



# PLAY BENTONVILLE PLAN

## BENTONVILLE PARKS & RECREATION TEN YEAR MASTER PLAN

*Adopted: August 22, 2017*



*Prepared For: Bentonville Parks & Recreation*



# OUR MISSION

To enrich lives through Recreation, Leisure and Culture

# OUR VISION

Bentonville Parks & Recreation is the choice provider of recreation, leisure and culture. Our parks, trails, programs and events make Bentonville a premiere destination for residents and visitors. The parks system and its beauty encourage active lifestyles and enhance quality of life for citizens. We share the character of Bentonville with parks, greenways and trails that are sustainable, well-maintained and safe. As an innovative organization, Bentonville Parks & Recreation offers comprehensive and diverse recreation programs for people of all ages, abilities and interests.



# OUR CORE VALUES

## **QUALITY**

We strive to provide the highest quality amenities to our citizens.

## **CREATIVITY**

Our work environment empowers staff to think creatively, constantly striving for improvement.

## **FUN**

Our work can be intense and having fun helps us keep it in perspective.

## **BUILDING A LEGACY**

Our organization is bigger than any one individual and the work we perform will benefit residents for generations to come.

## **INTEGRITY**

Our team strives to make decisions that reflect the highest standard of accountability. We uphold the highest ethical principles while demonstrating honesty and sincerity in all of our dealings.

## **LEADERSHIP**

We respect the vision and leadership that built the parks and recreation system and recognize the need for ongoing leadership in achieving excellence.

## **EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE**

We want to exceed your expectations by providing accurate information, helpful assistance, and great solutions.

## **WE ARE A TEAM**

Our team works as one with the community to create great things.

## **SAFETY**

We never compromise in creating the safest environments for patrons and employees.

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

Bentonville Parks and Greenways are available to and welcome everyone.

## **HEALTH & WELLNESS**

We encourage citizens to live a healthy lifestyle. We model that message in our daily work environment.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This master plan could not have been made possible without guidance from the following

## *Mayor*

Bob McCaslin

## *Bentonville Parks & Recreation Advisory Board*

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# INTRODUCTION

## *A framework for America's New Park City*

Between 2007 and 2015, the population of Bentonville grew from 33,827 people to an estimated 44,499 people. This represents the growth undergone since the creation of Bentonville Parks & Recreation, as well as the issuing of the 2007 Parks and Recreation Master Plan Report. This growth trend is projected to continue and, in effect, requires additional and expanded facilities to accommodate increased patrons and changing recreation trends.

Since the creation of Bentonville Parks & Recreation, several capital projects and system improvements have taken place. With over \$36M in investments, Bentonville Parks & Recreation has built, managed, and operated these new exceptional facilities and program offerings. Notable projects include the tennis court collaboration with Bentonville public schools, Razorback Greenway and trail initiatives, Orchards Park, Austin-Baggett Park, and the new 80,000 sq. ft. Bentonville Community Recreation Center.

This Master Plan looks toward the future, to build on Bentonville Parks & Recreation's success, in an effort to define ways to achieve a world class park system. The residents and users, coupled with the passions of Bentonville's young population and their love for the cultural legacy of the parks system, have expressed their desire to live in a city where the park system is considered the best America has to offer.



*Left: Mueller, Austin TX integrates parks and natural systems seamlessly into the community and neighborhood.*

# REPORT PROCESS & PURPOSE

Collection of the data in this report began during the summer of 2016 with meetings of focus groups, community members, city staff (Planning and Parks & Recreation), as well as key stakeholders. Additionally, a randomized Bentonville population was targeted to participate in a mail-in survey, which helped accurately understand use, participation, and interest in various recreation facilities and activities. Following the collection of this data, the same survey became available to the general public to solicit additional feedback and anecdotal data.

Listed are a few highlights from the survey that played a key role in how the existing Bentonville parks system was assessed, and how future parks and systems were designed:

- 48% of households visit a park at least once or twice per week
- 34% of households use Bentonville trails at least one to two times per week, with another 25% using them one or two times a month
- When asked for their most preferred transportation method to access parks, 35% of households indicated they would like to walk and 30% desired to ride bikes, however 52% indicated they cannot presently do this safely
- With safely connected sidewalks and trails, 86% of households would be willing to walk or bike at least ½ mile to get to a park
- When asked what kind of new trail construction they preferred, 68% of respondents indicated new paved, multi-purpose trails
- 80% are satisfied with the cleanliness of the parks, the quality of programs delivered, and the overall management of the system

The entire Master Planning process was designed to be open and inclusive to achieve a plan accurately reflecting the specific needs of Bentonville groups and individual citizens. The goal of this process was to assure a plan that would serve both the existing resident population, as well as attract new development, and top talent to contribute to Bentonville as an active, vibrant, and exciting recreational destination to call home.



*Community meeting solicited feedback from residents.*



*Children's' drawings envisioning their ideal park.*

# THE VISION

The Bentonville Parks & Recreation Master Plan 2025 outlines a balanced strategy for park improvements and new parks in a cohesive and seamlessly connected park system.



*Constructing and maintaining facilities at a tournament-level quality remains a high priority of residents and is reflected in program participation through activities such as beach volleyball.*

## INCLUSIVE & ACCESSIBLE DESIGN

“Bentonville Parks & Recreation strives to be open and welcoming to persons of all physical, mental, and emotional abilities. As we continue new project development and park restorations, we do it in a manner as to become continually more accessible, offering spaces and programming to accommodate all members of our community, their friends, and their families.”

# REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- A ‘branded’ grand trail loop system connecting city neighborhoods to both existing and new parks
- Existing park improvements to enhance user amenities and recreational opportunities
- New parks to meet the needs of a growing population
- The integration of ‘neighborhood’ park components in all parks with ‘flexible’ field spaces to accommodate future, unforeseen needs
- A companion ‘maintenance and management’ program to guide future operations and management strategies to insure a financially sound, sustainable park system that meets the needs of future generations
- The need to enhance partnerships with schools, local foundations, and non-profits
- Institutionalization of the established 501c3 to work with Bentonville Parks & Recreation to assist in fundraising, programming, and developing a volunteer base

## WHAT THE MASTER PLAN ACHIEVES

This plan, if implemented as outlined, will achieve the following:

- With the inception of the ‘grand loop’ a total of 15-20 miles of new trails will be completed
- Numerous neighborhood and park trail segments and sidewalks will be completed
- Enhanced existing parks and new parks provide user amenities and recreation components that exceed national standards that will service the residents of Bentonville and beyond, putting parks within a one-half mile walking radius of most residents
- More diversified park offerings and user amenities that celebrate the youth demographic of Bentonville as well as the entire population
- Incorporating uses that celebrate Bentonville history, natural setting and its art focus
- Integrating green infrastructure and sustainability techniques that enhance the environment
- A sound Maintenance and Management Plan that insures the delivery of exceptional park services – a legacy of Bentonville Parks & Recreation
- A fiscally sound plan that is implementable

# BACKGROUND

## *Assessment of Existing Parks and Amenities*

An initial assessment of existing parks in Bentonville reveals a very high level of maintenance and construction. Both the initial construction quality and level of continuing maintenance are two critical elements contributing to the success of quality, long-lasting parks.

Bentonville Parks & Recreation has also adhered to standards for their most recent site element improvements such as park signage, benches, and building construction. These are important to help citizens identify their parks, distinguish parks from private property, and improve the quality, efficiency and cost of maintenance/repairs. The material selection for these elements includes durable materials such as stone and metal, which will continue to perform at a high level for many decades to come.



*Enjoying the water.*

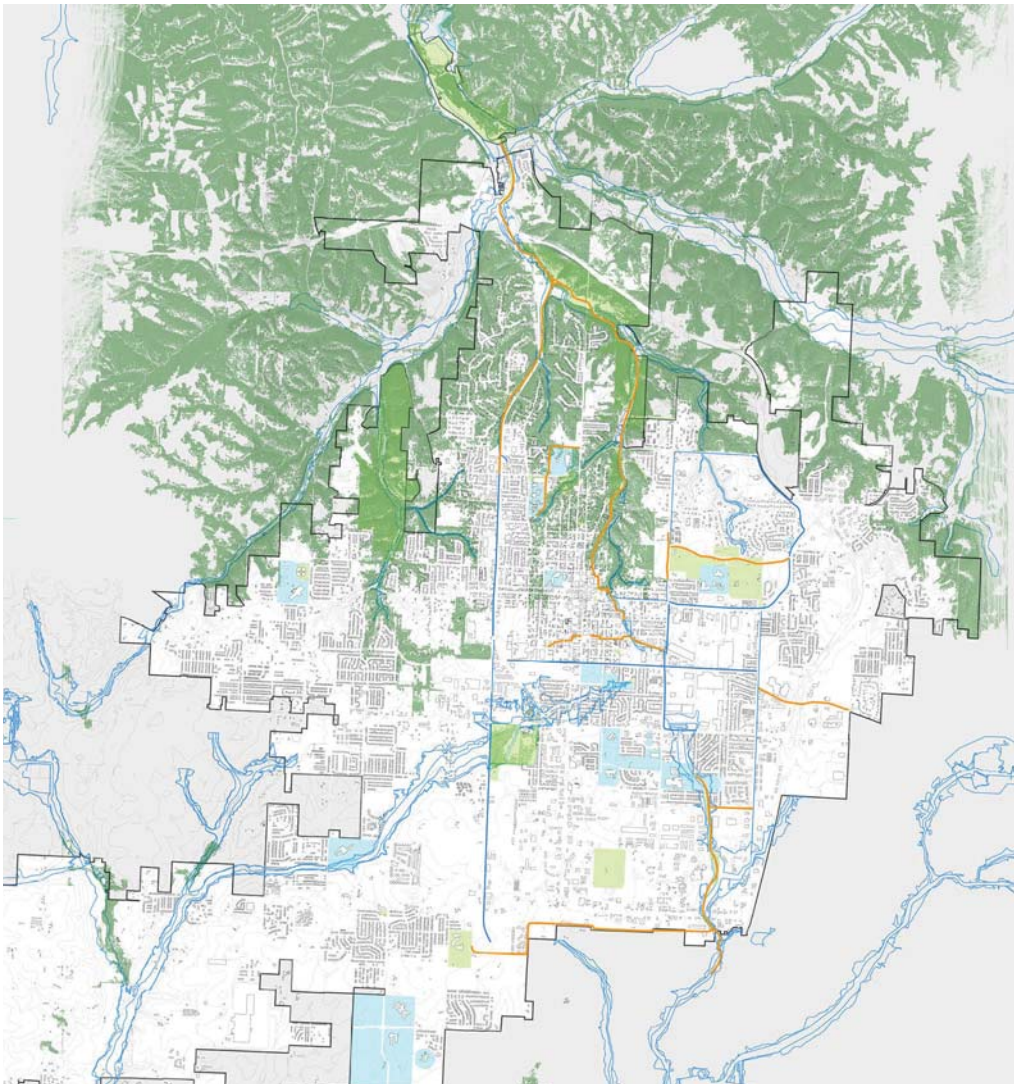
### ACTIVITY SURVEY SUMMARY

The following is a summary of recreation interest indicated by Bentonville residents through the public survey. Full results can be found in the appendix.

	Adult	Youth
Walking	68%	22%
Hiking	58%	30%
Swimming	51%	34%
Visiting Nature	43%	22%
Dog walking	42%	14%
Running	32%	17%
Mountain Biking	30%	21%
Playground Use	36%	24%
Rock Climbing	26%	21%
Tennis	25%	11%
Basketball	19%	21%
Soccer	13%	19%
Baseball	12%	15%
Softball	9%	8%
Canoing	37%	17%
Zip-lining	36%	21%
Lake Kayaking	40%	15%
Whitewater	27%	11%

## INVENTORY MAPPING

One of the most informative discoveries during inventory and data collection was the expansive natural systems network existing in Bentonville, particularly along the northern periphery of city limits. This topography shown below in green typically discourages development, however is ideal for many forms of recreation, prized for its scenic beauty, and vital as habitat that allows wildlife to circulate through connected corridors accessing expansive protected land. These green “spines” reach down and into Bentonville, just as natural watersheds shown in blue reach up from the south. These floodways and floodplains from the south should also be protected from development in an effort to preserve existing hydrology and in doing so protect additional habitat. With even small connections, these two networks and available land can be tied together representing an opportunity to develop a connected trail system so unique, that it has only been accomplished by a few of the oldest and most revered park systems in the country.



*Bentonville schools, parks, and trails with natural systems overlay.*

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## *A Vision for new parks and connections*

The vision for Bentonville is three fold:

- The creation of a “branded” grand loop trail that connects that connects existing parks, new parks and neighborhoods together into a seamless whole. This is the defining framework for the future park system and will place Bentonville in the ranks of a true city defined by its parks.
- The division of Bentonville into park quadrants divided by Walton Boulevard the 8th Street Corridor. These streets, defined by some to be physical barriers in regards to park access, will now become boundaries allowing park amenities and services to be equally distributed across these quadrants. The master plan’s goal is to have a park within a ½ mile walking radius of all residents. Within these quadrants, existing parks will be enhanced and new park will be built.
- To insure a diversity of park uses that meet the needs of all residents – young and old. This plan not only creates areas for recreation, but also spaces for civic events, informal gatherings or just hanging out. It speaks to land preservation and ecosystem enhancements. It also recognizes Bentonville young demographic their desire to celebrate as a community. For instance, a new downtown “quilt of parks” is envisioned to provide much needed space for celebration as well as casual lounging.



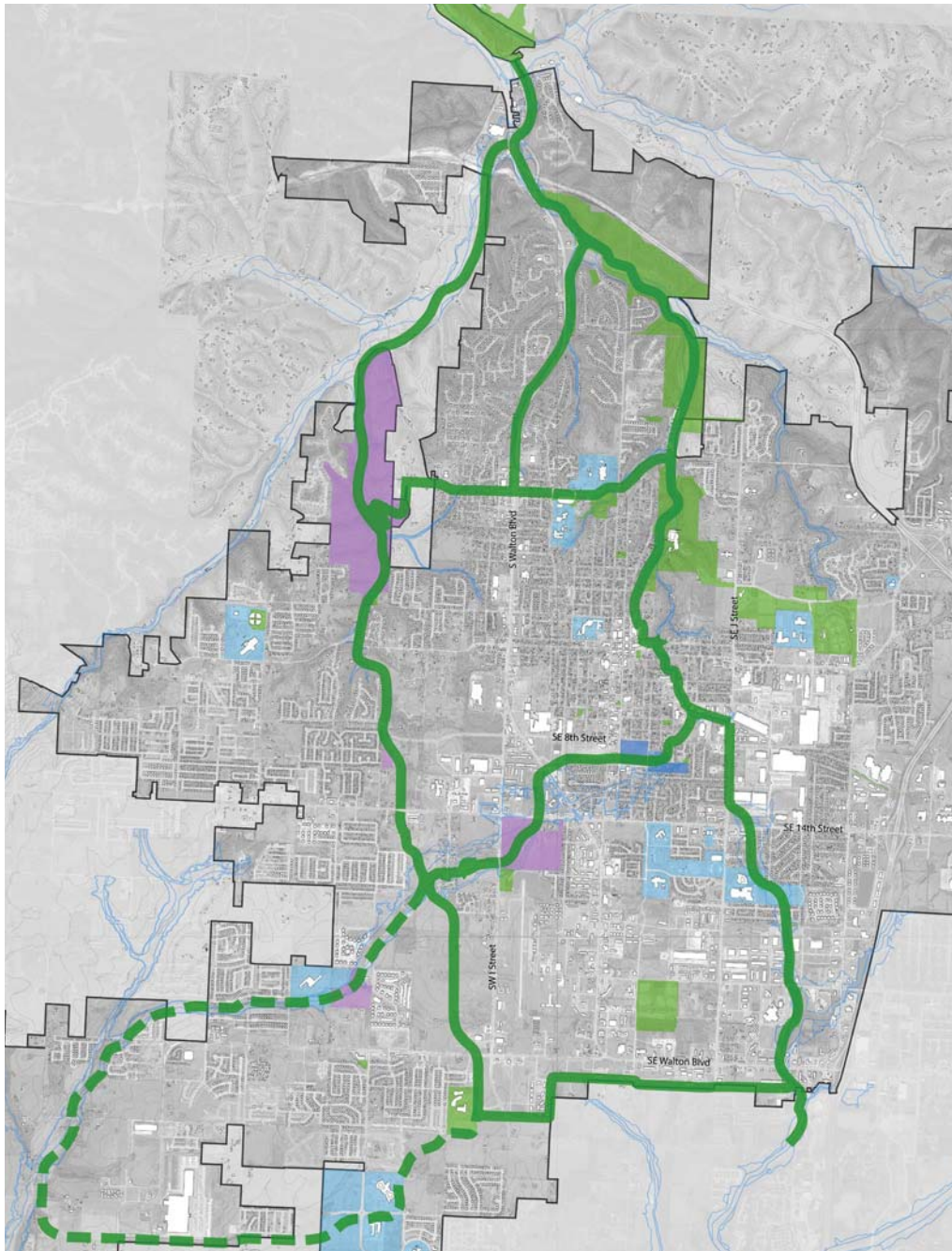
*Adventure play.*

## VISION I:

# THE GRAND LOOP TRAIL SYSTEM

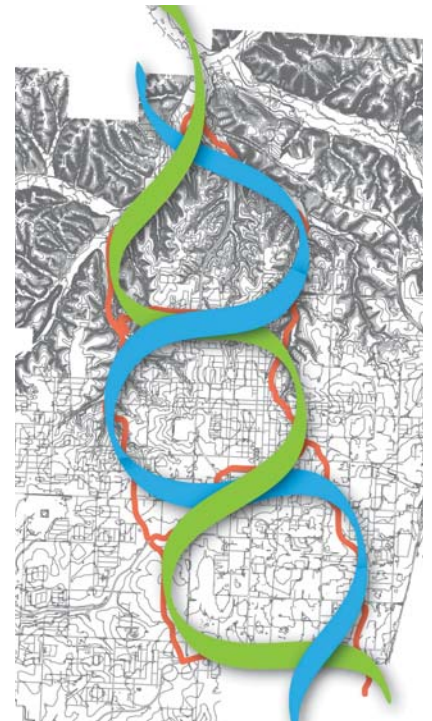
The first and primary focus of Bentonville Parks & Recreation should be the acquisition of land to complete and secure the Bentonville Loop Trail System. As mentioned previously, this off-road trail system and park network is akin to world renowned park systems such as the Emerald Necklace in Boston and the Grand Rounds in Minneapolis. These park systems had the advantage of planners and architects with incredible foresight when land was acquired long before development occurred. This kind of opportunity is nearly unheard of today and virtually impossible to accomplish without the unique circumstances existing in Bentonville. The dark green line represents the inner most loop for immediate adoption, while the dashed line shows future expansion as new construction and housing moves to the Southwest.

