



*Our Mission is to Provide Quality Public
Services in a Fiscally Responsible Manner
While Preserving the City's Open Space
Character*

NOTICE OF MEETING

**City of Lake Elmo Park Commission
3800 Laverne Avenue North
November 21, 2016 6:30 PM**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Approve Agenda
3. Approve Minutes
 - a) October 3, 2016
4. Savona Park
5. Lions Park
6. Sunfish Lake Park Master Plan
7. Tablyn Park - temp lights and warming house
8. December Meeting Agenda
 - a) Neighborways Presentation-UWRF Students
 - b) 2017 Work Plan
9. Staff Reports & Commission Update
10. Adjourn

****Note: Every effort will be made to accommodate person or persons that need special considerations to attend this meeting due to a health condition or disability. Please contact the Lake Elmo City Clerk if you are in need of special accommodations.*

MINUTES

City of Lake Elmo Park Commission October 3, 2016

Members Present: Chair Weis, Commissioners Nelson, Zeno, Steele, Nuenfeldt

Members Absent: Commissioners Frick, Hartley, Ames,

Others Present: Administrator Handt, Planner Emily Becker, Public Works Director Rob Weldon, Tucker Pierce from The Savona Neighborhood

The meeting was called to order by Chair Weis at 6:30 PM.

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Nuenfeldt, seconded by Nelson to approve the agenda. Motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Weis requested a correction of spelling of his last name.

Zeno motioned, seconded by Nuenfeldt to approve the September 19, 2016 Minutes as amended. Motion passed 3-0-2. Weis and Steele abstained.

Savona Park

Administrator Handt conveyed to the Park Commission, a rough estimate of \$100,000 for Phase 1 of a neighborhood park.

This includes rubber mulch, half- court basketball court, sport court, zip line, bocce ball, picnic tables and benches.

The rough estimate for future phases of the park was \$100,000, which included badminton net, Second bocce ball court, and to continue to add on to the playground.

Tucker Pierce represented Savona Neighborhood, and a discussion was held about if using rubber mulch was the best option. Commissioner Steele would like more research done to establish the best practice used throughout the country. Demographics were also discussed, the neighborhood is presently 1/3 occupied including approximately 60 children between 2months and 18 years with the majority under 12 years old. Pierce reported that there were about 20 neighbors interested in helping with the labor.

Weis motioned to direct staff to start looking for playground equipment providers and to start a Concept plan layout. Steele seconded the motion and motion passed 5-0.

November Meeting

Lions Park
Sunfish lake Park Plan
Neighborways Research

Staff Reports and Commission Update

Handt mentioned Lions Park progress, improvements to Tablyn that were approved by Council, and concrete curbing at Easton Village Park.

Nuenfeldt asked about rubber mulch or something on the surface at the Easton village Park.

She also asked about picnic tables at Tartan Park.

Zeno mentioned concerns about Kleis Park and folks driving into the park.

Meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

**Respectfully Submitted,
Kristina Handt**



PARKS COMMISSION COMMUNICATION

DATE: 11/21/2016

ITEM #: 4

AGENDA ITEM: Savona Park
SUBMITTED BY: Emily Becker, City Planner
REVIEWED BY: Kristina Handt, City Administrator
Rob Weldon, Public Works Director

BACKGROUND:

At its October 3rd meeting, the Parks Commission met with a few representatives of the Savona neighborhood, who, after surveying other residents and meeting with the Parks Commission in August, presented a possible phasing plan for the park, detailing desired amenities.

Staff, after looking through past documents presented to the Parks Commission regarding Savona Park, realized that a Concept Plan for Savona Park had been previously prepared by Savona engineers that included the desired amenities. This Concept Plan, along with some edits, is included with this report.

ISSUE BEFORE COMMISSION:

Staff respectfully requests that the Commission review the proposed Concept Plan and proposed pricing and make recommendations.

PROPOSAL DETAILS/ANALYSIS:

Staff will discuss with the Parks Commission proposed pricing during the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Parks Commission discuss the proposed Concept Plan for Savona Park as well as make recommendation about what should be specifically included in terms of playground equipment in the park.

