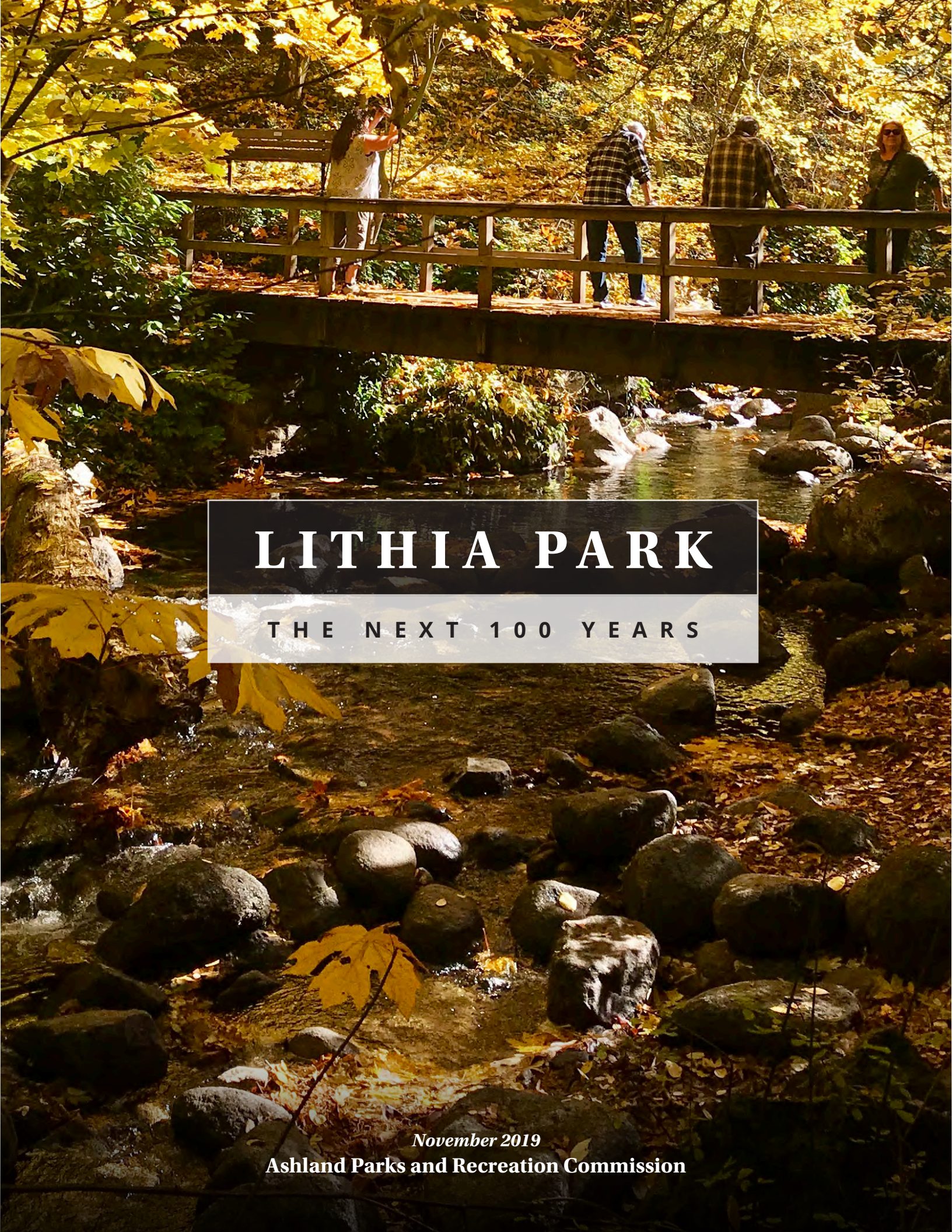

LITHIA PARK

THE NEXT 100 YEARS

November 2019

Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission

Prepared by

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LITHIA PARK

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November 2019

Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission

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McLaren's 1915 design for Lithia Park emphasized the very best of the natural landscape with just the right amount of art and design to create the type of picturesque space people thirsted for.

1

INTRODUCTION

Lithia Park, one of the first landscapes to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places in Oregon, has been Ashland's jewel for more than 100 years.

Lithia Park has its roots in the Chautauqua Movement. Chautauquas, held around the United States, were gatherings in outdoor settings to exchange ideas about current events, religion and the arts in outdoor settings, and first came to Ashland in 1893.

Lithia Park gets its name from the nearby Lithia Springs, which the Springs Water Commission sought to market to travelers far and wide in the early 20th century, promoting Ashland as a health springs resort to boost tourism and the local economy.

Lithia Park is a living monument to the strength and determination of early Oregon women pioneers, in particular the Ashland Women's Civic Improvement Club, who overcame strong commercial interests to ensure that a public park was provided along Ashland Creek.

This led to the hiring of notable designer and parks movement leader John McLaren to design a park in Ashland that exemplified the innovative landscape architectural ideas established by Frederick Law Olmsted, designer of Central Park in New York City. McLaren himself brought his experience from designing Golden Gate Park and leading the extensive public works projects associated with San Francisco's Panama-Pacific International Exposition. Lithia Park is McLaren's only work in Oregon. Following the Olmsted model, McLaren's design for Lithia Park emphasized the very best of the natural landscape with just the right amount of art and design to create the type of picturesque space people thirsted for at that time.

Guided by McLaren's original plans, park superintendent and landscape architect

Chester Corry labored over the course of many decades to enhance the natural beauty of this landscape and create a world-class park for Ashland.

Today, Lithia Park is a welcoming open space for both the Ashland community and its visitors. Its strategic location along Ashland Creek links the heart of downtown Ashland with the woodlands and mountains south of the city, and with Bear Creek and the Rogue River to the north.

The park unfolds as a series of garden "rooms", formal and informal, manicured and natural. Ashland Creek and the wooded bluff along the east and north frame the lawns, ponds, playgrounds, bandshell, and rose garden, and other designed features, which appear to have been carved from nature herself. Paths wind through the park and roads wrap around, all following the curvilinear form created by the creek and valley.

At the north end of the park, where it meets downtown Ashland, the park is the most garden-like and formal, and cultural features dominate. As visitors move through the park, they experience a transition to a semi-natural then natural character. Following Ashland Creek, visitors find that riparian vegetation becomes more prominent, with the steep wooded bluff that flanks the park on its eastern side narrowing the east side pathway. At the southernmost end of the park, natural features are dominant and the transition to the forest landscape is complete.

THE NEXT 100 YEARS

Lithia Park's spirit of place is palpable and evident to anyone who walks through the park or sits under its canopy of trees alongside the banks of Ashland Creek. The goal of this Master Plan is to help the community sustain Lithia Park for another 100 years, preserving what resonates most, making subtle changes

Above: View from Lithia Park.

Right: Artists flock to paint the beauty of Lithia Park.

to design and maintenance to amplify what makes this landscape so special, and only changing things that will benefit the character and health of the park.

Ashland's recently adopted Climate & Energy Action Plan articulates that, by 2050, Ashland will "be a resilient community that has zero net greenhouse gas emissions, embraces equity, protects healthy ecosystems, and creates opportunities for future generations" reflecting the community's multi-layered view of sustainability. Management of Lithia Park provides important opportunities to offset increasing risks of climate change to the Ashland community, including risks from wildfire and floods. Creating a more sustainable built environment is a complex enterprise, requiring both the cartographer's broad perspective and the ecologist's intense focus.

Lithia Park is beloved and a reflection of Ashland's revered history. An important thread of this history is embodied in the efforts of both of its primary designers, reflecting a park landscape which has always embraced strong environmental values even as it has evolved over time. In keeping with the wealth of feedback from the Ashland community, this Master Plan seeks to encompass the original elegance of McLaren's features and the naturalistic adaptations implemented by Corry, while continuing Ashland's proud history of environmental leadership and amplifying the aspects that make this landscape so special.

ARKS

2

PLANNING PROCESS

In November 2017, APRC launched the Lithia Park Master Plan process. This master plan will guide the management of the park's resources, facilities and visitor experiences over the next 100 years, ensuring that Lithia Park continues to shine as Ashland's jewel.

The Master Plan process included three phases. The APRC's Lithia Park Master Plan Committee provided guidance and direction throughout the process. Opportunities for public input were integrated in all three phases, guided by a Community Engagement Plan.

The **Strategic Analysis of Lithia Park** phase set a foundation for informed decision-making. During the **Design Week** phase in summer 2018, the consultant team and APRC representatives developed concepts and alternatives in an open studio at the Ashland Community Center. The **Master Plan Development and Refinement** phase began in late summer with investigations and refinements of ideas generated during Design Week, with refinements continuing through plan adoption by the APRC in 2019.

Strategic Analysis and Initial Community Outreach

The project kicked off in November 2017, when the Community Engagement Plan and Outreach Strategy was drafted. In December 2017, the consultant team met at Lithia Park for two days to complete focused field work, interview stakeholders, review historic research, and discuss current issues and opportunities with APRC staff and the Lithia Park Master Plan Committee (LPMPC). A Listening Post held in the evening allowed community members an opportunity to share their thoughts about Lithia Park with consultant team members in an informal drop-in open house.

To complement the Listening Post, former APRC member and longtime Ashland Creek advocate JoAnne Eggers facilitated a focus group discussion in February. In addition, several community members provided written comments that were reviewed by the consultant team.

MASTER PLAN PROJECT SCHEDULE

	PHASE	2017		2018			2019			
1	Project Initiation and Preparation	NOV								
2	Strategic Analysis of Lithia Park		DEC							
3	Design Week - Transparent Concept Development				MAY DESIGN WEEK JUNE 12					
4	Master Plan Development and Refinement					AUG	PUBLIC MEETING APRIL 25	MAY	ONLINE SURVEY JULY	NOV

An online mapping questionnaire launched in late March and ran through mid-May 2018. This map-based questionnaire invited people to provide feedback about how and where they use Lithia Park, which aspects resonate the most, and information about themselves.

Consultant team members followed up on what they learned during meetings and field visits, considered the feedback from the public, and developed a deeper understanding of the park, its resources, issues and opportunities over the next few months.

Two key deliverables documented the results of this phase. The Foundation Report, presented to the full APRC in March 2018, is included in the appendices in its entirety. A summary of the results of all Phase 1 community engagement activities was shared with the full APRC in May 2018. This presentation is included in the appendices, along with the full summary of the Listening Post held in conjunction with the December field work.

Design Week

In mid-June 2018, the planning and design team (encompassing the consultant team and APRC representatives) developed design concepts for Lithia Park in a transparent open studio process over the course of four days. This approach allowed for rapid prototyping of ideas and development of design responses, advancing the Master Plan and establishing key directions.

The Design Week process included a kick-off evening public workshop to get community direction on the vision for the future. Daytime work sessions were open to community members to engage with the planning and design team and watch ideas develop. Interspersed during the work sessions were impromptu and scheduled meetings with stakeholders. Midweek, an evening pin-up allowed

1: Project kickoff meeting.

2: Community meeting.

the planning and design team to engage with the community about in-process ideas and get feedback. Design Week culminated in an evening public workshop where the planning and design team shared all the ideas generated throughout the week and heard from community members in a variety of formats. The Lithia Park Master Plan Committee met the following day to provide initial direction to the consultant team, based on community feedback.

For those who could not attend the Design Week sessions, summaries of the preliminary concepts were made available online throughout in July 2018 to extend the public input process and allow more opportunity for input.

All Design Week feedback, including online comments and other letters received, was summarized and presented in mid-August 2018 to the Lithia Park Master Plan Committee, who provided direction that allowed the consultant team to move into the Master Plan Development and Refinement phase. The Design Week Summary is included in the appendices.

Master Plan Development and Refinement

The consultant team further developed ideas and concepts generated during Design Week into a preferred direction for Lithia Park's next 100 years, incorporating the recommendations into a draft Master Plan. The Master Plan public review process included a public workshop and companion online engagement opportunity. The consultant team incorporated public and APRC feedback to create the final Master Plan, adopted by APRC in 2019.

3

FOUNDATION OF THE MASTER PLAN

Four key themes of Lithia Park are The Meander, Lithia Park Legacy, Creek to Canopy, and Access and Connections

There is a wealth of information about Lithia Park, Ashland Creek, and cultural, historic and natural resources in and around the park. During the first phase of the planning process, the consultant team synthesized key information and observations drawn from the wealth of existing material and field work. The resulting Foundation Report, included in the appendix, provides a summary of the broad issues, opportunities and challenges for Lithia Park. By no means an exhaustive record, the Foundation Report provides a record of key facts and analysis and is not intended to supercede the detailed studies that have been completed over the years.

Four key themes of Lithia Park, core to its identity and sense of place, are described in this section:

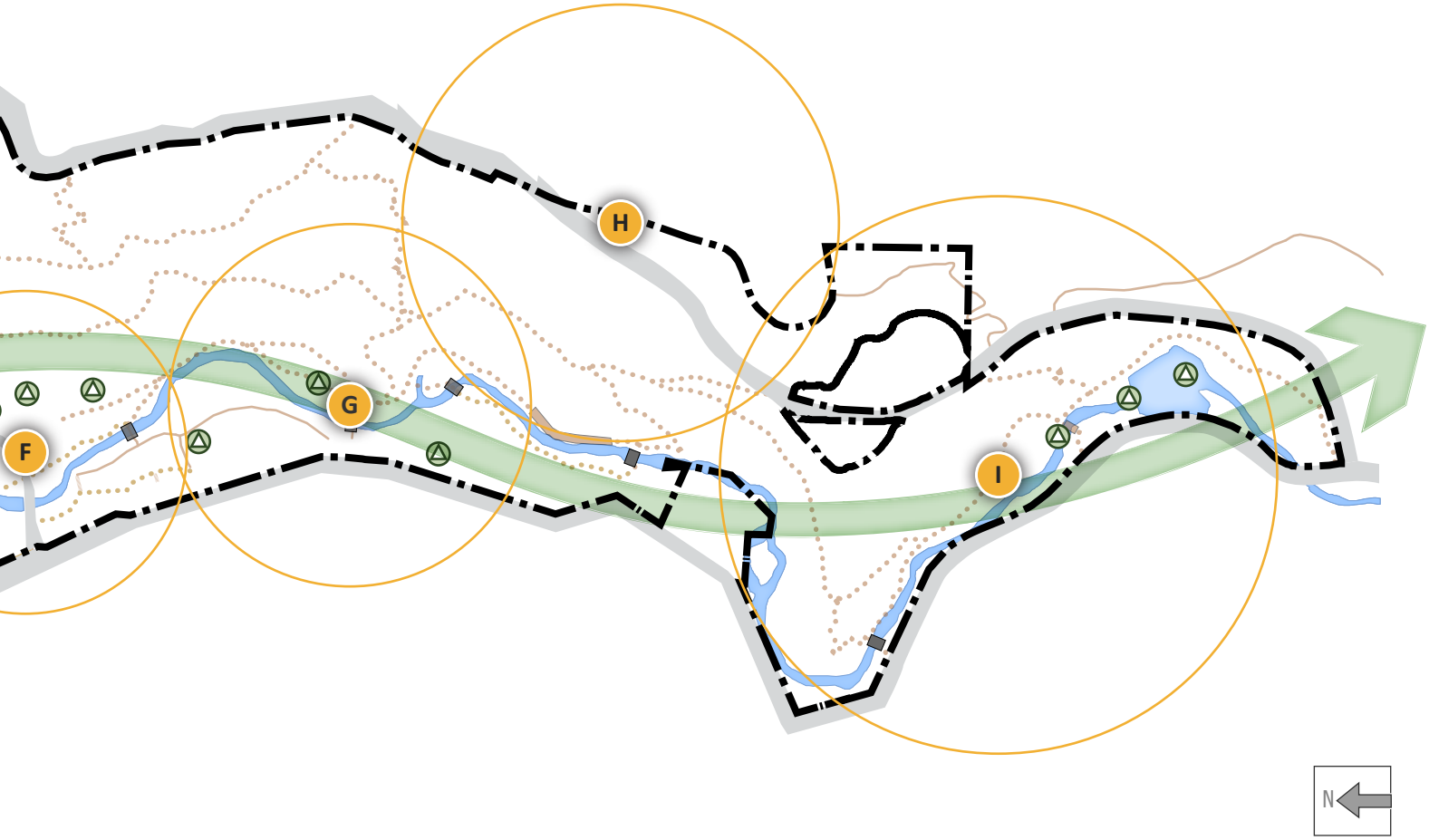
- The Meander, a term that conveys the processional character of Lithia Park and the “rooms” within it;
- Lithia Park Legacy, the built environment within and affecting the park;
- Creek to Canopy, the natural resources and vegetation that are a major contributor to the Lithia Park experience.
- Access and Connections, the pathways within Lithia Park and the physical and visual connections to and from the park.

Above: Lithia Park Map showing the nine distinct "rooms" within the Meander concept

THE MEANDER

Lithia Park's identity is strongly rooted in its design as a series of "rooms" that are arranged like pearls along the string of Ashland Creek, with paths braiding though the park. "The Meander", a term created by the planning and design team during Design Week, is a characteristic of Lithia Park that is central to its identity. The community engagement process strongly underscored the importance that community members place on the meandering character of the park. Design Week input also confirmed that the Master Plan should respect the processional quality of this meander through a connected series of spaces that exhibit their own distinctive qualities while also being cohesively linked.

Over Lithia Park's existence, the individual "rooms" have evolved and changed, but the experience of meandering among a series of overlapping spaces has been a consistent feature. The consultant team defined nine distinct "rooms" that exist within Lithia Park today, each of which possesses a distinctive character derived from its history, contemporary use, and materials. The master plan recommendations, later in this document, make reference to these nine "rooms" within the Meander.



MAP LEGEND

X. Distinct Landscape "Rooms"

Defining Features (listed below)

Meander Pattern

A. Plaza Entrance, Lower Duck Pond, Feast of Will Lawn

B. Ashland Creek Wading Area, Atkinson Bridge, Playground, Pioneer Hall, Community Center

C. Rose Garden, Perozzi Fountain, Enders Shelter, Butler Memorial Bandshell, Sycamore Grove

D. Japanese Garden and Sports Courts

E. Upper Duck Pond, Lawn Below Upper Duck Pond, Madrone Picnic Area

F. Park Offices and Maintenance Area and Former Campground Zoo

G. Cotton Memorial Area, Hillside Picnic Area and Root Memorial

H. East Slopes to Glenview Drive

I. Ashland Creek Elbow, Granite Street Dam, Swimming Hole

A. *Plaza, Entrance, Lower Duck Pond, And Feast Of Will Lawn*

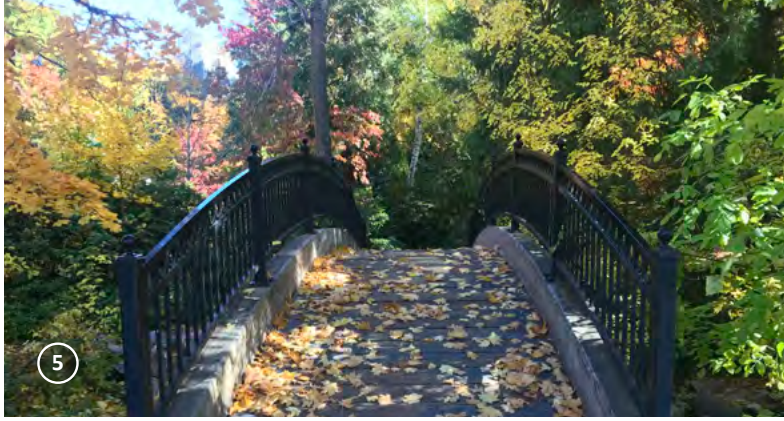
Long before Lithia Park, this area was home to the Shasta tribe village, located where Ashland Plaza now stands at the northern end of the park. After Ashland began to establish itself as a town, this was the site of the Chautauqua Dome, an important gathering place for the community from 1893 to 1933. It was rebuilt twice during its 40-year life. The area gained its now-familiar romantic backdrop after the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF) began in 1935. OSF eventually built its Elizabethan style theater on the site of the Chautauqua Dome. This area has become an iconic gateway into Lithia Park and a key visual connection to downtown Ashland from the park. The Lower Duck Pond (now Meyer Memorial Lake) and waterfall were constructed around 1910 and originally featured tall fountain spray heads in the middle of the lake. These spray heads are now gone.

This area is characterized by manicured, semi-formal gardens with open lawns, and a collection of large, arching canopy trees that exhibit spring and summer flowering and fall color. The Lower Duck Pond/Meyer Memorial Lake is now a still reflecting pond, with a babbling waterfall falling down the slope near the OSF theater. Ashland Creek runs along the western portion of this area but is not as visible a presence as in other areas of the park.

1: Historic image of Lower Duck Pond.

2: Early park visitors.

3: Key map for A. Plaza Entrance, Lower Duck Pond, and Feast of Will Lawn.



Materials within this area include paved walkways with different types of exposed aggregate, round river stone in built features such as a seat wall along the main pathway and globe-style lights that reflect the style of the historic light fixtures around the Perozzi Fountain. Wooden benches are spaced in regular intervals along the main pathway.

This area supports small and large group gatherings on its two large lawn areas and includes many places for quiet contemplation. Since its buildings abut the park, OSF holds a number of companion events within Lithia Park, mainly on the Feast of Will lawn.

4: Lower Duck Pond (now Meyer Memorial Lake) constructed in 1910.

5: Bridge across from Ashland Community Center.

6: Photo composite with historic image of Lower Duck Pond in black and white and current image (2018) in color.

B. *Ashland Creek Wading Area, Atkinson Bridge, Playground, Pioneer Hall and Community Center*

The iconic concrete Atkinson Bridge, standing within this area since 1912, now acts as gateway to the playground and frames the Ashland Creek wading area. Around 1953, the playground area was expanded, and the wading area was created from donated funds. This area also includes a parking lot that was designed to be used as an ice rink in winter. Located outside of the park, but important to the character of this area and history of the park, are the Pioneer Hall and Community Center.

In his early years as park superintendent, Chester Corry created a landscape plan for this area titled the "Self-Guiding Natural Trail," which spanned from the entrance through the current playground area. His intent was to educate visitors on the numerous varieties of trees and shrubs found within the park.

This area is characterized by Atkinson Bridge, gathering areas focused on play and access to the creek, the adjacency to Pioneer Hall and the Ashland Community Center, and amenities such as restrooms. There is a mosaic of gathering areas that are open to the sun and those that provide shade under a mixture of native and non-native trees and shrubs that provides visual interest throughout the year as well as some

1: Key map for Ashland Creek Wading Area, Atkinson Bridge, Playground, Pioneer Hall and Community Center.

2: Playground.

3: Wading area.

wildlife habitat. Pathways are concrete and there is some exposed aggregate and use of river stone details, but it is not as pronounced as in the area further north (area 1).

4: Photo composite with historic image of Atkinson Bridge in black and white with current image (2018) in color.

5: Pioneer Hall and the Women's Civic Club.

6: Wading area viewed from Winburn Way.

C. *Rose Garden, Perozzi Fountain, Enders Shelter, Butler Memorial Bandshell, Sycamore Grove*

This area contains several design features depicted in McLaren's 1915 plan and which were major features at the park's dedication in 1916. The dedication celebration spanned three days from July 4th to 6th. The tradition of celebrating as a community in Lithia Park over the July 4th holiday continues today, and is still centered on this area of Lithia Park.

In the years that followed the dedication of Lithia Park, some features in the 1915 plan were never built and others were lost to time. Those features that remain in this part of the park reflect McLaren's influence on Lithia Park, and this area most closely echoes McLaren's design. It's here that park visitors can still get a taste of Lithia water in the restored Enders Shelter next to Ashland Creek, the only remaining octagonal wooden shelter of the original three that were built per the McLaren plan.

The bandshell has evolved over the years and now has a mid-century built form. However, its function has not changed since 1915, and today the bandshell continues to serve generations of community members as a place to gather and enjoy music. The Sycamore Grove, with its intriguing gridded rows of trunks, was part of the McLaren Plan. It was intended to include "music concourse" that would have been sited among the trees but never took shape.

This area is characterized by a collection of formal historic elements and spaces including the Enders Shelter and Lithia Fountain, Perozzi Fountain, Rose Garden (now reduced in size), Sycamore Grove, and Butler Memorial Bandshell. It also used to be home to the statue of Abraham Lincoln. Those more formal early 20th century elements are surrounded by large open lawn spaces that are edged by a collection of native and non-native trees and shrubs, which

1: Historic image of early road and shelter in Lithia Park.

2: Photo composite with historic bandshell area in black and white and current image (2018) in color.

continue to provide seasonal color and interest. The spaces in this area can accommodate larger crowds and events, but also provide some areas for smaller groups to gather both informally and for planned special events.

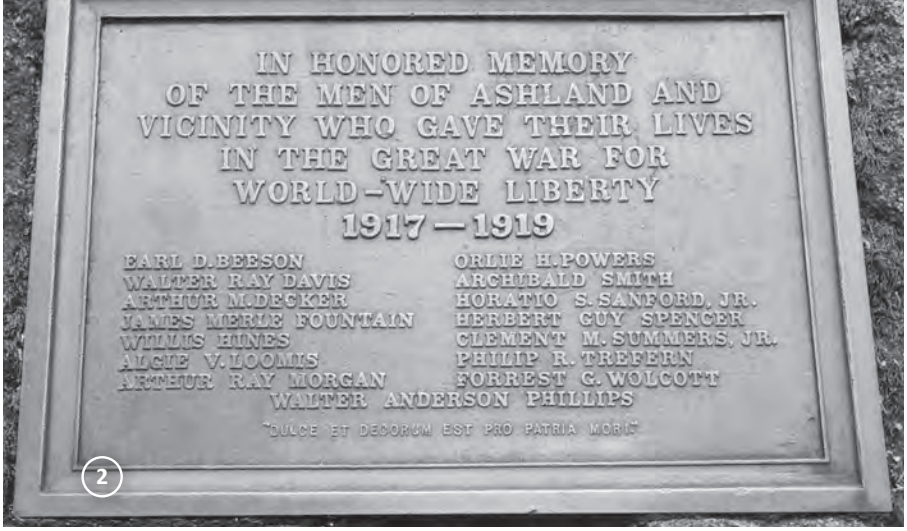
Winburn Way now dissects this area and creates a division between the east and west sides, which was not McLaren's intention.

3: Key map for Rose Garden, Perozzi Fountain, Enders Shelter, Butler Memorial Bandshell, Sycamore Grove.

4: Enders Shelter.

5: Pathways in the area.

1



2

3

D. *Japanese Garden and Sports Courts*

This western section of the park reflects the intent of the mineral springs resort advocates and McLaren's 1915 plan to market Lithia Park as a health retreat. This area was originally intended to support the vitality of visitors through access to fresh, open air in a natural setting. Some features depicted in the 1915 plan were never realized. The Japanese style garden was planned to border a sanatorium and the tennis courts were intended to be edged by a bowling green, handball court, bath house and swimming pool. This area seems somewhat disjointed to the visitor today, most likely due to the features that were never built and the intrusion of Winburn Way through the midst of it.

This area is characterized by the Japanese style tea garden and watercourse, tennis and volleyball courts, and large open lawn areas. These lawn areas are bordered by a mixture of native and ornamental tree and shrub plantings including large conifers, with the area on the west being sloped and the area on the east being more level. Tucked between the western path along the creek and native woodlands which continue as a backdrop to the tennis courts, a modest plaque serves as the only indication of the Chester

1: Historic image of Japanese style garden.

2: World War I Memorial.

3: Key map for Japanese style garden and Sports Courts.

Corry Memorial Garden. Towering rhododendrons and lush native understory plants gracefully line the short garden path in tribute to the man who devoted so many decades of his life cultivating and maintaining Lithia Park.

Pathways in this area are a mix of concrete and asphalt. Stone stair and seat walls continue the use of round river stones found in the northern part of the park. This part of the park has dedicated active use facilities like the tennis courts, but also includes spaces for more reflective and quiet uses. There are areas for individuals and small groups, as well as the active use facilities. Winburn Way continues to be a barrier between the east and west.

4: Historic aerial image of the Japanese style garden.

5: World War I Memorial.

6: Japanese style tea garden.

7: Tennis courts.

E. *Upper Duck Pond, Lawn Below Upper Duck Pond, Madrone Picnic Area*

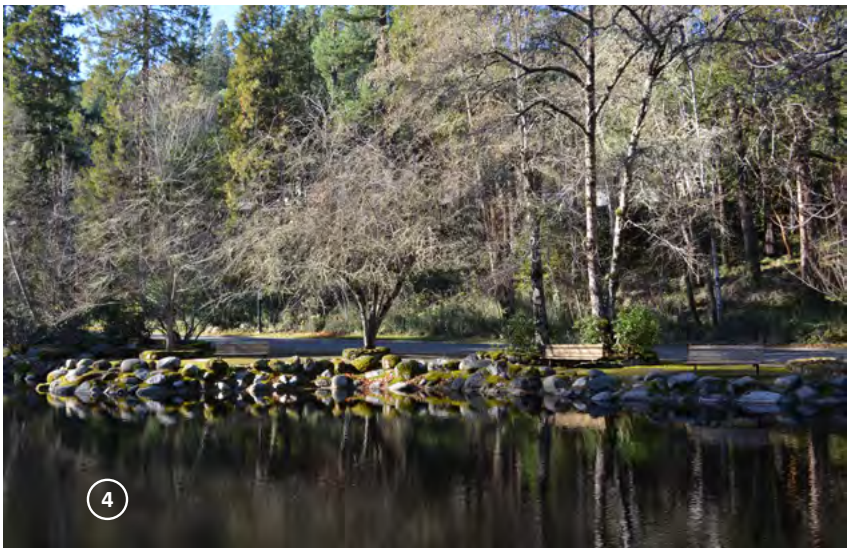
This area was originally planned by McLaren, but the Upper Duck Pond is the only major feature from his plan to be built. On the east side of the creek, the Madrone picnic area is a beloved feature built early on as part of the auto camp that was a key feature of area 6. The Madrone picnic area still stands as a link to the past, continuing to provide a place to picnic under the sun-dappled tree canopy along Ashland Creek at rustic wood picnic tables. This area typically hosts small to medium sized gatherings, wildlife viewing, and more contemplative or relaxing activities.

This area is characterized by the reflective water feature of the Duck Pond, the use of round river stone as a designed edge of the pond, and a mature woodland with native and non-native trees and shrubs that possess seasonal color and interest. There are also a few round river stone walls that punctuate the area. Pathways west of Ashland Creek are concrete, while the trails east of Ashland Creek are soft surface trails.

1: Historic image of Upper Duck Pond.

2: Historic image of Madrone Picnic Area.

3



4

5

3: Key Map for Upper Duck Pond, Lawn Below Upper Duck Pond, Madrone Picnic Area.

4: Upper Duck Pond.

5: Madrone Picnic Area.

F. *Park Offices and Maintenance Area and former Campground and Zoo*

Lithia Park once hosted a free auto camp, one of the first on the West Coast, which operated from 1915 to 1956. This area of Lithia Park includes land that was acquired in the 1920s for improved facilities and the construction of the Community House, a feature of the auto camp now used for APRC offices.

The current layout of this area is reflected in Chester Corry's Cotton Area Master Plan, created in the 1960's. The Cotton Area Master Plan included several picnic areas for individuals and groups in a natural setting featuring rock gardens and flowers, minimal lawn areas, numerous trails, a service road and large parking area. During Chester Corry's time, the current park maintenance yard and shop was the location of the zoo which housed deer, raccoons, Teddy the elk, monkeys, an eagle, and other animals until it was phased out in 1971.

This area is characterized by the early 20th century rustic style community house, one remaining historic cabin (restored), a naturalistic setting with areas shaded by mature tree canopy, a bridge that spans Ashland Creek, visual access to Ashland Creek, a small amphitheater designed with round river

1: Historic campground.

2: Historic zoo.

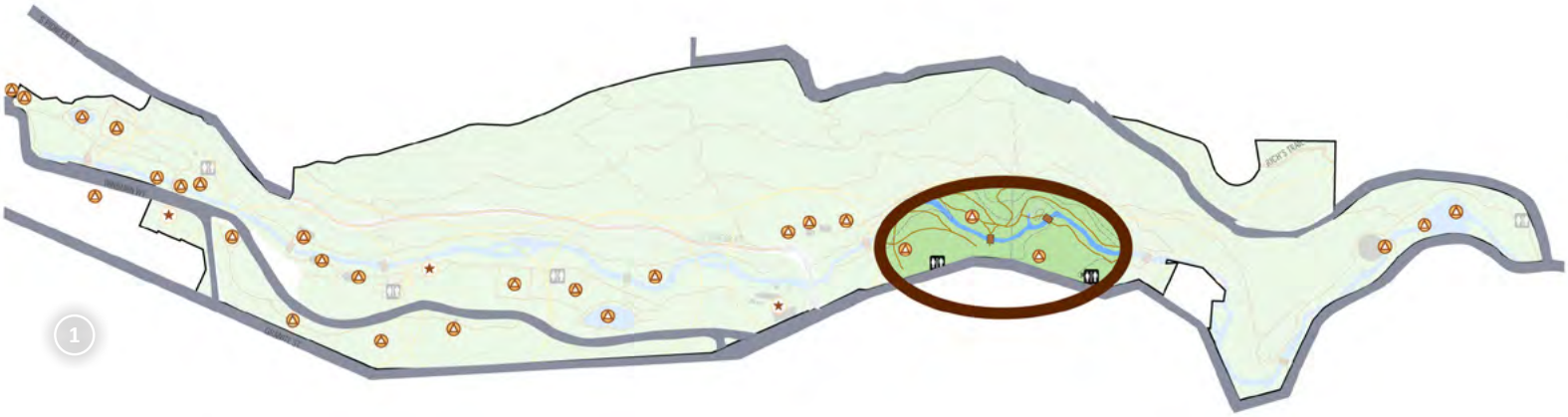
3: Photo composite with historic amphitheater in black and white and current image (2018) in color.

stone set into a hillside, and a small parking area. The park maintenance shop and yard is a fenced area that seems out of character with the surrounding area, and public access is not permitted in this area, which is located on the footprint of the former zoo.

4: Key map of Park Offices and Maintenance Area and former Campground and Zoo.

5: Community House.

6: Maintenance yard.



G. *Cotton Memorial Area, Hillside Picnic Area and Root Memorial Area*

This part of the park includes lands that were donated by private land owners for the purpose of incorporating them into the park. These donations are the source of the named features in this area (e.g., Cotton Memorial Area).

