

III. Site Master Plan

The Site Master Plan includes the identification and integration of new or expanded features with the existing park amenities consistent with the guiding principles. In order to accomplish this, the park planning process included several interrelated steps:

Determine Desired Park Uses and Features

A wide range of uses and features were considered and evaluated. The process was informed by the extensive park user survey conducted in 2003, interviews and discussions with various user groups and individuals, and input from staff. Through that process, and in consideration of the overall vision for the park and the County-wide park system, the existing uses to be expanded or improved and proposed new uses and features were identified and prioritized, including:

- Multi-Use Trails,
- Picnic Areas and Pavilions,
- Playgrounds for Children,
- Water Park (wave pool, spray park, lazy river, water slides)
- Disc Golf Course and Learning Center
- Fishing
- Sledding
- Community Recreation Center (includes Large Indoor Facilities)
- Soccer Fields
- Baseball/Softball Fields, including Miracle Baseball Field
- Golf Learning Center
- Adventure Playground
- Natural Area Interpretation
- Dog Park

Assess the Unique Attributes and Characteristics of the Site

The other essential consideration that informs the application of the various use areas and features to the property is the unique natural and cultural quality the site possesses. In order to assess and quantify these attributes, a detailed site investigation was performed and documented. A combination of surveys and mapping, along with on-site observations, revealed the essence of the land and its natural and cultural attributes. Two significant patterns emerged—the natural water movement on the site, and the existing tree structure, largely mature tree rows that indicate original agricultural field edges and divide the relatively gently sloped terrain into large outdoor “rooms”. Along with the other features and built elements within the park property, these formed the primary basis for the site planning framework as illustrated in the following three figures:

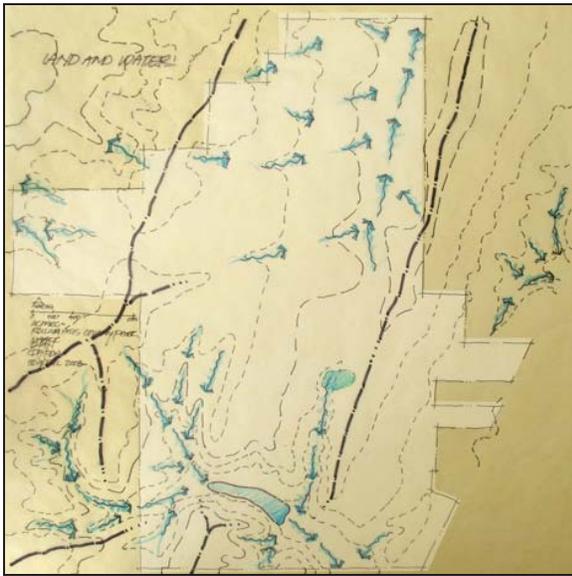


FIGURE 3. Land and Water

Two subtle ridge lines run north and south on either side of the site; the surface topography slopes gently towards low points at the northeast corner, the south, and west property lines. There is very little off-site surface water drainage onto the site, except from the residential parcels to the southwest of the site. This provides great opportunity to properly manage all of the rainwater falling onto the park site, and develop high quality on-site natural and aquatic landscapes.

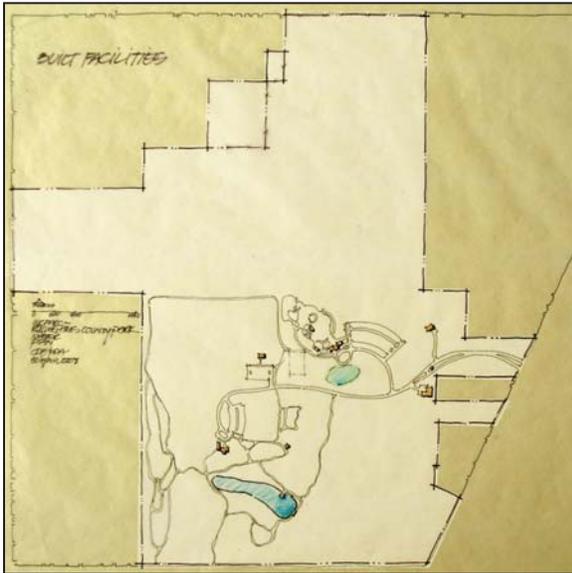


FIGURE 4. Built Facilities

Portions of the site have been developed with a primary roadway, parking facilities, and several structures, including the water park, the Lodge, picnic pavilions, and maintenance facilities. This existing infrastructure is a valuable asset, and great care has been taken to utilize all of these elements in the expanded and reconfigured plan.

