

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

City Park 2050

A Community Plan to Enrich A Joyful and Resilient Park For Generations To Come



Prepared in August 2025 for

City Park Conservancy (CPC)
and **The New Orleans City Park
Improvement Association (CPIA)**

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We honor the ancestral land of the Atakapa-
Ishak, Caddo, Chitimacha, Choctaw, Houma,
Natchez, Tunica, Biloxi, Bayougoula, Washa,
Chawasha, Tchoupitoulas, Acolapissa, Pointe-
Au-Chien, and other currently unknown
Indigenous nations who lived on and cared for
this land for over 6,000 years.

We also recognize that this land’s cultiva-
tion, financial growth, and ongoing cultural,
historical, and environmental significance was
achieved through exploitation and systemic
oppression of Black and Indigenous people
of color. Enslaved African people were forced
to clear cypress swamps, construct canals,
and cultivate sugarcane on the 14 plantations
that occupied City Park’s current boundaries.
We acknowledge their uncredited labor, the
injustices they endured, and the generational
impacts that persist.

As we honor this land’s past, we pledge to
prioritize cultural sensitivity, environmental
stewardship, and equitable partnerships with
Indigenous nations and descendants of en-
slaved communities in all aspects of planning
and engagement for City Park’s future.

*This Land and Labor Acknowledgement was
shaped in partnership with the Ideas Youth
Committee (IYC), whose members reviewed
and reimagined an early version inspired by
the New Orleans Museum of Art (NOMA). The
IYC helped create a statement that reflects
a more honest and inclusive understanding
of City Park’s past. This served as a grounding
element throughout the planning process and
remains a living document, open to continued
reflection and refinement.*

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Historic aerial view
of City Park, 1950s.



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Welcome



FIG 2
(Left, from top)
The Park’s history, including its development in the WPA era, was an important influence on the Plan.

A family enjoying City Park.

Community meeting’s co-design activity provided essential ideas for this Plan.

Park leadership and staff worked closely with the Design Team.



Dear Friends,

It is with great pride and excitement that I present to you City Park 2050—a bold and thoughtful vision for the future of our beloved New Orleans City Park.

Inspired by the deep love our community holds for City Park, we set out to imagine a future for the Park shaped by that collective affection. As a sanctuary for retreat, recreation, rest, and memory-making, City Park serves as a unique collection of shared spaces and experiences. At the heart of this Plan is a commitment to honoring the Park’s legacy, safeguarding its spirit, and sustaining its vitality for generations to come.

Through extensive conversations with the community, one message rang clear: while new investments in the Park are welcomed, the true priority lies in enhancing the everyday experiences that make the Park so beloved. This means improving paths, walkways, and bikeways; enhancing accessibility; adding amenities like lighting, shade, parking, signage, restrooms, and water fountains; and nurturing the Park’s natural environment by strengthening its ecosystem and supporting biodiversity. Enhancing access to nature and opportunities for recreation were also among the community’s most heartfelt aspirations.

Through a robust engagement process that included numerous meetings with the community, Park users, and stakeholders, and various initiatives to ensure all voices were

considered, we heard that City Park doesn’t need sweeping renovations—it needs care, not reinvention. Guided by this understanding, we focused on preservation and thoughtful investment in the Park’s essential infrastructure, as well as in the special places that spark joy and connection. Out of this engagement emerged a twofold approach to planning: Foundational Planning that strengthens the Park’s overall systems, and Placemaking Planning to enhance the unique spaces that make City Park so special.

This Plan is the result of two years of collaboration, listening, and dreaming together. We’ve engaged with neighbors, park users, young people, guests from across the Greater New Orleans area, community leaders, environmental experts, and city officials to ensure that every voice was heard and every idea considered. The Plan incorporates the needs of our changing community and input from people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities. The result is a community-inspired roadmap that honors the Park’s rich history while embracing the possibilities of tomorrow.

Our work is just getting started. Throughout our engagement with the community, we heard a deep recognition of the rich cultural and historical layers embedded within City Park—stories that reflect both the Park’s unique past and the broader history of the region. A history that includes the origins of the land, the natural environment, and the impacts of humans on that environment and on each other. There was a clear desire to see this

complexity acknowledged and woven into the Park experience.

This thread—honoring and representing the Park’s history—was present throughout the planning process. In response, City Park Conservancy is committed to developing a program that embraces this layered history and respectfully shares these stories. As we implement improvements to land and facilities, we will ensure that the Park’s evolving narrative is shared, enriching visitors’ experiences with a deeper sense of place and purpose.

A notable chapter in City Park’s history is that this Plan is only the third since the 1920s, when the Works Progress Administration brought transformative investment to the Park, leading to such iconic facilities as Tad Gormley Stadium and Popp Fountain, as well as treasured Park elements like its bridges and lagoons. The next Park Plan, City Park 2018, was approved in Spring of 2005, just a few months before Hurricane Katrina devastated the Park and the surrounding region. In the aftermath, City Park 2018 became a blueprint for recovery, guiding the Park’s restoration and its evolution into a world-class destination for the City’s 2018 Tricentennial. Each of these historical plans has played a pivotal role in shaping City Park’s essence, growth, and enduring service to the community.

City Park 2050 goes beyond adding new amenities—it takes a holistic view of the Park’s performance—examining systems such as hydrology, the health of landscapes, and

the sustainability of revenues, operations, and maintenance. Rooted in respect for the Park’s legacy, the Plan also seeks to align the Park’s future with the evolving culture of New Orleans and the changing needs of its community.

Introducing this Plan marks a defining moment in City Park’s history—a reflection of our community’s shared vision for its future. Serving as a roadmap for future investment, the Plan is designed to protect and enhance this natural gem within our urban environment. We are fortunate to have City Park at the heart of our city, and this Plan ensures it remains a treasured space for future generations.

At its core, the Plan calls for the restoration of native Louisiana landscapes, with a focus on the northern areas beyond the I-610 overpass. A network of new and enhanced trails will connect the Park’s diverse landscapes, encouraging guests not just to visit, but to explore. We will invest in recreational amenities, such as upgrading existing fields and providing new sports courts, while creating welcoming spaces that foster cross-generational connection and community gatherings.

Introducing topography in some areas of the Park will offer fresh and inspiring views, while the restored lagoon system will provide healthier habitat for regional species and support recreational water activities and fishing. We will create inviting entrances and a signature water feature to invite all into the Park—ensuring a sense of belonging for everyone.

Most importantly, this Plan lays out a clear path to enhance accessibility, sustainability, and equity across City Park. From revitalized trails and restored habitats to inclusive playgrounds and vibrant community gathering spaces, the future we envision is one where every resident feels welcome, enriched with nature, and filled with joy. This vision remains true to the Core Intentions confirmed by our community: a City Park that is welcoming, accessible, and safe; enriched with nature and biodiversity; mindful of the history and culture that shaped it; joyful for all ages; and a place that remains an affordable and inclusive amenity for everyone.

City Park is—truly—the city’s Park. It belongs to all of us, and it deserves the very best of our collective care and investment. I am deeply grateful for the time, insights, and passion that our community has contributed to shaping this Plan. It has been an honor to help guide this process, and I will always take pride in stewarding such a remarkable and cherished place. Together, we can bring this shared vision to life and ensure that City Park remains a source of joy and resilience for generations to come.

Rebecca Dietz

Rebecca H. Dietz
President and Chief Executive Officer
City Park Conservancy

FIG 3
(Right)
Aerial view near the I-610 underpass, overlooking NOLA City Park. The rendering shows the proposed Hangout Hill, lagoon crossings, and circulation network, designed to enhance lagoon access and offering connections between this area and the rest of the Park.



City Park 2050

Parks are unique places in the world. In an urban setting, parks are critical natural resources that provide places for people to come together to get a respite from busy city life and enjoy themselves and their natural surroundings. As cities evolve, parks are tasked with fulfilling a constantly changing set of human and environmental needs. Planning is a critical tool to guide the evolving future of a park. A Park Plan looks at its history, considers its present, and imagines its future.

By legislation, City Park is required to operate under a Park Plan. In 1891, the Park area along Bayou Metairie was officially established under the name “City Park.” Since then, there have only been two Park Plans to guide the development of the Park. The first plan established a massive expansion of Park land to be executed under the Works Progress Administration (WPA) effort in the 1930s. The second plan, City Park 2018, was approved in March 2005 and for the last decade and a half has guided the recovery and improvements of the Park to address the impacts of Hurricane Katrina.

In 2022, the New Orleans City Park Improvement Association (CPIA),

the state agency that oversees and ensures performance management regarding City Park, transitioned the day-to-day operations to a newly formed 501(c)(3) nonprofit, City Park Conservancy (CPC). Under this new governance model, the Park can be nimbler in its planning, oversee direct fundraising, and deepen ties to the community that the Park serves. This change presented a unique opportunity to develop a new Park Plan. In 2023, CPC launched a new planning process rooted in serving the greater good, addressing community needs, preserving historical and cultural context, enhancing environmental resilience, and fostering a welcoming and inclusive sense of place across all 1,300 acres.

The result, City Park 2050, is the third Plan to guide the Park’s future and sets out to enrich the experience of the Park for generations to come. Shaped by community aspirations and grounded through technical assessments of current Park conditions, this Plan takes care not to disrupt the many important places and programs that exist within the Park and are sewn into the fabric of community life, while providing a strategy for changes

Foundational Planning

Placemaking Planning

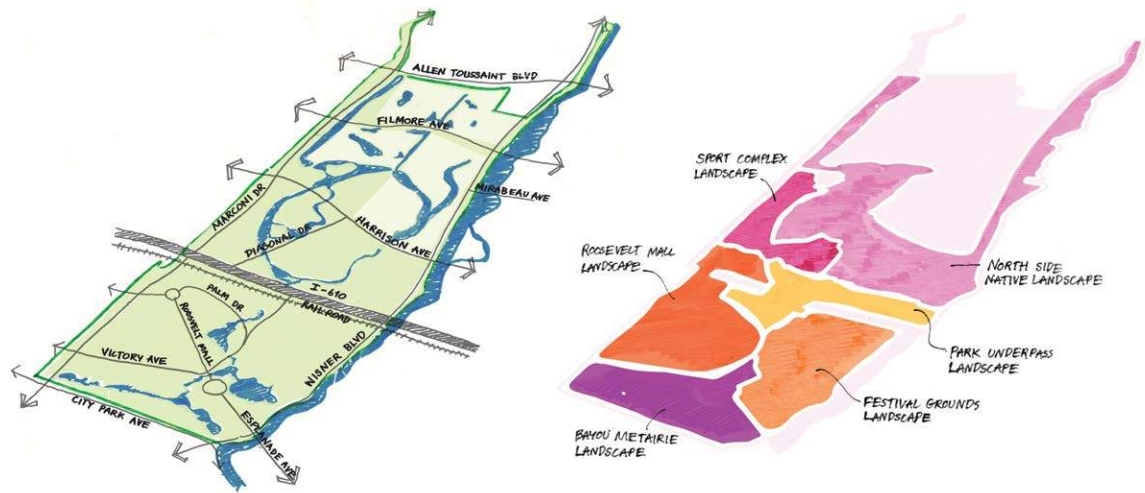


FIG 4
(Top)
City Park
Foundational
Planning and
Placemaking
Planning.

that can improve the overall Park systems such as maintenance, revenue, hydrology and water quality, landscape health and resilience, connectivity and wayfinding, as well as incorporate new transformational opportunities to better serve the community.

The Plan makes recommendations through a two-pronged approach: Foundational Planning that focuses on improving the essential elements that keep a park healthy and support all visitors, and Placemaking Planning, which looks at enhancing visitors’ experience by preserving what is loved, improving what exists, restoring qualities that have been lost, and adding new opportunities as needed. These two approaches were developed as a means to undertake the planning of such a large site—comparable to the size

of a small city—and assist in seeing it as a whole in its entirety while simultaneously highlighting smaller areas representative of the way that visitors experience and create memories in the Park.

A guiding principle of this Plan was to avoid making single purpose recommendations, which often result from rushed planning efforts with a linear thinking process (we need X, let’s add X) and can result in costlier and riskier projects to implement. Instead, recommendations propose integrated solutions that address multiple issues and synthesize key outcomes of Foundational Planning and Placemaking Planning to enrich and create memorable places for new Park experiences that support all visitors and function as part of the larger park systems that keep City Park healthy.

The Planning Process



FIG 5
(Left, from top)
The public participated in four co-design meetings.

Focus groups gathered for presentations and feedback sessions.

The Design Team conducted months of site investigations.



City Park is one of the largest urban parks in the United States, presenting one of the most unique park planning opportunities in the country. Every other major public open space within New Orleans fits within the Park’s footprint, making it a single destination that provides a large proportion of the city’s public space amenities and services. Within its boundaries, the Park holds many cherished institutions, places, programs, and memories that are dear to the local community, and are also major cultural destinations for the region. The Park is enjoyed by 16 million visitors every year.

Community engagement has been at the core of the planning process since it started in July 2023. This robust 2-year long engagement process included a total of seven community meetings (three community-wide sessions and four iterative co-design community meetings), a public survey that gathered over 5,000 responses, various focus group meetings with informal and formal organizations that use the Park, four working sessions with the Ideas Youth Committee (IYC), a Community Fellows program that enlisted eleven local residents to serve as project ambassadors, and numerous pop-up events throughout New Orleans. Over 30,000 comments were collected. Recurring meetings with the Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) and the Master Planning Committee delivered continuous guidance. All of these efforts provided opportunities for the community to enrich the Park’s future and informed the development of City Park 2050.

In October of 2024, Concordia, a local firm specializing in community engagement, joined the Design Team to enhance the existing engagement strategy. Together with CPC and MVVA, they developed the Engagement Pathway for four iterative co-design community meetings grounded in a familiar process-based metaphor: *Making Gumbo*. Each successive meeting represented a step in the cooking process, with sessions entitled *Stirring the Roux*, *Prepping the Ingredients*, *Mixing the Gumbo*, and *Taste-Testing the Gumbo*. Each meeting’s format included a presentation and an interactive activity, inviting participants to collaborate and give feedback on the Plan’s evolving ideas. The meeting content reflected the Design Team’s two-pronged approach: Foundational Planning and Placemaking Planning.