Following land acquisition it is also advised this trail Loop be branded to reinforce mental mapping, visibility, and way-finding through the community. From residents to visitors, users should feel as though the Loop is THE preferred method of circulating through Bentonville whether it is to get to a park, head to the grocery store, or go see a friend. Bentonville must feel like a city within a park system. Final trail alignment should be safe, connected, efficient and seamless. The Loop should also act as the spine for new parks, land preservation, public art, and a tool for socialization. It is suggested Bentonville Parks & Recreation contract the services of a marketing firm to establish the best brand image. If implemented, this grand loop system will be Bentonville's signature accomplishment that will emerge from this master plan. In fact, it can help foster the following initiatives.

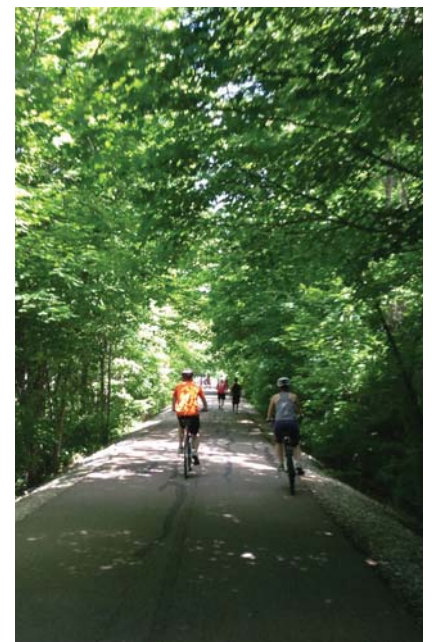


*With the addition of a few connectors, the Grand Loop will be able to capture all parks and schools.*

## *“The Coil”* *“The Helix”*



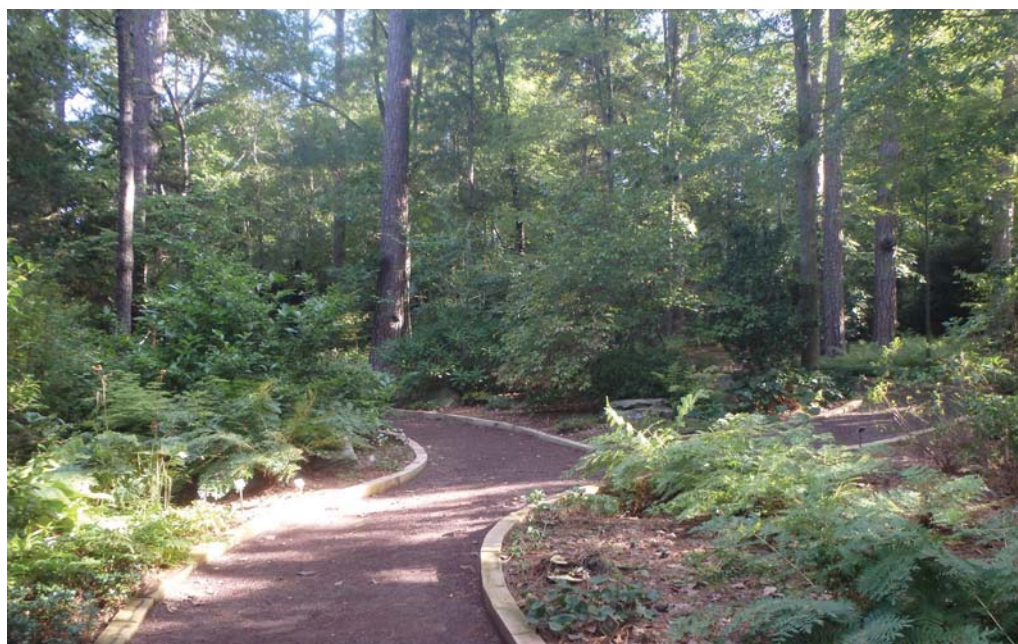
*Branding the system.*



*Mature trail example.*

**INITIATIVE 1: ENHANCING CONNECTIVITY - PARK TO PARKS, NEIGHBORHOODS TO PARKS**

- Continually work to “loosen” geometry for cycling. Minimum radius of horizontal curvature is 50’. Desired radius is 100’. This will require opportunistic land acquisition as ownership changes and in conjunction with new development.
- Main Loop trails should have a 12’ minimum standard. High capacity trails within a 1 mi. radius of downtown should be designed or increased to 14’ if possible.
- Select trails to incorporate bike use restrictions. With walking and hiking as the #1 and #2 activities, it is important to make sure there are places for all trail users to feel safe. Many comments in the survey and at community meetings expressed a (real or perceived) concern for safety particularly amongst the young and elderly. One ideal application of this enforcement may be at the new airport park where restoration and preservation are central to the park’s philosophy, but active recreation such as biking on the trails is less compatible.
- The addition of underpasses in the Bentonville trail system has been well received by users through creating efficiency in the trail system and improving safety. Underpasses as well as overpasses (where appropriate) should continue to be considered, especially at critical and busy roads such as Walton Boulevard and Airport Boulevard
- Provide dual purpose restroom facilities at the intersection of new parks and the Loop Trail
- Install mapping and signage at all trail heads and major junctions
- Way-finding should be enhanced through repetition of materials, trail hierarchy at intersections, and signage/branding
- Ensure adequate bike parking facilities at all parks
- Development on and around trail property (such as the Applegate Estate is slated to do) should consider how development faces onto the trail, prioritizes the trail, and regards the trail as an amenity.
- Bentonville must initiate sidewalk program to complete a comprehensive sidewalk system throughout its neighborhood. This should be coordinated with the new Comprehensive Plan. This can be accomplished through public infrastructure improvements, through requirements for new developments to require sidewalks and connectivity, and new standards for public street improvements.



*Well maintained nature trail example.*



*Raised crosswalk prioritizing pedestrians.*



*Accessible crushed fines example.*

## INITIATIVE 2: LAND PRESERVATION

Bentonville has several natural and cultural resources that stand to be threatened through the rapid pace of development and population growth over the next ten years; the most underrepresented of which is farmland. With the preservation of habitats such as Slaughter Pen, Coler Mountain Bike Preserve, and Crystal Bridges, forested woodlands are well represented in Bentonville and provide critical ecologic corridors through many topographic valleys. As land becomes available to extend this network of steep terrain and woodlands, passive (or opportunistic) acquisition is always recommended. Active acquisition however should be sought for the more susceptible farm land.

Farmland parcels are at high risk for loss due to the nature of their development opportunity. This drives prices higher as development encroaches, and makes farmland some of the most difficult land to purchase in a growing community. The vernacular of old barns, pastures, stands of trees and crop fields are not only picturesque in nature, but represent a real and tangible connection to the region's cultural heritage deserving preservation. To save this aesthetic and habitat, it is recommended that Bentonville Parks & Recreation actively and preemptively search for farmland along the Loop trail system to protect as farmland under purchase and lease arrangements, deed restriction, or other mechanisms in perpetuity.



*Whether pastures or fields of crop, farmland plays a key role in a regional character worth protecting for the citizens of Bentonville.*

### INITIATIVE 3: CIVIC PARKS AND CREATING SOCIALIZING SPACES

The development of social spaces must become a key component of all parks.

Communities are built through chance, spontaneous social interactions that occur in these spaces. They are sometimes organically created and sometimes contrived, but with both finding equal success. The keys to success are grounded more in experimentation and flexibility than any particular activity offering or spacial design. You can see below a wide range of social spaces that are successful for very different reasons.

It is recommended Bentonville Parks & Recreation look to generate social activity developing a self sustaining critical mass at each park that adds to the vitality and safety of the park network as a whole. As a starting point, some proven strategies include:

- Food vendors
- Movable seating
- Leisure options, such as leisure or board game rental
- Refreshment sales
- Regularly scheduled live music



*Outdoor room made by canted lawns and lush grass.*



*Movable furniture allows people to rearrange, cluster, and people watch.*



*Shade, beer, and music offer a trifecta for socialization.*

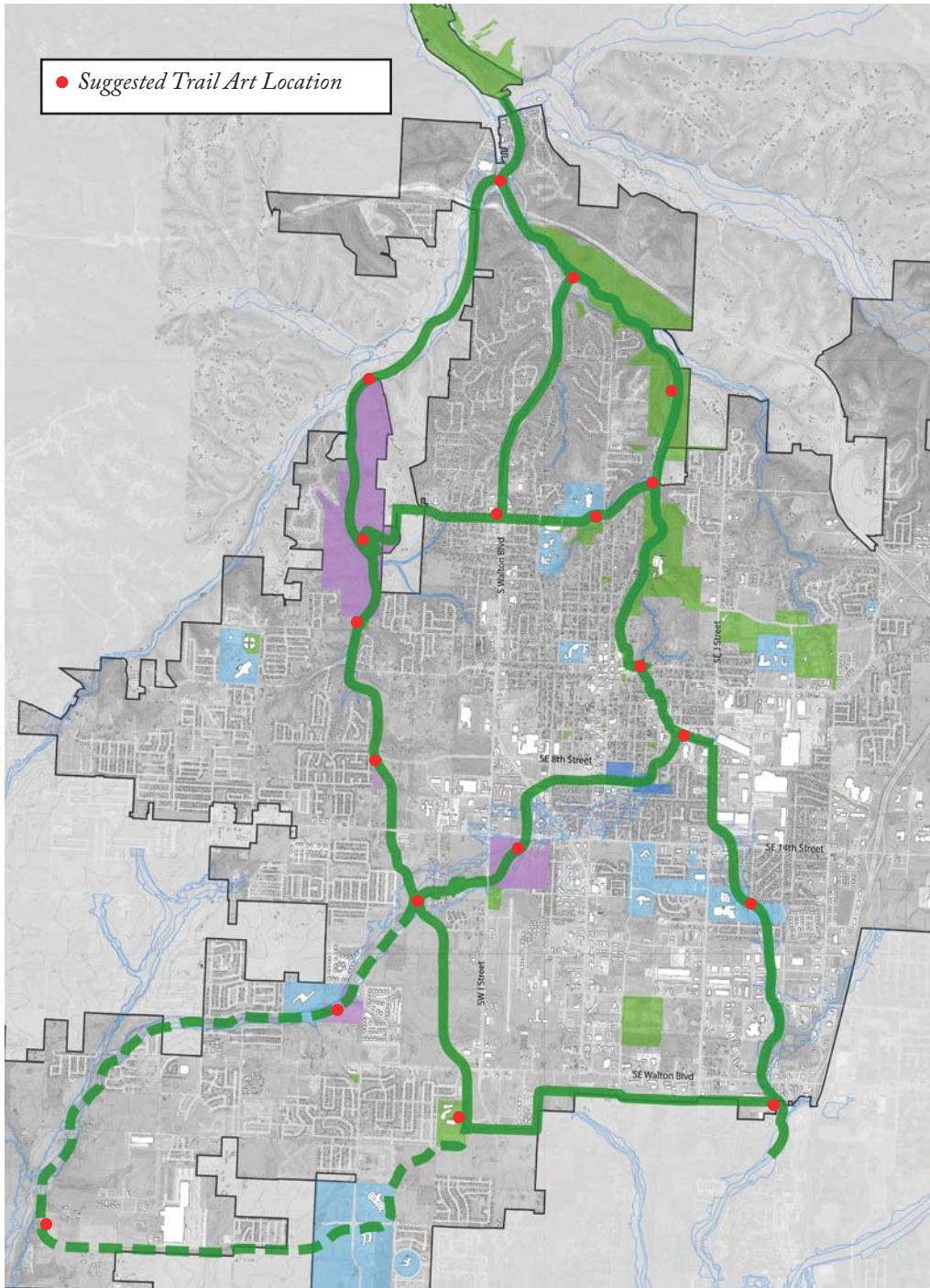


*Blankets, pillows, and games bring backyard amenities to public spaces.*

## INITIATIVE 4: ART AS A THEME

Just as it is important to focus on the connectivity and quantity of open space preserved, as land is chosen to be designed and more actively maintained, it is important to focus on the quality of the space and user experience. This quality serves both an aesthetic role, but also a functional role.

In conjunction with and in addition to The Walton Family Foundation Design Excellence Program, public art should be used throughout the Bentonville parks and in particular, along the Loop, to serve as nodes, assist in way-finding, and to provide interactive rest stops and visual enhancement.



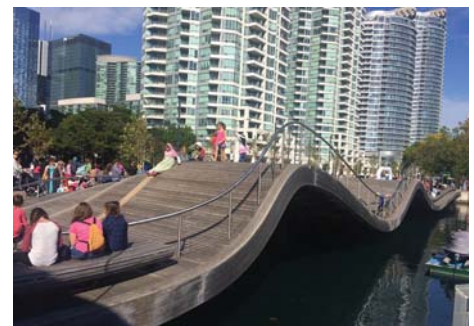
*Grand Loop map with potential art installation locations indicated at key parks, trail heads, and junctions.*



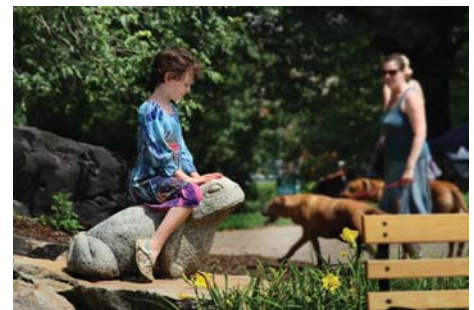
*Nature art.*



*Nighttime art.*



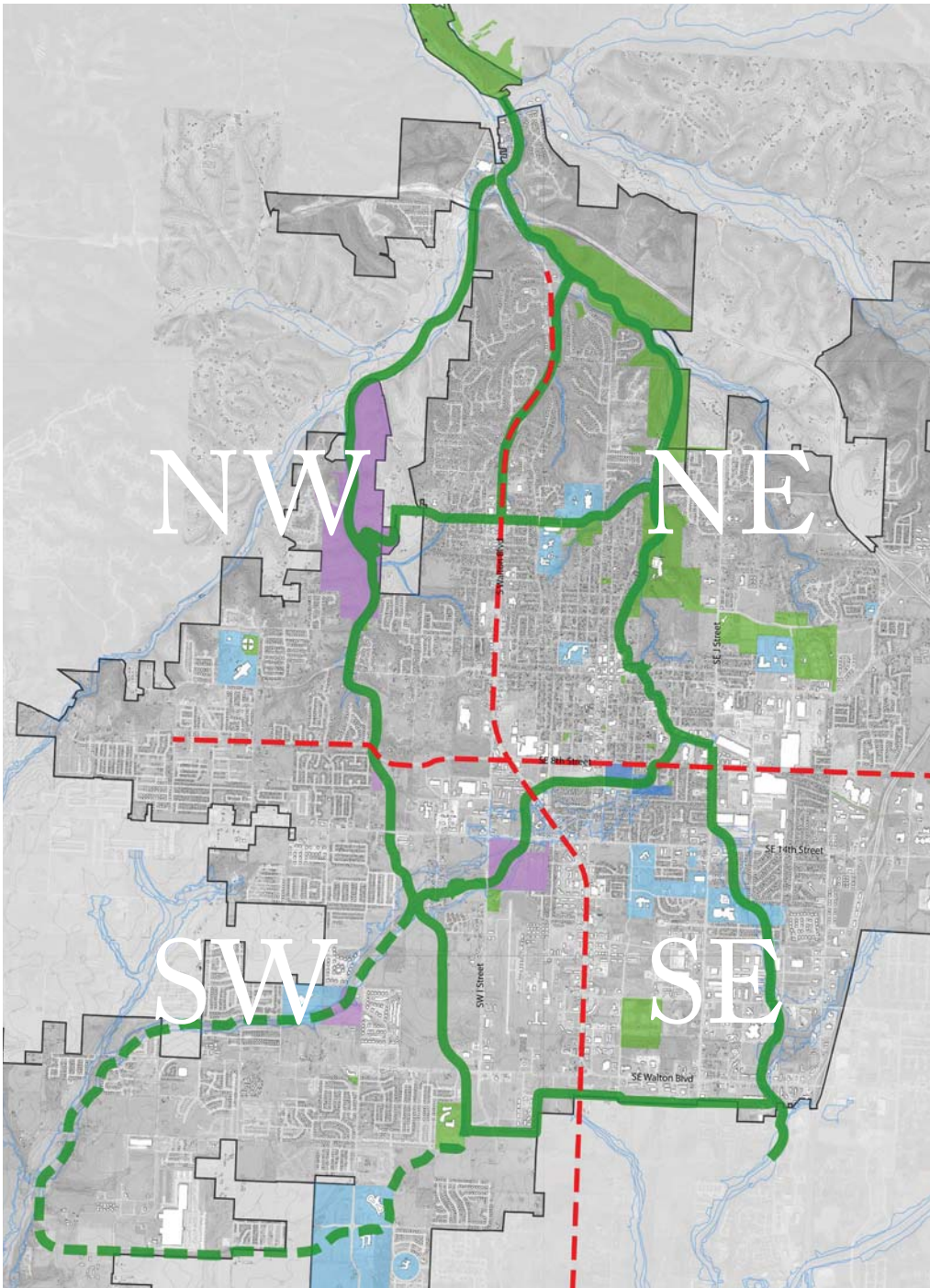
*Integrative art.*



*Traditional art.*

# VISION 2: THE FOUR QUADRANTS

Bentonville has been divided in 4 quadrants using South Walton Boulevard and 8th Street. Walton is both a physical as well as perceptual barrier due to the traffic volume and street scale. Even with a trail running along the length of South Walton, regular curb cuts, missing sidewalks, parking lots, and lack of shade make this an unwelcoming pedestrian environment. Eighth street was chosen as the North-South divide due to its planned expansion as a multi-lane arterial connecting Walmart headquarters and I-49. As this project progresses it will be critical for Bentonville Parks & Recreation to advocate and participate in pedestrian crossings (over, under, and signalized) so they may be accomplished cost effectively during construction, to accommodate both current and future trails.



