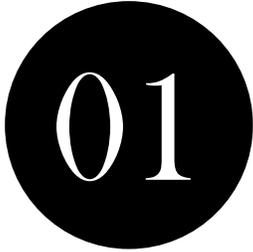

EASTON POCKET PARKS VISION PLAN

January 2021



A decorative banner with yellow paper flowers is positioned across the middle of the page. The background is a soft-focus bokeh of green foliage, creating a bright and natural atmosphere. The word "CONTENTS" is centered in a white, serif font, overlaid on the banner.

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01

INTRODUCTION

The Easton Pocket Parks Vision Plan was developed through a partnership with the City of Easton, Pennsylvania, and the West Ward Community Initiative. The plan was completed by Omnes, an Easton-based landscape architecture, planning, and art studio.

The City of Easton is home to a range of diverse neighborhoods, each with its own unique character. This community-driven plan defines an identity for each of a series of pocket parks located throughout Easton's West Ward and South Side. The recommendations for each park are based on feedback received from residents throughout a robust public engagement process that offered a range of opportunities for community members to make their voices heard.

The plan will be utilized by the City of Easton and its partners to support the pursuit of funding opportunities that will allow the City to make real the community ambitions contained herein. Though the parks included in this plan are small in size, they can be places of tremendous impact. Relying on the voices and aspirations of Easton residents, this document offers a realizable vision for a future shaped and shared by the community.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PROJECT FUNDING

This plan was made possible by a grant awarded to the City of Easton by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources 2018 Community Conservation Partnerships Program.

PROJECT TEAM

Director of Public Services David Hopkins and West Ward Community Initiative Manager Amy Boccadoro worked directly with the Omnes planning team, providing resources, feedback, and guidance throughout the planning process.

CONTRIBUTORS

Others contributors to the plan include:

- The general public of Easton, who made their voices heard through seven "Pop into the Park" sessions, e-mailed feedback, website comments, and 191 online survey responses.
- Antoinette Cavaliere, Translator
- Nick Daza, Translator
- Liza Fuentes, Translator
- Carlos Reyes, Translator
- Tracey Werner, City of Easton Marketing Consultant
- Carl Manges, GIS Data



- Cory R. Kegerise, AICP, PA Historical & Museum Commission, State Historic Preservation Office
- Sharon Gothard, Marx Local History Room, Easton Public Library
- Leonard S. Buscemi, Sr., Ph.D., Historian
- Steven B. Burg, Ph.D., Shippensburg University & the Pennsylvania Hallowed Grounds Project
- Easton Area Community Center, Engagement Partner
- Easton YMCA, Engagement Partner
- Faouzi's Talk of the Town Ice Cream

PLANNING CONSULTANT

The community engagement and resulting vision described in this plan were completed by Omnes, a landscape architecture, planning, and art studio based in Easton, Pennsylvania. The Omnes team included:

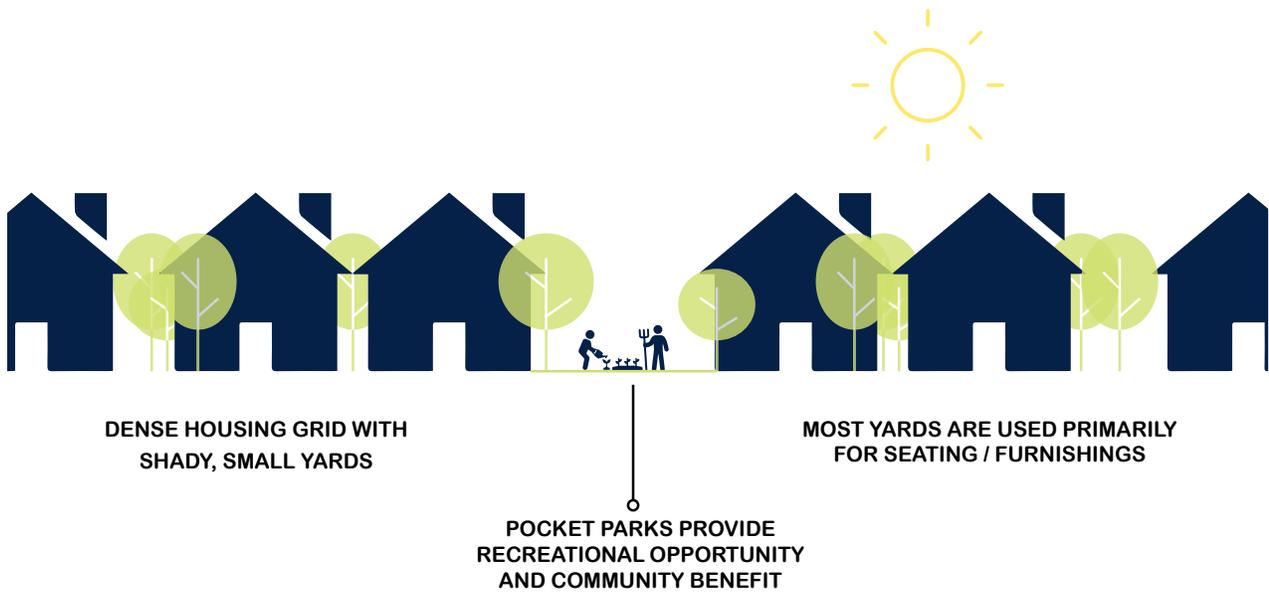
- Laura Stedenfeld, Principal
- Emily Hahn Van Wagoner, Project Manager & Senior Landscape Designer
- Sheila M. Fuentes, Editor & Researcher
- Bonnie Kirn Donahue, Associate
- Justin Soto, Designer
- Jon Van Wagoner, Senior Landscape Designer

Cost estimates were produced by Civitas Regio, an Allentown-based engineering, planning, and environmental firm.

USING THIS DOCUMENT

This document was developed for the City of Easton and its partners to use as a visual tool to guide individual projects and initiatives for the improvement of seven of the existing pocket parks in the West Ward and South Side neighborhoods. Individual projects should continue to seek feedback from the community to ensure that the final designs of these parks will be loved and cared for by the surrounding residents.

A wealth of community feedback was received throughout the engagement process, and this data was used to determine the design of each park. Each chapter in this book outlines recommendations for individual parks and initiatives based on analysis of this feedback. A comprehensive summary of feedback received over the course of the project is provided to the City in a separate appendix.



tiny spaces should be well-maintained and programmed in order to continue being well utilized, serving the needs of their neighborhood as part of the overall park network.

THE POCKETS

The pocket parks included in this plan are typically the size of a residential lot, and are located within residential neighborhoods. There are approximately sixteen pocket parks in Easton. Seven of these parks were prioritized by the City as under-served parks in need of improvement. Two of these seven are located in the South Side neighborhood and five are located in the West Ward neighborhood.

West Ward

- 7th Street Park
- Bushkill Street Park
- Jackson Street Park
- Centennial Park
- Raspberry Street Park

South Side

- Nesquehoning Street Park
- Porter School Park

Because of their small scale, the pocket parks have the opportunity to provide recreational and ecological resources to their immediately adjacent neighbors. These

VISION PLAN GOALS

Three primary goals drove the design process of the Pocket Parks Vision Plan:

ENGAGE

Successful public parks are those that are regularly used, maintained, and beloved by the community. To transform a space into a successful park, the surrounding community must be engaged, with their ideas clearly visible in the park concepts.

ACTIVATE

Infuse parks with the community's desired programming to transform the spaces into places full of life and activity throughout all seasons.

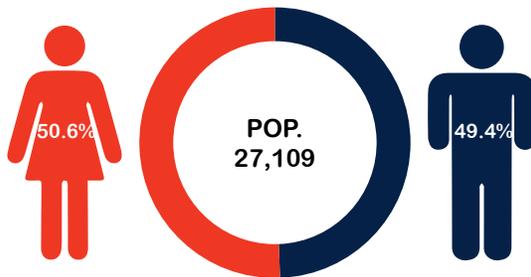
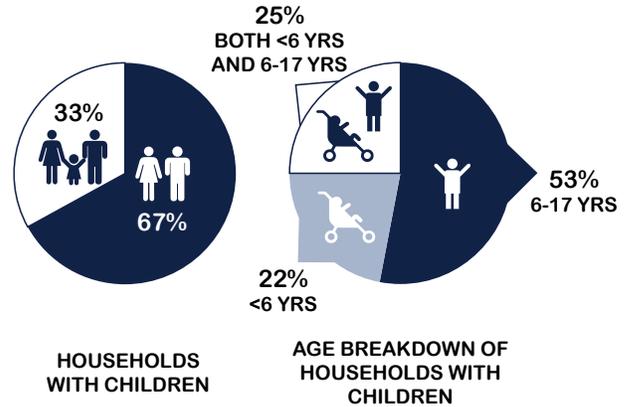
TRANSFORM

Through engagement and activation, pocket parks can

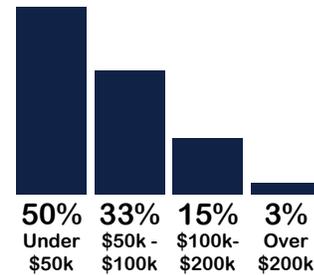
DEMOGRAPHICS

The demographic breakdown illustrated on this page represents the entire City of Easton, PA and provides a big picture view of the users of the Pocket Parks. In addition to the statistics shown on this page, 54% of the population rents their homes while 46% own them. This breakdown varies locally by park, and maps for the neighboring properties can be found for each park in the following chapters.

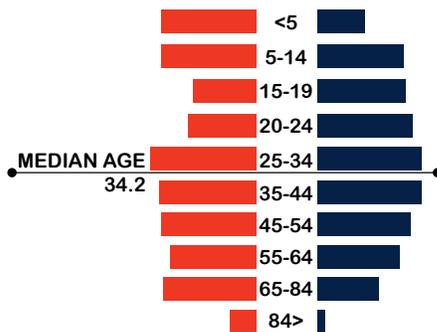
HOUSEHOLDS



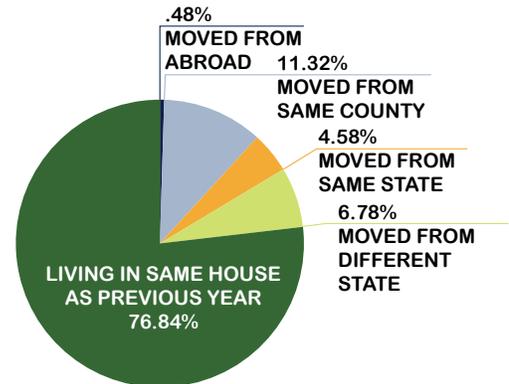
INCOME



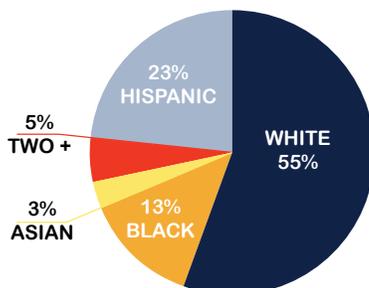
AGE



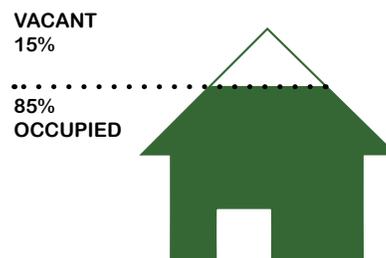
HOUSEHOLD LOCATION HISTORY (REGARDLESS OF RENT VS OWN)



RACE



HOUSING OCCUPANCY



Sources:
 Areavibes. "Easton, PA Demographics." Easton, Pennsylvania Population & Demographics, www.areavibes.com/easton-pa/demographics/.
 "Census Profile: Easton, PA." Census Reporter, censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US4221648-easton-pa/.
 "Easton Pennsylvania Demographics Data." Towncharts Demographics Data, www.towncharts.com/Pennsylvania/Demographics/Easton-city-PA-Demographics-data.html.
 "Easton Demographics." Point2, www.point2homes.com/US/Neighborhood/PA/Northampton-County/Easton.html.



PUBLIC PARKS NETWORK

Pocket Parks Included in Study

- 1 7th Street Park
- 2 Bushkill Street Park
- 3 Jackson Street Park
- 4 Raspberry Street Park
- 5 Centennial Park
- 6 Nesquehoning Street Park
- 7 Porter School Park

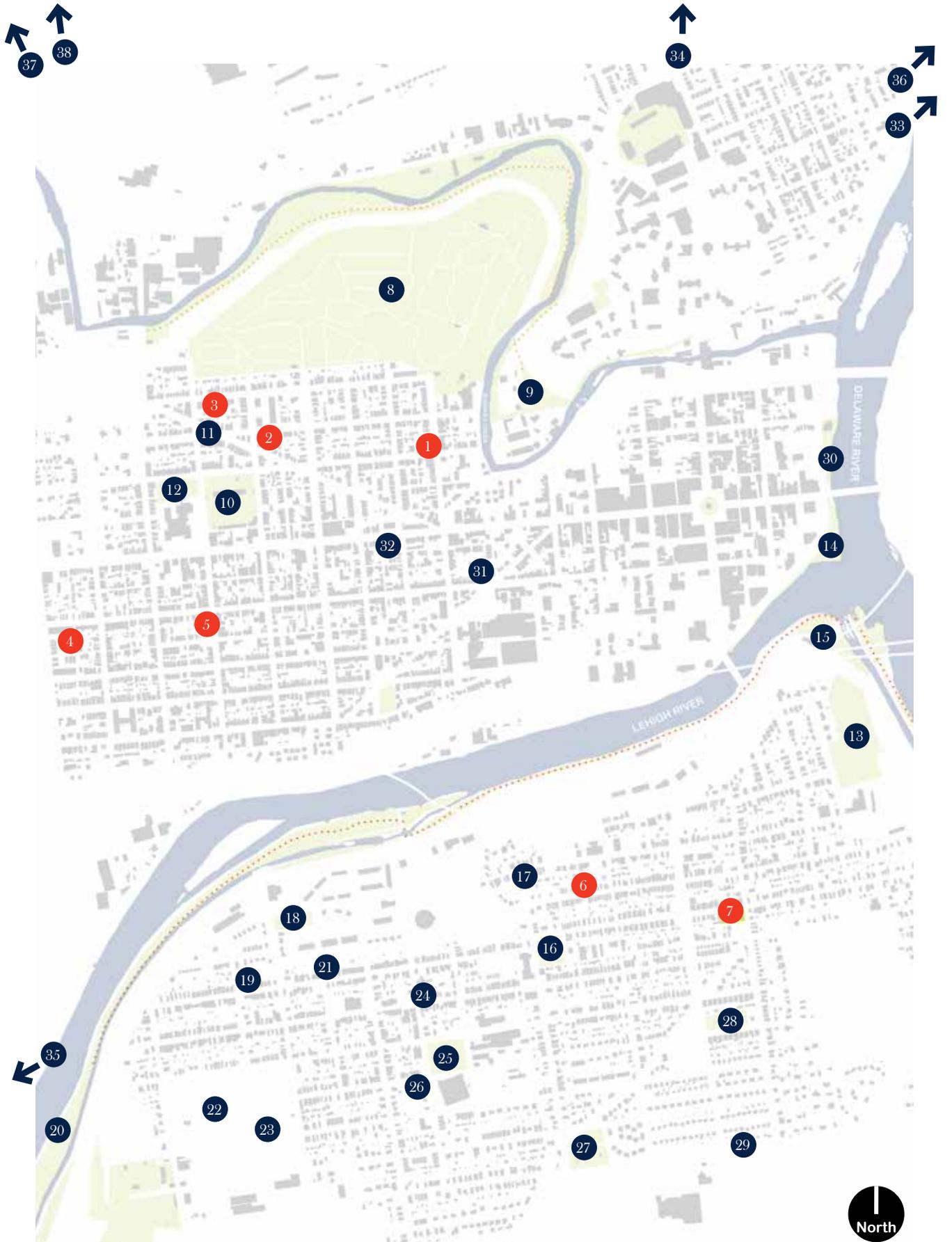
All Other Parks

- 8 Easton Cemetery
- 9 Butz Park
- 10 Vanderveer Park / Cottingham Stadium
- 11 Cannon Park
- 12 Paxinosa Elementary School
- 13 Lachenour Park

