



# **Julius F. Bishop Park**

## **MASTER PLAN**

Athens-Clarke County Leisure Services Department  
Office of Park Planning

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# Executive Summary

Bishop Park is a 33-acre park in the Normaltown area of Athens-Clarke County (ACC). The park, named after former Mayor Julius F. Bishop, first opened in 1974 with softball fields, tennis courts, and other amenities. Later work included additional parking, tennis courts, and a multi-purpose field along Sunset Drive. The park also currently houses ACC's youth gymnastics center, a 50 meter pool, pavilions, a playground, basketball courts, and walking paths.

At forty-three years old, many of the park's features and infrastructure systems are at the end of their useful life and in need of replacement. The park also sees high volumes of traffic, estimated by park staff to be nearly 400,000 visits per year. Since the park was constructed, many new programs have emerged, such as the Athens Farmer's Market or pickleball, or grown substantially, such as the youth gymnastics program or tennis, warranting a more comprehensive review and modification of the park's design than a simple repair or refurbishment could provide.

## PROCESS

In the fall of 2014, Athens-Clarke County Leisure Services staff began a comprehensive master planning process for Bishop Park. This process included an inventory and analysis of the park's existing conditions and features, park usage patterns, programmatic needs, and substantial public input. Staff also evaluated several peer facilities of similar size and character, as well as sites identified by stakeholders, to gain insights into how other communities had chosen to provide similar recreational experiences to those found at Bishop.

In the spring of 2017, ACC Leisure Services staff redrafted the master plan based on comments from the Mayor and Commission. The redraft consisted of altering the final master plan to keep

existing facilities when possible, rewriting the master plan to mirror the updated plan to reflect a more detailed and current cost.

The master plan's goals included enhancing Bishop's character as a walkable "central park" for the west side of Athens. Additionally, it needed to support the many programs of regional significance that call Bishop Park home. Finally, the master plan needed to explore opportunities to incorporate health and wellness programming and amenities into the park's design. Leisure Services also wanted to improve the park's branding and visibility through enhancements along the park's street frontages.

## PUBLIC INPUT

Leisure Services staff worked with students and staff from the University of Georgia's Center for Community Design & Preservation to conduct a comprehensive public input process that included online surveys, public meetings, and a design charrette. This effort began with an online survey in the fall of 2014 to identify user concerns and desires. At subsequent meetings, citizens expressed their concerns about desired areas of improvement and cherished park features; reviewed and ranked concept alternatives and potential park design strategies; and gave feedback on preliminary designs for the park.

Over 500 responses were received for the initial survey, representing 1200 individuals who use Bishop Park. An additional 150+ responses were received regarding the park's preliminary design, and dozens of citizens attended the public meetings that were held as the plan was developed. Staff also consulted numerous stakeholders who are involved in providing the park's diverse array of activities to identify and address concerns regarding the park's many programs. Staff finalized the process in June 2017 with a series of public review meetings.

## CONCEPT

This plan transforms Bishop Park from an auto-oriented park divided into separate use zones into a dynamic and diverse park that blends into the fabric of surrounding neighborhoods. New pedestrian entrances bring visitors from adjacent streets into walking loops that connect the park's many active and passive recreation features. Gathering areas are situated throughout the park along these walkways.

These loops, one kilometer and one quarter mile in length, are two of many features that contribute to the park's many wellness-related features. The park also includes outdoor spaces that facilitate fitness, yoga, and other classes that would be out of place in the park's large athletic fields. The park's centerpiece is a new Gymnastics & Wellness Center, which includes new space for the park's currently overcrowded gymnastics program, and areas for wellness and exercise related classes, activities, and other programs. The park's covered tennis courts are left in place with an option in the future to renovate the space and provide restrooms, converting it into a true event pavilion. Alternatively, Mayor & Commission can elect to demolish the structure and rebuild a new building designed with large events in mind.

Other changes to the park include the addition of new bioswales and large stormwater features to manage stormwater runoff onsite, which will be managed alongside new plantings as an urban forest. Parking areas will be reoriented to enhance safety and navigability, and reconstructed with environmentally friendly features that support the character of the redeveloped park.

master plan. Following feedback from the Mayor & Commission, the draft underwent changes so that the implementation of the final master plan was feasible to construct.

As part of this process, staff developed conceptual grading plans, strategies for environmentally friendly stormwater management on site, recommendations for landscape management, and identified opportunities for the compatible installation of public art.

Five phases of redevelopment, of varying scale and cost, allow for staged implementation of the Master Plan utilizing an array of potential funding sources.

Other considerations identified as part of the master plan process include possibilities for regional pedestrian connections that facilitate health and wellness collaboration and programming among multiple organizations; opportunities for complementary redevelopment that may be spurred by investment in Bishop Park; and potential improvements to surrounding neighborhoods to increase non-motorized travel to the park. Additionally, the Greenway Network plan was updated in 2016 and a cross-county greenway route connects to the park.

## IMPLEMENTATION

This report includes a number of implementation strategies, including potential programmatic enhancements and minor improvements to immediately enhance the park's usability. However, the focus of the report is a comprehensive update of the aging park's features and infrastructure.

After receiving feedback on the preliminary concept, staff undertook substantial review and refinement of that concept to produce a draft

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

Julius F. Bishop Park is a 33-acre community park located in the Normaltown neighborhood, in western Athens-Clarke County (ACC). Since the park opened in the 1970s, it has evolved from an athletics-oriented recreation center into a well-loved and multifunctional public space. Today, Bishop Park hosts diverse civic events and recreational activities, serving a broad cross section of the community. These include youth football, soccer, and gymnastics; fitness programs; adult softball, soccer, tennis, and kickball; and a Saturday farmer's market. The park also hosts a strong contingent of unorganized communities, including pickup soccer, basketball; ultimate frisbee games; playground users; and walkers, bikers, and runners. Park staff estimate that users visit Bishop Park almost 400,000 times per year.

Though Bishop Park is very successful and beloved by its users, the park, as currently developed, does not correspond well to the level and types of use it receives today. Some programs have outgrown their current spaces. Others rely on adapting space intended for some other purpose; for instance, the Farmer's Market is housed on the park's covered tennis courts.

Aging and obsolete infrastructure presents another challenge. A comprehensive look at stormwater improvements is needed for the park, as elements of the current system are deteriorating. Electrical and plumbing systems are original to the development of the park, and are in urgent need of replacement. The barbecue building and pavilion structure, covered tennis courts, concrete bleachers, field dugouts, athletic scorestands, and fences are in need of review, renovation, repairs and/or updating to reflect current park usage.

The park's vehicular circulation is another major issue. Currently, the park is dominated by a confusing network of one-way drives that do not

adequately serve the park's facilities. Pedestrian circulation is another major challenge. Presently, there is no clear connection between sidewalks on surrounding streets and the park's interior. Hawthorne Avenue, arguably the park's busiest frontage, is underserved, with only a single unmarked gate into the park, and no improved walking surface serving it. Portions of the park, such as the northern end, are underutilized due to unclear wayfinding and access. While the park's design may have been appropriate when it was initially constructed, regional and local traffic patterns, destinations, and levels of development have changed significantly since the park was established.

A related issue is the park's branding and graphic presence. A fence and tall hedge screen Bishop Park from Hawthorne Avenue, a major thoroughfare, and a significant opportunity for showcasing the park and the activities it contains. Likewise, at the Sunset Avenue and Oglethorpe Avenue intersection, the park is unmarked. Only along Sunset Drive, at the entrance to the circuitous parking lot, is it clear that Bishop Park is a public facility. The centrally located Bishop Park should be an easily identified and navigated central park that is a showpiece for Athens-Clarke County.

The Bishop Park Master Plan provides a long-term vision for the future of Bishop Park that reflects and enhances the park's diverse character, while addressing the issues described above. To produce the plan, Athens-Clarke County Leisure Services Department's Office of Park Planning undertook a comprehensive, multi-step process, which included site documentation, public input, development of a vision for the park and strategies for implementation, considerations for other projects and programs outside of the park that support that vision. These tasks are described below, and in greater detail throughout the document.

## Project Impetus

Since Bishop Park was first designed and developed in the 1970s, little long-range planning has been done for the park. In the last few years, several issues have arisen that raised questions about the adequacy of Bishop Park's existing infrastructure to meet current community uses and desires, and Leisure Services' programmatic goals.

The first instance was in 2009, when the site selection committee for a new Tennis Center project, funded by the SPLOST 2005 program, identified Bishop as a candidate site. Various concepts developed as part of the process proposed replacing a softball field, basketball courts, and portions of the multi-use field. This sparked significant community opposition, with neighbors forming a group called Protect Bishop Park and collecting 1,100 signatures for a petition to locate the Tennis Center elsewhere. A member of the group cited the "multi-use, balanced" character of the park as part of what they were protecting.<sup>1</sup> The proposal would have displaced the popular Athens Farmer's Market, as well as softball, basketball, and other users of the park.<sup>2</sup> In July of 2010, the Athens-Clarke County Unified Government (ACCUG) Mayor & Commission ruled out the Bishop Park site, preserving the park's existing configuration.<sup>3</sup>

In June of 2013, Leisure Services staff worked with a local contractor to develop initial cost estimates for renovations to the BBQ Pavilion. Ideas for the renovation included updates to the kitchen area, renovation of the currently inadequate restrooms, and removal of the BBQ pits. Following up on this work, in November 2013, Park Planning staff investigated the structure with assistance from Chris Evans of local design firm E+E Architecture. Following these conversations, staff determined that replacement was more desirable and cost-effective than renovation. Leisure Services put forward an application for

a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for \$25,000 to design a new prototype rental pavilion for the Leisure Services department, to be implemented first in Bishop Park. This CDBG bid was unsuccessful.

For years, park users have complained about the park's circuitous network of one-way drives. Changing housing patterns and new programs such as the Athens Farmer's Market have also increased visitation of the park on foot and by bike, transportation modes currently poorly supported by the park's existing infrastructure. In December of 2013, the Office of Park Planning undertook an initial investigation into the park's circulation at the request of the Leisure Services Department Director. This "Entries and Parking Study" identified several issues related to pedestrian and vehicular circulation into and within the park, proposed modifications to the park's walks and drives, and illustrated opportunities to implement under-development signage standards within the park.

These instances illustrated the need for a more comprehensive evaluation of Bishop Park. Leisure Services staff determined that the Bishop Park needed a new Master Plan. On July 16, 2014, ACCUG Manager Alan Reddish issued a Notice of Proposed Administrative Action (NOPAA) to the Mayor & Commission informing them that Leisure Services staff would begin development of a new Master Plan for the park.<sup>4</sup>

## SITE DESCRIPTION

### Park Context

Bishop Park is a 33 acre ACC Leisure Services facility located in the Normaltown area of Athens, generally lying between Sunset Drive, Oglethorpe Avenue and Hawthorne Avenue. The park features significant frontage on all three of these corridors, but vehicular access is only available via Sunset Drive.

Adjacent land uses include a large YMCA recreation center featuring pools, athletic fields,

1 Aued, Blake. "Revamped tennis center concept draws volley of fire." Online Athens. *The Athens Banner-Herald*. 8 July 2010. Web. 3 October 2014.

2 Aued, Blake. "No, not there: Tough call on tennis complex." Online Athens. *The Athens Banner-Herald*. 27 September 2009. Web. 3 October 2014.

3 Aued, Blake. "Bishop Park out as tennis center locale." Online Athens. *The Athens Banner-Herald*. 22 July 2010. Web. 3 October 2014.

4 Reddish, Alan. "Master Plan Process – Bishop Park." Memo to Mayor & Commission. 2014 July 16. Email.



*Figure 1.1: Early photo Bishop Park playground and gymnasium building*

gymnasium, and other recreational facilities; a nursing home; a hospital; medical offices; a Veterans' of Foreign Wars office; and townhomes. Other nearby institutions include the University of Georgia Health Sciences Campus, Athens Regional Medical Center, and Oglethorpe Avenue Elementary School. Portions of the Sunset-Holman, Forest Heights, Normaltown, and Buena Vista neighborhoods are within a half-mile walk of the park. Additionally, the Normaltown Connector, a greenway corridor, connects from Ben Burton Park, through Beech Haven, and to Bishop Park before it connects to the North Oconee River Greenway.

## Park Development History

On January 1, 1972, Athens Mayor Julius Bishop announced a purchase agreement for the Athens Fairground property, for the development of a recreational park. The initial 23 acre property on Hawthorne Avenue was held by the Athens Fairgrounds Association, who at the time used the property for the annual county fair. An Atlanta developer with plans of developing a shopping center had obtained an option to purpose the property. When that option lapsed, the city purchased the property for \$400,000. The Department of Housing and Urban Development's Model Cities and Legacy of Parks programs provided \$300,000 in funding with the remaining costs covered by local tax revenues.

The city broke ground for the park in December 1973. The following year, the city council voted to



*Figure 1.2: Athens Fairground - 1960s*

name the park in honor of Mayor Bishop for his pivotal role in its development. Architect Wood C. Campbell designed the park and its gymnasium. The office of S. Martin provided landscape design and engineering services. The first phase of construction cost \$384,000 and included site preparation and grading of the property, two basketball courts, three softball fields, six lighted tennis courts, picnic tables, and parking for 275 cars. The fairground concessions building was retained and included as part of the park. Construction of the Bishop Park gymnasium began in 1975 and was completed in the following year. Expansions of the park continued for the next two decades. Phase Two of the park's development included the construction of the \$235,000 Olympic sized swimming pool, which opened in summer 1977.<sup>5</sup> The barbecue shelter was built at the request of the Athens Fire Department. Upgrades to the lighting of the softball fields and

<sup>5</sup> Harrisman, Jay (1973). "City Breaks Ground for Park." *Athens Daily News.*

an expansion of the parking area were installed in 1984. The city purchased adjacent land on Sunset Drive for \$100,000 in the 1980s. The property was developed into the park's multipurpose athletic field. Three tennis courts were added to the park in 1989 near Sunset Drive, and two covered tennis courts were completed in 1996 for \$385,000.<sup>6</sup>

**Namesake.** During the initial planning phase, Bishop Park was referred to as the "Athens Fairground Park." Later, the Athens City Council renamed the park for Mayor Julius Francis Bishop, who served as the Mayor of Athens from 1964 to 1976. Bishop was born in Athens, and attended Athens High School and the University of Georgia. In addition to serving as Mayor, Bishop also served in the US Navy, worked in the poultry industry and served as the President of Athens Federal Savings and Loan, which later became Athens First Bank and Trust. He served on many local and state boards, including Athens Regional Medical Center, and the Board of Regents. As a young man, Bishop was an athlete, playing for UGA's baseball team for several years. Bishop passed away in 2008 at the age of 93.<sup>7</sup>

## Park Features

The park is located near the top of the broad ridge, defined by Prince and Milledge Avenues, which divides the Middle and North Oconee River watersheds. This location results in a relatively flat site; a gentle hollow, draining northwest toward Hunnicutt Creek, is the park's major topographic feature. Much of the park is open, with scattered trees and ornamental areas. Athletic fields and hardscape elements are prominent features in the landscape. A few remnant wooded areas occur on the peripheries of the property. The amenities in Bishop Park include the following site features and structures:

### Site features:

- 3 lighted athletic fields, with covered dugouts and score stand structures

<sup>6</sup> Schroeder, George. Interview. 1 February 2002.

<sup>7</sup> "Julius F. Bishop Obituary." Online Athens. *The Athens Banner-Herald*. 2008 July 9. <<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/onlineathens/obituary.aspx?n=julius.f.bishop&pid=113009583>>. Web. 10 October 2014.

- Large multi-purpose field
- 9 lighted tennis courts
- Covered lighted tennis court structure containing 2 courts
- Playground
- ~1 mile of asphalt walkways
- 305 improved parking spaces, and additional unimproved overflow parking
- Open landscaped areas, including picnic areas
- 50-meter pool with covered bleachers, bath house, and gatehouse

### Structures:

- ~2,100 ft<sup>2</sup> BBQ pit building with outdoor covered seating areas
- ~12,000 ft<sup>2</sup> gymnastics and administration building
- ~1,800 ft<sup>2</sup> administration building
- ~800 ft<sup>2</sup> former concession building with breezeway and restrooms

## VISION & STRATEGY

With input from the public, Leisure Services staff, and other stakeholders, Park Planning staff developed the following principles to guide the redevelopment of the park. These principles constitute a broad vision for the park, to be realized through measurable objectives for the plan (below).

## Guiding Principles

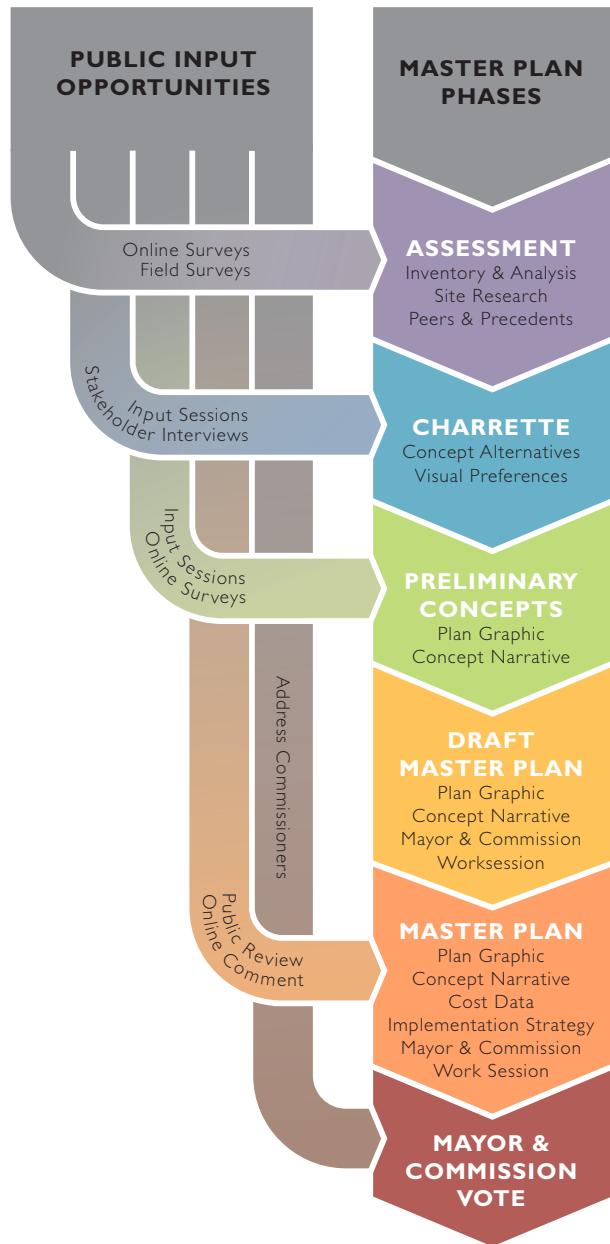
- Enhance Bishop Park's identity as a Leisure Services Department facility.
- Support regionally significant athletic and community programs hosted at Bishop Park.
- Enhance Bishop Park's identity as a "central park" for

Normaltown and the west side of ACC.

- Create a feeling of welcome, safety, and security within the park.
- Improve access to the park for non-automobile users, including transit users, walkers, and cyclists.
- Foster a balance of park programs and activities, including both passive and active uses.
- Create a diverse, multi-generational park, with activities for all ages, from children to seniors.
- Create physical and programmatic connections with surrounding institutions that support health and wellness, including nearby hospitals and nursing homes, the YMCA, and the UGA Health Sciences Campus.
- Create long-lasting and sustainable infrastructure that minimizes operational and maintenance costs.
- Explore opportunities to recover costs associated with park operations.

## Plan Objectives

- Redevelop the park's vehicular and pedestrian circulation networks to be safer and easier to use.
- Maintain or increase parking as necessary to support growing park use.
- Provide adequate facilities and support spaces for the park's growing programs.
- Allow for continuous operation of the park and its programs during the redevelopment process.
- Increase multi-purpose field space for both informal and program use.
- Provide more and a greater variety of pavilions, shelters, and other rentable spaces.
- Provide infrastructure for wellness-oriented programs including classrooms, fitness equipment, walking loops and outdoor spaces for group exercise.



*Figure 1.3: Bishop Park Master Plan public input opportunities*

## Scope of Work

In the fall of 2014, Park Planning staff began a Master Plan process for Bishop Park. This process included four primary components, described below:

**Research and Site Documentation.** Leisure Services staff undertook a comprehensive inventory and analysis of the site's existing conditions. The inventory included documentation of features such as slope gradient and aspect, hydrology, and existing features. Circulation patterns, maintenance needs, and nearby cultural resources were also documented as part of the inventory and analysis process. In addition to site-specific data, staff investigated precedent and peer parks; national and regional trends in recreation and parks programming and development; and demographics of the surrounding neighborhoods.

**Public Input.** The public input process included multiple strategies to capture user concerns and desires. To assist in this process, Leisure Services staff contracted with the University of Georgia College Of Environment and Design's (CED) Center for Community Design and Preservation (CCDP) to lead the public input process. CCDP gathered resources from multiple CED courses as part of its work, which included facilitation of public meetings, development of design alternatives, and analysis of public input.

The first input method was an online survey, which received 459 responses. The survey was advertised through social media, via news stories in several local media outlets, and through postcards mailed to nearby residents. CED students also administered a version of the survey on-site and at nearby public centers, resulting in approximately 50 additional responses. CED students also conducted interviews with adjacent businesses to gain their thoughts on the future of the park.

On October 6, 2014, CCDP led a public input at Oglethorpe Avenue Elementary, attended by approximately 30 community members. Data gathered to date was then used to inform a design charrette conducted by CED students. This charrette resulted in three design alternatives, which were then presented to the public at a

meeting on October 27, 2014. CCDP gathered feedback on these concepts, giving staff guidance on participants' least and most preferred physical improvements.

In addition to these more broadly targeted efforts, Park Planning staff also met with program leaders, Bishop Park staff, and other stakeholders to gain more detailed input on the needs of specific park elements.

**Master Plan Development.** Following completion of the public input process, Park Planning staff began development of the park's Preliminary Master Plan. As this process neared completion, final public input meetings were held on March 25, 2015 and surveys were distributed at an information booth on Saturday, April 4, 2015 at the Athens Farmer's Market to gain additional feedback on the park's proposed design. Park Planning staff also presented the preliminary concept and solicited feedback from Leisure Services staff on March 19, 2015. Information gained during these input efforts was used to develop a Draft Master Plan, supporting details and graphics, recommended phasing, cost estimates, and implementation strategies. Following feedback from the Mayor & Commission, the draft master plan underwent changes so that the implementation of the final master plan was feasible to construct.

**Other Considerations.** In addition to the needs of the park itself, the master planning process identified a number of opportunities to collaborate with other ACCUG departments, public and private agencies, and neighboring properties in support of Bishop Park's program. Opportunities identified included potential collaborations with neighboring health and wellness oriented entities; opportunities for improved pedestrian and bicycle connectivity in the area; economic development opportunities associated with the park; and opportunities for regional greenspace connectivity.

# Chapter 2: Preliminary Planning Process

The preliminary planning process that informed the design process consists of three major sections: Inventory & Analysis, Trends & Precedents, and Public Input.

Inventory & Analysis provides descriptions and analysis of Bishop Park's features, physical conditions, and resources that will inform later design decisions. A more detailed Inventory & Analysis is attached in Appendix A and hosts a series of graphs, images, and maps.

Trends & Precedents explores several emerging concepts and trends in parks and recreation programming and design relevant to the redevelopment of Bishop Park, and offers regional examples that illustrate these concepts. The parks and facilities profiled in this chapter share commonalities with Bishop Park in terms of programming and context and illustrate how other communities have approached the same issues that face Bishop Park.

At the request of ACC Leisure Services Department staff, the Center for Community Design & Preservation (CCDP) coordinated the facilitation of community input and generated conceptual design alternatives for public feedback in order to determine what is popular about the park and what amenities should be eliminated or introduced. The results of this public input are outlined in Appendix C.

## INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

The Inventory & Analysis includes four sections:

- **Site Use** contains data on trends in usage of various park areas.
- **Site Conditions** describes the park's physical elements and properties.
- **Site Analysis** includes discussions of the site's more intangible conditions and patterns of use, such as management strategy, circulation patterns, and unique viewsheds.
- **Issues and Opportunities** synthesizes these three sections into a collection of spaces to address as part of the project's design phase.

### Site Use

Bishop Park's activity is generally increasing, with only one of four years (2011) below the starting level in 2008. On a monthly basis, the park is busiest during summer, with a secondary peak in the fall that corresponds to several recreational leagues, including youth football and adult softball. Usage in the winter is very low, with short days and cold weather limiting the use of the park. In spring, use increases as spring leagues and the Farmer's Market season begin, and the weather warms.

Many categories showed consistent patterns in use, such as walking and passive activities. Others, however, showed dramatic shifts. Tennis declined by over 35% over 5 years, athletic field usage increased more than 55% during this five-year period, and Sunset Field and Greenspace use also generally increased over this period, but much less dramatically. Collectively, these suggest greater demand for flexible field space.

Other less dramatic patterns reveal changes in conditions or operations. A decrease in shelter

usage is associated with declining conditions of the facility. Due to its current conditions, park staff may encourage patrons to take advantage of amenities at other facilities, if possible. Increased use of Bishop Park has also limited parking, and made the site less suitable for large gatherings; park staff currently recommend other facilities, such as Sandy Creek Park, for these types of events. Increased usage of the basketball courts may be attributable to growth of the Farmer's Market. The conference room, which is used for not only meetings and events, but also programming is increasing. Starting in 2008, park staff began making this available for rentals. Though playground use appears to have declined, park staff does not feel that its level of use has changed appreciably. However, the playground equipment is outdated, and this may have resulted in some loss of users.

## Site Conditions

The site condition section of Appendix A contains the following information.

- **Existing Features** lists features in the park including active recreation amenities, passive recreation amenities, and additional features
- **Resources** includes a number of physical and cultural resources in the vicinity upon which to draw in the redevelopment of the park
- **Elevation** includes the elevation of the park and illustrates its context within the county
- **Slope Gradient** outlines the areas of the park that are flat and suitable for development or steep and difficult to develop
- **Slope Aspect** determines a site's exposure to various climatic forces, including sun and prevailing winds, and can create microclimates more suitable for particular plant communities.
- **Soil Suitability** includes general locations, descriptions and characteristics of soils, and their suitability for various uses.
- **Hydrology** covers watersheds, impervious areas, stormwater infrastructure, and existing drainage issues
- **Vegetation** is classified with an eye towards landscape character, rather than plant communities, as might be appropriate on a less disturbed site
- **Utilities** depicted include sanitary sewers, water lines, stormwater lines, electrical lines, street lights, adjacent or running through Bishop Park

## Site Analysis

The site analysis section of Appendix A contains the following information.

- Current Zoning depicts the current zoning of the park itself and the surrounding parcels.
- Circulation refers to the ways in which people move through the site. This section discusses vehicular circulation, pedestrian circulation, and farmer's market circulation. It outlines the existing patterns of use and shows areas of needed improvement.
- Views and Vistas are an important part of a landscape, contributing to character and sense of place, wayfinding, and safety. Within and around Bishop Park, there are a number of opportunities to create or enhance views.
- Landscape Zones are outlined by the ACC Central Services Department's Landscape Division. They manage park grounds according to a five level system of landscape management zones, designated as Athletic Fields and Zones 1 through 4, which are described in that division's Service Delivery Plan<sup>1</sup>. These zones describe maintenance service levels appropriate for the function and use of each site.
- Infrastructure Issues outlines park systems and infrastructure that have reached the end of their lifespans. Some systems are buried underground and their locations are unclear. In many cases, regulations and building codes have changed substantially since the park was constructed, requiring a complete overhaul of those elements. In other instances, materials used are no longer considered standard, and fall outside of modern maintenance routines. Many of these elements are safety hazards for maintenance staff and park users.

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<sup>1</sup> Athens-Clarke County Unified Government. Central Services Department Landscape Division. *Service Delivery Plan*. Print.

## Issues & Opportunities

Bishop Park functions as three distinct zones, broken up both geographically and by use. Though managed as a unit, these zones are not well connected, resulting in particular user groups only using a portion of the park, and rarely visiting other zones.

The “North End” is a primarily passive zone, with walking paths, a pavilion, and some small lawn areas used informally by small groups or families. Clusters of trees are scattered throughout this area. The upper portion of the North End is a broad, flat area, visible from Hawthorne Avenue; to the east, this passive landscape slopes down into a hollow, creating the park’s most dramatic topographic feature.

Active programming, such as recreational fields and courts, park administration buildings, and parking dominate the “Central Core” of Bishop Park. The area is well supported by a network of walking paths that connect between the athletic facilities. The interface between these walks and the athletic programs creates opportunities for various park users to interact and gather. Visually, hardscape features, fencing, and turf dominate this area. The park appears to have featured substantial ornamental landscaped areas historically, as evidenced by a host of unique ornamental trees and small ornamental features throughout the park. However, these plantings have degraded somewhat over time, or caused maintenance issues for adjacent hardscapes.

The “South End” is largely undeveloped—an unused softball backstop is the only hard infrastructure in the area. However, this area is very visible from surrounding neighborhood streets, which have views into a large bowl-like multi-purpose field, ringed in trees. Many pedestrians walk along or through the multi-purpose field, creating desire lines leading into and out of the space. The result is a space that functions, and to some extent resembles a “green” or “commons” for the adjacent neighborhoods.

The North End and Central Core are part of an access-controlled area. Despite the significant frontage along Hawthorne Avenue, these areas do not read as a park for passing vehicles, due to the

hedge, fence, and lack of access. The South End’s character as a neighborhood space is enhanced by the lack of gates and fencing, allowing users to enter the space directly, regardless of time of day.

The themes outlined below present opportunities to blend these three spaces together to create a unified and cohesive park landscape:

- **Gateways.** Hawthorne and Oglethorpe Avenues are significant untapped opportunities for park access and branding. Increased and formalized pedestrian access to the park in these locations could help to offset parking demands by facilitating non-motorized visitation to the park, and provide opportunities to brand the park through signage and installation of park entry landscape features.
- **Parking.** The network of one-way drives within Bishop Park is confusing to park users. This area also creates unsafe conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians, as few pedestrian improvements have been provided. The parking area also compounds pedestrian issues related to the South End, adding another layer of challenging wayfinding for users wishing to move from one area of the park to the other. A reconfiguration of the parking areas is needed. When developing this reconfiguration, considerations should include opportunities for improved vehicular access into the park; approaches to providing pedestrian infrastructure through the parking areas; and opportunities to improve the park’s road frontage. Pulling parking back from the core of the park may also yield land where the north and south ends of the park can be better stitched together.
- **Gathering Spaces.** Bishop Park features a number of well-designed spaces that facilitate gathering near or viewing athletic events. These spaces include the “Tennis Plaza,” Concrete Bleachers adjacent to the Fields 2 and 3, and the slopes along the Multi-purpose Field. Well-framed views from the park’s walking paths also create connections between athletic programs and general park users. Enhancing, formalizing, and creating these spaces supports the goal of a dynamic and diverse park that facilitates interactions between many types of users.
- **“The Great Wall.”** Fencing surrounding the basketball courts, covered tennis pavilion, and tennis courts, and the overflow parking area create a physical and visual barrier between the South End and the remainder

of the park. The design of these spaces isolates the southern portion of the park, and discourages movement between areas. Abundant desire lines illustrate the need for movement between these spaces. Currently, users must walk on informal trails, passing utilities, dumpsters, and other infrastructure to move north or south through the park. The pedestrian experience in this area is improved in the final master plan. However, future consideration in the redevelopment of the covered tennis courts should take into account the walled off effect of the space.

- **Stormwater Management.** Currently there are many erosion issues throughout the park. Parking and other hardscape areas will likely require new stormwater infrastructure as part of their redevelopment. Two corridors, one in the North End and one flowing along the southern edge of the Central Core, provide opportunities for creating a naturalistic stormwater management landscape. Bundling a bioswale, landscape improvements, passive recreational elements, and circulation into these corridors also presents an opportunity to stitch the park's three zones together, creating a consistent passive landscape experience throughout the park.

## TRENDS & PRECEDENTS

There are several emerging concepts and trends in parks and recreation programming and design relevant to the redevelopment of Bishop Park. Appendix B offers regional examples that illustrate these concepts. The parks and facilities profiled in Appendix B, which share commonalities with Bishop Park in terms of programming and context, illustrate how other communities have approached the same issues. From a functional standpoint, these parks, located throughout Georgia and the southeast, illustrate how other communities have chosen to provide similar services to those Bishop Park currently offers, or desired services identified by stakeholders and the public during the public input process. Several of these facilities, such as the Roswell Physical Activity Center, Frances Meadows Aquatic Center, and Forsyth Park, were identified by stakeholders and citizens as spaces upon which they would like to see Bishop Park modeled.

### Key Trends in Recreation

This section discusses several trends that are emerging in park design and management throughout the country. Parks and recreation facilities and departments are constantly evolving to meet changing needs in response to shifting demands and evolving demographics. As an essential civic element, parks adapt based on the needs of the community at large and in their regional context. Parks also evolve as new discoveries are made on how to maximize the benefits that they already provide. This section highlights three trends in recreation and park planning relevant to Bishop Park.

Research that identified the following trends comes from the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). In their Synopsis of 2010 Research Papers report, the NRPA summarizes trends that are emerging across academic literature regarding parks and recreation. Their report collates into six categories of research on the many benefits that parks provide to communities: physical health, mental health, social functioning, youth development, environment, and economic impact. These categories suggest the major roles that parks will

be expected to play as research and dialogue about parks continues to evolve.

We have further summarized these six categories into three roles—**Infrastructure, Health and Wellness, and Community Development**—that Bishop Park could fill. By identifying these trends, the proposed masterplan for Bishop Park is poised to fulfill the needs that NRPA's research has identified for communities across the country.

“Infrastructure” reflects the environmental and economic impact themes that NRPA identified. The role of parks as infrastructure includes consideration of how parks contribute to the natural and fiscal resources of the agencies that govern them. The “Health and Wellness” section discusses the circumstances that are affecting public health and how parks play an integral role in healing and recovery. It includes physical and mental health. “Community Development” looks at how parks are a platform to build a stronger, more integrated community. The topic combines the benefits of social functioning and youth development discussed by the NRPA. Discussing these three trends provides insight into the roles that peer parks and facilities discussed later in this chapter can play.

**Parks as Infrastructure:** Parks serve as alternative, green infrastructure systems in their community. They create measurable environmental benefits such as stormwater management and improved air quality that reduce operational costs for governments. Parks, like more conventional infrastructure such as roads or utilities, also have the potential to spur investment and increase property values, boosting revenues for local governments.

- Trees mitigate the urban heat that would otherwise increase energy demand, air pollution, and heat-related illness<sup>2</sup> while also capturing rainfall in their canopy, promoting stormwater infiltration, storing carbon, and filtering soil pollutants from stormwater runoff.<sup>3</sup>
- Parks can help preserve essential ecological functions

2 <http://www.epa.gov/heatisland/>

3 [http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpa.org/Publications\\_and\\_Research/Papers/Nowak-Heisler-Summary.pdf](http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpa.org/Publications_and_Research/Papers/Nowak-Heisler-Summary.pdf)

and protect biodiversity.<sup>4</sup>

- Parks can provide numerous stormwater management benefits by reducing the need for built infrastructure. Bio-swales, retention ponds, and stormwater amenities lessen the impact on traditional stormwater systems.<sup>5</sup>
- Bicycle infrastructure projects create 11.41 jobs per \$1 million spent.<sup>6</sup>
- Successful parks attract tourists and that promote business growth and gains in tax revenues.<sup>7</sup>

**Health and Wellness:** People consider urban parks to be an escape from the city, providing personal relaxation and restoration. In recent years, an increasing interest in public health has brought attention and data to the mental and physical health benefits that parks provide and the economic impact of those benefits on healthcare and social welfare systems.

- There is approximately \$147 billion for direct and indirect costs of the obesity crisis. Spending on parks departments is one of the most cost-effective ways to lower long-term health costs, especially in low-income communities, where most of the money comes from Medicaid.<sup>8</sup>
- The trend in parks is to focus on promoting activities rather than exercise. The goal of this trend in recreational activities is to make healthy lifestyles more attractive. For example, individuals who have an aversion to the idea of “exercise” may be attracted to activities like organized sports, swimming, or gardening. This approach encourages individuals to pursue a healthy lifestyle participating in enjoyable activities rather than through “exercise.”
- Studies show that physical inactivity contributes to \$60

4 <https://www.planning.org/cityparks/briefingpapers/greeninfrastructure.htm>

5 Ibid.

6 Active Transportation and Parks and Recreation. Rep. NRPA. Web. 9 Jan. 2015. <[http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpa.org/Publications\\_and\\_Research/Research/ActiveTransportation\\_Final.HIGH.pdf](http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpa.org/Publications_and_Research/Research/ActiveTransportation_Final.HIGH.pdf)>.

7 Crompton, John L. Measuring the economic impact of park and recreation services. Ashburn, VA: National Recreation and Park Association, 2010.

8 Synopsis of 2010 Research Papers. Rep. NRPA. Web. 9 Jan. 2015. <[http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpa.org/Publications\\_and\\_Research/Research/Papers/Synopsis-of-Research-Papers.pdf](http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpa.org/Publications_and_Research/Research/Papers/Synopsis-of-Research-Papers.pdf)>.

billion in annual health care costs in the United States, or about \$200 per person.<sup>9</sup> Compare this cost with the \$83 per person budget that most cities spend on their local parks that a study from Trust for Public Land found. By investing more in public parks, returns can be seen in the reduction of health care costs as well as physical improvements in our city and our citizens.

- In addition to the physical benefits, parks promote mental and social health. Having access to greenspace has been shown to improve cognitive function and reduce emotional stress. For example, studies show that walking in a natural environmental provided more relief from mental stress than walking in urban environments.<sup>10</sup>
- Hospital patients with views to natural environment recover more quickly and require less of traditional care treatment.<sup>11</sup>

**Community Development:** Parks contribute to stronger communities by providing opportunities for citizens of diverse ages and backgrounds to gather and interact, with a number of benefits to the community. Parks provide areas for farmers' markets that provide increased access to fresh foods for urban dwellers, provide economic opportunities for rural communities to sell their products, and foster interaction between individuals across communities that promote relationships between diverse groups.

- Successful parks increase neighborhood social ties. Strong community connection results in less violence and crime in the region. Buildings with high levels of vegetation have 52% fewer total crimes than buildings without.<sup>12</sup>
- Strong community relationships prompt individuals

9 Cohen, Deborah, Roland Sturm, Bing Han, and Terry Marsh. Quantifying the Contribution of Public Parks to Physical Activity and Health. Rep. NRPA. Web. 9 Jan. 2015. <[http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpa.org/Publications\\_and\\_Research/Research/Papers/SOPARC-Report.pdf](http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpa.org/Publications_and_Research/Research/Papers/SOPARC-Report.pdf)>.

10 Blanck, Heidi, Diana Allen, Zarnaaz Bashir, Nina Gordon, Alyson Goodman, Dee Merriam, and Candace Rutt. Let's Go to the Park Today: The Role of Parks in Obesity Prevention and Improving the Public's Health. Rep. NRPA, Oct. 2012. Web. 9 Jan. 2012. <[http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpa.org/Publications\\_and\\_Research/Research/Papers/Role-Parks-Obesity-Prevention.pdf](http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpa.org/Publications_and_Research/Research/Papers/Role-Parks-Obesity-Prevention.pdf)>.

11 Synopsis of 2010 Research Papers. Rep. NRPA. Web. 9 Jan. 2015. <[http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpa.org/Publications\\_and\\_Research/Research/Papers/Synopsis-of-Research-Papers.pdf](http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpa.org/Publications_and_Research/Research/Papers/Synopsis-of-Research-Papers.pdf)>.

12 Ibid.

to rely on their neighbors for resources instead on government-funded welfare programs that total \$503 billion annually.<sup>13</sup>

- The most successful markets are located in areas where people are already drawn to such as parks or event spaces. Park and recreation departments are uniquely qualified to contribute to a farmer's market success by incorporating recreational components into the farmer's market experience within their park facilities.<sup>14</sup> A successful farmers' market contributes to thriving neighborhoods with strong social ties. Parks provide a location for these community-building activities to take place.
- Children with access to natural environments are more resilient to adverse peer pressure: Studies show that youths with access to 1-hour of extracurricular activity per week are 49% less likely to do drugs and 37% less likely to be a teenage parent.<sup>15</sup> Park facilities are naturally poised to offer structured programs that are adult-supervised and promote this trend in youth development.
- Parks provide benefits to senior citizens. Studies show that elders with access to parks live longer and functions better than their peers who are isolated from outdoor spaces.<sup>16</sup> Parks provide opportunities for the elderly to remain physically and socially active, contributing to a better quality of life.

13 "Current Spending: History and Charts for US Governments." Current Spending: History and Charts for US Governments. US Government Spending, n.d. Web. 11 Jan. 2015. <[http://www.usgovernmentspending.com/current\\_spending](http://www.usgovernmentspending.com/current_spending)>.

14 Park Vending and Farmer's Markets: Increasing Healthy Food Choices for Underserved Communities. Rep. NRPA. Web. 9 Jan. 2015. <[http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpa.org/Grants\\_and\\_Partners/Recreation\\_and\\_Health/Resources/Issue\\_Briefs/Farmers-Markets.pdf](http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpa.org/Grants_and_Partners/Recreation_and_Health/Resources/Issue_Briefs/Farmers-Markets.pdf)>.

15 Synopsis of 2010 Research Papers. Rep. NRPA. Web. 9 Jan. 2015. <[http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpa.org/Publications\\_and\\_Research/Research/Papers/Synopsis-of-Research-Papers.pdf](http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpa.org/Publications_and_Research/Research/Papers/Synopsis-of-Research-Papers.pdf)>.

16 Ibid.

## INITIAL PUBLIC INPUT

At the request of ACC Leisure Services Department staff, the Center for Community Design & Preservation (CCDP) coordinated the facilitation of community input and generated conceptual design alternatives for public feedback in order to determine what is popular about the park and what amenities should be eliminated or introduced. This chapter discusses the public input process and findings; This chapter also presents the alternative design concepts produced, and the public's response.

*The UGA Center for Community Design & Preservation (CCDP) is the Public Service and Outreach office for The University of Georgia College of Environment & Design. CCDP provides opportunities for our faculty and students to engage in real-world projects and put their academic pursuits into practice. The mission of CCDP is to provide service learning experiences to students in landscape architecture, historic preservation and environmental planning. CCDP delivers conceptual community design services by utilizing a mix of faculty, professional staff, and students, which helps leverage professional assistance to implement projects. Students receive the practical hands-on experience that makes them more marketable as graduates.*

## Goals and Methodology

Determining the strengths and opportunities for a community requires local interest combined with outside expertise. At the beginning stages, long-term planning efforts benefit from a participatory, inclusive and results-driven design workshop known as a “charrette.” A charrette is a rapid, intensive, and creative work session, usually lasting several days, in which a team focuses on a particular design problem and arrives at a collaborative solution. Public design charrettes are fast becoming a preferred way to face the planning challenges confronting American cities.

*The National Charrette Institute (NCI) is a nonprofit educational institution that helps people build community capacity for collaboration to create healthy community plans. NCI teaches professionals and community leaders the art and science of the NCI Charrette System™, a holistic, collaborative planning process that harnesses the talents and energies of all interested parties to create and support a feasible plan. This method is especially useful for efforts related to sustainable development, transportation, public works, and transit, as well as citizen advocacy.*

The University of Georgia's College of Environment and Design (CED), with programs in Landscape Architecture, Historic Preservation and Environmental Planning and Design, has been using the charrette process to help communities for many decades and has completed over 80 charrettes in Georgia, as well as international efforts. ACC's need to garner public input and create design alternatives for a future Bishop Park for staff and users to respond to was an ideal scenario for a design charrette.

### Charrettes occur in three phases:

**Phase I** is Research, Assessment, Preparation & Survey; Phase II is public workshops and the design charrette; Phase III is Concept Refinement. For Phase I, a group of CED students in the Master of Environmental Planning and Design (MEPD) program worked with Park Planning staff to research, survey, and analyze information about the park and its users. The students' work program included:

- Creating and launching an online survey;
- Conducting additional on- and off-site surveys;
- Entering and analyzing survey data;
- Performing existing conditions assessments and inventories of both the park and the surrounding communities (which also included gathering community demographic data); and
- Interviewing area residents, park users, and business owners.

**Phase II** was the Design Charrette, which began with a kick-off session. CCDP led direct public discussion of issues resulting in constructive visioning for community improvement, as well as community buy-in. Work continued by refining ideas and eliminating ineffective options through regular feedback loops from stakeholders, including detailed discussions with Bishop Park staff. The team's workspace—a hands-on, active design studio—remained open to the public throughout the charrette so that citizens and stakeholders could stop by to provide feedback and additional information. The charrette produced

multiple design scenarios based on public input collected via online surveys, public input sessions and in-park interviews, and presented these concepts to the public for additional feedback. The charrette concluded with presenting the solutions to the public for their reaction and final input.

**Phase III** of the charrette process is Concept Refinement. CCDP staff was responsible for compiling work from Phases I and II into concise documentation of process, input, and concepts, including opinion surveys and public feedback on design solutions for the park. Leisure Services staff incorporated this feedback into the development of the final Master Plan.

## Timeline

- Online Surveying: MEPD students developed an online survey in conjunction with Leisure Services staff and the ACC Public Information office via the county website: [www.athensclarkecounty.com](http://www.athensclarkecounty.com) [September 27 – October 10, 2014]
- Kick-off Meeting. CCDP facilitated a public input session with community members to gather input and ideas on park improvements. Following an initial presentation of the project by ACC Park Planning staff, CED students facilitated round-table discussions with attendees. [Oct. 6, 2014]
- Interviews. MEPD Students conducted in-person interviews property owners adjacent to the park and provided transcripts of these interviews for inclusion as an appendix in the Master Plan. [Oct. 9-13, 2014]
- Field Surveying: MEPD Students conducted field surveys of park users and neighborhood residents. Paper survey data entered into the online survey by students and incorporated into final dataset. [Oct. 9-13, 2014]
- Charrette: CCDP conducted a 3-day design charrette with CED students to generate alternative design concepts for the park based on public input. [Oct. 17-19, 2014]
- Concepts Presentation: CCDP presented concepts produced during the charrette and gathered public feedback on elements of those alternatives. [Oct. 27, 2014]

## Survey and Methodology

The purpose of the survey was to solicit public input to better understand the requirements and expectations of the future Bishop Park to be realized in the Master Plan. The survey was designed to obtain the following information:

- User demographic data
- Frequency of park usage
- Transportation mode used to reach the park
- Parking assessment
- Valued park programs, facilities, and spaces, with special attention to park programs and facilities for which there is no dedicated supporting organization, such as walking or picnicking
- Missing but desired park elements and programs as well as underutilized existing park elements
- Areas of concern or areas that are in need of improvement

The full text of the survey, including all of the submitted responses, is available in Appendix C of this report.

**Advertising the Survey:** The survey and public participation opportunities were advertised as follows:

- **Postcards:** Mailed to 1,180 addresses within 3/8 mile of the park.
- **Social Media:**
  1. Twitter: 842 followers
  2. Facebook: 2,084 followers (boosted post to reach an additional 5,640 users)
- **Newsletter:**
  1. Leisure Services Department's E-Newsletter (2,000+ subscribers)
  2. Also shared on other facility Facebook pages and with ACC employees

- **Email Listservs:**

1. ACC Staff listserv (1000+ county employees)
2. Athens Regional Medical Center Staff Listserv
3. University of Georgia Health Sciences Campus Staff Listserv
4. Gymnastics, Swim Team, Adult Softball, and other Bishop Park program Listservs
5. A local parenting Listserv
6. Neighborhood group Listservs (Federation of Neighborhoods, Boulevard Neighborhood Association, and Normaltown Neighborhood Network)

- **Press Release**

Leisure Services staff provided a press release about the Master Plan and associated public input opportunities, and received coverage from the following media outlets: Athens-Banner Herald, Flagpole Magazine, Grady News Source (television), and WGAU (radio).

## **Results of Online Survey**

The online survey was posted from September 27 to October 10, 2014, and resulted in over 500 respondents. In addition to online responses, 30 field survey responses were solicited by the student planning team within Bishop Park and 13 surveys were conducted off-site (in Downtown Athens, the Alps Road shopping area, and selected adjacent property areas). The survey results were divided into three main sub-groups—The People, The People and The Park, and The Park—in order to more efficiently analyze the data.

The first section of the online survey, The People, reflects the demographic information of the subjects who filled out the online survey. There are significant items from this first group. The first item to note is the overwhelming use of Bishop Park by female visitors (67%). The second item is the age distribution, which showed that most users are very young or middle-aged. Responses to this question also revealed that the survey represents almost 1200 individuals with a connection to the park. People predominately reach the park by car (91%), but a significant minority of respondents also reported walking (24%) or biking (22%) to the park. This data correlates well with the 27% of respondents who reported living within 1 mile of the park.



*Figure 2.1: Sunset Field*

The multi-purpose field (aka Sunset Field) is a heavily used and well-loved asset, used by a diversity of park patrons for a variety of activities. However, there is no direct route from the field to the rest of the park, creating a sense of isolation.



**Figure 2.2: Pool**

Adults and children that participate in the ACC's swimming lessons and competitive swim team program in the large outdoor pool desire an indoor pool for year-round swimming. Other citizens complain that the pool is not open often enough for public swim. A splashpad is also highly desired by families with young children.

The second section, The People and The Park, evaluates how and when users interact with the park. An item of note is the frequency that people participate in events and organized programs at Bishop Park. Eighty-nine percent of respondents said they participate "Often" or "Sometimes" in organized activities at the park. The primary activities respondents reported that they visit the park for are the Farmer's Market (60%), exercise/fitness (48%), and athletics or organized sports (41%) (Figure 2.3). The walking paths (25%), the playground (17%), and the gymnastics center (12%) are among the most heavily used features according to survey respondents (Figure 2.4).

The responses in the last section, The Park, provide data on users' perceptions of the park. This includes the facilities, the programs, and the operations. An item of note is the "moderate" or "difficult" rating for navigating the parking lot (55% combined). This indicates that the parking lot is a concern for a majority of park users. However, the survey also indicates that the amount of parking is right.

The top four items needing improvement and/or expansion are: the playground, walking paths, gymnastics center, and the pavilion (Figure 2.5). The BBQ pavilion was noted as the most underused facility at the park, but responses to other questions reflected continued need for pavilion space at the park. This is revealed

especially in a question regarding facilities one would like to see added to Bishop Park. The most desired facilities include a splash pad/pool amenities, expanded playground amenities, a dog park, and a community/event pavilion.

## Conclusions of Online Survey

The analysis of the online survey results determined the following chief concerns and considerations:

### Existing Facilities

- Playground: expand multi-aged elements, creative play.
- Walking Paths: add distance markers, exercise elements, add path to perimeter of entire park.
- Gymnastics Center: expand programs, add new gym for competition training (Figure 2.6).
- Pool: add splash pads, expand hours of public access, winter cover, year round swim teams.
- Parking: rework parking, adding few if any spaces.
- Restroom: add restrooms in additional locations throughout the park.

Figure 2.3: Online Survey – Question 1

Please indicate your reasons for using Bishop Park?

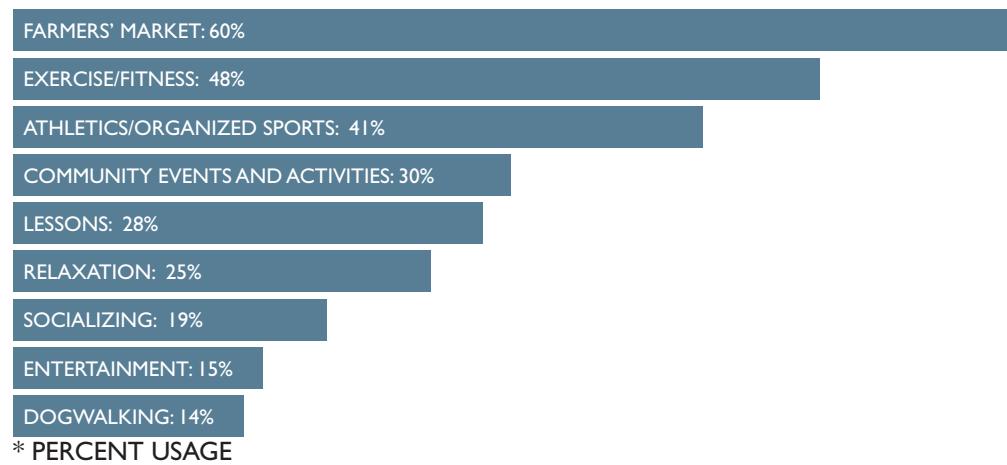


Figure 2.4: Online Survey – Question 2

What facilitates at Bishop Park do you use most often?

