

Lake Myra County Park

Master Plan

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July 8, 2024



@wakegov    

wake.gov

Agenda

- PROS System Overview
- Master Plan Process
- Site Analysis
- Community Engagement
- Master Plan Concepts
- Final Summary
- Next steps



PROS System

- Natural Resource Based
- 8 Existing County Parks
- 3 Existing Nature Preserves
- Construction / Planning / Design
 - One New Park under construction
 - Two new parks in planning / design
 - One new greenway/preserve in design
 - Four existing parks in design for bond improvements
 - Two New Park facilities in concept planning



Wake County Parks and Open Space Mission and Core Services

Mission Statement:

“Wake County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Division preserves open space, promotes stewardship, and provides equitable and inclusive education and outdoor recreation for a diverse and growing community.”

Core Services:

Recreation & Leisure

Facilities and amenities that allow residents to enjoy more active recreation – trails, volleyball courts, boat rentals, picnic shelters, fishing and more.

Open Space

Lands that preserve natural resources and wildlife and help provide clean air and drinking water. Open spaces help conserve Wake County’s natural resources and provide a place for people to enjoy passive recreation such as hiking.

Educational Opportunities

Site-based cultural, environmental and recreational education programs that introduce visitors to the history, natural environments and recreational opportunities of Wake County.

Strategic Plan / Resolutions / Design Guidelines

- Growth, Land Use and Environment Goal 3:
 - **Protect 1000 Acres of green space, including open space, parks, greenways farmland and forests by 2029.**
- Renewable Energy Resolution (2018)
- Native Plants Resolution (2018)
- Public Art Policy (2017)
- Wake County Design Guidelines & Standards
- Energy Design and Management Guidelines



Project Team



Susan Hatchell

Landscape Architecture, PLLC



**HUFFMAN
ARCHITECTS**

N | V | 5

BEYOND ENGINEERING

Wooten



lynchmykins



Axiom Environmental, Inc.

Master Plan Process



SITE ANALYSIS

Study of natural systems, historic and cultural history, and regional connections

COMMUNITY MEETING #1

Site Analysis presentation and introduction of the recreational survey

PROGRAMMING

Draft Park Program that incorporates the results of the Community Meeting and recreational survey

MASTER PLAN CONCEPTS

Prepare several Master Plan Concepts based on feedback from the first Community Meeting, the recreational survey, and the park program

COMMUNITY MEETING #2

Review of the recreational survey results and Master Plan Concepts

PRELIMINARY MASTER PLAN

Prepare a Preliminary Master Plan based on community feedback

COMMUNITY MEETING #3

Review of the Preliminary Master Plan

MASTER PLAN REPORT

Prepare the Master Plan Report

APPROVALS

Finalize the Master Plan Report and gain final approval from the Wake County Board of Commissioners and move forward with design

Community Engagement

(3) In Person Community Meetings

- Direct Mail Postcards (7500 Residents)
- Mobile Texting Service (4200 Residents)
 - (3) Pre-meeting and (1) Post-meeting
- Yard Signs around the park site
- News Release and Media Management
- PROS Project Website
- Wake / Municipality Social Media Promotions
- Flyers
- Media Coverage: CBS-17, WPTF, Wake Weekly



The flyer features a top banner with the text "LAKE MYRA COUNTY PARK" in white on a dark background with autumn leaves. Below is a map showing the park's location relative to I-87, Smithfield Road, Wendell Falls Parkway, Martin Pond Road, and Poole Road. The map also labels Lake Myra, Marks Creek, and Lake Myra Elementary School. A QR code is located on the right side with the text "SCAN to learn more!". The bottom section is split into two colored boxes: a yellow box on the left with a clipboard icon and the text "Drop in anytime to get an update on plans, talk to staff and let us know what you want to see at this future park!", and an orange box on the right with the text "COMMUNITY MEETING" and details for the meeting on Oct. 18 at Wendell Town Hall.

LAKE MYRA COUNTY PARK

SCAN to learn more!

COMMUNITY MEETING

OCT. 18 WEDNESDAY 4-7 P.M. **WENDELL TOWN HALL**
Board Room
409 Landing View Drive, Wendell

wake.gov/LakeMyra
✉ prosplan@wake.gov ☎ 919-856-6670

WAKE COUNTY NORTH CAROLINA

Stakeholders

- Wendell Parks and Recreation
- Wendell Planning
- N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission
- Knightdale Parks, Recreation / Cultural Programs
- Knightdale Development Services
- Wake County Public Schools
- Lake Myra Elementary School
- Brookfield Residential (Wendell Falls Neighborhood)
- Foothills Land Conservancy
- OSAPAC



Core Values and Principles

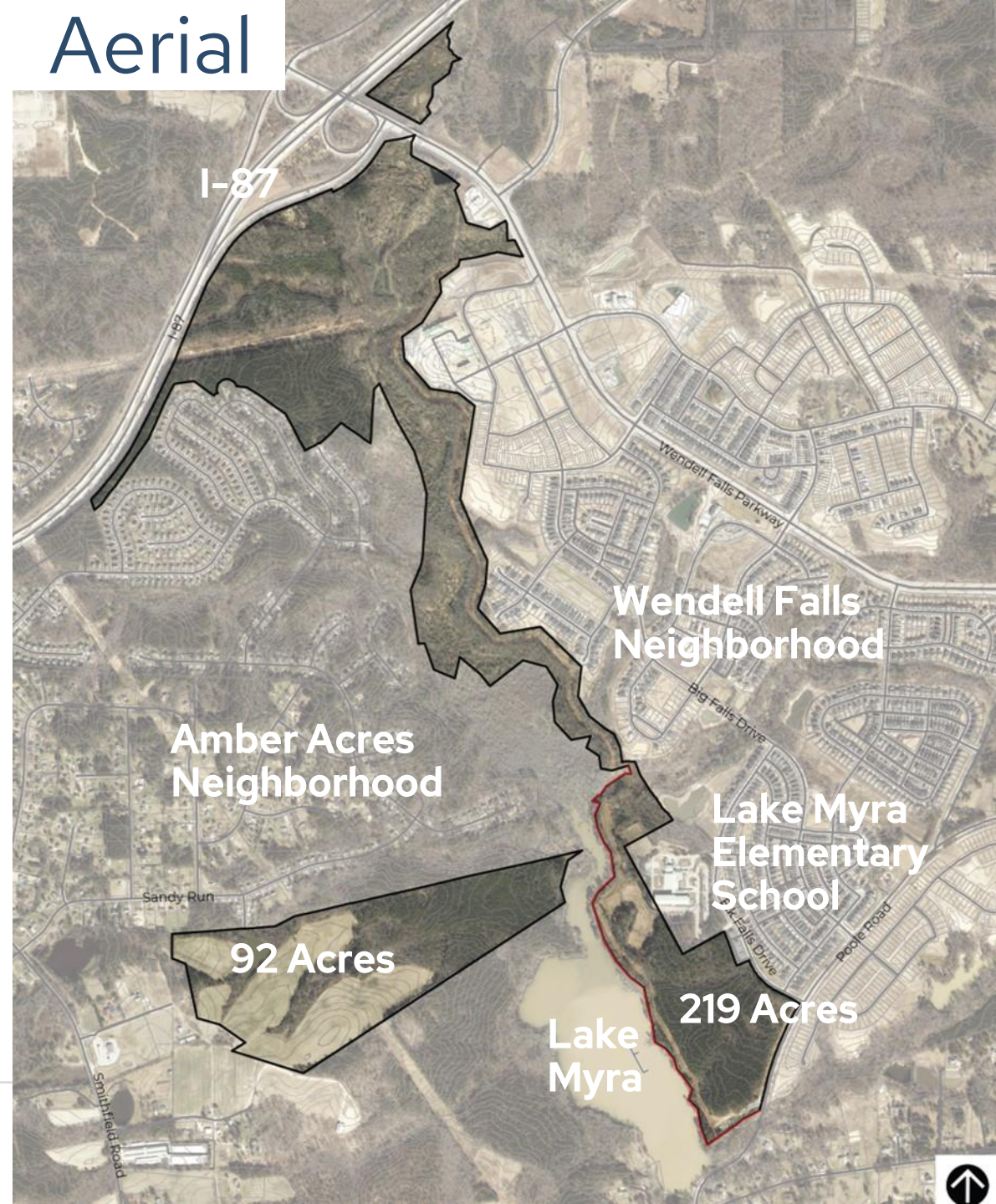
Most critical core principles for the future of Lake Myra Park are.....

- Experiencing Nature
- Passive Recreation
- Connectivity
- Protect and Restore Natural Systems
- Exploration
- Balance of Built and Natural Systems

Aerial

Site Context / Need

- There are no full County Parks in the Eastern part of Wake County
- Lake Myra County Park envisioned and planned for in the 2008 Comprehensive Parks And Recreation Master Plan
- Wendell Falls and Amber Acres Communities
- Western Parcel = 92 Acres
- Eastern Parcel = 219 Acres
- Land Purchased in 2007



Project Planning Background



2010

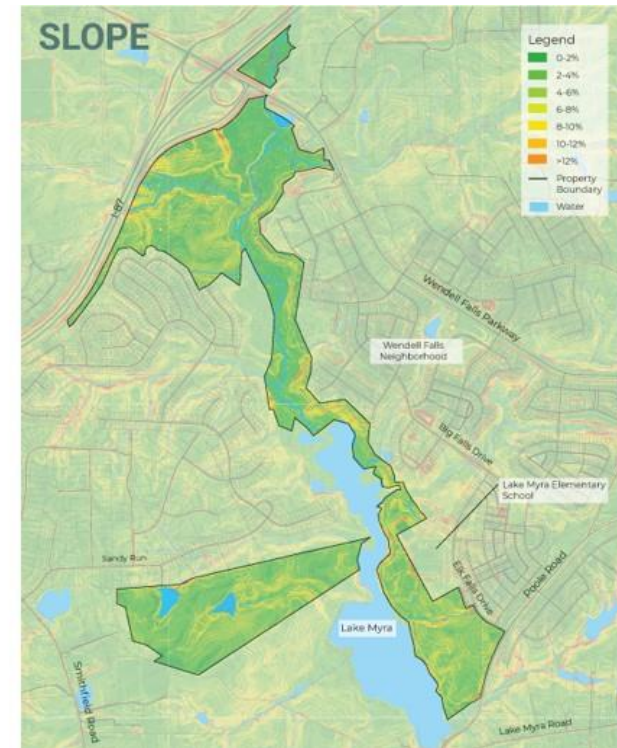
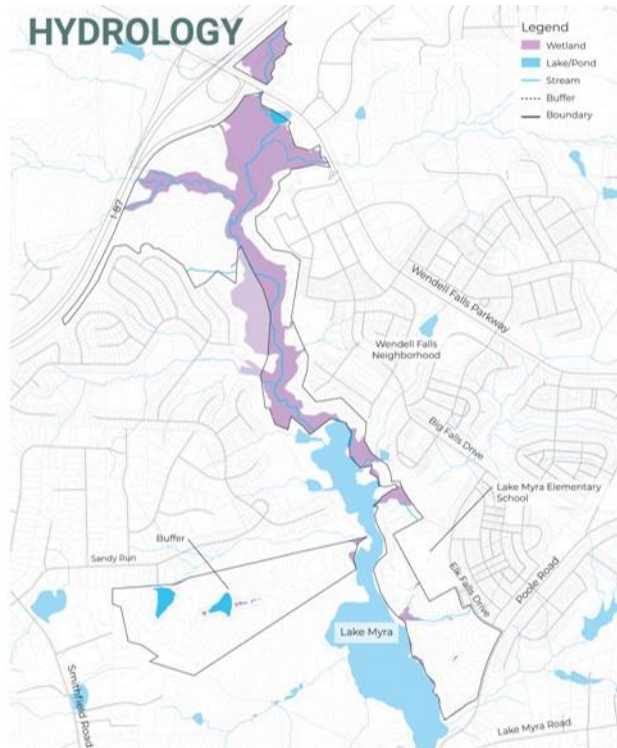


2021

Site Analysis



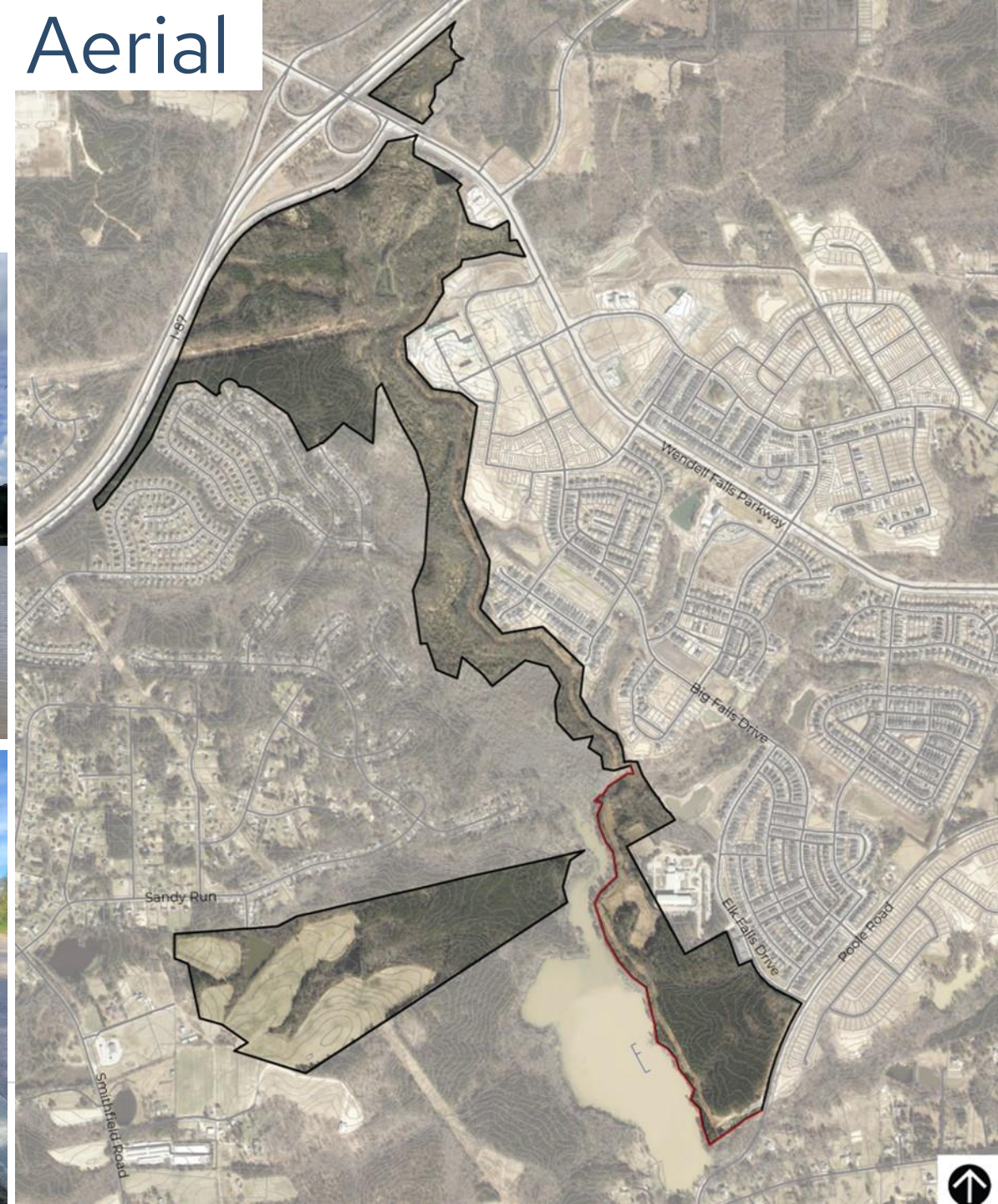
Environmental and Natural Resources Analysis



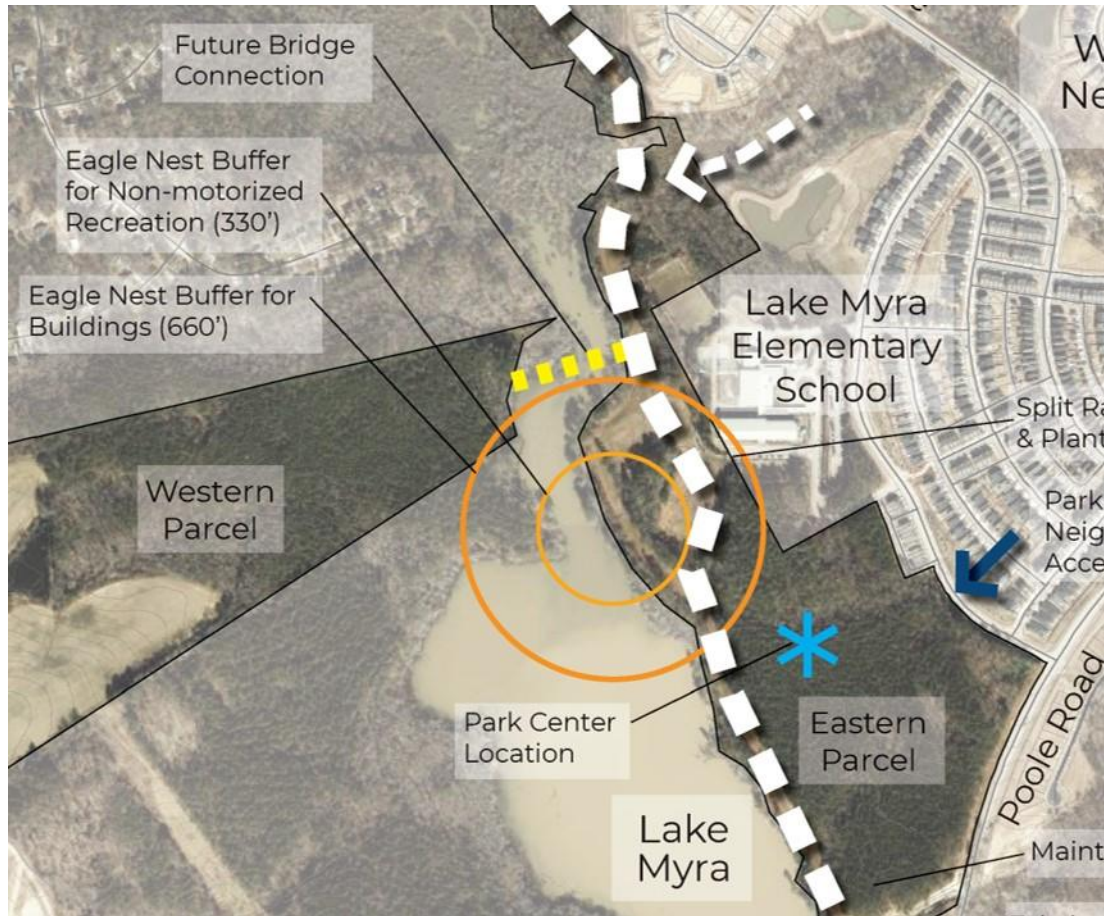
Site Images



Aerial



Habitat and Species Guidelines



1. Rare species:

- a. Bald Eagle
 - i. Requires a 660 feet buffer around nest site.
 - ii. If possible, plan construction around the immediate vicinity of the nest from June - August. This will avoid the nesting period (September-May).
- b. Striped Mud Turtle
 - i. Requires 160 ft from water's edge where individual was found on northern section of property (coordinates: 35.779139, -78.437091).
- c. Bird species in table below
 - i. Required tree cover percentage varies by species from 10 to 67%, which should remain present on site.
- d. Bat species in table below
 - i. Allow any potential roost snag trees to remain (snags in various stages of deterioration, emphasizing larger-diameter snags).
- e. Plant species
 - i. Avoid placing facilities on plants marked on ArcGIS Field Maps if a rare or uncommon species.
 - ii. The polygon provided for *Nestronia umbellule* requires a tree protection fence around both populations.

2. Wetland habitat and adjacent Upland habitat: critical for all species above

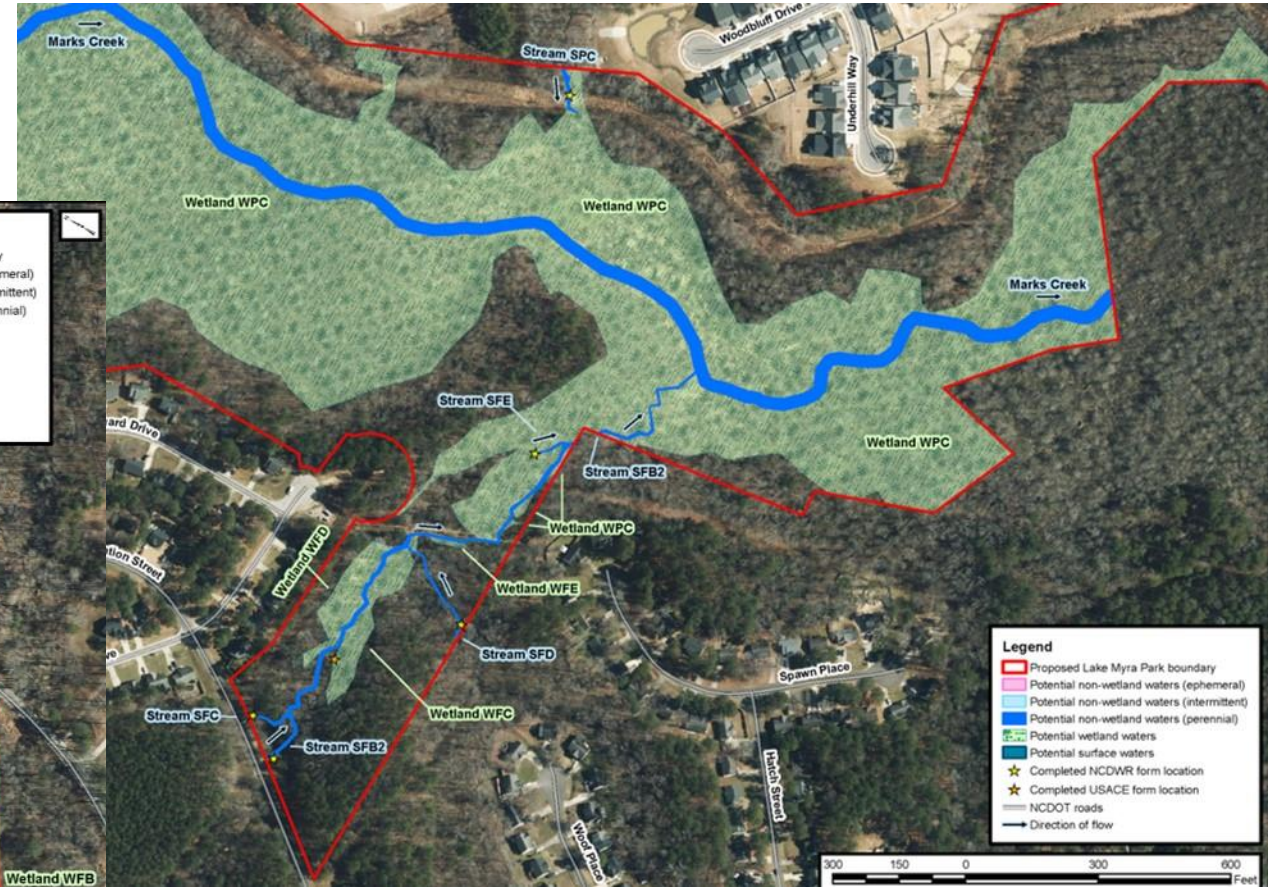
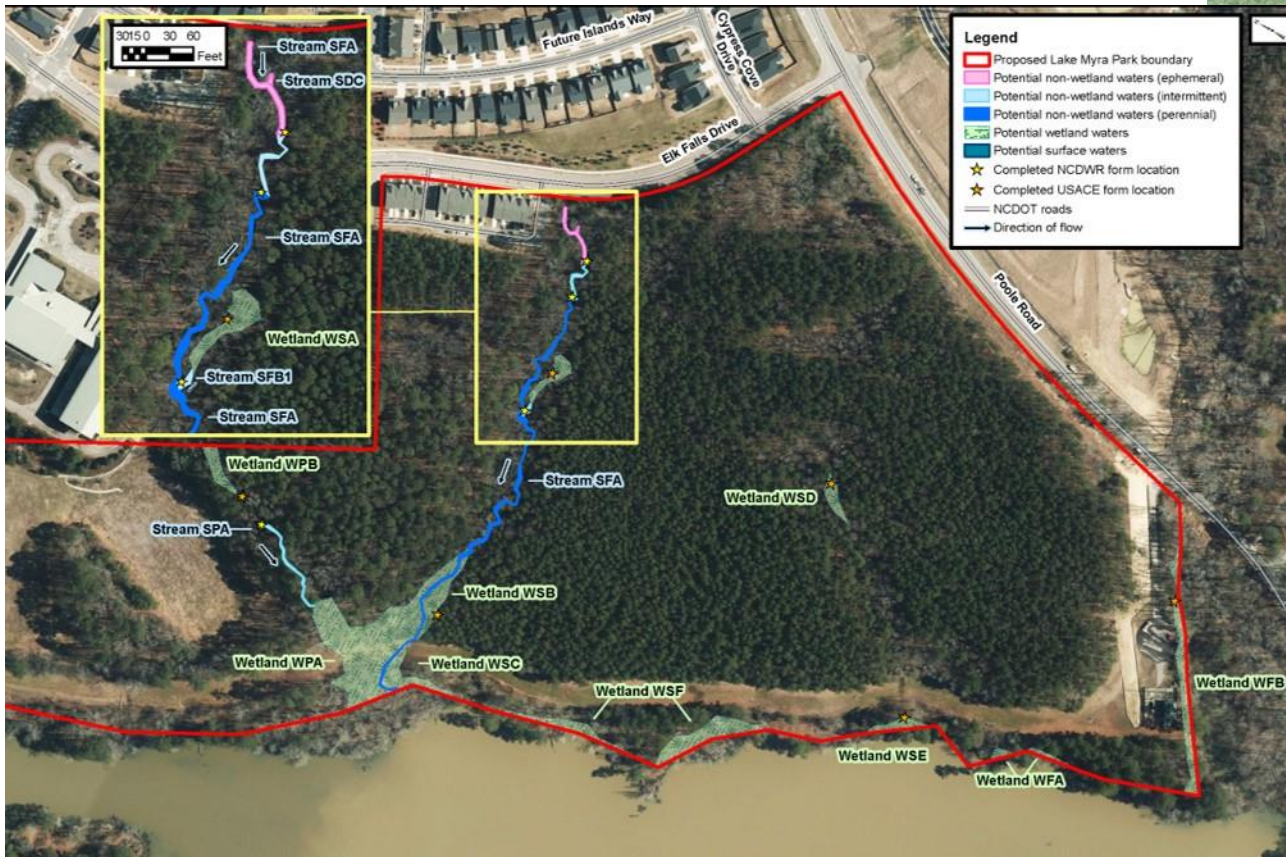
- a. Protect minimum of 150 ft up to 330 ft, wherever possible of undisturbed buffer around riparian and floodplains, ephemeral wetland habitats. Author acknowledges that this will be difficult with current sewer easement alignment.

3. Early succession habitat: This habitat is rare in Wake County and becoming increasingly rare as agriculture is converted to developed land.

- a. Preserve area currently in agriculture off Poor Boy Farm Road (~39 acres) as prairies to support grassland birds, pollinators, and other species. Include fire breaks/trails for future prescribed fire regime.

Buffers and Wetlands

- Multiple streams and wetland areas with buffers



Cultural and Historical Context

- PROS Background
- Former gristmill site
- Long history of recreation
 - Swimming
 - Fishing
 - Picnics
 - Community gatherings

Formal Opening of LAKE MYRA
"Raleigh's Own Resort"
Saturday, May 29th., Aquatic Meet, 3 P. M.
Good Prizes to Winners.
Demonstration of Life Saving Methods by members of Junior Red Cross Life-Saving Corps.
Lake Myra is an excellent place for Picnic Parties, Fishing Parties, etc.
Good Spring Water, Good Fishing, Boating and Bathing.
J. E. STONE, Prop.



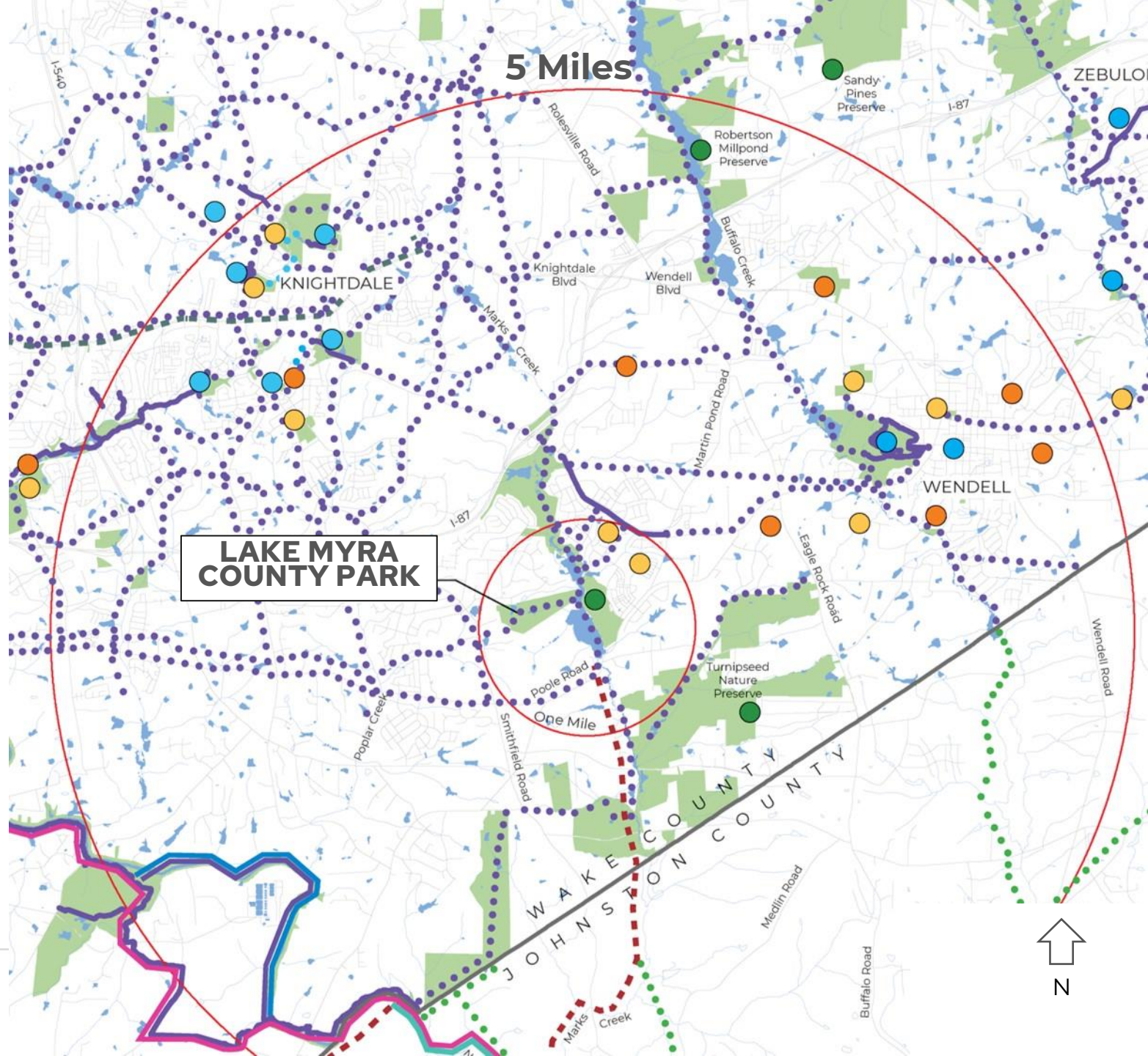
Fred Banner for The News and Observer
Dennis Kittrell and his son, Benji, fish on Lake Myra near Wendell

Old Lake Myra full of big yarns, fish



Regional Connectivity

- Many existing and proposed connections to parks, neighborhoods, greenways and trails within 1-5 miles



Community Meeting #1

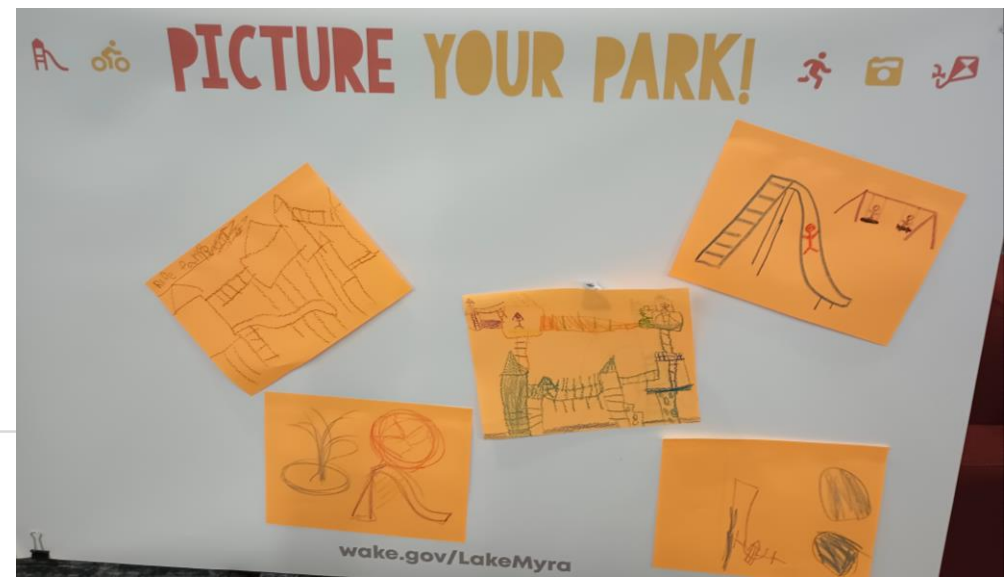
- October 18, 2023 in Wendell
 - Site Analysis presentation
 - Launched Recreational Survey

"An accessible and inclusive playground would be a great addition to Eastern Wake County! An outdoor classroom space for educational nature classes would be fantastic!"



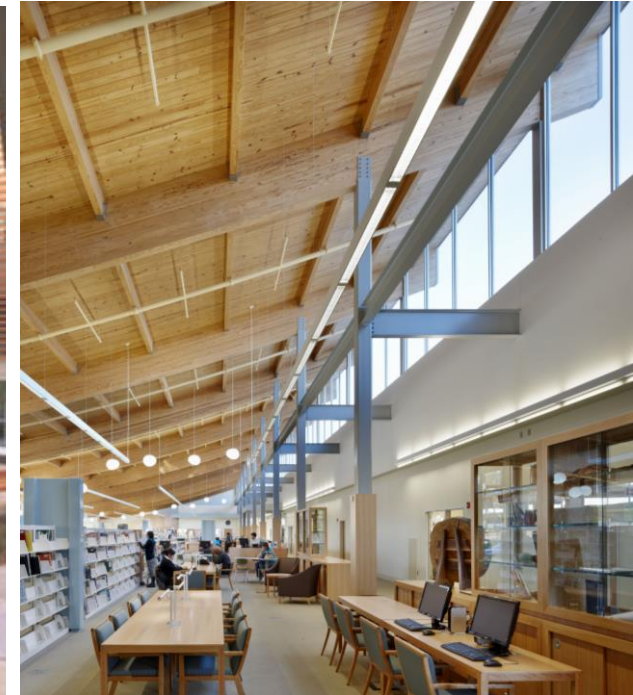
Park Program

- Park Center and Maintenance Facility
- Greenway and connector trails
- Paved and natural trails
- Picnic shelters and restrooms
- Open play areas
- Playground and nature play
- Boating
- Fishing piers
- Observation platforms
- Successional wildlife habitats
- Agriculture, community gardens / landscapes
- Meadows and pollinator areas
- Outdoor classrooms
- Environmental and historical interpretation
- Volleyball
- Disc golf



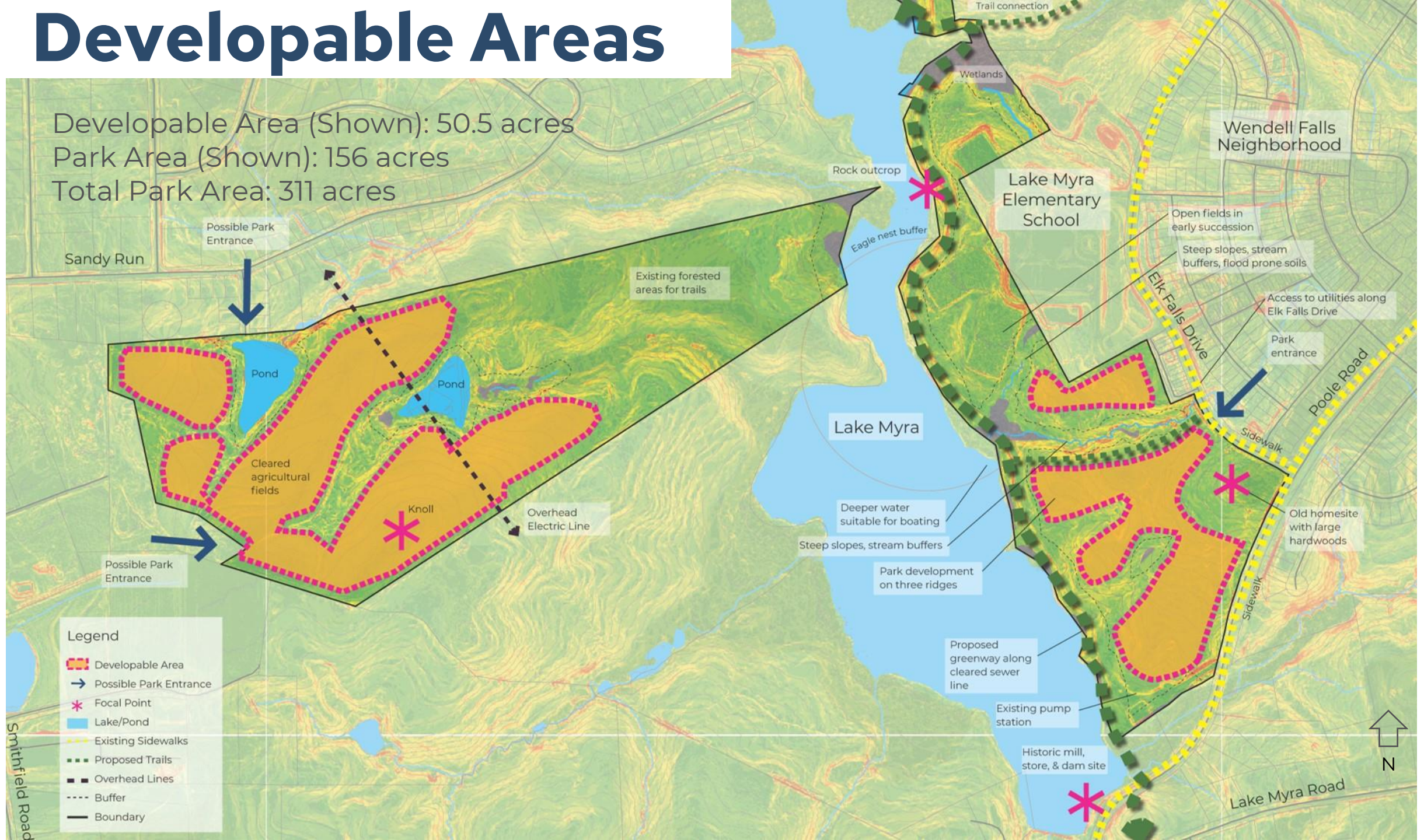
Sustainability Features

- Building Orientation
- Daylighting
- Low-flow fixtures
- Cisterns
- Photovoltaics
- Geothermal
- EV Charging Stations
- Permeable pavers
- Green Stormwater Infrastructure
- Native Plantings
- Reduced grading and clearing



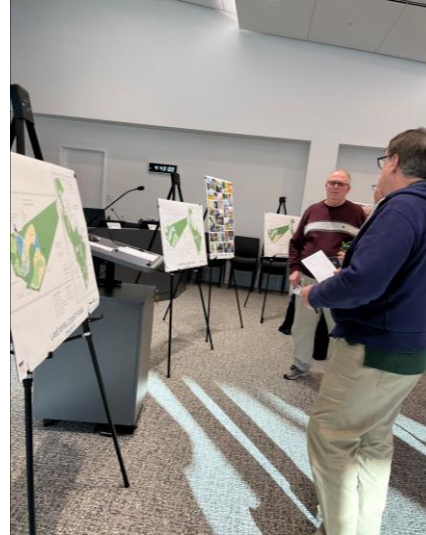
Developable Areas

Developable Area (Shown): 50.5 acres
Park Area (Shown): 156 acres
Total Park Area: 311 acres



Community Meeting #2

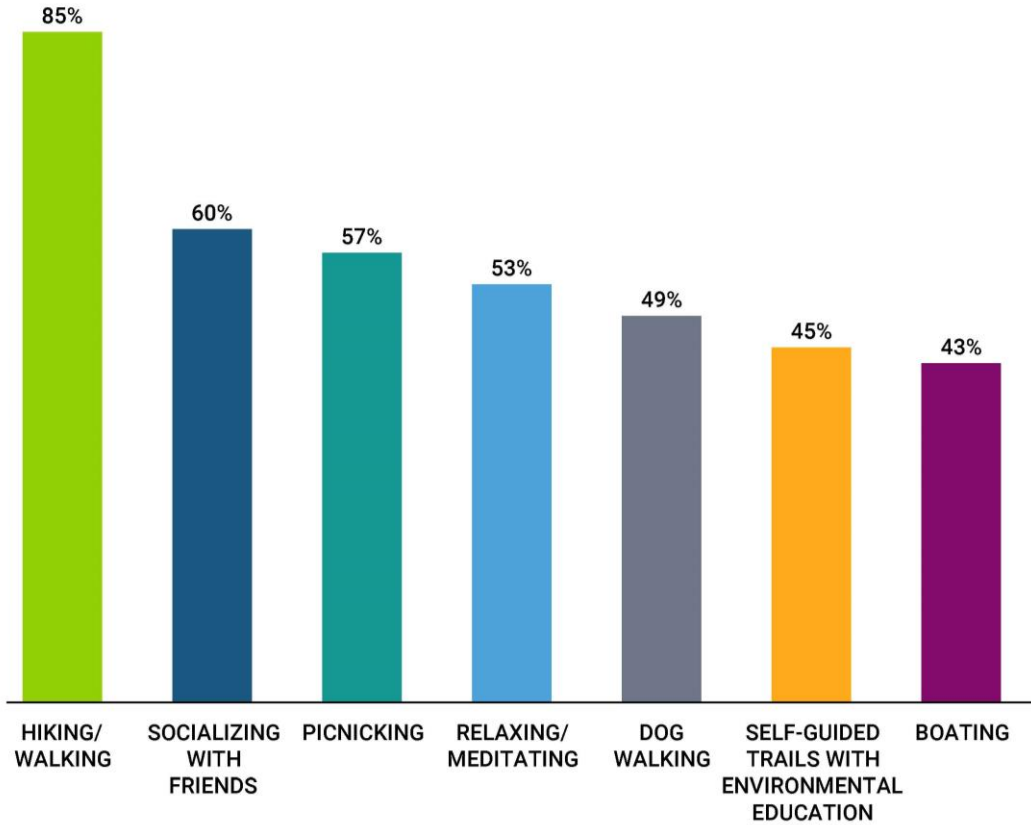
- February 13, 2024 in Wendell
- Presented the results of the Recreational Survey
- Presented three Master Plan Concepts and gathered feedback
- Gauged interest in specific park values



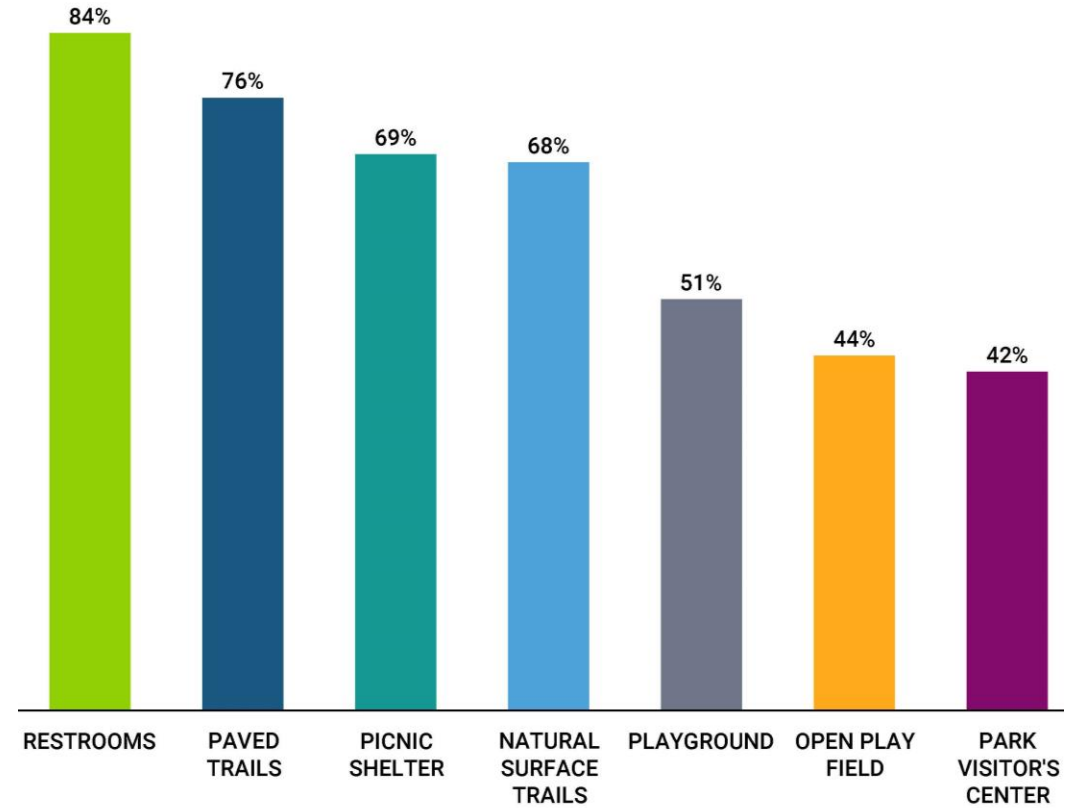
"Getting people out in nature is essential!"

"Concept 3 is most prepared for a future influx of residents"

Recreational Survey Results



WHICH ACTIVITIES WOULD YOU PARTICIPATE IN AT LAKE MYRA COUNTY PARK?



WHAT FACILITIES WOULD YOU AND YOUR FAMILY UTILIZE AT LAKE MYRA COUNTY PARK?

Overall Master Plan

Eastern Parcel

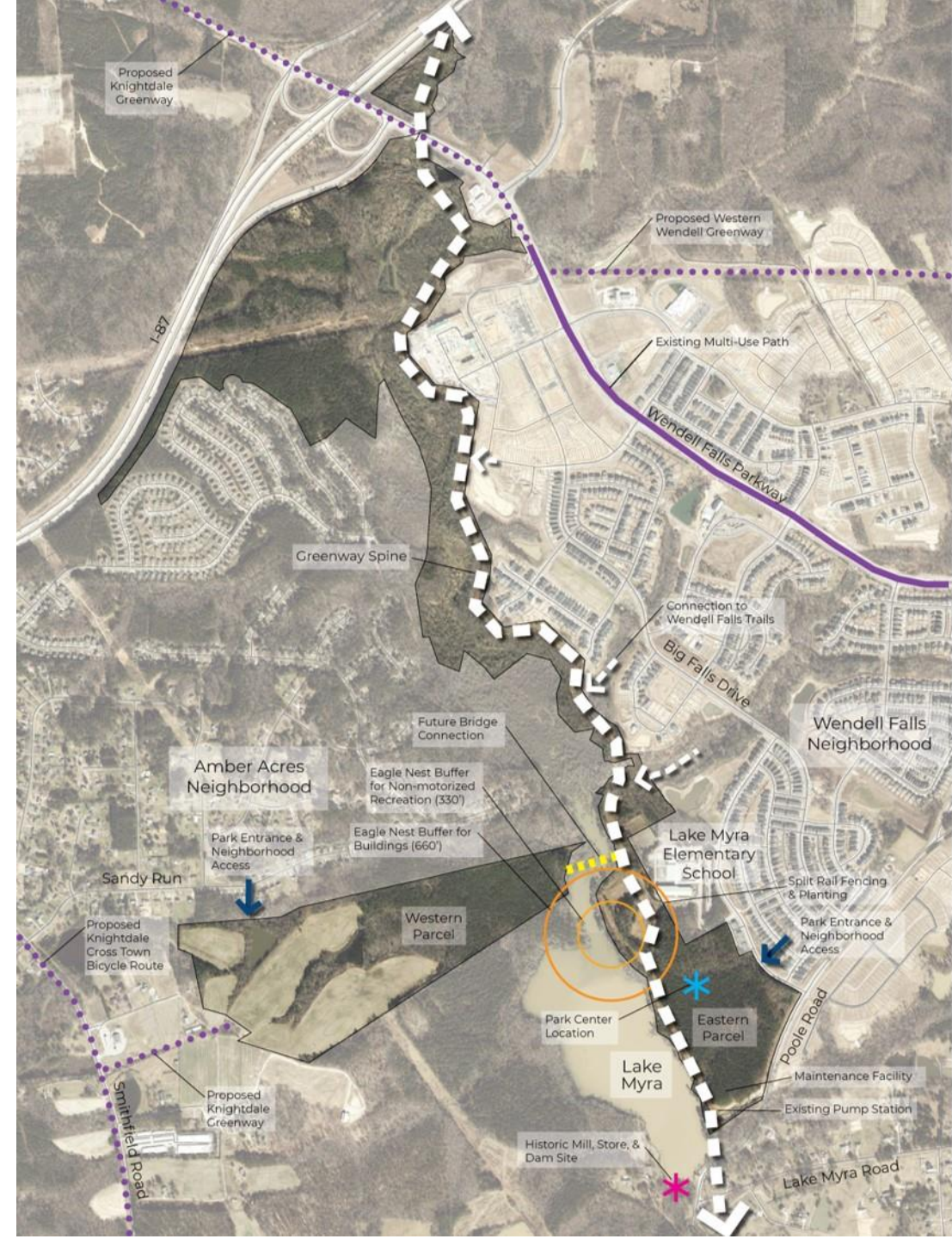
- Vehicular entrance off Elk Falls Drive
- Several neighborhood connections to Wendell Falls
- Park Center location

Western Parcel

- Vehicular entrance in the Amber Acres neighborhood
- Previously cleared and farmed

Overall

- Approx. 2.5-mile greenway spine avoids eagle buffer
- Boardwalk across the lake
- Gristmill and store site – historic and cultural interpretation



Master Plan Alternative Concepts



Concept #1: Low Development



Concept #2: Medium Development



Concept #3: Most Development



Preliminary Master Plan



Community Meeting #3



- April 30, 2024 in Wendell
- Presented the Preliminary Master Plan and gathered final feedback

Concept Preferences Survey Results

Concept 1: Low Impact Development allows minimal development and low-impact public access.

Concept 2: Medium Development allows moderate development and public access.

Concept 3: Most Development favors the most recreation infrastructure and public access.

	Concept 1: Low Impact Development	Concept 2: Medium Development	Concept 3: Most Development
Whole Park	17% Concept 1: Low Impact Development	33% Concept 2: Medium Development	50% Concept 3: Most Development
East Side	21% Concept 1: Low Impact Development	29% Concept 2: Medium Development	50% Concept 3: Most Development
West Side	14% Concept 1: Low Impact Development	29% Concept 2: Medium Development	57% Concept 3: Most Development

Preliminary Master Plan



Western Parcel

- Trails: 5.0 miles
- Parking Spaces: 162
- Mountain Biking Skills Area: 1.0 acre
- Agriculture Area: 3.5 acres
- Interpretive Garden Area: 0.5 acre
- Meadow/Restoration Area: 11.6 acres
- Open Play Area: 4.0 acres
- Forest Area: 54.5 acres

Eastern Parcel

- Trails: 2.5 miles
- Parking Spaces: 155
- Open Play Area: 2.7 acres
- Forest Area: 44.0 acres

Feedback from Community Meeting #3

- Have Master Gardeners have some classes. Have lots of blooming plants and bushes!
- Nature class offered
- Pickleball does not work with this project. The Town is doing pickleball in the other park. Keep passive vibe aka no pickleball
- Playground on the Amber Acres side
- Ensure maintenance facility and yard is not an eyesore, landscape color
- Keep Greenway connections!
- Nice level walking trails – gravel or paved
- Love the greenway and the multi-modal connection to the neighborhoods
- East side– expand walking trails
- Prefer trails that allow both hiking and mountain biking
- Prefer conservation, limit clear cutting development
- Love the open space and not filling in every space available

Activity Centers

Western Parcel



Meadow Path

Interpretive
Agriculture

Farm Storage
Building

Orchard
Beyond

Possible
Agriculture
/Prairie

Mountain
Biking
Skills Area

Interpretive
Agriculture,
Edibles, and
Farm
Storage
Building

Fishing



Fishing
Pier,
Gazebo,
and
Overlooks

Shelter/RR, Stage,
Picnic Areas, and
Trails

Bird and Wildlife
Early Successional
Habitat



Fishing Pier, Gazebo, and Overlooks

Activity Centers

Eastern Parcel

Boating and
Observation
Deck

Lake Myra

Park Center

Forest Overlook

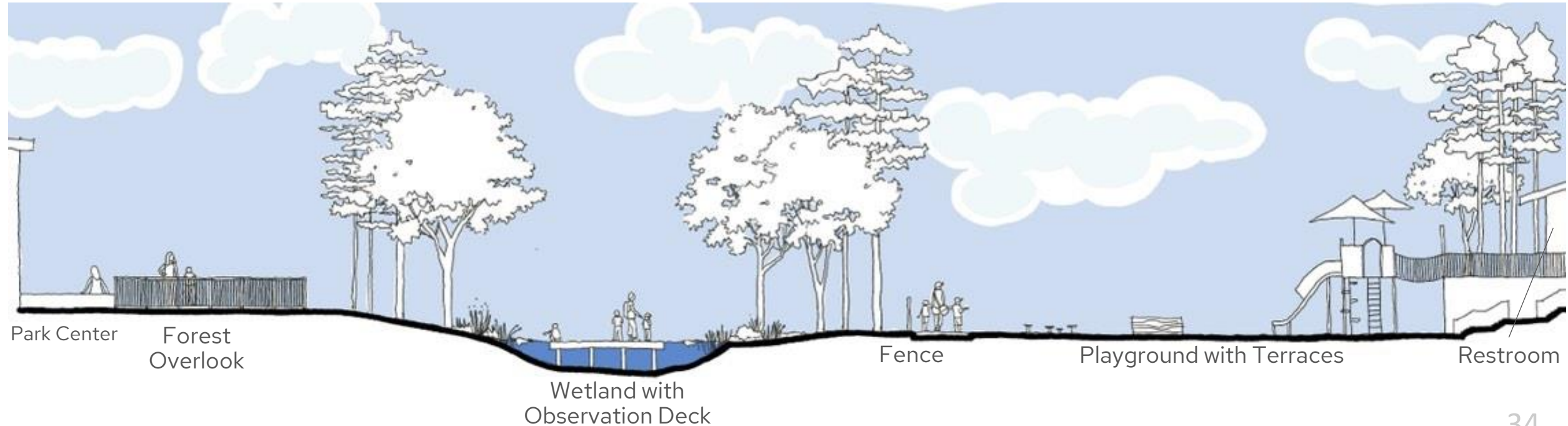


Wetland with
Overlook
Deck

Fenced
Playground
with Terraces

Restroom

Shelter



Park Center

Forest
Overlook

Wetland with
Observation Deck

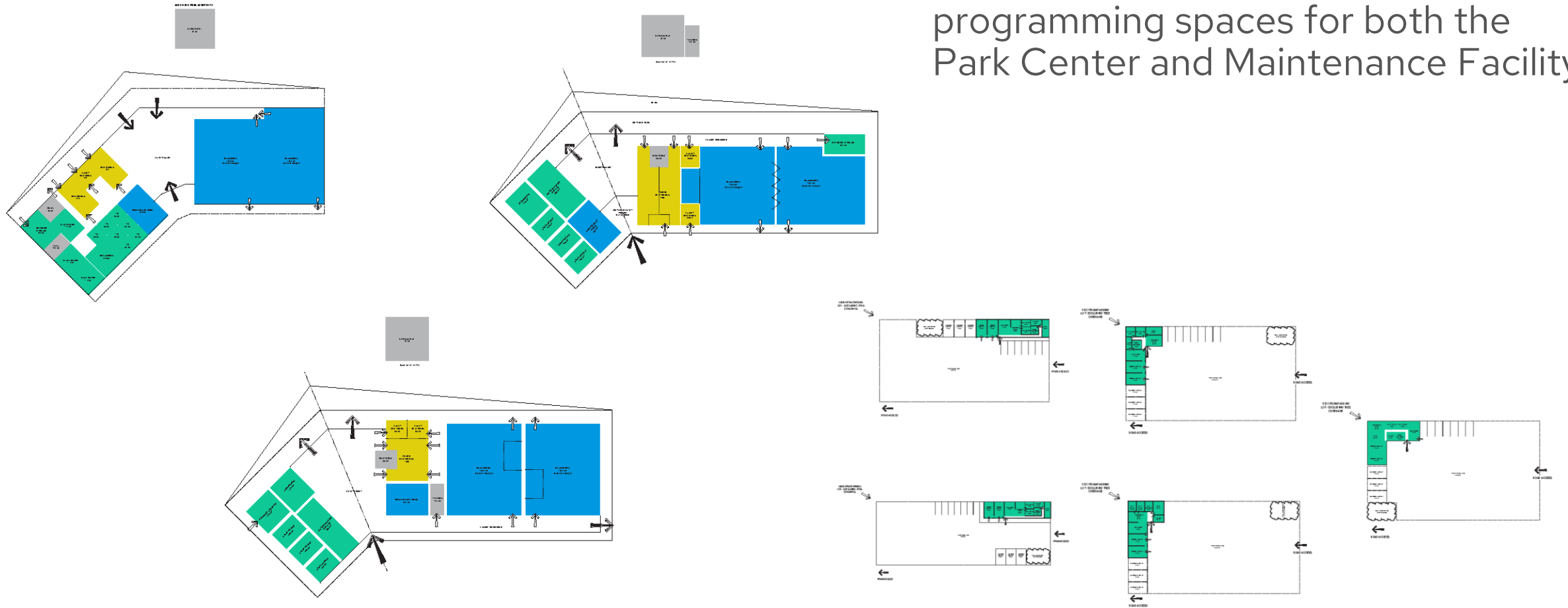
Fence

Playground with Terraces

Restroom

Building Studies

- Developing building studies to determine layout and available programming spaces for both the Park Center and Maintenance Facility



Final Summary



Project Takeaways

- Excited community !
 - 305 meeting participants
 - 8200+ unique survey responses
- Addressing Core Values and Principles
- Balancing Built and Natural Systems
- Connecting East and West park parcels
- Connecting neighborhoods / school
- Including Sustainability features
- Providing Public Art



Opinion of Cost

- Preliminary Full Build Project Cost Estimate: \$35 - \$39 Million
- Current planned project funding from the bond: \$16 Million
- Project will be constructed in phases
- Staff is having ongoing discussions regarding alternatives for additional funding

Phase 1 – Goals :

- Primary Focus based on community survey needs
- Activate East and West Parcels
- Connect East and West Parcels

Phase 1 Recommendation

Values / Principles / Park Element Priorities

Hiking/Walking, Socializing, Picnicking, Relaxing, Education, Boating, Open Play, Fishing.

Trails (paved / natural surface)

Picnic Shelters

Restrooms

Playgrounds

Park Center

Maintenance Facility

Parking

Boating

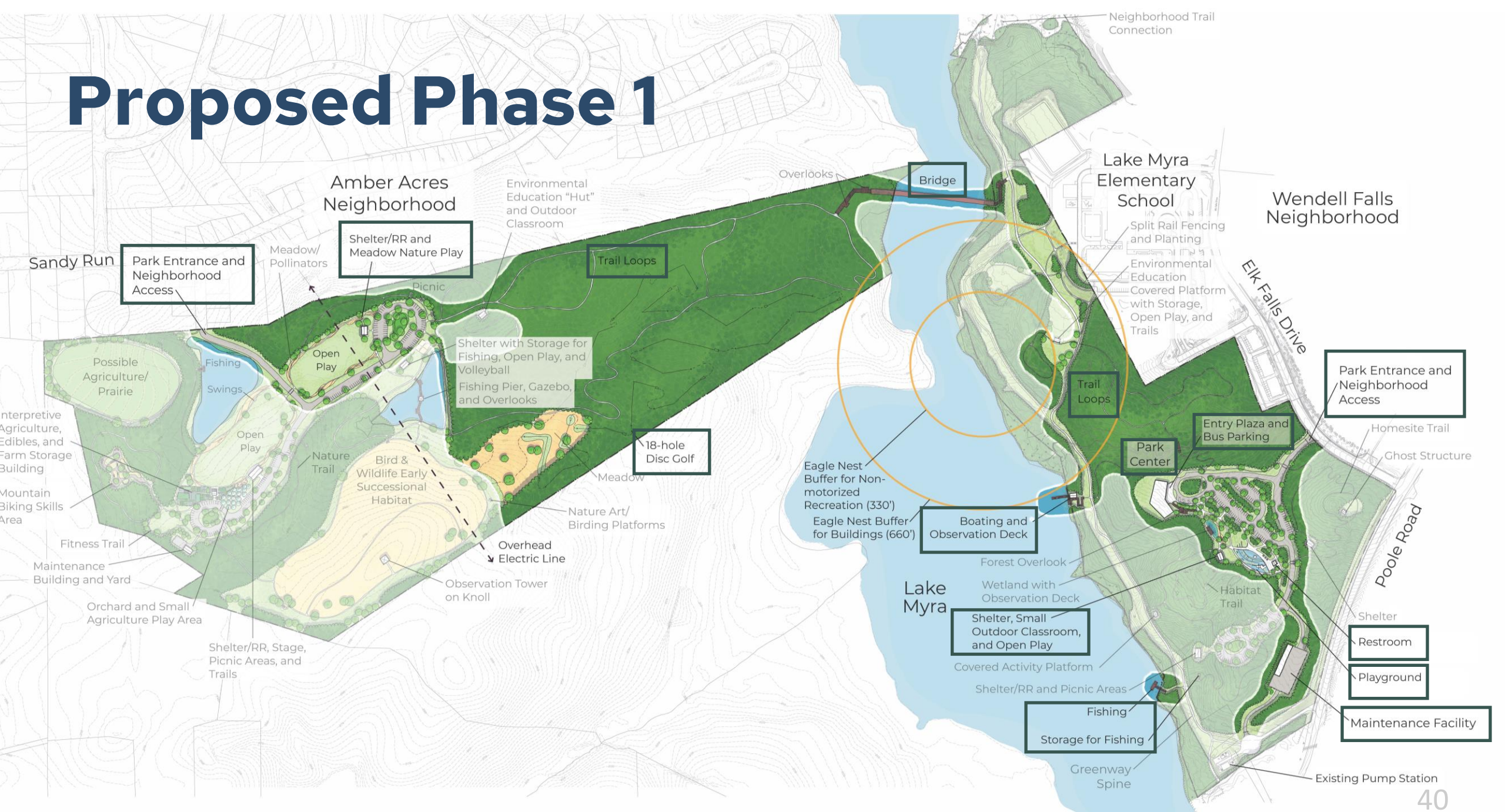
Fishing

Boardwalk Connection

Open Play

Disc Golf

Proposed Phase 1



Timeline / Next Steps

**BOC Draft
Master Plan
Presentation**



**Q3 2024
July 8, 2024**

**Programming
Schematic
Design**

**BOC
Presentation**



Q4 2024

**Final Design
Bidding and
Contracting**



Q4 2025

Park Opening



Q1 2027

Thank you! Questions?





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