



CASCADE TOWNSHIP  
RECREATION PARK  
2024 PARK MASTER PLAN





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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# RECREATION PARK INVENTORY & ANALYSIS



Pg 6 - Project Context & Purpose  
Pg 12 - Inventory & Existing Conditions  
Pg 16 - Park Analysis



## PROJECT CONTEXT & PURPOSE

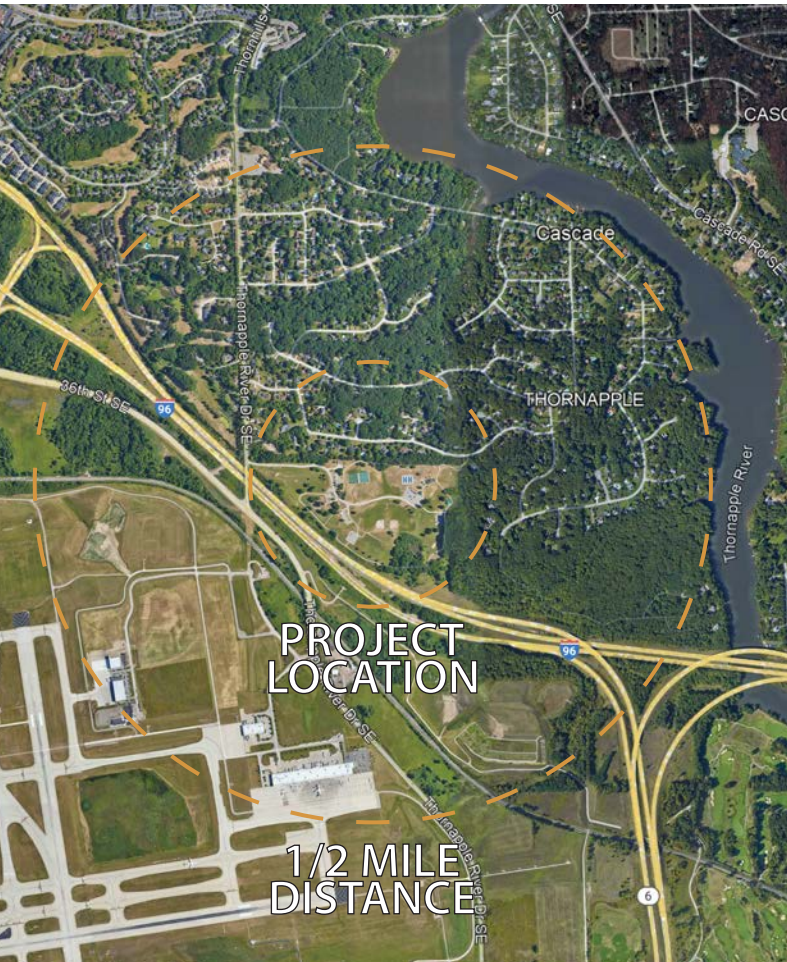
### Project Location:

Cascade Township Recreation Park is located at 3810 Thornapple River Drive SE, adjacent to the westbound lanes of I-96, running along its southern and western edges. Gerald R. Ford International Airport lies just beyond I-96 to the west and south.

To the east, nearly 450 feet of dense woodland buffer the park from nearby residential neighborhoods. These neighborhoods also extend around the park's northern border, directly adjacent to park property. In total, over 500 residential units are located within a half-mile north and east of the park, making Recreation Park easily accessible to approximately 1,500 residents in the immediate vicinity.

### Master Plan Purpose:

The master planning process allows Cascade Township to assess existing conditions, analyze internal and external factors, and prioritize future improvements based on community needs for Cascade Township Recreation Park. A park master plan is a collaborative effort involving township officials, township staff, and community members. By combining their knowledge of the park, they can identify key amenities and action items for future development. An additional benefit of a park master plan is its role in securing funding. Many state grants require a formal master plan, and it also serves as a visual tool to attract private investment.





## PROJECT CONTEXT & PURPOSE

### Recreation Park Description:

As Cascade Township’s largest park, Recreation Park spans over 55 acres and serves as a central hub for recreational activities for both residents and visitors. The park hosts a variety of sports, including softball, baseball, soccer, football, pickleball, and lacrosse.

Cascade Recreation Park also features a popular year-round dog park, a perimeter walking trail that winds through the more wooded areas of the park, tennis and basketball courts, a large playground, a disc golf course, and a sledding hill in the winter. The township maintains all sports fields, pavilions, trails, and other amenities with the resources it has available to meet community needs.

Cascade Township will use this Parks Master Plan as a strategic guide for future improvements to Recreation Park. The plan prioritizes amenities and facilities based on community feedback gathered through public engagement. Additionally, it will evaluate progress on goals set in previous planning efforts—such as the Five-Year Parks & Recreation Master Plan (2023-2027)—to ensure alignment with broader township initiatives. Through this collaborative effort, the Cascade Township community will help shape the future of Cascade Recreation Park.



**55**  
ACRES OF PARK

## RECREATION PARK



**1.1**  
MILES OF TRAIL

# PARK INVENTORY



**2** BASEBALL FIELDS



**3** MULTI-USE FIELDS



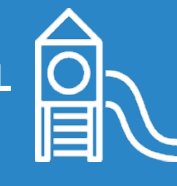
**2** BASKETBALL COURTS



**8** TENNIS + PICKLEBALL COURTS



**1** VOLLEYBALL NETS



**1** PLAYGROUND LOCATION



**1** DOG PARK



**1** POND & WOODLAND AREAS



**1** DISC GOLF COURSE



**1** SLEDDING HILL



**3** PICNIC SHELTERS



**1** RESTROOM BUILDING

## PARK INVENTORY & EXISTING CONDITIONS

### Existing Conditions:

The park is well-used and enjoyed by many residents and visitors throughout the year. However, many amenities and sports fields at Cascade Recreation Park have deteriorated. The baseball fields have been a major concern, as their current condition is unsuitable for competitive play. Additionally, the outfield is frequently used by various soccer organizations for practice. The main soccer field also requires frequent repairs due to low spots and an uneven playing surface. Given soccer's popularity in the park, additional youth fields have been painted onto the grass near the tennis and pickleball courts. The concrete and surfacing for the pickleball and tennis courts also show significant wear, requiring imminent repairs.

Currently, the only restroom that services the entire park is located near the playground. This makes it inconvenient for dog park visitors, pickleball and tennis players, and soccer field users to use these facilities. Maintaining the park's vast mowed lawn areas requires significant time, energy, and costs—diverting resources from the upkeep of other amenities. The park also lacks adequate trees which could provide ample shade during the summer and act as a visual and sound barrier to I-96.

### Previous Feedback from Park Users:

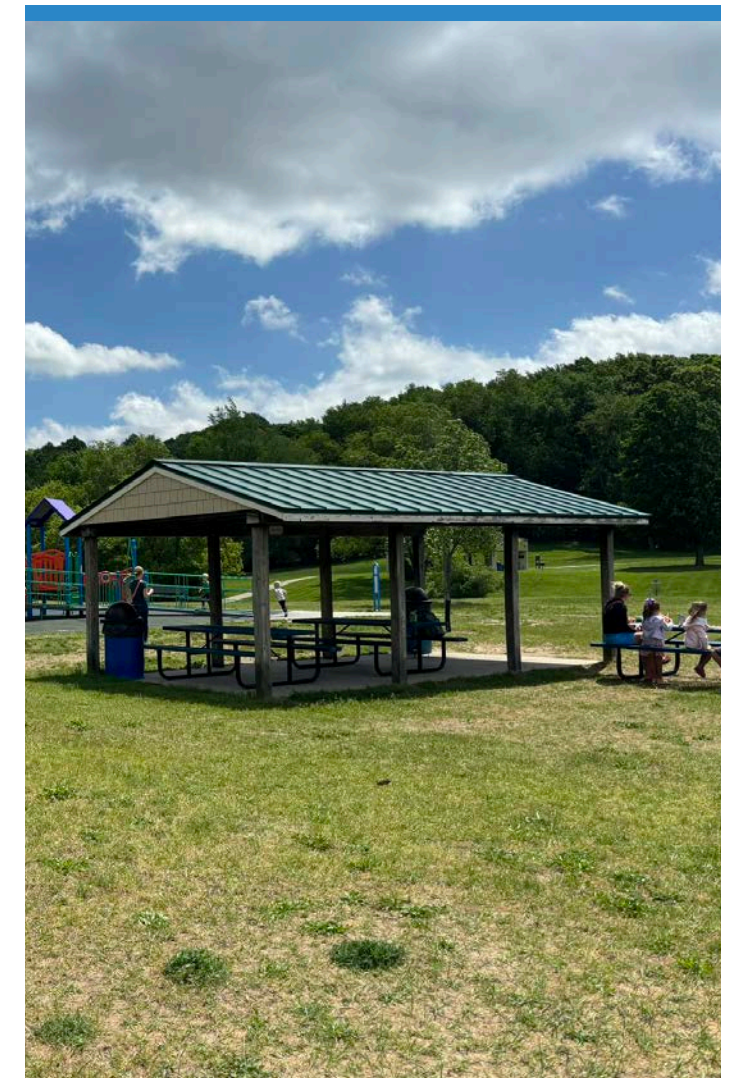
The Five-Year Master Plan included public input regarding Recreation Park, and the Parks Committee had several meetings that discussed potential improvements. Some of the primary concerns identified include:

- **Restroom access** for the dog park and tennis/pickleball courts
- **Adequate parking** for the dog park, tennis/pickleball courts, and soccer fields
- **Increased shade** at the playground, dog park, and tennis/pickleball courts.
- **Disc golf improvements**, including better course layout and upgraded tee boxes
- **Field upgrades** for both soccer and softball fields
- **Native plantings** to clean and reduce stormwater runoff and provide ecological value.

### Accessibility Assessment:

Ensuring accessibility is a top priority in future park planning efforts, promoting both equity and inclusion. Prioritizing accessibility also aligns with state grant funding requirements, maximizing opportunities for both inclusivity and financial support.

A review of Recreation Park shows that most facilities are accessible, and parking areas include designated accessible spaces. However, several park amenities lack accessible routes, including the softball fields, volleyball court, horseshoe pits, and the picnic shelter near the playground. The playground, upgraded in 2015, was designed to meet accessibility and universal design standards. Cascade Township should prioritize accessibility in all proposed improvements and updates to existing amenities and facilities.



## PARK INVENTORY & EXISTING CONDITIONS

### Previous Planning Efforts:

As part of the inventory process for this Park Master Plan, recent Cascade Township and other adjacent area planning documents were reviewed, including the goals and objectives outlined in the Five-Year Parks & Recreation Master Plan (2023-2027). From this planning process, Cascade Township established the following mission statement for its parks:

*“Cascade Township Parks protects and preserves its natural resources through strategic acquisition, stewardship, education, and management while providing accessible, quality recreational amenities and experiences to equitably enrich the lives of residents and future generations.”*

The Five-Year Parks & Recreation Master Plan also included nine goals, as well as strategies and action items, for the future of all Cascade Township Parks. The nine goals are:

1. Ensure that existing parks meet the needs of the community
2. Identify future pathway routes
3. Refine the township’s parks organization structure & support
4. Identify and implement appropriate funding mechanisms
5. Preserve natural areas and open space
6. Develop a gathering space with planned downtown village
7. Identify space for new parks and preservation
8. Increase public awareness of parks
9. Develop parks programming





## PARK SWOC ANALYSIS

### Park Strengths:

Cascade Recreation Park is ideally located and sized to serve as the community's recreational hub. Adjacent to hundreds of local residents and conveniently positioned near a major interstate, the park offers quick and easy access. Its visibility and accessibility also make it an attractive destination for competitive sports leagues and programming for both youth and adults. The park's expansive acreage provides ample room for future improvements, including new amenities, sports fields, courts, and facilities to meet community needs.