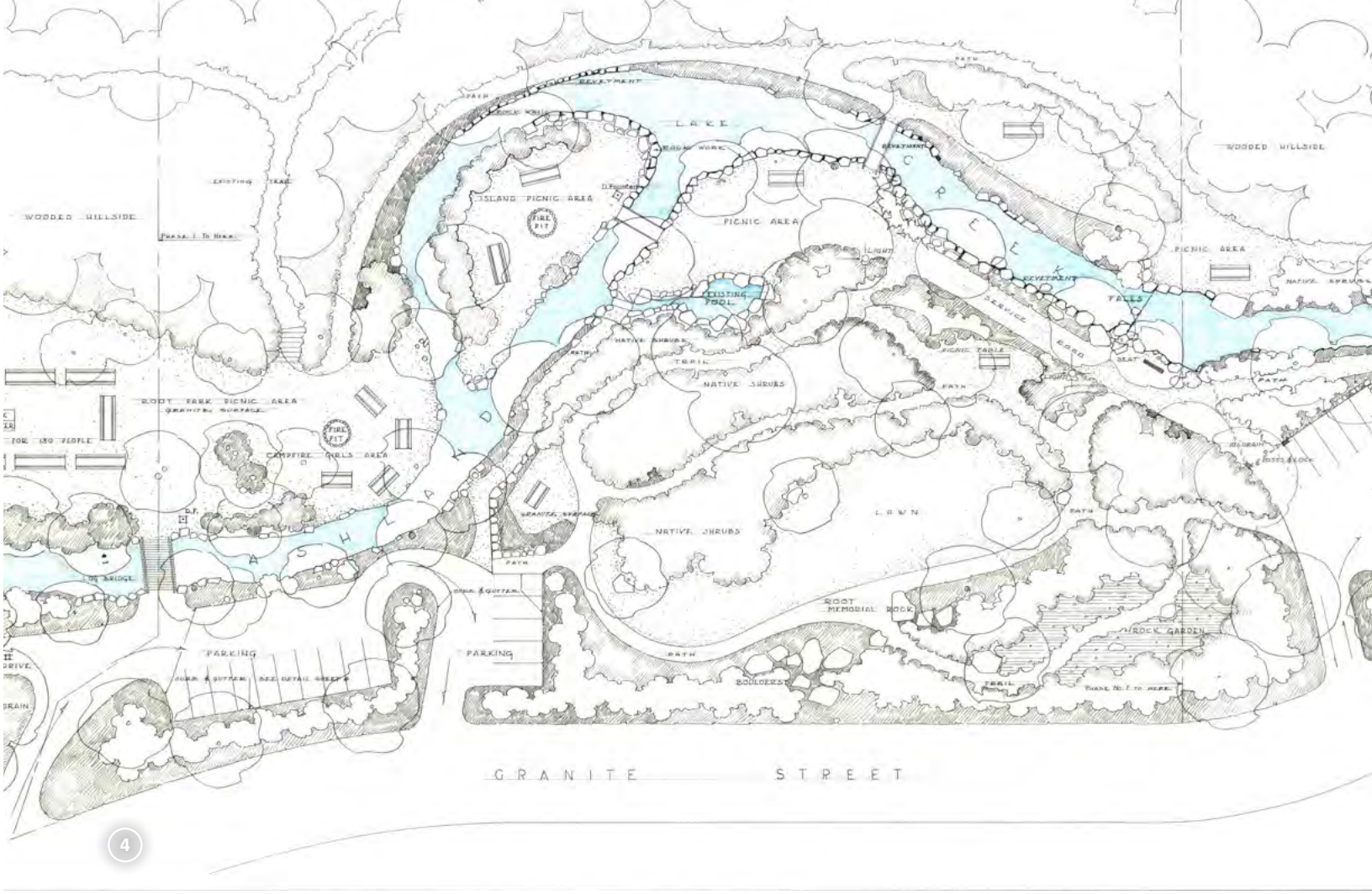
This part of the park is detailed in Chester Corry's Lithia Park Extension – Development Plans, though not all his design ideas were implemented or are present today. This part of the park is a bit more secluded than some of the spaces located to the north. The gathering areas and trails are interwoven by braids of Ashland Creek that give the area a more natural and less gardenesque character than areas on the north end of Lithia Park. The gradual transition from more formal plantings and aesthetic in the north to a more naturalistic quality in the south becomes very apparent in this area.

This area is characterized by Watsons Island, which Ashland Creek braids around; Root Memorial Rock; natural stone revetment walls which prevent some stream bank erosion; log bridges, picnic areas with fire pits; native planting areas; parking lots; and some structures that exhibit the consistent use throughout the park of round river stone.

1: Key map of Cotton Memorial Area, Hillside Picnic Area and Root Memorial Area.

2: Historic image of trail along Ashland Creek.

3: Bench near Root Memorial Area.



parking area. The park maintenance shop and yard is a fenced area that seems out of character with the surrounding area, and public access is not permitted in this area, which is located on the footprint of the former zoo.

4: Chester Corry's 1961 Lithia Park Extension Development Plan drawing.

H. *East Slopes to Glenview Drive*

Open woodlands; steeply sloping hills vulnerable to erosion; and dry, sunny conditions define the character of this area of the park. This is the least developed area of the park , where the woodland is managed mainly for wildland fire prevention. The only developed feature within this stretch of park is soft surface hiking trails leading to the eastern edge of the park along Glenview Drive.

The area is characterized by earthen trails, dry open woodland of native and non-native trees and shrubs, steep topography, and erosion. Primary uses include walking, running and hiking and views of the landscape to the north.

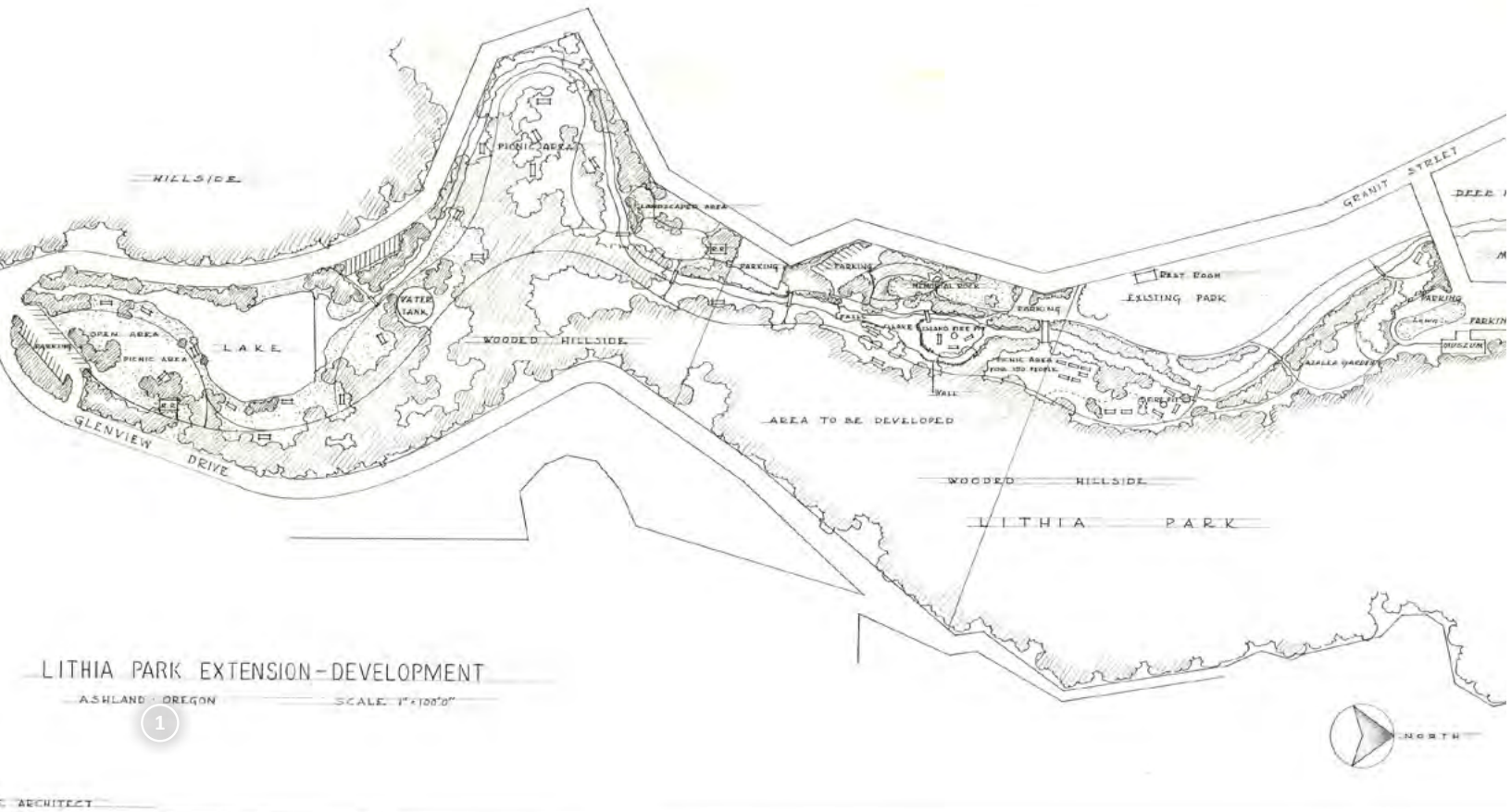
1: Historic view from Lithia Park.

2: Historic road through the park.

3: Key map of East Slopes to Glenview Drive.

4: Hillside trails and historic stonework.

5: Trail users.

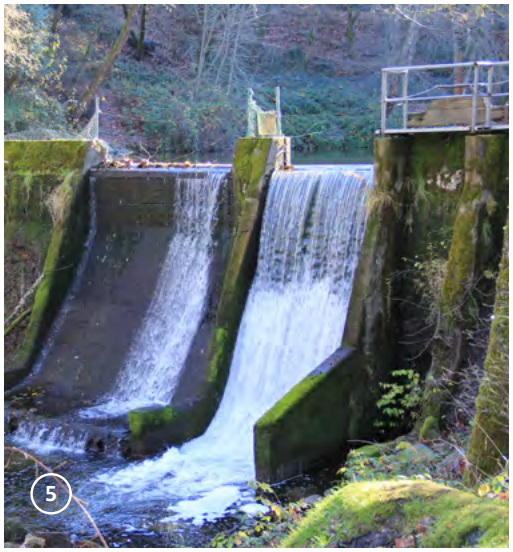


I. *Ashland Creek Elbow, Granite Street Dam, Swimming Hole*

The Granite Street Dam and Reservoir was built in the early 20th century as a water storage facility for the City and has served as a swimming hole over the years. The concrete structure spills into the densely vegetated canyon to the north where Ashland Creek reemerges on its journey through Lithia Park. Set within the more naturalistic southern end of the park, this area is defined by steeply sloping woodlands with only a few trails. It is bordered on its western side by an earth and gravel road that provides access to the southern area of the park and public lands located further south of Lithia Park.

This area is characterized by the swimming hole, Granite Street Dam, soft surface hiking trails, the dirt and gravel road, a woodland setting with some open areas that provide access to sunlight, and sloped hillsides and steep topography. Depending on the season, this area is either quite active with recreational activities associated with the reservoir and hiking trails or quieter and more isolated. Hiking and running activities occur year-round.

1: Chester Corry's Lithia Park Extension Development Plan drawing.



2: Key map of Ashland Creek Elbow, Granite Street Dam, Swimming Hole.

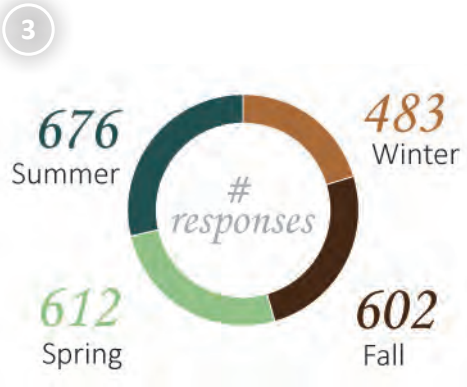
3: Historic view of Ashland Creek and a horse carriage.

4: Reservoir.

5: Granite Street Dam.

LITHIA PARK LEGACY

Lithia Park is one of Oregon's most iconic designed parks, reflecting multiple influences and the steady stewardship of the Ashland community. Chosen in 2104 by the American Planning Association as one of America's Great Public Spaces, the park is well-loved and often cited as a primary reason for why community members chose Ashland as their home. It also provides a place of respite for the many who visit and love Ashland as if it was their home too. This connection is powerful and only reserved for special landscapes like Lithia Park whose history is deep and character is soulful.



Community members participated in an online questionnaire in spring 2018 which identified the places they frequent in the park, showing that though use is focused on the northern half of the park, the entire park length of the park is used with a focus on areas near Ashland Creek.

Community members also identified when they visit the park with an almost equal presence in three of the four seasons, but also a significant amount of visitation in winter meaning this park enjoys year-round use.

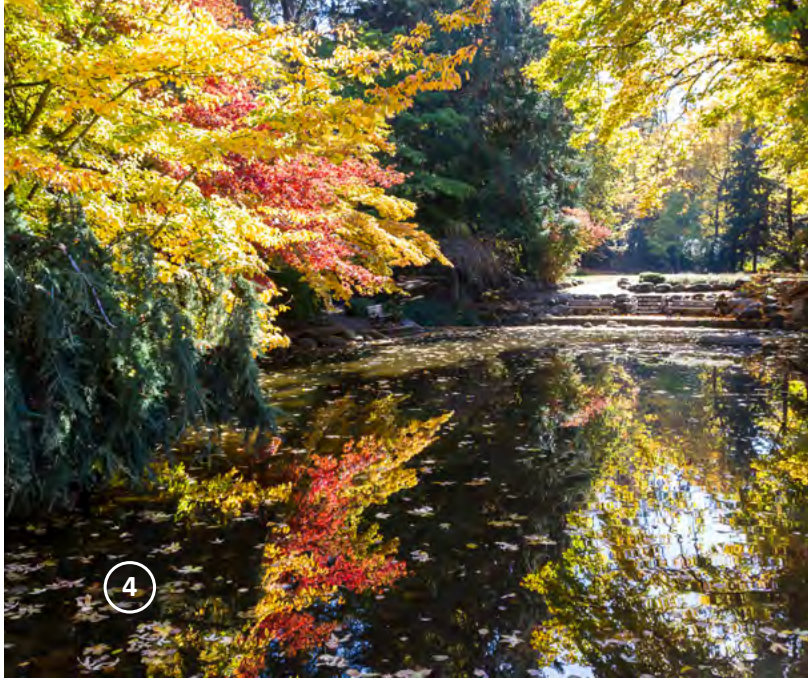
Water Sources

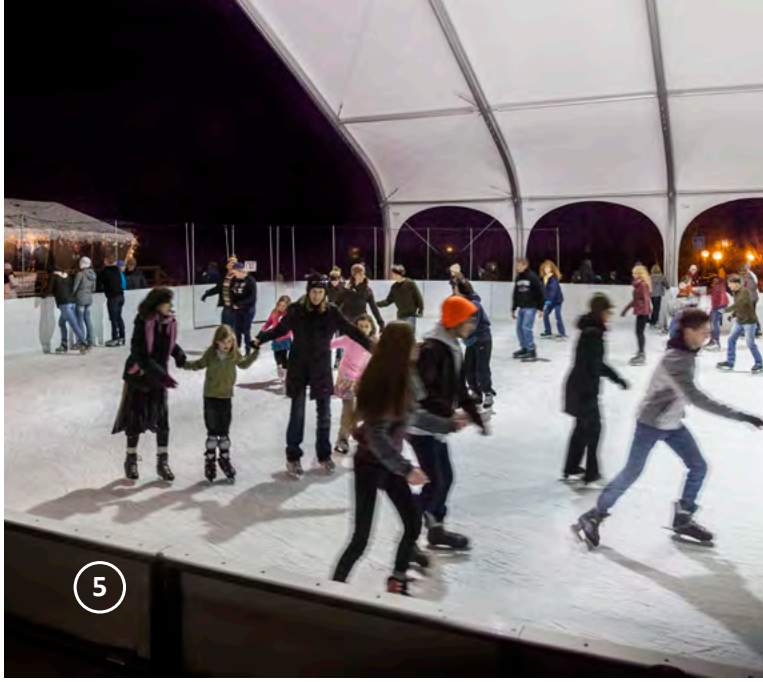
Lithia Park is named for the mineral rich water that can be accessed in the park which was initially thought to have beneficial health properties. Lithia Water is high in lithium, soda, and sulfur and is piped from a spring miles away from the Lithia Park boundary. It is currently provided in the park at the Enders Memorial Shelter. From a maintenance perspective Lithia water is problematic.

1: Spring in Lithia Park.

2: Park user enjoying the swimming reservoir.

3: In an online questionnaire in Spring 2018, community members indicated that they visit Lithia Park throughout the seasons and all throughout the year.





The Ender's Shelter Fountain drains through a short head driven drainage into Ashland Creek. The stone around the discharge point is discolored a rusty orange, and it is unclear if the Lithia water has a negative impact on the water's quality or water-based habitat in Ashland Creek.

Two main sources supply potable and irrigation water to Lithia Park. Irrigation water is supplied from the Talent Irrigation District (TID) through an agreement with City of Ashland Water. Potable water is supplied through City of Ashland Water from the city's main water source, Reeder Reservoir, and through a water treatment plant located between Reeder Reservoir and Ashland city limits.

Talent Irrigation District is served from Hyatt Lake and Howard Prairie Lake through a series of canals. Once the Talent Irrigation District Water enters a monitoring station near Starlight Place in Ashland (located about ½ mile due east of the southern tip of Lithia Park), the City assumes responsibility for maintaining and providing service from this water source to the services within this section. This water is for irrigation purposes only and has not been treated to drinking water standards. It is an important water source for both Lithia Park and the City of Ashland as it supplies approximately 75% of all irrigation water for the park and acts as a supplement for the city's water treatment plant in drought times. The main TID line crosses the park and Ashland Creek near the southern 1/3 of the park. This siphonic system is limited to 750,000 gallons per day at the crossing of the creek, so any water in excess of this is discharged to the creek. The discharge at the creek has been noted as "having an unnatural sound" because it is not a consistent flow but rather flows at short intervals and falls several feet to the creek surface, resulting in a recurrent gushing or surging.

Reeder Reservoir (with supplement from TID during drought periods) is the supply for Ashland's municipal water

4: Fall color at the Lower Duck Pond.

5: Ice skating at Lithia Park in winter.

system and the surface waters of Ashland Creek. With recent climate trends, City of Ashland Water has been operating in drought conditions in the summer months. Ashland Water Department is challenged to meet the drinking water demands to city water users while maintaining a minimum water level in the creek. The City is required to maintain a certain flow in Ashland Creek for downstream water user's water rights. This flow is a percentage based on the incoming flow to Reeder Reservoir. Currently, potable water from City of Ashland is provided via few connections to the public system along Winburn Way and Granite Street. These water services provide water to restrooms, drinking fountains, and provide the makeup of irrigation needed to maintain the park's green lawns.

Buildings and Structures

Many buildings and structures exist throughout the park, ranging from historic wood and masonry buildings to modern masonry, wood or pre-manufactured structures. The historic structures on the site and many of the other structures likely do not meet current seismic codes and could sustain a substantial amount of damage during a large seismic event. Seismic strengthening of these structures, especially for those being rehabilitated in the future such as the Park Office, should be factored into the planning and design process. Some buildings are cut into the adjacent hillside, which also poses a risk during a large earthquake to cause damage.

The historic **Community House/Park Office** house building houses offices and a meeting space. This building consists of partial height masonry bearing walls supporting a wood framed roof and wood framed walls. The existing structure appears to be in good condition and is well maintained.

The existing **Shop Building** appears to have been constructed in two stages. The original section of the building consists of a concrete retaining wall built into an existing hillside with hollow clay tile and wood framed walls supporting a wood framed roof. It appears to have been expanded to the south after the original construction with a structure consisting of CMU walls supporting a wood framed roof. The attic space in both buildings is connected and it appears that the buildings are not structurally separated.

The **Maintenance Shed** is located adjacent to Ashland Creek. The existing building consists of wood framed walls on three sides supported on CMU block partial height walls. The building is

rectangular in plan and one long side of the building is completely open except for wood support columns for the roof.

Numerous **small structures** existing throughout the park, ranging from single occupancy bathrooms to small utility structures for Parks maintenance staff. These structures appear to be in good condition. In some cases, the bathrooms are not well-located or easily accessed by heavily used park areas.

1: TID Outlet.

2: Reeder Reservoir.

3: Historic Community House/Park Office.

4: Shop Building.

CREEK TO CANOPY

Time and time again Ashland Creek and the canopy of trees and shrubs that form the vertical and horizontal spaces of Lithia Park came up as critical defining characteristics which draw people and wildlife to this landscape. Understanding the function, character and condition of the elements that support the creek and surrounding vegetation was a primary focus.

Ashland Creek and Watershed

Ashland Creek is a central feature and a foundational element of Lithia Park. Within Lithia Park the creek is at the lower end of a nearly 20,000-acre watershed, with its headwaters high up on the slopes of Mt. Ashland. Multiple organizations work together to protect, maintain, and restore the watershed, including the Ashland Watershed Partnership, Rogue River Watershed Council, Ashland Forest Lands Commission, and the US Forest Service. Ashland Creek emerges below Granite Street Dam into Lithia Park from a canyon landscape as a relatively low gradient creek. It remains somewhat constrained by topography, particularly the steep bluff that forms its eastern boundary. The stream channel and its bordering riparian vegetation are confined to the existing location. While it may have migrated somewhat within the narrow valley, today it is constrained by park and other infrastructure, including Winburn Way and Granite Street on the west. The park's urban infrastructure places constraints on Ashland Creek and the freedom it once had to be a wild stream that could change its course.

There are two larger dams and additional minor diversion dams on Ashland Creek. One of the larger dams, Granite Street Dam, is at the upper end of Lithia Park and holds a small reservoir that is a popular swimming area in summer.

1: Ashland Creek.

2: Granite Street Dam.

3: Hosler Dam and Reeder Reservoir.

Farther upstream is the Hosler Dam, which holds Reeder Reservoir, the main municipal water supply for the City of Ashland. Floods are a natural part of the Ashland Creek watershed and, according to climate change projections, are likely to increase in the future as storms increase in magnitude and rain-on-snow events become more common. Lithia Park has experienced major floods in the past and the potential exists for additional floods in the future.

The Ashland Creek channel within Lithia Park is moderately incised, or downcut. The existing channel bottom is primarily boulders and sand. This means that over time, the energy of the creek has tended to dig the channel deeper than it was before the City and the dams were built. Most likely the biggest causes are the Hosler and Granite Street Dams. Both have altered the natural migration of the creek channel as it winds through the park. Gravel and cobble that would typically exist in this creek are likely trapped in the Reeder Reservoir behind Hosler Dam. Some gravel may also be trapped behind the Granite Street Dam. This has resulted in a more scoured out and incised channel that has become partly disconnected from its historic floodplain. Effects of a disconnected floodplain include more frequent flooding downstream and lower quality aquatic habitat.

According to previous studies and water sampling, Lower Ashland Creek (located north of the park) has poor summer water quality, periodically failing to meet standards for temperature, fecal coliform bacteria, ammonia, dissolved oxygen, and total suspended solids. Some of these issues are the result of land uses downstream of Lithia Park and cannot be addressed through this master plan. However, some causes may be located within the park. Granite Street Reservoir is a broad, minimally shaded water body

that likely absorbs quite a lot of solar radiation, warming the water that flows downstream through the park.

Ponds

There are presently two ponds, an upper pond and lower pond, within the park. Both provide a still water experience that contrasts with the more active creek and reflect the park's early history of development. Though the upper pond is supplied with a flow of relatively clean TID water, both ponds require high levels of maintenance to address water quality issues. The ponds are frequented by waterfowl, which provide an oversupply of organic nutrients leading to serious water quality issues, including nuisance algal blooms. To discourage overuse by waterfowl, Lithia Park has a public awareness program to discourage visitors from feeding waterfowl.

Vegetation

One of the defining features of Lithia Park is its mature tree canopy and rich layer of shrubs, which are a mixture of native and non-native species. Both provide habitat for humans and wildlife and provide a seasonal color and interest throughout the year. It is this mixture of species and the gradation from formal to naturalistic that resonates strongly with the community which place its vegetation as one of the park's primary defining characteristics.

The park's location at the edge of native pine and oak woodlands, that grade into the much larger forest ecosystems of the Siskiyou Mountains. The park is in effect carved out from these woodlands, and retains quite a bit of natural vegetation, both along the creek and on the steep slope along its eastern side. According to the 2007 Ashland Watershed Assessment, which included Ashland Creek, the vegetation cover within the watershed has changed significantly over

1: Lower Duck Pond.

2: Upper Duck Pond in winter.

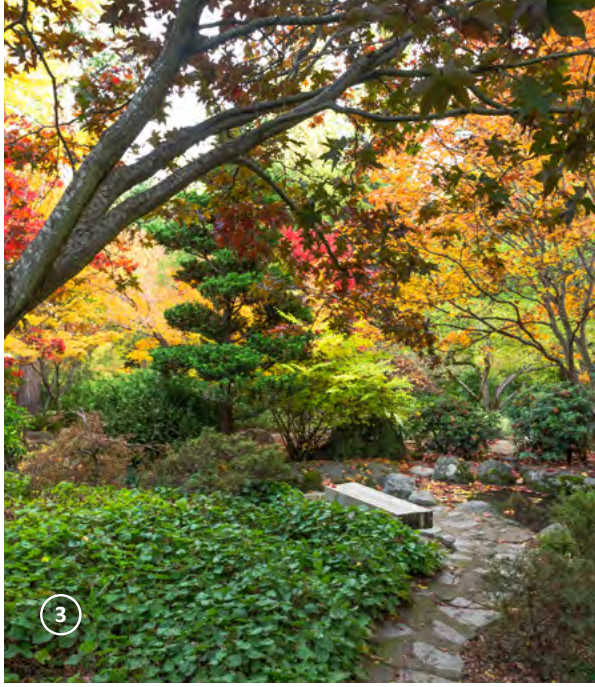
3: The Japanese Garden in full fall color.

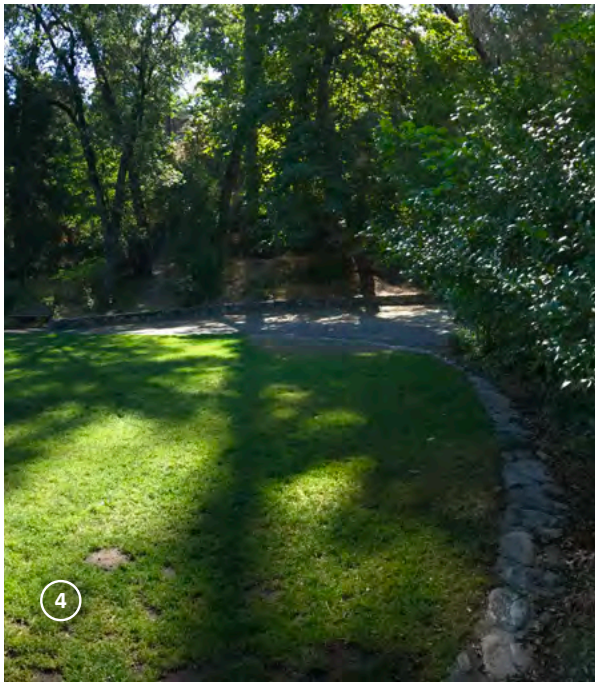
4: Mix of native and ornamental plantings.

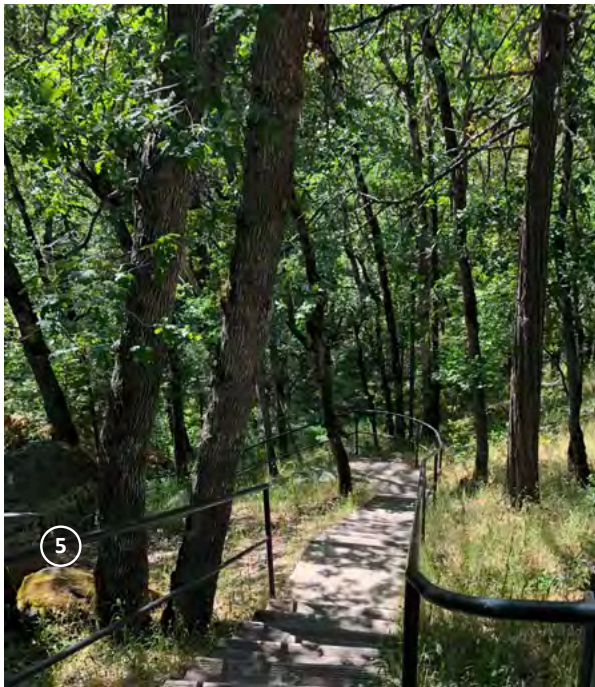
5: Native vegetation along the east bank.

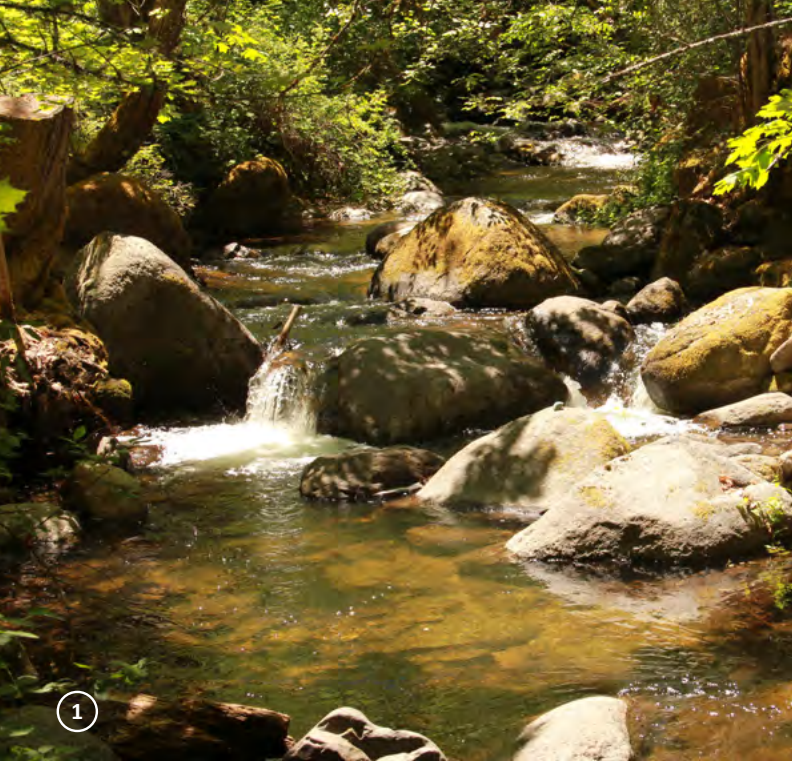
the past 150 years. While urban and agricultural development altered the lower watershed, the upper watershed was changed through logging and fire suppression. What had once been a forest dominated by the fire-tolerant pine that favors more open conditions, the forest is now dominated by fir, which favors more shady conditions and is less tolerant of fire. Over time this shift in forest conditions has become a threat to the watershed and the city water supply.

Several high intensity wildfires that threatened the city watershed got the attention of land managers, City officials and residents. Since that time, proactive strategies have been developed to thin forests, prevent wildfires, and generally restore forest conditions to the more open stands common historically. This has largely been in response to the buildup of fire risk over many decades, an unintended result of the displacement of American Indians, who once set fires that kept forests and grasslands more open, logging practices that took many of the larger, more fire-resistant trees out of the system, and suppression of natural fire, which resulted in a higher density of conifer trees. This is a long ongoing process and will take many years to fully implement. Through its Forest Lands Commission, and after years of public outreach and education, Ashland









has dedicated resources to mapping and managing woodlands across the city, including those within Lithia Park. Up until now, management has focused on reducing fuel levels and restoring a more natural structure and composition to these woodlands. The recently adopted *2016 Ashland Forest Plan* is the guiding document for this approach, which stretches beyond the city and into the larger watershed.

The park's riparian corridor within the park is in fair condition. The Ashland Creek Inventory noted that the riparian corridor width within the park is exceptionally narrow. It consists of both native and ornamental trees and shrubs. Invasive species such as English Ivy and periwinkle are also present.

Wildlife Habitat

As the primary headwater stream in the Bear Creek drainage, Ashland Creek provides spawning and rearing habitat for steelhead and Coho salmon. It also is an important source of cold water to downstream reaches of Bear Creek, where summertime water temperature often exceeds that desired for salmon and steelhead. According to data provided by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), adult and juvenile steelhead still use Ashland Creek although their numbers are greatly reduced compared to historical periods. Smaller numbers of Coho salmon, coastal cutthroat trout, and sculpin also have been observed in Ashland Creek. Adult steelhead have been observed at the base of the Granite Street Dam located at the upstream end of Lithia Park according to ODFW. Granite Street Dam blocks access to any further upstream habitat and blocks downstream movement of fish. ODFW estimates that there is at least one mile of high-quality habitat upstream of the Granite Street Dam that is inaccessible to anadromous fish.

1: Pooling in Ashland Creek.

2: Juvenile steelhead.

3-5: Some of the wildlife found within Lithia Park.

3

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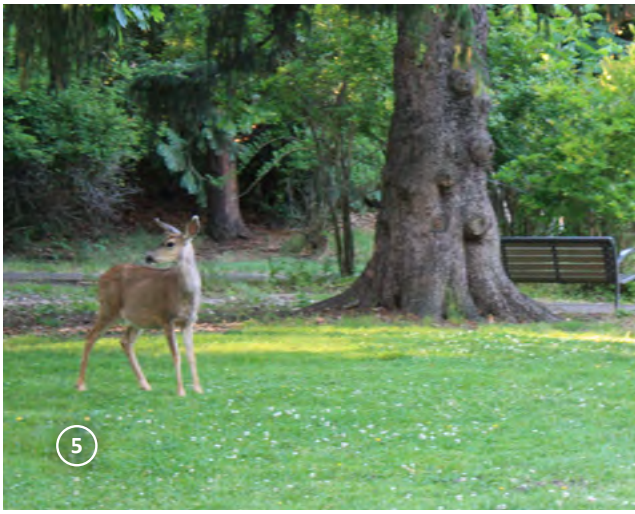
Ashland Creek lacks pools, spawning habitat, and large wood. There are few sizable pools that provide deep, cool water. The creek channel consists mainly of what aquatic ecologists call “riffle habitat,” areas that are too shallow for adult fish to pass through at lower flows, and which provide few fish “parking areas” for resting, feeding, or cooling. The combination of encroachment and confinement, a lack of cobble and gravel due to upstream impoundments, and a lack of large wood all combine to create and maintain a simplified creek channel. Dissolved oxygen levels in Ashland Creek also have a strong influence on the quality of aquatic habitat. Salmon, steelhead, and trout require relatively high levels of dissolved oxygen in the water to survive and thrive. A reduction in stream temperatures could help since cooler water has a higher capacity for dissolved oxygen.

Wildlife within the park, but outside the creek include migratory songbirds, nesting birds such as wood ducks and American dippers, woodpeckers, owls, raptors, deer, raccoons, bobcats, and the occasional bear or mountain lion. Even wolves have been identified in recent years visiting the mountains south of Ashland.



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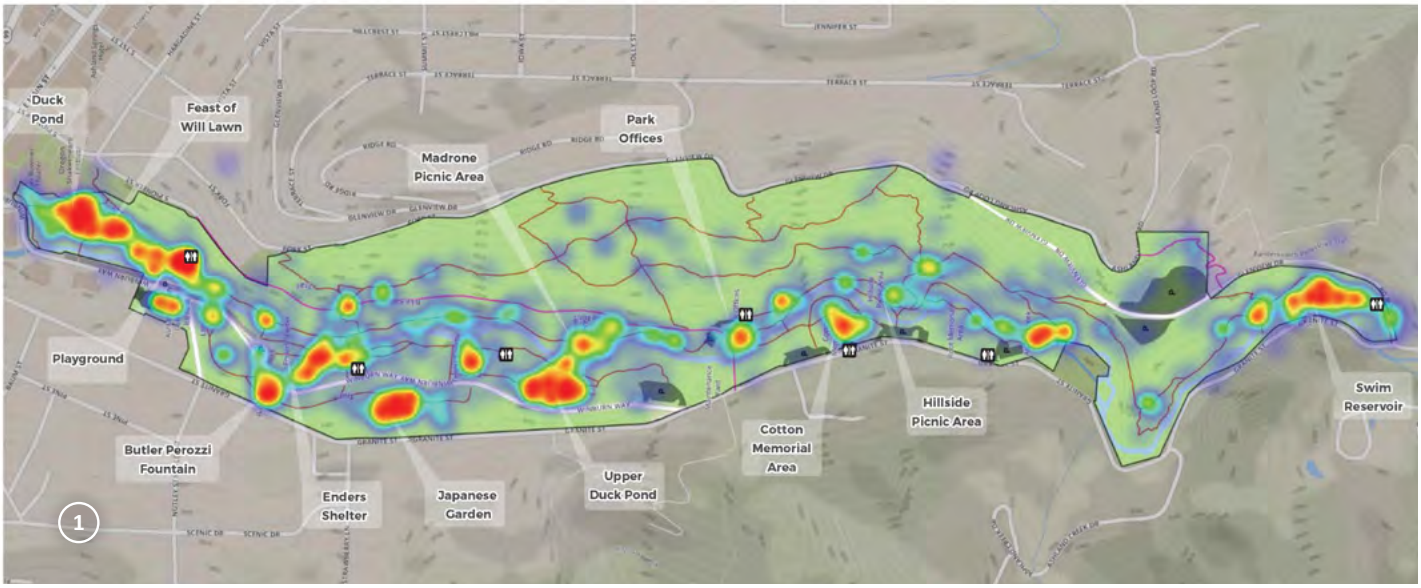
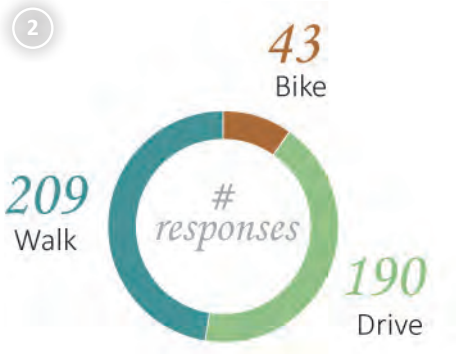


ACCESS AND CONNECTION

Recognizing how people access and connect to Lithia Park defined many early conversations with the Ashland community, while also raising issues and opportunities that this master plan needs to address. Where people enter the park, how they arrive at the park, and what elements allow them to move through the park were critical to understand.