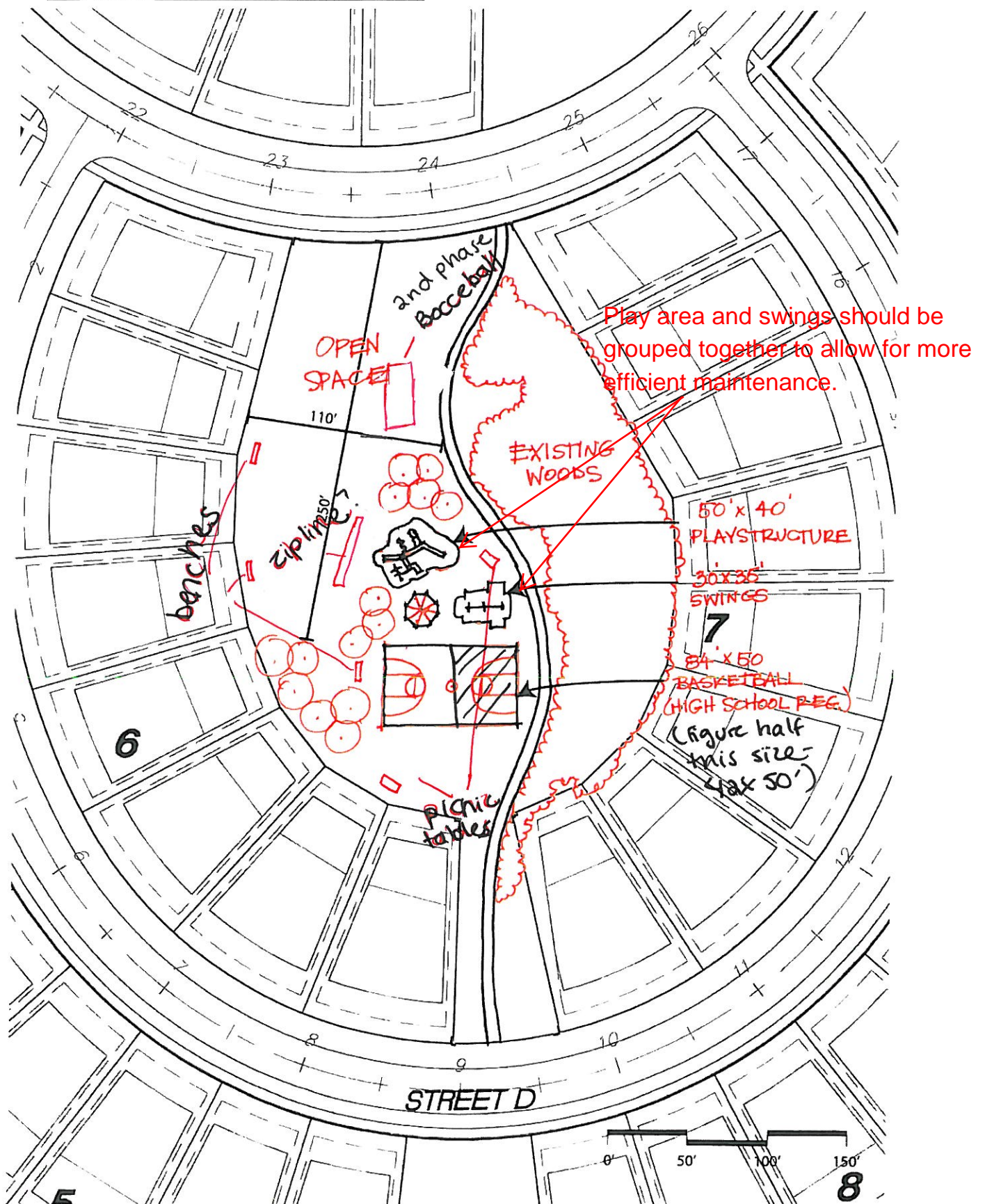
ATTACHMENTS

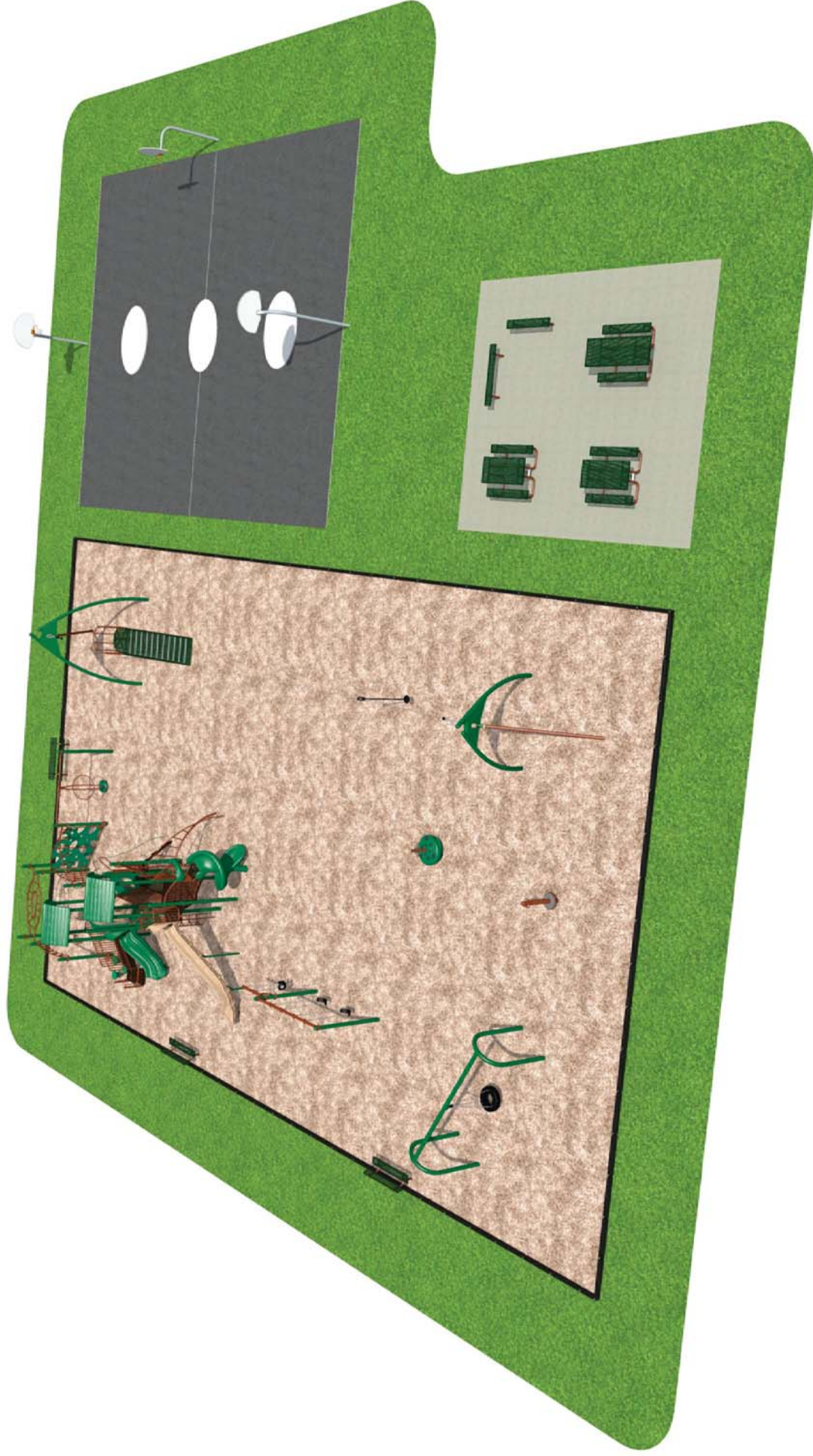
- Savona Park Aerial and Concept Plan
- Savona Park Equipment Proposals from Midwest Playscapes and Webber Design