- 14 Scott Park
- 15 Delaware Canal State Park
- 16 Shull Field
- 17 Saint Joseph Street Park
- 18 Mauch Chunk Park
- 19 Condran Park
- 20 Hugh Moore Park
- 21 Valley Street Play Lot
- 22 Hay's Cemetery
- 23 South Easton Cemetery
- 24 McKeen Park
- 25 Pioneer Field
- 26 Cheston / Pioneer Field
- 27 St. Joseph Cemetery
- 28 Milton Street Park
- 29 St. Magdalen Cemetery
- 30 Riverside Park
- 31 Dutchtown Park
- 32 8th Street Park
- 33 Nevin Park
- 34 Sullivan Park
- 35 Riverview Park
- 36 Eddyside Pool
- 37 Hackett Park
- 38 Bob Rude Fields

● ● ● D&L Trail Lehigh Canal Towpath

● ● ● Karl Stirner Arts Trail





PUBLIC AMENITIES NETWORK

1 7th Street Park

2 Bushkill Street Park

3 Jackson Street Park

4 Raspberry Street Park

5 Centennial Park

6 Nesquehoning Street Park

7 Porter School Park

DOG PARKS

1. Karl Stirner Arts Trail
2. Hugh Moore Park
3. Hackett Park (off map)
4. Nevin Park (off map)

FOUNTAINS, SPLASH PADS & POOLS

1. Center Square
2. Heil Park Pool
3. Nevin Park (off map)

SOFTBALL / BASEBALL FIELDS

1. Heil Park
2. Shull Field
3. Riverview Park (off map)
4. Hackett Park (off map)
5. Bob Rute Fields (off map)

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

1. Raspberry St. Park
2. Centennial Park

3. Vanderveer Park

4. Paxinosa Elementary School

5. Dutchtown Park

6. Hugh Moore Park

7. Scott Park

8. Riverside Park

9. St. Joseph Street Park

10. Mauch Chunk Park

11. Condran Park

12. Valley St. Playlot

13. Heil Park

14. Cheston/Pioneer Park

15. Milton St. Park

16. Riverview Park (off map)

17. Hackett Park (off map)

18. Nevin Park (off map)

19. Sullivan Park (off map)

BASKETBALL/PAVED COURTS

1. Porter School Park
2. Nesquehoning Street Park
3. Raspberry Street Park
4. Vanderveer Park
5. Mauch Chunk Park
6. Cheston/Pioneer Park
7. Milton St. Park

FOOTBALL FIELDS

1. Heil Park
2. Cottingham Stadium
3. Fisher Stadium

FLEX / SOCCER FIELDS

1. Porter School Park
2. Heil Park
3. Pioneer Field
4. Riverview Park (off map)
5. Hackett Park (off map)

DISC GOLF

1. Hackett Park (off map)

TENNIS COURTS

1. Pioneer Field

COMFORT STATION / PUBLIC RESTROOMS

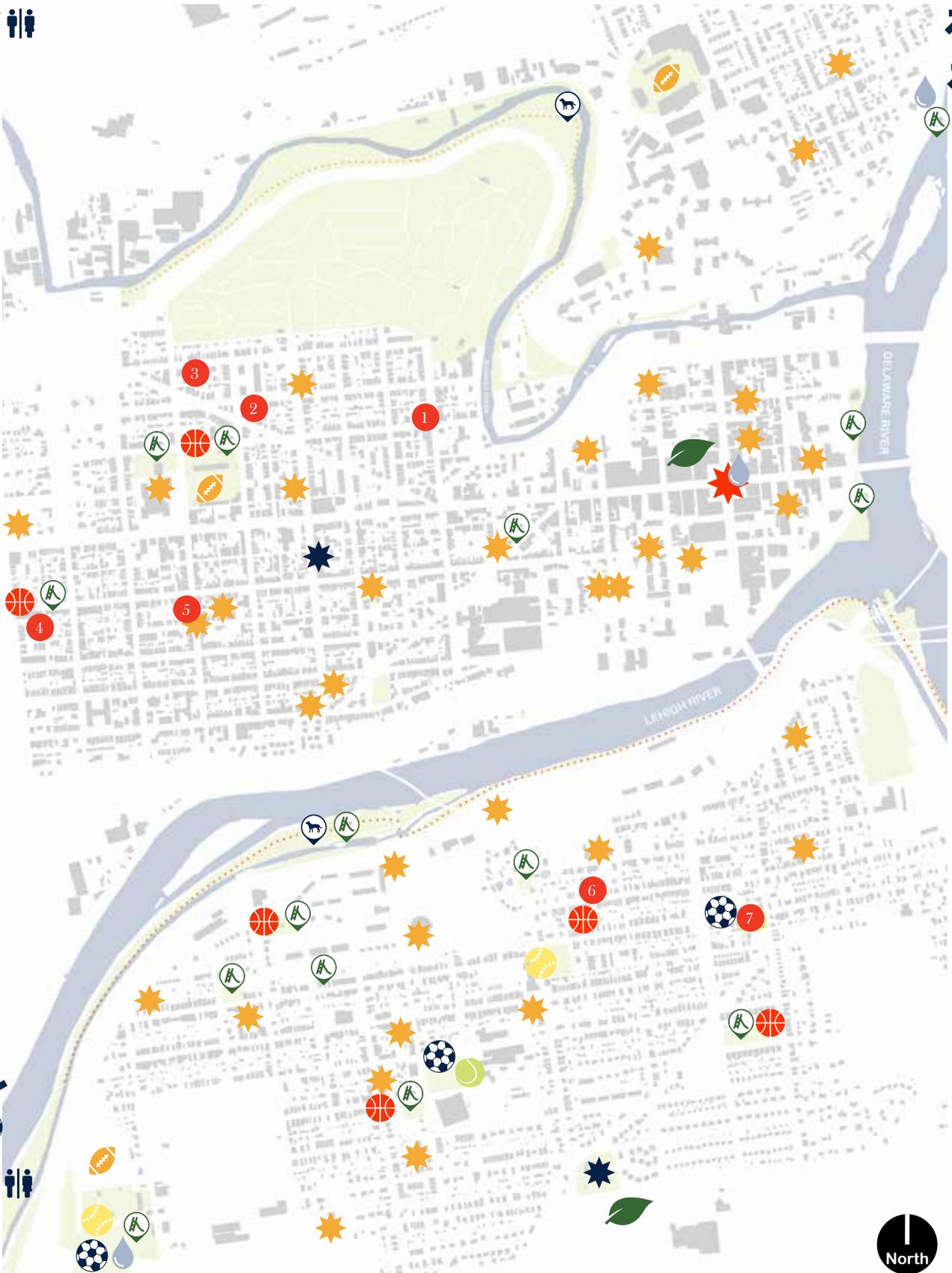
1. Hackett Park (off map)
2. Hugh Moore Park

CENTER SQUARE

COMPOST PICKUP LOCATION

COMMUNITY GARDEN / URBAN FARM

RELIGIOUS CENTER





OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

MAINTENANCE

Pocket parks require regular maintenance and operation support. It is recommended that in addition to regular mowing and trash pickup during non-winter months, the City also engage in seasonal maintenance such as:

- Annual assessment of equipment and deferred maintenance
- Weeding and clearing of any invasive species
- Annual inspection of play equipment
- Powerwashing of concrete paving; sealing of asphalt surfaces
- Regular maintenance of any broken furnishings
- Repair and replacement of existing lighting with low-energy LED lighting fixtures

VOLUNTEER DAYS

At many of the “Pop into the Park” community engagement sessions, neighbors offered to assist in park maintenance. This assistance could take the form of community clean-up days during spring and fall or on an as needed basis. Alternatively, a program could be established where citizens submit requests for materials / supplies to the city and complete the labor using resources supplied by the city.



SEASONAL PROGRAMS

At many of the Pocket Parks, neighbors requested more programming and activities. Community ideas for additional park programs include:

- Summer movie series, where an inflatable movie screen and food trucks travel to each of the different pocket parks over the course of the summer
- Traveling art-in-the-parks events / exhibits
- Concerts / performances
- Children’s activities (arts and crafts, game nights, etc.)
- Yoga / exercise classes
- Mini neighborhood festivals with BBQs, food trucks, and games
- Pumpkin carving at Halloween
- Pop-up art installations
- Winter ice rink
- Holiday light exhibits

The planning team recommends exploring opportunities to work with other organizations and existing Parks programs, bringing activity to neighborhood parks. These activities should be focused on delivering services to park zones most in need, particularly those with a high density of children or seniors.

ACCESS / SAFETY

At many of the parks, safety was a prominent concern. Many residents stated that the parks had sometimes in the past harbored non-compliant activities such as alcohol and drug use. More recently, parks have been emptied of their amenities, prohibiting all activity – good or bad. It is imperative that improvements or new design of Pocket Parks address safety concerns while also providing public civic amenities.

All materials and furnishings should be high-quality, durable materials that are difficult to deface. Lighting and sight lines should be integrated to allow views into the park from the street and surrounding areas, and from the park outward into the neighborhood. Furnishings and play equipment should be chosen to avoid the creation of hiding places. If appropriate, perimeter fencing and gates could be integrated to allow parks to be closed after dusk.

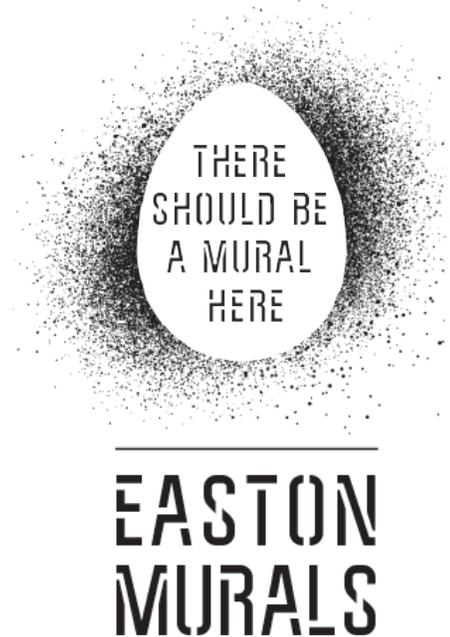


PARK SIGNAGE

In many instances, the people of Easton did not know that these parks were public spaces for their use. The design team recommends a City-wide park signage/wayfinding study be completed to assist in the design of the signage that clearly marks these spaces as public parks. These signs should integrate bold graphics with oversized text, and potentially bold use of spot color that is unique to each pocket park or park typology. These could be integrated within benches and walls on site, or could function as free-standing art elements. Bold signage creates a photo opportunity and also shows that these spaces are unique, important, and cared for, which in turn encourages good behavior within the parks. At many of the Pocket Parks there are multiple, large signs describing the park rules. It is suggested that these be consolidated and designed to blend in with the aesthetics of identifying park signage.

PARK LIGHTING

To support safety and discourage prohibited behaviors, existing light fixtures should be repaired or replaced, with sufficient fixtures added to provide illumination within the parks.



MURALS

In many of the pocket parks there are opportunities for public art and murals. At these locations, it is suggested that the City partner with Easton Murals, a local organization that works to bring public art to the city's blank walls.

02

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The parks included in the Easton Pocket Parks Vision Plan are small in scale, with most tucked between neighboring residential lots. This scale necessitated an in-depth community engagement process as a crucial step in determining the future of these tiny public spaces, since changes will be immediately palpable within each neighborhood.

METHODOLOGY

With the rise of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, traditional engagement strategies were re-evaluated by Omnes and the city. These exercises were pivoted to formats that followed social distancing protocol while still allowing for interaction with members of the community.

This community-driven plan centers Eastonians' voices through a diversity of events, social media efforts, polls, and activities that solicited input from a diverse range of constituents. These opportunities are outlined on the following pages.

PINWHEELS IN THE PARKS

For one week during the month of August 2020, the Omnes team installed an array of 1,500 colorful pinwheels within the seven pocket parks. The installation announced the kickoff of the community engagement portion of the project and provided temporary activation through ephemeral pops of color. Community members were encouraged to visit each of the parks to collect a bouquet of playful pinwheels, one color for each of the seven parks.

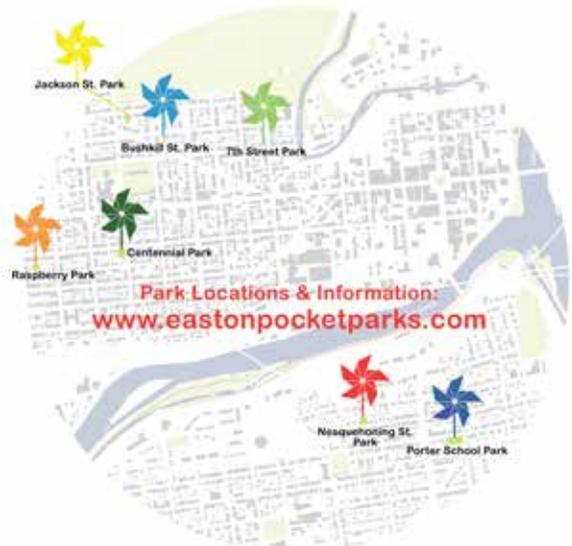
These bright lawn ornaments evoke a sense of nostalgia for many, inviting visitors to see the pocket parks in a new way while also referencing how these small, hyper-local public spaces often serve as an extension of neighborhood residents' own backyards. The concept of the *Pinwheels in the Park* was conceived during quarantine as a way to provide cheerful and interactive art that would breathe life into the existing park spaces and create a sense of hope and delight for all to enjoy – all while adhering to appropriate COVID-19-era practices.



Courtesy of Ed Eckstein



Courtesy of Elizabeth Crommie





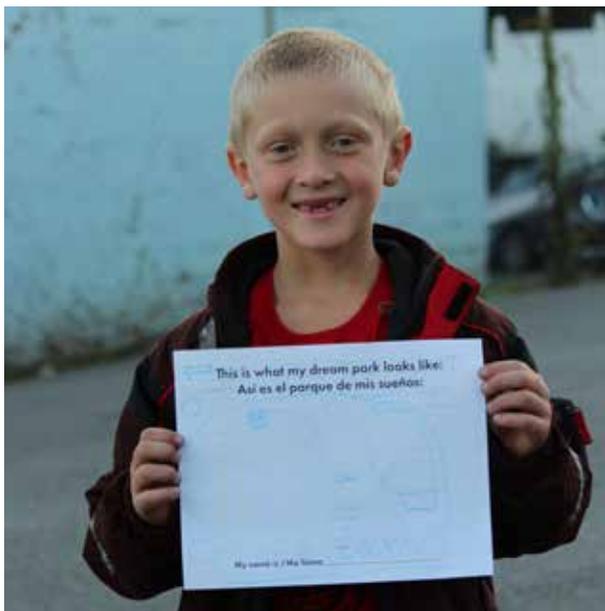
PROJECT WEBSITE

The website <https://eastonpocketparks.com/> was built by Omnes as a means to share information and gather community feedback. Separate tabs provided information about the overall project and project partners; information about each of the parks; activities and contests to get involved; inspiration ideas; an option to post online comments or to e-mail comments to the project team; and links to the online Easton Pocket Parks Survey.



PARK SIGNAGE

Installed just before the *Pinwheels in the Parks*, signage specific to each of the parks was designed to inform visitors of the master planning process and ways to get involved. Custom QR codes directed visitors to eastonpocketparks.com and asked them to take part in the online survey to share their own thoughts and ideas. All information was displayed in both Spanish and English to encourage participation from a wide range of residents.

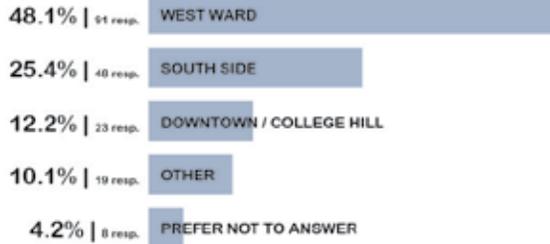


ACTIVITIES AND CONTESTS

A scavenger hunt and drawing contest ("Draw Your Dream Park!") were developed as part of the community engagement process to get children involved and encourage residents to get out and explore their local parks. To encourage participation, a gift card to local Faouzi's Talk of the Town Ice Cream was offered as a prize for two winning entries. Activities and contests were promoted through the project website, social media, at the "Pop into the Park" sessions, and at various YMCA park programs and Easton Area Community Center events.

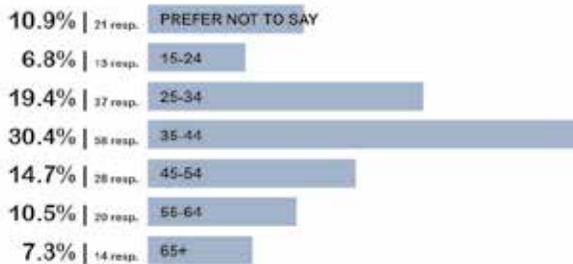
ONLINE SURVEY RESPONSES

WHERE DO YOU LIVE?