As part of this planning process, experts in various disciplines such as hydrology, ecology, engineering, transportation planning, wayfinding, and athletic facilities design, were engaged to assess current conditions and establish a baseline understanding of the existing Park. This gave the Design Team a place to test the feasibility and compatibility of the ideas that came out of the engagement process. As this Plan came together, these experts also developed recommendations to support the concepts put forth in the Plan and provide an understanding of what implementing this Plan would entail. These assessments and recommendations are included in the City Park 2050 Comprehensive Plan document, available online at CPC’s website.



Foundational Planning

Park Experiences

Foundational Planning focuses on improving the essential elements that keep a park healthy and support all visitors. This approach looks at City Park in its entirety, as one 1,300-acre site. It examines the systems that operate across its footprint such as maintenance, revenue, hydrology and water quality, landscape health and resilience, connectivity and wayfinding, and visitor support. Foundational Planning also provides recommendations to address the demands of environmental health, affordability and economic development, and community growth.

Community input highlighted the need to address these overall Park systems with common requests to improve the health of waterways, expand the circulation network, refine maintenance practices, add restrooms and water fountains near Park entries, and augment visitor amenities and furnishings. The Design Team collaborated extensively with CPC and the community to craft six Core Intentions that steered the development of the Foundational Planning recommendations:

- 1 **Present a unified and welcoming Park arrival experience**
- 2 **Ensure the Park is safe, accessible, and convenient**
- 3 **Promote landscape health and biodiversity through maintenance and stewardship**
- 4 **Respect the history and cultural uses of the Park**
- 5 **Create fun, healthy, and enriching opportunities for all ages**
- 6 **Balance the Park’s budget, revenue, and affordability**

Core Intentions 5 and 6 arose directly from feedback from the IYC and the broader community. These Core Intentions serve as a measure to guide future design proposals and investments in the Park.

Conversations with CPC staff members and with the community revealed a high interest in infrastructure that could better support visitors’ needs during their time at the Park. Frequent requests

FIG 6
(Previous pages)
Community Meeting
preview at Warren
Easton Charter High
School, December
2023.

included: safety improvements and lighting, accessibility, signage, shaded seating areas, better drainage, and improved management of vegetation and invasive species. This was so emphatically stated by the community that the list of these needs was named “The Givens,” providing the community with an established understanding that these basic needs would be addressed throughout the Park. By doing so, community members were encouraged to think about ideas beyond these that would improve their experience at the Park—they were asked to dream big.

The Design Team then identified specific landscape interventions and strategies to better meet the Core Intentions and The Givens. These interventions are described in this chapter through the lens of how visitors experience these systems in the Park:

- Activating Park Entrances
- Moving Around the Park
- Understanding the Park
- Spending Time in the Park
- Managing a Healthy Park

“The Givens”

- RESTROOMS
- CONCESSIONS & REFRESHMENTS
- INFORMATION KIOSK
- SEATING
- TRASH CANS
- DRINKING WATER FOUNTAINS
- SIGNAGE & WAYFINDING
- LIGHTING
- SAFETY & SECURITY
- BIKE PARKING
- BIKE SHARING STATIONS
- PARKING
- ACCESSIBLE PEDESTRIAN & CYCLIST TRAILS
- SHADE
- NATIVE PLANTING
- INVASIVE MANAGEMENT
- RAIN GARDENS

Comprehensive list of “The Givens” developed and utilized during the planning process.

Activating Park Entrances



FIG. 7
(Left)
The Pizzati Gate was erected at the main entrance to City Park at City Park Avenue and Alexander Street in 1910.

The experience of going to a park starts with how visitors get there. Great parks have great entries. They invite people in with signs of activity and civic gestures that explicitly communicate to frequent parkgoers, new visitors, and tourists that the park is accessible and intended for their enjoyment. City Park has a perimeter of approximately 8 miles, along which 20 entrances to the Park exist. Most of these entrances serve visitors arriving from neighborhoods and districts of New Orleans proper and favor vehicular traffic. Recommendations in this Plan seek to make the Park more accessible for visitors using alternative means of transportation and coming from remote neighborhoods.

Despite having a prominent location at the heart of the city and along several major transportation corridors in New Orleans, access to City Park is complicated. Most of City Park’s current visitors arrive via car. An estimated 70% of Park visitors come from outside Orleans Parish and rely heavily on the interstate system that directs them to a few ways in and out of the Park along Marconi Drive and Wisner Boulevard south of Interstate 610 (I-610). The existing transit service to and from the Park in both Jefferson and Orleans Parishes is limited. Gaps in the overall bicycle network throughout the neighborhoods surrounding the Park limit cyclists from using bicycles as a safe and reliable means of access. While the recommendations in this Plan are limited to addressing Park entrances within the Park boundary, an understanding of the Park’s relationship with city-wide and regional systems was critical for developing informed recommendations. As City Park 2050 is implemented, conversations between CPC, the City, and transit agencies and organizations will be crucial for fulfilling the rising needs of the community.

While a couple of City Park’s entrances can be identified by iconic gateways, many of the Park’s entries fall short of being recognizable as entry points. The Mobility Planning Study completed for this process revealed that the design of the intersections at many Park entrances favors automobile access and creates barriers for visitors who are traveling on foot, bicycles, or public transit. A key recommendation of this Plan is to redesign

the intersections that currently prioritize vehicular traffic so that all means of transportation can better coexist, and pedestrians and cyclists can safely enter the Park.

In addition to being safe, Park entrances also need to look and feel inviting. Visual obstacles such as fencing along portions of the landscape, long lagoons with no visible means to cross them, and dense thickets of vegetation that obscure deeper views into the Park currently make some areas of the Park feel unwelcoming or uninviting to visitors. Most Park entrances could greatly benefit from more investment in elements that embody the values of inclusion and the deeply engaged civic life that define the culture of New Orleans. These are particularly important to stimulate more visible signs of activity that convey a sense of welcome. Opportunities include: landmark art installations that invite photography, areas for play and recreation, trailheads that immediately offer shade and seating, signage that communicates destinations in the Park, spaces for multi-purpose programming, and temporary art installations.

Site-specific recommendations for activating City Park’s entrances are outlined in [FIG. 8].

FIG. 8
(Right)
Activating the Park
Entrances
Recommendations.

- Scale of investment in Park entries
- ➔ Park entries
- ↔ New waterway crossing
- ↔ Existing waterway crossing
- Pedestrian safety improvements

Create landscapes at Park entries to signal arrival into City Park.

Create a garden to activate the Spanish Fort area.

Create new Park entrances with restrooms, lighting, and accessible meeting points.

Make I-610 underpass welcoming by adjusting sightlines, and providing more paths and lighting.

Create safe access to Bayou St John’s under the Wisner Boulevard Bridge.

Create a welcoming Park entry at Irby Field.

Provide accessible pedestrian bridge connections across Bayou Metairie.

Moving Around the Park



FIG. 9
(Left)
This Plan proposes a vision for better integrated networks serving vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians throughout the day.

Once at the Park, the circulation network organizes visitor movements via different modes of transportation through a collection of roadways, parking areas, paths, and trails. This network should be safe, accessible, clear, and convenient so visitors can arrive at their intended destination and easily do more than one thing during their visit—watch a child’s soccer game and have a meal in the Park with the whole family, go for a bike ride and see an event, or hike the nature trails and meet a friend for a coffee and beignets. Recommendations in this Plan target a rebalancing of all means of circulation to make moving through the Park a safer and better-connected experience.



FIG. 10
(Left)
Limited pedestrian
and cyclist paths.

FIG. 11
(Right)
Moving Around
the Park
Recommendations
for vehicular network.

Increasingly, urban parks across the world are challenged to reassess the balance of vehicular, cyclist, and pedestrian networks within their boundaries. As the cities surrounding them experience changes in the development of mobility networks, parks need to adapt to meet the needs of their urban dwellers. City Park’s existing circulation network favors vehicular travel and caters to single destinations without clear connections to other Park offerings. In addition, the Park is divided into two sections by I-610 and the railroad. Moving from one destination to another often requires driving to the perimeter of the Park on Wisner Boulevard or Marconi Drive, then back into the Park to the destination. For day-to-day activity, vehicular traffic is generally over-accommodated, while Park cyclists and pedestrians are underserved. Most internal Park streets do not accommodate designated space for bikers and generally lack sidewalks, clearly marked crosswalks, and other cues to alert drivers

of pedestrian travel. Existing parking is offered via large surface lots and on-street parking. Parking can mostly be found near destinations; however, the lack of pedestrian and cycling connectivity and lack of wayfinding information throughout the Park discourages visitors from utilizing parking facilities that are farther away from their destination during peak hours.

City Park’s circulation network for pedestrians also extends into the landscape in a limited way. Isolated pathway circuits currently exist in areas like the Wisner Tract, Couturie Forest, and Big Lake. Historic bridges provide opportunities for crossing some waterways, but often in a non-ADA-compliant way. The lagoons on the north side of the Park are frequent circulation barriers. Access to the water’s edge is challenging due to overgrown vegetation and eroded shorelines.

Recommendations in this Plan target a rebalancing of all means of

- Existing to remove
- Existing to remain
- Proposed roadway
- ↔ Main circulation
- Safe-crossing intersection
- Ⓟ Parking garden

Reconfigure intersections for safe pedestrian crossings at Allen Toussaint Boulevard and Marconi Drive.

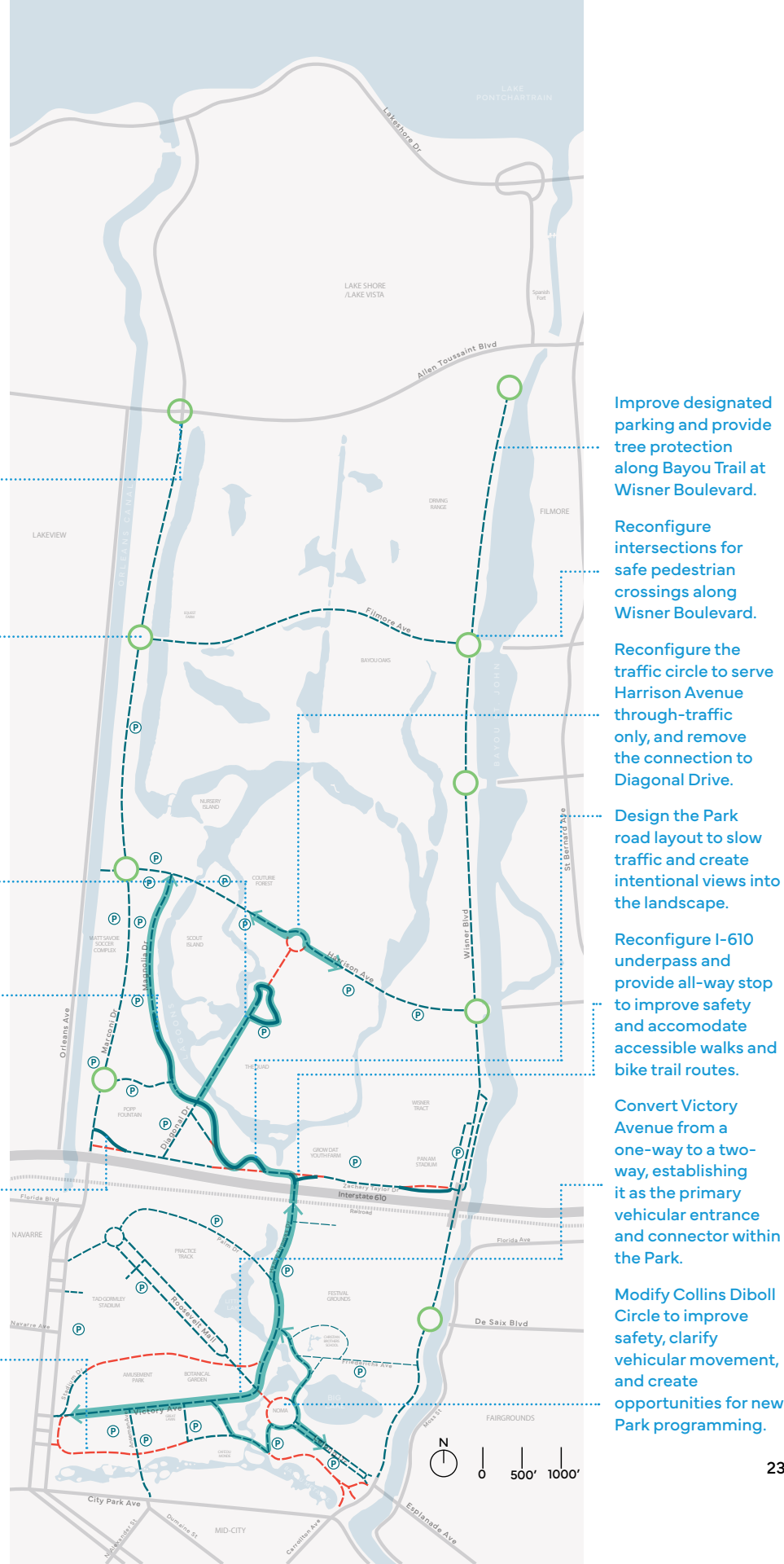
Implement traffic-calming measures along Marconi Drive, including reducing road width, preserving room for dedicated turn lanes, and syncing signals to create safe pedestrian crossings.

Diagonal Drive to serve as access to the Nature Landing in the north side of the Park.

Reconnect Magnolia Drive and convert it into a Park road that provides access to multiple destinations within the Park.

Convert Zachary Taylor Drive from a service road into a Park road that connects multiple destinations and supports broader recreational use.

Remove portions of Dreyfous Drive, convert much of it into a multi-use path for pedestrians and cyclists.



- ➔ Park entry
- Path network
- Roadway
- ⊙ Pedestrian plaza/gathering space
- ↔ New waterway crossing
- ↔ Existing waterway crossing

Expand the trail network to Nursery Island, inviting visitors to a new destination.

Provide accessible pedestrian bridge connections across the waterway.

Establish a central trail hub within the core of the nature areas.

Enhance safe pedestrian and bicycle trails to strengthen Park-wide connectivity.

Create public pedestrian access through the Botanical Garden connecting users from the Great Lawn to the North.

Connect existing trail to historical sites such as Spanish Fort.

Connect existing trails to educational sites such as Doctors' Grove.

Expand the trail network in Couturie Forest to enhance circulation, and improve access to diverse habitat zones.