Entrances

The main entrance to Lithia Park is from the north end, where N. Main Street becomes Winburn Way. During the high season, this entrance is often congested. There is a secondary park entrance at Granite Street and S. Pioneer Street along the park's west side which provides access to a maintenance yard and offices of the Ashland Parks & Recreation Department as well as a parking lot. There are numerous tertiary entrances from Granite Street, S. Pioneer Street, Glenview Drive and W. Fork Street.

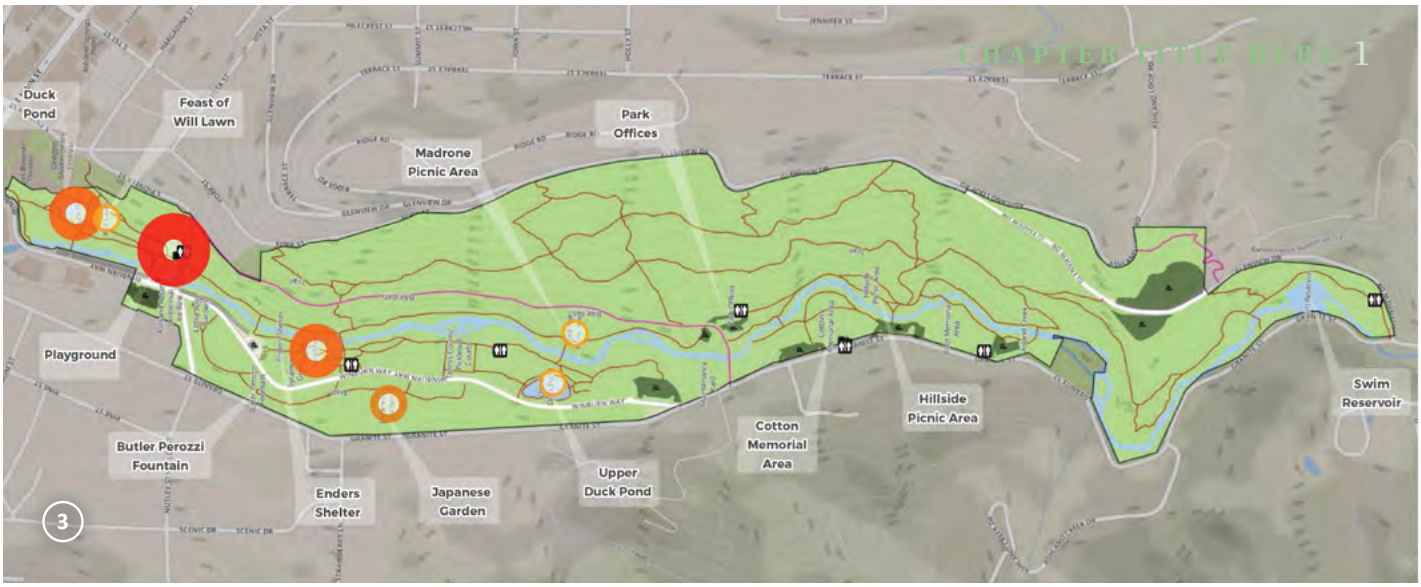
Roads

Lithia Park is surrounded by four primary roadways.

Winburn Way is a two-way road that serves as the main vehicular circulation entry into and through the western portion of the park until it ends at Granite Street. Winburn Way has sidewalks on both sides north of Nutley Street but no sidewalks to the south. It

1: In the Spring 2018 questionnaire, community members identified the locations where they enter the park and indicated that they use the numerous park entry points that exist.

2: Community members were also asked how they get to the park with nearly equal responses between those who drive and those who walk. A smaller percentage bike to the park.

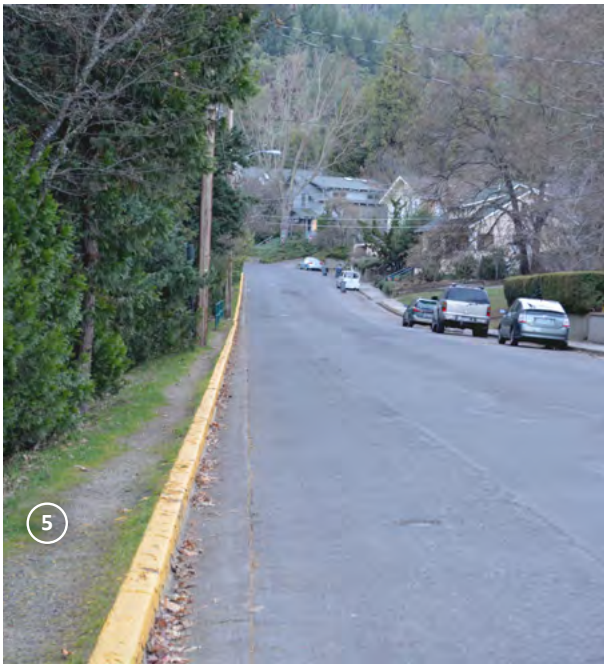


bisects the park's northern end providing a barrier to safe east-west movement.

Granite Street defines the western edge of the park between Nutley Street and Glenview Drive. Granite Street is a residential street with sidewalks on the non-park side north of the intersection with Winburn Way. South of the intersection with Winburn Way, there are no sidewalks and the road character becomes more rural and narrower as it winds up the canyon.

Glenview Drive is part of the eastern border of the park. It is a largely unimproved road that provides access to public lands south of Ashland with limited residential development above the park; there are no sidewalks along its steep border with the park. There are a few trails that provide access to the park from Glenview Drive, some of these are formal trails and others are user-created.

W. Fork Street serves as part of the eastern edge of the park. It is a gravel road at its intersection with Glenview



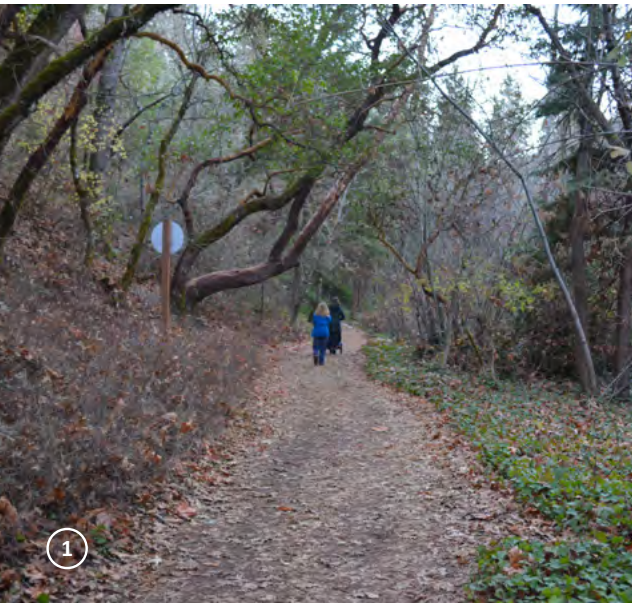
3: When asked what the "heart of the park" meant to them, respondents identified these places since they are some of the most used, for how they feel special, and for the presence of a special or iconic feature.

4: Lithia Park main entrance.

5: Granite Street along the park's western edge.

Drive and becomes paved along its length; however, there are no sidewalks along its border with the park.

S. Pioneer Street is a paved and unpaved road that connects the Oregon

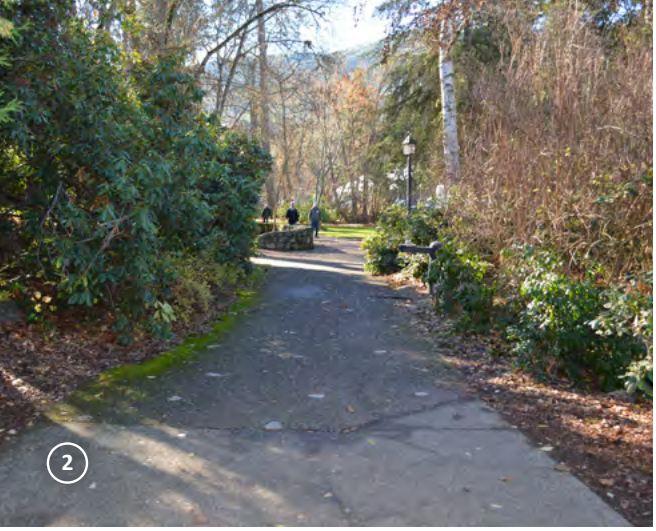


Shakespeare Festival with the Park Office. Paved sections occur on the north near the Oregon Shakespeare Festival buildings and on the south near the Park Office where it intersects with Granite Street. Pedestrians, bicycles and dogs on leashes are allowed along the length of S. Pioneer Street. Vehicles are only allowed on the paved sections.

Trails

Trails in Lithia Park consist of a variety of types, widths and surface materials that are distributed throughout the park. Generally, natural surface trails are focused on the east side of Ashland Creek or south of S. Pioneer Street's intersection with Granite Street. These trails consist of compacted earth with mulch; a variety of punchions and boardwalks provide trail surfacing at points where water passage and drainage patterns have eroded trail stability. The change in surfacing and some other impediments also cause some accessibility issues which are noted on the diagram. This is not a definite survey but highlights some areas where those transitions and impediments need to be addressed.

Trails on the west side of Ashland Creek and north of S. Pioneer Street's connection with Granite Street are more urban in character and paved. There is no consistent material or treatment of material used; materials include concrete, asphalt and stone with some areas having specialty treatments such as embedded materials and exposed aggregate. Trails, in this area, include sidewalks and internal circulation paths that parallel Ashland Creek and Winburn Way with connections that provide access to the different uses, such as the bandshell and Japanese-style garden. There are few



1: The unpaved portion of S. Pioneer Street serves as a trail through the park.

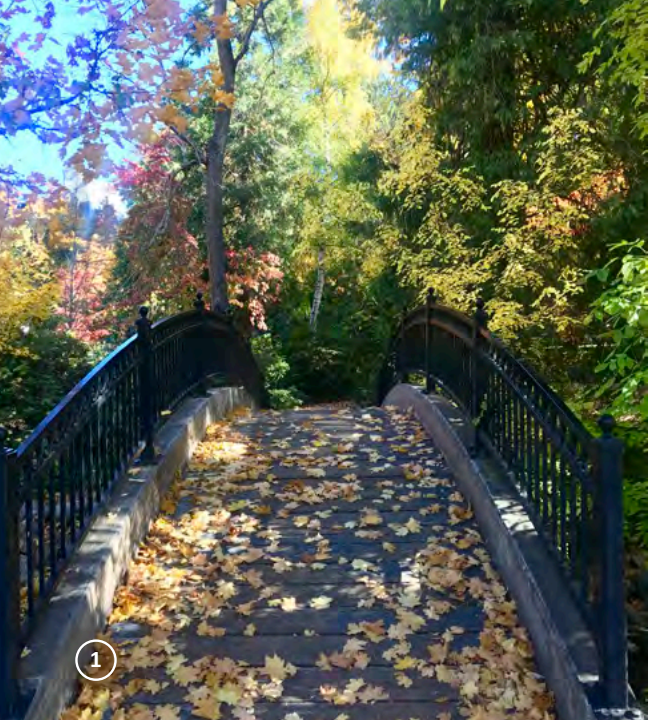
2: Paved pathway.

3: Unique stepping stone pathway in the Japanese Garden.

4: Soft surface trail along Ashland Creek.

trails that connect to Granite Street and those that do, end at the street as there is no sidewalk. Winburn Way serves as a trail, but it has no dedicated pedestrian area on either side between Nutley Street and Granite Street. While some trails in this more developed area provide useful connections between park areas and features, others are remnants whose connections have been lost.

On the east side of Ashland Creek are two primary north-south routes, which are primarily used as trails. One is adjacent to Ashland Creek and the other is S. Pioneer Street, which is described in the previous section on roads. A variety of trails continue from this area and provide access further south into the park and or up the canyon walls and connecting to W. Fork Street or Glenview Drive. Some of the trails along Ashland Creek, particularly in the middle and southern portions of the park are close to the creek's edge.



Bridges

Within the park there are ten bridges that cross Ashland Creek providing connections between different areas within the park and allowing for a variety of different routes to explore the park. The existing bridges are mostly wood framed, but there are also two historic concrete bridges. Bridges are more formal in character and material at the northern end of the park closer to downtown; these tend to be more ornately constructed of concrete and metal. As the crossings move south along the Ashland Creek, they become more rustic in character and tend to be constructed of wood. The existing wood-framed and concrete bridges appear to be in good condition. Existing concrete foundation supports also appear to be in good condition, however, some foundations are experiencing scour that is undermining the foundations.

Parking Areas (cars and bikes)

Parking is provided in a variety of locations throughout the park. Parallel and angled street parking is provided along Winburn Way north of Nutley Street, and along S. Pioneer Street by the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, these are the most dense and urban in character. There is a parking lot north of the maintenance yard on Winburn Way and parking areas around the Ashland Parks & Recreation Department. There are three parking lots along Granite Street south of S. Pioneer Street that service the southern end of the park. There is street parking along Granite Street that is used by park visitors but the lack of sidewalks and pathways into the park limit the connectivity. There are some pullouts along Granite Street south of Ashland Creek Drive as well as along Glenview Drive that accommodate vehicles and provide some access to trails that connect to the park.

1-3: A variety of bridges found in Lithia Park.

4: Storm drain which flows directly into the creek untreated.

5: Street parking and parking lot along Winburn Way.

6: Parking directly adjacent to the creek.

3

4

The parking lot at the north entrance of the maintenance area appears to be oversized for the number of parking spaces it provides. The lot could be reconfigured to either provide additional parking spaces, improve access into and within the park, or meet another need identified during the park master planning process. All other parking areas in the park are using their allotted space more efficiently.

None of the parking areas contain stormwater treatment facilities so all the water that falls on these parking areas drains directly or indirectly into Ashland Creek. Storm drainage within Lithia Park is limited to collection of surface runoff and conveyance via below grade piping to multiple discharge points into Ashland Creek. There is no formal stormwater management or treatment system within the park. Methods for managing and treating stormwater runoff before it enters Ashland Creek should be considered as part of the Master Plan.

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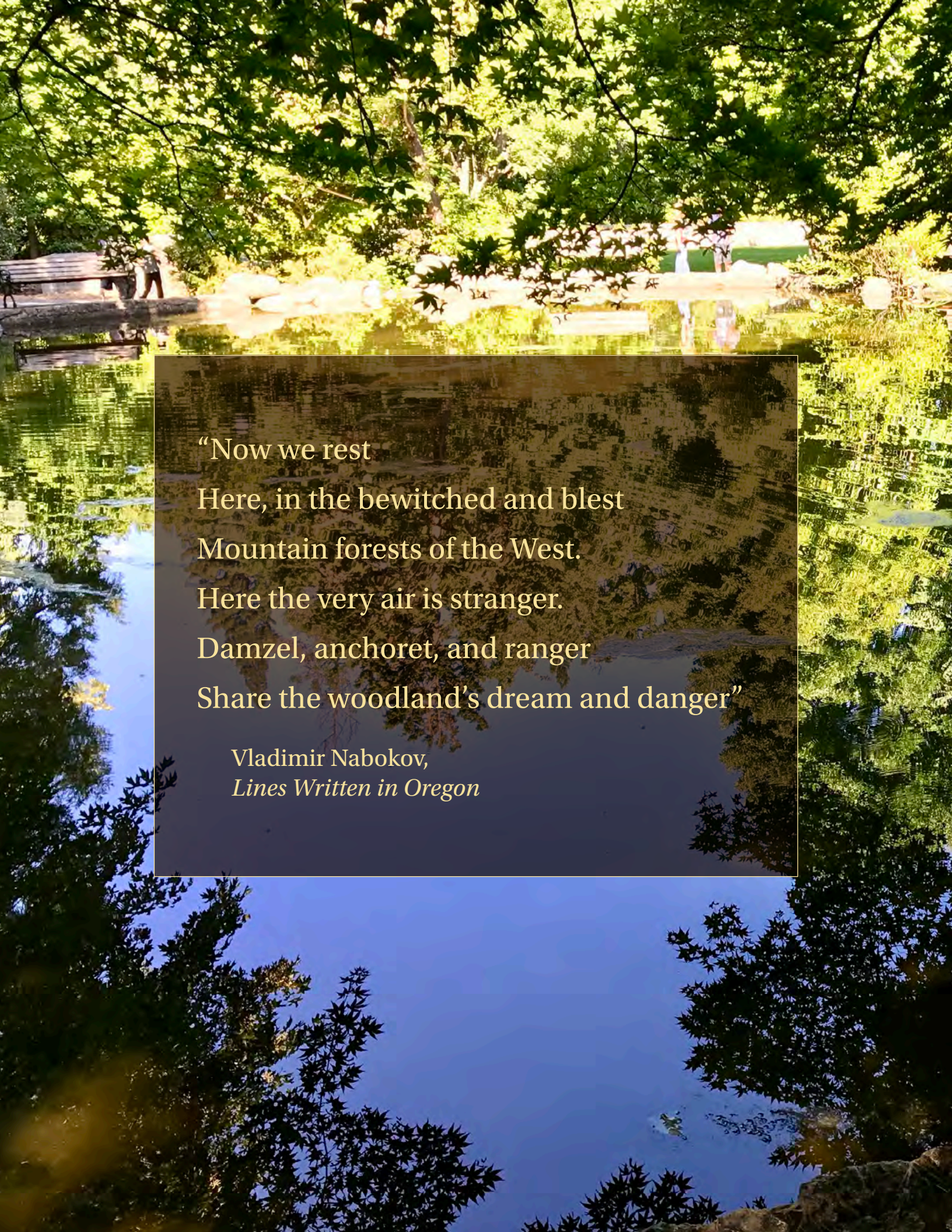


"Now we rest
Here, in the bewitched and blest
Mountain forests of the West.
Here the very air is stranger.
Damzel, anchoret, and ranger
Share the woodland's dream and danger"

Vladimir Nabokov,
Lines Written in Oregon

4

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Ashland community has a deep, historic commitment to the value of parks starting with the founding of Lithia Park more than 100 years ago.

There is so much about Lithia Park that resonates with the Ashland community, but as a living landscape it evolves and changes over time. Looking forward to the next 100 years, it is imperative to have a vision and plan that guides decisions about managing this beloved space to honor and sustain its legacy.

The recommendations within this chapter are based on contributions from passionate community members and professionals with expertise in a variety of park planning and design disciplines. This chapter is organized as follows:

- **Guiding Principles** that clarify the overall vision for Lithia Park
- **Recommendations by Theme**
  - The Meander
  - Creek to Canopy
  - Access and Connection
  - Lithia Park Legacy

The recommendations are organized by four themes that are foundational to Lithia Park, highlighted in Chapter 3. All recommendations are consistent with the guiding principles, and each recommendation is numbered for reference.

Predicting the future is a fraught task, so this Master Plan includes recommendations that can be done in the short-term and some that are much more long-term. Some recommendations are higher level and will require further study when funding becomes available. Others are more specific and have a more defined path to implementation. This balance ensures that the plan has both the flexibility and specificity needed to assist the APRC and Ashland community as they continue to steward this magical place.

Clarify the overall vision for Lithia Park

PUBLIC PROCESS

Community Input & **Professional Expertise**

Distill findings to reflect the values of community members and preserve the legacy of Lithia Park

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Honor the legacy, adapt for today and tomorrow
- Orchestrate movement into and through the park
- Provide a diverse sequence of spaces and experiences
- Emphasize places for solitude and gathering
- Provide access for all
- Prioritize restorative connections to nature
- Regenerate healthy habitats and support resiliency
- Build to last
- Reflect community values

Create an approachable and flexible plan for future decision making

ORGANIZING THEMES

The Meander | **Access and Connection**

Creek to Canopy | **Lithia Park Legacy**

Develop actionable items for short and long-term management

RECOMMENDATIONS

Guiding Principles for Lithia Park

The guiding principles help clarify the overall vision for Lithia Park. These principles should be used to guide decisions about all actions (management, maintenance, programming, capital improvements, events) within the park or that may have an impact on the park. APRC can use these principles to guide the decision-making process when unforeseen opportunities and challenges arise in the future.

Honor the legacy, adapt for today and tomorrow

Park stewards, planners and designers should honor the legacy of those who helped shape Lithia Park's physical existence and character, including early inhabitants such as the Shasta Indians, the Chautauqua founders, the Ashland Women's Civic Improvement Club, John McLaren, and Chet Corry. Each contributed to the character of the park that people experience today. Past contributions should be respected but not frozen in time; rather, they should be adapted following a rehabilitation approach so that their essential character is retained.

Orchestrate movement into and through the park

As Ashland Creek moves through the park, so do people. Their movement from north to south and east to west should be choreographed. Lithia Park's function as a

place for movement through a sequence of experiences should be supported with a multiple well-located entries that provide clear and safe access while also protecting the park's sensitive resources.

Provide a diverse sequence of spaces and experiences

One of the defining characteristics of Lithia Park is its kaleidoscope of diverse spaces and experiences. This allows all who visit the park to find a place that fits their needs on any given day. This diversity contributes to the strong connection people have with the Lithia Park landscape and is a characteristic that should be nurtured.

Emphasize places for solitude and gathering

Lithia Park is beloved for both the places of solitude it provides and the lively community gatherings it supports. Both should be provided, and the balance should be continually calibrated to ensure that both are equally sustained into the future.

Provide access for all

People of all ages, abilities, cultures, and socio-economic status should be able to enjoy the Lithia Park experience. Using universal design principles as a basis for all design projects will help ensure that Lithia Park is accessible to all.

Prioritize restorative connections to nature

The restorative power of nature as a tonic from everyday life cannot be overstated. The healthful connection to nature was one of the driving forces for the creation of Lithia Park. It should continue to be a primary function of the park and should be prioritized in all decision-making.

Regenerate healthy habitats and support resiliency

Lithia Park should provide and promote the regeneration of habitat for a diverse variety of plant and animal species, including humans, to ensure the park continues to support health, longevity and adaptability to changes in the environment.

Build to last

As new elements and features are built, repaired, preserved or rehabilitated in the park, they should be designed and constructed with longevity in mind. Long-lasting, high quality materials reflect the history and constancy of this park. In addition, they reduce the need for regular replacement of features and are more financially and ecologically sustainable.

Reflect community values

Consider social and environmental principles, such as the Valdez Principles, and community wide initiatives, such as Bee City USA, as a guide to decision making in order to reflect the values of the community.

THE MEANDER

THE MEANDER

At its core, Lithia Park possesses a sensation of movement. While Ashland Creek flows from south to north, many people wander from the north to the south and back again. The linear nature of the park encourages movement through its spaces either via topography as the water runs downhill or by the draw of nature that pulls people through the park to explore and reconnect. It is this movement through diverse spaces and experiences that should guide future designs, spatial organization, and interpretation.

Recommendation 1: *Incorporate interpretation and storytelling throughout the park to link people to its cultural and natural qualities, using art, media, programs and permanent or temporary exhibits.*

Lithia Park has a rich natural and social history and offers many opportunities to inform visitors about its history and natural processes. Based on the public engagement results, many people feel there is not enough environmental information and interpretation within Lithia Park, nor is there a consistent depth of understanding of the landscape's history. The challenge of enhancing education and interpretation

is to do so sensitively and artfully, avoiding littering the park with signs and kiosks.

All eras of the landscape's history should be thoughtfully incorporated into permanent or temporary art installations and exhibits whenever opportunities present themselves, including the park's origins with the Chautauqua movement, the Ashland Women's Civic Improvement Club, and its relationship with San Francisco's landscape designer John McLaren and the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exhibition. There are also rich opportunities to coordinate with descendants of the Oregon Shasta tribe (part of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde and Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians) to provide opportunities for them to gather in their sacred homeland and engage with the history and ecology of Lithia Park in a way that reflects their past, present and future in a manner which they determine.

In addition, interpretation efforts can be focused on environmental education to strengthen park stewardship and increase environmental awareness. In the spirit of Chet Corry's Self-Guided Nature Trail, provide opportunities for Ashland residents, park visitors and students to access information on park resources by highlighting natural processes, connections, and indicators of ecological conditions within the park. For example, information on park resources and their sensitivity could be provided to Ashland residents, park visitors, and student visitors to improve environmental literacy and park stewardship.

Recommendation 2: *Recognize the diversity of spaces that exist in Lithia Park and emphasize their unique character while also integrating the experiences within a linear style park that stretches from town to wild.*

Lithia Park was designed to include a series of spaces that work together as a whole park, linked in large part by the presence of Ashland Creek, while also providing a variety of spaces, experiences and uses along the continuum from north to south. This continuum transitions from areas with more cultural emphasis to areas with more natural emphasis. This conceptual framework for the park's design and programming should inform which elements are appropriate for each zone, while taking care to recognize the inherent qualities of each historic character area. This also allows for incorporation of elements that can serve as links between zones and improve the integration between them. The transition between spaces should be purposeful in design, taking cues from each area's inherent character, to inform how the interstitial spaces are designed and flow.

CULTURAL LEGACY TIMELINE

AREAS OF INFLUENCE: DEFINING MOVEMENTS & VALUES OF DIFFERENT AREAS

PRE-CONTACT
TIME IMMEMORIAL - EARLY 19TH CENTURY

SETTLEMENT
EARLY TO LATE 19TH CENTURY

CHAUTAUQUA & WOMEN'S CIVIC MOVEMENT
LATE 19TH TO EARLY 20TH CENTURY

LITHIA PARK THE FIRST 100 YEARS

MCLAREN ERA
1910S

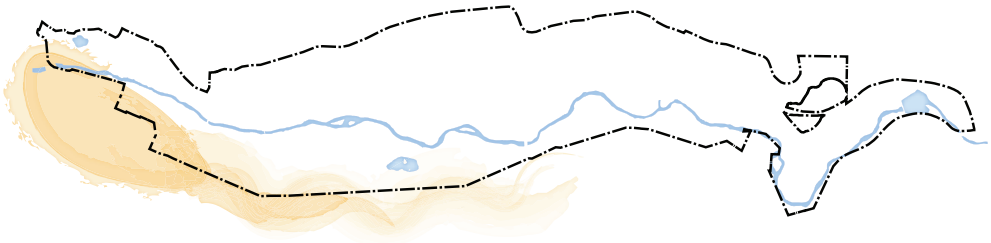
CHET CORRY ERA
1929-1969

CURRENT
1970-2019

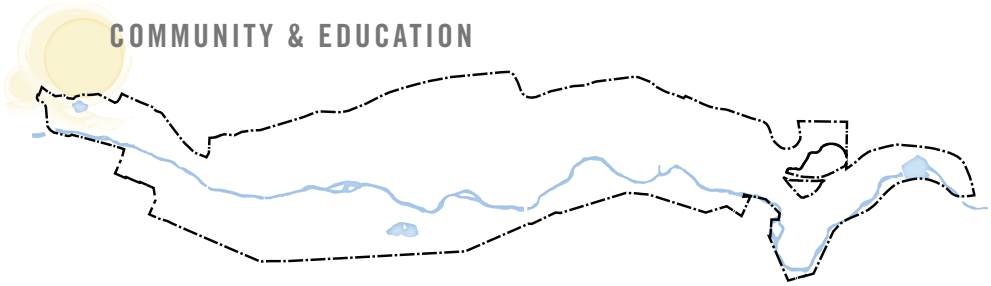
THE NEXT 100 YEARS

TRIBAL CONFLUENCE

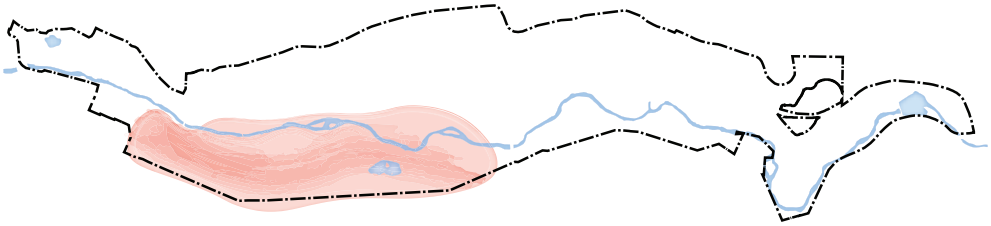
AGRICULTURE & EXTRACTION



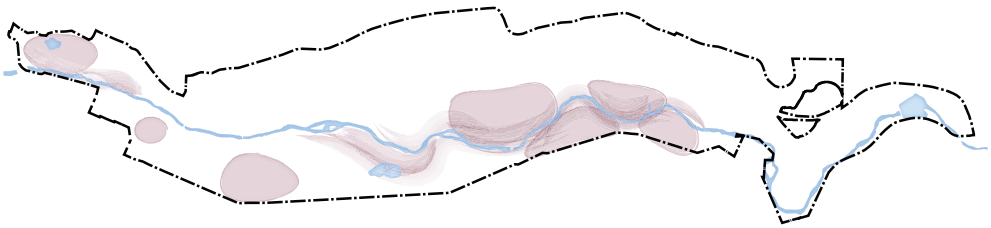
COMMUNITY & EDUCATION



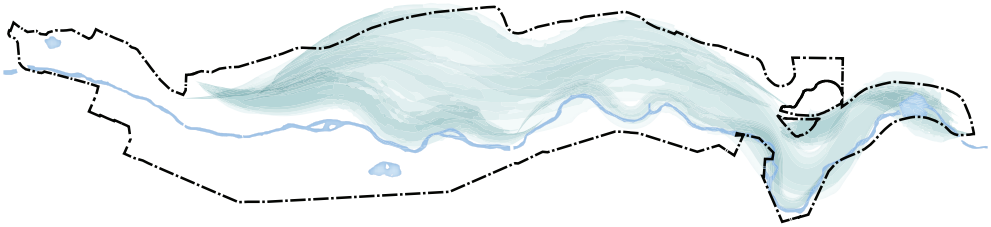
HEALTH & WELLNESS



ASHLAND'S GARDEN



RETURN TO NATURE



A DIVERSITY OF INTEGRATED EXPERIENCES

The Meander Zones illustrate how current elements will be blended with future recommendations by grouping similar features into a continuum along "McLaren's Meander", the braided pathways that link the park's north to south together. The zones include:

- **Civic Grounds** – Park Entrance, Lower Duck Pond, Feast of Will Lawn, Ashland Creek Wading Area, Atkinson Bridge, Pioneer Hall and Community Center
- **Terrace Gardens** – Rose Garden, Perozzi Fountain, Enders Shelter, Butler Memorial Bandshell, Japanese Garden, Chester Corry Memorial Garden, and Sycamore Grove
- **Gathering Groves** – Sports Courts, Upper Duck Pond, Lawn Below Upper Duck Pond, Park Offices and Community House
- **Picnic Grounds** – Cotton Memorial Area, Hillside Picnic Area, Root Memorial Area, and Madrone Picnic Area
- **Upper Woodlands** – Granite Street Dam, East Woodland Slopes, Ashland Creek Wading Pools

1

2

3

4

5

HAMMOCK GROVE

1

2

3

EDWARDS GARDENS
European settlement began in this area shortly after the War of 1812. Alexander Milne, a Scottish weaver, arrived here with his family in 1817. Milne's farm and mill operation prospered for over a century, eventually expanding to 240 hectares in size. For many years, the watercourse passing through this park was known as Milne Creek.
In 1944, Rupert E. Edwards, proprietor of Canada Varnish Ltd., purchased the original 11-hectare Milne homestead. Over the next 12 years, Mr. Edwards introduced many landscape features into the garden including a large rockery, ponds, rustic bridges, flower beds, and a 9-hole golf course.
Mr. Edwards' vision was to see the gardens become a public park. Accordingly, in 1955, Metropolitan Toronto purchased the property and, since then, has maintained the beauty and original character of this unique landscape.

4

CHICAGO
BOTANIC
GARDEN

5

Part of the Solution
Caring for the Jordan River

6

Interpretation & Storytelling

1: Park directory signs can be designed to be both artistic and informational, consolidating information about maps, park policy, and upcoming events, while minimizing the number of signs used. (Photo: Society for Experiential Graphic Design)

2: Here an interpretive sign incorporates rich graphics and photos to convey information about park features. The sign has been designed to match the park directory seen in Photo 1, creating a unified look throughout the park.

3: A 3-Dimensional bronze map conveys a parks relationship between historic features, topography, water, and the surrounding city. (Photo: Society for Experiential Graphic Design)

4: An elegant and classic approach to displaying information about key park features or areas.

5: A simple and elegant sign can be used to identify the park from the front, while the park directory is displayed on the back, paired here with temporary banners promoting upcoming events.

6: An example of interpretive design focused on environmental education.

7: Here a historic photo is paired up with the original viewpoint to convey the rich history of a place.

8: Another example of a unified design approach to signage, here a decorative sign used along the roadway matches the interpretive sign seen in Photo 6.

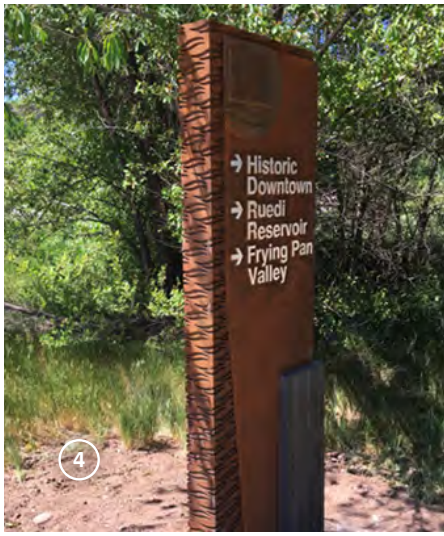
9: A park sign incorporated into the landscape design which doubles as seating.

10: An engraved tree tag identifies the plant species and also subltly includes a QR code which can be scanned with smart phones to link to interactive digital information.