Several of the park's newer amenities have been highly successful and well-received, including the accessible playground, dog park, and the conversion of two tennis courts into pickleball courts. During the warmer months, the park remains busy, with sports fields booked for soccer practices and games, pickleball courts seeing high usage through all times of the day, families enjoying the playground with their children, and the dog park bustling from sunrise to sunset.

Even in the colder months, many of the park's amenities continue to attract visitors. The dog park and walking trail have consistent use, and the sledding hill is a popular attraction when there is adequate snowfall.

### Park Weaknesses:

Cascade Recreation Park contains several aging amenities, including some that are no longer usable, such as the sand volleyball court and horseshoe pits. The tennis and pickleball courts have many cracks due to prolonged use and freeze/thaw cycles, and will likely require resurfacing or replacement soon. The softball fields are not suitable for competitive play in their current condition, and their outfields have been used for soccer practices in recent years. Additionally, the disc golf course tee boxes and baskets are in need of updates.

Beyond aging infrastructure, the park also lacks certain amenities that meet public needs. A single restroom facility for a 55-acre park is insufficient for visitor convenience. Parking is also limited in some high-use areas such as the dog park, tennis and pickleball courts, and soccer fields. Many amenities lack accessible routes, an important design consideration for future planning to ensure inclusivity and equity.

Another key concern is the lack of shade throughout the park. The fenced-in dog park has minimal shade, making it uncomfortably hot in the summer. The playground, and basketball courts have a small pavilion to provide limited relief, but additional shade is desired by residents. The tennis and pickleball courts, baseball fields, and soccer fields have minimal shade nearby, leaving athletes and visitors exposed to direct sun and heat.



### Park Opportunities:

Cascade Recreation Park offers numerous opportunities to enhance the recreational experience for both community members and visitors to the park. One key opportunity lies in expansion. Pickleball has surged in popularity, and adding more courts would reduce wait times and improve accessibility for players. The layout of existing fields and amenities could be improved to accommodate additional soccer or multi-use fields as well as flexible event space. The playground area has ample room for expansion, allowing for the addition of exciting features such as a playground expansion, splash pad, ice rink, and larger pavilion.

A significant portion of the park consists of unused mowed grass, which requires constant maintenance while offering little recreational benefit or ecological value. Repurposing these areas for native plantings, upland prairies, and bio-swale retention would reduce maintenance costs, enhance the park's natural beauty, and support local biodiversity.

Another major opportunity is upgrading and enhancing high-use amenities. The dog park could use some functional and safety improvements. The playground features some great play opportunities, but simple additions—such as shade structures, new play elements, and additional seating for parents—would further enhance its appeal.

Cascade Recreation Park is also home to a unique 18-hole disc golf course, which has strong community support for improvements. Given its low impact on space and cost, enhancing the course would provide a high-value amenity for residents and attract disc golfers from the broader region.

The Cascade Recreation Park Master Plan serves as a catalyst for these improvements, increasing community engagement and support. It also creates opportunities for investment from private corporations and expands access to state and federal grant funding, allowing for more enhancements with less reliance on township funding.



### Park Challenges:

The main challenges impacting the success of Cascade Recreation Park include aging infrastructure and amenities, resources for deferred and ongoing maintenance, and funding for park improvements.

Most of the critical park infrastructure has accumulated deferred maintenance or approaching the end of its life cycle. The maintenance garage needs to be replaced, most of the asphalt drives and parking lots need to be resurfaced or replaced, and the restroom building has functional and aesthetic problems that need to be addressed.

Park maintenance is an ongoing challenge, particularly regarding available funds and staffing. The priority for the first phase of improvements should be to address deferred maintenance items and focus on improvements that don't increase maintenance needs. Strategic planning and design choices—such as converting some unused mowed lawn areas to native plantings—can significantly cut down on weekly maintenance time while enhancing the park's natural beauty and biodiversity.

Funding remains the most significant obstacle for any municipal park project. With rising material costs and limited local funding, maximizing financial resources is crucial. Effectively prioritizing park projects based on community needs, costs, timing, and potential external funding sources will be essential for successful implementation.





# RECREATION PARK COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Pg 22 - Public Input Survey Results  
Pg 30 - Recreation Park Goals

**CASCADE TOWNSHIP**  
**CASCADE RECREATION PARK**  
**MASTER PLAN**

**PLEASE GIVE US YOUR INPUT!**  
 Search the link below or scan the QR code to provide feedback for future improvements at Cascade Recreation Park!

<https://forms.gle/P5as8tKYdmdbsUoD7>

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Cascade Township engaged with the public to gather valuable input on the park’s challenges and opportunities. This process also aimed to build community support for proposed improvements and enhance public understanding of the project. Meaningful public participation was essential in identifying action items that reflect community needs.

The community feedback gathered through this engagement became the foundation for future park improvements. With public support and a clear understanding of community needs, Cascade Township identified action items that not only address the park’s current needs but also create a positive, lasting impact for residents.

### Public Input Survey Strategy:

Cascade Township launched the Public Input Survey in June 2024, hosting it online and promoting it through social media, the township newsletter, and at summer community events. The survey aimed to establish community priorities and goals for the Master Plan. Questions were developed based on feedback from Township staff and the Parks Committee.

The survey results provided valuable insights into current park usage, existing conditions, and desired future amenities. To further analyze community needs, responses were segmented into three user groups:

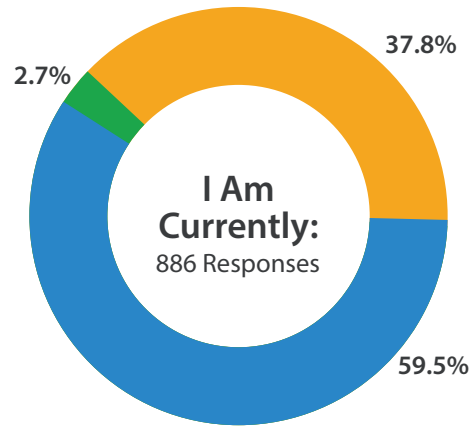
1. Cascade Home Owner
2. Cascade Renter
3. Non-Cascade Resident

This segmentation allowed for a detailed understanding of each group’s park usage patterns, future improvement or addition priorities, and general demographics information.

The survey closed in September 2024, having received 886 responses. This high level of participation provided the planning process with robust community-driven data, ensuring informed decision-making for future park improvements.



# PUBLIC INPUT SURVEY RESULTS

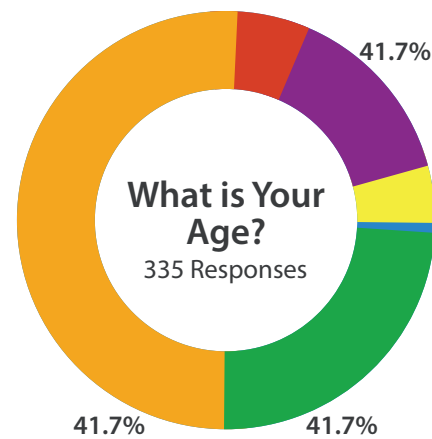
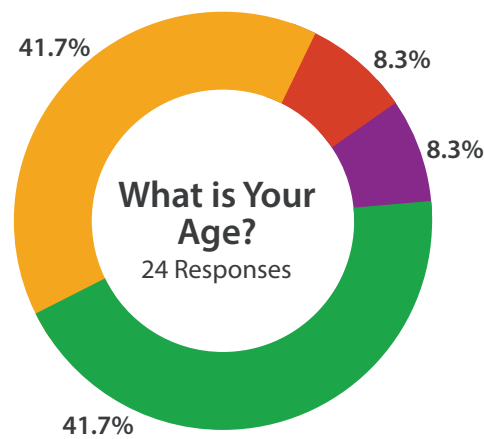
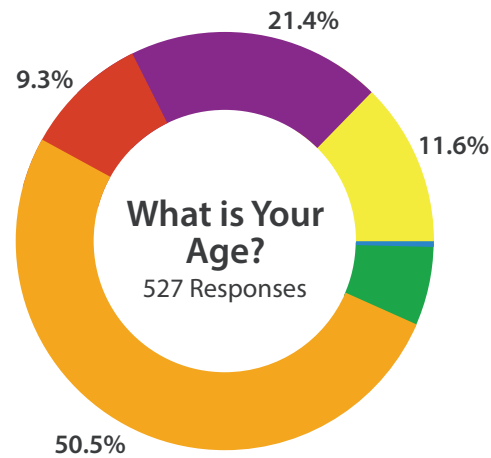


- A Homeowner in Cascade Township
- A Renter in Cascade Township
- Residing Outside of Cascade Township

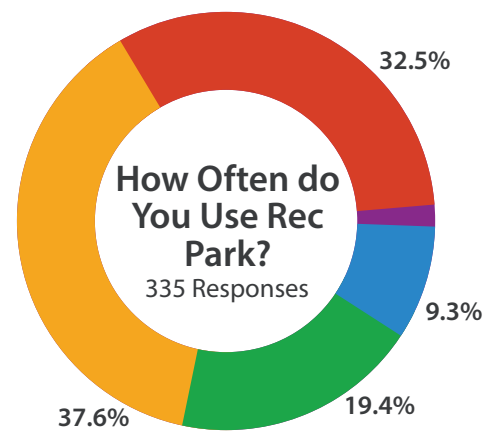
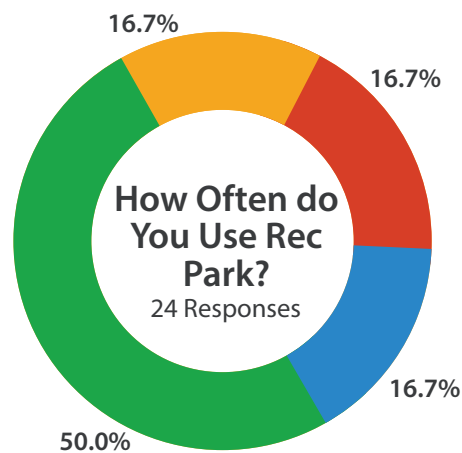
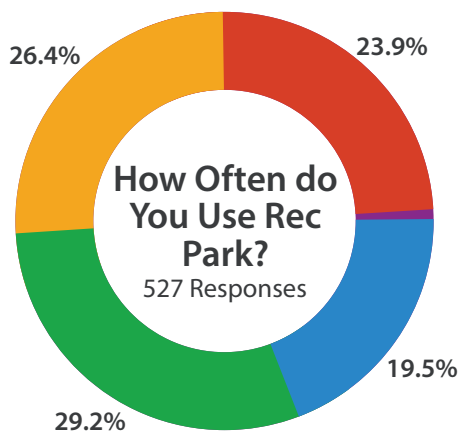
Cascade Homeowner

