



Bowmanville Park Master Plan

August 2024

Land Acknowledgement

The Municipality of Clarington is situated within the traditional and treaty territory of the Mississaugas and Chippewas of the Anishinabeg, known today as the Williams Treaties First Nations. Our work on these lands acknowledges their resilience and their longstanding contributions to the area now known as the Municipality of Clarington.

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Soper Creek

1 Introduction

1.1 Zoo History

Bowmanville Zoo was once the oldest private zoo in North America. Established in 1919, it closed in 2016. Plans for the site's future include its redevelopment for parkland and natural environment purposes with its eventual inclusion in Clarington's Resilient Circle of Green surrounding Bowmanville's historic boundaries. The Circle incorporates the Bowmanville and Soper creeks, and is a multi-active transportation pathway for walkers, runners, hikers, cyclists and others using non-automotive modes of mobility.

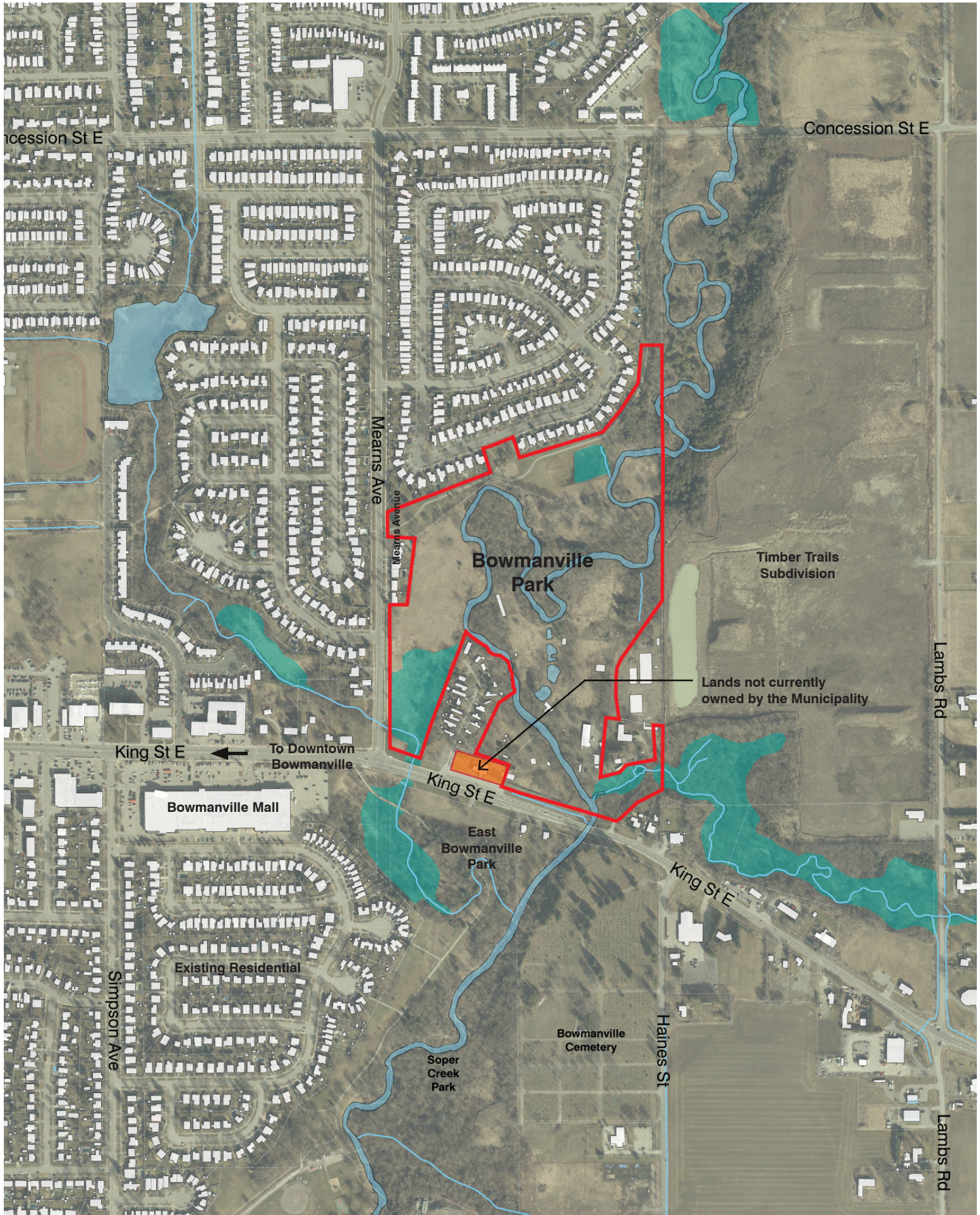
The site once occupied by the Zoo, is on the banks of the Soper Creek. The Cream of Barley Mill (today's Visual Arts Centre of Clarington), is located farther south on the creek. At one time, both were part of James Morden's ambitious plan after World War I to develop a diverse visitor attraction featuring a campground, cabins, a zoo, a swimming pool, and other recreational opportunities. In pursuit of his vision, Morden hired Alfred Shrubbs, to help manage and promote the Cream of Barley Camp. Shrubbs was known as the world's greatest runner between 1903 and 1912. Shrubbs's rivals before the war had included the renowned First Nations runner Tom Longboat against whom he competed in a celebrated series of both indoor and outdoor marathon-length encounters. During his association with the zoo, Shrubbs would use the ponies housed in the front of the zoo, as partners in interval training. This type of training technique was first developed by Shrubbs, and is recognized now as one of the more sophisticated techniques of developing high levels of fitness, although today, pony partner use is optional.

In the long run the two survivors of Morden's vision were the Zoo and the Cream of Barley Mill, with the latter being managed by Shrubbs, who lived in Bowmanville for the rest of his life.

The Bowmanville Zoo remained a popular attraction not only locally but for tourists. As well, it prepared many animals for feature films. As examples, Bongo and Caesar, two African lions, starred in the 1996 movie *Ghost and Darkness*, featuring Val Kilmer and Michael Douglas.

Additionally, a Bengal tiger named Jonas, had a role in the Oscar-winning 2012 movie, *Life of Pi*. Angus, a male African elephant, appeared as Jumbo in the A and E production of *The Life and Times of Phineas T. Barnum*, and surpassed the original Jumbo in both height and weight. Over the years the animals and their various keepers were also regular performers on numerous nature productions and children's television shows.

The Zoo's demise was an unfortunate consequence of changing societal views of privately owned captive exotic animals. In light of the extensive relationship between the zoo and its local citizenry, a large proportion of the land was donated to the Municipality for the creation of recreational green space, in order that the citizens of Clarington could continue to enjoy the property.



1.2 Location & Context

The Zoo lands comprise 34 acres abutting King Street East and Mearns Avenue in Bowmanville. The lands are located north of the Bowmanville Cemetery and west of the newly developing residential area, Timber Trails. The map illustrates the relation of Timber Trails to the site and some of the development’s planned park space adjacent to the lands and a stormwater management pond. A road adjacent to the park with houses only on the east side enables physical and visual access to the new park site through Timber Trails. The lands are connected to the Soper Creek Trail to the north and provides great opportunity to further develop and enhance the Soper Creek Trail system.