Improve existing Wisner Tract paths and connect them with a variety of trail types including shaded accessible paths, boardwalks, and seasonal mown paths.

Improve the I-610 underpass with a defined multi-use path, integrated lighting, and clear wayfinding to improve safety and connectivity.

Connect Bayou Metairie and Big Lake trail systems with a multi-use path and incorporate a safe crossing at Lelong Drive.

FIG. 12
(Left)
Moving Around
the Park
Recommendations
for pedestrian and
bike network.

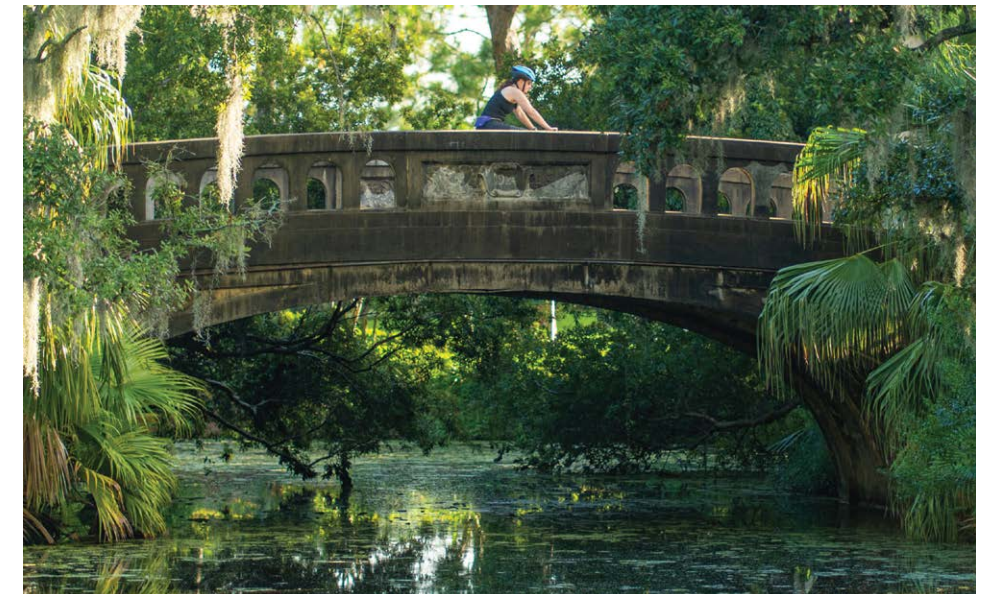
circulation to make moving through the Park safer and better-connected. City Park 2050 proposes targeted roadway reductions and removals to open new opportunities for safe movement for cyclists and pedestrians between all areas of the Park, particularly to destinations north of I-610. Recommendations also include implementation of safety features such as planted medians, safe crossings, and dark sky Park lighting [**FIG. 9**]. These changes were closely developed with mobility planning experts and checked against daily usage and event scenarios to support all traffic conditions. Further studies will be needed to refine these recommendations as they are implemented.

Through careful examination of desire lines between existing and future destinations, this Plan also recommends expanded connections to integrate large areas of the Park landscape that are not currently part of the shared experience. The Plan proposes a hierarchy of

path types that can support different ways of experiencing the Park, from direct and efficient connectivity to more immersive and intimate moments in nature. Different surface types can be implemented in response to the existing character and/or volume of traffic experienced in each area of the Park. New bridges across the lagoons, floating walks, and boardwalks in wet inundation zones are also proposed to connect places more efficiently and simultaneously create opportunities to observe the diverse ecology that emerges from the interaction of water and land. These recommendations can connect all the destinations within City Park for the first time in its history.

Site-specific recommendations for improving the circulation network throughout City Park are outlined in [**FIG. 11-12**].

FIG. 13
(Right)
Dreyfous bridge at
Bayou Metairie.



Understanding the Park



FIG. 14
(Left)
Historic oak grove
near Bayou Metairie.

City Park is one of the largest urban parks in the United States, at 1,300 acres. One of the challenges of a park of this size is providing visitors with a common and clear understanding of its features and offerings, and its relationships to the surrounding community—physical, historical, and cultural. Developing a more coherent impression of the Park begins with clearly conveying a great deal of information such as circulation routes, locations of destinations, and historical events. Through the introduction of various types of signage, this Plan seeks to provide the right amount of information that a visitor needs to receive at strategic points throughout their experience in the Park.

A large, manicured hedge sculpture of the word "NATURE" is positioned on a green lawn. The letters are constructed from dense, green hedges. In the background, a dense forest of tall, mature trees with thick canopies is visible under a cloudy sky. A concrete sidewalk runs across the foreground, partially obscuring the bottom of the frame.

Signage should be welcoming, clearly convey information, communicate the rich culture and history of the Park, support way-finding, and be engaging and fun! Recommendations included in this Plan focus on the Park as a whole, with the goal of incorporating the area north of I-610 into the public's larger understanding of the Park. Through the introduction of various types of signage, this Plan seeks to provide the right amount of information that a visitor needs to receive at strategic points throughout their experience in the Park. Implementing signage throughout City Park's 1,300 acres will need to be phased overtime. However, if early initial investments are geared towards introducing signage in strategic locations, visitors' experience could quickly be improved. Recommendations for signage types and distribution throughout City Park are outlined in [FIG. 16].

FIG. 15
(Left)
The City Park topiary along City Park Avenue, a hedge that has been shaped over the years to spell the name of the Park. Landmark signs like this one can create fun opportunities for social gatherings and interactions.

Node signs at key points of interest provide information, rules, and navigational help.

Parking signs provide clear information for drivers.

Spending Time in the Park



FIG. 17
(Left)
A Park visitor rests on a bench under the shade of one of the mature live oaks near the Harrison Avenue Roundabout.

Comfort and convenience are fundamental parts of the Park's visitor experience. Access to basic services that support visitor needs like restrooms, concessions, and parking, as well as proximity to other complementary Park experiences can significantly increase the time a visitor spends in the Park. Additionally, offering a variety of places, programs, and activities for people of all ages and interests will enable groups of friends or families to find something to do for everyone. Recommendations in this section address gaps in visitor support infrastructure, enhance access to shade, improve the experience around waterways, and introduce more convenient parking amenities with shade, plantings, and stormwater gardens.

Through conversations with the community, CPC and the Design Team learned that people want to spend more time in the Park during their visits but the inconvenience of getting to other destinations, as well as the few restrooms and concessions offerings, often cut their visit short. Feedback also revealed a high need for shade in the Park to support all types of activities and a desire to engage with the water bodies that exist in City Park. Community members also asked for an increase in places and opportunities for people of all ages and interests.

The Design Team inventoried existing destinations and assessed their proximity to infrastructure that supports visitor needs (restrooms, concessions, parking areas), as well as their proximity to other complimentary Park experiences. Based on a structural assessment of all existing buildings and structures, buildings that are underutilized and have the potential to be repurposed were identified. A historic assets assessment guided the development of recommendations for historic buildings and bridges that are meaningful to the community and were previously identified in the Cultural Landscape

Report ensuring compatibility with these valuable resources.

Based on the above, the Design Team recognized gaps in visitor support infrastructure and identified opportunities for improvement through enhancing existing offerings, repurposing underutilized buildings to provide these and new services, or building new structures if needed. Recommendations in this Plan also provide guidance on how to incorporate new furnishings like seating, trash cans, and lighting to be compatible with the historic character of the Park; increase access to shade by making existing underutilized shaded areas accessible; restore access to water bodies in the Park for recreation through boat launches, bridge crossings, and wooden decks; and introduce parking gardens that offer a more welcoming parking experience with shade, plantings, and storm-water gardens. Recommendations for improving the experience of visitors spending time in the Park are outlined in [FIG. 19]. Recommendations for creating new places and opportunities for people of all ages and interests are outlined in the Placemaking Planning chapter.



FIG. 19
(Right)
Spending Time
in the Park
Recommendations.

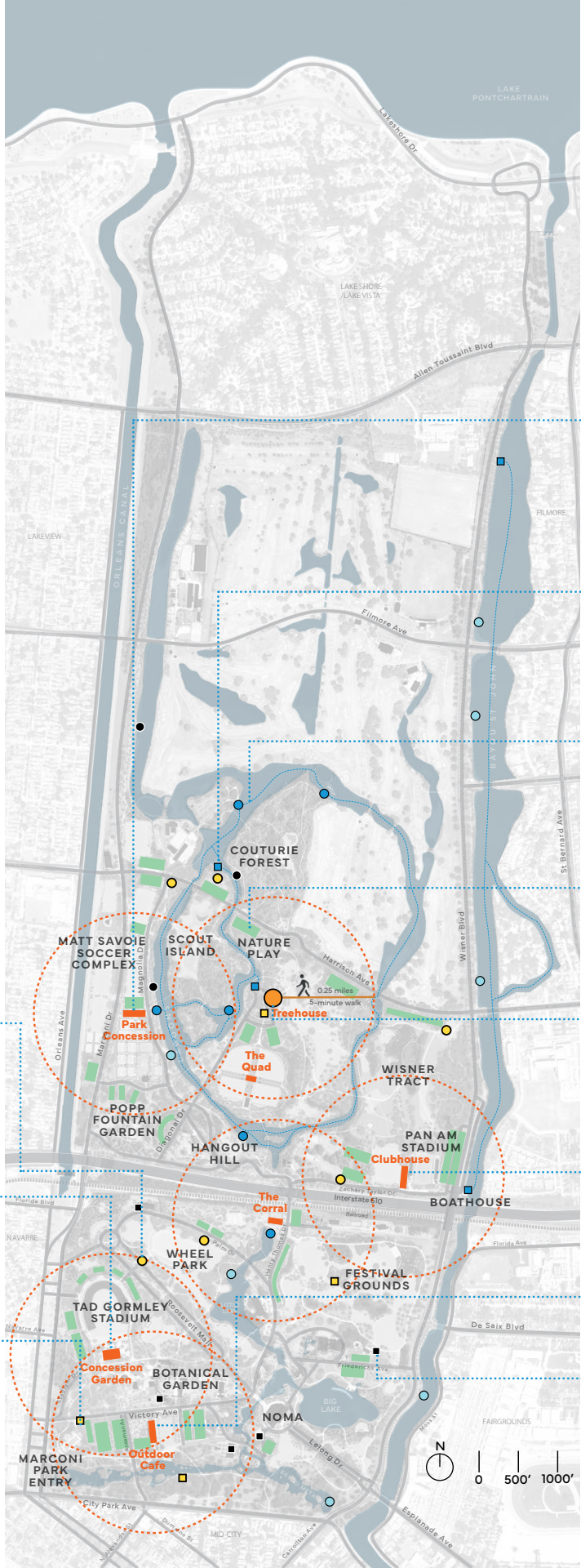
FIG. 18
(Left)
Example of how to
transform existing
underutilized areas
that receive shade
under oak trees and
are typically wet into
accessible areas for
visitor use. Hermann
Park, Houston TX.

- Amenity center
- Kiosks
- Concessions, restrooms
- Existing restrooms
- Restrooms
- 0.25 miles / 5-minute walk radius
- Boat launch at grade
- Boat dock on structure
- Boat route
- Fishing pier
- Existing fishing pier
- Parking garden

Provide Park kiosk stations offering information, shaded areas, and potentially other amenities such as bike parking.

Create new concession facility at Tad Gormley Stadium offering food options to variety of Park users.

Provide restrooms throughout the Park supporting new and existing programming.



Create new concession building offering food options and restrooms associated with outdoor seating to variety of Park users.

Restore access to water bodies through boardwalks that support bird watching, fishing, and boat launches.

Restore water quality at lagoons to support water recreation opportunities like boating.

Create parking gardens that manage stormwater, provide shade, and offer a welcoming arrival experience.

Create the Nature Landing by providing a comfort station, welcome center, and a variety of programming opportunities.

Potential indoor support facilities for physical training.

Create concession opportunities along the Great Lawn.

Restore existing restrooms.

Managing a Healthy Park



FIG. 20
(Left)
Gander Point is one of the few locations in City Park that provides elevated access and views of the lagoons.

The site that is now City Park has been significantly manipulated throughout its existence. Through human interventions, underlying natural systems such as groundwater levels and soil stability have been affected. Additionally, land management practices over time have impacted the health of trees and the water quality of the Park's waterways, affecting landscape diversity in the Park and its value to regional wildlife species. Recommendations in this Plan seek to address declining landscapes, increase the Park's biodiversity and resilience, and provide guidance revising maintenance practices throughout the Park.

Initially a cypress swamp, the site was originally inhabited by various Indigenous nations. Eventually, enslaved African people were forced to clear cypress swamps and construct canals to support agriculture in plantations. The site of City Park was officially pronounced a public park in 1854. However, it wasn't until the 1930s that the site was transformed into the Park area we recognize today through the projects implemented by the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Over 18 million cubic yards of earth were moved to create lagoons and lakes, thousands of trees were planted, and many civic buildings, monuments, and artworks were built throughout the Park.

Feedback from community members revealed that existing offerings

at City Park such as pedestrian trails, nature areas, athletic fields, and amenities first and foremost need improved care. An assessment of the health of the Park identified areas that are in decline, such as some of the lagoons with poor water quality and eroded edges, various lawn areas with compacted soils and damaged tree roots due to mowing practices, and other areas within the landscape that have been overtaken by invasive plant species. This assessment also looked at the health of the various tree populations in the Park.

Based on these findings, this Plan puts forward an approach for addressing the health of the declining areas in the Park that consists of addressing poor water quality in the lagoons through removal of

FIG. 22 (Right) Managing a Healthy Park Recommendations—Opportunities for Shoreline Improvement.