Cascade Renter

Non-Cascade Resident



- 20 or Under
- 21-30
- 31-45
- 46-49
- 50-65
- 66+



- Twice a week or more
- Once per week
- Once per month
- Few times a year
- Never

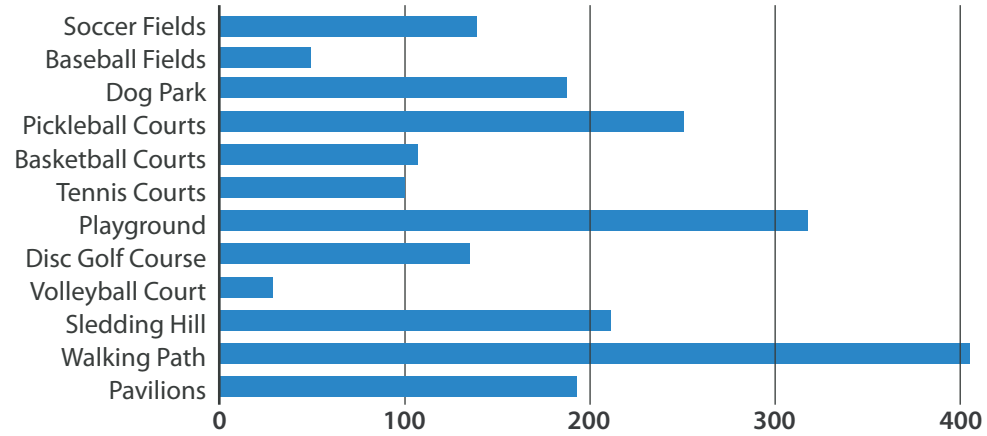
# Why are parks most important to you? (Select top 3 answers in order of importance):

- Providing opportunities to enjoy nature/outdoors
- Improving health and wellness
- Connecting with people and building community
- Participating in athletics/sports
- Protecting the natural environment and wildlife
- Providing family friendly activities and opportunities for children's play

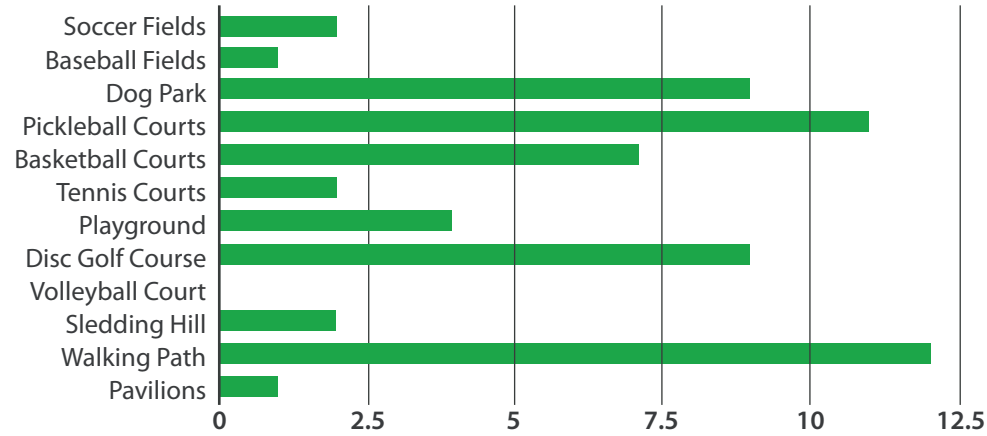


Which of the following amenities do you use at Rec Park? (Select all that apply):

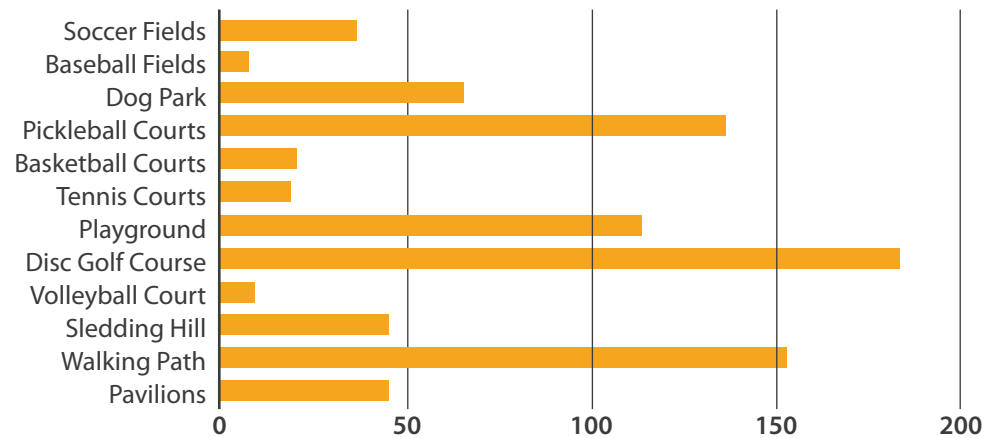
**Cascade Homeowner**  
527 Responses



**Cascade Renter**  
24 Responses

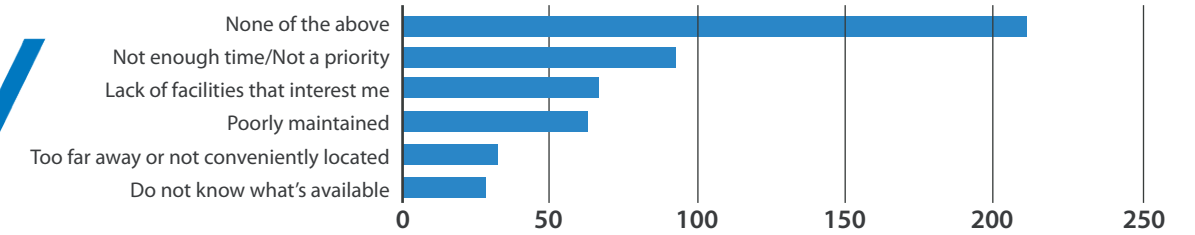


**Non-Cascade Resident**  
335 Responses

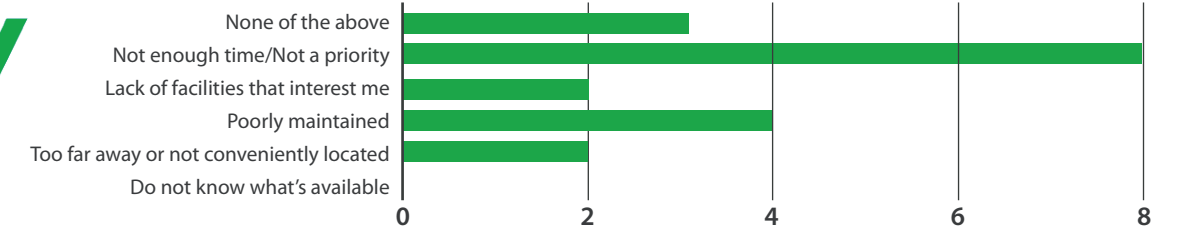


Which of the following, if any, create challenges to your current use of Cascade Rec Park? Please select any that apply.

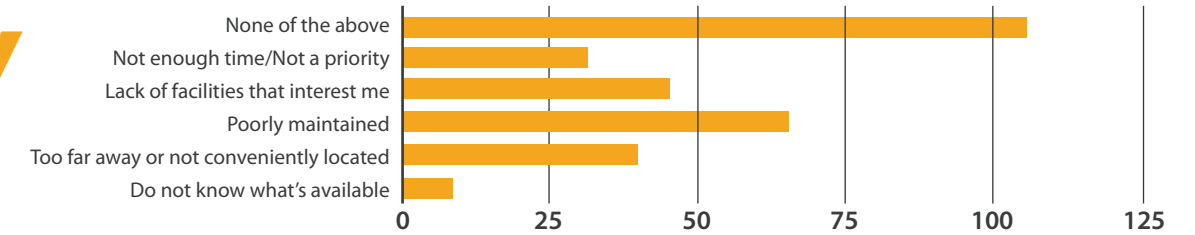
**Cascade Homeowner**  
527 Responses



**Cascade Renter**  
24 Responses

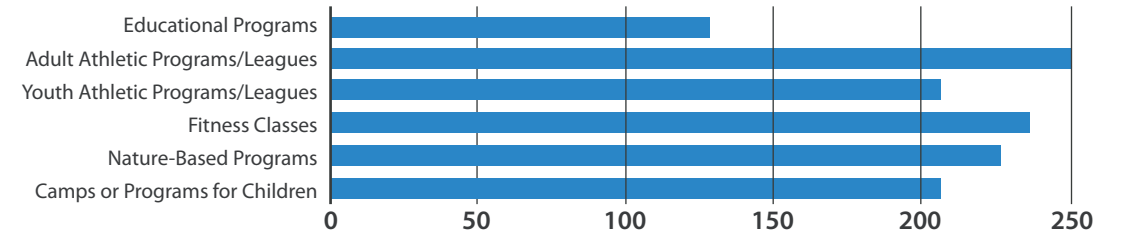


**Non-Cascade Resident**  
335 Responses

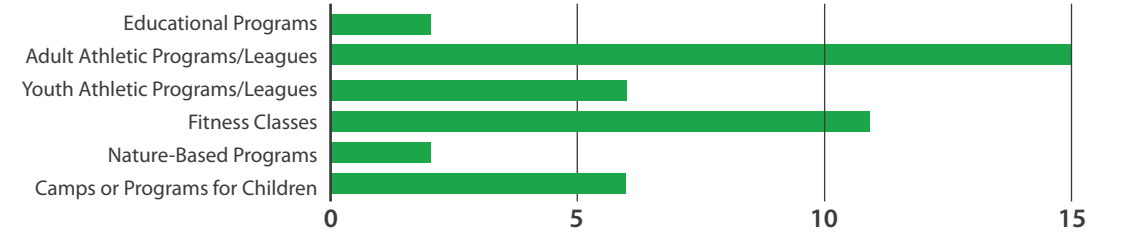


Would you or your family participate in programming if it was offered at the Rec Park? If so, which programs would you be interested in? (Please check all that apply)