Savona Park Aerial



CONCEPT SKETCH PLAN





Savona

Lake Elmo, MN

Sales Representative

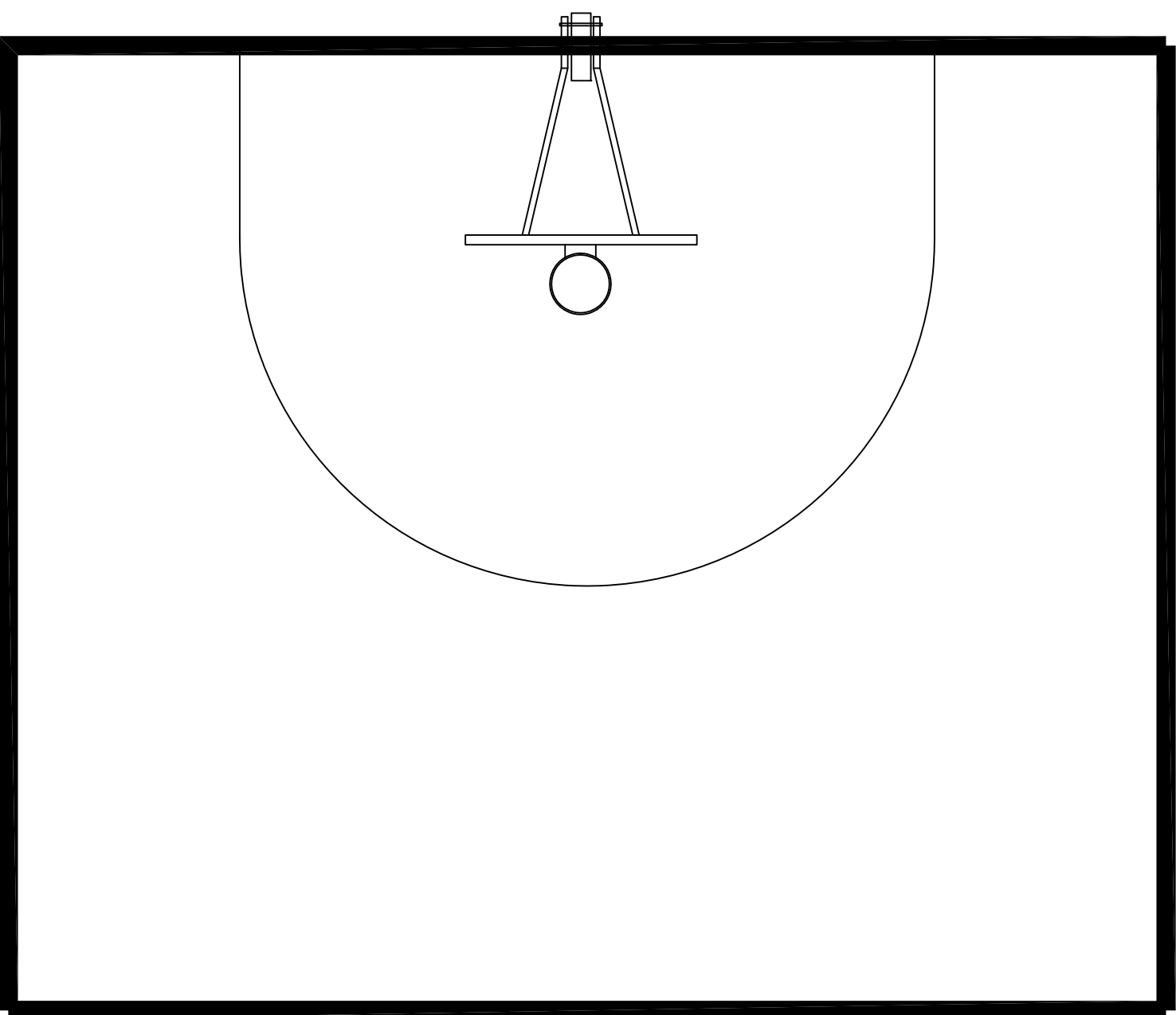
Equipment Manufacturer



16-4302B

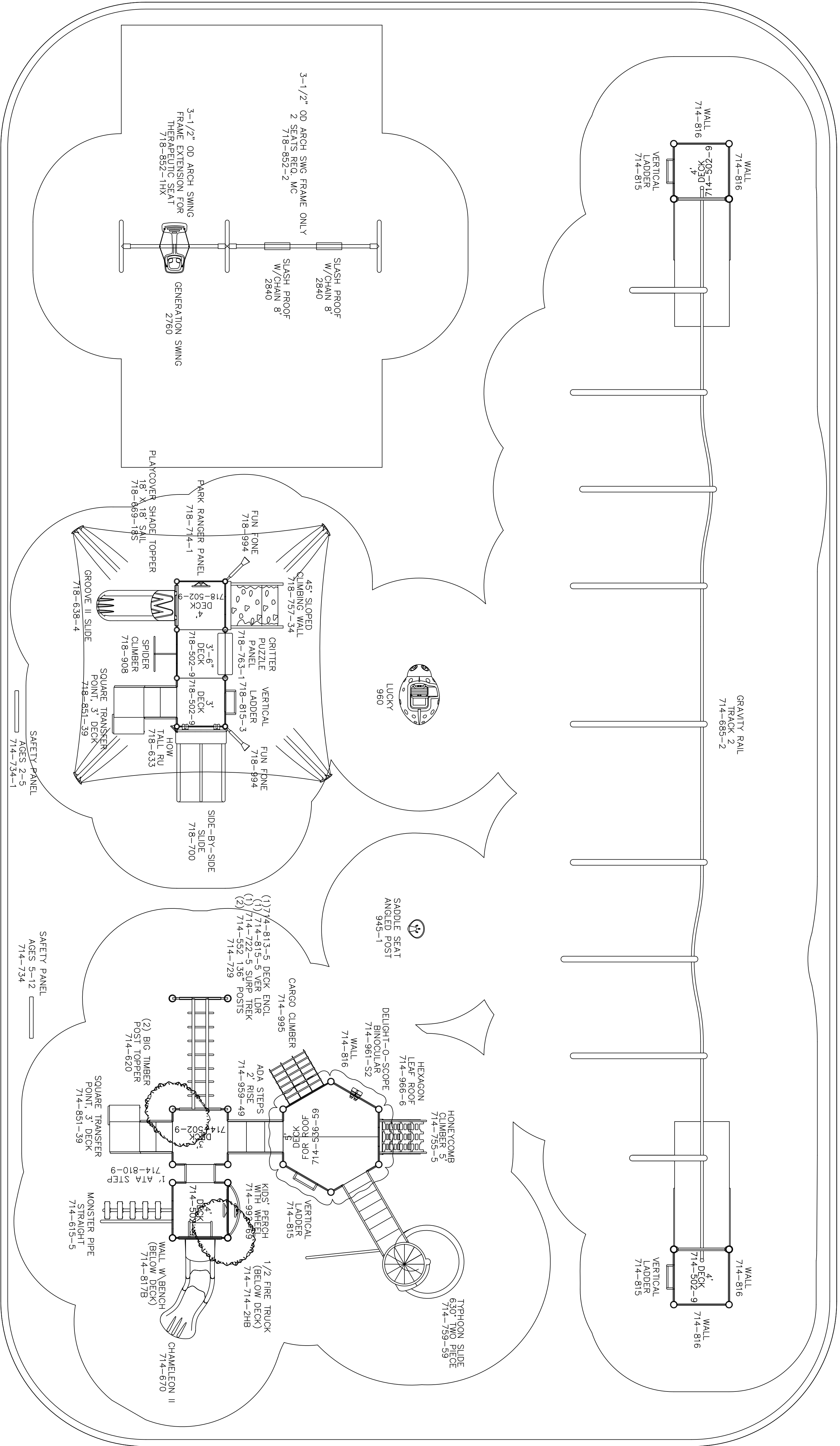
2-5 PLAY AREA				
ELEVATED PLAY ACTIVITIES - TOTAL	7	REQD	4	
ELEVATED PLAY ACTIVITIES ACCESSIBLE BY TRANSFER	7	REQD	4	
ELEVATED PLAY ACTIVITIES ACCESSIBLE BY RAMP	0	REQD	0	
GROUND LEVEL ACTIVITIES ACCESSIBLE BY RAMP	4	REQD	2	
GROUND LEVEL ACTIVITY TYPE	4	REQD	2	
GROUND LEVEL ACTIVITY QUANTITY	4	REQD	2	

AREA: 6072 SQUARE FEET
PERIMETER: 309'
The information provided is for
estimation purposes only.



5-12 PLAY AREA				
ELEVATED PLAY ACTIVITIES - TOTAL	9	REQD	5	
ELEVATED PLAY ACTIVITIES ACCESSIBLE BY TRANSFER	9	REQD	5	
ELEVATED PLAY ACTIVITIES ACCESSIBLE BY RAMP	0	REQD	0	
GROUND LEVEL ACTIVITIES ACCESSIBLE BY RAMP	5	REQD	3	
GROUND LEVEL ACTIVITY TYPE	6	REQD	3	
GROUND LEVEL ACTIVITY QUANTITY	6	REQD	3	

SAVONA PARK (OPTION 1) LAKE ELMO, MN



Play Area Capacity: 120-130

To promote safe and proper equipment use by children, Miracle recommends the installation of either a Miracle safety sign or other appropriate safety signage near each playsystem's main entry point(s) to inform parents and supervisors of the age appropriateness of the playsystem and general rules for safe play.