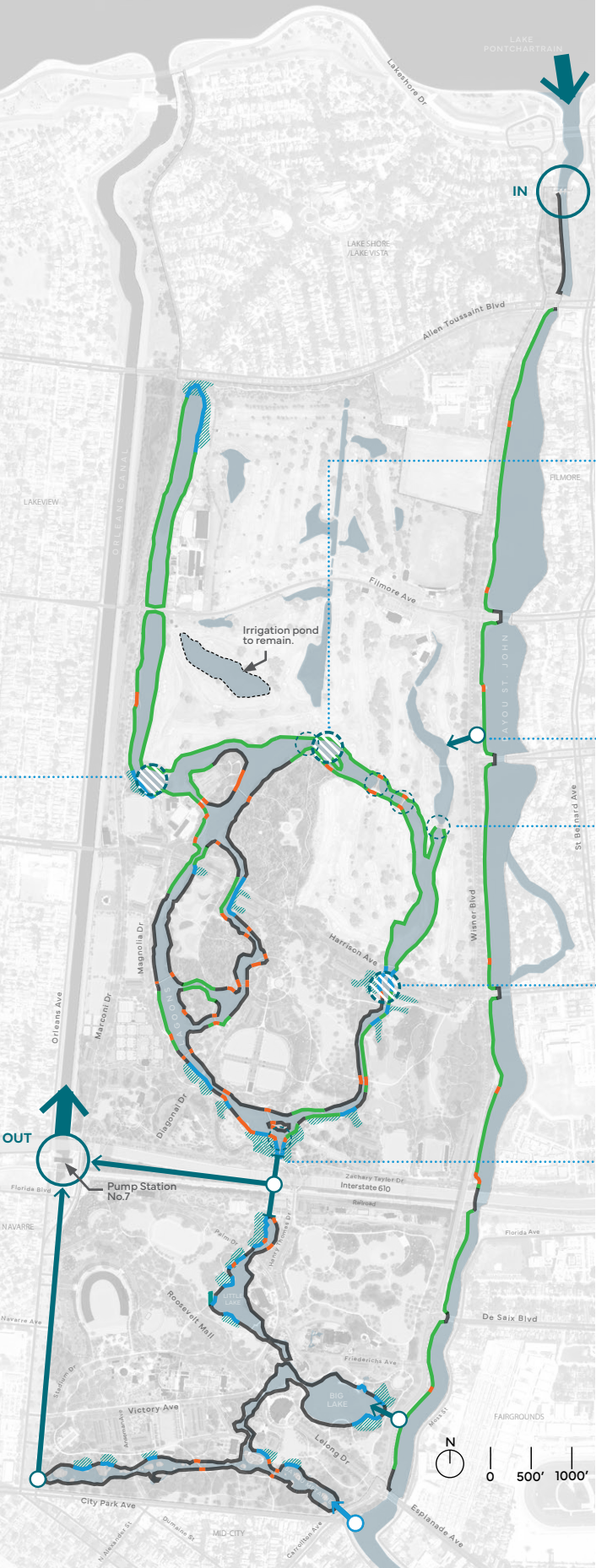


FIG. 21 (Left, from top) Declining shorelines and excess aquatic weeds reduce dissolved oxygen, causing fish kills. Severe erosion exposes soils, increasing sediment and nutrient runoff that further degrades water quality.

A thriving shoreline has diverse native plants that stabilize banks, filter runoff, and provide habitat for wildlife.

- ← Lagoon fill source/ stormwater structure
- Constructed forebay
- Causeway culvert modification
- Existing to remain
- Potential shoreline landscape improvement
- Potential constructed edge for water access
- Potential stormwater treatment edge
- ▨ Potential stormwater treatment area

Create a west-side forebay to collect and temporarily hold runoff, sediments, debris, and pollutants before they enter larger water bodies, allowing for easier maintenance and improved water quality.



Create forebay to collect and temporarily hold runoff from the golf course, sediments, debris, and pollutants before they enter larger water bodies, allowing for easier maintenance and improved water quality.

Replace failing intake pipe from Bayou St. John.

Replace berm and culverts with bridge connections to increase lagoon flow.

Create an east-side forebay to collect and temporarily hold runoff, sediments, debris, and pollutants before they enter larger water bodies, allowing for easier maintenance and improved water quality.

Reconstruct north lagoon weir to manage debris and aquatic weeds from the north side of the Park and integrate flow from new blue infrastructure along Zachary Taylor Drive.

accumulated sediment; stabilizing eroded edges through a vegetated buffer to increase runoff filtration and storage capacity; introducing landscape diversity at wet low-lying areas through wetland gardens and meadows that require minimal mowing; widening some connections between lagoons to enhance water circulation; and implementing best practices for lawn maintenance. In addition, recommendations aim to balance the composition of tree populations to mimic that of healthy forests through a succession plan for planting young trees over time. These changes will increase landscape diversity at the Park and its value to regional wildlife species, particularly to migratory and breeding birds that rely on New Orleans and the Gulf Coast as essential habitat. It will also make the Park more resilient to storm events.

For the successful establishment of these native landscapes and their longevity over time, appropriate implementation strategies and maintenance regimes will need to be adopted. In addition, new Park offerings will require suitable maintenance practices to be

viable additions to the Park. When developing the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Plan to support implementation of City Park 2050, landscapes and amenities were divided into different categories based on their materiality, intended use, programming, and surrounding context. The O&M Plan outlines necessary tasks, skillset, and equipment for proper care of each of these categories. A key outcome of this O&M Plan is the reduction of areas that require regular mowing by about 40% over time. This will allow for those maintenance hours to be re-located to perform other tasks such as erosion control, woody species pruning, litter removal, water quality testing, invasive plant species management, and prescribed burning for applicable landscapes.

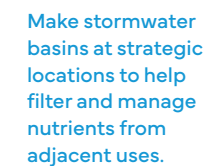
Implementation of the Plan will begin through ecological restoration test plots in three areas of the park to develop a replicable framework for broader restoration and management efforts across the Park [FIG. 23].

Site-specific recommendations for improving the health and management of the Park are outlined in [FIG. 22 + 24].



FIG. 23
(Left)
Example of the process needed to restore a native meadow. Starting with existing conditions, followed by weed removal and the establishment of a temporary crop, and finally achieving an established native landscape.

FIG. 24
(Right)
Managing a
Healthy Park
Recommendations—
Landscape.



Create parking gardens that manage stormwater, provide shade, and offer a welcoming arrival experience.



Adjust Park infrastructure to allow areas to hold more stormwater and create new landscape experiences.

Remove invasive plants, establish native plant species, and reduce mowing while providing shaded walks for Park users.

Reduce mowing, diversify planting types, and allow low areas to collect stormwater.

Diversify the lake's edge with new planting to reduce erosion and create more ecological diversity.

Placemaking Planning



Park Landscapes

Placemaking Planning looks at City Park in smaller areas representative of the way that Park visitors experience and think about the Park. It is a people-centered approach to planning that, at its core, focuses on places where memories are formed: the landscape settings that shape what happens at these locations. Placemaking is just as much about composing the landscape to accommodate visitors for specific activities, such as a sports game or a concert, as it is about fostering spontaneous moments of joy for Park users, such as looking out over a quiet lagoon for a moment of reflection or finding a shady spot under a large oak tree to get together with some friends.

To enable conversations around smaller areas in the Park and steer the development of the Placemaking Planning recommendations, a simple framework was introduced:

1. To assess what we have by considering how the already-valued places in the Park might be **improved**.
2. To reconsider places or activities that have been lost in the history of the Park that could be **revived**.
3. To look more broadly across the larger New Orleans community and consider what might be missing from the Park and could be **added**.



FIG. 25
(Previous pages)
An evening gathering near the Peristyle.

FIG. 26
(Left)
Concert at the Peristyle.

The community was especially passionate about the Placemaking Planning interactive activities that allowed people to draw upon and describe their memories of the Park. They also felt empowered to share their ideas and aspirations for the Park they deserve with other community members, CPC, and the Design Team. The engagement process revealed many places in City Park where powerful personal and collective memories have been formed over the years. When developing the recommendations included in this Plan, these loved places were carefully considered so as not to disrupt what is most meaningful to the New Orleans community. Underutilized areas where the landscape is less appreciated, less accessible, or less healthy, were also identified as areas for transformational opportunities.

These recommendations are described in the Placemaking Planning chapter using six different areas that share characteristics in the landscape:

- North Side Native Landscapes
- Sports Complex Landscape
- Park Underpass Landscapes
- Roosevelt Mall Landscape
- Festival Grounds Landscape
- Bayou Metairie Landscape

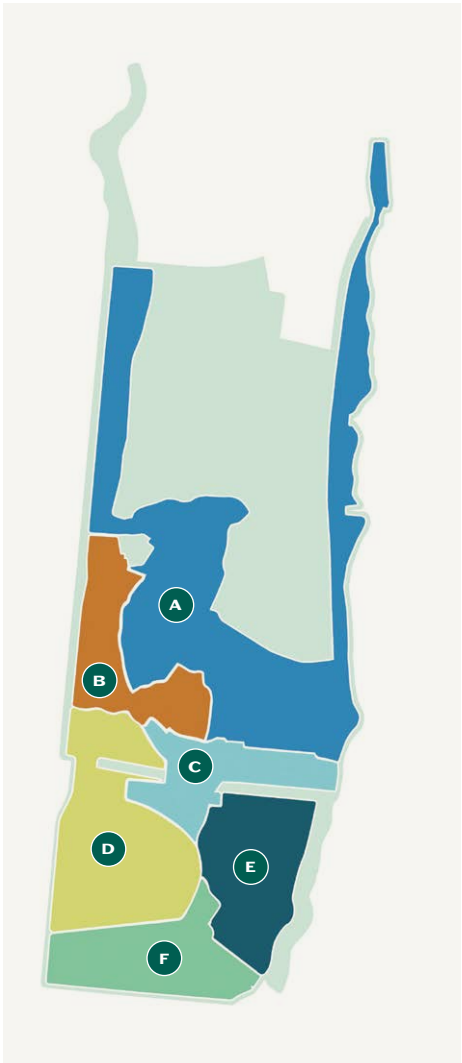


Diagram showing the extent of the six different Park Landscapes:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| A North Side Native Landscapes | D Roosevelt Mall Landscape |
| B Sports Complex Landscape | E Festival Grounds Landscape |
| C Park Underpass Landscapes | F Bayou Metairie Landscape |



Celebrate the Nature of City Park

FIG. 27
(Left)
This is the proposed view looking toward Scout Island. Recreational access to Park lagoons can be improved with new piers, boat launches, and lagoon crossings. Biodiverse riparian improvements will stabilize lagoon edges and create a healthy ecology.

Perhaps the most resonant piece of community feedback throughout the planning process was the need to enhance, connect, and expand the Park’s beloved natural spaces. Existing natural areas like Couturie Forest and the Wisner Tract are in decline and are also separated by roadway infrastructure, fragmented recreational areas, and the lagoon waterways. This Plan seeks to unify these areas through tactical roadway reductions and an improved trail system including new lagoon crossings and wayfinding signage. Recommendations also include enhancements through the introduction of native species and suitable maintenance practices, visitor support services, family-friendly activities, and educational programs. The result will be a 165-acre display of native Louisiana landscapes that can be enjoyed by all visitors and serve as valuable habitat for regional wildlife species.

Existing Conditions

Couturie Forest, Scout Island, Nursery Island, and the Wisner Tract anchor the Park’s nature offerings. Park visitors currently use these fragmented areas for walking/hiking, running, birdwatching, playing disc golf, and even engaging in outdoor adventure activities such as rope courses and kayaking with LOOP NOLA. While these areas are loved and highly used, they present low biodiversity and show an overall decline in their ecological health, which in turn offers limited habitat for regional wildlife species. In addition, these areas cannot be enjoyed together with ease without having to cross roadways if walking or having to drive from one location to another. A lack of distributed parking and visitor support amenities, poor connectivity, and inconsistent wayfinding further impact how Park users spend time in these natural areas.

Other areas of the Park that are low-lying and typically wet, such as Doctors’ Grove, exhibit the original character of the site as a cypress swamp. Cypress trees have been reintroduced in these areas, and with slight adjustment to the current drainage, they can become thriving examples of this type of native landscape.

Community Feedback

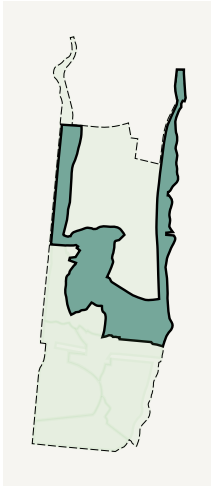
During the engagement process, Park users passionately expressed how rare and meaningful these nature areas are for residents to get respite from the busy city life and for urban youth to experience nature. They voiced the importance of enhancing and expanding these areas by introducing native plants and shade trees and improving maintenance practices to keep their “wild” essence. They also expressed a desire for better water quality in the lagoons to improve ecological function and accommodate recreational opportunities like boating and fishing.

Furthermore, they asked for all these nature areas and waterways to be more accessible and better connected through an expanded network of trails and bridges with clear wayfinding. Additionally, community members identified amenities such as trailheads, restrooms, trash cans, shaded seating, drinking water fountains, and well distributed parking as key additions to support and improve their experience.

Finally, they identified programming opportunities that are complementary to these natural landscapes, including more family-friendly opportunities like nature and sensory play, as well as educational opportunities like kids’ camps, guided tours, and educational signage.

FIG. 28
(Right)
Illustrative plan—
Proposed North Side
Native Landscapes.

Key Plan



- Revive historic site at Spanish Fort and add trail connections.
- Provide educational opportunities.
- Improve native Louisiana landscapes.
- Add pedestrian bridge over Harrison Avenue.
- Improve continuity of natural areas by removing part of Diagonal Drive.
- Activate portions of Nursery Island by providing public access and trails.
- Revive lagoons + shorelines.
- Add discovery nature play.
- Revive native landscapes + increase biodiversity.
- Add visitor support amenities.
- Add welcoming entrances + trailheads.
- Improve trail connections with accessible crossing over lagoons.
- Add native Louisiana landscapes.



before



after



FIG. 29
(Left)
Existing trails have no trailhead signage and are not easily accessed from the surrounding landscape. They also have:

- A** Limited biodiversity
- B** Limited trail network
- C** Walking trails with limited shade
- D** Monoculture of non-native grasses
- E** Dense shrub thickets

The Plan proposes an expanded network of new and updated shady trails with access to native Louisiana landscapes. These trails would have:

- A** Cajun prairie landscape
- B** Water garden/stormwater catchment
- C** Elevated boardwalk network
- D** Restored shaded path
- E** Wayfinding and educational signage
- F** Successional tree planting
- G** Diversified native understory planting

Transformational Opportunities

ENHANCING AND CONNECTING NATIVE LANDSCAPES

City Park 2050 seeks to connect Couturie Forest, Scout Island, Nursery Island, the Wisner Tract, and interstitial areas into a continuous, uninterrupted collection of thriving native Louisiana landscapes that span 165-acres through the heart of the north area of the Park. To do so, partial removal of a section of Diagonal Drive and reconfiguration of the roadway roundabout at Harrison Avenue will be needed.

