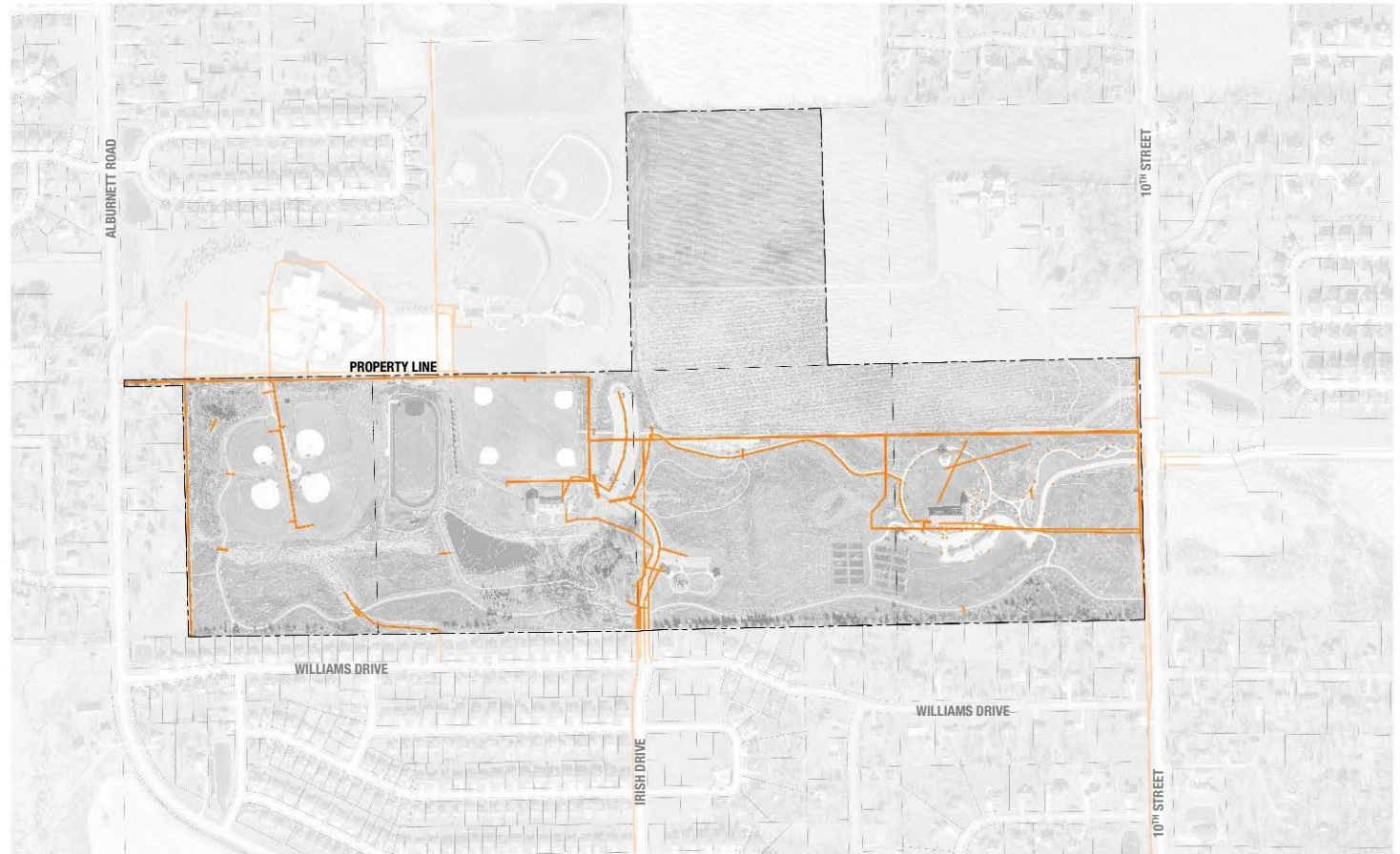


1 Document of Discovery

Site Utilities

Understanding the existing infrastructure and utility framework is essential for future planning. Having as much information about what is already in the ground and what has already been planned for is critical from an efficiency and budget perspective. We've acquired the existing pipe networks for water, storm and sanitary systems as well as mapping the existing power, fiber, telecommunications and gas lines. Successful planning development means taking a thorough analysis of all these systems and understanding what can be extended, removed, relocated or added on to.

Data Collection & Research



1 Document of Discovery

Meeting Discussion Points

- Important to keep the natural features of the park
- Incorporate more water interaction
- Large events have been successful but need improvements to pedestrian and vehicular circulation and parking
- Arts and Environment Center is at capacity, needs to be updated and expanded
- Greenhouse and maintenance buildings look to expand
- Work with surrounding neighborhoods and Linn-Mar school district for future connections and transportation needs
- Improve current athletic facilities but do not expand them
- (Full meeting minutes included in appendix A.)

Technical Committee Meeting – 10/10/2022



1 Document of Discovery

Meeting Discussion Points

Attending Groups

- Youth Baseball
- Art Council and Friends of the Park
- Recreation Staff
- Senior Programming and Encore Café
- Master Gardeners
- Chamber and City Events
- City Council and Park Board

Main Themes

- Maintain the natural feel—it is a key to the park's success
- Improve athletic fields and facilities but don't expand
- More trails, more trail connections, add paved and natural trails
- More water interaction, access, activities
- Modernize and expand Arts and Environment Center
- Improve parking and circulation for large events
- Gardens are great learning opportunities; look to relocate and expand greenhouses and demonstration gardens
- Collaborate with local community and overall metro area for larger events
- Look at revenue-generating events
- (Full meeting minutes included in appendix B.)



Stakeholder Interviews – 10/19/2022



1 Document of Discovery

Meeting Discussion Points

- Park is unique, functions well with athletics and natural areas being used at the same time
- Community appreciates proximity to natural refuge, open green space, very welcoming and inclusive
- Has become a regional destination; look to continue that trend
- Provide more teachable opportunities, learning centers
- Arts and Environment Center has become unofficial senior center; embrace and enhance those programming opportunities
- Arts and Environment Center needs to be modernized and expanded
- Explore revenue-generating events, enhanced restrooms, parking congestion, circulation, lighting, technology
- Addition of botanical center, arboretum, STEM outdoor learning opportunities
- Addition of meditation facilities and opportunities
- Urban farming opportunities, relocated community gardens
- Art Pond to be a showcase along 10th Street
- Let the park breathe, don't over program, keep it natural
- (Full meeting minutes included in appendix C.)

Steering Committee Meeting – 10/19/2022



2

Conceptual Design Options

Establishing options outlining park programming, layout and character.



2 Conceptual Design Options

Distillation

Natural Feel

- Must be maintained
- It is the key to the Park's success

Athletics

- Make what we have high quality
- Don't need more
- Do best we can with what we have

Trails

- Connect and make circuits
- Program with unique ideas
 - Art
 - Environmental Education
 - Agrarian Heritage

Water

- We want functional Ponds
 - Fishing
 - ADA Access

AE Center

- Great building
- Needs to be updated to the needs of the community
 - Flexible Spaces
 - Large Events
 - Kitchen Upgrades
 - Lighting & HVAC Improvements
 - Operational Improvements, Offices

Events

- Now have more and bigger events
- Need infrastructure to support
 - Lighting
 - Rigging
 - Green Room
 - Concession
- Revenue Generating

Gardens

- Important to Park
 - Demonstration
 - Community
 - Orchard
 - Green House
- Need to improve some aspects
 - Irrigation
 - Green House Space
 - Classroom Space

Parking & Pedestrian Connectivity

- Need Parking
- Not all impervious
- Not Wal-Mart

Collaboration

- Working with the schools
- Fluidity needs to be maintained



2 Conceptual Design Options

Conceptual Option 1



2 Conceptual Design Options

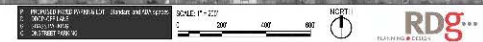
Conceptual Option 1

Key Areas of Interest

1. ART POND
 - Water interaction, fishing, meditation
 - Learning center, outdoor classroom
 - Art Trail / Sculpture integration
2. ARTS AND ENVIRONMENT CENTER
 - Reprogram Klopfenstein Amphitheater
 - Larger amphitheater overlooking water
 - Vehicular and Pedestrian circulation
 - Courtyards, Outdoor Classroom, Gathering
 - Proximity to Greenhouse, Community Gardens
3. NATURAL AREAS
 - North/South axis separation
 - Additional trails, meditation opportunities
 - Arboretum facility, integration with water
4. ENHANCE EXISTING POND
 - Reseal and expand pond
 - More shade and passive access to pond
 - Fishing, Hammocking, Natural Play, Trails
5. YOUTH BASEBALL
 - Improvements to fields 1-4
 - Shift fields 5-8 east for parking, circulation
 - Restrooms and Concessions
6. FUTURE CONNECTIONS
 - North playground area
 - Residential facing park, property negotiation



LOVE PARK MASTER PLAN UPDATE
CONCEPTUAL LAYOUT PLAN - OPTION 1



2 Conceptual Design Options

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CONCEPTUAL LAYOUT PLAN - OPTION 1

SCALE: 1" = 200'
NORTH
RDG...
PLANNING & DESIGN

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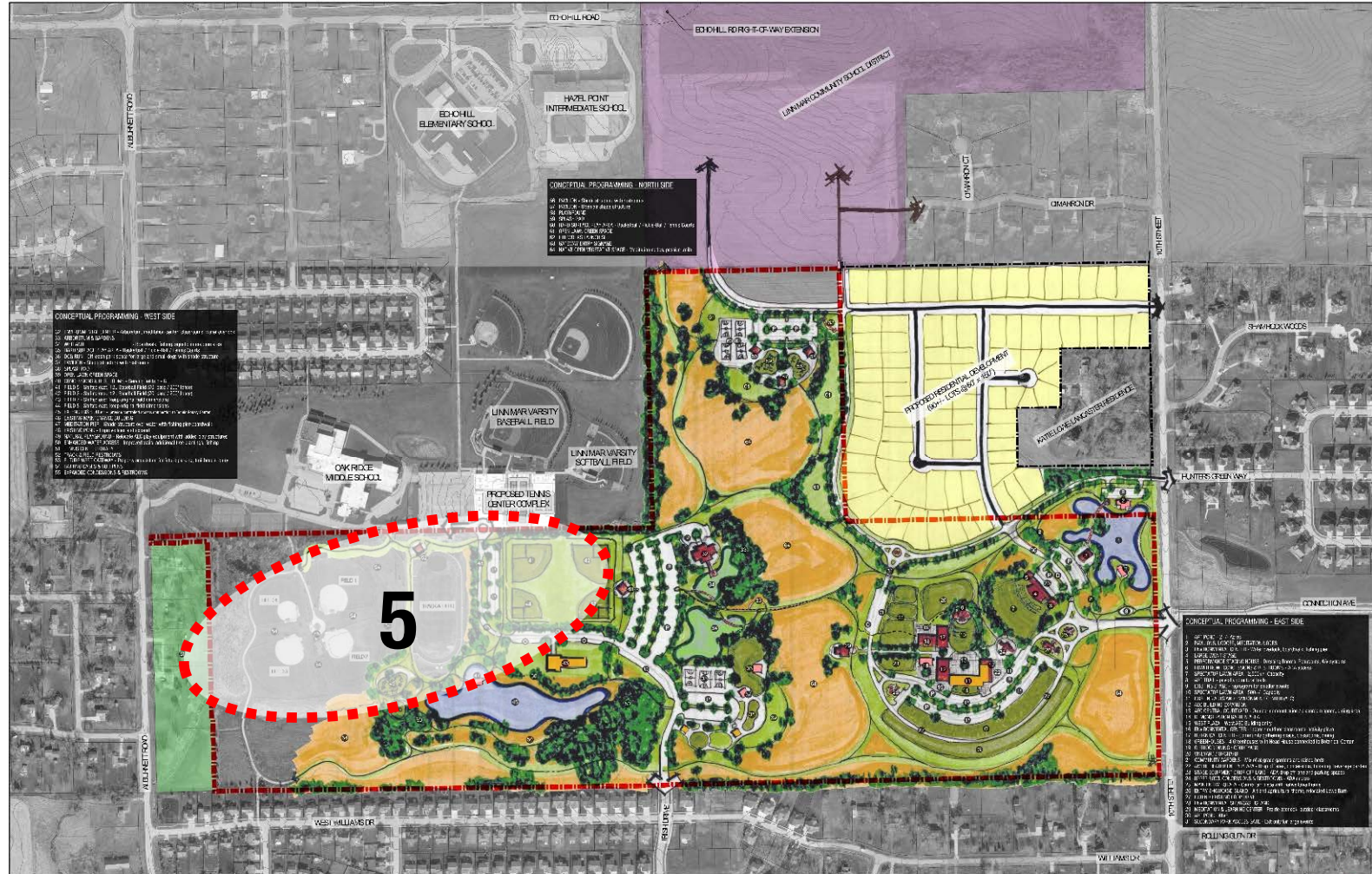