1

2

3



4

Recommendation 3: *Create a series of measured and named loop trails.*

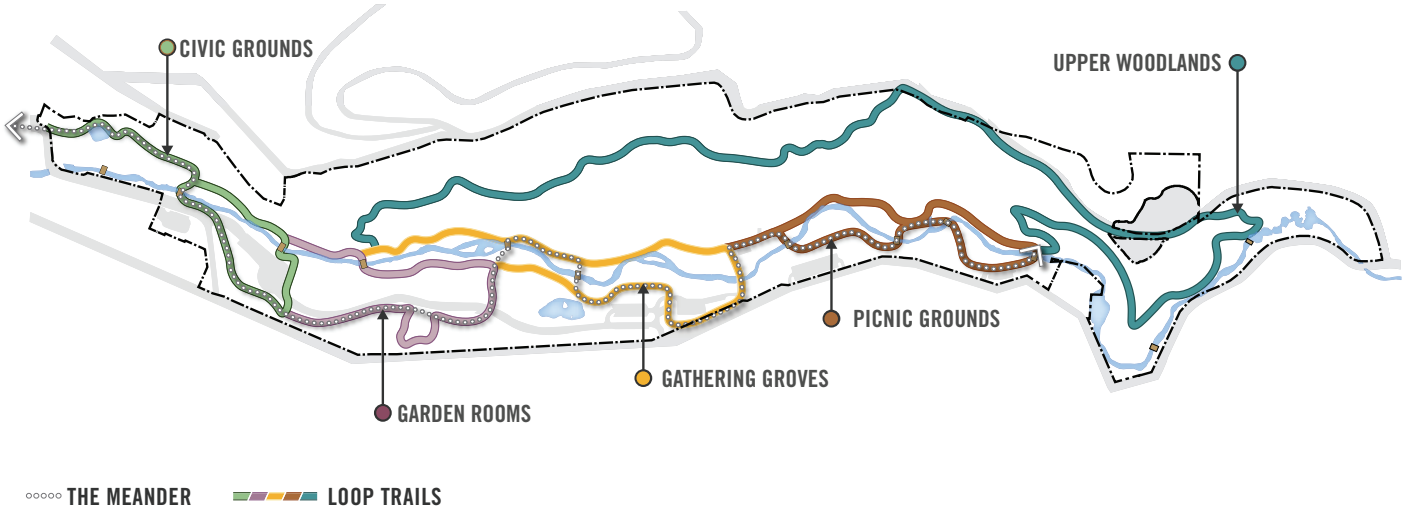
There are trails within Lithia Park, but no formalized loop trails. Loops can help increase appropriate use of the park's circulation network and decrease instances where people cut through more sensitive areas. Loop trails can use the 10 pedestrian bridges and one multimodal bridge to allow connections back and forth over Ashland Creek.

Establishing and naming several shorter and longer loop trails that are signed with distances would allow for more informed use of the existing trails and provide useful information for visitors, maintenance and emergency response. The loop trails should be located to provide a variety of experiences, including areas of garden, woodlands, and areas near the creek which can be facilitated with boardwalks to protect the wetland soils.

5

6

LOOP TRAILS



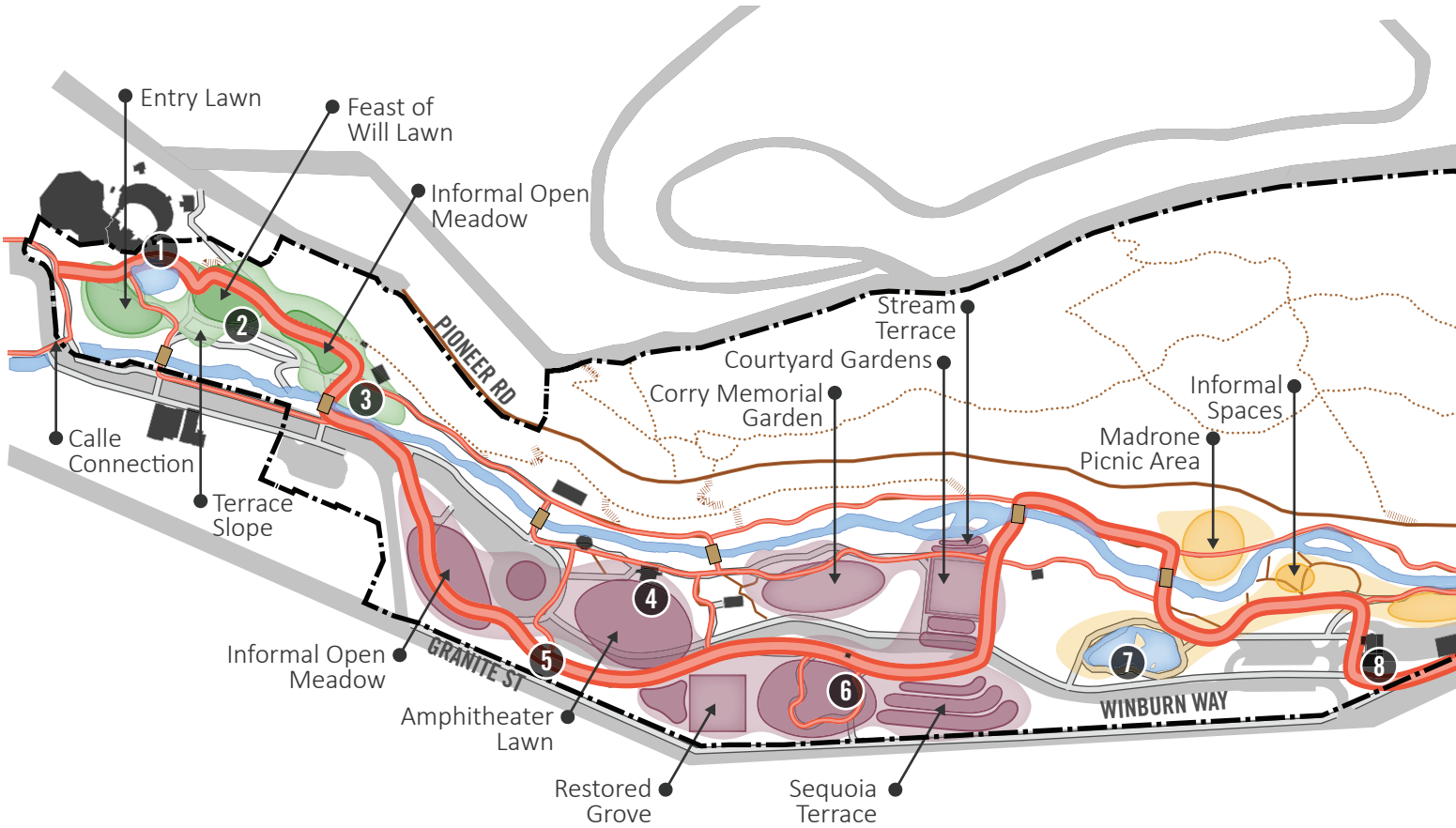
Wayfinding

1: An example of a simple but elegant directory sign for a linear park (Central Park).

2: Directional signs should be placed periodically at the intersections of main trails and secondary access points (see Circulation Concept) to help visitors stay oriented.

3: Directions signs can be subtle where guidance is needed in keeping restricted uses to designated routes, such as biking and on-leash dog walking.

4: Directory maps should be displayed near all major access points (see Circulation Concept). Sign materials and design should either reflect the character of the Meander Zone where it's placed, or follow a consistent design used throughout the entire park.



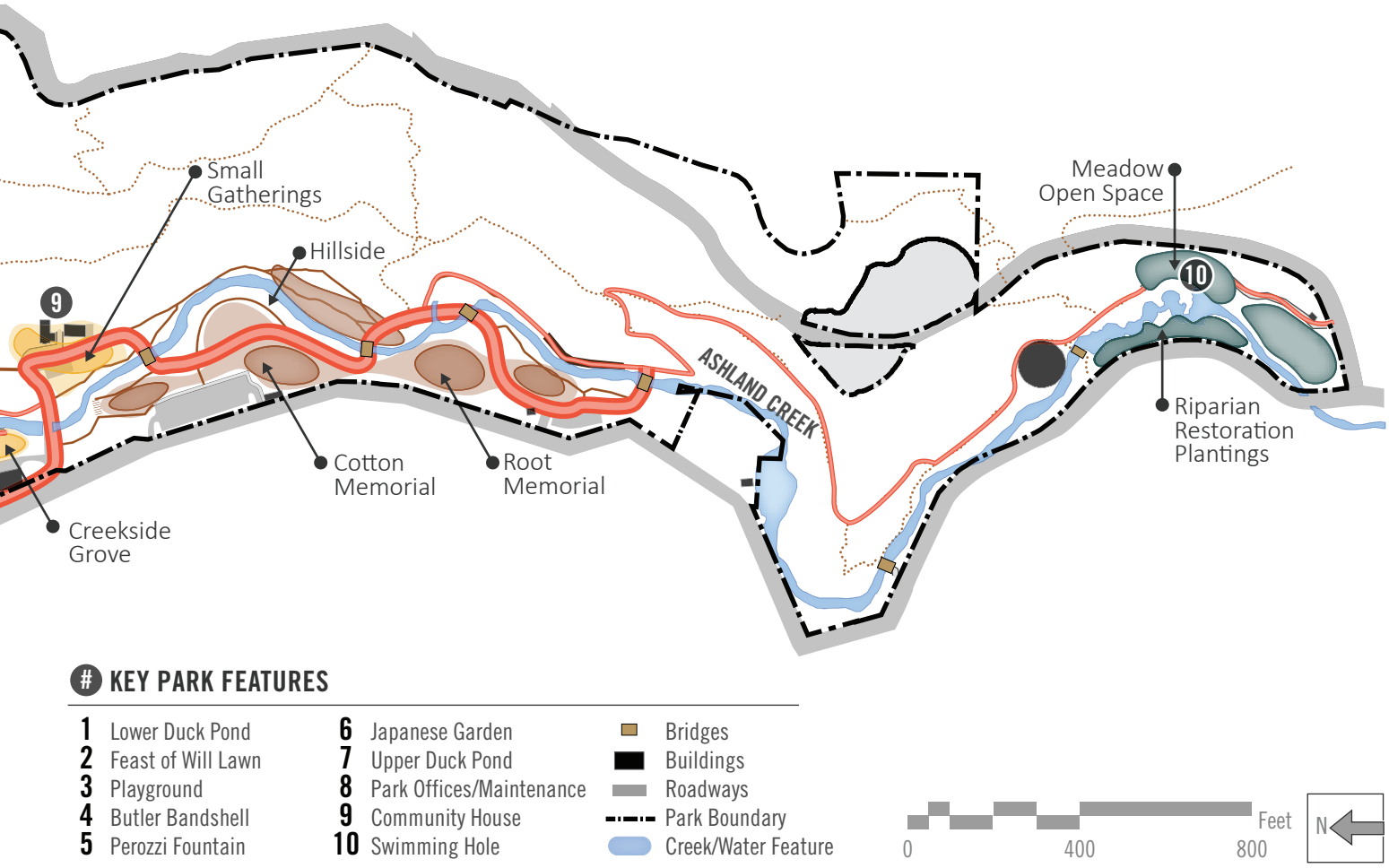
CONCEPT MAP LEGEND

- Civic Grounds
- Terrace Gardens
- Gathering Groves
- Picnic Grounds
- Upper Woodlands
- Primary Meander Route
- Secondary Meander Routes

Recommendation 4: *Provide wayfinding within the park for clearer orientation.*

Lithia Park would benefit from a wayfinding system designed specifically for the park that reflects the Lithia Park Legacy and helps people traverse The Meander. A wayfinding system would orient park visitors and help them navigate the park with more clarity and confidence ensuring more appropriate use of the park's spaces. The lack of wifi/cell coverage within the park means that a system of signs is needed, rather than a digital wayfinding system. As part of this effort, creating greater visibility for entry points from the west would enhance visitor access and orientation. Wayfinding can also help clarify what modes of transit are allowed where, as well as distances and trail conditions, so visitors can make informed decisions for their visit.

A hierarchy of wayfinding signs designed with a unified identity that is compatible



KEY PARK FEATURES

1 Lower Duck Pond
2 Feast of Will Lawn
3 Playground
4 Butler Bandshell
5 Perozzi Fountain
6 Japanese Garden
7 Upper Duck Pond
8 Park Offices/Maintenance
9 Community House
10 Swimming Hole

Bridges
Buildings
Roadways
Park Boundary
Creek/Water Feature

with the historic and natural character of the park should be installed at access points and meander route junctions (see page 59 for examples and page 93 for Circulation Concept access points). Signage should be incorporated into non-historic structures wherever possible to reduce visual impact of additional signs. A wayfinding map and more detailed park directory should be placed near all major access points. At secondary access points signage should be reduced, highlighting only key information. Signage at minor access points should be minimal, reduced to directional information and key policies as needed.

Clear information regarding safe routes in the event of an evacuation due to natural disasters should be provided throughout the park at key locations. Safe evacuation routes and associated signage should be reevaluated every ten years or following a major event.

CREEK TO CANOPY

CREEK TO CANOPY

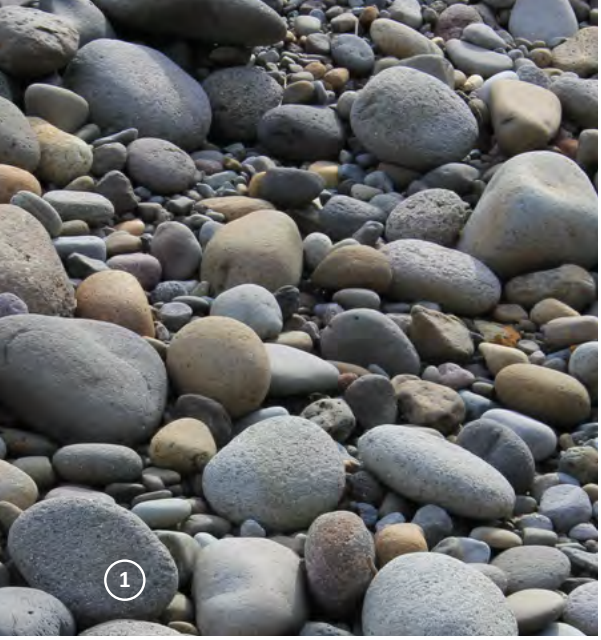
Ashland Creek and the canopy of trees and shrubs that form the vertical and horizontal spaces of Lithia Park are at the heart of the park. Ensuring the health and longevity of the creek and canopy is central to the successful future of Lithia Park.

Recommendation 5: *Improve aquatic life habitat in Ashland Creek*

There is a high potential to restore clean water and anadromous fish populations within Lithia Park, which would provide an enhanced recreation, aesthetic, and ecological resource to the region. Restoration actions should remove or mitigate problems such as blocking fish passage both inside and outside the park, irrigation return inflows, elevated E. coli pollution, lack of large wood, lack of fish spawning gravel, lack of holding pools, and loss of riparian cover and stream channel complexity. Restoring spawning and rearing populations of steelhead would be a visual treat for visitors and would be a strong indication of improved water quality and fish passage within Ashland Creek. Any opportunities to allow the creek to move around in its alluvial fan and develop a braided channel would be good for fish habitat.

Removing fish passage barriers and restoring access for spawning and rearing habitat for cold-water dependent fishes is an important goal for the broader Ashland Creek ecosystem. Numerous opportunities exist to improve fish habitat in Ashland Creek outside of Lithia Park that should be encouraged. These improvements will result in greater numbers of steelhead and perhaps Coho salmon within Lithia Park as passage barriers between Bear Creek and the upper reaches of Ashland Creek are removed.

Dissolved oxygen levels in Ashland Creek have a tremendous influence on the quality of aquatic habitat. Salmon, steelhead, and trout require relatively high levels of dissolved oxygen in the water to survive and thrive. There are opportunities for riparian modifications within the park that can have a significant influence on dissolved oxygen, including the creation of cascades and methods to lower stream temperature. Boulder weirs would increase pool habitat and create small cascades that would increase oxygen mixing. A reduction in stream temperatures would also help. Cooler water has a higher capacity for dissolved oxygen. Therefore, the removal of Granite Street Dam and an expansion and improvement of the riparian zone, as discussed in relation to other recommendations, will help increase dissolved oxygen levels in the creek. Currently, the shallow pools above



Granite Street Dam provide a solar sink that increases water temperatures and may also contribute to summer bacteria problems in the park.

Several recommendations within this master plan address restoration actions for Ashland Creek in Lithia Park. In summary, recommended restoration actions include:

- Spawning gravel augmentation
- Fish passage improvements
- Treating irrigation return water
- Improving stormwater runoff
- Reducing thermal pollution
- Removing streamside developments and restoring riparian vegetation
- Enhancing riparian habitats
- Expanding, maintaining and enhancing the floodplain
- Creating instream pools
- Adding boulder weirs and large wood
- Creating streamside wetland areas

Several agencies and organizations are likely willing to partner with the City of Ashland in restoration of Ashland Creek, including ODFW, Southern Oregon University, Rogue River Watershed Council, and local fishing organizations.

See related recommendations regarding removing buildings from the floodplain, restoring connections between Ashland Creek and the floodplain, green infrastructure, and improving water quality.

Recommendation 6: *Restore Ashland Creek in this location and reconnect stream habitats that reflect pre-dam conditions by considering the removal of Granite Street Dam.*

Work with partner agencies and non-proft organizations, such as the Rogue River Watershed Council, the Resources Legacy Fund (Open Rivers Fund), and Sustainable Northwest to seek removal of Granite Street dam and undertake a major restoration effort. As part of this effort, APRC should modify the stream channel upstream and downstream of Granite Street Dam to create instream pools suitable for swimming that are not dependent on the backwater currently provided by the dam. These pools should

be interspersed with moving sections of water to create diverse water habitat.

The riparian areas of the creek should be revegetated with native trees and shrubs to decrease solar radiation in this section, which adversely affects the water's quality by supporting conditions that lead to E. coli outbreaks and the ability to support aquatic habitat for species that require cooler water. Sizable pools that would provide deep, cool water for adult fish to hold should be added wherever appropriate given the geology and morphology of the creek channel. The morphology of the creek channel is currently nearly all riffles that are difficult for adult fish to pass through at lower flows and which provide no fish holding options. Streams with gradients like the Lithia Park section of Ashland Creek will typically develop a series of pools and riffles when undisturbed.

Removal of the sediment that has accumulated within the Granite Street Dam pool will reveal what the pre-dam channel conditions may have been. Pre-dam channel conditions should serve as baseline information to be used in designing channel modifications that will meet the public access, swimming, and wading features desired. Channel modifications should also provide for fish holding and passage requirements.

See related Recommendation 9 for augmenting streambed gravel and cobble before and after the proposed Granite Dam removal.

Recommendation 7: *Restore connection between Ashland Creek and its adjacent floodplain to decrease the creek's channelized form and increase creek health.*

Stream modifications should be made that will increase the frequency of interaction between the stream channel and its floodplain and decrease its channelized effect. Modifications that should be considered include the lowering of the floodplain through excavation of material below the 100-year flood elevation to create flood benches. Flood benches will provide numerous benefits to the creek, including off channel refuge for fish

1: Gravel-cobble substrate .

2: Stream channel with a mix of rocks and gravel.

3: Log jam creation.

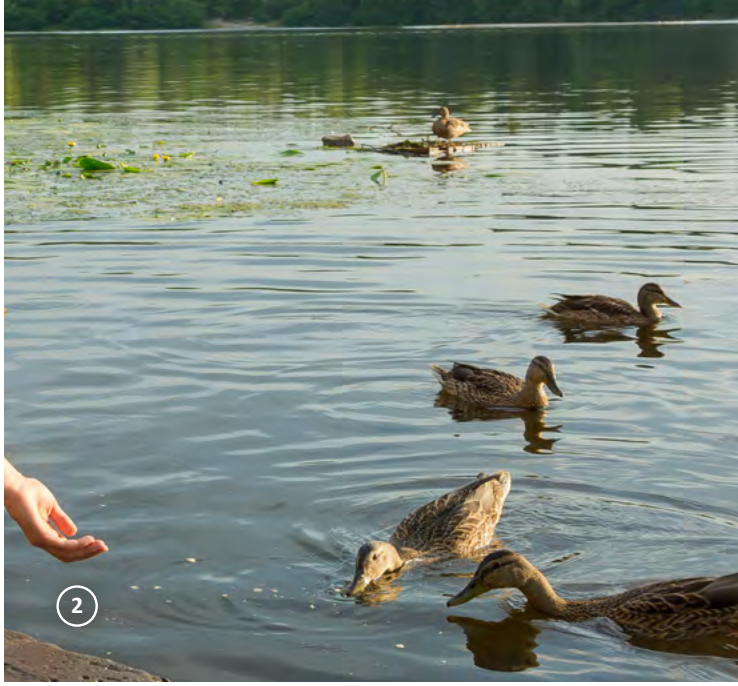
4: In a natural stream, log jams create pools and cascades which provide essential habitat.

during high flow events, an increase in habitat diversity that would include wetlands, and groundwater recharge that can contribute instream flows during the low flow period of late summer and early fall. Other stream modifications that should be considered include raising the stream bed with low boulder weirs, the addition of large wood in channel, and the addition of cobble and gravel as mentioned above. Increasing the density of native shrub vegetation and removal of invasive blackberry in the riparian zone and on the floodplain will also enhance the stream and floodplain interaction and the general health of the riparian zone. The floodplain and its flood storage capacity should be expanded everywhere feasible and practical in the park.

Erosion within the park can be reduced through the reduction in floodway encroachments, addition of sand, gravel, and cobble materials downstream of Granite Street Dam, reconnecting the floodplain wherever possible, and through the addition of large wood and other forms of channel roughness. Erosion that is enhancing floodplain connection and creating side channels should be accepted as natural improvements to the system, and no effort should be made to stop this process unless it threatens park infrastructure.

Additional flood detention/retention within the park can be achieved through the reconnection of the channel with its floodplain and the development of side channels and floodplain wetlands. In addition to these features providing some flood reduction, they will also provide additional aquatic and terrestrial habitat.

Expand the riparian corridor as much as practical on both sides of the creek to reduce the amount of solar radiation reaching the creek thereby reducing water temperatures. The west side of the creek is typically narrower given its interface with more developed areas of the park. Native trees and shrubs should be prioritized for planting in the floodplain following the City of Ashland's Water Resource Protection Ordinance. Tree density within the floodplain should be managed to provide maximum canopy to shade the creek while also maximizing habitat for wildlife. In the more developed, northern half of the park compatible non-native species that evoke the seasonal color of the park's tree and shrub canopy can be planted just outside the riparian area, beginning at the top of the bank to ensure the cultural character of the park is preserved alongside its natural character.



1: A pond which transitions to an emergent wetland area.

2: Providing extra food for waterfowl has an adverse affect on the pond's water quality.

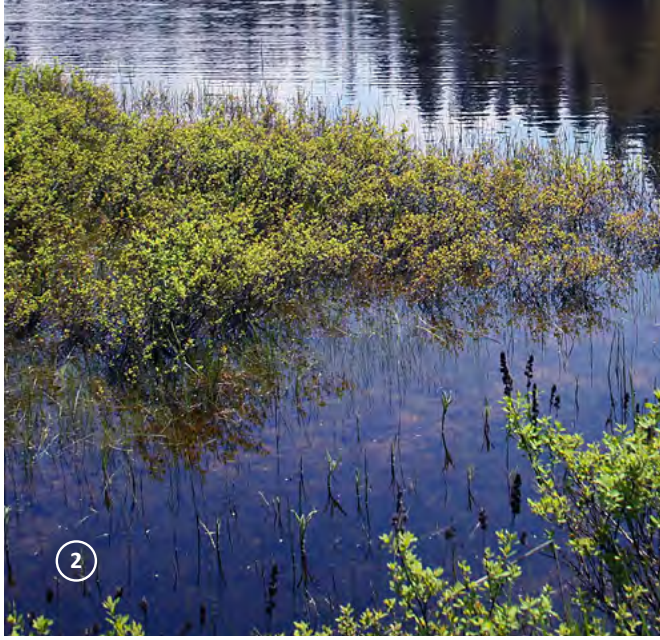
3: Boardwalk over a rain water infiltration area which treats stormwater runoff and reduces flooding.

4: Healthy ponds can support a more diverse range of wildlife, such as the threatened Western Pond Turtle seen here.

Recommendation 8: *Improve water quality of Lithia Park's ponds by incorporating their function into Ashland Creek.*

Water quality in the ponds can be improved by creating flow-through wetlands or other natural treatment features to help treat irrigation return water and runoff from blacktop. Discouraging the feeding of wildlife, particularly waterfowl, will also help improve water quality. Both the upper and lower duck ponds receive similar inputs of nutrients from ducks plus a large volume of deciduous tree leaves that fall into the pond and settle to the bottom.

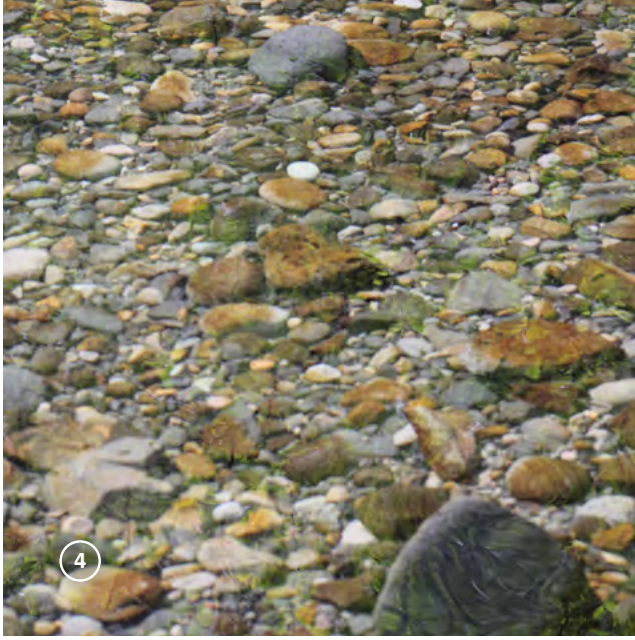
Improving the water quality of the duck ponds may require a combination of approaches. The water from both ponds could be used as irrigation water replacing the City water source that is currently used for irrigation. This



approach would provide a continual replacement of pond water with water that is low in nutrients, thereby reducing algae blooms during the summer months. It would also provide nutrient rich irrigation water for vegetation within the park. Both ponds could be provided with flow through water from Ashland Creek by connecting them to the creek with side channels. This connection would serve multiple purposes, including improving water, creating wetlands, and providing increased stream capacity during high flow events.

During low stream flows, direct discharge of pond water to Ashland Creek may not be ecologically desirable or acceptable to the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) due to potentially high nutrient loads, e. coli bacteria counts, biochemical oxygen demand (BOD), and high temperature. Water discharged from the ponds should either be used as irrigation water within the park or should be treated before discharge into Ashland Creek. The recommended approach to treating the pond discharge water is to create a treatment wetland between the pond and Ashland Creek. A treatment wetland can be designed to provide a reduction of the anticipated pollutants and would also provide some habitat diversity within the park. Chemical and mechanical treatment should be avoided when treating pond water, except for aeration. During high stream flows, the connection between Ashland Creek and the ponds would result in flushing the ponds and providing increased flood capacity in the overall stream channel.

Additional methods of improving water quality include: converting portions of the ponds to emergent wetland to reduce the area suitable for waterfowl while creating a natural treatment system for the water and improving habitat for amphibians, and adding one or more fountains to the ponds that would aerate the water to help break down organic material. Adding a fountain would affect the reflective quality of the pond, which could be mitigated by having them only run at night.



1: Wetland with more diverse species of waterfowl.

2: Emergent wetland.

3: Water quality in ponds can be improved by aerating with fountains. These can be run at night if a smooth, reflective pond surface is preferred.

4: A mix of sand a gravel critical to fish rearing.

Recommendation 9: *Augment input of gravel, cobble and wood material to Ashland Creek*

Streambed gravel is important for aquatic species and spawning anadromous fish, such as steelhead and Coho salmon. The reach of Ashland Creek through the park has a substrate that is severely lacking in gravel and is somewhat lacking in cobble due to the two dams upstream that serve as sediment traps. Increasing the instances and amount of gravel and cobble in the creek will decrease channel downcutting, increase floodplain connection, and increase habitat diversity for aquatic species. Adding gravel to the substrate (gravel augmentation) will provide more opportunities for anadromous fish spawning to occur within the park. The overall objective of gravel augmentation is to try to mimic the sediment transport that might occur if the dams were not in place.

It is currently estimated that the average annual volume of gravel and cobble material deposited into Reader Reservoir by Ashland Creek is 2000 cubic yards. In relatively dry years this figure should be much lower, and in high flow years it may be much higher. Due to the alteration of the Ashland Creek hydrograph by Hosler Dam and Reeder Reservoir, which results in lower peak stream flows through the Park, it is uncertain whether Ashland Creek below the Granite Street Dam has enough energy to transport and distribute the full volume of material deposited into Reeder Reservoir. It is likely that the appropriate volume of gravel augmentation will be less than the volume that is deposited to Reeder Reservoir.

Gravel augmentation is going to require a significant adaptive management approach and would ideally start out with small amounts of gravel that are gradually increased up to the carrying capacity of the creek through the park. The material assimilation and carrying capacity of the creek will be dynamic and unpredictable from year to year. Augmentation will require the oversight of a fisheries biologist or fluvial geomorphologist to inspect the

channel on an annual basis and decide whether to add more or less gravel for the next round of augmentation. While removing Granite Street Dam will improve sediment recruitment (see related Recommendation 6), it's unlikely to resolve the lack of gravels upstream given the upstream dam and reservoir. Therefore, this recommendation includes a process for augmenting gravel in Ashland Creek before the removal or breach of Granite Street Dam and after.

The ideal source of material for gravel augmentation is the upper end of Reeder Reservoir where it is deposited by Ashland Creek and removed as part of ongoing maintenance of the Reservoir. It has been estimated that the average annual yield of sediment to Reeder Reservoir is 2000 cubic yards. Until Granite Street Dam is removed, gravel and cobble material, with an emphasis on gravel, should be transported from where it collects at the upper end of Reeder Reservoir during flood events to downstream reaches of Ashland Creek. Ideally the gravel augmentation would occur on the downstream side of the Granite Street Dam. Once the Granite Street Dam has been breached or removed, the ideal location for gravel augmentation would be at the most readily accessible location on the downstream side of the Hosler Dam.

Removal of Granite Street Dam is likely to improve sediment recruitment but unlikely to resolve the lack of gravels completely given upstream dam and reservoir. The stream gravel amount and composition used in augmentation should be monitored throughout the park on an annual basis to determine if material transport and augmentation is needed to optimize aquatic habitat and floodplain connection.

Material for use in augmentation could be selectively mined from the upper end of the Reeder Reservoir to match the type of material desired. Material selected for augmentation should be primarily gravel with the inclusion of some fines and cobble. The type of material that would be most beneficial to the augmentation process can be determined on an annual basis, or just prior to its removal from Reeder Reservoir. Placement of material into Ashland Creek should occur at a location with good access for dump trucks and other heavy equipment to facilitate the work. Timing of material placement should be at the beginning of the higher flow season (fall and early winter) to facilitate its distribution to downstream reaches by the high winter stream flows. Material should be placed over a long enough period to allow it to move downstream and to prevent blocking

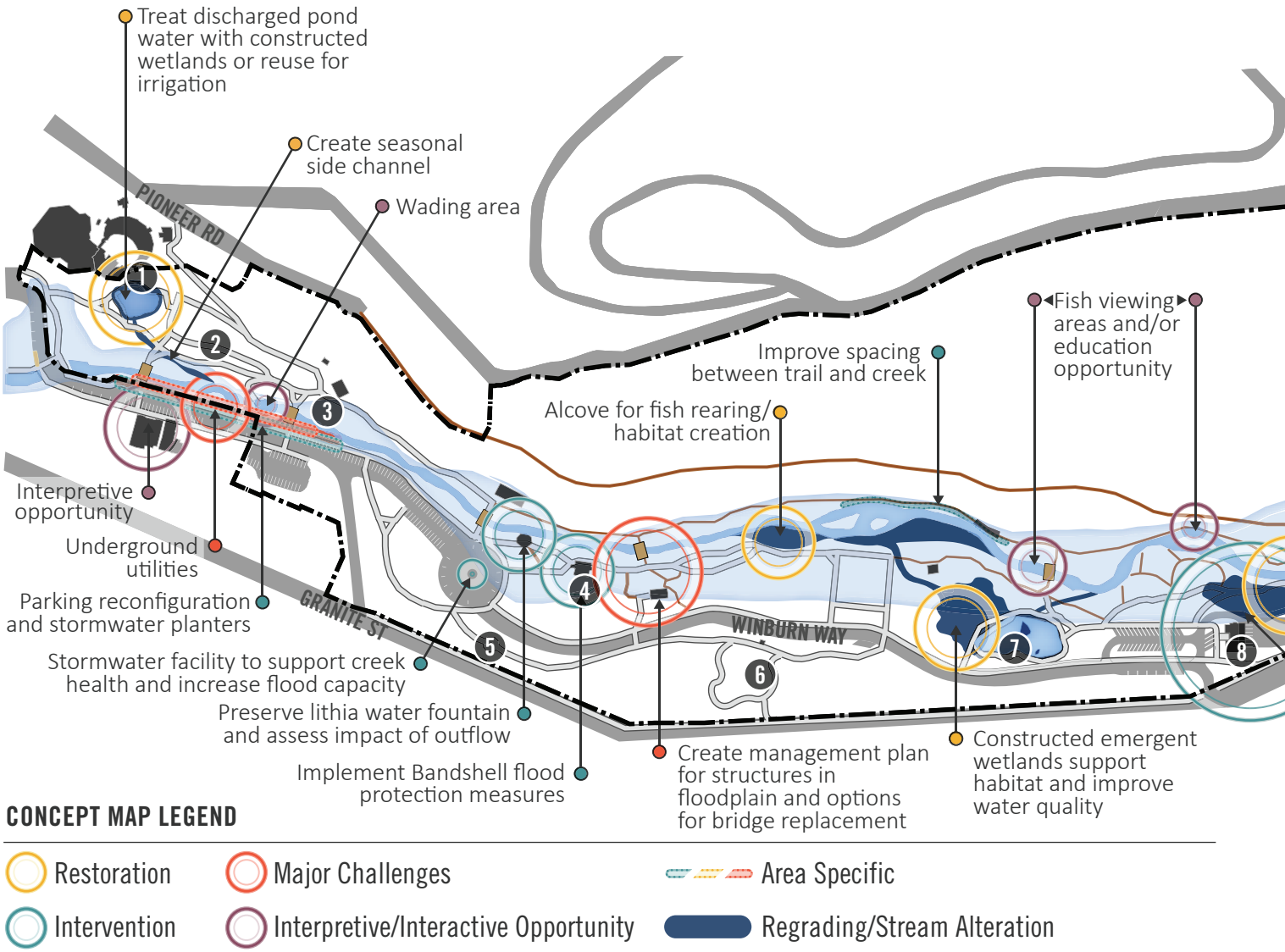
the channel at the point of placement. If removal of material from Reeder Reservoir occurs more rapidly than the rate at which it should be placed in Ashland Creek, it can be stockpiled for later use. Prior to the removal of the Granite Street Dam, the material should be deposited below the dam. After dam removal and the stream restoration is completed, material should be distributed in areas below the Hosler Dam at a readily accessible location.

Woody material is also an important component of stream health. Large trees within the channel are important elements of pool formation and fish cover. They can be added to urban streams in a manner that ensures that they remain in place to prevent their migration downstream. Fish habitat restoration activities for the creek should be considered as soon as, and whenever, practical. These activities should include the creation of a series of pools distributed throughout the stream reach within the park, and the addition of large wood (whole or partial mature conifer trees) to provide hydraulic diversity and fish holding areas. Large wood added to the stream channel and floodplain should be anchored appropriately to prevent its migration downstream of the park. Trees that are removed from the park's forested areas for maintenance purposes should be kept within the park for use as habitat, with as many of them placed within the stream channel and floodplain as is reasonable considering restoration objectives. Trees also have habitat value as downed wood in upland areas and nature play areas.