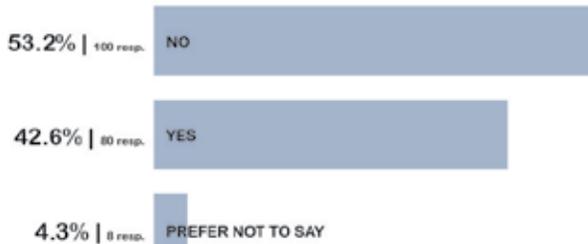
Source: Online Survey

WHAT IS YOUR AGE?



Source: Online Survey

DO YOU HAVE CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 18 LIVING WITH YOU?



Source: Online Survey

HAS THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AFFECTED HOW MUCH YOU USE PUBLIC PARKS?



Source: Online Survey

ONLINE SURVEY

A critical component of the engagement process was the bilingual online survey that invited residents to provide feedback. Survey respondents were asked whether they wanted to focus specifically on parks located in the West Ward or the South Side, or if they would like to respond to questions for *all* of the parks.

Both multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank questions were used, and residents were given the option to vote whether each park should remain a public park or to redefine the park with a different use.

The overwhelming majority of Eastonians voiced that they want these parks to remain as parks – in many cases even if they didn't know of this park prior to the survey. Even among those who indicated that a park should be converted to a new use ultimately indicated in fill-in-the-blank answers that they would want the park to remain publicly accessible open space of some kind.

Additional open-ended questions allowed survey respondents to provide feedback that was not limited to the seven parks included in the vision plan, but rather extended to Easton as a whole. To discover trends within the open-ended response data, the wealth of information obtained from this exercise was distilled into 14 different categories of concern based on the content of the response. The analysis of this data is found on the following pages.

A comprehensive summary of all commentary obtained from the survey questions, online website comments, e-mails, and feedback from the "Pop into the Park" conversations is provided to the City of Easton in a separate appendix.

“It would be cool to have a more integrated South Side, with more to offer so people wanted to visit South Side as much as downtown. I would love a German-style beer garden in South Side. Also on Berwick a culture/business hub would be cool. Lastly, a public transit route to downtown would be another super cool idea. The bridge to Hughmore Bark Park being fixed from South Side would also be a game changer.”

“Have community centers/orgs like the Y and others have programs in the parks for kids, seniors, etc. Not everyone has access to transportation and it would mean more people would get services! I also wish Easton had volunteer/seasonal jobs to help with maintenance, etc.”

***IF YOU COULD MAKE ANYTHING HAPPEN IN EASTON, WHAT WOULD IT BE?**



“More art displayed throughout neighborhoods.”

“More activities for kids. Having movie nights in the local parks, ice cream socials, small picnics, game nights, arts & crafts. Kids have nothing to do and there is great parks that could be put to use!”

“More community gardens with native flowers instead of grassy areas – better looking, give people a sense of pride, and easier to maintain than grass. Also dog friendly park areas for neighbors without small children. What ever happened to skate parks? They give teens something to do instead of hanging around the parking garages. Kids loved the ramps on South Side.”

“Consistent clean up of garbage, plants and trees in abundance – less concrete more green especially streetside, lots of public art with opportunities for community to make art together, splash pads for summer..”

“Make the spaces community places, not just for children but also a place for adults. This could include play ground space but also seating areas or even garden space. The pandemic has changed a lot of things in reference to accessibility. If the spaces were for all community members, community members might be feeling more hopeful, and more community oriented.”

“Dog parks with proper fencing and big/small dog separations would be awesome! We have a lot of communities here with pets but no yards... a place to take them to run would be amazing.”

“The parks are under used, underutilized, and lighting is poor. Need to make them more welcoming, more attractive and more KNOWN to the community.”

***IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT TO TELL US ABOUT YOUR PARKS AND COMMUNITY?**



“Integrate more murals with the Easton Mural project so... neighborhoods they feel like someone cares for them... Also have more park events so people have stuff to do on the weekends, especially teenagers...”

“We need to keep them safe well lit and clean.”

“Not every park needs playground equipment, some need just grass. Babies learn to walk, handicap and elderly can sit and enjoy space. ... Parks can be for people who aren’t active.”

“I love them and don’t want buildings on them. All the suggestion options in the survey are great. Making them hyper-relevant to their respective blocks and prettifying them is a great move and preserves the personality of our city.”

“Please consider **HANDBALL COURTS.**”



October 5 - October 15, 2020

Pop Into the Parks!

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS TO SHAPE THE FUTURE OF EASTON'S NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Make your voice heard!

Can't make it to a Pop Into the Parks Discussion? Take the survey:
www.eastonpocketparks.com



JOIN A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION TO SHAPE THE FUTURE OF YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD PARK!

The City of Easton is developing a new vision plan for seven underutilized “Pocket Parks” in West Ward and South Side, and residents are invited to “pop into the parks” for socially distanced conversation sessions with the design team between October 5th and 15th.

Let us know what you want to see in your neighborhood park. With your help, we’ll re-imagine Easton’s underutilized spaces and develop a plan for future activity and investment together.



Pop Into the Parks

COMMUNITY CONVERSATION SCHEDULE

- 1 **Bushkill Street Park** (1030 Bushkill Street)
Monday 10/5, 5:30-6:30pm
- 2 **Jackson Street Park** (1142 Jackson Street)
Tuesday 10/6, 5:30-6:30pm
- 3 **Centennial Park** (1216 Ferry Street)
Wednesday 10/7, 5:30-6:30pm
- 4 **Raspberry Park** (1425 Spruce Street)
Thursday 10/8, 5:30-6:30pm
- 5 **Nesquehoning St. Park** (325 W. Nesquehoning St.)
Tuesday 10/13, 5:30-6:30pm
- 6 **Porter School Park** (117 Wilkes Barre Street)
Wednesday 10/14, 5:30-6:30pm
- 7 **7th Street Park** (102 North 7th Street)
Thursday 10/15, 5:30-6:30pm

All who attend Pop Into the Parks discussions will be asked to socially distance and wear masks.

Can't make it to a Pop Into the Parks discussion?
Email hello@eastonpocketparks.com or take the online survey:

www.eastonpocketparks.com

POP INTO THE PARK SESSIONS

The “Pop into the Park” sessions were designed to take the place of a traditional community meeting. Over the course of seven days, the design team visited each park for an hourlong session where neighbors could “drop in” and have candid conversations about the parks. These informal sessions provided extremely valuable feedback on how neighbors view the parks and wish to utilize them.

The conversations ranged across all topics, but most included discussions around how the parks are currently used, issues with safety/maintenance, site-specific history, other successful local parks, and desired programming/community needs.

To advertise the event, the design team distributed flyers within a two-block radius of each park a few days

before the session was to take place. The events were also advertised in the monthly West Ward Community Newsletter and via the social media accounts of the City of Easton, West Ward Community Initiative and Omnes.

A summary of the feedback received from the park sessions is included in this Vision Plan within the chapters for each park.

03

7TH STREET PARK



PARK OVERVIEW

7th Street park is located on 7th Street between Spring Garden and Bushkill Streets. The lot-sized park is mostly lawn with a few large shade trees. A narrow asphalt path leads up the steep front slope and ends at a flat lawn area towards the back of the park. 7th Street Park is one of the smallest pocket parks included in the visioning process at only 3,890 sf. Despite the park's small scale, the community surrounding 7th Street Park is passionate about the space, and was collectively adamant that this park remain flexible open space.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

This park has a relaxed feel and is located in a relatively quiet neighborhood. Access to the park is limited to a narrow asphalt path traversing the steep slope along 7th Street that does not meet ADA standards. Metal remnants from previous BBQ pits and benches remain partially buried within the lawn and create hazards for children running and playing. Immediately adjacent houses have limited screening, making some users feel uncomfortable within the space. The residents within the neighboring houses say that the park had a significant role in their decision to purchase their own properties, and they enjoy the proximity. Traffic along 7th Street often drives past faster than the posted speed limit, and the steep slope means children playing in the park need to pay close attention that sports balls do not roll out into traffic.



“My kids use this almost daily, as do [others in the neighborhood.] We are a fairly tight-knit community around here. Everyone I have spoken to about this would like the park to mostly remain an open space. It would be great to remove the old lights, old signs, electric service pole and sawn off BBQ stands that stick 2” out of the ground – there are about 16 in total. Also remove the tree stump. I believe the trees are black walnut and have been severely attacked by lantern fly this year – we did our best to protect them with duct tape. We are happy to help maintain this park and have offered to do so in the past.”

“Gardens and landscaping.”

“A fence at the bottom of the slope would be useful to keep balls, kids, etc. from rolling out into the street.”

POP INTO THE PARKS

“We would love a swing set!”

“Something that won’t be broken easily.”

“Modern art and playable structures!”

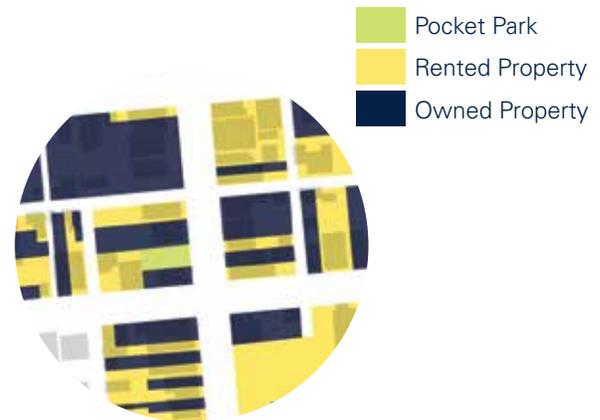
“The neighbors would definitely adopt this park. If they could set something up with the city where they could submit receipts for the cost of materials (mulch etc.) they would spend the time to fix it up. Mulching, weeding etc.”

“Keep it open and flexible for kids and neighbors to use. Kids often use the park to throw balls, and neighbors with young kids set up a slip-n-slide on hot days in the summer.”

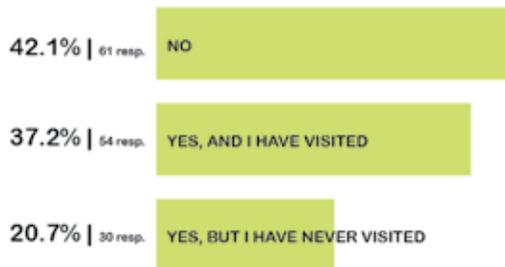
“Please, PLEASE add a four-way stop sign at the corner of 7th and Spring Garden!”

COMMUNITY INPUT

The results of the Easton Pocket Parks online survey show that while the slight majority of Eastonians know that 7th Street Park is a park, only 37.2% have actually visited, and the overwhelming majority of survey respondents would like the park to remain a park. When asked what features they would like to see improved, residents primarily asked for better park maintenance and for 7th Street Park to remain green, open, and flexible. They would also like to see more diverse plantings, some seating, and integration of public art.



DID YOU KNOW THAT 7TH STREET PARK IS A PUBLIC PARK?



Source: Online Survey

SHOULD 7TH STREET PARK REMAIN A PUBLIC PARK?



Source: Online Survey

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE AT 7TH STREET PARK?



*OTHER

1. "Easton has a lot of little free libraries, it would be great to see one here."
2. "Leave as is. The kids in the neighborhood enjoy having an open field to play in."

Source: Online Survey

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK BY CATEGORY OF CONCERN



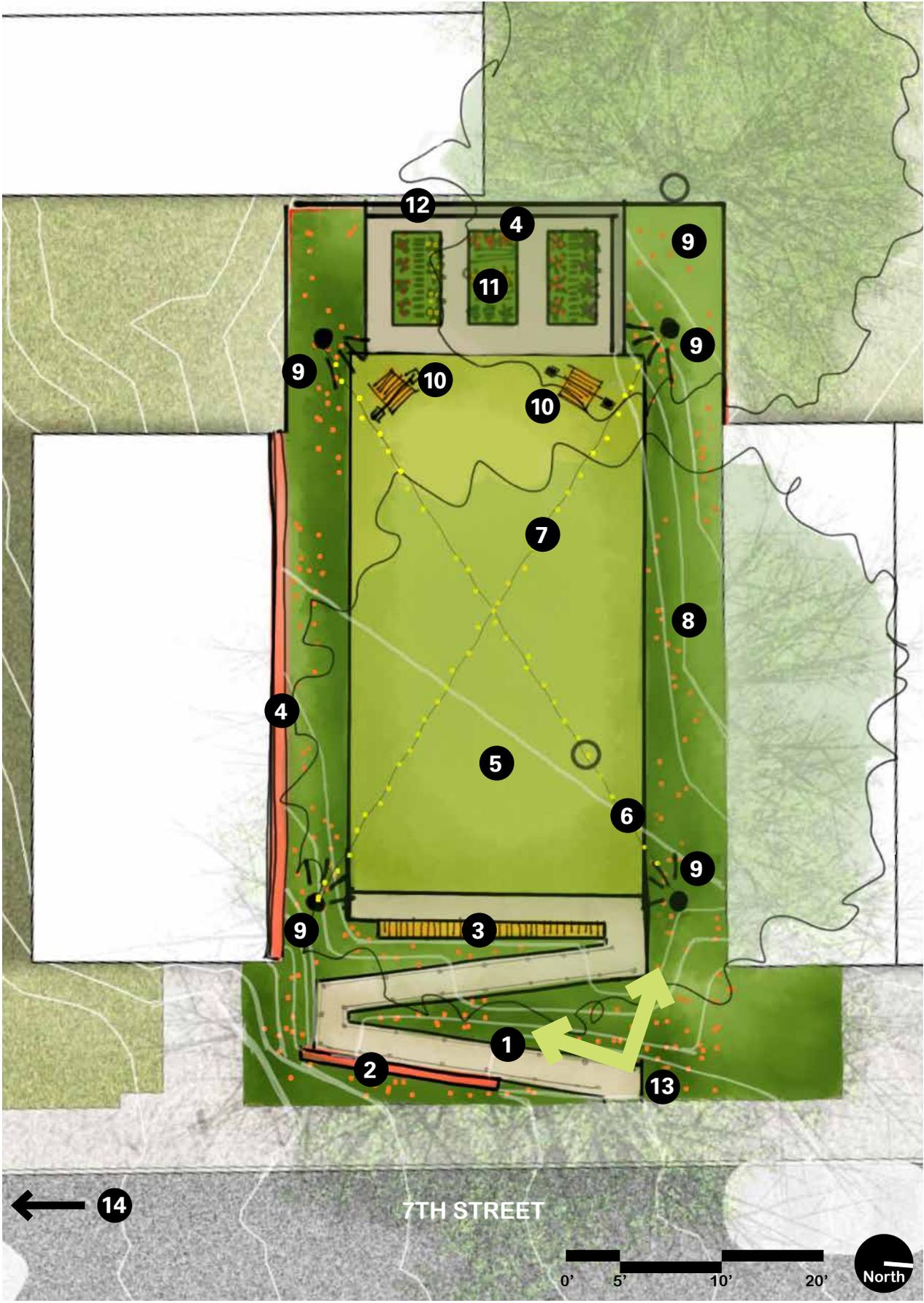
Sources: 26 Online Survey Comments, 3 Website Comments, 36 "Pop Into the Parks" Comments