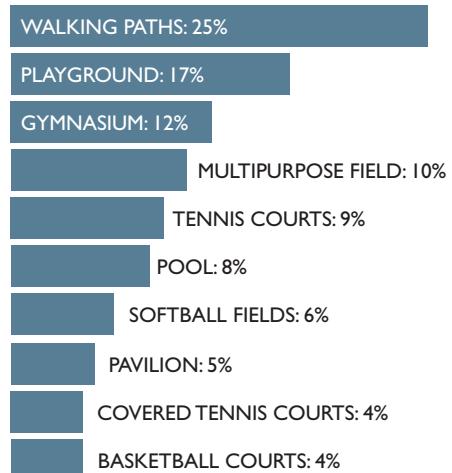


Figure 2.5: Online Survey – Question 3

Which facilities at Bishop Park need improvement or expansion?

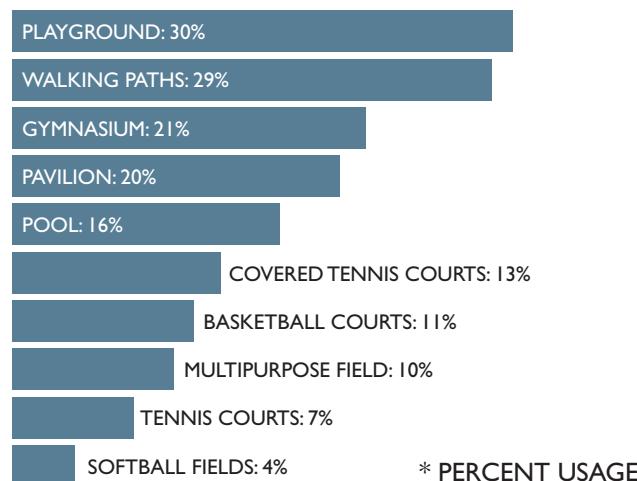




Figure 2.6: Gymnastics

The gymnastics program is extremely popular, but has completely outgrown its space and therefore can't expand its programs to meet the demand from the public. A new gym building is needed in order to accommodate the future of this program.



Figure 2.7: October 2014 Public Input

CCDP invited citizens to a public input meeting to find out opinions about Bishop Park. Approximately 40 people attended the October 6, 2014, session.



Figure 2.8: October 2014 Public Input - Groups

Participants took turns sharing within their group, putting a coordinating dot on the map as they talked—yellow dots represented things about the park they would keep; blue dots represented things that need fixing.

## Future Desires

- Dog park
- Conversion of covered tennis courts to pavilion for community events
- Yoga: designated space
- Frisbee: Ultimate Frisbee leagues
- Fireworks: bring them back to the park
- More youth sports/programs

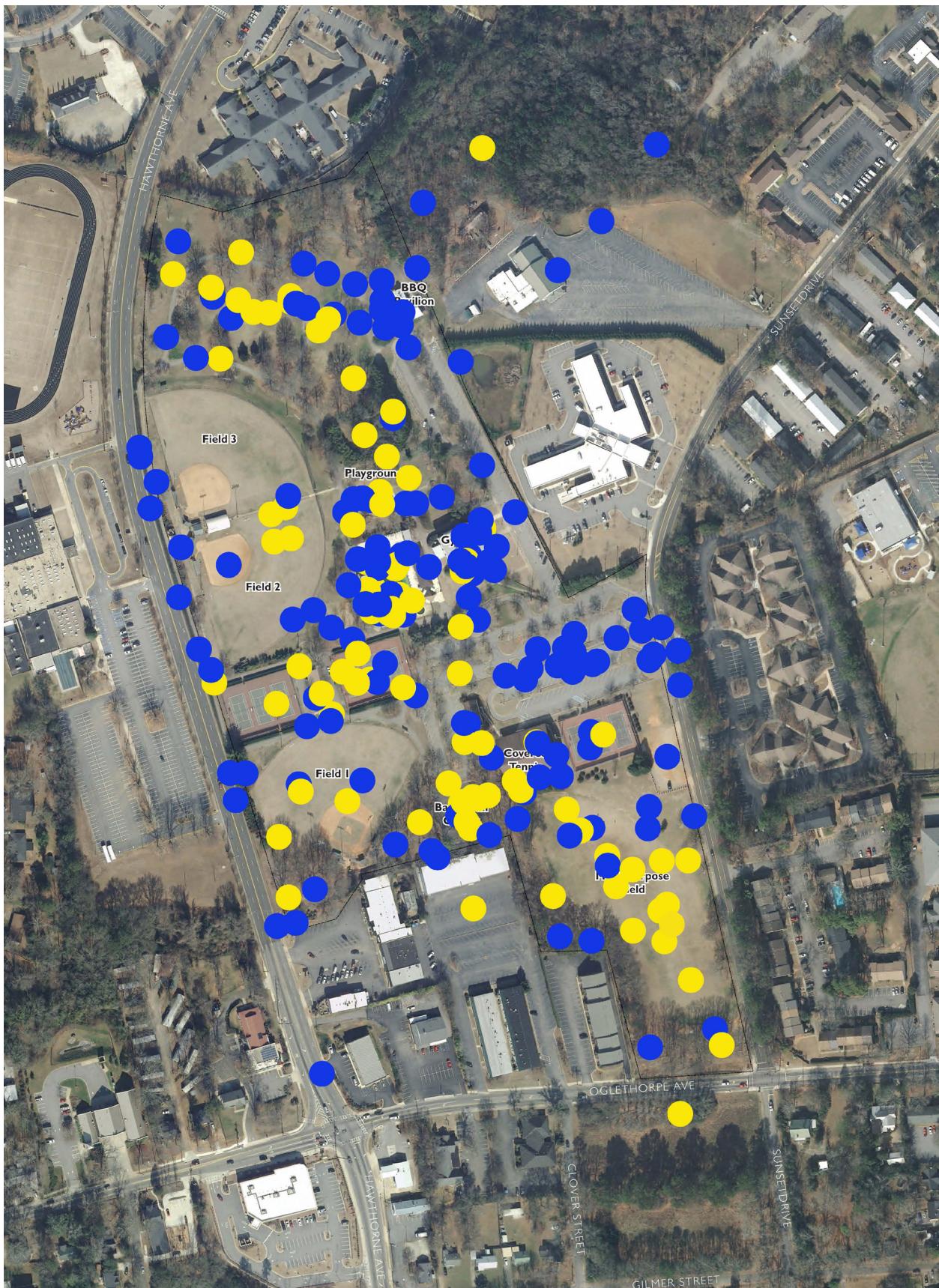
## Public Input Meeting

On October 6th, 2014, a public “kick-off” meeting was held at Oglethorpe Avenue Elementary School to begin the design phase of the charrette. UGA CED student facilitators stationed at numerous tables led small groups of participants through discussions to gather specific feedback on the park that would inform its redesign (Figure 2.7). The small group discussions utilized open-ended questions so that the results could stand alone or augment the questions in the online survey.

Participants were guided through two exercises that focused on both existing and future conditions: “Keepers and Fixers” and “Visioning.” For determining existing conditions, groups were asked to identify elements of Bishop Park that they would like to keep, i.e. “Keepers,” and elements needing improvement or to be eliminated, i.e., “Fixers.” Each group worked on the aerial photograph and went person-by-person around the table (round-robin) sharing their ideas and placing a coordinating dot on the map as they talked (Figures 2.8 and 2.9). This method, adapted from methodology used by the National Charrette Institute,<sup>1</sup> allows all participants to be heard and keeps any one person(s) from dominating the conversation.

## Results of Public Input Meeting

Frequently expressed “Keepers” responses included the Farmer’s Market, the multi-purpose field on Sunset Drive, the walking trails, and the swimming pool. Frequently expressed “Fixers”



**Figure 2.9: October 2014 Public Input - Results**

Synthesis of "Keepers" (yellow) and "Fixers" (blue) for Bishop Park.



**Figure 2.10: Hawthorne Avenue**

The path along busy Hawthorne Avenue is buffered physically and visually by a hedge in some sections, but elsewhere the chain link fence bordering the park is bare, rusted and unsightly.

included the gymnastics center, parking, traffic flow, and the BBQ pavilion.

For the second exercise, the groups examined future conditions for Bishop Park via a visioning process that asked participants to describe how they envisioned the park in 15 to 20 years. Facilitators prompted the discussions by asking questions such as: “Imagine that you have been away for 15 years and you just came back. How do you see the park improved in 15 years? What amenities or programs are in the park that weren’t there before? What would you be most excited to see? What does the surrounding area look like?”

While a notable amount of “Vision” responses were guised more in the form of “Fixers,” a consistent set of general descriptors of a future Bishop Park were found, especially: “vibrant,” “multi-use,” “recreational,” “pedestrian-friendly,” and “community-oriented.”

## **Stakeholder Interviews**

### **Interviews of surrounding businesses and organizations by MEPD students**

There is a wide array of publicly-oriented uses that lie within one-quarter mile of Bishop Park, including commercial, institutional, and non-profit organizations. The several medical and office complexes that border Bishop Park will be most affected by future redevelopment of the park. CED students conducted interviews with a few of these businesses—located at Jefferson Professional Park, Heritage Square, Bishop Professional

Park, YMCA International, and Pruitt Health—to determine what they would “keep” or “fix” about Bishop Park, as well as their “vision” of the park 15 years into the future. Responses yielded similar results for “Keepers” as were expressed in the public input meeting, such as tennis courts, swimming pools, and walking trails. Responses for “Fixers” also yielded similar responses, such as upgrading the tennis courts, upgrading the swimming pool, repairing walking paths, and improving traffic flow and parking. Responses to the visioning exercise generally described a park that is natural, passive, and multi-purpose. Full results of these interviews are available in Appendix C.

### **Interviews of ACC Staff and park program leaders by Park Planning staff**

As a supplement to the online survey and public input meetings, Leisure Services staff conducted a series of interviews with key park figures and stakeholders to gain a more detailed understanding of issues identified during the input and master planning process. Interviewees included both ACC staff responsible for operations and programming of the park, and program leaders for independent groups that routinely use the park, such as the Athens Farmer’s Market and Dolphins swim team. Staff interviewed 15 people in 11 interviews as part of this process. These programs collectively serve thousands of users, especially children. Many of the program leaders noted that their programs were at capacity and had room to grow, if more space were available. Several of the programs especially benefit lower



**Figure 2.11: Walking Paths**

The walking paths in the north end of the park are a popular asset, with multiple routes, changing topography, and both shady and sunny paths.

income citizens, such as the Farmer's Market's EBT matching program, and the Downtown Falcons football program. Minutes from these interviews are found in Appendix C.

Lack of space and conflicts between programs sharing space were consistently identified as issues for the park. Eight interviewees referenced instances of conflicts between park programs over access to fields, meeting space, or other facilities. Five identified a need for more multi-purpose space; however, three recommended that all three softball fields be retained. Lack of space for meeting and classroom space, and administrative offices and storage were both cited as issues by five interviewees. Outdoor covered space or additional indoor program space was requested by five interviewees, primarily as a response to inclement weather.

Ten interviewees mentioned instances of poor park or facility conditions as a concern. These included landscape issues such as poor drainage and plant health, as well as age or conditions of park infrastructure. Lighting was specifically mentioned by five as a need; additional lighting would allow for greater utilization of the park on weekday evenings in the winter season.

## Summary of Findings

The CED Planning students concluded their analysis of Bishop Park by synthesizing all survey data, the public input session, and stakeholder



**Figure 2.12: Playground**

The current playground is great for younger kids, but doesn't offer much for older elementary-age kids. Parents complain that the restrooms are too far away from the playground.

interviews and identifying the following broad needs:

- **Redesign of Conflict Areas.** There are several areas where pedestrian and vehicular conflicts compromise park visitor safety and comfort.
- **Pedestrian Access on Hawthorne.** The current access on Hawthorne is insufficient and its redesign should be very carefully reconciled with Hawthorne Avenue street design and park visitor safety (Figure 2.10).
- **Additional Security Features.** There may be some unintended consequences to changing the park security fence. Survey data suggests that park visitors feel safe in the park currently. Modifications to perimeter fencing to allow for additional entry points and more foot and bicycle traffic through the park should preserve the existing sense of safety.
- **Open Space Programming.** The open spaces present a great opportunity to develop new activity centers, but the character of these areas is important to the surveyed population. The multi-purpose fields along Sunset Drive are best unchanged. The open space on the north end of the park is important for park visitors who attend the park for rest and relaxation (Figure 2.11).
- **Additional Bathroom Facilities.** The undersized, centralized restroom building is insufficient for a 33-acre park. Additional restrooms should be added to accommodate all the activity centers in the north, central, and south ends of the park (4.12).

- **Connectivity to YMCA.** An enhanced connection to the adjacent YMCA is desired by park users who are also YMCA members. However, Hawthorne Avenue vehicle speeds and blind curves make crossing on foot treacherous. Additionally, YMCA administration does not want to encourage foot traffic by non-members, and their outdoor facilities are gated.
- **Alternative Transportation.** There are opportunities to make connections to existing or proposed bicycle facilities and paths in the area such as the Oconee Rivers Greenway Network.
- **Adjacent Parcel Purchases or Use Agreements.** There are adjacent underused parcels that could enhance park capacity and should be considered for long-term expansion of the park.
- **Covered Tennis Courts.** The two tennis courts under the large covered shelter are inadequate due to minimal protection from rain and poor lighting at nighttime and are therefore underutilized. Surveys and interview data suggest that the covered shelter would be better utilized for an alternative function, and that a true indoor tennis option is more desirable.
- **Branding and Park Marketing.** Many park visitors described how they eventually “discovered” Bishop Park despite having lived nearby for several years. This may be due in part to the park’s lack of visibility from Hawthorne Avenue and its limited hosting of general community events (such as the now relocated Fourth of July celebration). A comprehensive signage and branding campaign should be implemented to appeal to newer residents and visitors.

This analysis served to guide the next phase of the planning process—the design charrette. During the charrette, a series of conceptual alternatives were generated illustrating potential solutions to the issues identified above. These alternatives and feedback to them will be discussed in the following chapter.

# Chapter 3: Preliminary Design Process

## CONCEPTUAL ALTERNATIVES

Following the public input session and MEPD students' compilation of all public input, CCDP led a design charrette with students from the College of Environment and Design's programs in Landscape Architecture, Historic Preservation and Environmental Planning and Design. The charrette team met at regular intervals with ACC Leisure Services staff for feedback loops (mid-point reactions to initial ideas to help refine designs) as concepts were developed (Figure 3.1). The charrette team's goal was to develop alternative concepts for park improvement to be presented to the public for feedback later that month.



*Figure 3.1: Charette*

CCDP held a pin-up presentation and critique at the mid-point of the charrette for Leisure Services staff to provide feedback on three conceptual alternatives.

### ***Bishop Park Health & Wellness Center***

One of the central themes of the Bishop Park charrette process was the concept of "Health and Wellness." The solutions described below call for an improved facility for gymnastics and indoor sports to support this theme. One solution in particular calls the new gymnasium the "Health and Wellness Center." Currently, ACC emphasizes improved health and wellness for its employees through its Employee Wellness Program; development of such a centralized center could

support employee programs in coordination with programming and facilities for the general public. The idea of a center that will address mind and body health can be easily integrated into Bishop Park improvements and serve the community in many ways that are not being addressed by other programs throughout ACC. The center would seamlessly meld with the functions that the park already provides to citizens, and enhanced services will bring new populations to the park.

In addition to the overarching goal of health and wellness, collected community input, the designers' observations and community precedents, there were certain issues that were determined to be inevitable. These issues, outlined below, were accepted as "givens" and factored into each team's design concept:

- The gymnastics program is extremely popular and needs a larger facility to accommodate its future growth.
- The pool is used, but has limited open sessions for the general public. Change should be considered, including an indoor/outdoor component and splashpad.
- The well-used and loved basketball court should not change.
- Parking needs to be re-worked and should contain no fewer than the existing 305 spaces. Improvements can modify the existing parking footprint.
- Vehicular gates should be used for parking lots, but the rest of the park can be de-fenced to allow for more porous pedestrian movement through the park.
- The multipurpose field (aka Sunset Field) is a highly regarded neighborhood feature that should remain as is, including maintaining the open and sloped Sunset Drive side known affectionately as the "sledding hill."
- A dog park—while a popular idea—would require more dedicated acreage (4 acres) than is feasible for a small multi-use park. Lesser accommodations, such as dog fountains and expanded walking trails, should be considered here and other suggestions incorporated into larger park facilities on the west side of Athens-Clarke County.
- Softball Field #1 (the southernmost field) can be

reoriented and/or converted to a multi-purpose field. Fields #2 and #3 will remain as they are.

- The uncovered tennis courts will remain as they are.
- The covered tennis courts are not meeting the needs of tennis players and can be reconfigured to a new use.
- The barbecue building is underused and at the end of its lifespan and will likely be demolished, as will the small administration building.

These parameters, along with community input data, departmental needs and personal observations, were analyzed and cross-referenced to produce a set of approaches for the redesign of the park. Three lenses of analysis—Passive, Active and Community—were determined to be the best approach for the design process. Charrette teams each adopted the Passive, Active or Community lens through which they were to filter, frame and prioritize their design recommendations. The intent was not to stifle improvements, but to serve as a way to design with a primary focus and generate a variety of amenities to compare and contrast.



*Figure 3.2: Gymnasium & Parking*

A new gymnasium features expanded indoor facilities and subterranean parking. The main parking lot has been reconfigured to improve circulation, and an outdoor plaza is featured in the center of the park.

The Passive Park group prioritized uses in the park that related to individual or self-directed experiences, such as walking, running, playground use and picnicking.

The Active Park group gave priority to park uses that served group or league activities, such as pick-up games, softball league play, and youth sports.

The Community Park group used social events and community-gathering opportunities as their filter, such as the Athens Farmer's Market, as well as increased neighborhood connectivity and expanded community programming.

These three areas of concentration produced complementary but markedly different options for improving Bishop Park. Appendix D describes each team's design intent and highlights of their plan, including circulation improvements, structural changes and ecological considerations.



*Figure 3.3: North End*

A new multipurpose field has been added to the northern end of the park, along with a deck to function as a “green room” for fitness classes. A clubhouse replaces the BBQ building and has a playground nearby.

## **Presentation of Charette Results and Synthesis of Preferred Options**

Following the charrette, CCDP and ACC Leisure Services held a public meeting on October 27, 2014, to present the charrette results and get the public's feedback. Approximately 40 citizens came for the final presentation, which included a PowerPoint overview of the entire process and the three conceptual plans, and then allowed attendees to see the plans up close and speak to students about their ideas.

Next, attendees were given the opportunity to vote "Dotmocracy"-style—applying color-coded dots—on various ideas and concepts presented in the three plans, ranking issues as to what was "liked" (green dots), "disliked" (red dots) and indifferent about/"maybe" (yellow dots). This dot-voting method allows individuals to give their feedback on each issue in equal measure, and allowed responses to be collated by color at a glance. The highest percentages of positive responses to "Passive" uses went to Playground for Older Kids (88% liked), Multi-use Paths (86% liked), and Climbing Trees (77% liked).

Active uses votes showed that 77% of respondents liked an outdoor pool, while only 55% liked the indoor pool concept. Keeping the northern section of the park as paths-only yielded 60% positive votes and no negative votes, while converting the area to a multi-purpose field yielded 68% "likes" with 18% disliking the idea.

Community uses, such as the Market Area, received many positive votes, with 90% liking the Tree Pavilion Market Area concept best. An enclosed Clubhouse with an asymmetrical roofline was voted undesirable (87% disliked), while 81% liked a more Craftsman-inspired design, and only 14% liked a utilitarian concrete picnic shelter. Eighty-two percent liked the idea of outdoor movies (with no one disliking the concept) and 79% liked the outdoor amphitheater idea. Please see Appendix II for the full summary of the Dotmocracy exercise.

Finally, attendees at the meeting were given an Opinion Ballot to respond to, with 37 ballots submitted. When asked "How do you use Bishop Park?" 92% identified as a Passive User, 39% as

an Active User, and 92% as a Community User. Since multiple categories could be selected, it is important to note that four distinct groups formed from the questionnaire:

- People that used the park in all forms (53%)
- Passive and Community Users (31%)
- Community and Active Users (3%)
- Passive users (3%).

A summary of the most prevalent responses to the additional three questions of the Opinion Ballot are below (the entire summary and transcript of ballot responses is available in Appendix II):

### **Which idea presented tonight is most appealing to you?**

- Larger gymnasium (22%)
- Indoor pool (16%)
- Splashpad (14%)
- Movie screen/amphitheater (14%)
- Improved walking/biking trails (11%)
- Fitness trail (11%)

### **Which Idea is least appealing?**

- Car entrance from Hawthorne (30%)
- Enclosed tennis court (27%)
- Vehicular gate (11%)
- Indoor pool (8%)
- Horticulture center (8%)
- Community plan (8%)
- Pedestrian access too restricted (8%)

### **Do you have any ideas for Bishop Park that have not been discussed?**

- Dog Park (14%)
- Covered/Permanent Farmer's Market (11%)
- Park should be opened up around the perimeter (8%)
- Street parking and sidewalks should be added on public roads (8%)
- Outdoor movies (82%)
- Amphitheater (79%)

## PRELIMINARY MASTER PLAN

After receiving input on the conceptual alternatives developed by CCDP (see Appendix D), Park Planning staff reviewed all data compiled to date as part of the Bishop Park master planning process, and began drafting a Preliminary Master Plan. The Preliminary Master Plan synthesizes favored elements from the three conceptual alternatives into a single concept, and is developed with a more detailed evaluation of site development constraints than was feasible as part of the charrette process.

Many elements identified in the conceptual alternatives were explored as part of this process that ultimately were not included in the preliminary concept. These include alternative parking configurations, pedestrian circulation strategies, and building programming options. As part of the programming exercise, the possibility of an indoor aquatics facility, identified as a desired feature by many survey respondents, was explored and ultimately set aside due to the substantial cost and parking requirements for such a structure (Figure 3.4). A dog park, a frequently requested element, was also not included due to the substantial space requirements to create a sustainable ground surface at what would likely be a heavily-used amenity. However, this use is being considered for other sites currently undergoing master planning by Park Planning.

The preliminary plan described below is thus a first draft of a feasible compromise between many alternative visions for Bishop Park. It makes substantial improvements to many of the park's existing programs, but ultimately does not include some new elements requested by citizens during the public input process.

Following completion of the Preliminary Master Plan, Park Planning staff presented the concepts to Leisure Services staff and the public to gain additional feedback. Input received at these events is described later in the chapter, and will be used to inform the Final Master Plan (Chapter 4).



Figure 3.4: Gymnasium & Wellness Center

An early concept for a larger Gymnastics & Wellness Center including an indoor aquatics facility was discarded over concerns about cost and parking requirements.

## Preliminary Master Plan Concept Feedback

Following completion of the preliminary concept, Park Planning staff solicited feedback from Leisure Services staff and the public to evaluate the appropriateness of proposed changes to Bishop Park. A summary of comments from these meetings is provided below; comprehensive responses are found in Appendix C.

### Leisure Services Department Staff Meeting:

Park Planning staff presented the preliminary concept and solicited feedback from Leisure Services staff on March 19, 2015 as part of the Department's monthly meeting. Department staff asked questions and made comments regarding the plan. These concerns will be addressed in the final master plan, along with citizen feedback on the concept (see below).

Topics discussed at this meeting included parking, safety, athletic amenities, and park amenities. Several staff members stressed the need for additional parking, and emphasized a desire for direct connections from parking areas to park amenities. Other issues raised are the retention of a perimeter fence and gates for the park, and the ability to secure the park appropriately at night. An additional suggestion for perimeter control was the use of a natural buffer along Hawthorne Avenue.

Staff members recommended a picnic pavilion capacity of approximately 100 people per rental structure. Department staff also requested additional restrooms throughout the park. Requested athletic amenities included refurbishing the tennis plaza, indoor basketball courts in the Gymnastics and Wellness Center, and appropriate sized athletic fields. Equipment storage for youth program providers was also requested.

**Bishop Park Staff Meeting:** Park Planning staff also met with Bishop Park staff on March 24, 2015 to discuss specific plan issues not covered at the March 19 meeting. Park staff focused their comments on the redesign of the gymnasium, pool, athletic amenities, park amenities, and safety. Park staff also identified the need for a loading area for the Gymnastics & Wellness Center for the convenience of park staff. Additionally, park staff requested that the building should have many windows for natural lighting.

Gymnastics program staff requested a facility of at least 15,000 square feet, comparable to other regional gymnastics facilities such as Georgia Elite Gymnastics in Watkinsville, Georgia. Gymnastics staff also requested two separate floor areas for participants of varying ages and skill levels. They also described options for parent waiting areas: parent observation areas and the main gymnastics space should be separated by glass if located on the same level, or by a level change, which eliminates the need a glass partition. This observation area could double as a space for birthday parties and other revenue generating events.

Park staff also recommended locating pavilions closer to the parking areas for easier unloading and loading by patrons who often bring food and other supplies when renting these facilities. Park staff also suggested providing a rental shelter nearer to the splashpad. Staff identified a critical need for storage space in the park to support its many athletic programs. Park staff requested extra bathrooms throughout the park both outdoors and indoors.

Aquatics staff noted that the pool needs replacement since water is leaking underground.

They also requested additional deck space and shade around the pool for both spectator space and parents during free swim time.

Park staff emphasized the significant athletic activities taking place in the park. The adult softball program is nearing capacity at the park, and the removal of one field could limit the program significantly. Expanded outfield space may make fields more usable for adult softball and provide more flexibility for youth sports using the outfields as multi-purpose spaces.

Park staff also expressed concerns about the crosswalk across Hawthorne Avenue, which may create a hazard for children and encourage illegal parking at the YMCA. Lighting is also very important around the park for creating a sense of safety.

**Citizen Feedback:** Park Planning staff gathered feedback on the preliminary master plan concept from over 150 people. Citizens were able to view the concepts and respond via an online survey from March 9 to April 13, 2015. Local news sources advertised the online survey and the two meetings. Additionally, staff distributed surveys at a public meeting held on March 25, 2015 at Bishop Park, and at an information booth on Saturday, April 4, 2015 at the Athens Farmer's Market. Leisure Services staff advertised the meeting via a press release and various online tools.

The survey included questions about most and least liked aspects of the proposed plan, and a prioritization of plan elements. Most and least liked elements provided in qualitative questions were categorized and ranked by topic (Figure 3.5). The most liked elements of the plan were the addition of a wellness center, improved pedestrian walkways, and the gymnastics facility expansion, while the least liked element of the plan was the addition of a crosswalk across Hawthorne Ave.

Figure 3.6 illustrates the averaged priority of plan elements. Walking paths and loops, restrooms and picnic shelters, and activity center and event pavilion were the highest ranked plan elements. The most important pool area elements were an improved pool house, restrooms, and changing

Figure 3.5: Survey – Question 1

What do you like most about the proposed plan?



Figure 3.6: Survey – Question 2

What do you like least about the proposed plan?

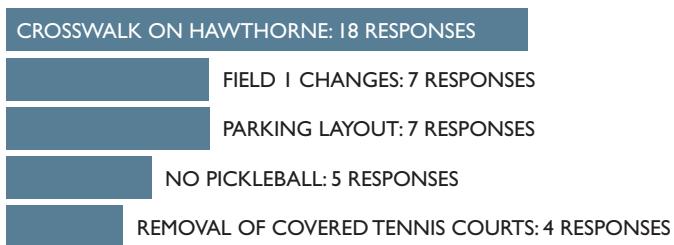


Figure 3.7: Survey – Question 3

Rate the following plan elements on a scale of 1 (Low Priority/ No Opinion) to 4 (High Priority)



\* PERCENT HIGH PRIORITY

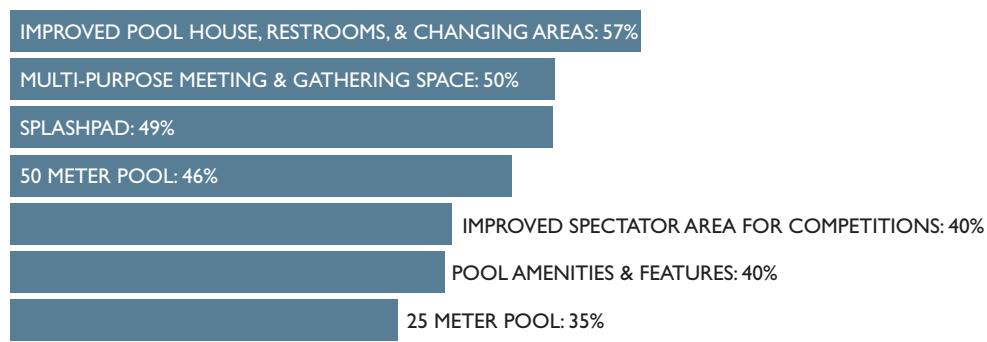
areas; multi-purpose meeting and gathering space; and a splashpad (Figure 3.7).

72.5% of people supported the creation of an event pavilion at Bishop Park, and 61.3% of people supported the creation of a community wellness center (Figure 3.8). Additional elements people

wanted to see included in the Bishop Park Master Plan included pickleball courts, a dog park, and more naturalistically planted areas. As part of additional comments, respondents reiterated their support for gymnastics pool improvements, playground improvements, and walkway improvements.

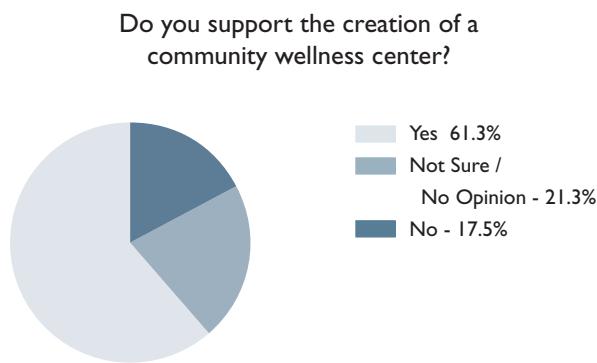
*Figure 3.8: Survey – Question 4*

Prioritize the following plan elements on a scale of 1 (Low Priority/ No Opinion) to 4 (High Priority)

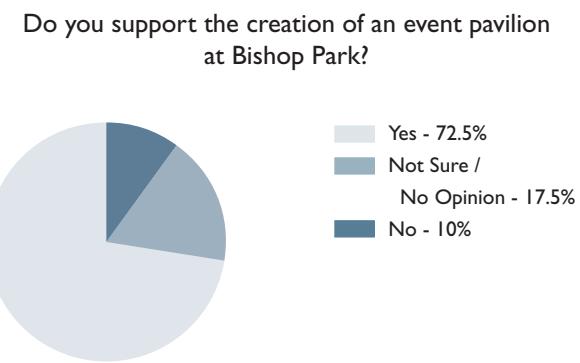


\* PERCENT HIGH PRIORITY

*Figure 3.9: Survey – Question 5*



*Figure 3.10: Survey – Question 6*



## Conclusions

The general nature of comments received during this effort was supportive of the approach used to develop the preliminary master plan concept. However, certain elements received more attention, warranting additional analysis, and in some cases revision. Following completion of this input process, Park Planning staff reviewed comments from staff and the public and identified a list of revisions to incorporate in the final master plan, including:

- Addition of pickleball courts
- Addition of restrooms on the south end of the park and adjustments to the event pavilion and plaza area
- Removal of the proposed crosswalk on Hawthorne Avenue and reduction of access points along this frontage from four to two

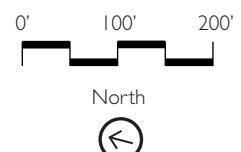
- Adjustments to the proposed gymnastics and wellness center to provide additional floor area, loading, and storage
- Adjustments to proposed picnic pavilions
- Revisions to the pool complex to provide additional shade and improved deck space

Park Planning staff also continued to refine design concepts for the park based in conjunction with more detailed analysis of park infrastructure needs (such as stormwater management and maintenance/emergency access), potential redevelopment phasing, and preliminary grading studies. This resulted in additional adjustments to the plan that will be included, along with issues identified above, in the final master plan.

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## LEGEND



# PRELIMINARY MASTER PLAN CONCEPT

Bishop Park Master Plan  
PRELIMINARY MASTER PLAN

Figure 3.11: Preliminary Master Plan Concept

Prepared by  
ACC Leisure Services  
Park Planning



for Athens  
Clarke County  
Leisure Services

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## DRAFT MASTER PLAN

This section provides an overview of the process surrounding the draft master plan for Bishop Park that was presented to Mayor and Commission in August of 2015.

The Draft Master Plan was developed and presented to the Mayor and Commission at their August 2015 work session. There were some concerns expressed over the complexity and recommended changes for Bishop Park, so staff did not pursue further advancement of the plan at that time. In January of 2017, based on comments received during the initial presentation, staff refined the plan and resubmitted the final draft master plan described in Chapter 4.

Staff looked back over public input, revisited stakeholder conversations, and evaluated the plan for areas of change that would simplify the design and bring it back to the roots of what was originally Bishop Park. Additionally, staff performed a more detailed assessment of park development, and out of that process, the expense for construction of the plan in Chapter 4 was much larger than originally anticipated in the Draft Master Plan presented on the following page.



Figure 3.12: Draft Master Plan Event Plaza

Designed as a flexible space, allowing for large events, or utilization of the Event Pavilion and Multi-purpose Space during inclement weather.

Staff then reviewed the plan for areas that would initiate cost savings as the final plan was implemented. Some portions of the Draft Master Plan are very specific and heavily programmed. The draft plan calls for the removal of the covered tennis courts, and reprograms that space for a large gathering area. This decision was reversed in the final master plan due to the desire to preserve the flexibility of that space and provide more options for decision makers in the future.

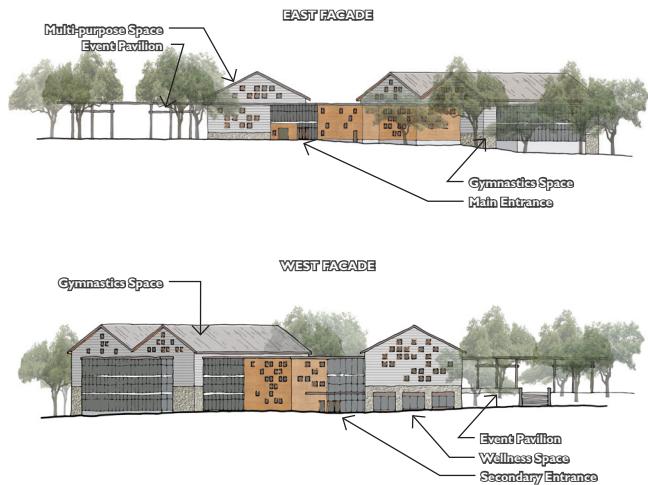


Figure 3.13: Elevations for the east and west facades of the Gymnastics & Wellness Center

The Wellness and Gymnastics Center was very detailed in its design and provided a large covered area that was intended for special event use such as the farmer's market. With the change to the tennis courts, it made sense to provide a simple footprint that would allow similar flexibility for the future gymnastics and wellness building.

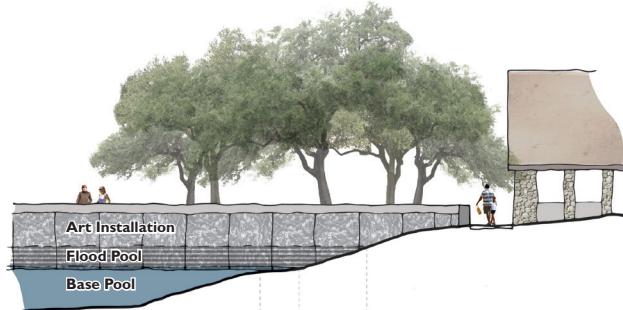


Figure 3.14: Section View of Stormwater Amenity

The retaining wall provides opportunities for viewing the water up close, and can serve as a surface on which to incorporate public art.

The parks stormwater feature was designed to become a major amenity for the park. This vision was shelved and a simple stormwater treatment and storage facility has taken its place.

Other park amenities such as the tennis plaza, pedestrian circulation, and aquatics area were also dialed back and simplified to allow placeholders for future decision making and cost savings.



Figure 3.15: Hawthorne Avenue Improvements

Walkways and plazas between Fields 2 and 3 were expanded to provide more space for gathering. The park's loop walkway is routed behind the concrete bleachers, providing views of the athletic field and Hawthorne Avenue.

Moving the fields to accommodate a larger pedestrian plaza and signature feature on the Hawthorne Avenue side of the park was abandoned due to the excessive costs with little benefit beyond much improved aesthetics for that portion of the park. Instead, the two pedestrian paths were combined into one, with a simplified gathering space at the softball fields that helps meet the sidewalk requirements of the county ordinance while maintaining pedestrian circulation through the site.

The parking configuration did not allow much room for change and so only minor adjustments were made to improve pedestrian safety.

The draft master plan is an important part of the overall process to explore what can be done with the master plan. It shows how much Bishop Park could change with a complete reworking. However, the final version of the Bishop Park Master Plan in Chapter 4 gives us a simple layout that largely preserves the original uses of the park while providing opportunities for improvements and adjustments to areas that have historically caused issues for the park.

## Plan Overview

### Structures

- 43,800 ft<sup>2</sup> Gymnastics & Wellness Center with 9,300 ft<sup>2</sup> of covered outdoor space attached
- Restroom Building
- 1,850 ft<sup>2</sup> Pavilion with Restrooms and Kitchen
- 750 ft<sup>2</sup> Pavilion with Restrooms
- (2) 320 ft<sup>2</sup> Shelters

### Site Features

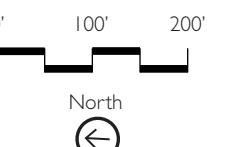
- 377 Parking Spaces
- 10' wide 1 kilometer Walking Loop
- 10' wide 1/4 mile Walking Loop
- ~3/4 mile of additional park walkways
- 10,500 ft<sup>2</sup> Playground
- 1/2 acre Stormwater Management Pond

### Recreation Spaces

- 102,000 ft<sup>2</sup> Multi-purpose Field (Sunset Field)
- 95,000 ft<sup>2</sup> Multi-purpose Field (Field 1)
- 52,000 ft<sup>2</sup> Multi-purpose Field (Hawthorne Field)
- 2 Softball Fields (Fields 2 and 3)
- 9 Tennis Courts (3 striped to accommodate pickleball)
- 2 Dedicated Pickleball Courts
- 2 Basketball Courts
- 3 Outdoor Wellness Spaces



## LEGEND



## DRAFT MASTER PLAN

Bishop Park Master Plan  
DRAFT MASTER PLAN

Figure 3.16: Draft Master Plan

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Park Planning  
for Athens  
Clarke County  
Leisure Services



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# Chapter 4: Final Master Plan

Chapter 4 presents a final concept for the design of a redeveloped Bishop Park, and a set of design guidelines. The concept and other recommendations that follow are the synthesis of all public input received as part of the Bishop Park Master Plan process, refining the preliminary concept discussed in Appendix E, with adjustments based on feedback from staff and the public.

First, this chapter provides an overview of the final vision for Bishop Park. Next, detailed concepts and images for important areas within the park are discussed. Finally, the chapter provides a series of park-wide recommendations, such as design guidelines and public art opportunities, and supporting information such as concepts for grading and stormwater management.

## PARK VISION

Bishop Park is a “central park” for Normaltown and the west side of Athens-Clarke County, with a balance between active and passive activities, and a strong emphasis on civic and community gathering spaces of varying scales. The park functions as a model and a lab for the role of parks in improving public health by employing active design principles to encourage physical activity; providing easily accessible alternative transportation connections; offering wellness-related facilities and programming; and creating partnerships with community partners in the public health and wellness fields. The design of the park is cohesive, attractive, and easily identified as an ACC Leisure Services Department facility through the consistent use of materials, and standardized signs and features. Successful community programs, such as gymnastics, aquatics, and adult and youth sports leagues, and the Athens Farmer’s Market continue to thrive at the park. The park’s design utilizes native plants,

green infrastructure strategies, green building techniques, careful material selection, and other environmentally responsible strategies to create a healthy landscape and contribute to improved environmental health for the community.

The park’s focal point is the Gymnastics & Wellness Center (GWC), and the existing covered tennis courts serves as a “front porch” for the park. The plaza next to the GWC provides connections between the park’s improved entry drive, Sunset Field, and Field 1 and the 1-kilometer walking loop encircling the upper portion of the park. These spaces are well-scaled to transition easily from daily informal use to larger scale events such as the Saturday Farmers’ Market. The redeveloped parking and drive areas are easy to navigate and minimize pedestrian-vehicle conflicts.

New pedestrian gateways at the park’s major corners and improved sidewalks along the park’s frontages make pedestrian access to and through the park much easier. Throughout the park, generous walkways connect major program elements and provide opportunities for walking. Supporting the park’s public health goals, a 1-kilometer and quarter-mile loop are designed into the park’s circulation system. Gathering areas throughout the park—such as the renovated Tennis Plaza and a plaza near the new playground—provide opportunities for people to congregate, play, and relax. These spaces invite the park’s diverse users to interact. Public art is incorporated throughout the park in prominent locations.

Stormwater is managed on the site through the creation of two stormwater features. These features could use networks of bioswales and rain gardens to increase water quality. Additionally, the northern stormwater amenity provides important infrastructure services and could serve as habitat for native wetland species if designed properly. The park’s undeveloped areas are managed as

an urban woodland, with diversity in species and age, and management for a healthy native plant community.

The park's athletic programs benefit from improved facilities. An improved pool complex enhances the park's ability to host competitions and practices while providing more opportunities for public access to aquatics activities through the addition of a splashpad. Youth sports programs, including soccer and football, take advantage of additional space on Hawthorne Field, and improvements to Fields 1, 2, and 3. Improvements to Fields 2 and 3 provide a higher quality experience for the adult softball program. The GWC allows the park's gymnastics program to continue to grow, and provides additional indoor space for summer camps, and adult classes. An improved tennis plaza enhances Bishop Park's role as a location for tennis tournaments, and new pickleball courts complement the park's existing racquet sports offerings. Improvements to and relocation of the park's basketball courts provide better accessibility and gathering and nods to the rich history of past generations of park users.

In the past, Athens-Clarke County has created parks focused on providing services to a particular niche—a nature center, an arts center, or a youth sports complex, for instance—but the newly renovated Bishop Park successfully blends the many clients of the department with space for the general public to recreate in unprogrammed civic space. The park's passive and environmental spaces are a backdrop for the park's active and developed features. The active features within the park become events to observe that enliven the park for everyday users, celebrating health, sport, and movement. And finally, the park's gathering areas become space for Athenians of all kinds to gather.

Below, the areas of the park touched on in this narrative will be described in greater detail.

## PLAN OVERVIEW

### *Structures*

- 51,500 ft<sup>2</sup> Gymnastics & Wellness Center
- 1,640 ft<sup>2</sup> Renovated Tennis Building/Community Meeting Room
- 1,830 ft<sup>2</sup> Pavilion with Restroom and Kitchen
- 1,830 ft<sup>2</sup> Pavilion
- 15,000 ft<sup>2</sup> Covered Tennis Courts/Event Pavilion

### *Site Features*

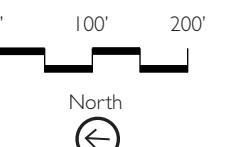
- 361 Parking Spaces
- 10' wide 1/4 mile Walking Loop
- 10' wide 1 kilometer Walking Loop
- 9,000 ft<sup>2</sup> Playground
- Integrated Greenway Connections
- Multiple pedestrian plazas
- Stormwater Management Ponds

### *Recreation Spaces*

- 98,000 ft<sup>2</sup> Multi-purpose Field (Sunset Field)
- 106,500 ft<sup>2</sup> Multi-purpose Field (Field 1)
- 56,000 ft<sup>2</sup> Open Lawn
- 2 Softball Fields (Fields 2 and 3)
- 9 Tennis Courts, 2 Covered Tennis Courts, & 4 Pickleball Courts
- 2 Basketball Courts
- 1 Outdoor Wellness Space
- 3,800 ft<sup>2</sup> Splash Pad & 10,200 ft<sup>2</sup> Swimming Pool



## LEGEND



# FINAL MASTER PLAN

Bishop Park Master Plan  
FINAL MASTER PLAN

Figure 4.1: Final Master Plan

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Figure 4.2: Architectural Guideline - Silver Standing Seam



Figure 4.4: Architectural Guideline - Lap Siding



Figure 4.3: Architectural Guideline - Granite Walls



Figure 4.5: Architectural Guideline - Board & Batten Siding

## DESIGN GUIDELINES

These recommendations are provided to give those eventually charged with development of final designs for the park's many phases with information about how best to implement the details of site design. Much of this section references standards developed by the Leisure Services Department that are independent. These standards, for features such as site furnishings, signage, and landscape materials, are developed

to streamline maintenance and minimize operational costs through standardization across the department.

**Architecture.** The park's architecture and landscape materials reflect the vernacular character of historic Athens architecture through the use of clapboard and board and batten siding, and fieldstone rustication at the base of structures and columns. This fieldstone motif is also used in piers and retaining walls throughout the park.



Figure 4.6: Architectural Guideline - Large Pavilion

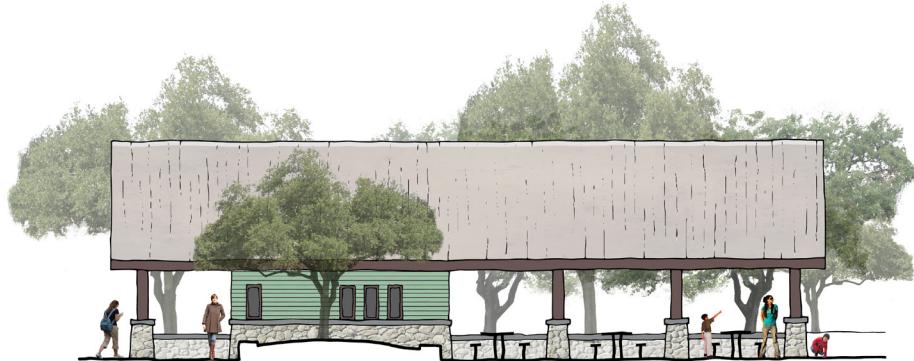


Figure 4.7: Architectural Guideline - Small Pavillion



Figure 4.8: Architectural Guideline - Conceptual Event Space

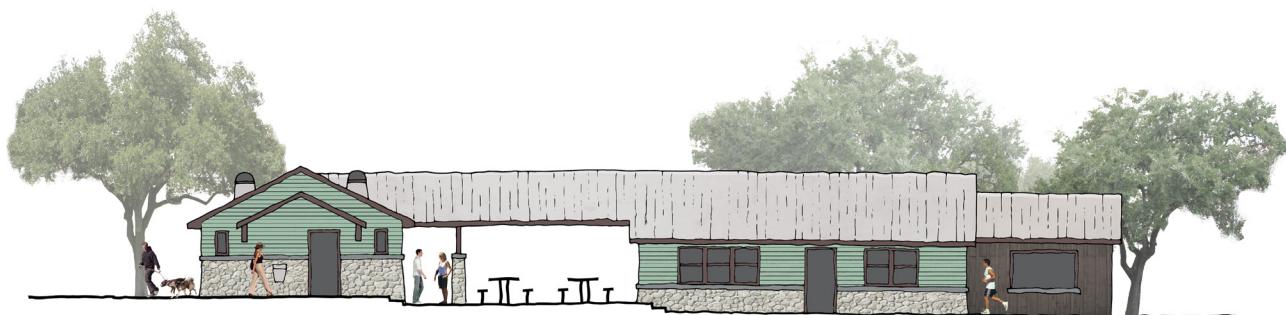


Figure 4.9: Architectural Guideline - Tennis Pavilion

The Gymnastics & Wellness Center, the largest proposed for the park, should echo the park's material and form palette. However, as a much larger facility than the park's restrooms and pavilions, and a signature for not only the park, but also the Department and Athens-Clarke County as

a whole, it will necessarily require a more open-ended approach to its design. Facilities such as the Gwinnett Environmental & Heritage Center illustrate how local materials and environmentally friendly design strategies can be blended to create a contextually appropriate community resource.

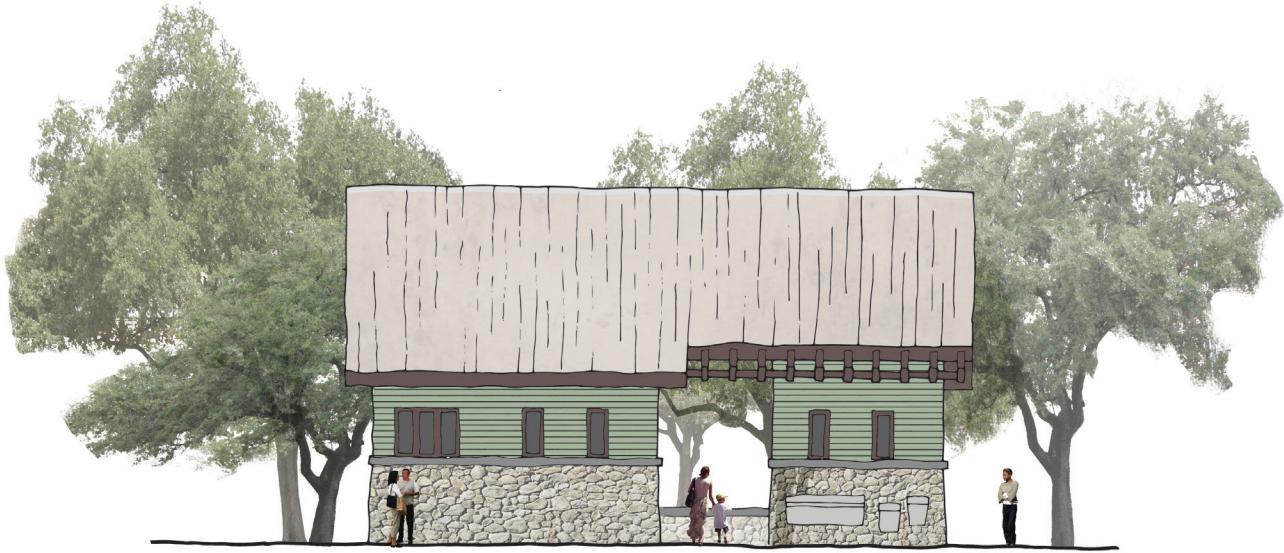


Figure 4.10: Architectural Guideline - Restroom



Figure 4.11: Park Bench



Figure 4.12: Integrated Trash & Recycling Receptacles

**Amenities.** The Leisure Services Department maintains a library of design standards and installation details for furnishings such as waste receptacles, benches and picnic tables, grills, bollards, and bike racks. Materials typically used in these products include black powdercoated steel, wood, and granite. Should amenities be needed that are not covered by the department's standards, long-lasting products that utilize the materials above should be chosen.



Figure 4.13 Picnic Table



Figure 4.14: Architectural Guideline - Entry Signs

**Signage.** Signage for the park, including park entry signs, wayfinding signs, and rules postings should follow the standards developed for the Leisure Services Department. Uniform signs covered by these standards include wayfinding signs throughout the park and rules signs posted at particular park features. These sign types (Figure 4.15) are modeled on the National Park Service's Visitor Information Sign System (VIS).

Pedestrian and vehicular entry signs have some flexibility in their design. While the text panels of the signs are consistent across the Department, sign foundation materials can be adapted to suit their context. Stonework details for retaining walls and architectural veneers illustrated elsewhere in this plan call for a fieldstone-style of masonry with an overhanging cap. The park's recommended pedestrian entry piers and vehicular signs also include this detail (Figure 4.14).