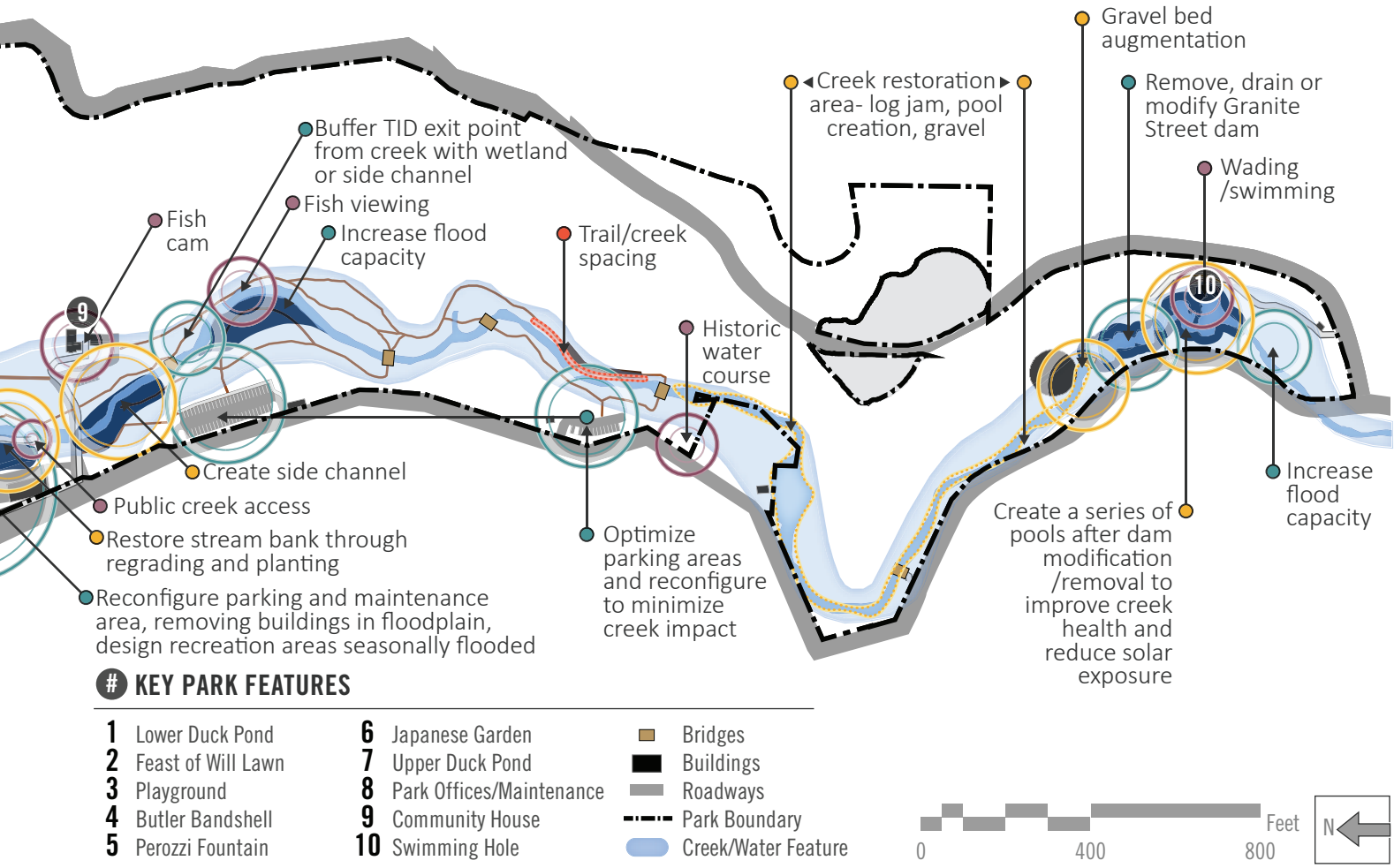
1: Wood material helps increase the health of a stream's habitat by providing places for fish and amphibians to rest and hide.

Recommendation 10: *Monitor and mitigate effects of climate change on low flows of creek during the dry season.*

Much of the negative impact of climate change in Lithia Park is expected to be to low creek flows and wildfire during the dry season, and erratic flows in winter and spring. Higher elevation snow serves as a vast reservoir that releases water to streams during the warmer months of the year. Historically, melting snow pack has provided cooler late summer



flows to streams. With a lower snow pack expected as a result of climate change, there will be less late summer flow in Ashland Creek and it will be warmer. There are no simple or easy solutions to this issue, but the effects should be monitored and opportunities to mitigate these impacts investigated. For example, there may be opportunities to adjust the operation of Reeder Reservoir and TID to provide additional flows to the creek downstream of Hosler Dam in late summer when flows are typically lower and warmer. Increasing the amount of riparian and wetland habitats can provide some benefits through water storage during wet seasons and slow release of water during summer. Large scale changes to the operation and maintenance of the forested watershed that optimize it for water supply should be considered through partnerships with adjacent land owners.



Recommendation 11:
Reduce TID outlet noise.

There is a TID outlet along Ashland Creek which has been noted as "having an unnatural sound" because it is not a consistent flow but rather flows at short intervals and falls several feet to the creek surface, resulting in a recurrent gushing or surging. This detracts from the natural setting. APRC should work with TID and regulatory agencies to modify the outlet to minimize the noise, striving to create something that is more natural and fitting for its context. Options could include changing the pipe's relation to the creek surface and/or providing a discharge area that minimizes the drop to the water level and/or allowing the water to be discharged in vegetation or on rocks to minimize the sound disruption.

BLM Wildfire Mitigation Definitions

Pile Burning

A prescribed fire used to ignite hand or machine piles of cut vegetation resulting from vegetation or fuel management activities. Piles are generally burned during the wet season to reduce damage to the residual trees and to confine the fire to the footprint of the pile. Pile burning allows time for the vegetative material to dry out and will produce less overall smoke by burning hot and clean. Swamper burning is a modified form of pile burning where personnel feed material (or swamp material) into small ignited burn piles.[1] The result is fewer piles per acre and can be used to lessen impact on fragile soils and plant and animal species.

Understory burning/ Underburning

A prescribed fire ignited under the forest canopy that focuses on the consumption of surface fuels but not the overstory vegetation. Underburning is generally used following a pre-treatment such as thinning and /or pile burning to further reduce the surface fuels, help maintain the desired vegetation conditions and enhance the overall health and resiliency of the stand.

1 https://www.blm.gov/or/resources/fire/prescribed burns/burn_terminology.php

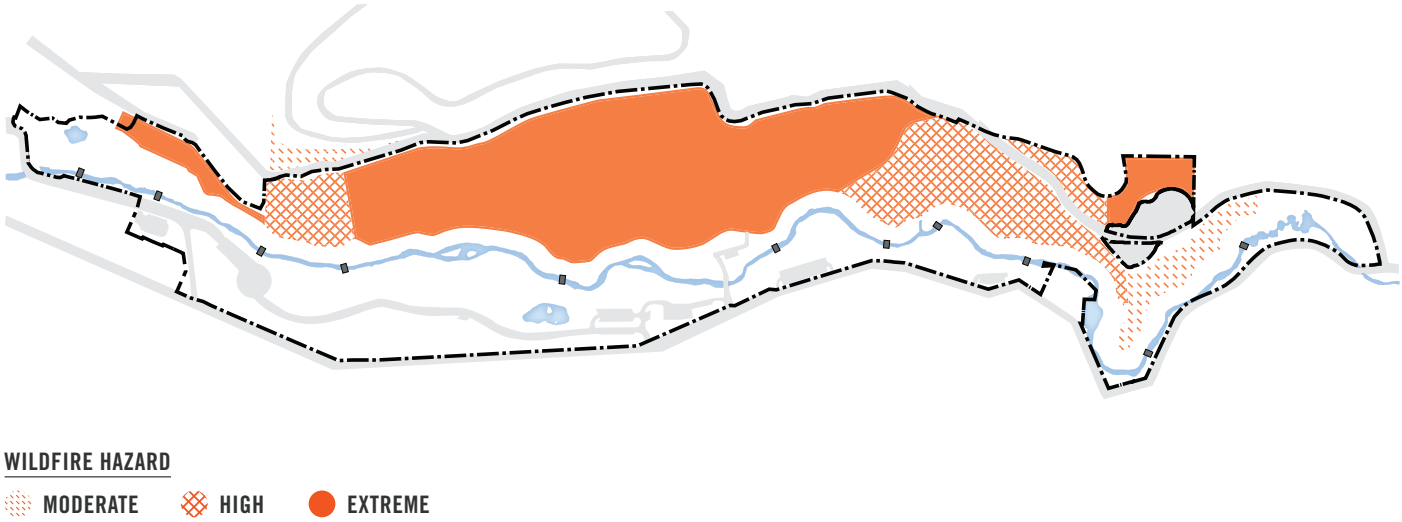
Recommendation 12: *Mitigate future wildland fires in Lithia Park.*

The riparian woodland and adjacent upland woodlands provide a semi-natural "matrix" that links Lithia Park and Ashland to the nearby forests and woodlands to the south, part of the greater Siskiyou Mountain ecosystem, and to the north and west via Bear Creek and the Rogue River. The habitats within the park are important as a stepping stone within this much larger system. However, as recent fires in California have shown us all, living adjacent to natural, flammable vegetation has high risks. In fact, according to the Ashland Forestry Commission 33 acres have an extreme fire hazard rating.

The APRC and Ashland Forestry Commission have been active in reducing crown fire risk by thinning the woodlands on the dry, west facing slope, and conducting thinning in other nearby forest lands. Nevertheless, reducing crown fire risk can increase ground

1: Wildfires have grown in scale, intensity and duration in the region.

WILDFIRE RISK (ASHLAND FORESTRY COMMISSION)



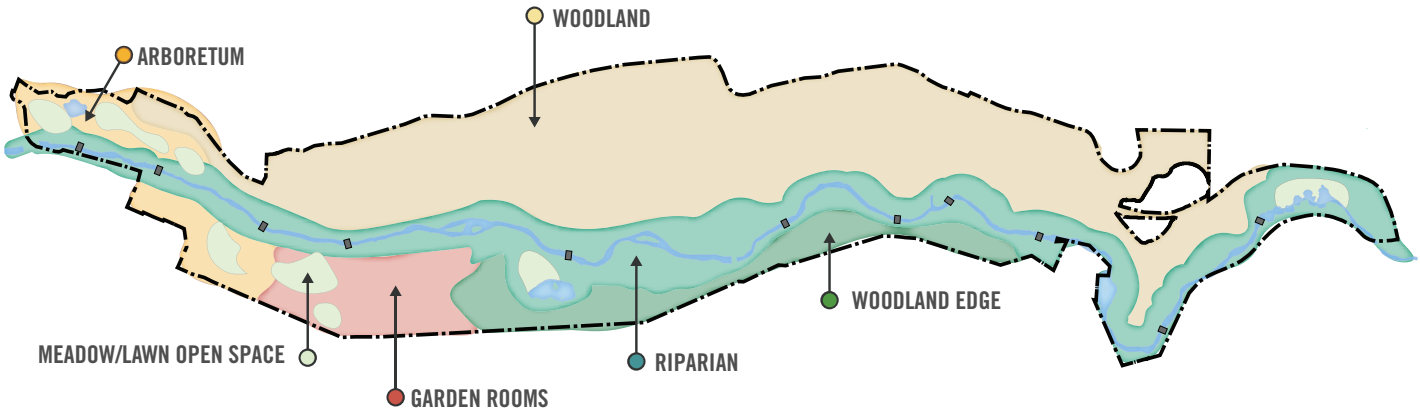
Graphic: Based on the 2016 Ashland Forest Plan - Upper Lithia Parcel. This graphic does not include wildfire risk calculations for park areas outside of the Forest Plan.

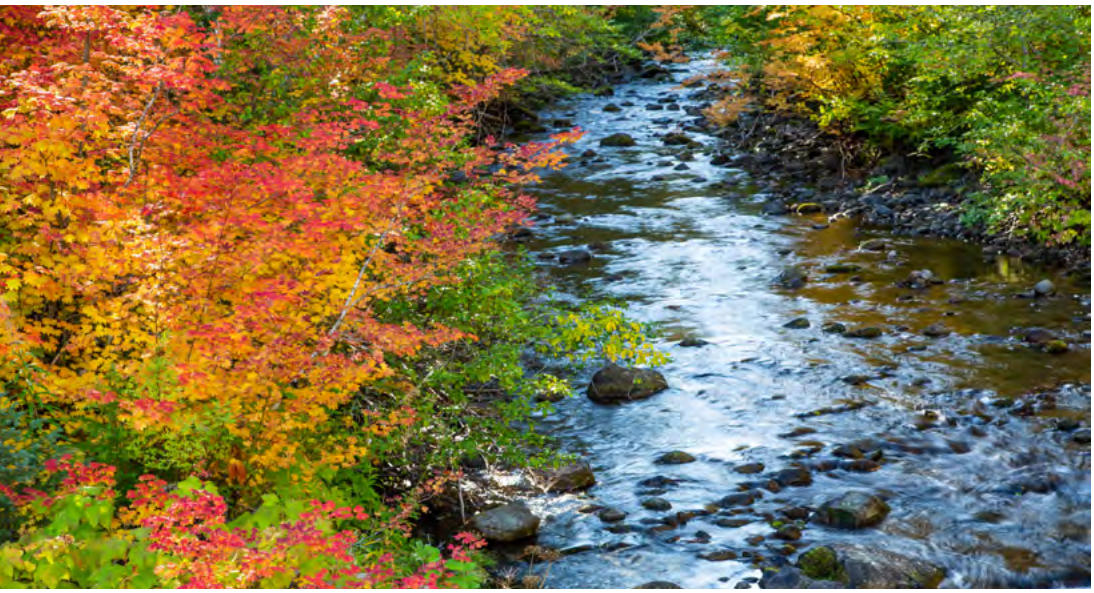
fire risk, as grasses and forbs, which are fine fuels, expand in response to a more open canopy. Ashland Fire has up until now not used prescribed fire to reduce fuels in Lithia Park, particularly along W. Fork Street and Granite Street, where houses abut natural fuels. The APRC should work with Ashland Fire to find ways to further reduce fire risk along this edge of the park. Options to consider include maintaining a seasonal (mowed, burned, or irrigated) buffer west of the two streets, proactively reaching out to homeowners adjacent to the park to make sure they understand the risk and take efforts on their own properties so make them fire resistant, especially during the wildfire season, and employing a regimen of controlled burns in high risk areas. In terms of the controlled burns, the Ashland Forestry Commission recommends two approaches. First, starting with pile burning for a decade and then progress to understory burning.

Recommendation 13: *Remove invasive vegetation species and replace with vegetation appropriate to the planned vegetation zone recommendations.*

Park managers should continue to remove invasive vegetation, especially ivy, periwinkle, and blackberry, from the riparian zone. Those areas should be replanted with primarily native riparian plant communities based on site conditions, including solar radiation and soils. Invasive removals should be prioritized for areas upstream so that invasive plants are not continually introduced from above. In addition, invasive removal should be monitored to determine the current effectiveness of the strategies being employed so that any adjustments can be made to increase invasive removal effectiveness.

VEGETATION ZONES





RIPARIAN

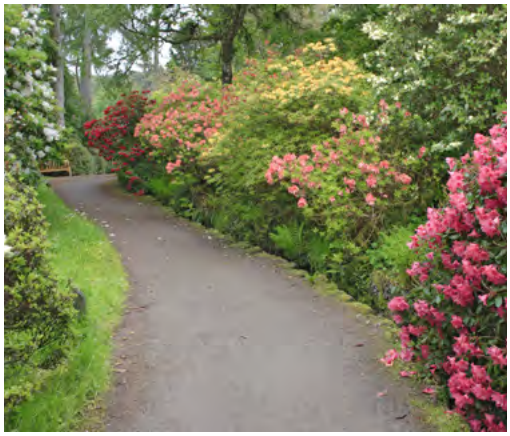
Plantings in the riparian zone should follow the City of Ashland's Water Resource Protection Ordinance which recommends planting native trees and shrubs and removing invasive species. Plantings should prioritize natives that have spring flowers and fall color (berries and changing leaf color), and be planted densely to decrease solar radiation in Ashland Creek.

ARBORETUM

Plantings should follow an arboretum-style landscape with a variety of native and non-native ornamental trees, shrubs, forbs inspired by the early 20th century design by John McLaren. Small, low-traffic lawn areas that don't host large events can be planted with eco-friendly mixes of grasses and forbs that require less water and mowing to minimize maintenance. Deciduous tree species should be prioritized, with conifers selected for specific areas where year-round screening is necessary.

GARDEN ROOMS

The garden rooms should have the greatest range of species and most unique ornamentals reflecting the style of each garden area. For example, the Japanese garden should reflect Japanese style plantings and the rose garden be filled with roses and compatible ornamentals. Surrounding the thematic gardens, plantings should reflect species inspired by John McLaren on the north and Chet Corry to the south. Lawn areas that don't host large events can be planted with eco-friendly mixes of grasses and forbs. Deciduous tree species should be prioritized, with conifers selected for specific areas where year-round screening is necessary.



WOODLAND EDGE

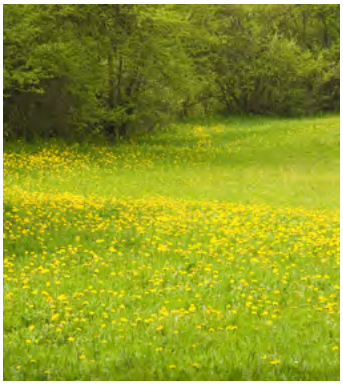
The woodland edge begins south of the riparian area at the top of the bank. It should include a variety of native and non-invasive non-native species that evoke the park's iconic seasonal colors (primarily spring flowers and fall leaf color) reflecting Chet Corry's influence. The planting style should be more natural in character than the Arboretum and Garden Room zones, even though it will include ornamental species.

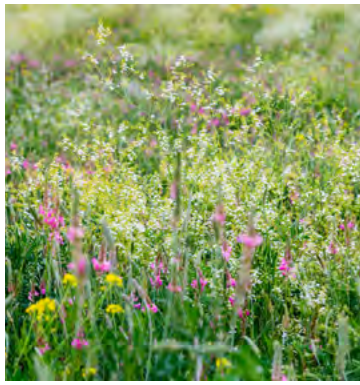
WOODLAND

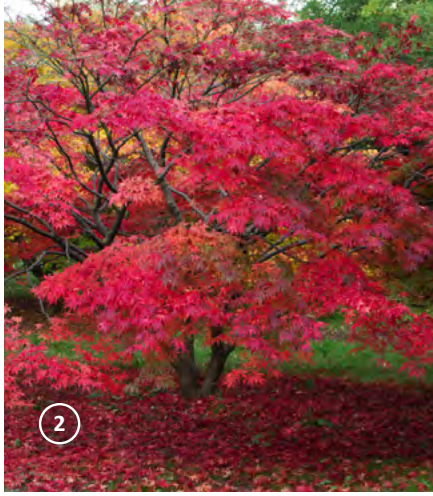
This area should focus on the regeneration of native trees, particularly oak and pine, indicative of the adjacent Siskiyou mountain ecosystem and the woodlands and forests south of the park. Shrubs and ground covers associated with a native oak and pine woodland planted to stabilize the bank and fire should be used to manage the area against wildfires.

MEADOW/LAWN OPEN SPACE

Open lawn spaces should be maintained to continue the diversity of Lithia Park spaces, balancing open meadows with enclosed tree canopies. These open spaces should primarily be surrounded by deciduous trees to increase the area's exposure to sunlight in the winter and shade in the summer. For more heavily used open spaces, lawns that can handle heavy use should be maintained and reseeded as necessary. For less heavily used areas, ecolawn or meadow mixes which include native forbs and flowers can be used. These non-traditional seed mixes support pollinators and reduce maintenance needs, and can be mowed less frequently allowing spring flowers to grow around the edges. To ensure longterm viability these should first be monitored in small test plot areas to determine the correct mix to suit particular locations and levels of foot traffic.







Recommendation 14: *Manage ornamental gardens to maintain the gardenesque quality of the Arboretum and Garden Room zones by incorporating flowering plants into the planting design of these spaces using deer resistant species.*

The defining characteristic of the Arboretum and Garden Rooms zones are their inclusion of formal garden plantings that reflect the early 20th century design of John McLaren. However, instead of having ornamental flower-focused plantings be separate entities, flowering plants should be incorporated into border planting beds of different scales which can help define small and medium sized gathering spaces. Deer are and will continue to be an on-going maintenance issue. Deer-resistant plant species should be selected but deer, when hungry, will and do eat anything. Many standard deer abatement efforts run counter to the City's commitment to the Valdez Principles and other overarching recommendations for Lithia Park (e.g. electric or peanut butter fences, deer repellent topical applications, etc.). The impact of deer and other animals on park vegetation will need to be monitored and browse protection measures may be needed to protect formal garden planting areas in the Arboretum and Garden Room zones. New ornamental

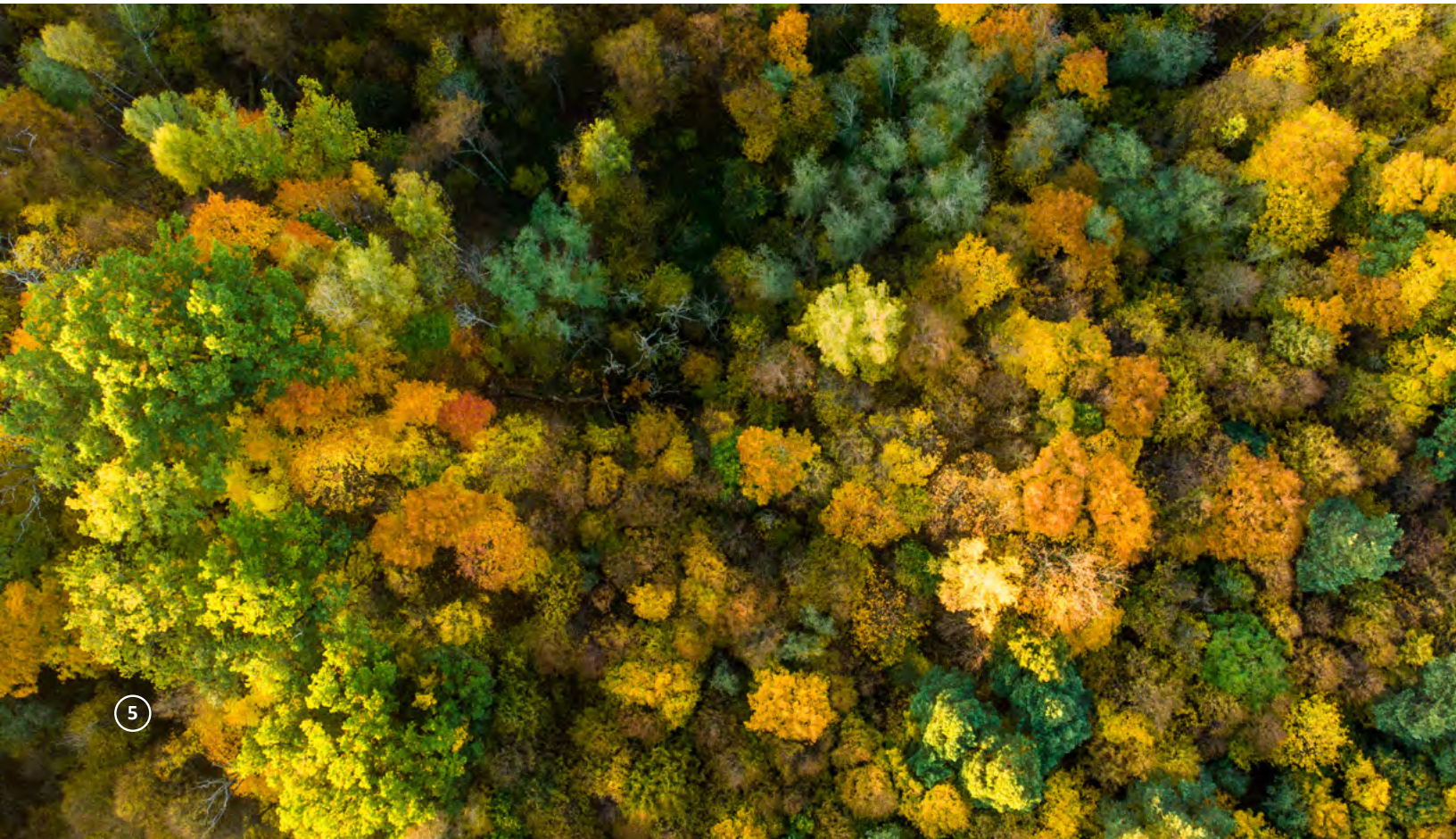
1-4: Ornamental vegetation and garden areas.

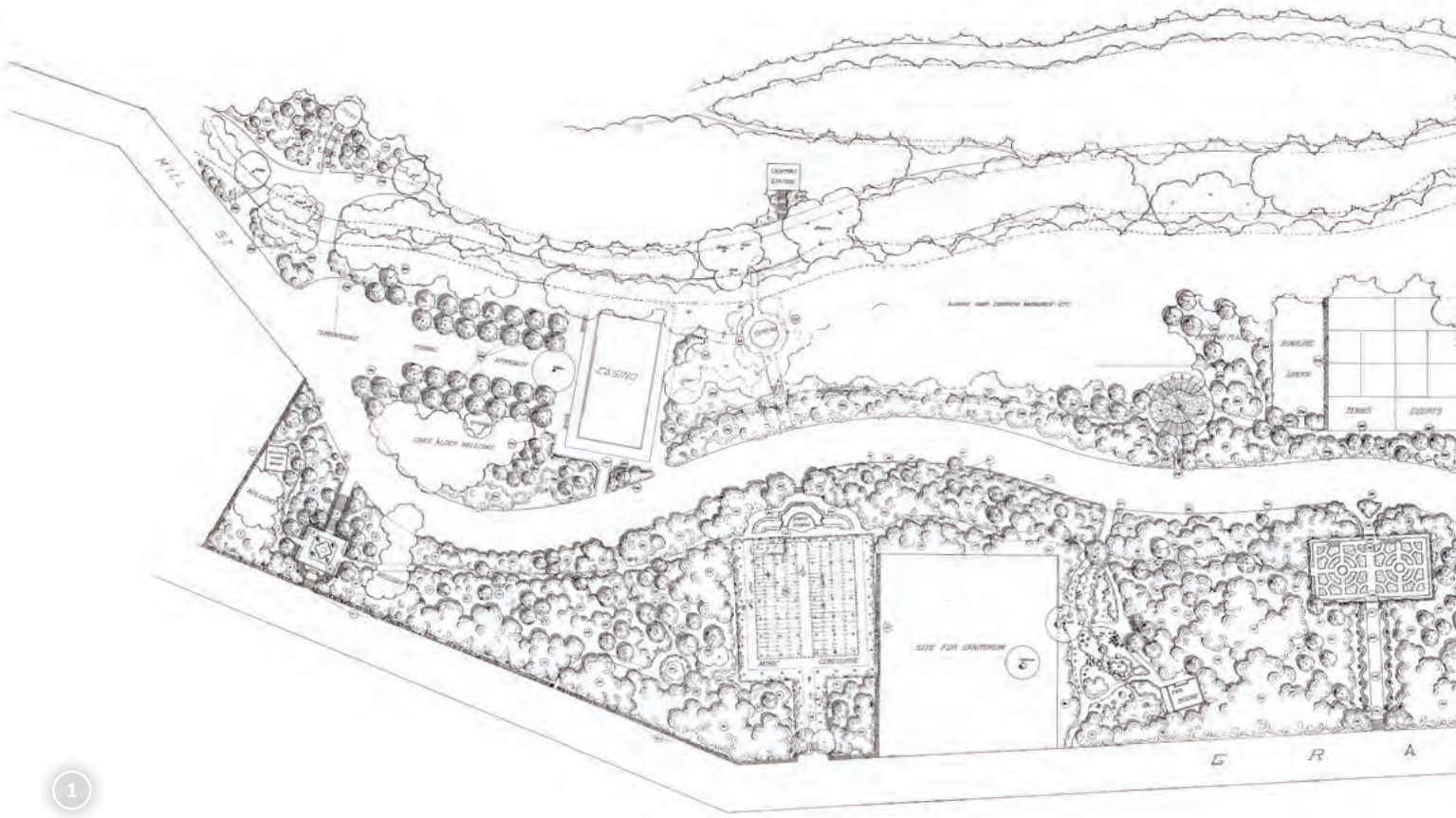
5: Dense, varied tree canopy.

plant species should be tested in small areas before major planting or replanting efforts. Long-term, the effort to protect the formal garden plantings protected may surpass what is maintainable and these areas may need to be less ornamental in nature.

Recommendation 15: *Manage the succession of the tree canopy to maintain the natural and cultural tree character of the park according to planned vegetation zones.*

The riparian corridor within the park appears at first glance to be healthy but is only in fair condition. It will continue to deteriorate if younger trees do not have the support and condition to mature into the next generation of tree canopy within the park. Additionally, the riparian corridor is quite narrow, especially at the north end of the park, which should be widened where possible to increase the footprint of the tree canopy which will also provide more protection or buffer zones for the vegetation and creek. The tree overstory throughout the park should continue to be a mixture of native and non-native species, as is appropriate for an urban park with this historic context. Native plants should be planted within the riparian corridor, but opportunities to plant non-invasive non-natives at the edges of the riparian areas near the top of the bank should be utilized to preserve the park's cultural





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character of spring flowering and fall leaf color.

Field observations indicate a lack of regeneration of native trees, particularly oak and pine, within much of the riparian zone. A proactive management approach would take advantage of existing and future canopy gaps large enough to provide sun for oak and pine seedlings, planted to eventually replace the older oak and pine. Selective removal or girdling of undesirable or invasive ornamental trees, especially those species that don't provide spring flowers or fall color, can also open space for oak and pine regeneration. The City of Ashland Forestry Commission can continue to be a great partner for this effort by developing an appropriate range of species for the woodlands and riparian zone, taking account of changing climate and creekside conditions.

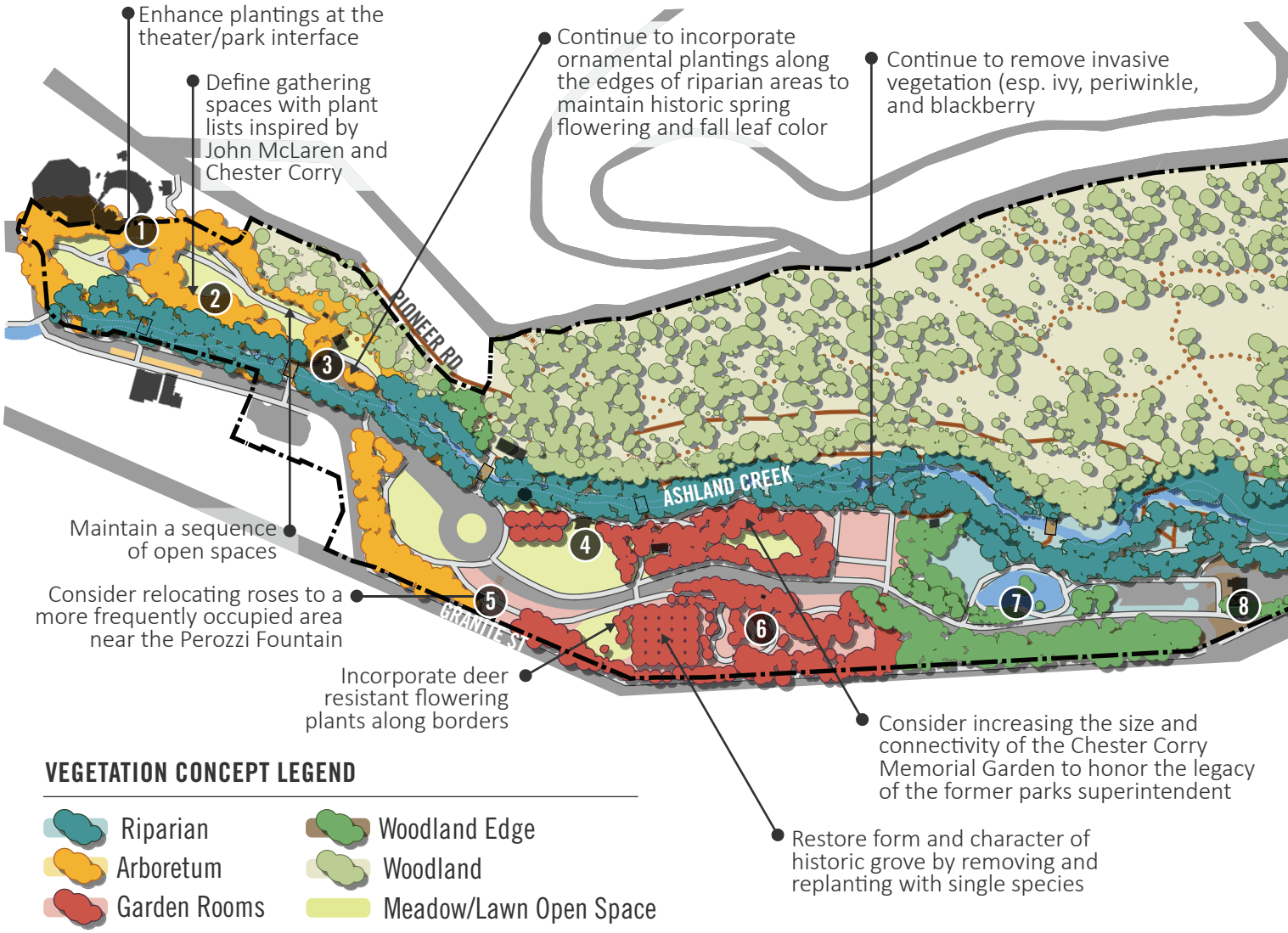
More ornamental areas, such as the Sycamore Grove, Japanese Garden, and park-like spaces within the Arboretum and Garden Room zones, require a different approach. In the historic Sycamore Grove, the form of the grove itself is the defining element less than the individual trees that comprise the grove. Sycamore tree loss due to anthracnose and other disease concerns has resulted in a mix of replacement trees of varying ages and species. To

1: McLaren's original plan for Lithia Park which officially opened in 1916. In the following decades, landscape architect and park superintendent Chester Corry implemented parts of the plan and created his own designs for expanded areas of the park.

