

Brentwood Park

Park Master Plan - April 2018



City of Raleigh
Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources

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Brentwood Park Master Plan

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Along with the Brentwood community and the City, the design team led by Susan Hatchell Landscape Architecture, PLLC (SHLA) worked to create a long-term master plan for future park development at Brentwood Park. Utilizing the public engagement framework determined by the City of Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Comprehensive Public Participation Program for Park Planning, the master planning phase began in 2016 and was completed in late 2017, with final approval expected in early 2018.

Brentwood Park is an existing 19.5-acre park in the well-established Brentwood neighborhood. Built in the 1970s, the park and Neighborhood Center building have played an important role in the history of the community. An adjacent 6.7-acre City of Raleigh Greenway parcel is located south of the existing park. Together, both parcels serve as a neighborhood park for those living nearby.

A Situation Assessment was prepared in the Spring of 2017. The document collected and analyzed community demographics, context and existing conditions. An important aspect of the document was to provide an overview of the community engagement strategies and input gathered to that point. The Situation Assessment compiled a recommended list of community members who would serve as the Citizen Planning Committee (CPC), officially appointed by the Raleigh City Council on March 21, 2017.

Throughout the summer and fall of 2017, the master plan for Brentwood Park was guided by the CPC and the public in a series of eight meetings to determine key park values and a park vision. The public determined that the most important values that should be reflected in the master plan for Brentwood Park's future development are play, nature, safety, connectivity, and accessibility.

The final proposed master plan includes a new Neighborhood Center, shelter/restroom complex, large playground, spray/mist feature, outdoor gym, improved parking areas, pedestrian connectivity and accessibility improvements, open play areas, basketball and tennis courts and nature play and environmental education areas.

Based on the community's priorities gathered through the public input process, Phase 1 of park development will focus on the upland areas of the park master plan including the shelter/restroom complex, the playground and spray/mist feature, improved parking areas and pedestrian and accessibility improvements. Funds from the 2014 Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Bond Referendum includes \$2 million dollars for both the park master plan as well as the first phase of project implementation.

Brentwood Park Master Plan

CHAPTER 1: PROJECT TIMELINE AND SCHEDULE

August 2016	Atlantic Citizens Advisory Council: Public Involvement Kick-off, Social Media and Website Launch
August - September 2016	Community Survey
September 2016	Stakeholder Interviews
April 2017	Atlantic Citizens Advisory Council Meeting
May 2, 2017	CPC Meeting #1
May 24, 2017	Public Meeting #1
June 1, 2017	CPC Meeting #2
July 13, 2017	CPC Meeting #3
July 27, 2017	Public Meeting #2
September 7, 2017	CPC Meeting #4
September 20, 2017	Public Meeting #3
November 9, 2017	CPC Meeting #5
February 15, 2018	Presentation of the Brentwood Park Master Plan to the PRGAB
March 15, 2018	Approval of the Brentwood Park Master Plan by the PRGAB
April 17, 2018	Presentation to City Council for Adoption

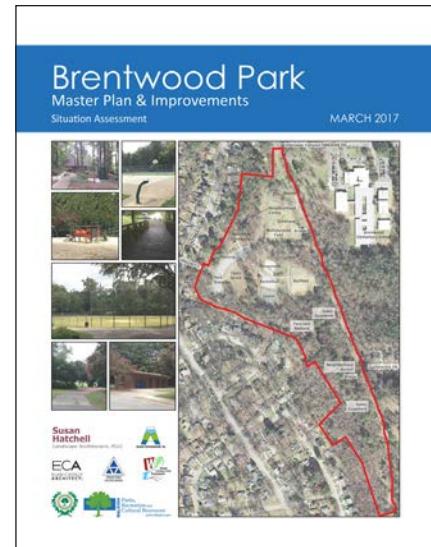
Brentwood Park Master Plan

CHAPTER 2: SITUATION ASSESSMENT

A Situation Assessment for Brentwood Park was prepared and approved in the spring of 2017. The assessment summarizes the initial analysis of the existing site conditions, site context, demographics and preliminary public outreach efforts. *See Appendix A for the Brentwood Park Master Plan and Improvements Situation Assessment.*

Key issues identified by the public in the process were safety and security, accessibility, user orientation/sense of place, opportunities for natural flood storage, neighborhood gathering spaces and destination quality.

Community members who represent the existing demographics and specific interests of the Brentwood neighborhood were recommended to participate in the Citizens Planning Committee (CPC). The final Situation Assessment and the roster of proposed committee members was presented and approved by the Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board (PRGAB) on March 16, 2017 and by City Council on March 21, 2017.



Situation Assessment



Existing Trail

Brentwood Park Master Plan

CHAPTER 3: CITIZEN PLANNING COMMITTEE

The role of the Citizen Planning Committee (CPC) is to provide direction and feedback through the master plan process while representing the larger community as a whole. The goals of the CPC include identifying and analyzing various options, recommending creative solutions for the Brentwood Park Master Plan, building consensus, preparing design and development recommendations, and presenting to the Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board (PRGAB) and City Council. *The Citizen Planning Committee Charter can be found in Appendix C.*

Volunteers for the committee were identified through the community survey conducted in August and September of 2016. All participants who indicated interest in the committee were interviewed by telephone to gain further insight about their knowledge and understanding of the community and park. Some members were interested in various aspects of the park master planning process, or were interested in specific potential park elements. The final demographic makeup of the CPC was as representative as possible of the demographic of the Brentwood neighborhood.

The following criteria were used in the selection process:

- Residents for whom this is the closest neighborhood-scaled park
- A balance in age, consistent with the project area demographics
- A balance of household types, consistent with the project area demographics
- A balance in housing tenure

Five CPC meetings were held in the summer of 2017. The public was also invited to the meetings and offered time to comment. Three public meetings were held during the process to gather additional input on the master plan.

Consensus Process

The CPC, in conjunction with city staff and the design team, utilized the Consensus Seeking pathway outlined in the City of Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department Comprehensive Public Participation Program for Park Planning. The Consensus Seeking pathway was designed to allow the public the maximum amount of input in the park planning, design and development process.



Citizen Planning Committee Meeting



Public Meeting Notification at Ingram Drive Park Entrance

Brentwood Park Master Plan

CHAPTER 4: PROJECT BACKGROUND

As a relatively affordable neighborhood within close proximity to downtown Raleigh and major transportation corridors, the Brentwood neighborhood is popular with young families, singles, as well as retirees. The racial diversity found within a two-mile radius of the park site is similar to that of Wake County, with a slightly higher rate of Hispanic residents. Nearby neighborhoods include Starmount Garden Club, Shamrock Meadow Community Support Group, Pinecrest Neighborhood, Northshore Neighborhood Association and Meadow Wood Park Homeowner's Association. The park property falls within a Low-Density Future Land Use designation and is zoned R-6, residential use up to six units per acre.

Active programming in Brentwood Park is organized by local neighborhood groups and the City of Raleigh Parks staff, which is based out of the Green Road Community Center and located 1.2 miles northeast of Brentwood Park. Green Road Park is programmed for larger community level activities such as classes, gym rental and league play. Other amenities at Green Road include a picnic shelter, two ball fields, two basketball courts, four tennis courts, six volleyball courts and a playground.

Nearby schools include Brentwood Magnet Elementary School and Torchlight Academy. Brentwood Magnet Elementary School is located immediately to the east of the park, sharing a property line along Marsh Creek. The magnet school is a NC STEM Model School of Distinction with a focus on Engineering. *See Figure 4-1, Community Context Map.*

Site Context

Brentwood Park is located within the well-established Brentwood Neighborhood between Atlantic Avenue and Capital Boulevard. The 19.5-acre park is bordered to the south and west by single family home development, to the north by Ingram Drive and to the east by Marsh Creek and Brentwood Elementary Magnet School. A 6.7-acre City of Raleigh greenway parcel is located to the south.

A part of the existing park was once the location of the Brentwood Swimming Club until the pool was decommissioned and filled in. Existing facilities and amenities on the site include an existing unstaffed Neighborhood Center, a restroom building, a picnic shelter, a multipurpose field, a playground, basketball and tennis courts, wooded areas, trails and a section of City of Raleigh Greenway. *See Figure 4-2, Site Analysis Map.*