Context Map

1.3 How We Got Here

When the Bowmanville Zoo closed after nearly 100 years of private operation, the land was sold to a developer and a portion (approximately 34 acres) was donated to the Municipality of Clarington for a public park.

This tremendous opportunity started a process that would lead to the reimagining of the former Bowmanville Zoo lands as a public park.

Clarington Council passed a resolution on December 31, 2021 directing staff of the Public Works Department to form a partnership with the Valleys 2000 organization to develop a concept plan for the Bowmanville Zoo lands.

The purpose of the plan was to establish a vision for the park and to provide the basis for more detailed planning and design.

Valleys 2000 is a volunteer charity organization with a board of community leaders. Their mandate is to raise funds to help develop, enhance, promote and preserve trails, naturalize river banks, enhance fish and wildlife habitat and improve interpretive signage along the Bowmanville and Soper Creek Valleys.

Valleys 2000 gathered a group of diverse stakeholders together to share ideas on the possibilities for the site, at a “charrette” style design workshop. The feedback gathered at this workshop informed this high-level park concept for the Bowmanville Zoo lands.

Lands were gratuitously dedicated to the Municipality.

Valleys 2000 hosted a design workshop with the Municipality of Clarington and local stakeholders to develop a Vision and concepts for the lands.

2018

September 2022

2021 December

Clarington Council passed a resolution directing staff of the Public Works Department to form a partnership with the Valleys 2000 organization to develop a plan for the Bowmanville Zoo lands.

February 2023

*The high-level park concept produced through the workshop, was formalized in the **Bowmanville Park Concept** report, February 2023.*

2023 May

Council directed that the Bowmanville Park Concept be included as part of the Parks Recreation and Culture Master Plan. Staff authorized to further the design and assess the feasibility of the implementation by extending the scope of work of the consultants.

2023 November

The extended scope was initiated in a kick-off meeting with staff. The Initial Concept was reviewed in the context of available based data / information.



As part of the community engagement for the Bowmanville Park master plan, the Town conducted an online survey and an in-person workshop to engage with residents who shared their opinions on the park design concept. The results of the online survey and comments from the workshop are included in Appendix A of this report.

It is recommended that future consultation with Indigenous communities be undertaken, including circulation of the final Master Plan report.



Valleys 2000 Workshop

The extended scope commenced with a workshop with staff and stakeholders. The Initial Concept was updated based on new information provided by staff.

The Concept Plan was refined with feedback from public consultation, stakeholders, staff and consultant team. The Master Plan Report was prepared with recommendations regarding programming, park elements, landscaping, and high-level costing/ phasing.

February 2024

May 2024

**Next Steps
(TBD)**

2024 April

An in-person public workshop was held and an online survey was launched to present the updated concept and get input from the public / community (those results are summarized under section 1.4, on the following pages).

2024 June

The Final Master Plan Report was presented to Council.





2 Vision and Concept Plan

A bold, inspiring signature park for the community of Bowmanville that is tied to the natural and cultural history of the property by honouring the legacy of Soper Creek and the former zoo and integrating the lands into the broader trail system.

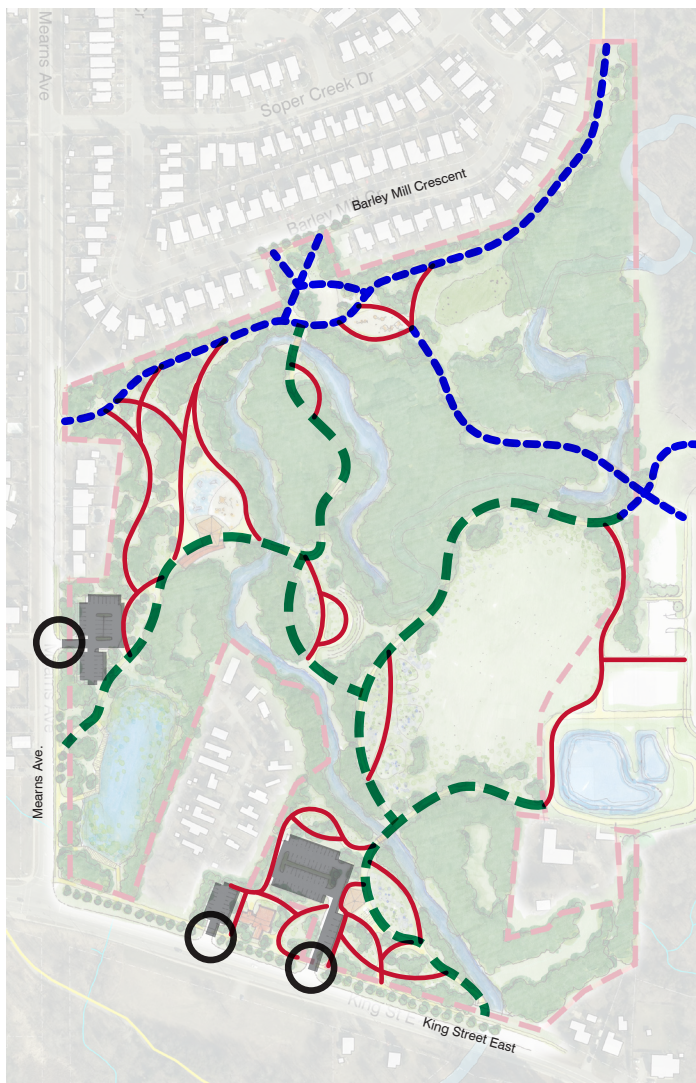
The master plan presents a 21st century vision for a new public park that will revitalize one of Bowmanville's most iconic destinations and landscapes. The former zoo lands will be transformed into a public space that celebrates the natural heritage of the site and creates a cultural hub for the community. Through this revitalization process, the park will assume a new and important role as a natural environment park and become a place for learning and for appreciating the flora and fauna of the Soper Creek Valley. The park will also showcase the extraordinary landscape of the Great Lakes Region that reestablished itself post glaciation, over ten thousand years ago, and was the territory of Indigenous peoples until colonization only a few hundred years ago.

From the meandering cold-water creek to the meadows, wetlands and forests that define its character and ecological function today, the new park will be a place of discovery to experience nature throughout the year. It will be a destination for people of all ages and abilities, for students, educators and wildlife observers and will serve as a backyard for local residents who can enjoy the trails and features of the park every day. An adventure playground with a natural environment theme will be a centre piece of the park attracting children and families from around the region. Culture will be imbued into all aspects of the park. There will be gathering spaces, including an outdoor amphitheatre for live performances, a big lawn for community celebrations and gatherings and art installations, both permanent and temporary, will be choreographed throughout the park.

The park will also pay tribute to the 100 years of the Bowmanville Zoo history, recalling the extraordinary and exotic animals who lived there and were beloved by the community. Many of those animals were celebrities themselves and will be remembered through the interpretative program and commemorative installations. In the decades to come, this moment in time will signal the rebirth of the Bowmanville Zoo Lands into one of the country's most treasured natural environment and culture parks.



The Brickworks, Toronto



Legend

- - - Existing Trail
- - - Type 1 (3.5m -4.0m)
- Type 2 (2.5 - 3.0m)
- Parking
- Vehicular Access

2.1 Access, Parking & Trails

Access, parking and trails are important infrastructural elements that will enhance the function of the park.