Figure 4.15: Architectural Guideline - Informational Sign

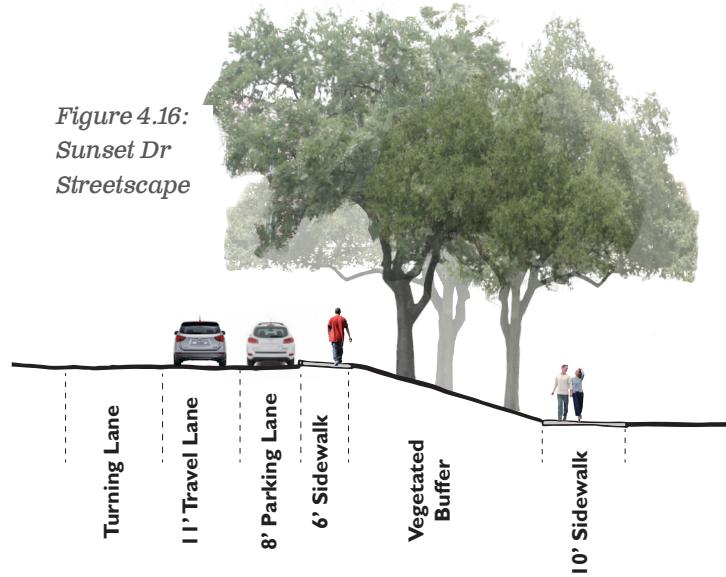
**Park Streetscapes.** Bishop Park fronts three major streets, each of which has its own unique condition to which the park's pedestrian circulation systems must respond. The recommended strategies for each corridor are described below:

New on-street parking is provided along much of the Sunset Drive frontage, buffering the adjacent sidewalk, enhancing the urban character of the corridor, and providing parking for informal use of Sunset Field. A reforested, sloped buffer separates Sunset Field's walkways from the adjacent sidewalk. Additional sidewalks are paired with the park's vehicular entry and exit. In the area surrounding this primary entrance, a more substantial vegetated buffer creates a gateway for the park and masks interior parking. (Figure 4.16)

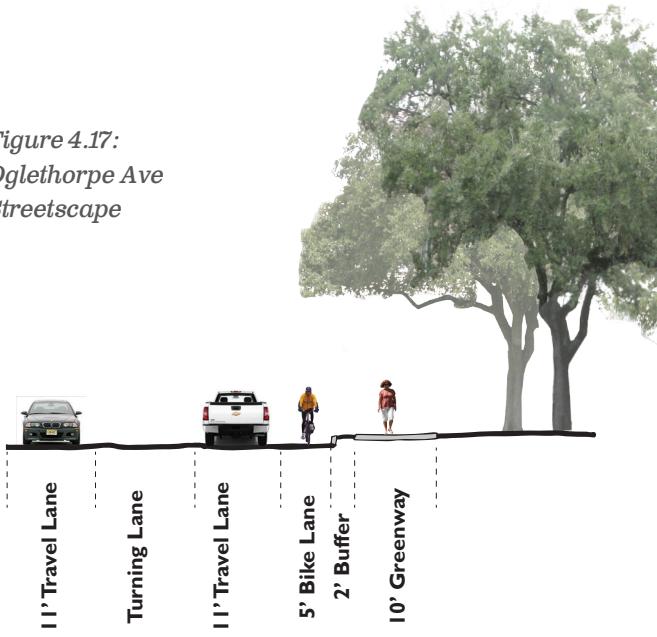
The existing curb for Oglethorpe Avenue is moved inward five feet to accommodate a completed bike lane along Oglethorpe Avenue. A new concrete greenway replaces the failing rubber sidewalk tiles, with a small planting strip between the bike lane and the sidewalk. Pedestrian entrances at either end of this frontage provide access to the park. Areas between the sidewalk and the park's interior circulation are maintained as a naturalistic woodland. (Figure 4.17)

A vegetated buffer with a decorative fence is provided between Hawthorne Avenue and a greenway sidewalk. Entrances at the northern and southern end of the Hawthorne frontage provide pedestrian access to the park. (Figure 4.18)

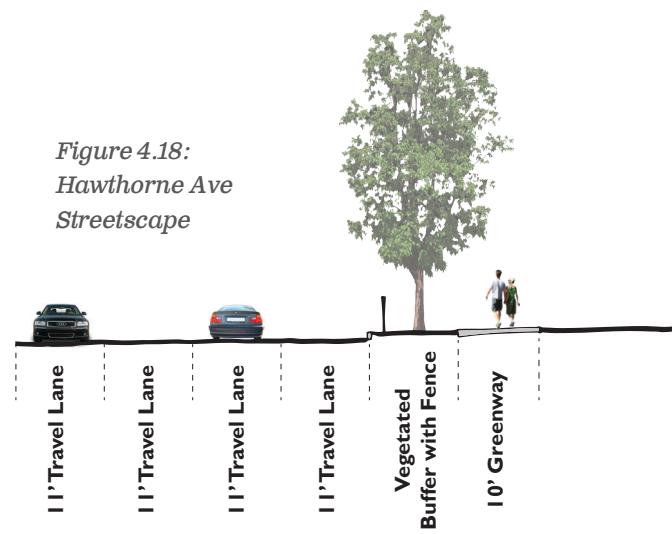
*Figure 4.16:  
Sunset Dr  
Streetscape*



*Figure 4.17:  
Oglethorpe Ave  
Streetscape*



*Figure 4.18:  
Hawthorne Ave  
Streetscape*



**Pedestrian Access.** At each pedestrian entry, a wooded buffer separates the park from adjacent streets. Paths lead into the park, intersecting the park's loop paths, and provide broad views to the park's open fields. Major destinations, such as structures and plazas, lie at the opposite end of these fields, inviting users to move into the park.

## CONCLUSION

The concept above provides an overview of Bishop Park's proposed redevelopment, including the broad vision, developed in accordance with conclusions from the robust series of public input activities conducted throughout this planning process. The concept is illustrative and general; however, the principles that created it should also be applied when developing more detailed construction plans during implementation, to be discussed in Chapter 5, to ensure compatibility with the master plan and community expectations.

# Chapter 5: Implementation Strategies

This chapter presents strategies for redeveloping Bishop Park according to the Master Plan presented in Chapter 4. These recommendations include short-term strategies to improve the user experience in Bishop Park, suggested phases for major redevelopment projects, and a list of potential funding sources. Finally, the chapter presents a series of suggestions for future planning or analysis beyond the scope of the Master Plan.

## SHORT-TERM STRATEGIES

The focus of this planning effort is the set of major recommendations for redevelopment of the park. However, during the public input process (discussed in Chapter 2 and Appendix C) park users identified a number of issues that could be undertaken before any substantial construction occurs. These recommendations are organized into three categories: park infrastructure improvements and frameworks for implementation of master plan phasing, recommendations regarding park operations and programming, and recommendations that concern other sites or department-wide programs.

## Infrastructure Recommendations:

- **Life Cycle Coordination:** Work with maintenance staff to coordinate repair and replacement funding for park facilities and amenities with the implementation of the Master Plan.
- **Building Program and Conceptual Design:** Contract with an architectural firm to produce a more detailed program, conceptual design, and cost for the proposed Gymnastics and Wellness Center, to aid in soliciting funding for final design and construction.

- **Interim Pedestrian Improvements:** Provide interim trails from the existing Hawthorne Gate to existing sidewalks. Improve informal trail between Sunset Field and existing parking areas. Evaluate opportunities for an additional pedestrian gate and interim trail on the North End of the park.
- **Branding and Wayfinding:** Install new granite entry signs following current departmental signage guidelines on Sunset Drive and Oglethorpe Avenue.

## Programming Recommendations:

- **Extended Park Use:** Evaluate extended evening hours for general park users, especially during winter months to facilitate greater year-round use of the park.
- **General Aquatics Use:** Review current aquatics programming at Bishop Park and evaluate additional opportunities for open use of the pool, including additional hours and an extended pool season. Review the current marketing approach for aquatics programs and identify ways to enhance awareness of existing opportunities for pool use.
- **Park Safety:** Coordinate with Athens-Clarke County Police to evaluate park safety and homeless activity in and around the park.
- **Evening Programming:** Evaluate use of Bishop Park for evening events such as movies and music.

## Departmental Recommendations:

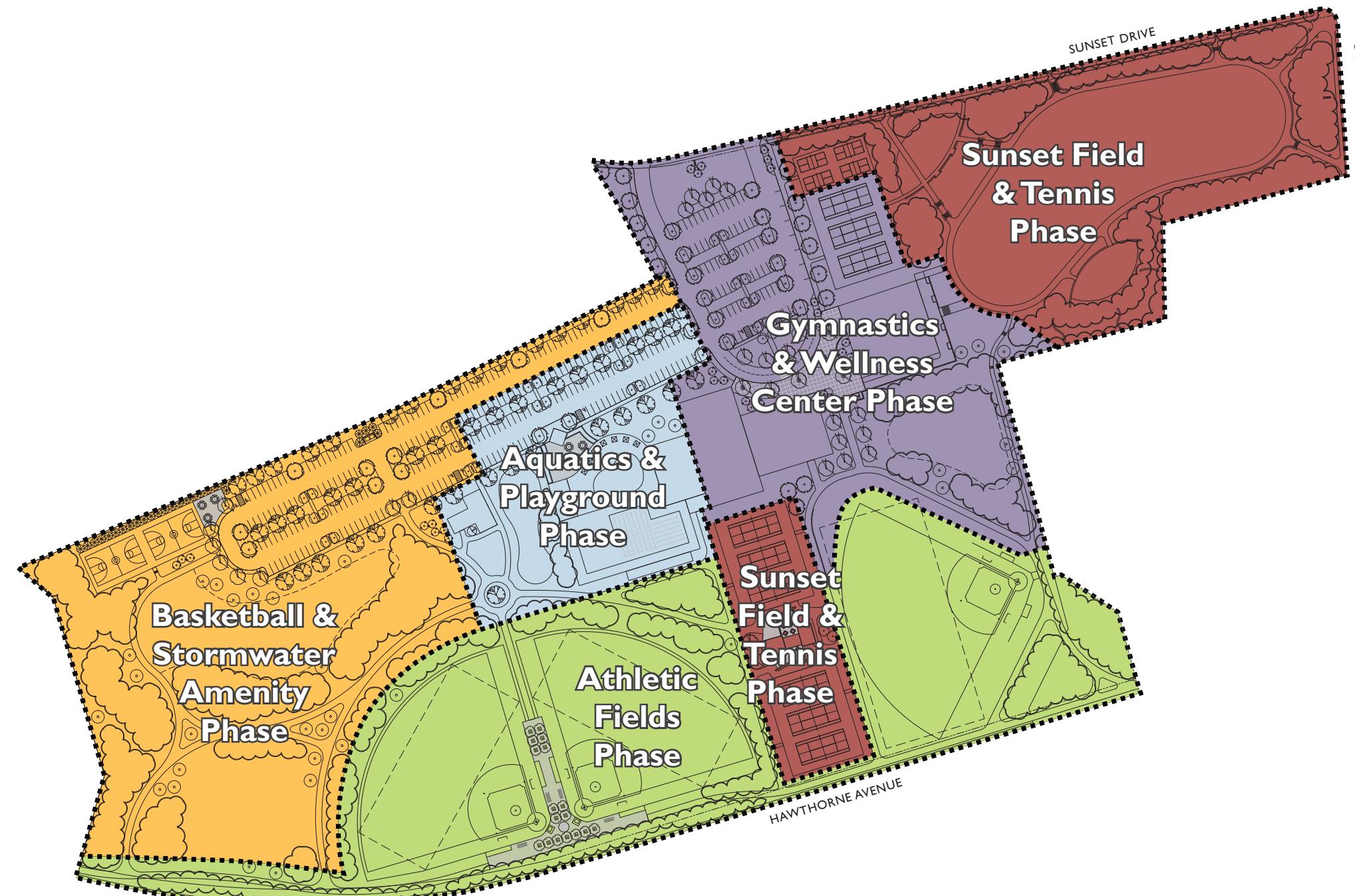
- **Wellness Programming:** Develop policies and recommended locations for fitness instruction, yoga classes, and similar event rentals at Leisure Services facilities. Identify and evaluate the feasibility of the Leisure Services Department providing these kinds of programs.
- **Dog Park:** Pursue development of a public dog park on the west side of Athens. Sites such as Burton Park should be evaluated as part of this process.
- **Aquatics Facility:** Evaluate demand for a comprehensive aquatics facility in Athens-Clarke County. Program elements to consider include an indoor competition pool, therapy pool for aerobics and lessons, and outdoor recreational features.
- **Adult Softball:** Evaluate the Department's adult softball program and identify field sites available across the department to facilitate program growth.
- **Wellness Committee:** Pursue creation of a community wellness committee to identify partnerships and programs that improve public health through parks and trails, alternative transportation, active design, and other strategies that facilitate outdoor activity.

## IMPLEMENTATION PHASING

The following is a recommended phasing for the renovation of Bishop Park (Figure 5.1). Included in this section are brief descriptions of each phase, and preliminary cost estimates. Many of the elements included in the master plan will need to occur regardless of the final design for the park as infrastructure and equipment age and need replacement. The phases and costs below represent a combination of reconfiguration in association with end of life-cycle replacement and some new or upgraded features. To the greatest extent practicable, capital funds for these life-cycle replacements should be coordinated with phasing of the Master Plan to maximize return on investment of public funds in the park.

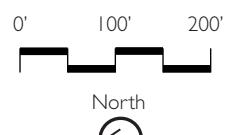
*Table 1: Total Cost Summary*

<b>Project Item</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Construction Costs	\$17,442,112.80
Contingency	\$2,616,316.92
<b>Construction Total</b>	<b>\$20,058,429.72</b>
Design Fees and Expenses	\$2,005,842.97
General Conditions, O&P	\$3,409,933.05
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>\$25,474,205.74</b>



## LEGEND

- Sunset Field & Tennis Phase
- Basketball & Stormwater Amenity Phase
- Athletic Fields Phase
- Aquatics & Playground Phase
- Gymnastics & Wellness Center Phase



## PHASING

Bishop Park Master Plan  
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Figure 5.1: Implementation Strategies

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ACC Leisure Services  
Park Planning



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Clarke County  
Leisure Services

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## Revitalization of Sunset Field and the Tennis Pavilion

The park's renovation begins with renovation, replacement, and improvement of park gathering areas that are "free-standing." Many of the plan's later phases include complex relationships between paths, parking, infrastructure, and sitework. However, the projects described in this phase take advantage of siting that facilitates improvements with only minor adjustments to their surroundings to provide connections. This phase also responds to the top two highest priorities identified by the public: walking paths and loops, and restrooms and picnic shelters. (Figure 3.8).

The two subprojects included in this phase are a revitalization of Sunset Field, to include improved walkways, tree planting, stormwater improvements, and a restroom facility; and renovation of the tennis plaza, including renovation of the restroom and concession building, new hardscape, and seat walls.

*Table 2: Sunset Field & Tennis Revitalization*

<b>Project Item</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Demolition	\$146,343.00
Erosion Control	\$14,056.00
Site Construction	\$700,773.00
Architecture	\$171,500.00
Signage	\$79,577.50
Site Furnishings	\$72,700.00
Vehicular and Field Lighting	\$168,000.00
Landscape and Irrigation	\$152,960.00
Drainage Improvements	\$35,565.00
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,541,474.50</b>
Contingency	\$231,221.18
<b>Construction Total</b>	<b>\$1,772,695.68</b>
Design Fees and Expenses	\$177,269.57
General Conditions, O&P	\$301,358.26
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>\$2,251,323.51</b>

## Basketball & Stormwater Redevelopment

In this phase, the largely passive north end of Bishop Park is redeveloped to include improved parking and stormwater infrastructure, new basketball courts, and a new open field. These spaces are arranged to retain the area's organic character while accommodating more usable space for park activities. This phase also provides a new pedestrian access point from Hawthorne Avenue and begins construction of the park's one-kilometer loop path.

This phase also includes a Stormwater Amenity, which provides improved stormwater storage capacity that additional upstream stormwater improvements will ultimately require as they come online.

*Table 3: Basketball & Stormwater Improvements*

<b>Project Item</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Demolition	\$167,398.00
Erosion Control	\$9,900.00
Site Construction	\$998,643.50
Architecture	\$0.00
Signage	\$10,560.00
Site Furnishings	\$93,900.00
Vehicular and Field Lighting	\$165,000.00
Landscape and Irrigation	\$129,720.00
Drainage Improvements	\$44,235.50
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,619,357.00</b>
Contingency	\$242,903.55
<b>Construction Total</b>	<b>\$1,862,260.55</b>
Design Fees and Expenses	\$186,226.06
General Conditions, O&P	\$316,584.29
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>\$2,365,070.90</b>
<b>Add Alternate</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Covered Basketball Courts	\$750,000.00*

\* Contingency, design fees, and overhead not included

## Hawthorne Frontage and Athletic Field Improvements

This phase continues improvements from the Basketball & Stormwater Amenity Phase south along Hawthorne Avenue, and renovates existing fields and support facilities such as bleachers, dugouts, scorer's stands, and lights. It fills in between improvements from the Basketball & Stormwater Amenity Phase and the Sunset Field & Tennis Phase with upgrades to softball fields 2 and 3. The Athletic Fields Phase completes the Hawthorne Avenue frontage with an upgraded pedestrian entrance at the park's southwestern corner. Field 1 is designed to serve as a softball field and a multipurpose field depending on the program needs at the park.

Table 4: Athletic Fields Revitalization

Project Item	Cost
Demolition	\$147,940.50
Erosion Control	\$10,356.25
Site Construction	\$709,434.75
Architecture	\$103,860.00
Signage	\$45,750.00
Site Furnishings	\$228,300.00
Vehicular and Field Lighting	\$396,000.00
Landscape and Irrigation	\$319,465.00
Drainage Improvements	\$73,900.00
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$2,035,006.50</b>
Contingency	\$305,250.98
<b>Construction Total</b>	<b>\$2,340,257.48</b>
Design Fees and Expenses	\$234,025.75
General Conditions, O&P	\$397,843.77
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>\$2,972,126.99</b>

## Aquatics and Playground Improvements

The Aquatics & Playground Phase focuses on improvements to the playground, the pool area, and additional walkways to serve these programs. Included is a replacement of the poolhouse and spectator areas, additional space for mechanical equipment and program storage, gathering space for team meetings, lifeguard training courses, and event rentals, a new playground, and a new splashpad. The design acknowledges current maintenance issues related to the pool, solutions for which may include repair, renovation, or replacement, and provides a flexible solution that respects the pool's current location.

Table 5: Aquatics & Playground Redevelopment

Project Item	Cost
Demolition	\$285,108.50
Erosion Control	\$9,500.00
Site Construction	\$836,443.75
Architecture	\$1,882,500.00
Signage	\$11,540.00
Site Furnishings	\$2,318,555.00
Vehicular and Field Lighting	\$105,000.00
Landscape and Irrigation	\$102,902.50
Drainage Improvements	\$59,942.50
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$5,611,492.25</b>
Contingency	\$841,723.84
<b>Construction Total</b>	<b>\$6,453,216.09</b>
Design Fees and Expenses	\$645,321.61
General Conditions, O&P	\$1,097,046.73
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>\$8,195,584.43</b>
Add Alternate	Cost
Covered Pool	\$2,750,000.00*

\* Contingency, design fees, and overhead not included

## Gymnastics & Wellness Center and Parking Reconfiguration

The Gymnastics & Wellness Center, Event Plaza and Pavilion, and the parking improvements that serve them will be the most challenging and expensive phases of the project. These improvements may come earlier in the park redevelopment as funding allows, so long as downstream stormwater improvements are provided.

This phase is described in three sections: completion of the park entry drive, construction of the new Gymnastics & Wellness Center, and demolition of the old structure and completion of the parking network. This staging allows for continued operation during construction of the new structure.

*Note:* The conceptual nature of the proposed Gymnastics & Wellness Center is necessarily vague. Prior to further design development of this phase, we recommend conducting a programming study of the Gymnastics and Wellness Center.

*Table 6: Gymnastics & Wellness Center Development*

<b>Project Item</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Demolition	\$244,029.50
Erosion Control	\$11,675.00
Site Construction	\$838,115.40
Architecture	\$5,030,000.00
Signage	\$33,090.00
Site Furnishings	\$105,125.00
Vehicular and Field Lighting	\$198,600.00
Landscape and Irrigation	\$138,922.65
Drainage Improvements	\$35,225.00
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$6,634,782.55</b>
Contingency	\$992,217.38
<b>Construction Total</b>	<b>\$7,629,999.93</b>
Design Fees and Expenses	\$762,999.99
General Conditions, O&P	\$1,297,099.99
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>\$9,690,099.91</b>

<b>Add Alternate</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Indoor Wellness Pool	\$2,500,000.00*
Underground Stormwater	\$1,500,000.00*

\* Contingency, design fees, and overhead not included

## FUNDING

Described below are a number of funding types and mechanisms that should be considered by the proposed committee. Funding sources fall into three general categories: government, non-profit, and corporate. Government sources include funding mechanisms that have been traditionally been used to undertake major park work in ACC, such as the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) and more unconventional strategies for park improvements, such as a Tax Allocation District (TAD). Corporate support or non-profit grants have been explored less and may be viable here.

Other variables to consider are the frequency of proposal submission windows for various funding sources, and when those funds become available. With the SPLOST program, it is typically many years between project cycles, and funding may come late in the cycle, resulting in a delay of many years between planning, proposal submission and acceptance, and construction. Granting organizations may accept on a rolling, bi-annual, or annual basis and deliver funds more quickly. However, these funds may come in smaller amounts than a typical SPLOST outlay. However, because the Leisure Services Department has many parks that need funding, overreliance on any one source will likely slow all projects down. A strategy that leverages the park's unique resources to attract funds from sources outside of traditional venues should be pursued to ensure timely execution of the Master Plan.

- **Capital Improvement Program:** Funding for replacement of park infrastructure and amenities provided through the ACC budget should be aligned with master plan implementation. As feasible, certain replacements may be accelerated or delayed to better align with master plan phasing.
- **SPLOST:** This program has been used for many recreational projects in Athens-Clarke County. It may be a logical source of funds for large phases such as the Gymnastics & Wellness Center.
- **Leisure Services Revenue Capture:** It is estimated that the Department will generate over \$1.1 million in FY 2018 from its programs and rentals, a 3.9% increase

over the previous year.<sup>1</sup> Currently, these funds are incorporated into the county's general fund, but could be earmarked for recreational capital improvements. Such a program would provide the Department with a dedicated revenue stream for needed improvements, which it currently lacks.

- **Community Development Block Grants:** Bishop Park's location and the demographics of surrounding neighborhoods make it an eligible candidate for CDBG funding. These funds have been used in the past for upgrades to Leisure Services facilities.
- **Community Improvement District/Tax Allocation District:** With many aging commercial properties surrounding the park, there is the potential to leverage investment in the park into greater redevelopment and increased property tax revenue along Hawthorne Avenue.
- **Public Health-themed Grants:** With increasing interest in public health, and the focus on this topic in the Bishop Park Master Plan, this may be a unique angle for identifying and applying for grants from private and nonprofit foundations.
- **Partnerships:** Nearby facilities such as Athens Regional Medical Center and the UGA Health Sciences Campus may benefit from amenities included in the Master Plan, such as the outdoor wellness spaces and walking loops. Partnerships that facilitate construction of amenities supporting on-site programs could be of interest to these organizations, or enhance the competitiveness of grant proposals.
- **Crowdsourcing/Community-driven Fundraising:** Bishop Park is a beloved and heavily trafficked community space. Some plan elements, such as the playground, may be particularly well suited to a donation-driven fundraising campaign.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

### Sidewalk Network Gaps

Bishop Park is located in a relatively walkable area of Athens. However, numerous gaps exist in the sidewalk network serving the neighborhoods around Bishop Park. Major streets where significant gaps in sidewalk connectivity exist include Oglethorpe Avenue, Hawthorne Avenue, and Prince Avenue (Figure 5.2). These streets have gaps in their sidewalks along at least one side of the street. Sunset Drive features a single sidewalk along its west side and has no sidewalk on its eastern side. In many cases, sidewalks that do exist are inadequate and do not meet modern accessibility standards or are in poor condition. Additionally, there is a gap of approximately four blocks in the bike lane corridor along Oglethorpe Avenue.

Coordination with the ACC Transportation & Public Works Department as well as Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) in this area is needed in this area to evaluate the issues described above in greater detail and determine appropriate solutions. Additionally, Athens has been chosen as a pilot site for the "Safe Routes to Parks" program, similar to the *Safe Routes to Schools* program, which prioritizes funding for sidewalks that serve parks and other community spaces and resources.

### Compatible Growth

Parks are valued community assets that can boost property values and serve as magnets for development. Bishop Park is located in the growing Normaltown area. This area has seen substantial residential improvement in adjacent single-family neighborhoods, new commercial activity along Prince Avenue, and has the potential to attract medical industry employers interested in locating near the UGA Health Sciences Campus and Athens Regional Medical Center.

However, the area around Bishop Park has not yet benefited from this positive growth. Adjacent uses include aging medical offices and small shopping centers, many of which are currently at least partially vacant. These parcels are zoned Commercial General or Commercial Office.

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<sup>1</sup> From The Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County FY2018 Annual Operating & Capital Budget – Mayor Recommended Budget. p C-52. <http://athensclarkecounty.com/DocumentCenter/View/39387>



Figure 5.2: Existing sidewalks (green) and gaps in sidewalk connectivity (orange)



*Figure 5.3:*  
*Development*  
*surrounding Bishop*  
*Park*

Development (white) or renovation (gray) of adjacent properties, especially medical offices to the southwest, could create a walkable commercial node near Bishop Park. These projects could include new pedestrian connections, and additional buffers.



*Figure 5.4: Fourth*  
*Ward Park*

Fourth Ward Park in Atlanta is surrounded by compatible mixed-use infill and renovations that serve as an attractive backdrop for the park. (Image Source: <http://beltline.org/parks/historic-fourth-ward-park/>)

**Figure 5.5: Surrounding Greenspaces**

There are several nearby properties containing substantial greenspaces (green) that are within walking distance (white dashed line).



Additionally, there is a large undeveloped block located south of the park, and currently zoned for Single Family development on lots of 5,000 square feet.

Redevelopment of these properties with an eye towards their relationship to the park could produce many direct benefits including additional buffering, new pedestrian connections, and attractive architecture that provides a backdrop to the park's open greens (Figure 5.3 and 5.4). Construction of new mixed-use structures and renovations of adjacent properties that provide strong pedestrian connections to the park, Sunset Drive, and Oglethorpe Avenue would enhance the walkable character of this area of Normaltown, and likely encourage further redevelopment along Hawthorne Avenue.

The potential for increased property values in this area suggest that a Tax Allocation District (TAD) may be a suitable tool for funding park improvements and streetscape enhancements. We recommend evaluation of this area by the Planning and Economic Development Departments to determine its feasibility for redevelopment in this manner, and the steps that might be necessary, such as rezoning or development of design guidelines to implement such a concept.

## Park Connectivity and Growth

Bishop Park is located in an urbanized area, limiting opportunities for growth beyond the park's current footprint. However, there are several nearby properties containing substantial greenspaces (Figure 5.6). These spaces, if linked, could create a public-health themed greenway corridor. Resources include the USG Health Sciences Campus, Bishop Park, YMCA, and Oglethorpe Avenue Elementary. The proposed Community Wellness Committee could take up further development of the vision for such a corridor.

In addition to the properties that contribute to this potential wellness-themed corridor, Bishop Park is also located near Beech Haven, an ACC-owned greenspace that could eventually provide connectivity to a future Middle Oconee Greenway. If the Transportation & Public Works Department considers additional bicycle improvements along Oglethorpe Avenue, this relationship should be considered.

There are also limited opportunities for expansion of the park itself. The vacant block to the south of the park, though separated by a roadway, could provide additional greenspace. However, given the physical separation, it may not be readily

perceived by the public as part of Bishop Park. Regional coordination of stormwater management with the adjacent hospital property could provide limited additional open space for buffering or recreational amenities. The adjacent VFW property is currently used as an informal dog park; greater collaboration with this organization could result in additional recreational space for the community.

## **CONCLUSION**

Redevelopment of Bishop Park will be a complex project that will take many years to complete. The recommendations described above provide a framework to deliver short, medium, and long-term results on the significant community interest and effort expended to develop this plan. However, the greatest challenge to this plan, as with any planning effort, is maintaining momentum.

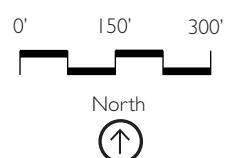
Bishop Park is a significant resource for ACC. Despite the aging condition of its infrastructure, Bishop Park thrives. It is a vibrant community space, but continued degradation of park infrastructure could compromise that vibrancy.

The vision described in this report, building upon substantial public input as part of this process, preserves that vibrant character while providing upgraded infrastructure that ensures Bishop Park will not only function as a community space, but a regional destination, and a model for Athens-Clarke County and other communities of high-quality, timeless park design. A sustained and dedicated effort to implement this plan will ensure that Bishop Park, and its users, receive the park redevelopment they deserve.



## LEGEND

- ↑↑↑↑↑ Opportunities for Park Growth
- ←→ Greenspace Connections
- ←···→ Connection to HealthCare Facilities



## PARK CONNECTIVITY & GROWTH

Bishop Park Master Plan  
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Figure 5.6: Park Connectivity & Growth

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# Julius F. Bishop Park

## APPENDICES

Athens-Clarke County Leisure Services Department  
Office of Park Planning

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# Appendix A: Inventory & Analysis

This chapter provides descriptions and analysis of Bishop Park's features, physical conditions, and resources that will inform later design decisions. The chapter includes four sections:

- Site Use contains data on trends in usage of various park areas.
- Site Conditions describes the park's physical elements and properties.
- Site Analysis includes discussions of the site's more intangible conditions and patterns of use, such as management strategy, circulation patterns, and unique viewsheds.
- Issues and Opportunities synthesizes these three sections into a collection of spaces to address as part of the project's design phase.

## SITE USE

The following graphs illustrate trends in park use over a five-year period between 2008 and 2012. This information is useful in understanding the level of activity Bishop Park currently sees, and how that use is changing. The level of use and patterns documented here are taken into account as the park's program is developed.

## Methodology

Between mid-2007 and 2013, Bishop Park staff regularly conducted hourly informal counts of park users. This count included specific features being used by patrons (such as basketball), and activities conducted in the park generally (walking). However, ongoing operational activities limited time for counting in some cases, creating gaps in the park user data. An analysis of these gaps showed that most of the missing data occurred from October to March across all five years from 2008-2012, when park activity and staffing levels were lowest. Though these gaps

exist, the remaining data is consistent with the general pattern of use in the park. Therefore, the charts depicted in this chapter utilize the raw numbers provided by Bishop Park staff. Because the usage numbers shown in these charts represent the raw, rather than adjusted data, park usage during off-peak times may actually be somewhat higher than reported here. In addition to the year-to-year change for each activity, total usage of the park by month was also compiled. Park staff also provided information on program seasons that was used to compile a calendar of programs.

**Survey Definitions.** Park staff tallied users using the following categories:

- Tennis – Includes courts 1-9 and the two covered courts
- Walking – Refers to patrons seen walking along park paths or between areas of the park
- Sunset Field – Refers to users of the unprogrammed multi-use field along Sunset Drive
- Passive – Refers to users sitting, picnicking, or performing other self-directed activities within the park
- Basketball – Refers to all uses on the basketball courts, including the Farmer's Market
- Playground – Refers to users, both parents and children, in the playground area
- Athletic fields – Includes Fields 1, 2, and 3, regardless of activity
- Gymnastics – Refers to the gymnastics area of the gymnastics center
- Shelter – Refers to the BBQ pavilion at the north end of the park

Figure A.1: Bishop Park Visitors

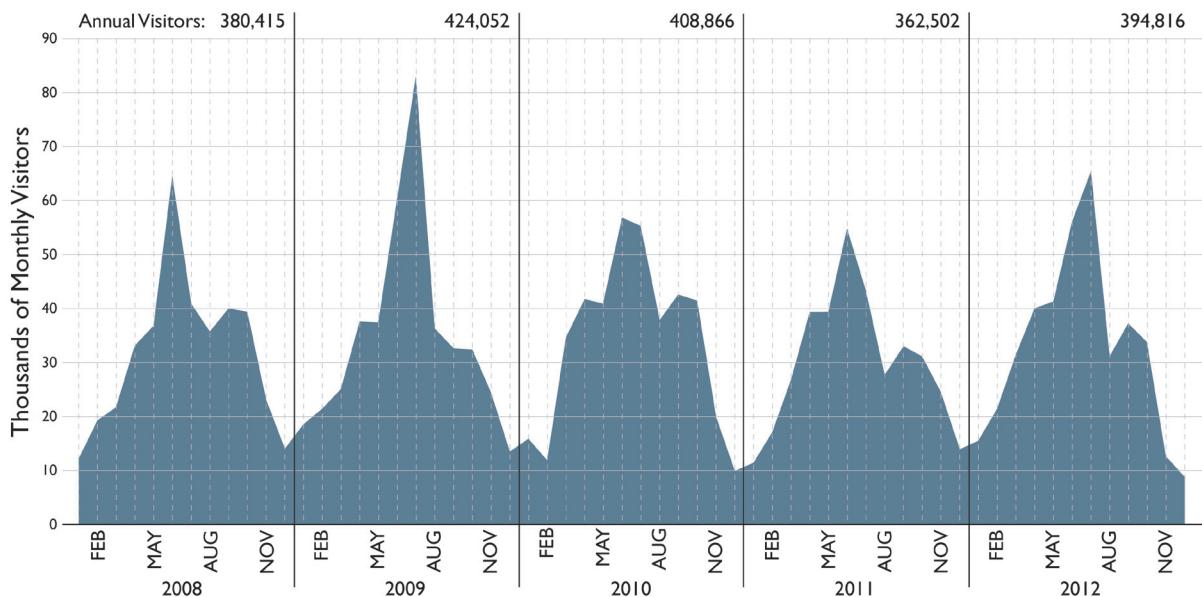
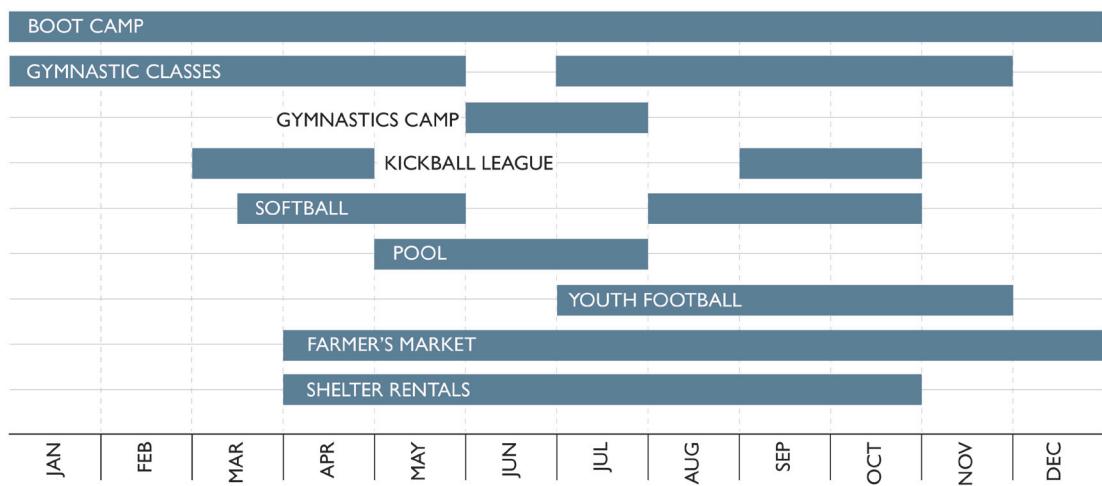


Figure A.2: Bishop Park Yearly Activities



- Greenspace – Keters to open lawn areas on the north end of the park being used for classes or informal play
- Conference Room – Refers to the classroom space on the upper floor of the gymnastics center

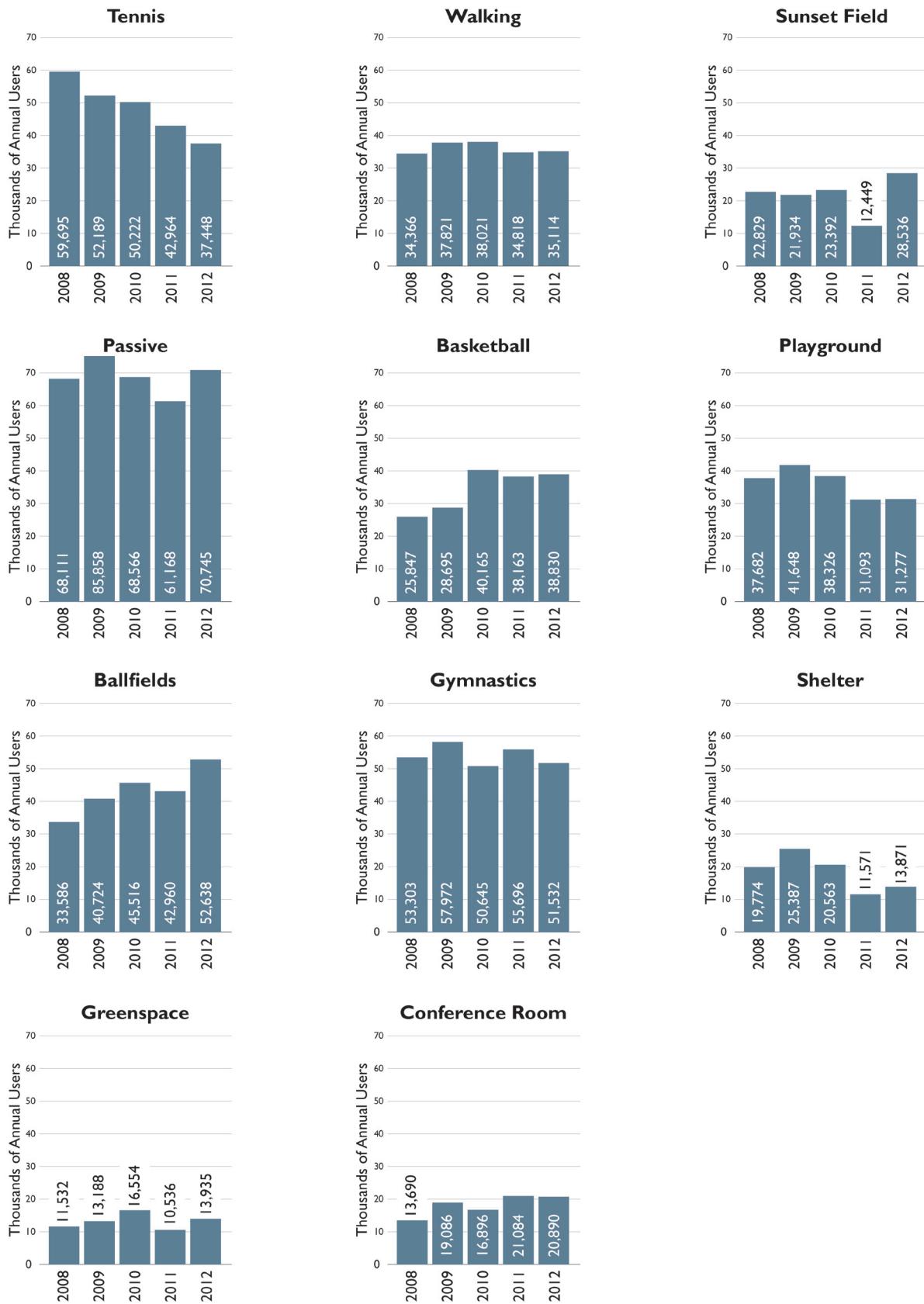
only one of four years (2011) below the starting level in 2008. Annual visitation for 2008 was estimated at 380,415. Visitation for 2012 was 394,860, an increase of almost 4% over 5 years. The average for this five-year period was 394,229 (Figure A.1).

On a monthly basis, the park is busiest during summer, with a secondary peak in the fall that corresponds to several recreational leagues, including youth football and adult softball (Figure A.2). Usage in the winter is very low, with short

## Results

Although the five year sample is too narrow, and the quality of data too low to interpret a more detailed understanding of park usage's trajectory, the park's activity is generally increasing, with

Figure A.3: Number of Users by Activity





**Figure A.4: Informal games on Sunset Field**

Youth football programs, and informal games of ultimate frisbee and soccer share the Sunset Field.

days and cold weather limiting the use of the park. In spring, use increases as spring leagues and the Farmer's Market season begin, and the weather warms.

Many categories showed consistent patterns in use, such as walking and passive activities. Others, however, showed dramatic shifts. Tennis declined by over 35% over 5 years, which may be connected with changes in program management, since remedied court surface condition issues, or signal declining demand for tennis facilities at Bishop Park. Athletic field usage increased more than 55% during this five-year period. These fields are used for a variety of activities, including softball, youth soccer, youth football, and kickball. Sunset Field and Greenspace use also generally increased over this period, but much less dramatically. Collectively, these suggest greater demand for flexible field space.

Other less dramatic patterns reveal changes in conditions or operations. A decrease in shelter usage is associated with declining conditions of the facility. Due to its current conditions, park staff may encourage patrons to take advantage of amenities at other facilities, if possible. Increased use of Bishop Park has also limited parking, and made the site less suitable for large gatherings;

park staff currently recommends other facilities, such as Sandy Creek Park, for these types of events. Increased usage of the basketball courts may be attributable to growth of the Farmer's Market. The conference room, which is used for not only meetings and events, but also programming is receiving increasing. Starting in 2008, park staff began making this available for rentals. Though playground use appears to have declined, park staff does not feel that its level of use has changed appreciably. However, the playground equipment is outdated, and this may have resulted in some loss of users. (Figure A.3)

## SITE CONDITIONS

### Existing Features (Figure A.11)

This 2013 aerial image illustrates Bishop Park's existing features. The park contains a variety of athletic fields and facilities, including:

- 3 softball fields
- 9 tennis courts
- Open-air pavilion containing 2 tennis courts
- 2 basketball courts

- Outdoor swimming pool, with associated bathhouse, gatehouse, and covered bleachers
- 3 acre multi-purpose athletic field (Figure A.4)
- Gymnastics building containing offices and meeting space

The park's passive recreation amenities include:

- Approximately one mile of asphalt walkways
- Playground
- Open landscaped areas
- Picnic areas
- BBQ pit building with covered seating areas and restrooms

Other features include:

- Restroom building with attached former concession stand
- Modular building containing administrative offices for the Leisure Services Department not associated directly with Bishop Park's operations
- 305 improved parking spaces
- Overflow parking area for approximately 30 cars

## Resources (Figure A.12)

Though Bishop Park's immediate context is relatively suburban, with most development occurring during the same era as the park itself, there are a number of physical and cultural resources in the vicinity upon which to draw in the redevelopment of the park.

Numerous medical facilities surround the park, including several medical office complexes; Landmark Hospital and Athens Heritage Home, both bordering the northern half of the park; and the University of Georgia Health Sciences Campus located to the east. Athens Heritage Home has an entry gate leading into the northern part of the

park, occasionally used by that facility's staff. None of the other facilities have a direct connection. By creating and expanding connections with these healthcare facilities, the park can serve as a health resource for outdoor-related therapy and treatments. Such a resource could allow adjacent healthcare professionals to expand their treatment options. Likewise, providing easy access from the nearby daycare center to the park would allow added options for daycare activities.

The park and its vicinity contain several landscape and architectural resources. Local architect Wood C. Campbell designed the park and existing gymnastics building. The bathroom and office structure between the outdoor tennis courts is a remnant of the era when the property served as the Athens Fairgrounds. East of the park, several nearby structures contribute to the Oglethorpe Avenue Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>1</sup> South of the park, Sunset Drive has a prominent landscape sequence, with a double allée of water oak trees, and brick entry piers, which once featured lamps. Though many of these trees have died, and a car recently damaged one of the piers, the landscape is nonetheless a dramatic one. To the north, the VFW facility marks its Sunset Drive entrance with an iconic vintage plane.

Other notable resources near the park include the YMCA and the University Childcare Center. The YMCA operates its own outdoor athletic fields and a well-equipped gymnasium and aquatic center. Beyond this property is a forested owned partially by the Clarke County School District and YMCA, which contains a trail system. Opportunities are available for partnership among these entities to create a significant recreational landscape in this area.

## Elevation (Figure A.13)

Bishop Park lies between 734 and 790 feet above mean sea level. The park's high point is located in the southeast portion of the property, adjacent to Sunset Drive.

<sup>1</sup> US National Park Service. *National Register of Historic Places*. Web. 27 Jan. 2015. <<http://www.nps.gov/nr/research/>>.



**Figure A.5: Erosion causing sedimentation**  
Sediment and mulch wash in many sites around the park.

Bishop Park is relatively high in elevation compared to much of Athens-Clarke County. The park is located on the western edge of the broad ridge that divides the Middle and North Oconee River drainages. The corridor formed by Jefferson Road, nearby Prince Avenue, and Milledge Avenue generally follows this ridge. A finger extending west from that ridge along Oglethorpe Avenue extends through the park, creating the park's two major drainages.

### **Slope Gradient (Figure A.14)**

The park sits on a generally flat site. The few areas of steep grade are limited to constructed slopes adjacent to fields and hardscape features. Some significant areas of moderate slope exist in the north of the park, on either side of the drainage there. Compared to many sites, slopes in Bishop Park are very favorable for the construction of fields, parking, and other recreational features.

### **Slope Aspect (Figure A.15)**

Slope aspect refers to the orientation of landforms. The orientation of a site determines its exposure to various climatic forces, including sun and prevailing winds, and can create microclimates more suitable for particular plant communities. Bishop Park is a largely flat site, with few landscape features that would create distinct microclimates. The exception is the northward oriented draw in the northern part of the park. Here, a 30' high moderately steep slope to the west shelters this lower, wetter area.



**Figure A.6: Overflow parking erosion**  
Daily use of overflow parking contributes to erosion.

### **Soil Suitability (Figure A.16)**

The US Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) manages a national database of soil data, which includes general locations, descriptions and characteristics of soils, and their suitability for various uses. Though initially developed for agricultural use, this data is also of value for land use planning, especially in regards to the suitability or limitations of particular soil types. However, this data is very general in its spatial character and not especially accurate for sites smaller than 100 acres, such as Bishop Park.<sup>2</sup>

The USDA Web Soil Survey indicates that Bishop Park contains three soil types:

- PgC3: Pacolet sandy clay loam, 6-10% slopes, severely eroded
- CYB2: Cecil sandy loam, 2-6% slopes, eroded
- CZB3: Cecil sandy clay loam, 2-6% slopes, severely eroded

NRCS classifies as "Not Limited," "Somewhat Limited," and "Very Limited," based on their suitability for a variety of use categories. All three soil types are defined as being somewhat limited for Picnic Areas; Playgrounds (a category which includes athletic fields); Paths and Trails; and

<sup>2</sup> Marsh, William M. *Landscape Planning: Environmental Applications*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. USA: Wiley 2005. Print. pp 100-101

Lawns, Landscaping, and Golf Fairways. All are very limited for Local Roads and Streets. CYB2 and CZB3 are not limited for Small Commercial Buildings; PgC3 is very limited. Most of the property is composed of CYB2, including the area around the existing gymnastics building, where any potential building addition would be located.<sup>3</sup>

## Hydrology (Figure A.17)

The site is located in the Hunnicutt Creek watershed, a part of the Middle Oconee River basin. Two smaller branches of Hunnicutt each drain approximately half of the site. The northern portion of the property drains northward, ultimately reaching a perennial stream that flows southwest. The southern portion of the site flows west into another branch. These two branches meet behind Oglethorpe Avenue Elementary and flow southwest toward the Middle Oconee.

Most of the site's impervious areas drain to the draw in the northern portion of the park. Swales and stormwater pipes direct water from portions of the site to this area.

Runoff from the multi-purpose athletic field flows west, passing just south of the basketball courts. This surface flow carries litter from the field and deposits it in this area. From this point, the drainage continues west, passing south of Field 1. A variety of small stormwater improvements have been constructed manage and direct this flow, with varying degrees of success. Other hydrology issues include:

- Mulch and sediment are washing off onto paths in several locations throughout the site.
- On Fields 2 and 3, runoff drains into adjacent dugouts, depositing sediment from the fields. Water is also draining into and along the walkway between the two fields, and is beginning to erode the walkway.
- Foul territory in right field of Field 2 stays wet, due to runoff from the adjacent grassy slope
- Sediment is being washed onto the walking path

<sup>3</sup> "Web Soil Survey." USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Web. <<http://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/WebSoilSurvey.aspx>>.

northwest of the picnic shelter (Figure A.5)

- Sediment is being washed onto the walking path behind Field 1
- The dirt overflow parking area is eroding (Figure A.6)
- A gully is forming behind the Covered Tennis Courts.
- Poor drainage of the multi-purpose field creates pools of water following rain.

## Vegetation (Figure A.18)

Bishop Park is a heavily constructed site, with few "natural" areas remaining in the park landscape. It is nonetheless a largely vegetated landscape. The site is classified as follows, with an eye towards landscape character, rather than plant communities, as might be appropriate on a less disturbed site:

- **Athletic Field:**Turf area that is heavily maintained specifically for recreational and sporting activities
- **Open Canopy Area:**Vegetative area with no or little tree cover that is characterized by an abundance of clear, open space that is routinely maintained
- **Closed Canopy Area:**Vegetative area with abundant tree cover that is left natural with little or no maintenance
- **Ornamental Area:**Vegetative area with various plant materials selected to achieve a desired aesthetic, and routinely maintained
- **Invasive Dominated Area:**Vegetative area characterized by an abundance of undesired exotic plant materials
- **Impervious Area:**Surfaces that do not allow water filtration such as concrete and other hardscape elements
- **Buildings**

Athletic fields and open canopy areas dominate Bishop Park. Paved parking lots, walking paths, and courts comprise much of the impervious area. Closed canopy area provides a buffer along the entire southern length of the park and in the

northeast corner. Ornamental landscaping is limited to areas adjacent to the gymnastics and pool buildings. The invasive dominated area is located adjacent to the north parking lot, with rows of Burford Hollies surrounding an area with an overgrown understory containing many exotic plant species.

## Utilities (Figure A.19)

Utility lines depicted include sanitary sewers, water lines, and stormwater lines running through Bishop Park. Data used to generate this map was limited to existing ACC GIS data and is not a complete survey of the site's utility infrastructure.

A gravity-fed sewer line services the park's major structures. The sewer main runs beneath the northern part of Field 1. A water main is located in the southern portion of Bishop Park, running north along the site's boundary in the south and cutting west through the parking lot to Sunset Drive. This line ultimately flows to the ACC Middle Oconee Water Reclamation Facility.

Stormwater lines primarily service the parking lots and other areas included as part of the original build out of the park. These lines flow north to the draw at the northern end of the park. Swales just beyond the outfields of Fields 2 and 3 capture water from these areas and convey it towards the draw. In addition to this larger stormwater system, the site contains a number of smaller stormwater improvements. These stormwater systems also handle some runoff from adjacent properties.

The park has streetlights on most of its public edges. Both Hawthorne Avenue and Oglethorpe Avenue have streetlights adjacent to the park. Sunset Drive has a nearby streetlight north of the park's entrance and another at the corner of Oglethorpe Avenue. All of these streetlights are located on the opposite side of the street, away from the park. Parking areas, courts, and athletic fields are lit. Portions of the park's pathways were lit previously, but many of these fixtures were damaged or in poor condition, and all were removed in Summer 2014.

An overhead electric transmission line runs along Hawthorne Avenue's western side, opposite the

park. Local electric lines run along the park's frontage at Oglethorpe Avenue. On the Sunset Drive frontage, local lines are located on the opposite side of the street. Power for the property is provided via a line from Sunset Drive.

The property also hosts a tornado siren, located at the northern end of the Sunset Drive frontage, which is operated by the ACC Office of Emergency Management. These are used when the National Weather Service issues a Tornado Warning, or a tornado is sighted. The Office of Emergency Management tests the sirens once per quarter. The immediate vicinity of the siren should remain clear of active uses, as there is a remote possibility of equipment falling.

## SITE ANALYSIS

### Current Zoning (Figure A.20)

Bishop Park is currently zoned as a Park district. This designation does not identify a particular set of allowed or prohibited uses.<sup>4</sup> Though not expressly designated as part of the Parks zoning description, ACC typically follows design guidelines applied to similar uses on private property.

Zoning for neighboring properties includes Commercial-General (C-G), Commercial-Office (C-O), Single-Family Residential (RS-5 and RS-8), and Mixed Density Residential (RM-2). The RM-2 district is composed of apartment complexes and the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW). Small retail and office spaces and a restaurant make up the C-G district on the corner of Hawthorne and Oglethorpe Avenues. The various C-O properties surrounding Bishop Park include medical office parks, healthcare facilities, and the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA).

The zoning of adjacent properties is largely in line with their present level of development. In comparison to the level of development allowed by the current zoning, two properties, the VFW and the undeveloped block to the south of the park (zoned RS-5), are considerably underdeveloped.

<sup>4</sup> Athens-Clarke County Unified Government. Planning Department. Code of Ordinances. Sec.9-9-1. Print.



*Figure A.7: Confusing parking lot configuration*

Navigating the park's one-way drives can be confusing and create vehicular conflicts. Note the second car traveling on the left, rather than right side of the drive.

The development of these properties could have significant impacts on Bishop Park.

## **Circulation (Figure A.21)**

Circulation refers to the ways in which people move through the site. The park features two circulation systems, a vehicular network of drives and parking areas, and a network of pedestrian walkways, which are also open to bicycles. Cycling and transit infrastructure are also located near the park.

**Vehicular Circulation.** Vehicular circulation within the park is primarily composed of paired one-way routes (Figure A.7). While uni-directional traffic flow is efficient in some cases, it is not an effective system here, due to Bishop Park's multiple intersections and lack of a central roadway. In some cases, junctions are only wide enough for a single car to pass, but encourage vehicles to enter from both sides. A lack of consistent directional signage compounds confusion upon entry into and at junctions within the park.