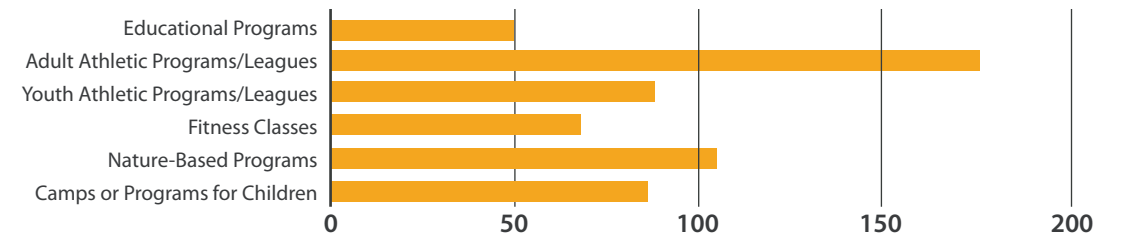
**Cascade Homeowner**  
527 Responses



**Cascade Renter**  
24 Responses



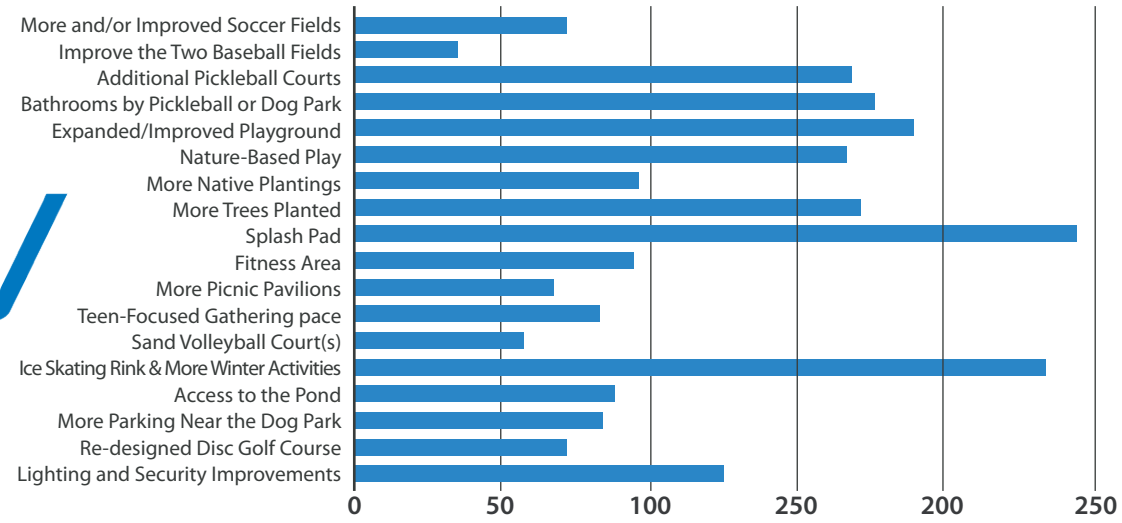
**Non-Cascade Resident**  
335 Responses



What parks and recreation amenities and facilities are you most interested in? Please check your top five choices.

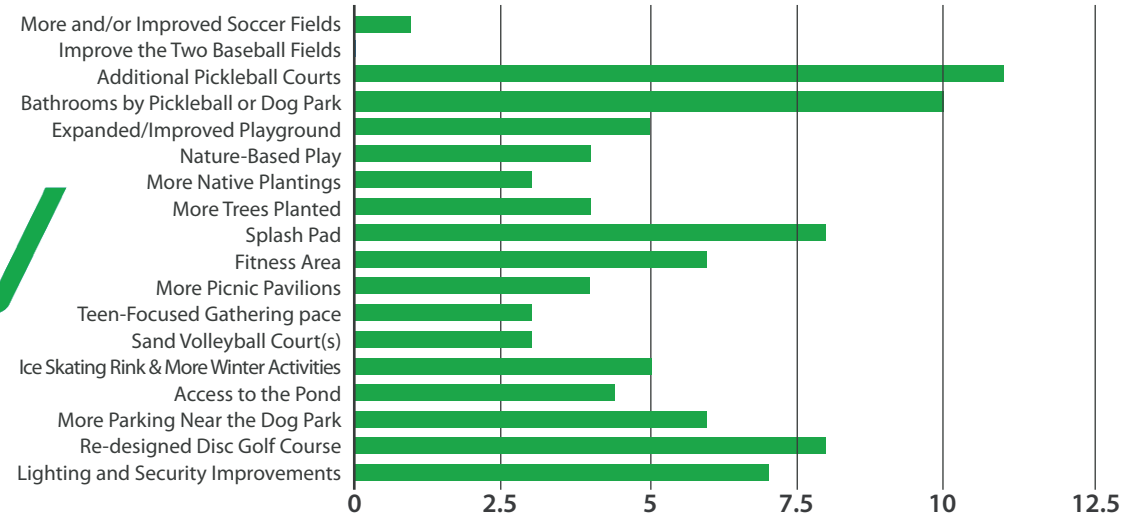
### Cascade Homeowner

527 Responses



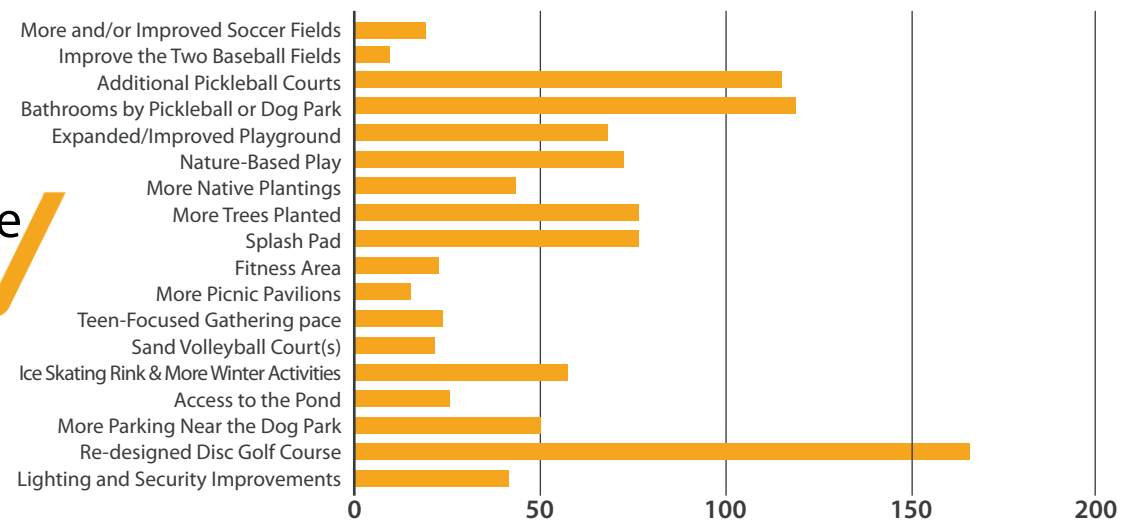
### Cascade Renter

24 Responses



### Non-Cascade Resident

335 Responses





RECREATION PARK  
PARK MASTER PLAN



Pg 34 - Concept Generation  
Pg 42 - Final Concept & Phasing



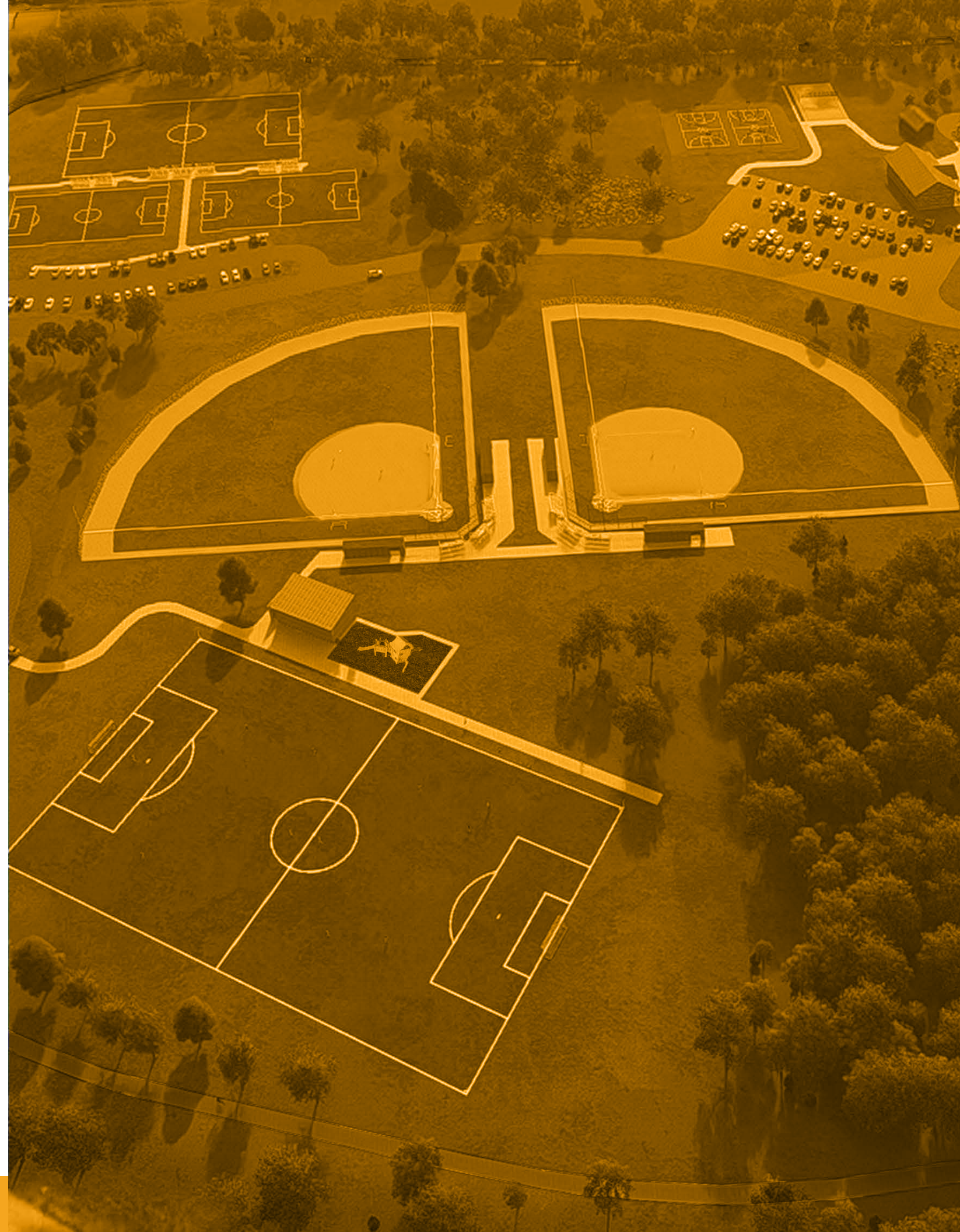
## CONCEPT GENERATION

### Preliminary Master Plan Concepts:

With clear goals and objectives established for the Cascade Recreation Park Master Plan, the process of concept development and design iteration was set in motion. Drawing from the site inventory and analysis, the results of the public input survey, and discussions with Township staff, multiple preliminary conceptual master plan iterations were developed for the park. These initial concepts explored various layouts of amenities and site features to help analyze the land usage and determine future possibilities.

While each concept shared similarities, they also presented different configurations for existing and proposed amenities, examining how their placement, enhancement, or relocation could optimize the overall recreational experience. Additionally, each iteration explored various treatments for individual park features, facilitating discussion on which approaches would best serve the park and its users.

The following pages present these preliminary draft master plans, including legends and precedent photos of proposed improvements, along with precedent images to illustrate potential designs. It's important to note that these precedent images serve as visual references rather than exact representations of the final design. These concepts were presented at a Township Board of Trustees meeting to gather input from the Board and public.