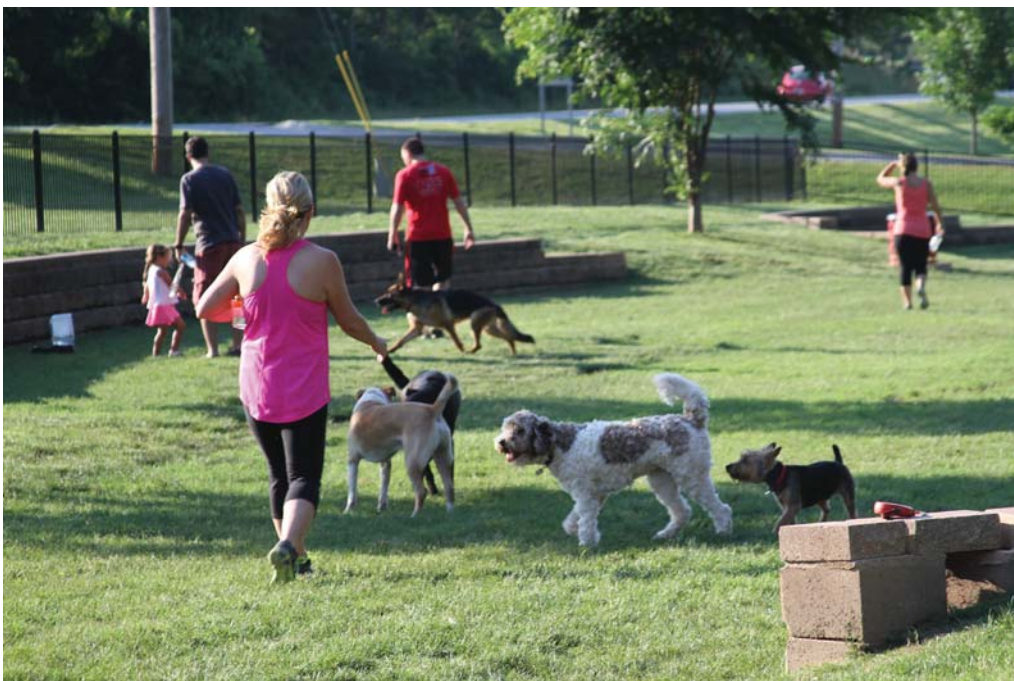
*This map shows the 4 quadrants throughout which the Grand Loop passes. Park services should be equally provided in each quadrant.*

## ACROSSTHE QUADRANTS

One key goal of the Master Plan is to have convenient uses scattered through each quadrant.

Highlights include:

- Improved trail access and connectivity
- Dog parks
- Neighborhood park components – compliment organized recreational play or adventure destinations with neighborhood park amenities. These include areas for pick up play and family friendly amenities for playing, gathering, and socializing
- Flexible field areas – for multi-use sports play that can be adapted over time to meet the growing needs of the community
- Flexible court games areas – both structured and non-structured
- Improved user amenities – may include new seating areas, shade canopies, restroom facilities, and other elements that make visiting parks comfortable and tend to lengthen a user's stay
- Signage and way-finding – enhance with new graphics and text to improve trail access as well as provide interpretation at neighborhood interfaces, define destinations, and celebrate the natural environment
- Art as a theme - along the new trail loop and within parks, incorporate art elements for play, shelter and interpretation
- Trail amenities - additional water fountains, bike repair stations, restrooms, benches, and trees well distributed



*Dog parks are ideal for both pet and owner socialization.*



*Movable, temporary public art.*

# VISION 3: ENHANCEMENT OF EXISTING PARKS AND NEW PARKS

Within Play Bentonville, there are recommendations for improvements to existing parks and the creation of new parks to meet the needs of current and future residents. This is a plan for the future and a vision to guide the Bentonville Parks and Recreation over the next ten years. These recommendations are arrived at in a number of ways:

- Information and comments gathered during our stakeholder, focus group and public meetings on their vision for the future of the park system.
- Benchmarking Bentonville with other cities as well as natural park standards as well as understanding national park trends.
- Research, assessments and understanding Bentonville's unique demographic and how residents currently use the park system and how they want to use them in the future.
- Providing precedent information and bringing new ideas to the table to diversify uses in the park system.

From this analysis and documentation, the following initiatives were established that are common to all recommendations for improvements to existing park and new park development.

- Creation of civic zones in each park. Think of these as flexible green spaces that can accommodate a number of uses, both for individuals to groups, as well as incorporate a number of landscape types – from terraces for events and informal gatherings, to open lawns, to woodland groves, to meadows. In a sense, offering choices for spontaneous play and gatherings. Examples are the greensward areas of Central Park, the central green and tree Bosque terraces of Bryant Park, and the parterres in Discovery Green.
- Taking sports to a new level by elevating a component of recreation fields to tournament quality venues. In other words, a certain percentage of fields may have synthetic turf and other amenities that enhance playing time and durability.
- Adding new parks in quadrant areas under-served to achieve a more equal distribution of parks as well as addressing the future needs of residents as Bentonville grows as a city. Recommendations for these facilities were based on current use patterns and future needs.
- Enhancing existing parks in a number of different ways. These include shifting of some park uses elsewhere, redefining or redeveloping certain facilities, and adding new uses in certain parks.
- Redefining the parks in downtown Bentonville to preserve the existing historic town square and complement it with new spaces to enhance events, community gatherings, festivals, and mobility.

# OVERVIEW OF QUADRANTS

The idea of quadrants grew out of discussion with stakeholders, residents and user groups highlighting Walton Boulevard and 14th Street a major barriers to mobility in accessing parks. In addition, there is not an equal distribution of parks, with most being around the north east which is logical since it is the historic core of Bentonville. As growth occurs, especially to the south and south-west, this inequity will become further exasperated.

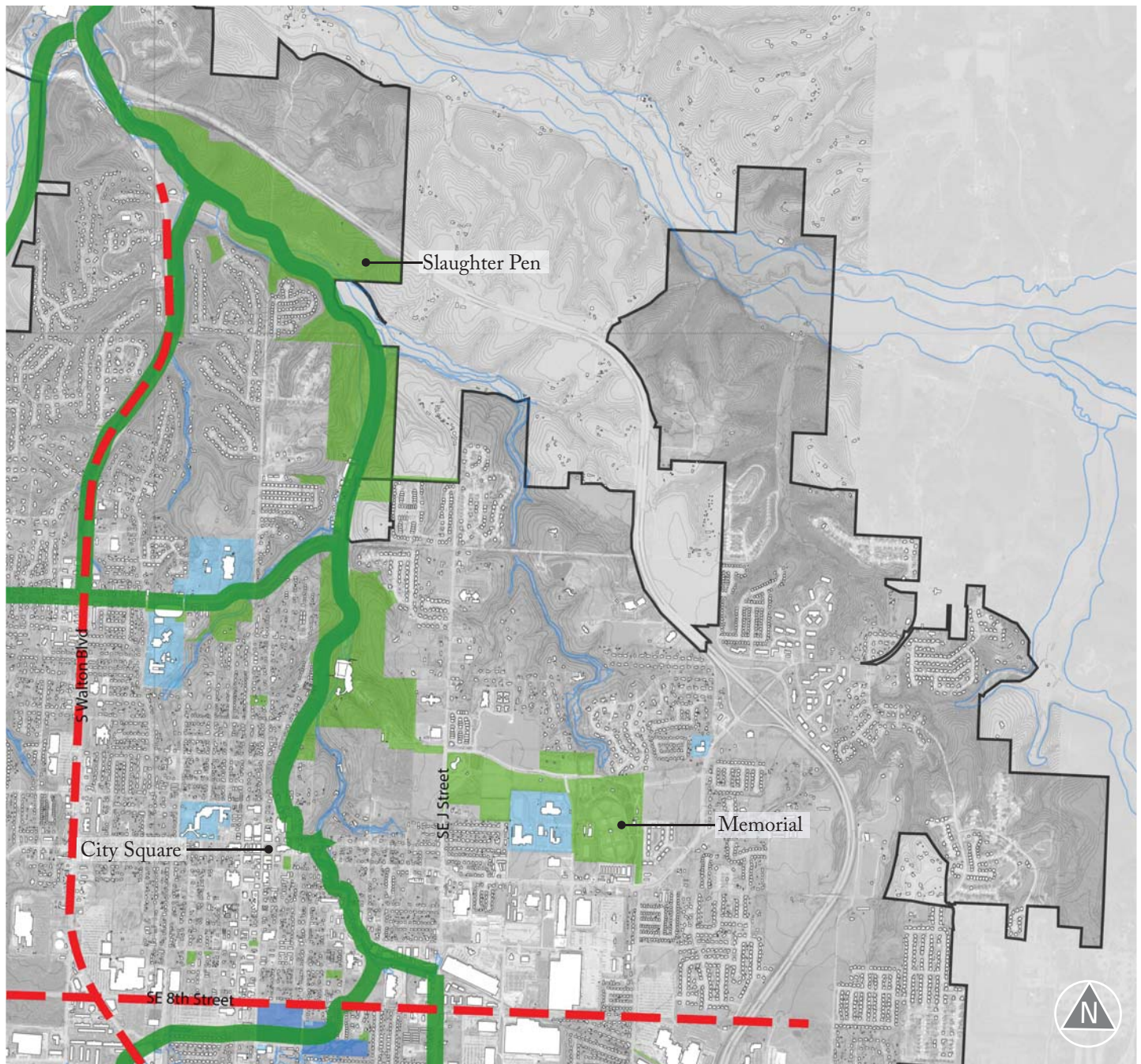
This recommendation hopes to provide a framework for a more equal distribution of parks enhancing safe access to parks closer to where people live. Walton Boulevard remains the north-south dividing line and the north-west quadrant now moves to the 8th Street corridor which is envisioned to be a new grand boulevard. These two streets almost equally divide the city into quadrants.



*A system of connected sidewalks and paths is critical to providing safe access to parks.*

# NORTHEAST QUADRANT

The Northeast Quadrant of Bentonville includes the town square and many of the first parks constructed in the city. It is also currently the most densely populated area, with guidelines and recommendations from the Comprehensive Plan to continue densification and development of this downtown core. Downtown parks are both the public face of Bentonville to visitors, as well as daily amenities for residents.



*Northeast Quadrant of Bentonville defined by South Walton Boulevard and SE 8th Street.*

## **A DOWNTOWN QUILT OF PARKS**

The historic City Square now serves as the major hub of activity for all events downtown. As a result, this green oasis requires excessive maintenance and is showing signs of wear. As Bentonville grows in population and its central core becomes more dense with commercial, food and entertainment venues, there will create demand for more flexible-use public spaces able to host the growing number of events.

The parks and open spaces are envisioned to be of the highest design quality creating unique spaces of various sizes and experiences that are intimate enough for individual users to be comfortable on a daily basis, and at the same time offer spaces for informal social gatherings, larger events, and even temporary park amenities that are attractive to the young, professional demographic of Bentonville residents.

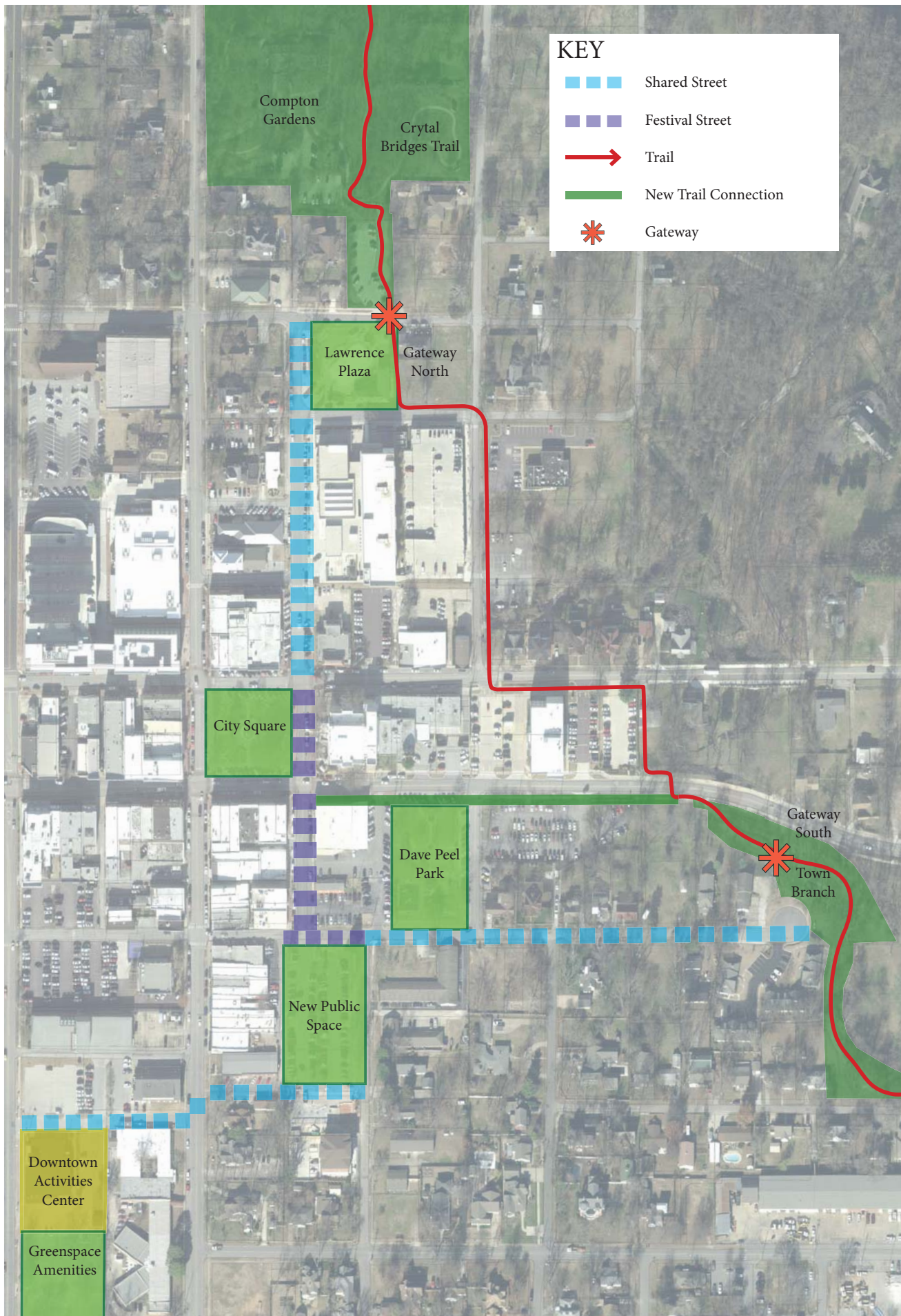
This ‘quilt of parks’ will expand the Downtown Square into a series of parks with unique offerings:

- Lawrence Plaza – a new gateway park to Crystal Bridges and the northern green system of trails and its natural ecosystems
- Dave Peel Park – reinvented to become a new event lawn with terraced outdoor living rooms, spaces for young adult gatherings and play, and a creative art play area using City Garden in St. Louis as an example.
- The Commons – a new ‘urban cool’ civic square for community events, social gatherings, areas for spontaneous adult play, a market building, as well as food trucks, pavilions, and cafes.
- Town Branch Park – enhanced to become a new southern gateway to the green trail network, similar to Lawrence Plaza to the north that will connect to the new developments at the Public Works Properties and the new 8th Street Market Area.

All of these spaces are envisioned to be connected with shared or festival style streets that can provide seamless pedestrian connectivity in a park like setting.

This new pattern, or quilt, of parks will redefine downtown Bentonville and provide a stage set to support social interaction, community engagement, foster economic development, and support public health. These are critical to workforce development and retention of young professionals and families.

There is a rare opportunity here that cannot be realized in most cities. Bentonville is on the threshold of becoming a denser, urban community. At this point, it has just the right density and unique open palette of land parcels not yet developed to their full potential. They are in a pattern that, if linked, will provide a unique sequence of public spaces appealing to a wide range of residents and visitors who can engage in a myriad of experiences in a safe, social, and exciting atmosphere.