Restoration of declining landscapes is proposed through the introduction of native species and successional tree plantings [FIG. 29], as well as appropriate maintenance regimes such as woody species pruning, litter removal, invasive plant management, and prescribed burning for selected landscapes. Water gardens will be established at low-lying areas to better support stormwater management.

Riparian improvements are proposed to improve the water quality and ecological health of the lagoons through dredging accumulated sediment and stabilizing eroded edges with deep-rooted native plants [FIG. 27].

Additionally, this Plan recommends expansion of the trail network to include new paths of various materials to enable different experiences, new accessible lagoon crossings, and a pedestrian bridge over Harrison Avenue. This network will not be limited to only these nature areas but will extend to multi-use trails along Marconi Drive towards Doctors' Grove, which will be restored to a thriving cypress swamp, and along Bayou St. John towards the Spanish Fort, which will be restored as a garden destination. Clear wayfinding and informative educational signage will support this expanded network, as well as better-distributed parking gardens and trailheads with shade and drinking water fountains.



FIG. 30
(Left)
Today, the intersection of Harrison Avenue and Diagonal Drive is a place for vehicular traffic.

- A** Disc golf course, beyond
- B** Harrison Avenue and Diagonal Drive Intersection
- C** Old live oaks provide shaded areas
- D** Lagoon shoreline, beyond
- E** Existing paths

In partially removing the roundabout, the Plan adds:

- A** Shaded picnic area
- B** Imaginative play
- C** Successional tree plantings
- D** Enhanced pedestrian connections
- E** Mist play fountain
- F** Lagoon crossing connections
- G** Log climbers
- H** Sandbox
- I** Collaborative play
- J** Old live oaks provide shaded areas

THE NATURE LANDING

To support Park users when visiting the restored native Louisiana landscapes, this Plan recommends introducing the Nature Landing, a central area where visitor support amenities are offered in a way that is compatible with the natural character of this space, meaning it will not be a commercial venue.

The Nature Landing will include parking gardens, bike parking, trailheads, and an information kiosk to support visitors' arrival and guide the start of their journey into nature. It will also include the Treehouse, a structure that will offer restrooms, water stations, and concessions; areas for informal gatherings sheltered from the elements; spaces for environmental education and nature-based programs; and platforms to enjoy views out into the vast landscape [**FIG. 31-33**].

Additionally, a Boathouse is proposed to support water recreation such as boating and fishing in the Park's lagoons.

NATURE PLAY

To further enjoy these restored nature areas, City Park 2050 proposes the addition of compatible programs that cater to children, young people, and families. Fulfilling a common community request, this Plan recommends introducing a nature play area adjacent to the Nature Landing.

This play area would offer various play experiences for children and youth of all abilities, ages, backgrounds, and developmental stages such as: sand and water play, where they can use their imagination to experiment and create; collaborative play where they can work with others to interact with water-supply features that promote role-play activities, as well as communication and cooperation; log climbers to train their balance and climbing capabilities; play towers with slides that are connected through climbing nets for those seeking height and speed adventures; and a mist play fountain to cool off during hot days. These play features would be carefully integrated under existing live oaks to take advantage of their shade and they would also be enhanced with new plantings.

Shaded seating areas with unobstructed views would be integrated throughout for caretakers. In addition, a proposed shaded picnic area could support day-long visits, and the proximity to the Nature Landing would make all visitor amenities, such as restrooms and drinking water fountains, easily accessible [**FIG. 30**].



FIG. 31
(Top Left)
A diagram illustrating the concept of connecting nature areas and introducing the Nature Landing to provide visitor amenities and programming.



FIG. 32
(Bottom Left)
Detail of the illustrative plan showing the Nature Landing and Discovery Nature Play.

FIG. 33
(Right)
The area east of the intersection of Diagonal Drive and Harrison Avenue is a former golf course.

- A Disc golf course
- B Existing tree grove
- C Existing path (former golf cart path)
- D Existing inundated areas

The Treehouse would offer a panoramic view of restored native landscapes towards the Wisner Tract and the surrounding area:

- A Disc golf course
- B Existing tree grove
- C Shaded trail
- D Wet meadow and inundated area
- E Panoramic overlook
- F Flexible seating
- G Shaded indoor space, restrooms, potential concession opportunities

before



after





Connect Athletics to the Larger Park Experience

FIG. 34
(Left)
Upgraded multi-use fields will ensure athletic facilities continue to meet the community's evolving needs. Strategically located parking gardens, an expanded network of improved paths for pedestrians and bikes, and shady areas for concessions and picnicking will make the area better for athletes, families, and other Park visitors.

The Park's athletic facilities are high-demand amenities since they serve many of the elementary school, high school, and college programs across the region, as well as recreational leagues. The recurring and often overuse of these fields, paired with current maintenance, has led to their deterioration. Changing sports trends in the region are increasingly favoring flexible multi-use fields. This Plan recommends upgrading existing fields and expanding the Park's athletic offerings through an additional multi-use field and new sports courts. To better support all Park users, recommendations also include improving visitor support services like concessions and restrooms, introducing new family-friendly programs like play areas, and expanding connectivity to other areas in the Park. Park users' safety can be improved by addressing vehicular traffic and improving roadway-adjacent conditions for pedestrians and bikers.

Existing Conditions

Most athletic facilities at City Park, including the Quadruplex, the Tennis Center, the Matt Savoie Soccer Complex, City Soccer, the Rugby Pitch, and Field 18, are located on the north-west area of the Park above I-610, creating a destination for athletes, players, and their friends and families. Main users include local elementary schools, high schools, colleges and universities, as well as recreational leagues. These fields support soccer, rugby, flag football, baseball, softball, and kick-ball games. They are booked back-to-back consistently throughout the year and many are used beyond the recommended field use hours. This has resulted in deteriorated fields with compacted soils, poor drainage, and high weed coverage. While some fields have spectator seating, irrigation, and lighting, and are located near restrooms, concessions, and parking, not all of them offer these amenities.

Numerous athletic facilities are organized along both sides of Marconi Drive and Magnolia Drive. Vehicular traffic at Marconi Drive is generally over-accommodated, which enables high-speed driving and creates unsafe conditions for the substantial pedestrian activity in the area. Additionally, inconsistent bike circulation leads to confusing and unsafe conditions for cyclists. Magnolia Drive runs parallel to Marconi Drive and also serves the athletic fields, but its effectiveness is compromised where it has been disconnected adjacent to the Tennis Center.

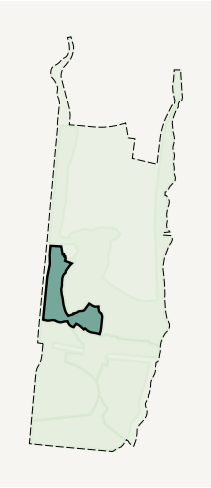
Community Feedback

While City Park is well-used for recreational sports, Park users expressed that there is room for improvements to the existing fields and surrounding amenities through better drainage, lighting, spectator seating, and storage space. They also voiced the desire for more multi-use fields and new sports courts that can accommodate additional recreational opportunities such as basketball and volleyball. Feedback also revealed the need for addressing pedestrian and cyclists' safety by implementing traffic calming measures on roadways and offering better-distributed parking throughout the area.

Lastly, community members recognized that this area could better welcome all Park visitors by improving connections with surrounding areas through well-marked trails and accessible lagoon crossings, in addition to offering opportunities that cater to non-athlete users such as concessions and restrooms that are easily accessible with space to sit and enjoy a meal, play areas for families, shaded seating that is not tied to fields, and decks for getting close to the water's edge and fishing.

FIG. 35
(Right)
Illustrative plan —
Proposed Sport
Complex Landscape.

Key Plan



- Add multi-use field.
- Improve safety along Marconi Drive.
- Improve the Matt Savoie Soccer Complex.
- Improve field access and parking.
- Improve connectivity with other areas.
- Revive concessions/restrooms.
- Reconnect Magnolia Drive.
- Add multi-use sports courts.
- Improve Quadruplex and surrounding landscape.





FIG. 36
(Left)
Existing and
proposed aerial of the
Quadruplex.

Transformational Opportunities

ENHANCING ATHLETIC FIELDS AND FACILITIES

This Plan recommends upgrading and expanding the Park’s current fields and facilities to better serve student athletes and community recreational leagues. Existing fields could be improved with better drainage, high-use soil profiles, reestablished lawn coverage, appropriate maintenance practices, and lighting. Supporting facilities could be improved with shaded spectator seating and upgraded amenity buildings with restrooms, concessions, and café seating [FIG. 34]. Two existing fields would be transformed into multi-use fields. New courts are proposed to accommodate sports that are currently absent such as basketball and volleyball.

IMPROVING PEDESTRIAN AND BIKERS SAFETY

To support the safety of Park users when visiting the Sports Complex area, this Plan recommends further assessing circulation at Marconi Drive to identify suitable safety measures to be incorporated. Safety measures could include introducing turning lanes and syncing traffic light signals for more efficient vehicular intersections; implementing sidewalk bump-outs and raised tabletop crossings with high-visibility signals for improved pedestrian safety; and separating bike circulation from vehicular traffic for increased cyclist safety.

Restoring Magnolia Drive’s former connection near the Tennis Center would provide visitors with an alternative route between Harrison Avenue and the southern area of the Park, reducing reliance on Marconi Drive. Two existing tennis courts would need to be relocated to the northern end of the Tennis Center.

In addition, parking gardens and bike parking would be better distributed throughout the area and aligned with pedestrian and cyclist safety improvements. A comprehensive trail network with clear wayfinding signage would safely guide visitors as they move to and from their destination field.

WELCOMING ALL VISITORS

This Plan recommends expanding the trail network and wayfinding signage to better connect with surrounding areas, including new accessible lagoon bridges. Shaded seating areas integrated into the landscape would offer places to rest without being immersed in a sports event. Small playgrounds could entertain athletes’ families during or between games, while wooden decks along the shorelines would create opportunities for visitors to engage with and enjoy the Park’s lagoons. The upgraded amenity buildings at multiple locations would further enhance the experience for all visitors.



Engage Youth within the Park

FIG. 37
(Left)
The Plan aims to create a safer I-610 underpass connection enhanced by artistic light installations, while also strengthening the visual link between the north and south areas of the Park.

This Plan seeks to improve the connection between the two sides of City Park that are separated by I-610 and the railroad so that it can be experienced as one cohesive Park. The existing highway and railroad underpasses are narrow and favor vehicular traffic. Important touchpoints for the community, such as Pan American Stadium and Grow Dat Youth Farm, along with service and storage facilities, are located nearby. This Plan recommends reconfigurations of the underpasses to increase safety and wayfinding for pedestrians, bikers, and drivers, and explores their potential to create a unique experience with temporary artistic light installations. Recommendations also build on existing offerings and activate the surrounding underutilized areas by introducing new recreational opportunities for youth and improving historic buildings in disrepair. Improved connectivity with Bayou St. John and increased access to water for recreation are also suggested.

Existing Conditions

City Park is divided into two sections by I-610 and the railroad. Popular destinations like Pan American Stadium, Grow Dat Youth Farm, and Pelican Greenhouse, along with service and storage facilities, are located nearby. While these destinations are used every day, they are not well integrated with the rest of Park. The narrow highway and railroad underpasses favor vehicular traffic, with two thin sidewalks for pedestrians. No clear sightlines, wayfinding, lighting, or bike infrastructure is present, creating an unwelcoming and unsafe experience. The dominant presence of transportation infrastructure as visible heavy traffic and loud disruptive noise has led to underutilization of nearby areas. Two historic buildings currently in disrepair, the former Maintenance Corral and the former Golf Clubhouse, are also here.

The Park’s drainage infrastructure converges at this location, which is the lowest in elevation, to be piped to New Orleans Sewerage & Water Board Pump Station 7. Many areas along the railroad and highway corridor are highly susceptible to inundation during storm events and could benefit from the introduction of stormwater management strategies.

Bayou St. John is another destination that is severed from the Park by transportation infrastructure. Most points of connection involve crossing busy intersections along Wisner Boulevard where all means of transportation converge. The area under Wisner Boulevard Bridge

provides an opportunity to enable safe pedestrian and bike crossings to and from the bayou.

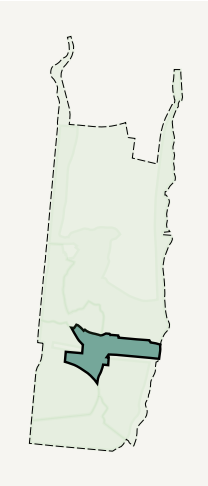
Community Feedback

Community members frequently expressed the need to improve access and circulation across the highway and railroad by addressing the experience at the I-610 and railroad underpasses. Feedback also revealed the desire to revive the area’s historic buildings, such as the former Maintenance Corral and former Golf Clubhouse, to provide new offerings like a City Park history museum, a visitor and information center, or event/gathering spaces. Upgrading lighting, spectator seating, and restrooms in Pan American Stadium could better support existing sports programming.

Concurrently with these revitalization efforts, people voiced the importance of cultivating new youth activities to build upon the existing offerings of Pan American Stadium and Grow Dat Youth Farm. Working sessions with the Ideas Youth Committee revealed aspirations for a space in City Park that can feel like theirs: a shared space for after-school and weekend gatherings where they can have fun and learn, including outdoor classrooms; spaces for arts and performance programming; hang-out areas; a bike course; a skate park; and basketball and volleyball courts. Lastly, community members asked for water access points along Bayou St. John that can support fishing and paddling sports, including boat launching and rental opportunities.

FIG. 38
(Right)
Illustrative plan —
Proposed Park
Underpass
Landscapes.