Access & Parking

Vehicular access to the park will be from King Street East and Mearns Avenue. Access points will connect directly to parking areas.

Two accesses are proposed along King Street East - the first, located to the west of the orientation centre, where a limited number of parking spaces will accommodate staff, visitors with mobility requirements and deliveries, will be located.

The other access along this primary road will be the primary entrance to the park, where approximately 60 - 70 parking spaces will be provided. From this location, park visitors will have direct access to the orientation centre, the event space and the demonstration gardens. Trails will provide connection to the amphitheatre, butterfly garden and meadow.

A secondary access is proposed along Mearns Avenue where approximately 40 - 45 parking spaces will be provided. From this location, park visitors will have access to the natural playground area as well as the wetland meadow feature.

Trails

Building on the existing trail system, a hierarchy of new trail types will be introduced throughout the park to enhance connectivity and circulation.

A major north-south multiuse trail will extend from the King / Mearns intersection to the north end of the park. It will be a 3.5m-4.0m wide asphalt trail that potentially provides for designated pedestrian and cyclist areas. A second trail typology will connect the feature areas of the park and provide a 2.5m - 3.0m wide accessible route paved in asphalt. These are shown on the diagram to the left.

A third trail typology will provide access into the natural areas of the park and will be either stone mulch or wood mulch depending on the surrounding ecology. The boardwalk is a fourth trail type and is specifically designed to provide access around the wetland meadow.



Primary / Secondary Trail



Tertiary Trail



Curbless Parking Area



Permeable Pavers in Parking Area

2.2 Landscapes

The new and restored landscapes wrap around the core area of the park providing special features and destinations that are designed to enhance the experience of park visitors. They increase both the ecological diversity of the park and the experiential diversity. From the demonstration gardens that serve as an introduction and orientation to the ecological zones of the park to the streetscapes and neighbourhoods that line the edges of the park, to the wet and dry meadows, these new and restored landscapes will enrich both the ecology of the park and the visitor experience. They are intended to be immersive landscapes that are diverse and rich in both flora and fauna. They will serve as education touch points and part of the interpretive program of the park. The streetscapes surrounding the park will also be designed to create a strong frame around the park comprised of native tree and understory plantings and incorporate pedestrian and cycling paths.

Existing Woodlands

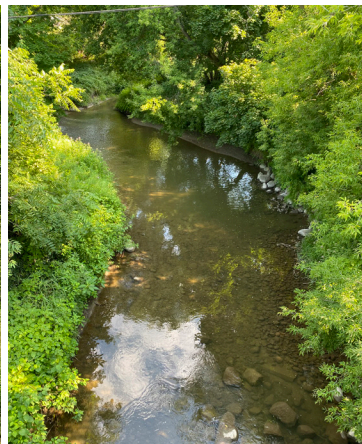
The woodlands create a strong armature that weaves throughout the park providing habitat for a variety of wildlife including birds, reptiles and small and large mammals. The woodlands of the park are representative of the Soper Creek valley system and include both low and upland species. They provide critical shading for the cold-water creek. For visitors they provide for shaded walking trails through a variety of richly vegetated areas that are both wet and dry where visitors can experience walking through an understory of trilliums, ferns, moss covered logs.



Existing Landscapes



Mature trees / Woodland








Soper Creek



Meadow

Legend

-  Park Landscape / Demonstration Gardens
-  Street Edges
-  Screening
-  Wet Meadow
-  Dry Meadow / Butterfly Gardens

Existing Soper Creek

The creek is a critical part of the natural environment weaving through the park creating discrete areas of the park. Four bridges cross the creek and provide points of interest to stop and look for fish, reptiles and other wildlife. The edges of the creek will be armored at some critical points to maintain infrastructure, but the other areas should be allowed to naturalize and erode as part of the natural process.

New and Enhanced Landscapes

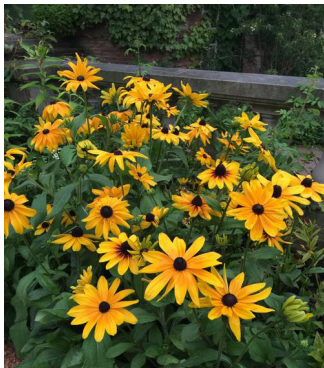
The development of the park will include the creation of new landscapes associated with the focus areas of activity and enhancement of the existing woodlands and creek. The landscapes envisioned include:

Park Landscape / Demonstration Gardens will be focused around the Main Entrance, the Adventure Playground and Mearns Parkette and organized around their respective activity, seating and circulation areas. The planting approach for these areas should highlight a native planting palette with some year-round ornamental interest.



Enhanced / Restored Landscapes

Sample plantings within the Park Landscape / Demonstration Gardens



Black-Eyed Susan
(*Rudbeckia hirta*)



Wild Lupine
(*Lupinus perennis*)



Blazing Star
(*Liatis spicata*)

The landscape along the **Street Edges** should be arranged to define the boundary of the park, and create a strong and consistent presence within the public realm. The approach to planting should emphasize large canopy trees to provide shade along the sidewalk and bold swathes of understory plantings.

The plantings along the interface of the park with adjacent private rear yards should provide a **Landscape Screen** that effectively defines the edges of the park and also creates pockets of shade and landscape interest for both park users and adjacent residents.

The **Wet Meadow** landscape that is proposed at the Mearns Avenue and King Street East corner of the park currently functions as an open wetland habitat with soils that are saturated for part or all of the growing season. As a wet meadow landscape, the approach to planting should be characterized by predominantly herbaceous (non-woody) plants that may include any combination of grasses, sedges, rushes, ferns, and forbs. The vegetation may be low and sparse, or tall and dense, depending on environmental factors.

Sample plants along the Street Edges



Ironwood
(*Celtis occidentalis*)



Red Maple
(*Acer rubrum*)



Quercus macrocarpa
(*Burr oak*)

Sample plants within the Screen Landscape



Eastern White Pine
(*Pinus strobus*)



Redbud
(*Cercis canadensis*)



Blackgum
(*Nyssa sylvatica*)

Although standing water may be present at times, especially in winter or spring or after rainstorms, it may not persist for long, and many Wet Meadows have little if any standing water through much of the growing season.

The Dry Meadow planting approach should feature drought-tolerant species established from a seed mix directly sown in-situ over a base layer of sand to provide a free-draining base for plant establishment.

The **Dry Meadow** landscape is an open upland habitat typically found on thin, infertile soil and in this case, in an old field occupying the eastern portion of the park, framed on the north and south by woodlands. The vegetation is dominated by herbaceous (non-woody) plants and consists mostly of forbs and grasses tolerant of dry, nutrient-poor conditions.

Sample plants within the Wet Meadow Landscape



Bog Goldenrod
(*Solidago uliginosa*)



Swamp Aster
(*Symphotrichum puniceum*)



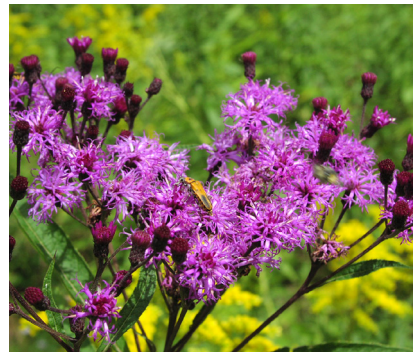
Blue Vervain
(*Verbena hastata*)



Golden Alexander
(*Zizia aurea*)



Wild Bergamot
(*Monarda fistulosa*)



New York Ironweed
(*Vernonia noveboracensis*)



Canada Wildrye
(*Elymus canadensis*)

2.3 Focus Areas

The concept plan introduces six areas of focus that offer various educational, cultural destination, recreational experiences to the park user. These are generally arranged around the perimeter of the park, with access and visibility from the surrounding street fabric, and connected by the existing and new system of trails.



A. Park Entrance / King Street Node

The main entry and arrival area on King Street is designed as a park orientation centre that will welcome local residents, visitors and school groups. The area will include a pavilion with interpretive signage, public art, demonstration gardens, parking, and trail connections into the park. It will be an inspirational introduction to the park where visitors will learn about the park's ecology including Soper Creek and its role in the larger watershed along the north shore of Lake Ontario. It will tell the story of Indigenous settlement over millennia and the colonial settlement of the area over the past few centuries. Importantly it will tell the story of the former Bownmanville Zoo and its role in the evolution of the municipality. Demonstration gardens will provide a sampling of the types of ecology in the park and provide information on transferable ecological gardening approaches.



Features

A1. Orientation Centre

The property located on King Street East, to the west of the subject lands provide the opportunity to be developed as part of the gateway to the park. These lands, which are not currently owned by the municipality, should be considered for future acquisition.

The existing building that currently sits on the property should be reimaged to create a new accessible visitor / welcome centre. The visitor centre shall be designed as an orientation, education and interpretation hub and include programmed interior and exterior spaces for community use.

There is the opportunity to incorporate green building technologies into the design of the building as well as to make the building accessible, including the washrooms.

A small parking lot should be provided on the west side of building. Here a small number of staff and accessible parking spaces may be provided along with space for deliveries. In general, parking lots in the park should be designed without barrier curbs and be graded to direct stormwater into adjacent landscaped areas.

The areas around the building should be designed as a series of demonstration gardens where local species of shrubs, perennial and annuals may be incorporated. The addition of interpretive signage to enhance the user experience and opportunities for indigenous placemaking should be considered.



Existing building



Orientation Centre



Orientation Centre - Outdoor Gardens



Orientation Centre - View from King Street East

A2. Gathering / Event Space

The proposed gathering area / event space is an extension of the visitor / welcome centre; together, these two areas of the plan should be viewed as the main gateway to the park and developed as such.

The gathering / event space is anchored by an open air pavilion that forms a sculptural landmark on the site and anchors the space. The paved area on the east side of the pavilion is intended to function as a plaza, be flexible and accommodate a variety of formal and informal gatherings. Measuring approximately 120 square metres in size, this area could potentially accommodate 240 to 360 persons standing or 225 persons seated for performances, for example.

The gardens framing this space will be planted in a similar fashion as the gardens around the visitor centre, and include demonstration gardens.



Open Air Pavilion



Orientation Centre - Outdoor Gardens

A3. Pedestrian Bridge

There are three pedestrian bridges proposed as part of the Master Plan. These will provide access across Soper Creek and connectivity to the trails system.

The design of the bridges shall be coordinated and consistent throughout the park. A unifying design expression will draw from the character of the park context and also provide a counterpoint to the natural setting.

A4. Potential Trail Connection

A potential trail connection will extend toward the eastern limit of the park and travel along the Soper Creek under King Street East to emerge on the south side of the Road.

The potential trail would connect the park to the East Bowmanville Park and the overflow parking area located on the south side of King Street East.



Event / Gathering Space

B. Wet Meadow

The wet meadow will be enhanced, enlarged and developed as a special feature area and destination within the park. It will be planted with indigenous dry and wet meadow species. A boardwalk trail will connect through the wetmeadow providing controlled access for visitors to see the range of flora and fauna including turtles, frogs, and other wildlife. Interpretive signage will describe the importance of wet meadow in the regional landscape. Immediately adjacent to the west parking lot and drop off area will provide access for visitors including those with mobility issues.



Features

B1. Boardwalk Trail

A boardwalk trail will connect through the wetmeadow providing controlled access for visitors to potentially view the range of flora and fauna including turtles, frogs, and other wildlife.

There are two portions of the boardwalk proposed - one accessed from King Street East and the other from Mearns Avenue. The design of the boardwalk should include integrated seating and visually permeable railings.

Interpretive signage will be provided in key locations to describe the importance of the wetmeadow in the local and regional landscape.



Boardwalks



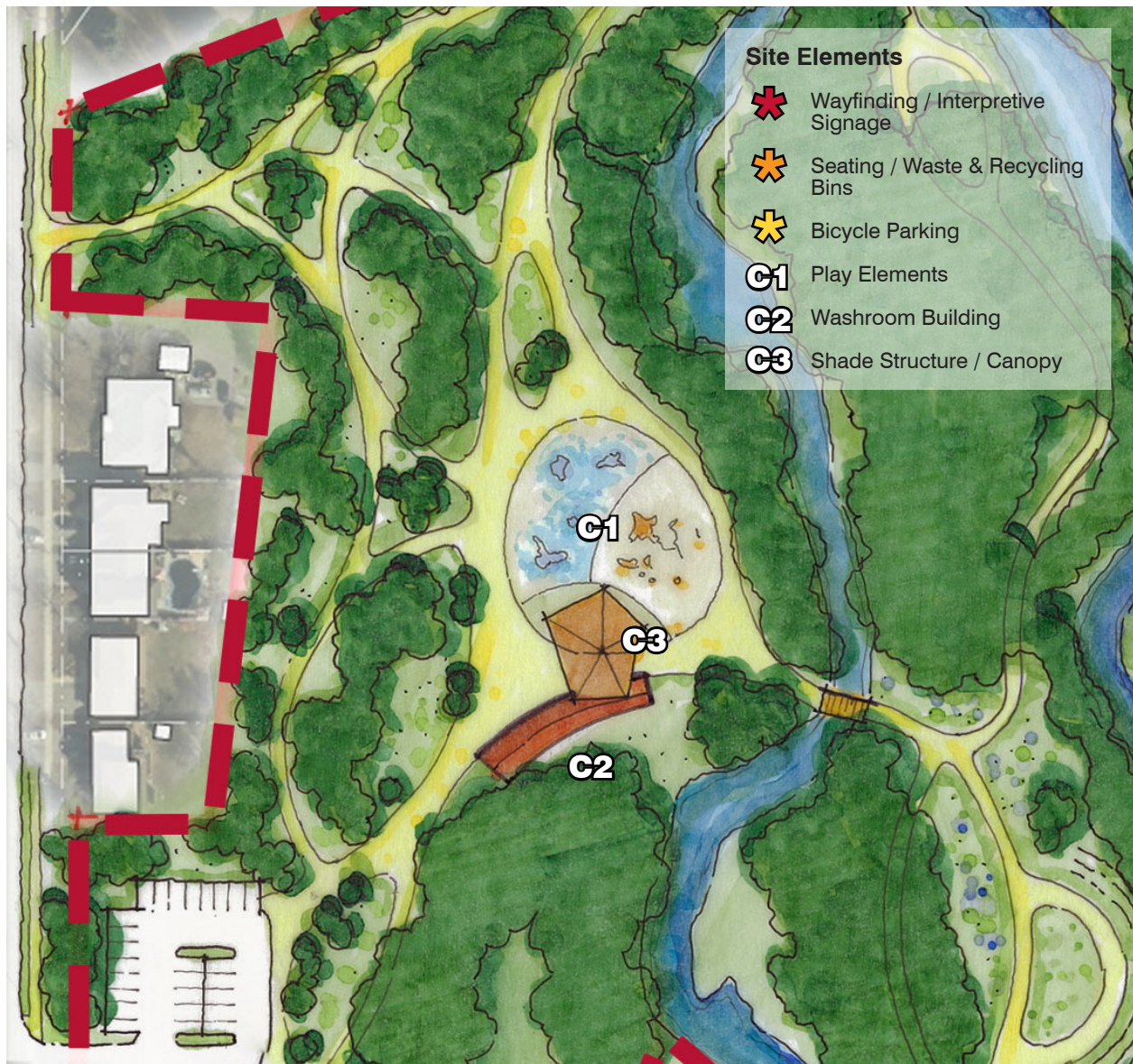
Pedestrian Boardwalk

C. Natural Playground

The playground is designed as a destination nature-based play area with natural elements including logs seating, moveable materials, nature gardens and water collectors.

The proposed natural playground will be a new experience for the children of Bowmanville.

The parking and drop off area immediately south of the playground will provide access for parents with small children and for those who require mobility devices.



C1. Play Elements

The natural playground area is intended to be a learning environment where children experiment with natural materials to create play environments. Key components include the use of natural materials such as tree logs, rocks, sand, branches, natural gardens etc. It's envisioned that there would be a limited number of fixed objects including climbing structures, swings and slides. The intent is for the children to experiment with materials and to create play environments that change based on their imaginations.

Part of the play area will be dedicated to a water play component that has similar elements and attributes.

A water play feature will be incorporated that references the nearby Soper Creek. The playground should be surrounded by canopy trees to provide shade.

The playground will be designed by professionals with expertise in this type of installation. The playground must be accessible and designed for a range of ages and abilities.

C2. Washroom Building

A washroom building is proposed to be located to the south of the play area, immediately adjacent to the trail. In this location, which is intended to also be conveniently accessed from the boardwalk and amphitheatre areas, the new building will form a landmark/ focal point for the area. As such, it should be designed as a pavilion in the landscape and incorporate the use of natural, innovative and sustainable materials and technologies



Washroom building with a shade canopy



Natural playgrounds

C3. Shade Structure / Canopy

A canopy structure is proposed to provide immediate cover over a seating / picnic area adjacent to the playground. The concept plan, and the image below depicts a canopy structure that is designed as an extension of the washroom building. As such, its design shall be integrated with that of the washroom structure.



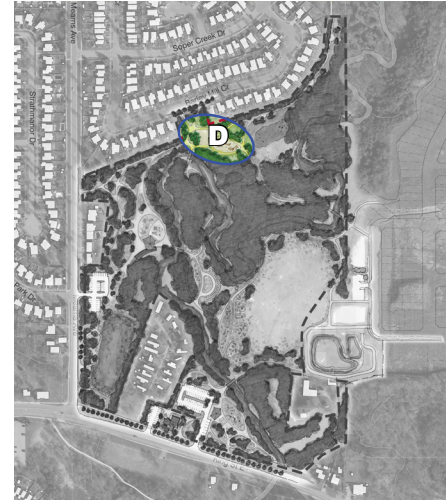
Natural / Adventure Playground

D. Mearns Park

Mearns Park is located within an existing residential area, with frontage along Barley Mill Crescent. It serves as a local amenity for the neighbourhood and currently has a small playground, some seating and trails.

The park has open areas of grass that are manicured with trees dotted within these areas. There are opportunities to introduce additional plantings in the park, to enhance the natural setting and to screen adjacent back yards while providing privacy for those residents.

The Master Plan assumes that the existing playground will remain as is and new trails, site furnishings and signage will be organized around this space.



Features

D1. Playground

A new playground is proposed to the southeast of the existing playground. Its location, at a transition to the woodlands, provides an opportunity to expand the amenity in this park and to create a playground that is nature based.

As such, its design should emphasize the use of wood and natural materials and should reference the main adventure playground and incorporate the use of wood play structures. The playground should be designed for children of all ages and abilities and incorporate a rubberized play surface for safety, ease of access and maintenance.

D2. Seating Area

A seating area is proposed to be located between the existing and new playground areas. Here, tables and chairs, some with shade structures such as umbrellas, shall provide opportunities for seating and gathering.

D3. Fitness Stations

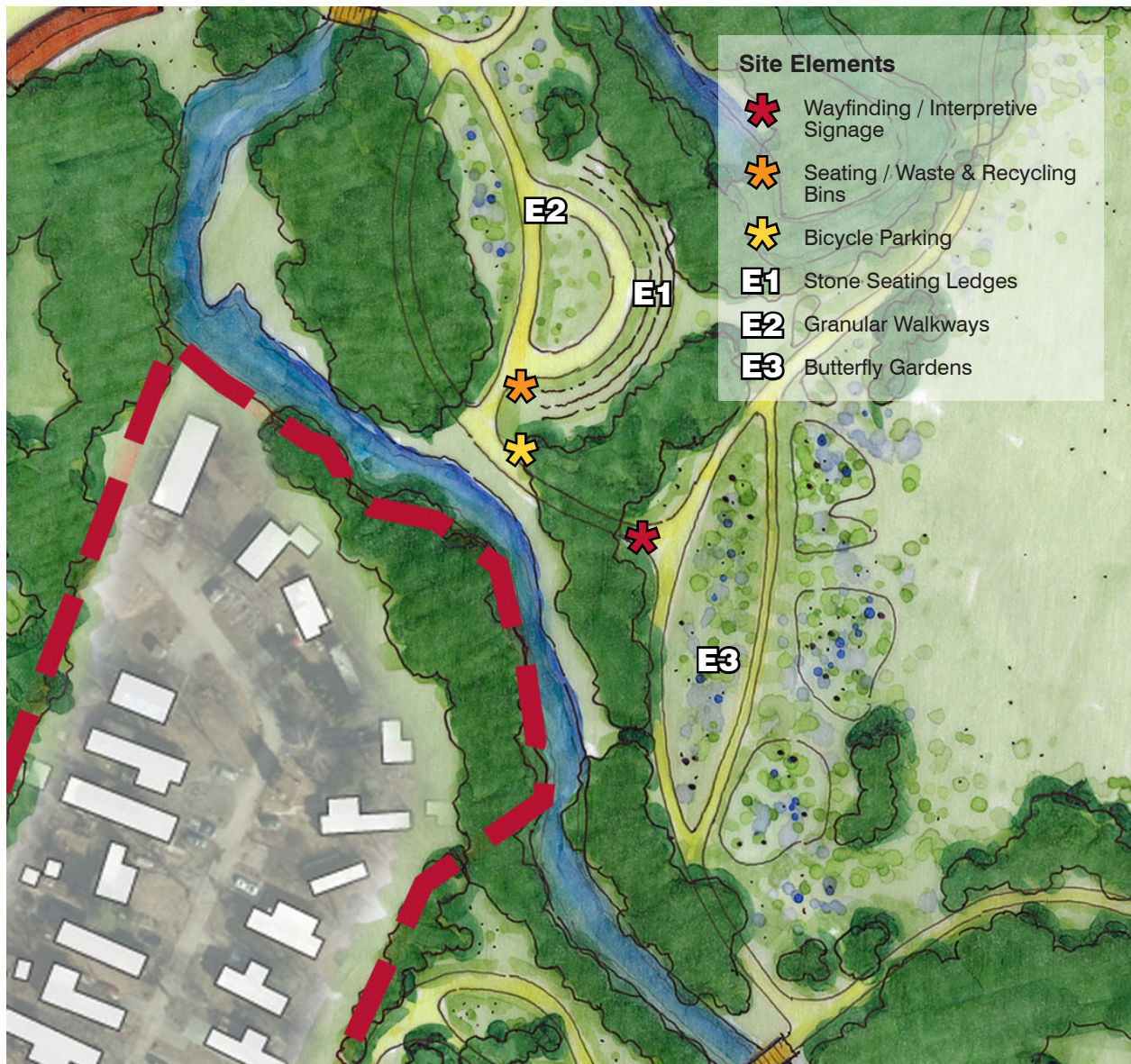
Along the existing trail that extends northward from Mearns Park, intermittent fitness stations are proposed to activate the trail. The Master Plan concept shows three fitness stations however, more may be considered depending on the level of service that is to be identified.



Natural playgrounds

E. Amphitheatre / Meadow

The amphitheater is designed as an integrated gathering space for outdoor education and small outdoor concerts and theatre in the park. The materials of the amphitheater should blend with the surrounding environment using natural stone seating ledges and granular surface finishes. It will create a semi-circular seating area surrounded by trees and vegetation that create a spatial frame around it.





Amphitheatre

Features

E1. Stone Seating Ledges

The proposed amphitheatre anchors the central portion of the park, situated between the adventure playground and multi-purpose field and connected to both, as well as the park main entrance by way of the network of trails.

The amphitheatre shall be formed by a series of semi-circular, stepped seating ledges made up of large rectangular stones.

E2. Granular Walkways

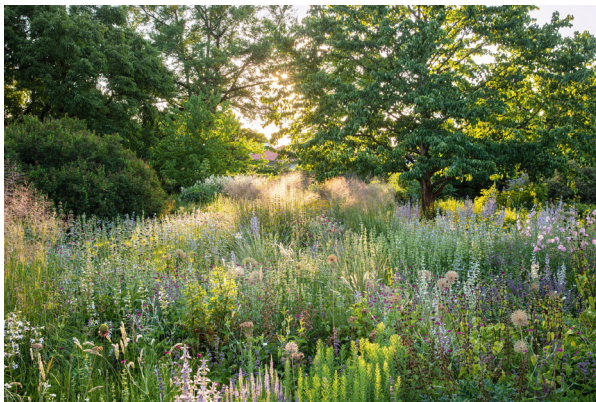
The natural setting of the amphitheatre should be enhanced through the use of low impact designs and materials; as such, walkways and paved surfaces in the area should be paved with a permeable material such as stone fines.

E3. Butterfly Gardens

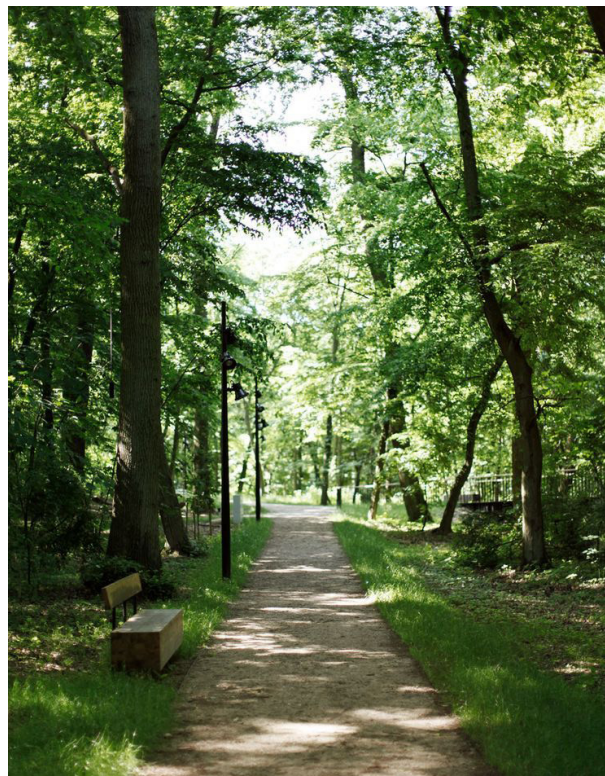
The proposed butterfly gardens are part of the meadow landscape that encircle the multi-use field and provide a transition from this area to the amphitheatre. From the park main entrance, the main trail leads visitors across the new pedestrian bridge, and along a trail to access these gardens. Similarly, from the adventure playground, a second pedestrian bridge provides access across the Soper Creek to this feature.



Stone seating ledges



Butterfly garden

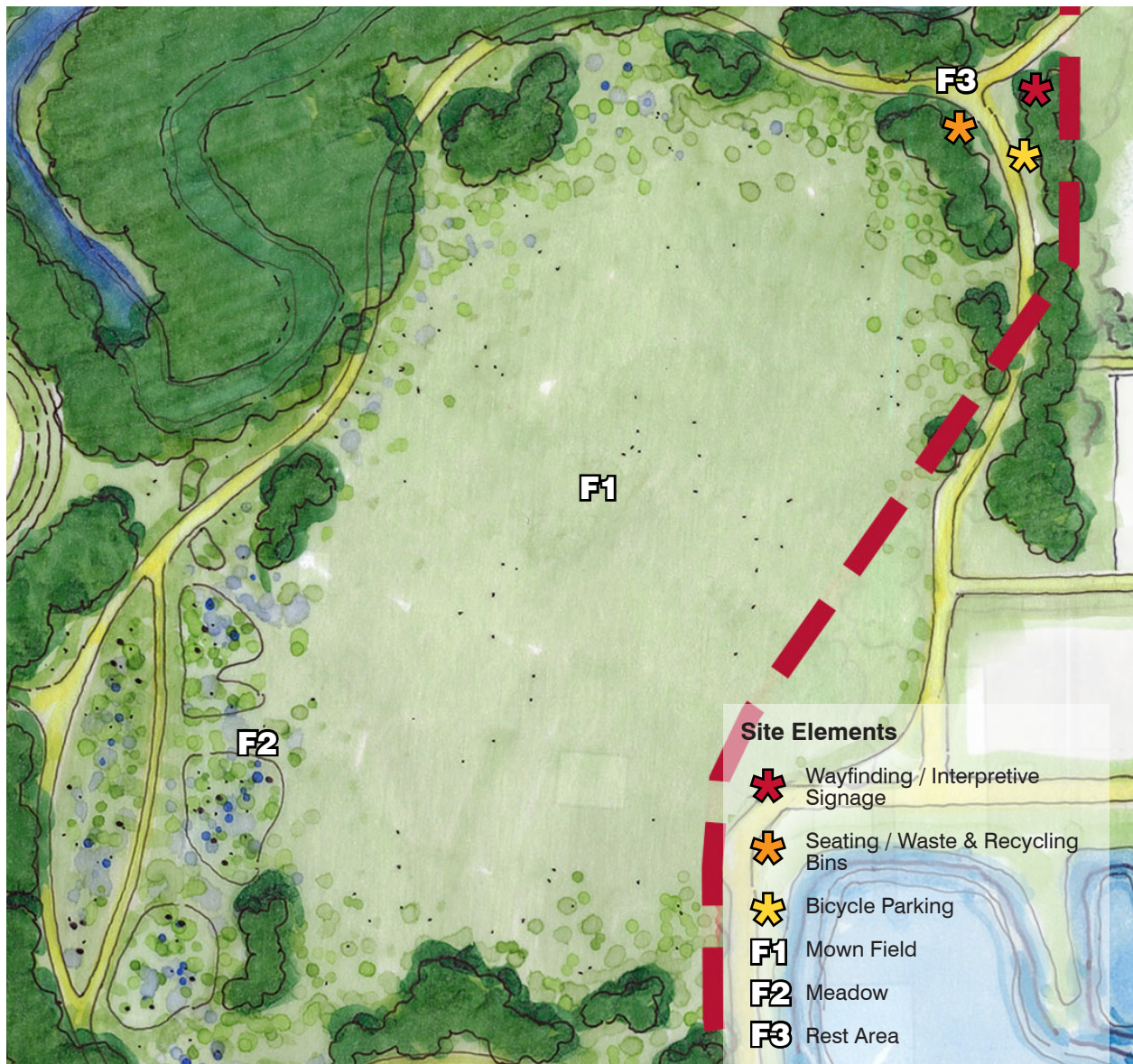


Granular walkway

F. Multi-use Play Field

The multi-use play field sits within the eastern portion of the park, accessed from the three main park entrances - Mearns Avenue, King Street East and Mearns Park (Barley Mill Crescent) by way of the network of trails and pedestrian bridges.

The multi-use play field is also connected to the future subdivision by way of the future park and stormwater management pond facility in that plan.



Features

F1. Mown Field

The multi-purpose field is designed to be a mown area within the larger meadow area of the park. It is intended to be used for community gatherings, cultural programming and sports activities. It will not be a manicured sports field but rather a robust sustainable grassed area.

F2. Meadow

The meadow areas that surround the mown lawn will be mowed once a year to ensure that meadow species are maintained and managed.

F3. Rest Area

The intersection of trails and trail connections provide opportunities for create rest areas that have seating and wayfinding / interpretive signage. A number of locations around the multi-purpose field may be development as rest areas.



Rest area | trails in meadow



Mown field within a meadow

3 Park Elements

The character and functionality of Bowmanville Park will be enhanced by a coordinated family of park / site elements. This will include seating, table & chairs, garbage / recycling receptacles, signage and lighting.



Seating along the boardwalk trail

Site Furniture should be of contemporary, resilient and robust in design. They will reflect the character of the park and where possible, incorporate wood and steel and create a strong identity that distinguishes the park from others in the municipality.

Where possible natural materials should be used, including wood, stone and bare metals. The furnishings should be comfortable and be designed for a range of ages incorporating accessible design elements. There should be a wide range of furnishings for different conditions from traditional bench seats with backs to seating ledges to picnic tables and other types. Garbage receptacles should be designed to meet park maintenance requirements.

Site furniture should be selected from a Canadian supplier for ease of maintenance and replacement when needed. The palette of furnishings should



Seating / Play Element



Trail seating and lighting element

create a uniform aesthetic that is immediately recognizable as part of the park identification.

A unified **Signage** system should be designed to contribute to the identity of the park. There should be a range of signage types including interpretive, directional and information related. The use of natural materials for the signposts and structures is recommended. The signage system should

be highly graphic and intuitive and appealing for a wide range of users. Themes should include the Bowmanville Zoo, Soper Creek, Indigenous and Colonial settlement, park flora and fauna.



Waste / recycling receptacle



Wayfinding / interpretive Signage located along a trail, in combination with a rest area.



Picnic table located in the meadow



Wayfinding / interpretive signage located within a woodland.



Picnic tables located at the main entrance and around the playground areas



Wayfinding / interpretive signage located in a rest area and combined with a waste / recycling component.

Integrating **Manmade Habitats** for birds and insects should be integrated within the landscape to provide educational moments throughout the park. They should be designed to be visible, and informative and they should target specific birds, insects and other wildlife. They could be designed in collaboration with artist and ecologists. Interpretation should be integrated with the installations.



Insect Hotel



Insect Hotel



Bird House

4 Public Art

Public Art should be integrated throughout the park. Public art provides the opportunity to animate the park and create focal points while recalling the legacy of the Bowmanville Zoo as well as the natural and cultural heritage of the area. The public art collection, developed overtime, should be curated and should include both permanent and temporary installations. Public art competitions should be professionally organized to ensure fairness and the highest quality. A public art master plan for the park should be developed as part of the next phase of design.



6 Costing & Phasing

The order of magnitude costing is a high-level exercise provided for budget allocation purposes only. The calculations are generally based on the areas and elements identified on the concept plan, multiplied by area unit costs gleaned from similar constructed public park projects. Since these costs are not based upon approved detailed designs, they do not account for any required infrastructure servicing, detailed site investigations, site preparation, supply of materials, labour costs and construction staging / phasing.

The organization of the following summary of costs is intended to allow a potential phasing strategy based on focus areas.

King Street East / Main Entrance.....	\$4,350,000
• Visitor Welcome / Orientation Centre	
• Shade Structure Pavilion	
• Parking Lot	
• Pedestrian Areas	
• Landscaped Areas	
• Benches, Waste/Recycling Receptacles	
• Lighting	
Wet Meadow / Boardwalk.....	\$2,000,000
• Pedestrian Boardwalk	
• Parking Lot	
• Pedestrian Areas	
• Landscaped Areas / Wet Meadow	
• Benches, Waste/Recycling Receptacles	
• Lighting	
Adventure Playground.....	\$5,000,000
• Washroom Building / Canopy Structure	
• Playground / Splash Pad	
• Pedestrian Areas	
• Landscaped Areas / Demonstration Gardens	
• Benches, Waste/Recycling Receptacles	
Mearns Parkette.....	\$1,200,000
• Playground	
• Pedestrian Areas	
• Landscaped Areas	
• Benches, Waste/Recycling Receptacles	
• Lighting	
Amphitheatre	\$1,170,000
• Terraced Seating	
• Pedestrian Trails	
• Landscaped Areas / Butterfly Gardens	
• Benches, Waste/Recycling Receptacles	
Multi-purpose Play Field.....	\$1,150,000
• Play Field	
• Meadow / Butterfly Gardens	
• Benches, Waste/Recycling Receptacles	
• Trails	
Miscellaneous.....	\$1,680,000
• Street Trees	
• Pedestrian Bridges (3)	
• Park Signage	
• Fitness Stations	
General Conditions (Mobilization).....	\$1,800,000
Contractor Fee.....	\$ 655,500
Construction Contingency.....	\$1,640,000
Design Consulting Fees.....	\$ 820,000
TOTAL.....	\$21,465,000

Appendix A

Public Consultation Detailed Analysis

Online Survey

Participants were able to pin comments to an interactive map on the Town’s website, and upvote or downvote other comments. Clicking on the green thumbs up, yellow neutral, or red thumbs down on the map will also show the users comment/reasoning for the positive, neutral, or negative feedback, in many cases the ‘yes’ is just a confirmation of their support for that proposed feature.