# CASCADE RECREATION PARK DRAFT MASTER PLAN CONCEPT #1



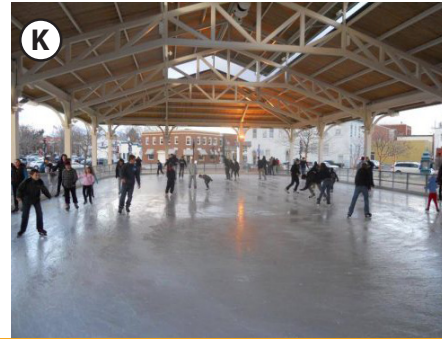
- LEGEND**
- A. DOG WALKING LOOP
  - B. PRAIRIE/NATIVE PLANTINGS
  - C. BIOSWALE/NATIVE PLANTINGS
  - D. RESTROOM PAVILION
  - E. ADDED PICKLEBALL
  - F. 7V7 SOCCER FIELDS
  - G. RESTORED SOFTBALL FIELDS
  - H. TURF SOCCER FIELD
  - I. PLAYGROUND
  - J. DOCK & POND ACCESS
  - K. SPLASH PAD
  - L. NATURAL PLAYGROUND
  - M. WALLED SOCCER/ICE RINK
  - N. PERMANENT CORNHOLE
  - O. UPDATED DISC GOLF



# CASCADE RECREATION PARK DRAFT MASTER PLAN CONCEPT #2



- LEGEND**
- A. DOG WALKING LOOP
  - B. PRAIRIE/NATIVE PLANTINGS
  - C. BIOSWALE/NATIVE PLANTINGS
  - D. RESTROOM PAVILION
  - E. 7V7 & 9V9 SOCCER FIELDS
  - F. PICKLEBALL & TENNIS COURTS
  - G. FLEXIBLE LAWN SPACE
  - H. TURF SOCCER FIELD
  - I. PLAYGROUND
  - J. DOCK & POND ACCESS
  - K. EVENT PAVILION & ICE RINK
  - L. FIRE PIT SEATING AREA
  - M. SPLASH PAD
  - N. SAND VOLLEYBALL
  - O. NATURAL PLAYGROUND
  - P. UPDATED DISC GOLF
  - Q. PICNIC SHELTER



# CASCADE RECREATION PARK DRAFT MASTER PLAN CONCEPT #3



- LEGEND**
- A. DOG WALKING LOOP
  - B. PRAIRIE/NATIVE PLANTINGS
  - C. BIOSWALE/NATIVE PLANTINGS
  - D. RESTROOM PAVILION
  - E. ADDED PICKLEBALL
  - F. 7V7 SOCCER FIELDS
  - G. RESTORED BASEBALL FIELDS
  - H. TURF SOCCER FIELD
  - I. NATURAL PLAYGROUND
  - J. GRASS SOCCER FIELD
  - K. DOCK & POND ACCESS
  - L. FIRE PIT SEATING AREA
  - M. SPLASH PAD/ICE RINK LOOP
  - N. SAND VOLLEYBALL
  - O. BICYCLE PUMP TRACK
  - P. PERMANENT CORNHOLE
  - Q. FITNESS COURT
  - R. UPDATED DISC GOLF

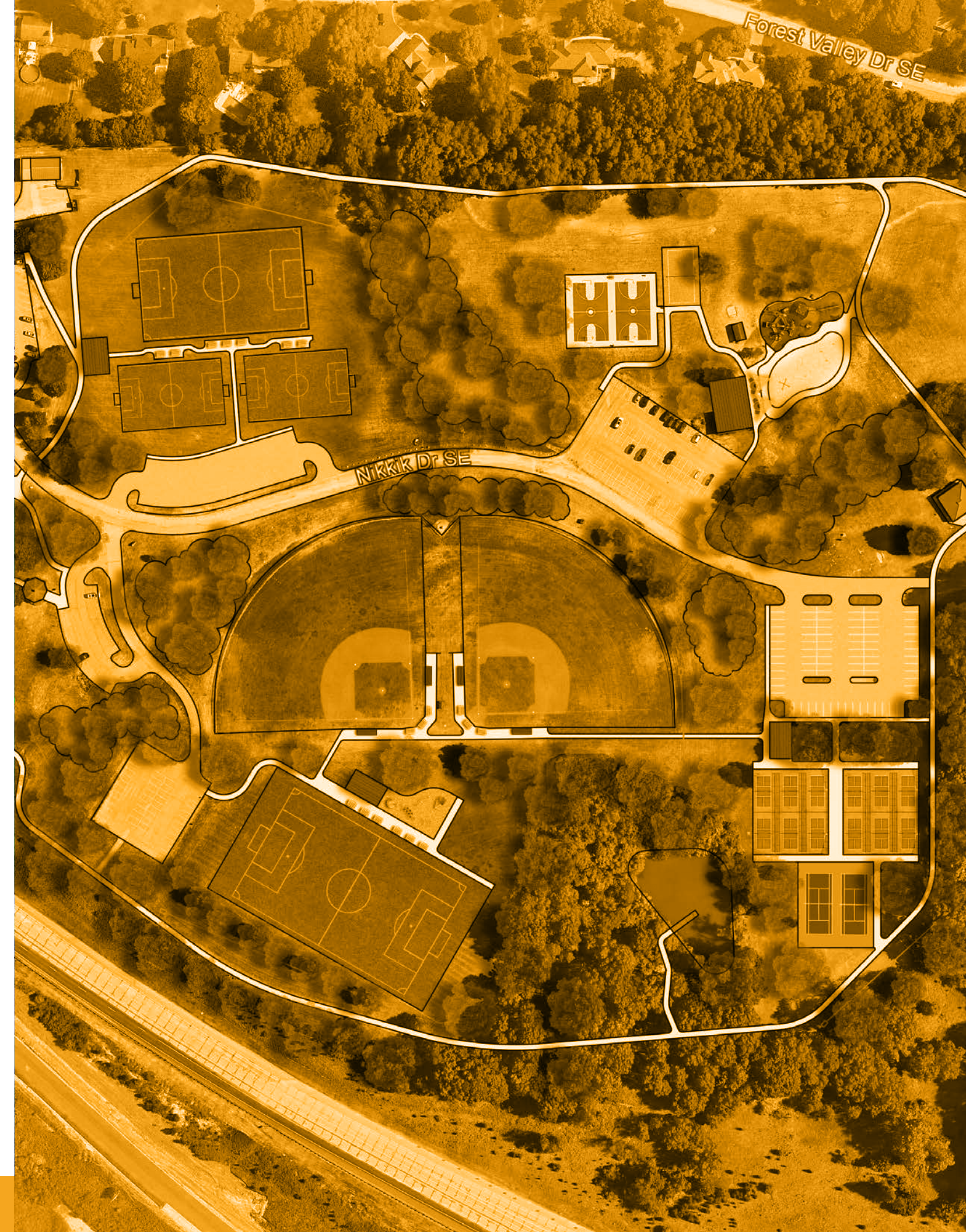




## FINAL CONCEPT & PHASING

After reviewing the preliminary concepts with the Township Board, Township staff, and Parks Committee, direction for a final preferred master plan took shape. This plan should be viewed as a strategic guide for future development, rather than a rigid blueprint. Implementation will occur in phases based on available funding, evolving priorities, and project constraints, allowing for flexibility in design adjustments as needed.

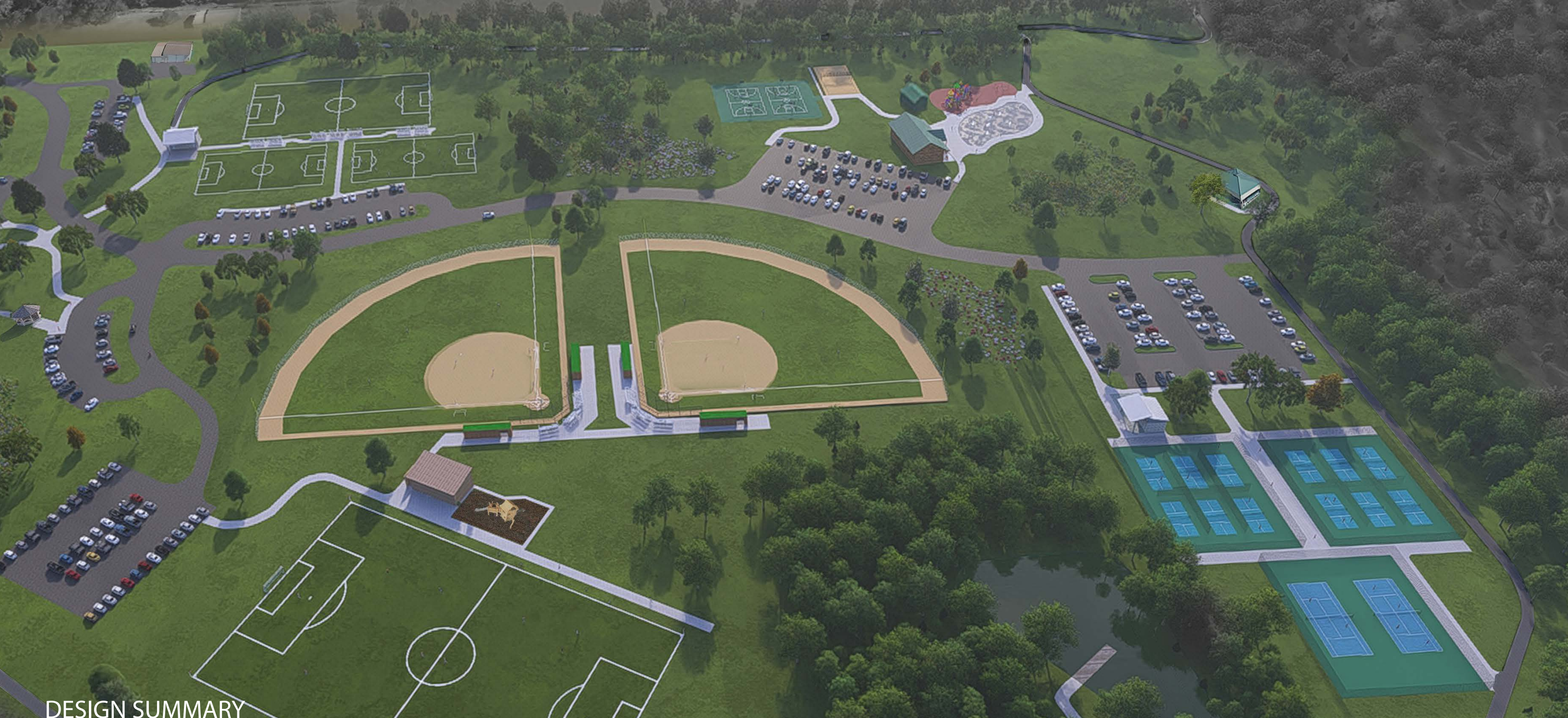
The Final Master Plan is accompanied by a series of phasing master plans, which break down the proposed improvements into four potential phases. These phases are structured around immediate park needs and logical construction sequencing to promote an efficient transformation of Cascade Recreation Park. However, phasing may be adjusted over time in response to funding availability and requirements, as well as shifting community priorities.