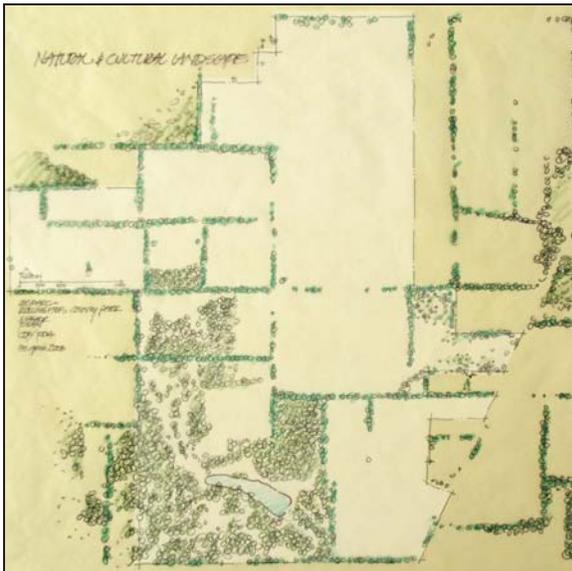


FIGURE 5. Natural & Cultural Landscape

Another distinct characteristic of the Rolling Hills site is the variety of landscape typologies present on the site. Generally, the portions of the site to the southwest contain the park's more naturalistic landscape features, including woodlands, a spring-fed pond, and a restored prairie. The parcels to the north and east were used previously for a variety of agricultural operations, including orchards, grazing, and sand and gravel excavation. A number of fairly large hedgerows define the fields, and serve to create a series of outdoor "rooms", which help to break down the scale of the park, provide a level of orientation, and a reference to the site's agricultural legacy.

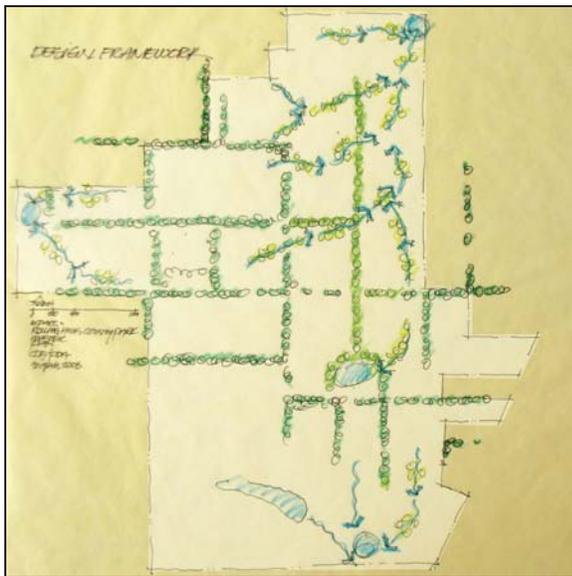


FIGURE 6. Design Framework

A combination of the primary existing surface water flow routes, the existing vegetation, and projected tree rows along former property lines provide a planning framework within which the various park uses and features will be located. This landscape context provides a very strong physical and visual theme, which reinforces the guiding principles, especially “A Park in Balance with Nature”.

Locate the Uses and Features on the Property

Based upon these factors, including the location of the water park, Lodge, primary road system, and other existing infrastructure, different arrangements of park features and sizes were evaluated. Along with the location and adjacencies of the features, options for an overall access and circulation system were also considered. When these different options were considered relative to the six guiding principles established at the onset of the process, one alternative became the clear choice. Synergies and potential shared facilities are designed into the plan. The size and location of the uses are compatible with adjacent properties, and the site for each use provides a wonderful setting that will greatly enhance the visitor’s experience. The road circulation system is clear and easy to navigate with a new main park entrance in a more visible location, and a simple loop with parking nodes, consolidating the footprint of driving surface while providing an additional pleasure drive amenity. The non-motorized circulation system includes trails and paths planned in loops with various materials to provide a wide range of experiences for walking, jogging, bikes, and rollerblades. This system also provides links to the emerging regional trail system off-site.

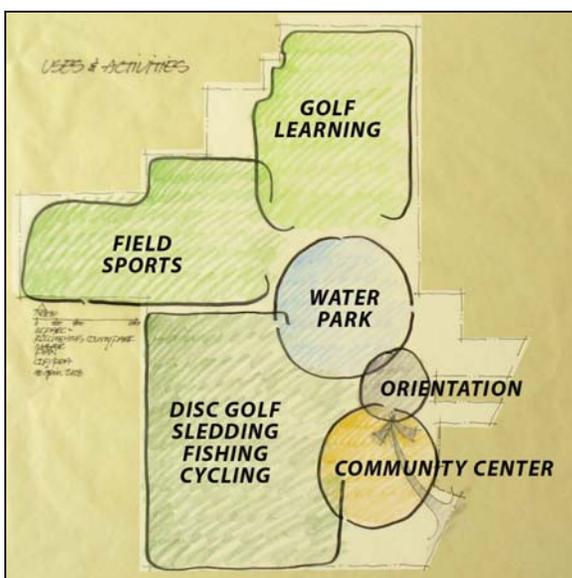


FIGURE 7. Uses and Activities

The combination of the existing facilities, natural site assets, and irregular property boundaries, along with the primary park exposure to the southeast, led to a very general orientation of access and use groupings that take greatest advantage of these characteristics.