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2 Conceptual Design Options

Conceptual Option 2

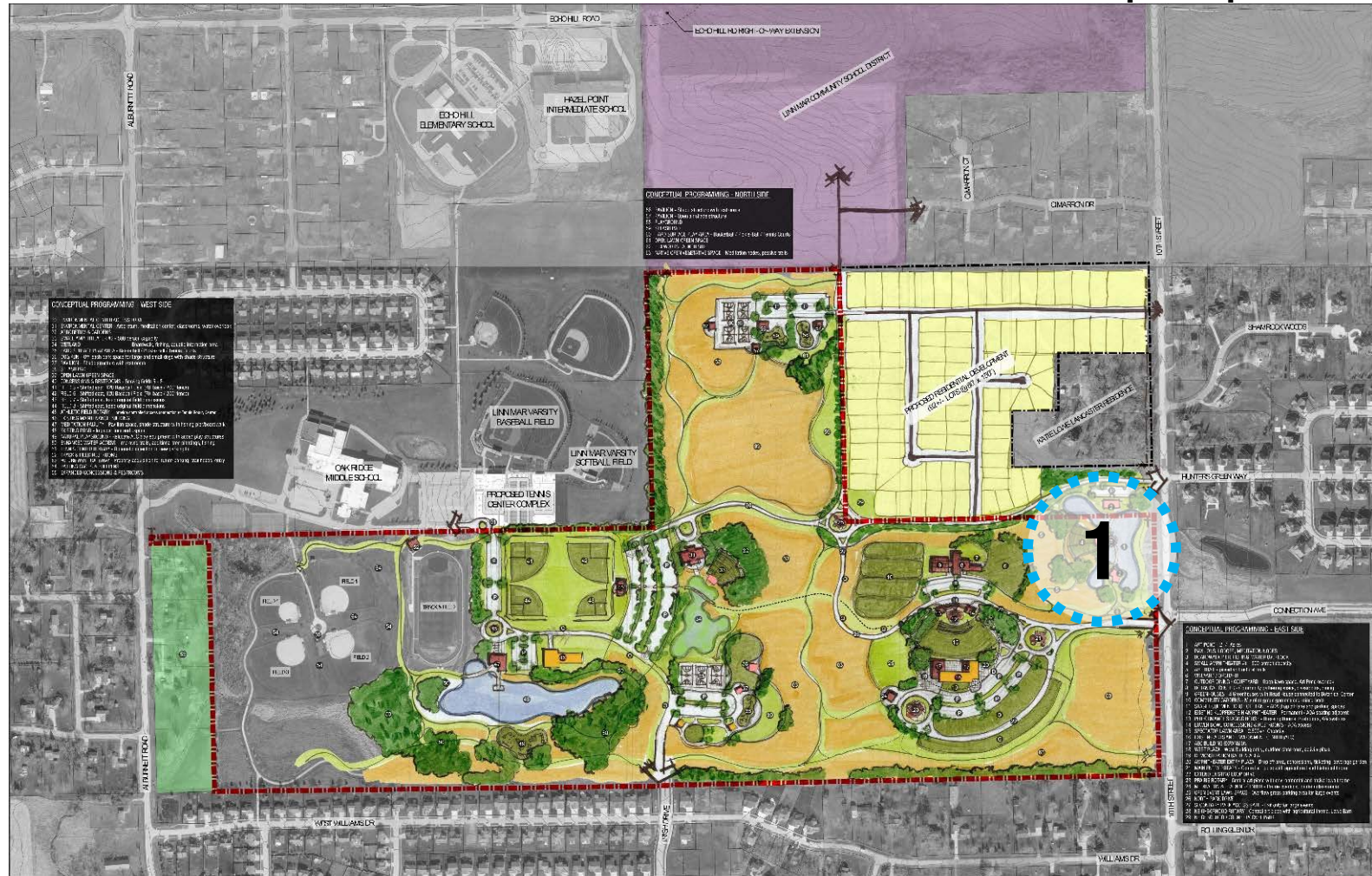


2 Conceptual Design Options

Conceptual Option 2

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1. ART POND
 - Water interaction, fishing, meditation
 - Smaller Amphitheater #1 near water
 - Art Trail / Sculpture integration
2. ARTS AND ENVIRONMENT CENTER
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 - Botanical Center/Greenhouse stand alone
 - Programmed spaces open west to natural areas
 - Vehicular and Pedestrian circulation
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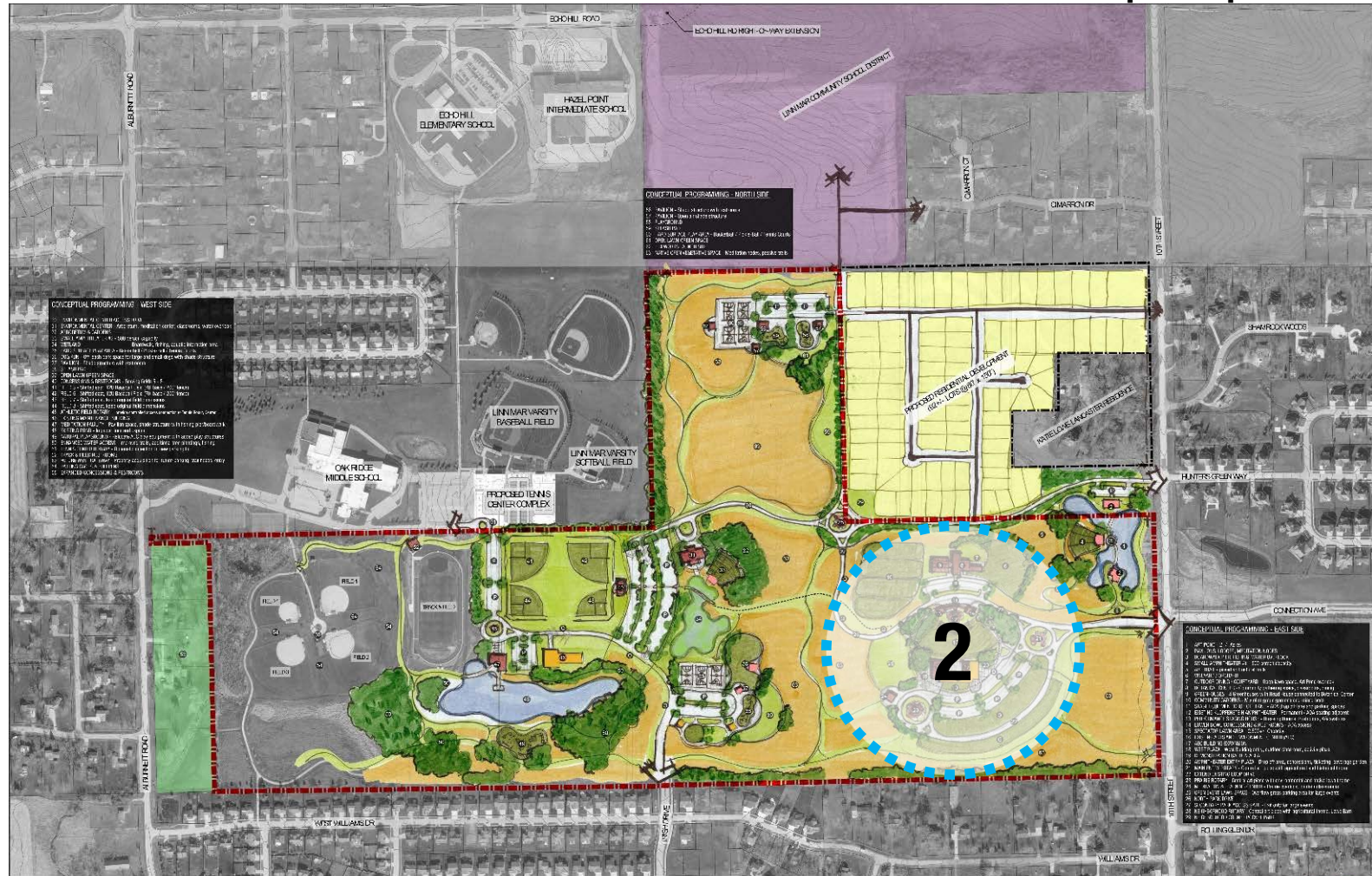
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SCALE: 1" = 200'
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 PLANNERS & DESIGNERS

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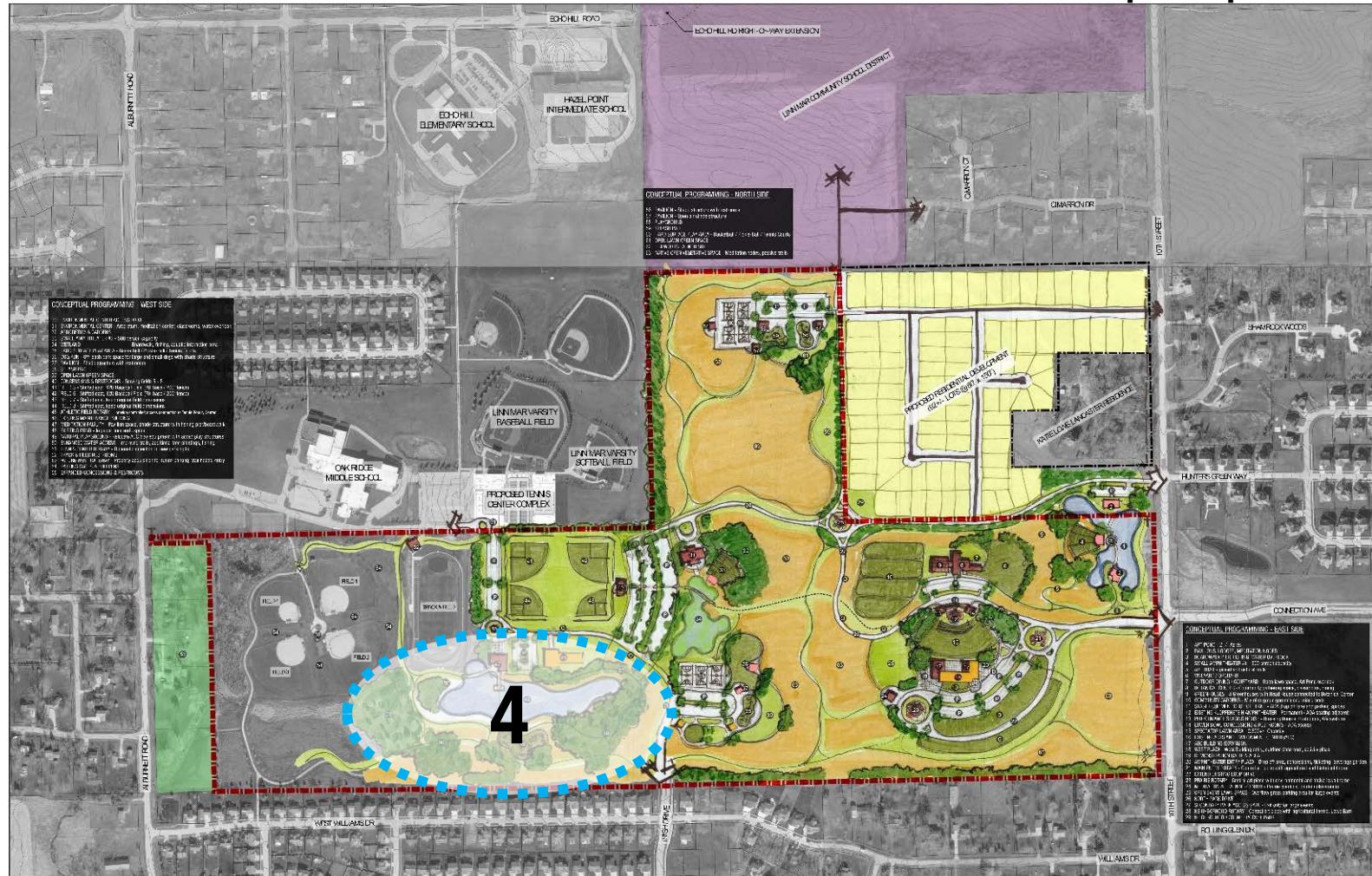


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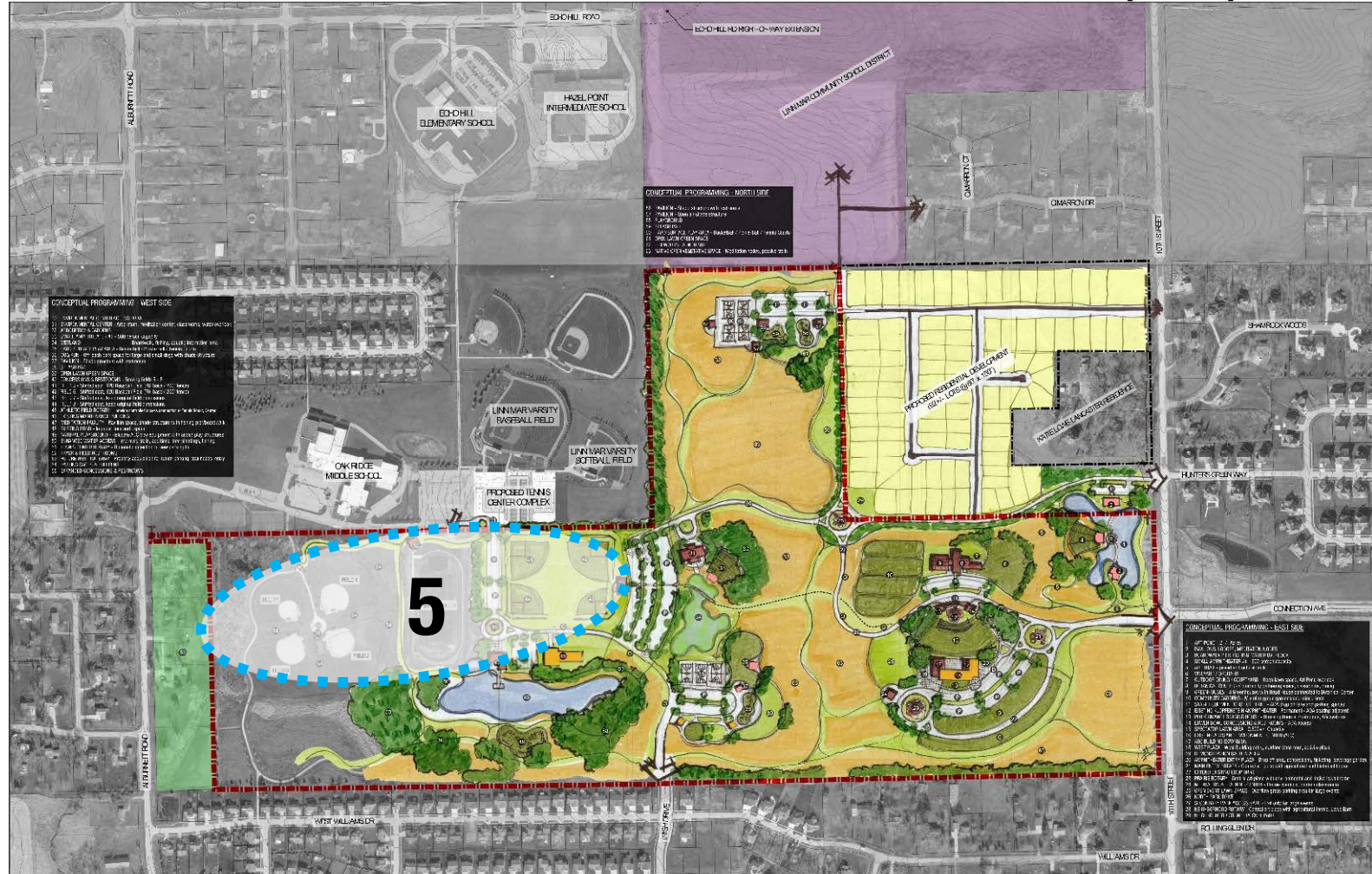
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CONCEPTUAL LAYOUT PLAN - OPTION 2

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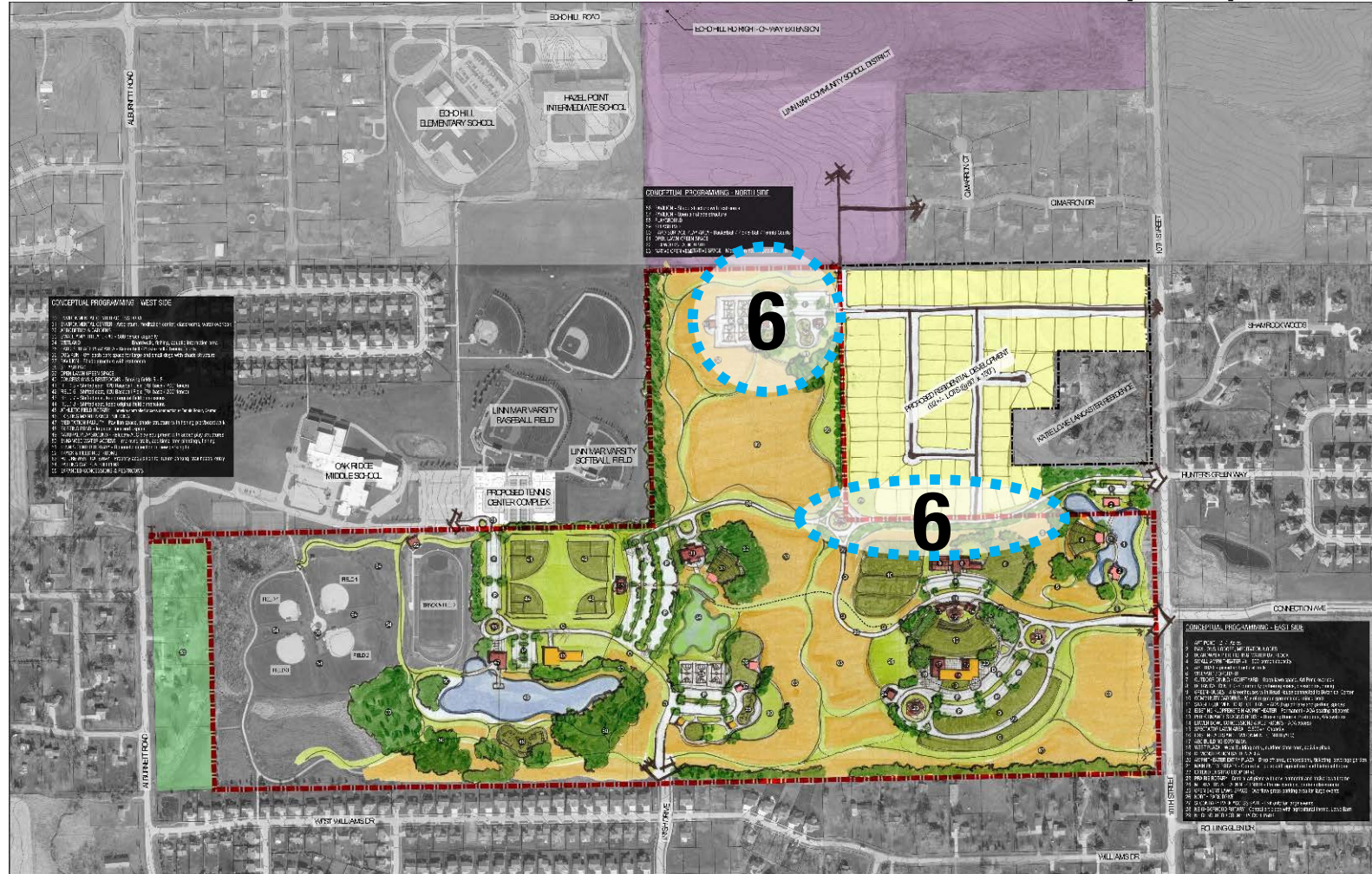
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LOVE PARK MASTER PLAN UPDATE
CONCEPTUAL LAYOUT PLAN - OPTION 2



2 Conceptual Design Options

Image Board



3

Master Plan

Advancement of the preferred option from the conceptual design process.



3 Master Plan

Previous Conceptual Options

Steering Committee Meeting #3



CONCEPT OPTION 1



CONCEPT OPTION 2
(preferred option between the two)

3 Master Plan

Steering Committee Meeting #3

Big Ideas from discussion:

Overall group likes Concept 2 more.

- Less going on
- More “natural”
- Don’t need large amphitheaters

Be sure to show residential area as is. No housing plans in final imagery.

Want all lights within park to match.

- Dark Skies
- Color
- Visually consistent
- Etc.

AEC use at night

- Make sure it is safe
- Night-time near water

OHP along 10th

- Can these be taken down?
- Maybe if 10th goes to an urban cross section.
- Public Transit to the facility needs to be called for.

Add Botanical Center to West End of AEC

- Trellis Café at DSM Botanical Center
- New Drop off-of connection of the two areas

Call out winter activities

- Snowshoe trails, Cross Country Ski trails, etc.

Phasing of Shade

- Structure
- Vegetation
- Etc.