# CASCADE RECREATION PARK FINAL MASTER PLAN CONCEPT

- LEGEND**
- A. DOG WALKING LOOP
  - B. PRAIRIE/NATIVE PLANTINGS
  - C. BIOSWALE/NATIVE PLANTINGS
  - D. RESTROOM PAVILION
  - E. PICKLEBALL & TENNIS COURTS
  - F. 7V7 & 9V9 SOCCER FIELDS
  - G. RESTORED SOFTBALL FIELDS
  - H. SOCCER FIELD IMPROVEMENTS
  - I. NATURAL PLAYGROUND
  - J. DOCK & POND ACCESS
  - K. SPLASH PAD/ICE RINK LOOP
  - L. FIRE PIT SEATING AREA
  - M. FLEXIBLE EVENT PAVILION
  - N. SAND VOLLEYBALL
  - O. UPDATED DISC GOLF
  - P. DOG PARK IMPROVEMENTS
  - Q. MAINT. GARAGE REPLACEMENT
  - R. RE-PAVE PARKING & MAIN DRIVE



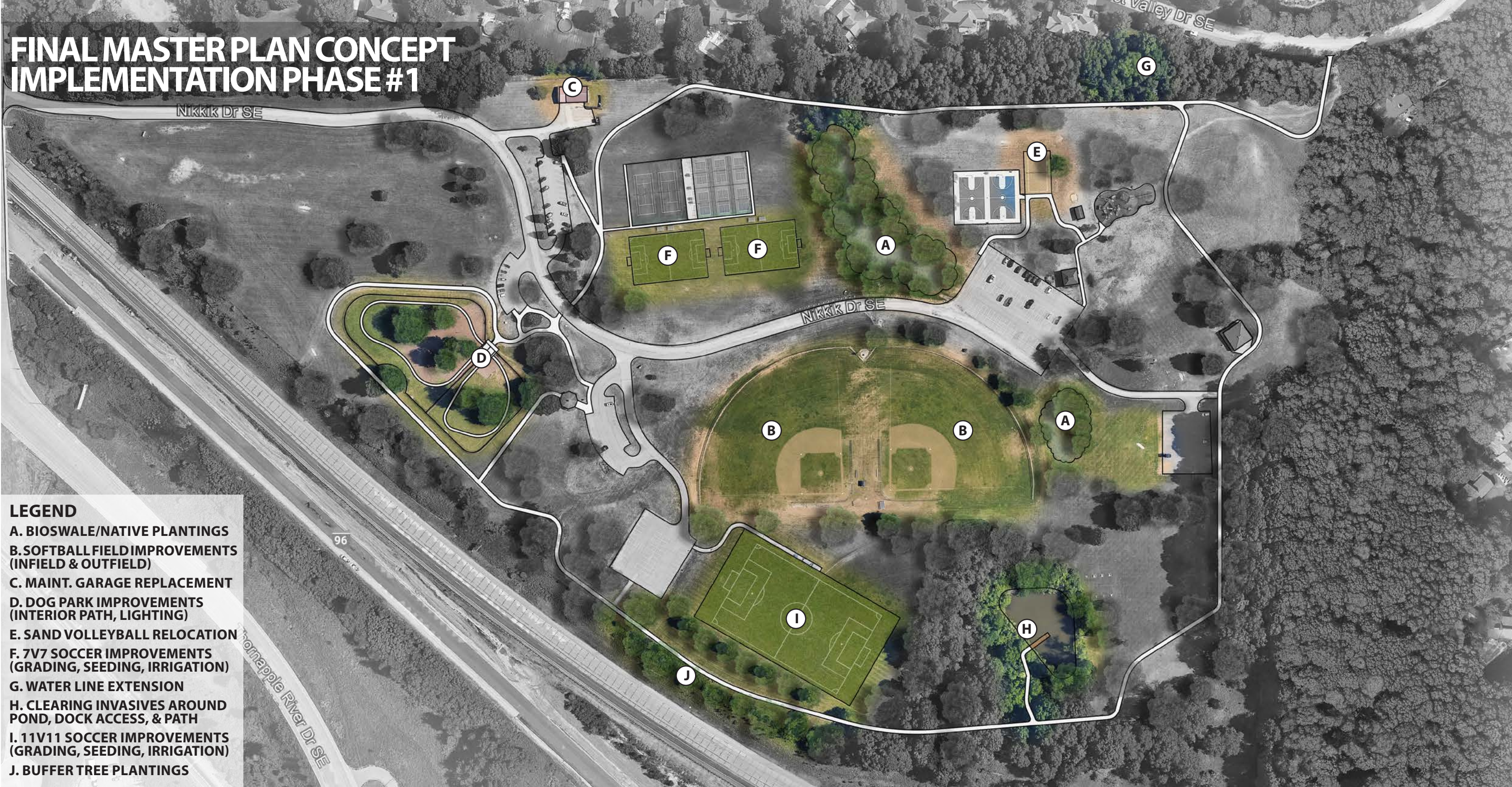


## DESIGN SUMMARY

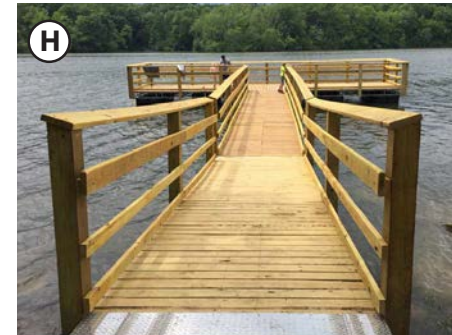
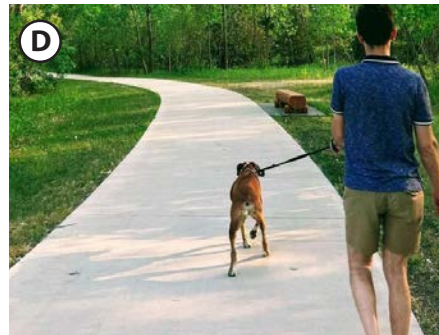
The Final Cascade Recreation Park Master Plan introduces strategic improvements to enhance accessibility, functionality, and year-round recreation. The plan aims to initially improve the infrastructure and amenities existing in the park, and then focus on capital improvements that add a high level of recreational value. A major change in the plan is relocating the tennis and pickleball courts to better allow for expansion and evening play, while providing space for the expansion of youth soccer fields. The two existing softball fields will be restored with improved playing surfaces, upgraded fencing, and enhanced dugouts and spectator seating. The 11v11 soccer field will also receive upgrades, including field improvements and a new restroom facility serving both soccer and softball areas. A small playground will be added near the 11v11 field to entertain younger children during games. The playground area will be improved with a new year-round event pavilion with restrooms. In warmer months, this area will be transformed with a

splash pad adjacent to the playground, offering a refreshing play space for families. To make the park a true year-round destination, winter-friendly features like a fire pit seating area and an ice skating loop will be added near the sledding hill. The underutilized sand volleyball court will be relocated near the basketball courts and enhanced. At the main entrance, a new natural area will feature restored native prairies and an expanded walking loop, while upgrades to the dog park will enhance the experience for visitors and their pets. Additional upgrades include a pond access trail with a fishing dock, improvements to the disc golf course with enhanced routing and tee boxes, and resurfaced park roads and trails for better accessibility. These upgrades reflect a commitment to making Cascade Recreation Park a more inclusive, engaging, and dynamic space, ensuring its role as a vital recreational hub for years to come.

# FINAL MASTER PLAN CONCEPT IMPLEMENTATION PHASE #1



- LEGEND**
- A. BIOSWALE/NATIVE PLANTINGS
  - B. SOFTBALL FIELD IMPROVEMENTS (INFIELD & OUTFIELD)
  - C. MAINT. GARAGE REPLACEMENT
  - D. DOG PARK IMPROVEMENTS (INTERIOR PATH, LIGHTING)
  - E. SAND VOLLEYBALL RELOCATION
  - F. 7V7 SOCCER IMPROVEMENTS (GRADING, SEEDING, IRRIGATION)
  - G. WATER LINE EXTENSION
  - H. CLEARING INVASIVES AROUND POND, DOCK ACCESS, & PATH
  - I. 11V11 SOCCER IMPROVEMENTS (GRADING, SEEDING, IRRIGATION)
  - J. BUFFER TREE PLANTINGS



# PHASE 1 INFORMATION:

## ⓑ SOFTBALL FIELD IMPROVEMENTS (INFIELD & OUTFIELD)



- Infield & Outfield Repairs are planned by the Township for the spring of 2025.
- Fields will be available for use by the public and local baseball leagues for the 2025 season.

## ⓓ CLEARING INVASIVES AROUND POND, DOCK ACCESS, & PATH



- The pond is currently inaccessible due to vegetation and invasive species.
- Clearing invasives and brush would open up sight lines to the pond.
- A trail with a boardwalk or pier could be added for fishing or viewing of the pond.
- Access to the pond received support in the public input survey as a desired amenity.

## ⓔ SAND VOLLEYBALL RELOCATION



- The current volleyball court is in poor condition and isn't used frequently in its existing location in the park.
- A volleyball court received support in the public input survey as a desired amenity.
- Constructing a volleyball court in a new location is a relatively low cost amenity.

## ⓔ SOCCER FIELD IMPROVEMENTS (GRADING, SEEDING, IRRIGATION)



- Soccer field improvements received support in the public input survey
- Improved soccer fields could allow the township to increase rental fees from local soccer organizations, helping revenue generation from the park.
- This improvement can be completed through a combination of township maintenance staff and contracted work.

## PHASE 1 INFORMATION:

### A BIOSWALE/NATIVE PLANTINGS



- **Improved Stormwater Infiltration**

Turf grass roots extend only about 4 inches deep, whereas native plant roots can reach 3 to 10 feet into the ground. Planting native species in low-lying, water-collecting areas enhances water absorption after rainfall, unlike turf grass, which tends to remain saturated for extended periods. This makes native plants ideal for stormwater corridors, such as detention areas, bioswales, and other poorly drained low-lying regions.

- **Providing Pollinator Habitat and Increased Biodiversity**

Turf grass is a non-native monoculture that contributes little to the natural ecosystem. It does not support the pollinators and wildlife essential for a healthy environment. In contrast, native plants serve as the foundation of a thriving ecosystem, providing host plants for thousands of native pollinators, including the beloved Monarch butterfly. Incorporating native landscapes into parks and public spaces helps sustain these vital ecosystems on which we depend.

- **Reduced Maintenance**

Turf grass, especially when maintained weed-free, requires significant upkeep. In contrast, native landscapes—particularly those established from seed—are low maintenance once fully grown. Native seed mixes take 1 to 3 years to establish, requiring more intensive maintenance during this period. However, once mature and free of weeds, these landscapes need mowing just once per year in the spring to help reset the prairie, drastically reducing maintenance compared to traditional lawns.

- **Reduced Irrigation and Fertilizer**

Unlike turf grass, native landscapes require no supplemental irrigation or fertilizer once established.

- **Reduced Operational Costs**

The reduced maintenance and irrigation and fertilizer needs result in reduced operational costs for the property. The initial costs for native landscape installations will be more than turf grass, but over time the average costs will go down based on the reduced maintenance needs. The start up costs can vary based on the site preparation needs, seed mix specifications, and other factors. Case studies have shown that around year 5 is the break even point, and after that you will save money year-on-year with a native landscape installation, when compared with a traditionally-maintained lawn.

- **Improved Site Functionality**

The reduced maintenance, irrigation, and fertilizer requirements of native landscapes lead to lower operational costs over time. While the initial installation costs are higher than those of turf grass, long-term expenses decrease due to reduced upkeep. Startup costs vary based on site preparation, seed mix specifications, and other factors. Case studies indicate that the break-even point typically occurs around year five, after which native landscapes provide ongoing cost savings compared to traditionally maintained lawns.