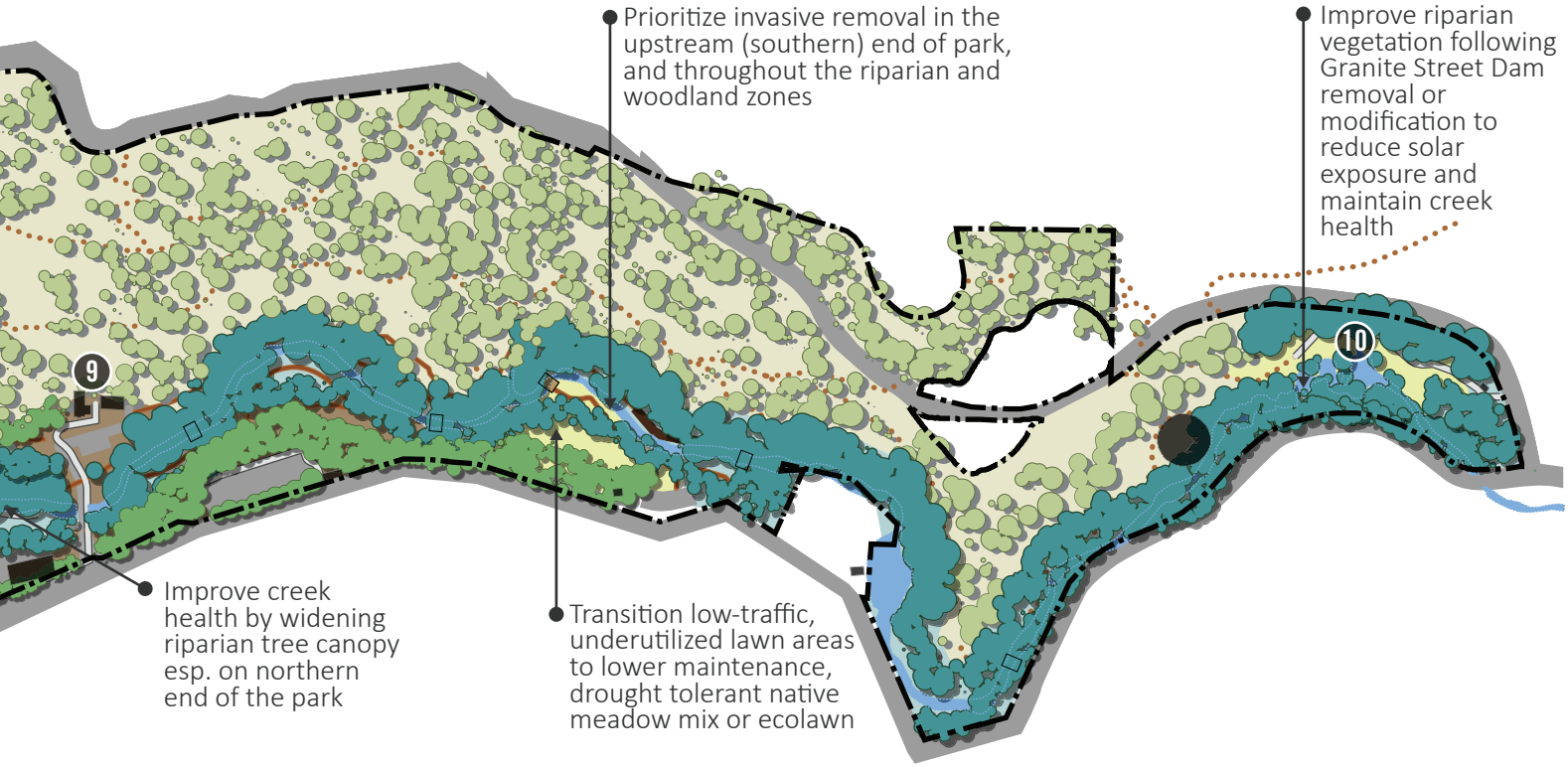
maintain its form and character, the grove should be removed and replanted with a single species of similar form and height to the sycamores within the next five to ten years. If not replaced, the grove will continue to deteriorate and lose its historic character and iconic form. Ideally, the grove would be replanted with sycamores, but if that is not desired then a similar deciduous tree with ornamental bark and similar height and shape can be substituted. Additionally, the spacing of the trees can be widened slightly so that the trees can enjoy healthier growth, but still read as a bosque. The spacing of the trees should be closer than would typically be specified, but not so close as to affect the future health and structural stability of the trees.

At the time of this Master Plan, the Japanese Garden was being redesigned in a concurrent effort. In the future, the succession of plant material and replacement of dead or dying species within the Japanese Garden should be done in consultation with someone with Japanese garden design and horticultural expertise.

For park-like open spaces, trees should be planted in concert with shrubs to define large and small gathering spaces in the Arboretum and Garden Room



zones, drawing inspiration from historic plans developed by Chet Corry and McLaren, which can be modified to reflect changes in climate, maintenance challenges, and water needs. Choosing the right plant for the right place is critical. For conifers, they can be placed to provide good year-round screening, but should not be planted where they will decrease access to sunlight and solar access for people and nearby plant communities. Deciduous trees provide great summer shade and winter sunlight, while some species also provide seasonal color and habitat. The emphasis should be less pronounced on planting individual trees in individual places, but how the trees and shrubs can shape spaces and provide visual interest for these more gardenesque areas of the park. Replacing lawn with native vegetation over time in areas not used



KEY PARK FEATURES

1 Lower Duck Pond
2 Feast of Will Lawn
3 Playground
4 Butler Bandshell
5 Perozzi Fountain
6 Japanese Garden
7 Upper Duck Pond
8 Park Offices/Maintenance
9 Community House
10 Swimming Hole

Bridges
Buildings
Roadways
Park Boundary
Creek/Water Feature

0 400 800 Feet

N

for large gatherings, such as some lawn areas near the creek in the mid portion of the park, should be considered along with how the make-up of native plant communities may start to shift with climate change.

In general, any vegetation replacement regimen should recognize the form and character of the plant species being replaced and determine if the same species is appropriate or another species should be considered given changes in access to sunlight, water or other issues.

Recommendation 16: *Recognize Lithia Park's function as a corridor and link for wildlife to adjacent national forests by monitoring wildlife and improving habitat to support desired species in partnership with partners such as the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the US Forest Service.*

Many native forestland and riparian bird species are in decline but are increasingly included in regional efforts to monitor populations and improve habitats. Opportunities to improve bird habitat should focus on removal of invasive plant species and development of mixed size classes of native trees and shrubs. The extensive trail system in Lithia Park can be used to partner with community-based monitoring programs by encouraging trail users to identify birds by direct observation or listening to their calls. The Klamath Bird Observatory conducts numerous community monitoring programs in the area and provides opportunities to partner in monitoring of local bird populations and identification of any sensitive species using Lithia Park.

Lithia Park also provides habitat for large carnivore species and their prey. Sightings of bears, mountain lions, coyotes and eventually wolves can inspire awe but also concern among park visitors and nearby residents. These species are important parts of the natural environment and may frequently move into or through the park and between park and adjacent private and public forest lands. Observations by citizens, park personnel, and remote cameras/videos provide opportunities to track these charismatic species and to determine under what seasons, time of day, and conditions that they are most likely to be encountered within Lithia Park. Making park visitors aware so that they can take safety precautions is a good strategy to adopt.

Amphibian populations are declining worldwide because of habitat degradation, diseases and pollution. As wetland and riparian habitats are expanded within Lithia Park are improved, desirable amphibian populations may increase. Wildlife monitoring programs within the park should include opportunities to track

1-3: Lithia Park is a popular bird watching area thanks to the riparian corridor of the creek and the adjacent forest lands. Just a few of the diverse range of bird species are shown here (left to right: American Dipper, Purple Finch, and Belted Kingfisher).

4-5: Citizen science activities.

amphibians. This is especially popular with school outdoor programs. Wetlands and ponds also provide opportunities to restore western pond turtles, a sensitive species in the region.

See related recommendations regarding improving floodplain capacity and improving aquatic life.

Recommendation 17: *Bring citizen science and monitoring into Lithia Park to support environmental education and partnerships.*

Explore and seek partnerships to capitalize on the numerous citizen-based monitoring and awareness programs that exist in the area. For example, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife has periodically utilized students from Southern Oregon University to monitor spawning steelhead and Coho salmon in Ashland Creek. Efforts such as this could readily be expanded. Real-time water quality monitoring would assist in tracking pollutants in Ashland Creek. Other citizen science opportunities currently exist that would be suitable for application to Lithia Park that would provide valuable data on park resources and their trends over time. For example, the Xerces Society operates a program called Bumble Bee Watch that encourages citizen scientists to locate and identify bumble bees, important but vanishing pollinators. The US Forest Service and their partners operate a stream temperature monitoring program for Pacific Northwest streams. The Klamath Bird Observatory monitors birds in the region and could likely include Lithia Park or other sections of Ashland Creek in their survey area.

There are numerous opportunities to increase community understanding of changing environmental conditions within Lithia Park by involvement in monitoring programs and citizen science activities. Such activities might include stream water quality monitoring, macroinvertebrate monitoring, spawning fish and redd counts, and invasive plant tracking and removal. Citizens that are more knowledgeable of changing environmental conditions and their causes are more likely to be better informed and stronger advocates for stewardship of Lithia Park in the future.

ACCESS AND CONNECTION

ACCESS AND CONNECTION

Autonomous vehicles are an indication that transportation will experience significant changes during the life of this Master Plan. Changes to circulation needs are likely to follow changes in transportation technology, and circulation will need to be reevaluated periodically as transportation modes change. However, while modes of travel may change over the next 100 years, there is still a need to ensure that circulation infrastructure is clearly defined with a guiding focus being on the slowest mode – pedestrian – as the dominant speed in the park's layout and circulation. Three speeds are addressed allowing for slowest (pedestrian), slower (bicycle, scooter, etc.), and slow (vehicular) speeds of travel. Visitors need to know which modes of travel are best suited to which areas and how to make connections into and through the park. Improved connections to and within the park are critical to ensure that there is access for all and that unnecessary barriers are removed. The following recommendations focus on different aspects of ensuring that access and circulation needs continue to support park use, and that they employ universal design principles.

Recommendation 18: *Ensure three speeds of traffic are accommodated within the park and are clearly identified.*

Lithia Park should continue to provide for slow (vehicular), slower (bicycles) and slowest (pedestrian) modes of traffic with slowest traffic being the primary and dominant mode. While the modes and transportation devices may change or evolve in time, all three speeds should be clearly accommodated within the park. This does not mean that all trails and roads need to serve all speeds, but all speeds do need to be accommodated within the park. As modes and levels of use of different modes change over time, roads and pathways may need to be re-identified as to what modes they are addressing. Providing clear signage and identification of what modes are welcome on each trail and road will continue to be a critical component so users can be informed of where they can and cannot use a particular mode of travel. In particular, the three speeds of traffic need to be better balanced throughout the park. For example, slow (vehicular) traffic dominates Winburn Way but, as a primary route through the park, the road must accommodate all speeds of travel. S. Pioneer Street is also a primary route and should support both slower and slowest paced travel. This plan highlights routes where leashed dogs (slowest) and cyclists (slower) are allowed, and proposes no changes to the

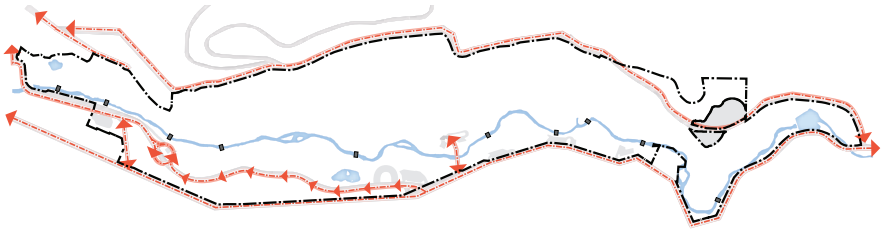
current policies but does emphasize prioritizing safe access along these routes where different speeds overlap.

Recommendation 19: *Use Universal Design principles to ensure that people of all ages and abilities can access unique experiences within Lithia Park in an integrated and inclusive manner.*

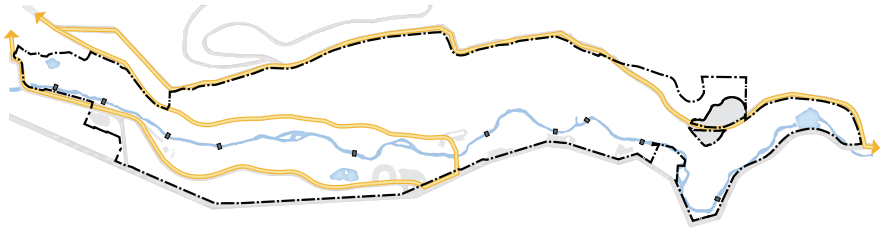
The park is more than 100 years old and so provides less in the way of accessible features. In conjunction with incorporating universal design principles into all future projects to ensure people have equitable physical access, other practices can increase people's ability to use the facilities and their level of comfort in terms of accessing the park. Some of these approaches include providing information about trail surfaces and conditions that enhance the visitor experience by allowing an individual to decide whether the trail is appropriate for their use, marking shorter walking loops allowing for greater choice in terms of length and exertion, and ensuring special events are accessible to and usable by people with a variety of disabilities.

THREE SPEEDS OF CIRCULATION

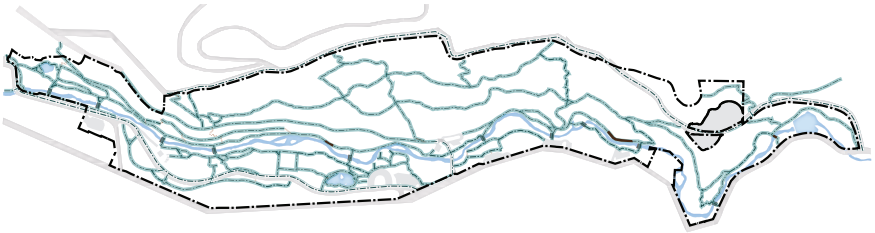
SLOW (VEHICULAR)



SLOWER (BICYCLES, SCOOTERS, ETC.)



SLOWEST (PEDESTRIAN)



1. Accessible pathways.

2. Scooter park tour.

3. People mover.

4. Designated bike paths.

5. Universal design principles should be used where feasible to create accessible connections and looping paths to iconic park features, such as the Japanese-style Garden.

6. Wood chip surfacing at play areas becomes a barrier to accessibility due to settling and uneven surfaces.

7. When repairing broken or lifted concrete paths prioritize those along designated accessible routes first.

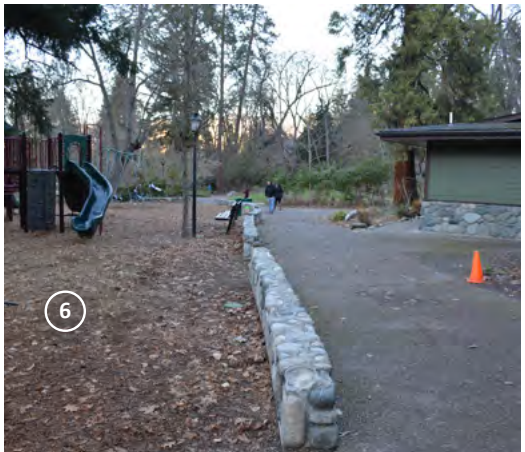
EXISTING BARRIERS TO ACCESSIBILITY

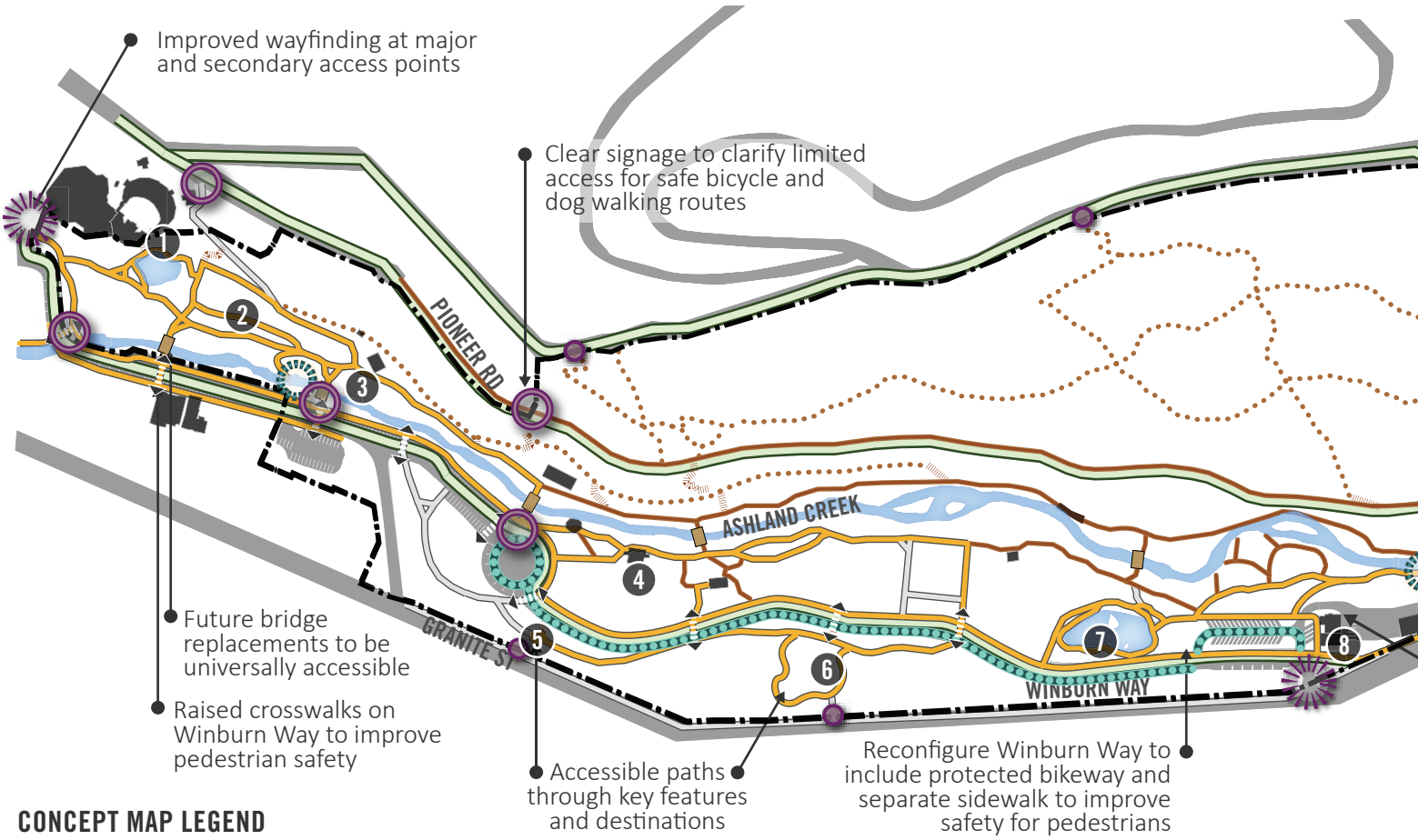
UNIVERSALLY ACCESSIBLE PATHS

— PAVED PATHWAYS ····· SOFT SURFACE PATHWAYS

CHALLENGES TO ACCESSIBILITY

····· SOFT SURFACE TRAILS ● STAIRS / ARCHED BRIDGES



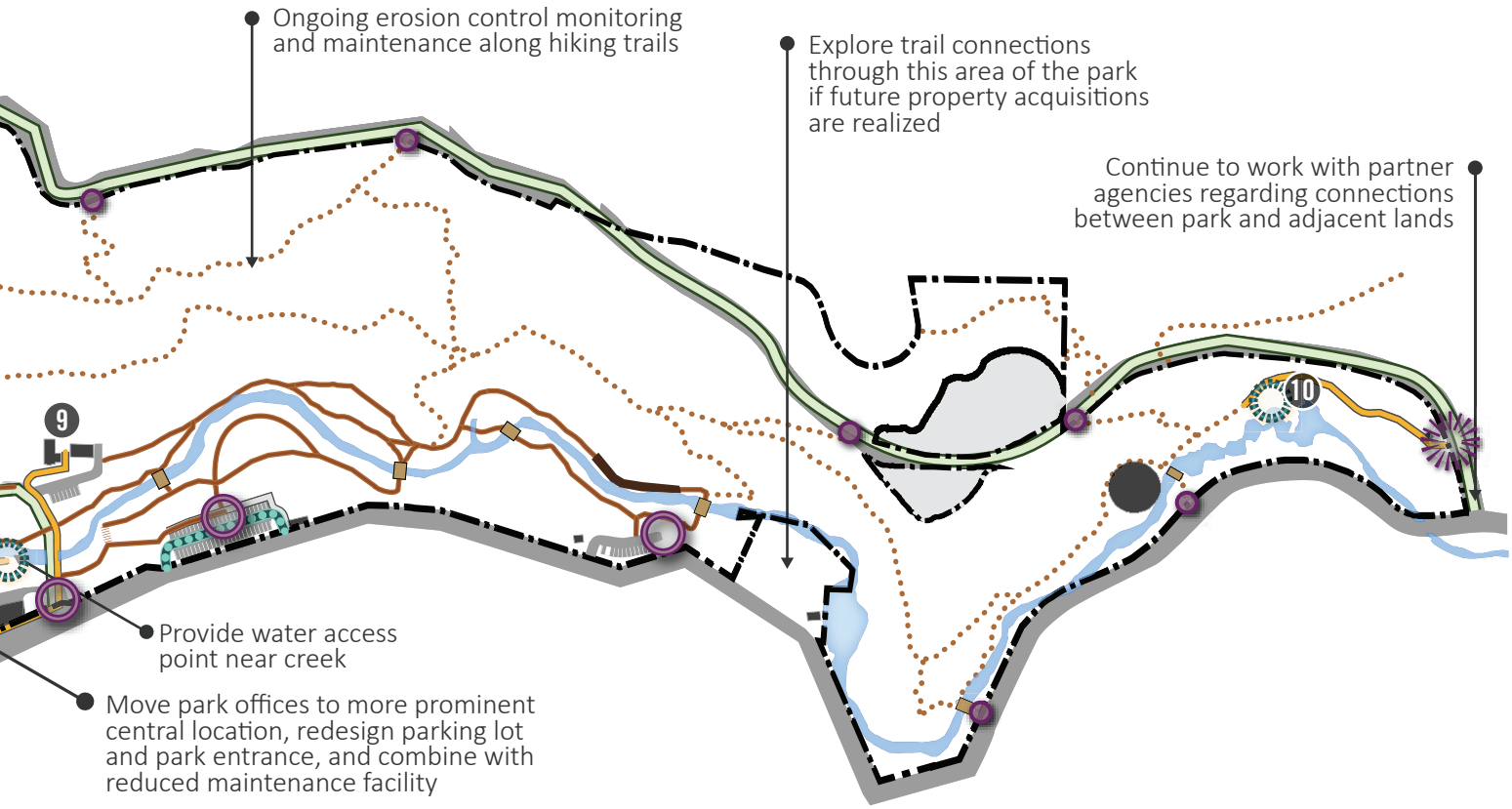


CONCEPT MAP LEGEND

- Paved Pathway
- Soft Surface Pathway
- Universally Accessible Route
- Bike Route
- Hiking Trails
- Water Access Point
- Major Access Point
- Secondary Access Point
- Minor Access Point
- Pedestrian Crossing
- One-Way Only Traffic

Recommendation 20: *Redesign vehicular roads to increase safety for all modes of travel, including pedestrians and bikes, and reestablish connectivity between the different zones of the park.*

Winburn Way is a paved vehicular route (with no sidewalks) that bisects the park, creating an artificial boundary within the park by prioritizing slow (vehicular) and slower (bicycle) speed traffic, interrupting slowest (pedestrian) speed traffic. The lack of clear pedestrian routes makes visitors on foot along Winburn Way feel disoriented and unsure of where to go. Modifying Winburn Way to better accommodate non-vehicular traffic is critical to overall circulation improvements in the park and addressing safety perceptions. Phased improvements and changes to circulation are recommended including making Winburn a one-way street between the relocated park offices and Nutley Street and providing a protected bike lane and pedestrian path along with clarifying parking spaces and moving them away from the creek's edge.



KEY PARK FEATURES

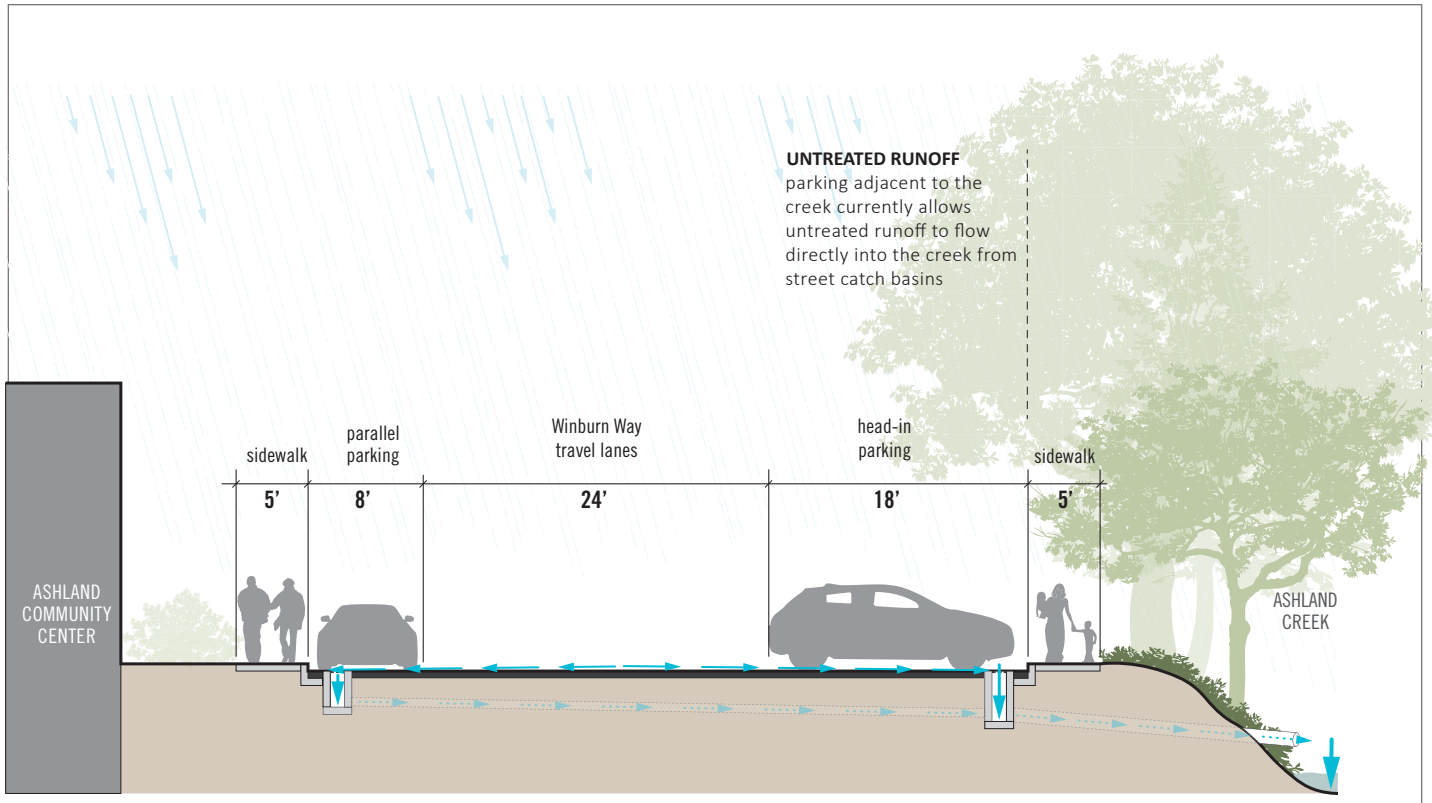
1 Lower Duck Pond
2 Feast of Will Lawn
3 Playground
4 Butler Bandshell
5 Perozzi Fountain
6 Japanese Garden
7 Upper Duck Pond
8 Park Offices/Maintenance
9 Community House
10 Swimming Hole

Bridges
Buildings
Roadways
Park Boundary
Creek/Water Feature

0 400 800 Feet

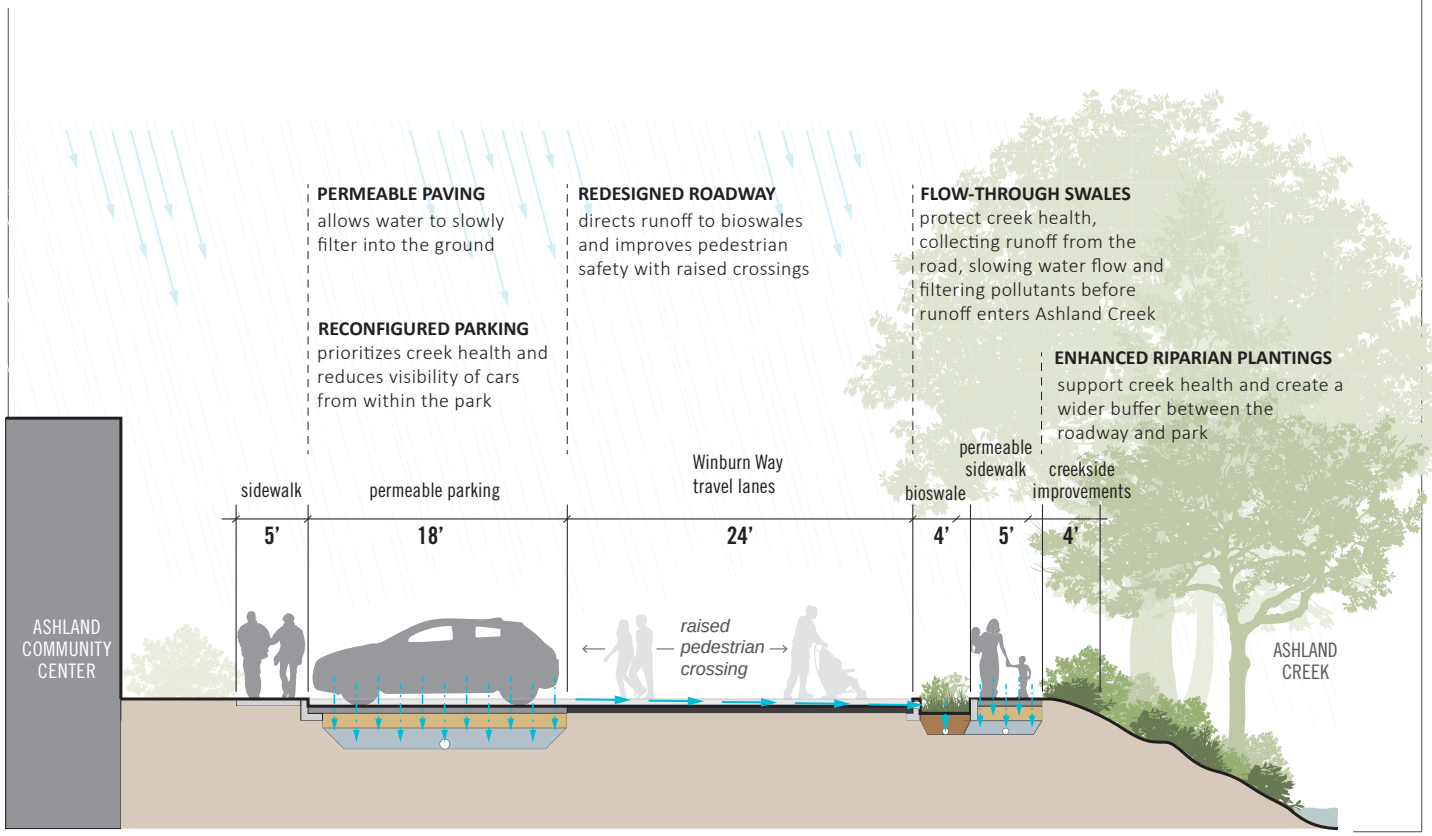
N

There are **two options** (see figures on the following page). Both will allow for improved accessible event parking closer to the bandshell while improving the balance between the different speeds of traffic and welcoming pedestrians to be part of this circulation area. If Winburn is *northbound* only, vehicular emphasis is given to the park offices and gathering areas off of Granite, distributing traffic patterns, as well as supporting park entrance signs located on N. Main Street that direct visitors to use Granite to access the park. Vehicular traffic would exist into the heart of downtown. If Winburn is *southbound* only, park offices and gathering areas off of Granite are less the focus and more emphasis is given to the urban edge of the park. In the future, closing Winburn Way to all but emergency vehicular traffic may be desirable and more palatable as traffic modes change and the park entry near Winburn Way and Granite Drive is established.



