

Park Edges:

Most of the perimeter of the park has residential uses that are situated on a higher elevation. This then prevents views from the park to the residences and also limits views from the residences to the park itself. These high slope banks also function as buffer zones so that park activities are limited to landscape and natural areas. Some residences near the Ottinger Road entrance may need to be buffered with shrubs and trees to limit any negative impacts.

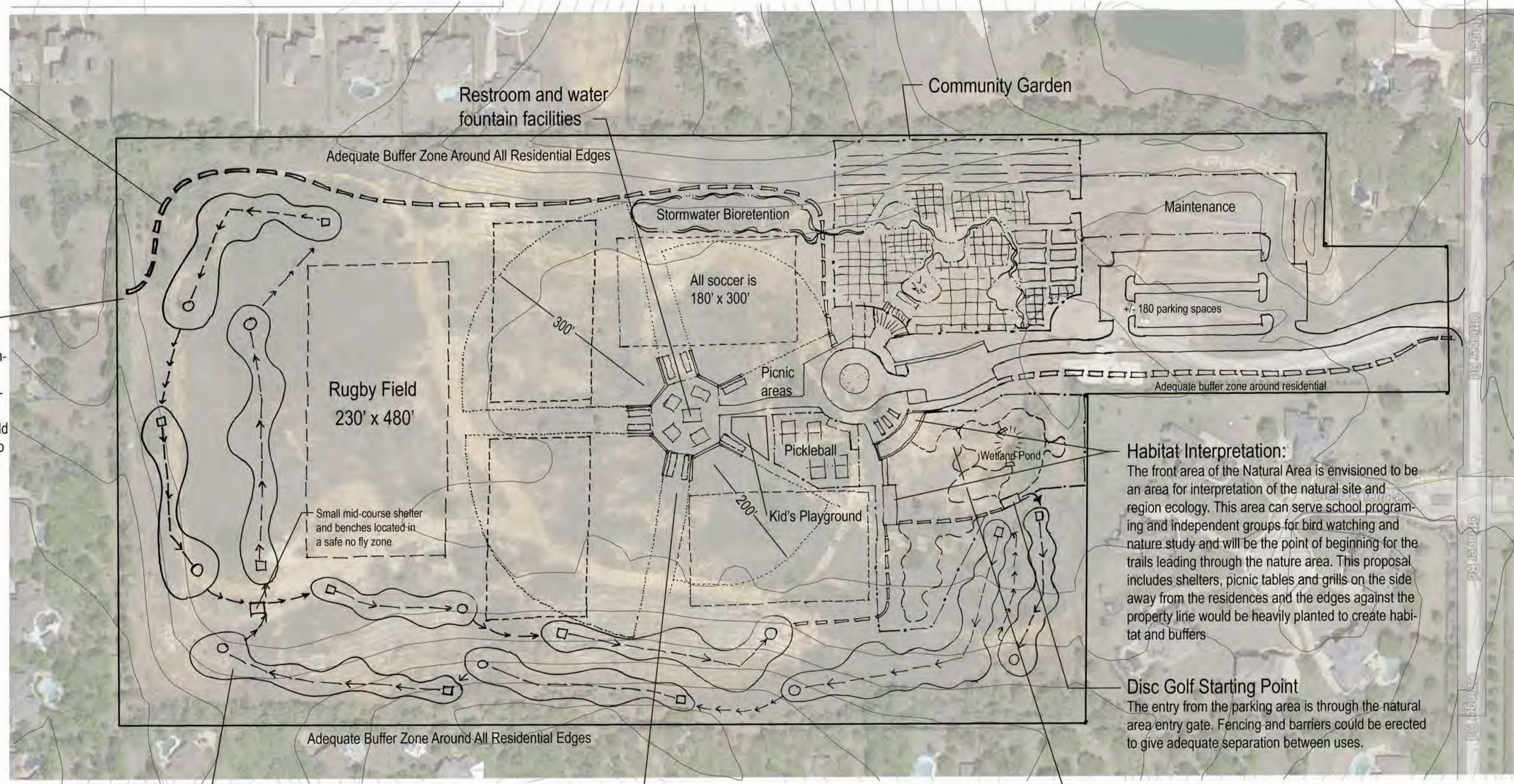
Community Garden:

Developing a successful community garden requires that there is a community of volunteers nearby that are eager, willing and organized to take this challenge on. "Build it and they will come" does not work. This project must start with neighborhood discussions. The location is by the yard waste area, on purpose, to take advantage of the available organic material for soil building, compost, and mulch. Composting bins need to be designed so that materials can be moved and turned at the proper rates. The overall park will be graded such so that the center pavilion of the park is on a high point. This means that stormwater can be drained to the northern edge of the park. The stormwater should first be drained into a bio-detention pond so that the water can be filtered and cleaned appropriately.

Passing through this area, the water can then be stored in cisterns or flow through a series of berm and swales for natural irrigation methods. Permaculture techniques can be employed as well as "food forest" strategies so that the overall garden becomes an amazing educational site for all ages. Additionally, a series of fruit and nut trees to perform both food production as well as buffering from the adjacent neighbors could also be considered. The garden should be phased and the first phase should be very small. This site is approximately 2.75 acres and a quarter acre may be a good size to start with. The remainder of the property can be utilized in tree farming until a larger community garden space is warranted. The City may want to farm trees on the land for future plantings in street renovations or other civic projects around the city.

Maintenance Yard:

The current uses in the park are for storage of yard wastes and chipping and shredding of these materials for mulch. This operation could continue to a limited extent and could remain a facility for area residents for continuing yard waste disposal. The yard will also serve as a location for soils and mulches to be used at the community garden as well as the overall park maintenance.



Park Trail:

The trail shown on the plan is proposed to be the primary trail going across the entire park. The trail design and alignment will ultimately be decided through public engagement but this trail is proposed to be a paved trail to accommodate biking, running, and walking, with the appropriate design section to accommodate of all these modes safely as defined by current standards.

West End Trail Connection;

A city trail connection point exists on the west side of the park along Vanderbilt Drive. Two important parks are in this area and are dependent on trail connections for the successful patronage of the parks and with the lack of trails in this section of the city, these segments would be important. These sections also contribute to a significant loop that includes Ottinger Road, and Melody Lane.

Overall Concept:

During this plan update process, there were several conversations, goals, and ideas about the vision for this park and how it should serve the City. First and foremost, the park design must consider adjoining residents and neighborhoods that could be impacted the most. This is a quieter part of the City and access is off of Ottinger Road which is a low speed and low traffic two-lane roadway. Uses need to be compatible with the surroundings and the park should be one that serves a wide variety of activities.

Due to the high level of need for practice areas expressed by area youth sports groups, one of the goals was to include such facilities in this park. The disc golf and the sports fields, all go toward the purpose of activating youth to be outdoors whether in an organized team event or in informal play. It was also important to include a significant amount of passive space and the lower elevation of the site provided the perfect location to transform this drainage area into a forested habitat that could support a variety of wildlife, mostly birds. The significant buffer areas along the perimeter serve to support the passive character and natural habitat as well as buffering adjoining residences. Finally, promoting a healthy community is supported by developing a community garden that is adjacent to the existing yard waste site. Both functions work well together for promoting a more sustainable agenda. This is discussed later in this document.

Disc Golf:

Disc golf is a fast growing sport among young adults and youth. Though this has not been discussed in public specifically for this site, it is a fitting use since the site is highly disturbed to begin with, and the activity is not a high level of sound generation. Having high banks along the park edges creates a natural protection edge. The majority of the course development would involve the equipment for the holes and tees as well as significant tree plantings contributing to an enhanced forest for the park. The disc golf starting point would be from an entry point through the natural area. Fencing and barriers can be erected to give adequate separation between uses. Being a facility attractive to youth, disc golf contributes to a higher level of activity for these age groups that is much needed for maturing into an active lifestyle.

This course is conceptualized as a moderate length course appropriate for beginning and mid level skilled players. In part it is envisioned to take advantage of the sloped areas for potentially two of the holes to add a bit of challenge for skill development.

Sports Fields:

One of the most significant set of comments received during the stakeholder interviews was the high need for soccer and ball practice areas, not formal, lighted playing fields. Develop this space for use by both ball players as well as practice soccer. The level of field development on the site is to be limited to site grading and playing surface preparation and possibly markers. No lights will be added. Backstops, bleachers, and the associated central plaza including restrooms and shade for gatherings would be a permanent construction. The plaza would be designed to be multi-functional including non-sporting event days. Parking areas will be provided for the ease of moving equipment and to provide access to shaded viewing areas with bleachers. The soccer fields are sized for all leagues through U19 so that smaller practice areas can be marked out and used for all ages. On the western end of the parkland is space allocated for Rugby. The spaces between the fields should be heavily planted with trees for shade where it does not interfere with various field marking arrangements or play safety. An additional use of 4 Pickleball Courts could be added as shown in the concept plan. This is a game becoming popular with seniors, and was requested by the tennis stakeholders. These courts are smaller and less costly to build. This could be an alternative element to a larger kids play area at the same location.

Natural Area:

Due to the site and the opportunities available, an area in the eastern portion of the site is the lowest point of the site and therefore provides essential drainage functions as well as the high potential for a restored natural area. Park users are provided a small patch of land that can be enhanced for wildlife viewing, particularly bird watching. As a passive space, picnicking, reading and other passive recreation are fully compatible. This area also provides a significant buffer from more active areas for the park. Boundaries will be heavily planted with wildlife habitat and food. The front area of the Natural Area is envisioned to be an area for interpretation of the natural site and region ecology. This area can serve school programming and independent groups for bird watching and nature study and will be the point of beginning for the trails leading through the nature area. This proposal includes shelters, picnic tables and grills on the side away from the residences and the edges against the property line would be heavily planted to create habitat, forage, and buffers.

Habitat Interpretation:

The front area of the Natural Area is envisioned to be an area for interpretation of the natural site and region ecology. This area can serve school programming and independent groups for bird watching and nature study and will be the point of beginning for the trails leading through the nature area. This proposal includes shelters, picnic tables and grills on the side away from the residences and the edges against the property line would be heavily planted to create habitat and buffers.

Disc Golf Starting Point

The entry from the parking area is through the natural area entry gate. Fencing and barriers could be erected to give adequate separation between uses.