*A quilt of paths and connectivity.*

## A NEW PUBLIC SPACE

City Square is one of the most visible and used parks in the Bentonville parks system. Nearly 80% of residents visit the park each year, with almost one-third of them saying it is their most visited park. This use likely stems from the park's centralized location for meeting friends and family, people watching, proximity to restaurants and cultural amenities, and well as its historic beauty.

Without having to change the character of the existing central square, a complimentary and more urban square should be built to accept the overflow of downtown events as the city continues to grow, along with those activities already not well suited for the manicured landscape.

With excessive use, strategies should be developed to help reduce daily wear and tear, particularly on the lawn. This will maintain the aesthetic appeal and reduce ongoing sod replacement practices. Some recommended approaches may include:

- Selective paving expansions near corners, along with seating to act as gathering spaces
- Removal or reduction of tree cover to allow more sunlight promoting healthier sod growth
- Strategic hedges to interrupt desire lines of travel
- Increased seating to deter people from sitting along the walls currently set in lawn
- Low barriers or planting beds to discourage excessive foot traffic on the lawn and deter bikers.



*A quilt of parks.*



*Pavilions for food and beverage.*



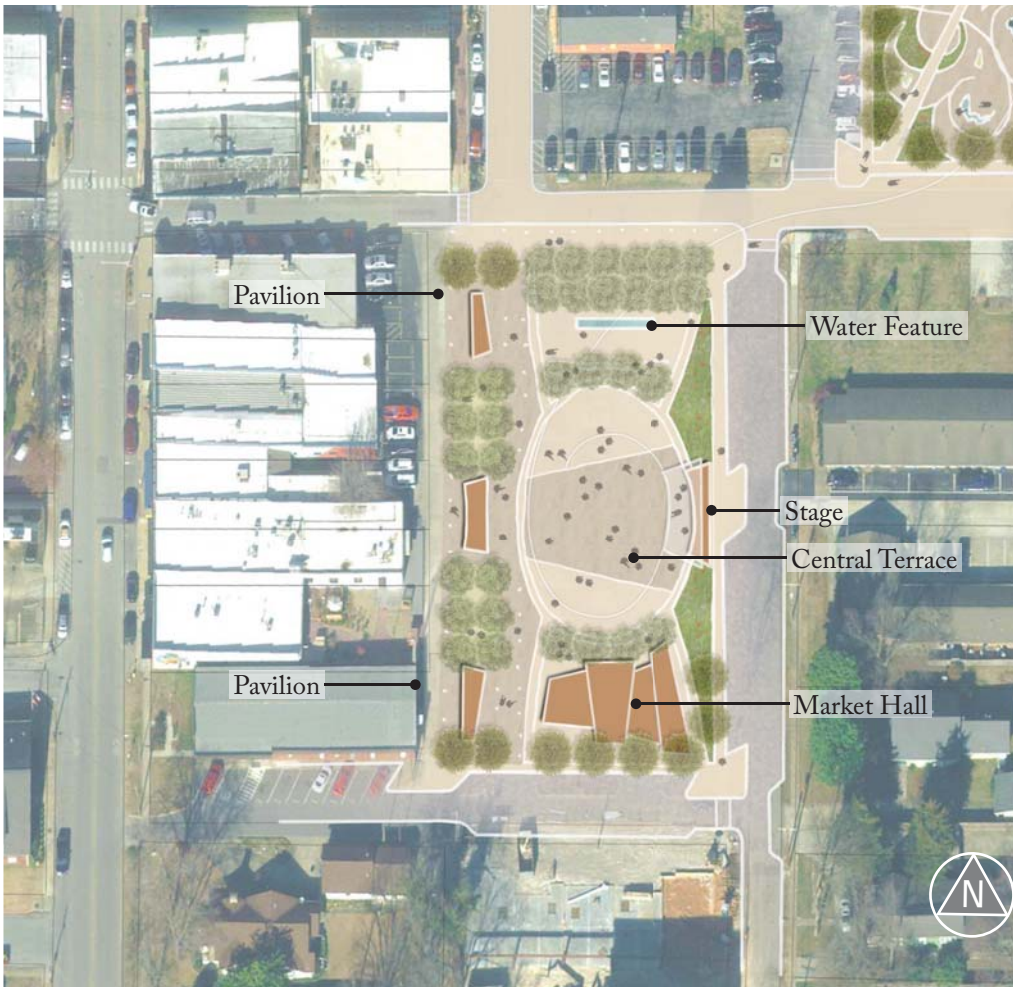
*A central water attraction with shade and comfortable seating.*



*Outdoor seating under a tree canopy.*



*Artistic interactive play.*



*Multi-purpose pavilion and shade canopy*



*Perimeter terraces*



*A public market*



*Aerial illustration looking southeast showing how the new town square may look with new surrounding development.*

## DAVE PEEL

Dave Peel Park is one of the most utilized playgrounds in Bentonville, according to survey participants, in part due to its restrooms and the added safety of the fence surrounding the play equipment. Proximity to the amenities on the square and central location within the city also contribute to its popularity.

To enhance Dave Peel, respond to public input, and recognize downtown development trends in Bentonville, it is recommended that the park become more civic in character and amenities added so more diverse uses can take place. Small things like adding a large lawn or terrace area with perimeter seating would foster gatherings of groups or individuals to socialize and enjoy the park's landscape setting. This park can offer an quiet place to visit, away from the hustle and bustle of the historic City Square and the New Town Square.

Improvements may include:

- A new central lawn or terrace for relaxing, open gatherings or events
- Perimeter lined tree bosques that can organize intimate sitting areas, water features, and vendors
- A new creative play and learning area
- A pavilion for user comfort



*Interactive play.*



*Architecture as art.*



*Integrating art and play.*



*Unique use of water.*



*Proposed plan improvements to Dave Peel using City Garden in St. Louis as a model.*



*Multi-purpose pavilion.*



*Multiple venues for play.*



*Multi-purpose central green.*



*Artificial turf and simple topography make informal play structure and places to sit and read.*

## PUBLIC WORKS PROPERTY - A LINEAR PARK

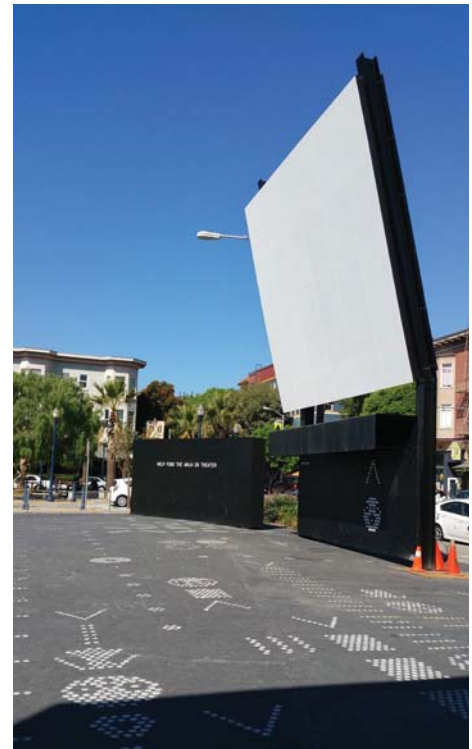
The Public Works trail corridor, if thoughtfully designed as a linear park engaging the various developments proposed in the area, including the new 8th Street, residential blocks, and the new Crystal Bridges Art Center and Amphitheater, can influence the realignment of the Razorback Greenway and make allowances for urban park interventions. These may be public, private, or partnerships, but they will be critical to the vitality and success of this development.



*Realigned trail interfacing with future development.*



*Pop-up festival.*



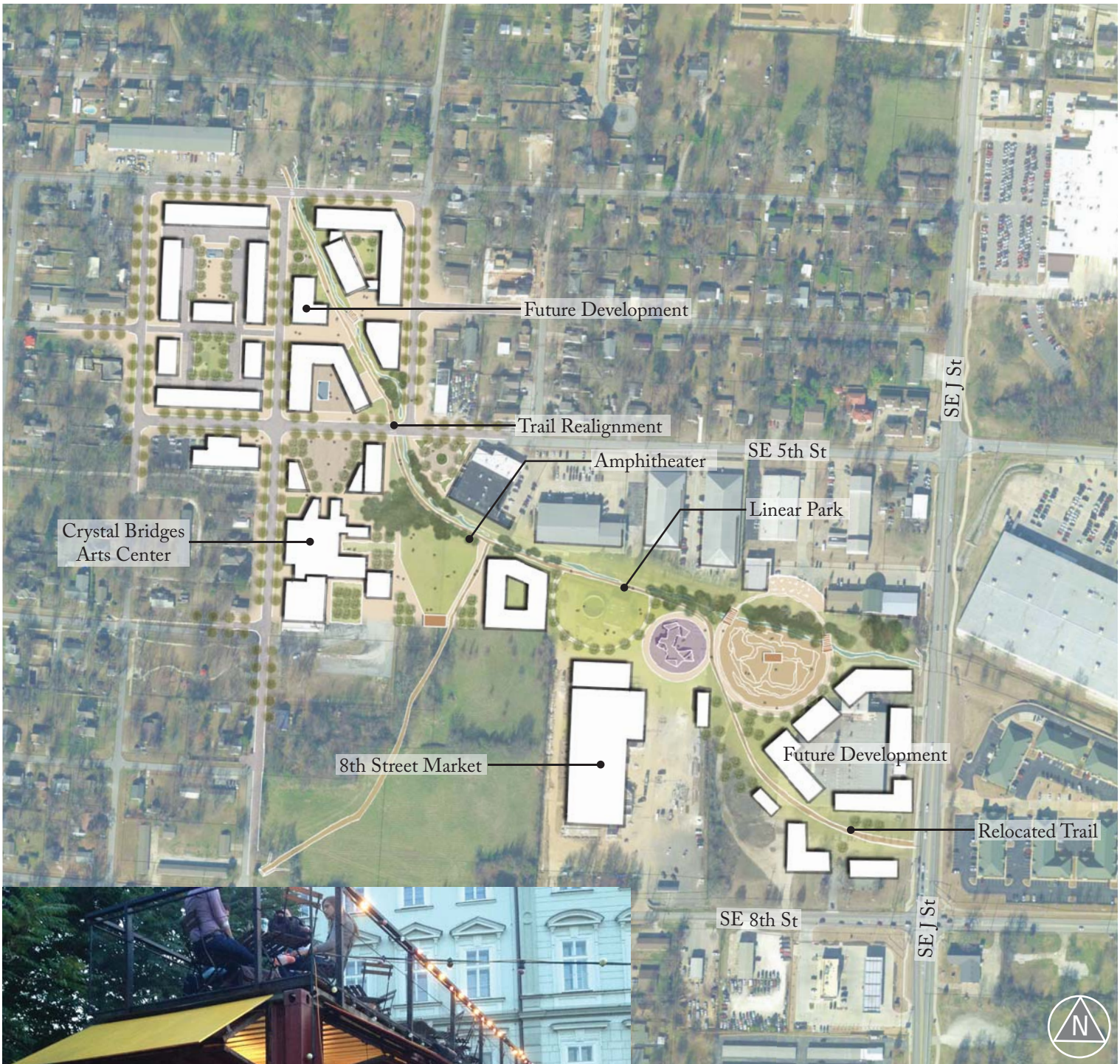
*Flexible terrace for events, games or movies.*



*Cultural green spaces for informal gatherings and relaxation.*



*Food vendor services.*



*Illustrative plan showing potential build out of a new urban neighborhood integrating civic, cultural and recreational destinations along the realigned Razorback Trail.*



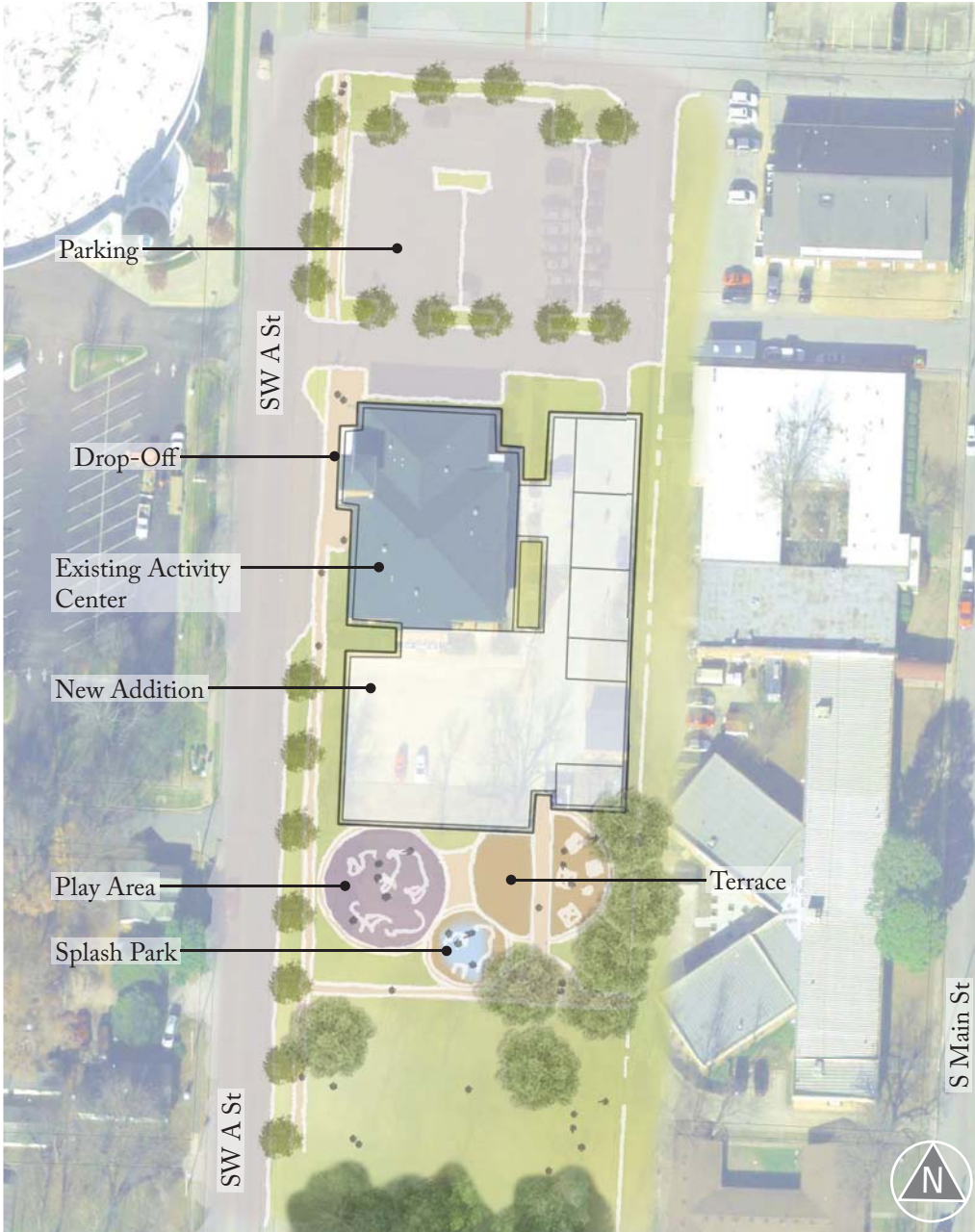
*Pop-up vendor fas a user service.*

## **DOWNTOWN ACTIVITY CENTER**

Bentonville shows a need for an additional community center, which would be best suited as close to the downtown and center of the existing population as possible. This facility would give relief to classes at the current community center, provide nearer access for many users and possibly offer different facilities that expand programming options. This recommendation expands the Downtown Activities Center, building on the existing facilities and taking advantage of the site's desirable location. As parking is lost, addressing a shared parking strategy with the adjacent First Baptist Church is encouraged.

Spatial constraints and architecture will play a role in what may be available, but recommended considerations based on the survey are:

- Additional multipurpose rooms and exercise equipment. Fitness equipment will be an essential addition to a recreation facility, however yoga and fitness/aerobics rank as some of the most popular activities for adults
- An art studio that might accommodate drawing, painting, photography and/or ceramics. These activities ranked high among adults and above many popular sports like soccer and baseball among youth
- A single basketball court. While a future indoor field and court complex should be expected to handle the additional court needs of the community, the importance of a flexible gym space at this centrally located facility should not be overlooked. Basketball ranks in the top 10 activities for youth and high among adults.
- Rock climbing area utilizing the clear space of the gym for entry level climbing. This should be viewed as an opportunity to increase accessibility of the sport for new or entry level climbers and not a full climbing gym experience. Full climbing gyms span thousands of square feet with ongoing route setting and specialized workout spaces that are best suited for private development. This activity is also one of the top 10 among youth and high among adults.
- Music rooms (2-3). Soundproof acoustic rooms can function for personal instrument practice, lessons, or even private study areas. Collectively, there is a high interest in music lessons among survey participants and providing a small number of spaces is relatively inexpensive.
- Demonstration kitchen. Perhaps the largest infrastructure investment, there was significant interest for adults and moderate interest among youth for cooking classes.
- Outdoor splash area. Because the expanded downtown recreation center will provide access to restrooms and changing facilities, it is an ideal location for an additional splash pad. Swimming and spray pad use are the 2nd and 3rd most popular activities for youth. To complement Lawrence Plaza, it is recommended the splash pad be more playful in design and interactive in nature.