WINBURN WAY EXISTING CONDITIONS

0 5 10 25



WINBURN WAY GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

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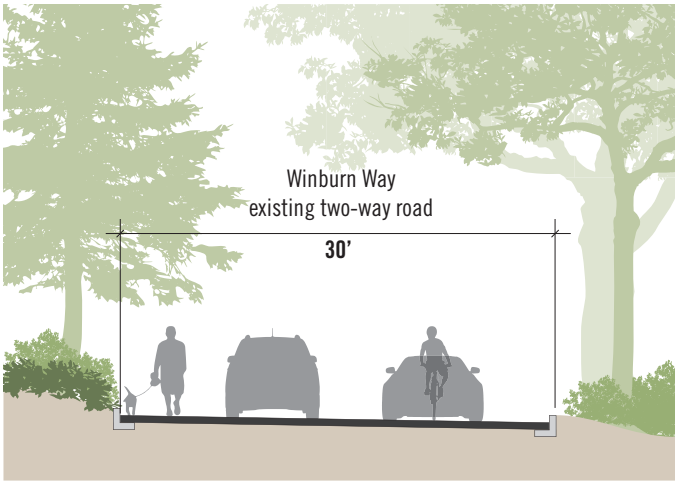
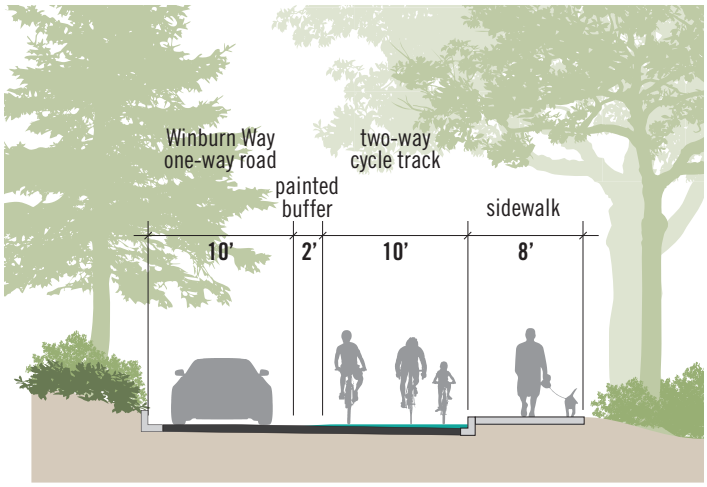
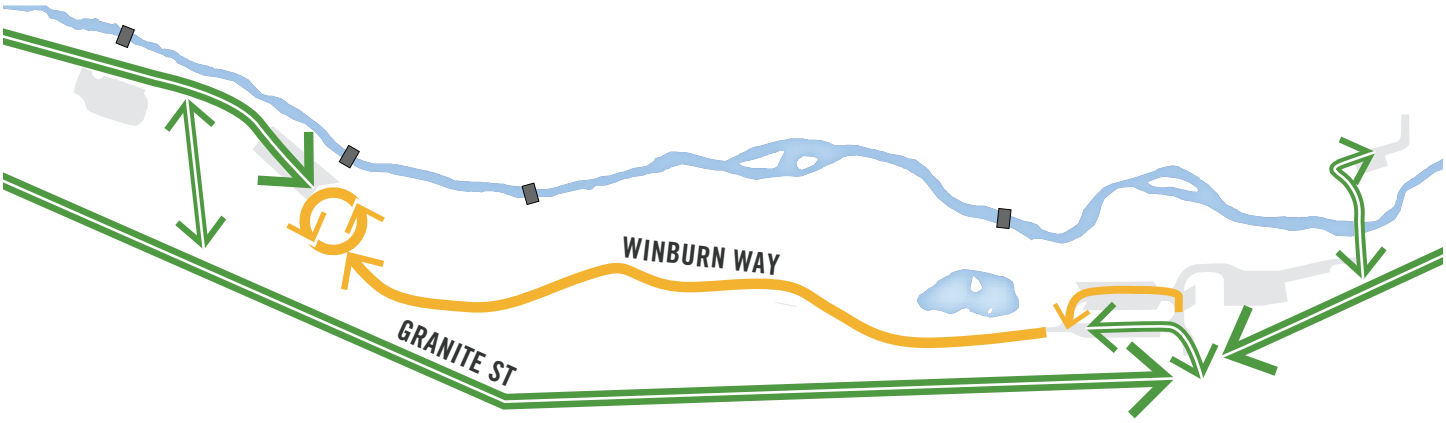


WINBURN WAY EXISTING CONDITIONS 0 5 10 20

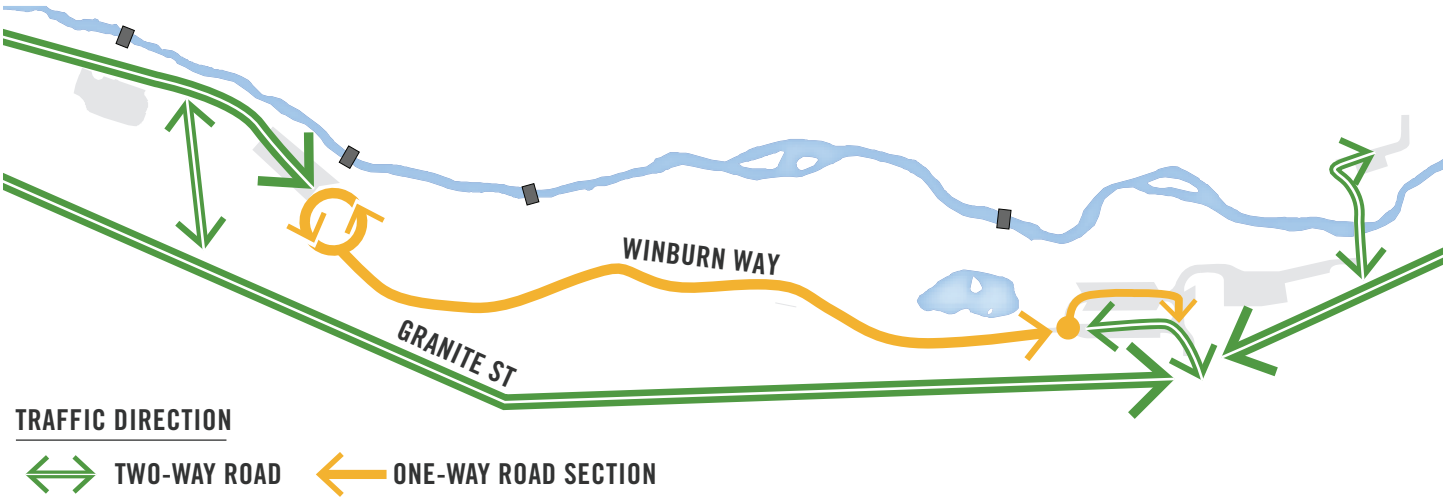


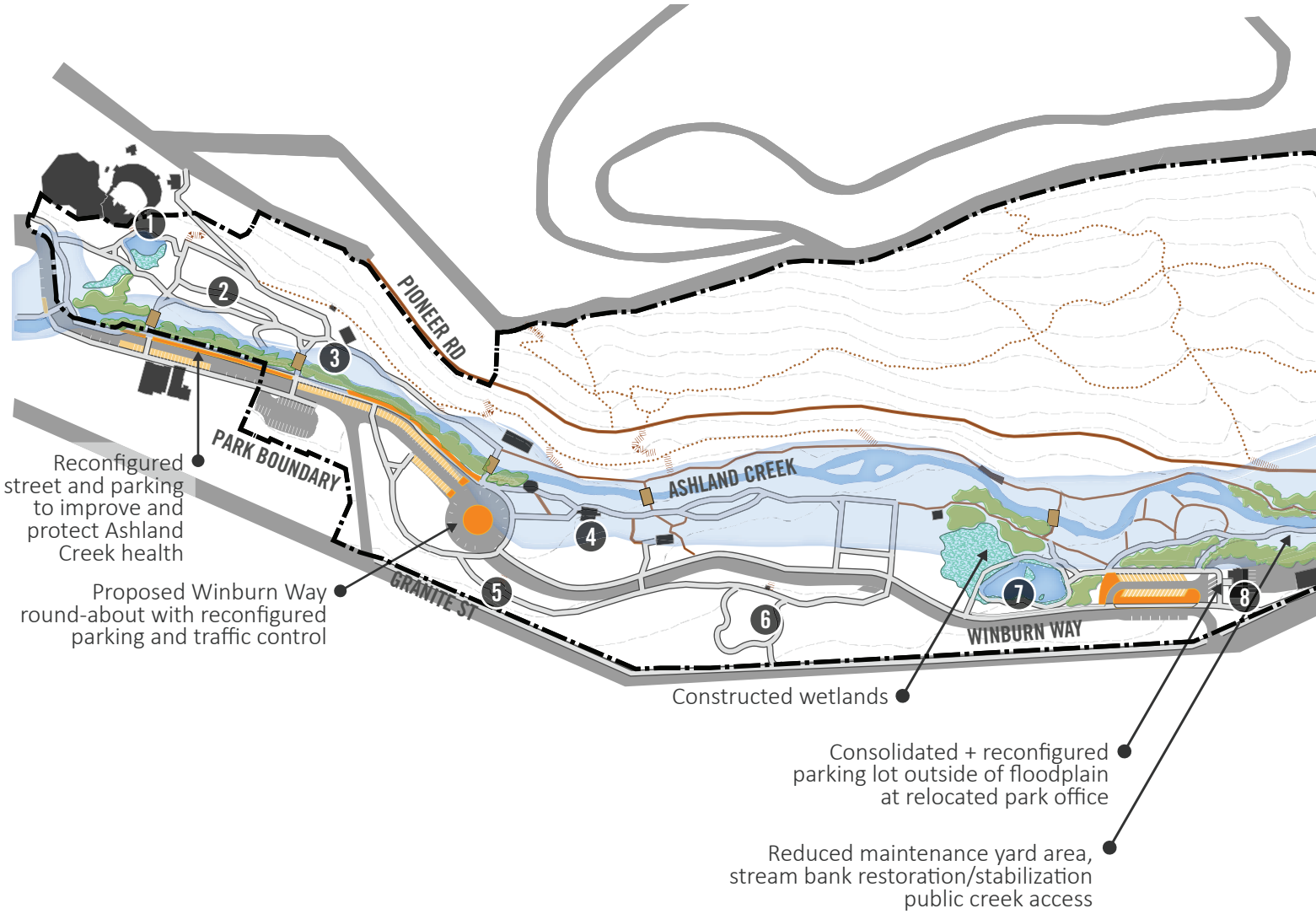
WINBURN WAY ONE-WAY REDESIGN 0 5 10 20

WINBURN WAY REDESIGN: ONE-WAY NORTHBOUND



WINBURN WAY REDESIGN ALTERNATIVE: ONE-WAY SOUTHBOUND

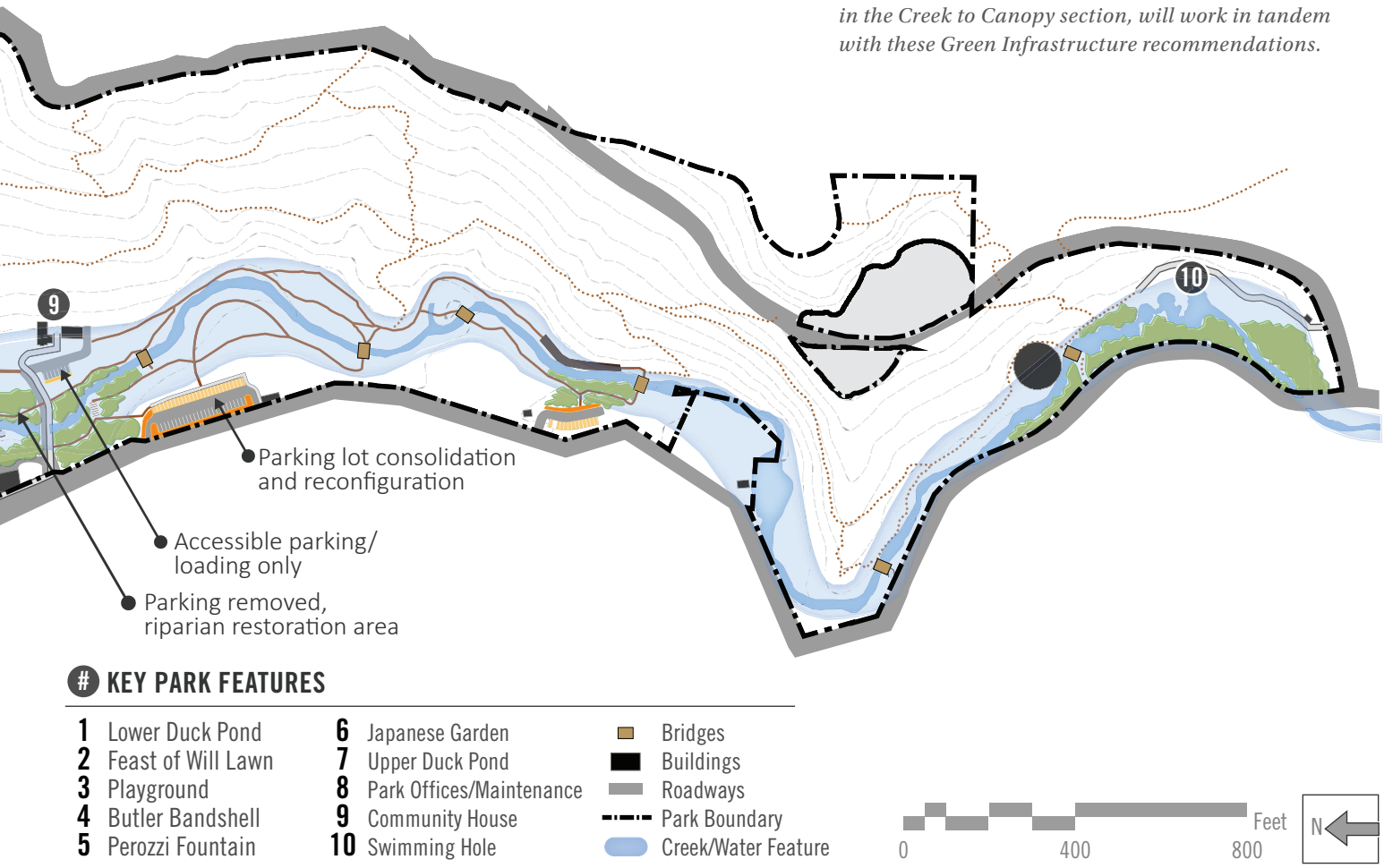




There are key points where there are no connections to Granite Street which have been referred to as "paths to nowhere" (see related Recommendation 37). The lack of sidewalks on the park side of Granite Street adds to this gap in circulation and access Pedestrian access into and out of the park along Granite Street are needed. Grade changes on the park side will require retaining walls and support structures to ensure an accessible path is provided. If too cost prohibitive, existing sidewalks on the residential side of Granite could be used with gaps in coverage addressed as long as those improvements include the addition of mid-block crossings with curb cuts and raised pedestrian crosswalks to improve connections to the existing sidewalks on the east side of Granite Street.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Note: Recommendations associated with creek restoration and improving its water quality, discussed in the Creek to Canopy section, will work in tandem with these Green Infrastructure recommendations.



Recommendation 21: *Incorporate green infrastructure and elements to support alternate and/or green transportation when redesigning or improving parking lots and streets.*

Related to restoring the health of Ashland Creek and earlier recommendations regarding relocating buildings and parking lots outside the floodplain is providing green infrastructure throughout the park. Currently, there are several areas where parking is immediately adjacent to the creek with no or limited landscape buffer to separate street and parking runoff from the creek. Street parking on Winburn Way near City offices needs to be modified to allow for landscape buffers and swales to slow and filter street and parking runoff before it enters Ashland Creek. All parking areas and streets should incorporate green infrastructure measures to ensure that stormwater which falls on impervious

1

2

surfaces is treated before entering Ashland Creek. Most of the parking lots have space to accommodate the inclusion of green infrastructure with redesigns. However, there are some locations, such as along Winburn Way and near Cotton Memorial Area, where some parking may need to be redesigned and/or relocated to other areas to allow adequate water quality improvement measures to be put in place while also improving the riparian habitat corridor in this area. Existing parking levels are recommended to be kept in the short term with some being maintained but relocated or reconfigured. However, as transportation needs change, consideration should be given to reducing the amount of vehicular parking to match reduced needs, as well as adding electrical charging stations or other infrastructure related to alternate modes of transport and/or greener transportation.

Recommendation 22: *Maintain connections across Ashland Creek that reflect the character of historic bridges while balancing their performance during flood events and ability to meet universal design principles.*

Bridges provide critical connections across Ashland Creek and should be located at regular generously spaced points along the length of Ashland Creek which correspond to primary circulation networks, with an emphasis placed at those locations associated with accessible routes. The bridges should be designed to reflect the park's historic character with structural designs that limit their ability to cause damage during flood events and limit the flow of the creek. Each bridge's design should balance the need for bridges that increase the passage of flood flows, while also reflecting the character of historic bridges that were present in the park during the early 20th century.

1: Utilize historic photos to inform the desired character of future bridge replacements. Original wooden bridge to the historic auto camp shown here.

2: A rustic style wooden bridge in Lithia Park.

3: Example of a bridge designed with steel support combined with wood detailing. These span the full width of the creek, offering a higher degree of flood resistance and have a similar style to many of the bridges in Lithia Park.

4: Arching bridges should maintain an accessible grade.

Those bridges include both concrete masonry and wood structures that reflect the early 20th century American parks movement.

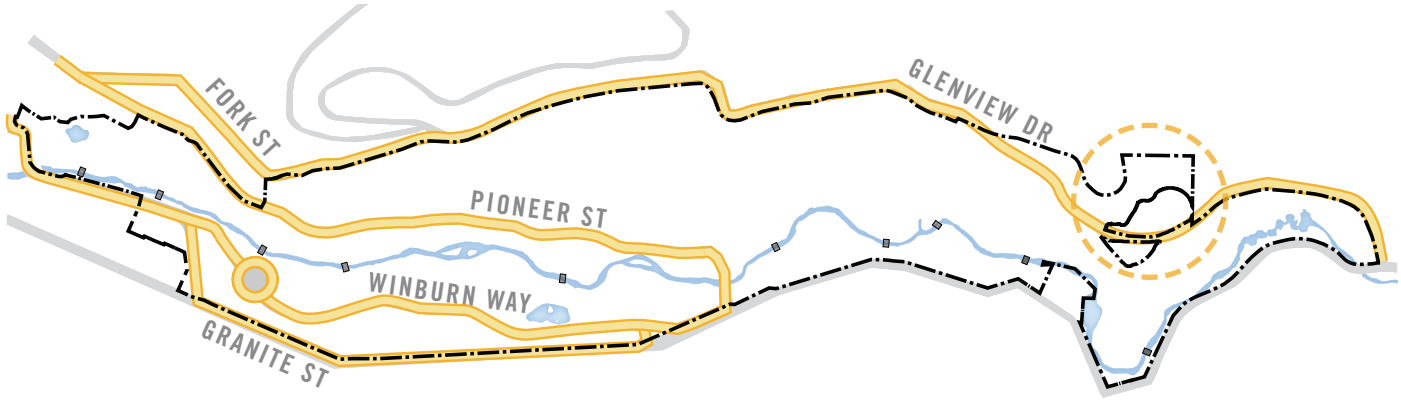
Bridges are related to loop tails and the road network ensuring visitors can access both sides of the creek within the Park. While the bridge types vary, most are either wood framed or concrete and in good condition. Some bridge foundations are experiencing scour which will need to be monitored along with impacts from future floods. When bridges need to be replaced or repaired, consideration should be given to relocating crossings to better facilitate trail realignments and connections. Bridges should be located on a straight reach of the river with firm banks above high flood level on each side (not on a curve). Single span bridge superstructures are relatively easy to remove and relocate onto new foundations which provide flexibility, and breakaway structures may also be an option to limit the threat of flow blockages during flood events.

Recommendation 23: *Support mountain biking opportunities through potential land acquisition area adjacent to the park.*

There are opportunities to provide a more defined mountain bike route along Glenview Drive and W. Fork Street that better connects USFS lands with downtown. APRC acknowledges that mountain biking is a growing recreational use and that improving mountain bike connectivity adjacent to Lithia Park will benefit mountain bikers and park users alike by clarifying routes and ensuring that Lithia Park continues to be Ashland's jewel for the next 100 years. APRC will support the creation of a bike skills area on City-owned land elsewhere in town, or if opportunities for potential land acquisition adjacent to Lithia Park arise, and along Glenview Drive to provide a place for young people to safely learn mountain biking skills, much in the same way that nature playgrounds foster connection to nature for young people.

EXISTING AND PROPOSED SPECIAL ACCESS*

**This Plan highlights routes where leashed dogs and bikes are allowed, and proposes no changes to the current policies.*



PATHWAYS WITH BIKE / DOG WALKING ACCESS POTENTIAL FUTURE LAND ACQUISITION AREA FOR BIKE SKILLS COURSE

Recommendation 24: *Clarify where dogs are allowed within and near Lithia Park.*

Dogs are currently allowed on leash on S. Pioneer Street, Winburn Way, and Granite Street. Given the habitat concerns throughout the park, dogs should not be permitted within other areas of the park. Recommendations for the redesign of Winburn Way and Granite Street include providing more protected areas for pedestrians, including those who are walking their dogs, which will make using these two roads safer for people and their pets. Off leash areas can be provided in other locations of the park system that are not focused on creek health and habitat. Signage should be provided to clarify where dogs are allowed.

1: While this plan does not propose additional bike access within the park, future land acquisitions can provide opportunities to develop a mountain bike skills course where kids can practice safely, or enhance connections to regional mountain bike trails.

2: On-leash dog walking paths.

3: The existing concrete bottomed wading area is great for families. With an improved access ramp it can be wheelchair accessible.

4: Exploring creek habitat on stepping stone boulders.

Recommendation 25: *Maintain human access to Ashland Creek in select areas that provide a diversity of water interaction experiences while also protecting sensitive areas of the creek.*

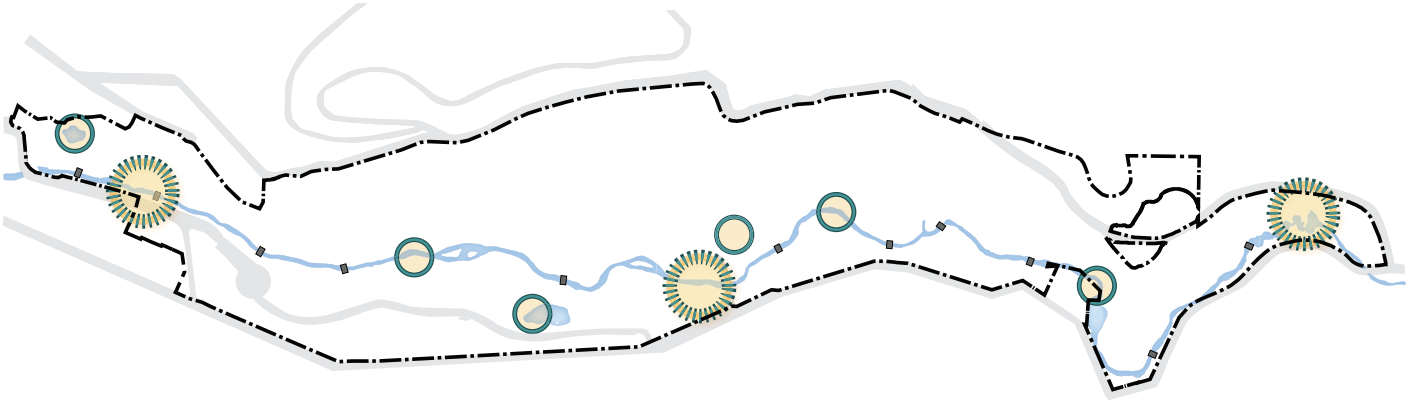
Access to Ashland Creek is critically important to the human experience within Lithia Park and should be maintained with a variety of water experiences that correspond to the character and context of the park adjacent. People are drawn to water, whether it is still or flowing. The allure of the park would be greatly reduced if the creek and the ponds were either not there or were unavailable to the human experience. On the other hand, too much access can result in visual and ecological damage to the stream and ponds that would also diminish the experience that people are seeking. Creek access points, such as those suggested, should strengthen interactions with the creek while limiting ecological degradation to the stream and ponds that visitors come to experience.

Access to the creek should be carefully located and designed so that each access point provides a unique experience. Areas where access is possible should be clearly identified for park users with information that indicates all other areas are off-limits. For areas where access is not possible, a variety of methods from education to planting design will be needed to prevent people from entering sensitive areas of the creek.

For the more developed northern end of the park, the current level of access will be maintained for people to have safe and easy ways to get to the creek. Modifications should be made to a section of the bank to ensure that people of all abilities can access the creek and its water. It may also be desired to add off-channel water play features such as small fountains or splash areas that expand access to water outside the Ashland Creek and that are available during warm summer months where the creek flow is lower and slower.

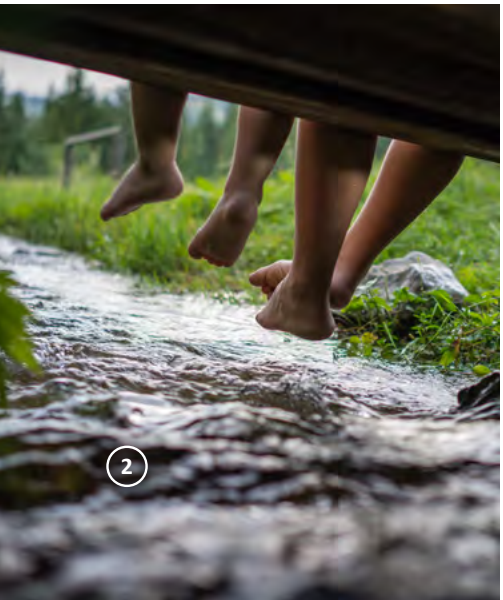
Opportunities to experience the creek mid-park are recommended for several locations that complement, but don't duplicate, the wading and swimming opportunities that will be available at the northern and southern ends of the creek. Following the redesign of

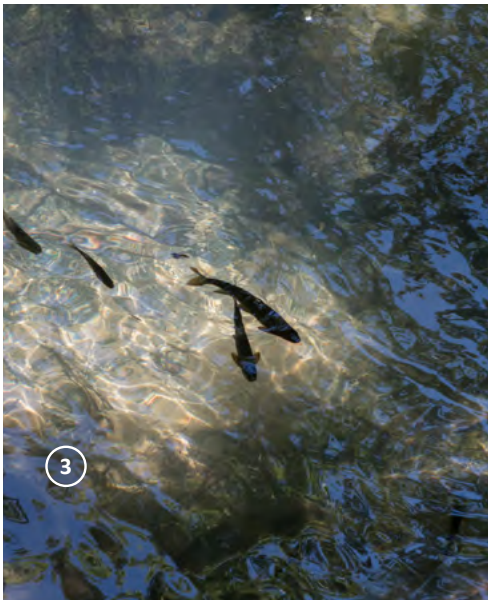
WATER ACCESS

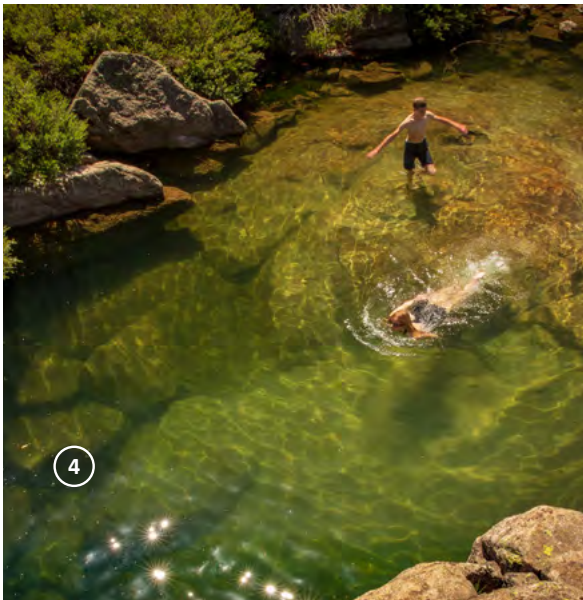


WADING OR SWIMMING AREA

KEY VIEWS / EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES







the maintenance yard area, direct water contact with the creek should be designed in conjunction with streambank restoration which allows the area to flood naturally.

Other mid-park access points should prioritize creek health by not allowing direct water contact, but instead provide more intimate, meditative interactions, memorable views, and educational opportunities. These access points should be varied for groups or individuals to experience other characteristics of the creek and adjacent water features including its riffles, runs, floodplains, side channels, constructed wetlands and ponds. These access points will support educational and learning opportunities but be designed to minimize loss of the creek's aesthetic and ecological values. Throughout the park in the designated areas, means of access should also vary, including rock and boulder access into the creek, board walks through wetlands, trails through riparian areas, and platforms for overlooks into pools that contain fish. Well defined access areas should provide informational signs if appropriate.

Removing the Granite Street Dam (see Recommendation 14) will also remove the existing swimming hole that it supports, but natural pools can be designed into the stream restoration project in this section to facilitate some swimming and wading opportunities. High gradient, confined mountain streams that are dominated by boulder substrate, like Ashland Creek, commonly form a step pool system. A step pool system is a series of pools separated by short riffles or cascades. Removal of the Granite Street Dam will expose a reach of Ashland Creek that may be conducive to the restoration or creation of a step pool system. Pools should be created through the careful design and placement of low boulder dams or excavations in the stream bed that will form natural looking small pools with cascades and shallower flowing water in-between them. These created pools will provide additional stream access and opportunities for wading, swimming, and close observation of fish and wildlife. Created pools will also be beneficial to resident and migrating native fish by providing cooler, deeper water for holding and rearing. Boulder dams should be designed to allow fish passage to facilitate migration upstream. Not all the pools that are added to this area will necessarily be available for human use. Some will be needed by aquatic species as habitat (see related recommendations). Due to the historical and expected continued use of this well-defined access area, it should have informational signage that provides guidance on its proper and safe use and information about its value to fish and wildlife.

See related Recommendation 28 on redesigning the maintenance yard and Recommendation 6 on removing Granite Street Dam.

1: Overlooks and boardwalks offer access to water areas while preserving ecological health.

2: Dangling feet over the water.

3: Viewing area over juvenile fish.

4: Swimming in small natural pools.

LITHIA PARK LEGACY

LITHIA PARK LEGACY

Many people have had a hand in shaping what Lithia Park is today. Respecting the contributions of the most influential groups and individuals-- which includes the Shasta Indians, the Chautauqua Movement, the Ashland Women's Civic Improvement Club, John McLaren and Chet Corry-- means understanding their influences while also looking ahead at refinements that will reinforce their influence. Ensuring that legacy continues means making some changes to sustain the park for another century.

See Cultural Legacy Timeline on page 53.

Recommendation 26: ***Be proactive about protecting Lithia Park's historic resources using a rehabilitation approach to accommodate changes that are needed to increase the viability and function of historic resources while also preserving their character.***

Work with the State Historic Preservation Office to update the National Register of Historic Places nomination to better address and understand the cultural landscape features that are associated with Lithia Park's established significance to increase clarity about what is historic and what is not. This will help the park's stewards make more informed decisions on what elements in the park are directly associated with the park's significance and which are not. Currently, 40 of the park's 100 acres, which includes areas and resources associated with the Chautauqua movement and McLaren's design, are incorporated in the nomination. However, there have been discussions about other areas and features being historic. Until the nomination is updated, there will continue to be ambiguity about significance of landscape features.

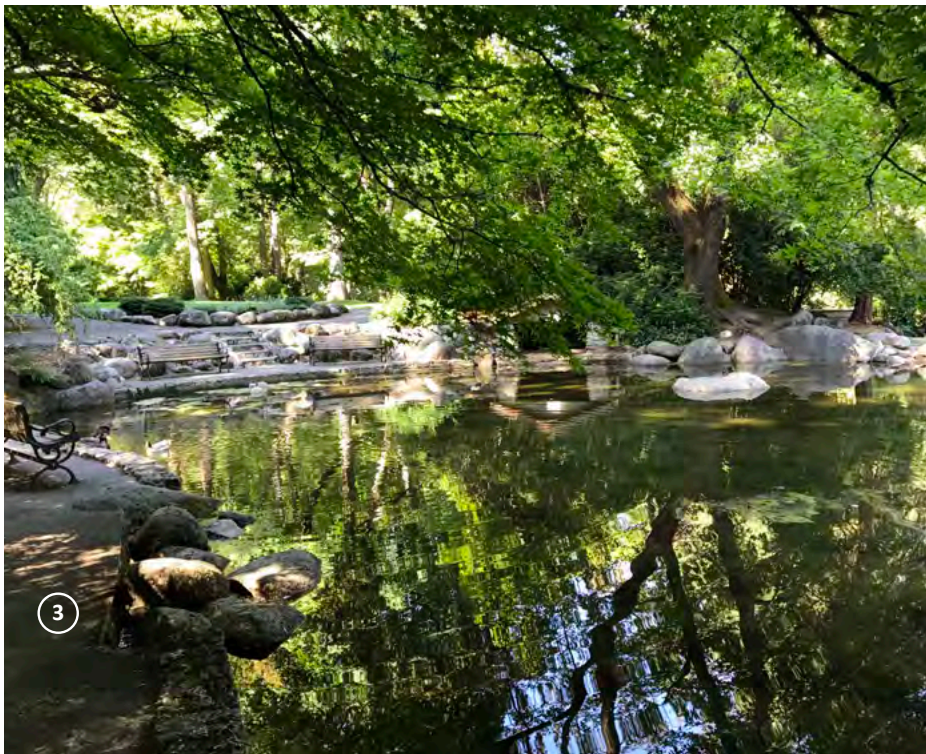
An overall rehabilitation approach should be used to guide the preservation of the built environment. This will provide additional protection to the

Defining Rehabilitation for Properties Listed in the National Register of Historic Places

A rehabilitation approach for properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places is defined as "the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values."[1]

1 The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior.

character of place that defines Lithia Park and keep the relationship between the buildings and the grounds intact for future generations. *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Cultural Landscapes* should be referenced for guidance. A restoration approach should be considered for specific historic features identified in the National Register of Historic Places nomination, such as the Perozzi Fountain.



1: The restored historic Enders Shelter which houses the park's lithia water fountain.

2: Perozzi Fountain.

3: Lower Duck Pond.

Guidelines for Rehabilitating Cultural Landscapes

Standards for Rehabilitation[1]

- A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
- The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
- Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
- Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
- Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
- Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
- Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
- Archaeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
- New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
- New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in a such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

1 *Birnbaum, Charles. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties + Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes, National Park Service, U.S. Secretary of the Interior, 1992.*

Recommendation 27: *Convert the current parks offices back to the historic Community House, to provide additional space for visitor education, celebration or gatherings.*

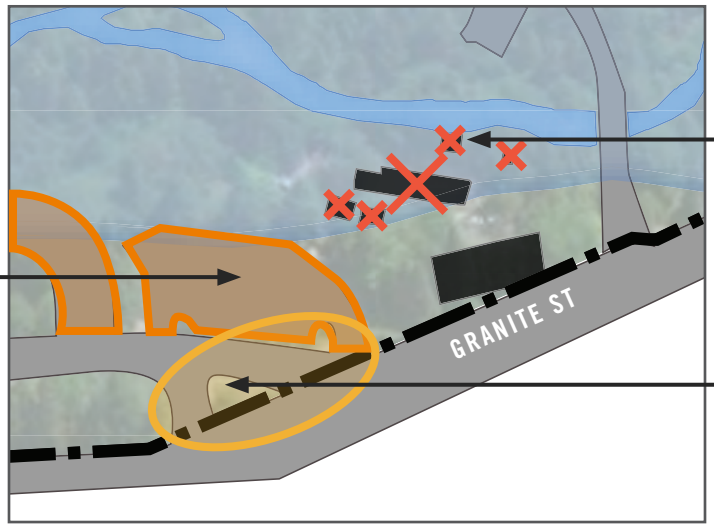
The existing park office is geographically centrally located but is hidden from the public and has limited use. This building could be repurposed to provide additional meeting or event space that could generate income, make better use of the building and its surroundings while allowing the park offices to move and be more visible and accessible to visitors of Lithia Park.

Lithia Park attracts visitors throughout the year and the Community House's central location perfectly aligns it with providing visitors with a place of shelter, respite and refreshments year-round. During the colder months it could be used as a warming hut or place to rest while exploring the central and southern reaches of the park. During the warmer months, it could provide water and refreshments which would allow people to lengthen their time in the park and enjoy its cool shade.

A small parking area should remain to accommodate accessible parking and loading/unloading activities, but the landscape will be redesigned to provide a better indoor/outdoor connection for the Community House so that events and activities can flow better between the building and the landscape. For example, the Laurel Springs Amphitheater, just north of the Community House, can be rehabilitated and incorporated into the landscape as a feature of the space.

1: Historic Community House

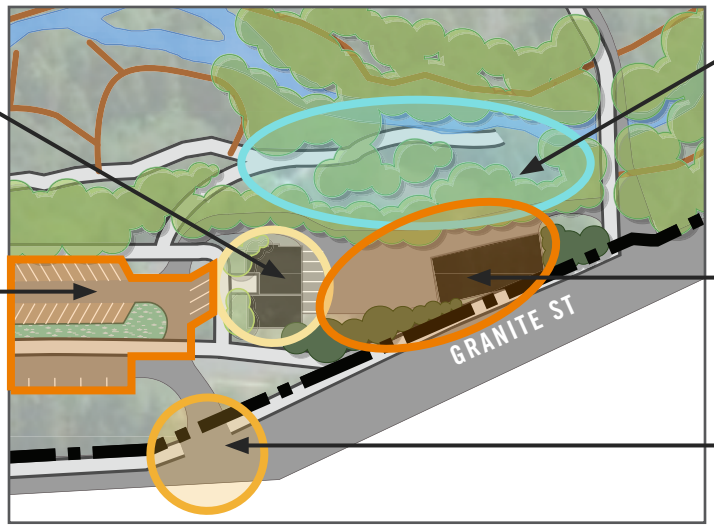
MAINTENANCE AREA REDESIGN



Remove existing maintenance buildings within floodplain and rebuild at regional park maintenance facility off site

Existing parking lots are over sized and do not effectively utilize space

Current intersection should be redesigned to increase safety and improve traffic flow



Restore streambank through regrading and planting, redesign area for accessible public creek access

Relocate park offices in new building to improve visibility and presence

Redesign parking lot to consolidate parking, add green infrastructure elements to protect creek health

Retain existing maintenance building and upper terrace area to serve park needs

Redesign for single intersection between Winburn Way and Granite Street

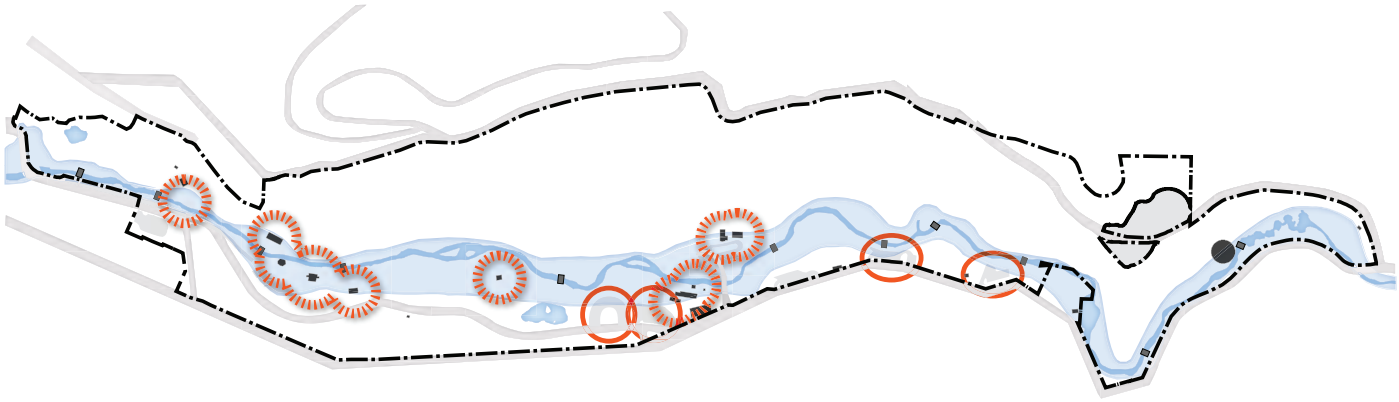
Recommendation 28: *Redesign the Lithia Park maintenance yard in order to relocate the park offices here to be more visible, create a more central entrance to the park, and create a stronger presence for park staff in the park. This includes relocating some of the functions to another site and removing buildings and structures associated that are in the flood plain to improve the health of Ashland Creek.*

Relocating Lithia's maintenance yard would allow this entry to become a main entry and create a more appropriate greeting point for visitors to Lithia Park. Resizing and reconfiguring the existing maintenance yard, relocating the park offices, and modifying the Winburn Way, Granite Street and S. Pioneer Street area would improve overall circulation, establish a clear park entry and identity, support creek health improvements, provide additional picnic facilities, and

allow for additional water connections for visitors. Shrinking the footprint of the Maintenance Yard also provides a significant opportunity to reclaim riparian vegetation at this location.