Key Plan



before



after



FIG. 39
(Left)

The existing I-610 and railroad underpasses are characterized by:

- A Narrow sidewalk
- B I-610 Underpass
- C Limited View between north and south

The Plan proposes important improvements for pedestrians:

- A Paths to multiple destinations
- B Visual connection between north and south
- C Diverse planting scheme
- D New Park signage
- E New tree plantings
- F Accessible multi-use trails

Transformational Opportunities

TRANSFORMING THE I-610 AND RAILROAD UNDERPASSES

The I-610 and railroad underpasses are the most critical points of connection between the north and south parts of the Park. Recommendations to improve the visitors' experience when crossing include regrading the topography of the adjacent landscape to provide accessible multi-use trails that are separated from the roadway and facilitate better sightlines to areas beyond; incorporating diverse plantings, including shade trees; and introducing clear wayfinding signage and lighting [FIG. 39].

Interventions below highway and railroad corridors where art, lighting, and careful consideration of the pedestrian experience transform the unpleasantness of these spaces into unique and celebrated public spaces have become popular around the world. Inspired by the legacy of light shows in the Park and in New Orleans, the I-610 and railroad underpasses could be further animated with temporary artistic light installations that provide a unique experience for visitors and in turn make it a destination [FIG. 37].

CREATING A YOUTH AREA

Building on the unique transformation of the underpass and responding to the community's desire for an area for young people, this Plan recommends transforming the underutilized area south of the railroad and adjacent to the former Maintenance Corral to serve the New Orleans youth. Introducing new Park programs such as a wheel park, sports courts, shaded hang-out areas, cooling gardens, and an outdoor classroom would provide passive and active opportunities for teens and young adults to have fun and learn. These kinds of programs are key to bringing energy and animation to a space that currently feels abandoned [FIG. 40].

In addition, an extended trail network with wayfinding signage and the renovation of the former Maintenance Corral to include restrooms, concessions, and space for indoor programs would further support new activities established in this area and connect it with the rest of the Park. The restoration of this historic building and its courtyard would also create a unique opportunity to host activities in a semi-protected setting.

before



after



FIG. 40
(Left)
The existing area around the former Maintenance Corral has fallen into disuse.

- A** Old live oaks to remain
- B** Underutilized open lawn, former golf course
- C** Former Maintenance Corral

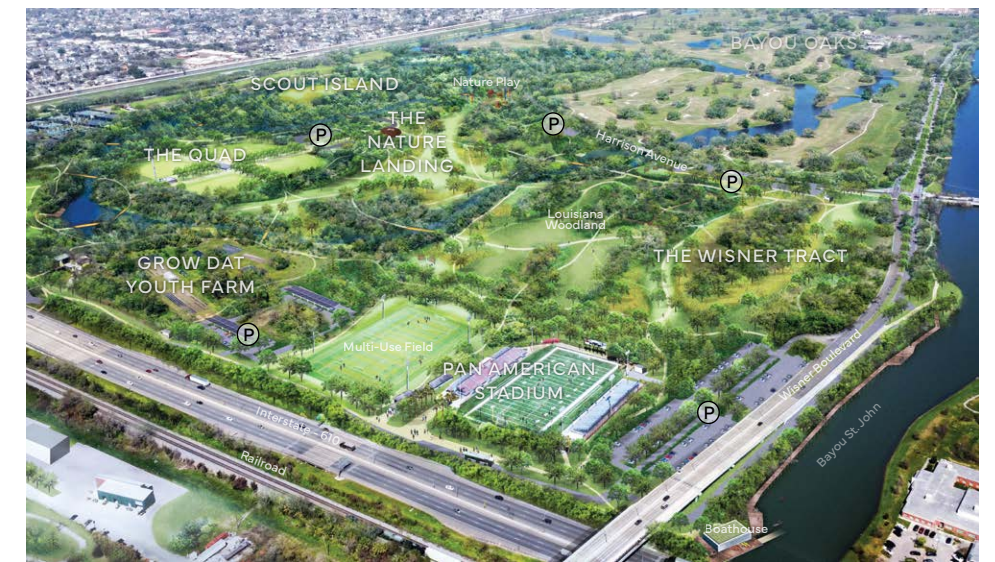
The Plan proposes a new wheel park and sports courts next to a renovated Maintenance Corral—with amenities like restrooms, concessions, and interpretive programs.

- A** Old live oaks to remain
- B** Successional tree plantings
- C** Sports courts
- D** Wheel park
- E** Shaded hangout areas, multi-use paths
- F** Renovated Maintenance Corral
- G** Seating areas
- H** Cooling garden
- I** Multi-use trail

FIG. 41
(Right)
Proposed aerial of the north side of City Park.

ACTIVATING THE NORTH SIDE OF THE UNDERPASS

On the north side of the underpass, the Plan recommendations address three areas [FIG. 41]. To the left, it is recommended to alter the linear layout of Zachary Taylor Drive to slow traffic and create views into the landscape. Suggestions also include embracing the wet nature of the area and establishing an expansive marsh garden to collect stormwater runoff and, through raised boardwalks and bridges, provide a new landscape experience for visitors. The resulting fill from excavation can be used to introduce topography and create a sound berm to attenuate the undesirable noise and traffic sights from I-610, as well as a place to hang out and enjoy raised views to the lagoons [FIG. 3]. Targeted vegetation management will address dense thickets and further open views into the water. Piers, decks, and bridges will create opportunities to interact with the lagoons and connect this area with the rest of the Park.



On the right side, recommendations include enhancing Pan American Stadium to better support current sports offerings and adding one new multi-use field to accommodate demands based on evolving sports trends in the region. Facilities to support athletes and visitors could be increased by restoring the former Golf Clubhouse to include restrooms, concessions, and an indoor training space, as well as better-distributed parking gardens, and a safe bus drop-off.

Recommendations also seek to leverage another underpass, beneath the Wisner Boulevard Bridge, to build the only direct access to the Bayou St. John shoreline. An extended trail network including a floating walkway and wayfinding signage would safely connect bikers and pedestrians with the existing multi-use trails that run along the bayou. A new boathouse would provide opportunities for boating, and piers would allow visitors to fish and enjoy views of the bayou.



Activate the Collection of Civic Spaces in the Park

FIG. 42
(Left)
The Plan envisions a transformed Roosevelt Mall median with understory gardens, shaded open lawn areas, and successional tree plantings. A network of pedestrian paths would be punctuated by new seating areas and space for small pop-up vendors and temporary art.

Among the numerous popular destinations on the west side of City Park, three significant civic structures are particularly iconic of the WPA era: Tad Gormley Stadium, Roosevelt Mall, and Popp Fountain. Fences and vehicular traffic restrict how visitors currently experience these spaces. In addition, the bike and pedestrian networks and parking offerings are limited, and athletic facilities are overused. Recommendations in this Plan seek to recapture the civic spirit of these structures through upgrades to the Stadium, a collection of gardens around Popp Fountain, and activation of the Roosevelt Mall median for social activities. Addressing safety and accessibility for bikes and pedestrians by expanding the circulation network with new multi-use trails and better-distributed parking will strengthen the connection between all destinations. Upgrades to athletic facilities, a new event amphitheater, and flexible lawns are also proposed.

Existing Conditions

The west side of City Park hosts numerous popular destinations including Carousel Gardens Amusement Park, Storyland, the Louisiana Children’s Museum, the City Park Practice Track, and NOLA City Bark.

Tad Gormley Stadium, the New Orleans Botanical Garden, and Popp Fountain are of particular historic significance. These three civic structures were built in the 1930s by the Works Projects Administration (WPA) and are representative of the unique collaboration between architect Richard Koch, landscape architect William Wiedorn, and artist Enrique Alf  rez. Their collaborative work gave much of the southern area of the Park a unique signature aesthetic. Access to Tad Gormley Stadium and Popp Fountain for informal everyday use is currently limited by fencing, restricting visitors’ opportunity to enjoy these historic assets.

Vehicular traffic is generally over-accommodated on Roosevelt Mall (also built by the WPA) and Palm Drive, which enables high-speed driving. These streets do not accommodate designated space for bikers and generally lack sidewalks and clearly marked crosswalks, resulting in unsafe and inaccessible conditions for pedestrians and cyclists along the roadways. Moreover, minimal pedestrian pathways across the landscape and through the various destinations restrict circulation in the area.

Community Feedback

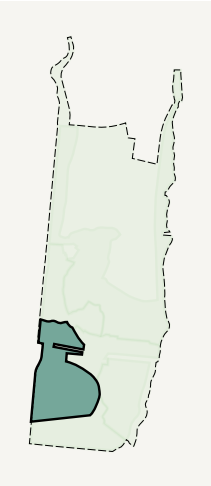
Community input strongly advocated for reviving civic features, such as Tad Gormley Stadium and Popp Fountain, to celebrate these historic assets and better integrate them into everyday Park use. Upgrades to athletic facilities and supporting amenities could better support student athletes, community groups, and individual users.

Community members recognized the area’s potential as a citywide gathering space and identified social programming such as public art displays, craft festivals, and more creative food and beverage options, including hot dog carts, snowball stands, beer gardens, and food trucks. Feedback also revealed the desire for an amphitheater to hold events and flexible lawn areas that can support informal activity.

To promote connectivity throughout the area and improve access to all destinations, Park users proposed to expand and connect walking and biking networks and incorporate wayfinding signage and lighting.

FIG. 43
(Right)
Illustrative plan—
Proposed Roosevelt
Mall Landscape.

Key Plan



Improve parking distribution.

Improve Popp Fountain as a publicly accessible garden.

Improve Marconi Drive underpass area by providing safe pedestrian/ bicycle trails for Park connectivity.

Revive practice track.

Add a new pedestrian Park entry at Marconi Drive.

Add flexible lawn spaces for events and recreation.

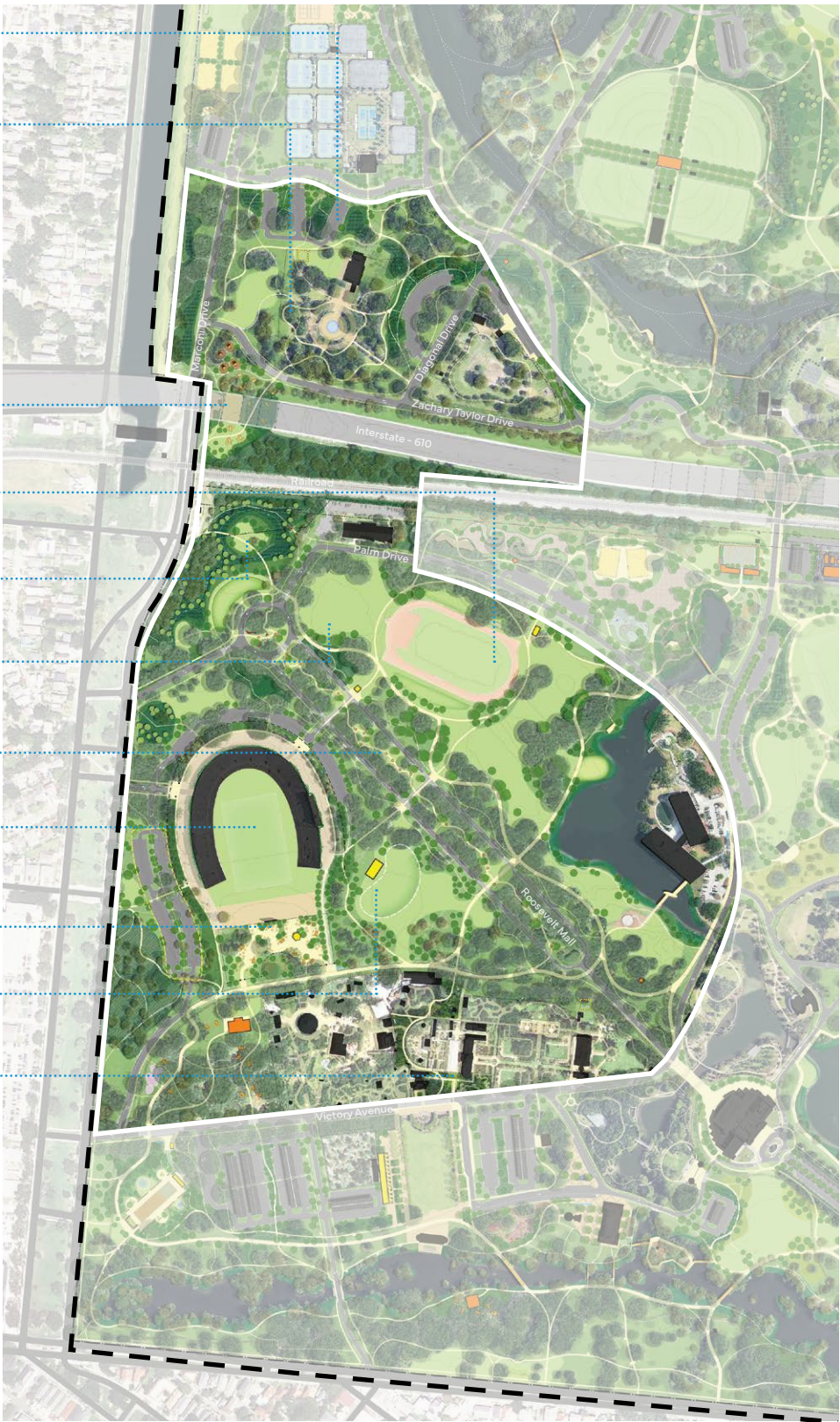
Activate Roosevelt Mall.

Revive Tad Gormley Stadium.

Add concessions garden.

Add event amphitheater/ pavilion.

Improve access through The Helis Foundation Enrique Alf  rez Sculpture Garden.