In addition, two equally emphasized vehicular entries into the park are immediately adjacent to one another. These dual entries each lead to their own one-way parking lot and compete with one another as the central corridor. The northern entry provides the only access to parking areas in the north of the park, an issue not made clear upon arrival to the park. Users wishing to park in



*Figure A.8: Hawthorne Avenue inaccessibility*

Currently, there is no sidewalk along Hawthorne Avenue. A hedge hides the park from passersby on the adjacent roadway.

this area who miss the turn are forced to exit and reenter the park in order to access this area.

Other issues include the existing location of the garbage dumpster, at the end of a parking loop adjacent to the basketball courts. Trucks must either make a sharp turn to follow the one-way traffic flow or proceed against traffic to reach the dumpster in this parking lot. Another service issue is a lack of appropriate space for Farmers' Market setup and parking for the large vehicles and trailers used to transport goods to the market.<sup>5</sup>

**Pedestrian Circulation.** Bishop Park features a substantial network of asphalt walkways. However, these are located primarily in the northern and central "original" portions of the park. Pedestrian infrastructure is lacking around the multi-use field (which was acquired and constructed later) and connecting to the surrounding sidewalk network.

Presently, there is no clear connection between sidewalks on surrounding streets and the park's interior. Hawthorne Avenue is a busy corridor that delineates most of the park's western edge, yet only has a single unmarked gate into the park, with no improved walking surface once users enter the park. There is also a gap in Hawthorne Ave's sidewalk network along the boundary of Bishop Park (Figure A.8). This lack of improvements on

<sup>5</sup> Kozak, Jan. "Athens Farmers' Market Stakeholder Interview." Personal interview. 11 Nov. 2014.



**Figure A.9: Overflow lot used more than paved**  
Visitors choose the unpaved overflow lot, rather than the paved lot.

Hawthorne Avenue diminishes Bishop Park's overall presence in the community.

The only existing sidewalk connection into the park is at the northern end of the park's Sunset Drive frontage. It is a narrow sidewalk crowded by Leyland Cypress trees, and connecting directly to the gymnastics building. Users arriving from the south typically enter the park by walking through the parking areas, rather than searching for this connection. User-created "desire lines" leading into the park from the southeast and southwest corners of the multi-purpose field and from the northwest corner of the multi-purpose field into the park's interior indicate a need for improved pedestrian infrastructure into the park.

Another issue in this area is the Oglethorpe Avenue sidewalk, which is constructed of rubber tiles. This material is not performing well, and should be replaced by a more robust surface. The tiles are cupping, causing water to pool and creating tripping hazards. Bishop Park also lacks identifying signage on Oglethorpe Ave. Providing signage or branding material on Oglethorpe would also increase Bishop Park's visibility in the Normaltown neighborhood while providing improved wayfinding to visitors.

There are also opportunities to improve pedestrian circulation within the park. The aforementioned Hawthorne Avenue entry gate has no improved pathway connecting it to the interior of the park. The Sunset Drive sidewalk is currently the only walkway connecting the parking area



**Figure A.10: Opportunities to increase visibility**  
Views from Oglethorpe Avenue present opportunities to increase the visibility of Bishop Park, the Leisure Services Department, and its programs.

to the multi-purpose athletic field. Visitors arriving in the paved parking lot are creating paths through the grassy corridor between the sheltered and outdoor tennis courts, and adjacent to the basketball courts to reach the multi-purpose field. In other cases, multi-purpose field users are parking on the overflow lot, even when space in the paved lot is available, to avoid walking to the field via these informal trails (Figure A.8).

**Farmer's Market.** The Saturday morning Athens Farmer's Market is a major weekly event in Bishop Park. Many visitors walk or bike to the park to attend this event, using the informal or inadequate pedestrian routes described above. Another issue specific to the Farmers' Market is the pedestrian-vehicle conflict. Pedestrians walking to the market must cross through the parking lot and navigate between vehicular traffic and vendors to reach the covered tennis courts. Vehicles exiting the parking lot must pass through a portion of the market, weaving between tents, trailers, and pedestrians. The tight radii of the parking lot also make access challenging for some vehicles, such as trucks with trailers, which serve the market.

## Views and Vistas (Figure A.22 Figure A.23 & Figure A.24)

Views are an important part of a landscape, contributing to character and sense of place, wayfinding, and safety. Within and around Bishop Park, there are a number of opportunities to create or enhance views. The park also contains

obstructions that need modification to address safety or wayfinding issues.

The southern portion of the park features several opportunities to enhance views and improve Bishop Park's visibility in the community. Heading north on Sunset Drive, visitors can see the tennis pavilion in the distance with the multipurpose field, filtered by scattered trees, in the foreground. The southern corners of the multipurpose field provide unobstructed views down the length of the expansive greenspace. A gentle rise surrounding the field helps to enhance views of the activities within (Figure A.10).

In the central area of the park, where the Fairground era restroom and concession structure is located, north and south views connect users to activities in Field 1 and Field 2. Looking north from this point, there are also views of the playground and passive areas beyond. From the concrete bleachers at Fields 2 and 3, views of the treeline and the architecture of the gymnastics center frame the foreground views of the softball fields.

In the northern section of the park, the walking path offers several significant views of park features. The picnic shelter and several vantage points along the path offer views of the area's undulating landscape. This area also provides views of the gymnastics center's north and west elevations.

Several obstructions to views exist in Bishop Park, with implications for both safety and park identity. The hedge along the length of Hawthorne Avenue screens the park from a high traffic corridor. While the hedge offers slight relief from the sights and sounds of traffic, it neutralizes the park's presence on the major corridor and visually separates the park from the community on Hawthorne Ave. Within the park, the dense row of Burford hollies and other plantings behind the gymnastics center obscures the entire western portion of the park from the north parking lot. While this screen helps to partition green space from parking, the lack of sight lines into the park hampers wayfinding for visitors in the parking area. This visual barrier contributes to the lack of use of the open space in the north. At the north end of the multi-purpose

field, tennis and basketball court fences and thick vegetation visually separate the field from the rest of the park. Sightline improvements in this area would further open up the park visually and promote additional use of park amenities.

## Landscape Zones (Figure A.24)

The ACC Central Services Department's Landscape Division manages park grounds according to a five level system of landscape management zones, designated as Athletic Fields and Zones 1 through 4, which are described in that division's *Service Delivery Plan*.<sup>6</sup> These zones describe maintenance service levels appropriate for the function and use of each site. The definition and level of maintenance for each level is described below:

**Athletic Field.** Athletic fields are surfaces designated for intensive outdoor recreation. These fields receive the highest level of care to ensure that they can accommodate athletic activities while remaining attractive. Turf is kept at 1" in height. Mowing frequency is once per week in April, May, and October and peaks at three times per week in July and August. Maintenance crews use fertilization, pesticide application, topdressing, aeration, and irrigation to maintain quality turf conditions. Athletic fields receive infield preparations for seasonal play from March through November.

**Level 1.** Level 1 Zones are areas that receive high use and visibility. These landscapes must be perceived as receiving perpetual care and never allowed to become unsightly. Grass is maintained at 1"-2" height with weekly mowing March to October. Level 1 Zones receive topdressing, aeration, fertilization, herbicides, pesticides, and irrigation. Mulch for trees and shrubs is kept at 2"-3" thick. Plants are pruned to maintain aesthetics and structural strength, promote healthy growth, and prevent obstructions of critical line of sight or other hazardous conditions. Fall leaf removal occurs two to three times per month from October to December, and detailed maintenance takes place yearlong to keep the appearance clean.

<sup>6</sup> Athens-Clarke County Unified Government. Central Services Department Landscape Division. *Service Delivery Plan*. Print.

**Level 2.** Level 2 areas are open spaces such as play fields, picnic areas, and outlying fields that are available and functional for informal use. These zones are allowed to appear to be in need of maintenance for brief periods while maintaining functionality. Grass height is maintained at 2"-3" with bi-weekly mowing March through October. Mulch for trees and shrubs is kept at 2"-3" thick. Plants are pruned to maintain aesthetics and structural strength, promote healthy growth, and prevent obstructions of critical line of sight or other hazardous conditions. Fertilization, herbicides, pesticides, and irrigation are used in Level 2 maintenance.

**Level 3.** Level 3 areas include open spaces that are seldom used but still require maintenance to prevent meadow and natural landscape conditions. Frequency of maintenance can range from monthly to twice per year based on terrain, adjacent use, and access requirements. Weeds are tolerated, but grass is the predominant cover, and is maintained at 3"-12" height depending on conditions and nature of use. Trees and shrubs are pruned only to improve structural strength and prevent hazardous conditions.

**Level 4.** Level 4 zones are areas that have been left in a largely natural state, such as meadows and woodlands. Meadow maintenance includes annual mowing in June, and October seeding of plants to enhance appearance and attract wildlife. Trees and shrubs are pruned only to improve structural strength and prevent hazardous conditions. No mulch or irrigation is needed in this area.

## Infrastructure Issues (Figure A.25)

Since Bishop Park was constructed four decades ago, park systems and infrastructure have reached the end of their lifespans. Some systems are buried underground and their locations are unclear. In many cases, regulations and building codes have changed substantially since the park was constructed, requiring a complete overhaul of those elements. In other instances, materials used are no longer considered standard, and fall outside of modern maintenance routines. Many of these elements are safety hazards for maintenance staff and park users.

The issues identified below represent an initial inventory of problems identified by Leisure Services maintenance staff and are not a comprehensive audit of park infrastructure conditions.

### Electrical Issues

- Electrical for the park lighting was installed with triplex wire buried directly in the ground. This wire is at the end of its service life. New wiring needs to be installed inside a conduit to prolong service life and allow for easier maintenance.
- The electrical mains are buried in a hard to access path and difficult to maintain.
- Electrical equipment, circuits, and panels are not properly labeled.
- The overall electrical layout is not well documented.
- Disconnects for field lightpoles are located on the ground and need to be relocated to poles. They are obstructions to the landscape and potential safety hazards in their current locations.
- The conduit for the covered tennis courts is tied to the steel fencing and needs to be re-installed in a safer location.
- The lighting on athletic fields and tennis courts uses older technology that is energy intensive and requires frequent maintenance to replace lamps and ballasts.

### Water

- Water for the majority of the park is fed from a single water meter. This prevents measurements of water usage for various activities and locations and makes locating leaks difficult.
- Many water lines are original to the park and are at the end of their useful service life. Some of these lines have broken in recent years and require replacement.
- Water fountains at the playground and athletic fields are very old and in need of replacement. There are no sewer lines for these fountains. However, current code requires the installation of drainage before these fountains can be replaced.

- Buildings do not have back-flow preventers as required by code.
- Buildings and portions of the park do not have isolation valves. Currently, the water supply to the whole park must be shut off and drained prior to any water line repairs.

## Facilities

- The gymnastics building has limited ADA accessibility:
  - The bathrooms and stage are not ADA accessible.
  - The sidewalk to the building does not meet ADA requirements for slope, handrails, and landings.
  - None of the entrances are equipped with ADA openers.
- The picnic shelter has rotten siding, outdated electrical, and non-ADA accessible bathrooms. The building's use does not match its design and causes maintenance issues.
- The gymnasium lacks fire suppression sprinklers or a fire alarm system.
- The dugout roofs in Fields 2 and 3 block out the view from the adjacent bleachers. The tent structure covering the shared dugout was installed as a temporary solution and is rapidly deteriorating. The scorestands are rotten at all three fields.
- Fencing is rusted and in need of replacement.
- The playground equipment was originally installed in 1991 and is nearing the end of serviceable life. The mulch playground surface breaks down rapidly, as no subsurface was installed to facilitate drainage. The playground adjacent to Field 3 has an inadequate use zone due to the proximity of adjacent fencing.
- The current paved parking has approximately five to ten more years before resurfacing will be required. Continuous use of the gravel parking lot on Sunset Drive has created erosion problems and prevented adequate maintenance in that area.

- Portions of the sidewalk and walking trail network in the park are cracked or have been cut for utility work. These portions require replacement.

## ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

Bishop Park functions as three distinct zones, broken up both geographically and by use. Though managed as a unit, these zones are not well connected, resulting in particular user groups only using a portion of the park, and rarely visiting other zones (Figure A.26).

The “North End” is a primarily passive zone, with walking paths, a pavilion, and some small lawn areas used informally by small groups or families. Clusters of trees are scattered throughout this area. The upper portion of the North End is a broad, flat area, visible from Hawthorne Avenue; to the east, this passive landscape slopes down into a hollow, creating the park’s most dramatic topographic feature.

Active programming, such as recreational fields and courts, park administration buildings, and parking dominate the “Central Core” of Bishop Park. The area is well supported by a network of walking paths that connect between the athletic facilities. The interface between these walks and the athletic programs creates many opportunities for various park users to interact and gather. Visually, hardscape features, fencing, and turf dominate this area. Although the park appears to have featured substantial ornamental landscaped areas historically, as evidenced by a host of unique ornamental trees throughout the park, and small ornamental features, these plantings have degraded somewhat over time, or caused maintenance issues for adjacent hardscapes.

The “South End” is largely undeveloped—an unused softball backstop is the only hard infrastructure in the area. However, this area is very visible from surrounding neighborhood streets, which have views into a large bowl-like multi-purpose field, ringed in trees. Many pedestrians walk along or through the multi-purpose field, creating desire lines leading into and out of the space. The result is a space that

functions, and to some extent resembles a “green” or “commons” for the adjacent neighborhoods.

Despite the significant frontage along Hawthorne Avenue, this side of the park does not read as a park for passing vehicles, due to the hedge, fence, and lack of access. The South End’s character as a neighborhood space is enhanced by the lack of gates and fencing, allowing users to enter the space directly, regardless of time of day.

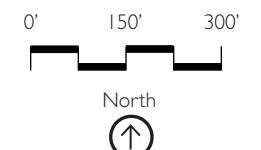
The themes outlined below present opportunities to blend these three spaces together to create a unified and cohesive park landscape:

- **Gateways.** Hawthorne and Oglethorpe Avenues are significant untapped opportunities for park access and branding. Increased and formalized pedestrian access to the park in these locations could help to offset parking demands by facilitating non-motorized visitation to the park, and provide opportunities to brand the park through signage and installation of park entry landscape features.
- **Parking.** The network of one-way drives within Bishop Park is confusing to park users. This area also creates many unsafe conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians, as few pedestrian improvements have been provided. The parking area also compounds pedestrian issues related to the South End, adding another layer of challenging wayfinding for users wishing to move from one area of the park to the other. A reconfiguration of the parking areas is needed. When developing this reconfiguration, considerations should include opportunities for improved vehicular access into the park; approaches to providing pedestrian infrastructure through the parking areas; and opportunities to improve the park’s road frontage. Pulling parking back from the core of the park may also yield land where the north and south ends of the park can be better stitched together.
- **Gathering Spaces.** Bishop Park features a number of well-designed spaces that facilitate gathering near or viewing athletic events. These spaces include the “Tennis Plaza,” Concrete Bleachers adjacent to the Fields 2 and 3, and the slopes along the Multi-purpose Field. Well-framed views from the park’s walking paths also create connections between athletic programs and general park users. Enhancing, formalizing, and creating these spaces supports the goal of a dynamic and diverse park that facilitates interactions between many types of users.
- **“The Great Wall.”** Fencing surrounding the basketball courts, covered tennis pavilion, and tennis courts, and the overflow parking area create a physical and visual barrier between the South End and the remainder of the park. The design of these spaces isolates the southern portion of the park, and discourages movement between areas. Abundant desire lines illustrate the need for movement between these spaces. Currently, users must walk on informal trails, passing utilities, dumpsters, and other infrastructure to move north or south through the park. New connections that break this barrier and provide pedestrian connectivity are needed.
- **Stormwater Management.** Currently there are many erosion issues throughout the park. Parking and other hardscape areas will likely require new stormwater infrastructure as part of their redevelopment. Two corridors, one in the North End and one flowing along the southern edge of the Central Core, provide opportunities for creating a naturalistic stormwater management landscape. Bundling a bioswale, landscape improvements, passive recreational elements, and circulation into these corridors also presents an opportunity to stitch the park’s three zones together, creating a consistent passive landscape experience throughout the park.



## LEGEND

	Baseball Field		Picnic Shelter
	Tennis Court		Bathroom
	Basketball Court		Maintenance Building
	Swimming Pool		Parking
	Multi-purpose Field		Park Office
	Playground		



## EXISTING FEATURES

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INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

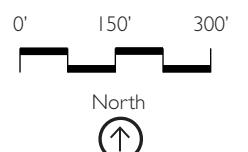
Figure A.11: Existing Features

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## LEGEND

	Medical Center		Daycare
	Cultural Resource		YMCA
	Landscape Resource		

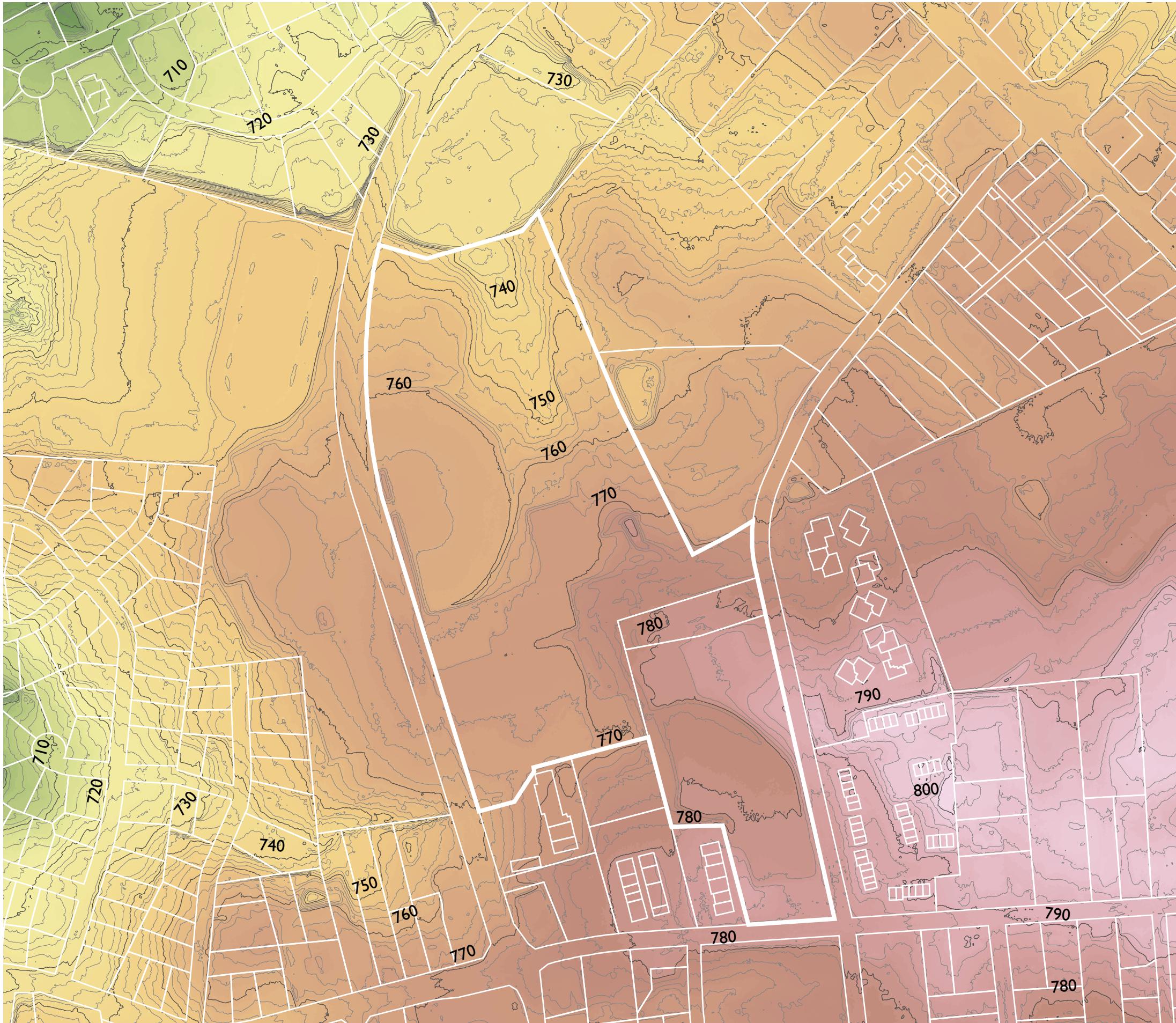


## RESOURCES

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INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

Figure A.12: Resources

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## ELEVATION

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INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

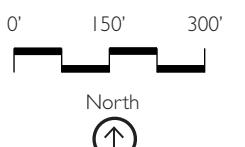
Figure A.13: Elevation

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## LEGEND

0 - 5%
5 - 10%
10 - 15%
15 - 20%
20 - 25%
25+%



## SLOPE GRADIENT

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INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

Figure A.14: Slope Gradient

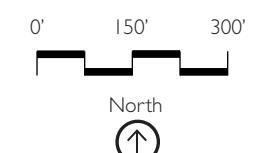
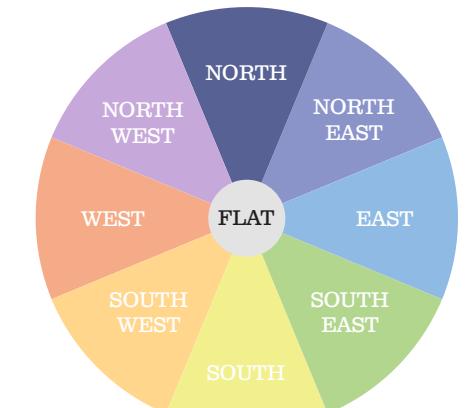
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## LEGEND

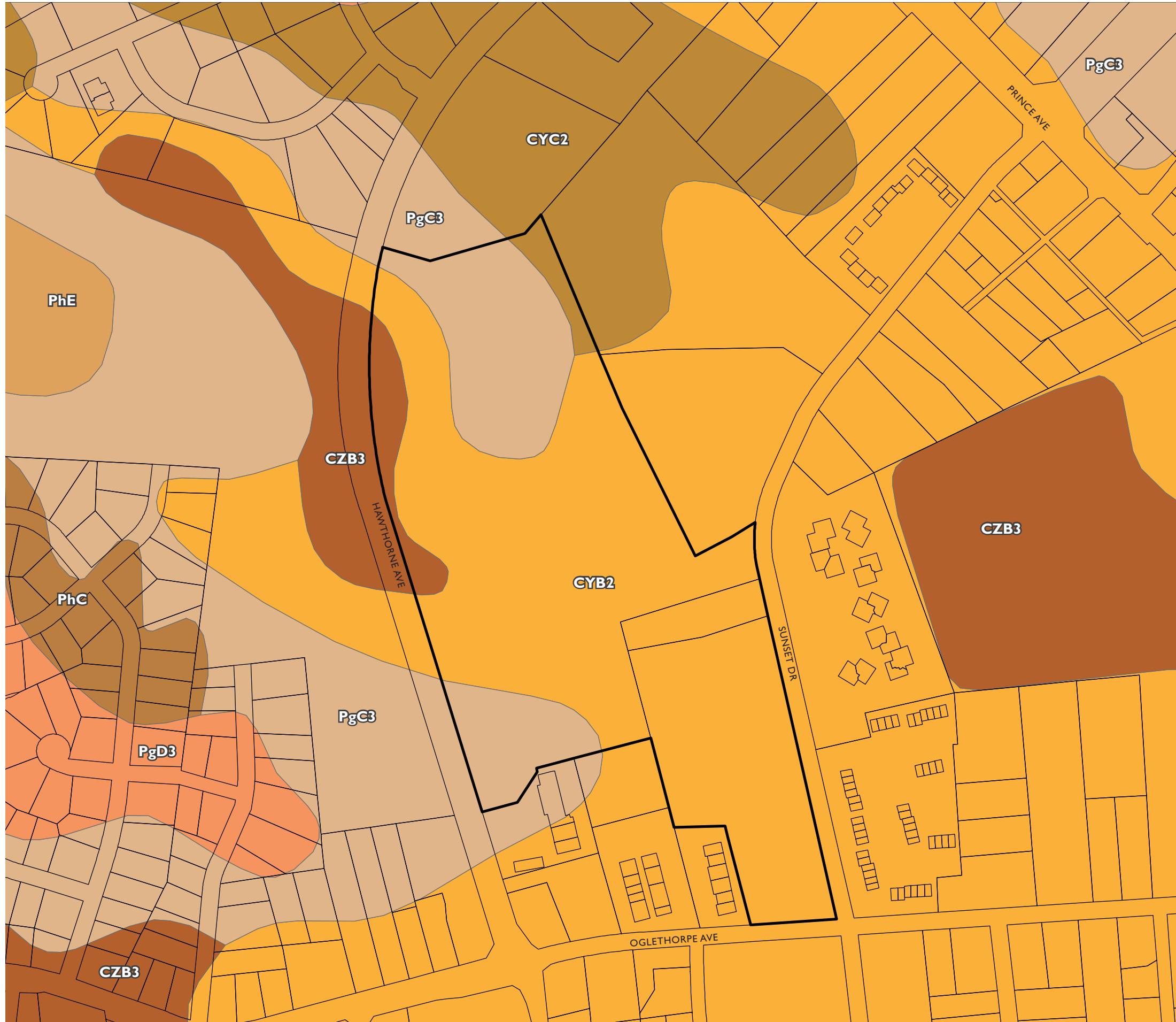


## SLOPE ASPECT

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INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

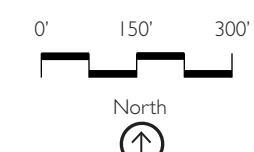
Figure A.15: Slope Aspect

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## LEGEND

	PICNIC AREAS	FIELDS	TRAILS + PATH	ROADS	BUILDINGS	LANDSCAPE
PgC3	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited	Somewhat Limited
PhE	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited
PhC	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited	Somewhat Limited
PgD3	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited	Somewhat Limited
CYB2	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	Very Limited	Not Limited	Somewhat Limited
CZB3	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	Very Limited	Not Limited	Somewhat Limited
CYC2	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	Somewhat Limited	Very Limited	Very Limited	Somewhat Limited



## SOIL SUITABILITY

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Figure A.16: Soil Suitability

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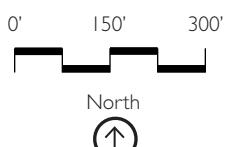
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## LEGEND

- ! Erosion Issue
- Drainage
- Watershed Boundary



## HYDROLOGY

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INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

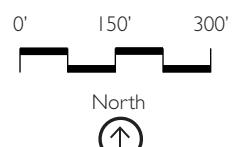
Figure A.17: Hydrology

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## LEGEND

- Athletic Field
- Open Canopy Area
- Ornamental Area
- Closed Canopy Area
- Invasive Dominated Area
- Structures
- Impervious Area



## VEGETATION & IMPERVIOUS SURFACES

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INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

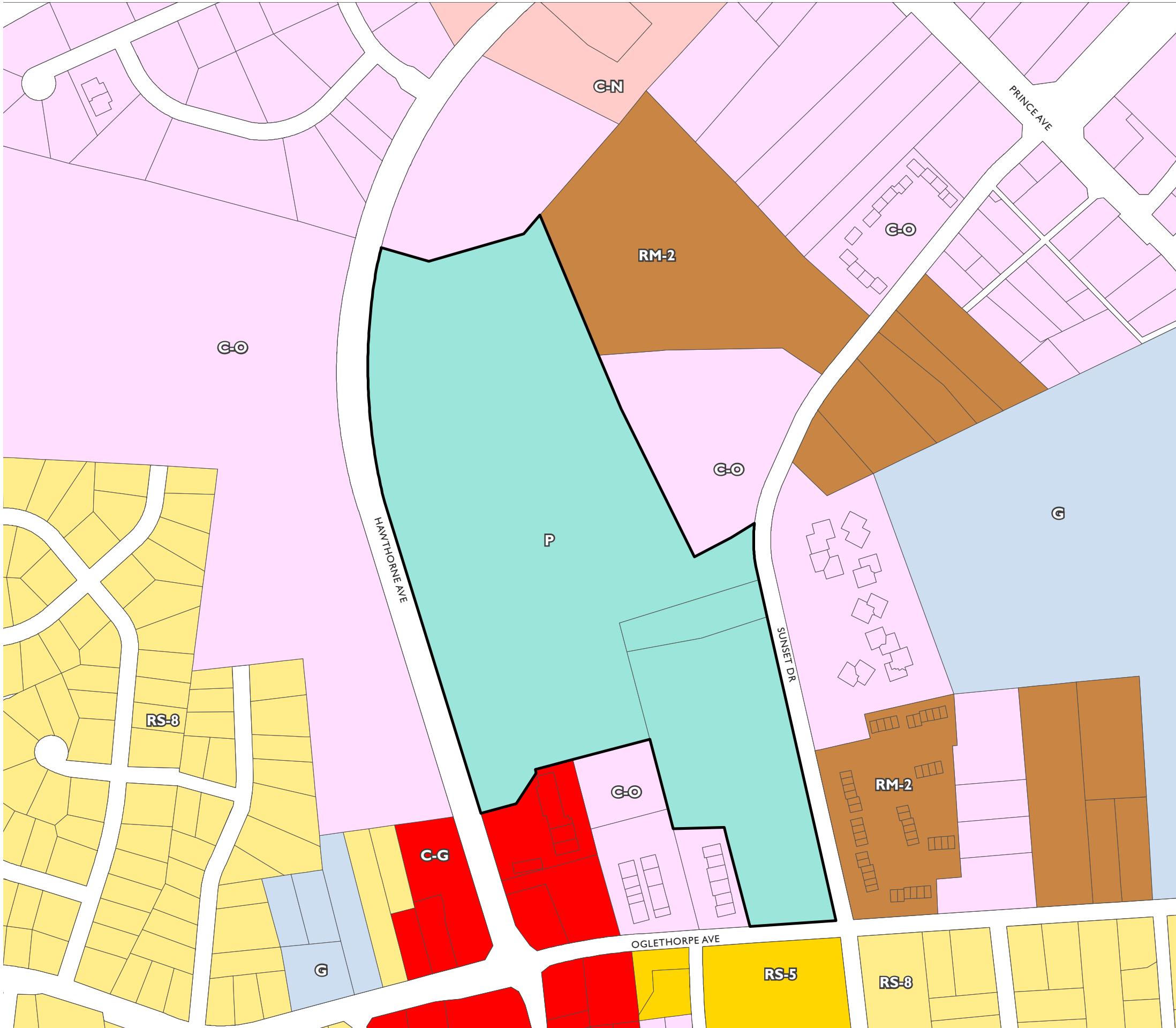
Figure A.18: Vegetation & Impervious Surfaces

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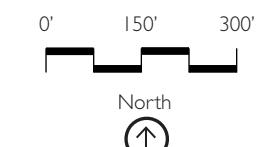
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## LEGEND

- C-G: Commercial General
- C-N: Commercial Neighborhood
- C-O: Commercial Office
- G: Government
- P: Park
- RM-2: Mixed Density Residential
- RS-5: Single Family Residential (Minimum lot area: 5000 sf)
- RS-8: Single Family Residential (Minimum lot area: 8000sf)



## CURRENT ZONING

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Figure A.19: Current Zoning

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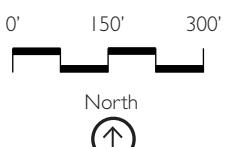
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## LEGEND

	Gate		Circulation Issue
	Bus Stop		Desire Lines
	Bike Lane		Main Entrance
	Shared Lane		Open Area



## CIRCULATION & ACCESS

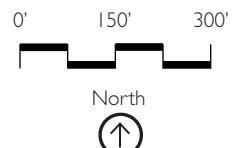
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Figure A.20: Circulation & Access

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## LEGEND



## IEWS & VISTAS

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Figure A.21: Views & Vistas

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a. Southwest view into multi-purpose field



b. Southeast view into multi-purpose field



c. View approaching park entrance on Sunset Drive



d. View from tennis plaza, looking south



Location Map

## LEGEND

## VISTA PHOTOS

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INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

Figure A.22: Vista Photos

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APPENDIX A - INVENTORY & ANALYSIS 99

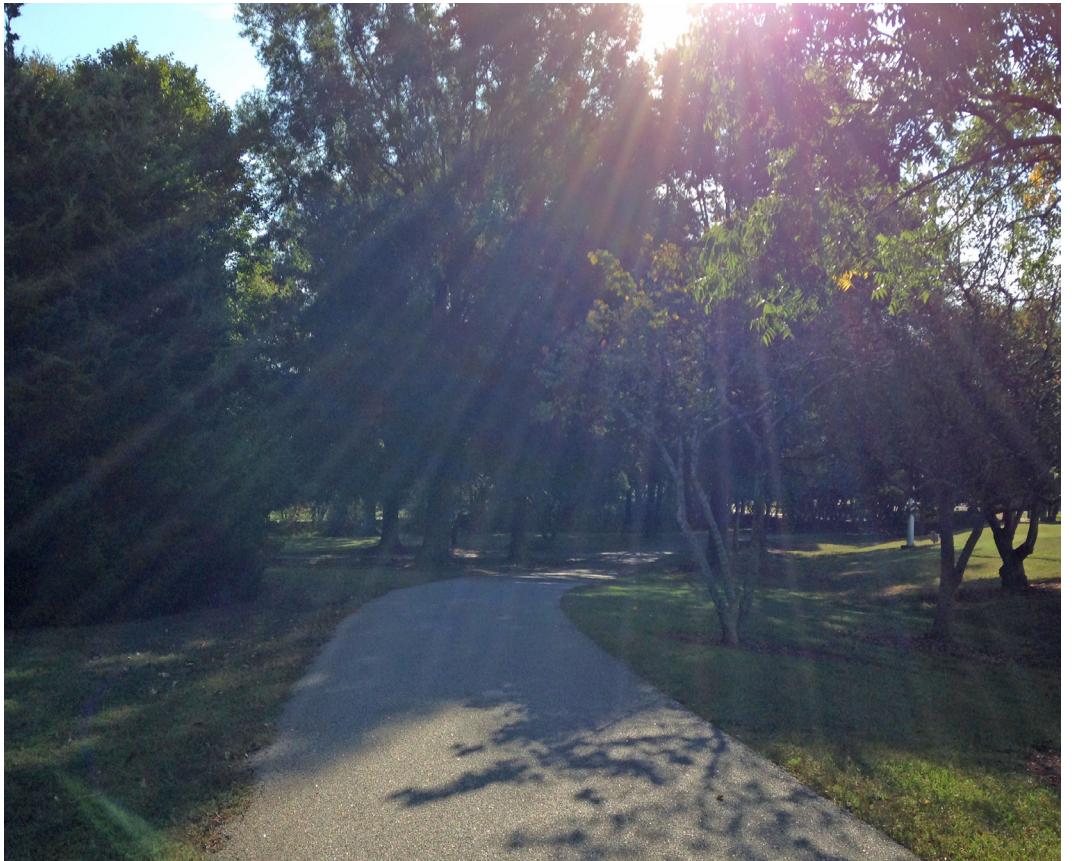
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a. View from tennis plaza, looking north



b. View from baseball bleachers toward gymnasium



c. View along walking path toward playground



d. View from picnic shelter



Location Map

## LEGEND

## VISTA PHOTOS

Bishop Park Master Plan  
INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

Figure A.23: Vista Photos - 2

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a. View into draw from top of hill at the northern end of the park



## **LEGEND**

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## **VISTA PHOTOS**

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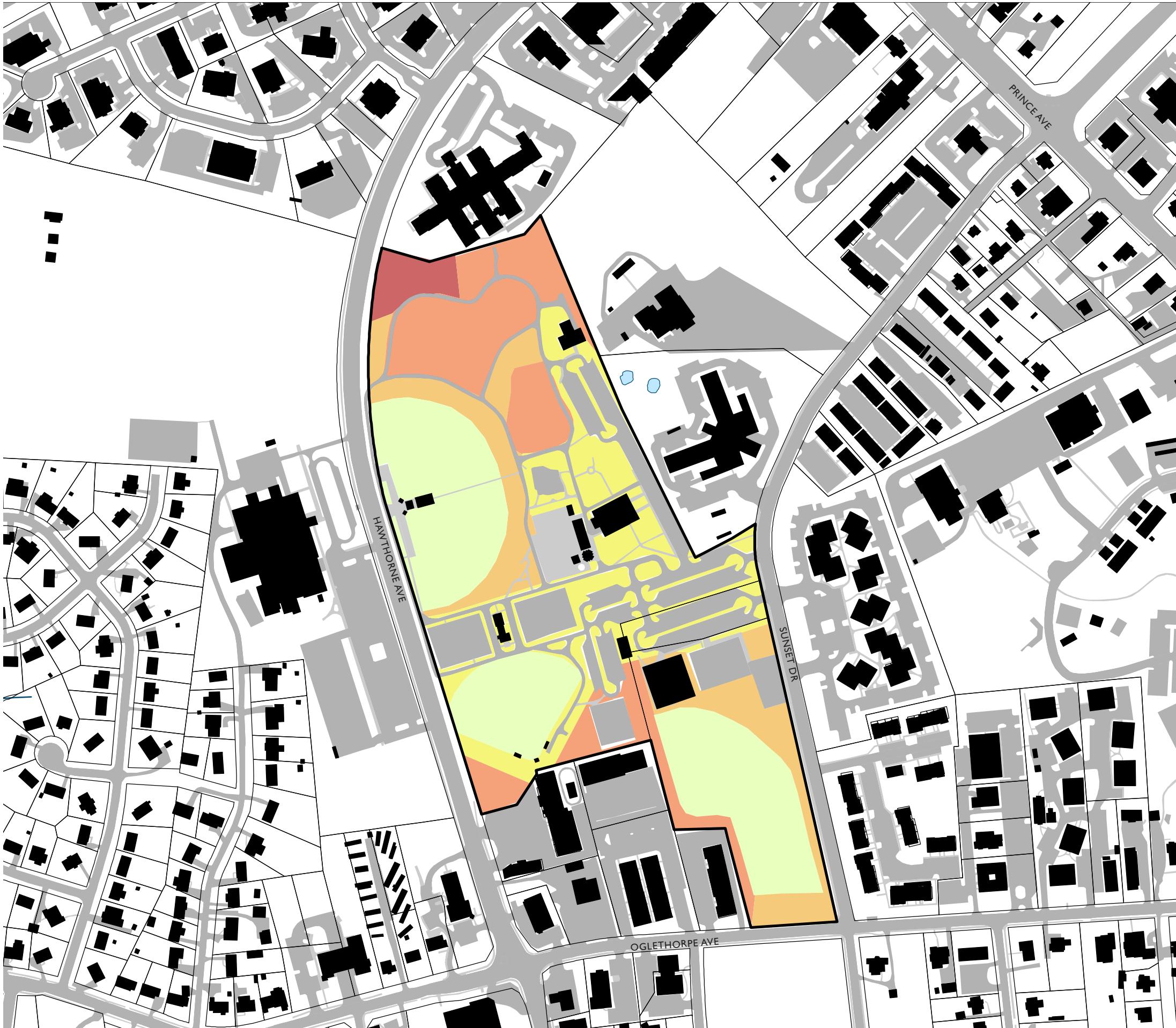
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*Figure A.24: Vista Photos - 3*

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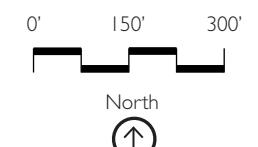


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## LEGEND

- Athletic Field
- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3
- Level 4
- Impervious Surfaces
- Buildings



## LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT ZONES

Bishop Park Master Plan  
INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

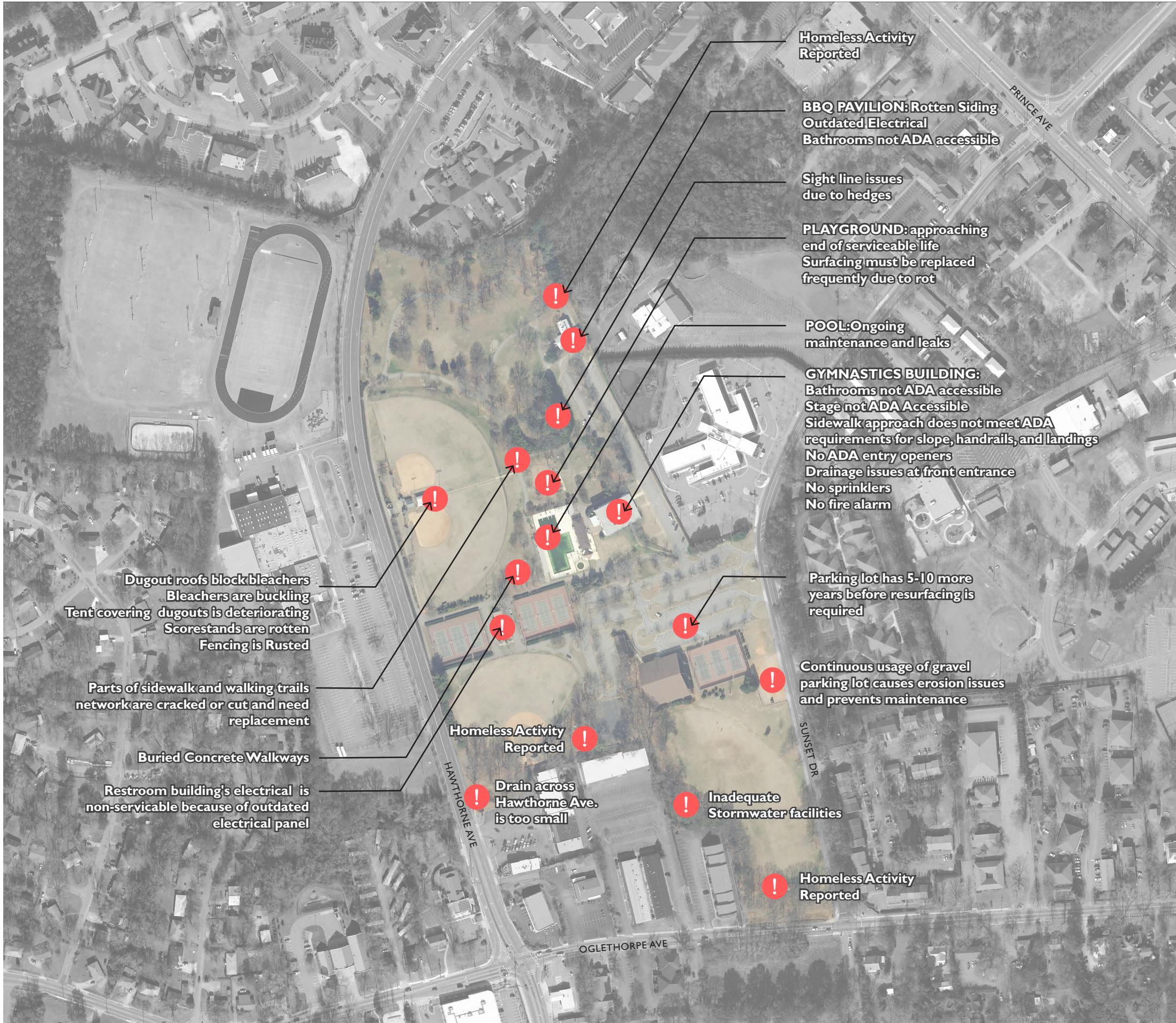
Figure A.25: Landscape Management Zones

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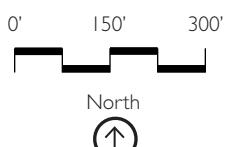
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## LEGEND

! Issue

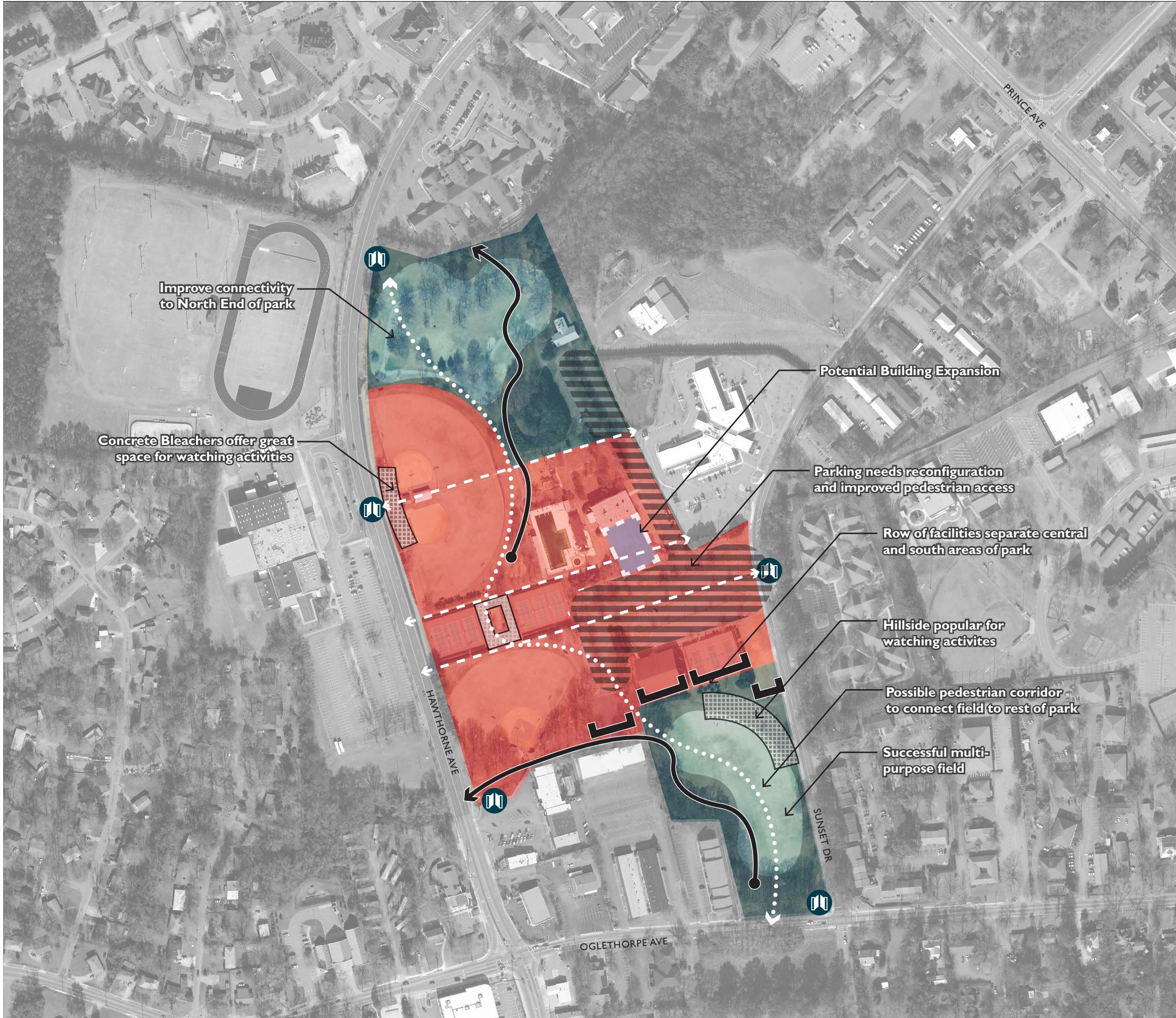


## GENERAL ISSUES

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INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

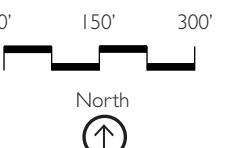
Figure A.26: General Issues

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## LEGEND

- Gateway Opportunity
- "The Wall"
- East-West Connectivity Opportunities
- Improved Pedestrian Spine through Park
- Storwater Corridor
- Park Character Zones
- Gathering Areas
- Parking Area



## ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Bishop Park Master Plan  
INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

Figure A.27: Issues & Opportunities

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# Appendix B: Precedents

## PRECEDENT PARKS

The following parks are similar to Bishop Park in scale, function, and regional context. Examining these peer parks provides tangible examples of the benefits discussed in the preceding paragraphs. They provide a basis for how Bishop Park can proceed for the future.

### Historic Fourth Ward Park

- Location: Atlanta, GA
- Opened: 2011 (Phase I)
- Size: 17 acres (12 acre main park and 5 acre satellite skate park) with 13 additional acres planned
- Cost: \$50 million

Historic Fourth Ward Park is a 17-acre park in Atlanta, Georgia. The city completed the first phase of the park in 2011. The park is part of the Atlanta Beltline, an urban redevelopment program that will create a network of parks, recreational trails, and light rail transit along a 22-mile corridor that encircles Atlanta.<sup>7</sup> Historic Fourth Ward Park consists of two distinct sections: the main 12-acre park and a 5-acre satellite park located 1/4 mile to the southeast. The main park provides amenities for passive and light recreational use. Amenities include large lawn spaces, a playground, a splashpad, an outdoor amphitheater, walking paths, and a 2-acre stormwater detention basin.<sup>8</sup> The satellite park's primary feature is a 15,000 square-foot skate park that includes bowls, ramps, and street-style structures that mimic



Figure B.1: Aerial view of Historic Fourth Ward Park.

Source: <https://vimeo.com/51356844>



Figure B.2: Historic Fourth Ward's Stormwater Retention Pond

Historic Fourth Ward's Stormwater Retention Pond that reduces neighborhood flooding, relieves local sewer systems, and features a fountain through which stormwater enters the pond from nearby streams.

Source: <http://beltline.org/parks/historic-fourth-ward-park/>

<sup>7</sup> "Southwest Connector Trail." Atlanta Beltline. Web. 01 Dec. 2014. <<http://beltline.org/about/the-atlanta-beltline-project/atlanta-beltline-overview/>>.

<sup>8</sup> "Atlanta's Best New Urban Oasis." Historic Fourth Ward Park. N.p., n.d. Web. 01 Dec. 2014. <<http://beltline.org/parks/historic-fourth-ward-park>>.



**Figure B.3: Historic Fourth Ward's Waterfall**

The waterfall circulates and aerates the water.  
Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/tjc/10148777674/>



**Figure B.4: Historic Fourth Ward's River Bed**

The dry river bed allows people to experience the movement of stormwater through the site even on clear days.  
Source: <http://beltline.org/parks/historic-fourth-ward-park/>



**Figure B.5: Historic Fourth Ward's Splashpad**

Source: <http://blog.hammersmith.net/featured/historic-fourth-ward-park-intown-atlantas-newest-attraction-and-its-best-kept-secret/>

the urban environment.<sup>9</sup> The satellite park also includes a playground and a 2-acre multipurpose athletic field. The city plans to connect the main park and the satellite park with a 13-acre expansion. The park expansion will include a dog park, community garden, multi-purpose lawn, and walking paths.

Historic Fourth Ward Park illustrates how a recreational project can also accomplish infrastructure goals. The site contained many acres of impervious pavement, which contributed to flooding and sewer overflows of the Clear Creek Basin watershed in the Fourth Ward. The city originally planned to address stormwater management issues in the area as part of a 15 year, \$3 billion project to upgrade the municipal sewer system. However, community members in 2003 developed a concept plan proposing a new public park with a detention pond component to mitigate the flooding.

The park would also replace the vacant brownfield site with usable public space. The site of the park was formerly the Ponce de Leon amusement park. Later, the property was used as a construction dump containing asbestos materials.<sup>10</sup>

The Atlanta Beltline completed construction for Historic Fourth Ward Park in two phases. The first phase cost \$13 million and included a stormwater basin and the landscape surrounding it. The second phase cost \$11 million and encompassed the remainder of the park. Design fees were \$2.1 million due to change orders during the projects implementation. After adding the land cost, the total cost comes close to \$50 million.<sup>11</sup>

The city ultimately adopted the community plan, and today Historic Fourth Ward Park prominently displays the 2-acre detention pond as its central feature.<sup>12</sup> In addition to its flood storage volume,

<sup>9</sup> Chambers, Justin. "Tony Hawk Helps Unveil Historic Fourth Ward Skate Park along Beltline." Creative Loafing Atlanta. 12 June 2011. Web. 01 Dec. 2014. <<http://clatl.com/freshloaf/archives/2011/06/12/tony-hawk-opens-atlanta-beltline-skate-park>>.

<sup>10</sup> "Construction Begins on Phase 1 of Historic Fourth Ward Park." Historic Fourth Ward Park Atlanta. 1 Sept. 2009. Web. 1 Dec. 2014. <[http://www.h4wpc.com/docs/4th\\_ward\\_park\\_construction\\_update\\_9-1-09.pdf](http://www.h4wpc.com/docs/4th_ward_park_construction_update_9-1-09.pdf)>.

<sup>11</sup> Burke, Kevin. "Historic Fourth Ward Park Informational Interview." Telephone Interview. 28 May 2015.

<sup>12</sup> "Historic Fourth Ward Park Atlanta." Historic Fourth Ward Park

the pond contains a permanent pool of water that serves as an amenity for the park. The pond also services adjacent water features, such as the waterfall that aerates the collected water, and a stone water cascade. The city saved \$15 million by utilizing this multi-functional solution rather than expanding its sewer system as originally planned.<sup>13</sup> Since the park was developed, many new multi-family residential properties have been developed nearby, illustrating the economic and redevelopment benefits that can be triggered by the development of urban park space.

## Forsyth Park

- Location: Savannah, GA
- Opened: 1840's
- Size: 30 acres

Forsyth Park is a 30-acre park in Savannah, Georgia. Located at the southern end of the city's downtown Historic District, the park is more than 150 years old. The historic park's design features a formal, ordered landscape aesthetic. Retail shops, offices, and historic residences surround the park. Mature trees and landscape plantings provide a buffer between the park and the moderate traffic of downtown Savannah. The north end of the park is a dense arboretum featuring large trees draped in Spanish moss. The south end contains open space for athletic fields and community events. Athletic facilities at Forsyth Park include basketball courts, tennis courts, and two athletic fields that are each 8 acres in size. These fields host a variety of concerts, festivals, and weekly events throughout the year, in addition to providing open space for active recreation. The park also contains a playground, splashpad, fragrant garden for the blind, walking paths, an iconic fountain that has been in place since 1858, and other historic features and monuments.<sup>14</sup> A farmers' market sets up along either side of the



Figure B.6: Forsyth Park's iconic allee of Live Oaks

Source: <https://en.wikivoyage.org/wiki/Savannah>



Figure B.7: Forsyth Park's - Open Fields

Source: <http://www.lhsa.org/gallery/show/50/page/10/>

Atlanta. Web. 01 Dec. 2014. <<http://www.h4wpc.com/about.htm>>.

13 "Atlanta's Best New Urban Oasis." Atlanta Beltline. Web. 01 Dec. 2014. <<http://beltline.org/parks/historic-fourth-ward-park>>.

14 "Forsyth Park | Savannah Georgia | Getting to Forsyth Park | Fountain." Visit Historic Savannah Georgia. N.p., n.d. Web. 01 Dec. 2014. <<http://visithistoric.savannah.com/forsyth-park/>>.



Figure B.8: Stage and field area at Forsyth Park

Source: <http://www.be-roberts.com/se/sav11/hd2.htm>



Figure B.9: Live Oaks lining the fields at Forsyth Park

Source: <http://media-cdn.tripadvisor.com/media/photo-s/02/fa/96/ed/forsyth-park-inn.jpg>



Figure B.10: Promenade at Long Bridge Park

Source: <http://parks.arlingtonva.us/locations/long-bridge-park/>

central walkway at the south end of the park on Saturdays. Here, vendors line up with tents or tables beneath the shade of mature oak trees.<sup>15</sup>

The city created Forsyth Park as part of its city planning efforts. During this time, the Oglethorpe Plan dictated the design of Savannah. The plan laid out the city using a repeated pattern of “wards.” This use of wards informed the initial settlement next to the Savannah River. However, as the city grew, a larger park was desired. The city created Forsyth Park to serve as the central square from which future development of the city would radiate.<sup>16</sup> William Hodgson donated 10 acres of land for public use in the 1840s to create Forsyth Park. Governor John Forsyth donated the remaining 20 acres. The city named the park after the governor in 1851.<sup>17</sup>

As Savannah has grown, the city has relied on the park to serve as an event and athletic space within the Historic District. The park has been updated with modern fields and courts to accommodate contemporary activities. These improvements were done while keeping the park’s historical assets intact. Historic fort structures that date to 1910 have been adapted to serve as the fragrant garden and a visitor center and café space.<sup>18</sup> The visitor center structure also provides a unique backdrop for a new stage and awning that feature a complementary contemporary design. Athletic fields, a playground, and other recreational spaces were sited to conform to the axial arrangement of the historic parade ground landscape in the southern end of the park, and needed infrastructure such as parking has been tucked away so as not to intrude on the park landscape.

The park is also well integrated into the city’s walkable fabric. Bull Street’s sidewalks continue through the park as its central walkway, and surrounding sidewalks along the park edge

15 “Forsyth Farmer’s Market - Support Local Food.” Forsyth Farmers Market. Web. 01 Dec. 2014. <<http://forsythfarmersmarket.com/>>.

16 “Forsyth Park - Savannah, Georgia.” Explore Southern History. Web. 01 Dec. 2014. <<http://www.exploresouthernhistory.com/forsythpark.html>>.

17 “Forsyth Park Fountain.” Visit Historic Savannah Georgia. Web. 01 Dec. 2014. <<http://visithistoricsavannah.com/forsyth-park/>>.

18 “Savannah, GA’s Historic Forsyth Park.” Historic Savannah Parks. Web. 19 Dec 2014. <<http://www.historicsavannahparks.com/parks/forsyth-park.html>>

provide easy access to park's arboretum and open fields. Because of its walkable location, only a limited number of parking spaces are provided: at the south end of the park and near the visitor center. Plentiful on-street parking is available on streets near the park, including some areas immediately adjacent to the park.

## Long Bridge Park

- Location: Arlington, Virginia
- Opened: 2011
- Size: 18 acres, planned development is a 30 acre park that includes a state of the art aquatics, health, and fitness facility

Long Bridge Park is an 18-acre athletic park in Arlington, VA. The city created the park to meet Arlington's demand for more access to health and fitness facilities. The master plan for the park, completed in 2004, broke the construction of the park into 5 phases. The city completed Phase 1 of the park in November 2011.<sup>19</sup> The park currently includes three synthetic turf athletic fields, public art pieces, an esplanade and overlook with views of an adjacent wetland, and passive green space. Future phases of the park will include an additional athletic field, a children's play area, and the Aquatics, Health, & Fitness Facility. This facility will contain a 50-meter pool, a 10-meter diving platform, seating for 700 spectators, leisure and therapy pool, a fitness gym, office and meeting space, and childcare facilities.<sup>20</sup>

The community of Arlington is committed to creating a premier athletic facility at Long Bridge Park. Currently, Arlington has limited access to athletic fields and recreational facilities.<sup>21</sup> The facilities at Long Bridge Park are a valuable

<sup>19</sup> "Long Bridge Park Background." Arlington, VA Parks and Recreation. Web. 01 Dec. 2014. <<http://projects.arlingtonva.us/plans-studies/parks-open-space/long-bridge-park/long-bridge-park-background/>>.

<sup>20</sup> "Concepts and Plan for Long Bridge Park." Arlington, VA Parks and Recreation. Web. 01 Dec. 2014. <<http://projects.arlingtonva.us/plans-studies/parks-open-space/long-bridge-park/concepts-plan-long-bridge-park/>>.

<sup>21</sup> "Synthetic Turf Fields - Parks & Recreation." Arlington, VA Parks and Recreation. Web. 01 Dec. 2014. <<http://parks.arlingtonva.us/synthetic-turf-fields/>>.



Figure B.11: Arbor at Long Bridge Park

Source: <http://parks.arlingtonva.us/locations/long-bridge-park/>



Figure B.12: View of athletic at Long Bridge Park

Source: <http://parks.arlingtonva.us/locations/long-bridge-park/>



Figure B.13: Future development plan of Long Bridge Park

Source: <http://www.arlandria.org/2011/11/long-and-short-of-long-bridge-park.html>

resource and justify a premium cost to ensure quality and longevity. For example, the athletic fields in the park are synthetic turf. Installation of synthetic turf fields can cost up to ten times as much as natural turf and costs more to maintain. However, the synthetic fields can accommodate five times more usage without degrading.

The planned Aquatics, Health & Fitness Facility, intended to be a state-of-the-art facility, is currently on hold. When construction bids for the facility came in above budget, Arlington County opted to postpone construction rather than compromise on the original vision for the facility. The county is currently pursuing creative financial solutions to fund the project rather than asking for additional public funding. Possible solutions include selling naming rights for the facility and collaborating with the US Olympic Committee for the 2024 Summer Games.<sup>22</sup> A future phase of the facility will include the “Multiple Activity Center.” This expansion will provide indoor space for soccer, tennis, racquetball, basketball and volleyball, additional fitness space, jogging track, and a climbing wall; underground parking for 547 vehicles will also be constructed during this phase.<sup>23</sup>

## PRECEDENT FACILITIES

The facilities described below are examples of community centers including some of the components considered for Bishop Park. These centers, of varying age, programming, and quality, are illustrated to give a sense of the spectrum of approaches that other communities have taken, especially regarding aquatics, gymnastics, and other indoor programming.

### Thornton Recreation Center Roswell Area Park Facilities

- Location: Roswell, GA
- Built: 1979 (Community Activity Building), 1988 (Physical Activity Center)
- Size: 80,500 ft<sup>2</sup> in three buildings

The Roswell Area Park, an 80-acre park north of Atlanta, contains athletic fields, tennis courts, 3.2 miles of trails, picnic areas, a playground, and a 2 acre lake. In addition to its outdoor recreation resources, the park also contains several structures that support a variety of community programs. These include the 36,500 ft<sup>2</sup> Physical Activity Center (PAC); 36,000 ft<sup>2</sup> Community Activity Building (CAB); and 8,000 ft<sup>2</sup> Visual Arts Center. Between the PAC and the CAB is an outdoor 50-meter Olympic pool.

The PAC facility contains two aerobic exercise rooms, four dance studios, administrative space, and a large gymnastics facility.<sup>24</sup> The floor area devoted directly to gymnastics programming is approximately 23,500 ft<sup>2</sup>, according to Roswell parks staff. The gymnastics equipment at the facility meets Olympic standards and the facility has hosted many gymnastics tournaments including the U.S. National Gymnastics along with several Olympic training events.<sup>25</sup> The CAB contains two gymnasiums, an indoor track, fitness space, meeting rooms, a commercial kitchen, stage, game room, and administrative space.

22 “Long Bridge Park Aquatics, Health and Fitness Facility Construction Postponed.” Arlington Virginia Newsroom. 5 June 2014. Web. 01 Dec. 2014. <<http://news.arlingtonva.us/releases/long-bridge-park-aquatics-health-and-fitness-facility-construction-postponed>>.

23 “Long Bridge Aquatics Center on Hold Due to Rising Costs.” Arlington Now. 3 Jan. 2014. Web. 1 Dec. 2014. <<http://www.arlnow.com/2014/01/03/developing-long-bridge-aquatics-center-on-hold/>>.

24 “Physical Activity Center.” City of Roswell, GA. Web. 1 Dec. 2014. <<http://www.roswellgov.com/index.aspx?NID=1124>>.

25 “Roswell Gymnastics Facility.” Roswell Gymnastics. Web. 1 Dec. 2014. <[http://www.roswellgymnastics.com/RG\\_Facility.html](http://www.roswellgymnastics.com/RG_Facility.html)>.

## Frances Meadows Aquatic Center

- Location: Gainesville, GA
- Opened: 2008
- Budget: \$12 million<sup>26</sup>

The Frances Meadows Aquatic Center includes two indoor pools; an outdoor recreational pool with a slide and other features; a fitness center; and an outdoor patio and playground. The 10-lane competition pool features spectator seating for up to 300 people. The smaller four lane instructional pool has zero depth entry for ADA accessibility. The facility's outdoor components include a splash pad, patio space, a swirl pool, drop buckets, 3-story high slides and other play elements.<sup>27</sup> The facility's fitness center houses a full gym with cardio and strength equipment, and meeting space for wellness classes.<sup>28</sup>

## Community Recreation & Aquatics Center - Bogan Park

- Location: Buford, GA
- Size: 83 Acres

Bogan Park is an 83 acre park in suburban Gwinnett County, Georgia. The park includes a 7 field baseball and softball complex with a football field overlay, playgrounds, basketball and beach volleyball courts, two miles of trails, Several pavilions, restrooms, and grill areas, and a Community Recreation & Aquatics Center. This Center includes an indoor aquatics center with a competition pool, leisure pools with zero-depth entry, a giant waterslide, water play structures, a double gymnasium, indoor badminton courts, and dance studios and classrooms.<sup>29</sup>

26 Gunn, Jerry. "Frances Meadows remembered at dedication." AccessNorthGA.com. 17 Sept. 2008. Web. 19 Dec. 2014. <<http://www.accessnorthga.com/detail.php?n=213395>>

27 "Frances Meadows Aquatic Center." The Official Site of the City of Gainesville, Georgia. Web. 1 Dec. 2014. <<http://www.gainesville.org/frances-meadows>>.

28 "Fitness Center." The Official Site of the City of Gainesville, Georgia. Web. 1 Dec. 2014. <<http://www.gainesville.org/fitness-center>>.

29 "Bogan Park." Gwinnett County Government. Web. 14 May 2015. <<https://www.gwinnettcounty.com/portal/gwinnett/Departments/Community-Services/ParksandRecreation/OurParksandFacilities/GuidetoYourParks/Bogan>>.



Figure B.14: Francis Meadows Aquatic Center Splashpad

Source: <http://loseandassociates.com/projects/frances-meadows-aquatic-and-community-center/>



Figure B.15: Francis Meadows Aquatic Center aerial view

Source: <http://loseandassociates.com/projects/frances-meadows-aquatic-and-community-center/>

## Figure B.16: Bogan Park Master Plan - Indoor Pools & Outdoor Athletics

Source: <http://mestudiol.com/landscape-architecture.html>





*Figure B.17: Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center*

Source: [http://www.yelp.com/biz\\_photos/gwinnett-environmental-and-heritage-center-buford](http://www.yelp.com/biz_photos/gwinnett-environmental-and-heritage-center-buford)



*Figure B.18: Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center*

Source: <http://www.dexigner.com/news/11352>



*Figure B.19: The Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center - Native Plants*

Source: [http://www.yelp.com/biz\\_photos/gwinnett-environmental-and-heritage-center-buford](http://www.yelp.com/biz_photos/gwinnett-environmental-and-heritage-center-buford)

## **Gwinnett Environmental & Heritage Center**

- Location: Buford, GA
- Opened: 2007
- Size: 65,000 ft<sup>2</sup>, 233 acres
- Budget: \$16.6 million<sup>30</sup>

Though more passive and environmentally oriented than the examples cited above, this LEED Gold certified facility is an excellent example of how to incorporate environmental site and building features into the design of a community facility. Innovative stormwater features run throughout the site, including a dry ravine that passes underneath a bridged portion of the structure, and pervious pavements. The building incorporates a green roof, recycled granite products, and many other sustainability strategies in its design.<sup>31</sup> The architecture uses local materials that are contextually appropriate, and blend in with the natural site on which the facility is located.



*Figure B.20: The Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center - Stormwater Treatment*

Source: [http://www.yelp.com/biz\\_photos/gwinnett-environmental-and-heritage-center-buford](http://www.yelp.com/biz_photos/gwinnett-environmental-and-heritage-center-buford)

Park>

<sup>30</sup> Ozler, Levent. "A Working Model of Sustainable Design: Gwinnett County Educational Center. Dexigner. 8 Jan 2007. Web. 14 May 2015. <<http://www.dexigner.com/news/10008>>

<sup>31</sup> "About." Gwinnett Environmental & Heritage Center. Web. 14 May 2015. <<https://gwinnettehc.org/about/>>

## SUMMARY

The three parks considered, Historic Fourth Ward, Forsyth, and Long Bridge, each provide examples of how a diverse array of programs have been adapted to constrained urban sites through multi-functional park infrastructure. In the case of Historic Fourth Ward Park, needed infrastructure has been adapted to serve as an iconic water feature for the park. As Bishop Park is redeveloped, new stormwater regulations enacted since the park's initial construction will require additional onsite stormwater treatment; these should be developed as an amenity for the park, given the limited acreage available.

Forsyth Park illustrates how a landscape that serves primarily as a community greenspace and pedestrian circulation can elegantly incorporate active and intensive recreational uses. Many participants commented on the desire for increased walkability at Bishop Park and expressed a desire to preserve the scenic character of existing unprogrammed field space. The relationship between Forsyth's multipurpose fields and its circulation and surrounding neighborhoods is particularly applicable to Bishop, though the historic and formal language may not directly translate to this context.

Long Bridge Park, wedged between a highway, a railroad, and the Potomac, in a densely developed area, provides needed athletic space by using artificial turf capable of withstanding high traffic. The park connects with adjacent scenic and natural resources and adjacent urban development through the creation of a network of formal walkways that, like Forsyth, mask the functional athletic character of adjacent fields. The park will also one day include a multi-purpose wellness and aquatics center. Of the parks considered, Long Bridge is most analogous to Bishop in terms of program and size.

The recreational and community centers profiled illustrate how other communities in northeast Georgia similar in population to Athens-Clarke County have chosen to provide space for the programs offered at Bishop Park. The varied approach to these sites, which include varying accommodations and equipment, should be considered when creating the right programming

balance for gymnastics, aquatics, and other similar programs at Bishop.

One concern expressed by several stakeholders (see Appendix III) was that value-engineering during future construction phases would undermine the vision for Bishop Park developed during this master plan process. One element that many of these examples share is a commitment to quality in implementation and dedication to their initial visions. In the case of parks like Long Bridge, this has meant slowing timelines and searching for additional funding rather than delivering a project that is reduced in scale or grade of materials.

What these examples collectively show is that the ambitious vision proposed by Bishop Park's users and stakeholders is feasible, and has been successfully accomplished by many nearby communities. The resources and scale of this plan may be new ground for ACC, but large-scale indoor facilities for gymnastics and aquatic programs, and publicly accessible space for fitness and wellness-related programs are becoming increasingly common.

Finally, the parks evaluated above provide examples of how the athletic and active components of parks can easily be adapted into a framework of community-oriented open space, a major interest of the public for Bishop Park. These examples show that Bishop's development as a hub for these kinds of activities can actually enhance, rather than detract from the park's status as a community space.

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# Appendix C: Public Input Process

## BISHOP PARK USER SURVEY

Working with Park Planning Staff, UGA MEPD students developed an online survey hosted online via [athensclarkecounty.com](http://athensclarkecounty.com). Park Planning staff also mailed announcements to 1,180 nearby residents, and advertised the survey and public input meetings via social media and various community email listservs. Additionally, MEPD students distributed field surveys. All told, this effort resulted in over 500 responses to the survey.

Below are charts illustrating results of the survey's quantitative questions, and the full text of responses to the survey's qualitative questions.

## Quantitative Results

Figure C.1: Survey - Question 1

Are you a resident of Athens-Clarke County?



Figure C.2: Survey - Question 2

How long have you lived in Athens-Clarke County??

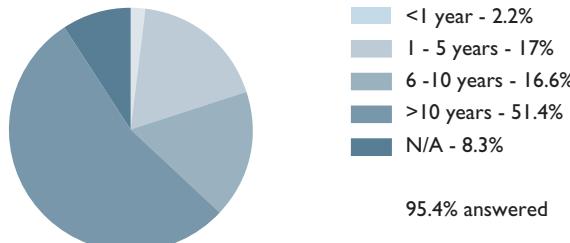


Figure C.3: Survey - Question 3

Gender?

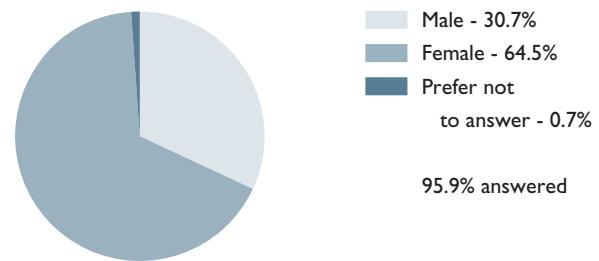


Figure C.4: Survey - Question 4

Please indicate the number of members in your household.

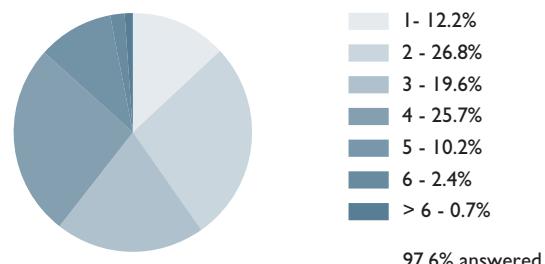


Figure C.5: Survey - Question 5

Household age distribution.

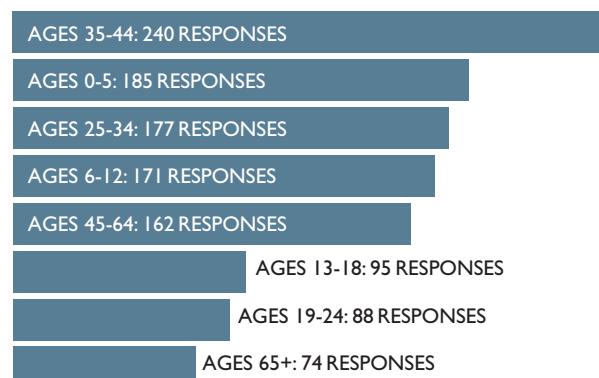


Figure C.6: Survey – Question 6

Do you use any Athens-Clarke County parks, facilities, or recreational programs?



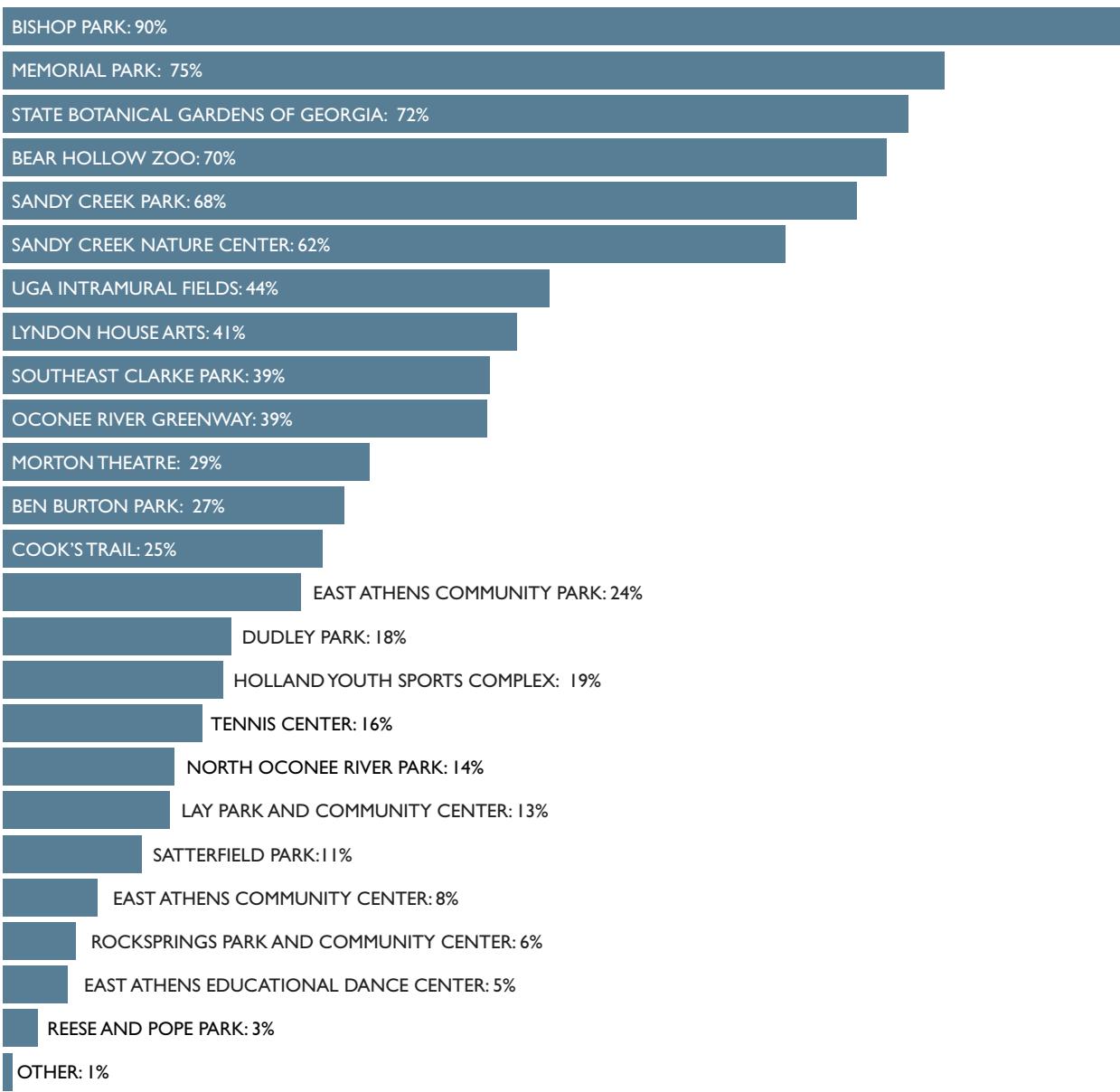
Figure C.8: Survey – Question 8

Do you use Bishop Park or are you aware of its amenities?



Figure C.7: Survey – Question 7

Please select any parks or recreation facilities in Athens-Clarke County that you visit.



\* PERCENT USAGE

Figure C.9: Survey – Question 9

Please indicate your reasons for using Bishop Park.

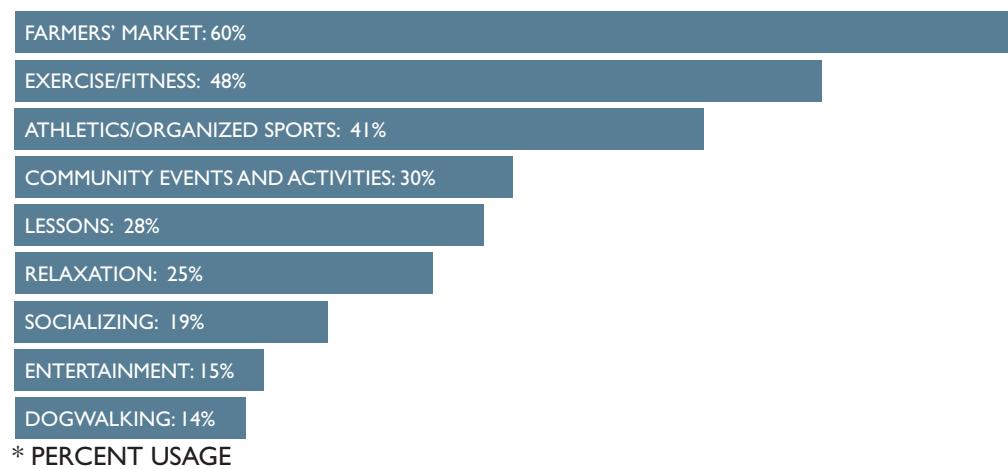


Figure C.10: Survey – Question 10

How often do you or members of your household use Bishop Park?

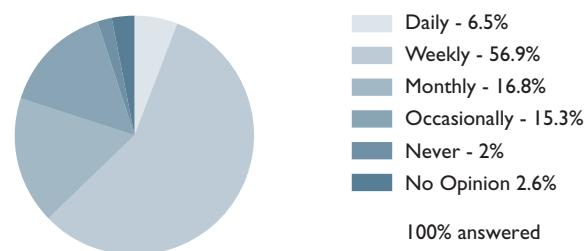


Figure C.11: Survey – Question 11

When do you or members of your household typically visit Bishop Park?

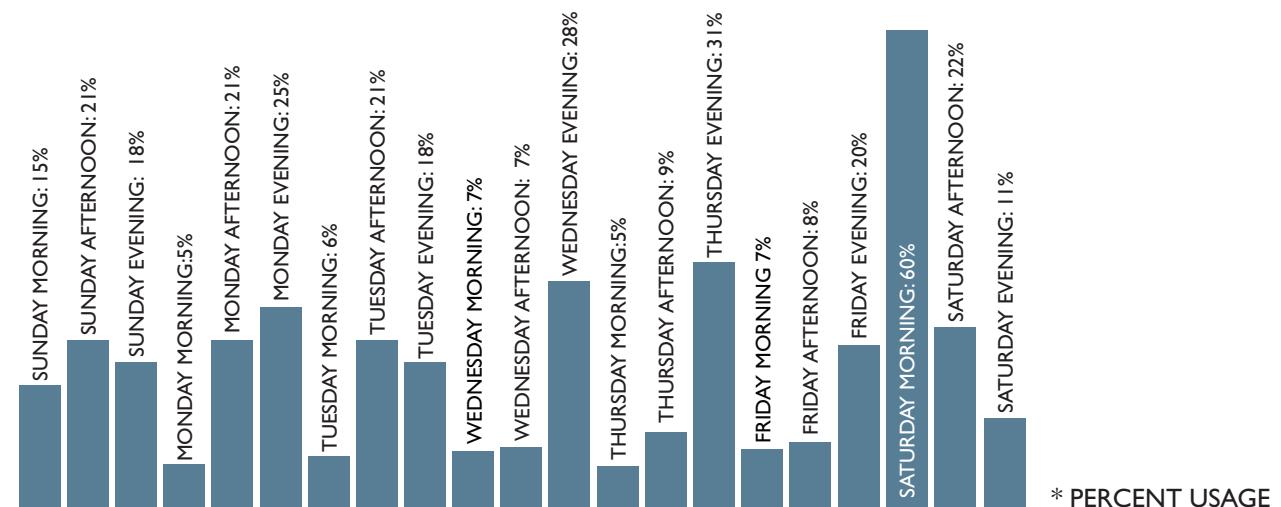


Figure C.12: Survey – Question 12

Which facilities at Bishop Park do you use most often?

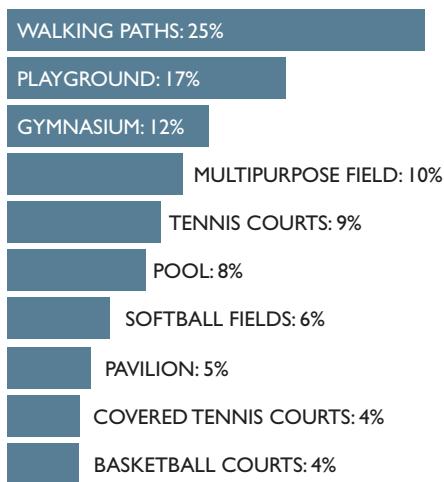


Figure C.13: Survey – Question 13

Which facilities at Bishop Park need improvement or expansion?

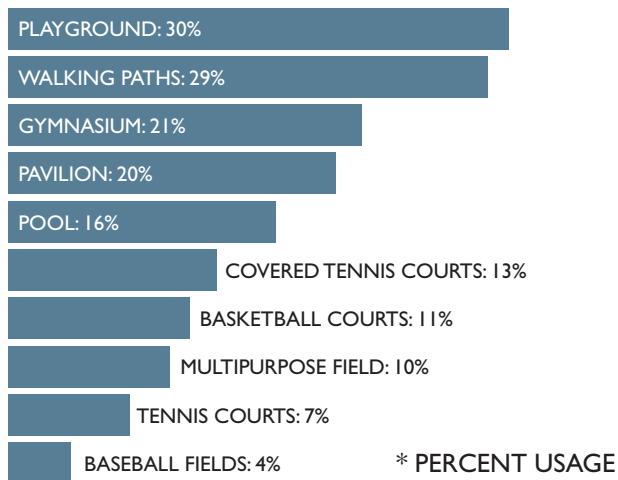
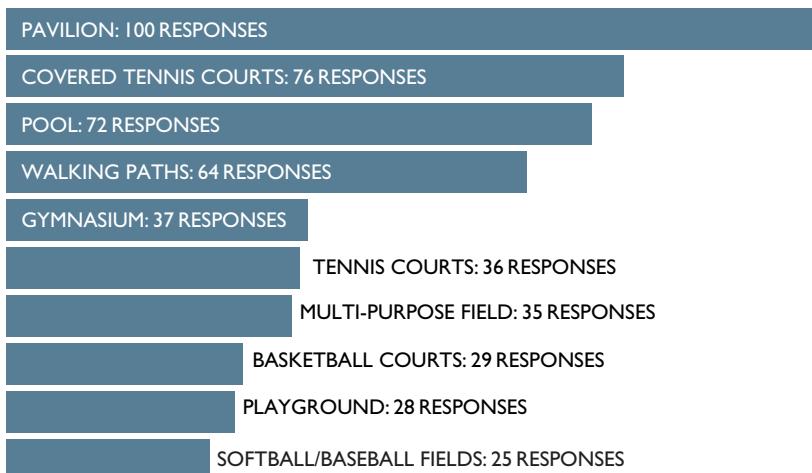
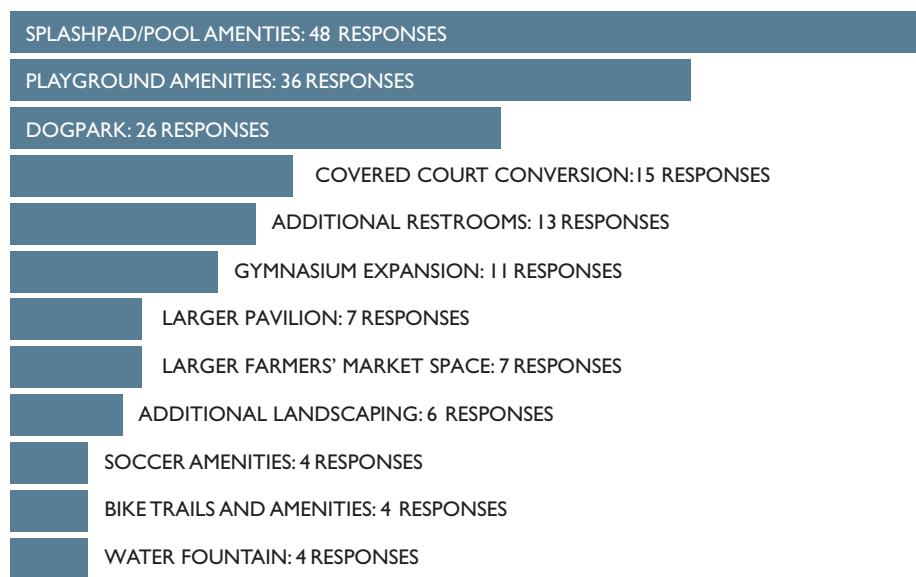


Figure C.14: Survey – Question 14

Which facilities at Bishop Park do you feel are underutilized?



*Figure C.15: Survey – Question 15*  
Requested Facilities by Survey Respondents



*Figure C.16: Survey – Question 16*  
How often do you or members of your household  
participate in an event or organized program at Bishop  
Park

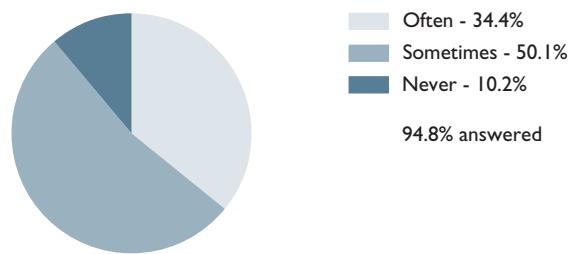


Figure C.17: Survey – Question 17

What activites or programs at Bishop Park do you attend?

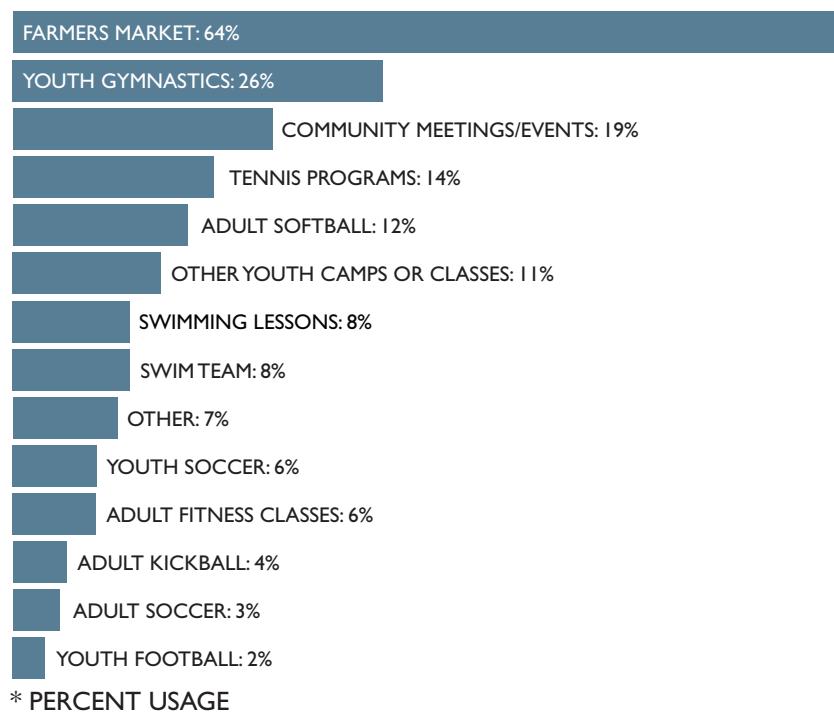
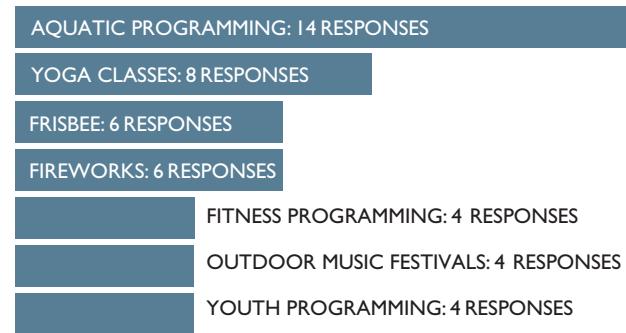
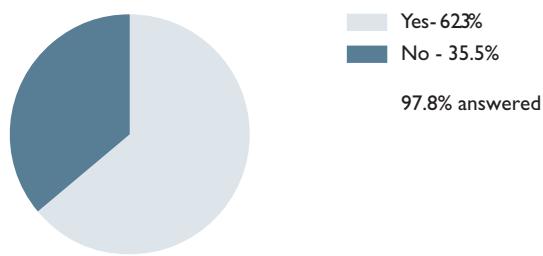


Figure C.18: Survey – Question 18

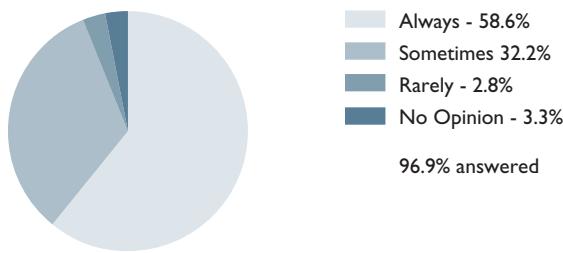
What additional programs would you like to see made available at Bishop Park?



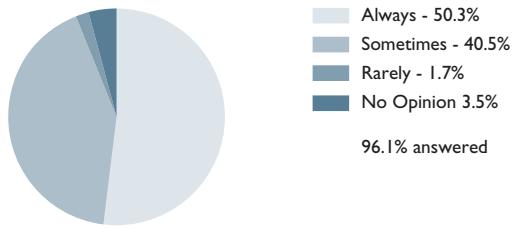
*Figure C.19: Survey – Question 19*  
Do you visit Bishop Park as part of your exercise, health, or fitness routine?



*Figure C.20: Survey – Question 20*  
Do you feel safe in Bishop Park?



*Figure C.21: Survey – Question 21*  
Is Bishop Park clean?



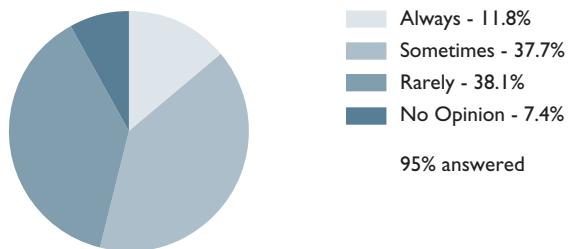
*Figure C.22: Survey – Question 22*  
Please rate the condition of Bishop Park facilities.



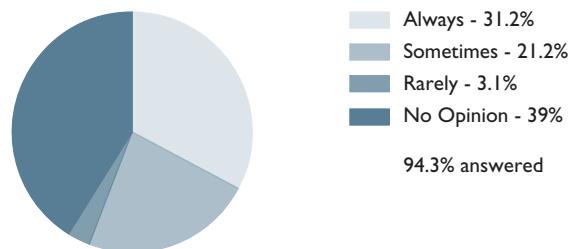
*Figure C.23: Survey – Question 23*  
Are Bishop Park's restrooms clean?



*Figure C.24: Survey – Question 24*  
Do you see Leisure Services staff when you are at Bishop Park?



*Figure C.25: Survey – Question 25*  
Are Leisure Services staff friendly and helpful?



*Figure C.26: Survey – Question 26*  
How far do you live from Bishop Park

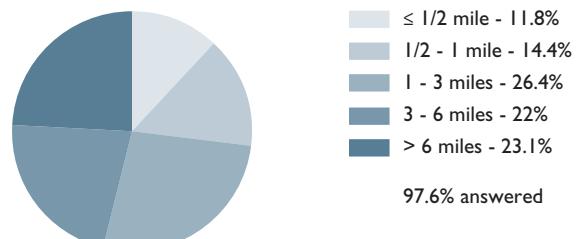


Figure C.27: Survey – Question 27

What is your ZIP Code

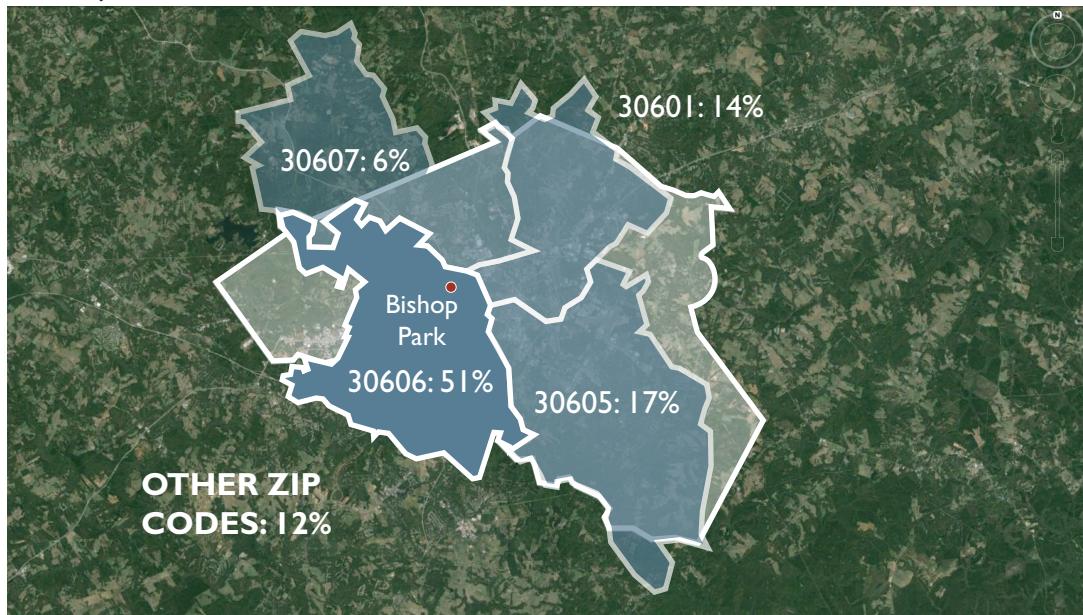


Figure C.28: Survey – Question 28

How do you travel to Bishop Park?



Figure C.31: Survey – Question 31

Navigating the parking lot in Bishop Park is:

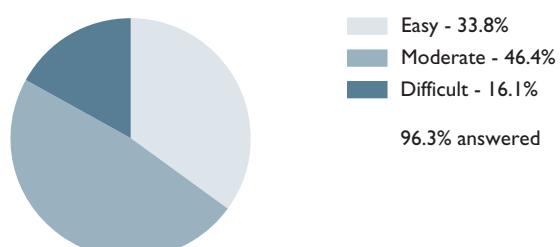


Figure C.29: Survey – Question 29

Bishop Park has:

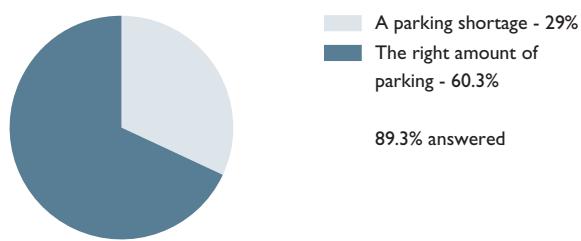


Figure C.32: Survey – Question 32

How did you hear about the Bishop Park Master Plan?

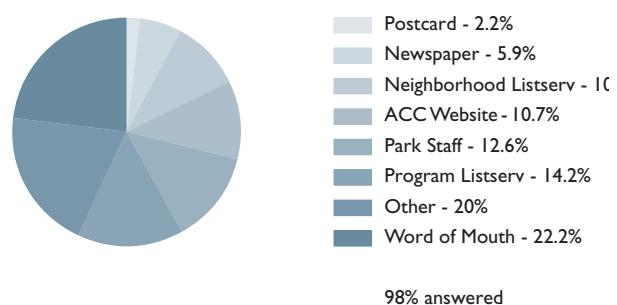
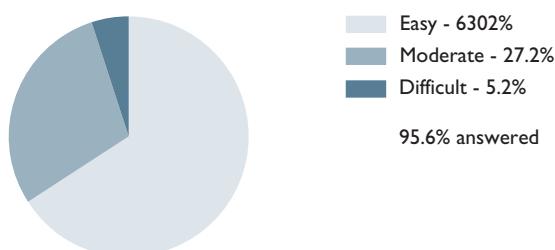


Figure C.30: Survey – Question 30

Finding your desired destination in Bishop Park is:



## Other Comments

### Are there any other comments that you have to help improve Bishop Park?

- Leisure services needs to take care of the ants at the park so my toddlers are not bit by them again and again.
- We love Bishop Park but would be happy to see improvements made to allow for families with very small children to enjoy the facilities more. We also would love to be able to use the pool for exercise when it's not being used by the swim team. I think better lighting and improved surfaces (i.e. the rubber tiles on the playground) would make the park experience even better.
- My kids love the gymnastics program, but the gym is so dreary and could really use an update. Also, the playground is fantastic for little ones, but as my kids have gotten older, the playground is less appealing. Maybe swings could be added (not just the buckets that are currently there) and additional climbing options for bigger kids. We love the walking paths and all of the shade!
- We would LOVE to see the gymnasium improved for the gymnastics program. So many more children would like to be involved. Hundreds of children (mainly little girls) are involved in the gymnastics program and camps already and they fill up fast. They need a larger facility with updated equipment. It is a wonderful program and we have been involved with it for almost 7 years. Tina and the staff do a wonderful job and I know many parents haven't been able to get their kids into the program.
- I really wish the fireworks show for Independence Day would return. This was a real loss for our community. We will NEVER go to the mall parking lot to watch fireworks. I would be willing to spend extra money to support the return of fireworks to Bishop Park
- Bishop Park needs a new gymnastics building. There is inadequate seating for spectators. There is generally not enough space for all the classes and team practices occurring simultaneously creating a safety issue. Also, the vault runway is not standard length, which jeopardizes skill development and safety.
- Feedback opportunities like this are great--thank you!
- If we lived closer, we would come to the playground every weekend. If it were a bigger playground we'd come more often anyway. I really do think it would be great to have a nice indoor playground too if possible, for rainy/superhot/very cold days. We would come from the other side of town for that!
- We have been extremely pleased with Tina Callaway and the gymnastics program. Unfortunately, the facility limits the growth of the upper level gymnasts. Both Tina and Megan Dunn have been trained and certified to instruct the upper level athletes however, the gym limits the growth and opportunities. Many gymnasts have moved to other programs because there is no pit or room to install the necessary equipment for the upper level skills. Again, we really appreciate the care and instruction provided under Tina's leadership and we desire to continue working with her and her staff. I believe a new and improved facility would create an opportunity to build one of the finest programs in North Georgia. I believe the lower level teams have achieved this status but the higher levels simply need more room for growth with the upper level skills. Thank you for your consideration.
- Have a map saying where everything is. Better signage needed.
- Seems like a great park for little ones (although the playground equipment could be updated and added on). It would be nice to engage older kids with something like disc golf.
- I wish the pool were open during the week in the summer. It seems like such a shame to have such a huge pool only partially used for lessons, camps, etc. while there isn't another local town pool nearby.
- Improve the traffic flow through the parking lot. It is weird to park in front of the gym and then to exit by driving all the way to the end, looping around by the picnic pavilion and then driving back up and all the way around and then finally out.
- Expand the Fantastic Fridays program to include homeschool age children (i.e. 5-8 yr. olds)
- Please update the playground. With open spots that kids can fall off off..It is dangerous for young kids. Also, the playground is in need of several more swings. Two baby swings is terrible for a public park. More picnic tables

and swings located around the park would be great.

- Take down those ugly chain link fences.
- Was not aware of the extensive services available until today, my fault. Should include "Most of the time" in the above survey.
- I am very fond of Bishop Park as it is, but I think reorganizing the parking and designating a permanent area for the farmer's market would be worthwhile improvements.
- Don't screw up the multipurpose field! It's great being so open ended- any activity works. We love watching people play soccer.
- I feel that if there was a gym just for the competition teams you will get more participation in the program even from outside counties. We would also be able to host our meets there instead of having to use other facilities maybe. Currently the gym is so crowded with the regular classes and the team practices being held in the same gym. The staff does an amazing job to make it work, but I think it would be safer for the gymnast and staff if they had more room. I do feel that it would help the program grow even more if the gym was updated or a second one added for the teams! I love this program and so does my daughter; I can't wait to hear about any upcoming changes. Thank you for listening to my suggestions.
- More community events more times the pool is open
- I feel the large field is underutilized and could be used for more community events such as music, art festivals etc. It seems like a waste of money to maintain a field that is rarely used for the community.
- I would like to see longer walking paths--that all connect without walking in the parking lot
- We REALLY would like to see more access to the park, both in terms of time and especially gates! Specifically we would like to see, a safe way to get from the park to the YMCA. The current gate is not always open and requires you to jaywalk or add a ton of walking to get to a crosswalk. Similarly, I have tried to go on a Sunday morning to find the park closed which is disappointing.
- Also, making the walking path more beautiful. I don't

really like walking around baseball fields--more trees and flowers please :)

- My toddler likes the playground, but it could use a bit more variety, and maybe a swing or two in addition to what is there.
- The playground definitely needs expanding - swings, Covers for the actual playground structure, more picnic tables near the playground. In addition, there is a huge ant problem that needs addressing.
- As I mentioned before, I would absolutely love to have a small dog park added to the park. Maybe in one of the green areas along with walking path. They are small dogs so they don't necessarily need that much space, just a social setting to interact/play with other dog their size.
- I believe the gymnasium should be expanded because there isn't enough space for the gymnastics classes. The girls barely have enough room to get on the floor without crawling over equipment.
- Reconfigure the parking area; it is a circle of confusion. It would be nice to have an indoor aquatics facility instead of one big outdoor pool. The gymnastics building needs expansion as there is currently no room for program growth due to space constraints. There also needs to be more security lighting around the park. The picnic shelter/BBQ building is just sad and old and looks like something out of a horror movie at night, please build a new shelter. Also, I would like to see the space that the covered tennis courts take up to be used for something else, as it seems as though they are only there "in case of rain" which seems like a big waste of space.
- Generally, cleaner/neater/safer. When we're at the pool, there is always a group of kids that are roughhousing and using foul language. There's a cop at the pool, but nobody calls them out on it - ever. Boys will be boys, but F-bombs in front of my 3-year-old is unacceptable.
- That said, it's a nice park.
- We don't use the pavilion due to its poor condition (esp. Bathroom). It would be nice to have a fan above tables and screened in area. As far as the walking path, it would be nice to have exercise outdoor machines. More water fountains are must. There are some un-used areas that could be used for pingpong tables or bocci ball area. We like badminton but there is no court for it. Also,

basketball court need lower baskets for smaller children to enjoy it. More recycling bins and less trash bins. Thank you!

- Parking in quantity is good, parking in layout is poor. Drive pickup truck and have hard time not hitting curves in turns.
- The park closes too early or at least the tennis courts inside the park close too early. Lights on the covered courts aren't working well. There are a few lights out on the three uncovered courts outside the park. There should be a photocell or a instead of a timer that has to be adjusted often by staff on the courts outside the park so they come on when it gets dark. Lessons after the park closes take up two of the three available courts with the balls going everywhere.
- Add a first class aquatics center. See above comments.
- Thank you for this wonderful park. It is a jewel and I am so pleased it is close enough to walk from home. I was sorry the July 4 event was moved, though I understand. I'd like to see family-oriented festivals and/or craft fairs. I love the cooking demonstrations at the Farmers Market. Would like to see more such activities, and speakers on nature topics and issues (e.g.: global warming, native birds, migrating birds, drought-resistant plantings)
- The Athens Clarke Gymnastics Academy could really use a new and updated facility. The program is **HUGELY** successful and constantly is filling up classes and has extensive waiting lists. It would be great to have an area specifically for younger kids--toddler/parent and tot and then a different area for school age and team. A new gym will help them offer more classes and be a safer environment for the participants.
- More lighting for the Walking Paths would be helpful in the late afternoons.
- I support conversion of tennis pavilion into a permanent market. Would also like to have a space for outdoor music.
- It is sad that Bishop Park tennis courts are so underutilized. Wish there was a bigger presence.
- My car was broken into in broad daylight. I don't feel very safe now as I have two little ones. I would love more security!!
- I like the neighborhood feel of the park and the fact that it appeals to a wide variety of users. The parking lot is horrible and due for a redesign. It seems like there is room for park expansion of the parking is reduced.
- It would be very helpful for there to be restrooms closer to the playground and for the playground area to be fenced. The landscaping beams need to be repaired/replaced near the playground. The tennis courts seem to be empty most of the time when we are there - maybe some of that space could be repurposed to create toddler playground and playground for older children.
- The park needs to stay open past sunset! The use of tennis courts 4-9 is going to be impossible after work because the sun will set and there are no lights. Also, they should put lights on the multi-purpose field behind the upper courts so people can play soccer year round outside after work. Finally, the covered courts need to be fixed. The lighting is bad in there and people use it to play soccer. Either fix the lighting and make it for tennis, or admit it's better as an indoor soccer arena and fix it up for that.
- Bishop Park is a great multi-cultural park. It's one of the rare places in Athens where people of difference races, backgrounds and ages mix. That makes it amazing, and it should be utilized more to continue that kind of community feel. Closing at sunset is a lousy idea and shuts down the fun from October - April.
- Please remove the fencing & provide pedestrian & bike passage through the park to Hawthorne Ave to better interconnect surrounding neighborhoods to the YMCA & nearby commercial facilities and offer a safe, alternative bike route to Prince/Oglethorpe/Hawthorne/Sunset. Incorporate more native & edible plants into the landscaping. Please involve local artists, gardeners, & landscape architects in the process as much as possible and as early as possible. Before putting out RFPs to commercial entities for playground, furniture, lighting, & pavilion designs, involve the Cultural Affairs Commission in seeking unique, locally designed elements for all our parks & facilities.
- A dog park would be nice and maybe just to update the walking trails. The playground could some more equipment. Overall, we love Bishop Park!
- Please turn on the tennis court lights at night in the main park area. My tennis team (Business Women's 4.0)

practices there on Thursday nights, and I practice on my own on Tuesday nights and sometimes other nights. There are not enough courts up top to support all of the people who want to play tennis at night. Especially in the fall and winter months, it is essential to keep the main park open after dark and have the lights on so people who work during the day can use the courts. They use to be open until 9pm. I would like the park to go back to those hours.

- The main reason I completed this survey is because I would love to see a dog area added to the park. We do not have access to a good dog park anywhere around the Bishop Park area besides the Memorial Park dog park which I am not comfortable being at as it feels like I am sitting in the forest and it does not feel kept up. I think a dog park area would greatly benefit the area, as there are tons of people in the Normaltown area that have dogs. Right now, my family drives out and pays to visit Sandy Creek Park because it is the closest and nicest dog park for us; however, it is not the most convenient. Please consider making this addition to the park! Other than that, Bishop Park is a wonderful asset to the community. Keep up the amazing work!
- Yes, I would like to see the lights on the tennis courts stay on later in the evenings, and the covered courts are underutilized due to the poor lighting conditions.
- We don't make the drive out to Bishop Park because of the distance (We live on the other side of town). Perhaps now that I am aware of the amenities available we will check it out.
- I would really enjoy a fenced in area to let my dog play off leash.
- Big kid swings would be a very nice addition to the playground.
- more swings on the playground
- Parking is rough on Saturday mornings with the Farmer's market and other sporting events occurring at the same time. I play tennis and would love to be able to play at night, but the lighted courts are usually taken :-(
- It is somewhat hard to navigate the park if you have never been there. Cute signs with arrows might benefit all.
- Being back the tennis program
- Make it a more vibrant community space; bring back Stacey for Tennis!
- Because we work full time, as do many other people in the neighborhood, our family is only able to take advantage of Bishop Park in the evenings or on weekends. It would be great to have programs that are available to families at these times. We would love to be able to swim during the week - we hope you will consider expanding the hours beyond the weekend. We would also like to see the pool season extended - it is still hot in September! Please do not lock the gates early - we have been locked in more than once!
- I have visited Bishop Park and am aware of the Farmers Market, tennis courts and swimming pool - Unfortunately I am not aware of what is offered at Bishop Park - I was surprised in reading this survey at how many things are available to do at the Park!!
- Many of ACC Leisure Services facilities have received updates in the past. The Bishop Park facility has received several small upgrades in the past which have helped the overall park aesthetics; however, focusing the improvements on the facilities such as the gymnasium and walking paths will enhance programming staff is able to bring to the community.
- Parking and flow of the park could be much improved.
- It's a great park. One thing that would help access by bus is if the back gate could be opened in the morning and maybe a sign added so people know where it is. I've tried to direct people to go that way before, but it's confusing. It's much closer to a bus stop than the Sunset entrance.
- Thanks for looking out for such a wonderful community resource!
- I love the convenience of the park location with regard to in-town amenities. I'd love to see more organized use of the fields. I participate in several Ultimate Frisbee leagues in Athens throughout the year, and it would be great to be able to utilize the facilities at Bishop Park in a more organized fashion for some ultimate league events. Bishop Park is great, thanks!
- I love that there's a field there big enough to put a

regulation Ultimate Frisbee field on (360 ft. x 120 ft.).

- And it's just a nice place to be! Good trees over by the playground, nice bleachers by the ball-fields, a general-use field. Wonderful park.
- Better/more recycling receptacles.
- I love Bishop Park because it's a relaxed feel. I do like the fact that there are TREES (unlike Southeast Clarke Park... that place is awful). I hate the parking lot at Bishop...it's in sad shape. That being said, don't put any more parking in there without thoughtfully making it work with the footprint already established. It definitely needs a facelift that is a good one.
- All us neighbors of Bishop Park miss the fireworks. By removing this yearly/bi-yearly event FROM Bishop Park, kids aren't exposed to the park and sometimes don't know that it's there. Let the MALL buy their own fireworks.
- NO MORE TENNIS COURTS! Good God, didn't we talk this to DEATH years ago? Find an abandoned strip mall, demolish it or use the wasted already paved flat area for the tennis courts. This place is full of hippies... how many hippies play tennis?! ...NONE. I know this is a develop tool for tennis tourism, however, let's be smart about this and don't destroy existing green space (the field at Bishop) for a "paved area" to play tennis on.
- It is very hard to follow the arrows around the walking trail. I don't know how to track my mile.
- Bishop Park is in the heart of Athens with so many families and individuals just walking distance away. This park could be the defining characteristic of COMMUNITY. Where are the bike racks? Where are the kid-friendly features? Where are the water-bottle fillers? This park needs upgrades.
- Yes, the walking path is a great idea. It's a one-mile course. This should have better signage with bright yellow feet to follow instead of the fading paint that is hard to follow!
- Water fountains should be upgraded to the motion sensor filler so that the people who play tennis, run, and play football there can fill up their water bottle.
- The playground needs to be upgraded and needs to be

bigger!

- The parking lot was poorly planned and everyone knows it's a hassle to find a spot come Saturday for the Farmer's Market.
- Once again, where are the bike racks? If the parking lot is not conducive to hosting hundreds of people, then make biking appealing! Encourage it. Same thing needs to be done at Memorial Park. Biking is highly underrated and bike racks need to be installed ASAP at multiple locations throughout the park.
- There needs to be more opportunities to picnic at Bishop Park. One shelter is not enough for the visitors to enjoy a Sunday lunch. In fact, why don't you encourage people to stay after the Farmer's Market by putting picnic tables around that area so that people can eat their breakfast and lunch at the park without having to stand in a crowded space. People want to enjoy the park! Let them.
- After swimming at the lap pool this summer, I have a suggestion. There needs to be a BIG clock at the pool. It's important to be able to check your time and to know when your workout is done.
- The signage at the park is confusing. I hard to know where the offices really are. I initially thought it was downstairs, but then I had to walk up the stairs and around the building to get to it. It kind of seems like the staff is hiding from the public, seeing as how the phone is not answered past 1pm and the building is dark inside. How about a welcome sign? Or a sign that says what time the office is open? Why isn't the park staff ever at the Farmer's Market, talking about the amenities and programs?
- I want the parks of Athens to be beautiful and welcoming. I want them to be the center of community events! But they need a LOT of work and dedication. Best of luck.
- The Indoor Tennis Courts are in need of an upgrade. When it rains hard, water finds its way in and then the fact that it is indoors is moot. Also, the lights need to be replaced, fixed, or whatever is needed to make them more useable at night. Possibly resurface the courts as well.
- Gymnasium needs a major upgrade or expansion for the

growing gymnastics program.

- Needs updating been coming since I was child and it still looks and is the same. Everything! Update and bring back a place for teens on the weekend. That's fun exciting and hip. We need this for the community.
- I would love to see the playground expand and the pavilion taken down. I feel that the pavilion just takes up space that could be used for a better purpose. Like maybe a small dog park.
- I used to run there until an ACC Leisure truck full of workers followed me for about 100 yards. I switched to running the loop at SE Park.
- I'd like to see renovations to the gymnasium!
- Needs way more swings on playground!! Infant and big kid swings. Also, gymnastics is so big there but the gym is not adequate for the number of kids participating.
- Dog park would be welcome addition. Evenings don't feel safe, at least for parked cars. Farmers market is great but the facilities could be better suited for that purpose.
- We don't use the pool because it is out of control. We've been assaulted and had things stolen. We are unable to just go and swim without having trouble. The lifeguards seem to make little or no effort to control the bad behavior. It is a beautiful pool and we wish we could feel safe swimming there with our family.
- I would love to see the park accessible from Hawthorne Ave.
- A dog agility course would be great to have.
- I'd also love to see more done with the playground.
- At the same time, we love the park as it is.
- Parking seems adequate for the times I attend the park. If music events or other entertainment is added, I think more parking would be needed for that. I would like to see a small family-use friendly shelter added for rental. The BBQ building is too much for a little family party and it is in need of updating. I would also like to see shade structures added to the playground so that it can be used during the summer months and perhaps some additional more inventive play equipment. Whatever you

do, do not remove the Chinese hollies around the path. Many people have a strong feeling of nostalgia about them and would be outraged to see them taken down.

- I use the covered tennis courts when it's raining or very hot. I would like to see all of the lights fixed because visibility could be better. I think more tennis players would use the covered courts if the lights were fixed and I know my tennis friends and I would be upset if these courts were ever taken away.
- I would also like to use the lower courts after sunset, which is currently impossible. These courts are equipped with lights and have just been resurfaced, but we are unable to EVER use the lights due to the sunset closing time. We'd voted as a community to have the courts resurfaced and now that they're finished, we are unable to use them during the hours that they'd receive the most use (the evenings). Working people play tennis after hours and it's a shame that we are unable to use these lovely, lit courts due to early closing hours. The upper courts are often completely overcrowded after sunset for this reason.
- The gymnastics facility is heavily used and I am amazed at how many classes, teams can fit in such a small space. It is time to expand the gym, as it is the same size it was when it opened in the 70's. It needs to be upgraded to a dedicated gymnastics building including pits for advanced training. That would allow the existing building to be used for many other activities.
- The county/city has done a great job improving the tennis courts at Bishop. We just need more access to all of the courts after 5:00. The lower courts in the park are closed at 7:30 and at 7:30; one of the three upper courts can be used for tennis lessons by the county. If you work and are able to get to the courts by 6:00 p.m., you only have 1 1/2 hours to play on the lower courts before the park closes. Because the lights are not functioning properly, the covered courts are not an option when it gets dark because you cannot see. Add to this that only one of the covered courts is truly playable and safe (the one on the left), the amount of courts for actual use is somewhat of a mirage. It looks like there are 13 courts but there are really only two courts available for play at Bishop Park after 7:30 p.m. Just as with the Athens Tennis Center, the community needs to reassess the hours of operations for both facilities. Depending on the costs, extending the close time for the Bishop Park tennis facility until 9:00 p.m. every day seems to be reasonable

- It would be great to be able to access the playground on Sunday mornings.
- We love Bishop Park!
- More covered areas at the pool.
- Parking can be challenging at times but I wouldn't like to see recreational areas converted to parking. People seem to always find a way and biking there is a better solution anyway.
- Thanks for asking about parking (assuming cars is what you mean). Bishop is in a neighborhood, so the more parking, the more car trips \*through\* the n-hood. People should be able to walk and bike more than driving, and covered bike parking should be a priority.
- I find this park to feel sterile and uninviting for general hanging out outside unless I'm going to hang at the playground which I don't do because I have teens. There really isn't much inviting a family who isn't into sports to do there. I feel most of our county parks focus too much on ball fields and recreational sports and not enough energy in places that kids can be free and enjoy play not on a playground built for toddlers.
- Keep the back gate open so folks can travel from YMCA to park.
- Didn't even know there was a gymnasium, so that seems underutilized.
- More space for farmers' market and more open pool/ open swim hours.
- The tennis courts are currently unavailable for evening play due to the early park closing time. This is a huge waste of courts when there is a very large tennis community here who need and want to play in the evenings. This is the only tennis facility on the west side of Athens, as well, so west siders have to drive across town or to Oconee County to play evening tennis.
- The playground at Bishop Park needs to be re-done. The equipment is old and they need more swings. It would be nice if the playground had more trees around it or some kind of canopy because it gets no shade. We don't usually go there in the summer because it's too hot. The tennis courts also need to be cleaned up and repaired.
- The open field is flexible space and therefore is used lots. It brings all types of people together. Since it is informal the powers at be regulate the activities and needs to a sub class. The fields need better turf maintenance and it is the only area without lights. Bishop needs more flexible, unprogrammed space.
- Living 2 blocks from Bishop Park, over the last 15 years, it's been a joy to be so close to a park. One common observation over that time has been an awareness of a lack of children playing in this wonderful in-town park; I reflect back on my childhood, and my friends and we would have been at this park nearly every day, especially using the open, green field by Oglethorpe Ave. Typically, this field has been empty (other than weekend soccer), and I've realized there haven't been a lot of children living within walking distance over most of the last 15 years. However, with the recognition that the Chase School district is a highly desirable area to live, there has been a recent influx of young families, and a growing sense of community in the surrounding older neighborhoods. I'm seeing an increasing number of baby strollers and young children on bikes, as well as joggers/walkers. My expectation is these young children and families may see the park as a central part of their lives, and we'll see more children walking, biking to the park, and greater use and appreciation for what a wonderful resource it is. That said, I hope the open green field will remain intact. Though I'm older, I value the aesthetic and calmness I feel in passing this verdant oasis daily. As a child, I would have relished it for recreation. Though underused now, my hope is to soon see the children returning to the nearby neighborhoods playing in this field and park in general, including my children and grandchildren.
- Beyond that, I hope the Farmers Market can continue to be accommodated and thrive; it has had an elevating presence for the area, and has helped in bringing folks together for a positive experience, thus creating a stronger sense of community, and further making the area a desired place to live or visit.
- Safety is an issue at Bishop Park - I have a child on team gymnastics, and they cannot run alone in the park. I also cannot have her walk by herself from gymnastics to swim team practice because of safety issues. The park would benefit from a greater police presence.
- The new tennis courts at Bishop Park are really nice; however, there are several issues that I'm concerned

about:

- 1) The lights on the lower courts are not used in the evening. This leaves only the upper courts for evening play. On more than one occasion, I've been kicked off the upper courts in the evening due to lessons being taught. Only turning on the lights on the upper courts does not seem to meet the demand of people who want to play in the evening.
- 2) There are several burnt out lights on the upper courts, including the covered courts. This makes the middle court on the top three nearly unusable. The covered courts lights are even worse. Having these covered courts is really, really nice, but they are generally unusable in the evening to any serious tennis player because of the light situation.
- 3) The trash is almost always overflowing at the BP tennis courts. There is also a lot of trash strewn about the courts, around the benches, and in the corners of the courts. My fellow tennis players could do a better job of not leaving trash behind, but there is often not a place to put it due to the overflowing trashcans at the court entrance. It might be worth it to put trashcans and recycling bins on the courts as well as at the court entrance. Of course, these would also need to be regularly emptied by park staff. This is how it's set up at Oconee Veteran's Park and those courts do not have the same trash problem that Bishop Park has.
- If there could be some type of visible security at Bishop Park in the afternoons after 5. When I am there walking there are some very shady looking characters sometimes just hanging out near the walking trails just standing or sitting and watching people. I think it would put me more at ease to be able to visibly be able to see more security.
- I walk/run early in the mornings on Saturday and Sunday. However, during the week after work it's usually around 5:30 or 6 before I can get there so more security would be nice.
- navigating through the parking lot is very difficult; signs for facilities are not sufficient enough for unfamiliar people; more friendly and courteous staff would be helpful; better office hours for working families
- Additional visibility from the road and less hiding or dark spaces for safety concerns. Better drainage and more grass or mulch in the shaded areas.
- Improved access from Hawthorne Ave, to include the sidewalk approach into the park, headed N. and to be able to exit back onto Hawthorne Ave. for pedestrian safety.
- We love this neighborhood park
- There is little to no signage at Bishop Park, It is difficult to get to one area to the other. I feel like there should be more lighting and signage off Oglethorpe and Sunset Ave. A wider parking lot and a facility map would be helpful.
- Scheduling of events so that parking isn't as difficult.
- Better/ more playground equipment for children of varying ages (more swings!!)
- Some of the walking paths are in need of repair (bumps from tree roots etc.)
- Pavilions are older could use some sprucing up.
- Drainage needs to be improved on the multi-purpose field.
- I haven't used the swimming pool bathhouse in years, but during the times we did, there were significant behavior problems (roughhousing, yelling, and some intimidating behavior) and no staff to supervise. In fact, one of the reasons we don't use the pool now is because of the behavior of kids in the bath house.
- The pool is wonderful, but is not open to the general public often enough in the summertime!! Being open weekday afternoons and with an 11 am start time on the weekends would be ideal. There appear to be adult swim lessons scheduled for the morning and swim school/lessons in the early evening, and a large chunk of time during the day when nothing is scheduled but the pool is not open to the general public.
- Also, rumor has it that the pool is too crowded on weekend afternoons and that there is no supervision of hordes of teenagers engaging in indecent behavior. So families with small children are discouraged from attending their neighborhood pool, instead opting for the YMCA or Legion Pool, which caters to families. This may not even be a reality, but the rumor is strong and

perception is reality. You would get more support for the pool if the hours were convenient and families felt welcomed.

- The walking paths are very nice, with a variety of hills and pathway options. The planted shrubs along the fence on Hawthorne are great for feeling separated from the fast traffic. If the paths could be extended to the perimeter of the south side of the park past the other softball field and the multi-purpose field, that would be ideal. I feel like I only get to walk half of the park.
- While I would love an off-leash, fenced area to play with my dog and other dogs, the park does not seem to have any free space. I only see room for it on the third softball field, which seems cut off from the rest.
- I think it's crazy that the park closes at 7:30. How can you schedule to play ATRL tennis matches if you only have a little more than an hour after work? And what is the point of having lighted tennis courts if we can't use them after dark?
- Fix the lights on the covered tennis courts to make play easier. Saturday mornings are very busy with tennis and farmers market. The parking lot is not made well to accommodate both. Have the use of the lights on the tennis courts available until 9:00.
- Move the parking AWAY from the front entrance. It is not inviting, it doesn't serve to lure or tempt people to enter the park.
- Increased leisure services staff in the evenings. Just the presence of staff in their uniform shirts might help calm some people's nerves about being there in the evening. They will feel like more people are around.
- The main thing is don't change it! If you observe how Bishop park is used it will make you feel it provides everything a park should. Everyone uses Bishop Park. Doctors drive in to play tennis, African American teenagers use the fields and the basketball courts, the whole town comes to Farmers Market, and lots of Latin American families walk it or use the open fields. In the last week I have seen these events in the open field; Yoga, Football, Ultimate Frisbee, sunbathing, soccer...this is a place in Athens that is truly integrated across socio-economic groups, race, everybody uses Bishop.
- Two improvements: sell concessions at the pool to

provide funds for the pool to be open more hours for the general public.

- Provide nice picnic shelters/ food prep/ grills that people will want to rent. The area we have now is gross and I think the rent would eventually cover the improvements.
- Please don't change too much, come spend time in the park and appreciate how well it works as is!!!!
- Bishop is an amazing park that, to me, has it all! Some playground updates and perhaps a fence or something kind of barrier around the kids' area. Also, I have not seen where the emergency police contact pole is in Bishop. Maybe an extra one near the playground (for the kids) would be helpful.
- The park needs to be opened up to the surrounding community. Sidewalk needs along Hawthorne.
- A dog park would be wonderful. The parking lot is laid out in a complicated way and would be easier to navigate if it were reorganized. The Farmer's Market is growing and will need more space before too long.
- I would like to see the tennis court lights either made available for the players to turn on/off or have them automatically turn on every night until the courts close. And if they are turned on automatically they need to be turned on at a decent time so visibility is not lost while waiting for the lights to come on (this has been a problem in the past). I would also love it if the park were open until 10pm. The courts were just re-done (as I am sure you are aware), but they do not get utilized like they should cause you really cannot go and play over there after 6:30 and it will be earlier than that pretty soon. Other than that, I love Bishop Park, but I mostly use it for tennis and lately I have been going to other facilities, farther away, to play tennis, which seems like a shame after so much money was just put into the tennis courts.
- Having Pickleball courts at Bishop Park would be great. Lots of seniors enjoy the game and we are running out of spaces to play in Athens.
- Would be great to have water fountains throughout. Also, if money allows, maybe a lion training cage, for budding circus performers. (Just kidding)
- Walking path is great...would be nice to extend the

length.

- The parking drive right outside the entrance to the Athens Farmers Market needs to be closed to motorists during the market. There are too many car-pedestrian conflicts there, the parking on that loop is minimal, and it would be safer and more aesthetically pleasing to not have to worry about crossing a street to get into the market.
- The infield on all of the baseball/softball fields needs to be screened-- it is far too rocky.
- The pool is not open for public swimming enough, like very underused. There are no concessions at the pool. Look at less progressive communities like Gainesville and Cumming to see what kind of pool facilities they have.
- I don't understand why there is a gym, but only for gymnastics. I would like to see the gym area expanded to increase the programming, including public use, not just gymnastics classes.
- Consider expanding the area of the farmers market to allow it to grow. More vendors needed and more space for customers to walk is needed. Great facility!
- Please arrange so that the tennis courts can be open until at least 9pm and preferably 10 pm year-round. Closing the courts at sundown makes it hard to play tennis after work in the fall and winter.
- It is outrageous that, as a resident of Athens-Clarke County, I am prevented from taking my leashed dogs into a farmer's market that is made up mostly of people from outside of the county. I pay taxes to support the park, the park allows dogs on leashes yet the farmer's market organization has decided I can't use that part of the park.
- During the weekends during the summer that Bishop Park Pool is open to the public, it would be very nice if there were more chairs available to sit on.
- As a person who lives near Bishop Park, I would love see the establishment of a parents group (public play date) during the week and on the weekend. We have a lot of babies this year here on Willow Run.
- Also, I would like to help establish a friends of Bishop Park Pool to help raise money for some furniture, possibly upkeep and community events (movies at the pool.)
- I have lived, worked, and paid taxes in ACC for 28 years. I play tennis 3 to 5 times a week and as a senior citizen, this is my principal method of exercise. I am very upset that I now have to drive more than 30 minutes to OCONEE CO. to participate in the "Tennis for Life" program! I live 5 minutes from the beautiful new Athens Tennis Center, but cannot receive the tennis services that I need at that location. Since I began playing tennis in Athens 20 years ago, we had a strong tennis program and a large tennis community, which found a home at Bishop Park. The new tennis center should have been the stimulus for that community to thrive and grow. From my personal observations, the opposite is occurring. We still have a large number of citizens of all ages who are recreational tennis players. As taxpayers, we deserve the access to the facilities, programs and services that will keep that community alive and growing. Bishop Park should remain a vital part of that equation. I hope that any plans will keep in mind the importance of Bishop Park to our tennis community. Thank you.
- We use Bishop Park regularly. The staff is great and easy to work with! I think some parts of Bishop Park could be used to better support youth sports. We have over 150 kids that use the park 3-4 times a week for 6 months out of the year. We are very happy with our overall experience at Bishop Park for the last 7-8 years!!
- Leave the lights on longer - at least until 9 - on the tennis courts. 7:30 is ridiculous!!
- We love the new tennis courts and the covered tennis courts. Those are the only covered courts in town. They are great to play in the shade when it's really hot in summer, or when it's raining. Our kids take lessons at Bishop Park and they don't have to cancel the lessons when it rains.
- Extended pool season; covered pavilion for farmers market
- I'd love to see the pavilion used for farmer's market and other craft market venues.
- The park is often very active in the evening prior to closing. The hours of park operations should be extended until 9 pm. All tennis courts should be lighted until that time. The past 3 weeks I've been there many courts

were occupied but had to quit due to darkness. The outer courts were already taken by 6 pm. The other activities going on also seem to feel rushed out of the park. I enjoy the Farmers market and don't particularly care for playing in the covered courts. The basketball court looks fairly rough. Thanks

- Please expand recreational programs for the 18-64 demographic.
- Indoor pool facility for year round swimming with indoor seating for spectators, improved on-deck seating for the outdoor pool, a new shade structure for spectators outdoor seating and a new on deck shade structure (the one that was there was removed). See Frances Meadows in Gainesville or the Cumming Aquatic Center in Cumming, Ga. A new indoor facility would most definitely need a state of the art ventilation system so as not to expose visitors to chlorine fumes that are so strong in so many indoor facilities.
- The tennis community in ACC is large and ever growing! The new tennis center is fantastic, but in order to bring more tournaments, therefore \$\$ bishop really needs to either redo or eliminate the covered courts which no one likes and add more open courts, improve the parking and make the lights manual!!! The farmers market needs to find its own space. We pay a lot of court fees to play at Bishop Park and Saturday mornings are a nightmare to park in the summer.
- Increase the trail to a 3 mile loop
- As stated, an enclosed space to "weatherproof" the farmer's market would be excellent
- As an art vendor at the Farmers Market, I collect sales tax for my wares which goes to ACC. When the weather is bad, the market and the vendors suffer. The more I make, the more Athens Clarke County gets in sales tax. In the two years I have done the market, I have only seen the covered tennis courts used twice. Since the taxpayers of ACC helped to fund a multi-million dollar tennis complex, isn't it about time the severely underutilized covered courts be converted into a weather-protected venue for the Farmers Market and other revenue generating events? If the Market could go into that space, more vendors could be accepted and the number of people shopping would increase... more money for ACC. Those tennis courts aren't being used and the certainly aren't accomplishing anything but

sucking revenue from the county.

- Since I primarily use BP for tennis, I would love to see some amenities expanded in this area. For example, longer hours on lower tennis courts wherein lights could be turned on if someone reserved a court in advance. We like to play after work but with no lights and the days getting shorter, we can only play an hour or so. Also, I would love to see a volunteer group such as 'Friends of Bishop Park' who might be able to staff the little house where Tennis for Life was. This person could turn on lights, maybe sell tennis balls and a little gear, maybe put out and take in tennis score bars and squeegees at night, lock gates, to try to keep the equipment unbroken and in good shape. The new courts are gorgeous and I would like to see them cared for by people who love tennis and love playing out of BP.
- There are still plenty of people who play tennis on this side of town. Don't get rid of the tennis courts for a farmer's market that only exists on the weekends. The market is great, but it cannot operate during the week to the extent it does on the weekend.
- Lights to come on & stay on in the evening!
- Convert the covered tennis courts into a multi-purpose pavilion to be used for the community and events. There also needs to be more parking
- Make the pavilion at the back of the playground parking lot more useful. It is poorly designed; restrooms are never open but could be a nice picnic shelter and restroom facility.
- It would be nice if the pool were open more often.
- Would like to see Farmer's Market in a sheltered space.
- Converting the tennis pavilion into a covered pavilion space would be a great improvement to the park. It is close to the parking lot and a large covered pavilion for the farmers market and other community events is greatly needed for such a wonderful park.
- No one uses the covered tennis courts - it's too dark for tennis in there. This space would be great as a covered area for the Farmer's Market, and if the cypress trees on the south facing side are removed, the area could serve as a stage that could be viewed from the open grass area below - it would be great for concerts and events!

So many possibilities in addition to the Farmer's Market.

- I also love the idea of an entrance on Hawthorne Ave - I work in an office off of Hawthorne and would love easier access to the walking trails where I frequently walk during my lunch break.
- This isn't truly related to the question, but I'd like to see the community coming together again for July 4 fireworks at Bishop Park.
- More events more music, more events like the farmers market but at night with artists. Music in the covered tennis courts. Amazing acoustics!
- convert covered tennis court to festival and market pavilion so that it can be used for weather proof farmer's market/artist market
- There is rarely soap in the restrooms
- I would like to see the swimming facilities improved
- At a minimum, more bleachers with a larger covering. Optimally a nice viewing stand with steps and covering.
- Athens needs to begin considering an indoor swim facility. Gainesville is a similar sized community and has a very nice facility that includes inside pools for lessons, swim teams, fitness, and swim competitions, as well as an outdoor water park for recreation along with concession stands.
- You could convert the covered space known as the "tennis pavilion" into a multi-purpose "festival and market pavilion". Every time I visit the park, it's not being used and it's beautiful. You could have the farmer's market in that space when the weather's bad.
- Also, I would enjoy lap swimming in your pool, but it's never open in the morning. I would even pay a fee to get some swimming in to help train for triathlons.
- Thanks for providing the community a way to give input on Bishop Park!
- I am a frequenter of the Athens Farmers Market at Bishop Park and have assisted with several booths. While it is a wonderful area to host the market, I believe that turning the Tennis Pavilion into a multi-purpose facility to be utilized during the market and

other community events would be very beneficial to the community. Athens does not have a permanent outdoor pavilion that is large enough to be utilized for markets and festivals, and by having one it could increase the community involvement during imperfect weather conditions and provide more access to electricity for booths. It would cost very little to convert this pavilion into a multi-use facility, but the impact it could have on the market and art scene for Athens is large. It would also have little to no negative impact to the surrounding neighborhoods.

- Please consider converting the Bishop Park Tennis Pavilion into a multi-use facility to provide a waterproof and powered permanent facility for good food, art, and community.
- Allow use of tennis courts at night with lights until 10 or 11 pm. Allow players to turn on/off lights so that can be turned on when needed and turned off when done. People who work play matches during the evening and need the lights to complete matches that may take until 10 or 11 pm. Players can turn off lights once done. UGA has timer lights, which is a possible option if concerned about lights on and no one on the court playing tennis. During winter months, some teams have matches for the business players, which require playing in the evening, and lights are needed. Not everyone can play on the weekend during the day. Being able to play tennis during the week is such a stress reliever and would love the ability to play at Bishop Park as it is close to my home. The covered courts are nice to have available to play in inclement weather. The lights do need to be repaired for better lighting on the covered court. The resurfaced tennis courts at Bishop Park are wonderful! Thank you.
- I would really like to see the Farmer's Market using the covered tennis courts. I have been attending the Farmer's Market virtually every Saturday for two years. I have seen only two people using the covered tennis courts during that period.
- The gymnastics facility is underutilized, because it is too small. That program could be expanded (and there is need), but the gym cannot handle more people because it is not safe.
- The pool hours and months of operation should be expanded and it should be open during the week. More seating would be ideal. Adult swimming (AM Masters Team) is fabulous.

- I would like to see the county begin planning for a year round swimming facility such as they have in Gainesville and Cumming GA. We have a strong swimming community in Athens and many people who are interested in promoting aquatics as a means to fitness and water safety. Whether this facility was to be located at Bishop Park or elsewhere, it would be an asset to our community.
- My children swim on the ACC Dolphins Swim Team and with the Athens Bulldogs Swim Club (ABSC). We would like to see improved and increased on-deck seating and increased shade for the outdoor pool. We'd also like to see a shade structure inside the pool fencing for the swimmers. There used to be one but it was removed a couple of years ago.
- More importantly, we'd love to see an indoor swimming facility that is comparable to Gainesville's Frances Meadows Aquatic Center and the Cumming Aquatic Center in Cumming, GA. We visited both pools this summer at the district and state swim meets and while both were nice facilities, it would be wonderful for Athens and the ACC Dolphins to be able to host a district or state meet and receive the revenue from those events. In addition, an indoor pool could possibly provide another location for ABSC to be able to practice year round. Year round swimming is very expensive and part of that expense is the rental of facilities like the Ramsey Center at UGA where ABSC currently trains. ACC could receive that revenue and it might also be possible for ABSC to decrease their tuition costs if they were paying less for pool rental. This would enable more children in the Athens area to afford to swim year round. Bishop Park is convenient to people coming from all over Athens, Oconee, and surrounding areas due to the by-pass and major thoroughfares like Prince Avenue and Atlanta Highway. The Athens area has a very strong swimming community and our facilities should match that.
- The park is a great community space. The Athens Farmer's Market has become a major draw on Saturdays and I would love to see a larger, covered area for the Market to operate out of. A covered, weatherproof market/craft fair space that could be utilized throughout the week and weekends would be a major improvement to the park. I would also like to see more dog-friendly amenities such as a fenced-in dog park and dog water stations. Perhaps local vets or the UGA Vet School could hold monthly or quarterly rabies/vaccination clinics at the park to help ensure the health of the furry visitors.
- A significant portion of the park is designed for a specific use like softball, tennis, or basketball. I would like to see more flexibility in the space available. For example, remove permanent fencing and replace with temporary/movable fencing so that softball fields can be utilized for other activities when not used for softball. Also all fields need drainage and turf improvement.
- I would love to expand the summer league swimming to include improved amenities (touch pads, better starter blocks, refurbished pool, covered seating).
- Streetlights. There's no visibility in the parking lot at night.
- Ask ACC to convert the covered space known as the "tennis pavilion" into a multi-purpose "festival and market pavilion"
- Bishop Park is in desperate need of good and plentiful bike racks. What is there now is inadequate.
- Support the Farmer's Market!
- I'd like to see a more permanent facility for the Farmers' Market and other market-style events.
- Love swim team at Bishop so any improvements at the pool would be greatly appreciated.
- I think having outdoor concerts on the lawn is a great idea!
- Please keep tennis courts open later in evening for evening play!
- Bishop Park is a jewel. It is well used and loved, attracting diverse people. I see many people from surrounding neighborhoods that are lucky enough to walk or bike there. The unfettered greenspace offers flexibility of use -- impromptu soccer games, Frisbee, kickball, or just the beauty and calming of open spaces. Even though parking can be tight, especially at Farmers' Market, it's do-able. A logical solution is to work out sharing (and access to) the huge swath of asphalt at the VFW Hall rather than use up any more of the valuable park property for parking. I hope that plans are being made now to acquire that property, should the opportunity arise. I'd love to see the walking trails expanded and restrooms improved. But mostly, the covered tennis

courts seem to be underused, and are a prime spot for outdoor (covered) community events such as the Farmers' Market and smaller music or art festivals or for rent for school or family reunions or corporate events like employee picnics. Could be a revenue stream if the facility were snazzed up a little and provided with close access to clean and well-lit restroom facility with water fountain. Thank you for undertaking this process of assessing and dreaming of what could be!

- I think that Bishop Park is a wonderful resource for our community. I love that there are so many different people utilizing this space. I believe that the large fields should remain as multipurpose fields, but put lights. There are many people having impromptu games and events in the evening here. I love the farmers market, I would like for us to have a larger designated space. My boyfriend and I attend the market multiple times a month, typically every Saturday when we are in town.
- The gymnasium needs to be expanded. There is not enough space for the quantity of children that participate and enjoy the gymnastics program to participate safely. Additional seating in the gymnasium would allow visitors and spectators to adequately view the classes/meets. The parking situation needs to be addressed - possible additional entrance off Hawthorne - better traffic flow - additional parking. The playground could use additions for older children (Herman C Michael's playground is amazing!)
- PLEASE plan to build an INDOOR SWIMMING FACILITY somewhere in Athens! (There isn't room to build one at Bishop Park but what about Southeast Clarke Park?) Athens has such a large, active swimming community that is neglected 9 months of the year!

## CHARRETTE KICK-OFF MEETING

**Meeting Date:** 10.06.2014

**Location:** Oglethorpe Elementary School (15 Fairground Rd. Lexington, GA)

### Facilitators:

- CCDP
- ACC Leisure Services

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On October 6, 2014, the UGA Center for Community Design & Preservation led a public "kick-off" meeting to begin the design phase of the Bishop Park Master Plan charrette. Approximately 30-40 citizens attended the session, held at nearby Oglethorpe Elementary School. Student facilitators from the UGA College of Environment and Design were stationed at numerous tables to lead discussions with small groups of participants in order to gather specific feedback on the park that would inform its redesign.

Student facilitators guided participants through two exercises that focused on both existing and future conditions: "Keepers and Fixers" and "Visioning." For determining existing conditions, groups were asked to identify elements of Bishop Park that they would like to keep, i.e. "Keepers", along with elements needing improvement or to be eliminated, i.e., "Fixers." Each group worked around an aerial photograph of the park and went person-by-person around the table (round-robin) sharing their ideas and placing a coordinating dot on the map as they talked - yellow dots represented things about the park they would keep; blue dots represented things that need fixing. This method, adapted from methodology used by the National Charrette Institute, allows all participants to provide feedback and keeps any one person(s) from dominating the conversation. For the second exercise, the groups examined future conditions for Bishop Park via a visioning process that asked participants to describe how they envisioned the park in 15 to 20 years.

Park Services staff collated the following list of responses from the seven table groups under common themes in order to determine trends and community priorities for Bishop Park. Along with online and in-person surveys and one-on-one interviews, these responses from the public meeting informed the subsequent design charrette process and the three alternative concepts presented to the public on October 27, 2014.

## Keepers – Fixers – Vision

**“Identify elements of Bishop Park that you would like to keep, i.e. ‘Keepers’ ”**

### *Multipurpose Field*

- Open space for recreating/multipurpose field (Group 3)
- Multi-Purpose field is nice for drop-in play (Group 3)
- Multipurpose field (Group 2)
- Multi-purpose field should remain untouched and minimally disturbed (Group 1)
- Keep multipurpose field (Group 4)
- The big field/open space (Group 4)
- Multi-purpose Field (Group 5)
- Love open space, especially multipurpose field (Group 6)
- Like the big open field (Group 7)
- Snow slide hill (Group 4)

### *Pool*

- Pool—people DO use it! (Group 1)
- Swimming Pool (Group 2)
- Pool Size (Group 3)

- Oversize pool (Group 3)
- Swimming Pool Size (Group 3)
- Keep the pool (Group 4-stated twice)
- Pool (Group 5)

### *Farmer’s Market*

- Treed picnic area near baseball court (used for events and during the farmer’s market) (Group 1)
- Farmers Market – just move it to be more visible (Group 2)
- Farmer’s market (anywhere on site) (Group 5)
- Keep farmer’s market (move) (Group 5)
- Keep the farmers market at Bishop Park (Group 6)
- Farmer’s Market is awesome (Group 7)

### *Sports Facilities*

- Basketball courts (Group 2)
- Keep the ball fields; they are used! (Group 1)
- Softball fields (Group 5)
- Like the Softball fields (grass in field, covered spectators seating) (Group 7)

### *Tennis*

- Covered courts-for summer tennis, rainouts, and tournaments (Group 3)
- Resurfaced tennis courts (Group 3)
- Access to fully functional tennis courts (Group 3)
- 11 Tennis Courts in close proximity (Group 3)
- Keep tennis courts (Group 5)

- Tennis courts (but the covered courts can be eliminated or better yet replaced; not many tennis folks enjoy using those two courts.) (Group 5)
- Continue to maintain the tennis courts so nicely (Group 6)
- Keep the covered tennis courts (Group 6)
- Keep tennis courts. Open later. (Group 5)
- (Group 6)
- Pedestrian buffer from street on Sunset (Group 1)
- Exercise bars and seating along walk path (Group 2)
- Distance markers on walking trail (Group 2)
- Expand playground and make it visible throughout the park Group 2)
- Add perimeter sidewalks – around the park – outside the fence Group 2)

#### *Gymnasium/Gymnastics Facility*

- Retain (possibly expand) the gymnasium (Group 1)
- Gymnastics program! – Great program (Group 3)
- Retain (possibly expand) the gymnasium
- Sports fields flow (Group 3)
- Lack of nature trails (Group 3)
- Flow of park is fragmented--each piece seems like an afterthought (Group 3)
- No clear path to farmer's market (Group 4)
- Gymnasium needs more clear entry points (Group 4)
- Open up the farmers market so that it is easier to navigate (Group 6)

#### **“Identify elements of Bishop Park that you feel need to be fixed, i.e. ‘Fixers’**

#### *Design*

- Ingress/egress from Hawthorne Ave (Group 5)
- Fix transportation access (Group 5)
- Access by public transit (Group 5)
- Fix the pathways so that they are more walkable and runnable, need better mile markers (Group 6)
- Need to create another entrance to the park—perhaps on the Hawthorne side (Group 1)
- Connect YMCA to park (Group 1)
- Get rid of fence/screen at Hawthorne (Group 1)
- Expand entrances option off Hawthorne (Group 7)
- Incorporate pedestrian entrance separate from auto entrance—walking areas throughout the park should be expanded (Group 1)
- Add formal entrance at southwest corner of park (currently there is brush and the gate is usually closed)
- Better walking access between gym and pool (Group 6)
- Add mile markers or maps with route lengths to walking trails (Group 6)
- Add better mile markers to trails (Group 6)
- Biking trail-separate from walking trail (Group 2)
- Improve the path throughout. Increase smoother paths, and add more paths through park since they are very bumpy for strollers now (Group 7)
- Security on walking trails and through park (Group 2)
- Add additional workout equipment on paths- Chin up bars (Group 7)
- Incorporate more connectivity through the park/fix

- bike/pedestrian access (Group 1)
- Improve seating at softball fields – remove barriers to use (Group 2)
- Move farmers market to multipurpose field, will allow for expansion (Group 6)
- Old, old trailer for staff offices – also, placement lacks nice site lines through the park (Group 3)
- Placement of BBQ building – poor views, not easy to access, old BBQ pits aren't functioning (Group 3)
- BBQ pavilion is in bad location (Group 4)
- How far the bathrooms are from the playground (BBQ restrooms often closed) (Group 4)
- No seating/benches at multipurpose field (Group 4)
- Put up “please pick up your trash before you leave” sign (Group 7)
- Storm water features to be amenity (Group 1)
- Parking Lot (Design)
  - Parking area - move it so there can be a beautiful, inviting entrance with large (eventually) trees (Group 5)
  - Reconfigure parking to maximize flow of park (Group 1)
  - Parking Lot - It is the worst, people do everything they can to park near the front (Group 3)
  - Limited parking (Group 3)
  - Parking! Confusing- one way signs are hard to follow (Group 3)
  - Strange traffic flow (Group 3)
  - Tight curve at BBQ pavilion (Group 4)
  - Parking Lot is weird (Group 4)
  - More parking, deck parking (Group 5)
- Traffic flow in parking lot (Group 5)
- Parking area - move it so there can be a beautiful, inviting entrance with large (eventually) trees (Group 5)
- Parking capacity (Group 5)
- Parking is difficult to navigate the way it is currently set up (Group 5)
- Address parking issues or increase parking lot, and improve
- poor traffic flow (Group 7)
- Fix the parking lot (safer circulation) (Group 1)
- Need to re-configure existing parking lot-it is a mess! (Group 1)
- Landscaping (Design)
  - Better use of scary holly forest area (Group 1)
  - Incorporate inactive plants/wildlife habitats (Group 1)
  - Fencing, shrubs, lack of access along Hawthorne; lack of access and aesthetically unappealing (Group 3)
  - Purchase VFW woods and keep it wooded/ “as is”, add only add a simple trail (Group 5)
  - Stop trimming the hedges along Hawthorne so severely, they provide privacy and insulation from traffic (Group 6)
  - Add a community garden, either for food or just for aesthetics (Group 6)
  - Add more community garden (Group 5)
- Bigger and better picnic pavilion (Group 1)
- More room at the BBQ pavilion (Group 2)
- Purchase VFW property (Group 5, mentioned twice)

### *Expansion*

- Add covered event space for farmers' market, art fairs, open air, etc. (Group 7)
- Add pedestrian/bike access from Hawthorne/ Oglethorpe and bike path along Hawthorne (Group 1)
- Services
  - Improve the bus service (on Hawthorne, where there isn't an entrance) (Group 1)
  - Add a destination amenity (splash and public art) (Group 1)
  - More benches, picnic tables and intimate seating areas (turn to local artists/landscapers in designing details—benches, lights, etc.) (Group 1)
  - Need a food option inside the park (private enterprise?) (Group 1)
  - Availability of some facilities after park closes, like tennis courts (Group 5)
  - Run a public bus down Sunset that stops at Bishop Park (Group 5)
  - Update the electronic means for registration for events and activities (Group 5)
  - Add outdoor yoga classes (Group 6)
  - More programming/classes (Group 6)
  - Open the park earlier-walking trails in the mornings (Group 6)
  - Open the park earlier in the mornings and on weekends (Group 6)
  - Add concessions for refreshments and ice cream (Group 2)
- Dog Park
  - Dog park next to Hawthorne (Group 1)
  - Add a dog park (Group 1)
  - Add dog water fountains (Group 6, mentioned twice)
  - Add a dog park (Group 6)
  - Add an off-leash dog park (Group 6)

*Existing Facilities*

- BBQ shelter - aging, sad, dilapidated (Group 3)
- Add lighting to multipurpose field (Group 4)
- Re-evaluate the baseball/softball fields. Are three truly necessary or could one be converted to a general grass field? (Group 5)
- Administrative offices (Group 5)
- Improve seating at softball fields – remove barriers to use (Group 2)
- Pool
  - Incorporate a splash pad for kids to complement the pool (Group 1)
  - Swimming pool (poor condition) (Group 3)
  - Expand pool hours
  - Pool isn't open all of the time (Group 4)
  - Pool open later in season (after school starts) (Group 4)
  - Pool: increase the days/hours pool is open to the general public. Evenings! (Group 5)
  - Swimming pool and facilities. Update the pool, need new diving blocks, Improve concessions, larger swim team space additional swimming pool: opened more hours for the public M-F. Build indoor swimming pool (Olympic size).
  - Build water park like Francis Center in Gainesville (Group 5)
  - Afford more open hours at pool; splash pad (Group 7)

- Add shade at the pool (Group 1)
- Tennis
  - Expand tennis and gymnasium programs (Group 1)
  - Utilize covered tennis courts for farmers market, craft fairs, and other community events (Group 1)
  - Convert covered tennis court to a permanent home for farmers market and other events (Group 5)
  - Improve tennis office (Group 3)
  - Covered tennis areas could be better utilized (as something else) (Group 4)
  - More organized tennis activities (Group 4)
  - Convert “tennis pavilion” into events pavilion, i.e. markets, art festivals, fundraisers, etc. (Group 5)
  - Tennis (old covered building) (Group 5)
  - Tennis courts (but the covered courts can be eliminated or better yet replaced; not many tennis folks enjoy using those two courts.) (Group 5)
- Gymnasium
  - Outdated buildings - gymnasium (Group 3)
  - Gymnasium (aging)- needs work (Group 3)
  - Gymnasium needs more clear entry points
  - Keep and fix gymnasium and gymnastics classes. Need updates to continue to compete. Need more space and more classes. Updated Equipment. Possibly larger (Group 5)
  - Expand tennis and gymnasium programs (Group 1)
  - Gym expansion (Group 2)
  - Gym expansion (Group 7)
  - Gym – more public accessibility – feels too cut off or restrictive walkability (Group 2)
- Playground
  - More playground space (especially shaded)—love the current space, but need more equipment (also could add another one elsewhere) (Group 1)
  - Update kids' playground (Group 1)
  - Sad little playground does not serve the many children in the area (Group 3)
  - No swings for big kids (Group 4)
  - Playground: update/expand the playground with more playground equipment for all ages 1-15. more swings for older kids (Group 5)

**“Imagine that you have been away for 15 years and you just came back. How do you see the park improved in 15 years? What amenities or programs are in the park that weren’t there before? What would you be most excited to see? What does the surrounding area look like?”**

#### *Parking Lot*

- Good traffic flow, improved parking (Group 7)
- Electric vehicle parking with charging ports (Group 6)

#### *Events/Services*

- An active park with lots of people, dogs, and activities
- Outdoor concerts (Group 6)
- There continues to be many multi-cultural and diverse families playing in the park (Group 6)
- Multipurpose park utilized by all members of the community with multitude of activities (Group 6)
- There is a wonderful large dog park with nice grass, trashcans, and water fountains installed (for all...DOG FOUNTAINS!) (Group 6)
- Walkable neighborhoods surrounding the park where kids can ride their bikes (Group 6)
- Remains a local park - not a regional (Group 5)
- Very busy: softball, swimming, gymnastics, tennis, basketball on a Thursday night with parking galore - and a family picnic for bonus (Group 5)
- Well used by youth programs year-round (Group 5)
- Multi-use building with classrooms for meetings and after school classes for youth (Group 5)
- Recreation, employment programs as alternative to gang involvement (after-school programs focusing on life skills) (Group 5)
- Add youth programs 6th-12th grade and facilities for these activities. Bus transportation from school (Group 5)

- More recreation opportunities for kids of all ages
- Open earlier on Sunday (Group 4)
- Monthly special events- concerts, plays, art shows, etc. (Group 3)
- Programming that invites all (cultural events also) demographics of town - currently some minorities are unaware of what is currently happening at park or they are aware and are uncomfortable (Group 3)
- Movies in the park (Group 3)
- Family friendly (Group 2)
- Bike-pedestrian access/connection trails (Group 1)
- Park as a community hub/destination that is easily accessible via walk/bike/bus from every angle (Group 1)
- Park as an active pedestrian/bike thoroughfare connecting different communities (Group 1)
- Pedestrian-friendly multi-use path that serves the area
- Walking trails are greatly improved with access, benches, and destinations. It now has several playgrounds and a splash pad (Group 1)
- Extreme activity at park spurs economic activity along adjacent commercial corridors (like Chattanooga's Coolidge and Renaissance Parks) (Group 1)
- Have private enterprises “open in” to the park (along Oglethorpe and Hawthorne) (Group 1)
- Acquisition of Oglethorpe/Hawthorne properties to plan and lease-out to private enterprise (Group 1)
- Retained multi-cultural use of the park; Bishop should be a melting pot, a community center, and a place for people to come together and exchange (Group 1)
- Full utilization for all (Group 2)
- More evening events (Group 4)
- Concert/performance stage (Group 4)

- Program or partners with group to teach kids in surrounding area about planting and where food comes from (kids are interested in learning) (Group 3) (Group 2)
- Duck pond for storm water runoff (Group 1)

- Innovative interactive storm water management
- Add more fruit/nut trees (Group 4)
- Plenty of trees (Group 5)

## Design

- Expanded pedestrian access, more entrances, walking paths, beautifications (Group 7)
- There is a wonderful large dog park with nice grass, trashcans, and water fountains installed (for all...DOG FOUNTAINS!) Group 6)
- Improved walkways and bike access to the park along Oglethorpe and Hawthorne Group 6)
- More ways to move through the park, not just one area (Group 4)
- Improve the flow of the park (Group 3)
- Put the fields together (Group 3)
- Organize the park so that it flows better both for vehicles and pedestrian traffic (Group 3)
- Improve entrance (Group 3)
- Add second entrance (Group 3)
- No more fences; strong pedestrian connection (Group 3)
- Park perimeter well lit with sidewalks all around the outside of the fence (Group 2)
- Water pads and fountain (Group 2)
- Tables with checkers and chess (Group 2)
- Wedding pavilion venue/multi-use gathering space (Group 3)
- Pedestrian bridge across Hawthorne to the YMCA

## Expansion

- Expand the park! Take over the VFW! Group 6)
- More pavilion can be small ones (Group 5)
- VFW property has been purchased and a permanent covered (but open) structure for the farmers market has been built (the building mostly removed) with good parking (Group 5)
- Some sort of partnership/dual membership with YMCA. Some sort of bridge to link the two (Group 5)
- Farmer's market twice its current size (Group 5)
- Signage from main roads (Group 4)
- Archery range (Group 4)
- Fitness course (Group 4)
- Public Art (Group 4)
- Artsy bike racks (Group 4)
- Bike repair station (Group 4)
- Flat bicycle racetrack (Group 4)
- Ferris Wheel (Group 2)
- Purchase VFW property for park expansion (Group 1)
- Benches in more areas of the park (Group 4)
- Water bottle fill stations (not just fountains) (Group 4)
- Zero-entry pool / splashpad (Group 4)

- Dedicated public gathering spot such as an amphitheater (Group 4) (Group 3)
- Coffee/beer truck (Group 4) ▪ Include lazy river and aquatic center (Group 3)
- Stage/amphitheater (Group 4) ▪ Indoor/outdoor pool (Group 2)
- Outdoor movie theater (Group 4) ▪ Multi use aquatic center: free use, scholarships (Group 5)
- Big event space used for lots of community events (Group 7) • Playground
  - Kid's climbing wall (Group 4)
  - Tall (curly) slide (Group 4)
  - 3. Innovation playscapes, not just typical plastic playground (Group 4)
  - Kid's maze (Group 4)
  - Place for kids of different ages to play/interact (Group 4)
  - Playscape for older kids (Group 4)
  - Climbing wall (Group 4)
  - Add fluorescent adult swings (Google them!) (Group 3)
  - Adult playground (Group 3)
  - Incredible playground (Group 2)

### *Existing Facilities*

- Improved walking and running trails (Group 5)
- More park benches (Group 4)
- Soccer goals can use on multi-purpose field (Group 5)
- Designated soccer fields with goals and lights (Group 4)
- Change BBQ area into coffee/beer spot for concerts (Group 4)
- Fireworks (Group 4)
- Gymnasium
  - Expanded Gymnasium, more space, spectator area (Group 7)
  - Build a state of the art gymnastics facility for growing program (Group 3)
  - Expanded gymnastics facility that allows even more kids in the program (Group 3)
  - Grow gymnastics with bigger, better facilities (Group 3)
- Pool
  - Pool: More use hours, bubble in the winter, splash pad
  - Enhanced water features (Group 7)
  - Upgraded/relocated pool/strong aquatics program

### *Landscape*

- There are more trees and flowers to enliven the park and add color. (Group 6)
- There is a small lake Group 6)
- Lots of open and green space Group 6)
- Trees have been planted that will eventually be large trees
- Community garden (Group 4 (Group 7)
- Edible landscapes (Group 3)

## CONCEPT ALTERNATIVES MEETING

Following the charrette, CCDP and ACC Leisure Services held a public meeting on October 27, 2014, to present the charrette results and obtain the public's feedback on several alternative concepts for Bishop Park. First, attendees voted on various ideas and concepts through a "Dotmocracy" exercise. Then, meeting organizers handed out an opinion ballot at the end of the meeting to obtain qualitative responses.