The maintenance yard is sited at a main park entry and poorly serves as an introduction to Lithia Park. The yard and its buildings are scaled to serve as regional facilities. They are partially located in the flood plain in an area with erosion concerns; this is a key opportunity to restore creek habitat, improve flood resiliency, and provide a new water connection for visitors. Regional facilities will be relocated to other park sites in the system so the maintenance facilities within Lithia Park are sized to serve only the park and its care allowing for a smaller footprint.

FLOODPLAIN CONFLICTS



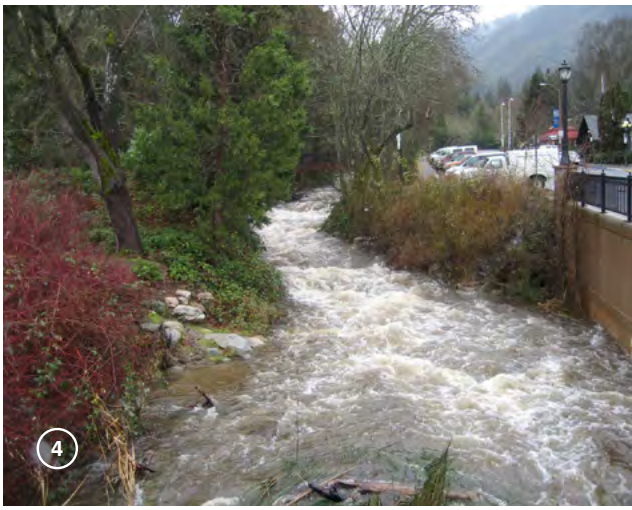
EXISTING FEATURES IN FLOODPLAIN

BUILDING/STRUCTURE PARKING LOT

Recommendation 29: *Remove non-historic buildings located in the Ashland Creek's floodplain, and refrain from constructing any new buildings or parking lots in these floodplain areas to increase the riparian area's ability to absorb high flows and minimize flooding impacts.*

Development within the floodplain, or flood storage zone, takes up valuable flood storage volume thereby causing more floodwaters to flow downstream and increase the peak flow. Parks with streams running through them are commonly modified to serve as flood detention/retention areas to store flood waters and reduce the peak flood flows to downstream developed areas. Prior to the construction of any new buildings within the park, the floodplain boundary should be delineated and mapped. Floodplain mapping should be based on anticipated future flood flows for at least the 100-year event, with consideration given to expanding the mapping to include the 500-year event so that boundary is understood. All areas within the 100-year event floodplain should be considered off limits to new building development, except those efforts that will increase flood storage or improve the creek's storage function.

See related recommendations for the park offices and maintenance operations, as well as for green infrastructure.



1: Lower terrace section of the maintenance yard adjacent to Ashland Creek, which is in the floodplain.

2: Maintenance area structures outside of the floodplain should remain and continue to serve Lithia Park needs.

3: Ashland Creek below the maintenance yard.

4: Narrow, channelized portion of Ashland Creek adjacent to Winburn Way after heavy rains (photo by Derek Severson).

1

2

Recommendation 30:
Determine consistent strategy for evaluating the introduction of new memorials in the park, and what type of physical elements are appropriate for memorials.

Currently there are numerous types of memorials in the park (plaques, benches, trees, etc.). A committee should be established to develop a set of guidelines for memorial requests, including the process by which the memorial requests are made, what fees will be charged, and what types of memorial elements are appropriate. For example, if plaques are determined appropriate, their size, look and materiality should be standardized so that they remain consistent throughout the park. A review of the types that currently exist should be completed to inform the new look and feel. Developing a process for planting memorial trees should follow guidelines for new plantings within the park so that appropriate species are placed within appropriate locations. Trees should not be planted in open meadows, and species should be chosen to match the character and design of the nearby vegetation. For example, if the tree is slated for Terrace Gardens then an ornamental tree can be considered, but if the tree is slated for the Upper Woodlands, then a native would be appropriate.

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Recommendation 31: *Strategically acquire adjacent lands that support the park's guiding principles as they become available.*

When opportunities arise, properties inside the Glenview, Fork and Granite Street boundaries should be obtained. In addition, adjacent properties along the south edges of the park that support the guiding principles of the master plan or enhance park connectivity should also be added. Creating a creek corridor from mountaintop to downtown would strengthen the nature interface and connection that the Ashland community has with its natural resources.

Recommendation 32: *Consider selling Lithia Park parcel at the corner of Granite Street and Nutley Street.*

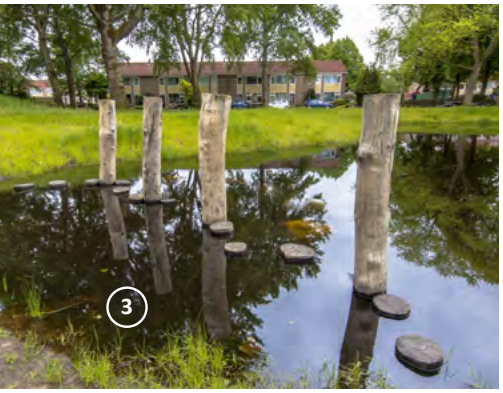
The size and location of this small triangular parcel does not meet any of the park's guiding principles, nor does it serve any park needs. If a viable opportunity to sell the property presents itself, it should be considered.

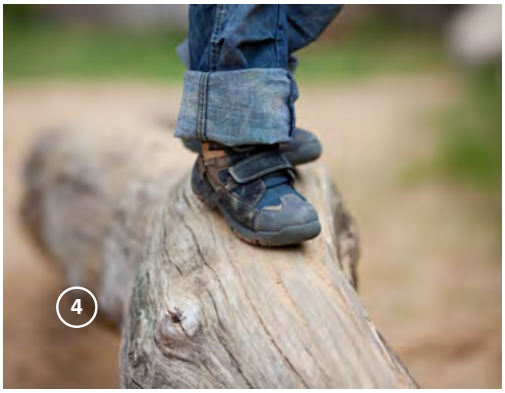
Recommendation 33: *Consider short- and long-term maintenance impacts with any current or new park facility and activity.*

Parks are only as good as their maintenance. Designing improvements with maintenance needs in mind will be critical to the ongoing success and sustainability of Lithia Park. Some strategies include developing an internal review process to ensure that sustainable solutions are considered against straight replacement of facilities in their current form or location. Periodic assessments of what activities and tasks require large outlays of maintenance funds or resources should be completed to determine if other solutions can be developed which will free up resources for other endeavors. Lithia Park will always require a great deal of maintenance but targeting activities that could be more efficiently completed to free up staff to attend to more impactful activities could make a large difference in the cyclical and ongoing care of the park.

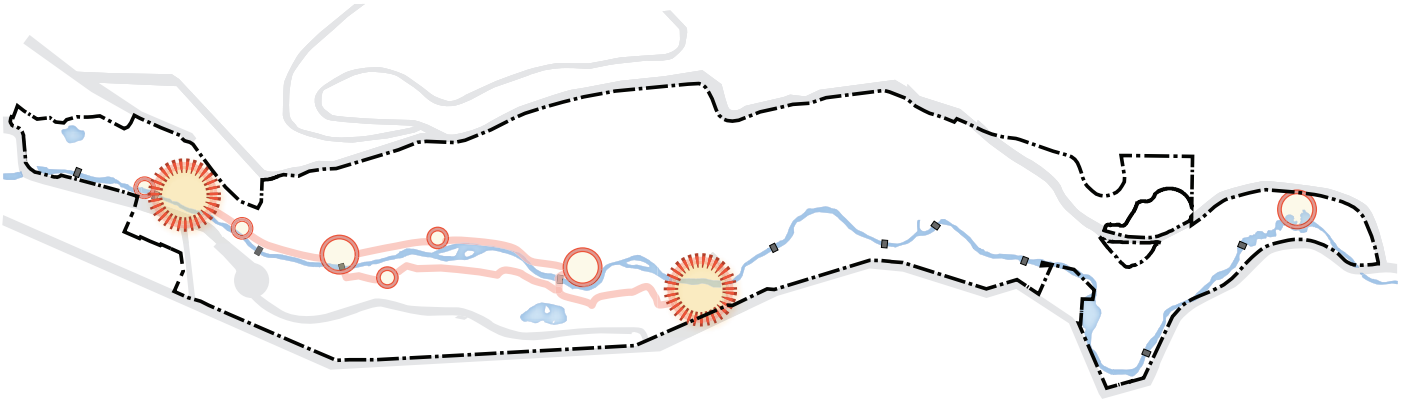
Over time, more sustainable maintenance equipment and methodologies should be implemented, such as the use of equipment powered by renewable energy resources. Maintenance aesthetic standards should be reevaluated periodically so that more effort is exerted in more formal areas of the park and less effort is required in more naturalistic areas of the park. For example, in the northern section of the park, maintenance efforts should be more concentrated to sustain an ornamental character. In other sections of the park outside of major access points maintenance efforts can be reduced to

1-6: Without the generosity of countless volunteers and donors Lithia Park would not exist as the iconic park it is today. Any future memorials should maintain a consistent style and materiality which reflects the surrounding character of the area of the park chosen for installation. Plaques for memorial trees, engraved stones, benches, and plaques set in stone are some examples of styles of memorials which blend well with the character of the park. (Photo 4 by Daniel X. O'Neil)





NATURE PLAY



NATURE PLAY THEMED PLAYGROUND

INFORMAL NATURE PLAY NODE FEATURE

allow a more naturalistic character. This will help match limited maintenance resources to the places they are most needed to maintain the park's different character areas, and will reduce sound disturbances in the more wild, southern section of the park.

Recommendation 34: *Focus play areas on the concepts and ideals of nature play with a variety of options that engage people of all ages and abilities.*

The existing play area will eventually need to be updated to meet changes in code and/or due to the structures reaching their life expectancy – typically 15 years or so. As part of the continuing evolution of the park, nature play should be provided both in concentrated locations near the urban end of the park in or near the existing play area as well as in moments along the trails up until the Community House. Nature play includes a variety of options from boulders for jumping, logs for scrambling, loose parts for building and/or natural materials combined with nets and other climbing amenities. Nature play is already occurring informally. Formalizing the locations will both clarify where this play should occur while providing additional recreation for all ages and abilities in a new way to connect with the surroundings while minimizing the potentially negative impacts to sensitive natural resources. Several locations along the main creek trail between the existing play area and the current park office have been identified for nature play nodes given their proximity to group picnic areas and their ability to create a distributed system of play nodes that would encourage park visitors to explore the trail while providing additional

1-9: Singular nature play elements can be placed periodically along major trails. These can be as subtle as a series of downed logs for balancing, whimsical and artistic sculptures, or unexpected discoveries such as swings or slides.

10-11: Examples of destination nature play ground areas.

1

2

opportunities to engage with nature and enjoy the beauty that is Lithia Park.

Recommendation 35: *Relocate restrooms and water fountains out of the floodplain to highly visible and easily serviced areas that are located throughout the length of the park.*

Restrooms are currently located at the play area, near the Butler Bandshell, by the tennis courts, at the park offices (only open when the offices are open), with two additional restroom buildings located along Granite Street near the upper parking areas associated with Cotton Memorial, Hillside Picnic, and Root Memorial Areas. The current number of restrooms is adequate for the size of Lithia Park and the overall capacity should be maintained, though locations should be re-evaluated to ensure that restrooms are located in appropriate places in the park. However, restrooms will eventually need to be renovated as levels of maintenance become too high to sustain. One of the first priorities should be relocating restrooms that are in the floodplain. The highest priority are the restrooms near the tennis courts which could be removed when the park offices move to their new location, combining those two facilities into one. The restrooms near the Butler Bandshell should be relocated to improve their visibility and relationship to evolving uses of this area. The existing restrooms at the Community House should remain. When replacing the restrooms near the play area, Cotton Memorial, Hillside Picnic and Root Memorial Areas, consider new locations that are located outside the flood plain, visible and easily serviceable, near proposed amenities, and in consideration of CPTED practices (crime prevention through environmental design).

1: Rustic style park restroom.

2: Drinking fountain which evokes Lithia Park's early design character.

3: Drinking and washing fountain.

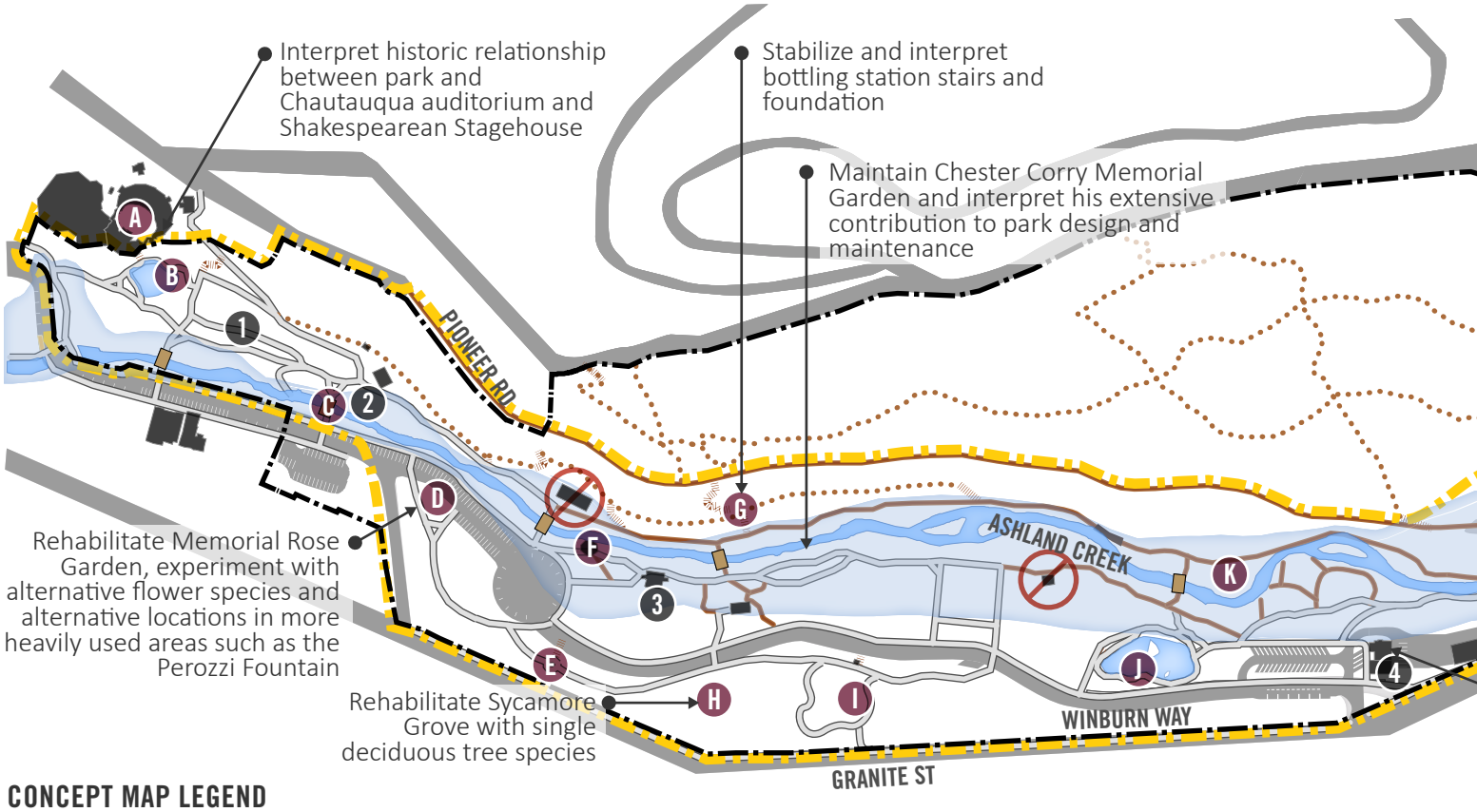
4: Typical public lands style restroom.

Recommendation 36: *Ensure safe potable water is provided to park visitors.*

Public water supply cross-connections need to be reviewed and upgraded to meet state requirements. Because the park receives potable water from Ashland and non-potable water from TID, there is a risk for cross contamination of the public water supply. State law requires water suppliers to create cross connection control programs to protect the public water systems from pollution and contamination. Under these programs, Lithia Park is required to provide a backflow assembly in the form of an approved air gap or reduced pressure backflow assembly at each connection to the City of Ashland potable water. Each connection needs to be evaluated to determine if the appropriate level of backflow protection is installed and operational. Where backflow system upgrades are required, Ashland Public Works in a joint effort with APRC would replace/upgrade systems to meet current state requirements.

Recommendation 37: *Sensitively remove abandoned non-historic infrastructure, and introduce new infrastructure that is sensitive to the park's cultural and natural character and function.*

Abandoned infrastructure that is non-historic should be removed, while historic abandoned infrastructure should be stabilized and interpreted. New infrastructure should be placed with sensitivity to its proximity to historic features. For example, new light fixtures should reflect the character of the park area they are located within and be night sky approved.



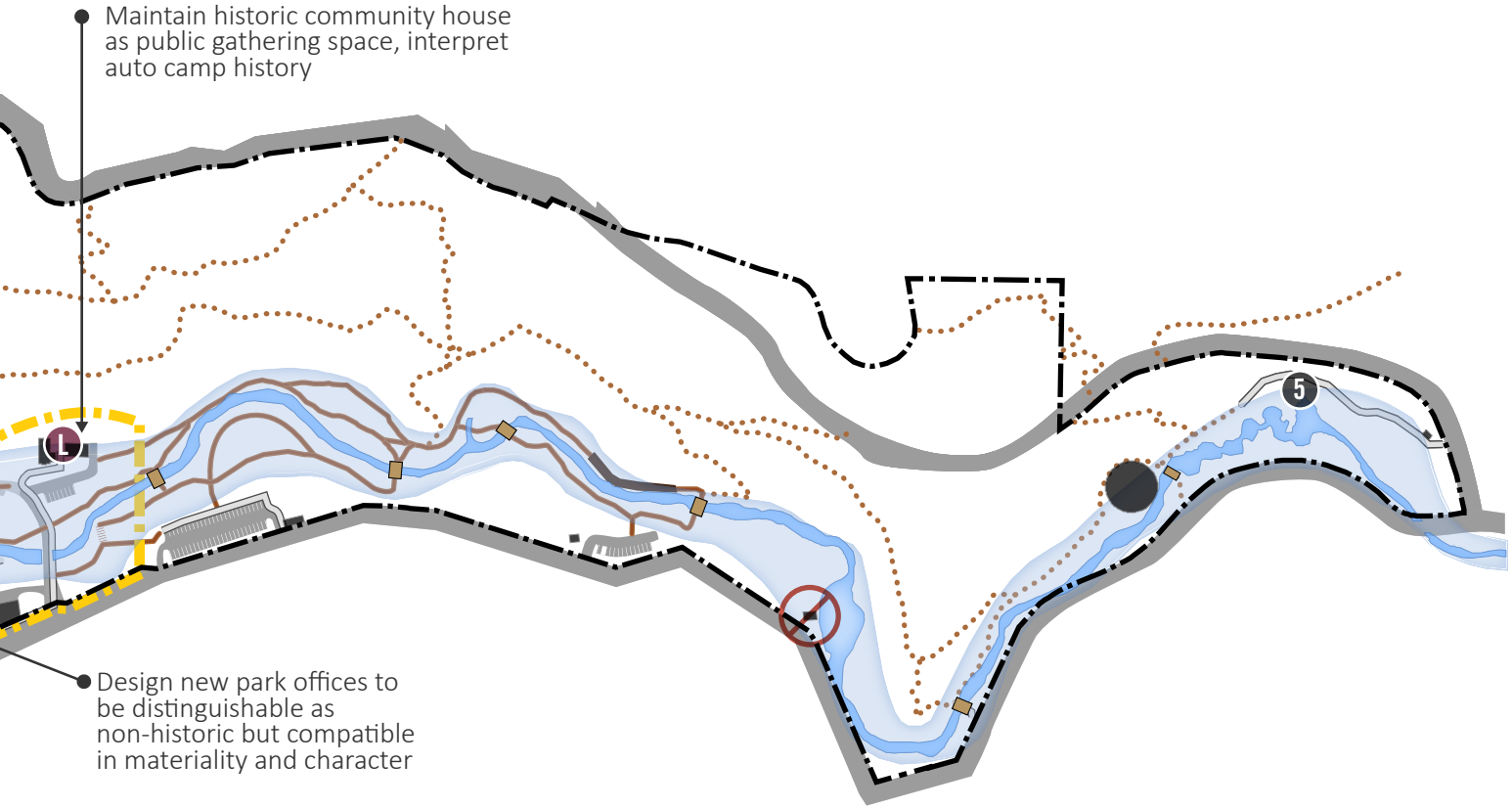
CONCEPT MAP LEGEND

Historic District Boundary (approximate)

Relocate non-historic structures in floodplain

X KEY HISTORIC PARK FEATURES

A Chautauqua Site
B Lower Duck Pond & Waterfall
C Atkinson Bridge
D Rose Garden
E Perozzi Fountain
F Enders Shelter
G Bottling Station
H Sycamore Grove
I Japanese Garden
J Upper Duck Pond
K Madrone Picnic Area
L Community House & Auto Camp Site



KEY PARK FEATURES

(NON-HISTORIC)

1 Feast of Will Lawn
2 Playground
3 Butler Bandshell
4 Park Offices/Maintenance
5 Swimming Hole

Bridges
Buildings
Roadways
Park Boundary
Creek/Water Feature
Floodplain

0 400 800 Feet

N

Recommendations Quick Reference

THE MEANDER

Recommendation 1: *p.51*

Incorporate interpretation and storytelling throughout the park to link people to its cultural and natural qualities, using art, media, programs and permanent or temporary exhibits.

Recommendation 2: *p.52*

Recognize the diversity of spaces that exist in Lithia Park and emphasize their unique character while also integrating the experiences within a linear style park that stretches from town to wild.

Recommendation 3: *p.58*

Create a series of measured and named loop trails.

Recommendation 4: *p.60*

Provide wayfinding within the park for clearer orientation.

CREEK TO CANOPY

Recommendation 5:..... *p.63*

Improve aquatic life habitat in Ashland Creek.

Recommendation 6: *p.64*

Restore Ashland Creek in this location and reconnect stream habitats that reflect pre-dam conditions by considering the removal of Granite Street Dam.

Recommendation 7: *p.65*

Restore connection between Ashland Creek and its adjacent floodplain to decrease the creek's channelized form and increase creek health.

Recommendation 8:..... *p.67*

Improve water quality of Lithia Park's ponds by incorporating their function into Ashland Creek.

Recommendation 9: *p.69*

Augment input of gravel, cobble and wood material to Ashland Creek

Recommendation 10: *p.71*

Monitor and mitigate effects of climate change on low flows of creek during the dry season.

Recommendation 11: *p.73*

Reduce TID outlet noise.

Recommendation 12: *p.74*

Mitigate future wildland fires in Lithia Park.

Recommendation 13: *p.75*

Remove invasive vegetation species and replace with vegetation appropriate to the planned vegetation zone recommendations.

Recommendation 14: *p.80*

Manage ornamental gardens to maintain the gardenesque quality of Civic Grounds and Terrace Gardens areas by incorporating flowering plants into the planting design of these spaces using deer resistant species.

Recommendation 15: *p.81*

Manage the succession of the tree canopy to maintain the natural and cultural tree character of the park according to planned vegetation zones.

Recommendation 16: *p.86*

Recognize Lithia Park's function as a corridor and link for wildlife to adjacent national forests by monitoring wildlife and improving habitat to support desired species in partnership with partners such as the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the US Forest Service.

Recommendation 17: *p.87*

Bring citizen science and monitoring into Lithia Park to support environmental education and partnerships.

ACCESS AND CONNECTION

Recommendation 18: *p.89*

Ensure three speeds of traffic are accommodated within the park and are clearly identified.

Recommendation 19: *p.90*

Use Universal Design principles to ensure that people of all ages and abilities can access unique experiences within Lithia Park in an integrated and inclusive manner.

Recommendation 20: *p.92*

Redesign vehicular roads to increase safety for all modes of travel, including pedestrians and bikes, and reestablish connectivity between the different zones of the park.

Recommendation 21: *p.97*

Incorporate green infrastructure and elements to support alternate and/or green transportation when redesigning or improving parking lots and streets.

Recommendation 22: *p.98*

Maintain connections across Ashland Creek that reflect the character of historic bridges while balancing their performance during flood events and ability to meet universal design principles.

Recommendations Quick Reference Continued

Recommendation 23: *p.99*

Support mountain biking opportunities through potential land acquisition area adjacent to the park.

Recommendation 24: *p.100*

Clarify where dogs are allowed within and near Lithia Park.

Recommendation 25: *p.101*

Maintain human access to Ashland Creek in select areas that provide a diversity of water interaction experiences while also protecting sensitive areas of the creek.

LITHIA PARK LEGACY

Recommendation 26: *p.105*

Be proactive about protecting Lithia Park's historic resources using a rehabilitation approach to accommodate changes that are needed to increase the viability and function of historic resources while also preserving their character.

Recommendation 27: *p.108*

Convert the current parks offices back to the historic Community House, to provide additional space for visitor education, celebration or gatherings.

Recommendation 28: *p.109*

Redesign the Lithia Park maintenance yard in order to relocate the park offices here to be more visible, create a more central entrance to the park, and create a stronger presence for park staff in the park. This includes relocating some of the functions to another site and removing buildings and structures associated that are in the flood plain to improve the health of Ashland Creek.

Recommendation 29: *p.111*

Remove non-historic buildings located in the Ashland Creek's floodplain, and refrain from constructing any new buildings or parking lots in these floodplain areas to increase the riparian area's ability to absorb high flows and minimize flooding impacts.

Recommendation 30: *p.112*

Determine consistent strategy for evaluating the introduction of new memorials in the park, and what type of physical elements are appropriate for memorials.

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Recommendation 32: *p.113*

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Recommendation 33: *p.113*

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Recommendation 34: *p.115*

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Recommendation 35: *p.116*

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Recommendation 36: *p.117*

Ensure safe potable water is provided to park visitors.

Recommendation 37: *p.117*

Sensitively remove abandoned non-historic infrastructure, and introduce new infrastructure that is sensitive to the park's cultural and natural character and function.

5

IMPLEMENTATION

The Lithia Park Master Plan is designed to provide long-term guidance for management of the park's resources, facilities and visitor experiences. This chapter describes three processes that will help APRC implement the Master Plan:

- The compliance review process for determining if proposals by community members are consistent with the Lithia Park Master Plan
- The work plan process, tying to the biennial budget process and breaking the 37 recommendations into manageable steps; and
- The periodic Master Plan review process, for evaluating the Master Plan at specified intervals and making adjustments as warranted.

MASTER PLAN COMPLIANCE REVIEW

In the coming years, it is likely that members of the public will propose projects or activities for Lithia Park. When this happens, APRC will need to determine whether the proposal is consistent with the Lithia Park Master Plan, and if so, whether the proposal should be prioritized for implementation.

The scorecard below provides a series of five questions for APRC to use when evaluating each proposal. The first two questions determine if a proposal is consistent with the Master Plan. If not, APRC should decline the proposal.

If a proposal is found to be consistent with the Master Plan, APRC should consider questions 3, 4 and 5, which address the costs and benefits of the proposal. Proposal-specific public involvement should be part of the compliance review process if one of the following conditions are met:

- The proposal adds a new use, feature or facility to Lithia Park.
- The proposal relocates or changes an existing use, feature or facility to another area of Lithia Park.
- The proposal expands the footprint of an existing use, feature or facility.

LITHIA PARK MASTER PLAN
COMPLIANCE REVIEW SCORECARD

Proposal:

Question		Comments
1. **Is the proposal consistent with one or more of the guiding principles?**	Yes Maybe No	
2. **Does the proposal advance one or more of the recommendations?** *If so, list which one(s) in the comments section.*	Yes Maybe No	
If the answers to question 1 or 2 are No, APRC should decline the proposal. *If the answers to questions 1 or 2 are Yes or Maybe, APRC should consider questions 3, 4 and 5.*		
3. **What are the overall capital costs? What would be APRC's capital costs?**	Total: $ APRC: $	
4. **Are there operating impacts for APRC?** *If so, please list in the comments section.*	Yes Maybe No	
5. **Does it bring outside resources to Lithia Park?** *If yes, please describe in the comments section. Examples: new partners, outside funding, revenue generation.*	Yes Maybe No	

Recommendation:

THE WORK PLAN PROCESS

APRC establishes a biennium budget every two years. The budget is the tool for accomplishing APRC's work, and the budget process includes goal-setting. As a small agency with limited staffing and multiple parks to manage, APRC only has so much capacity to plan, manage and implement projects at Lithia Park. By creating a two-year Lithia Park Master Plan work plan with the biennial budget, APRC will focus its implementation efforts and sequence its Lithia Park work effectively.

As part of the biennial budget process, APRC should establish how much staff time is available for Lithia Park given APRC's overall responsibilities and clarify the areas of expertise of those staff. APRC also should identify the budget resources available for Lithia Park efforts.

Since staffing and budget resources are limited, the following questions provide considerations for prioritizing actions and developing a work plan.

1. **Are there any limited-time opportunities that should be pursued?** Examples: grant funding opportunity, new or emerging partnership.
2. **Are there recommendations that require ongoing attention and investment of staff time?** For example, Recommendation 15 may require additional staff time over the course of each year.
3. **Which recommendations does APRC want to make progress on during the next two years?**
   - *Are there necessary first steps that would simplify implementation or management?* For example, Recommendations 24 and 26 could facilitate management or decisions related to other recommendations
   - *Are there quick wins that could be completed in one or two years?*
   - *Are there longer term or more complicated recommendations that APRC would like to take initial steps on?* Recommendations 6 and 16 are examples since both require multi-jurisdictional coordination.
4. **Will there be progress in each of the four organizing theme areas over the course of the biennium?**

PERIODIC MASTER PLAN REVIEW PROCESS

Though the Lithia Park Master Plan considers the next 100 years, it should be revisited periodically to consider new information and to check in with the Ashland community to confirm overall direction.

APRC should conduct a periodic review every ten years. As part of this review, APRC should report progress on the recommendations, update any pertinent foundational information, and check in with the public to confirm the direction is still on target.

IN CONCLUSION

The Lithia Park Master Plan will continue to be a guiding light for APRC and the City of Ashland in the years to come with thoughtful and strategic implementation of its recommendations, engaging the community when appropriate. The plan represents a thorough process of public engagement that incorporated voices from multiple perspectives, all of which have a deep love for the park and its future, and the community it serves.

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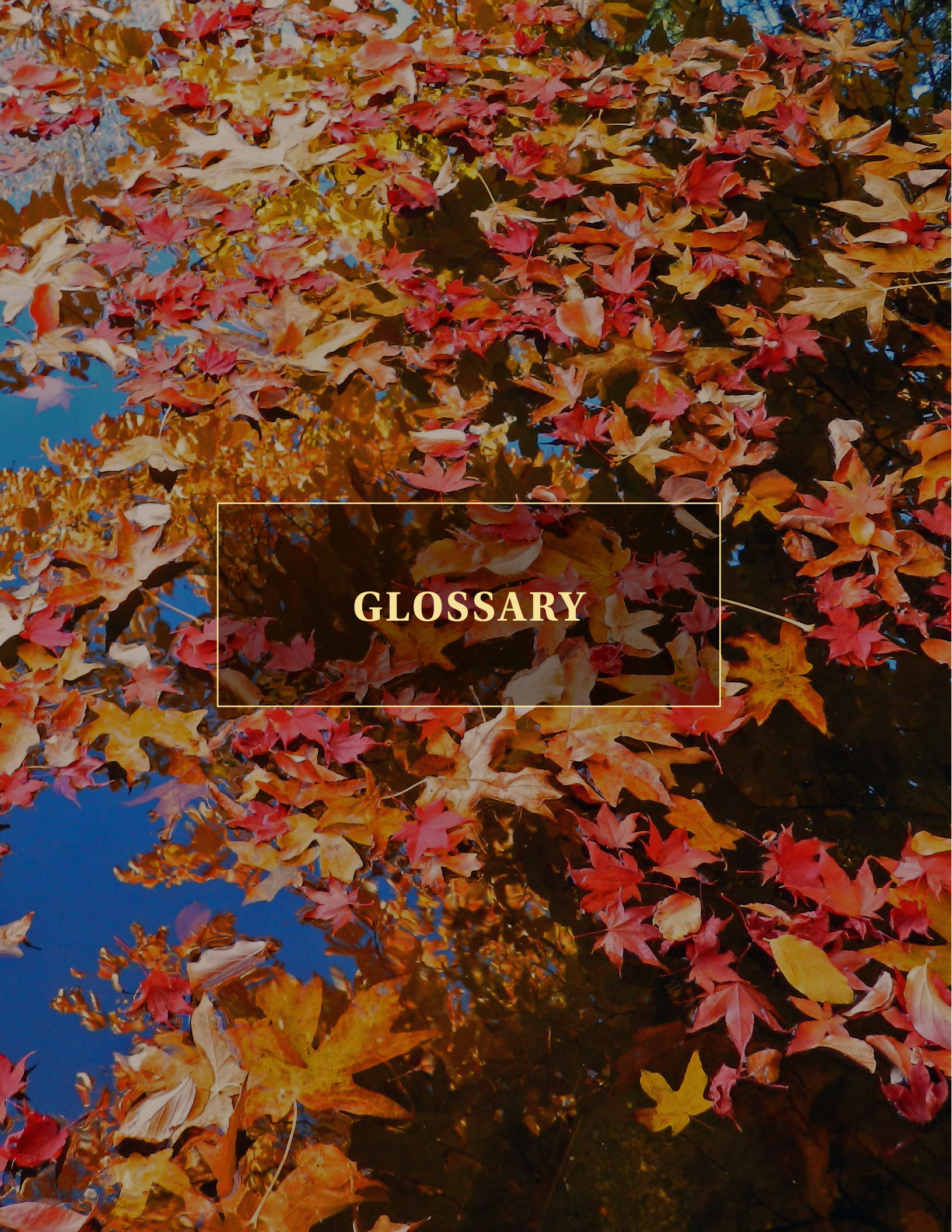

GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY

Conservation (see related definition for Preservation)

Preservation, protection, or restoration of the natural environment, natural ecosystems, vegetation, and wildlife.

Cultural Landscape

A geographic area, including both cultural and natural resources and the wildlife or domestic animals therein, associated with a historic event, activity, or person or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values.

Ecology

The branch of biology that deals with the relations of organisms to one another and to their physical surroundings.

Habitat

The place or environment where a plant or animal naturally or normally lives and grows.

Habitat Connectivity

Native vegetation corridors or “stepping stones” that allow wildlife to use multiple habitats for food, shelter, or nesting.

Invasive species

A species that is established outside of its natural past or present distribution, whose introduction and/or spread threatens biological diversity.

Native species

A species living within its natural range (past or present) including the area which it can reach and occupy using its natural dispersal systems.

Anadromous Fish

Fish such as salmon, steelhead or Pacific lamprey whose eggs hatch in freshwater, juveniles migrate downstream to the ocean for a period of one or more years and return to freshwater as adults to spawn.

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation. Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archaeological resources.

Preservation (see related definition for Conservation)

The act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction.

Rehabilitation

The act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.

Redd

A hollow in a riverbed made by a trout or salmon to spawn in.

Stormwater Runoff

Rainfall that flows over the ground surface. It is created when rain falls on roads, driveways, parking lots, rooftops and other paved surfaces that do not allow water to soak into the ground.

Stream Morphology

The shape of river channels and how they change over time. Creeks and rivers are dynamic and shift side to side, up or down largely based on how sediment moves through them or accumulates.

November 2019

Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission