Chapter 4: Master Plan Design

4.0 OVERVIEW

The final concept for Holly Springs Park evolved from a thorough public involvement process. Consulting with the community throughout the journey of planning and design revealed gaps in Town and parks and recreation programming. Combining desires and visions with site constraints and opportunities resulted in a conceptual plan and site programming that will serve the population of Holly Springs.

4.1 Final Concept

Holly Springs Park

Overall, Holly Springs Park is a series of experiences juxtaposed within the Village District maintaining nine acres of undisturbed forest on the seventeen acre site. The layout is woven into the surrounding land uses, serving as transition areas from single family housing, to recreational space, to community gathering places, and into the village core. A series of paths and nodes create a sense of mystery and discovery as users navigate through multiple elevations and experiences. The regional greenway, boardwalk, and hard-surface trails of stamped concrete and gravel pave provide ADA accessibility throughout the site. Circulation, via a system of about one-half mile of soft-surface trails, allows visitors to appreciate natural features and challenging topography.

Three large, distinct places are located within the park to serve an array of social needs. The Village Green area provides a large public gathering space and permanent home for the Holly Springs Farmers Market. A Parks and Recreation Program Building serves as home base for the Parks and Recreation Department, while providing facilities for programming related to the park, and indoor space for youth, adults, and seniors. The third node, an adventure playground, will be integrated into the natural terrain and vegetation to provide several ages with physical challenges and social interactions.

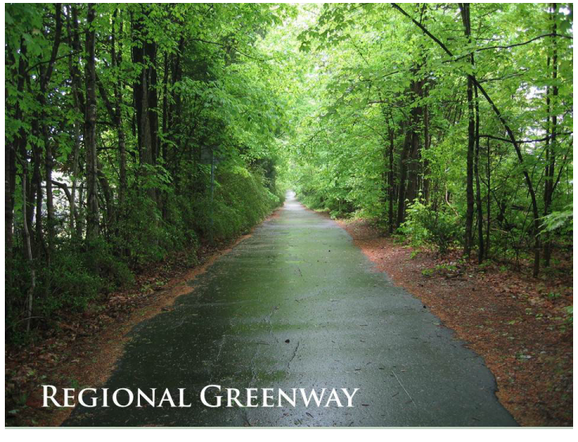
With multiple entrances, access to the wooded site is easy whether traveling by foot, bike, or car. Cyclists and pedestrians gain entry via a regionally connected greenway and the surrounding sidewalks connecting the entire Village District area. Movement within the site is notably aimed toward pedestrian and bicycle priority, with safety signage posted for drivers and zero curb environments in parking areas and arrival lanes. Bicycle parking will be available at all major nodes within the site including the trailhead, village green, parks and recreation center, and adventure play area.

Stitching together these nodes are travel-ways and places of exploration and discovery. Marked with wayfinding signage throughout the property, small "found places" become destinations. Four of these quiet, special places are denoted with flagstone paving and vegetation surrounding the site of historic springs and brick cisterns – used in the past to collect drinking water. These discovered places are marked with interpretive signage delicately integrated into the natural surroundings.

A quarter-mile, raised "wetland-walk," beginning at the Parks and Recreation Building, becomes more than a path. As a main attraction to the park it reveals a story of the site's natural

Potential Architectural Style

Spring and Cistern treatment



Regional Greenway

Wetland Walk

habitat, stream facts, conservation information, and species descriptions through interpretive signage. The journey begins on the highest ridge, traveling through the treetops until crossing a stream. With outlooks and benches punctuating the path, the boardwalk begins to descend through the foliage toward lower elevations of the forest, following a course along streams and

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Figure 4-1: Final Conceptual Site Plan.

wetlands. The arrival point is the intersection of hard-surface trail, soft-surface trail, and the entrance to the adventure playground.

The adventure play area will be tailored to a wide-range of ages. By integrating play into the natural environment, negative impacts to the site will be minimized. In between trees, rope systems will provide a variety of imagination and physical challenges for preschoolers through middle-school aged youth. Seating and shade for observing parents and guardians will abound in this grove of activity.

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Moving along the stamped concrete trail, visitors will follow tracks of animal prints and leaf shapes. Meandering through the wooded slope, this two-tenths of a mile trail will be dotted with observation points and interpretive signage. As the trail approaches the Village Green area, users will pass through the edge of the Village Orchard.