*Splash park.*



*Outdoor climbing wall on facade of building.*



*Expanded fitness class space.*

## ORCHARDS

The recommendations for Orchards build on and intend to enhance the garden character of the park. The desire is to take the separate and disconnected elements that exist – the pond and garden area, the orchard and the amphitheater and tie them together with new pathways, tree planting, sculpted mounds, and a more intimate outdoor theater area.

Improvements may include:

- A garden play area
- Sculptural mounding to add interest to the grounds as well as enhance the rake of the current amphitheater
- Omitting the existing paths in the orchard and installing a new perimeter path; the orchard area now becomes a new stage for temporary art installations
- New entry terrace
- Tree plantings to add shade and make the place more intimate



*Art can be temporarily or permanently integrated within the orchard creating destinations and adding interest.*



*Food and beverage kiosk.*



*Expanded arbor as a pedestrian path.*



*Example of an artful amphitheater and stage pavilion at Nexton, SC.*



*Playground structures located in garden room settings.*



*Proposed improvements to Orchard Park.*



*Expanded green space, pavilions and gardens.*

## MEMORIAL

Memorial park is the only true community park in the Bentonville parks system. At just over 80 acres, it includes a swimming pool, playground, skate park and facilities for tennis, beach volleyball, soccer, softball, baseball, tee-ball, and basketball. Memorial is the second most popular park in the city (behind City Square) with over 75% of citizens claiming to have visited within the past year. Even with the successful use of this park, there are still recommended improvements to increase the efficiency, add amenities, reduce maintenance, and help Memorial to best fit as a piece of the new park system.

The first recommendation is to relocate the failing t-ball fields to Phillips Park. Secondly, it was heard that the skate park is becoming outdated. These two future changes, along with the desire to reconfigure parking and allow one of the major park corners to become a visual entry rather than a parking lot, help open up a considerable piece of land. It is recommended this open space be designed to function as a cricket pitch and flexible open space. With a focus on structured sports fields, a large flexible field was a missing piece in the recreation at Memorial.

Additional adjustments include the addition of a wet playground, lazy river and enclosure of the pool to extend use into winter hours. Several adjustments have been made to enhance parking, arrival landscape and vehicle circulation.



*Enhanced aquatics.*



*Creative/adventure play.*



*Improved court games.*



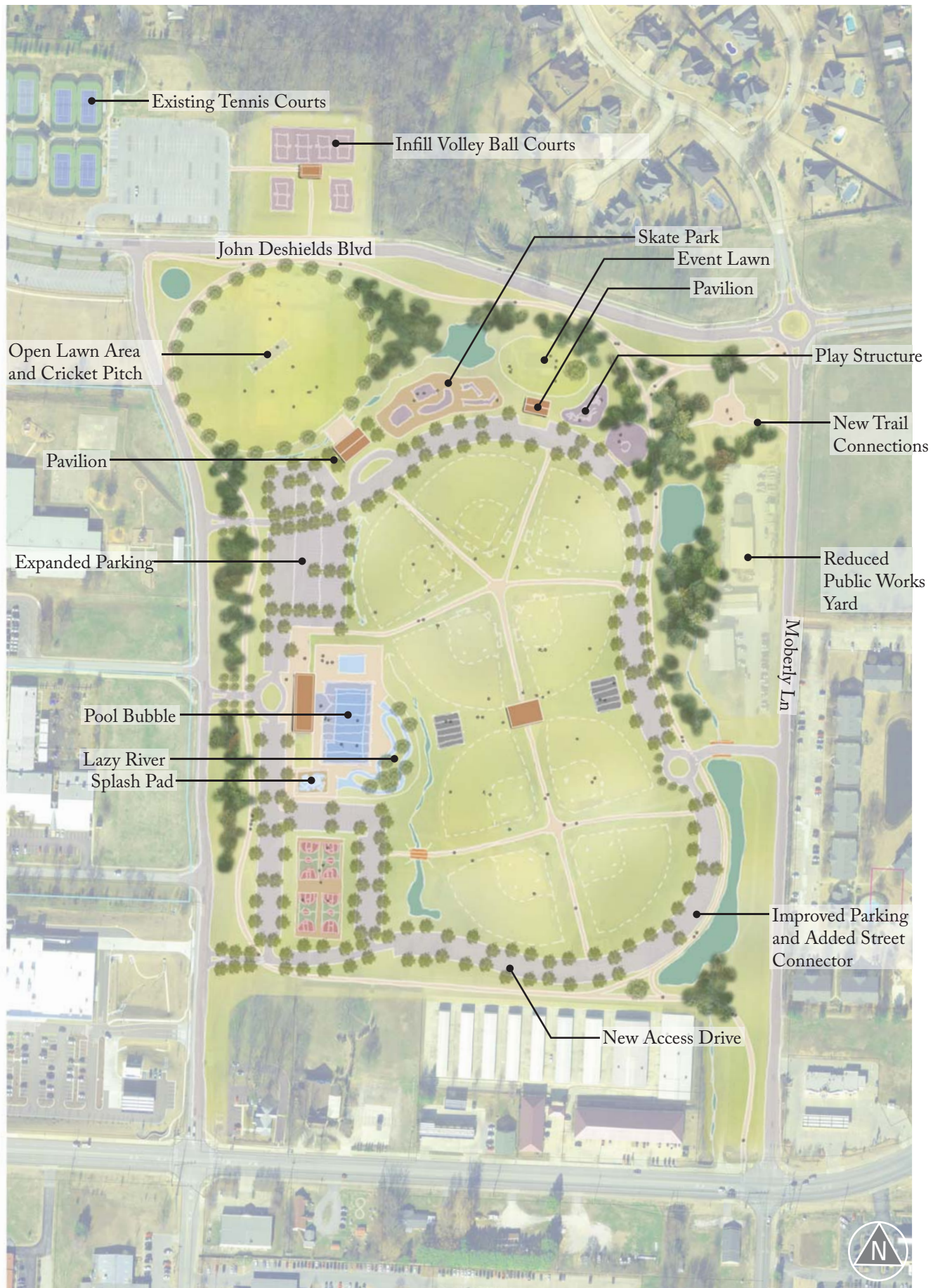
*New pavilions.*



*Enhance sport fields.*



*New skate park.*



*Illustrative plan of proposed park improvements.*

**PARK SPRINGS**

According to the survey, Park Springs Park is one of the most underutilized parks in the system. Despite having scenic beauty, excellent shade and restrooms (expressed as three of the most desirable park qualities), residents tend to either avoid or miss out on the opportunities offered at Park Springs. One simple solution is to first increase visibility and access by constructing a new trail head along Tiger Boulevard.

The second recommendation would be to reconstruct the handicap parking and path to make sure it was meeting current standards and accessible to all users. This parking lot landscape should also reconsider the dense canopy and develop a planting strategy that moves away from the struggling lawn. Lastly, additional playground features should be added to complement and expand the current offering.



*Illustrative plan for new trail head off Tiger Boulevard.*



*Woodland pavilion.*



*Creative play.*



*Creative play.*

## SLAUGHTER PEN

Slaughter Pen Mountain Bike Park is one of the premier facilities of its kind and one of the biggest tourist destinations in the area. Because of this attraction, it will remain important to support growing parking and increased maintenance. Plans to include restroom facilities near the central open space should be completed at the East Entrance.



*Illustrative plan for new trail head off NE A Street.*



*Trail art.*



*Active play.*

## **TOWN BRANCH**

While Town Branch Park is currently one of the least visited parks in Bentonville, it will play an ever increasing critical role along the improving Razorback Greenway and expanded Grand Loop. The park will begin welcoming north-bound trail users to the heart of downtown and ushering southbound trail users to the quickly developing public works property. To enhance this gateway experience and celebrate the beautiful natural setting, Town Branch Park should be expanded to adjacent property through opportunistic land acquisitions. As the downtown core densifies and population increases, this picturesque open space will become increasingly valuable to users.

## **AUSTIN-BAGGET**

Austin-Bagget Park is currently a well-designed, maintained, and amenitized neighborhood park. However, because future development on adjacent properties is ongoing, it will be important to continually reassess the play equipment capacity and potential restroom needs. Development may also increase vehicular traffic volumes and speeds. In such cases, it is recommended to enclose park spaces by a low fence for child safety, capturing not only play equipment but also open space for unstructured play.

- Add Park System Map
- Possible Future Fence and/or restrooms

## **OLD TIGER STADIUM**

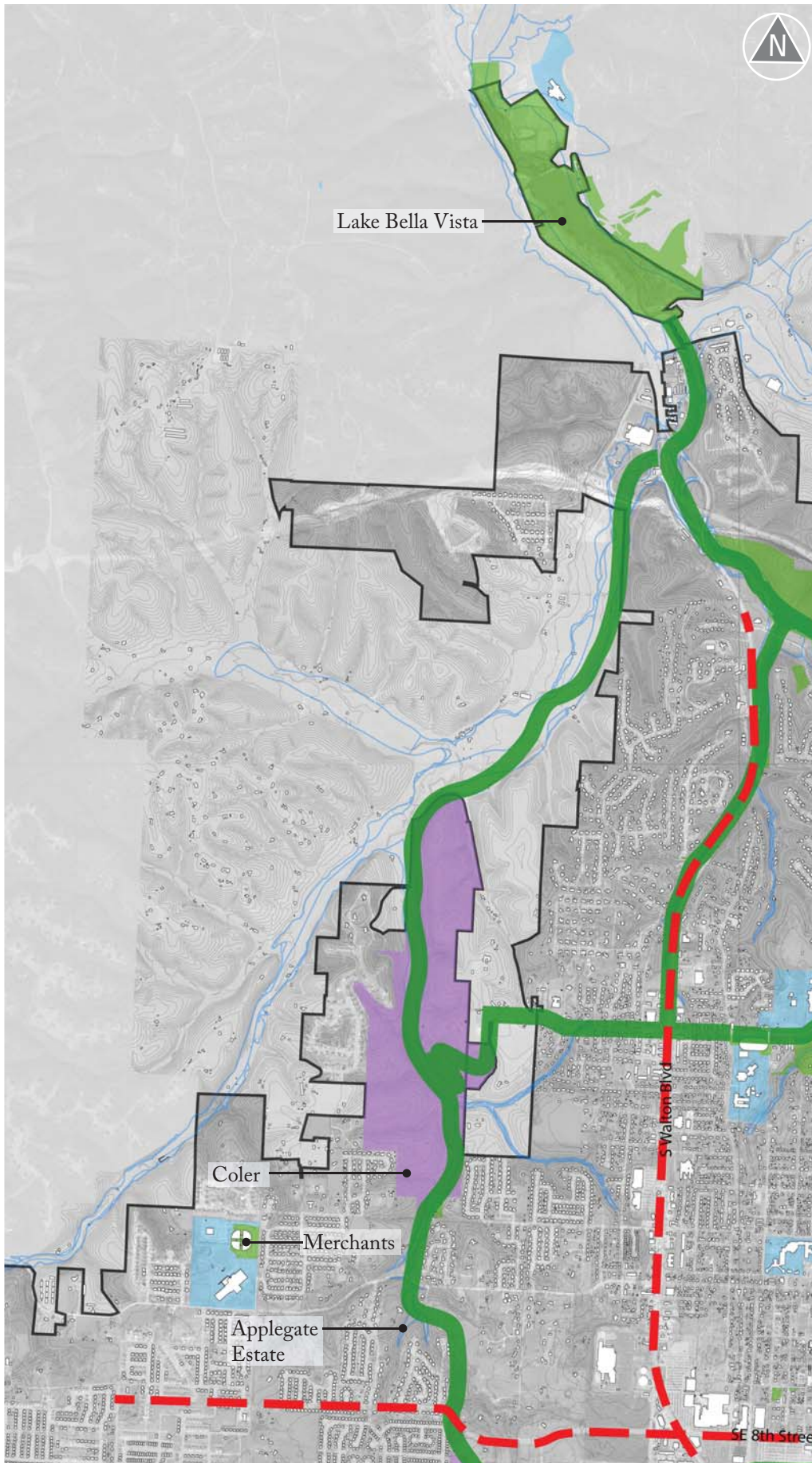
Old Tiger Stadium is currently the only public use track in Bentonville. Updates should be made to improve the track as well as provide restrooms and pavilion for changing and shelter from inclement weather. Because the infield is already bound by hard concrete edges, the field is also an ideal candidate for synthetic turf application.

## **BARK PARK/BICYCLE PLAYGROUND**

Survey results and site visits highlight the success and popularity of the Bark Park, Bike Playground, and use of these parking lots as trail head parking locations for the Slaughter Pen Mountain Bike Area. Because of this, users regularly exceed capacity of the facilities and parking of this location. There is little opportunity to expand, making the key recommendation to focus on maintaining the high quality of the existing park, and relieving pressure by developing additional dog parks in Bentonville along with a new trail head for Slaughter Pen at the East entrance.

- Add Park System Map
- Add playground/art feature
- Consider planting residual grass verges along N. Walton Blvd. with meadow mix to reduce maintenance, increase natural beauty and create a barrier between the park and traffic.

# NORTHWEST QUADRANT



*Northwest Quadrant of Bentonville defined by South Walton Boulevard and SE 8th Street.*

## BELLA VISTA LAKE ENHANCEMENT

Bella Vista Lake Park offers an escape to nature along with beautiful lake vistas unique in the Bentonville parks system. These factors are likely contributors to the park being tied as the 3rd most visited City Park just behind Memorial Park and the City Square. Despite being geographically closer to Bella Vista, we now know it is a valuable regional asset even for Bentonville residents.

Currently, eutrophication and degraded water quality are being caused by siltation and the damaged state of the dam. In order to restore the environmental health of the park, it is important to address either the repair or removal of the dam, both intensive and costly processes. Each alternative poses opportunities and constraints. If the dam is repaired and siltation management strategies are put in place, the lake can continue to offer views, wildlife habitats, and opportunities for lake recreation, such as flat-water kayaking and canoing, both identified among the top activities of interest in the survey. If the dam is removed, natural stream ecologies could be restored, providing a different, but equally beautiful natural area focused on hiking, walking, and mountain biking, also all ranking high among the interest of residents.

After discussions and considerations with various parties, the conclusion for this Master Plan is that the complex decision must be made through the lens of further ecologic assessment and understanding of carefully orchestrated funding opportunities. The following illustrate conceptual opportunities for each of these circumstances.

*Integrated Art, Landscape  
Architecture, and natural  
systems*



*An enhanced lake edge and improved access.*



*A grand pavilion at lake's edge.*



*Kayak experience.*



*Kayak storage.*



*Lake overlook.*



*Destination play area.*



*Illustrative plan for Lake enhancement.*

## BELLA VISTA POND AND STREAM OPTION



*Small lake overlook terrace.*



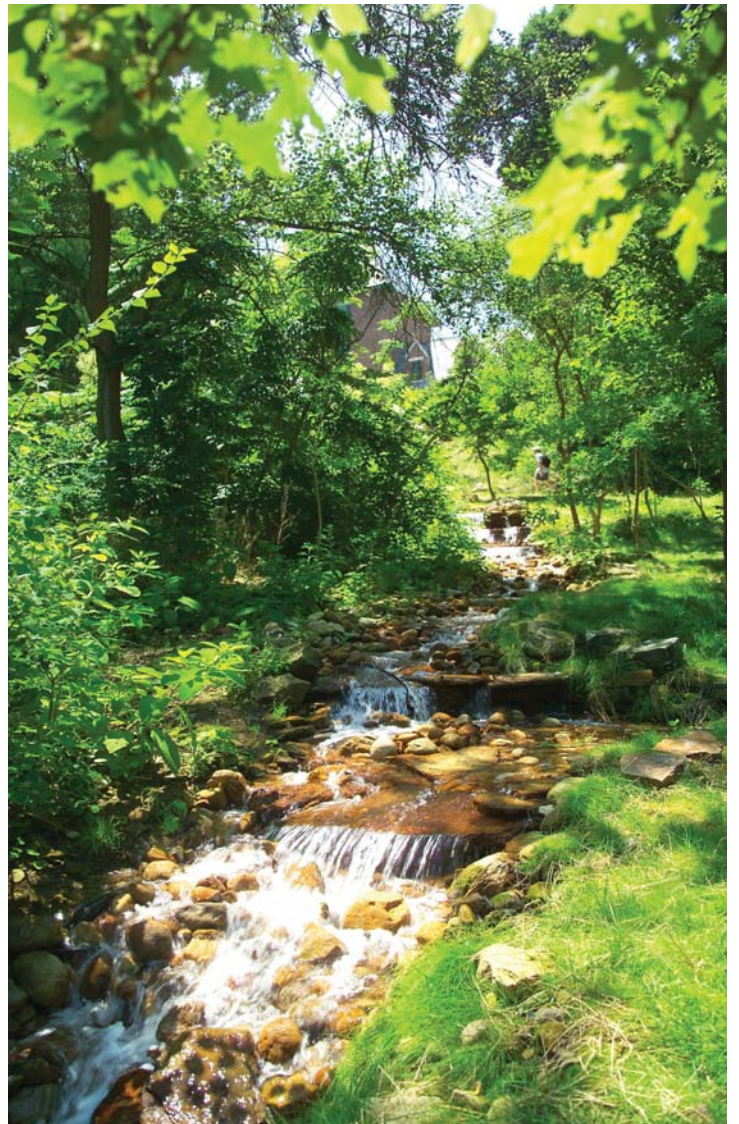
*Lake overlook at woodland edge.*



*Multi-purpose pavilion.*



*Terrace for events.*



*Nature stream restoration.*



*Illustrative plan for a reduced lake area with partial stream restoration.*

## BELLA VISTA STREAM RESTORATION OPTION



*Trail head pavilion.*



*Stream edge band shell and pavilion.*



*Lawn terrace at the small lake area.*



*Enhanced lawn and meadow area.*



*Improved trails for events*



*Cafe in the park*



*Illustrative plan for full stream restoration.*

## **PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS THAT FOSTER TRAIL CONNECTIONS**

Critical to the development of any trail network is the ability to find seamless connectivity through land prior to parcel subdividing. This prioritizing allows trails to follow natural systems aligned with desirable and efficient routes. Any subdividing and new construction should work around the trail, enhance the trail, and respect the trail as a valuable amenity.