RECOMMENDATIONS

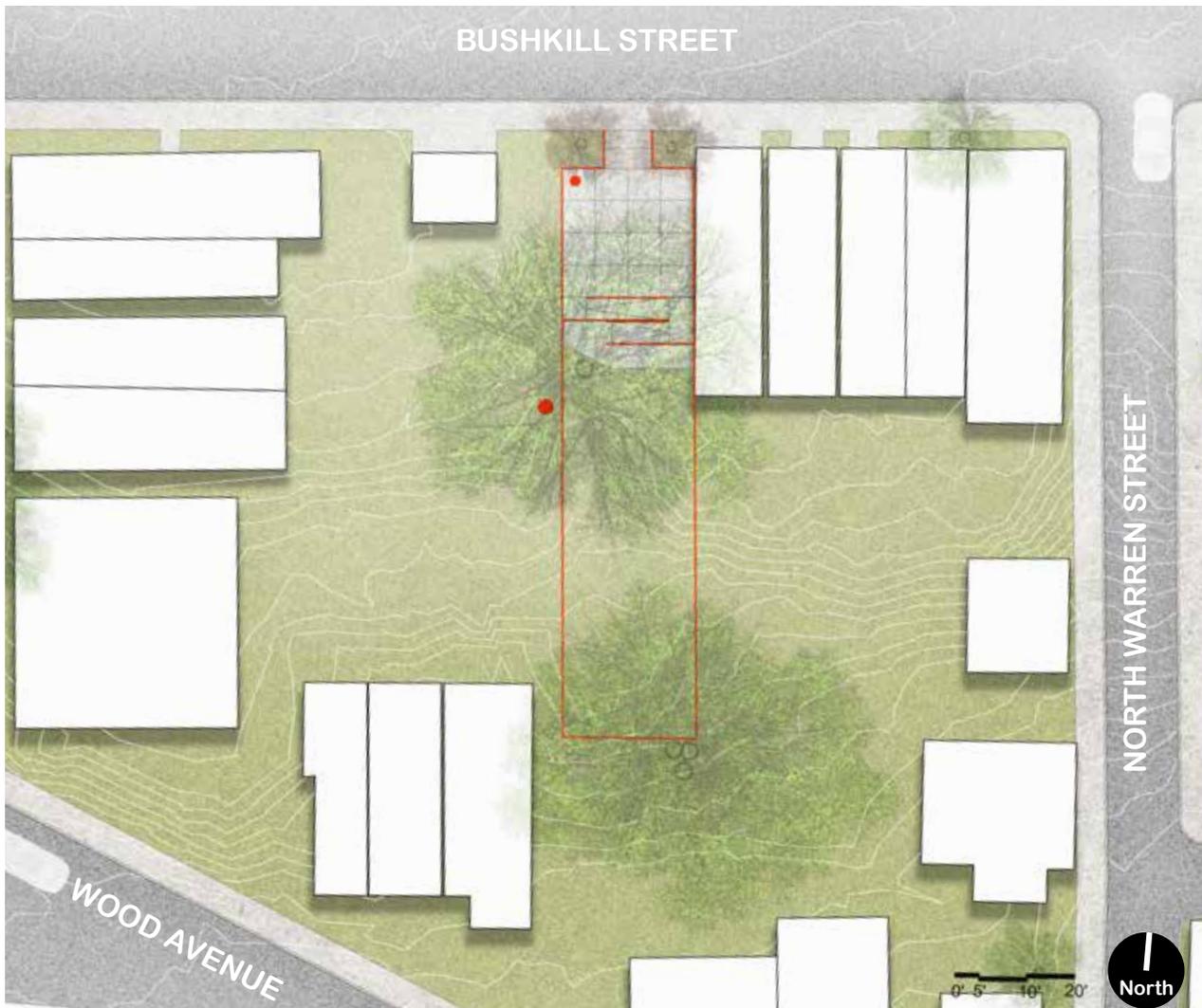
The proposed plan for 7th Street Park improves access by incorporating a switchback ramp with handrails off of 7th Street. A small retaining wall with colorful, branded park signage welcomes visitors to the space. At the top of the slope a seatwall acts as a barrier to prevent sports balls from rolling into the street below, and also provides a space for parents to supervise children's play. A large open lawn fills the center of the park where slight regrading provides a flat space for flexible play. At the back edge of the lawn are two swing benches and community garden beds. Native grasses and wildflowers frame the lawn and create an impactful but easy to maintain border. A new, 6' tall, solid wood fence provides screening along the back portion of the park. The brick wall of the house on the south side of the park and the new wood fence provide potential opportunities for murals to help the park feel more like a public space. Light poles at the corners of the park provide functional lighting and support playful string lights overhead.

- 1** 1:12 ADA ACCESS RAMP WITH HANDRAILS
- 2** RETAINING WALL WITH BRANDED PARK SIGNAGE
- 3** SEATWALL WITH WOOD SLATS
- 4** POTENTIAL MURAL LOCATION
- 5** FLEXIBLE LAWN; RE-GRADE AND REMOVE METAL REMNANTS
- 6** NEW PARK LIGHTING
- 7** STRING LIGHTS
- 8** LOW MAINTENANCE PLANTED BORDER GARDEN, MAINTAINED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH NEIGHBORS
- 9** EXISTING TREE
- 10** SWING BENCHES
- 11** COMMUNITY GARDEN BEDS
- 12** NEW 6' SOLID WOOD FENCING AT PARK PERIMETER
- 13** LITTLE FREE LIBRARY
- 14** 4-WAY STOP SIGN AT THE CORNER OF 7TH AND SPRING GARDEN



04

BUSHKILL STREET PARK



PARK OVERVIEW

Bushkill Street Park is located between North 11th Street and North Warren Street, and is the smallest of the seven pocket parks included in the plan. Two fruiting trees flank a concrete walkway that leads to a small plaza. At the far edge of the plaza, a switchback ramp takes visitors down to the edge of the sloped lawn that comprises a majority of the park. A large tree at the edge of the plaza provides shade for the northern half of the park.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Bushkill Street Park has a long and narrow configuration that creates some limitations for the type of programming that can be accommodated. The fruiting trees at the entry attract unwelcome wasps to the park. Neighbors mentioned that, until a few years ago, play equipment was located in the lawn area and a large planter with flowers was located between the paved plaza and the ramp; they have since been removed. The park is located in a quiet area and offers views of the sunset and the mountains beyond. During the community engagement session, neighbors mentioned a desire for more park programming, play equipment, seating, outdoor games, and community gardens or productive plantings.



“Spiral slide – play areas!”

“Could be a community donation center / lending library, for books, community pantry, clothes, tools, etc. Would need to make sure it did not turn into a community dumping spot though.”

“Outdoor movie nights with food trucks and an inflatable movie screen!”

“Needs picnic tables, bistro tables, Adirondack chairs. Some sort of seating where there is also a spot to put your drink while you are sitting.”

POP INTO THE PARKS

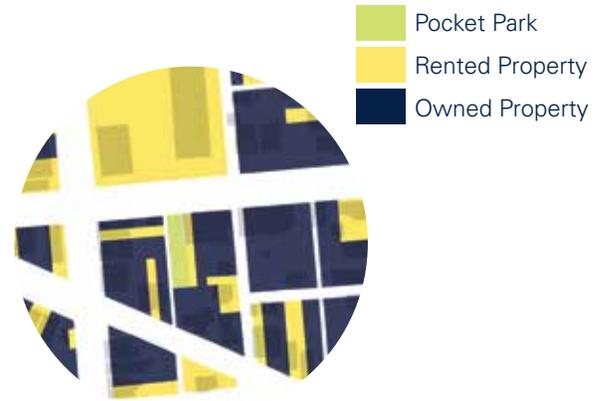
“Covered seating, pavilion, somewhere for parents to sit.”

“Community garden or composting station.”

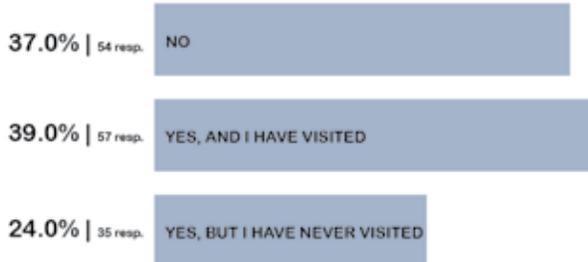
“Private nook, escape, reading, drawing, writing, lunch break, down time, flowers, colorful perimeter, recharge the senses, perennial garden beds for all seasons, landscape to flatten grassy area – entire stretch or flatten a portion with a visible, soft glowing step...”

COMMUNITY INPUT

The primary component that residents would like to see at Bushkill Street Park is the inclusion of more amenities, specifically tables and chairs. A close second is the inclusion of plantings such as community garden beds. Additionally, residents would like to see better lighting and the inclusion of play equipment or playable structures. During the “Pop into the Park” session, residents were enthusiastic about the idea of a play garden and as well as the potential for more programming such as community move nights with food trucks and an inflatable movie screen.

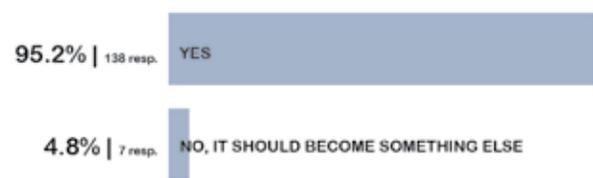


DID YOU KNOW THAT BUSHKILL STREET PARK IS A PUBLIC PARK?



Source: Online Survey

SHOULD BUSHKILL STREET PARK REMAIN A PUBLIC PARK?



Source: Online Survey

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE AT BUSHKILL STREET PARK?



*OTHER
 1. "Dog park."
 2. "Water fountain / bottle refill station."

Source: Online Survey

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK BY CATEGORY OF CONCERN



Sources: 5, Online Survey Comments, 1 Website Comment, 1 Email, 20 "Pop Into the Park" Comments

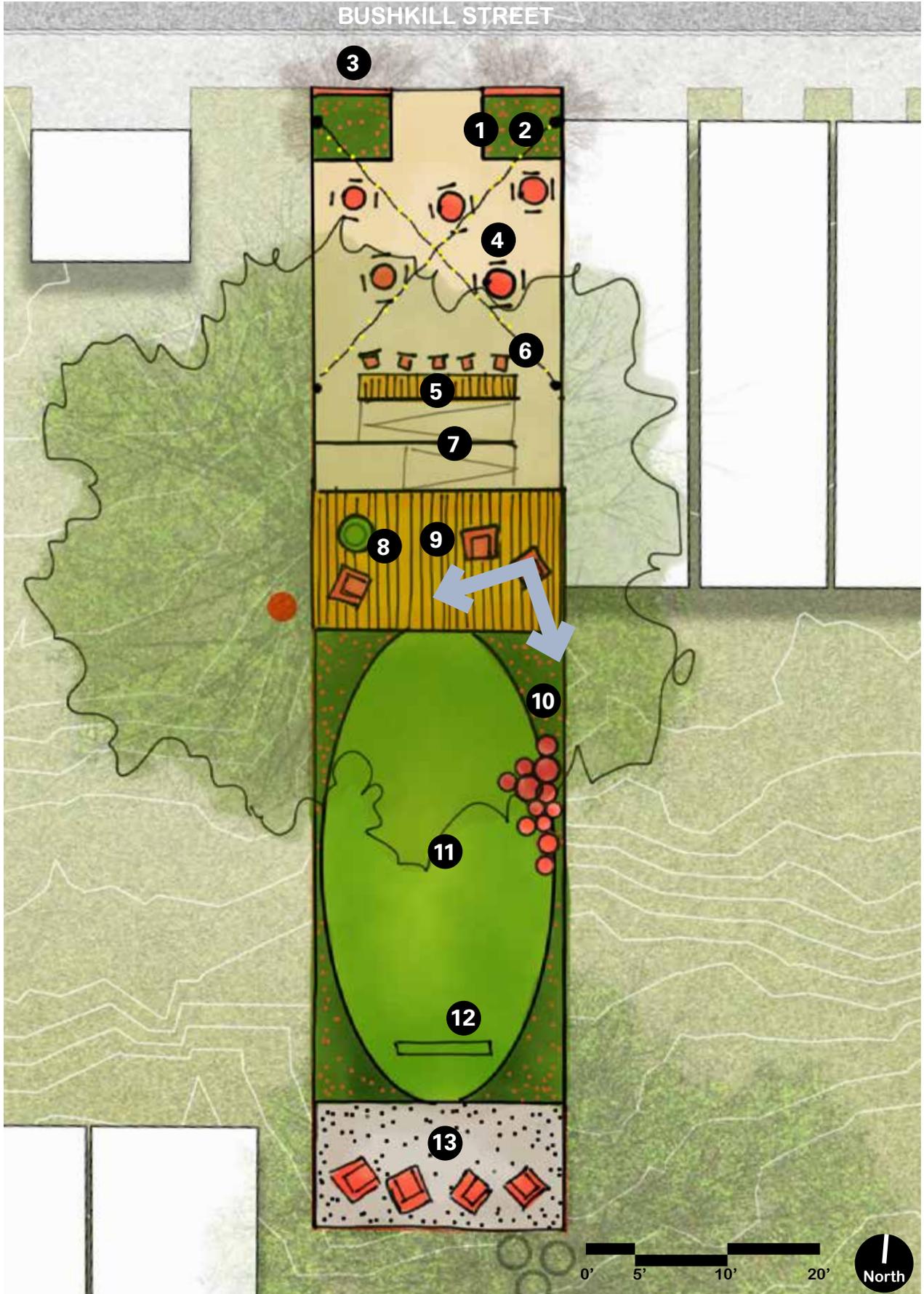


RECOMMENDATIONS

At Bushkill Street Park, design recommendations include removing the existing fencing and fruit trees and replacing them with native plantings and branded park signage. Just inside the entry, the existing concrete plaza is activated with colorful loose tables and chairs and string lights. At the top of the existing ramp, a bar-height table with loose chairs provides additional seating opportunities with views into the southern portion of the park. The existing ADA ramp remains, with a fresh coat of paint on the handrails. At the base of the ramp, a decking area is added with lounge seating beneath the shade of the existing honeylocust tree. Below the decking, an open lawn creates a flexible space conducive for movie nights and other activities. The lawn is surrounded with enhanced plantings of native grasses and wildflowers, with opportunities for the inclusion of natural play. A new wood fence clearly defines the park's borders. At the far south side of the lawn, additional lounge seating is provided atop a small stonefines plaza.

- 1 REMOVE EXISTING FENCE
- 2 REMOVE EXISTING FRUIT TREES AT ENTRY
- 3 BRANDED PARK SIGNAGE
- 4 EXISTING PAVED PLAZA WITH MOVABLE TABLES AND CHAIRS
- 5 BAR COUNTER WITH CHAIRS (OPPORTUNITY FOR WIFI ACCESS)
- 6 STRING LIGHTS
- 7 EXISTING ADA ACCESS RAMP WITH PAINTED HANDRAILS
- 8 EXISTING TREE
- 9 ADA ACCESSIBLE DECK WITH LOUNGE SEATING
- 10 PLANTED PERIMETER WITH EDIBLE SPECIES AND POSSIBLE INCORPORATION OF STUMP PILES FOR PLAY
- 11 OPEN LAWN
- 12 LOCATION FOR INFLATABLE MOVIE SCREEN
- 13 STONEFINES LOUNGE SEATING AREA

BUSHKILL STREET



05

JACKSON STREET PARK



PARK OVERVIEW

Jackson Street Park is located between North Elder Street and North 12th Street. The long and linear park is approximately the size of two tennis courts. The park contains multiple mature shade trees with low branches that create dense shade and also block views through the park. The park has two entries – the main entry follows a steep asphalt path at Jackson Street and the second is a flatter approach off of Vine Street. The secondary entry is slightly hidden, and neighbors mentioned issues with trash piling up at the entry. A bright yellow pavilion on a small concrete pad is located about halfway through the park.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Because of the dense shade, the lawn areas appear to be struggling, and there is a high density of weeds. The low hanging branches overhead also block views into the park and make it a dark and hidden spot that sometimes enables prohibited behaviors during the evening hours. Neighbors warned against the inclusion of a composting station as the park has a significant population of mischievous squirrels!



“It would be neat to add outdoor games like bocce, corn-hole, etc.”

“Playground for kids to mingle and interact with each other – they do not have many ways to interact with the other neighborhood kids.”

“A ninja warrior style obstacle course thru out the park may be a wow. made for active, young, grade-school-age kids... Also, most families I saw during the pinwheel event were young toddlers walking thru the pin wheels – big photo op! That might be an age group to consider needing activities – for the moms!”

“Bring back a play area, but keep it open.”

“More programs / activities in the park – maybe partner with already existing groups in the city, but bring them to this park.”

POP INTO THE PARKS

“Trim up the tree branches for better visibility through the park.”

“Add more lighting!”

“Make a reason for people to congregate.”

“Add shrubs to the entryway at the back alley to make it feel more like an important entry and so people are less likely to dump their trash there.”

“No composting station – the squirrels are very bad and get into everything. It would need to be very squirrel proof.”

COMMUNITY INPUT

Community input at Jackson Street Park indicates a need for increased visibility through the park – both by pruning / removing some of the trees and incorporating lighting. These improvements will increase a sense of safety and discourage prohibited activities within the park. The immediately surrounding area is home to many young children, and there is a strong desire for play equipment to allow neighborhood kids to interact with each other and get outdoor exercise. Additionally, the neighbors would like to see more plantings and park programs / activities that provide a reason for people to congregate in and use the park.