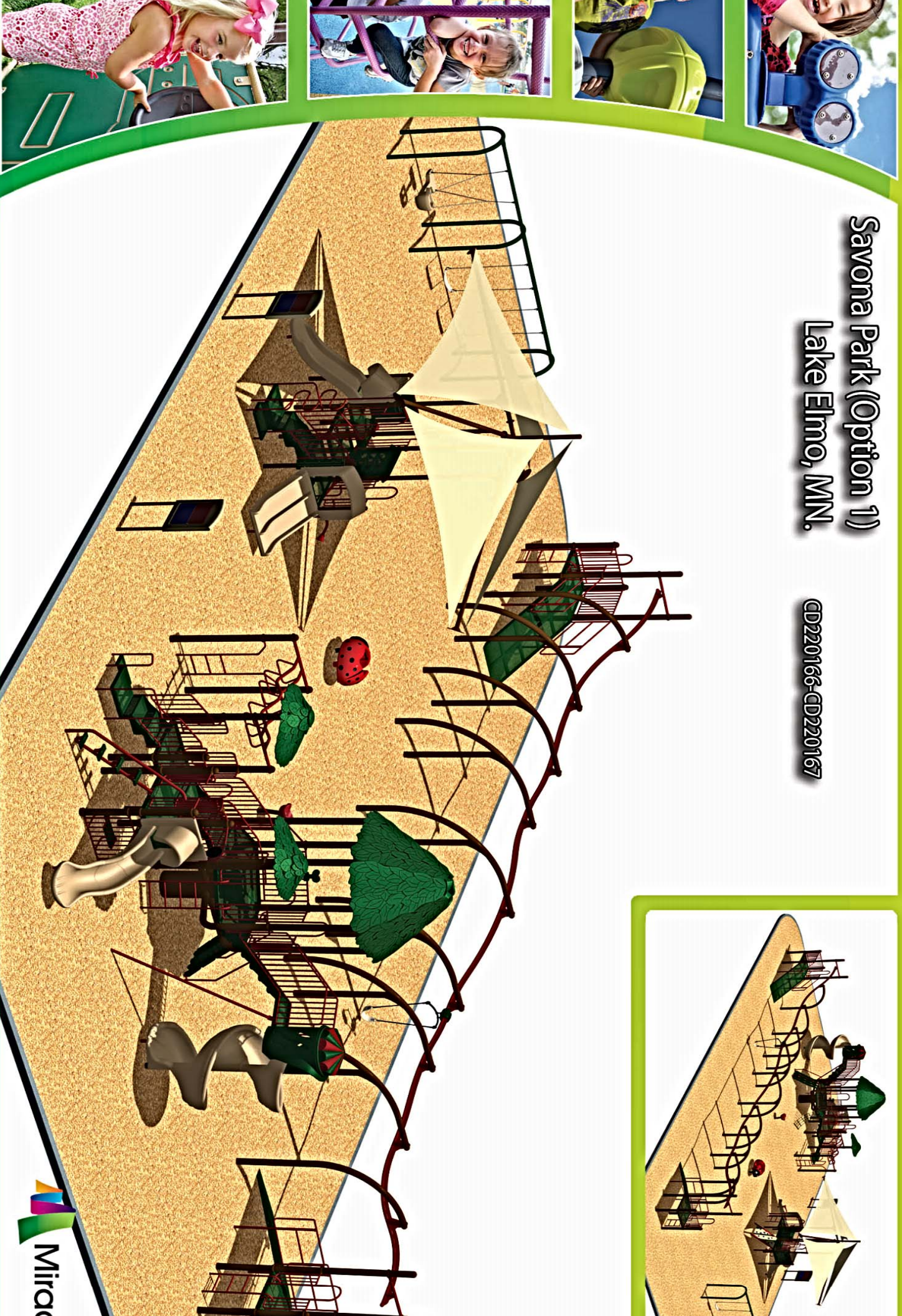
THE PLAY COMPONENTS IDENTIFIED IN THIS PLAN ARE IPEMA CERTIFIED. THE USE AND LAYOUT OF THESE COMPONENTS CONFORM TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF ASTM F1487.
AN ENERGY ABSORBING PROTECTIVE SURFACE IS REQUIRED UNDER & AROUND ALL PLAY SYSTEMS.

CD220166-167		DESIGNED FOR AGES 2-5 & 5-12		DATE: 11/14/2016	
✓	COMPLIES TO CPSC	0	QUANTITY:	AR	
✓	COMPLIES TO ASTM	0	ADDITIONAL GROUND LEVEL ACCESSIBLE ITEMS NEEDED FOR ADA COMPLIANCE		
✓	COMPLIES TO ADA	0	SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"		



Savona Park (Option 1) Lake Elmo, MN.

CD220166-CD220167





STAFF REPORT

DATE: November 21, 2016
ITEM #: 5

TO: Parks Commission
FROM: Kristina Handt, City Administrator
AGENDA ITEM: Lions Park Design

BACKGROUND:

Following the joint work shop on September 13th, at the September 20th City Council meeting, the Council approved a contract with Miller Architecture Inc. for design services for Lions' Park.

ISSUE FOR DISCUSSION:

What improvements are needed at Lions Park? How are they prioritized within the available budget?

PROPOSAL DETAILS/ANALYSIS:

Brady Hickcox, Miller Architecture Inc., will be at the meeting to begin discussions on what improvements to Lions Park should be included in the design. Included in your packet is concept plan for some of the improvements originally sought but within the allotted budget. Some items originally discussed are not going to be able to be completed within the allotted budget. Parks Commission should help to prioritize the improvements based upon what they have heard from users and community members.

Description of possible improvements that were included in the RFP issued in May were:

The City of Lake Elmo is in the process of renovating an existing little league baseball field complex consisting of a natural grass infield and outfield, a concession building, restrooms, dugouts, bleachers, fully fenced perimeter, a scoreboard, and field lighting that meets the spirit of the city's dark sky night time lighting regulations. It is the goal of this project to design and bid a renovated version of the baseball complex on the existing site. Ideally this project will provide for a safe natural grass field of play and full fencing. It will also contain concession/public bathroom areas, storage, scoreboard, backstop, dugouts, and fan bleachers at a minimum. Other possible improvements may include a ticket booth, batting and practice areas, team meeting area, warning tracks, brick/veneer detailing for fences, announcers booth, parking and year round uses such as ice skating /hockey rink, prep kitchen and warming house.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The 2016-2020 CIP included \$40,000 for grading the field at Lions Park. The Parks Commission 2017-2021 CIP recommendations include \$150,000 for improvements to Lions Park. The total request therefore was \$190,000.

The Park Dedication Fund has a projected balance of \$885,000 by the end of 2016

Miller's not to exceed cost is \$27,500. In addition, the cost of the survey for the Lions Park will be \$3,570. This would leave approximately \$158,930 available for improvements in the \$190,000 budget.

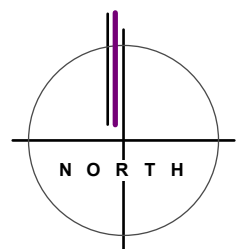
OPTIONS:

- 1) Provide specific recommendations on what improvements to include in the design
- 2) Solicit more feedback from the community and park users before making a final recommendation

OPTION ONE: FIELD IMPROVEMENTS

RE-GRADE FIELD.....	\$16,500
HYDRO-SEED OUTFIELD.....	\$12,100
NEW DUGOUTS.....	\$24,750
PERIMETER FENCE INFILL.....	\$5,000
	\$58,350

<div>NEW PERIMETER FENCE</div> <div>[745 LF 6' CHAINLINK FENCE, 155' LF 18' CHAINLINK FENCE W/ BACKSTOP]</div> <div>\$22,000</div>
<div>NEW HYDRO-SEED OUTFIELD</div> <div>[36,000 S.F. HYRDO-SEED TURF]</div> <div>\$12,100</div>
<div>NEW SOD</div> <div>[1000 S.F. NEW SOD @ INFIELD PERIMETER]</div> <div>\$5,500</div>
<div>2 NEW DUGOUTS</div> <div>[CONCRETE BLOCK (CMU) WALLS W/ CONCRETE FLOOR, WOOD SHELVES, AND WOOD BENCH. WOOD FRAME & METAL ROOF 8'X36']</div> <div>\$24,750</div>
<div>3 NEW BLEACHERS</div> <div>[81 LF 5-ROW ALUMINUM]</div> <div>\$19,800</div>
<div>NEW ANNOUNCER (P/A) BOOTH</div> <div>[CONCRETE BLOCK (CMU) WALLS W/ CONCRETE FLOOR, WOOD FRAMED 2ND FLOOR STRUCTURE AND STAIRS. METAL ROLL-TOP SHUTTER W/ WINDOW, WOOD FRAME & METAL ROOF 10'X20']</div> <div>\$11,000</div>
<div>EXISTING CONCESSION STAND</div> <div>[UPDATE EX. EXTERIOR FINISHES AND INTERIOR FINISHES - PAINT]</div> <div>\$1000</div>



CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN
1" = 30'



OPTION TWO: ALL UPGRADES

RE-GRADE FIELD.....	\$16,500
NEW INFIELD, ETC.....	\$13,200
HYDRO-SEED OUTFIELD.....	\$12,100
SOD INFIELD PERIMETER.....	\$5,500
NEW DUGOUTS.....	\$24,750
PERIMETER FENCE.....	\$22,000
BATTING CAGES.....	\$5,500
IRRIGATION.....	\$6,600
BLEACHERS.....	\$19,800
ANNOUNCER BOOTH.....	\$11,000
CONCESSION STAND.....	\$1,000
	\$137,950

<div>RE-GRADE FIELD</div> <div>[RE-GRADE ENTIRE FIELD AND SURROUNDING PERIMETER FOR PROPER DRAINAGE - 72,000 +/- S.F.]</div> <div>\$16,500</div>
<div>NEW INFIELD, WARNING TRACK, BATTING CAGE GRAVEL/DIRT</div> <div>[20,000 S.F. GRAVEL/DIRT MIXTURE]</div> <div>\$13,200</div>
<div>BATTING CAGES</div> <div>[STRUCTURE AND NETS]</div> <div>\$5,500</div>
<div>IRRIGATION SYSTEM</div> <div></div> <div>\$6,600</div>

*****COST ESTIMATES BASED ON SIMILAR PROJECT COMPLETED IN CENTRAL MINNESOTA. ACTUAL COSTS MAY VARY BASED ON LOCATION. ENGINEERING & CONSULTATION FEES NOT INCLUDED*****

LIONS PARK BASEBALL FIELD

FIELD RENOVATION & UPGRADES

LAKE ELMO, MN

SHEET NO.
P-101
07 . 28 . 2016



320.251.4109 | 320.251.4693 fx
3335 West St Germain Street
PO Box 1228
St Cloud, MN 56302



PARKS COMMISSION COMMUNICATION

DATE: 11/21/16

ITEM #: 6

AGENDA ITEM: A Guide to the Development and Usage of Sunfish Lake Park

SUBMITTED BY: Emily Becker, City Planner

REVIEWED BY: Kristina Handt, City Administrator

BACKGROUND:

A Parks Commission subcommittee developed a long-term vision for the development of Sunfish Lake Park through the creation of the document entitled A Guide to the Development and Usage of Sunfish Lake Park (Guide). This Guide was presented to Council in June of 2015 but has not yet been officially adopted. The Minnesota Land Trust, to which a conservation easement was granted by the City over certain areas of the park, recently reviewed the document and made comments. Staff has prepared Minnesota Land Trust-recommended amendments to the plan for the Parks Commission's review. Language from the Sunfish Lake Park Area 2 Concept Plan approved by the MN Land Trust in 2009 was incorporated in to the Guide to maintain consistency.

ISSUE BEFORE COMMISSION:

Staff respectfully requests that the Commission review the recommended amendments made by the Minnesota Land Trust.

PROPOSAL DETAILS/ANALYSIS:

Staff will again present the Guide to Council for approval once the Commission has reviewed and made recommendation regarding the amendments.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Commission recommend approval of amendments to 'A Guide to the Development and Usage of Sunfish Lake Park.'

ATTACHMENTS:

- Staff Edits based on MN Land Trust Comments to 'A Guide to the Development and Usage of Sunfish Lake Park' (redlined and final draft versions)
- Previously Approved Sunfish Lake Park Area 2 Concept Plan
- Sunfish Lake Conservation Easement Area Map

A Guide to the Development and Usage of Sunfish Lake Park

A Proposal of the Lake Elmo Parks Commission

Updated November 2016

I. Purpose

In December 2013, a subcommittee of the Lake Elmo Parks Commission was charged with developing a long-term vision for the development of Sunfish Lake Park that can serve as a blueprint to city leaders through 2030. It is anticipated that this guide plan will foster improved decision-making, provide an effective timeline for development of the park, increase responsiveness to citizen requests and needs, and enhance the efficiency by which city resources are committed to the park. This plan was first reviewed by the Parks Commission as a whole on November 17, 2014, revised and approved by the Parks Commission on March 16, 2015, and forwarded for review by the City Council.

II. A History of Sunfish Lake Park

Sunfish Lake Park is by far the largest park in the Lake Elmo park system, with a total of 256 acres of forest, wetlands, and Sunfish Lake itself. Consisting mostly of land that has never been farmed owing to its thick woodland, steep slopes, and extensive wetlands, the park was created through \$750,000 park bond referendum that was passed by the citizens of Lake Elmo in 1974. The land was purchased at a significantly discounted price from owners who were committed to saving it from development, and the bond was presented to the people of Lake Elmo as a means of preserving the natural beauty of a unique wilderness for hiking trails, observing nature, cross-country skiing and other passive uses. The parkland has been described by the Nature Conservancy as having one of the best upland forest in Washington County.

Following purchase of the land, citizen volunteers planted over 5,000 trees in the park in 1975, and the city authorized expenditures to create a network of natural walking, hiking, and cross-country ski trails throughout the park as well as a split-lane entry and exit road to a dirt parking lot on the south side of the park. In May 1992, in response to citizen signatures, safety concerns, an original referendum, and ecology testimony from the DNR and Nature Conservancy, and following an examination of the park's trails by the Washington County Soil & Water Conservation District (which declared them especially prone to erosion), the Lake Elmo City Council (supported by a unanimous recommendation of the Parks Commission) passed an ordinance banning mountain biking and biking in general within the park.

In 2008, in still another significant effort on the part of the citizens of Lake Elmo to ensure that the original intent of the park – to preserve the land while encouraging passive uses of its trails – was sustained, the Parks Commission collaborated with the City Council and professional staff to create a permanent land-trust conservation easement with the Minnesota Land Trust that encompassed the entire park. This critical step, which affirmed and effectively codified the conservationist ethos informing the historical development and contemporary usage of the park, established strict parameters for preserving this unique natural resource in our city. Contained within city files are unanimous motions by the Parks Commission – which were accepted by the city council – to prohibit any form of biking in Sunfish Lake Park.

III. Principles Governing the Development of Sunfish Lake Park

In the course of developing this vision for Sunfish Lake Park, the Parks Commission has been guided by a commitment to:

- maximizing utilization of the park without compromising, diminishing, or damaging the conservation of its natural resources or changing its fundamental character as a nature preserve;
- designing diverse uses that speak to the expressed preferences and anticipated needs of the people of Lake Elmo as iterated in the 2013 park survey while remaining true to the letter and spirit of the ~~Land Grant easement of 2008~~ Conservation Easement recorded 9/22/2009 and held by the Minnesota Land Trust; and,
- recognizing the unique role that the park plays as the only significant nature preserve in the city and instituting uses that draw on the natural characteristics of the park while, at the same time, complementing the design of the Lake Elmo parks system as a whole.

IV. Proposed Development and Management of the Park

A. Area One

1. Description

“Area One” consists of approximately 216 acres of rolling forest land, woodland, wetland, open water ponds, a small meadow, and a portion of Sunfish Lake itself.

2. Utilization

Consistent with the original intent of the park, and working within the parameters of the land trust easement of 2008, Area One should be used for only low-impact activities that do not detract from conservation of this unique natural resource. Quiet, unobtrusive activities such as nature hikes, guided interpretive walks, bird watching, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, landscape painting, jogging, orienteering, photography, geocaching and orienteering are some desirable uses. Activities that should be banned include biking, mountain ~~biking (except on the road and parking lot)~~, and the use of any motorized vehicles except those needed by city personnel and their designees for maintenance of trails and flora.