As a natural extension of the Coler Property Park, Bentonville has been fortunate to collaborate with owners of the three properties immediately adjacent to the south. The first easement will connect from Coler to the Applegate Estate



*Heritage Park, Minneapolis, MN example of integrating natural areas into civic park space.*



*Homes fronting natural open space.*



*Trails systems and preserved natural systems working together.*



*Assembly of parcels for an improved trail network extension.*

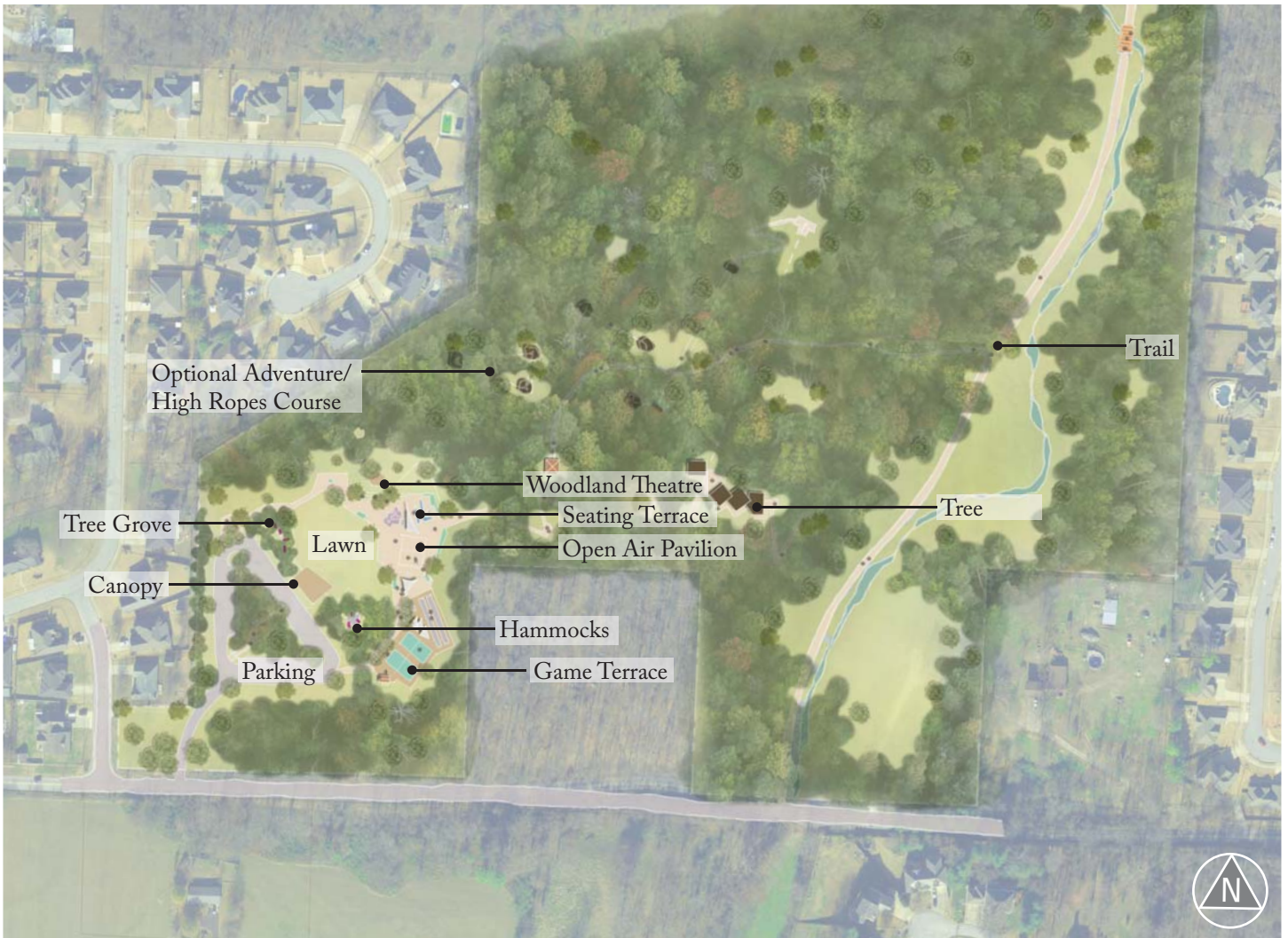
## COLER MOUNTAIN BIKE PRESERVE - STANBERRY PROPERTY

The southern boundary of the Coler Mountain Bike Preserve is well positioned to provide amenities to an under-served population of residents in NW Bentonville. Access can be gained off Cross Lane to provide for neighborhood amenities such as a simple shelter, open play field/practice ball diamond, and traditional playground equipment.

In order to take full advantage of the topography and natural beauty of the site, it is also recommended to include an adrenaline component that may involve zip-lines, high ropes, team building activities, sky walk opportunities, and tree house observation structures. Zip-lining ranked as the 12th most popular activity among adults and 9th among youth. While zip-lining is a recommended component of a ropes course, studies also show people are less likely to repeat strictly zip-line courses but can be encouraged to revisit challenge/high ropes courses for the opportunity to improve their time or experience the course with new group dynamics. Due to the high visibility of Coler mountain biking trails and the ropes course as a regional tourist attraction, any proposed landscape and structures are encouraged to participate in or select firms from the Northwest Arkansas Design Excellence Program.



*Illustrative view looking from the high ropes course and zip-line back toward the tree house. Courses should take advantage of the site beauty and natural topography while remaining as nondescript as possible.*



*Coler south entrance plan concept – a flexible park for games and social engagement.*



*Gathering spaces.*



*Relaxing.*



*High ropes course and climbers.*

## APPLEGATE PROPERTY

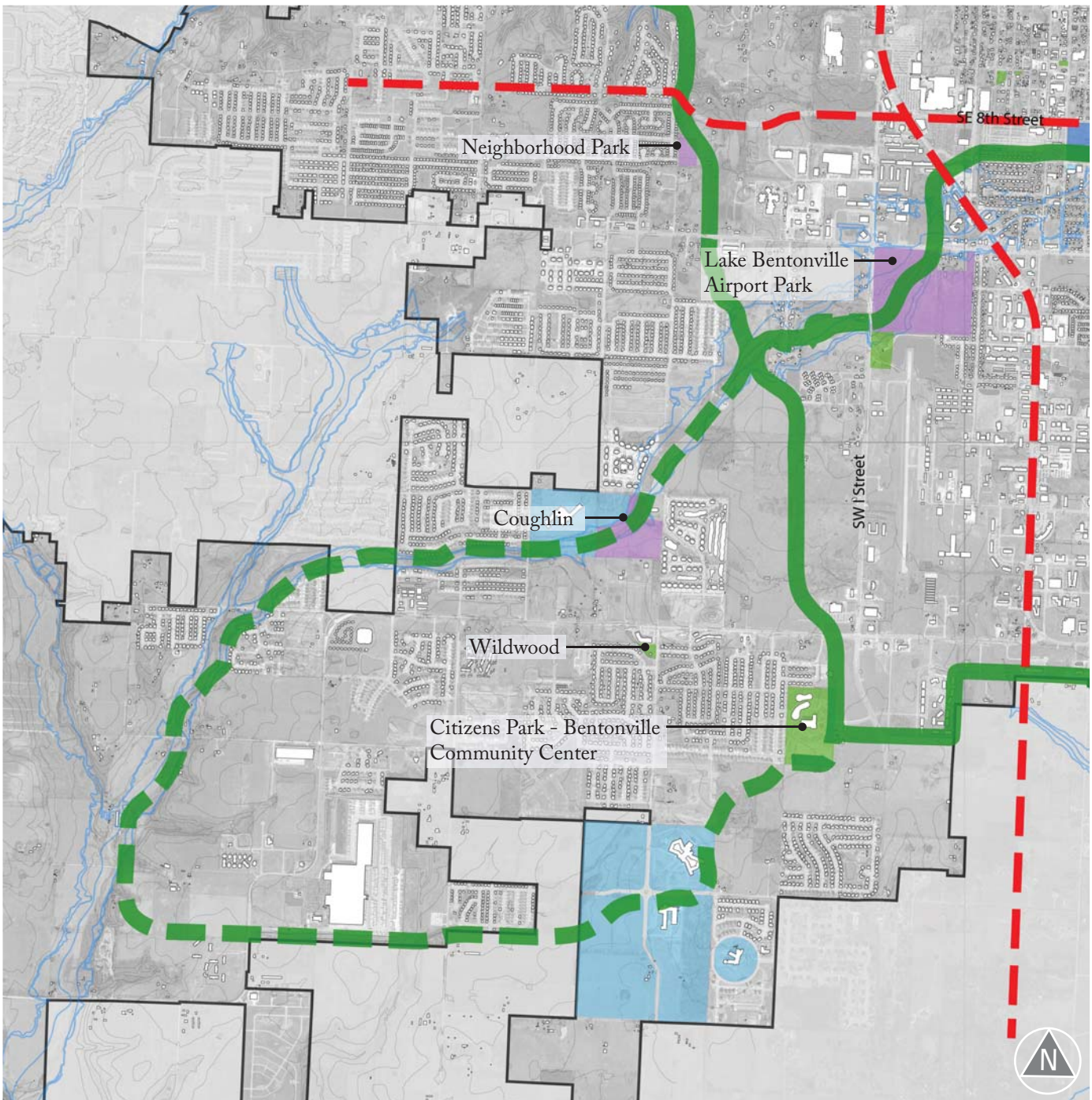
This parcel, commonly referred to as the Applegate Estate, is just south of Coler Park and an obvious extension of the helix bike network. Assuming an estate portion of the property will remain, it is suggested that any additional development plans consider how housing relates to the trail network as a focal point and amenity. Because of the proximity to the proposed park at Coler, no neighborhood park is proposed on this site. A focus on the main trail, along with parallel off road mountain bike trials (offering warm-up stunts leading to Coler) are recommended as the best and highest use for this land.

Shown on the right is a conceptual plan illustrating just one of many options as to how the land may be developed. This scheme utilizes cluster housing similar to the Black Apple development in Bentonville to address the beauty of the property and respond to housing trends in the area. Notice should be taken how the street layout prioritizes the trail and homes overlook open spaces rather than developing and privatizing this as rear yards. This pattern aids in trail visibility and safety and becomes a shared amenity for everyone in the public realm.



*Illustrative plan showing desired trail alignment.*

# SOUTHWEST QUADRANT



*Southwest Quadrant of Bentonville defined by South Walton Boulevard and SE 8th Street.*

## NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

Like the Applegate Parcel, the property located immediately to the south is a critical trail connection that represents an opportunity to continue strong development patterns that reinforce good park, trail, and neighborhood building relationships.

This site is positioned almost equally between Coler and Lake Bentonville, making it an ideal location for another neighborhood park. Survey respondents, focus groups and citizens at community meetings all voiced their concern for the lack of parks west of Walton Boulevard. This should be one of the parks filling that void, offering flexible field space, playground, splash park, pavilion, and basketball/volleyball/tennis court.

While the parcel may be developed in several ways, this conceptual example shows single family residences on lot sizes similar to the adjacent development. One critical point to notice is how new lots along the West property line relate to existing homes by backing up to them and then facing the park. This helps homes face the public space amenity increasing property value and providing visibility and safety to the park.



*Shallow water wading pool.*



*Birds eye view showing a new park at the neighborhood center with houses facing the open space.*



*Multi-purpose court areas.*



*Flexible lawn areas for play and events.*



*Conceptual plan for new neighborhood and park.*

## COUGHLIN PROPERTY

The Coughlin property is the newest Bentonville Parks & Recreation acquisition, directly adjacent to and east of the new Osage Creek Elementary and Creekside Middle School. This land contains gently rolling topography, clusters of trees, and a small creek. It is also positioned along the southwest extension of the Grand Loop. It is recommended the core of this natural system be sensitively designed around and taken full advantage of. Neighborhood components such as pavilions play areas, courts, dog park, open event lawn, and walking trails should all be gracefully positioned within existing trees and topography.

Understanding the current and future pressures to the programmed sports programs, it is recommended this event lawn be a space considered for artificial turf and the level southern portion of the Coughlin property site remain undeveloped as open meadow in the event that future need dictates the need for fields. Tennis courts, baseball/softball infields, and Football/soccer/lacrosse should all be designed to coexist on this flexible multipurpose field space. Coughlin is positioned to be a public center and socialization space for much of the southwestern community allowing persons of all ages to walk or bike to the property and participate in passive or semi-formal recreation.

Bentonville Parks & Recreation is also encouraged to explore partnerships with the school to take full advantage of the adjacent relationship and mutually beneficial opportunities.



*An “outdoor living room” in the trees for planned and unplanned neighborhood gathers.*



*Community gardens.*



*Illustrative plan shows improvements for a multi-use community park.*



*Nature trails along stream valley.*



*Open flexible lawn allows for a variety of activities.*

## LAKE BENTONVILLE

From a resource and location assessment, Lake Bentonville is well-positioned to be one of the most utilized parks, however survey results find it rated somewhere in the middle. The central location in the city, lake, and playground contribute to use, while lack of trails, landscaping, and boating account for the disuse.

“Hiking, walking, and visiting nature reserves” are three of the most popular activities among youth and adults that would all be well suited activities for Lake Bentonville based on the aesthetic potential of the area and existing popularity of a similar lake amenity at Lake Belle Vista. Additionally, lake kayaking, canoing, and fishing are some of the most popular activities among adults that should take advantage of the lake.

In order to bring visibility to the lake, capitalize on the aesthetic beauty, and financially leverage this resource, an urban harbor style development should be considered for the western arm of the lake. This area could help with the beautification of the lake edge, enhance the relationship to SW I Street, and improve access for all persons. The remaining lake can be preserved with ecological restoration along the edges.



*The beach.*



*Boardwalk through natural areas.*



*Paddleboarding.*



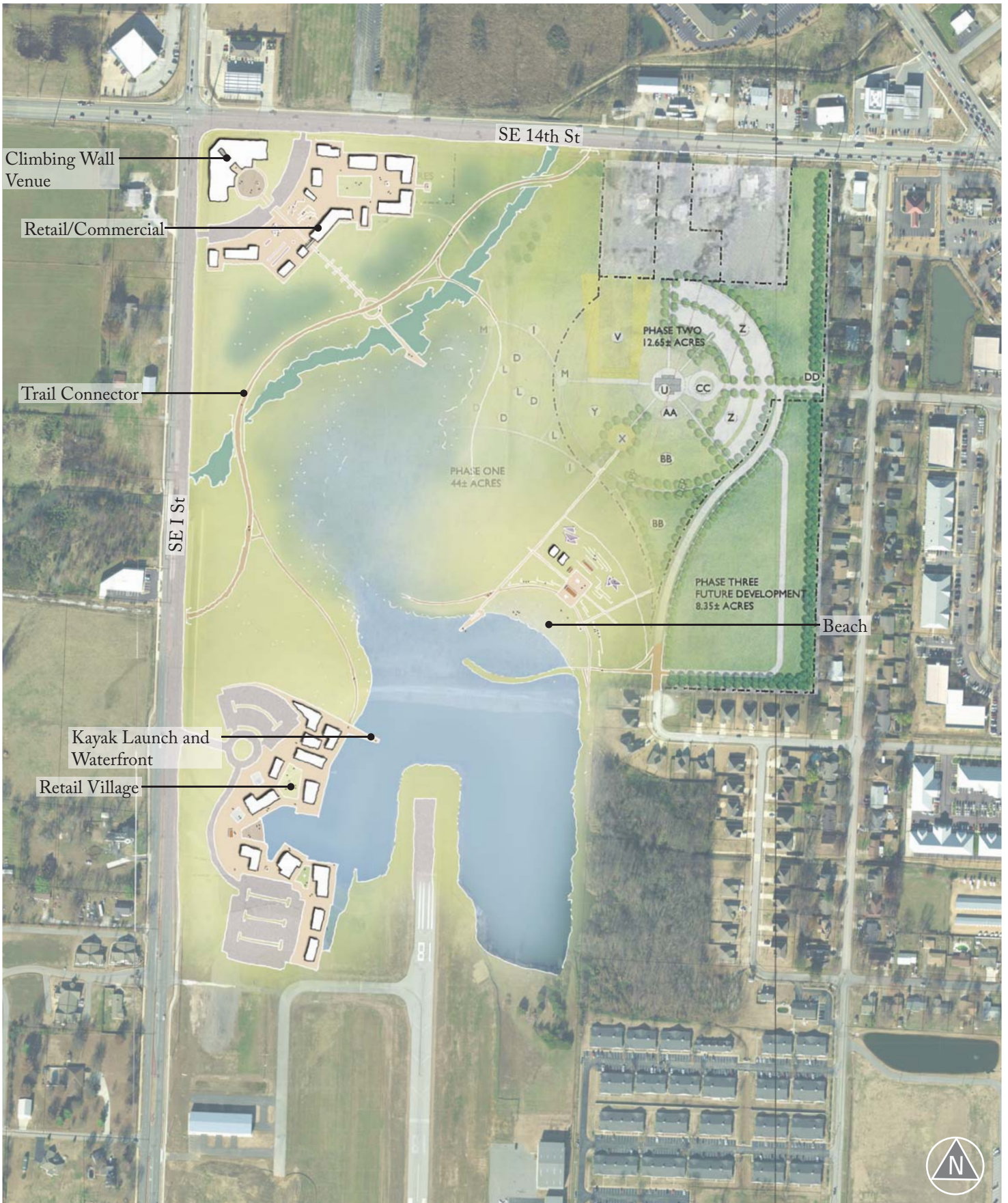
*Aerial illustration of a lake front “mini” harbor development precedent found in Fishers, IN.*



*Kayaking.*



*Relaxing by the water.*



Lake Bentonville Park plan overlay with the new Airport Park plan to highlight lake edge treatments and trail alignment suggestions.