- **Improving Site Aesthetics and Experience**

Native landscapes introduce color, texture, and natural beauty to lawn-dominated areas that might otherwise feel sterile or barren. Seasonal blooms and changing textures enhance the visual appeal, making these spaces more inviting. In many cases, the dynamic beauty of native landscapes becomes a key attraction, drawing visitors to parks to connect with nature.

- **Promote a different kind of 'play'**

While kids love playing on lawns, they also enjoy exploring nature! Native landscapes provide a unique, interactive environment where children can engage with their surroundings in new ways. From observing butterflies and bees to discovering diverse flowers and vegetation, these spaces encourage play, learning, and hands-on exploration.

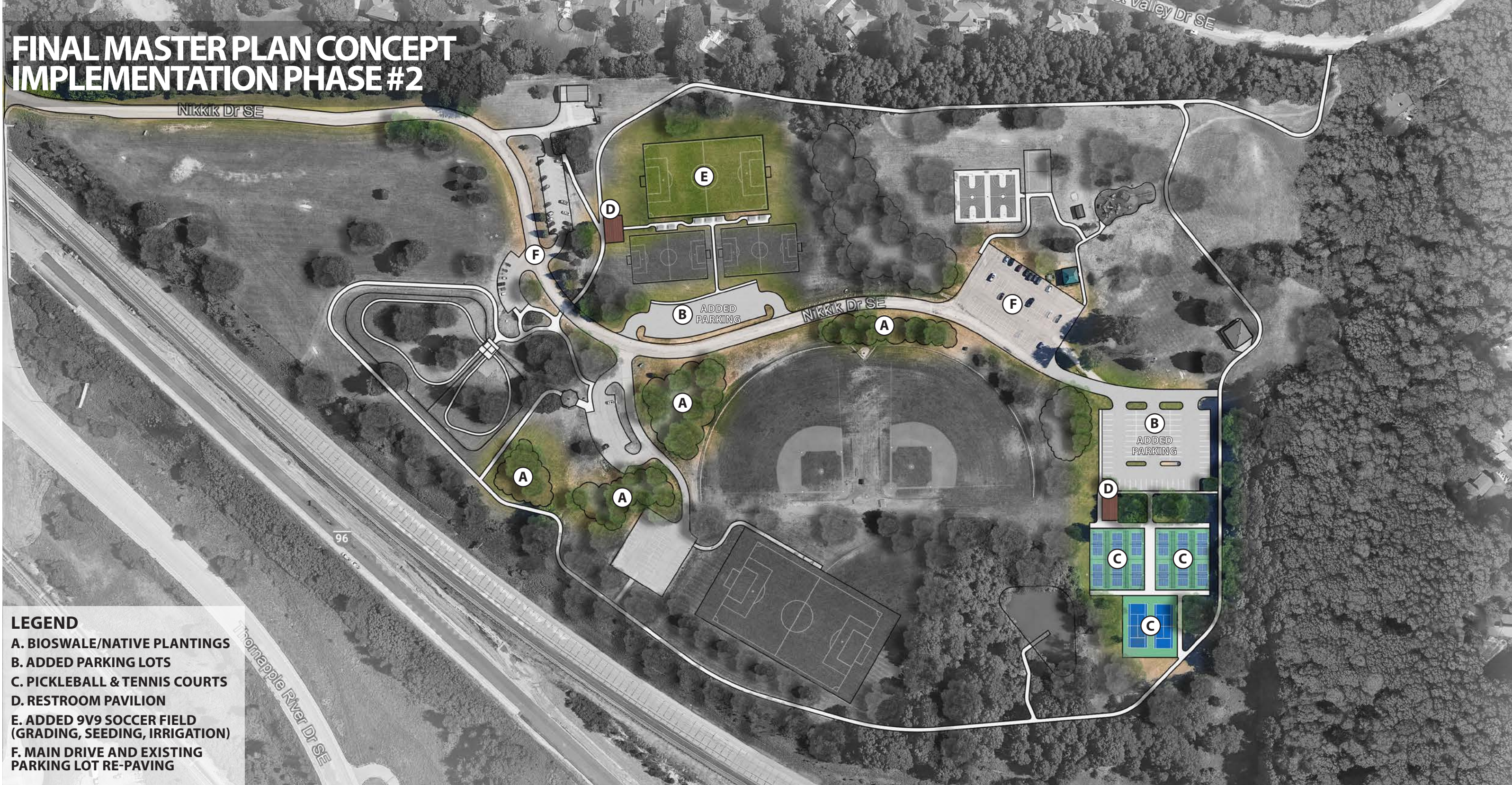
- **Education and Stewardship**

Our public spaces should showcase best landscaping practices and expose citizens to sustainable ways of managing natural areas. By strategically incorporating native landscapes into parks and open spaces, we can demonstrate their benefits and inspire residents to adopt similar approaches in their own yards.

## PHASE 1 COST ESTIMATE:

<b>Cascade Recreation Park Master Plan - Phase 1</b>				
Conceptual Construction Cost Estimate				
January 2025				
Description	Unit	Unit Cost	Quantity	Total Cost
Softball Field Restoration (Infield, outfield leveling/seeding)	LSUM	\$ 30,000.00	1	\$ 30,000.00
Maintenance Garage Replacement	LSUM	\$ 300,000.00	1	\$ 300,000.00
Dog Park Concrete Path	SYS	\$ 90.00	550	\$ 49,500.00
Dog Park Lighting	LSUM	\$ 50,000.00	1	\$ 50,000.00
Pond Brush/Invasives Clearing	LSUM	\$ 10,000.00	1	\$ 10,000.00
Pond Access Trail & Pier	LSUM	\$ 70,000.00	1	\$ 70,000.00
Volleyball Court Relocation	LSUM	\$ 45,000.00	1	\$ 45,000.00
11v11 Soccer Field Grading/Seeding/Irrigation Upgrades	LSUM	\$ 50,000.00	1	\$ 50,000.00
7v7 Soccer Fields Grading/Seeding/Irrigation	LSUM	\$ 75,000.00	1	\$ 75,000.00
Tree Buffer Planting	EA	\$ 800.00	30	\$ 24,000.00
Bioswale/Native Plantings	SYS	\$ 8.00	2200	\$ 17,600.00
Water Line Extension (neighborhood to restroom)	LSUM	\$ 175,000.00	1	\$ 175,000.00
Engineering Fee				\$ 89,610.00
15% Contingency				\$ 134,415.00
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$ 1,120,125.00</b>

# FINAL MASTER PLAN CONCEPT IMPLEMENTATION PHASE #2



## LEGEND

- A. BIOSWALE/NATIVE PLANTINGS
- B. ADDED PARKING LOTS
- C. PICKLEBALL & TENNIS COURTS
- D. RESTROOM PAVILION
- E. ADDED 9V9 SOCCER FIELD (GRADING, SEEDING, IRRIGATION)
- F. MAIN DRIVE AND EXISTING PARKING LOT RE-PAVING



## PHASE 2 INFORMATION:



- Additional parking will be needed for the new tennis/pickleball courts location & new soccer fields location.
- The parking expansion will also improve accessibility to the courts and fields.



- There are no existing restrooms that service the west or south areas of the park. New restrooms would service the dog park, new soccer fields, and new pickleball courts.
- The pavilions offer a rentable space for gatherings.
- The pavilions would provide shade for users of these areas of the park.



- The current pickleball/tennis courts are deteriorating.
- Improving and adding new pickleball courts received very high support in the survey.
- The new location will be better for reducing the impact of noise and lighting to adjacent neighborhoods.



- A new 9v9 soccer field can be added in the place of the existing pickleball courts to create a youth soccer area in the park when combined with the adjacent 7v7 fields.
- This received support in the public input survey and with local soccer organizations.
- The soccer/multi-use fields will generally have less noise than pickleball that could be a disruption to the adjacent neighborhood.

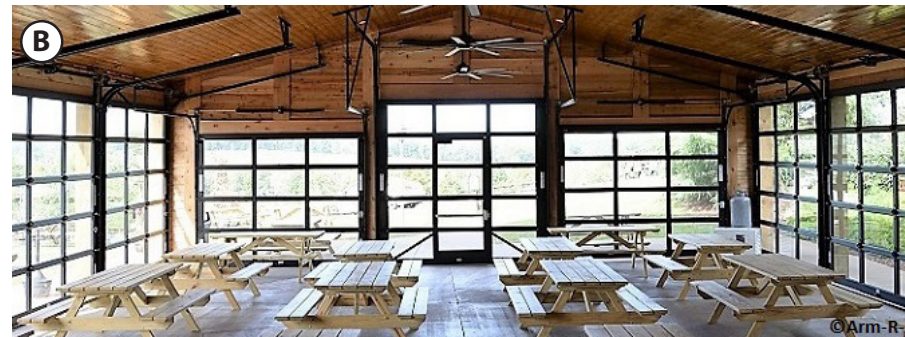
## PHASE 2 COST ESTIMATE:

<b>Cascade Recreation Park Master Plan - Phase 2</b>				
Conceptual Construction Cost Estimate				
January 2025				
Description	Unit	Unit Cost	Quantity	Total Cost
Asphalt Pickleball Courts (12)	LSUM	\$ 60,000.00	12	\$ 720,000.00
Asphalt Tennis Courts (2)	LSUM	\$ 150,000.00	2	\$ 300,000.00
Courts Lighting	LSUM	\$ 200,000.00	1	\$ 200,000.00
Pickleball Pavilion & Restrooms	LSUM	\$ 300,000.00	1	\$ 300,000.00
Pickleball Parking Lot Expansion	LSUM	\$ 100,000.00	1	\$ 100,000.00
Sidewalks	SYS	\$ 95.00	600	\$ 57,000.00
Main Drive Re-Paving	SYS	\$ 45.00	6500	\$ 292,500.00
Main Parking Lot Re-Paving	SYS	\$ 45.00	3500	\$ 157,500.00
Pickleball Court Removal & 11v11 Soccer Field	LSUM	\$ 300,000.00	1	\$ 300,000.00
North Soccer Pavilion & Restrooms	LSUM	\$ 300,000.00	1	\$ 300,000.00
North Soccer Parking Lot	LSUM	\$ 80,000.00	1	\$ 80,000.00
Bioswale/Native Plantings	SYS	\$ 8.00	1800	\$ 14,400.00
Tree Plantings	EA	\$ 800.00	20	\$ 16,000.00
Engineering Fee				\$ 283,740.00
20% Contingency/Inflation				\$ 567,480.00
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$ 3,688,620.00</b>

# FINAL MASTER PLAN CONCEPT IMPLEMENTATION PHASE #3



- LEGEND**
- A. BIOSWALE/NATIVE PLANTINGS
  - B. FLEXIBLE EVENT PAVILION
  - C. FIRE PIT SEATING AREA
  - D. SPLASH PAD
  - E. ICE SKATING LOOP
  - F. PLAYGROUND IMPROVEMENTS



## PHASE 3 INFORMATION:



**A FLEXIBLE EVENT PAVILION**

- The existing restrooms are deteriorating and in need of improvement/replacement.
- A new event pavilion and restrooms would provide a rentable space near the playground, sledding hill, and proposed ice rink & splash pad.
- The building is proposed to be heated with “garage door” windows to promote four-season function and use.