Green Road Community Center



Brentwood Elementary

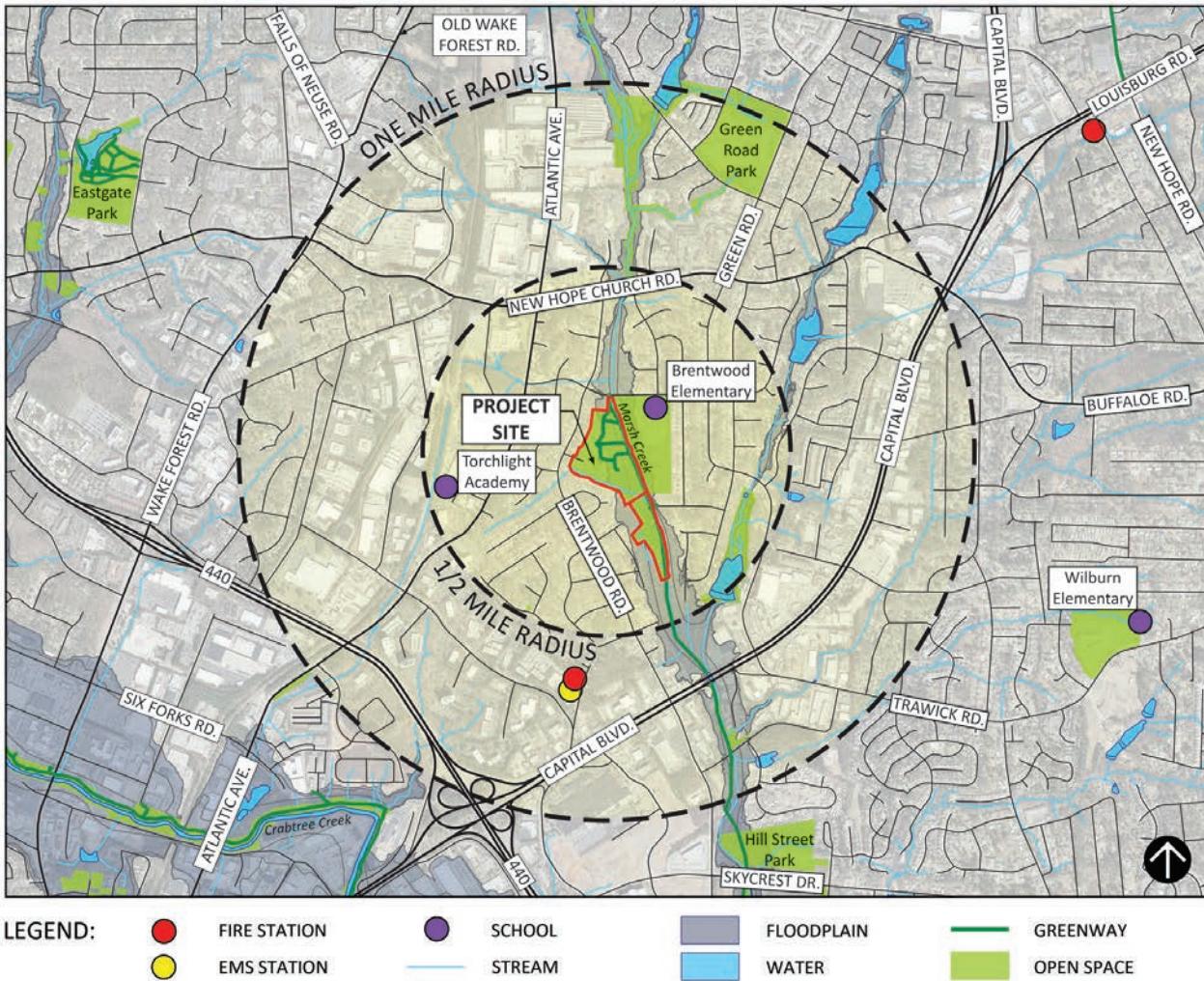


Figure 4-1: Community Context Map

Existing Conditions/Site Analysis

Perhaps the most significant identifying feature of the existing park is its location along Marsh Creek and its floodplain. Steep slopes define the edge of the floodplain, separating the low area along the creek where many recreational amenities are located from the Neighborhood Center and restroom building that are located in the upland area. The steep slopes that separate the park from east to west hinder accessibility through the park. *See Figure 4-3, Elevation Map.*

The park lies within the Neuse River Basin, a protected watershed in North Carolina. Marsh Creek as well as an unnamed tributary run through the site and both are subject to a 50' protected buffer that limits development. With any future park development, an increase in impervious surface area may require a stormwater device or purchase of a nutrient buy down. Marsh Creek is FEMA regulated, which restricts development around the stream. The City of Raleigh also restricts development within the 100-year floodplain. *See Figure 4-4, Hydrology Map.* Improvements could be made in the flood fringe, which is the area between the outer limit of the floodway and the outer limit of the floodplain. Any improvements

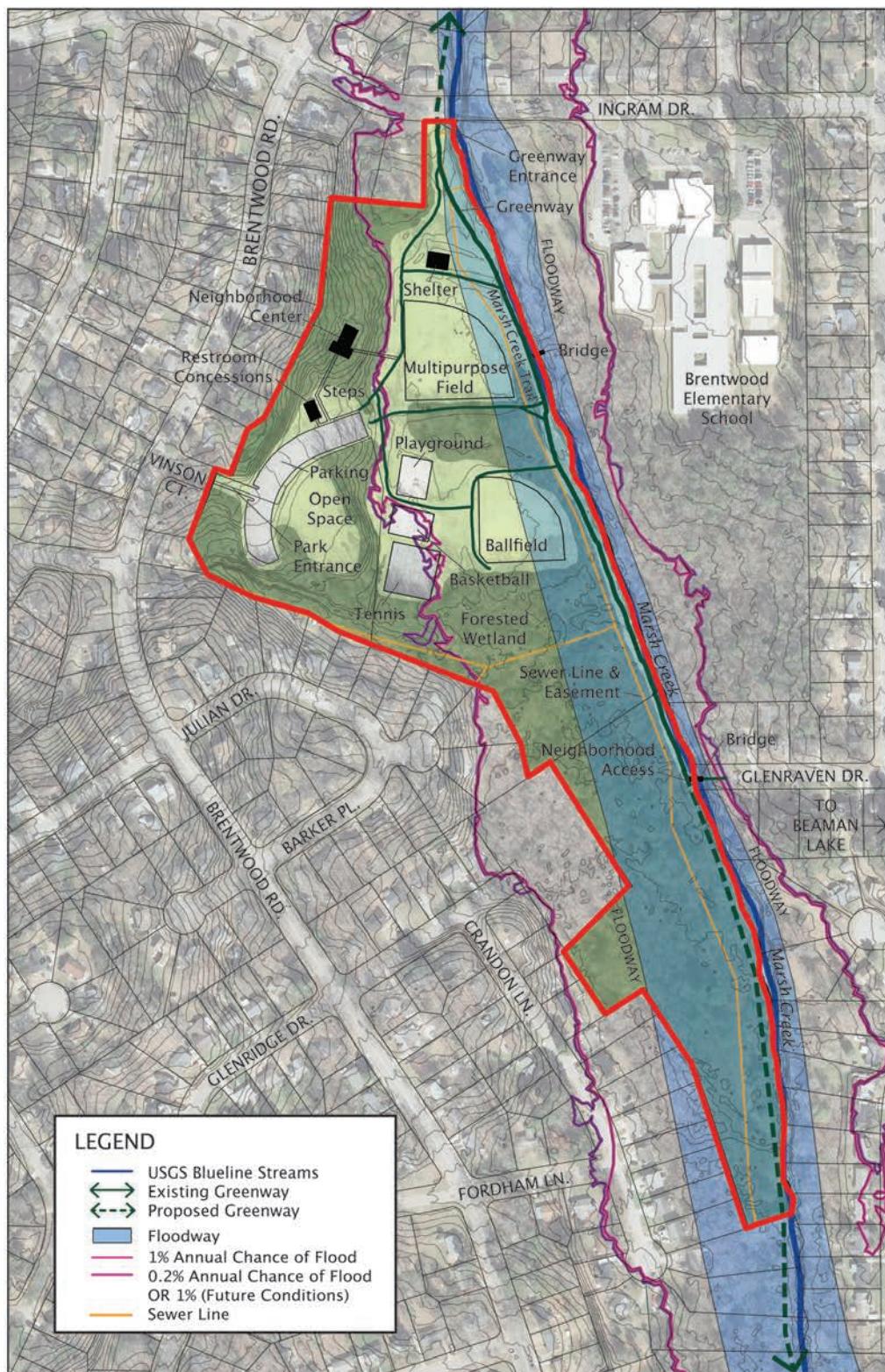


Figure 4-2: Site Analysis Map

Brentwood Park Master Plan

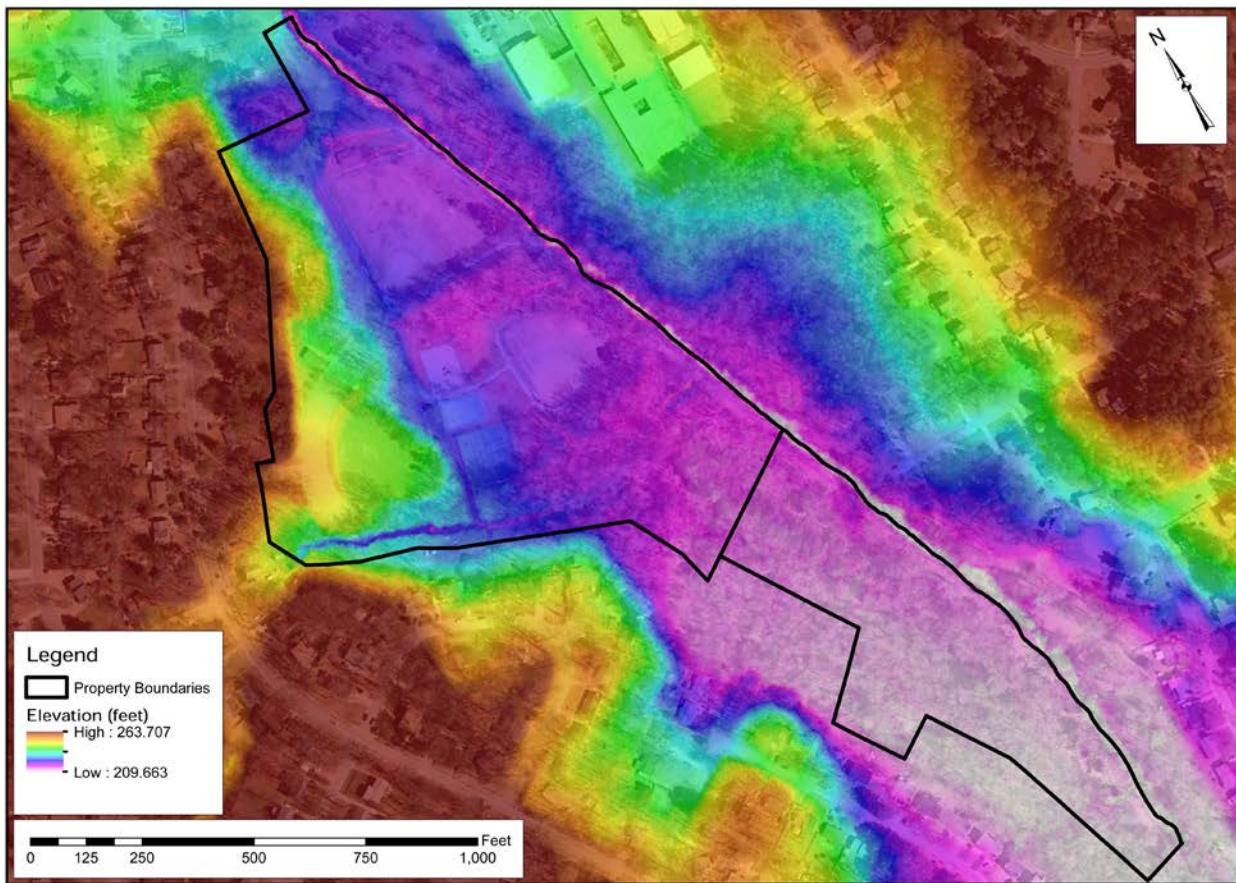
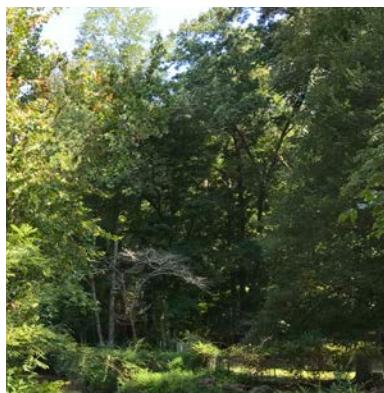


Figure 4-3: Elevation Map



Marsh Creek



Marsh Creek near Glenraven Dr.