## CITIZENS PARK - BENTONVILLE COMMUNITY CENTER

As one of the newest parks, Bentonville Parks & Recreation is still implementing portions of the original plan. It is recommended both the six tennis courts and accessible and inclusive playground be installed as planned. This will be Bentonville's first inclusive play structure and a critical addition toward fulfilling Bentonville Parks & Recreation's commitment of being welcoming to all persons.

Creative playgrounds, an outdoor splash pad, and a bicycle playground are all additional amenities that have been identified as high use by the community and appropriate enhancements to the park's experience. Bentonville Parks & Recreation is also encouraged to construct a wide path from the southwest to northeast corner of the site to allow future trail alignment opportunities of the Grand Loop. From the northeast corner, connections must still be made moving north across SW Regional Airport Blvd and ideally East to meet the recently completed trail extension. This would eliminate tight 90 degree trail turns and fulfill the goal of prioritizing trail use.

Lastly, additional landscape buffer improvements are encouraged along the perimeter of the site to help screen the general imposing appearance of rear yard fences.



*Destination play area.*



*Stage/pavilion at open lawn.*



*Integrated climbing wall.*



*New tennis courts.*

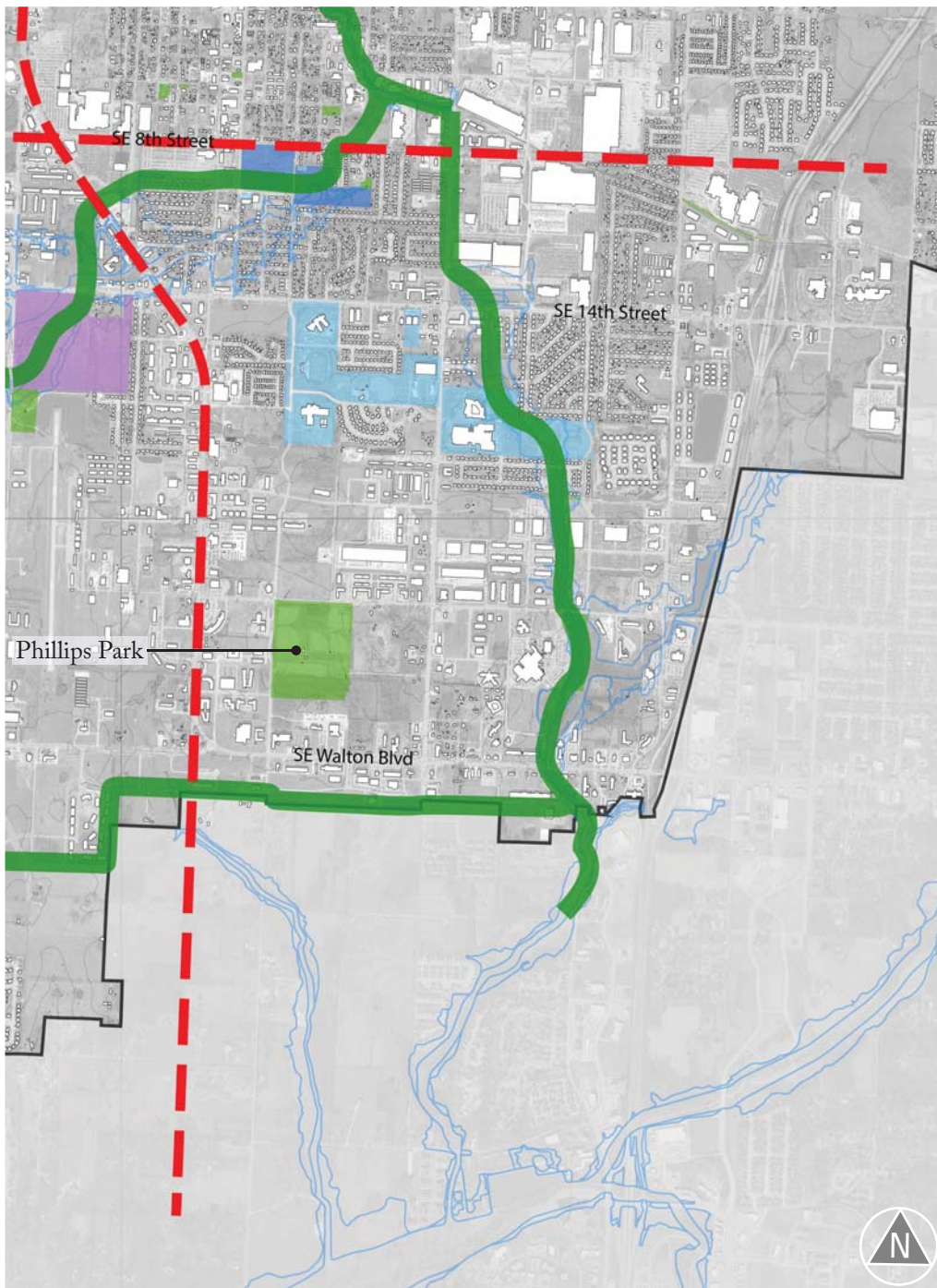


*Plan enhancements at the Bentonville Recreation Center.*



*Creative play space.*

# SOUTHEAST QUADRANT



*Southwest Quadrant of Bentonville defined by South Walton Boulevard and SE 8th Street.*

## PHILLIPS

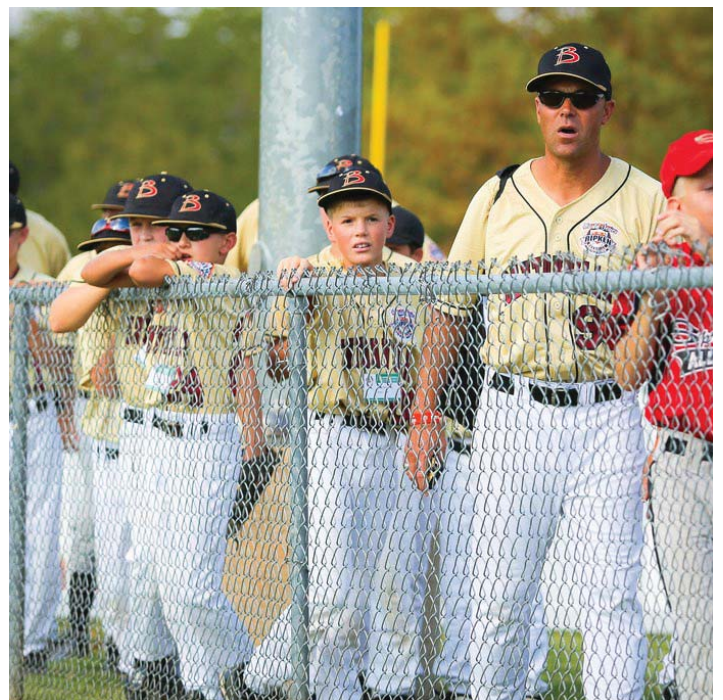
Bentonville has a strong youth baseball culture the community wishes to continue. In response to the need for additional and improved fields, it is recommended Phillips Park be redesigned to more efficiently use the existing park space. Through this renovation, field 1 should be maintained and improved. As the only park in the southeast quadrant, it is also critical for Phillips Park to design and protect neighborhood park components such as open flexible lawn, court games, and play structures from any additional baseball field development.



*New destination play area.*



*Large Community Pavilion.*



*Enhanced sports play.*



*Phillips Park conceptual plan alternative integrating civic spaces, such as an open lawn and neighborhood use components.*

# SMALLER PARKS ACROSS THE QUADRANTS

Bentonville has a wonderful collection of smaller parks that serve its neighborhoods. Most are in great conditions and offer state of the art user amenities. In the next ten years, there parks will require minor upgrades that may include the following: new or renovated play grounds, new shade shelters and pavilions, new site amenities such as benches and seating areas, updated signage and way-finding, and possible new user amenities such as restrooms. These improvements will be applied to the following parks:

## **NORTHEAST QUADRANT**

Train Station Park  
Gilmore Park  
Lawrence Plaza  
Enfield Park  
Crystal Bridges Trail

## **SOUTHWEST QUADRANT**

Wildwood Park



*Enhanced and natural play.*

# REDEFINING ACCESSIBILITY, USE AND PARKS AS A FRAMEWORK

Plan Bentonville when beyond the boundaries of a typical park's master plan. Yes, it looked to the future to insure the residents of Bentonville that their park system will continue to offer excellent services, quality programming, and state of the art recreational facilities. But is also integrated intangibles that are sometimes overlooked, things that make a park system special and cherished. These intangibles are inherent to great park systems.

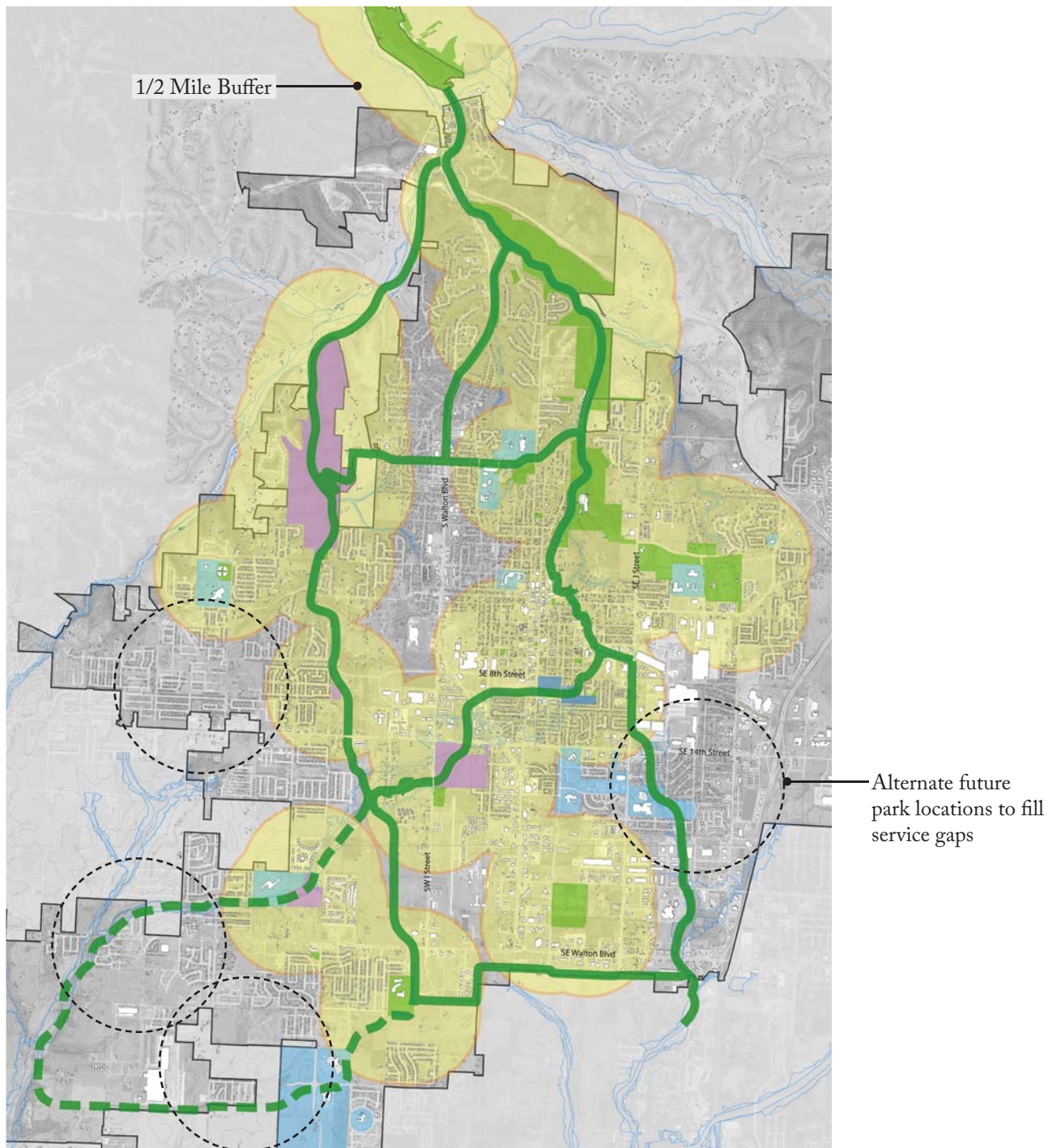
- The idea of ease of safe and seamless access that spiritually bring the park system to a resident's front door. This calls for better connectivity to neighborhoods and for parks to be located within a convenient walking radius – in this case ½ mile.
- The idea that parks are the catalyst for landscape preservation and a reservoir for habitat, woodland and water management. The Grand Loop, or green necklace, can foster a network of parks along its corridor but can also foster the preservation of key parcels of land for conservation extending the green network to enhance the quality of life by providing access to natural systems, agricultural lands, and major woodlots. This new parks 'framework' will make Bentonville a city within a park.
- The idea of democratic, civic park spaces incorporated into all park, both new and old. Parks should never be built in residential neighborhoods that are single use. They should be built for all users and have a set of diverse uses – from classical park landscapes such as lawns of various sizes, a hierarchy of pathways, flexible civic spaces for spontaneous gatherings, play areas for youth and adult, and organized areas for sports. Of importance is the need to provide user amenities such as social spaces for gatherings that focus on entertainment, food and beverage, as well as artful play. This addresses the new trend in recreation – free-form play and impromptu socializing.



*Parks for all.*

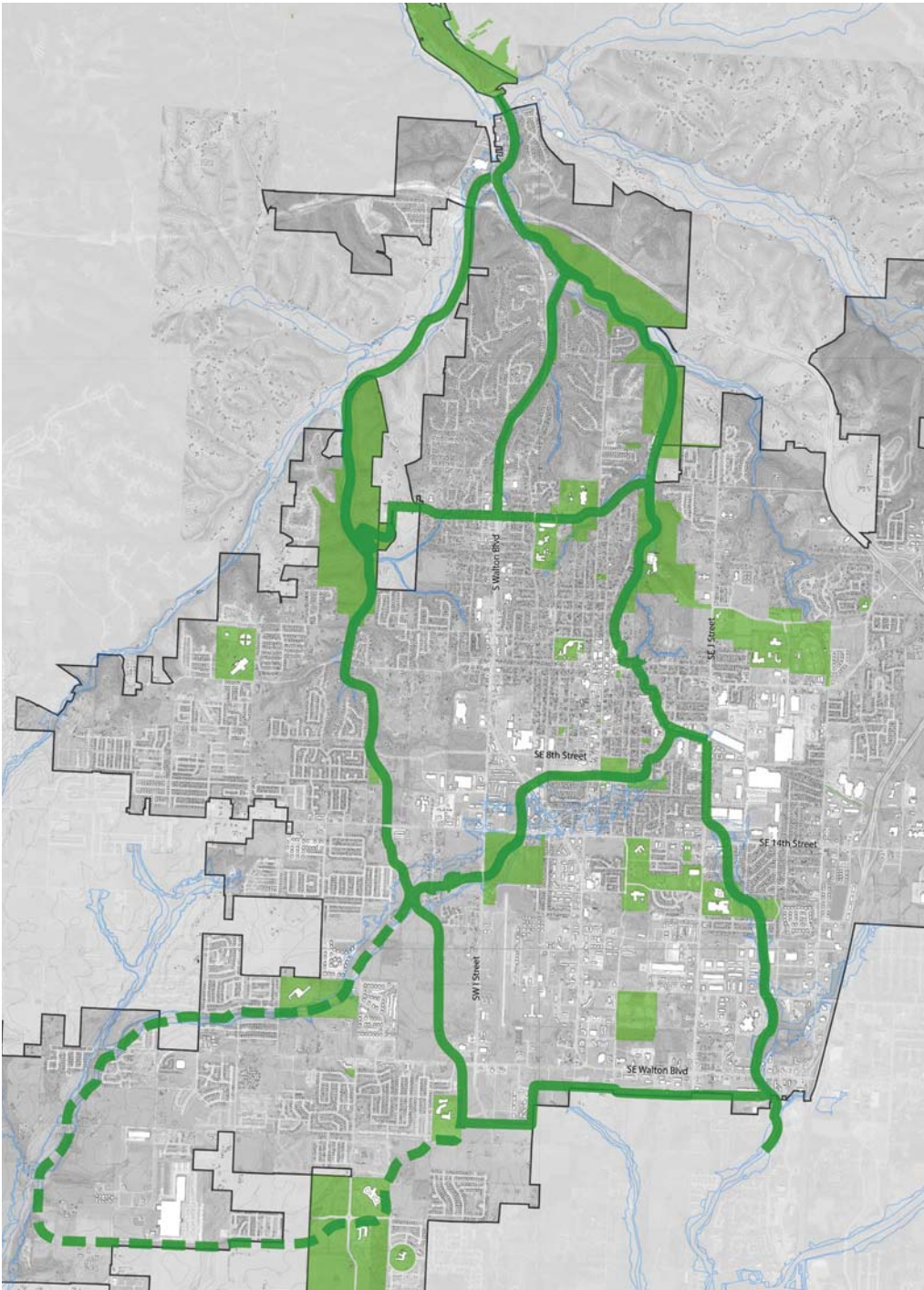
# WALKABILITY SERVICE AREAS

A major goal of the plan is insuring ease of access for walking and biking to parks. This illustration shows how the new park system become within reach of a majority of residents. Gaps in the walkability of zones can be filled in by the addition of new neighborhood parks developed in partnership with developers, schools or others interested in providing new recreational opportunities.