**C SPLASH PAD**

- A splash pad received the most votes from Cascade Twp. residents of the proposed amenities in the public input survey.
- Re-circulating and flow-through options are available, but a flow-through system with timer and shut-off would be recommended for maintenance and safety reasons.



**B FIRE PIT SEATING AREA**

- “New Winter Activities” was one of the highest voted amenities in public input survey
- A fire pit area in conjunction with the event pavilion would create a more attractive space for winter and evening use.



**D ICE SKATING AREA**

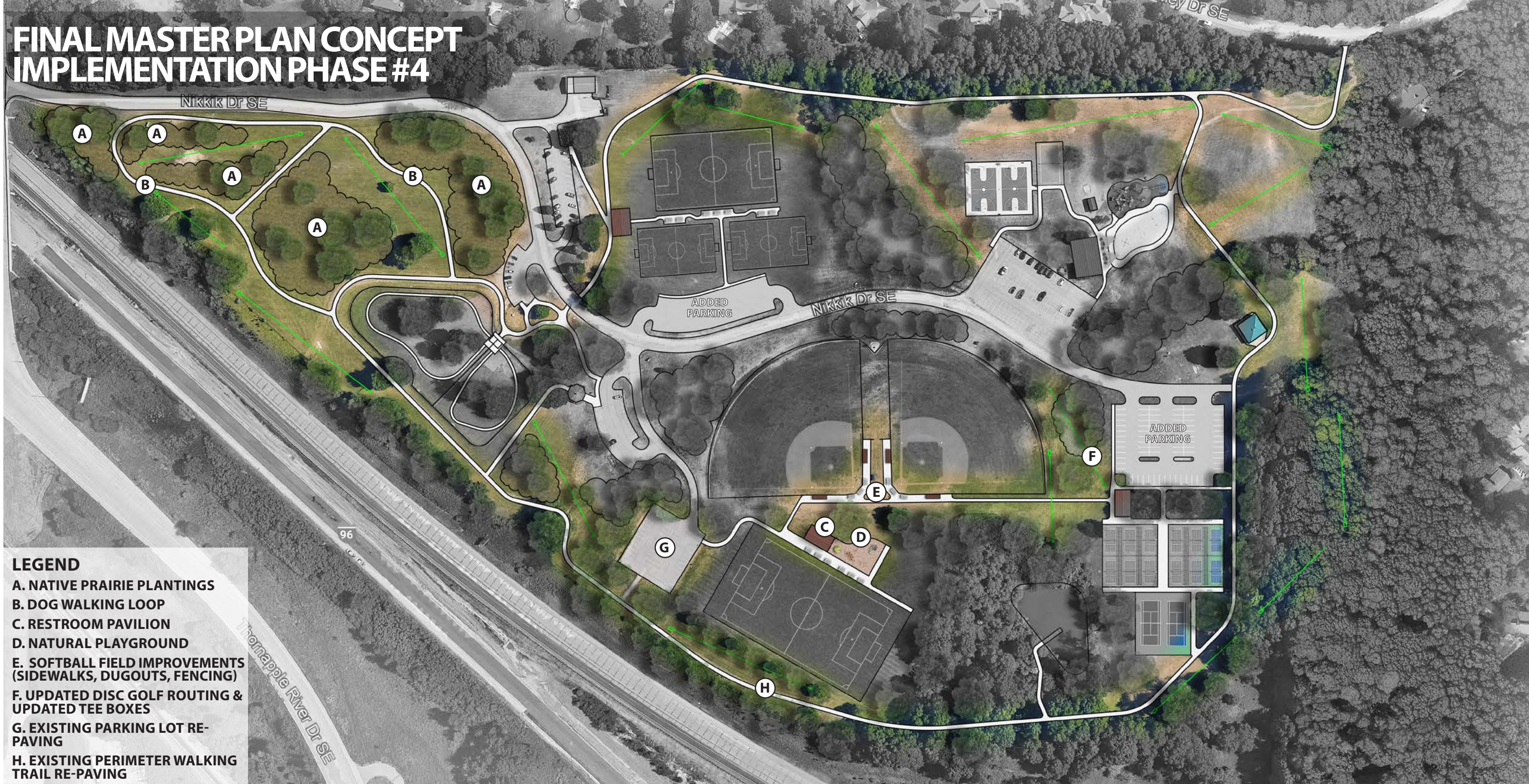
- Ice skating received the 2nd most votes from Cascade Twp. residents in the survey.
- The ice skating area could be a rink and/or a loop layout. A loop would be recommended to have chilling equipment and tubing within the concrete slab.
- A rink layout could also be a temporary system that is installed only in the winter, or there are synthetic ice surfaces that could be utilized to reduce maintenance.



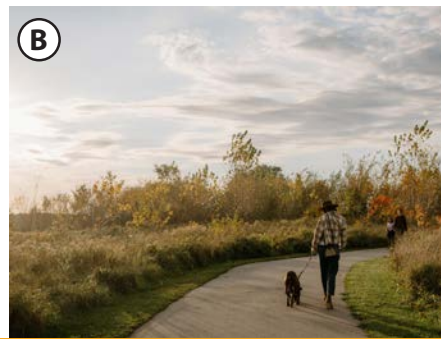
## PHASE 3 COST ESTIMATE:

<b>Cascade Recreation Park Master Plan - Phase 3</b> Conceptual Construction Cost Estimate January 2025				
Description	Unit	Unit Cost	Quantity	Total Cost
Four-Season Event Lodge/Pavilion	LSUM	\$ 1,000,000.00	1	\$ 1,000,000.00
Patio & Fire Pits	LSUM	\$ 150,000.00	1	\$ 150,000.00
Skating Loop	LSUM	\$ 600,000.00	1	\$ 600,000.00
Splash Pad	LSUM	\$ 400,000.00	1	\$ 400,000.00
Playground Improvements	LSUM	\$ 200,000.00	1	\$ 200,000.00
Lighting	LSUM	\$ 100,000.00	1	\$ 100,000.00
Bioswale/Native Plantings	SYS	\$ 8.00	900	\$ 7,200.00
Tree Plantings	EA	\$ 800.00	15	\$ 12,000.00
Engineering Fee				\$ 246,920.00
20% Contingency/Inflation				\$ 493,840.00
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$ 3,209,960.00</b>

# FINAL MASTER PLAN CONCEPT IMPLEMENTATION PHASE #4



- LEGEND**
- A. NATIVE PRAIRIE PLANTINGS
  - B. DOG WALKING LOOP
  - C. RESTROOM PAVILION
  - D. NATURAL PLAYGROUND
  - E. SOFTBALL FIELD IMPROVEMENTS (SIDEWALKS, DUGOUTS, FENCING)
  - F. UPDATED DISC GOLF ROUTING & UPDATED TEE BOXES
  - G. EXISTING PARKING LOT RE-PAVING
  - H. EXISTING PERIMETER WALKING TRAIL RE-PAVING



## PHASE 4 INFORMATION:

### B DOG WALKING LOOP



- The northeastern portion of the park is owned by Kent County, so this area is proposed as a long-term improvement that would need approval/partnership.
- The trail could be a crushed aggregate surface rather than asphalt or concrete.
- Native plantings could be utilized to improve aesthetics and habitat in this area.

### D NATURAL PLAYGROUND



- A natural playground was highly supported in the public input survey.
- Natural playgrounds provide a different play experience for kids allowing for creative use of features and elements in the playground.
- The location provides play activity for families at the baseball and soccer fields.

### E SOFTBALL FIELD IMPROVEMENTS (SIDEWALKS, DUGOUTS, FENCING)



- The ballfields are not currently accessible since there are no sidewalk connections.
- Dugouts are important for the safety of players and provide shade for players.
- Backstops and fencing are aging and should be replaced.

### F UPDATED DISC GOLF ROUTING



- An updated routing will be necessary due to other park improvements.
- Disc golf course upgrades received overall support in the survey, and for non-residents it received more votes than any other amenity.
- Re-routing the disc golf course and adding tee boxes is a low-cost improvement.

## PHASE 4 COST ESTIMATE:

<b>Cascade Recreation Park Master Plan - Phase 4</b>				
Conceptual Construction Cost Estimate				
January 2025				
Description	Unit	Unit Cost	Quantity	Total Cost
11v11 Soccer Field Restroom/Pavilion	LSUM	\$ 300,000.00	1	\$ 300,000.00
Soccer Field Natural Playground	LSUM	\$ 200,000.00	1	\$ 200,000.00
11v11 Soccer Field Parking Lot Re-Paving	SYS	\$ 45.00	1900	\$ 85,500.00
11v11 Soccer Field Sidewalks	SYS	\$ 95.00	400	\$ 38,000.00
Softball Fields Sidewalk, Dugouts, Fencing, Bleachers	LSUM	\$ 300,000.00	1	\$ 300,000.00
Disc Golf Course Routing Updates	LSUM	\$ 50,000.00	1	\$ 50,000.00
NW Parcel Crushed Limestone Walking Trails	SYS	\$ 35.00	1200	\$ 42,000.00
NW Parcel Native Plantings	SYS	\$ 8.00	8000	\$ 64,000.00
Perimeter Walking Trail Re-Paving	SYS	\$ 55.00	5250	\$ 288,750.00
Tree Plantings	EA	\$ 800.00	20	\$ 16,000.00
Engineering Fee				\$ 138,425.00
20% Contingency/Inflation				\$ 276,850.00
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$ 1,799,525.00</b>

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

This plan specifically includes prioritization and phasing to help break down the implementation into capital improvement projects that could be funded through different methods. Some improvements may appeal to donors or qualify for grant programs, other improvements could be completed through township staff and volunteers, while higher cost items may benefit from bonds or a millage.

### GRANTS

Cascade Township is eligible for funding through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources since there is an active Parks Committee and Five-Year Parks Master Plan. Potential grant opportunities include:

- Land and Water Conservation Fund
- Natural Resources Trust Fund
- Recreation Passport Grant Program

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation's (MEDC) Revitalization and Placemaking (RAP) Program offers funding for public placemaking projects. Regionally in the greater Grand Rapids area, funding can be applied for through The Right Place, Inc. to potentially acquire funding from the RAP Program. Grant programs may change annually through the MEDC and The Right Place, Inc.

The Michigan Health and Endowment Fund has a Nutrition & Healthy Lifestyles Initiative - Built Environment Division grant program that funds planning and design for capital improvement projects that contribute to the advancement of community health through enhancements to the physical spaces where communities live, work, and play.

### PARKS MILLAGE

Many surrounding communities rely on a parks millage to provide funding for maintenance and capital improvements. Now that the township has a master plan for Rec Park, and a plan underway for Tassell Park, a millage could be proposed to help fund improvements at these parks along with other park maintenance and improvement needs.

### TOWNSHIP FUNDS

Current funding for parks, pathways, and recreation improvements and maintenance throughout the township includes the general fund, parks budget, open space millage, and pathways millage. Also municipal bonds can be used to fund park projects, and paid back over time through township funding such as a millage.

### OTHER RESOURCES

Other funding partners could include Cascade Community Foundation, local athletic organizations, private entities and donors. Also, the township should continue to determine strategies to capture parks revenue through facility rentals and programming.