Marsh Creek floodplain

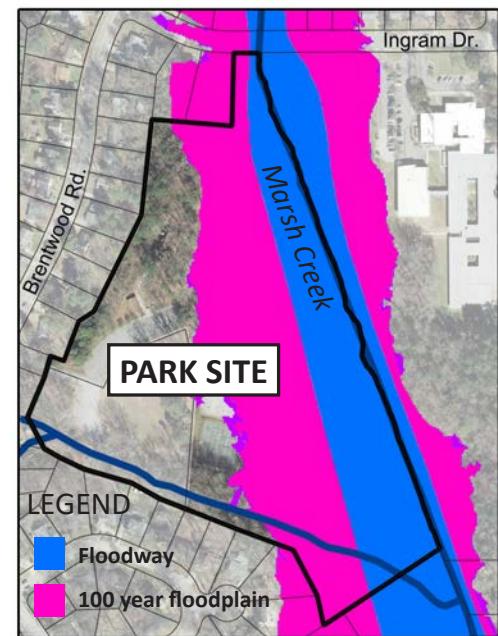


Figure 4-4: Hydrology Map

in the flood fringe would be limited to development on flat surfaces and minimal obstructions, such as shelter posts or trail improvements. Extensive park improvements in this area would likely cause a rise in water surface elevations and could impact adjacent residences. A topographic survey is needed for the site in order to understand the exact location of the floodplain, flood fringe and the limits of park development.

The portion of Marsh Creek that runs through the park is characterized by steep, and in some locations, unstable banks. Previous storms such as Hurricane Matthew in 2016 reduced stability along both banks after many trees along the banks collapsed. Evidence of regular overbank flooding events can be found in the sediment deposits, surface scour and organic debris lines found along the greenway and the grass multipurpose field that borders the creek, which require on-going maintenance.

Unique for a small suburban park, the site supports four distinct natural plant communities including upland forest, riparian forest, bottomland hardwood forest, and riverine swamp forest. Together, the natural plant communities provide a wide variety of habitats for wildlife, which is unusual in a suburban setting. A 65' Tree Conservation Area along all property lines is required by the City of Raleigh. Maintained areas can be found in the park along the sewer line and greenway, the open play areas and the planted ornamental beds. *See Appendix E within Appendix A.*

The Neighborhood Center is approached by a non-accessible sidewalk from the parking lot and a set of wooden steps at the multipurpose field. Due to its location, the entrance to the center is not currently visible from the parking lot. The current size of the center limits the building's usefulness in supporting programming elements beyond party or small event rentals. Improvements to the building are needed for life safety and code compliance.

The small brick restroom building houses bathrooms and a small concession space. The building does not have a heating system or insulation, and accessibility and security improvements are needed to bring the structure into code compliance. *See Appendices F and G within Appendix A.*

Existing utilities found on the site include water, sewer, gas and electricity which provide service to the Neighborhood Center, restroom building, water fountains and light poles. The collection system for storm drainage is limited in the park. A variety of pipes and ditches convey storm water away from parking and other site features. *See Appendix H within Appendix A.*

See Figures 4-5 and 4-6 for site sections and site section locations. A map of existing park facilities and corresponding photographs can be found in Figures 4-7 and 4-8.



Existing hardwood forest around the Neighborhood Center



Main approach to the Neighborhood Center



Brick restroom building also houses concessions

Brentwood Park Master Plan

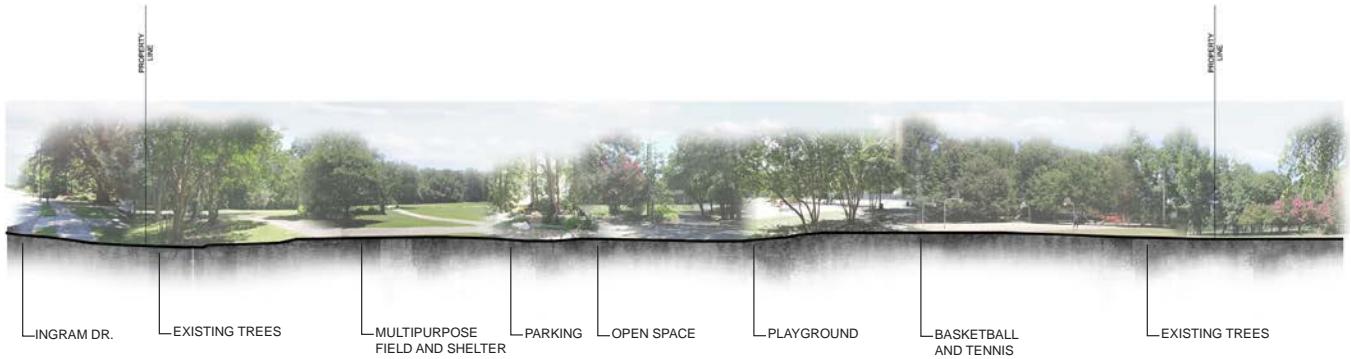


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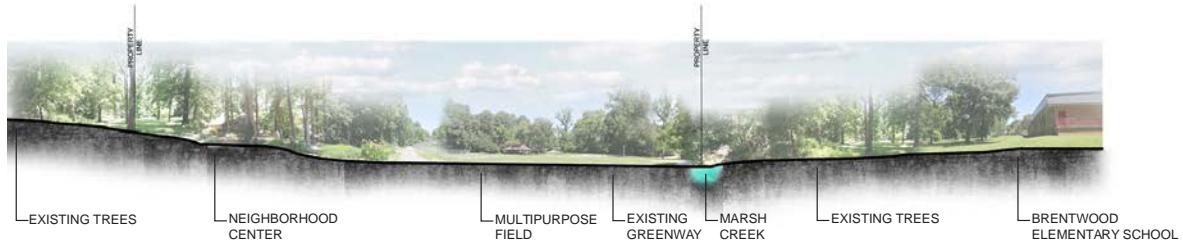


SUD ASSOCIATES, P.A. CONSULTING ENGINEERS

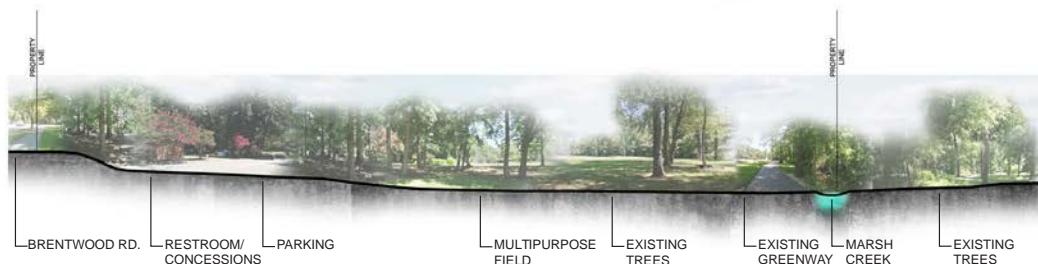
Figure 4-5: Aerial with Site Section Locations



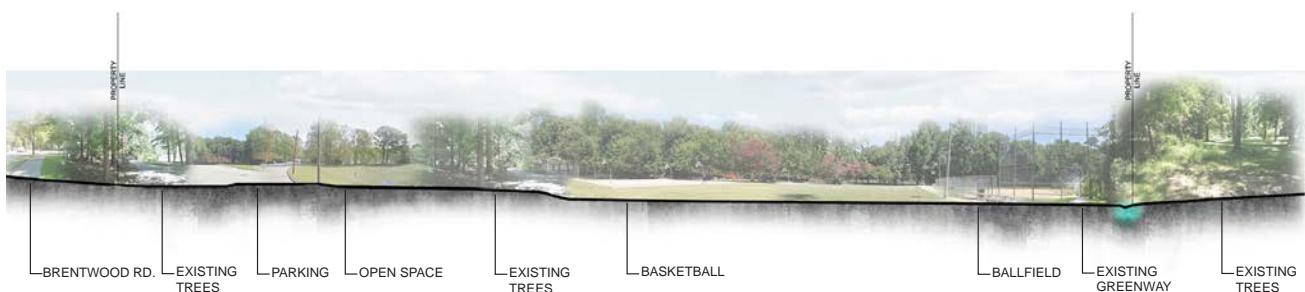
SECTION A - VIEW TO THE EAST



SECTION B - VIEW TO THE NORTH



SECTION C - VIEW TO THE NORTH



SECTION D - VIEW TO THE SOUTH

Figure 4-6: Site Sections

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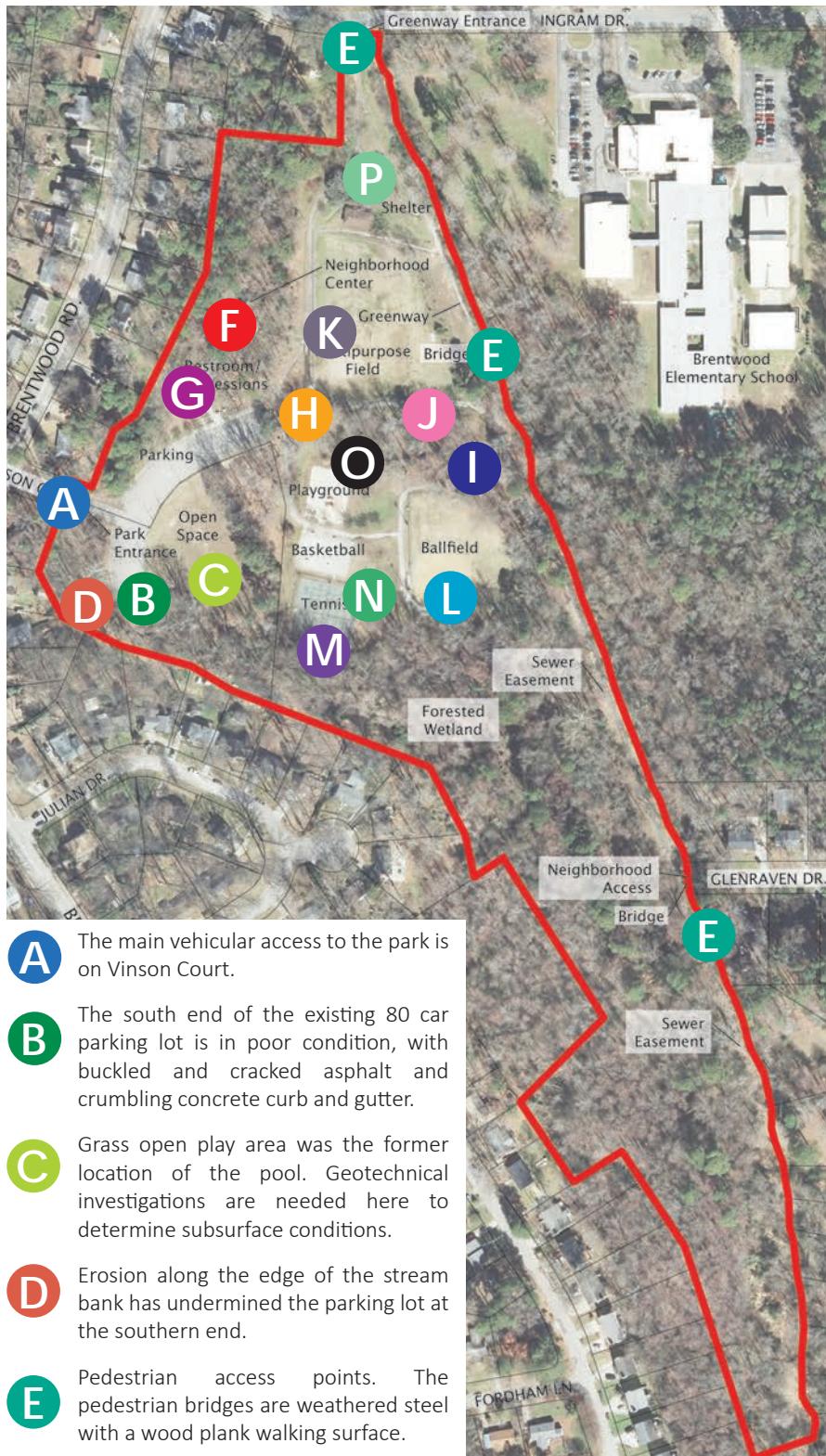


Figure 4-7: Existing Park Facilities Map



Park entrance at Vinson Court



Buckled and cracked asphalt in parking lot



Grass open play area



Stream bank erosion



Pedestrian access point



The Neighborhood Center



Restroom/concession Building



Sidewalks into the park are too steep



Marsh Creek Greenway

Asphalt Trails



Multipurpose field



Lighted softball field



Two fenced tennis courts



Concrete basketball courts



Out-of-date playground equipment



Picnic Shelter

Figure 4-8: Existing Park Facilities - Photographs

Conclusions

Evaluation of the existing park facilities and amenities is an important aspect in determining what shall be preserved, removed, renovated and/or added in the Brentwood Park Master Plan. These choices should be weighed against the development restrictions in the floodway, preservation of existing vegetation and habitat, accessibility, code compliance and sustainability. The Situation Assessment concluded that the following opportunities should be investigated as the master plan process continues:

1. Assess existing programmatic and function needs of the community.
2. Keep existing park amenities that the community identifies as important where possible, as long as they are accessible and in good condition in order to stretch the budget for future park improvements.
3. Incorporate green building technologies in new park development such as permeable pavements, electrical vehicle charging stations, LED lighting, solar power and innovative stormwater techniques.
4. Improve park aesthetics by improving views into and out of the park, renovating or adding new structures and replacing worn or broken pavements to make the park feel more welcoming.

CHAPTER 5: CPC AND PUBLIC MEETINGS

Site Analysis, Park Values and Program Development

CPC Meeting #1: May 2, 2017

After a general introduction to the decision making and design process for the Brentwood Park Master Plan, the CPC quickly began working on a series of exercises which demonstrated their early preferences for park values or guiding principles for the park master plan. Initial Park Values, or themes, were heard: nature, building community, “something for everyone”, sustainability, playground, accessibility, shade and fitness.

As Brentwood Park has a long history with many existing park elements, an assessment of existing conditions was presented to the committee with the design team’s initial thoughts about which elements were in good, fair or poor condition. Committee members provided their own photographs of what they considered “the best” and “the worst” at Brentwood Park. This exercise helped the group understand which existing park elements should be preserved in the new park master plan. *Meeting minute summaries for this meeting as well as all subsequent CPC Meetings can be found in Appendix D.*

Public Meeting #1: May 24, 2017

Approximately 17 attendees were present at the first public meeting on May 24, 2017. Participants were asked questions about the unique history of the park as well as what the community envisions for the future.

When asked how Brentwood Park is special to the Brentwood neighborhood, the participants noted the proximity to Brentwood Elementary, family gatherings and the easy access to natural areas, such as the creek and woods. Attendees felt that the future of Brentwood Park should include adding more connections to the larger greenway network, keeping the park as a community hub and improving the play spaces for all ages.

Utilizing the initial list of Park Values provided by the CPC at their first meeting, the public meeting attendees were asked to rank possible Park Values. The top rated park values were play, nature, safety, connectivity and accessibility. The attendees were also asked to rank potential park program elements. The top-rated elements were an open play/multipurpose field, playground/nature play, nature, Neighborhood Center, greenway, sprayground, and restrooms.

Attendees looked at large maps showing the existing condition of the park. They felt strongly that the existing vegetation and open space, as well as the greenways and trails, were very important. They also noted that the



Reviewing existing conditions maps



Park program element preferences

Brentwood Park Master Plan



Park Values exercise



What is the Future of Brentwood Park?



Post-it notes with public comments

multipurpose field and shelter were heavily used by the community.

Although the open play field is used quite often, the field floods frequently which interrupts normal use for days until the field becomes playable again. The participants also mentioned concerns with accessibility, the perception of safety, as well as the condition of the existing structures. Many felt that the buildings were not welcoming and often felt “creepy.” *Refer to Appendix E for meeting minutes for all Public Meetings.*

Neighborhood Interviews: May-June 2017

A series of neighborhood interviews were undertaken by volunteers. Small groups of residents were asked questions about the community's preferences, concerns and hopes for Brentwood Park. In a smaller, more intimate setting, community members who felt anxious about participating in a larger forum were able to be reached. Five interviews took place, reaching a total audience of 51 people. *Summaries of the interviews can be found in Appendix F.*

Comments received were consistent with other public comments to date. Favorite park related activities included walking, picnics, butterfly gardens, riding bikes, basketball and informal play. Respondents mentioned their favorite things about Brentwood Park which included nature, the creek, open space, trees, soccer games, and bike and walking trails. Common responses for possible park elements included playgrounds, a spray park, and an upgraded and expanded Neighborhood Center that is more inviting and accessible. They felt that diversity, community spirit, and passionate neighbors define the Brentwood neighborhood.

Concept Development

CPC Meeting #2: June 1, 2017

In the second CPC meeting, the design team expanded upon the site analysis already presented to the group by presenting potential "Development Zones". Because much of the park is in a floodplain, more intensive development such as new structures, infrastructure or vehicular pavements should be restricted to upland areas. Some active and passive park development could occur in the floodplain with restrictions. Passive park uses, such as trails, boardwalks and observation areas can occur in the floodplain.

Steep, vegetated slopes at the edge of the floodplain create accessibility and safety issues that must be addressed in order to provide access to the various development zones.

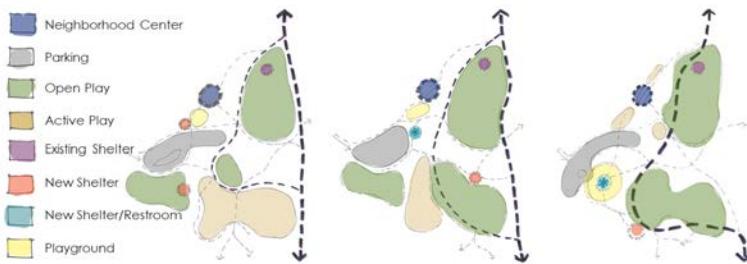
CPC attendees were then asked to break into two groups to create a conceptual master plan layout by arranging park element placeholders in each of the three development zones mentioned previously. The commonalities of both concept plans were discussed. Both plans showed a renovated or expanded Neighborhood Center in the existing location, preserved open play and existing vegetation where possible and new pedestrian connections to the neighborhood and school. A larger playground and a new sprayground, as well as an outdoor gym or fitness stations, were also discussed. Both groups preferred expanding the trail system and providing more opportunities for nature observation. Also considered were ornamental and pollinator garden areas, as well as the inclusion of public art. The group felt that the tennis courts could be eliminated or perhaps converted to pickleball courts.

CPC Meeting #3: July 13, 2017

At the third CPC meeting, the group reviewed and approved the park vision statement:

Brentwood Park will increase accessibility and connectivity for a diverse community of all ages and abilities to safely gather, play, exercise, and enjoy nature.

A draft park program which reinforced the top five park values, as well as three park concept plans, were presented. The differences between the concepts included the level of renovation or expansion of the Neighborhood Center, the alignment of the greenway, location of the restroom and playground, and amount of parking and open play areas provided. The diagrammatic sketches below show the three concepts with varying greenway alignments (thick dashed line), location and amount of open space in green. *The three park concept plans are shown in Figure 5-1.*



Concept Diagrammatic Sketches



Park "Development Zones" map with Group 1 concept



CPC members discussing concept layout

Brentwood Park Master Plan



Concept A: "Play Zones with Central Hub"

After reviewing Concept A (above), the CPC liked the central spray plaza, smaller parking area and stormwater detention areas in this scheme. CPC members disliked keeping the softball field in the master plan. Ultimately the group decided to eliminate this concept moving forward.



Concept B: "Use Zones"

The CPC liked the pollinator garden, the restroom location and the meandering greenway along the creek in Concept B (above). They felt that this concept shows too much parking, and that the small open play area at the entrance was not a good use of space. The group asked that the design team incorporate the spray plaza from Concept A and reduce the amount of parking shown.



Concept C: "Interactive"

Concept C (left) was liked by the group for various reasons including the internal greenway alignment, the improved park entrance, shelter/restroom complex, the large playground and iconic spray/mist feature and the amount of open play areas shown. They also felt that the park design offered a high level of flexibility in possible programming, and the arrangement of facilities would work well for after school programs or camps. The group asked that the design team add a narrow walking path along Marsh Creek between Ingram Drive and the bridge to the school.

Figure 5-1: Preliminary Park Concepts

Public Meeting #2: July 27, 2017

The second public meeting on July 27, 2017 was highly attended with approximately 80 participants. The public was presented with the two refined concepts discussed at the last CPC meeting, which can be found on the following pages.

Each participant was handed a ballot to gauge concept preferences. Most respondents preferred renovating the Neighborhood Center rather than a renovation and expansion. Participants preferred smaller parking areas, a larger playground, more open play areas and the internal greenway alignment. The preferred concept was "B" with some elements from "A". There was a strong preference for the spray plaza, challenge course, multiple basketball courts, outdoor gym, and larger playground with shelter and restroom complex shown in Concept B. A limited interest was shown in pickleball. Some respondents requested the inclusion of skateboard friendly areas in the park. *See Figure 5-2, Concept A, and Figure 5-3, Concept B.*

During the general discussion, it became clear the wider community agrees with the CPC members that lack of safety and security is a concern in the neighborhood. Based on information from the police department, there is minimal criminal activity at the park.

How to address the existing Neighborhood Center was discussed at length. Some participants, as well as the City, felt strongly that the Neighborhood Center be staffed after any renovation. Other participants suggested that the building be demolished or that a new building should be built in another, more accessible area in the park.

Meeting attendees asked for additional park entrances where possible in order to maximize connectivity to the park. Connectivity to the larger City of Raleigh greenway network was mentioned as very important.



Meeting participants review park concepts



Public Meeting #2



Public Meeting Attendees



Potential Pedestrian Connections

Brentwood Park Master Plan

BRENTWOOD PARK

Key Features:

- Renovated Neighborhood Center with new entrance, plaza and trellis
- Ramp extends through the existing woods to the northern park entrance
- Wide set of ramps provides accessibility to lower park
- Combination restroom/picnic shelter near the Center and playground
- STEM/nature play space
- Improved accessibility and circulation
- 40 space parking lot, loop for emergency vehicles
- Existing greenway alignment adjusted to add room for a vegetated buffer along Marsh Creek and boardwalks
- Several loops for fitness walking
- Paths, boardwalk and nature play at existing drainageway
- Three areas of open play, two with picnic shelters
- Ball field is removed, basketball remains, tennis courts converted to pickleball, new outdoor gym area
- Pollinator garden along edge of open play area with new shelter/outdoor classroom
- Nature trails, boardwalks, overlooks and observation areas in the forested wetland area in the southern portion of the site

CONCEPT A - PLAY ZONES

Susan Hatchell

Concept A: "Play Zones"

- Renovate Neighborhood Center with new entrance, plaza and trellis
- Ramp extends through the existing woods to the northern park entrance
- Terraced playground area with spray plaza. Wide set of ramps provides accessibility
- Combination restroom/picnic shelter near the Center and playground
- STEM/nature play space
- 40 space parking lot, drop-off
- Existing greenway alignment adjusted to add room for a vegetated buffer. Several loops for fitness walking
- Three areas of open play, two with picnic shelters
- Softball field is removed, basketball remains, tennis courts converted to pickleball, new outdoor gym area
- Pollinator garden along edge of open play area with new shelter/outdoor classroom
- Nature trails, boardwalks, overlooks and observation areas in the forested wetland area



CONCEPT A - PLAY ZONES

Figure 5-2: Concept A

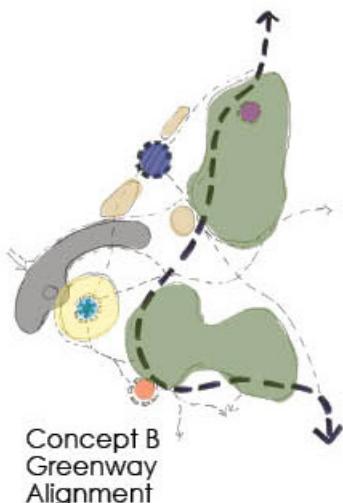
BRENTWOOD PARK

Key Features:

- Expanded and renovated Neighborhood Center with a wide patio overlooking the park
- Boardwalk through the existing woods to the northern park entrance
- Small “tree house” challenge course
- Improved accessibility and circulation
- Outdoor gym area at Center, single basketball court
- 50 space parking lot, loop/drop off area for emergency vehicles
- 50 space parking lot, loop/drop off area for sustainability study
- Paths, boardwalks and nature play at existing drainage way
- Combination restroom/shelter and large playground with integrated seating and planting at park entrance
- Mist sculpture - new park icon
- Small pollinator garden and climbing sculptures/interactive public art
- Greenway re-aligned through the park, connecting amenities, vegetated buffer along creek
- Several loops for fitness walking
- Three areas of open play, two with picnic shelters
- Shelter/outdoor classroom at southern open play area - hub for nature trails, boardwalks, overlooks and observation areas

CONCEPT B - INTERACTIVE

City of Chicago Department of Parks and Recreation
Susan Hatchell



Concept B: “Interactive”

- Expand and renovate Neighborhood Center with a wide patio overlooking the park
- Boardwalk through the existing woods to the northern park entrance
- “Tree house” challenge course
- Improved accessibility
- Outdoor gym area at Center, single basketball court
- 50 space parking lot, drop-off
- Planted stormwater detention areas - nature and sustainability study
- Paths, boardwalks and nature play at existing drainage way
- Combination restroom/shelter and large playground with integrated seating and planting at park entrance
- Mist sculpture - new park icon
- Small pollinator garden and climbing sculptures
- Greenway re-aligned through the park, loops for fitness walking
- Three areas of open play, two with picnic shelters
- Shelter/outdoor classroom at southern open play area



CONCEPT B - INTERACTIVE

Figure 5-3: Concept B



CPC members "Groundtruth" Concept Plan



CPC members review existing park conditions



Public Meeting #3

Concept Refinement, Setting Priorities and Gaining Consensus

CPC Meeting #4: September 7, 2017

Based on the feedback received at the Public Meeting, the design team prepared and presented the preliminary park concept for Brentwood Park.

The plan included an expanded and renovated Neighborhood Center with patio, a 50-space parking lot with a loop/drop off area, an internal greenway alignment, vegetated creek buffer with sloped banks or benches where feasible, walking loops, planted detention areas for nature and sustainability study, nature play at the existing drainage way, a combination restroom/shelter, a large playground and mist sculpture, small outdoor gym and challenge course, small pollinator garden and climbing sculptures/public art, multipurpose field/open play in two locations, skateboard friendly amenities, basketball courts would move to the existing tennis location, nature trails, boardwalks, overlooks and observation areas. After discussion and a walk through the site to "groundtruth" the concept plan, the CPC decided to retain the existing tennis courts.

The group then performed an exercise to determine which park elements are critical for the success of Brentwood Park. A playground was considered most critical for the future success of the park, followed by multipurpose fields, open play, the spray/mist feature and the outdoor gym and/or challenge course. The CPC identified three priority groups in terms of proposed park improvements. Group one, or most important, is the playground, the mist feature and open play areas. Group two, or somewhat important, is the outdoor gym, the shelter and restroom and the Neighborhood Center. Group three, or least critical, is tennis and basketball. At the end of the meeting, a citizen suggested demolishing the Neighborhood Center due to the cost to replace or renovate the structure.

Public Meeting #3: September 20, 2017

The third public meeting was attended by approximately 25 participants who provided feedback and comment on the proposed preliminary master plan concept for Brentwood Park. *See Figure 5-4, Preliminary Master Plan Concept.* After a short PowerPoint presentation, attendees provided comments on the plan on comment cards as well as ranked park program elements they felt were critical to the park's success. Based on the comments received, the participants noted their preference for the Neighborhood Center to be staffed if it were renovated. They also reinforced the need for upgraded lighting and seating, improved accessibility, more amenities for seniors and more pedestrian connections to the neighborhood.

The participants felt that the Neighborhood Center, playground, restroom,



Figure 5-4: Preliminary Master Plan Concept

greenway and walking loops, and the outdoor gym/challenge course are park elements that are critical for the park's success.

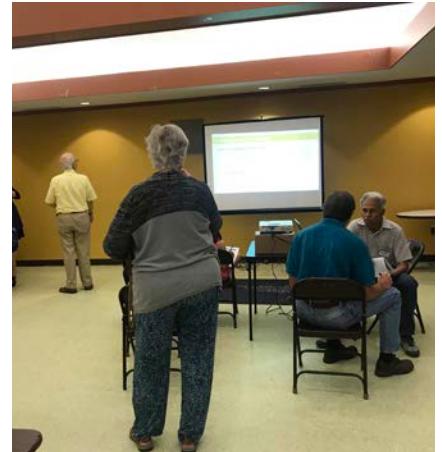
The comment cards showed that the meeting attendees overwhelmingly approved the park concept plan. When asked which facilities were most important without a consideration of possible cost, participants ranked the shelter/restroom complex, the playground and greenways/trails in the top three. When asked about how often



Public Meeting #3



Public Meeting #3 Concept Comments



Public Meeting #3 Stations



Neighborhood Center Exterior



Kitchen at the Neighborhood Center

the meeting participants would regularly or sometimes use particular park elements, they responded that they would utilize greenways or trails, shelter/restroom, the expanded/renovated Neighborhood Center, stream and environmental education areas and the playground most often. The majority of attendees felt that the draft park concept plan addressed the five park values of play, nature, safety, connectivity and accessibility.

CPC Meeting #5: November 9, 2017

The focus of the last CPC meeting was finalizing priorities and identifying preferred phasing scenarios for the master plan to be implemented over time.

The feedback on priorities from the fourth CPC meeting and the third public meeting demonstrate similar priority preferences. The first priority group included the playground, mist feature, shelter/restroom, Neighborhood Center, outdoor gym, and site accessibility and safety improvements. The second priority group included additional trails, re-aligned greenway, improved basketball courts, stream planting, retaining the tennis courts, and improvements to stream ecology and access. Many of the suggestions from the community are low cost improvements that can be included in any phase such as selective tree thinning for improved safety, pollinator gardens, and natural play areas.

As with any park master planning effort, hard choices must be made to identify which elements are the highest priority to the community. Specific to the Brentwood Park Master Plan effort, funding has been made available by the City to ensure that some improvements can be made immediately following master plan approval. The City intends to pursue Schematic Design for the highest priority items that fall within the available budget as early as spring of 2018.

During the fifth CPC meeting, constructability and phasing of the master plan elements were discussed in length. Given the age, deterioration, limited use, and non-code compliance of the existing Neighborhood Center, city staff has determined that it must either be renovated as part of Phase 1 or be demolished. A Neighborhood Center would still be included in the master plan to be implemented in a future phase.

The CPC was presented with two phasing options:

Option A includes a renovated and staffed Neighborhood Center, outdoor gym, shelter/restroom building, playground and mist feature. This option includes a renovation of the existing Neighborhood Center to bring the building into current building code compliance and to increase programming opportunities. Site work is limited to the upland areas of the park, accessibility is provided to the lower park areas, existing park

Possible Phasing Option A

- **Big Ticket Item: Neighborhood Center**
- Addresses life safety and accessibility, provides new elements for programming, focuses on items that need renovation and preserves what is in good shape
- Constructability – keeps the work at the upland portion of the park
 - Easy access, minimal floodplain development
 - Keeps the rest of the park open
- Economy of Scale – focus on renovations that need large amount of site work
 - Group similar work together
 - No stream permitting, minimized floodplain impacts



Possible Phasing Option B

- **Big Ticket Item: Playground**
- Work focuses on new site elements and lower cost renovations to existing amenities
- Neighborhood Center & Restroom demolished – money used towards other elements
- Constructability – keeps the work at one end of the park
 - Easy access, minimal floodplain impacts
 - Keeps upper half of the park open
- Economy of Scale – focus on renovations that need large amount of site work
 - Group similar work together
 - No stream permitting, minimized floodplain impacts



Figure 5-5: Possible Phasing Options

amenities within the floodplain that are in good condition are preserved, minimizing permitting and stream impacts. This option is nearly \$1 million over budget, so some park elements would need to be minimized or deferred to later phases. *See Figure 5-5, Possible Phasing Options.*

Option B includes the demolition of the Neighborhood Center in order to offer more park site amenities such as the shelter/restroom building, large playground and mist feature. Most site work is limited to the upland areas of the park, accessibility is provided to the lower park areas, existing park amenities within the floodplain that are in good condition are preserved, minimizing permitting and stream impacts. This option is nearly \$250,000 over budget, so some park elements will need to be minimized or deferred to later phases. A future phase would include a new, larger Neighborhood Center in the existing location of the current building.

Much discussion was undertaken by CPC members about both phasing options and the potential impacts of both. The group asked city staff how other parks without community buildings are programmed. Programming opportunities at parks without structures include athletic and fitness programs, buddy walks, and STEAM/STEM programs, among others. The CPC felt that considering the proximity of Green Road Community Center, they would not duplicate park elements that can also be found there. The CPC decided to proceed with Option B in order to maximize the allotted budget for Phase 1.

CHAPTER 6: PARK MASTER PLAN

Park Values, Vision and Outcome Measures

The framework for the Brentwood Park Master Plan responds to the Park Values set forth by the CPC and the larger community. Park Values are the over-arching principles or needs that a community uses to guide the master planning process. Outcome Measures are the ways in which the Park Values are represented in the proposed park elements at Brentwood Park.

<i>Park Values</i>		<i>Outcome Measures</i>
Play -A place for the community to gather and play in a variety of ways, using both traditional play equipment and natural materials to encourage fitness, health and fun.		Structured and natural play facilities, spray/mist feature, open play areas, outdoor gym, and interactive public art.
Nature -A park that preserves, protects and enhances the natural resources found within the park boundaries and respects the larger network of natural systems that connect the park to the larger region.		Provide access to natural areas using boardwalks and trails, pollinator garden, outdoor classroom areas, integrated play and natural areas, solar or other sustainable park features, preserve existing vegetation.
Safety -Ensuring that the park experience for all users feels safe and welcoming is an important aspect of the master plan.		Selectively thin vegetation to open up sight lines through the park, bring existing structures up to current codes and accessibility requirements.
Connectivity -Strengthening and improving existing pedestrian and vehicular entrances encourages visitors to use the park more often. Seeking additional opportunities for new pedestrian connections is an important way to ensure the park will continue to be a well-loved destination.		Create an internal greenway alignment which connects park elements, investigate additional pedestrian connections into the park, improve accessibility to allow more neighbors to access park facilities.
Accessibility -Access to park amenities for all users at all levels of accessibility allows park visitors to safely and confidently enjoy public spaces.		Meet and exceed ADA requirements, provide all-inclusive play areas for all ages and abilities as well as shade and areas for rest.

Brentwood Park Vision Statement

Using the above five Park Values, individual CPC members prepared draft vision statements for Brentwood Park at home and shared with the group at the meeting. The group reviewed and approved the following Park Vision for Brentwood Park:

Brentwood Park will increase accessibility and connectivity for a diverse community of all ages and abilities to safely gather, play, exercise, and enjoy nature.

Brentwood Park Master Plan



Figure 6-1: Park Master Plan Concept

Concept Plan Narrative

The five Park Values adopted by the community guided the development of the master plan. The public made a careful consideration of the existing condition of the park elements at Brentwood Park to see which elements should remain, be renovated or be eliminated. Some park elements that were once popular in the community such as softball and tennis are not currently used very often. Other park elements such as the Neighborhood Center and restroom building no longer meet current codes for life safety. Some elements are in good condition and are meaningful to the history of the park, such as the picnic shelter. The CPC and other community members worked hard to preserve the best of the park while also considering what the future needs of the community might be.

The concept plan is a long term vision for park development and will be phased to allow for development in stages as funding is secured. Designed to fulfill the Park Values of play, nature, safety, connectivity and accessibility, the concept plan provides a flexible framework that will continue to evolve as the neighborhood grows. *See Figure 6-1, Park Master Plan Concept.*

Concept Plan Elements

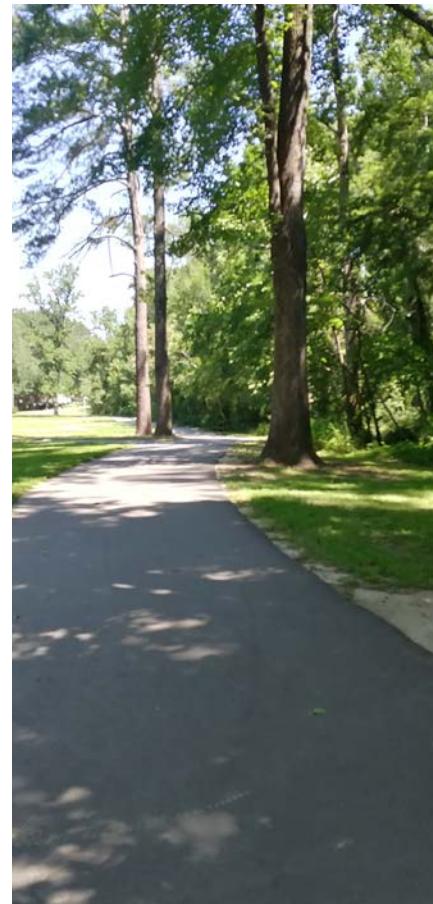
Park Circulation and Accessibility

The vehicular entrance to the park is located off of Vinson Court. The improved entrance includes a new sidewalk for improved connectivity to the park from Brentwood Road. New and bigger signage increases visibility of the park entrance.

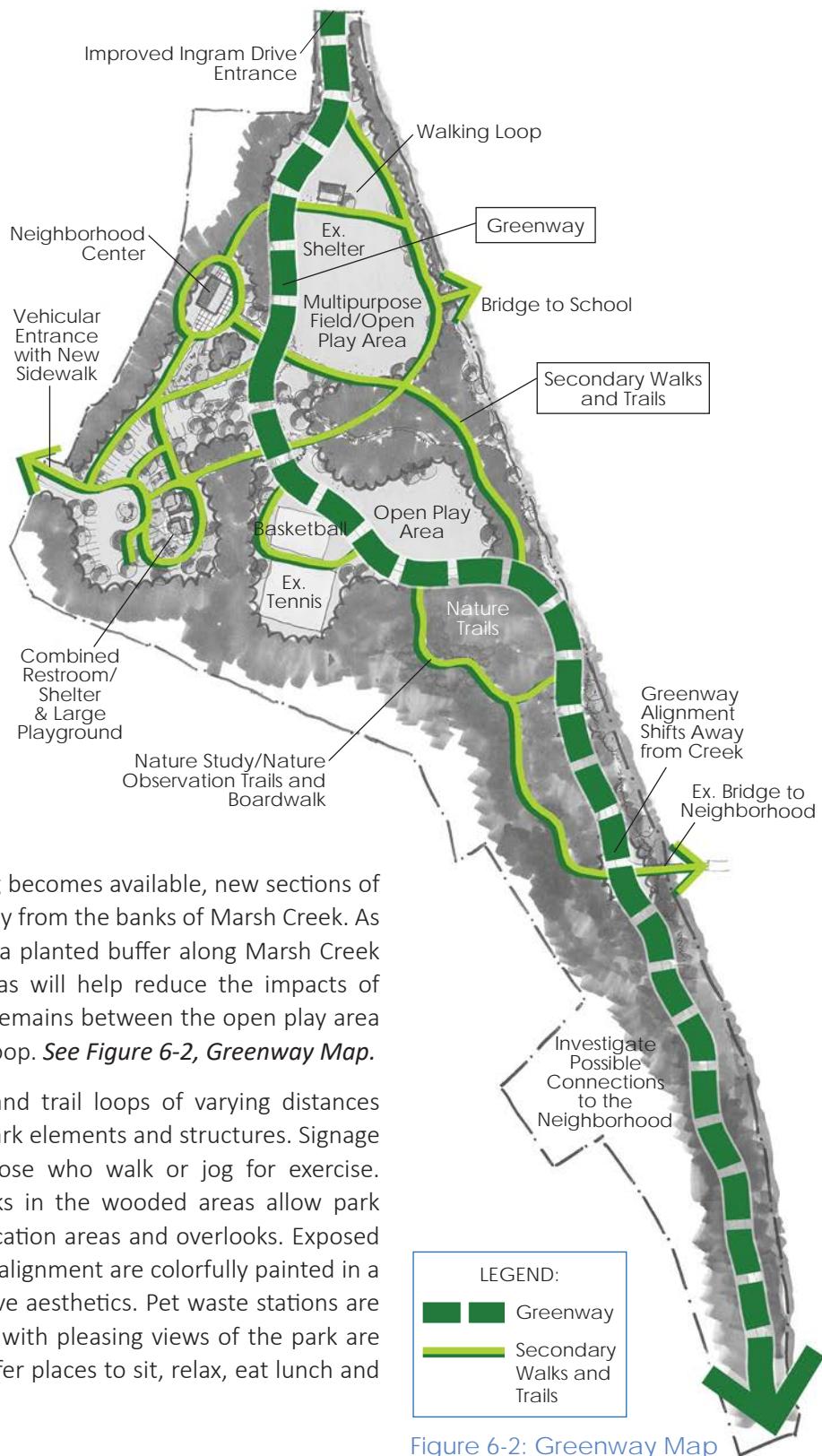
The existing pedestrian entrance off of Ingram Drive is improved with a more generous entry “plaza” and signage. Improvements to the fencing at the vehicular bridge over Marsh Creek improves the aesthetics of the park entrance.

Other pedestrian entrances include the two pedestrian bridges located at the elementary school and the terminus of Glenraven Drive. Both bridges are currently in good structural shape and provide important connections to the park.

A City of Raleigh Greenway segment runs the length of Marsh Creek and the sewer easement. Heavily used, the greenway connects Ingram Drive and both pedestrian bridges. In the future, this greenway will eventually connect to the larger greenway network, providing more connectivity to the larger region. In order to alleviate some of the flooding from Marsh Creek, the greenway is realigned through the park. This “green spine” connects the major park elements with a wide accessible route. In the



Brentwood Park Master Plan



southern parcel, as greenway funding becomes available, new sections of the greenway will be built farther away from the banks of Marsh Creek. As the trail is relocated, more areas for a planted buffer along Marsh Creek will be available. These planted areas will help reduce the impacts of overbank flooding. A narrower path remains between the open play area and the creek to allow for a walking loop. *See Figure 6-2, Greenway Map.*

A network of accessible sidewalks and trail loops of varying distances provide connectivity to the various park elements and structures. Signage which indicates distances assists those who walk or jog for exercise. Natural surface trails and boardwalks in the wooded areas allow park visitors access to environmental education areas and overlooks. Exposed sewer manholes along the greenway alignment are colorfully painted in a proposed public art project to improve aesthetics. Pet waste stations are provided for dog-walkers. Rest areas with pleasing views of the park are situated along the trail network to offer places to sit, relax, eat lunch and enjoy the shade on hot summer days.

Figure 6-2: Greenway Map

Structures and Infrastructure

New Shelter/Restroom/Playground Complex

The picnic shelter and restroom complex is situated at the terminus of Vinson Court, creating a striking focal point at the park's entrance. The shelter provides covered areas for family picnics, birthday parties and reunions and the incorporated restroom allows for a wide range of programming, rental and event opportunities. Several spots for grilling are provided as well as other site amenities such as benches, picnic tables, water fountains, bike racks and waste and recycling receptacles.

The adjacency to parking and the drop-off loop makes these picnic areas very popular and highly used. The community is interested in incorporating sustainable/green building technologies where possible, such as solar panels, daylighting, and electric vehicle charging stations. The proximity to the large playground and mist/spray feature ensures that this complex is a vibrant centerpiece of the park. The existing restroom/concession building in the park does not meet current building codes and will be demolished.

A new, large playground with rubber poured-in-place surfacing surrounds the shelter/restroom. The play areas are integrated with plantings and seating, providing shade and creating several play "rooms" for exploration. Play equipment is accessible to serve all ages and abilities. Seating is located in convenient places where parents and other caregivers can easily monitor children. This highly visible and innovative playground is a major focus of the park.

A mist/spray feature keeps park visitors cool during the summer months. Although the misting feature is disabled during the winter, the plaza area surrounding the sculpture remains a usable space throughout the year.

Subsurface investigations of the site for the shelter/restroom/playground complex are required to fully understand any building limitations or concerns in future design phases.

Neighborhood Center and Outdoor Gym

A new, more generous and welcoming Neighborhood Center with a strong visual connection to the site is proposed as part of the plan. The new Center will be a staffed facility that will offer programs suited to the needs and the interests of the Brentwood Community, and include space for rentals and events. The building is surrounded by wide outdoor patios that offer great views into the park, gathering spaces, and amenities. An elevated pedestrian boardwalk through the woods provides an accessible route to Ingram Drive. Selective clearing and trimming of the vegetation around the Center will open sight lines in and out to improve security.



Brentwood Park Master Plan







A small outdoor gym with stationary bicycles, elliptical and other typical gym equipment is located near the entrance of the Center. Popular with all park users, this equipment often serves as a low-cost alternative to gym membership. In conjunction with the trails and sidewalks at the park, the outdoor gym helps to provide park visitors with a well-rounded work out.

Existing Picnic Shelter

The existing picnic shelter was built by Brentwood residents in the 1970's and is regularly used. The picnic shelter remains, and serves as a visual reminder of the park's long history.

Parking



A parking lot with a roundabout and drop-off loop is provided in roughly the same location as the existing parking. The existing parking lot is approximately 80 spaces, which is more than the park actually needs. A reduction to a total of 50 parking spaces including accessible car and van spaces, will satisfy current parking needs and lower the amount of impervious surface creating stormwater runoff. Most of the existing asphalt and curb and gutter is in poor condition. Where possible, the existing subgrade may be able to be used, however it is possible that some of the subgrade will need to be replaced. Crosswalks are provided at key pedestrian crossing locations.



To meet North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality and City of Raleigh requirements, a small stormwater detention area may be used to treat stormwater runoff from the building and parking areas. A series of ramps and landings with benches overlooks the stormwater feature, which will educate park visitors about the importance of stormwater filtration. The stormwater feature bisects the park, tying into the existing stormwater swales in the park.

Site Utilities and Site Lighting

Site lighting is provided in order to ensure a safe environment for park users. The park closes at dusk, but the Neighborhood Center is used as a rental facility into the night. Parking lot lighting illuminates parking areas but will not negatively impact neighbors. The existing park structures are already serviced by water, sewer and electricity. Utility needs for future structures will be assessed during the schematic design phase.

Informal Open Play

The master plan shows the large open play area staying in its current location between the Neighborhood Center and Marsh Creek. The flexible green space serves all park users including those playing soccer as well as other field sports. A smaller open play area is shown in the location of



the existing softball field from which the fences will have been removed. Providing the maximum amount of open play areas was important for the community.

Basketball and Tennis Courts

In the floodplain, park development is limited to improvements that do not increase the existing ground elevation. If the surface elevation changes, any development in the floodplain will require additional permitting. Park elements that are already existing in the floodplain may not be allowed to be developed. The community decided to retain the existing basketball and tennis courts in place in the master plan.

Two new concrete basketball courts replace the existing courts in the same location. Although the courts are in playable condition now, there are some existing cracks and accessibility issues with the adjacent sidewalk. New striping and goals will also be added. An accessible sidewalk provides access to the courts off of the main greenway.

The tennis courts are in relatively good condition. As funding becomes available, new surfacing and striping will improve the playing surface. A new sidewalk will provide access to the courts. Other municipalities are adding striping in a contrasting color for pickleball on top of tennis court striping in order to allow the courts to be playable for both sports. This could be investigated at a later time if desired by the community. The existing water fountain is replaced with a new, accessible fountain, and benches and bike racks are provided.

Selective clearing and thinning of surrounding vegetation opens up sight lines through the park which will facilitate natural surveillance of previously secluded areas to improve security.

Nature Play and Environmental Education

Brentwood Park is home to four distinct natural communities, including a forested wetland area south of the existing tennis courts. Unusual for a relatively small suburban park, this area provides an excellent area for environmental education. Low impact boardwalks, overlooks, signage and natural surface trails in this area of the park are enjoyed by both residents and elementary school students.

A small pollinator garden is located in the open play field north of the basketball courts and includes interactive public art sculptures. This garden area could be maintained by volunteers and is a relatively low-cost park improvement that will be valued by both residents and school children. All greenway users walk through the garden, enjoying the ever-changing seasonal palette of blooms.





A planted detention area below the parking lot filters stormwater runoff before it reaches Marsh Creek. A short section of boardwalk is located over the water channel, providing an overlook. The detention area is wet only intermittently, typically after heavy rain and storm events. The swale through the existing grove of trees meanders through the forest, allowing closer access to the stream for exploration and education.

A play area dedicated to natural play is provided in the shaded grove. Logs, stumps, boulders and other natural materials in conjunction with the meandering water course provide an alternative to more traditional play equipment. Free play areas such as these allow children the ability to interact and reconnect with nature. The adjacent elementary school will also be able to use these areas to reinforce their nature and science curriculum studies.

Marsh Creek is a major feature of the park and offers a multitude of environmental education opportunities which are beneficial for both the neighborhood and the larger region. The other wooded areas are similarly important. Care should be taken to remove dead, invasive and noxious plant species where encountered to ensure the forest remains a healthy habitat for the various wildlife at the site.

Marsh Creek

The community has expressed a strong interest in a stream restoration to improve the health of the creek and to reduce overbank flooding impacts. The design team investigated several options including bank stabilization, adding planted and wooded buffers, enhancement of the stream bed, establishment of a bankfull bench (low areas adjacent to the creek that allow flooding within the channel), and channel relocation to enhance the stream sinuosity.

The simplest modification to enhance the creek would be to stabilize the creek banks. This option was preferred by the community, as it was mindful of existing budget and permitting limitations. The banks are currently very steep and devoid of any stabilizing planting in some areas. Sloping the banks back, and adding a wider area of planting, would improve the long term stability of the creek. This work would require buffer authorization, 401 permit, 404 permit, and no-rise approval. If additional funding becomes available, other stream restorative methods could be explored in conjunction with future greenway or stream projects. *See Appendix B for a more complete description of the stream improvement options discussed.*

Areas where creek banks could be sloped back and vegetation added were located during the master plan process. The existing greenway trail along the creek is relocated to a more internal alignment, leaving more room for

planting. Low cost ways to improve the aesthetics of the creek include the removal of vines and other invasives that tend to snag trash in the creek.

General Planting

New low maintenance and drought tolerant native plantings compliment the natural plant communities already found on the site. Evergreen and deciduous canopy and understory trees, shrubs, grasses and perennials are chosen to provide seasonal interest. All new plantings adhere to the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), providing no places to hide, opening up views across the park, and inviting park users to feel safe. The City of Raleigh requires screening planting around parking and utility areas. A 65' wide, forested perimeter buffer/tree conservation area around the park is preserved. The intent of the concept plan is to preserve as many existing trees as possible while still allowing construction of new elements and meeting requirements for site accessibility.

Priorities and Phasing

Throughout the public involvement process, the community provided feedback about their priorities for the potential park elements in the master plan for Brentwood Park. The final CPC meeting utilized this information along with rough cost estimates to determine the priorities for Phase 1 development.

Phase 1 Priorities

During the fifth CPC meeting, the CPC identified the following park elements as priorities for the first phase of park development (*See Figure 6.3, Phasing Priorities Map*):

- Large playground
- Spray/mist feature
- Shelter/restroom complex
- Parking and site lighting improvements, stormwater detention area
- Accessibility and safety improvements, new sidewalks
- Neighborhood Center, restroom building, existing playground and softball field demolished

Work in the first phase would concentrate park development in the upland areas of the park, outside of the floodplain. Although the loss of the existing Neighborhood Center was a very difficult decision for the CPC, the cost to renovate and expand the center into a more usable and staffed space would have used nearly the entire budget, considering the building's age,



Brentwood Park Master Plan

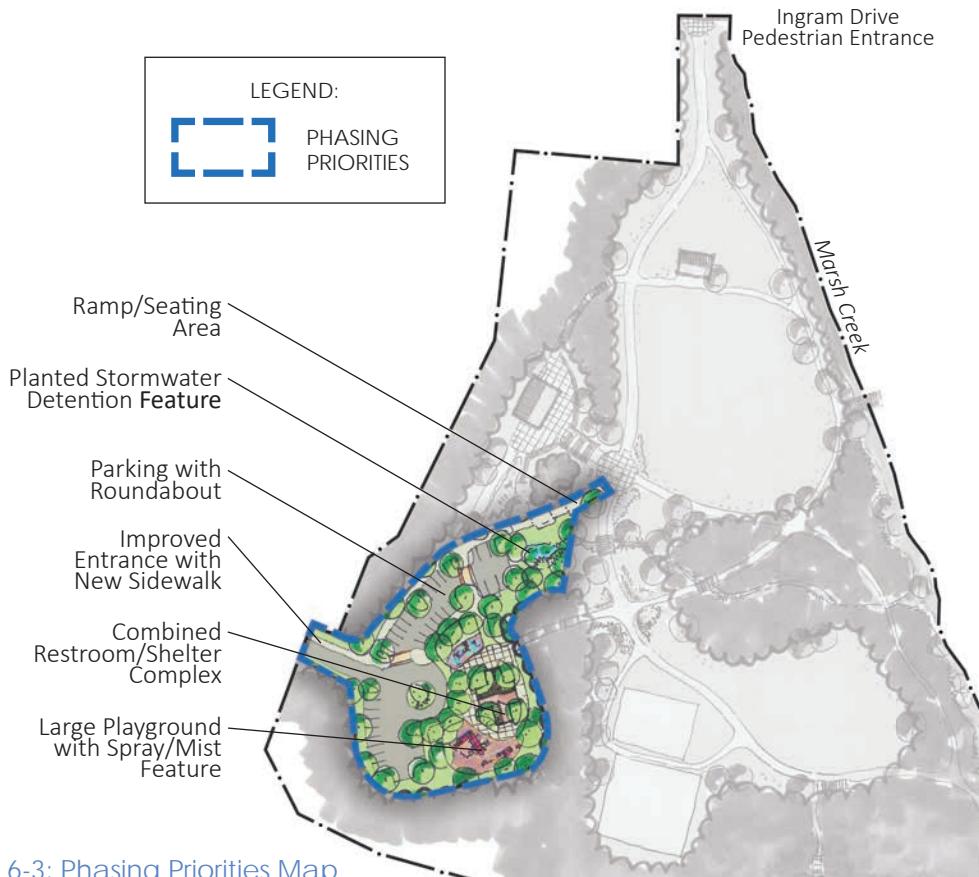


Figure 6-3: Phasing Priorities Map

and that it does not meet current building codes. The group decided to prioritize the shelter/restroom complex and the large playground and mist/spray feature, while making minor improvements to park elements that are already in good condition. Concentrating major work to the upland areas will reduce costs by creating an economy of scale and easier constructability. Saving any stream work or park improvements in the floodplain for later phases also saves on permitting time and costs.

Future Phases

Future phases could include:

- Neighborhood Center and outdoor gym
- Greenway realignment and additional trails
- Improved basketball and tennis courts
- Stream buffer planting
- Nature play areas, pollinator garden, public art

Additional funding may become available that could assist with several projects including stream restoration or future greenway projects. Potential grants and funding for stream restoration work might be limited if both sides of the creek are not included in the restoration. Some of the work could take place at any time, such as the removal

of softball field fencing, pollinator garden installation or public art on the sewer manholes. These are low-cost items that could be undertaken by the City or volunteer groups.

Project Budget and Estimated Costs

Estimated costs for park development can vary due to many factors such as material and labor availability, constructability, bid packages, site specific subsurface and environmental conditions, permitting requirements, and weather delays. The estimated costs for all phases is estimated at \$7,000,000 to \$8,000,000 based on 2017 construction costs.

The project budget for Phase 1 is \$2,000,000 and was allocated in the 2014 City of Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Bond. The bond funding includes park master planning, park design and Phase 1 park development.

The CPC's priorities for Phase 1 are shown below. These priorities will be re-evaluated during the schematic design phase when the public will have another chance to review and comment on proposed plans. At that time, the actual park elements listed below may change to ensure that the project does not exceed the available budget.

CPC Priorities for Phase 1

Playground	Sidewalks/Ramps/Trails
Spray/Mist Feature	Site Amenities & Planting
Shelter/Restroom Complex	Parking (Includes +/- 50 spaces)

Costs for the priorities determined by the CPC is estimated between \$2,200,000 and \$2,600,000 (includes associated costs of site work, utilities, permitting, and design) and is based on 2017 construction costs.

Schedule and Next Steps

The master plan was approved by City Council in April 2018. Design work for Phase 1 construction will begin in the summer of 2018. More detailed site investigations such as the preparation of topographic surveys and subsurface geotechnical work will take place at this time. The design team will prepare 30% construction drawings and revisit project estimated costs. A public design review meeting will offer residents an opportunity to provide feedback and comment. Design development (60% drawings) will be prepared and presented to the Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board (PRGAB) and City Council. A final review of drawings will occur at 90%. Site plan approvals and other permitting will run concurrently during the construction drawing phase. 100% construction drawings for Phase 1 will be prepared and submitted to the PRGAB and City Council. Technical specifications, cost estimates and bid packages will be prepared as well.

Phase I construction should begin in late 2019. The length of construction will depend on which site elements are included in the construction package, more detailed site investigations, as well as bid pricing. For the elements prioritized in Phase 1 above, an estimated six to nine months of construction should be anticipated.

Brentwood Park Master Plan