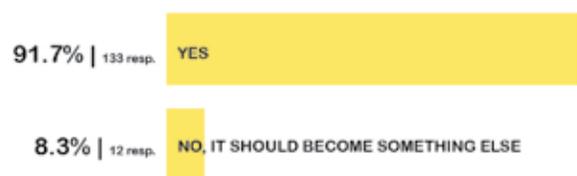


DID YOU KNOW THAT JACKSON STREET PARK IS A PUBLIC PARK?



Source: Online Survey

SHOULD JACKSON STREET PARK REMAIN A PUBLIC PARK?



Source: Online Survey

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE AT JACKSON STREET PARK?



*OTHER

1. "A small pavilion where they can hold little informal classes teaching about the community garden, have plaques that educate on the importance of vegetables and fruits fun facts for the kids."

2. "Sports, let me handball"

3. "Wooden bridge walk between trees"

Source: Online Survey

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK BY CATEGORY OF CONCERN



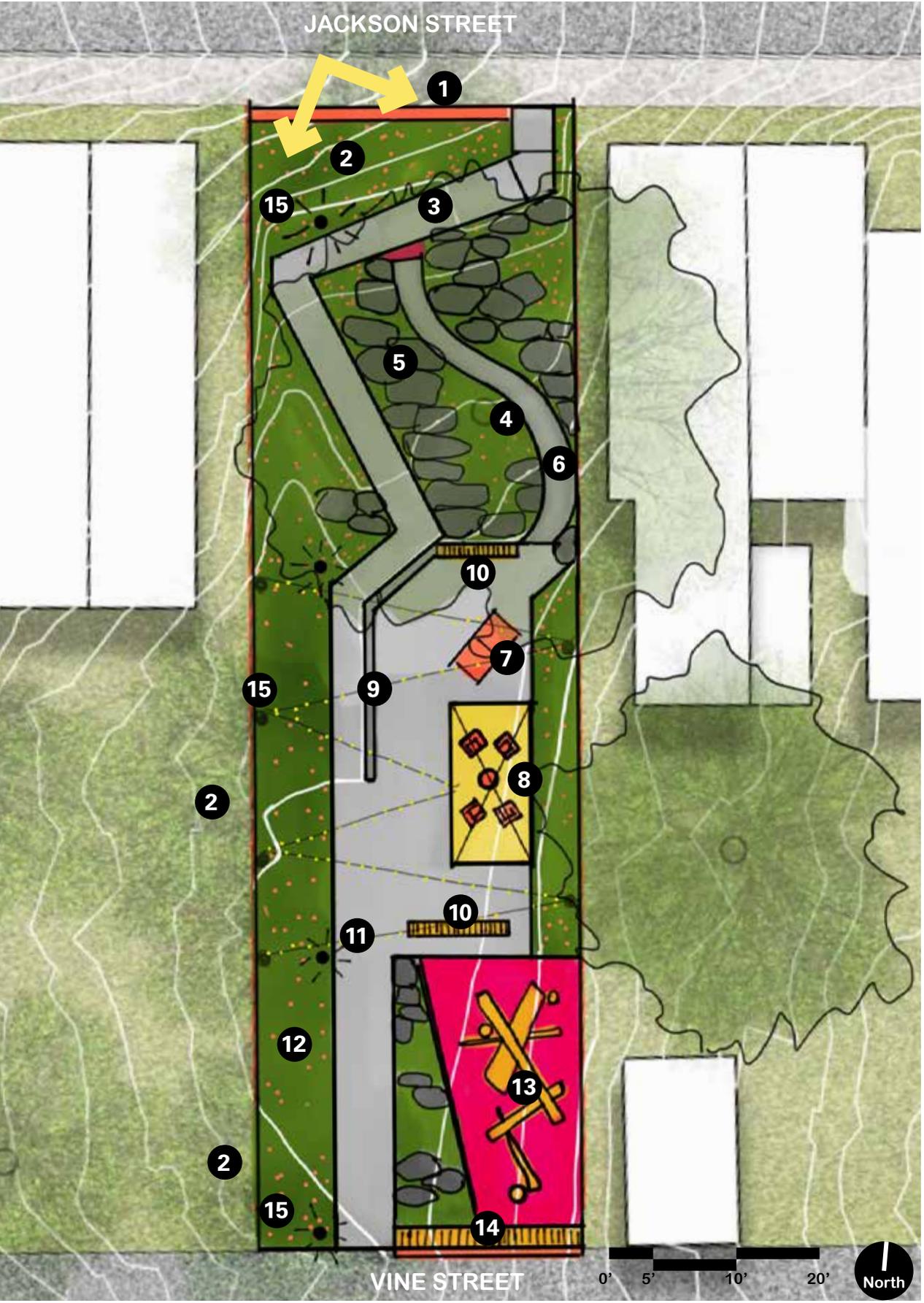
Sources: 12 Online Survey Comments, 1 Website Comment, 1 Email, 37 "Pop Into the Parks" Comments



RECOMMENDATIONS

Because of the dense shade and deteriorating condition of many of the trees at Jackson Street Park, recommendations include removing the existing trees in the park (with the exception one linden tree at the front of the park). Primary park signage is shown at the Jackson Street entry and smaller signage incorporated into a seatwall is shown along Vine Street. An ADA-compliant sloped walk, a metal slide, and boulders for children to climb and play are integrated into the north slope of the site. At the top of the slope a low, retaining / seatwall forms the edge of a leveled-out plaza space with outdoor ping pong. Beyond is the existing and freshly painted pavilion with lounge seating and lighting. Overhead string lights activate the space during the evening hours to extend activities to dusk. The furthest south portion of the park consists of planted areas with boulders and log-jam style play equipment built with salvaged logs from the removed trees at the park.

- 1 ENTRY SIGN
- 2 REMOVE HAZARDOUS TREES
- 3 5% ADA ACCESSIBLE ACCESS PATH
- 4 EXISTING TREE TO REMAIN
- 5 BOULDER FIELD FOR CLIMBING
- 6 METAL SLIDE WITHIN BOULDER FIELD
- 7 PING PONG TABLE
- 8 LOUNGE SEATING AT EXISTING PAVILION; LIGHT AND RE-PAINT PAVILION
- 9 RETAINING WALL
- 10 BENCH
- 11 STRING LIGHTS
- 12 PLANTED BORDER
- 13 LOG JAM CLIMBING STRUCTURE FORMED FROM DEMOLISHED TREE ON SITE
- 14 BENCH WITH SECONDARY PARK SIGNAGE AND LIGHTING
- 15 NEW LIGHT POLES



06

CENTENNIAL PARK

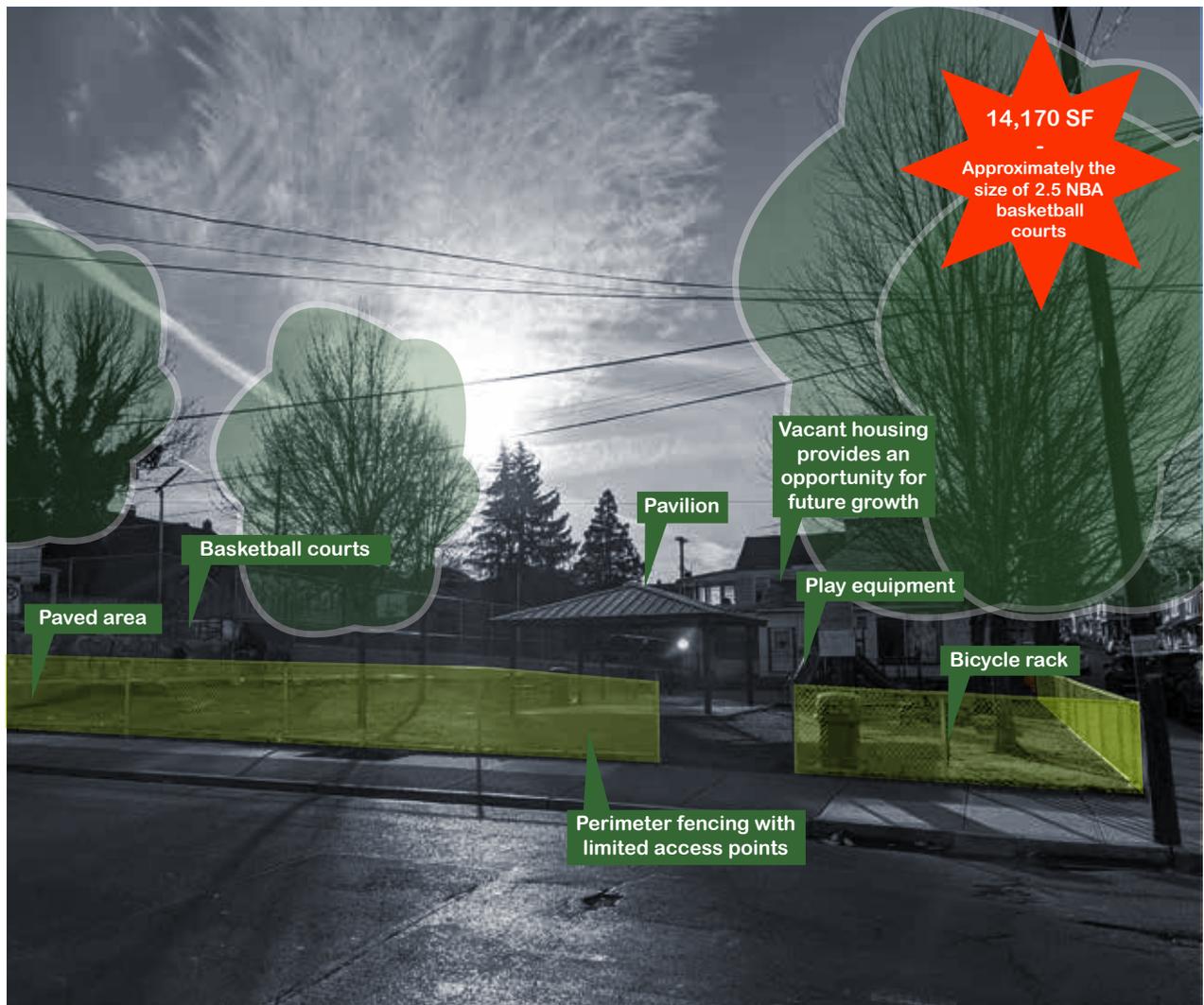


PARK OVERVIEW

Centennial Park is one of the larger parks included in the study at just over 14,000 SF with the potential to expand to include the adjacent vacant lots recently acquired by the City. The park is located at the corner of South 12th Street and Ferry Street. Existing park amenities include a play area with climbing equipment and swings, a small pavilion, benches, bike racks, litter receptacles, open lawn areas, and a full-sized basketball court. Currently the park is well used by children and adults throughout the warm seasons, whether gathering at the play area or utilizing the basketball courts. The park is also a frequent location for community events such as free ice cream in the summer and community meetings/gatherings.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

With the potential to expand into the adjacent vacant lots, Centennial Park is a prime candidate for the addition of a community recreation center. This could be located on the recently acquired parcel to the west of the park. Safety is a major concern of the surrounding neighbors, and the proposed park design must take into account visibility, lighting, and security. The park is currently a gathering place within West Ward, and would benefit from additional seating and spaces for programming.



“An ADA accessible swing and regular baby swings.”

“There is a lot of crime and drug issues in the area. Syringes and other paraphernalia are often found in the play area and in the grass around the pavilion.”

“Make the park more accessible for families, all ages – something for parents to do while young kids are playing and something for teens to do.”

“A community center with indoor courts and after-school programs.”

POP INTO THE PARKS

“More benches, especially in the basketball court area.”

“Put lights that illuminate the basketball courts!”

“Paint the lines on the basketball courts! We have a system for play, but it would be awesome to have painted lines.”

“A place for teens like my friends and me to hang out together.”

“Expand the park into the adjacent vacant housing. The vacant house keeps getting broken into and they have to keep re-boarding it up”

COMMUNITY INPUT

At Centennial Park, neighbors were concerned about safety and visibility within the park, suggesting improved lighting, the addition of security cameras, and creation of clear sightlines. Children and teens playing in the basketball courts requested that lines for half-court games be painted and lighting be added for night games. Additionally noted was the need for a bench or hooks to hold backpacks and jackets within the court area. It was apparent that Centennial Park is a highly used park and was filled with lots of kids who wanted a place to hang out with their friends. During the "Pop into the Park" session residents also suggested expanding the park to encompass the adjacent vacant building.



DID YOU KNOW THAT CENTENNIAL PARK IS A PUBLIC PARK?



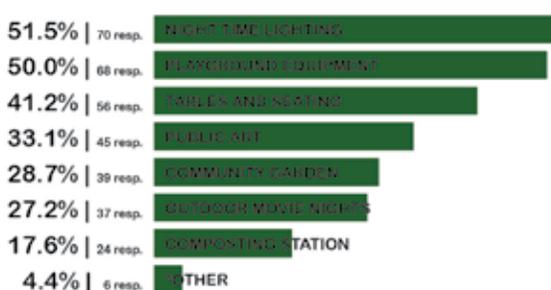
Source: Online Survey

SHOULD CENTENNIAL PARK REMAIN A PUBLIC PARK?



Source: Online Survey

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE AT CENTENNIAL PARK?



*OTHER

1. "Space, to do all things that you do with a park, that isn't a choice here."
2. "A handicap swing and regular baby swings"
3. "An indoor basketball court"
4. "Basketball"
5. "More trees"
6. "Zen garden, incorporate plaques and sculptures to teach mindfulness and support the mission of the Shanti project which is brought into the schools"

Source: Online Survey

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK BY CATEGORY OF CONCERN



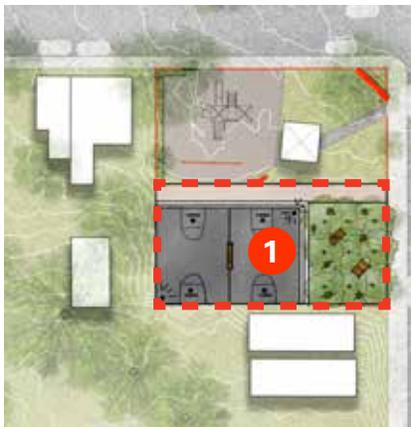
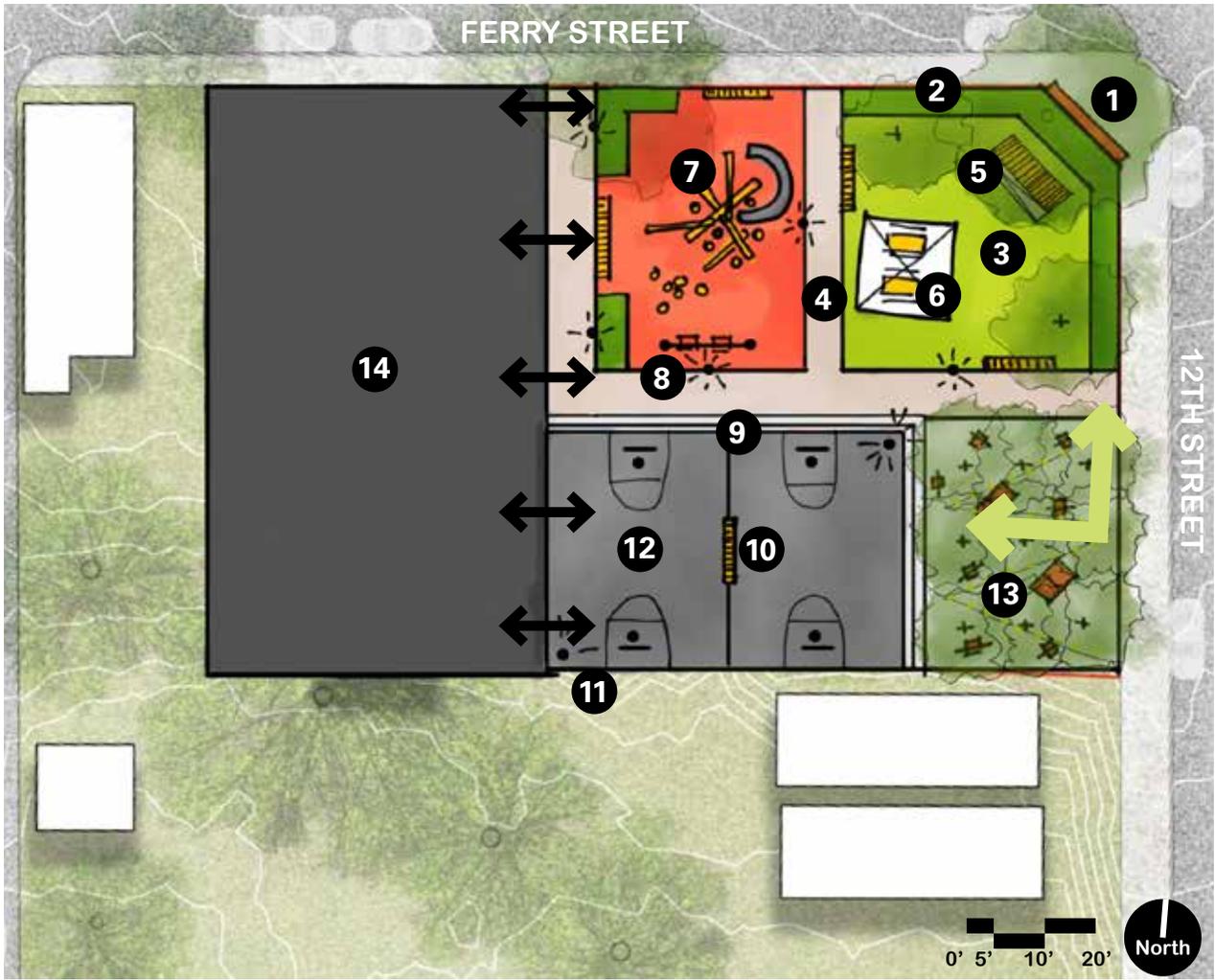
Sources: 7 Online Survey Comments, 1 Website Comment, 26 "Pop into the Parks" Comments



RECOMMENDATIONS

At Centennial Park, recommendations include a new community recreation center with garage doors that can be opened to provide an indoor-outdoor recreational connections. The existing basketball courts are shrunken by 1/3, and lines are painted to create two basketball half-courts. New lighting is incorporated. The grade change between the courts and the rest of the park is traversed via a series of steps that can also act as seating. To the east of the basketball courts is a grove of trees with swing benches and outdoor ping pong tables illuminated by string lights in the tree canopy. To the north, the existing pavilion remains with picnic tables added below, and a platform for a stage is added to support concerts, events, and community movie nights. The perimeter is enhanced with low-maintenance plantings and shade trees, and park signage is added at the corner of South 12th and Ferry Streets. The existing play area is replaced with sturdy natural play climbing structures, metal slides and swings.

- 1 ILLUMINATED PARK SIGNAGE
- 2 BORDER GARDENS
- 3 LAWN
- 4 CONCRETE PATHWAY
- 5 STAGE AND LOCATION FOR INFLATABLE MOVIE SCREEN
- 6 PICNIC TABLES AT EXISTING PAVILION
- 7 LOG JAM AND METAL SLIDE
- 8 SWINGS
- 9 STEPPED SEATING
- 10 BENCH
- 11 LIGHTING
- 12 BASKETBALL COURTS WITH PAINTED LINES (2, HALF-COURTS)
- 13 STONEFINES GROVE WITH SWING BENCHES, PING PONG TABLES AND STRING LIGHTS
- 14 REC CENTER WITH OPERABLE GARAGE DOORS



PHASE 1

Phase 1 includes park signage, updates to the existing basketball courts, and the addition of the stonefines grove with trees, ping pong, swing benches and string lights.



PHASE 2

Phase 2 expands to include improvements to the lawn and stage area, perimeter plantings, additional benches, and updated play equipment.



PHASE 3

Phase 3 occurs after the adjacent vacant lots have been obtained and includes the addition of the community recreation center and its connections to the park.

07

RASPBERRY STREET PARK

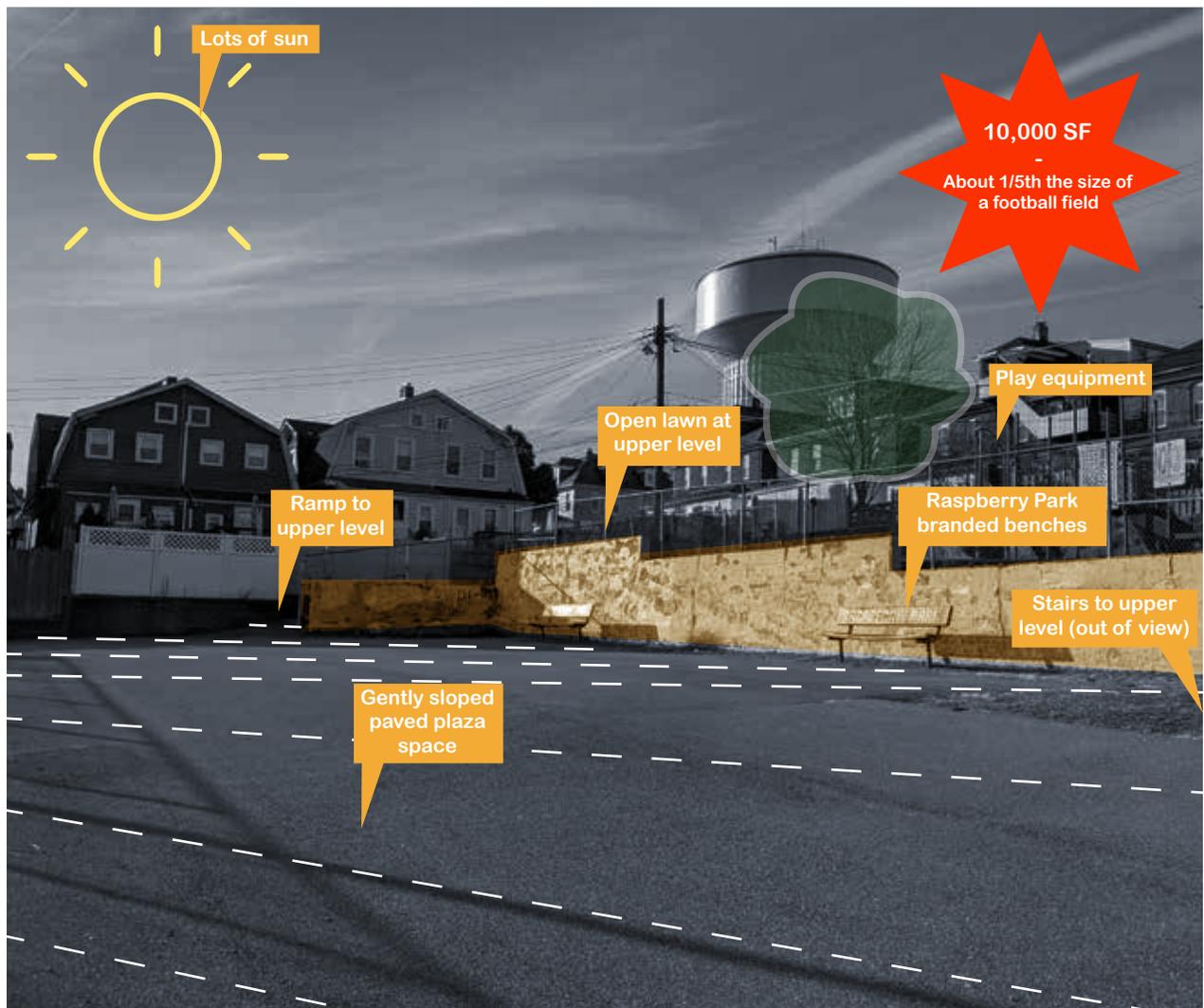


PARK OVERVIEW

Raspberry Street Park is one of the lesser-known pocket parks, tucked off along the narrow Raspberry Street alley between Spruce Street and Ferry Street. The park is around 10,000 SF with a large open asphalt area to the south and an open lawn area with play equipment to the north. The two spaces are separated by a stepped retaining wall and roughly 5-foot grade change. A stairway on the east side and a ramp on the west side provide access between the two park levels. Branded “Raspberry Park” benches are located along a narrow strip of grass between the retaining wall and the asphalt lot.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Limited tree cover and large asphalt areas make Raspberry Street Park a hot and sunny location during the summer months; the addition of trees would help to soften the space. The retaining wall at the center of the park provides a constraint for access but also has opportunities for murals/ projecting movies or integrating play equipment and tiered seating. The park was is often empty during the day, but activated in late afternoon and evening, including during the “Pop into the Parks” session when the space was filled with children riding bikes and playing, families with dogs, and parents socializing while watching children.



“Skate park and bike riding area for older kids – but also a non-technical area just for little kids to ride around for fun.”

“Gates that can be locked at night.”

“Rock wall or jungle gym.”

“Brighter lights in the park”

POP INTO THE PARKS

“A SKATE PARK!”

“Ping pong.”

“Murals on the walls to brighten it up a bit. Kids could paint their hand prints on part of it.”

“Keep the upper part a park and change the entryway – make the parking lot into courts or even a community center/coffee shop/gathering space for kids and families.”

“Trash cans!”

“Host mini neighborhood festivals in the park with face painting stations, BBQ, games, etc.”

COMMUNITY INPUT

Raspberry Street Park proved a highly-utilized space during the "Pop into the Parks" session. In addition to neighbors stopping by to provide input, the paved area was occupied by young children on bikes for the duration of the event. The community indicated a desire for amenities such as tables, seating and play equipment, as well as more programming. One neighbor recommended that the plaza be used to host neighborhood festivals / community nights. There was a desire for more planting and shade, but some form of flexible plaza space should remain and would be well-used. Other input suggested the inclusion of basketball half-courts and a lower hoop for young children. Open space for biking and skating would support existing use by neighborhood kids. Art and murals were also desired, and a nearby neighbor offered to store recreation equipment or games within her garage to bring out for kids during sunny days.



DID YOU KNOW THAT RASPBERRY STREET PARK IS A PUBLIC PARK?



Source: Online Survey

SHOULD RASPBERRY STREET PARK REMAIN A PUBLIC PARK?



Source: Online Survey

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE AT RASPBERRY STREET PARK?



*OTHER
 1. "Trees"
 2. "A SKATE PARK"
 3. "Dog wash"

Source: Online Survey

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK BY CATEGORY OF CONCERN



Sources: 13 Online Survey Comments, 37 "Pop into the Parks" Comments



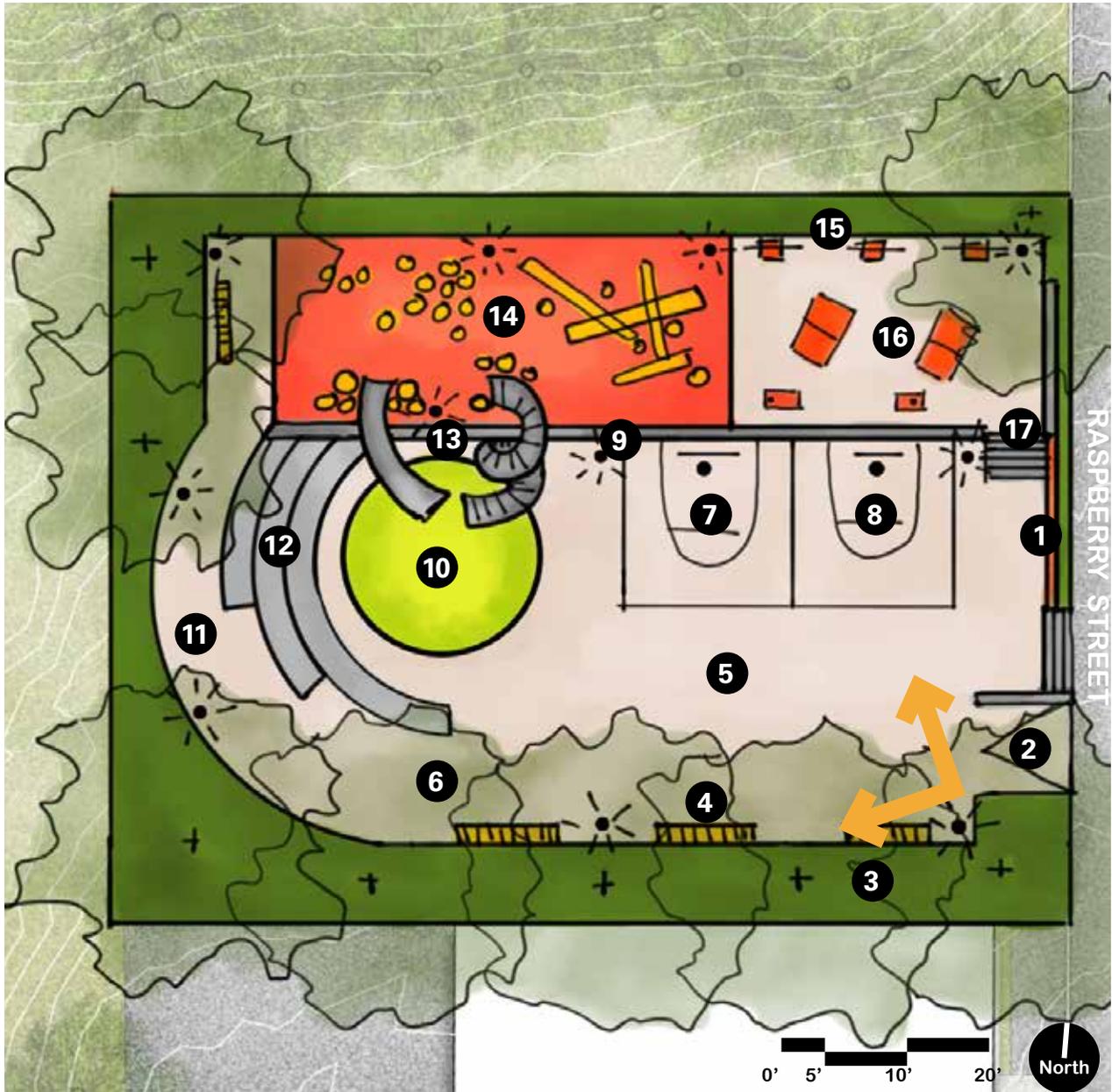
RECOMMENDATIONS

At Raspberry Street Park, recommendations build upon the existing structures within the park and infuse recreation opportunities for all age groups. The proposed plan preserves the flexible paved area of the site but replaces the asphalt with a smoother concrete surface more conducive for skateboarding and biking. This flexible plaza space can act as a safe, open space for children to bike and play but can also be converted into a pop-up skate park, or filled with food trucks and vendors to support neighborhood festivals and movie nights.

Along the eastern edge of the retaining wall, two basketball half-courts are integrated, one with a lower net for younger kids. At the western edge of the park, the existing ramp is extruded in an arc that allows the slope to be reduced and integrates terraced amphitheater seating. This seating is angled toward a patch of planting where an inflatable movie screen can be set up. At the upper level, the play area is updated to include sturdy, natural play equipment and two metal slides that create a play "loop" allowing children to slide

from one level to the next. The eastern portion of the park at the upper level forms a game area with outdoor ping pong tables, lounge swing benches, and cornhole. Along the south side of the plaza, new branded park benches are shown. These could be simple benches with integrated signage or could take a more artful form as oversized 3D letters that double as seating or skateable objects within the space. Lighting is also included in the proposed plan as well as a mural across the retaining wall to enliven the space.

Low-maintenance natural plantings form a border around the park and allow for the insertion of shade trees without compromising the flexibility of the paved space. This downhill slope also serves as an opportunity for stormwater capture.



- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 ILLUMINATED PARK SIGNAGE | 9 NEW MURAL |
| 2 VEHICULAR RAMP | 10 LAWN |
| 3 BORDER GARDENS WITH TREES | 11 RAMP |
| 4 BRANDED PARK BENCHES | 12 AMPHITHEATER |
| 5 FLEXIBLE PLAZA WITH CONCRETE PAVEMENT;
POSSIBLE SKATEABLE SCULPTURE / LOCATION FOR
POP UP SKATE PARK | 13 HILLSIDE SLIDES |
| 6 NEW PARK LIGHTING | 14 LOGJAM CLIMBING STRUCTURE AND CLIMBING
ELEMENTS |
| 7 HALF COURT BASKETBALL | 15 SWING BENCHES |
| 8 HALF COURT BASKETBALL WITH LOW NET FOR KIDS | 16 PING PONG AND GAMES (CORNHOLE, ETC.) |
| | 17 EXISTING STAIR AND RETAINING WALLS |

08

PORTER SCHOOL PARK



PARK OVERVIEW

Porter School Park is the largest of the parks included in the study at 26,000 SF. It is located in the South Side neighborhood between West Wilkes Barre Street and West Burr Street at the intersection of Folk Street. The lot was occupied by the old Porter Elementary School until 1980, when it was razed. Currently, the lot is a large open lawn surrounded by a tall chain link fence and is marked "For Permit Use Only." Previously, the space was used as a sports field for nearby schools.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

The large open lawn has a gentle slope and is conducive for a wide range of activities. There is a steep slope at of the northern and southern edges of the park. The existing fence prevents neighbors from using the space. Tree are located only at the perimeter and create a bright and sunny condition for the interior.