Community

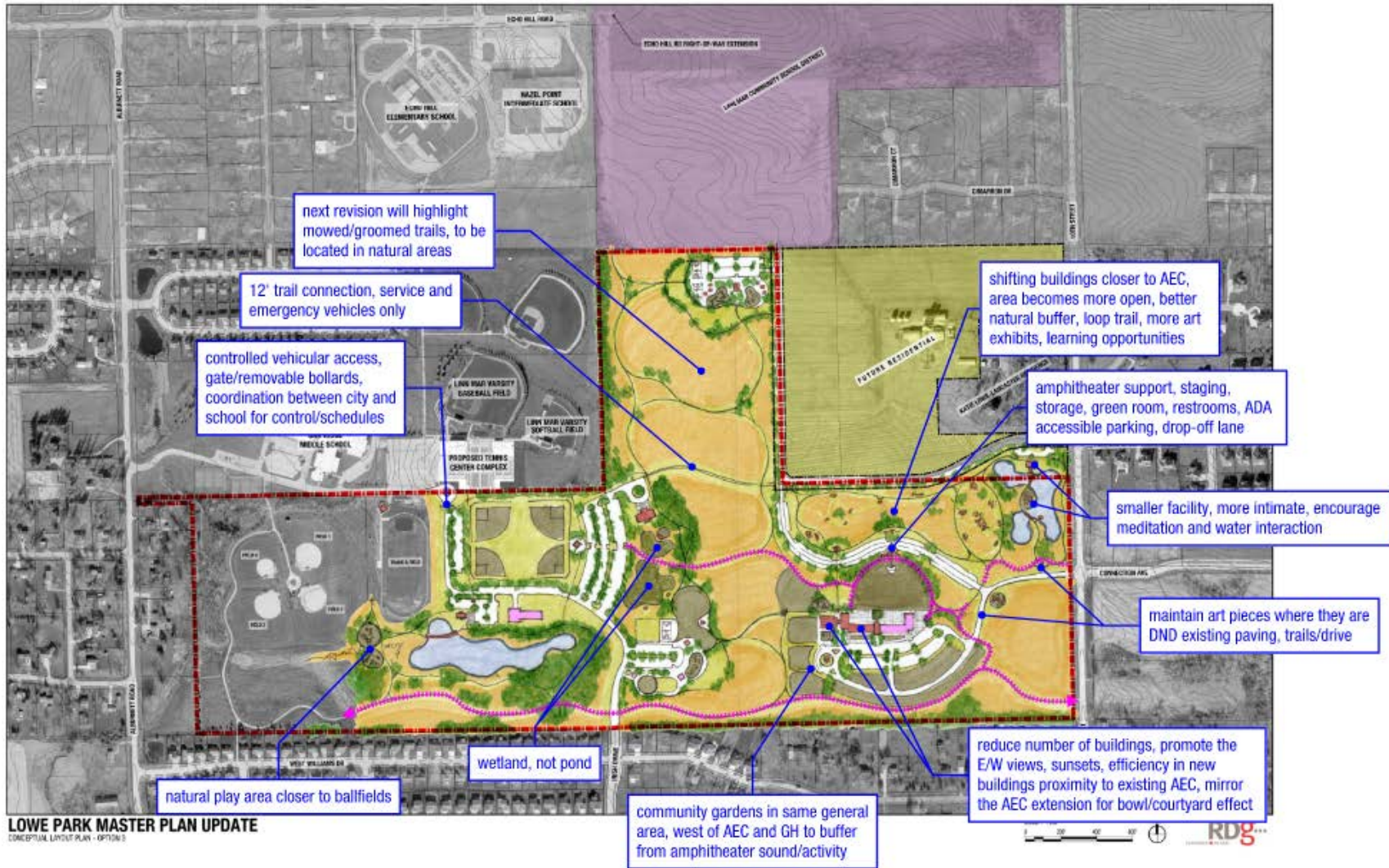
Costs & Priorities

- Low hanging fruit
- Things that must happen – Critical Path
- Bigger Funding Goals
- Funding Paths and Options



CONCEPT OPTION 2

(preferred option between the two)

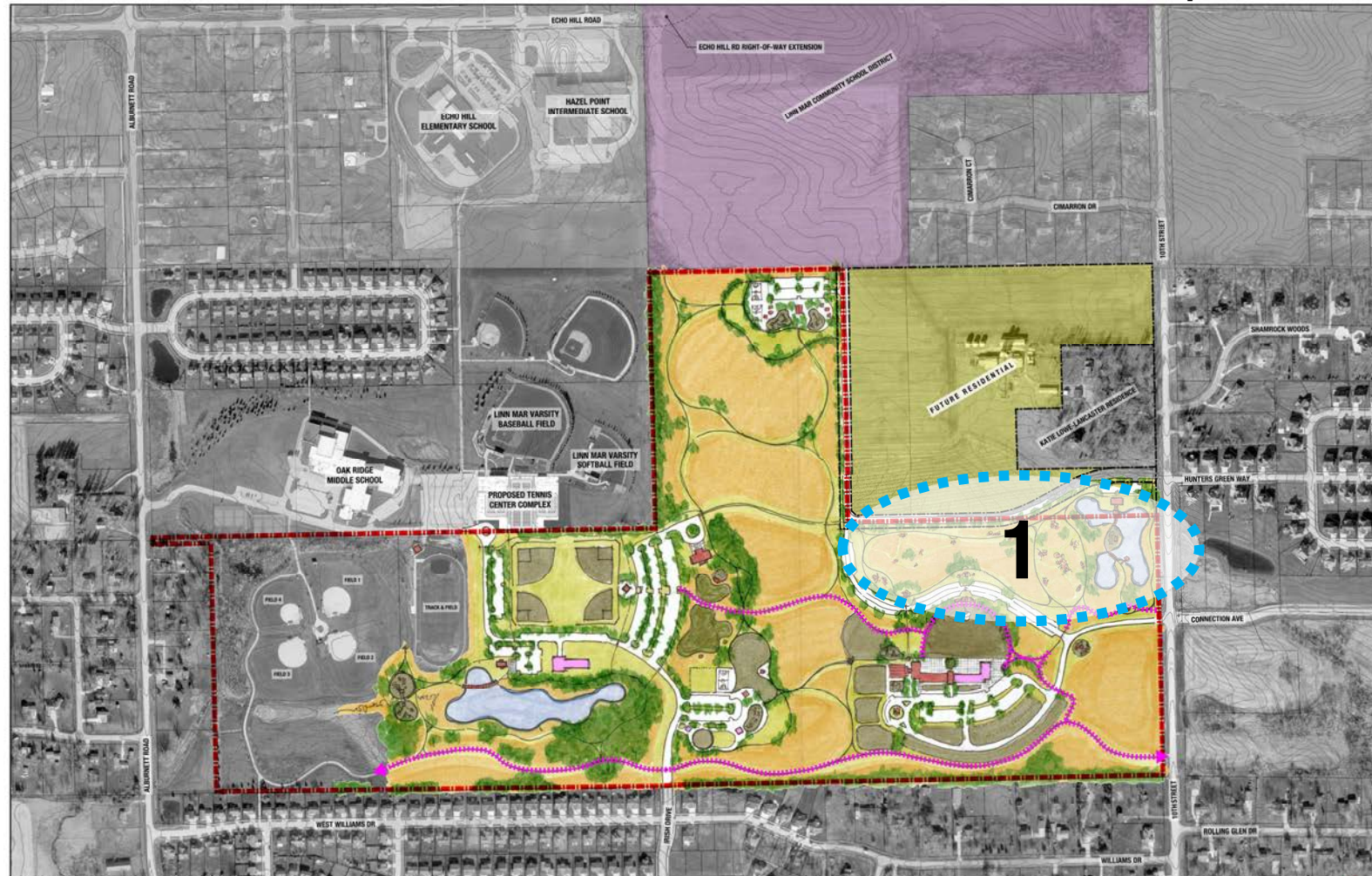


3 Master Plan

Master Plan - Final Concept Sketch

Key Areas of Interest

1. ART POND AND TRAIL LOOP
 - Water interaction, fishing, meditation
 - Outdoor Classroom / Activity Patio near water
 - Art Trail / Sculpture integration
2. ARTS AND ENVIRONMENT CENTER
3. NATURAL AREAS
4. EXISTING POND AND SOUTH PLAYGROUND
5. YOUTH BASEBALL
6. FUTURE CONNECTIONS



LOWE PARK MASTER PLAN UPDATE
CONCEPTUAL LAYOUT PLAN - OPTION 3

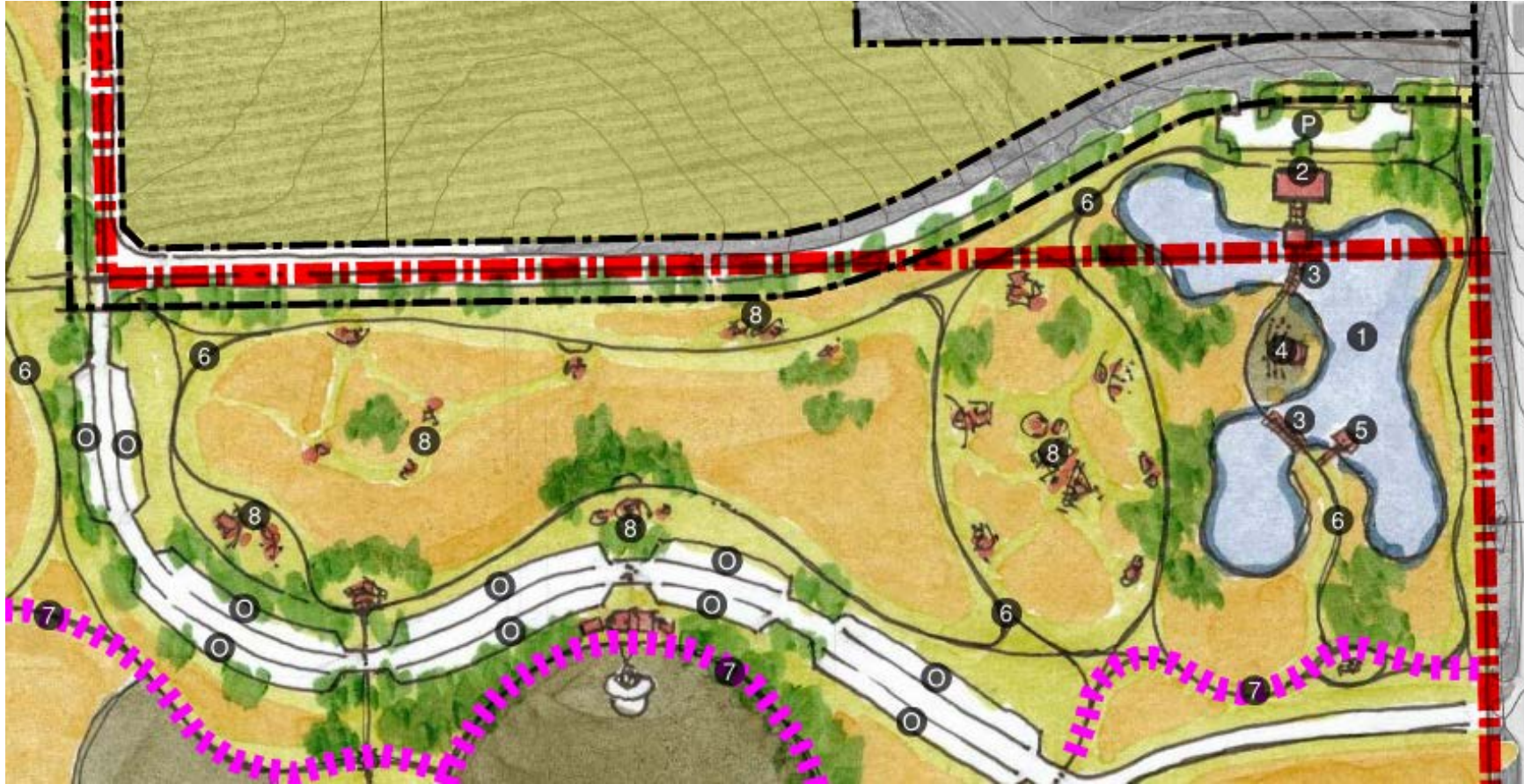
3 Master Plan

ENLARGED FOCUS AREA

ART POND AND TRAIL LOOP

PLAN KEYNOTES

- 1 ART POND: 2+/- ACRES
 - 2 NORTH LODGE
 - 3 BOARDWALKS OVER WATER
 - 4 OUTDOOR CLASSROOM / ACTIVITY PATIO
 - 5 FISHING PIER / WATER ACCESS
 - 6 PROPOSED PAVED TRAIL
 - 1/2 and 3/4 MILE ART LOOP
 - 7 MAINTAIN EXISTING TRAIL
 - 8 ART EXHIBITS
 - SCALE AND DISCOVERY
 - PAVED TRAILS / NODES
 - SHADE REFUGE OPPORTUNITIES
 - NATURAL TRAIL ACCESS
 - INTERACTION
- 0 ON STREET PARKING
P PAVED PARKING



3 Master Plan

ART POND AND TRAIL LOOP

IMAGE BOARD

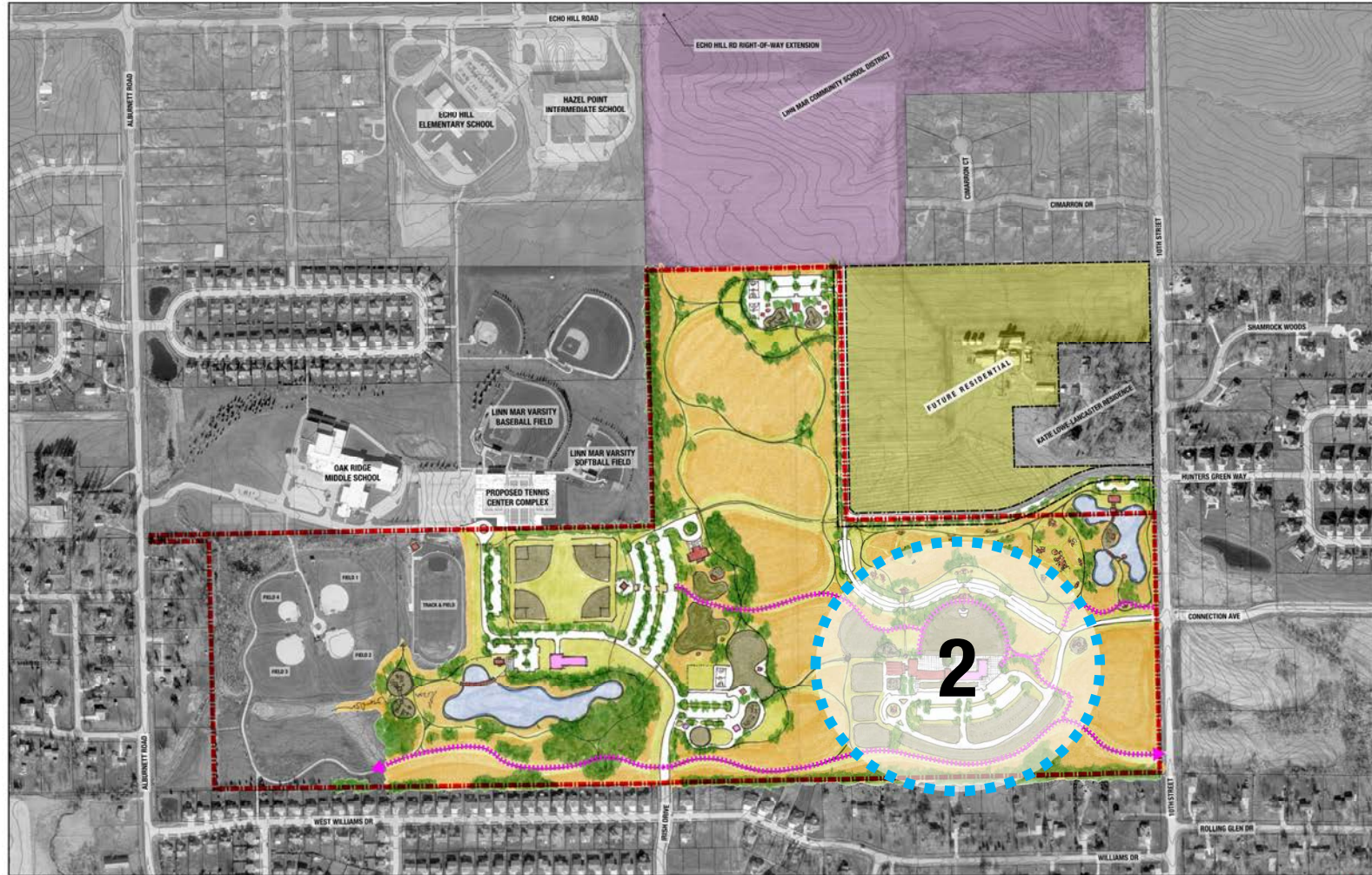


3 Master Plan

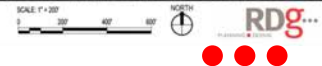
Master Plan - Final Concept Sketch

Key Areas of Interest

1. ART POND AND TRAIL LOOP
2. ARTS AND ENVIRONMENT CENTER
 - Klopfenstein Amphitheater 2,500 capacity
 - Botanical Center/Greenhouse west of AEC
 - Community Gardens west of AEC
 - Programmed spaces open west to natural areas
 - Improve Vehicular and Pedestrian circulation
3. NATURAL AREAS
4. EXISTING POND AND SOUTH PLAYGROUND
5. YOUTH BASEBALL
6. FUTURE CONNECTIONS