Establish General Circulation and Site Arrangement

As the plan evolved, and different options were considered, several access/circulation planning strategies emerged. First, the southeast corner of the site was the location most preferred for the community center. This led to the idea of relocating the main entrance to the south (to about 500' north of the intersection of Stony Creek and Bemis), which provides much better visibility, the ability to stage visitors coming into the park before the entrance gate, and also to access the community recreation center without coming through the park gate. The circulation concept is to keep the main access drive a fairly simple, compact loop that accesses all of the various park facilities in an easily navigable roadway that also serves as a pleasure drive. A visitor arriving by car will enter the site, drive past the community center, and up to the main gate. The entrance sequence and orientation is enhanced by a circular roundabout, helping to split and guide traffic accordingly. Signage will direct the visitor towards the different park facilities, and parking nodes scattered through the park provide convenient car parking in a way that is somewhat concealed from the main drive, blending into the natural landscape. Ample opportunities are also provided to access the site by bicycle or by foot through a perimeter trail that links the interior trail circulation with the county road network, and will eventually link to other regional trails in the vicinity.

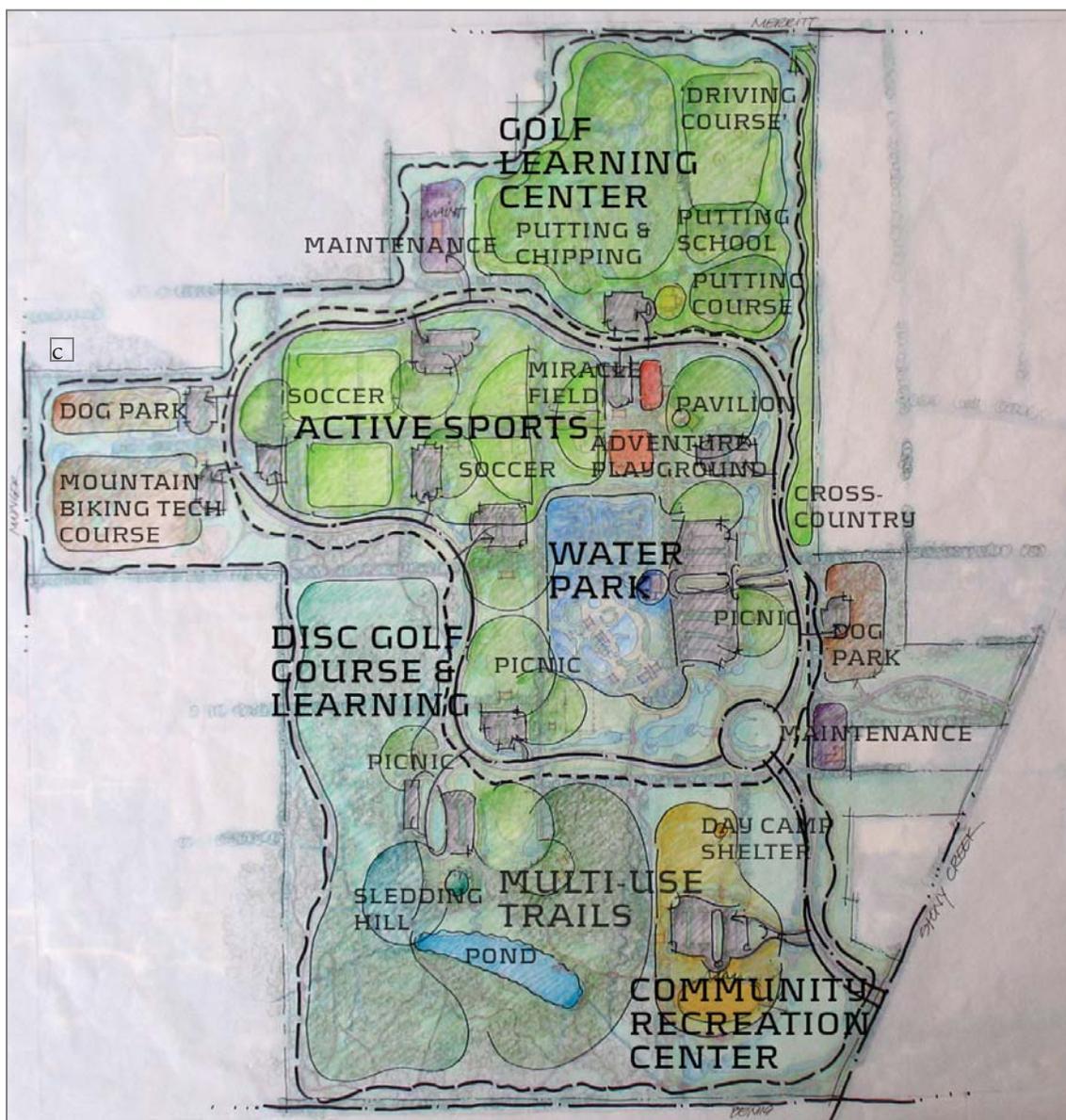


FIGURE 8: Park Use Diagram



FIGURE 9: Conceptual Site Plan