Surrounding the Village Green to the west and south, the Village Orchard will be gently integrated into the natural slope. This feature folds into the agricultural history of the site, framing the entrance to the village green from the west, and providing seasonal interest and activities for families and visitors.

The Village Green area plays host to a variety of special events and gathering opportunities for the community. In addition to becoming a permanent home for the Holly Springs Farmers Market, small and large events can be accommodated on the over one half acre green. Edging the green are trees providing dappled light to the raised, reclaimed wood planter boxes doubling as benches. The surrounding open-air pavilions shade food vendors, local retailers, and artists during concerts and community festivals. In the main building, the center open air space for seating or staging is capped on either end by a café and restroom facilities. The promenade surrounding the green, along with the areas behind the buildings and the parking lot, will be a structural gravel material - providing a casual back-yard feel coupled with engineered support for vehicles and ADA accessibility as well as permeability for environmental consciousness.

Minimal grading will be employed to align this area on the top of the ridge. Where needed, stone retaining walls topped with wrought iron railings will frame the village green. The cemetery site will feature a grass lawn with flagstone paths surrounded by a wrought iron fence. Shade trees,

Figure 4-2: Conceptual rendering of Village Green during a community event.

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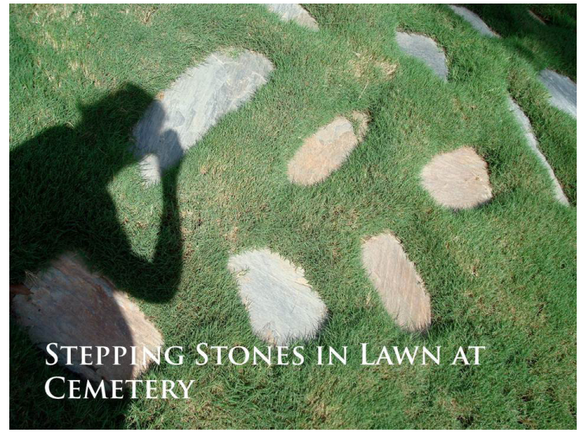
Figure 4-3 through 4-4: Conceptual renderings of buildings around Village Green.



benches, and interpretive signage finish this area as a quiet, reflective place when large events are not occurring.

As a feature to draw people into the site, the area between the Village Green and Avent Ferry Road will be completely cleared and transformed into an open meadow with a beautiful biofiltration facility. This facility will be densely planted with native grasses and flowering perennials, perfectly suited as structural components for the soil. Acting as a giant sponge, this area will filter stormwater

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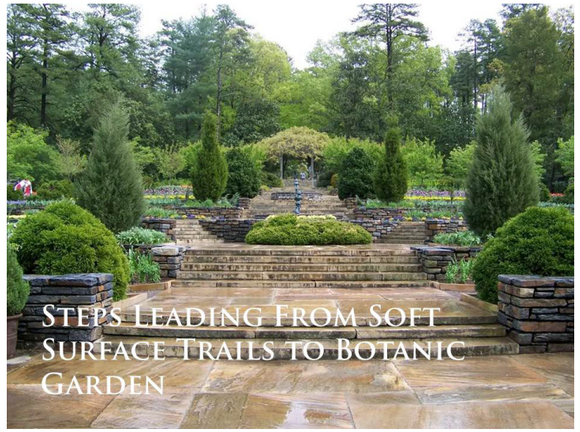
GravelPave

Dense Planting for Biofiltration Area


Botanic Labels for Plants


Soft surface trail bridge


Biofiltration system


Steps Leading From Soft Surface Trails to Botanic Garden


Pergola Style

before it enters the groundwater source and creeks located on the property. Hard channels will direct water through a series of terraces and weirs punctuated with boulders and stepping-stones. A soft-surface path will lead explorers from the Village Green area, through the meadow and biofiltration facility, to the trailhead at the northeast corner of the park.

A boardwalk spanning the creek also connects the Village Green area with the trailhead. Here, twelve parking spaces are provided to gain access to the park. An additional minimum of twenty-four parking spaces will line Earp Street for those traveling via car to the site. At the trailhead, visitors will find a complete map of the park, bicycle parking, pergolas with shaded seating, wayfinding signage at trail intersections, and an entry monument feature. Also a zero-curb area, pedestrian and cyclist safety is a top priority in this environmentally sensitive, pervious parking lot.