LOWE PARK MASTER PLAN UPDATE
CONCEPTUAL LAYOUT PLAN - OPTION 3



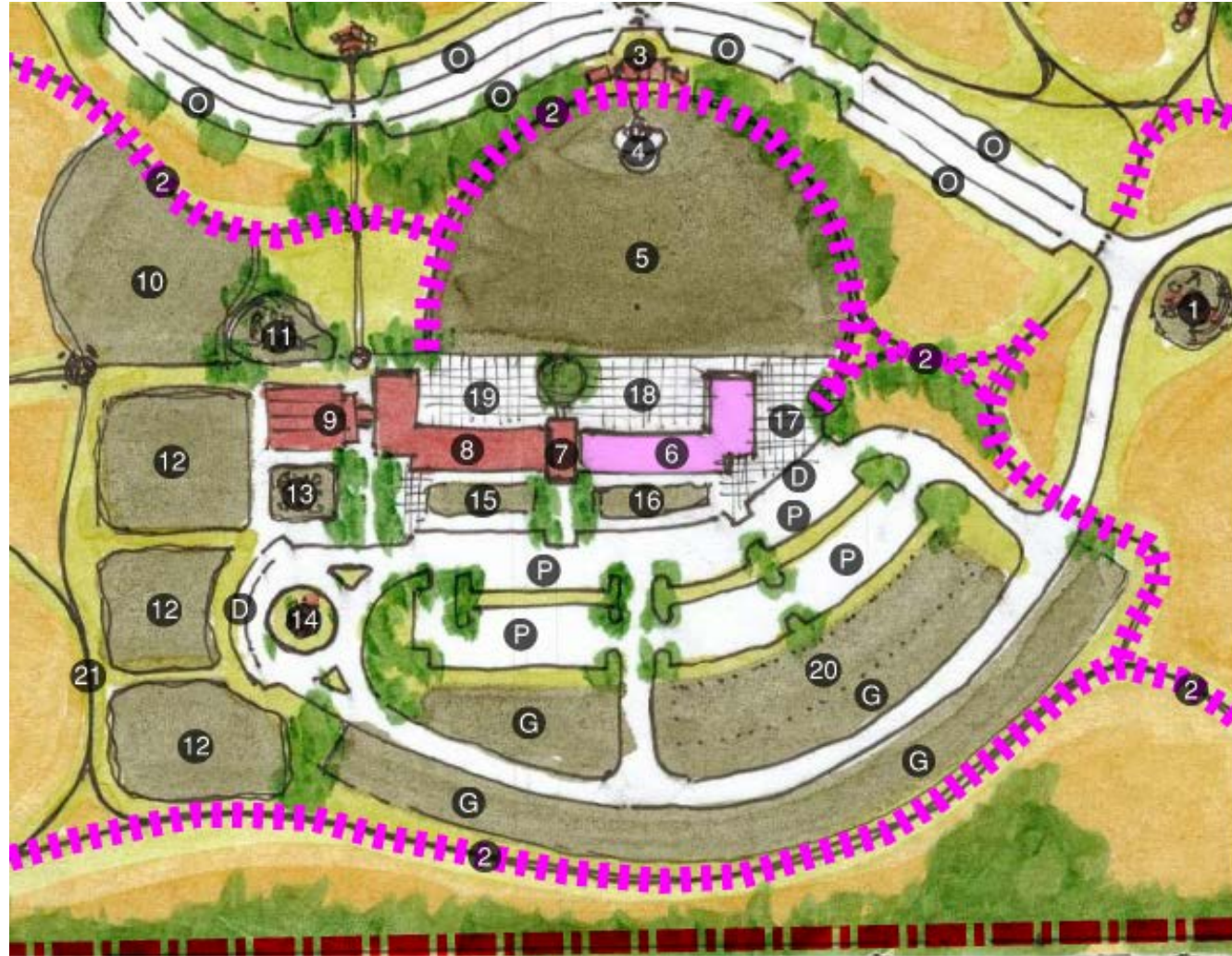
3 Master Plan

ENLARGED FOCUS AREA

ARTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

PLAN KEYNOTES

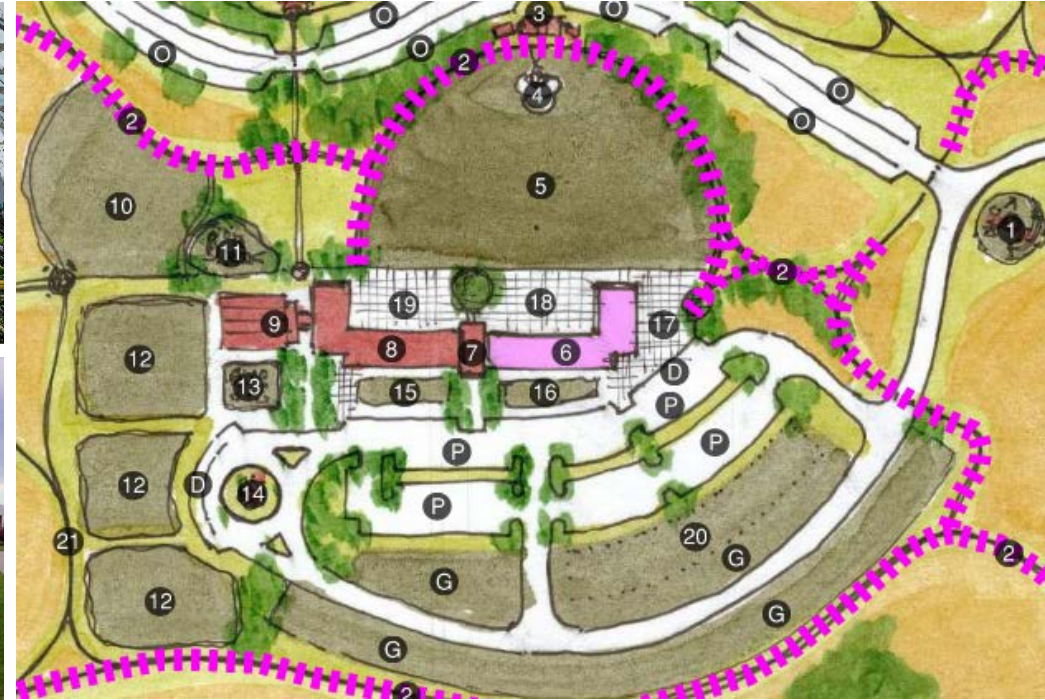
- 1 MAIN ENTRY FEATURE
(FUTURE ROTARY)
 - 2 MAINTAIN EXISTING TRAIL
 - 3 STAGE SUPPORT BUILDING
(RESTROOMS / ADA ACCESS)
 - 4 EXISTING KLOPFENSTEIN STAGE
 - 5 EXISTING AMPHITHEATER LAWN
 - 6 EXISTING AEC BUILDING
 - 7 MAIN BUILDING ENTRANCE
 - 8 AEC BUILDING EXPANSION
 - 9 HEAD HOUSE AND 4 GREENHOUSES
 - 10 VINEYARD / ORCHARD
 - 11 RELOCATED PLAYGROUND
 - 12 COMMUNITY GARDENS
 - 13 OUTDOOR CLASSROOM
 - 14 PRAIRIE ROTARY
 - 15 DEMONSTRATION SPACE
 - 16 EXISTING DEMONSTRATION GARDENS
 - 17 AMPHITHEATER ENTRY PLAZA
 - 18 AEC ACTIVITY PLAZA
 - 19 OUTDOOR DINING / COURTYARD
 - 20 FUTURE PAVED PARKING AREA
 - 21 PROPOSED PAVED TRAIL
-
- P PAVED PARKING
 - O ON STREET PARKING
 - G GRASS PARKING (OVERFLOW ONLY)
 - D DROP-OFF LANE



3 Master Plan

ARTS AND ENVIRONMENT CENTER

IMAGE BOARD



3 Master Plan

Master Plan - Final Concept Sketch

Key Areas of Interest

1. ART POND AND TRAIL LOOP
2. ARTS AND ENVIRONMENT CENTER
3. NATURAL AREAS
 - North/South axis separation
 - Additional trails, meditation opportunities
 - Meditation and Arboretum Facility
 - Outdoor classroom near wetland
 - Shade opportunities / phasing
4. EXISTING POND AND SOUTH PLAYGROUND
5. YOUTH BASEBALL
6. FUTURE CONNECTIONS



LOWE PARK MASTER PLAN UPDATE
CONCEPTUAL LAYOUT PLAN - OPTION 3

3 Master Plan

NATURAL AREAS

PLAN KEYNOTES

- 1 12' WIDE PAVED TRAIL
 - SERVICE & EMERGENCY VEHICLES ONLY
 - OVERFLOW PARKING ON GRASS ADJACENT
 - 2 CONTROLLED TRAIL ACCESS
 - REMOVABLE BOLLARDS FOR SECURITY
 - 3 MAINTAIN EXISTING TRAIL
 - 4 PROPOSED PAVED TRAIL
 - 5 MEDITATION AND ARBORETUM FACILITY
 - 6 OUTDOOR CLASSROOM
 - 7 WETLAND
 - 8 ARBORETUM
 - INTERACTIVE TRAILS
 - NATIVE GROVES
 - EXHIBITS / SHADE NODES
 - 9 NATIVE VEGETATION / OPEN SPACE
 - SNOW SHOEING TRAILS
 - CROSS COUNTRY SKIING
 - 10 FIREWORKS LAUNCH AREA
- P PAVED PARKING



ENLARGED FOCUS AREA & IMAGE BOARD

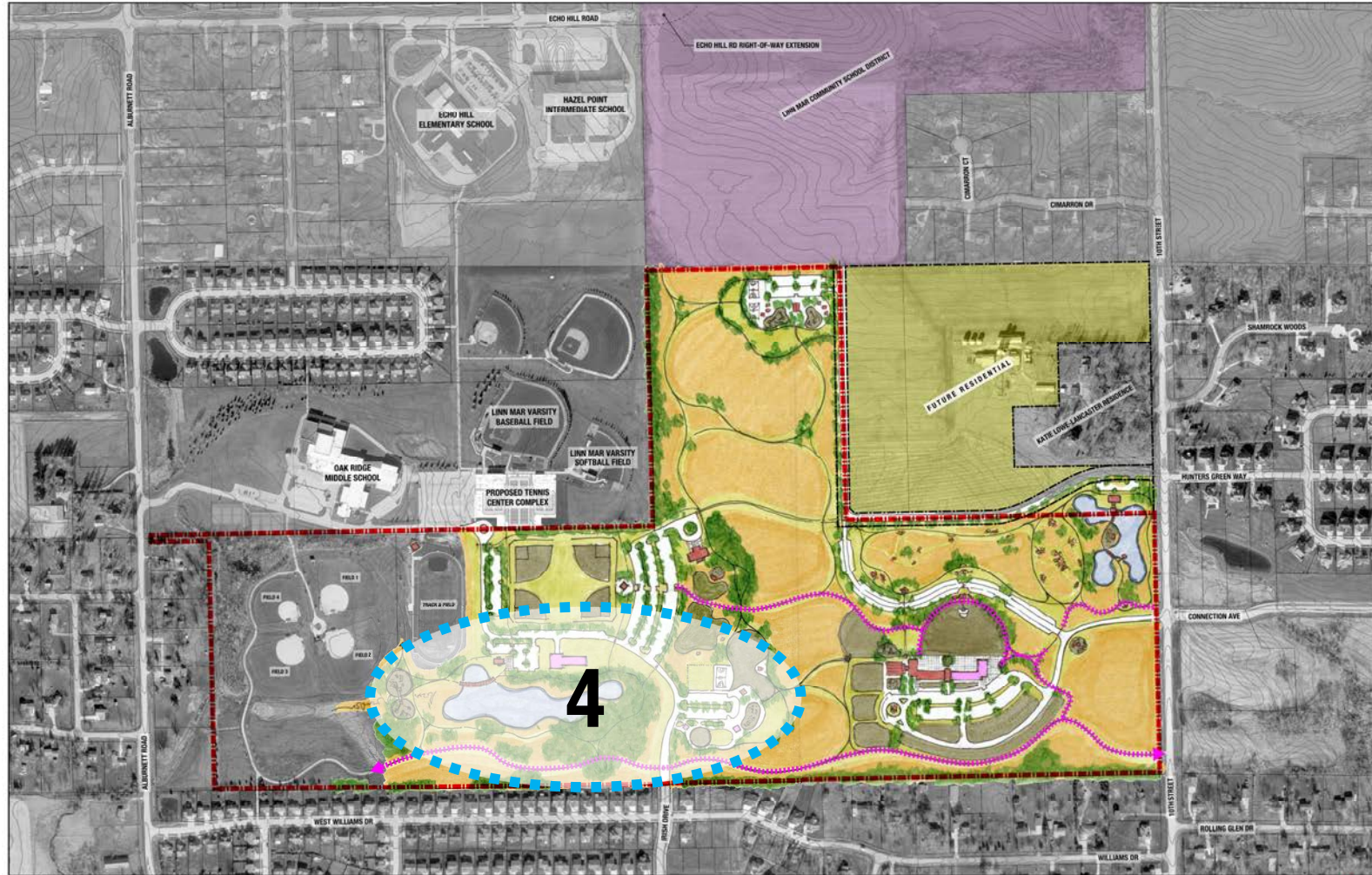


3 Master Plan

Master Plan - Final Concept Sketch

Key Areas of Interest

1. ART POND AND TRAIL LOOP
2. ARTS AND ENVIRONMENT CENTER
3. NATURAL AREAS
4. EXISTING POND AND SOUTH PLAYGROUND
 - Improve liner and expand pond
 - More shade and passive access to pond
 - Fishing, Hammocking, Natural Play, Trails
5. YOUTH BASEBALL
6. FUTURE CONNECTIONS



LOWE PARK MASTER PLAN UPDATE
CONCEPTUAL LAYOUT PLAN - OPTION 3

3 Master Plan

ENLARGED FOCUS AREA

EXISTING POND AND SOUTH PLAYGROUND

PLAN KEYNOTES

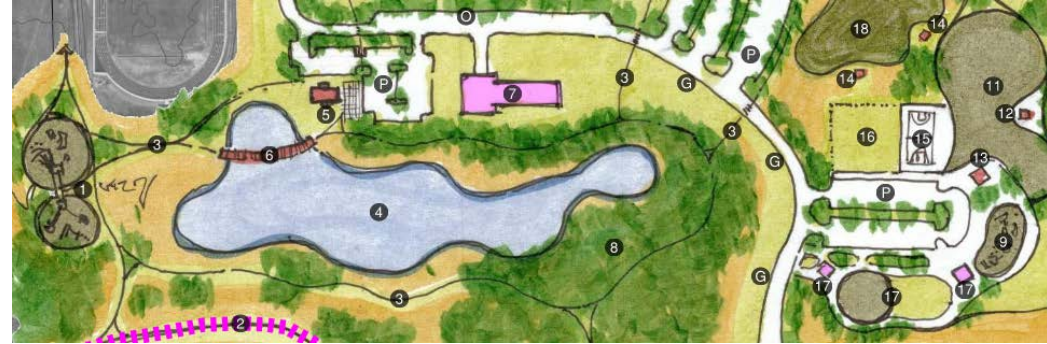
- 1 NATURAL PLAYGROUND
 - TREE CANOPY STRUCTURE
 - SPAN ACROSS WATER
 - ADVENTURE
 - 2 MAINTAIN EXISTING TRAIL
 - 3 PROPOSED PAVED TRAIL
 - 4 EXISTING POND
 - IMPROVE LINER AND EXPAND
 - 5 MEDITATION FACILITY
 - PAVILION SPACE / SHADE REFUGE
 - 6 FISHING BOARDWALK
 - 7 EXISTING MAINTENANCE BUILDING
 - 8 EXISTING VEGETATION
 - ENHANCE WATER ACCESS / TRAILS
 - ADDITIONAL TREE PLANTINGS
 - HAMMOCKING, FISHING
 - 9 SPLASH PAD
 - 10 OPEN LAWN
 - 11 DOG RUN TURF AREA
 - 12 SHADE STRUCTURE
 - 13 PAVILION (MATCH EXISTING, SEE NOTE 17)
 - 14 SHADE NEAR WETLAND
 - 15 HARD SURFACE PLAY
 - BASKETBALL, PICKLE BALL, TENNIS
 - 16 HARD SURFACE PLAY EXPANSION
 - 17 EXISTING PLAYGROUND AMENITIES
-
- O ON STREET PARKING
 - P PAVED PARKING
 - G GRASS PARKING (OVERFLOW ONLY)



3 Master Plan

EXISTING POND AND SOUTH PLAYGROUND

IMAGE BOARD



3 Master Plan

Master Plan - Final Concept Sketch

Key Areas of Interest

1. ART POND AND TRAIL LOOP
2. ARTS AND ENVIRONMENT CENTER
3. NATURAL AREAS
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5. YOUTH BASEBALL
 - Improvements to fields 1-4
 - Shift fields 5-8 east for parking, circulation
 - Restrooms and Concessions
6. FUTURE CONNECTIONS