POP INTO THE PARKS

“Housing on the macadam lot and open space on the green”

“No composting station or community garden – the neighborhood uses their backyards for that.”

“A dog park.”

“Exercise or outdoor community greenspace, but not a playground – something quiet.”

“A paved riding / walking loop.”

“Kid-friendly playground for toddlers.”

“It would be great to have a place to come out, have a picnic, and get away from the in-laws.”

“Trees, native plants, shade, picnic table, and water feature – remove the fence.”

COMMUNITY INPUT

Residents would like Porter School Park to remain open green space, but would also like to have amenities added and to have access into the fenced-in space. Community members suggested the addition of tables and seating – specifically a place where they could come out to picnic. They also suggested an area for children to play, a walking / biking loop for parents and kids, and places with shade and native plantings. Nearby neighbors would prefer for the park to remain a quiet, open space, and do not want programming that would bring large groups to the area. They also suggested that if housing were to go in on one of the lots, it should be only a few small units consistent with the character of the neighborhood. Neighbors also suggested that a dog park would be a valuable addition to the neighborhood.

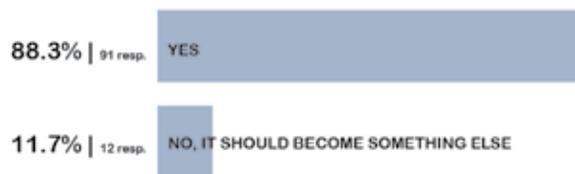


DID YOU KNOW THAT PORTER SCHOOL PARK IS A PUBLIC PARK?



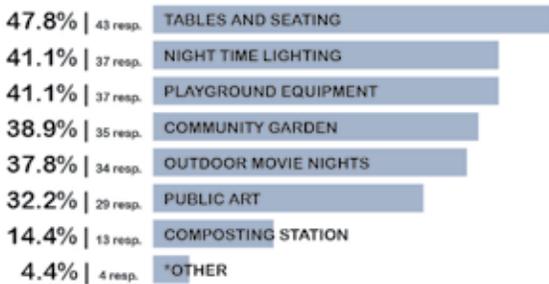
Source: Online Survey

SHOULD PORTER SCHOOL PARK REMAIN A PUBLIC PARK?



Source: Online Survey

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE AT PORTER SCHOOL PARK?



*OTHER

1. "Skate park"
2. "Dog park"
3. "Leave it alone"
4. "Trees, native plants, shade, picnic table and water feature, remove fence"

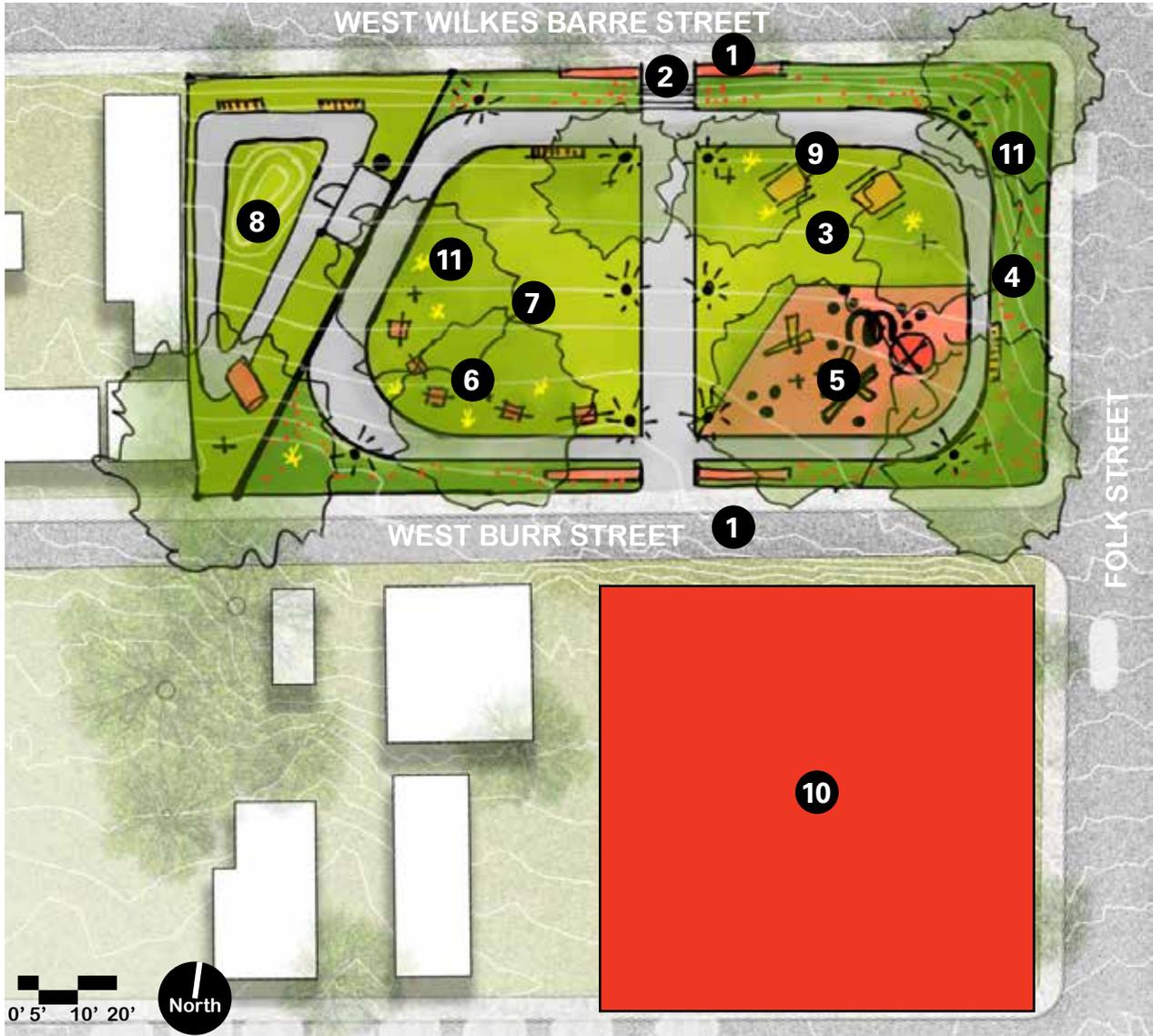
Source: Online Survey

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK BY CATEGORY OF CONCERN



Sources: 13 Online Survey Comments, 25 "Pop Into the Parks" Comments

CONCEPT OPTION A

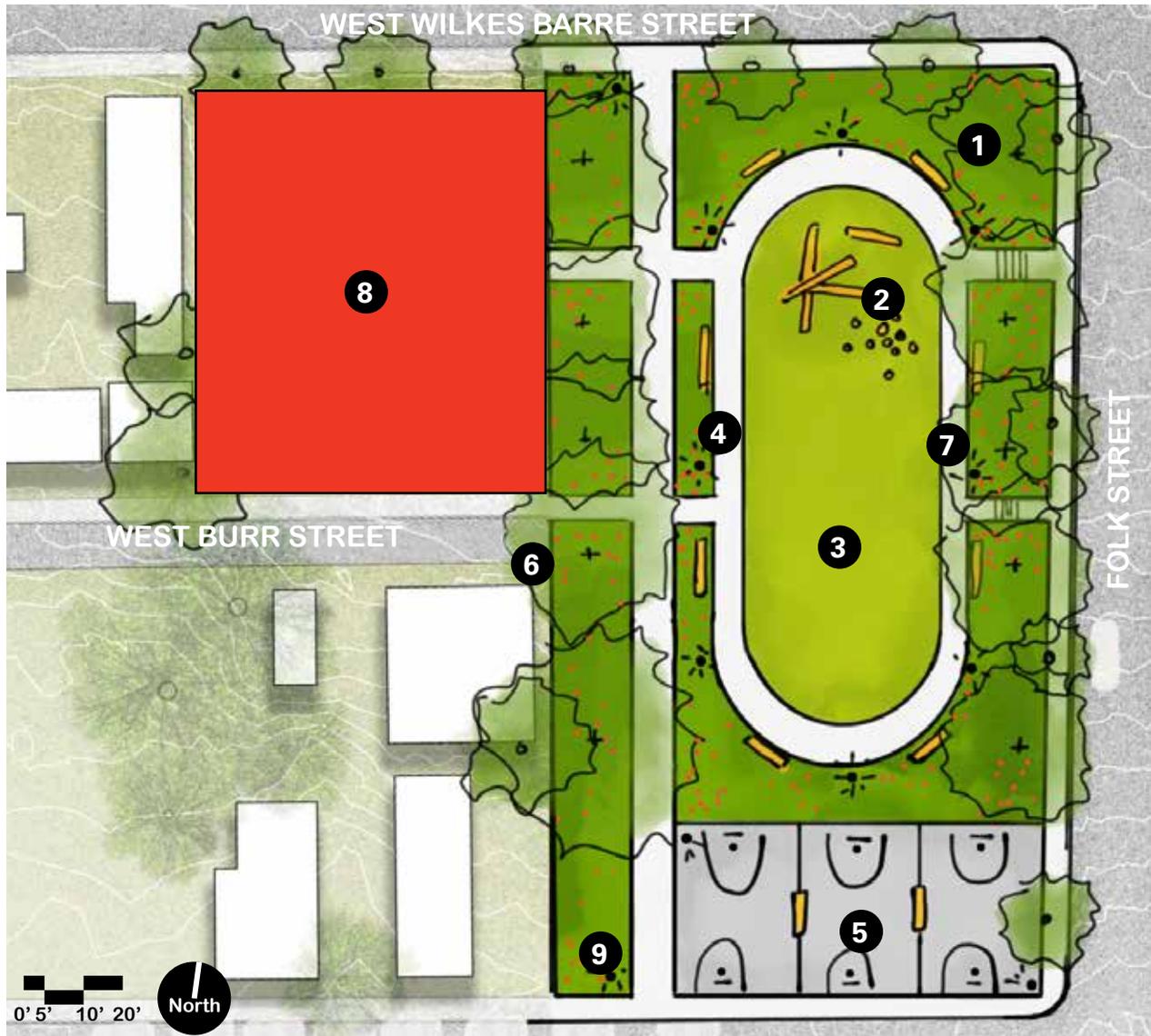


RECOMMENDATIONS

Concept Option A works with the existing park configuration and locates the park space in the northern lot, allowing for future development (housing, community center, etc.) at the southern lot. This configuration replaces the perimeter fence with a band of native planting and trees. A paved walking / biking loop defines the central portion of the park and creates space for natural play, a picnic area, and lounge swing benches under the trees. At the western side, a corner of the park is fenced in and dedicated for dogs with a running loop and obstacles. Park benches and lighting occur throughout the space and signage occurs at both of the entries into the park.

- 1** PARK SIGNAGE ON RETAINING WALLS
- 2** NEW STAIRS
- 3** PICNIC AREA
- 4** SLOPED PERIMETER GARDENS
- 5** NATURAL PLAY EQUIPMENT
- 6** SWING BENCHES
- 7** LAWN
- 8** DOG PARK
- 9** WALKING / BIKING LOOP
- 10** FUTURE DEVELOPMENT
- 11** NEW LIGHTING

CONCEPT OPTION B



RECOMMENDATIONS

Concept Option B looks at the opportunity to turn West Burr Street into a pedestrian alleyway that dead ends at the park. The park stretches from north to south across both parcels and allows for future development at the western portion of the northern lot. Similar to Option A, a walking / biking loop defines a central lawn with opportunities for natural play and flexible open space. Park benches and lighting follow the pathway and low maintenance natural plantings frame the space. Multiple entries allow access into the park. At the southernmost portion of the park the existing paved space is converted into three basketball half-courts with benches and lighting.

- 1** PLANTED PERIMETER
- 2** PLAY AREA
- 3** LAWN
- 4** BENCHES
- 5** HALF-SIZE BASKETBALL COURTS
- 6** DEAD END AT BURR STREET; OPPORTUNITY FOR PEDESTRIAN ALLEYWAY
- 7** WALKING / BIKING LOOP
- 8** FUTURE DEVELOPMENT
- 9** NEW LIGHTING

09

NESQUEHONING STREET PARK

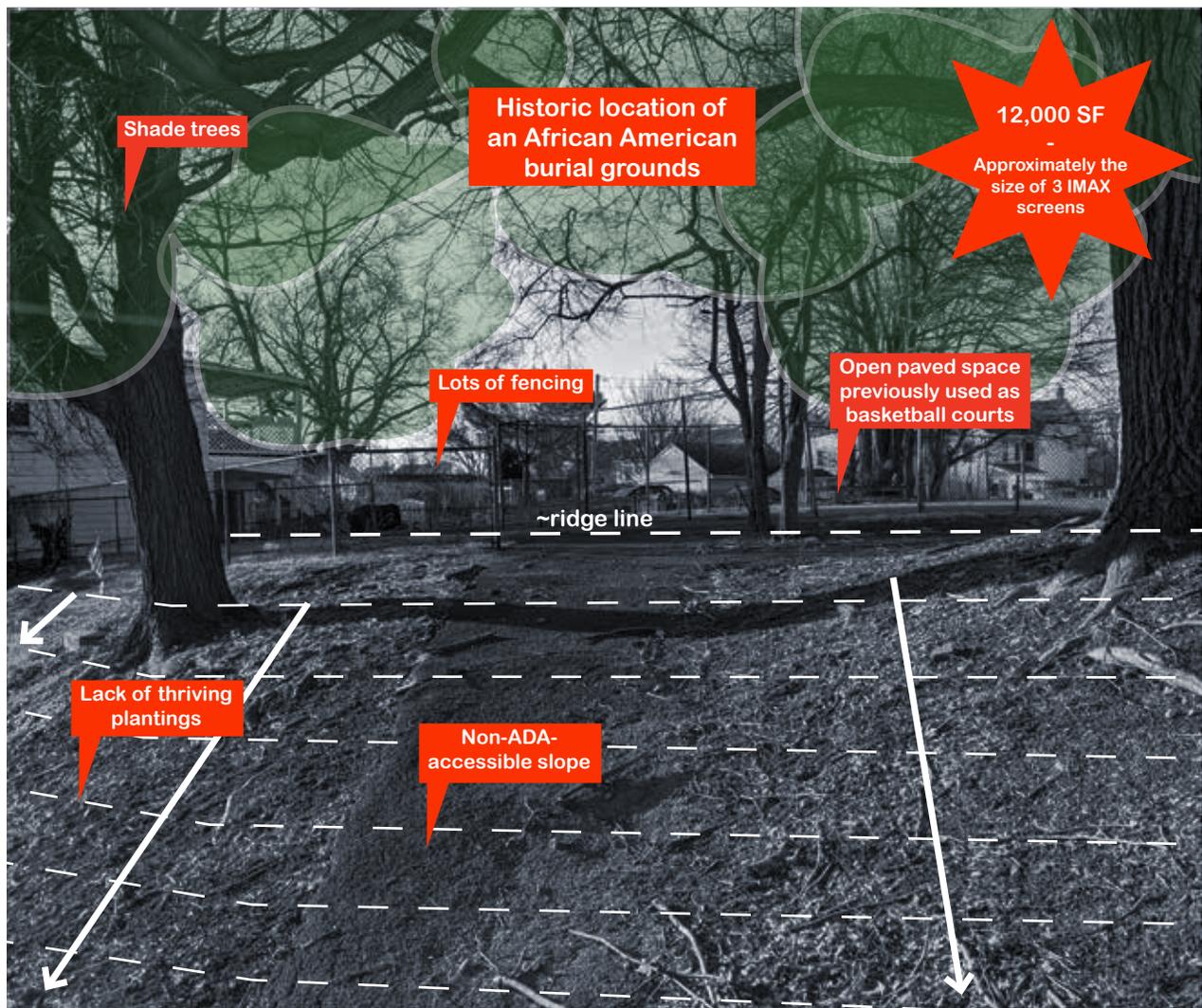


PARK OVERVIEW

Nesquehoning Street Park is the second of the two South Side parks included in the study. It is approximately 12,000 SF and is located between Nesquehoning Street and West Holt Street just west of Davis Street. The park has a steep slope off of Nesquehoning Street with a non-ADA compliant ramp leading up to a larger flat area. Three large shade trees with low branching are located on the front portion of the park. At the top of the slope is a large paved area surrounded by fencing. This area was previously basketball courts and is currently used as overflow parking for the nearby retreat center at the old Street Joseph's Church. The planning process also revealed that the Nesquehoning parcel is of notable significance, with the site being the historic location of a burial grounds for African Americans dating to at least the 1870s, as outlined in the following pages.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

The steep non-ADA-compliant access point is a constraint at Nesquehoning Street Park. Additionally, the shade trees at the slope block the majority of the sunlight by the pathway and make it difficult from lawn to grow. The remainder of the park is mostly unused and resembles more of a parking lot than a park. The historical significance of the site as a burial ground for African Americans is of utmost importance in determining the future of the parcel, and the critical work of uncovering its history, determining its current status, and honoring those who were interred there will shape further opportunities and constraints.