**Meeting Date:** 10.27.2014

**Location:** Oglethorpe Elementary School (15 Fairground Rd. Lexington, GA)

### Facilitators:

- CCDP
- ACC Leisure Services

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### Ballot

CCDP and Park Services staff provided this opinion ballot to gain additional feedback on the concepts developed during the charrette. This allowed attendees to voice their specific concerns or preferences. For more information, see Chapter 5. A full list of responses to qualitative questions is found below.

### Which idea presented tonight is most appealing to you?

- Entrances from Hawthorne (not necessarily the car entrances, but walking). I like the idea of the amphitheater
- Adding restrooms in more areas of the park; movie screen for public movies at night; green area in middle as wildlife corridor.
- A new gymnasium: expanding gymnastic program. (Illegible). Active use plan
- Great thoughtful designs. I think there is a missed

opportunity here. Bishop Park has the opportunity to be a great urban park. All the designs look at is from a leisure service perspective. Bishop can be a part of an economic development strategy for the area. The park should be opened up around the perimeter. Alternatively, street parking and sidewalks should be added where adjacent to public roads. Pedestrian connection between the YMCA and Bishop should be provided.

- Indoor Pool!! Bike paths
- Having a restroom near the top tennis courts and fields is essential.
- Central Plaza/Market place, Bicycle designated paths, Amphitheater (movie/concert programing), Game tables (senior interaction), Aquatic/wellness center; and Iconic design (Potentially different for every park!)
- Passive user-love the trail that goes completely way around the park.
- Active Plan
- Community fitness center; Adult swing, Separate the pedestrian and cycling lanes
- The active plan
- Fitness trail
- Water parks, hammock forest, climbing trees, big kids play grounds, grown up swings, swimming pools.
- We love that the fields on Sunset are still there. Love the splash pad, Love the big kid play ground
- Splash pad fountain
- Passive-walking/biking paths, Active- fitness trail, wellness facility
- Larger gym to support growing gymnastics program, with updated facilities
- Passive user
- Water park, hammock forest, climbing trees
- Passive and community

- Multipurpose field
- Boardwalk in rain garden
- Multi-use paths, multi-use cement pad, amphitheater
- Dry creek beds, no fencing. Open plaza, distance markers
- Community
- Amphitheater
- Adult swings
- Perimeter access, indoor swimming, exercise stations
- Community plan with tweaks (subterranean parking beneath new gym)
- Horticulture focus (teaching gardens), Distance markers on path with fitness stations,
- Multiple Hawthorne Ave pedestrian entry, Include artists in design, Splash pad
- #1: Hawthorne entrance, upgraded paths (but no need for exclusive bike paths)
- I really like the idea of an all-purpose wellness central gym including an indoor aquatic facility and revamped gymnastics gym.
- I very much like the idea of an integrated gym/swimming facility looking out on green space. An indoor pool should be designed so it can be used for fitness classes, lessons, and competition.
- remove fencing around perimeter.
- Do not enclose the tennis courts-unnecessary expense
- Covered farmers market area to eliminate tents, but with open side.
- Clubhouse space. Use the space for a permanent year round farmers market. Your rental income will come from encouraging more local food and artisans.
- Increase in parking
- Active User- changes the current feel of the park.
- Passive Plan
- Indoor tennis; indoor swimming; enclosing the current indoor tennis courts
- Community plan, but all three have neat parts.
- Car entrance on Hawthorne
- Vehicular gate, multiuse path, distance markers
- Vehicle entrance on Hawthorne
- No shade at the farmer's market will be bad.
- Parallel parking on Sunset Dr. Iconic Graphic Design-National Parks are separate from a municipality who wants to maintain a unified brand throughout all departments... Active: Pedestrian Entrances. Will there be a sidewalk? How will people get from Hawthorne to BP? YMCA does not favor this plan. No to the covered tennis courts. Do not waste money on adding HVAC to this. Community: Central Parking area for special events does not resolve the current issue of 350 vehicles exiting onto Sunset dr.

### Which Idea is least appealing?

- Don't paint on the pathways (ugly). Adding road entrances from Hawthorne will cut the park in half.
- Eliminating the outdoor pool; horticulture center
- No Hawthorne pedestrian. Entrances. No enclosing tennis court
- Pedestrian access is too restricted on all plans. Need to
- No pedestrian entrances from Hawthorne, No enclosed tennis courts
- Community User
- Vehicular gate
- All plans for worthy idea as presented
- New vehicular access from Hawthorne Ave.

- Indoor tennis courts
- Splash pad, labyrinth garden, adult swing, greenhouse, new park drive
- Labyrinth
- The entrance for vehicles on Hawthorne on the active plan- but there are many good ideas on the plan.
- Money in covered tennis court, Removing pavilion
- New entrance for cars off Hawthorne
- Entrances on Hawthorne. Is there a sidewalk? HVAC tennis courts, Horticulture center (Athens already has one)
- Adult hammock/tree swing area (kind of creepy) if there are trees people can bring their own. Fitness trail- I have never seen people using these in parks.
- Car entrance on Hawthorne, extra field on North end of park.
- Indoor only-pool, AC tennis courts
- Don't remove the path along Hawthorne or the wooded walking paths on the North side! (Alternatively, make it a big loop), #2: Vehicular road within the park.
- The hammock area is a nice idea but may encourage some vagrancy...
- "Traditional" solutions to storm water retention, (gats), etc.
- Great thoughtful designs. I think there is a missed opportunity here. Bishop Park has the opportunity to be a great urban park. All the designs look at is from a leisure service perspective. Bishop can be a part of an economic development strategy for the area. The park should be opened up around the perimeter. Alternatively, street parking and sidewalks should be added where adjacent to public roads. Pedestrian connection between the YMCA and Bishop should be provided.
- Covered farmers market area to eliminate tents, but with open side.
- Amphitheater for concerts in the park. Geocache site. Dog park area
- Rocket Launch area
- Incorporate elements of all 3 designs!
- Indoor tennis; indoor swimming; enclosing the current indoor tennis courts
- Well if it were more open to pedestrian entrances, can we get sidewalks off Hawthorne?
- Coffee/beer garden
- Ice cream stand, Winter ice skating park
- Moveable playground- where kids can manipulate their environment physically.
- Public/private partnerships, such as leasing of public space for private enterprise (restaurant, juice shop, sports equipment etc.)
- Butterfly garden
- Tennis courts also (pickleball) in gym
- Convert tennis pavilion to art festival and market multi-purpose site
- Beer garden/coffee
- Exceptional, incorporate all of our suggestions
- The work and ideas are fantastic! Thank you!!
- Would love a dog park! Overall park needs better

### **Do you have an idea for Bishop Park that hasn't been discussed?**

- No dog park or dog water fountains! Been discussed, not seen in results. There is only one – 25 min. away. Why not in any plan? By omitting it, I am worried it is now lost... That is all I need. There needs to be one on the west side of town. I will pay for it... Keep as many trees as possible. Maybe consider upgrading what's already there... a "standard park" is not a bad park. (Fixing things like parking is needed)
- I really like the #2 plan

- Convertible indoor/outdoor pool (with collapsible walls or one end that is outdoor)
- Dog park/dog water fountains: there are always many dogs at the park, but they don't respond well to surveys... water them!! No need for indoor tennis, extended pool season would suffice, rather than making it indoors, Outdoor classes & farmer's market (yoga tai chi etc.) can use multi-purpose fields/green space- they don't need a dedicated space. Who uses game tables? Do NOT touch the Holly tunnel! The thing about Bishop Park that makes it unique is that its multi-purpose- it's not a zoo, botanical garden, etc... That's its strength! How would one access entrances along Hawthorne? There's no sidewalk beyond the corner gate.
- A disc-golf course throughout the park would be cool. Also, expanding the size of the park would be great.
- Look into acquiring land at the corner of Hawthorne and Oglethorpe. Several of the lots are on the market.

## **“Dotmocracy” (Figures C.33 - C.36)**

Attendees voted on various ideas and concepts with three different colored stickers; green (like), yellow (indifferent about/maybe), and red (dislike). This allowed voters to give feedback on each issue in equal measure and allowed Park Planning staff to collate responses quickly and efficiently. For more information, see Chapter 5.

# AMENITIES

## PASSIVE USES



Multi-use Paths

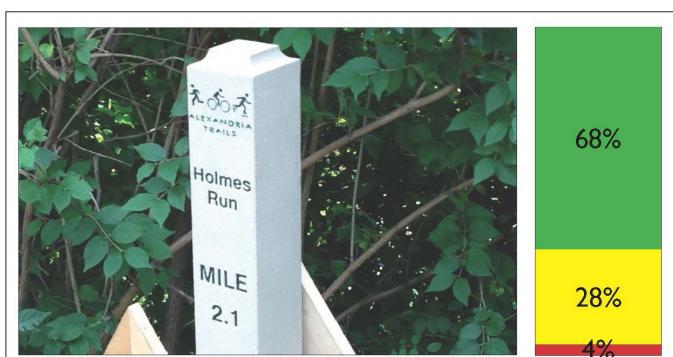


Climbing Trees

LIKE DISLIKE MAYBE



Boardwalk through Raingarden



Distance markers



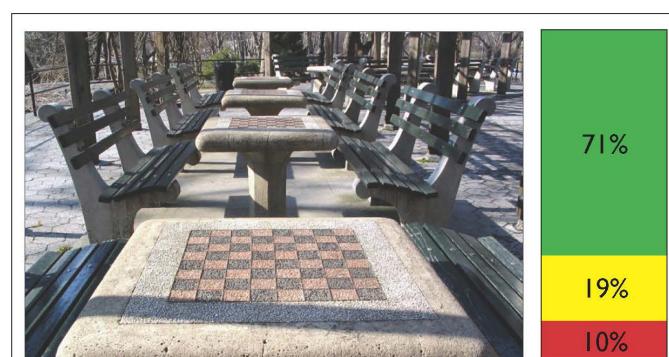
Playground for Older Kids



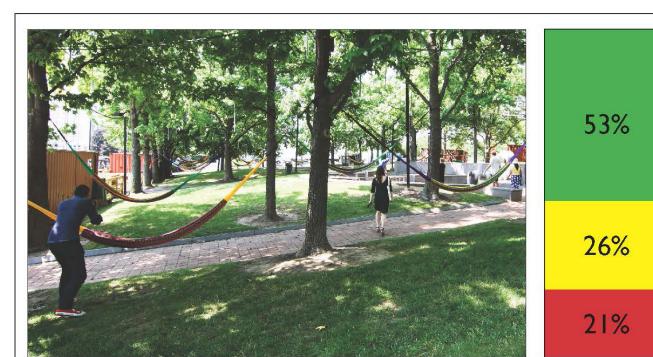
Adult Swings



Labyrinth



Game Tables



Hammock Forest



Location Map

## AMENITIES - PASSIVE USES

Bishop Park Master Plan  
APPENDIX II -  
PUBLIC INPUT RESULTS

Figure C.33: Amenities - Passive Uses

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# AMENITIES

## ACTIVE USES



Northern Area as Multipurpose Field



Northern Area as Paths Only

LIKE   DISLIKE   MAYBE



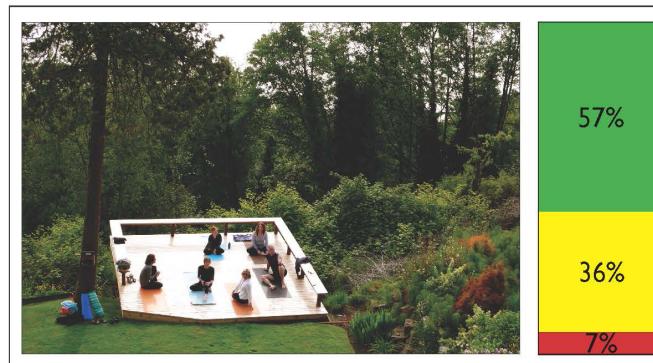
Fitness Trail Around Park Perimeter



Indoor Pool



Splashpad: Sprinkler-style



Green Rooms for Group Classes



Outdoor Pool



Splashpad: Fountain-style



Indoor Tennis Courts



Location Map

## AMENITIES - ACTIVE USES

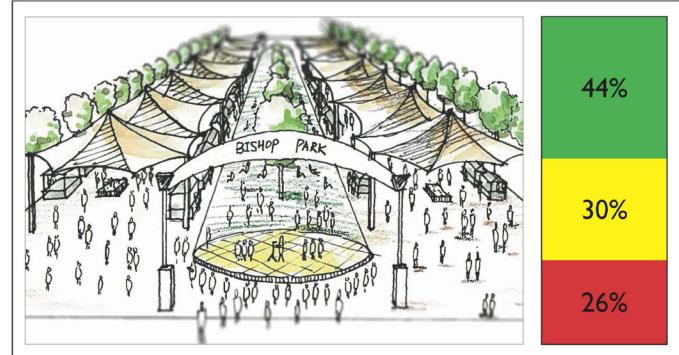
Bishop Park Master Plan  
APPENDIX II -  
PUBLIC INPUT RESULTS

Figure C.34: Amenities - Active Uses

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# AMENITIES

## COMMUNITY USES



Market Area: Tent Structures



Rental Clubhouse

LIKE DISLIKE MAYBE



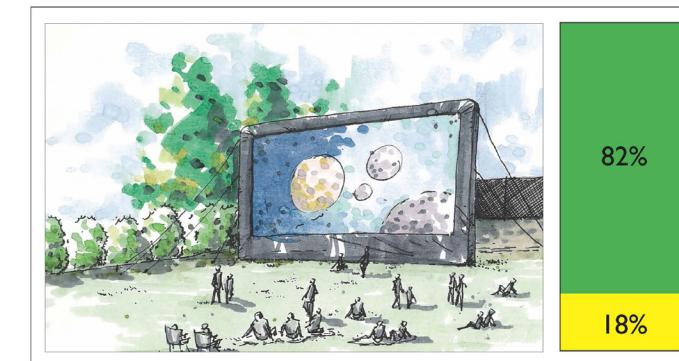
Amphitheatre



Market Area: Open Plaza



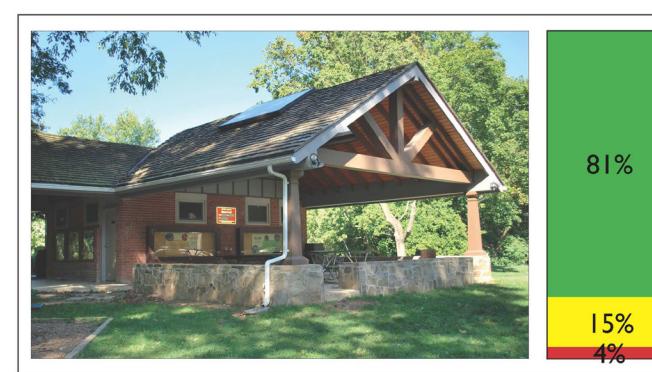
Rental Clubhouse



Outdoor Movies



Market Area: Tree Plaza with Pavilion



Rental Clubhouse



Horticultural Center



## AMENITIES - COMMUNITY USES

Bishop Park Master Plan  
APPENDIX II -  
PUBLIC INPUT RESULTS

Figure C.35: Amenities - Community Uses

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# SITE DESIGN



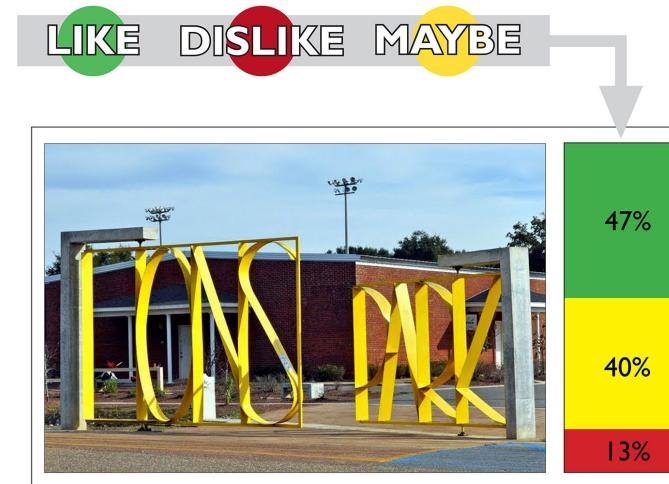
Location Map



Stormwater Solutions: Dry Creekbed



More Attractive Fencing



Vehicular Gate: Artistic



Stormwater Solutions: Traditional



No Fencing Throughout Park



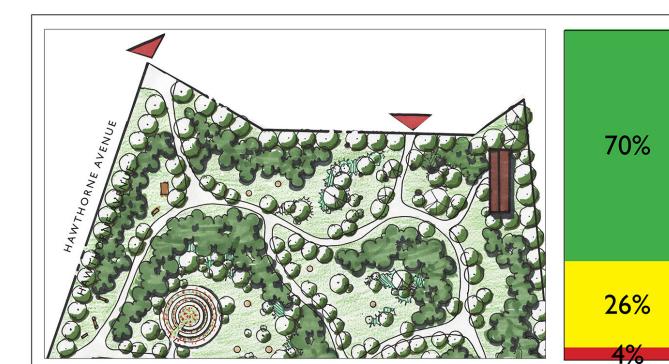
Vehicular Gate: Traditional



Raingardens



New Vehicular Entrance at Hawthorne Ave



New Pedestrian Entrances at North End

## SITE DESIGN

Bishop Park Master Plan  
APPENDIX II -  
PUBLIC INPUT RESULTS

Figure C.36: Site Design



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## LEISURE SERVICES DEPARTMENT STAFF MEETING

Park Planning staff presented the preliminary concept and solicited feedback from Leisure Services staff on March 19, 2015 as part of the Department's monthly meeting. Department staff asked questions and made comments regarding the plan. These concerns will be addressed in the final master plan, along with citizen feedback on the concept.

**Meeting Dates** 03.19.2015

**Location:** Sandy Creek Nature Center

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### Staff Comments

- **Parking**
  - Is reconfiguration of parking adding spaces?
  - Distances for hauling things from the parking lot to the various park amenities
- **Safety**
  - Does this plan still retain perimeter fence and gates?
  - Natural buffer on Hawthorne?
  - Would the park be secured at dark/dealing with unsecurable parks at dark
- **Athletic amenities**
  - Does this call for a revamp of the tennis plaza – what changes – the building itself, how will it be overhauled – potential rental
  - Gymnastics center – basketball courts?
  - Athletic field sizes – full sized soccer fields?
  - Consider outside storage solutions for youth program providers
  - Keeping concrete bleachers?
- **Park amenities**
  - Size of picnic/group shelters – increase in demand for

large shelters like those at SCP

- Calculate group sizes per sf of shelter, shoot for about 100 occupants
- Where are all of the restrooms? A haul from Sunset area to get to the restrooms

## BISHOP PARK STAFF MEETING

Park Planning staff also met with Bishop Park staff on March 24, 2015 to discuss specific plan issues not covered at the March 19 meeting.

**Meeting Dates** 03.24.2015

**Location:** Bishop Park

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### Staff Comments

- **Building**
  - Loading is appreciated. Loading door needed. Sometimes receive pallets for equipment.
  - Not many windows for programs.
- **Gymnastics**
  - Sizing
    - 12,000 sqft is too small for gymnastics space. 15,000 sqft is minimum.
  - Parent Viewing Area
    - if on the same level needs to be glass. Not necessary if on different levels.
    - Parent observation area can double as birthday party area.
    - Two Floors in one large room preferred for spectating. Clear separation for risk management.
    - Separate areas - two program areas for classes.
    - Younger kids area that's dedicated. can be more open or independent. 2000 square feet for this area.
  - Pits are needed
  - No raised surfaces - one level.
  - Reference gyms include Georgia Elite for competition, Roswell, Tallahassee (Trousell) for pits
- **Wellness Center**
- **Park amenities**
  - Indoor Gym - half court could work, full gym not necessarily needed.
  - Could be useful for employee programs. Youth leagues for gyms are already using gym space regularly.
- **Pool**
  - Pool needs replacement. Water is likely leaking under playground.
  - Swimming spectators attract a lot of people. Lots of tents and tailgaters around pool because not enough spectator space. Parents currently are lining much of the perimeter of the pool.
  - More shade is needed around the pool, especially for free swim times.
  - Deep end is north end of pool.
  - Baby pool is hard to keep sanitary. Splashpad is good solution.
- **Athletic amenities:**
  - Softball is close to being maxed out on field space. Losing field space will hurt program significantly.
  - Softball Field 1 on Plan and Football as alternate. Softball should continue to grow. Loss of a field is a significant issue for the program. Nowhere else do three fields exist. Youth sports dominate elsewhere.

- Bigger fields - adult program. More outfield space will allow for adults, and more flexibility for youth multi-purpose. Look at Fields at SE Clarke Park.
- **Safety**
  - Crosswalk is a concern. May be a concern for containing kids. Could also create the possibility of illegal parking at YMCA. Already parking at businesses next door.
  - Lighting is important

## PRELIMINARY CONCEPT SURVEY

Park Service staff obtained feedback on the Preliminary Master Plan Concept from over 150 citizens to this survey through various sources, including online surveys and public meetings. A full list of responses to qualitative questions in the survey is below.

**Meeting Dates:** 03.25.2015 & 04.04.2015

**Location:** Bishop Park

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### What do you like most about the proposed plan?

- Addition of a community wellness center
- Improvements to sunset field and playground
- I like the walkway and wellness spaces being added to Sunset Field.
- Love the walking trail and new pedestrian entrances. Also, the wellness features and putting bathrooms/pavilions near the playground seems immensely needed.
- While it's disappointing that the pool is not receiving more attention, and now the park feels more in line with the current configuration of the park, there are some exciting changes here. What I would like to see most from the park (as a neighborhood resident that lives with three kids off Holman and frequent the park almost daily), is a way to make our park a destination spot for the community. We are missing a grand opportunity to monetize the park by offering consistent concessions on the weekends and during the summer months. The addition of the kitchen in the tennis plaza would enable local vendors such as Hip Pops and Jittery Joes to have a constant presence in the park. I can't tell you how many times we went for a walk on a nice day and it would have been great to have a local vendor selling ice cream, or have concessions at the pool on a hot summer day. Local cart vendors should also be encouraged. Weekend evening events, similar to the annual moon landing night, should be ongoing. There is no reason why this cannot be a destination park in our community with monetized events given this proposed structure. Movies at the pool on Friday or Sat evening would not conflict with Dolphin Swim. Concerts at the amphitheater or small-scale art festivals can all be accomplished in this proposed plan, and all of the potential of providing low cost entertainment for our community and revenue for the park. As a brand specialist here in Athens (Kaptiv8 Marketing), it would dramatically change the dynamic of the park to regularly host such events, and provide welcomed amenities. Imagine working that the hospital and walking to the park to grab lunch or a quick snack. Allowing cart vendors, particularly during events such as movies in the pool or on the lawn, during festivals or concerts, would create the same lively atmosphere that is enjoyed by patrons of the Farmer's Market on Saturday mornings and encourage small-scale entrepreneurship. Currently the pool closes the first week of August, because school starts back. This is insane! There are plenty of high school and college students that would be available to continue to work on weekends through Labor Day to keep the pool going. Keeping concessions open throughout the year on weekday morning through late afternoon, and on weekends, could provide job opportunities covered by their own revenue streams. Please consider this possibility.
- Lots of nice pavilion space
- The additional entrances, sidewalk on Hawthorne, plaza area for the Farmers Market, Splash Pad for pool (I hope this will allow the pool to be open to the public), improved playground with restrooms
- Wellness Center
- I greatly appreciated the added access points, particularly the three entrances along Hawthorne Ave. Also, I believe that the addition of the covered pavilion and wellness center will receive regular use and be appreciated by the neighborhood and larger community.
- The Wellness Center - this ties everything that the park represents together
- Placement and size of event pavilion
- Increased pedestrian access and a pavilion that can accommodate the farmer's market.
- The dedication of outdoor spaces for particular activities, walking paths, splash pad.
- Better access to the various park features through the parking lot and pedestrian entrances, more usable green

spaces and the walking loop

- Sunset Field remains un-programmed; new configuration of Field 1 as a multipurpose field; pedestrian entrances; event pavilion; a few more restrooms--honestly, I think the plan is basically wonderful. Good job. Now execute! :)
- Looks like there are many great improvements. I'm happy to see park connectivity with Hawthorne being included, as now there seems to be no connection whatsoever. Building a sidewalk is much needed, as are basic entrances. Planning for the park to be friendly and accessible to all users, as all of Hawthorne hopefully can be one day (as a strong candidate for Complete Streets conversion) is the way to go.
- I'll also add that it's nice seeing new facilities such as the Wellness Center and Gymnastics Center added, along with current facilities being upgraded. Bishop Park is excellent in its diversity of facilities and people who use them, and it's great to see ACC continuing this style of park planning.
- New Gymnastics Facility
- Improved Gymnastics building, pool, more parking, and splashpad...
- Open Fields and Outdoor Wellness Space
- The splashpad, improved playgrounds and new gymnastics facility. Love the green scape areas as well.
- Increased gymnastics space with addition of wellness center and splashpad! Pedestrian walkways
- Overall, it is a nice plan.
- I like the larger Gymnastics facility. The splashpad will be a great addition.
- More parking around the gymnastics center and a bigger gymnastics center
- Increased gymnastics area. Increased playground area
- revised parking layout at entrance
- New Gymnastics Gym! Playground improvements!

- Overall, looks like a great plan. Love the splashpad and community gym. Also happy to have the 1K walking path
- 1. The expansion of the Gym Center 2. Pool Area 3. Restrooms closer to playground 4. Wellness Center
- The indoor and outdoor wellness center
- The Splashpad, pavilion rentals
- Bathrooms by the playground, splashpad. I'm curious about the Wellness Center. I like the concept but would like more info and hope it doesn't hurt other businesses (YMCA, YWCO, ...)
- More parking, plenty of field space, indoor wellness center space in this area.
- Larger gymnastics space is desperately needed to meet the needs of the many youth involved in gymnastics. A large pool area would also better serve the many youth participating with the Dolphins Swim Team and in competition with the team.
- splashpad
- just the updating of the park to make it more aesthetically pleasing but also functioning well
- event pavilion for farmers market, Hawthorne Ave pedestrian entrance, new parking configuration, walking loops
- I just love that the park is being made more user friendly! It seems the plan to diversify use throughout the park will have a great impact on how the community uses the space, and I cannot think this is a wrong ambition.
- Space for the farmers market
- Improved playground and splash pad are tied for first. P.S. I will be so happy to see the current square padding at the end of the slides on the "little kids" portion gone. I have seen so many little ones trip on the upturned edges. Makes me cringe every time.
- The amount of parking and larger gym space.
- The respect it shows for un-programmed use of the outdoor spaces. Safe places for a diverse population to participate in organized and unorganized recreation.

Sidewalk on Hawthorne and additional entrances link the park to the YMCA grounds.

- splash pad, more paved walking trails and community fitness center
- The new buildings
- Improving the park for enjoyment of community!
- The walking paths, the increased number of trees, more field space, more places to sit, LARGER GYM, concession stand + classroom by tennis, new entrances
- I like the idea of improving the gym for our gymnastics program. I believe a new gym is necessary in order to take the program to the next level and to truly make it competitive.
- The expansion in the gymnasium. It is VERY much needed.
- I think you have done a good job of making improvements with realistic costs. You have kept the balance of organized sports and neighborhood use.
- Bigger Gymnastics Building
- Good walking, Great access, multi-purpose pavilion has potential, preserved soccer fields
- I like the space given to the gymnasts. I believe with this space we ACGA will be able to grow as a team and as individual athletes. Right now, they are very limited as far as regular class kids mixed in with competition kids. There is a lot of potential and this will definitely bring more opportunities for higher levels.
- Nice Pool
- Layout is clean cut
- The balance to meet the needs of a "new generation." Looking forward to the future.
- Gymnastic Center
- Playground with adjacent restrooms, cohesiveness to the park overall - the walking loops and pavilions tying everything together:
- The change in the parking set up
- New home for Athens farmers market!
- Splash pad and expanded gymnastics facility.
- New gymnastics facility, however, the space looks smaller than what was presented at previous meetings.
- Expanded spaces, more room for recreational pursuits
- Nothing. I do not agree with the Bishop Park Master Plan.
- The farmer's market
- redoing the restrooms and walking paths
- NOTHING!
- all except pedestrian walk across Hawthorne
- I do not like the plan at all.
- It's great to make the park look nicer and safer.
- Improved pedestrian access
- Walking paths and outdoor fitness areas
- I KM walking trail
- Using parking space for pavilion
- Walking trails around the park and better parking
- More shade and the splashpad
- Better parking!
- Wellness Center & Stormwater Amenity
- The Wellness Center, the Walking Loops, Covered Pavilion for events
- I like the exercise paths. Great for planning exercise plans.
- More parking and green space
- Walkways and proposed covered areas for Farmer's

Market

- More sidewalks and paths. Stormwater pond
- Variety of sports available
- Sunset Field
- Adding a gymnastics area
- The improvements to the pool facilities are appreciated. Increased rental spaces seems like a good way to encourage more use
- The crosswalk to the YMCA. Trees! Wellness center: nice that there is limited addition/construction of structures
- Multi-use integrated
- the layout makes sense
- The additional gymnastics space caught my eye.
- Outdoor wellness center!
- The parking lot
- Farmers Market Pavilion
- Pedestrian entrances to encourage walking to park
- Pool
- Walkway entrances for the community.
- Wellness Center
- The outdoor wellness spaces.
- Walking loops, permanent space for farmer's market
- The new water feature! Walking Loop
- More walking paths
- Walking trails and a better area for things like the farmer's market. Keeping stormwater on site.
- I like the well thought out layout
- Good space for Saturday market

- Nothing. It makes no sense since there is no public parking on Hawthorne across from Bishop Park.
- Upgrading an old facility-- more useful to today's needs.
- NOTHING
- I like the new gym but needs to be larger for parents and events. Gymnastics is such a large part of Bishop Park and Athens. It needs to be larger.
- I do not like the plan interfering with the local YMCA facility.
- The new wellness center
- Complication with YMCA facility
- nothing
- Wellness initiatives for the community
- The reconstruction of the fields! And the new parking lot!
- The idea of revamping the park
- Improved walking trails, Sunset Field and Outdoor Wellness Space.
- The Wellness Center and Event Plaza/Pavilion!
- The wellness center and outdoor performance space.

**What do you like least about the proposed plan?**

- Taking away the covered tennis courts
- Parking spaces on Sunset.
- I don't like the proposed parking spaces along Sunset Street in front of Sunset Field, as there seems to be adequate parking in the dirt lot next to the tennis courts.
- More biking options/bike path/ bike racks
- It looks very expensive. Why are we redoing existing parking lot configurations? Money doesn't grow on

trees. Where is the basketball gymnasium? Why is there no bike path down the Hawthorne, it seems it would be safer to ride in a park than on a street. Very little imagination shown for bikes. Stormwater amenity appears to be a lake with a bridge but in reality will be a mosquito pit.

- Highly disappointed that the pool wasn't given more consideration. Currently there are several city/ county run pools in Gwinnett and Gainesville (Bethesda and Collins Hill in Gwinnett, and the Gainesville Aquatic Center) offer multiple water sliders, indoor facilities, and a lazy river. ANY ONE of these amenities would provide a dramatically better pool offering, but become a destination spot in our community. For a city this size, the fact that we have to drive to Gwinnett or Gainesville for such amenities is appalling. Not to mention how it would change the landscape of our Dolphin swim team's ability to host regional events, drawing more people and revenue to our city. Were we to add such an aquatic center to Athens, we would draw people from every neighboring county. Combine this with other events and revenue drivers; such as the farmers market, increased concessions, classes and seminars -- these people would stay and part with lots of money. As it is now, on a typical weekend, I meet people who have driven from Bogart or Danielsville just for the pool. I understand if Bishop Park isn't feasible for such a location. Please consider this seriously for other ACC parks where it might be a better fit. This would be a tremendous asset for our community. The splash pads are wonderful for younger kids, but this type of center would appeal to all ages and give our families a much-needed low cost entertainment outlet in the summer time. I am also disappointed in what seems like an increase in parking. There is ample parking at the doctor's office complex across the street. The park is never full during their business hours. There should be some arrangement made for overflow parking for events or high traffic days with the property managers of that complex. Currently, during swim meets, and other busy days at the park, that parking lot (700 Sunset) is always in use and it never seems to be an issue. It would be a great shame if parking were increase at Bishop, taking away space from the actual park.
- I can't tell where any restrooms are! Have additional been added? (We need them)
- Lack of dog park area

- I am concerned about turning the area called Hawthorne Field from its present state (a relatively undisturbed parcel of rolling land with merely a walking path meandering through it) to a 50-yard football practice field. I would think such a practice field would have to be flat and that would take away from one of the things that distinguish Bishop Park from so many other parks in town - it actually reflects nature and not a flattened, clearly man-made version of it. It is a "park" after all. Rolling hills in the Hawthorne Park area are an inducement for many to walk in the park in the first place and any grading that takes away from that takes away something special about Bishop Park (compare with the walking track at SE Clarke Point) as well as an incentive for people to go for a stroll at Bishop Park.
- New Entrances - fewer entrance may guarantee more safety
- It seems that there may be a decrease in walking trails, but I'm not sure.
- Parking
- There is no provision for pickleball in your plan. Pickleball is called the fastest growing sport in American and judging by the growth in the Athens area, I believe it is true. Pickleball was introduced to Athens about a year and a half ago and we now have 200 members, most of whom are active in the sport. I am president of the Athens Area Pickleball Association and I think that adding pickleball to your plan could be as easy as marking tennis courts appropriately and having nets available.
- There are no pickleball courts or opportunities in the plan!!!
- No soccer fields
- I hope Pickleball courts will be considered. It is an up and coming activity for all ages. Athens needs more courts on which to play.
- More of an ongoing concern: are there any plans/ potential methods to improve the drainage of Sunset Field? Will the stormwater amenity help with that? It retains a lot of rainwater in spots and stays muddy longer than other fields in town. Concern 2: I really like a lot of the equipment on the current playground--is it possible to keep some of it when the playground moves?

Concern 3: There are some low granite/concrete walls in the mock-ups. I think they have the potential to be somewhat ugly. It would be a shame to have that one blemish on an otherwise beautiful park. Make them out of Monet or Titian paintings instead!

- I can't judge from viewing the plans, but in general, I dislike it when parks are sterile lots of grass. These are common in US parks but not so much elsewhere in the world. Obviously, there is a need for plenty of grass in this park, but it would be nice to see this enhanced with more "natural" areas of interest. UGA has done a good job in recent years adding low-maintenance, drought-tolerant landscaping. Bishop Park can have little decorative pockets and borders of ornamental grasses and wildflowers to accent monotonous-while-useful grassy spaces. Many people have been inspired by the Highline in NYC, which uses a lot of texture as opposed to blooms (see Piet Oudolf, designer of these plantings and more: <http://oudolf.com/>). High impact plantings with low-maintenance results. Not only can this be beneficial for users, it can be more compelling work for ACC staff, planners and maintenance staff alike.
- Losing Field 1 as a softball field
- Field #1 not having softball field
- Nothing!
- I wonder how often classroom facilities would be utilized.
- No kiddie pool for the kids area
- The Outdoor Wellness Center doesn't seem to be beneficial
- Combine some wellness with gymnastics center for parents waiting on children taking class - to still see and be available to them while exercising.
- Parking lot design - concerned about crowding and traffic flow
- Too many buildings and designated activity areas. I would like more of a park than a recreation complex. Multi-use fields for passive recreation, more woodlands, native flowering plants, meadow area, and picnic tables scattered in the wooded area. Too structured, too heavily occupied with areas serving a small segments

of the population. The department's name is LEISURE Services, not Athletic Services.

- All improvements are welcome
- Please consider adding a gravel or mulch path as part of the 1K walking loop. Cement is really hard on runners!
- Stormwater Amenity
- Nothing
- Looks good as is
- Still looks like parking/traffic flow will be a problem
- I don't see a location for the farmers' market.
- Emphasis on parking.
- taking away one of the softball fields
- The possibility of getting rid of field 1. When you play softball, you already use all three fields especially in the springtime. getting rid of one of the fields will just make it where some teams would need to go all the way to the eastside to play which for a lot of people is out of the way
- Looks like it involves demolishing the existing tennis pavilion, which seems like a waste, why not just use that for the event pavilion?
- HOWEVER, as someone who has used the Sunset field three times a week on average for over fifteen years to play soccer; I am alarmed that these improvements will negatively affect the traditional use of that space. While I am all for having these new resources made available, it seems that soccer and other team sport use is being sacrificed to make them possible. A friend commented that the loss of the softball corner shouldn't affect the soccer/football/Frisbee use made me realize how much that corner gets used in the summer afternoons when the sun is blazing and the temperatures are high. If there are multiple games being played, it makes sense to maximize the shaded areas where players can be sheltered from the worst of the sun and heat. Taking that corner out of the usable field space will be a potential health threat to the folks running around trying to enjoy the sport they love during the summer months. Amazingly, we still go out and play despite health

advisories warning folks to exercise caution in outdoor activities. Removing even part of that sheltered area will have potentially threatening consequences.

- Another consideration is that taking out that corner removes an obvious straight-line orientation for the free form fields that spring up randomly as players arrive and set up their own games. Perhaps it is merely an inconvenience that folks would adapt to, and maybe the new paths would substitute for that visual reference, but loss of space is loss of space, and there are days when ALL that space is absolutely required.
- Another more serious issue is that the paths themselves are an obvious (to me) health risk for people running all out trying to fully commit to the sport they are passionately applying themselves to. Having a ground level abrupt transition from usable sports space to non-usable sports space is a real threat to people who don't have any other physical boundaries to where their field starts and ends. Stepping at high speed from soft grass to hard concrete is about the most dangerous thing you can do playing these sports, especially if you have a competitor chasing you down. Twisted ankles, blown out knees, serious scrapes, broken arms, and concussions are almost inevitable from using studded cleats (necessary for sports like soccer and football on the grass) and suddenly finding the ground no longer something your shoes dig into and grip but sit on top of and slide.
- If anyone imagines this is a good idea I suggest putting on some cleats and running flat out from the grass to the walkway in a straight line, much less trying to stop yourself on the concrete or attempting to turn directions. It's not just difficult but EXTREMELY DANGEROUS. Just ask any athletes you know or consult health professionals, or sports science folks. THIS IS NOT SAFE!
- I would have loved more investment in the pool but overall NO complaints!
- Stormwater Amenity seems bigger; is it needed?
- the removal of a softball field
- the old charm
- Upgrades are always great. :)
- Pedestrian Entrances
- Tearing down pavilion, which could be modified for little \$ to be market/festival/events pavilion.
- Right now nothing. I'm looking forward to the expansion of the gymnastics gym.
- No pickleball courts.
- No pickleball courts
- Construction will be disruptive during the progress. Inevitable
- Losing a softball field. Not sure why this is even an option.
- The Size of the gymnastics facility and the idea to make field one into an event field
- I don't like the idea of pedestrians crossing Hawthorne to enter the park. Very dangerous situation.
- The Athens YMCA does not support any crosswalks coming from Bishop Park to the Athens YMCA. Hawthorne is dangerous. This will encourage people to park at our facility, increase the confusion between the Y and public parks, and put people in harm's way. The Athens YMCA would like to be involved in all meetings regarding this plan moving forward.
- That it interferes with the Athens YMCA and their property structure.
- Cross walk on Hawthorne Ave to and from the Y
- The crosswalk
- Reconfiguring the roads and the possibility of adding a crosswalk on Hawthorne Ave.
- Whoever thought this plan up does not live here or come to the YMCA! Major traffic and people will be put in danger.
- pedestrian walk across Hawthorne
- I think it is a terrible idea. Hawthorne Avenue is not the appropriate place to access Bishop Park. It is very busy and we should not encourage families to cross even if it is with a bridge over the street. Access off of Sunset is more quiet way to access the park. Also, the

YMCA and Bishop Park are two separate organizations. There should not be a connection between the two. The YMCA is a private organization and Bishop Park is a public park. Two very different purposes.

- The crosswalk is a ridiculous idea. All it will serve as is a place to cross the street after parking at the YMCA. Not only will it create a huge problem for the Y and its members in the parking lot, but it will also create problems with the in and out flow of traffic to and from the Y. It is already a problem to turn in or out of the YMCA and by adding the crosswalk, it will create an even more dangerous situation for not only vehicles but also the pedestrians that use the crosswalk.
- The creation of a wellness center is also uncalled for. This will do nothing but create an unjust and frankly unfair hardship for the YMCA. For all that the YMCA does for and in this community, I find it ridiculous that the county/city would be trying to find ways to compete in the wellness arena.
- I think that the biggest issue I have with this whole master plan is that the YMCA wasn't even a part of the discussion and/or planning process. If the county/city is going to be making decisions that will not only include but also intrude on surrounding businesses then they should have representation from the get go and be part of the creation of the master plan.
- lack of attention to improving facility for soccer
- I love the open-air farm market we have now, so if we roof the market then we should make sure it is light and feels open.
- Don't see a covered tennis courts.
- I don't feel strongly about any of the changes.
- Not Sure
- No Volleyball Court
- Parking is centralized in one area
- The park has to close for a while
- Building knocked down
- Nothing!
- none
- softball field improvements
- No dog park
- need security measures at upper walking trail loop
- I would like some inclusion for roller-skating, skateboarding in a parking area.
- There is no safe way to access Bishop Park from a busy Hawthorne Ave. and there is no public parking on Hawthorne across from Bishop Park.
- Pedestrian entrances on Hawthorne not a good idea. How are you trying to encourage walking in? Where would they park? Y across the street is private property and the new entrances might encourage people to park there. Hawthorne Ave is extremely busy street with very little pedestrian traffic.
- Increasing traffic with more obstacles on Hawthorne is not a logical plan but rather a huge traffic and safety nightmare. The Hawthorne entrance will only increase congestion problems, accidents and possibly the loss of lives. The traffic volume and speed already causes problems without any additional obstacles. Traffic backs up from Hawthorne and Oglethorpe intersection from all directions, morning, noon and end of day. The crosswalk and proposed Hawthorne entrance will only add fuel to the fire and endanger families and children lives with another bottleneck. If ACC has funding available, a better use would be to solve the current traffic and safety issues on, leading up to and away from the Hawthorne and Oglethorpe intersection.
- **EVERYTHING**
- Is poses many possibilities for the public to get hurt especially with the cross walk. It also poses safety issues for children with all shrubs being cut down. More traffic congestion and possible need for light at YMCA.
- Cross walk and bike lanes are not a good idea at this time. Busy traffic and control of kids in and out of park are a concern. Also homeless folks would have easier access to the park after hours.
- I don't like the proposed crosswalk to the YMCA

- The crosswalk on Hawthorne as well as taking down the fences and hedges between the YMCA and the park.
- I dislike that you are taking down the bushes across from the YMCA because it creates a visual for homeless people to the children on the fields. I also dislike the crosswalk put across Hawthorne, it is an extremely busy intersection and I fear there will be many accidents.
- everything
- Changes that will affect the Athens YMCA, including removal of bushes from the side of Hawthorne Ave and the addition of a crosswalk across Hawthorne
- I really don't recommend the crosswalk to the YMCA. That street is really dangerous with drivers always flying down that road; I just do not think that would be a good idea. Please do not build a crosswalk, I support everything else but please keep that out. Thanks
- Opening up the space on the Hawthorne Side and having a crosswalk on Hawthorne Ave.
- I wish the walking path could be longer than 1 km. Would be nicer to have a longer path/loop to utilize.
- Not sure about the low wall seating...would be nice to see pictures
- Also not a fan of making the pool too much like an amusement park (w/slides and etc.). Seems to be for the playground.
- Opening Hawthorne and crosswalk to YMCA

### **Are there any other elements you would like to see included in the Bishop Park Master Plan?**

- Myself & my children use Bishop Park's covered courts often in times of rain or during hot weather. We've been lucky to have them, as they are the only covered courts available to the public in NE Georgia. Because they are not built to completely eliminate the possibility of water accumulating upon them, I would like to see them improved upon, as opposed to being removed entirely. I understand that the Farmer's Market would also appreciate cover from the elements..just as tennis players do! Having a separate pavilion space for the

Farmer's Market would allow tennis players to have a place to play in times of rain while also accommodating the FM. I understand that the portion of citizens interested in the FM is growing, but this event is held 1 day per week, seasonally. The portion of citizens interested in tennis is consistently expanding (thus the Athens Tennis Center was built) and these people are playing tennis all week long, throughout the year. Please keep this portion of taxpayers in your thoughts when considering removing the covered tennis courts at Bishop Park. The covered courts do receive use throughout the year by the public, for league play, for tennis lessons, for pickle ball, etc. and it would be a shame to take away a valuable alternative in times of rainy/hot weather. Thanks for all that you do to make our parks beautiful and user-friendly!

- Pickleball is becoming very popular with seniors. It would be great to have 2+ outdoor pickle ball courts and be able to use some space indoors for pickle ball.
- A bike path into the park from Sunset and Hawthorne.
- Gymnasium
- From a branding standpoint, the entrance, the amenities, the events, and entertainment opportunities for this park are huge. On any given Saturday or Sunday afternoon, the park is brimming with impromptu soccer games, flag football, and families with their kids having picnics and playing on the playground. Imagine if we had cart vendors, encouraging micro entrepreneurship in our communities, evening movies in the park or pool, concerts on the lawn, or a community art festival, similar to Piedmont Park. I am very excited about community classes and a fitness center that is open to everyone. I think they would be highly used. As a daily walker in the park, I see the same people out enjoying exercise every day. I know these would be utilized and provide another alternative revenue stream. Even if the pool isn't increased, the services can be expanded. Swim lessons can be expanded in the morning, and if Memorial Park can stay open to swimmers while their summer camps are in session, there is no reason why the Bishop Park pool needs to be exclusive to the Gymnastic campers during the day. Dolphin swimmers occupy the pool on weekdays until 7:00pm, but it is crazy that we don't open the pool back up from 7:00 until dark on Friday and Saturday evenings. I think if this was considered and promoted properly by Leisure Services people would most certainly come.

- More drinking water fountains
- More marketing efforts
- The pool should be opened from May to August - until 8pm. Why do pools close so early? It's hot from May to September - and well past 5pm. It doesn't make sense. People come off work and they want to go to the pool. August is the hottest month. Why is it closed? No one cares about parking or a "wellness center" - just open the pool like normal countries do.
- Good area to walk dogs.
- you need to add Pickleball courts
- Soccer Field
- Pickleball courts
- As mentioned above: A better drainage system for Sunset Field please!
- It seems like you have it all covered. Happy to see the Farmers Market included as well.
- add playground equipment for older kids, too, the one that is there is only for younger kids
- An outer perimeter "mega-" walk/run loop
- Mindfulness of all ages and abilities. I hope the plans utilize universal design for the greatest possible use by all people.
- Kiddie Pool
- Increased space to allow increased offerings or multiple options for programming options
- As mentioned above: more passive, natural areas, more trees and naturally shaded areas.
- As regular users of the gymnastics center & playground, we would love some improvements in those areas. Also another splashpad / more water fun in Athens would be wonderful.
- Basketball courts improvements
- Dog Park, larger gymnastics area, improved playground, adding swings for kids older than the ones who currently fit in the baby swings
- I need more details about the Wellness Center
- My only question is where will the farmers' market be located? Ideally, it should have a roof covering it. The old covered tennis court would be perfect.
- Better draining system for field 2, games are cancelled on this field very often because of standing water.
- I didn't see it, but a drinking fountain contiguous with the Sunset field would be appreciated. I seem to remember when I first moved to Athens in '89 there was a working fountain at that field. And there are water lines in the area where the sprinkler system runs for that field. It would be worth considering. Lights for that field as well. During the fall and winter months, many users of that field get off work close to twilight and are forced to play in the near darkness. Amazingly, they love what they are doing enough to keep at it despite being almost unable to see what they are doing. Spill over light from the tennis courts is insufficient. Even one or two dedicated lights in that corner would make a huge difference.
- A restroom that is open during playground hours with a changing table in both the men's and women's restrooms.
- Increased and shaded park bench seating and other shaded areas where kids can cool down in the playground area and get a reprieve from the summer sun.
- Recycling bins throughout the entire park.
- The dream would be to acquire adjacent property and expand the walking/ jogging path to include new land and offer an indoor pool!
- Lanes on the walking trails so if many people a place where low-impact cyclists can get a decent ride without stopping a lot and weaving between people... for safety. Oh, and a leash free area for dogs.
- Frisbee Golf or Practice Zone
- A larger parking lot in front of the gymnasium, more swings on the playground, big diving board @ pool.

- Outdoor fitness machines like at Trail Creek Park. Pickleball courts.
- Phase use of current tennis pavilion into a market and festival pavilion immediately. Don't demo until new pavilion is completed. Add pickleball courts.
- Indoor & Outdoor Pickleball Courts
- Pickleball Courts
- A larger gymnastics center. This is one of the few aspects of ACC Leisure Services that actually will make money to help pay for things.
- Yes updated playground with more swings, I love there is a shade area with tables/ benches for parents to sit. Closer/more bathrooms and all bathrooms need changing tables please! Also, Update covered tennis courts!
- Take the Athens YMCA out the Bishop Park Master Plan.
- Cover over the pool
- A Velodrome is necessary for the betterment of the Athens community!
- adding more family picnic areas
- Improved focus on accommodating community soccer
- Concert space, spaces to sit and listen to music and eat lunch on a nice day
- more interesting landscaping
- Lots of swing sets
- A covered tennis courts, an indoor pool
- Basketball
- Dog Park?
- Farmer's Market under a permanent structure =)
- native species for all plantings
- water fountains
- love the idea for improved/expanded parking
- Yes, dog area!
- Native plant space/garden
- Enclosed Dog Park so they can be off leash.
- A roller sports area
- Improved walking trails, lighting for security and more local events like music and kid camps.
- We do not want a crosswalk between us and Bishop Park, nor do we want the hedges cut down (for child safety reasons). We also do not want them creating a space for wellness classes.
- Include soccer goals to the sunset field!