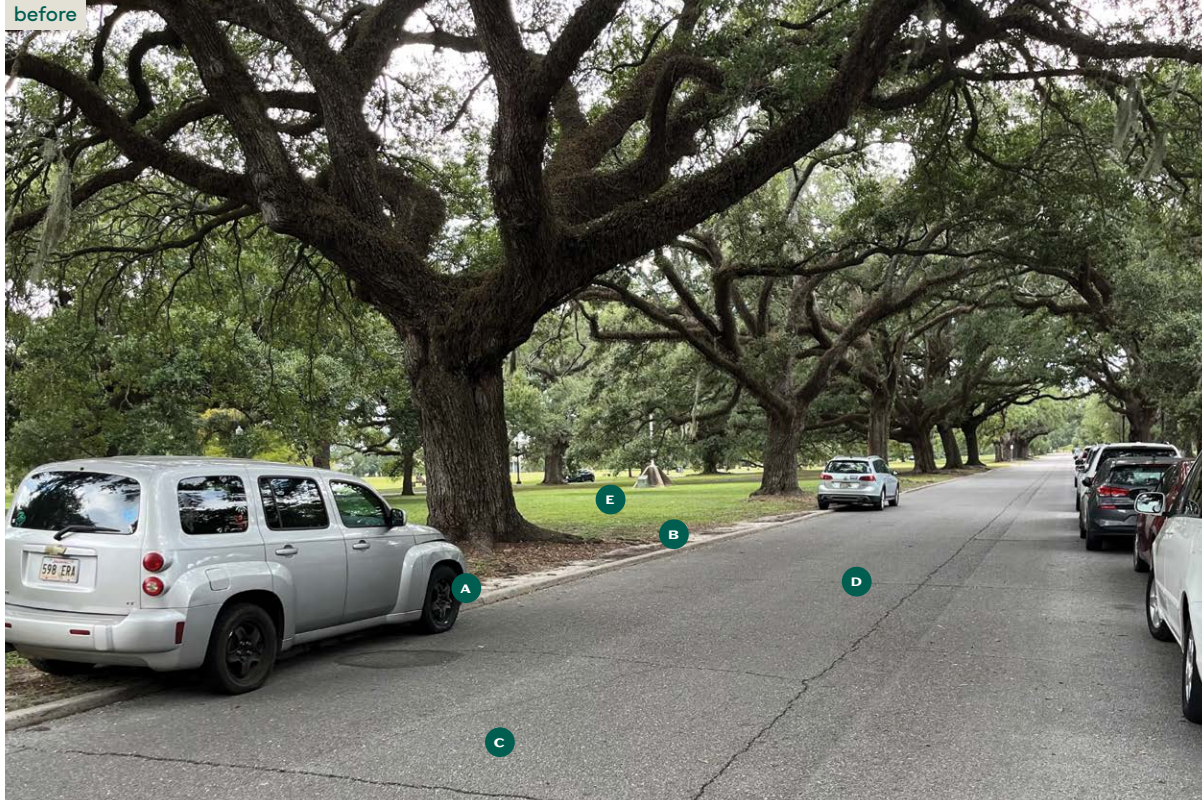


FIG. 44
(Left)
Currently, Roosevelt Mall is characterized by historic live oaks but also:

- A** Parallel parking on sidewalk and tree roots
- B** Narrow sidewalk
- C** Unsafe pedestrian crossing
- D** Wide one-way road
- E** Underutilized open lawn area

The Plan proposes:

- A** Historic live oaks with understory planting
- B** Designated parallel parking
- C** Designated sidewalk on the parking side
- D** Raised tabletop pedestrian crossing
- E** Roosevelt Mall road reconfiguration
- F** New seating area and successional tree planting
- G** Pedestrian path network
- H** Narrowing road to allow for more space for tree roots

Transformational Opportunities

REVIVING TAD GORMLEY STADIUM

Proposed enhancements will preserve the structural well-being and attractiveness of this historic structure. To better support stadium usage, basic facilities that are in poor condition such as restrooms and concessions should be upgraded. To address access and safety, the Plan recommends upgrading lighting and positions parking on the outside of the security fence.

Responding to community feedback, a new event amphitheater is proposed nearby. A new concessions garden along Stadium Drive would support stadium and amphitheater use, as well as other park visitors. Since access to parking areas around the stadium will no longer be restricted, they can also be used during events at the amphitheater and for everyday Park activity. New trails with wayfinding will connect this parking to other destinations nearby.

BROADENING ACCESS TO POPP FOUNTAIN

Recommendations focus on broadening access to this historic asset by introducing multiple openings to the surrounding fence and enhancing the adjacent landscape with a collection of gardens such as rain gardens, leisure and event gardens, display gardens, or, per community feedback, recreation gardens that accommodate programs for older Park users, such as croquet and bocce.

UNLOCKING ROOSEVELT MALL FOR SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

The current roadbed at Roosevelt Mall is too wide, which enables high-speed driving. This also enables informal parallel parking over the median, which impacts the health of the adjacent live oaks. This Plan recommends adjusting the roadway width, formalizing parallel parking, introducing a designated sidewalk along the parking side, and incorporating raised tabletop crossings to support pedestrian safety [FIG. 44]. Enhancements to the landscaped median include understory plantings, seating, and new trails with wayfinding signage so visitors can enjoy the shade under the historic live oak trees [FIG. 42]. Successional tree plantings would ensure the character of this area can be preserved over the years. Periodically, small pop-up vendors and temporary art can further enhance the experience along Roosevelt Mall.

IMPROVING BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIVITY

Safety-focused modifications to existing roadways and the addition of new multi-use trails with wayfinding signage are proposed to support pedestrian and bike movements in the Park. A new public path through the Helis Foundation Enrique Alf rez Sculpture Garden would enable passage between the dense collection of destinations in this area. Activating the I-610 underpass along Marconi Drive with workout and picnic facilities would improve the connection between the north and south areas of the Park.



Tailor the Investment to the Land

FIG. 45
(Left)
In the northeast corner of the Festival Grounds, the Plan proposes a multipurpose event lawn and an area for a temporary stage. Pedestrian paths would give Park visitors many routes through the area. A boardwalk with seating would provide passage across a rain garden.

The east side of City Park is characterized by a monotonous landscape consisting of mown lawns, large shade trees, and multi-use trails that allow visitors to walk, jog, or bike around Big Lake and through the Festival Grounds. As well-known as these destinations are, so too are the challenges of occupying this landscape after wet weather. Community members advocated for a more biodiverse experience that can better support everyday uses and large events. This Plan seeks to diversify the landscape at the Festival Grounds by embracing the existing wet and dry landscape conditions and adjusting maintenance practices. Recommendations also address the eroded shoreline at Big Lake. Proposed interventions will increase landscape diversity and improve storm-water management. An expanded multi-use trail network with wayfinding signage and shade will increase the site’s offerings for walkers, joggers, and bikers.

Existing Conditions

Big Lake, the Festival Grounds, Reunion Shelter, and Christian Brothers School are located on the east side of City Park. Various multi-use trails enable visitors to walk, jog, or bike around this area that mostly consists of mown lawns and large shade trees. At Big Lake, Park users can enjoy art installations such as The Wave of the World and the Singing Oak Tree, as well as the Big Lake Native Plant Trail that takes visitors through a native meadow established to commemorate the resilience and commitment of New Orleanians to rebuilding their homes and neighborhoods after Hurricane Katrina. A variety of recreational rentals including bikes, four-wheel surrey cycles, and swan boats provide additional ways for visitors of all ages to enjoy this area. The Festival Grounds offer 50-acres of flexible space for recreational use through informal multi-use athletic fields and special events such as music festivals. Between these two areas, Reunion Shelter provides visitor support amenities such as restrooms, shaded seating, drinking water fountains, and lights.

Various zones in the Festival Grounds and Big Lake are low in elevation, so stormwater collects and remains there long after weather events. While these conditions are favored by some tree species such as the Bald Cypress, they are undesirable for both large-scale events and everyday recreational use. In some areas, drains have been placed near trees to help drain accumulated water faster. This has compromised the health

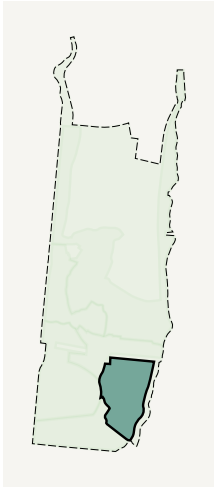
of trees that thrive in wet conditions. Moreover, frequent mowing practices in muddy areas have resulted in conditions that further affect tree health, such as compacted soils and damaged cypress knees. Introducing stormwater management strategies, such as rain gardens, would be of great benefit.

Community Feedback

Park users advocated for diversifying the existing monotonous landscape by increasing native plantings, both in service of stormwater management and visitor experience. Suggestions included tree groves to provide shade and colorful wildflower fields. Upon improvements of the area’s ability to manage weather events, community members also expressed interest in bringing back musical performances and festivals.

FIG. 46 (Right) Illustrative plan — Proposed Festival Grounds Landscape.

Key Plan



Improve event spaces + lawns to better support programming.

Improve landscape diversity to enhance daily visitors’ experience.

Add new trees and paths.

Improve water’s edge with planting.

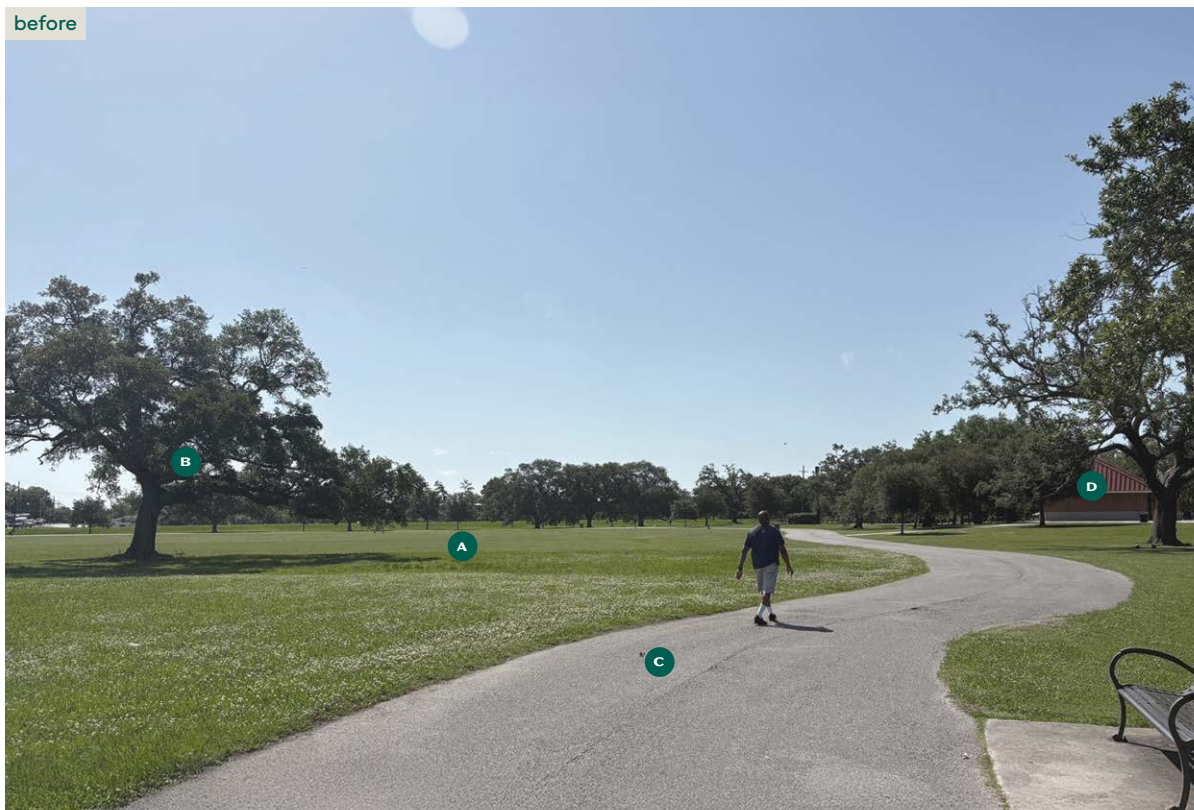


0

500'

1000'

before



after



FIG. 47
(Left)
The Festival Grounds
today has:

- A** Open lawn areas
- B** Mature tree canopy
- C** Walking paths with limited shade
- D** Reunion Shelter

The Plan proposes changes to create:

- A** Flexible use lawns
- B** Gathering areas
- C** Multi-use path network
- D** Shaded paths
- E** Park lighting
- F** Benches
- G** Running + walking loop
- H** Diverse landscape

Transformational Opportunities

DIVERSIFYING THE LANDSCAPE AT THE FESTIVAL GROUNDS

City Park 2050 seeks to diversify the landscape at the Festival Grounds by embracing the various existing wet and dry landscape conditions and adjusting maintenance practices. In low-lying zones around tree species that thrive in wet conditions, the Plan recommends adjusting existing drains and introducing marsh garden plantings to increase collection and storage of stormwater runoff. Access through and opportunities to enjoy this new landscape would be provided through raised boardwalks and bridges [FIG. 45].

In drier zones, flexible open lawns that can support festivals and informal recreational fields will remain. To better support tree health, no-mow areas will be introduced around some trees. This will restrict how close mowing equipment can get to the trees, limiting soil compaction around the roots. Under other mature trees, a deck structure with seating could be carefully installed to support informal social and cultural activities under shade. An expanded multi-use trail network with wayfinding signage will provide better connectivity and increase the site's offerings for walkers, joggers, and bikers [FIG. 47].

ENHANCING BIG LAKE'S SHORELINE

Some areas along the shoreline of Big Lake have eroded due to mowing and waterfowl overgrazing, which occurs when waterfowl consume vegetation at a faster rate than it can regenerate, leading to habitat degradation. This Plan recommends introducing a native wetland/prairie buffer along some areas of the lake to stabilize the edges and mitigate impacts from overgrazing. These new plantings can help frame views across the lake to art installations or buildings beyond, such as NOMA.

On the east side of the lake, the Plan proposes introducing a native wet meadow garden that can capture and filter stormwater runoff before it enters the lake. Raised boardwalks and bridges would expand the existing trail network to support movement through this wet landscape.



Greet Visitors with Expressions of Comfort

FIG. 48
(Left)
Near the Park entrance at Marconi Drive and Orleans Avenue, the Plan envisions an ephemeral water feature and flexible gathering spaces, complemented by Park lighting and shaded benches for comfort. A new tree canopy enhances the landscape, while a cohesive circulation network and reconfigured Park entry road improve access and connectivity throughout the area and beyond.

The historic live oaks along City Park Avenue paired with Bayou Metairie provide one of the most iconic landscape experiences in City Park. Over time, destinations and vehicular infrastructure have accumulated, making this area feel congested. This Plan seeks to reduce the dominant presence of roadways and large surface lots through tactical reconfigurations, especially along Dreyfous Drive, to reclaim substantial areas for safe pedestrian and cyclist circulation. Recommendations also include enhancing and activating Dreyfous Meadow as a critical point of connection between the iconic Bayou Metairie landscape and the popular multi-use trails at Big Lake, as well as reimagining the Marconi Park entry as a pedestrian focused civic landscape with a water feature that welcomes all.