“This was an African American cemetery at one time. There’s no marker or anything.”

“Bring back the play equipment at St. Joseph’s Park and turn Nesquehoning into a basketball court again for the bigger kids. Keep the other one for the smaller kids – framework is all there, with mulch areas etc., pavement for courts.”

“Remove the blacktop and make it green. Add composting station, native plants, and flowers to attract birds and insects, as well as small path with shaded benches.”

POP INTO THE PARKS

“Play equipment.”

“The paved area is still used as parking for St. Joseph’s church, now a retreat center, on Saturdays.”

“A lot of people have lived here their entire lives and their parents lived here their whole lives also.”

“Multi-purpose outdoor space for biking, skateboarding, etc. The one-way street makes it difficult for neighborhood kids to bike/play safely.”

COMMUNITY INPUT

The “Pop into the Park” session at Nesquehoning Street Park gave the impression of a tight-knit community, with many attendees and their relatives having lived in the area their whole lives. Residents noted that they would like to see a place in the neighborhood for kids to play, more community events, and better maintenance at the Nesquehoning site. Moreover, the public session yielded important information about the park’s history, with a resident noting he had grown up hearing that the site was at one time an African American cemetery. Omnes completed preliminary research in follow up, and confirmed that the Nesquehoning parcel is in fact the historic location of a burial grounds for African Americans dating to at least the 1870s. See following pages for additional information and recommendations based on this important history.



DID YOU KNOW THAT NESQUEHONING STREET PARK IS A PUBLIC PARK?



Source: Online Survey

SHOULD NESQUEHONING STREET PARK REMAIN A PUBLIC PARK?



Source: Online Survey

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE AT NESQUEHONING STREET PARK?



* OTHER

1. "Multi purpose outdoor space for biking, skateboarding, etc. The one way street ma difficult for neighborhood kids to bike / play safely"
2. "Dog park"
3. "A SKATE PARK PLEASE!"
4. "Basketball"
5. "Basketball"
6. "Remove part of the blacktop, make it green. Composting station, native plants and flowers to attract birds and insects, small path with benches for seating in shade"

Source: Online Survey

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK BY CATEGORY OF CONCERN



Sources: 14 Online Survey Comments, 34 "Pop Into the Parks" Comment

**PATHS TO THE PAST:
PRELIMINARY RESEARCH**

Preliminary research confirmed that the Nesquehoning Street Park parcel is the historic location of a cemetery for African Americans dating to at least the 1870s. Based on what has been learned to date, Omnes believes it likely possible that graves of some individuals interred at the Nesquehoning burial grounds may not have been relocated prior to the site’s conversion into a park, and there therefore may be remains still present at the site.

Upon beginning research about the Nesquehoning parcel, Omnes contacted regional historian Leonard S. Buscemi, Ph.D., who confirmed the site’s past as a burial ground and directed the planning team to a historic newspaper account of the shameful desecration of the grave of a Black veteran there by white Easton youth. Noted in Buscemi’s 2016 book *South Easton: South Side*, the *Easton Express* of Saturday May 1, 1886, reported:

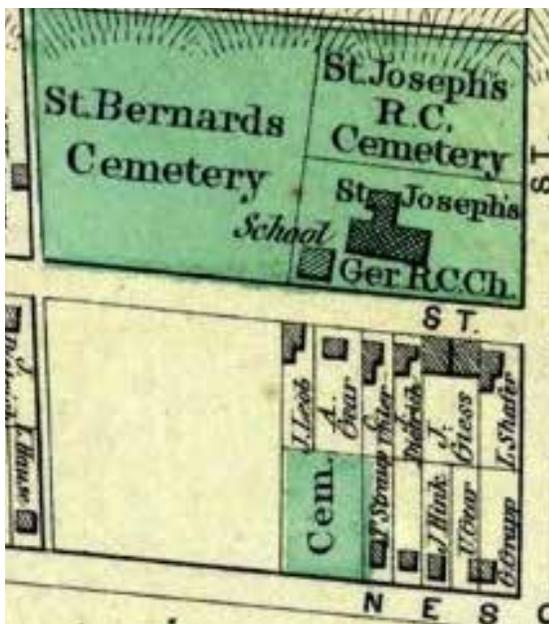
“A dozen or more young boys, whose ages range from twelve up to fifteen years, secured spades and shovels yesterday afternoon, with which they proceeded to the colored burying ground on the hill and commenced digging up the remains of George Hoff, the colored soldier who is buried there.”

This account marked the first confirmation the planning team saw of the identity of an individual originally interred at the site. Further research revealed that Hoff, born in 1844, was a Civil War veteran who served the Union as 1st Sergeant in the United States Colored Troops 25th Regiment, Company B. Hoff returned to Easton after the war, where he died and was interred at Nesquehoning in 1870.

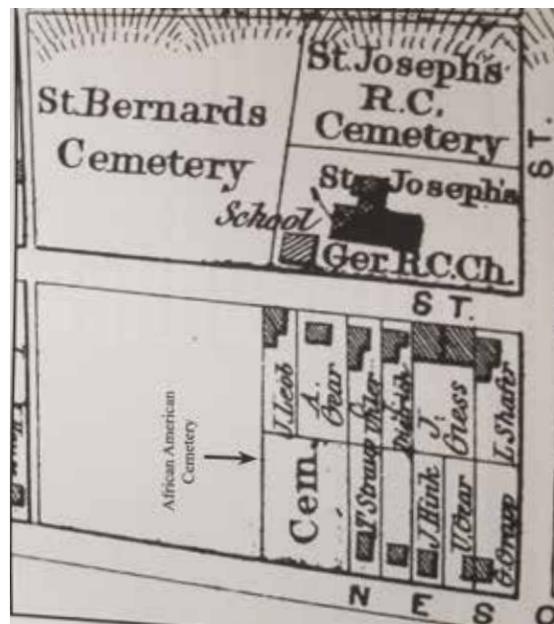
Another contemporary newspaper report about Hoff notes of the burial grounds:

“The colored cemetery in South Easton is on the south side of Nesquehoning Street, between Coal and Cherry. A stranger while passing it would suppose it to be a vacant lot, there being no enclosure except the fences on private properties on the east and west of it. It is frequently used as a play ground by children and cattle are often seen passing through. There isn’t a headstone to mark the grave of one of the deceased persons who are buried there, and in fact there isn’t anything to indicate that the cemetery is anything but a vacant lot.”

Omnes located census records that indicated that Hoff was married, and that his children and later



Detail in *Atlas of Northampton County*, 1874 (Historic Map Works Rare Historic Maps Collection), identifying the site as a cemetery.



The same map detail, annotated in Leonard S. Buscemi’s *South Easton: South Side*, which notes that the site “in the latter part of the 1800s was the African American Burial Grounds” and “went from Holt to Nesquehoning Streets.”

grandchildren also lived in Easton. After sharing initial findings, the team learned that Sharon Gothard of the Marx Local History Room at the Easton Public Library has performed extensive genealogy research into the Hoff's and other early Black families of Easton. Ms. Gothard's guidance and research subsequently became central to the planning team's efforts to learn more about the site, critically informing this document. Her work and expertise may be an invaluable resource in efforts going forward to identify descendants of those interred at the Nesquehoning site.

Although historic accounts exist of George Hoff's burial at Nesquehoning, the team also located a grave for him that exists at a separate location, Easton Cemetery. Professor Steven B. Burg, Ph.D., of Shippensburg University and the Pennsylvania Hallowed Grounds Project – a network dedicated to the preservation of the burial grounds of United States Colored Troops and other early Black Pennsylvanians – also directed the planning team to a Pennsylvania Veteran Burial Registry record noting Hoff's resting place as Easton Cemetery.

Confirmation of the movement of Hoff's remains was finally made when Ms. Gothard located a newspaper account of May 9, 1886 – just a few days after the

2	—	Margaret	25	3/11	Washing House
3	—	Harriet	17	3/11	
4	—	Charles	3	3/11	
5	68-69	Hoff George	28	3/11	Laborer
6	—	Harriet	27	3/11	Washing House
7	—	Mary	7	3/11	
8	—	George	4	3/11	
9	66-67	Prime Hoff	31	3/11	Laborer
10	—	Charles	3	3/11	Laborer

1870 Census Record for George Hoff, wife Harriet, daughter Mary, and son George, showing them residing in Easton's Bushkill Ward.

65-66	—	Sallie Hoff	33	3/11	Wife	1	housekeeping
—	—	Frank Hoff	7	3/11	son	1	at home
—	—	Prudence Charles	3	3/11	daughter	1	Laborer
—	—	Mary Hoff	3	3/11	daughter	1	housekeeping
—	—	Smith Hoff	3	3/11	son	1	at home
—	—	George Hoff	3	3/11	son	1	at school
—	—	Hoff Frank	3	3/11	son	1	at home
—	—	Prime Hoff	3	3/11	son	1	at school
—	—	William Hoff	3	3/11	son	1	at home
66-67	—	William Hoff	3	3/11	son	1	at home

1880 Census Record for Hoff's wife (by then widowed), children, grandchildren, and in-laws, showing them residing in Easton's 2nd Ward.

desecration of his grave at Nesquehoning – that noted the reinterment of his remains by the Grand Army of the Republic: “The body is to be disinterred . . . and reburied in the G.A.R. plot at the Easton Cemetery.”

At the same time, Ms. Gothard uncovered an account of another U.S.C.T. soldier originally buried at Nesquehoning. Reinterred as part of an effort by the G.A.R. to properly locate and bury veterans, the remains of Black soldier George Good were moved from Nesquehoning to the Easton Cemetery just a few months before Hoff's, in March 1886:

“The members of the Grand Army intend to remove the bodies of George Good (colored), from the Colored cemetery, in South Easton, and Comrade Paxton, from Arndt's cemetery, to the G.A.R. plot at the Easton cemetery. The expense of both will be borne by the G.A.R., unless the colored friends of the former will contribute, toward the transfer of the body.”

While the remains of these veterans, and perhaps others, were reinterred from the Nesquehoning site at the expense of the G.A.R. during the 1880s, research also turned up evidence of a great many civilian burials at the site for which no record of removal or reinterment has yet been found.

Ms. Gothard directed the team to the *Records of the First Colored Evangelical Lutheran Church of Easton, PA: 1861–1902*, which illuminates the identities of ten church members besides George Hoff – including several young children and infants – whose remains were interred at

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Military Affairs		RECORD OF BURIAL PLACE OF VETERAN		Northampton County 215	
NAME Hoff, George J. (Colored)		DATE OF BIRTH Sept. 5, 1844	DATE OF DEATH Nov. 5, 1870		
VETERAN OF Civil		SERVED IN WAR ARMY (X) NAVY () MARINE CORPS ()			
DATES OF SERVICE Jan. 6, 1864 to Dec. 6, 1865		ORGANIZATION: Co. B 25th Regt. U.S.		GRADE Col. 1st Sergt.	
CEMETERY OR PLACE OF INTERMENT Easton Cemetery 7th St., Easton, Pa.					
LOCATION OF GRAVE IN CEMETERY SECTION LOT No. C 1-9			HEADSTONE Marble Tablet		
RANGE GRAVE No. 63			GOVERNMENT () COUNTY () FAMILY (X)		
INFORMATION GIVEN BY Veterans Grave Registrar					
DATE Oct. 7, 1938					

Pennsylvania Veteran Burial Registry record for George Hoff, noting his place of interment as Easton Cemetery.

the Black cemetery located at the Nesquehoning site:

- Rosie Hoff
- Floyd Prime
- Laura Merritt
- Sallie Smith
- Lavinia Olestra
- Infant daughter of Peter Lewis (no name recorded)
- Solomon McIntire
- Laura Wilson
- William White
- Blanche Louise Hoff

The church records list additional individuals as being buried at the "Colored Cemetery," which may possibly also refer to the Nesquehoning site:

- Jane Durling
- Jacob Prime
- Edward M'Intire
- Catherine Moss
- Sophia Duncan
- Francis Martin
- Catharine Moore
- Nancy Hunt

These are members of just one Easton church who were or may have been interred at Nesquehoning; members of other Black religious congregations were also likely buried at the site, and records of other churches might reveal their identities. Of the individuals affiliated with the First Colored Evangelical Lutheran Church of Easton, evidence of reinterment has been found only for Blanche Louise Hoff, who is described in other records as having a grave at Easton Cemetery.

It is well possible that the remains of some or many civilians are still interred at the Nesquehoning site. In contrast to the U.S.C.T. veterans whose remains were moved at the expense of the G.A.R., the burden of responsibility and hardship of cost to reinter bodies of ordinary Black civilians would probably have fallen primarily to individual families, who may not have had the means or opportunity to do so. To date, no evidence has been found of any other coordinated group removal or mass-reinterment of the remains of individuals from Nesquehoning.

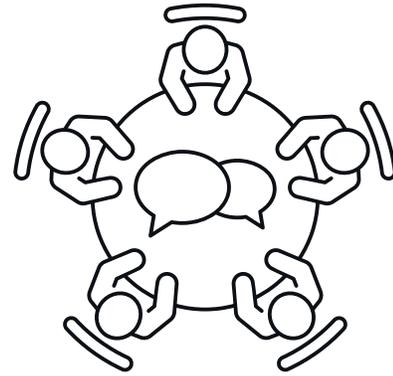
NEXT STEP RECOMMENDATIONS



SITE STUDY



**HISTORICAL
RESEARCH**



**FURTHER
ENGAGEMENT**

Upon initially confirming the Nesquehoning site's history as a burial ground, Omnes consulted the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office (PA SHPO). PA SHPO Community Preservation Coordinator Cory Kegerise provided background information and expertise about similarly re-discovered burial grounds in other Pennsylvania communities and offered guidance for some of the initial recommendations for the site made here. Recommendations for a successful process going forward include further study and research of the site; identification and engagement with descendants or ancestral communities; and the development of a plan for the parcel's future that acknowledges its history and honors those interred there.

Based on PA SHPO's guidance and the historical findings to date, no active park uses should be introduced or plans made for the site until further study, research, and engagement can be completed. Before considering any future planning for the site, the City must determine the status of any remains that might still be interred there. As a first step, it is recommended that an archeological consultant be engaged to perform a ground-penetrating radar study to determine the extents of the burial grounds. PA SHPO offers grant opportunities that could support such a study; the City should consult with Mr. Kegerise to determine how to apply for funding.

The City must also ensure that any plan or process regarding the park's future is in alignment with state and

federal laws regarding cemeteries and the respectful and proper treatment of remains; PA SHPO may also be a resource for information regarding these issues.

While the physical extents and status of the site must be understood, historical research should also be undertaken to confirm the identities and descendants of individuals interred at the site. The City should seek further guidance from PA SHPO and consider collaborations with historic organizations, community groups, scholars, and volunteers. Easton might look to the experiences and public processes of similarly re-discovered sites in other communities, such as the Bethel Burial Ground in Philadelphia and Lincoln Cemetery (now Lincoln Memorial Park) in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

As the historical context and status of Nesquehoning becomes better understood, there should be further engagement about the site's future. A concerted effort should be made to inform the public of the site's significance and bring the community to the table in planning for its future. In particular, the voices of any living descendants of interred individuals who might be identified should be centered in discussions about the site. Transparent and robust engagement, along with the work of uncovering and making known the history of Nesquehoning, will be critical to developing a responsible plan for the site's future that acknowledges its past and honors those buried there.

REPORT PREPARED BY:



ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF EASTON