**Other Comments:**

- This is probably a long shot, but if there was a SPLOST to purchase the VFW lot and convert it to a proper aquatic center; this would be the best possible option. That space can be consolidated to a much smaller location, and there is no need for a lot that size. While the logistics of working an entrance behind Landmark Hospital would be tricky, I believe ACC voters would get behind this, especially if they were to see the revenue it could produce (currently, entry into the Gainesville or Gwinnett aquatic center is \$13). I understand that the VFW sold the land to Landmark Hospital a few years ago, and that there was a huge missed opportunity. Now the space that is left may not be enough square footage to create a center. If that is the case that is a tremendous shame and proves that we need more forethought in our city planning so that something like this doesn't happen again.
- Beautiful plans!
- Make a bike park.
- I really like this proposal!
- I'm glad to see attention being put into Bishop Park. It has a wonderful location and is already a cornerstone for the neighborhood. This looks like a great way to

increase the use of the park.

- Can we bring back 4th of July fireworks? Going to the mall blows.
- Good work.Thanks!
- Looks great!
- It is also important that existing and new programs remain cost efficient for Athens residents.Thank you for these much-needed improvements in our community.
- I have mainly used Bishop Park for my daughter's gymnastics. I would love a track (walking/jogging) above/around the gym floor so I can walk and keep an eye on my girls as they do their gymnastics classes. Also a bigger gym.
- Better ingress/egress options for surface streets and parking lots. More gymnastics equipment for more efficient or multiple simultaneous programming.
- I need more details about the Wellness Center
- This is one of my favorite parks in town. I think it is important to improve things but I also believe the three softball fields are needed. I have seen the number of softball teams out each season going up in the past couple of years. I also really like the idea of a splash pad because I am also a mother and now we have to drive to the other side of town for a splash pad.
- So glad to see that the Farmers market would be getting a new and more functional home! Much needed!
- Updated and expanded gymnastics facility to make more classes available and increase the availability of summer camps and programs is very important to myself and my family
- As long as the Gymnastics program has room to improve is program. Allow space for parents to watch their children during programs without the close physical contact of strangers.
- Really well done. I see a lot of balance in this plan.
- We play softball via the city's softball league. It's so hard to find an open practice field in Athens.The removal of a field for adults would only cause more headaches. I

suggest you review how many teams sign up.

- I am extremely excited for the upgrade at Bishop Park. Long overdue.
- Make sure new gymnastics center has up to date equipment and safety equipment.
- Great Job! Thank you
- Thank you!
- Thanks for taking the time to improve our park!
- Please expand the gymnastics center!
- I notice that the plan include a new gymnastics facility but not one any larger than the current gymnastics facility. At least 50% of the size of the current facility needs to be added on. The size of the current facility does not allow everyone to practice as needed and is very crammed and space is scarce. Two floors would be very helpful, one for gymnastics classes and one for team. More bars would be useful and beams as well.
- I also noticed that the plan proposes tearing down softball field one and making is an event field. That would be very unbeneficial. Softball is extremely popular, and at Bishop Park and it would be inconvenient for it to be anywhere else. Bishop Park has enough games to take over four fields; one doesn't need to be taken away.
- This is not a good plan. Implementing this plan will be dangerous to the community and those that travel on Hawthorne Ave. Especially during rush hour. Please do not consider moving forward with the Bishop Park Master Plan.
- No cross walk on Hawthorne Ave to and from YMCA
- I don't think there should be a crosswalk between the YMCA and the park. Too dangerous!!
- I use the YMCA and Bishop Park quite a bit. Turning left from the YMCA parking lot on to Hawthorne is a nightmare. A crosswalk joining the two would be suicidal unless it was an overhead bridge.
- Use event pavilion for outdoor concerts in the summer!
- I hope this helps bring more people to the park!

- Good job!
- I live across from Sunset Field. Not many people walk around the park - and if they do they can walk on the grass - Money? Money?
- Looks great!
- Great ideas!
- Thank you!
- Thank you for your hard work
- There is no need for a crosswalk that does not lead to parking or other public property across Hawthorne Ave., which is a very busy thoroughfare. What purpose does this serve if people can't park on that side of Bishop Park?
- Please leave the fence and everything the same, do not make a cross walk from the ymca to bishop park. That is very dangerous especially with the traffic on hawthorne being so bad.
- For the safety and well-being of the community, I do not believe you should include a cross walk on Hawthorne, and I believe the fences deprecating the park should remain. This way, it gives the new park a more concealed feel and makes individuals inside feel like they are in a getaway instead of it being open to the street.
- Please do not interfere with YMCA.
- The Athens YMCA across the street is an integral part of the community in Athens and is important in the lives of hundreds of people, especially children. It is important that the YMCA remain safe and secure for the children and families who use and enjoy it. The removal of the hedges along Hawthorne Ave that provide a visual barrier for the YMCA would be detrimental to the YMCA community. There have been issues in the past with dangerous individuals coming very close to the YMCA while children's activities are being held outside, and removing this barrier would provide increased access to those children, making the programs less safe. A crosswalk between the park and the YMCA is also a dangerous idea. Drivers coming down that stretch of Hawthorne Ave have very limited visibility because they come around a curve, and it is unlikely that a crosswalk there would truly be safe for pedestrians. The YMCA

also deals with huge amounts of traffic at certain times of the day, and a crosswalk would make it even more difficult for drivers leaving the YMCA parking lot to get onto the road quickly and safely. The YMCA will suffer greatly if these aspects of the plan are implemented. Its role in the community is significant, and it should not be neglected as changes are made to Bishop Park.

## FINAL MASTER PLAN PUBLIC REVIEW

Park Service staff obtained feedback on the Final Master Plan Concept from 34 citizens. This feedback was obtained through various sources, including an online survey and three public meetings. A full list of responses to the questions in the survey is below.

Approximately 90 people attended the public meetings, and 33 verbal comments were received from basketball players on June 14th and June 17th.

Conversations with basketball court users resulted in the recognition of the need for improved courts and backboards, with a desire for covered courts. The new location of the courts was not objectionable to the users. Their concerns were more about the quality of the courts rather than the location.

**Meeting Dates:** 06.07.2017, 06.10.2017, & 06.12.2017

**Location:** Bishop Park Conference Room and Farmer's Market

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- I am a vendor at the Athens Farmers Market – we need more parking at the park to be able to grow the # of customers at the market and support our farm business – the market is our main source of income. I also work at Nutter + Assoc. on Hawthorne Ln. I think having a pedestrian entrance on Hawthorne Ave would allow for employees of the office park to improve their quality of life + contribute to the overall health of our community. Please approve the master plan! Thank you.
- So exciting – Bishop Park is an amazing community resource + can use some serious TLC. I'd love to see most of this happen.
- I think this is a great plan to improve Bishop Park. They have intelligently addressed many of the issues of this Park. I hope to see these improvements implemented.
- Love the Plan!
- I love the proposed plan for the park. I believe the splash pad is a facility that would really draw families from the west side.
- This looks fantastic! It should be one of Athens' highest

priorities. This is what makes Athens a great place to be + lures new residents.

- I like it. Please use semi pervious surfaces for paving in parking.
- I really like this design. Splash pad is a great idea. I also appreciate the incorporation at stormwater control. Thanks for the hard work.
- Great Design
- So much better than that idiotic tennis center idea they tried several years ago. Too bad landmark hospital space wasn't bought as everyone in the neighborhood suggested. However, very good ideas and designs. Just add another potty to SPLOST for godsake and fix/upgrade it. Make the purpose pillars for Pedestrian Entry match the yellow pillar and yellow house across the street. Don't pave it all! Keep enough room for soccer to be played.
- Gymnastic program is very good, but facility needs to be updated.
- While the gymnastics facility is suitable it definitely needs to be updated and expanded.
- Please make the Gym bigger for gymnasts + also put foam pits.
- I would encourage a soft surface – even mulch- around perimeter of Sunset Field as this would increase multi-use + flow for soccer – Frisbee + 'trail' running
- Looks fantastic! Please implement this plan. It's worth the extra tax \$.
- Please install shade canopies on the playground.
- Great, Expand! Public Parks are a great way for a city to express its personality!
- I am a parent and teacher in Clarke County. My children & students are participants in the Dolphins Program. I want our pool to be a priority for Bishop Park. There are not enough slots in the program for all the kids who want to participate due to the size of our pool. We need more water space for these kids. We need more time in the year to swim and that could happen with an indoor pool. We could have a place like Francis Meadows in

Gainesville. From a teacher standpoint, I think we need more space for learn to swim programs as well. Please consider these as priorities for Bishop Park. I would rather have a lane pool than a splash pad.

- It is important to invest in a well-vetted indoor swim facility for the county to improve access to swim skills and physical fitness to our community members. Health and wellness should be fostered by our new plans! Thanks for your hard work.
- 1. The Stormwater "Amenities" are short sighted. They will become a blight. Consolidate via piping or even better put it underground. Land is finite.
- 2. NO or LESS fencing @ Hawthorne
- 3. Land Acquisition – vfw!!!
- I support the Bishop Park renovation plans, which would enhance a classic park. I would also recommend an indoor aquatic center to build an already skay 8-week swimming program (Dolphins). Alternatively the current plan could be modified to protect current deck space to enable a growing swim program, especially for meet competitions.
- This looks awesome. As a frequent visitor to this park my only suggestions would be to add additional water fountains/bottle filling stations strategically placed around the park, i.e. in between field 2 and 3 where the baseball fields are, next to the basketball court. Not just the old school fountains but the nice water bottle filling stations. You can't have to many water fountains in a park in the south. Thanks, keep up the good work.
- Some of that budget would be well used to buy real estate at the corner of Hawthorne and Oglethorpe Ave.
- My main concern with the Bishop Park Master Plan is not so much what is being changed inside the park but access to it, particularly for people walking, biking, or taking transit. While I understand that changes to Hawthorne Ave are not part of the plan, there may need to be changes to that general area to make the two new pedestrian entrances on that side of the park usable and safe. In addition, there seems to be a missed opportunity to connect with the YMCA across Hawthorne by not looking at access points between Oglethorpe and Hawthorne Park. Speeds of vehicles on Hawthorne are high for a multitude of reasons, but

the fence/shrubbery on the park side of Hawthorne make it difficult to access from that general area. While I understand the need for people in the park to feel secure, I can't help but wonder how secure/safe is it for people who live on other side of Hawthorne to access the park without a car. Thanks and have a good day.

- I would like to ask that when redesigning bishop park, the pool area would not be forgotten. The dolphins swim team hosts many swim meets and we need lots of deck space. More would be preferable, but it would be great if the area could at least not be lessened. If upgrading the pool is something that can happen, I would like to ask for long-course markings for the bottom of the pool and upgraded locker rooms. Thanks so much!!
- An indoor facility would be welcomed, but perhaps a bubble until then would be a decent option. I'm from Union county, NC. MSA added a bubble to an existing pool and within a year:c with the interest, turned around and were able to build their own indoor facility. I say build it, and they will come... It would be fantastic to have places to swim in the area. There aren't enough competitive swimming or indoor options.
- an expanded bathhouse, improved spectator seating, better lighting for nighttime events, a built-in PA system, blocks, flags, and liner markings for long course swimming,
- I wasn't able to load all the documents but I wanted to say that it's extremely important to have multiple pedestrian entrances to the park. One at the corner of of Hawthorne at the existing "back" entrance but also further down Hawthorne for people walking from the other direction. It's important that they are unlocked reliably and well lit. TONS of Shade at the playground and an all-weather water fountain are essential! I see the short walking path, a long one around the whole park is something I look for when exercising. Also a path around the playground to walk while kids play. Thanks for all your hard work so far! Can't wait to see it!
- Daniel Rocks at Park design! Do it! (heart; smiley face; peace sign)
- We like the updated plans for the park. We want to learn how to play pickleball and these courts will give us a place to play closer to home. We have been taking the grandchildren across town to the new playground. The

updates and addition of a splashpad at Bishop will mean we don't have to go so far when they visit!

- As a mom with 2 young kids....ages 2 and 4, it surprises me that parks in GA offer very little shaded areas! For example, you should send an employee to the Trail Creek Splash pad past noon on a hot day. The asphalt that the playground equipment is on is so hot, the slides are on fire to even touch, let alone try and slide down, and so many of the tables don't have shade umbrellas.... just bare tables. If you go into the splash pad to chase around your kids, there is once again ZERO shade. If you have an infant and need to nurse or just get out of the sun, it is not really an option. I'm hoping this goes into your planning of the playground areas at Bishop.
- I strongly feel that Field #1 should remain a softball field and not converted too multi-purpose field because there are local industries and local business that love the central location of all three fields at Bishop Park.
- I think this is a great idea, if it can be used for several different activities. With the decline of number of softball teams it should be used for as many activities as possible.
- This is a great looking and ambitious plan that will greatly enhance the park. I am happy that this is process is underway. The proposed 1/4 mile walking trail at Sunset Fields should be rerouted to not infringe on the existing multiuse fields which are routinely overcrowded and would be more so with these improvements. Instead of constructing two sidewalks that are parallel to each other please design one sidewalk that can accommodate both city sidewalk and walking trail users (area nearest Sunset Dr/proposed on street parallel parking). One well designed sidewalk should be able to handle both user groups. Similarly, why not route the proposed walking trail through some of the wooded areas on the perimeter of Sunset Field. That would give users a different experience than currently available in the rest of the park--a modified woodland experience. The wooded areas bordering Oglethorpe Ave. could become more than a mulch storage area and more of an amenity. Finally a note on programming--The proposed plan calls for the existing softball fields to allow for multi-use (good!) but I doubt those will be utilized for anything besides softball unless there are very clear signs saying so. Currently the softball fields "appear" to not allow any other uses. This must be addressed to alleviate overcrowding on Sunset Field. Thank you!

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# Appendix D: Conceptual Alternatives

## THE PASSIVE USER EXPERIENCE

### Design Intent

This plan (Figure D.6) focuses on individual or self-directed experiences within the park, whether that be a single person or a small, independent group or family. This plan emphasizes the activities passive users appreciate most—providing facilities and services that enable people to be self-directed in their pursuit of leisure—while also considering the built and natural environment.

### Highlights

This plan emphasizes the quieter areas of the park and protects the larger expanses of green space towards the northern and southern ends of the park, while relegating vehicles, heavy foot traffic, and organized team sports to the center of the park (Figure D.1).

### Circulation

- The current vehicular entry and exit remains in the same location.
- Some parking remains in its current location; new spaces are added in front of the gymnasium. The gravel lot is paved, but screening vegetation is added along the perimeter.
- A new gymnastics center features subterranean parking (taking advantage of the topography) providing approximately 65 spaces. Reconfiguring the parking provides approximately 320+ spaces.
- The small turn-around lot closest to basketball courts is eliminated.
- The walking path is wider, with a dedicated path zone for bicycles.
- New bike/pedestrian pathways are added to the northernmost portion of the park and to the Oglethorpe and Sunset edges; paths traverse the park and include distance markers.
- Existing pedestrian entrances at the nursing home and on Hawthorne Avenue are improved and formalized with proper gates and paths.



Figure D.1: Amenity Configuration

A new gymnasium features expanded indoor facilities and subterranean parking. The main parking lot has been reconfigured to improve circulation, and an outdoor plaza is featured in the center of the park.



Figure D.2: Field Configuration

Field 1 is redesigned as a multi-purpose field, with an amphitheater embedded at the edge of the field.



Figure D.3: Plaza Configuration

A paved plaza provides open space, uniting the multi-purpose field, a small amphitheater, and the parking lot. A covered open-air pavilion accommodates the Farmers' Market.



*Figure D.4: Passive Design*

The northern end of Bishop Park is reimagined for the “passive” user with a labyrinth garden, increased walking path circulation, and rain gardens with a zig-zag boardwalk for exploring nature.



*Figure D.5: Hammock Garden*

The wooded, shady area between Field I and the basketball court could benefit from a “hammock garden” such as this popular version at Spruce Street Harbor Park in Philadelphia (Source: [www.visitphilly.com](http://www.visitphilly.com). Accessed October 2014)

offices, storage and restrooms.

- A rebuilt outdoor pool with covered spectator seating is located between the two structures.
- The shallow baby pool has been replaced with a splash pad.
- An expanded playground area has equipment for smaller children and incorporates natural features and existing holly trees for older children.
- A New two-story clubhouse contains fully functional facilities, including kitchen, with covered spectator seating extending from both sides.
- New restroom and spectator facility is between the current tennis courts.
- A paved plaza provides open space uniting the multi-purpose field, the proposed small amphitheater, and the parking lot. The northernmost section of this plaza will be covered, but still open-air to support the Farmer’s Market (Figure D.3).

### **Ecological**

- Multiple rain gardens and dry creek beds accommodate the large volume of stormwater runoff and address erosion problems. A raised boardwalk attracts older children from the adjacent playground area with its zigzag design (Figure D.4).
- A labyrinth garden is created on the hill in the north end of the park.

### **Recreation Features**

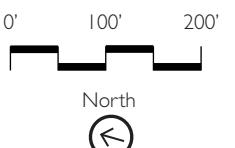
- The barbecue pavilion has been replaced with “green room” outdoor space for classes such as yoga, tai chi, art, outdoor demonstrations, etc.
- Game table furniture is provided throughout the north end nearest the adjacent senior living facility.
- A hammock and tree swing garden (Figure D.5) has been installed, with adult-size swings and hammocks provided, or as bring-your-own-hammock accommodations.
- A large locally-designed public art piece announces the name of the park along the western edge of the multi-purpose field.

### **Structures and Buildings**

- Field I (softball) is modified to accommodate multi-use functions. It is surfaced in turf with a small amphitheater (Figure D.2).
- A new gymnastics center is devoted to an expanded gymnastics program, as well as housing administrative



## LEGEND



## PASSIVE CONCEPT

Bishop Park Master Plan  
CONCEPTUAL ALTERNATIVES

Figure D.6: Passive Concept

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Design & Preservation  
for Athens  
Clarke County  
Leisure Services



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*Figure D.7: Circulation Configuration*

A circular central plaza is the main hub in the park, accessed by a new vehicular entrance on Hawthorne and through the parking lot from Sunset Drive. New pedestrian entrances from Hawthorne Avenue are located at the tennis courts.

## AN ACTIVE RECREATION PROPOSAL

### Design Intent

This plan (Figure D.13) addresses and facilitates health and wellness by maximizing opportunities for active recreation through organized group activities. It maximizes the park's capacity for group activities and organized athletic events. The plan recommends flexible spaces to accommodate a variety of the community's needs as well as larger organized sports programs.

### Highlights

This plan emphasizes the more active areas of the park and focuses on programming as much space as possible.

### Circulation

- The southwestern corner of the park has new vehicular access from Hawthorne Avenue.
- Field I has been reoriented to place home plate at the northwestern corner of this space; the new park drive follows the edge of the reoriented Field I outfield.
- The existing parking lot has been modified to create more efficient placement of spaces and circulation, yielding total parking capacity at 350. The narrow one-way turnarounds are removed.
- A new restroom and pavilion structure is located by the tennis courts near Sunset Drive.
- Four pedestrian entrances are added along Hawthorne



**Figure D.8: North Section**

A new multipurpose field has been added to the northern end of the park, along with a deck to function as a “green room” for fitness classes. A clubhouse replaces the BBQ building and has a playground nearby.

Avenue, creating inviting access points and drawing users in from all sides of the park, eliminating the perception of there being a “front” and “back” of the park.

- To promote porosity and ease of access, fencing is retained only in areas where it is needed for safety: namely along un-vegetated, unbuffered sections of Hawthorne Avenue. Vehicular entrances are also equipped with adequate sidewalks and bike lanes.
- A new central plaza is the main hub of circulation. Located approximately in the same location as the existing administrative building, it is a major focal point. Traffic approaches this area from Sunset Drive through the parking lot or from the new drive on Hawthorne Avenue. Pedestrian paths lead out from the plaza, an event space with a central signature element or specimen plant.
- The existing parking area behind the present administrative building has been reclaimed for general use, providing space for dining, casual spectator seating for activities on Field 1, and overflow for the Farmers’ Market.

## Ecology

- A dry creek structure along the west side of the



**Figure D.9: Green Classroom**

A deck and green room will function as a “green classroom,” in a natural environment; it is simply a raised deck erected just above the terminus of the dry creek, creating a view of the rolling topography. (Source: <http://www.frangallo.com/deck-yoga/>. Accessed October 2014.)



**Figure D.10: Green Classroom - Section**

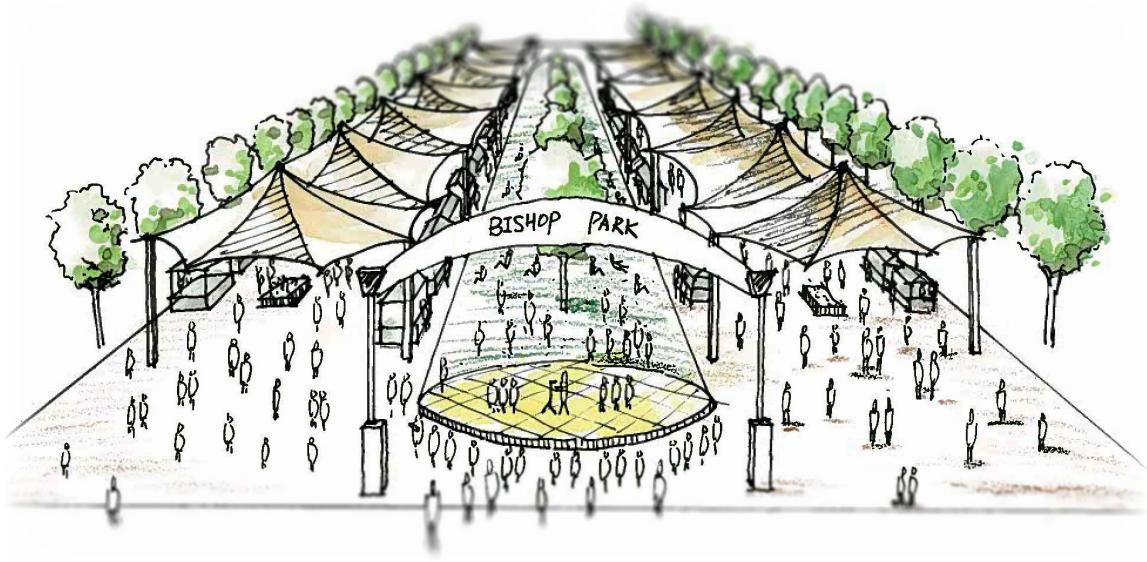
Section view of “green classroom” and bioswale.

existing multipurpose field is added at low points to manage stormwater; the creek bed intersects with walking paths, providing an educational opportunity for pedestrians.

- A greenbelt creates a swath of vegetated green space and tree canopy throughout the park, generally along walking trails, and specifically along perimeter areas where buffers are needed.

## Structures

- A new “Wellness and Recreation Center” replaces the existing gym and swimming pool and is the heart of the entire site. It includes an indoor aquatics area for year-round swimming, multipurpose courts, multipurpose “studio” rooms, an indoor track, and administrative offices.
- A new “Clubhouse” replaces the barbecue pavilion and includes a catering kitchen and restroom. One wing of the building is screened and one wing is open. This facility accommodates outdoor group fitness activities,



*Figure D.11: Bishop Park Marketplace*

A central hub with arched gateway announces the “Bishop Park Marketplace” and is a partially canopied area that may serve a variety of uses, from the weekly Farmer’s Market to musical performances to picnicking by large groups or individuals.

classes, meetings, birthday parties, reunions, etc.

- A new playground on the north side of park is located near the clubhouse, with a secondary playground added between the tennis courts.
- The covered tennis court remains, but has been enclosed with glass walls and equipped with HVAC.
- A new multipurpose field has been added to the northwestern corner of the park. A new field in this location creates excellent visibility along Hawthorne Avenue, generating interest and excitement amongst passersby.
- A new restroom building is added between Sunset Drive and nearby tennis courts to serve the multipurpose field; the building has restrooms and seating.
- A deck and green room will function as a “green classroom,” in a natural environment. This structure is simply a raised deck erected just above the terminus of the dry creek, creating a view of the rolling topography.
- A fitness trail is added along the walking paths, creating a “fitness landscape,” weaving workout stations along and into the walking trails.



*Figure D.12: Bishop Park Marketplace - Plan View*

The “Marketplace” is located at the center of Bishop Park, convenient to parking and the new Wellness Center.

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## ACTIVE CONCEPT

Bishop Park Master Plan  
CONCEPTUAL ALTERNATIVES

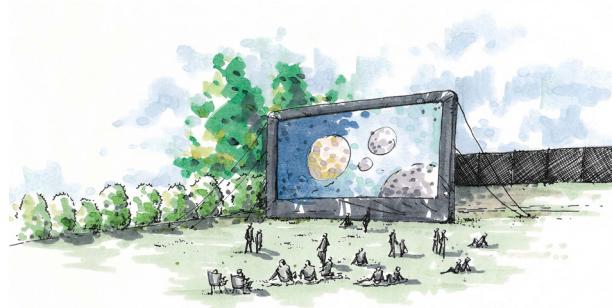
Figure D.13: Active Concept

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**Figure D.14: Bishop Park Horticultural Education Center**

The new “Bishop Park Horticultural Education Center” is located at the north of the Marketplace. Ethno-botanical, scented or medicinal gardens are found here.



**Figure D.15: Multi-purpose Field**

Converting Field I from a dedicated softball field to a multipurpose field allows the space to function for multiple sports and community events such as evening outdoor films, concerts, and the possible return of July 4th fireworks viewing.

## A COMMUNITY-BASED PLAN

### Design Intent

This plan (Figure D.18) weaves Bishop Park into the cultural and social fabric of Athens by creating spaces and elements for a variety of group sizes. It increases access to and permeability of the park by connecting bike and pedestrian paths to surrounding infrastructure and increases opportunities for new broader-based community programming. Of particular interest is the plan’s ability to accommodate events of varied scale—from small birthday parties at the clubhouse, to the medium-size crowds attracted to the Farmer’s Market, to even larger special events such as holiday festivals and fireworks.

### Highlights

This plan emphasizes the multiuse aspects of the park and focuses on tying the park into the social fabric of the community surrounding it.

### Circulation

- Accessibility concerns are addressed by creating new, clearly marked, and differentiated entrances for bikes as well as pedestrians.
- A large loop pathway with lanes for both bikes and pedestrians circles the park.
- Bike entrances are located adjacent to bike lanes.
- Two new pedestrian entrances along Hawthorne Avenue tie into existing transit stops.
- Other pedestrian-only paths cross the park to allow for easy accessibility to park features and provide framed views.

### Ecology

- The existing low areas and stormwater system is better managed to allow for drainage. Invasives are removed.
- Shrubs are used to create buffers between parking and the surrounding area.
- The new “Bishop Park Horticultural Education Center” is located at the north of the Marketplace. Ethno-botanical, scented or medicinal gardens are found here (Figure D.14).
- The greenhouse and the teaching gardens provide year-round programming. These areas will allow for enhanced nature and nutrition programming. These gardens include circular seating walls and generous places for relaxation.

### Structures

- A central hub with an arched gateway announces the “Bishop Park Marketplace.” This is a partially canopied area that may serve a variety of uses. The structure consists of two long, permanent, tent-like canopies augmented with a strip of green space in the center and a circular stage at one end. The tent structure references the period of time the park was used as a Fairground.
- A new gymnasium with an indoor pool and tennis courts has large glass walls looking out onto the park.

In the summer months, an adjacent outdoor area contains a splashpad. A rooftop “open porch” provides grandstand viewing.

- A new clubhouse adjacent to the playground consists of an enclosed, roofed area with a catering kitchen, restroom facilities and can accommodate outdoor seating.
- The covered tennis area, the gymnasium, and the barbecue pavilion will all be removed to make way for these changes.
- The bathroom and equipment building between tennis courts will remain, but has been rehabilitated.

## Group Areas/Features

- Field 1 is reoriented so that the home plate corner of the field is now in the northwest corner of the field. It is converted to a multipurpose field and can now function well for other sports, as well as for medium to large events such as festivals, holiday events, evening outdoor films, concerts, and the possible return of July 4th fireworks viewing (Figure D.15).
- A new playground adjacent to the clubhouse accommodates children of all ages.
- The pathway to the Farmer’s Market is separated into smaller areas with small group seating.
- A circular amphitheater in the north end of the park accommodates small group activities.
- South of the Marketplace is a dedicated picnic area. A deck containing shaded picnic tables can serve many functions.

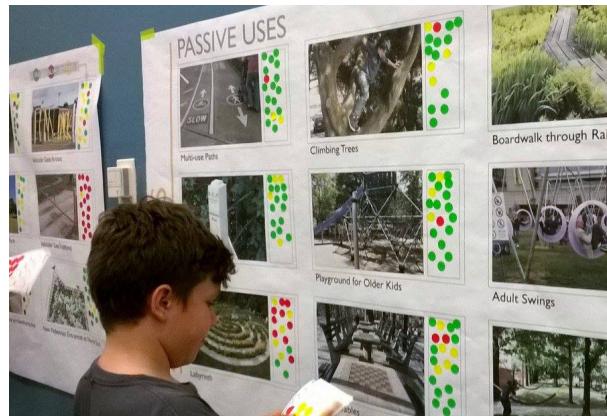


Figure D.16: Dotmocracy

A young attendee votes in the “Dotmocracy” exercise, used to capture feedback on various amenities suggested for Bishop park.

**Your Opinion Matters!**

1. How do you use Bishop Park?  
(check all that apply)

**Passive User**  
(self-directed activities such as walking, running, playground, picnics, yoga)

**Active User**  
(organized or semi-organized sports and games such as tennis, softball, football, basketball, soccer, swim team, etc.)

**Community User**  
(Farmers Market, special events, etc.)

2. Which idea presented tonight is most appealing to you?

3. Which idea is least appealing?

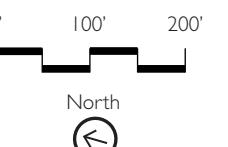
4. Do you have an idea for Bishop Park that hasn't been discussed?

Figure D.17: Opinion Ballot

Opinion ballot provided at final charrette presentation.



Location Map



## COMMUNITY CONCEPT

Bishop Park Master Plan  
CONCEPTUAL ALTERNATIVES

Figure D.18: Community Concept

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for Athens  
Clarke County  
Leisure Services



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# Appendix E: Preliminary Master Plan

## CONCEPT (FIGURE E.3)

The Preliminary Master Plan creates a clear hub for Bishop Park and provides logical pedestrian and vehicular connections to this hub. Improvements throughout the park are focused on extending the park's valued scenic and naturalistic characteristics to provide an attractive backdrop for active recreational elements. Functional elements such as stormwater management are blended into the landscape throughout the park.

When developing the concept, particular attention was given to preserving the existing structure during construction to allow for uninterrupted park use. The proposed Gymnastics & Wellness Center (GWC) is sited to allow continuous operation of the existing structure's gymnastics program during construction of the new facility (Figure E.1).

Proposed improvements are explained in four sections. Three—the Park Hub, North End, and South End, are geographical. The final section, Pedestrian Circulation, refers to improvements undertaken throughout and along the edges of the site to enhance utilization of the park by pedestrians and cyclists, with an eye towards increasing visitation of the park by foot, bike, or bus, rather than car.

## PARK HUB (FIGURE E.2)

This concept focuses on creating a very clear hub of activity at the center of Bishop Park. A new structure, the GWC, is located to the south of the current gymnastics building. It contains a variety of elements, including a new gymnastics center, wellness center, large multi-purpose room, classrooms, administrative space, and pre-function areas across two floors. An event pavilion and restroom are attached to the south end of the Wellness Center, anchoring a large plaza.



Figure E.1: Gymnastics & Wellness Center

A revised concept for the Gymnastics & Wellness Center and Pool house (blue) facilitates continued operations of the existing gymnasium building (red) during construction.

Pedestrian and vehicular routes converge on the plaza, which is the focal point for the park.

**Vehicular Improvements.** A one-way loop that begins and ends at Sunset Drive provides vehicular circulation into and through the site. This two-lane loop serves parking bays and a drop-off lane adjacent to the Event Pavilion, the main entrance of the new GWC, and an accessible route to Sunset Field and other park walkways (Figure E.4). Improved parking increases from 305 to 383 spaces. 32 of these spaces are provided on-street along Sunset Drive. The existing gravel lot remains for overflow parking, but is improved with a hardier structural turf, and access is limited via a gate to when special events are occurring.

**Wellness Center.** The new GWC provides approximately 8,000 square feet of dedicated interior space for fitness equipment and classrooms. Bishop Park, located near the UGA Health Sciences Campus, Athens Regional Medical Center, and many other medical services, is a logical choice for this element.

**Gymnastics Center.** Currently, there is approximately 4,320 square feet of dedicated floor area for gymnastics activities. The proposed Wellness Center contains 12,000 square feet of

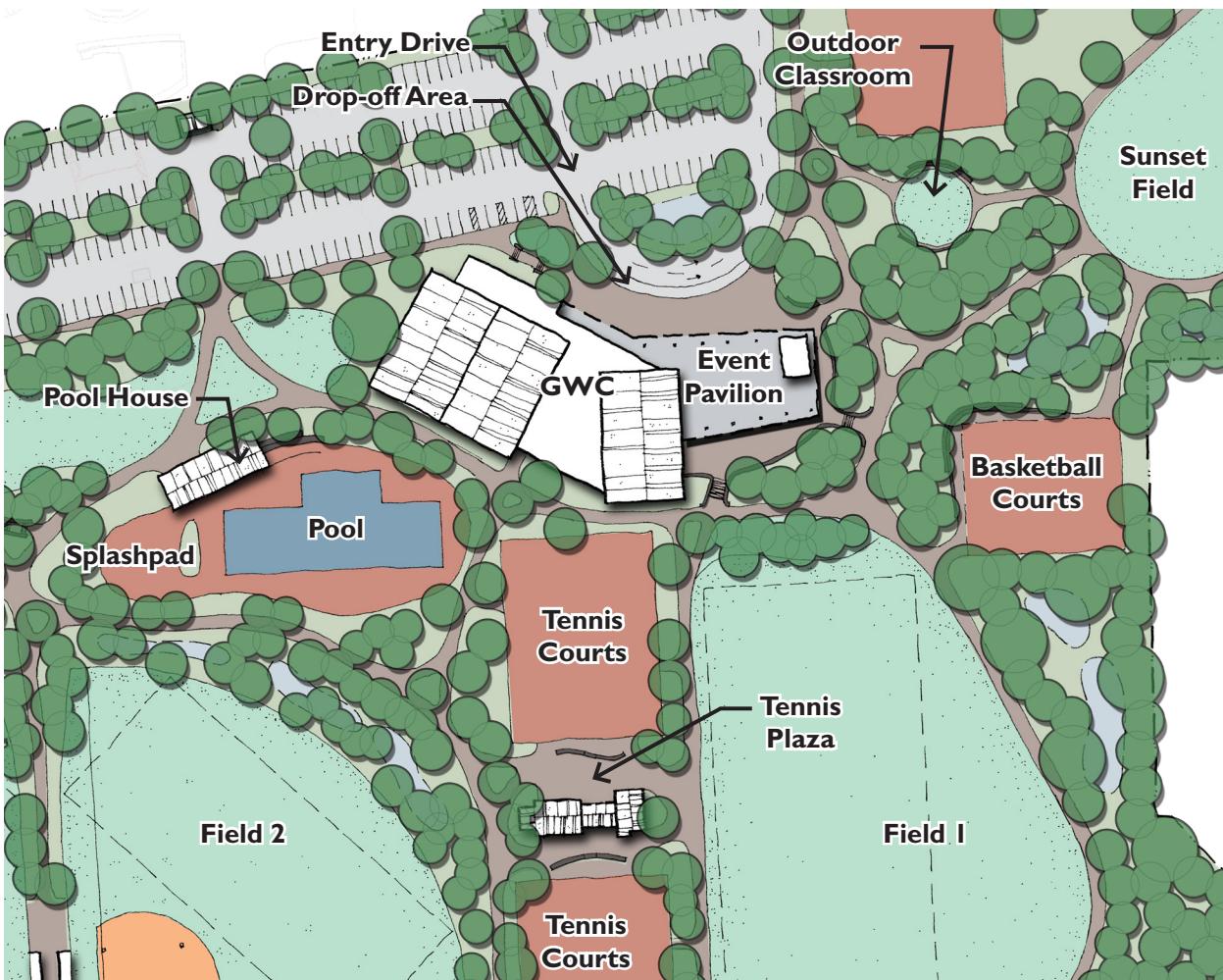


Figure E.2: Event Pavilion and Plaza

The Event Pavilion and Plaza is the centerpoint of Bishop Park, providing gathering space, and views and access to many of Bishop Park's features.

open floor area for gymnastics, in addition to locker room and storage areas, administrative space, and a spectator area.

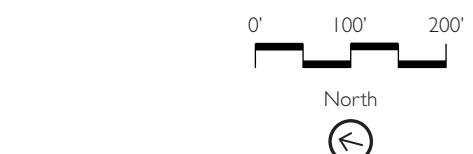
**Event Pavilion and Plaza.** A large open-air structure covers a portion of a large plaza overlooking Sunset Field and Field 1. This plaza, approximately 18,000 square feet, will serve as a new home for the Athens Farmer's Market on Saturday mornings. Currently, the market uses the 12,000 square foot basketball court.

The 8,000 square foot pavilion structure provides shelter from the elements for a portion of the total plaza area. The space connected to an adjacent 6,000 square foot multi-purpose interior space (equal to a full basketball court) facilitating more varied event configurations. This flexible configuration provides 14,000 square feet of

covered space for the Farmer's Market during inclement weather, equal to the area of the existing covered tennis courts.

When not used for events, the Event Pavilion and Plaza serve as a shady piazza, open to sitting and other passive activities. Stairs and walkways connect the plaza to the park's walking loops and parking areas. Restrooms are incorporated into the structure.

**Pool Area.** The existing location and configuration of the pool is retained in this concept. Although the existing pool structure has many ongoing repair issues, this concept facilitates improvements to other pool infrastructure, such as new viewing areas and improved access control, and allows for eventual replacement of the pool in place if necessary. Supporting the pool is a new pool



## PRELIMINARY MASTER PLAN CONCEPT

Bishop Park Master Plan  
PRELIMINARY MASTER PLAN

Figure E.3: Preliminary Master Plan Concept

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**Figure E.4: Entry Drive**

A one-way entry drive provides access to parking area, the front entrance of the GWC (center), and the Event Pavilion (left).

house containing locker rooms, administrative space, and a viewing area on the second level. An accessible viewing area is provided adjacent to the structure. The pool deck area is expanded, and a splashpad is included at the north end of the pool area.

**Field 1.** Field 1 is converted from a softball field into a multi-purpose field that accommodates a full football field. The current configuration allows for multi-purpose use of outfields, of which approximately 50,000 square feet is available for non-softball programming. This adjustment increases available multi-purpose turf area to over 90,000 square feet. The open area also allows for removal of many fences in this area of the park. The result is a much more accessible space—resembling Sunset Field in character—adjacent to the Event Pavilion, Tennis Office and Plaza, and near the pedestrian entry from Hawthorne Avenue.

Although multi-purpose field use is currently in demand throughout Athens-Clarke County, and softball participation has declined by half as compared to the 100+ teams that once used Bishop Park in previous decades, these trends may not hold. To allow for greater flexibility when elements of the Master Plan are implemented, an optional reconfiguration of Field 1 to retain its softball use

while improving park circulation is also suggested (Figure E.5).

**Tennis Office and Plaza.** The existing walkways around the restroom and former concession building are reconfigured to provide more opportunities for gathering and seating. Low walls provide seating for spectators viewing the adjacent tennis courts. The renovated concession stand structure now serves as a classroom space with kitchen, available for meetings and event rentals.

## NORTH END (FIGURE E .6)

Though the number of elements in the North End of the park increases, the largely passive and natural character of this area is retained and enhanced. Required stormwater detention elements resemble an attractive wetland and pond, which is seen from pavilions, the playground, walkways, and a footbridge. The meadowy areas in the northwest corner of the park are reconfigured into a multi-purpose field that is framed by trees and serves as a gateway space for pedestrians arriving from a new pedestrian entrance on Hawthorne Avenue.



Figure E.5: Field 1

This alternative configuration for Field 1 allows for improved circulation while retaining three softball fields at the park.

The focal point for the north end is a plaza to the northwest of the playground, where several walkways converge. Here, a grassy “stage” provides an opportunity for play, sitting, and informal gathering. A small outdoor classroom near a connection to the adjacent healthcare facility provides opportunities for gathering, or for easily accessible wellness programming.

**Playground.** The playground area moves north and expands from 7,000 square feet to 10,000 square feet, providing space for equipment serving multiple age ranges. A restroom facility and two pavilion spaces are adjacent to the playground. Bioswales and rain gardens planted in native shrubs and trees serve as a scenic backdrop and buffers the playground from parking areas.

**Rental Pavilions.** Several new open-air structures provide a variety of options for gatherings in the north end of the park. Some of these structures are simple shelters with picnic tables. Others are larger, and contain restrooms and other facilities. Each is sited with a unique view of some element of the park.

**Stormwater Amenity.** Naturalistic bioswales draining the park’s fields and hardscape drain along the eastern edge of the playground into a forebay, managed as a wetland pool. Stormwater

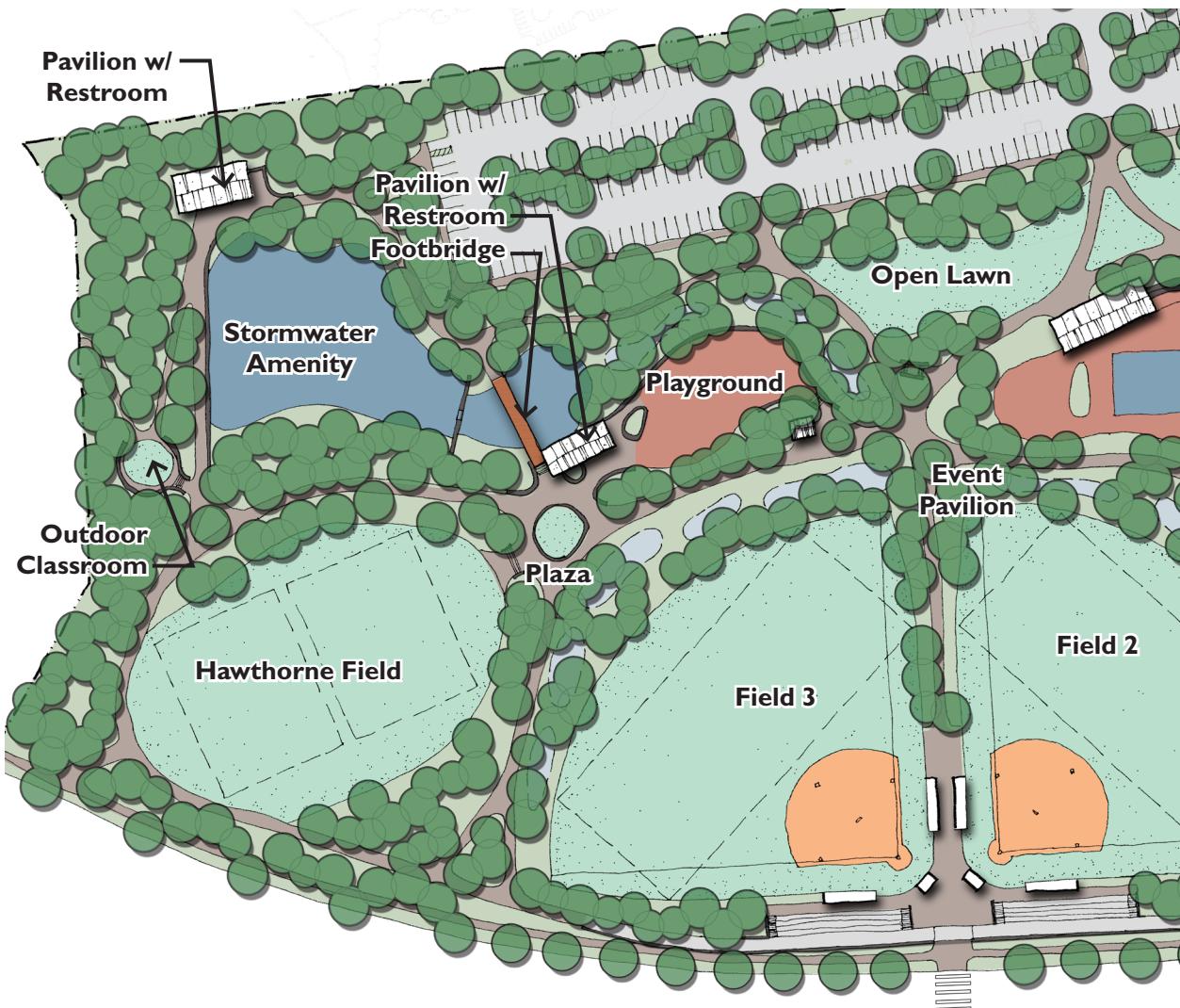
runoff from parking areas is also routed to this site. This feature spills over a weir into a larger detention pool, which is managed as an open pond, with additional reserve capacity for stormwater. Native riparian trees, shrubs, and grasses ring the forebay and lower pool. A footbridge across the forebay pool, and a low wall along the north edge of the lower pool provide opportunities to view the water up close.

**Hawthorne Field.** This multi-purpose field, situated on the hilltop at the north end of the park, provides opportunities for youth athletic activities. The field can be configured for two U-10 youth soccer fields, or as a full width 50-yard football practice field. The field is ringed in trees and, like Field 1 and the Sunset Field, serves as an open gateway into Bishop Park for visitors arriving from a pedestrian entrance along Hawthorne Avenue. Careful grading ensures that creation of the field enhances the rolling character of the North End of the park. A low, broad set of steps connects Hawthorne Field to the North End’s plaza area.

## SOUTH END (FIGURE E.7)

Removal of the existing covered tennis pavilion, a structure that is poorly suited to its designated use and difficult to repurpose, allows for the south end of the park to be reconnected to the Park Hub. New walkways connect to Field 1 and the Event Pavilion and Plaza. Smaller paths provide access to an outdoor classroom and the basketball courts, which are improved with new seating walls. New on-street parking, pedestrian entries, park signage, and landscape elements improve Bishop Park’s presence along Sunset Drive and Oglethorpe Avenue.

**Sunset Field (Figure E.8).** A new quarter-mile walkway ringing Sunset Field formalizes the existing multi-purpose field. The walkway acknowledges adjacent slopes, and facilitates sitting, picnicking, and viewing of activities on Sunset Field. A small corner of the field, currently occupied by an unused softball backstop, is converted into a small outdoor classroom. The field remains unprogrammed, and subtle landscape improvements such as low seating walls



*Figure E.6: North End*

An informal plaza is the centerpoint for the North End of the park, providing space for gathering, and easy access to parking, Hawthorne Field, the playground, and restrooms. The park's one kilometer walking loop passes through the plaza.

and new plantings in areas surrounding the field enhance its character as a community green for the Normaltown area.

**Outdoor Classrooms.** Two outdoor classrooms are provided in the South End of the park (a third is located in the North End). These intimate, grassy gathering areas allow small groups to hold outdoor fitness activities and classes. These spaces can be reserved, allowing the park to more actively support wellness-related outdoor programs. The spaces are offset from adjacent walkways with low walls and plantings, creating a psychological buffer. This offset allows for some assurance that possessions such as mats, weights, or bags won't be disturbed should the class incorporate other

portions of the broader park landscape into its activities.

When not in use for classes, they are semi-enclosed open spaces that allow for informal gathering and picnicking.

## PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

Additional opportunities for pedestrian access into and through the park were a major concern expressed by park users, and are a primary feature of this concept. New entrances and

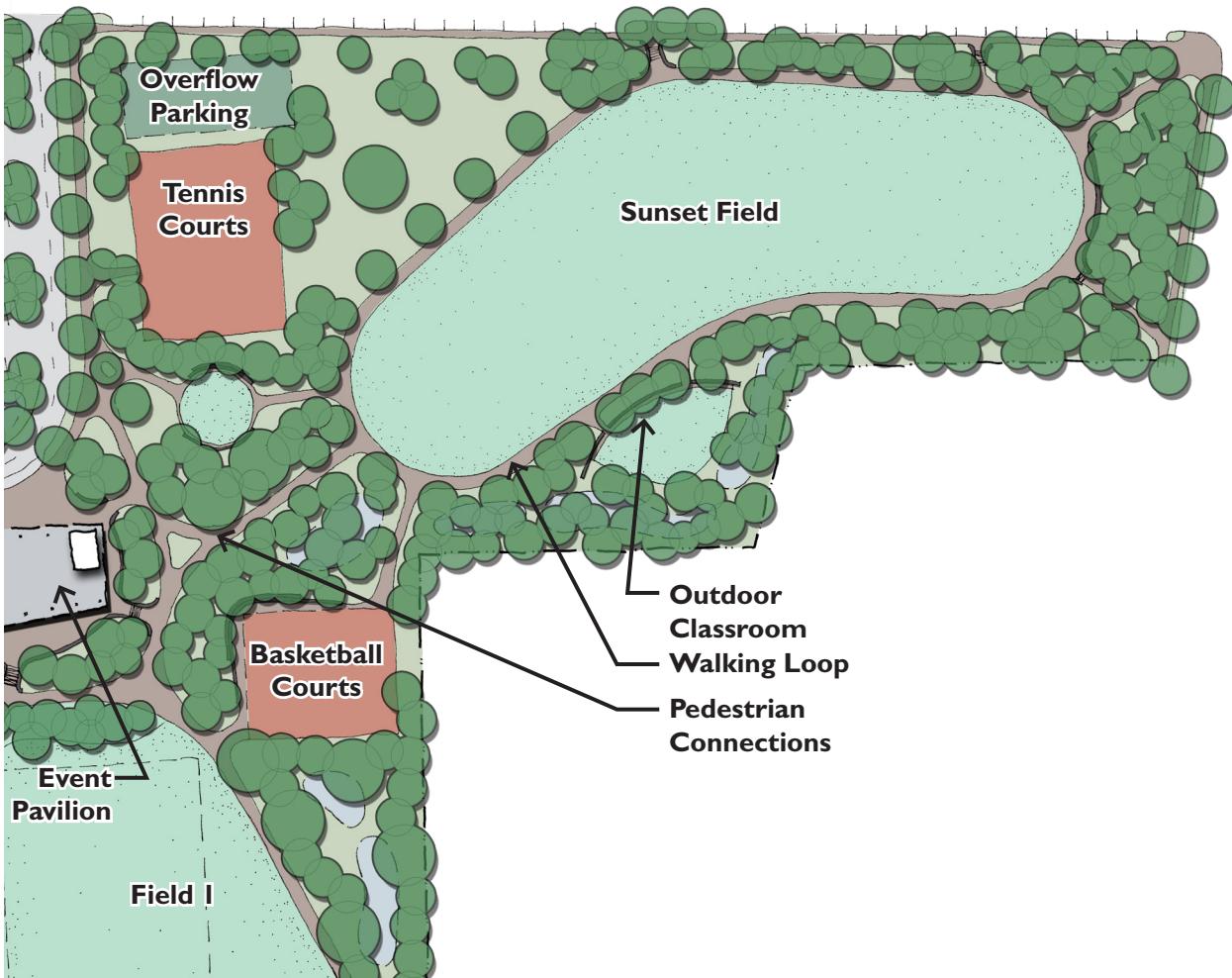


Figure E.7: South End

New walkways transform Sunset Field into a community green for the Normaltown area, with new pedestrian connections providing access into and through Bishop Park.



Figure E.8: Sunset Field

A new quarter-mile walking loop encircles Sunset Field. Outdoor classrooms (left) provide spaces for fitness classes. Removal of the covered tennis structure improves pedestrian connections from Oglethorpe Avenue and Sunset Drive into the Park Hub, and provides views of the Event Pavilion and GWC.

sidewalks are provided along all the park's street edges, as are improved walkways within the park.

**New Entrances.** Three primary pedestrian entrances are provided into the park: one at Oglethorpe and Sunset, one at the southern end of the Hawthorne frontage, and one at the northern end. Each entrance includes a dramatic entrance into the park with an open view of a multi-purpose field and welcoming signage. Additional connection to Oglethorpe Avenue, stairways from Sunset Drive, and an additional entry point on Hawthorne Avenue supplement these new primary pedestrian gateways.

**Walking Loops.** Two walking loops support wellness-related activities in the park. A quarter-mile loop rings the Sunset Field, allowing for shorter, faster-paced laps. A 1 kilometer loop passes through the Park Hub and North End, with dynamic views of many park features. Each feature is located in proximity to other wellness-related elements, facilitating more complex wellness programming.

**Hawthorne Sidewalk.** Adjustments to the locations of Fields 1, 2, and 3 facilitate providing 20 feet of additional right-of-way on Hawthorne Avenue. This right-of-way allows for future bike lanes, street trees, and a sidewalk along the corridor. A crosswalk is suggested at a park entrance between Fields 2 and 3, opposite the YMCA's primary entrance, and midway between two existing traffic signals.

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