Commensurate with the role of Sunfish Lake Park as the ‘crown jewel’ of the Lake Elmo parks system, the Parks Commission recommends that the City develop new, long-term approaches to increasing the use of the park in ways that will continue to conserve its natural features. The delicate balance between using the park and conserving it can be achieved most effectively by restricting uses as iterated above while 1) developing new formal programming to draw people to the park, and 2) establishing new and sustainable strategic partnerships with a variety of organizations which may share an interest in the park:

- a) New and Enhanced Formal Programming. The City of Lake Elmo must go beyond the current, largely passive standing invitation to the people of Lake Elmo to take a hike, go for a walk, or go snowshoeing in Sunfish Lake Park and develop formal programming that will actively draw people to the park. Some possible low-impact, City-organized programming could include:
 - a. Annual festivals with entertainment and refreshments in the parking lot
 - b. Geocaching
 - c. Orienteering
 - d. Citizen science programming
 - e. Interpretive talks and hikes by experts
 - f. Ski races
 - g. Photo contests
 - h. Summer runs with refreshments
 - i. Snowshoe races with refreshments
- b) Strategic Partnerships. In the long-term, the City should reach out to a wide variety of organizations which may be interested in using Area One for their own needs. Possible partners could include the Audubon Society (organized bird watching events), District 834 Schools (science classes), local colleges and universities (science research), Boy/Girl Scouts of America (various uses), and regional arts and sciences museums. Collaborations with these groups should increase usage of Area One.

3. Management of the Natural Landscape

Long-term, the efficient and cost-effective management of Sunfish Lake Park will require the development of a master “Natural Resources/Woodland Stewardship Development Plan” that will guide the management of the park’s flora and fauna, and assure a smooth articulation of these natural resources with human-made trails, signage, and capital improvements. This plan should reflect the guiding principles contained in this document. All forest and habitat management plans for property protected by conservation easement must be approved in writing by the Minnesota Land Trust. Removal of timber and other wood products as well as management of the vegetation on property protected by conservation easement must be in accordance with the approved plan.

In addition to the Plan, the Parks Commission forwards these specific recommendations for managing the park:

- a) Storm Damage. The professionals who develop the Natural Resources Development Plan should include a set of response goals and procedures for responding quickly and effectively to storm damage in partnership with professional loggers and contract foresters. Contingencies for addressing significant storm damage should exist prior to incurring actual storm damage;
- b) Trails. The park's trails are to be maintained according to a well-established annual schedule, and the City should consult with professional naturalists on the best trail coverage and on ways to mitigate erosion. Winter ski trails are to be maintained regularly and according to a well-established protocol in order to encourage more people to use the trails for cross-country skiing. Winter trails for hikers and snowshoeing enthusiasts are to be established. In addition, in order to enhance accessibility, the City should install an eight-foot wide, multi-use asphalt trail near the parking lot for those with disabilities. ~~ideally, this wide trail will run down to Sunfish Lake itself and, in the winter, serve as a gateway to ice skating on the lake.~~ Further research will need to be done on American with Disabilities Act requirements for trails within Area 1 of the park, as paved trails are only allowed as necessary to meet such requirements and must receive written approval from the Land Trust. Boardwalks should be installed in key areas to enhance access throughout the park. Additional benches should be installed along the trail as a way of opening the park and its trails to those who may need extra assistance. Finally, the trails should be assessed regularly for erosion and problem areas should be dealt with immediately.
- c) Management of Invasive Species. The park should be monitored and inspected on a regular basis for the incursion of invasive flora and insects, and the City should develop a plan for mitigating invasive species using both professional and volunteer labor.
- d) Signage. The park is quite large, and there have been not infrequent cases of visitors getting disoriented on its looping trails. Existing signage is not adequate. The Parks Commission recommends that a better master overview sign and/or informational kiosk be installed at the parking lot along with maps and more signs at critical junctions along the trails. In addition, the City should develop, in collaboration with naturalists and perhaps the Audubon Society, signs at key places in the park that will provide interpretive information on the natural landscape and wildlife.
- e) ~~Parking Lot. The parking lot that serves both Area One and Area Two should be paved as a way of encouraging greater use of the park.~~

4. Capital Improvements Area One

Given the nature of Area One, the Parks Commission envisions minimal capital improvements – mainly in the area of trails and signage.

A. Area Two

1. Description

“Area Two” consists of approximately 40 acres of rolling grasslands located immediately to the south of Area One. For several years, it was cultivated, but in 2011 the City planted prairie grasses and wildflowers in the area south and west of the parking lot.

2. Utilization

In general, the Parks Commission believes that the topography of Area Two allows for more active and diverse uses than are found in Area One. This area is envisioned as both a conserved prairie (in its pre-settlement state) and a gathering place for families. As in the case of Area One, though, utilization of this part of the park should be restricted to activities that will not diminish or damage the natural resources or conflict in any way with the long-term conservation of the area or violate the restrictions in place as part of the land trust easement. Where the focus in Area One is on upland forest and wetlands, the emphasis in Area Two is on restoration and maintenance of a long-grass prairie. Desirable uses of Area Two include:

- a. Hiking
- b. Running
- c. Snowshoeing
- d. Cross-country skiing
- e. Family picnics
- f. Nature observation
- g. Photography
- h. Landscape painting
- ~~i. Playground~~ i. Short Turf - Open Play Area
- j. Educational programming

3. Capital Improvements and Management of Area Two

In order to realize the full potential of Area Two, more significant capital improvements and non-capital improvements will be necessary:

~~Expansion of the Tall Grass Prairie. The existing prairie should be expanded approximately to the south and to the west as a way of moving towards a viable green corridor between Sunfish Lake Park and the Lake Elmo Park Reserve. The City should schedule regular burns as per the recommendation of the appropriate professionals.~~

- a. Prairie / Oak Savanna Restoration Area
Most of area 2 is slated for restoration to prairie and oak savanna. Care will be taken to research the area's likely pre-settlement plant community with the goal of restoring the site to replicate the original genetics as closely as possible. A seed mix will be used that is comprised of the species that are believed to be native to the site. The seed will

originate from the same ecoregion or in counties that adjoin this ecoregion. The installation of the restoration project and subsequent management will be based on sound and well-found ecological principles. Efforts will initially be made to restore the area to prairie with the possibility of creating areas of savanna.

b. Native Planting / Interpretive Area

The long drive into the park will be planted with plants native to the site, but in a more structured or “clustered” fashion. The goals of this somewhat more formal planting arrangement is 1) to create a defined and “showy” entrance to the park and 2) to provide effective interpretation of the various plant types.

c. Trails. ~~A new, but limited, system of paved trails should be constructed throughout the expanded tall-grass prairie. A system of boardwalks should connect the parking lot to the paved trails. Inasmuch as possible, trails should be designed for accessibility for individuals with mobility challenges. An overlook deck above the prairie with benches may enhance the enjoyment of the park by many individuals. Benches should be installed along the trails in order to help those needing extra assistance. The City should develop a plan for maintaining these trails.~~

A segment of ADA compliant hard surface trail is desired with the goal of providing a high quality interpretive experience with as much diversity as possible. A soft-surfaced mowed trail might be established throughout the perimeter of area 2 with a couple of cross-over trails designed to offer a variety of loop trail distances. Trail placement should be done with the goal of providing an effective fire break and catching as much diversity as possible while offering gentle curves for interest. Interpretive signage might be developed as a means of offering a high quality self-guided interpretive experience.