LOWE PARK MASTER PLAN UPDATE
CONCEPTUAL LAYOUT PLAN - OPTION 3

SCALE: 1" = 200'
0 200 400 600 NORTH
RDG

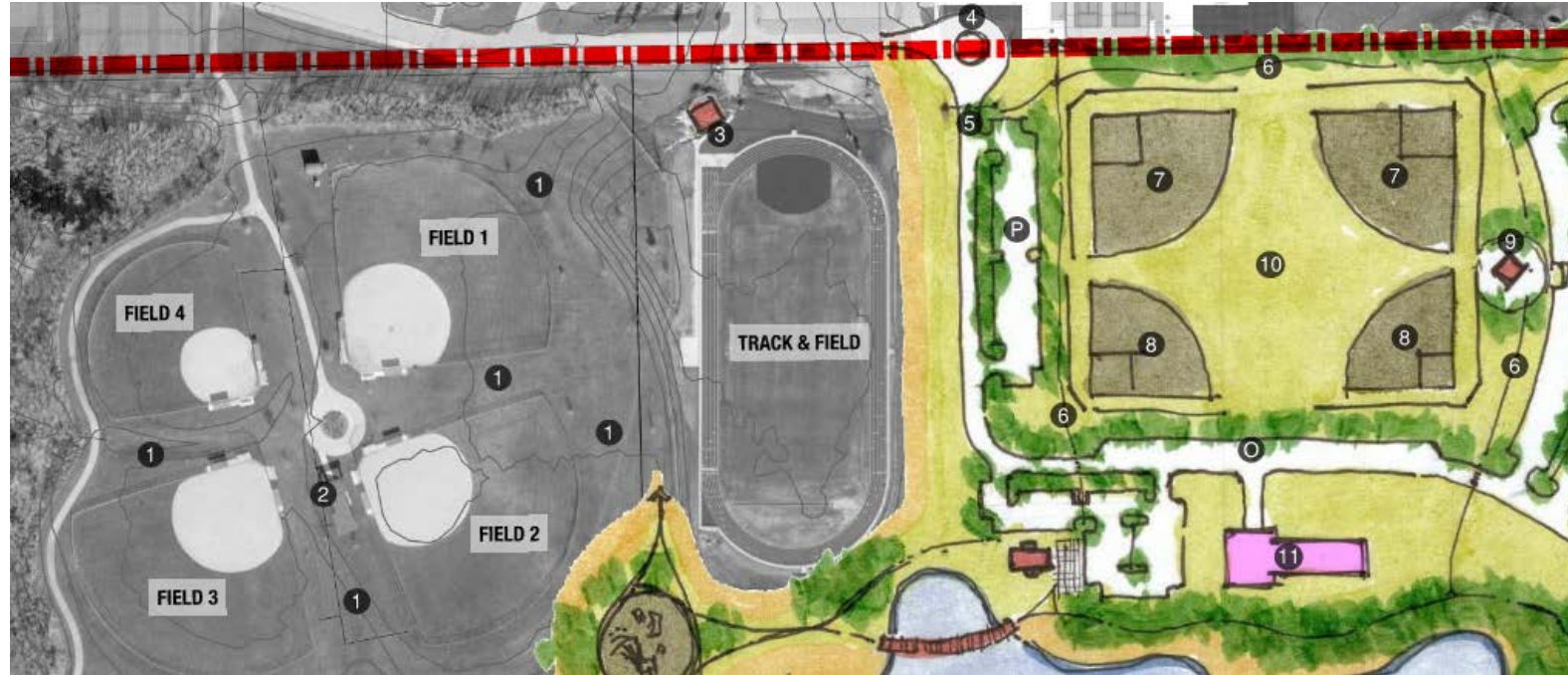
3 Master Plan

YOUTH BASEBALL

PLAN KEYNOTES

- 1 BATTING CAGES & BULLPENS
 - 2 EXPAND CONCESSIONS & RESTROOMS
 - 3 TRACK & FIELD RESTROOMS
 - 4 TENNIS CENTER ROUNDABOUT
 - 5 CONTROLLED ACCESS CONNECTION
- GATE / REMOVABLE BOLLARDS
 - 6 PROPOSED PAVED TRAIL
 - 7 12U FIELD – SHIFTED EAST
 - 8 EXISTING FIELD SIZE – SHIFTED EAST
 - 9 CONCESSIONS & RESTROOMS
- SERVING FIELDS 5 - 8
 - 10 TRANSITIONAL EVENT SPACE
- FLAG FOOTBALL
- YOUTH SOCCER
- FIREWORKS SPECTATOR VIEWING
 - 11 EXISTING MAINTENANCE BUILDING
- 0 ON STREET PARKING
 - P PAVED PARKING

ENLARGED FOCUS AREA & IMAGE BOARD



3 Master Plan

Master Plan - Final Concept Sketch

Key Areas of Interest

1. ART POND AND TRAIL LOOP
2. ARTS AND ENVIRONMENT CENTER
3. NATURAL AREAS
4. EXISTING POND AND SOUTH PLAYGROUND
5. YOUTH BASEBALL
6. FUTURE CONNECTIONS
 - North playground area
 - Pedestrian/Vehicular connections north and east



LOWE PARK MASTER PLAN UPDATE
CONCEPTUAL LAYOUT PLAN - OPTION 3

3 Master Plan

FUTURE CONNECTIONS

PLAN KEYNOTES

- 1 SHADE STRUCTURE
 - 2 PLAYGROUND
 - 3 PAVILION / RESTROOMS (MATCH SOUTH)
 - 4 SPLASH PAD
 - 5 HARD SURFACE PLAY
 - BASKETBALL, PICKLE BALL, TENNIS
 - 6 OPEN LAWN
 - 7 PROPOSED PAVED TRAIL
 - 8 NATIVE VEGETATION / OPEN SPACE
 - SNOW SHOEING TRAILS
 - CROSS COUNTRY SKIING
 - 9 FUTURE RESIDENTIAL
 - 10 LINN MAR SCHOOL DISTRICT PROPERTY
-
- O ON STREET PARKING (PARALLEL)
 - P PAVED PARKING



ENLARGED FOCUS AREA & IMAGE BOARD

4

FINAL MASTER PLAN DOCUMENTS

FOR APPROVAL BY MARION CITY COUNCIL



4 Master Plan

Master Plan – Illustrative



DRAWING IS NOT TO SCALE, SEE MARION PARKS DEPARTMENT FOR FULL SIZE MASTER PLAN DOCUMENT





DRAWING IS NOT TO SCALE, SEE MARION PARKS DEPARTMENT FOR FULL SIZE MASTER PLAN DOCUMENT



4 Master Plan

Master Plan – Illustrative

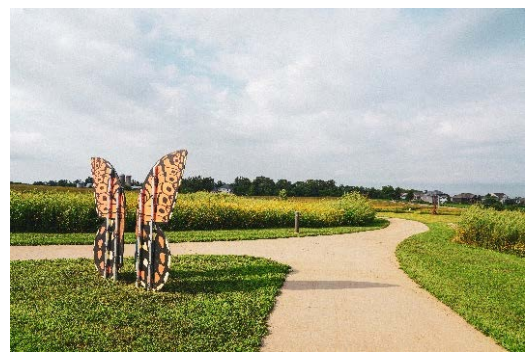
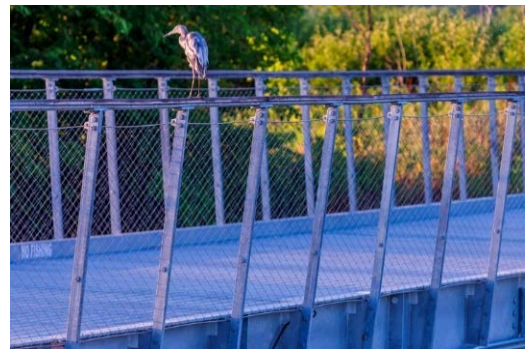
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 - Learning center, outdoor classroom
 - Art Trail / Sculpture integration
- 2. ARTS AND ENVIRONMENT CENTER**
 - Reprogram Klopfenstein Amphitheater
 - Vehicular and Pedestrian circulation
 - Courtyards, Outdoor Classroom, Gathering
 - Proximity to Greenhouse, Community Gardens
- 3. ARBORETUM, MEDITATION, AND NATURAL AREAS**
 - North/South axis separation
 - Additional trails, meditation opportunities
 - Arboretum facility, integration with water
- 4. EXISTING POND AND SOUTH PLAYGROUND**
 - Reseal and expand pond
 - Dog run, hard surface play, splash pad areas
 - More shade and passive access to pond
 - Fishing, Hammocking, Natural Play, Trails
- 5. YOUTH BASEBALL & CONTROLLED ACCESS**
 - Improvements to fields 1-4
 - Shift fields 5-8 east for parking, circulation
 - Restrooms and Concessions
- 6. NORTH PLAYGROUND, TRAILS, FUTURE CONNECTIONS**
 - North playground area
 - Residential facing park, future growth



4 Master Plan

ART POND AND TRAIL LOOP



ENLARGED FOCUS AREA & IMAGE BOARD



4 Master Plan

ART POND AND TRAIL LOOP

AREA RENDERING



4 Master Plan

Master Plan – Illustrative

Key Areas of Interest

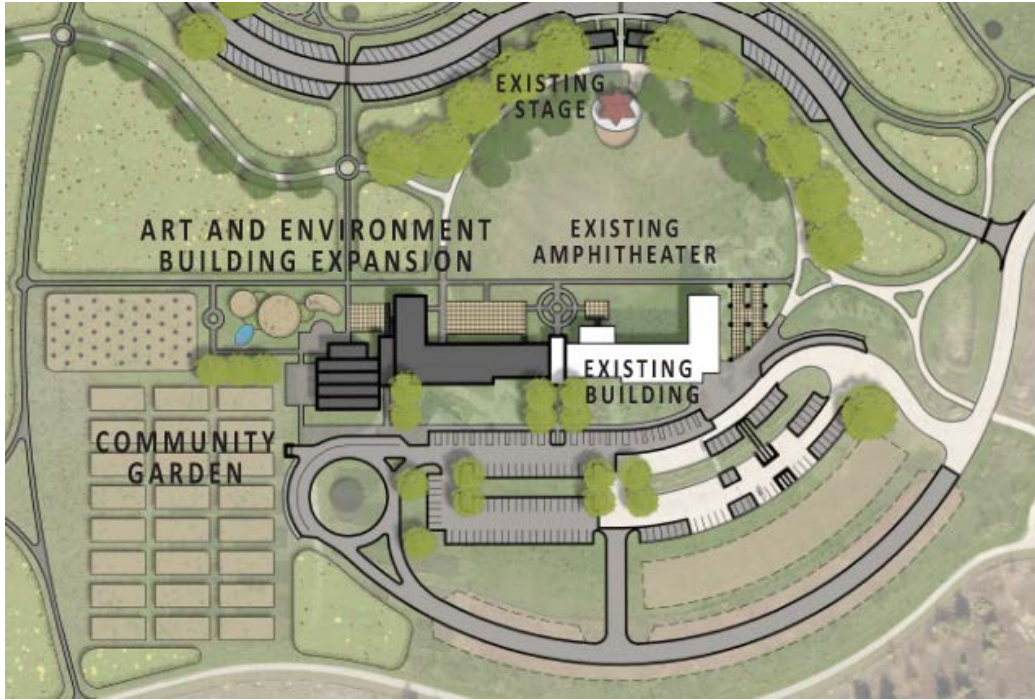
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4 Master Plan

ARTS AND ENVIRONMENT CENTER

ENLARGED FOCUS AREA & IMAGE BOARD



4 Master Plan

ARTS AND ENVIRONMENT CENTER

AREA RENDERING



4 Master Plan

Master Plan – Illustrative

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4 Master Plan

ARBORETUM, MEDITATION, AND NATURAL AREAS



ENLARGED FOCUS AREA & IMAGE BOARD



4 Master Plan

AREA RENDERING

ARBORETUM, MEDITATION, AND NATURAL AREAS



4 Master Plan

Master Plan – Illustrative

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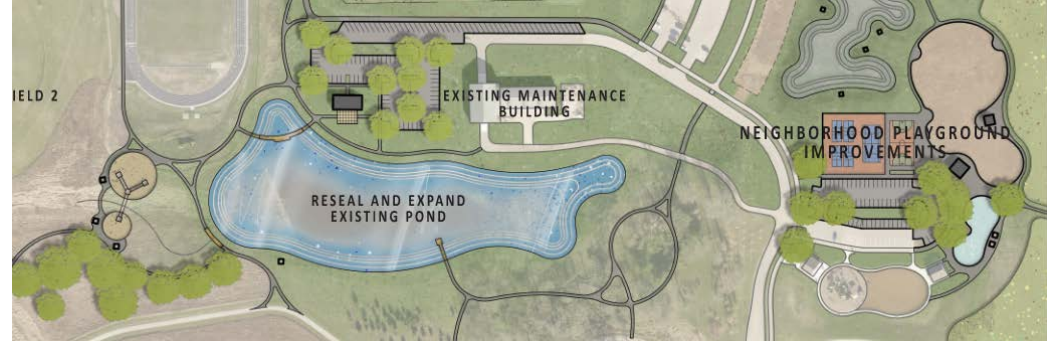
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4 Master Plan

EXISTING POND AND SOUTH PLAYGROUND

ENLARGED FOCUS AREA & IMAGE BOARD



4 Master Plan

EXISTING POND AND SOUTH PLAYGROUND

AREA RENDERING



4 Master Plan

Master Plan – Illustrative

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4 Master Plan

YOUTH BASEBALL & CONTROLLED ACCESS

ENLARGED FOCUS AREA & IMAGE BOARD



4 Master Plan

YOUTH BASEBALL & CONTROLLED ACCESS

AREA RENDERING



4 Master Plan

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Master Plan – Illustrative



4 Master Plan

NORTH PLAYGROUND, TRAILS,
FUTURE CONNECTIONS



ENLARGED FOCUS AREA & IMAGE BOARD



4 Master Plan

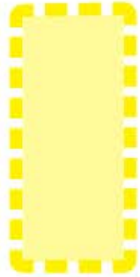
AREA RENDERING

NORTH PLAYGROUND, TRAILS, FUTURE CONNECTIONS



PHASING PLAN LEGEND

OPINION OF PROBABLE CONSTRUCTION COST
(INCLUDES 20% CONTINGENCY)



1-3 YEAR PLAN:

AREA 1 - ARTS AND ENVIRONMENT CENTER	\$13.3 MILLION
AREA 2 - SOUTHWEST POND AREA IMPROVEMENTS	\$3 MILLION
AREA 3 - WETLANDS & DOG RUN	\$1.1 MILLION
AREA 4 - BALLFIELDS 1-4	\$4.5 MILLION



3-10 YEAR PLAN:

AREA 5 - STAGE & AMPHITHEATER	\$2 MILLION
AREA 6 - SOUTH NEIGHBORHOOD PLAYGROUND	\$1.8 MILLION
AREA 7 - TRACK & FIELD/BALLFIELDS 5-8	\$1.5 MILLION
AREA 8 - SOUTH LODGE	\$1.2 MILLION
AREA 9 - ARBORETUM & MEDITATION	\$3.2 MILLION

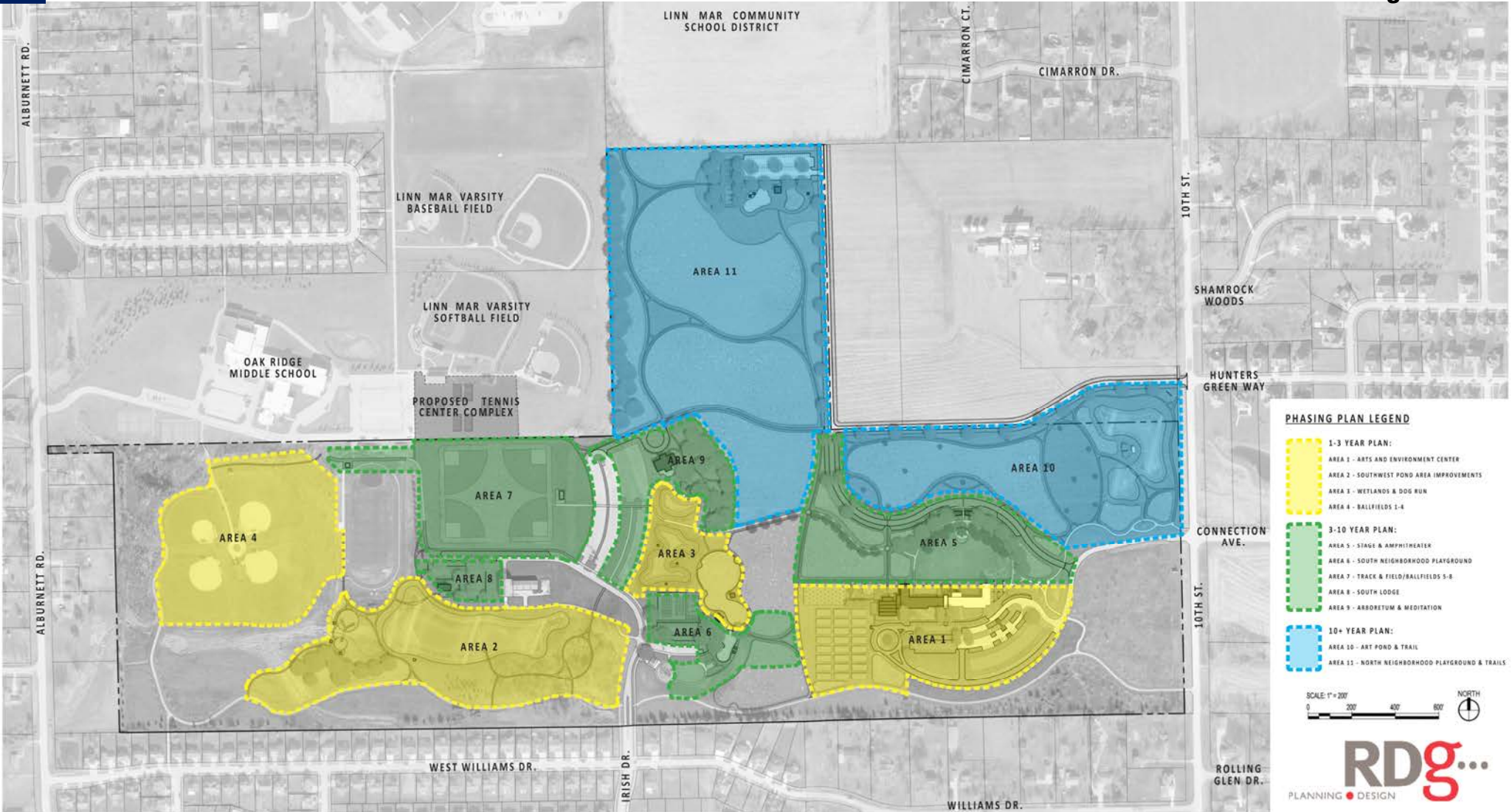


10+ YEAR PLAN:

AREA 10 - ART POND & TRAIL	\$1.1 MILLION
AREA 11 - NORTH NEIGHBORHOOD PLAYGROUND & TRAILS	\$2.2 MILLION

OVERALL TOTAL

\$34.9 MILLION



PHASING PLAN LEGEND

- 1-3 YEAR PLAN:**
 - AREA 1 - ARTS AND ENVIRONMENT CENTER
 - AREA 2 - SOUTHWEST POND AREA IMPROVEMENTS
 - AREA 3 - WETLANDS & DOG RUN
 - AREA 4 - BALLFIELDS 1-4
- 3-10 YEAR PLAN:**
 - AREA 5 - STAGE & AMPHITHEATER
 - AREA 6 - SOUTH NEIGHBORHOOD PLAYGROUND
 - AREA 7 - TRACK & FIELD/BALLFIELDS 5-8
 - AREA 8 - SOUTH LODGE
 - AREA 9 - ARBORETUM & MEDITATION
- 10+ YEAR PLAN:**
 - AREA 10 - ART POND & TRAIL
 - AREA 11 - NORTH NEIGHBORHOOD PLAYGROUND & TRAILS

SCALE: 1" = 200'

0 200' 400' 600'

NORTH

RDg
PLANNING • DESIGN





Appendix

Table of Contents

A Technical Committee
10/10/2022 Meeting Minutes

B Stakeholder Interviews
10/19/2022 Meeting Minutes

C Steering Committee
10/19/2022 Meeting Minutes

D Steering Committee
01/16/2023 Meeting Minutes

E Arts and Environment Center
Building Spatial Programming Analysis

Appendix A

Technical Committee - 10/10/2022 Meeting Minutes



meeting minutes

From:	Mike Sharp		
Project No.:	3005.560.00	File No.(s):	2.01
Date Prepared:	10/13/2022		
Meeting Date:	10/10/2022		

Project Name: Marion, IA – Lowe Park Master Plan Update

Subject: Technical Committee – 2pm via Zoom

Meeting Attendees: Seth Staashelm – Director of Parks & Recreation; City of Marion
Brent Neighbor – Deputy Director Parks & Recreation; City of Marion
Karlene Hummel – Recreation Superintendent; City of Marion
Lara Moellers – Programmer with City Library; City of Marion
Amber Bisinger – Communications Manager/Event Coordinator; City of Marion
Darin Andresen – Assistant City Engineer; City of Marion
Andy Parke – Building & Grounds Supervisor; Linn-Mar Schools
Mike Cimprich – City Arborist; City of Marion
Justin Platts – RDG
Colt McDermott – RDG
Mike Sharp - RDG

Comments, additions, or corrections to this memo should be communicated in writing to RDG Planning & Design within seven (7) days of receipt. If no comments are received within that period, this memo will be assumed accurate and filed as part of the permanent record for this project.

Discussion:

This memorandum summarizes the items discussed during the meeting referenced above.

- 1) Project reset/timeline
 - Justin and Colt gave updates to the current planning status and a quick history of what has transpired over the past few months, E.g., Steering Committee meeting, “Music under the moon” public feedback event.
 - Biggest takeaways for RDG:
 - This is Marion’s plan
 - Thoughtful
 - Taking the time to get it right.
- 2) Future scheduling
 - Goal will be to meet with this committee once a month, preferably on Mondays or Wednesdays during typical workday hours (8 – 5) via Zoom.
- 3) Evolution of park usage over the years, positives/negatives.
 - Natural Features/Water Ponds
 - Original plan incorporated some natural space areas focused on trees/vegetation, it has been successful and would like to see that trend continue.
 - Original plan shows multiple water features, currently only have one on the southwest side of the park



- (south of maintenance building). It was designed to be a wet pond and when it holds water and the level is high enough, it is used for fishing, exploration, interaction with nature.
 - Bentonite was used to line the pond and was designed for 10-year to 25-year rainfall events; however, it appears there's a leak so there's no consistent pool elevation and the pond doesn't hold water sufficiently/consistently.
 - Original master plan showing pond in center of park area will not work given existing topography, however the pond shown on the east side adjacent to 10th Street (natural low point) is possible and would be a nice addition and opportunity for more nature interaction.
- Large Events (Fireworks and Fireflies, Great American Kites, Weddings, Concerts)
 - Overall, have proven to be successful, well received and attended, parking and circulation are the biggest obstacles.
 - Ideal crowd size is approximately 3,500 people. Fireworks and Fireflies brings in closer to 7,000.
 - Current launch site for fireworks are the ballfields just north of the maintenance building. It was noted the school has approximately 92.5 acres north of this site, possibly consider coordination with the school to move the launch site further north and free up additional parking.
 - Marion's population is approximately 40,000, goal to improve parking and circulation to accommodate comfortably and efficiently 15% (6,000).
- 4) Programming – Events, Parking, Facilities, Seating
 - Parking and Vehicular/Pedestrian Circulation:
 - Look to implement multi-use, biophilic, structured grass overflow parking areas being mindful not to create wasted spaces, E.g., area between Marion Arts and Environment Center (MAEC) building and south neighborhood.
 - Existing grass parking works unless there's rain or soft/wet ground, then it becomes very limited
 - Parking/drives in partnership with schools for drop-off/pick-up stacking queues, mainly from the north
 - Consider parking areas coming from 10th Street and from the north with future residential development platting/road layouts.
 - Buses/shuttles/satellite offsite parking currently used for larger events, issue with traffic bottleneaking at the 10th Street entrance. Need to find ways to relieve the pressure at this location and be thoughtful for better emergency vehicle circulation/access.
 - Possible to have isolated loop drive for these vehicles and not lose parking.
 - Look at removable bollards, controlled entrance features, etc.
 - Need to provide more space for people around the MAEC building for activities as well as seating areas. This will help Marion monitor activities with the limited number of staff.
 - Connectivity:
 - Revisit the original goal of not having a through road in the park.
 - Consider the land uses and traffic plans from 20 years ago, still align with this plan?
 - Does the Tower Terrace Road project help justify connecting 10th Street to Irish Drive through the park?
 - Need to analyze and balance parking needs and park connectivity based on seasonal events
 - If parking lots sit empty when no large events, still worth providing a through route?
 - Darin has an older conceptual design showing the MAEC building connecting to the playground at the Irish Drive entry.
 - Long term improvements to 10th Street (3-lane urban cross section with trails) need to be considered.
 - Look at overall improvements to pedestrian connections, trails/walks (balanced between paved/natural).
 - Review ADA compliance for walks/trails/gathering spaces at MAEC building and ballfields.
 - Existing soccer fields to become Tennis Court Center. Current drive/walk from west school entry (Alburnett Rd) to be extended easterly (north of Lowe Park Fields 5 & 6) and connect to existing N/S parking lot off of Irish Dr. People currently park in fire lane instead of parking lots, how to alleviate this with the future connection/Tennis Center?



- Existing ballfields:
 - During tournaments, parking overflows into the school lots
 - When concerts or MAEC events occur on the same day, parking/circulation gets overwhelmed.
- 5) Needs v. Wants
 - MAEC building is at capacity
 - Need more office space.
 - Need more art room space for classes.
 - Identify library (north side additions?) needs for book drop-off, internet access.
 - Recreational services, interaction inside/outside.
 - Events in proximity and centered around MAEC. Look at providing enough space for large vehicles (food trucks, buses, etc.) to have easy access/parking, with people interacting around it.
 - Mobile Food Pantry
 - Book Mobile – Traveling to various districts, book drop-offs, interaction, electrical hook-ups
 - Senior Events and Services
 - Greenhouse and Maintenance buildings – look at opportunities to expand and improve
- 6) Park Growth – Adjacent Land Uses and Future Planning:
 - Revise master plan to be more realistic regarding existing property lines to the north.
 - Don't show park going onto existing private property.
 - Possible negotiation and collaboration with future residential development for land swap to allow for park to be more organic, not so grid-like, or rectilinear. Promote the idea of a shared drive so fronts of houses look out into the park rather than being fenced off with backyards facing the park.
 - Transportation and Circulation
 - Review school overflow stacking/queuing possibilities from Echo Hill Rd, layout and needs are much different from original master plan
 - Future infrastructure and utilities
 - Darin to meet separately with Mike Sharp to review utility needs and review buildable items/areas based on current and future networks.
- 7) What Should Happen?
 - Keep providing large amounts of natural space:
 - Honor Lowe family's vision, a truly native Iowa aesthetic.
 - Mowed paths, not paved.
 - Focus on original natural setting goals from original master plan.
 - Updates to the MAEC building:
 - Must happen, it's 20 years old and need to modernize.
 - Has become the unofficial senior center, think about programming opportunities
 - Derecho has been eye-opening, need to think about safety and providing adequate storm shelters
 - Host public/private events at the same time, revenue generating opportunities, community events of various sizes
 - Provide flexibility between hosted events and outside vendors, think about ticketing, security, access.
 - Improve the current athletic fields where necessary, but do not expand them.
 - Maintain and keep existing wayfinding/signage but also look for ways to improve. Navigating can be overwhelming for first-time park users.
 - Keep promoting passive play spaces, integrate high quality, unique, interactive play structures that look integrated with the natural setting, not something that appears as an afterthought.
 - Splash pads that are unique, inclusive for all abilities and age ranges, integrated with the natural surroundings and overall park aesthetic, and of high quality.
 - Mindful and positive community messaging
 - Stay aware and be sensitive of proposed community improvements, i.e., majority of development on north side, nothing for the south side.
 - Negotiations with school and future residential development on the north side (Echo Hill Rd.).



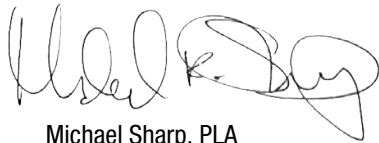
- Continued negotiations with Oak Ridge School for parking/access

8) What Should NOT Happen?

- Athletic Fields (New)
- Aquatic Centers / Swimming Pools
- Standard playground equipment (traditional post and deck structures) that look like an afterthought. Equipment and structures of high design quality would be allowed, as noted in item 7 above.

9) Next Steps

- Lowe Land Development Concepts
 - RDG to meet with Darin to understand acceptable future residential lot yields and how future growth can work for all parties.
- RDG will be in person for stakeholder interviews and steering committee meeting next Wednesday, October 19th, at the MAEC building.
- Next meeting between RDG and Marion Parks & Recreation planned for the week of October 24 – 28, 2022.



Michael Sharp, PLA

Appendix B

Stakeholder Interviews - 10/19/2022 Meeting Minutes



meeting minutes

From: Mike Sharp
Project No.: 3005.560.00 **File No.(s):** 2.01
Date Prepared: 10/31/2022
Meeting Date: 10/19/2022 10am – 3:30pm

Project Name: Lowe Park Master Plan – Marion, IA

Subject: Stakeholder Interviews – Arts and Environment Center

Meeting Schedule and Attending Groups: Youth Baseball (10am – 10:45am)
Art Council and Friends of the Park (10:45am – 11:30am)
Recreation Staff (11:30am – 12:15pm)
Lunch Survey with Senior Programming / Encore Café (12:15pm – 1pm)
Master Gardeners (1:15pm – 2pm)
Chamber and City Events (2pm – 2:45pm)
City Council and Park Board (2:45pm – 3:30pm)
RDG – Justin Platts, Mike Sharp

Comments, additions, or corrections to this memo should be communicated in writing to RDG Planning & Design within seven (7) days of receipt. If no comments are received within that period, this memo will be assumed accurate and filed as part of the permanent record for this project.

Discussion:

This memorandum summarizes the items discussed during the meeting referenced above.

1) Youth Baseball

Attendees: Brian Allison – Eastern IA Director
Nick Morrison – VP of MIYB
Brad Wegmann – LMYB Program
Matt Meidlinger – LMYB Program
Brent Neighbor – Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation

- MIYB (Marion Iowa Youth Baseball) – 12 teams with approximately 160 kids
- LMYB (Linn Mar Youth Baseball) – 41 teams with approximately 420 kids
- Not enough room, need to hold practices at Prospect Meadows, have also used Noelridge Park, Christian Church
- Games typically on Mondays and Thursdays, tournaments typically April – July.
- Primarily using Lowe fields 1-4 for games, tournaments, practices. Fields 5-8 not used as much, too small.
- Primary age groups 7U – 14U
- Fields 1-4
 - (1) Positives
 - (a) Overall layout
 - (b) Central space areas between diamonds
 - (c) Concessions



- (d) Restrooms
- (2) Negatives
 - (a) Need more restrooms
 - (b) Drainage – infields/outfields don't drain well, look at regrading the fields as well new infield surfacing material. Possible volunteer effort from local high schools/youth groups, etc.
 - (c) Field 2 is only one available after rain event, fields 3 and 4 are the worst. 4 used for younger kids.
 - (d) Lack of practice space in addition to when games are being played
- Fields 5-8
 - (1) Parks and Recreation primarily using these fields.
 - (2) Not being utilized but could be used for 7U and 8U if bases/plugs installed.
 - (3) Possibly get 11U and 12U if infields can accommodate 70' base dimensions
 - (4) Sometimes used as a practice field by team, decent infield for groundballs.
 - (5) Park using the outfield area for flag football, soccer, and cricket groups. How to make infield upgrades while preserving those spaces. Look at scheduling, use temporary/removable fencing during the summer baseball/softball season, remove in the fall for the other activities.
- Parking is a major challenge, almost all traffic comes from the west off Alburnett Rd. People end up parking wherever they can, in proximity to fields 1-4. Very little use of parking lot off Irish Dr near fields 5-8.
- Parking circulation during dual use events or weeknight doubleheaders is even more challenging, e.g., Linn Mar baseball or softball games, or any events at Oak Ridge Middle School.
- Look at providing connection to Irish Dr so traffic doesn't stack up and bottleneck on/off Alburnett Rd.
- Is there a way to get more fields? Bare minimum, try to improve fields 5-8 so they can be used by 7U – 12U.
- Infield practice space is desired.
- Storage is not an issue, portable pitching mounds kept at Lowe Park, but that's it.
- Additional practice features – Prospect Meadows a good example, especially for batting cages.
 - (1) Batting cages – the more the better, minimum of 2 per field (1 per team), don't need full length batting cages, half size almost better, can get more done. Cages that have synthetic turf are ideal, less impacted by rain, benefit of still practicing and use facility even if a game can't be played.
 - (2) Bullpens – the more the better, minimum of 2 per field (1 per team), synthetic turf per batting cages above.
 - (3) Space for soft toss, more L-screens, focus on batting practice spaces
 - (4) Pitching machines not necessary, extra expense, maintenance, storage.
 - (5) Space for kids to be in cages and on the field at the same time, then rotate.
- Synthetic turf infields can be nice, benefits of cost and ROI when compared to less maintenance and more playability. Not necessary if existing fields can be regraded and resurfaced.
- Player/Coach/Spectator experience
 - (1) Look for more shade opportunities, trees not large enough yet. Possible shade structures, permanent v. temporary.
 - (2) Signage and wayfinding are adequate, could be better for first time park users that go to the AEC instead.
 - (3) More restrooms and concessions.
- Possible phasing with lighting the fields.
 - (1) Benefit of spreading out schedules, get more games, 13U/14U practices can start later
 - (2) Not done all at once, look for partnerships, donations, volunteer efforts.
 - (3) Fundraising opportunities
 - (4) Be respectful of light pollution, downward lighting, be a good neighbor to surrounding residences
- Triple Play Sports Complex (Mt. Vernon Rd. and Hwy 13) is better example for 7U – 12U age groups, look at their facility as a good example, Prospect Meadows is more suited for high school ages, field size too large/not adaptable.
- Existing tennis courts NW of fields 1-4 are going to stay, need to figure out better circulation, more parking space.
- Projected parking equation: $10 - 12 \text{ kids per team} \times 1.5 = \text{number of cars per team}$.
- Summary / Priorities
 - (1) Focus on 7U – 12U, highest user age group
 - (2) More practice space or maximizing what they have



- (3) Batting Cages / Bullpens
- (4) Parking
- (5) Restrooms
- (6) Lighting – fundraising for 600+ kids
- (7) Growth of baseball and softball is constant – economic development.