Passing along the north of the parking lot, the regional greenway connects cyclists and pedestrians to areas throughout Holly Springs. This greenway is connected to the site via the trailhead and an entrance on the west side of the park. At the west entrance, visitors will enter the site along the "wetland walk."

Returning to the south end of the property, across from the Cultural Center and Library, the Parks and Recreation building is fronted by a half-acre botanical garden. Meandering paths are framed with native plants, wildflowers, and ornamental species – all tagged with appropriate common and scientific names. Large pergolas with "front-porch" swings welcome visitors to enjoy the gardens, read a book, or visit with friends. The Parks and Recreation building will be integrated into the steep ridge complete with a viewing deck large enough to support outdoor café seating or private and public events. This node is connected to the Village Green area via a boardwalk suspended over the stream. Access to the site of the springs and soft-surface trails are provided via a staircase.

This concept provides the town with a series of trails, public gathering spaces, and conservation areas. Interpretive signage will educate visitors about the history of Holly Springs, as well as the importance of water quality and habitat preservation. A balance of human access and conservation areas, coupled with educational components, will create a sense of appreciation in visitors for the protection of lands near water sources. As the Town continues to grow, this park will remain a hub of social and ecologic connections for generations to come.

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Figure 4-5: Conceptual rendering of botanical garden area and boardwalk leading to Village Green.

4.1A Technical Considerations

Undisturbed Acreage

From the beginning of the planning and design process the community recognized how unique it is to have seventeen acres of wooded land near a downtown core. Conservation and preservation remained high on the list of priorities for the site. With streams and sensitive edge habitats coupled with the existing residential neighborhood, conservation areas and buffers were main components of the design. Roughly nine acres will remain undeveloped with minimal disturbance to insert trail systems in conservation areas. Educational signage throughout the property will also help visitors understand the importance of keeping the park free from debris, not interfering with plant and animal species, and remaining on marked paths and outlooks.

Trail Systems

The number one requested element for the park was trails. This request consistently appeared during visioning, workshops, and was submitted via online surveys. With topographical challenges, and opportunities to include boardwalks, trail mileage throughout the site was maximized to include as much hard- and soft-surface trails as possible without completely developing the parcel. The regional greenway along the west side of the site is 1/4 mile, the wetland walk is also 1/4 mile, and there are over 1/2 mile of soft surfaces trails with varying degrees of difficulty.

Parcels and Ownership

To create a successful place for the Town of Holly Springs, adjacent landowners will need to work together. Essential to the Village Green operating as part of the core Village District will be a relationship between the owners of 919 Marketing, the owner of the Mims House, and the Holly Springs United Methodist Church. Access, circulation, safety, program scheduling, and other logistics will need to be reviewed by all parties. Working in a cooperative fashion will benefit all parties. In this site design, the Town has expanded a proposed parking area planned by the church. Safety enhancements will be made around the existing monument to create a pedestrian environment and determine when bollards should be in place to block vehicles from accessing the lane circulating through all four properties.

Working with Topography

This trail systems and buildings throughout the site are intended to work with the topography. All efforts will be made to preserve the natural slopes, ridges, and valleys. New hard- and soft-surface trail alignments will gradually climb and descend slopes with switchbacks and retaining walls. This system will allow slopes to not exceed standard ADA accessible limits.

Parking Access

Several discussions throughout the process have focused on parking and vehicular access to the site. A major component of the vision statement is to promote healthy living and preserve the natural landscape. Those two components can be achieved by limiting vehicular access and pollutants to the site. By encouraging visitors to park within the downtown area, they will not only improve their health by walking, but also will

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Figure 4-6: Acreage estimates for areas throughout the site.

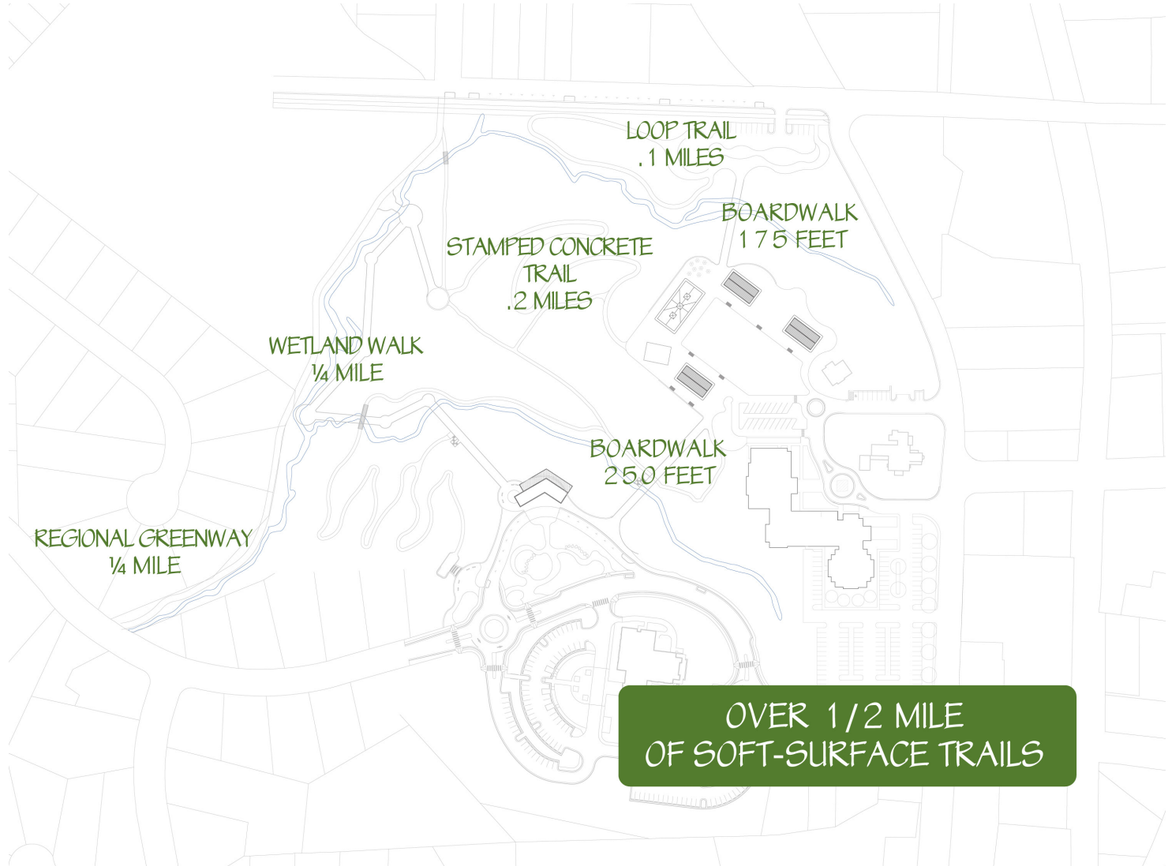

Figure 4-7: Trail mileage estimates.

stimulate the economy. Visitors to the site passing by local shops and restaurants are more likely to patronize these locations traveling to or from the park. Also, there currently are 432 parking spaces throughout the Village District. With additional on-street parking, a trailhead, a small lot at the Village Green, and an access lane, the proposed site will add at least an additional 67 spaces. All of which are within a five minute walk of the Village Green area.

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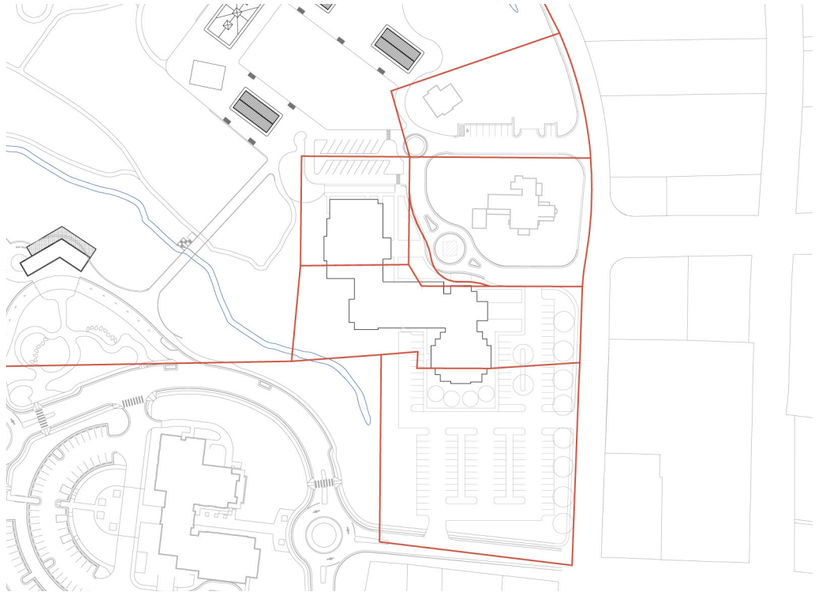

Figure 4-8: Approximate parcel lines.

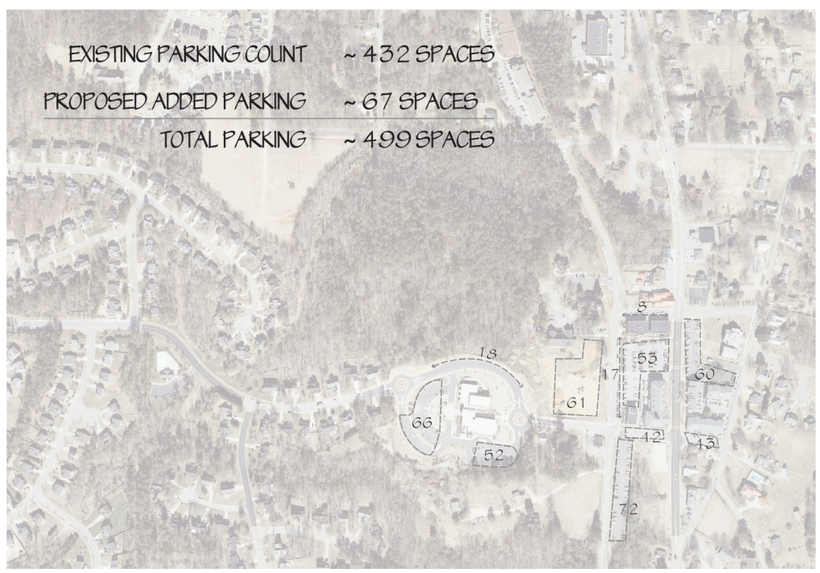

Figure 4-9: Village parking estimates - all within a five-mile walk of the Village Green.

Figure 4-10: Topography overlaid on site plan.

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Option B: Amphitheater

After presenting the Holly Springs Park Master Plan concept to Town Council on May 1st, 2012, the design team was requested to explore the possibility of inserting an amphitheater on the site. This facility should be designed to seat approximately 1,000 people. The purpose of inserting this programming into the site would be to draw people to the downtown area and stimulate the economy for both the park and surrounding businesses. Option B is presented to illustrate how an amphitheater would fit across from the Cultural Center -in lieu of the Parks and Recreation Program building and botanic gardens.

Option B: Spacial Study

Currently, the area housing the Parks and Recreation Program building and botanic gardens is only one-half acre. In order to accommodate 1,000 seats, the amphitheater will need to use 1.3 - 1.5 acres of land.

Placement of the amphitheater will require altering the existing topography and must remain outside of the 35 foot buffer from the stream (see figure 4-12).

Figure 4-11: Existing conceptual site plan showing the half-acre site with a program building and botanic garden.

Placing the stage near the stream buffer provides just enough room to have 1.3 acres for the facility. A spacial study shows how the seating area will need to fan out away from the stage, while remaining outside the sensitive stream buffer (See figure 4-13). Intensive site work will be required to reshape the top of the ridge. Twenty to thirty feet of elevation change will need to be gradually sloped to allow for ADA accessibility throughout the amphitheater area as well as to provide a connection to the wetland walk and boardwalk leading to the Village Green. In addition to creating a more gradual slope, the contour pattern will also have to be reversed to follow the arc of the seating layout. This amount of disturbance will physically reshape the land and require massive retaining walls to expand the buildable area. These retaining walls will also need to be engineered to withstand the force of vehicles delivering items to the staging area (see figure 4-14).

Crowd control areas will be required during events to ensure all ticketed patrons are admitted to the seating area and those without tickets can not circulate throughout the amphitheater space. These barriers should be removed when events are not in progress (see figure 4-15).

The sidewalk will also need to transform into a queue area for those waiting to gain entrance to the event space. Protective barriers from vehicles

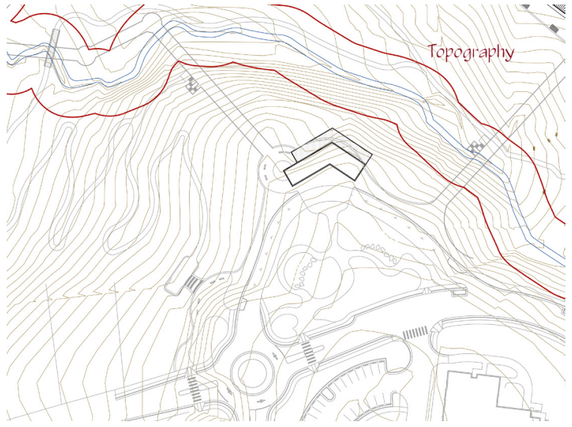

Figure 4-12: Stream buffers and topography.

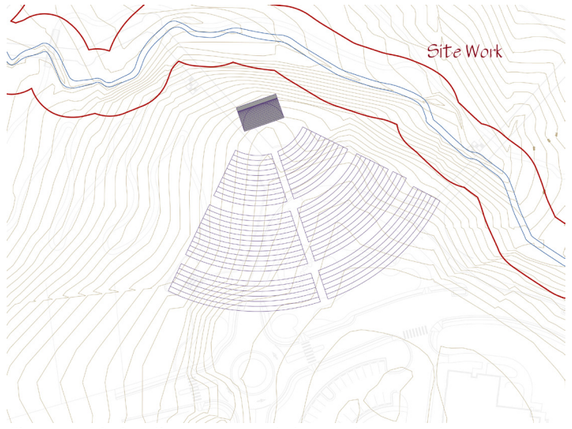

Figure 4-13: Seating area and stage placement.

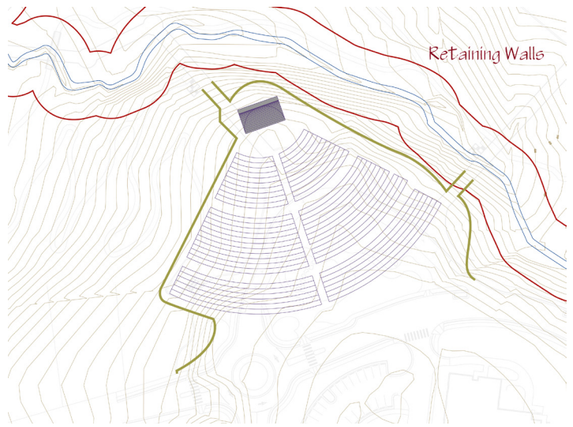

Figure 4-14: Retaining walls.

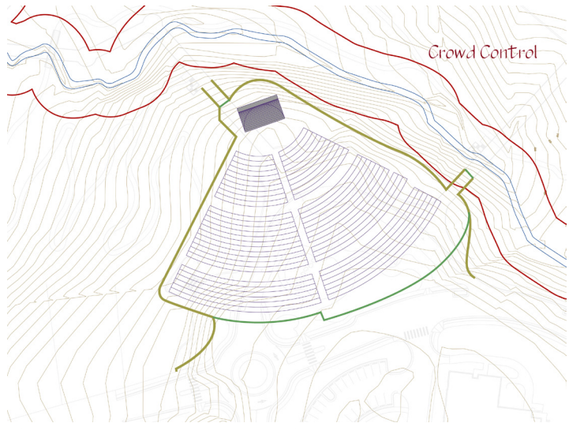

Figure 4-15: Crowd control barriers.

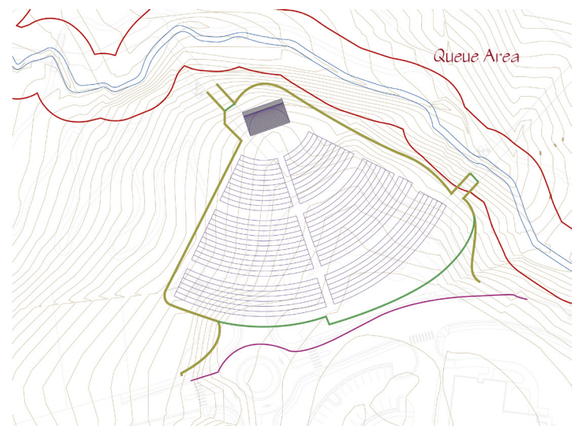

Figure 4-16: Queue area.

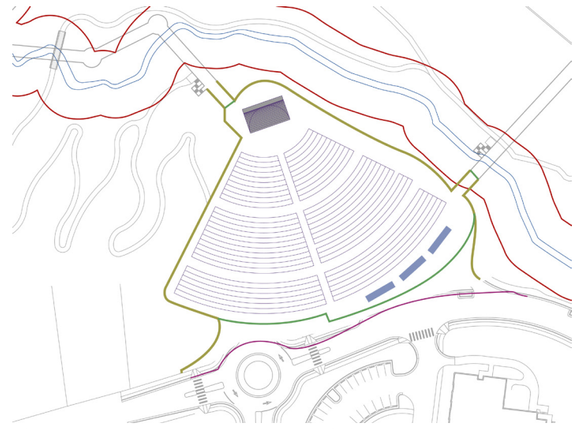

Figure 4-15: Kiosks and contextual fitting.

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- in the form of bollards or vegetation - may need to be installed to ensure safety of pedestrians lining up to enter the event space (see figure 4-16).

Within the event space, it is required that patrons have access to restroom facilities and food and beverage vendors. Kiosks will need to be added to the space to provide these services (see figure 4-17).

DESIGN STANDARDS:
To create a facility with the capacity to seat 1,000 people, typically 1.3-1.5 acres are required.

1,000 Seat Venues:

River Front Park/Mankato, Minnesota	1.3 Acres
Oak Point Park/Plano, Texas	1.4 Acres
Hugh Morton/Wilmington, NC	1.4 Acres

NOTE: Forest Theater in Chapel Hill holds 300 people and is approximately .8 acres.

The staging area will need to support electrical features including lighting and sound systems and the seating area should include lighting for safety. Vehicular access will need to be provided to the staging area for equipment set up. Speakers should be integrated throughout the seating area and the stage will need to be designed to project sound toward the audience with sides and ceiling areas. In addition to the performance and seating area, restrooms, concessions, and a box office are required. ADA accessibility will need to be integrated into seating, concessions, box office and restroom facilities.

What does this mean for Holly Springs Park?
The proposed location for the amphitheater – across from the Cultural Center – is only one-half acre. This size space will not be able to accommodate 1,000 people. This ridge will likely support less people than the Village Green area – which is currently design to operate as a flex space for events, the Farmers Market, and serve as an open green for park activities including bocce, chess, Frisbee, etc. Within the site, determining the appropriate 1.4-1.5 acres will alter the existing design as access roads, utilities, ADA accessibility, and other design feature will need to be integrated into the landscape. As a community-directed planning and design project – one of the main visions for the site was for it to not have service roads or vehicular traffic within the interior of the site.

COSTS:
Two comparisons reveal the implementation cost of 1,000 seat amphitheaters to be around $2-3 million.

- River Front Park/Mankato, Minnesota $2,000,000
- Sunbury Riverfront/Sunbury, Pennsylvania $2,700,000

Operation and management costs vary for each facility depending on the number of paid events, free events, rental fees collected, event labor, event cleaning, weekly maintenance, etc. The pro forma within the Sunbury Report shows a five-year summary indicating cash flow for a 1,000-seat facility.

Net Cash Flow
- Year 1: $60
- Year 2: $2,230
- Year 3: $3,590
- Year 4: $8,843
- Year 5: $7,779

See Sunbury Pennsylvania Feasibility Report (link located at the end of this report) for itemized Planning Level Implementation Costs and Income and Expense Pro Forma.

MARKET AREA:
For amphitheaters serving 1,000-2,000 patrons, market areas extend 30-75 miles. The facility will need to be managed by the city (for marketing and booking) or by an entertainment management company. Within the 30 mile radius, competition (at varying scales) includes:

- Holly Springs
  - Parrish Womble Park
  - The Cultural Center
- Raleigh
  - Raleigh Amphitheater
  - Time Warner Cable Pavilion at Walnut Creek (Rock Quarry Road)
- Durham
  - American Tobacco Campus
  - Angle Amphitheater (Duke Gardens)
- Cary
  - Koka Booth Theater
- Chapel Hill
  - Forest Theater

OPERATION:
Town or City managed amphitheaters typically require two or more full time employees to manage marketing and booking. Beyond attracting patrons, securing talent, and coordinating rentals, other daily and weekly operations include (but are not limited to):

- Security, Parking, Crowd Control (during events)
- Emergency Services (during events)
- Upkeep and cleaning (daily/weekly)
- Food vendors
- Ticket Management

TRENDS IN EVENT SPACE:
With such high implementation costs for amphitheater spaces, which are seen as single-use areas, many towns and cities are programming public space to be multi-use. By creating multi-use spaces, municipalities can accommodate large events with portable staging, lighting, and sound systems that integrate into their public spaces.

Examples:
- Carrboro features entertainers on the Weaver Street lawn.
- Chapel Hill often holds concerts and festivals on Franklin Street with portable staging for entertainers.
- Downtown Raleigh transforms City Plaza and Fayetteville Street into concert and event venues.
- Columbia, South Carolina, holds events, festivals, and concerts in the streets of their five-points area downtown.
- Buffalo, New York, transforms their large green space along the water front for concerts and events.

AMPHITHEATER ADDITIONS TO TOWNS AND CITIES:
For venues seating 1,000 or more patrons, towns and cities often conduct a feasibility study before embarking on the design and implementation of the facility. As a model, refer to the Feasibility Report for Sunbury, Pennsylvania, completed by consultants from Simone Jaffe Collins.

Report Includes: Executive Summary, Background, Site Analysis, Design Process, Master Site Plan, Market Assessment, Operating Costs, Economic Impacts, and Implementation:

http://www.cityofsunbury.com/Documents/Forms/All%20Items.aspx?RootFolder=%2fDocuments%2fRiver%20Front%20Project%2fFinal%20MSP&FolderCTID=0x0120009B53131E7709A543B642BCCE732DB084

Chapter 5: Implementation

5.0 OVERVIEW

The implementation of the Mims Property Master Plan will require a comprehensive approach that includes multiple sources of funding, partnerships, design, construction, and management. It will also take the dedication of Town staff and a commitment to the visions and goals established in this Master Plan.

5.1 Master Plan Adoption

The Town's adoption of the Mims Property Master Plan should be the first step in the implementation process. Adoption confirms the Town's position on the success of the planning process and the desire to move forward. Most importantly, having an adopted plan is critical in securing funding from federal, state, and private agencies.

This plan can be adopted with both options A and B for the final master plan. It is recommended that the Town continue with a phased approach for adoption and implementation as follows:

Action 1: Approve concept plan with optional site feature of (A)botanic garden with parks and recreation program building or (B) amphitheater.

Action 2A: Move into implementation process with phased approach – begin with design development and construction of the Village Green area, follow with trail and trailhead design development and construction.

Action 2B: Execute an RFP for a feasibility study including more in-depth planning and design, market analysis, and pro forma development for an amphitheater with a capacity of 1,000 seats

Action 3: Select a final design solution for the space across from the Cultural Center after the completion of a feasibility study.

Action 4: Initiate design development for site across from Cultural Center.

5.2 Next Steps

5.2A Organize Implementation Committee

This Committee could be a subset of the existing Steering Committee. Their role would be to prioritize short-term and long-term implementation/phasing strategies and to determine funding mechanisms.

5.2B Programming opportunities

Establishing a list of potential short- and long-term programming opportunities will support the concept for the park, transitioning it into a reality for the citizens of Holly Springs. Some programing can be aimed toward funding implementation; others can be established now and continue to run throughout the life of the park.

- Reprogramming Farmers Market
- Educational partnerships with local schools
- Local garden clubs/organizations volunteer group
- Establish a "Friends of the Mims Park" group
- Programming of site and responsibilities
- Promotional brochure for the Park's mission and goals/master plan.

5.2C Continue building Partnerships

Build strategic partnerships between Town Departments and between the Town and public –private partnerships for Park issues related to funding, implementation and management. Issues to work through in collaboration include:

- Park access road
- Zoning issues/regulations
- Town initiated stormwater projects for Downtown District

5.2D Consider Multiple Funding Sources and Facility Development Options

Multiple approaches should be taken to support the Mims Property development and programming. Because of significant capital costs and future potential function of the park, partnerships with other public and private agencies are essential. Partnership opportunities can be useful when a combination of funding sources is needed. Potential partners can include downtown businesses, business and civic organizations, local major employers, corporate sponsors, and non-profit groups. It is likely a combination of funding sources would be used to reduce the reliance on one financing technique. Potential funding avenues include:

- Parks & Recreation Bond funding
- Local CIP
- PARTF funding
- Other sources (including private monies) – grants/gifts
- Public-Private Partnerships

5.2E Identify Scope for Future Tasks

The following list of action items will set the implementation process in motion. As the Town moves toward a funding strategy, the conceptual design and programming will need to be vetted against Town needs, current uses, future uses, zoning, design guidelines, and Parks and Recreation standards. The following list should be included as future tasks.

- Pre-Design of park program elements
- Phasing Plan
- Budget Estimates for site and facility program elements
- Construction Documentation following park program funding
- Operations and maintenance

Implementation

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