d. Nature Interpretive Center. ~~The need for a “Nature Interpretive Center” should be studied for Area 2 whose intent it will be to provide environmental programming and nature experiences for all ages. This expands the vision which draws the community to the park through formal programming and strategic partnerships. It is proposed that the site will offer synergistic activities for the public and partner with area schools, Boy and Girl Scout troops and local organizations. Active and enriched nature education classes are envisioned for preschool and grade school age children and assistance will be given to help fulfill badge requirements for scout programs. Community educational programs that complement the “spirit” of the park as well as seasonal and holiday events would be held at the Center. The building design will complement and blend with the surrounding natural habitat, have a low profile, and have windows that will bring nature into the center. It will also have modern facilities (electricity, running water and flush toilets, if feasible) with a rustic exterior and a footprint at least large enough for a 30 seat classroom. The building would serve a dual function by providing shelter and toilets for the general public who visit the park. Any needed outside lighting will be minimal. Approximately 1.5 acres in the northeast corner of area 2 is identified as space in which a modest interpretive center might be placed. The goal of the center would be~~

to provide a facility that would promote awareness, appreciation and conservation of the park's natural resources through interpretation, educational programs, activities and events. The facility might include a small indoor multi-purpose area that would be used as a gathering space or warming area in inclement or cold weather and restrooms and/or an adjacent outdoor gathering space with some overhead protection from the elements. The outdoor areas adjacent to the center would be utilized for interpretation and interactive learning opportunities. Placement of the center within the identified 1.5 acre parcel would be based on the desire for the facility to "hug" the land in a complimentary and unobtrusive fashion. The placement and design of the center should be guided by the desire for visitors to effectively observe and experience the diversity of the natural outdoor surroundings while within and just outside the facility. The structure should be rustic in nature and constructed / fabricated with materials, textures and colors that will effectively blend with the natural surroundings. The design and construction of the center should be based on sound environmental and conservation principles with the possible use of geothermal, solar, and wind for energy. The design should also reflect the city's heritage and rural character.

- e. ~~Picnic Shelter. A picnic shelter with picnic tables should be constructed on the north edge of Area Two – on the edge of the parking lot. Short Turf – Open Play Area Playground. /Short Turf - Open Play Area. An playground open play area that accommodates young children and teenagers should be installed- made available near the picnic shelter using natural materials (such as those available through "Natural Playscapes")- Natural materials that will fit well with the natural setting of the park and with written approval of the Minnesota Land Trust could be included in this area.~~
- f. Signage. Interpretive signage should be posted at key locations along the new prairie trails.
- g. Overlook Tower or Platform. It would be appropriate for the City to install an overlook tower or platform in Area 2 (with the permission of the Land Trust).
- h. Safety. Owing to the isolation of Sunfish Lake Park and the risk of vandalism, security cameras should be installed that can monitor the parking lot, picnic shelter, and playground 24 hours a day.
- i. ~~Parking Lot. The parking lot that serves both Area One and Area Two should be paved as a way of encouraging greater use of the park.~~
The parking area will include structures and amenities that will assist in the effective management of the parking area and entire park. For example, rain gardens will be installed to filter run-off from the parking area and improve water quality. An information kiosk with regulatory, directional and interpretive information will be located in the area with the goal of enhancing park visitor's experience and promoting conservation. The parking area will be defined through the placement of stones or

other natural materials in an effort to prohibit unauthorized vehicles from entering other areas of the park. The size and shape of the parking area will be guided by needs. All structures and amenities will be rustic in nature and constructed / fabricated with materials, textures and colors that will effectively blend with the natural surroundings. The parking area should be as natural as possible.

V. Area Three

Area Three, an estimated xxx acres located directly to the west of Area One along Jamaca Avenue, presents some of the greatest challenges in terms of long-term strategic planning. It consists primarily of a very large and deep depression that was left as a result of the efforts by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to mitigate pollution in this area. There is some existing fencing in this area, as well as the only western entrance to Area One of Sunfish Lake Park.

The sense of the Parks Commission is that this area has significant potential as a city dog park, natural amphitheater, soccer and/or football fields, and perhaps baseball fields. The area is quite isolated, and most visitors to this parcel will likely arrive by car; unfortunately, there are few natural areas to place a parking lot with the possible exception of the area that runs along the northern fence line of Area Three and to the east of the existing fire station.

Given the challenges of this location and its unique topography, together with the fact that there has emerged no strong demand for the types of facilities and improvements that could be naturally accommodated in this area, the Parks Commission recommends that this area not be developed at this time – except for the planting of trees in areas along the edges of the large depression. This area should be kept in reserve so that future community leaders will have a valuable resource to use as new priorities and needs emerge in the years to come. In the near future, it would be desirable to keep the area inside the large depression mowed as city resources are available so that the citizens of Lake Elmo can use it informally for pick-up games, walking their dogs, flying kites, etc. As land reserved for the future, and as an integral part of Sunfish Lake Park, Area Three should never be used for non-park purposes and should not be the site of non-park capital improvements.

Owing to the remedial actions taken by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to preserve the safety of Lake Elmo citizens, considerable acreage has been removed as use for parkland. Conversion of loss of this parkland should be pursued by the City in conjunction with appropriate legal and regulatory bodies.

Lake Elmo Park Commission Sunfish Lake Park Area 2 Concept Plan November 16, 2009

Introduction

This document is intended to complement the Conservation Easement with the Minnesota Land Trust for Sunfish Lake Park. Its purpose is to further define the permitted improvements for Area 2 of the park, a 20 acre parcel that was cropped through the summer of 2009.

Area 2 of Sunfish Lake Park is intended to be largely designated as a restored prairie / oak savanna area in which only limited improvements may be made in ways that are consistent with the primary goal of restoring this section of Sunfish Lake Park into a native plant community while making the parcel accessible to the general public for limited uses. The land may be improved to facilitate the recovery of a native plant community, including the planting of appropriate grasses and wild flowers, the construction of trails and signage subject to the design limits in effect in Area 1, and the construction of a modest warming and interpretive structure. This vision of Area 2 as primarily a native plant community containing only the very limited improvements iterated above is consistent with its topography, its unique location as part of a natural habitat area consisting of Sunfish Lake Park and the Lake Elmo Park Reserve to the south, and its designation as part of a much larger natural wildlife corridor, the Metro Greenway.

The placement and nature of any limited improvements should be guided by the needs and consideration of park users, neighbors, and most importantly, ensuring public safety.

Prairie / Oak Savanna Restoration Area

Most of area 2 is slated for restoration to prairie and oak savanna. Care will be taken to research the area's likely pre-settlement plant community with the goal of restoring the site to replicate the original genetics as closely as possible. A seed mix will be used that is comprised of the species that are believed to be native to the site. The seed will originate from the same ecoregion or in counties that adjoin this ecoregion. The installation of the restoration project and subsequent management will be based on sound and well-found ecological principles. Efforts will initially be made to restore the area to prairie with the possibility of creating areas of savanna.

Native Planting / Interpretive Area

The long drive into the park will be planted with plants native to the site, but in a more structured or "clustered" fashion. The goals of this somewhat more formal planting arrangement is 1) to create a defined and "showy" entrance to the park and 2) to provide effective interpretation of the various plant types.

Parking Area

The parking area will include structures and amenities that will assist in the effective management of the parking area and entire park. For example, rain gardens will be installed to filter run-off from the parking area and improve water

quality. An information kiosk with regulatory, directional and interpretive information will be located in the area with the goal of enhancing park visitor's experience and promoting conservation. The parking area will be defined through the placement of stones or other natural materials in an effort to prohibit unauthorized vehicles from entering other areas of the park. The size and shape of the parking area will be guided by needs.