2) Art Council and Friends of the Park

Attendees: Fuf Renfer – Marion Arts Council, School Arts Teacher
Jay Moore – Marion FD retired, Market Master, Marion Arts Council, Friends of the Park, AEC Supervisor for Revenue Generating Events
Brent Neighbor - Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation

- Overall goals:
 - 1) Hope to keep meeting the original goal to preserve, protect, and showcase the green/natural spaces. Done a good job with this for the first 20 years, hope the next 20 years are just as good/better.
 - 2) Keep the park adaptable for various events/uses but still focus on environment
 - 3) This is Marion's "Central Park".
 - 4) Athletic events on the west side, more natural/open space events on the east side, both areas work well together and can coexist! Put a cap on growth/expansion of athletic fields, don't infringe upon natural areas.
 - 5) Maintain original intent of not having a through road in the park connecting 10th to Alburnett Rd., this is a great thing.
- Arts and Environment Center building (AEC)
 - 1) Like to see it become an environmental showcase. Look for opportunities to enhance and showcase/teach sustainability throughout the park grounds and the areas adjacent to and within the AEC.
 - 2) More storage, restrooms, appropriate scale and size
 - 3) More parking, grass areas work OK. Look at more isolated parking areas, spread it out and still be efficient/functional.
 - 4) Excited about growth opportunities but expansion/additions to be programmed thoughtfully and be sensitive to what currently works well, needs to fit the aesthetic.
 - 5) Work with Tony Ireland for more environmental programs. Focus more on the botanical opportunities and look at events that can be held inside and outside, complement what's already there with the gardens, art, pond, etc.
 - 6) Has become very popular spot for photography, homecomings, proms, weddings. Hosted approximately 50 graduation parties last spring, look to program and expand to be able to host public events along with private events.
 - 7) Flora/fauna pond, preserve and improve for educational opportunities.
 - 8) More space for indoor learning opportunities
 - a) Art
 - More classrooms dedicated for art only, adults and/or kid programs
 - More storage space, movable tables, multiple sinks, no clay/dust
 - Space for 20 – 25 adults/kids for classes
 - Create more gallery/exhibit space, it currently feels lost or forgotten. Increase space and can host dual events simultaneously.
 - b) More space for senior events, look at current events, more rooms as necessary.
 - c) STEM and art activities/rooms for K – 12 students, integrate into the art classrooms, create interactive exhibits.
 - d) Day camps for kids in summer and winter



- Trails and Outdoor Venues
 - 1) Expansion of trail network, both paved and natural
 - 2) Include opportunities for botanical art implementation, signage, and interaction, like the nodes along the trail for aerospace and sundial memorial
 - 3) Addition of an arboretum/botanical building facility. Look to blend uses between an educational component and public/private events, e.g., weddings with permanent altar, class pictures, etc.
 - 4) Outdoor Classroom opportunities, implement close to the AEC building but also out on the grounds/park/pond. Wetland areas and defined spaces.
- Greenhouse and Gardens
 - 1) Expand, create larger greenhouse with shared space for opportunity to collaborate with art integration
 - 2) Provide storage and restrooms, be independent from AEC.
- Future Growth, what should and should not happen
 - 1) Katie Lowe's farm, approximately 11 acres, look to obtain it and integrate into the overall natural/historical context of the park.
 - 2) Preserve and enhance the natural park aesthetic, groves of trees native to Iowa, prairies
 - 3) Have a good relationship with Parks Department, need to keep that tradition and collaboration strong.
 - 4) Space for new sculptures, permanent/temporary.
 - 5) Maximizing community events, look for positive collaborative opportunities in neighborhood and entire metro area:
 - Cedar Rapids Freedom Festival – starting location for bike event
 - Free public events: movie nights, coffee house nights, star gazing, music
 - Concerts and private/public events
 - Mix of age ranges
 - 6) Things to avoid or use caution:
 - a) Tall lights
 - b) Minimal concrete, find balance between more parking and no concrete
 - c) No road connection through the park
 - d) Aquatic recreation
 - e) Overprogramming the park, standard/traditional shelters, picnic tables, keep natural/green/native
 - f) Be sensitive to the type and size of ticketed events, don't want a circus, festivals, BBQ rendezvous
- What should happen first?
 - 1) Classroom space for Arts Council
 - 2) Help promote volunteerism for events
 - 3) Next sculpture, funding available over the next couple years

3) Recreation Staff

Attendees: Karlene Hummel – Recreation Superintendent
Seth Staashelm - Director of Parks and Recreation
Allie Waterman – Recreation Program Coordinator
Brent Neighbor - Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation

- Arts and Environment Center (AEC) building:
 - 1) Proximity to amphitheater, for certain events it can feel too close. Need to coordinate adequate and efficient space for event seating, ADA accessibility, parking, pedestrian/vehicular circulation
 - 2) Too many fixed spaces in the AEC, wasted space, can't have 2 events at the same time
 - 3) Art is a priority, need more space:
 - Standalone classrooms and storage
 - Uses isolated from other events.
 - More passive and quiet space
 - More sensory needs space



- 4) Maximize various rooms and uses to hold events at the same time, improve shared times/scheduling.
 - 5) Improve lighting (inside/outside), focus on interior lighting, too dark.
 - 6) Improve A/V technology, look at built-ins, projectors into the walls, create a seamless, integrated system.
 - 7) Improve sound/acoustics (only have sound in Oaks Room)
 - 8) Provide audio connectivity between rooms and throughout the building, providing more options for meetings, presentations, plug-in at one point and go, etc.
 - 9) TV's or monitors mounted with ability to be wireless or connected to staff computers for wayfinding, slide shows, presentations, etc.
 - 10) HVAC Improvements:
 - Currently a challenge
 - Too cold in winter, too hot in summer
 - Window louvers to knock down heat gain
 - Systems to be more efficient during all 4 seasons.
 - 11) Add hand dryers in all restrooms
 - 12) Add more water bottle filling stations (inside/outside).
 - 13) Look at creative ways to update building power while being sustainable and providing teachable moments, e.g., school STEM programs, AEC with trail leading to wind turbines, areas for solar, geo-thermal.
 - 14) Provide space for senior programs, youth groups, create lounge spaces, Esports lounge.
 - 15) Additional office spaces for city arborist, horticulturist, recreation staff. Overall, looking at approximately 4 offices with 4 – 6 drop-in spaces/cubicles.
 - 16) Add storm shelter / safe room.
 - 17) Existing multi-purpose room max occupancy of 130+/- . Building can have a maximum of approximately 450+/- people at the same time but they're not all in the same room. Need to have multi-purpose room accommodate closer to 200.
 - 18) Add conference rooms (for 12 – 15 people) and smaller break out rooms/spaces.
 - 19) No break room, need a sink in back room.
 - 20) Events and programming
 - a) Opportunities for revenue generating services – concessions, alcohol sales (currently BYOB), more restrooms
 - b) Improved crowd control – difficult to fence off the area, circulation, pedestrian staging areas (beer garden/patio)
 - c) Ticketed events – more infrequent, how to control access on a temporary basis
 - d) Lighting / Security – pre and post events, better wayfinding, illuminate parking areas and walks, easier to see and navigate when leaving at dark.
- Klopfenstein Amphitheater:
 - 1) Need more restrooms, storage
 - 2) Need better back of house facilities:
 - a) Dressing rooms, changing spaces, green rooms, performers expect a private dressing/lounge space
 - b) Special event storage, A/V equipment, rigging for lights A/V
 - c) Production truck/tent space – challenge of being close to stage but out of the way, e.g., don't detract from the overall setting / venue aesthetic. Have used RV's in the past, OK but could be much better
 - Park Amenities
 - 1) Open green space for athletic activities is at a premium, need more passive spaces. Try to provide highest quality lawn/surfacing possible while not adding more fields for flag football, soccer, baseball, softball. Possibly add synthetic turf for maintenance and use purposes but need to weigh the advantages/disadvantages.
 - 2) Only space for small soccer fields, nothing permanently programmed, setup wherever can find room.
 - 3) Soccer use, largest age group 3 – 8, camps, practices, and games.
 - 4) Revenue possibility in charging for the programmed practice space v. open green space, worth it?
 - 5) Athletic use priority list: baseball then soccer, need to provide more basketball opportunities.
 - 6) Need more parking, restrooms, concessions, shade structures, safety via netting/fencing.



- 7) Areas between fields, look to balance the space needed for an emergency service drive with multiple shade structures v. one large pavilion.
- 8) Add restrooms near track and field.
- 9) Improve access entry points with vehicular signage/wayfinding throughout the park, guests will frequently come in, turnaround, and use different entrance, typical for ballfield users.
- 10) Improve pedestrian signage/wayfinding. Provide trail data (mileage), map/navigating services, make a trail loop within the park, connectivity across the north side from fields 1-4 to 5-8.
- 11) Provide pet clean up stations (cans and bags).
- 12) More benches along trails, more trash/recycling receptacles.
- 13) Water – when SW pond holds water, it becomes a good fishing pond, provide access and signage to give users awareness to where it is and that it exists.
- 14) Security:
 - a) Trails highly utilized from early morning to late night, don't currently have gates or cameras, need for cameras/lighting?
 - b) Concerns more on west side, parking lots along Irish Dr
 - c) Need security cameras at AEC (inside/outside), amphitheater, modernize overall system
 - d) Add coded/fobbed key access to buildings, manage who is entering
 - e) Consider adding emergency call boxes, none now and no lighting on the south loop trail, be proactive.

4) Senior Programming / Encore Café – Survey Comments

- More parking and ADA parking for seniors
- Swimming pool
- Beer tent
- Need more trees
- Outdoor and garden lighting along sidewalks
- Amphitheater seating for stage
- More kitchen storage
- Upgraded commercial kitchen appliances

5) Master Gardeners

Attendees: Phil Pfister – Master Gardeners
Sandy Rosenberger – Linn County Master Gardener Coordinator
Linda Hayward – Master Gardener Demonstration Garden and Greenhouse Lead
Brenda Van Gorp – Master Gardener Demonstration Garden and Greenhouse Lead
Randy Dusil – Master Gardener Demonstration Garden and Greenhouse Lead
Seth Staashelm – Director of Parks and Recreation
Brent Neighbor – Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation

- Improve wayfinding/signage, baseball users must turn around
- Existing food pantry garden plots work well, very important, approximately 50+ people
- Mission: “to educate people about gardening” Always looking for ways to help educate the public
- Maintaining existing and developing new partnerships
 - 1) Public Garden Plots
 - 2) Library (Library “talks”)
 - 3) Groups that already rent out the plots
 - 4) Various neighborhood/community events
- Currently use the AEC building twice a year, would like to see that expand for the benefit of providing indoor and outdoor classroom spaces.



- Lighting improvements
 - 1) Parking lot and inside building, too dark
 - 2) Improve lighting along walks, upgrade existing bollards
 - 3) Consider vehicular and pedestrian scale lighting
 - 4) LED's have made a big improvement, opportunity for night classes
- Relocate dumpster location for ease of use, safety, and promote open views.
- Eliminated lip between gardens and parking lot
- ADA accessible gardens/raised beds, possibly survey community for overall interest in raised planters/beds
- Parks Department Greenhouse:
 - 1) Discussion to tie this to the south side of the master gardener's facility
 - 2) Explore benefits of a "head house", would provide classroom space for kids and adults.
 - 3) Need its own restrooms so not dependent upon the AEC building, appreciate the porta-potty they have.

- Improve water access/irrigation for conifer garden during the dry months
- Overall water pressure/access is difficult
- Demonstration garden improvements (located in front of AEC building)
 - 1) Current location is good, its prime real estate, got positive feedback and is a major asset to their programs, don't want to move. If there is expansion, want to be near areas with higher use / foot traffic.
 - 2) Need an automated irrigation system, water spicket on south side is difficult to turn, improve ASAP?
 - 3) Rain runoff from roof adjacent can inundate the gardens, Seth noted there will be gutters added this fall, need to observe and assess in the spring as they may not catch everything.
 - 4) ADA compliant walkways, surfacing is loose and hazardous for all users
 - 5) Great experience for first time users, improve partnership with AEC and create opportunities for discovery, make it more of a showcase, help draw more people in.
- Greenhouse improvements
 - 1) Utilities, different ways to power and heat building, look at solar, wind, geo-thermal v. natural gas. Opportunities to provide floor heat, all options to be teachable moments, educational demonstrations.
 - 2) Specific needs to have hydroponic garden areas
 - 3) Storm water management and analysis, implement permeable pavers, storm water infiltration, collection basins. More teachable opportunities in water collection data, quantity/quality, etc.
 - 4) More space desired, 28' x 36' current size and too small.
 - 5) Ideal facility is either 1 larger building with partitions to provide different growing conditions or multiple smaller buildings connected to a headhouse.
- Possible expansion of gardens and addition of orchard, opportunity to partner with local food pantries, partner with local groups (Trees Forever, City of Marion – tree trimming classes), but need more space to do so.
- Very appreciative of overall grounds crew, very good service, and partnership.
- Addition of dog park, many people bring their dogs during various events, have a dedicated space for them, look at proximity of other dog parks in the community (Wannatee and Hiawatha).
- Addition of a 1-acre farmstead demonstration area
 - 1) Display existing crops (corn and bean plot) preserve a historical context
 - 2) Provide interactive exhibits with trucks/tractors/farm equipment, opportunity to bring in the public and continue to educate as the surrounding neighborhoods continue to grow.
 - 3) Example of what the park used to be, show the timeline / evolution of community development.
 - 4) Acknowledge Iowa's native prairie and agricultural roots (example: Neil Smith Wildlife Refuge – how to tell the story with signage/exhibits)



6) Chamber and City Events

Attendees: Jill Ackerman – Chamber of Commerce
Tami Schlamp – Chamber of Commerce
Jessica Carney – Event Coordinator
Amber Bisinger – Communications Manager
Seth Staashelm - Director of Parks and Recreation
Brent Neighbor - Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation

- Parking and circulation need to improve
- Maintain the overall natural feel
- Trails are an asset but add more and improve the existing ones
- Extend trail system north for future Echo Hill Rd development, Hazel Point School, Oak Ridge School
- More water usage/interaction/fishing opportunities, fix the SW pond
- Addition of botanical garden/arboretum to get winter usage, public interaction, plant storage
- Improve fireworks event
 - 1) Consult with Marion Fire Department on better launch location
 - 2) Better parking and circulation to help deal with large crowds
 - 3) Think about viewing angles
 - 4) Restricted parking/access to help with crowd control
- Klopfenstein Amphitheater Event Improvements
 - 1) To draw bigger shows – assess audio/video/electrical needs
 - 2) Structural requirements for rigging, lights, speakers, etc.
 - 3) Staging of temporary power facilities
 - a) Power needs – 200amp, 3 phase service, 15/20 Edison outlets, multiple outlets
 - b) Generator locations, how to screen from public view, make it more back of house
 - c) More outlets for food trucks and vendors
 - 4) More stage storage
 - 5) Provide space and connections for vendors, beer sales, designated locations, wayfinding.
 - 6) Ticketing events, revenue generating is a plus but how to address security and circulation with limited staff
 - 7) Need more permanent restrooms
 - 8) Temporary restrooms, “porta-potty coral”, need better lighting
 - 9) More staging and back of house areas (green room / dressing rooms)
 - 10) Host more events other than concerts, ex. Yoga, theaters, plays, etc. Assess A/V needs, wireless capabilities, acoustics, cameras, accessibility, service/mechanical equipment
 - 11) Make amphitheater more interactive and showcase when not in use, lighting/sound.
 - 12) Birds can be an issue, roosting/nesting.
 - 13) Improved overall lighting for amphitheater, paths, parking
 - a) Implement house lights to provide safer wayfinding during evening events, area is very dark
 - b) Temporary v. permanent lighting
 - 14) Need to be sensitive towards crowd control, crowd control, limiting space, nothing permanent, be adaptable.
 - 15) Be mindful of tree locations, where and how many, wind can be an issue during amphitheater events.
 - 16) Fixed permanent seating adjacent to the stage v. open green space, needs for ADA compliant accessibility and their locations.
 - 17) Better ways to indicate seating areas and walking aisles, improved spacing/organization.
- Smaller more intimate performance area, separate from amphitheater
- Creation of large open air performance space with covered stage
 - 1) ex: Indian Creek Nature Center but bigger
 - 2) Storage needs
 - 3) Concessions
- Provide rentable spaces for smaller events: birthdays, graduation parties, retreats (ex: Squaw Creek but bigger)



- Facilities to serve as a rain contingency – back up options for events of various sizes, approximately 500 people
- Ideas for potential events – assess spatial needs and constraints
 - 1) Glamping at the Amp
 - 2) Local neighborhood farmer's market
 - 3) Whispering Dishes?
 - 4) Band Wagon – smaller event space south of AEC parking lot
 - 5) Kites
 - 6) Interaction with “Falliday”, Encore Café, fire pits seating/gathering areas
 - 7) Outdoor Christmas Market – best location? Sheds kept up 3 weeks at a time in conditioned space.
- Opportunities to add shade, natural, built, temporary throughout the park.
- Art trail has been successful, would like to see that continue to grow
- Better lighting for trails, parking, permanent fixtures.
- Visual and noise screening from Linn Mar varsity fields.
- Possible animal interaction, seasonal themed, petting zoo – goats, reindeer, equestrian
- Tami has information on audio, video, power infrastructure.