Existing Conditions

The southernmost portion of City Park represents the first area that made up the Park and is home to many of the Park’s oldest and largest live oak trees, some of which are over 800 years old. A remnant of a distributary of the Mississippi River was restored as Bayou Metairie. This historic area offers one of the most memorable landscape experiences in the entire Park and serves as the front door for visitors.

Over the years, incremental additions geared towards improving visitors’ experience have accumulated in the area. These include historical assets such as the Peristyle, Popp Bandstand, the New Orleans Museum of Art (NOMA), and Café Du Monde. More contemporary additions include the Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden, City Putt, and the Goldring/ Woldenberg Great Lawn.

One of the City’s first public swimming pools was also located in this area. The pool operated for 30 years and was closed in 1958 because of the legislation for racial integration. The pool structure was then used for various alternative programs, including a zoo-like attraction with sea lions and a monkey island, a miniature golf course, and a haunted house. In the early 2000s, the pool was filled in and transformed into Irby Field, an open green space.

To accommodate visitors’ access to these destinations and occasional large events, vehicular infrastructure including roadways and

surface parking has increasingly grown over time. The accumulation of all these destinations and infrastructure makes this area feel congested. Currently, the circulation network favors vehicular travel. For day-to-day activity, vehicular traffic is generally over-accommodated, while Park cyclists and pedestrians are underserved. This has resulted in high vehicular travel speeds and unsafe and inaccessible conditions for pedestrians and bikers along the roadways.

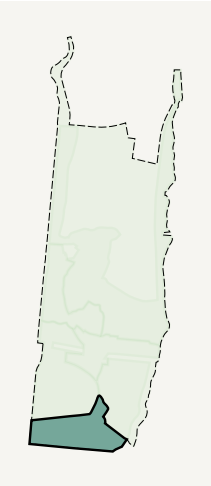
Community Feedback

Throughout the planning process, community input strongly advocated for safer and better integrated bike and pedestrian trails, including clear wayfinding signage. Feedback also revealed the desire for more accessible opportunities to enjoy and engage with Bayou Metairie, including comfortable benches, accessible bridges, and wooden decks. Community comments also reinforced the need for stronger visitor support services such as an information kiosk, a history museum, varied concessions, and a café.

A popular idea among community members of all ages was the addition of a civic water feature where all visitors can cool down in the summer months.

FIG. 49
(Right)
Illustrative plan —
Proposed Bayou
Metairie Landscape.

Key Plan



Add sense of welcome to Marconi Drive Park entry.

Add civic water feature.

Improve trail network at Historic Oak Grove.

Improve pedestrian/bike trails by simplifying road system.

Improve accessible lagoon crossings.

Revive Pigeon Island as a play and educational space.

Reconfigure Collins Diboll Circle and add pedestrian plaza.

Improve Lelong Drive sidewalk and pedestrian access.



0

500'

1000'

before



after



FIG. 50
(Left)

Currently, Dreyfous Drive is a one-way road with parking and:

- A** Limited sidewalk
- B** Unsafe pedestrian crossing

The Plan envisions areas of Dreyfous Drive converted to an accessible multi-use trail with:

- A** Water garden
- B** Parking garden
- C** Cohesive circulation network
- D** Successional tree planting
- E** Park lighting

FIG. 51
(Right)

Detail of the illustrative plan showing Lelong Drive and NOMA.

Transformational Opportunities

TRANSFORMING DREYFOUS DRIVE TO PRIORITIZE BIKERS AND PEDESTRIANS

City Park 2050 proposes targeted roadway reconfigurations to open new opportunities for safe movement for cyclists and pedestrians. Recommendations include converting Victory Avenue from one-way to two-way, making it the primary vehicular entrance; removing vehicular circulation from portions of Dreyfous Drive and converting it into a multi-use path for pedestrians and bikers [**FIG. 50**]; and integrating drop-off points near popular destinations for visitors arriving by bus or ride-

share. Transforming existing large surface lots to parking gardens would help better integrate this needed infrastructure into the landscape experience.

It is also recommended that safety features such as marked pedestrian crossings, lighting, and way-finding signage are implemented in all remaining roadways. New accessible crossings over Bayou Metairie will expand the improved multi-use trail network to the rest of the Park. These recommendations were closely developed with mobility planning experts and checked against daily usage and event scenarios to support all traffic conditions. Further studies will be needed to refine these recommendations as they are implemented.



IMPROVING VISITORS' EXPERIENCE AROUND NOMA

Roadway reconfigurations also extend to the eastern end of this area, where NOMA and the Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden are located. Collins Diboll Circle currently runs between these two destinations. Limited pedestrian sidewalks and unmarked crossings present unsafe conditions for visitors to move from one destination to another. This Plan recommends modifying Collins Diboll Circle by removing vehicular access from the area behind NOMA and converting it into a pedestrian plaza with movable furniture [FIG. 52]. Controlled vehicular access will accommodate truck and art deliveries to NOMA's loading dock.

In addition, the removal of Dreyfous Drive in this area, the introduction of safety features such as raised tabletop pedestrian crossings and wayfinding signage in all remaining roadways, and the reconfiguration of the City Park Train track, paired with landscape enhancements such as shade trees and understory plantings, rain gardens, movable lawn seating, and new multi-use trails, seek to activate Dreyfous Meadow and connect the iconic Bayou Metairie landscape with the popular multi-use trails at Big Lake and the Festival Grounds.

ACTIVATING THE MARCONI PARK ENTRY

At the western end of this area, the removal of vehicles from Dreyfous Drive opens a meaningful opportunity to reimagine this Park entry as a pedestrian-focused civic landscape that welcomes all. The Plan proposes transforming Irby Field, the former location of City Park's public pool, into a large plaza that features a civic water feature for visitors of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities to enjoy [FIG. 48]. The civic water feature would be ephemeral in nature. When active, a few inches of water would accumulate over a designated area to create a mirror effect that reflects the surrounding landscape, including the sky and colorful sunsets. Dispersed misting features can activate the space at set times and provide opportunities for play and for cooling off. Shaded seating located at the perimeter would support people watching and social activities. When dry, the plaza can function as a flexible paved space that can accommodate events.

The surrounding landscape would be enhanced with shade trees and understory plantings, new multi-use trails with wayfinding signage and lighting, visitor support services such as an information kiosk, and community plazas that can support social and cultural gatherings.

FIG. 52 (Right)
Today, Collins Diboll Circle is a one-way road with:

- A Limited sidewalk
- B Unsafe pedestrian crossing
- C Unsafe pedestrian environment around NOMA
- D Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden
- E City Park train track
- F Grandjean Bridge

The Plan envisions a transformed circle:

- A Accessible multi-use trail
- B Understory plantings
- C New shade canopy trees
- D A pedestrian plaza
- E Park lighting
- F NOMA service road reconfiguration/access



Special Thanks

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Ideas Youth
Committee (IYC)
Organizations

The 18th Ward
Benjamin Franklin
High School
Booker T. Washington
High School
Country Day
New Orleans
Children & Youth
Planning Board
Dillard University
LOOP NOLA
First Tee Greater
New Orleans
Girls on the Run
New Orleans
Grow Dat Youth Farm
Hart Academy
of Dance
Jesuit High School of
New Orleans
Louisiana Children's
Museum
Metairie Park Country
Day School
Morris Jeff
Community School
The Net
New Orleans Center
for Creative Arts
NOLA Gold Rugby
The New Orleans
Charter Science
and Mathematics
High School
UnCommon
Construction
Ursuline Academy
Warren Easton
Charter High
School
Willow High School
Xavier University
of Louisiana

Focus Group
Participant
Organizations

Bayou District
Foundation
Benjamin Franklin
High School
Bike Easy
Booker T. Washington
High School
Brother Martin
High School
Canoe and Trails
Adventures
Christian Brothers
School
City Park
Conservancy Team
City Park For
Everyone
City Park Tennis Club
Congo Square
Preservation
Society
Football Night
in America
Frederick A. Douglass
High School
Greater New Orleans
Iris Society
Greater New Orleans
Sports Foundation
Grow Dat Youth Farm
Holy Cross
High School
Islanos/ Master Papi
Jesuit High School of
New Orleans
LA USTA
Livingston Collegiate
Academy
LOOP NOLA
Louisiana Children's
Museum
Louisiana Fire
Soccer Club
Louisiana Master
Naturalists of
Greater
New Orleans
Louisiana Rugby

Loyola University of
New Orleans
Magnolia Community
Services
Mount Carmel
Academy
Native Plant Initiative
New Orleans
Botanical Garden
Advisory Council
New Orleans Disc
Golf Club
New Orleans Jesters
New Orleans
Museum of Art
New Orleans
Police Department
New Orleans
Rowing Club
New Orleans
Spartans FC
NOLA City Bark
Members
NOLA Gold Rugby
NOLA Miles
NOLA Parks For All
NOMATA
PlayNola
Sarah T. Reed Senior
High School
St. Mary's Dominican
High School
St. Michael
Special School
The 18th Ward
The Arc of Greater
New Orleans
University of
New Orleans
Walkers of Wisner
(WOW)
Warren Easton
Charter High
School

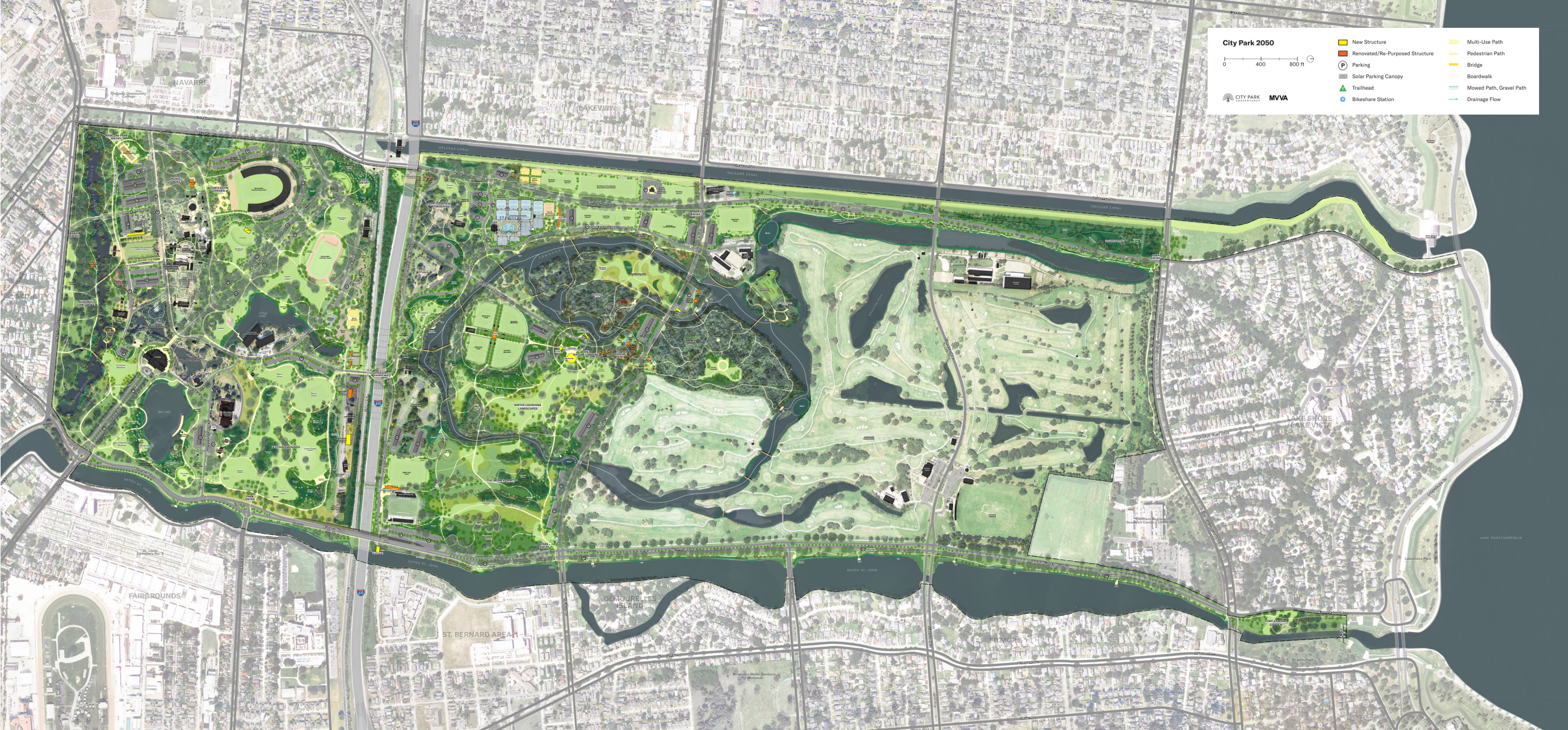


FIG. 53
(Above, from top)
Community Meeting
at Warren Easton
Charter High School,
December 2023

Ideas Youth Com-
mittee meeting 1,
October 2024

To download the City Park 2050 Comprehensive Plan,
or to read more about the planning process, visit
neworleanscitypark.org/master-plan-overview





City Park 2050

0400800 ft

G

CITY PARK CONSERVANCY

MVVA

New Structure

Renovated/Re-Purposed Structure

Parking

Solar Parking Canopy

Trailhead

Bikeshare Station

Multi-Use Path

Pedestrian Path

Bridge

Boardwalk

Mowed Path, Gravel Path

Drainage Flow

An aerial map of City Park 2050, showing proposed developments and infrastructure. The map is overlaid on an aerial photograph of the park area, which includes various green spaces, water bodies, and surrounding urban areas. The map is color-coded to indicate different types of developments and infrastructure. A legend in the top right corner provides a key for the symbols and colors used. The map also includes a scale bar and a north arrow. The surrounding urban areas are labeled with names such as NAVARRE, LAKEVIEW, FAIRGROUNDS, ST. BERNARD AREA, DEMOURELLES ISLAND, FILMORE, and LAKE SHORE LAKEVISTA. The map shows a complex network of paths, including multi-use paths, pedestrian paths, bridges, boardwalks, mowed paths, gravel paths, and drainage flows. It also shows various structures, including new structures, renovated/re-purposed structures, parking areas, solar parking canopies, trailheads, and bikeshare stations. The map is a detailed plan for the future of City Park, showing how it will be developed and managed in 2050.



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