*1/2 Mile Walking Radii surrounding parks.*

# THE GREEN NETWORK REALIZED



*Parks and Open Space network connected through the spine of the Loop Trail System.*



# ALTERNATIVES TO THE PLAN

This previous recommendations will provide Bentonville a suitable park program that addresses the future needs of its residents over the next ten years. Although the plan is flexible and had land within the system to address special areas of growth and use, this plan recommends three alternatives that should be considered in the future.

- **A New 25 Acre Park.** This park may be needed if the flexible green spaces become overwhelmed with recreational demands or other uses not yet foreseen. This 25 acre minimum parcel can and flexibility to the system. It can also be beneficial if Bentonville Park and Recreation what to continue to serve the region beyond it resident. This park can be developed in partnership with adjacent communities with shared funding sources.
- **An Indoor Facility.** This component has been mentioned as a key component that is desired by residents and user groups. It can include facilities for indoor fields and courts, an expo area, and common spaces. It can also include outdoor activities as well.
- **An Environmental Central.** Bentonville's growing park system includes beautiful and rich natural landscapes. Adjacent to these parks are other natural areas such as Crystal Bridges Museum grounds further enhancing this natural amenity. As a compliment to the Amazeum, the children's museum, an Environmental Center would add an education component bringing focus to the native habitats and ecosystems of the region. This type of facility will enhance Bentonville's reputation as a leader in sustainability and natural preservation.



## 25 ACRE PARK

As the population of Bentonville grows, there may need to be a 25 acre piece of land acquired. This land should also be along the loop trail extension to assure it is tied into the overall trail network.

The development of this parcel may be holistic or incremental, to keep pace with need and population growth. The most important aspect however will be to build any smaller portions in compliance with a site master plan so that development remains efficient and aesthetically pleasing when the park is finally built to capacity. The purpose of this park will be in part to support overwhelmed field capacity for field sports such as soccer, football, lacrosse, baseball, and softball, as well as fill deficiencies in walkability gaps.



*Multi-use community spaces.*



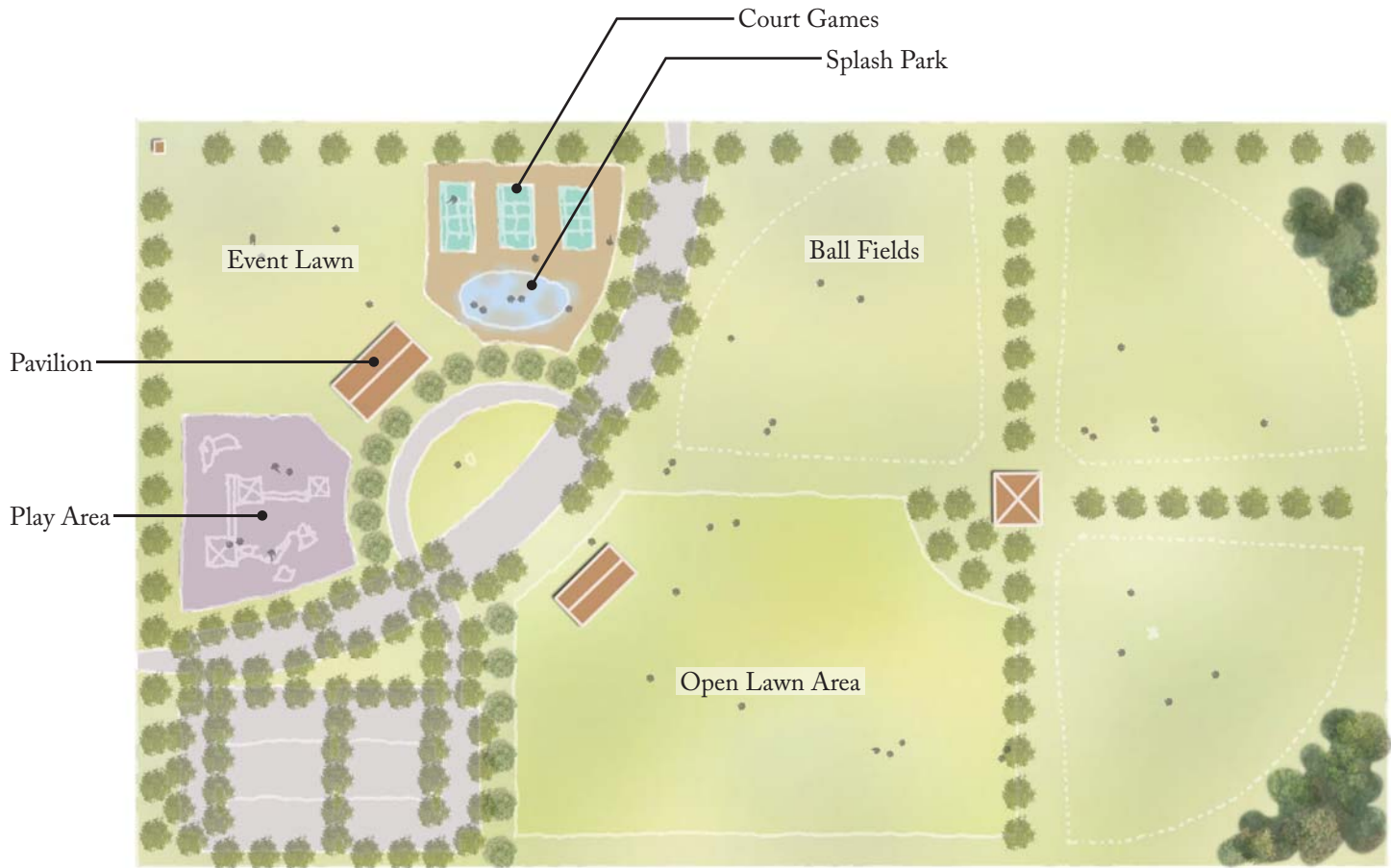
*Open areas for flexible play.*



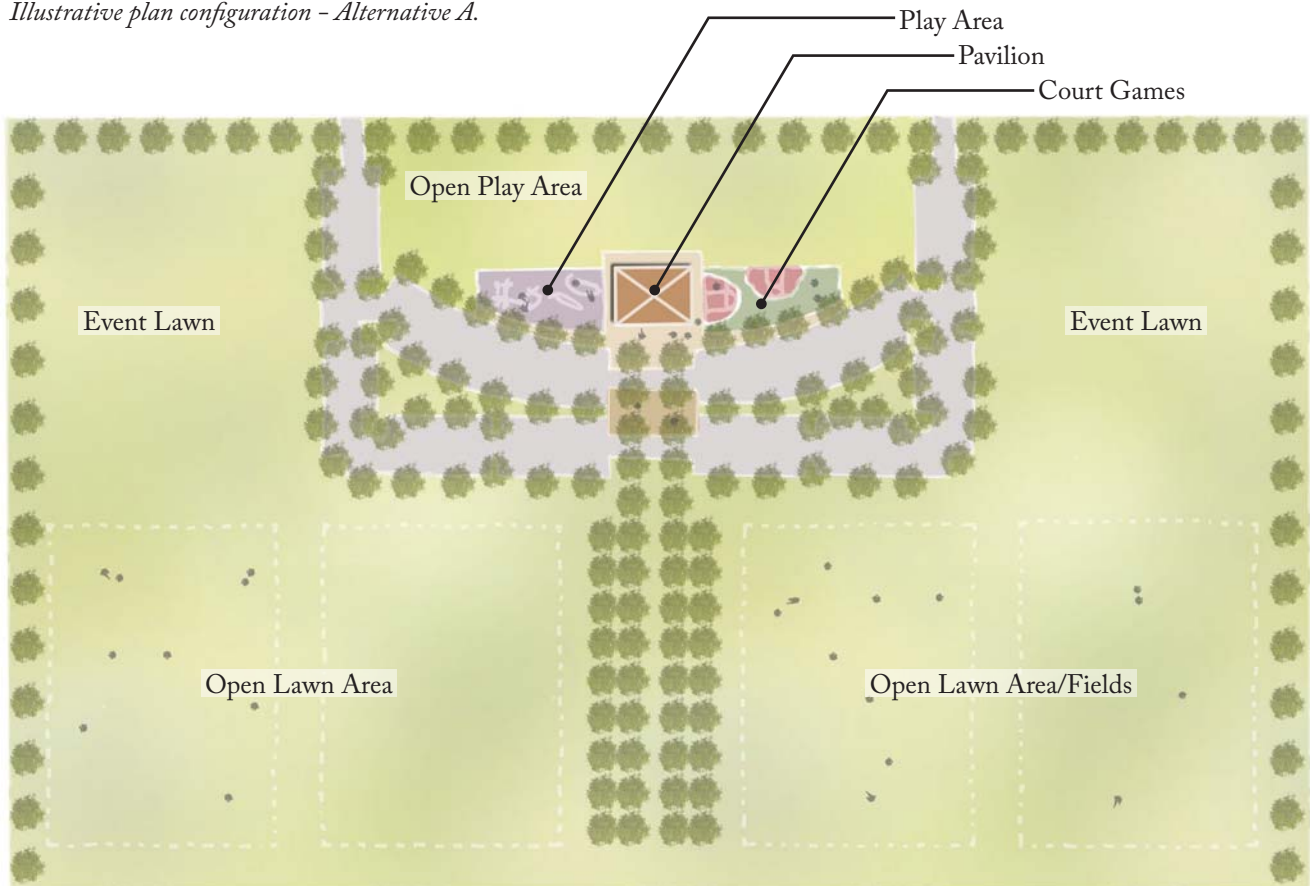
*Programming for community use.*



*Pop-up vendors as a user amenity.*



*Illustrative plan configuration - Alternative A.*



*Illustrative plan configuration - Alternative B.*

## INDOOR FACILITY

One missing regional recreation element is a large multi-purpose indoor facility to house flexible space for any field sport. While demand may vary with the seasons, temperature extremes and inclement weather drive people indoors throughout the year and support year round use of these types of facilities. There is also an advantage in extending the accessibility of adult recreation by allowing activities and leagues to occur much later into the evening than is sometimes possible outside. In addition to the field space, it is recommended to include 6-8 indoor basketball courts and 6-8 indoor tennis courts. With access to the indoor amenities, one outdoor synthetic field and running track are suggested additions to support the growing populations needs.

The exact size and location of this facility will be dependent on any land opportunities, but a few recommendations and considerations are suggested. Ideally the parcel should be able to accommodate a building with a minimum of two and an option of four full indoor soccer fields. These fields are often subdivided for regular play, but offer a competition level venue when necessary. The conceptual study (shown right) represents a 40 acre parcel. The facility should also be centrally located in Bentonville as close as possible to the helix trail loop. This plan shows the trail going through the site. Layout of the facility and turf movability should be considered to accommodate hosting mini expos that can be an additional revenue generator for the facility. It is recommended to consult with the A&P commission for ideal size and configuration.



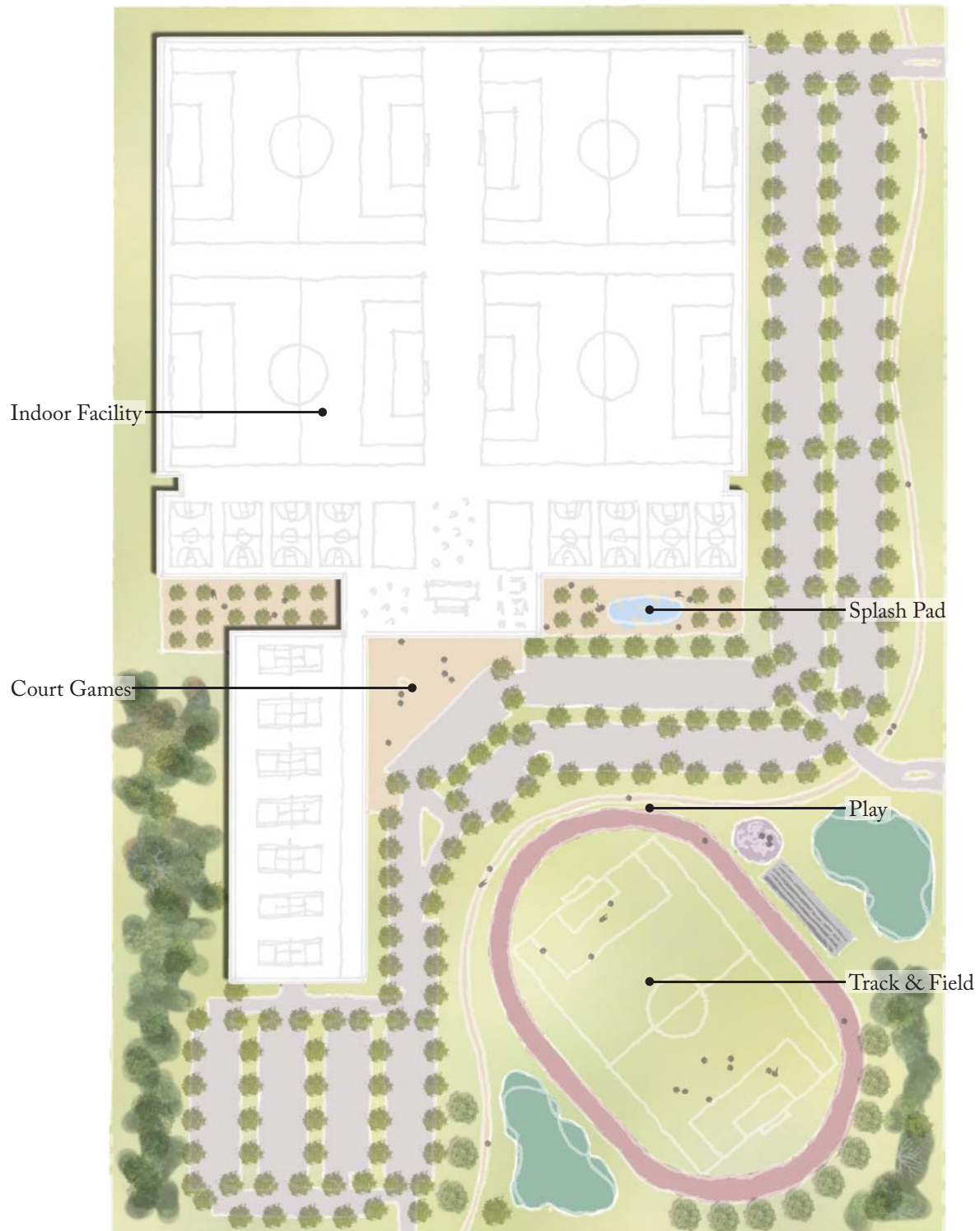
*Indoor recreational uses.*



*Outdoor community track serves a need for all ages in the running community.*



*Aerial illustration of a smaller two-field indoor facility.*



*Conceptual plan for a larger four-field indoor facility. This would be ideally located in the Southeast or Southwest Quadrant.*



*A seamless integration of landscape and architecture – the Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center, Austin, TX.*

## ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER ALTERNATIVE

Several community members and focus groups expressed interest in the development of a Bentonville Environmental Center. The function could range from educational programing and partnerships with schools, to housing master gardeners activities and extension services. With the abundance of natural habitat in the Bentonville Parks system, this building would need to be opportunistically sited as land or funding allows.



*Integrated art at the Environmental Center at Frick Park, Pittsburgh, PA.*



*The highest level of sustainability – a living building challenge project, the Environmental Center at Frick Park, Pittsburgh, PA .*

*This facility would ideally be located near some of the more natural areas of Bentonville so that it is immersed in a rich and diverse landscape setting. One ideal location would be near the Crystal Bridges Museum and the Amazeum Children's' Museum.*

# BENTONVILLE PARKS MASTER PLAN

## 2025 ILLUSTRATIVE



*Aerial Illustration of how the Grand Loop and Park system will work throughout Bentonville.*

# SUMMARY

This Parks Master Plan 2025 provides a new vision for Bentonville. One that addresses the need for better city wide connectivity and safe access to parks and trails that are close to home. It addresses the future recreational needs of growing and robust population that loves to spend time in their parks, enjoy the vibrancy of their downtown, the livability of their neighborhoods, and the natural and diverse beauty of their landscape setting.

Highlights include:

- Provide recreational amenities that will serve future Bentonville residents
- Provide enhanced amenities that will continue serve a larger population area of adjacent communities that currently use Bentonville Parks for recreation
- Define a threshold for future amenities that begin to negatively impact Bentonville Parks & Recreation's ability to provide exceptional services and strain capital and maintenance budgets and manpower.
- Once the threshold is reached, seek partnerships with adjacent communities to share the cost of future facilities, as well as determine the best locations for future parks, and to that outline a new fee and revenue structure that sustains the park system across the board

Specifics Include:

- If recreational improvements to existing and new parks are implemented, the facilities will exceed national benchmarks for the future population of Bentonville in 2025
- In addition, the plan will continue to service the region, as currently serviced for the foreseeable future