All structures and amenities will be rustic in nature and constructed / fabricated with materials, textures and colors that will effectively blend with the natural surroundings. The parking area should be as natural as possible.

Interpretive Center / Picnic / Short Turf – Open Play Area

Interpretive Center

Approximately 1.5 acres in the northeast corner of area 2 is identified as space in which a modest interpretive center might be placed. The goal of the center would be to provide a facility that would promote awareness, appreciation and conservation of the park's natural resources through interpretation, educational programs, activities and events. The facility might include a small indoor multi-purpose area that would be used as a gathering space or warming area in inclement or cold weather and restrooms and/or an adjacent outdoor gathering space with some overhead protection from the elements. The outdoor areas adjacent to the center would be utilized for interpretation and interactive learning opportunities. Placement of the center within the identified 1.5 acre parcel would be based on the desire for the facility to "hug" the land in a complimentary and unobtrusive fashion. The placement and design of the center should be guided by the desire for visitors to effectively observe and experience the diversity of the natural outdoor surroundings while within and just outside the facility. The structure should be rustic in nature and constructed / fabricated with materials, textures and colors that will effectively blend with the natural surroundings. The design and construction of the center should be based on sound environmental and conservation principles with the possible use of geothermal, solar, and wind for energy. The design should also reflect the city's heritage and rural character.

Picnic / Short Turf – Open Play Area

This same 1.5 acre parcel is also identified as space where-in an area of short turf might be established and maintained for the purpose of providing an area for family and small group picnics and informal play. The area would lend itself to casual play such as bocce ball, "catch", tag, Frisbee, drama, badminton, kick-ball, etc. None of these play activities would be supported by the permanent placement of, or installation of equipment.

A play area specifically for children might be designed and developed that would encourage creative and active play. The play area would consist of natural materials and might include the planting / placement of native plants in a fashion that encourages creative play and movement.

Placement of this open space should be guided by the desire for the area to be accessible and safe, but not visually dominant. A small number of picnic tables might be scattered within the area.

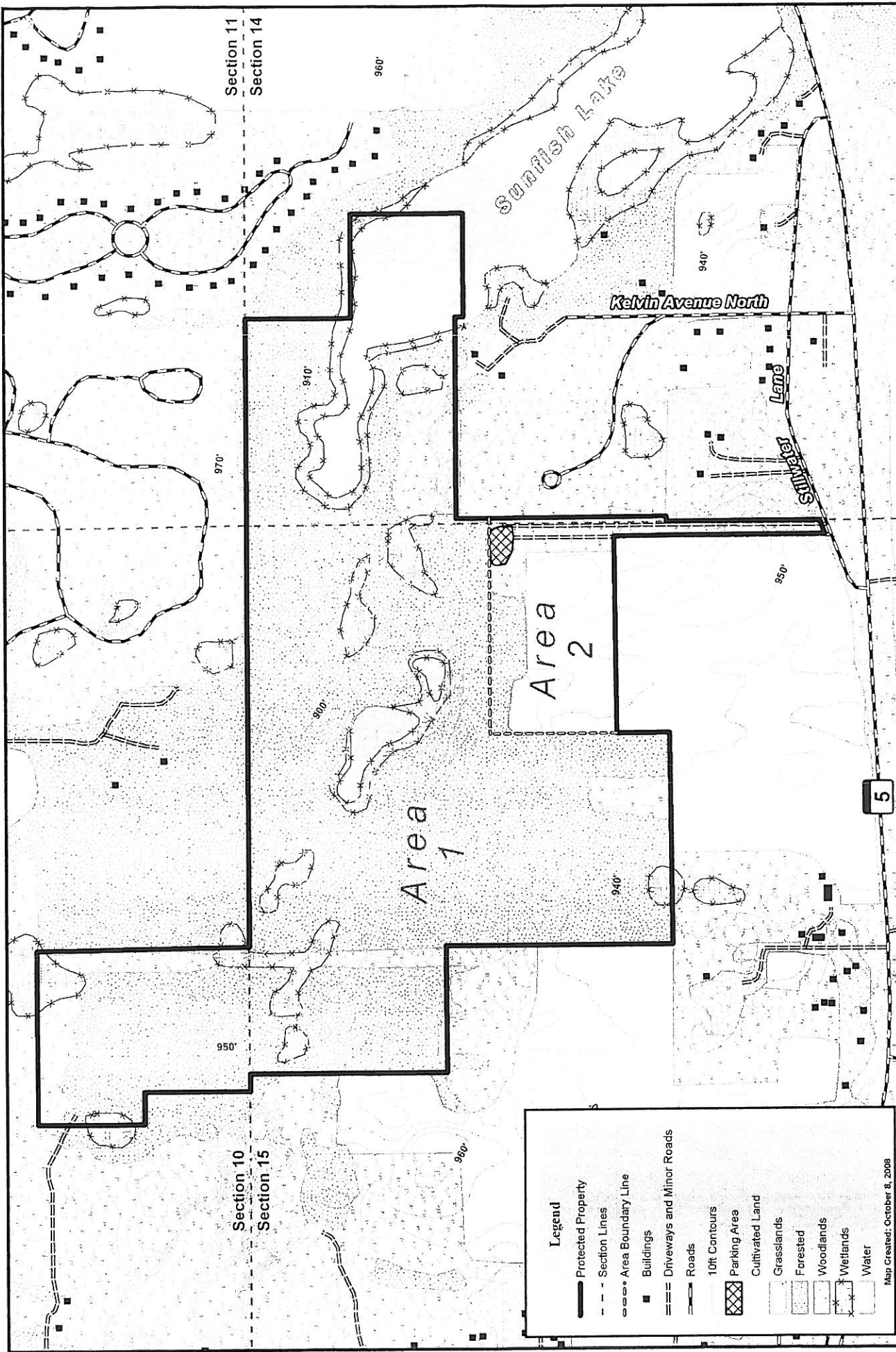
ADA Compliant hard surface trail

A segment of ADA compliant hard surface trail is desired with the goal of providing a high quality interpretive experience with as much diversity as possible.

Soft-surfaced Trail

A soft-surfaced mowed trail might be established throughout the perimeter of area 2 with a couple of cross-over trails designed to offer a variety of loop trail distances. Trail placement should be done with the goal of providing an effective fire break and catching as much diversity as possible while offering gentle curves for interest. Interpretive signage might be developed as a means of offering a high quality self-guided interpretive experience.

Exhibit B: Property Map



Legend

- Protected Property
- Section Lines
- Area Boundary Line
- Buildings
- Driveways and Minor Roads
- Roads
- 10ft Contours
- Parking Area
- Cultivated Land
- Grasslands
- Forested
- Woodlands
- Wetlands
- Water

Map Created: October 8, 2008

Map Resource Information

Protected Property, Section Lines, Area Boundary Line, Buildings, Roads, Driveways & Minor Roads, 10-Foot Contours, Parking Area, Cultivated Land, Grasslands, Forests, Wetlands, and Water created by Community GIS Services Inc.

Users of this map agree and acknowledge that the City of Lake Elmo and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources are not liable for any errors or omissions in the map data provided. GIS materials should not be relied upon to establish legal title, boundary lines, or locations of improvements.



Site: Sunfish Park - Tract: City of Lake Elmo
Washington County - Twp. 29 N Rng. 21 W Sec. 10, 14 & 15



Scale:
1" = 800'