7) City Council and Park Board

Attendees: Nicolas AbouAssaly – Mayor
Sara Mentzer – City Council
Amy Hussel – Marion Parks Board
Seth Staashelm - Director of Parks and Recreation
Brent Neighbor - Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation

- Important to focus on events that fit naturally into the neighborhood/community.
- Amphitheater has done well with overall programming
- Park has become a regional asset, public interest, very well used.
- Public community gardens are very popular, look at future uses/expansion, interest from many groups, host more demonstrations / teaching opportunities.
- Parking overall seems adequate, but it's a challenge during large events.
- Desire for more water interaction / engagement
- Pond near maintenance building not holding water, create and promote easier access and interaction, fishing, close proximity to south playground.
- Forested area near maintenance pond used for hammocking, one of the few natural shade refuge areas in the park. Great example of natural shade, unique and not overprogrammed, doesn't feel like a traditional park with shade shelter.
- Ticketed events, need to address spatial organization, security, points of crowd/traffic control.
- Explore possible revenue generating events while preserving and showcasing the natural feel and park aesthetic
 - 1) Maintain and improved local partnerships, ex. Yoga, meditation areas, water interaction, fishing
 - 2) Implement larger event that is more regional for public interest, ex. Houston, TX (Cockrell indoor butterfly habitat/museum). Create destination feature via botanical/arboretum space, something unique
 - 3) Outdoor garden space, ex. Scottsdale, AZ (Chihuly exhibit) desert botanical garden. Create experience that is immersed and interactive, unique, tells a story, leads you out and through the space, 4 season access.
- AEC building improvements
 - 1) Needs overall upgrades/modernization.
 - 2) Assess room configuration, spatial/storage needs
 - 3) Kitchen
 - a) Needs overall upgrade
 - b) No commercial appliances
 - c) Layout for teaching opportunities



- 4) West building entry is heavily used, used more than originally intended, need wider doors or revise location for better circulation/access.
 - 5) Water feature should be bigger or possibly go away, also needs a new liner
 - 6) Play structure doesn't seem to belong, can it be relocated? Seems out of context when larger events are taking place, south playground should suffice and could add playground on the north side.
 - 7) Programming of events, need adequate space, host dual events at same time, being adaptable
 - a) Senior events
 - b) Esports
 - c) Library
 - d) Encore Café
 - e) Canning classes
 - f) Blood drives
 - g) YMCA activities
 - h) Youth groups
 - i) Retreats
 - 8) Art Gallery is an asset but can get missed based on location, need better way to showcase and highlight it.
- Klopfenstein Amphitheater improvements
 - 1) Technology around the stage, better A/V and electrical
 - 2) Acoustics / Lighting
 - 3) Variety of events, ex. Plays/theatrical
 - 4) Staging areas, green / dressing rooms, access to stage closer to the AEC building
 - 5) Opportunities for smaller events elsewhere at the same time
 - 6) Consider reorienting a mobile stage to be closer to the building, flip it 180 degrees, new concrete.
 - Community Gardens:
 - 1) Popular, in high demand.
 - 2) Small operational costs to the city, Parks Dept. provides water, need better supply via irrigation?
 - 3) Long term vision, is there a better overall location for these and with any AEC expansion?
 - 4) Try to understand, do people use the gardens based on their proximity or is it the best facility available in the community?
 - Trail safety, park is much more popular, however this leads to various trail users. Some adults bike too fast on trail with family/kids, possible ways to slow down and have dual use?
 - Farmland leased ground area is an annual agreement, will want to give plenty of notice to farmer in advance.
 - Provide more amenities for pets/dogs, watering stations, existing one at the south playground is highly used.
 - Add programming for winter events, ex. Snowshoeing, cross-country ski rentals (ex. Jester Park), provide natural groomed trails, fat tire bike trails
 - There are enough athletic fields but update the existing facilities, focus on the natural feel of the park
 - Examine areas that are currently unused and assess whether to tap into them or leave alone
 - Assess overall infrastructure needs and update as necessary
 - Need to improve vehicular circulation but still honor the original agreement of no thru road in the park connecting 10th St to Alburnett Rd.
 - 1) Vehicle drop-off lanes
 - 2) Parking
 - 3) Shuttle to satellite parking areas
 - 4) Buses, isolated loop drive
 - 5) Emergency vehicles
 - Pedestrian access from outside the park, no walking currently available coming from 10th St., coordinate future improvements planned for 10th St expansion with City Engineer/Planning/Public Works.



Mike Sharp, PLA



Appendix C

Steering Committee - 10/19/2022 Meeting Minutes



meeting minutes

From:	Mike Sharp		
Project No.:	3005.560.00	File No.(s):	2.01
Date Prepared:	10/31/2022		
Meeting Date:	10/19/2022		

Project Name: Lowe Park Master Plan Update

Subject: Steering Committee Meeting #2 – Oaks Room: Arts and Environment Center: 4 – 6pm

Meeting Attendees: Nicolas AbouAssaly – Mayor / City Council Member
Amy Hussel – Park Board Member
Jay Moore – Friends of Marion Parks
Katie Lowe-Lancaster – Lowe Family Member
Jill Ackerman – Chamber Staff
Vic Klopfenstein – Community Member
Tiffany Hermsen – Community Member
Ahmed Elsayy – Mayor’s Youth Council
Fuf Renfer – Arts Council Member
Phil Pfister – Master Gardeners
Sara Mentzer – City Council Member
Seth Staashelm – Director of Parks & Recreation
Brent Neighbor – Deputy Director of Parks & Recreation
Karlene Hummel – Recreation Superintendent
Justin Platts – RDG Planning & Design
Mike Sharp – RDG Planning & Design

Comments, additions, or corrections to this memo should be communicated in writing to RDG Planning & Design within seven (7) days of receipt. If no comments are received within that period, this memo will be assumed accurate and filed as part of the permanent record for this project.

Discussion:

This memorandum summarizes the items discussed during the meeting referenced above.

- 1) RDG give summary of recent public engagement and current project status
 - 8/13/22 Music Under the Moon – public feedback
 - 9/12/22 Steering Committee Mtg #1 – confirm original vision, assess public feedback
 - 10/10/22 Technical Committee Mtg #1
 - 10/19/22 Stakeholder Interviews

- 2) Existing Programming
 - Park functions well with athletics and natural areas being used at the same time
 - Park is unique, different from the traditional parks with standard structures and amenities.
 - Community enjoys the proximity to natural refuge, open green space
 - Quality connections to the surrounding neighborhoods, feels very welcoming, inclusive for all age groups



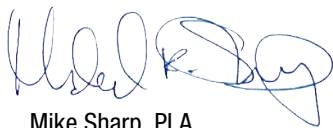
- Has become a regional destination through both active and passive event programming, would like to see it continue, regional means the greater Cedar Rapids metro area, but could extend further for some events.
 - Markets/festivals
 - Fireworks
 - Biking/walking trails
 - Art, classes and sculptures (buffalo)
 - Athletics
 - Private events (graduations/weddings)
 - Concerts and entertainment
 - Environmental and biological areas
- 3) Programming Improvements
- Provide teachable/educational centers
 - Opportunities for interaction
 - Create physical learning spaces
 - Connections to schools, STEM programs, focus on environment, sustainability, arts, gardening, water
 - Indian Creek Nature Center and Wickiup Hill Learning Center are good examples
 - Park has become unofficial community senior center
 - LIFT buses don't come here, provide public access/transportation for those that don't drive
 - Youth messaging
 - Younger ages, HS groups, don't know about the park
 - Reach out for more connections to the schools to help make them aware
 - Park has hosted HS Cross Country races, do more of this
 - Look at more night specific activities, intentional uses at night, how does the park change at night?
 - Safety and security, overall OK, noticed some drag racing at parking lot adjacent to fields 5-8. How to make it safe, feel intentional and welcoming at night?
 - Gathering spaces
 - Opportunities to gather over food, cookouts. Think bigger, something unique, not a traditional grill.
 - Additional pavilions and shelters strategically located
 - More seating – tables, benches, chairs, hammocks, etc.
 - Passive and Active spaces, don't over program, find right balance
- 4) Arts and Environment Center Improvements
- Be able to tell a story
 - Honor the history
 - Can't develop just to develop
 - Inclusive to a quickly growing Marion, looking to the future
 - Becoming a destination with community and neighborhood connection
 - Overall building and area need to be modernized.
 - Be sensitive and cognizant to the direction and size of expansion or additions and how that changes the experience, maintain the east – west viewshed.
 - Keep high design standards, above and beyond typical structures/amenities
 - Assess spatial needs for more offices, classrooms, storage
 - Need more restrooms
 - More parking, better circulation
 - Adaptable and more meeting rooms
 - Improve indoor/outdoor lighting
 - Art gallery and shrunk dramatically, need to showcase it



- Indoor/Outdoor events
 - Has become a photographer’s dream: weddings, homecomings, prom, graduation parties
 - Revenue generating opportunities: ticketing, concessions, etc.
 - Need more space for gathering, meeting, and classes
 - Opportunities to mix outdoor with indoor activities, botanical garden
 - Dual uses
 - Provide ability for multiple events to coincide
 - Currently causes congestion, parking, and pedestrian/vehicular circulation constraints
 - Relocate gardens and greenhouse to find more efficient location
 - Intention to keep accessing from multiple points of entry, no one item or area dominates the other features in and around the AEC building.
 - Klopfenstein Amphitheater
 - Add permanent seating close to stage, reserved, prime location, revenue generating
 - ADA accessibility overall, multiple vantage points, focus on the end user experience.
 - Smaller performance stage opportunities, possible to use stage passively when not in use.
 - Better staging/back of house visual screening of equipment (as seen from spectators and 10th St), trucks loading and parking locations
 - Improve technology
- 5) Passive v. Active Park Uses and Improvements
- Increase overall park water interaction and activities
 - Addition of more passive, intimate spaces
 - Mediation nodes
 - Passive discovery trails
 - Informal picnic areas
 - Botanical / Arboretum Facility
 - Scottsdale Botanical Garden example
 - Educational for when vegetables should be planted, harvested
 - Demonstration and teaching garden pods
 - Grow and sell natural produce at various times throughout the year
 - Mentorship opportunities
 - Incorporate interactive art
 - Partnerships with local non-profits, community groups
 - Addition of Meditation Center – escapes from noise and distractions
 - Meditation Center in the woods, simple structure visually connected to nature
 - Defining that use, one central facility or multiple passive pavilions?
 - Possible large building structure, arboretum, or botanical center
 - Sun dials, pods/nodes to stop along trails, something in addition to the sculptures
 - Different pods for different people: cornfield, trees/forest, grasslands, water, art, etc.
 - Smaller scale, passive spaces to experience
 - Areas integrated with water
 - Educational possibilities via signage or interactive exhibits highlighting surrounding land uses, existing conditions, historical context, indigenous people, environmental and botanical areas
 - Consider making meditation a part of the AEC building
 - Indian Creek Nature Center has good example of indoor meditation.
 - Urban Farm / Community Gardens
 - Incorporating pollinators, bees/butterflies, how that works with open green space and gardens.
 - Relocation, possibly have multiple locations
 - Connection to a senior center or botanical center
 - Goals for the next 10 years
 - Public demonstrations and educational opportunities



- Interactive setup for regular and first-time users
 - Mentoring and collaboration with schools, community groups, food pantries
 - Corn and soybeans – work with nonprofits and food banks, interpretive learning classes
 - Art Sculptures / Trail
 - Continued trail access and nodes, more sculptures and art, interactive
 - Collaborative experiences
 - Learning opportunities – From buffaloes to prairies to satellites
 - Historical acknowledgments – create a timeline trail, look back at the past, what did this area look like 50, 100 years ago, tie into meditation areas
 - Playgrounds
 - High design standards for equipment, use pieces that fit the natural theme, are unique
 - Morgan Creek, Wanatee Park at Squaw Creek, good examples
- 6) Art Pond
- Natural low point, make sure it is sized accurately
 - Want to showcase the amenity right off 10th St near the park entry
 - Experience and interaction
 - Meditation spots
 - Fishing
 - Piers, docks, boardwalks
 - Pavilion access
 - Water activities – paddle boarding, canoes, kayaks, etc.
 - Integrate art trail and sculptures to water access
 - Naperville example – kids on the water
- 7) Parkwide Improvements
- Upgrade technology throughout, better A/V/power
 - Interactive signage, better wayfinding
 - Plant identification, QR codes, botanical learning opportunities
 - Upgrade lighting for safety and security, directional lighting to be dark sky compliant
 - Look for opportunities to implement solar and wind turbines
 - Improve the digital programming display on the main entry sign on 10th St
- 8) What areas need to be a focus for the future?
- Educational opportunities
 - Maintain and promote the native/natural theme, focus on history and environment
 - Meditation features and/or facility for wellness, spiritual, emotional, physical
- 9) Overall Central Priorities
- Keep promoting positive collaboration with neighborhoods and larger community
 - Be mindful and forward thinking about future surrounding growth, partnerships with the schools, neighbors, traffic
 - Let this park breath, natural park that is a gem, preserve it.
 - Year-round activities, look at more winter usage, indoors and out
 - Park Board and City Council – get them involved early for fundraising efforts and include them in the planning dialogue for marketing and community outreach efforts.



Mike Sharp, PLA



Appendix D

Steering Committee - 01/16/2023 Meeting Minutes



meeting minutes

From:	Mike Sharp		
Project No.:	3005.560.00	File No.(s):	0.10.0
Date Prepared:	1.19.2023		
Meeting Date:	1.16.2023		

Project Name: Lowe Park MP Update

Subject: Steering Committee Meeting 03

Meeting Attendees: Nicolas AbouAssaly – Mayor / City Council Member
Amy Hussel – Park Board Member
Jay Moore – Friends of Marion Parks
Katie Lowe-Lancaster – Lowe Family Member
Tiffany Hermsen – Community Member
Phil Pfister – Master Gardeners
Sara Mentzer – City Council Member
Seth Staashelm – Director of Parks & Recreation
Brent Neighbor – Deputy Director of Parks & Recreation
Karlene Hummel – Recreation Superintendent
Colt McDermott – RDG Planning & Design
Mike Sharp – RDG Planning & Design

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Discussion:

This memorandum summarizes the items discussed during the meeting referenced above.

- 1) Concern of western connection (Irish Drive extension) to school.
 - a) Prefer this access controlled by the City/Parks only.
 - b) No connections of road across park. No “vehicular” paving, make the connection more of a service trail.
- 2) Remove parking shown between football field and ballfields 5-8 (slide 19 of 23 – Youth Baseball: Enlarged Focus Area).
 - a) Keep trail break west of number 6.
 - b) #5 to #6 bollards north/south connection with extended width trail.
 - c) No #4 turnaround by proposed tennis center.
- 3) Assure property line is shown on final plan. Color entire planning within park boundary.
- 4) Katie Lowe expressed concern with potential public street connecting to 10th St and aligned with Hunters Green Way.
- 5) Confirm there is an accessible garden space for community gardens and demonstration gardens.
- 6) Maintain as much of the existing orchard as possible.
- 7) Show proposed location of dumpster enclosure for the greenhouse and AEC building.
- 8) Confirm buffalo sculpture location. Consideration of other existing art features to be relocated.
- 9) Incorporate the existing discovery garden into the building entrance area, consider keeping in same general area or relocating it.
- 10) Reinforced grass parking on the south side of the building. – Show as such with no hard surface additions.



- 11) Consider how to display/represent wind power, geothermal, solar on the master plan. Graphically show or represent within descriptive keynote information.
 - a) Fits with the desire to showcase the learning opportunities at the park and within the AEC building.
- 12) How does the committee feel about the size of the building and overall layout?
 - a) Like the buildings being centralized compared to previous plans.
 - b) Accessibility for seniors.
 - c) Addressed many of the previous concerns/questions from earlier plans.
 - i) Like seeing a lot of the big activities contained within proximity to each other, greenhouse, building addition, gardens, amphitheater, all close to the AEC and AEC addition.
- 13) Greenery / Greenhouse still needs to feel public.
 - a) Can this be a community gathering space in addition to private/class events.
 - i) Rental facility possibilities.
- 14) Maintain existing feel of building.
 - a) Like the multiple points of access, a main entry with other secondary entrances.
 - b) Gallery is consistently used... knowing this, does this expand or get relocated?
- 15) Slide 16 of 23 – Existing Pond and South Playground: Enlarged Focus Area
 - a) Move keynote 3 south of track to confirm track throwing area is maintained.
 - b) #7 show maintenance drive coming from south
 - c) Trail 2 and 3 near the SW pond... enough elevation change to warrant both? RDG to review and edit as necessary.
- 16) Show speed bumps along park drive north of amphitheater.
- 17) Phasing Thoughts:
 - a) Send out to committee a list of programming – priority elements.
 - b) Safe Space in building
 - c) #1 Grading activities to be done first.
 - i) SW Pond needs to be relined ASAP, possibly timed with wetland establishment.
 - d) #2 Dog park soon after.
 - e) #3 AEC building restructuring/renovation
 - i) AEC and greenhouse as one thing.
 - ii) A different vote for the building to be first.
 - (1) Heating and cooling updates need to be a priority.
- 18) Confirm what the last meeting entails. RDG can revise overall master plan, submit to Steering Committee and review/approval process is via zoom. RDG develops and submits overall cost estimate and phasing plan to Parks for review and approval. Upon Steering Committed approval, project moves onto presentation to Council. RDG and Parks to confirm contract scope and city review process.



Mike Sharp, PLA



Appendix E

Arts and Environment Center - Building Spatial Programming Analysis