Question 1 Summary of Results

1. Drop a pin on the design concept to leave your feedback

- Drop pins on the map to let us know what you think about the design concept. Help us learn what features you like or dislike and tell us what you’d change.

- Let us know if you agree with what others have suggested by upvoting their comments.

There were 41 people who responded to this question with 155 people including “up votes” and 58 people including “down votes” on comments shared by others. Comments are included on the concept plan at the end of this document.

Question 2 Summary of Results

2. Share your feedback on the draft design concept.

- Select a category and leave your comments in the field below.

There were 73 people who responded to this question with 792 people including “up votes” and 664 people including “down votes” on comments shared by others. Comments are included on the concept plan at the end of this document. The following is a summary of comments received.

Category	Up Votes	Down Votes	Comment
1. Gateway/Park Entrance	15	0	As someone who doesn’t drive, will there be DRT stops at the entrance? If there is will there be a way for people to cross from the south?
	23	0	Very happy with this proposal. It will bring a community gathering/green space to this underserved area. A splashpad would be a nice addition
	5	0	Do we have a rough timeline yet? This park was announced years ago, but with such little progress so far, I’m concerned it may never happen.
2. Visitor Welcome Centre	4	3	It’s important to make all upgrades to our region with the new generation in mind. Tap n Go’s, QR codes, mobile robotic info guides.
	15	6	How about the inclusion of the First Nations peoples’ contributions to the area in addition to a large posted Land Acknowledgment
3. Parking	8	15	Why such excessive parking spaces? Bowmanville is not even that big and we shouldn’t encourage car dependency
	10	7	More parking, enough that if there is a game on in the field, others are still able to park.
	6	1	Would there be enough parking? How many spots for those who don’t live within walking distance?

4. Trail / Walkway	General Comments:		
	1	0	Don't build any more. We will have junkies living there plus drug dealers a new place to dump bodies more graffiti space. YOU ARE DESTROYED
	12	8	Play structure, soccer field, baseball area and splash park. Washrooms and picnic areas.
	4	3	Looks good! Would be cool to have a park app like the valleys has to encourage recreation as well.
	19	1	Would love to see a bicycle/scooter pump track like they have in Uxbridge
	Skating Trail:		
	1	4	I would like the addition of an ice-skating trail please. There is one setup 2.5 hours away at Arrowhead Provincial Park, too far!
	4	9	I want to see an ice-skating trail in the park.
	9	13	I want to see an ice-skating trail in this area, and a splash pad for. A place where we can be outdoors. Bowmanville is losing its charm.
	9	16	I would love to see an outdoor skating trail or rink at the old Bowmanville zoo. It would be a great family recreational activity for all
	1	17	Where on this plan is the ice-skating trail???
	1	22	Would like to see refrigerated trail.
	0	21	Refrigerated ice skate trail
	2	18	An ice-skating trail would be such an amazing attraction for locals and visitors alike.
	29	0	I do not agree with having a skating trail in this park. Too expensive, very exclusive and the weather does not always cooperate.
0	22	The ice-skating trail that residents are requesting will be a great addition to their community	

	1	17	Why have you dismissed the overwhelming requests for a refrigerated skate trail? Why ask residents what they want when it is always ignored
	1	19	I think the ice-skating trail sounds like a fantastic idea. It's a great idea for families to be active, get outdoors & enjoy time together.
	1	16	What happened to having a winter skating trail here? We need stuff to do in the winter, as well as summer months.
	1	17	With our rinks used by hockey and sport I would love to see the skating trail, as promised for leisure skating in winter.
	2	16	I would like to see an ice-skating trail as well within the park. We have to get families active, outside and together.
	1	19	Where is the wonderful outdoor ice-skating trail that was proposed? Would be lovely in winter & would have many other uses in warm weather.
	2	16	Please add an ice-skating trail to the park. Sounds like an amazing fun idea.
	2	17	Would love to see an ice-skating trail
	3	21	Please add a refrigerated ice-skating trail!
	3	18	Would love to see a skating trail also!!
	0	17	This is very exciting but I would love to see an outdoor skating trail!

6. Playground	12	1	A fully accessible playground would be the first of its kind in the area, with rubber surface is needed for equality for all
	11	2	A pool/ splashpad, ice-skating rink/trail, and tennis/pickleball courts would be awesome additions if these are not already part of it
	20	0	Please consider needs of adults with disabilities who LOVE to visit parks especially swings! See Activefit Outdoor Fitness, Port Perry
	22	9	I would love to see a bigger splash park, a skate park perhaps? We have nothing for our 10-15 year olds to do!
	20	0	Have more than one accessible washroom and family wash-room. Have accessible playgrounds for children using wheelchairs.
	21	0	Please include decent playgrounds, more like the parks in Whitby. Inclusive/different playground for all ages.
	14	8	It would be great to see a basketball court included. One similar to the court at Tyrone Park would be fantastic.
	1	15	Will there be an ice rink at the park?
	21	12	A tree zip line would be awesome - like treetop trekking. A large splash pad would also be super appreciated - we need more of those

7. Washroom Pavilion	4	1	According to zoning, we were told no permanent structures are to be built on this land. How is it a washroom structure is being proposed?
	8	2	I'm concerned about bathrooms, there only appears to be one. Maybe another somewhere closer to King or Barley Hill?
8. Amphitheatre	1	0	Focus on wetland integrity and not an Amphitheatre. This will offer park visitors the opportunity to experience nature first hand
	3	0	Having the Amphitheatre intact or with any necessary renovations will be another great way to showcase the local creative arts scene.
	18	0	Love that there are gardens and forest areas to preserve wildlife and green spaces. Amphitheatre a great idea too.
	31	0	I would like to see a place for outdoor artists to play music in the park and a place to have great coffee & hot cinnamon donuts like Tyrone
9. Picnic Area	3	0	Most looks great, I see 2 picnic areas but no washrooms in those areas, is that correct?
10. Demonstration Gardens	21	0	Beautiful natural setting. Teaching/giving gardens. Raised beds for seniors & people with physically challenges. Outdoor space for families.
11. Commemorative Forest	26	14	As an owner of 2 dogs, and being walking distance to this park, I would love a designated off leash dog area!
12. Wetland / Wet Meadow Boardwalk			--

13. Multiuse Play Field	2	3	Will there be a safe area for dogs to run around? Would also love for there to be plenty of trash cans. And native flowers/ plants!
	6	1	Incorporating a full-sized tiled outdoor basketball court more suitable for teens and adults to play would be incredible.
	0	16	Please consider this space for park model low cost affordable homes for purchase so that people can afford to enter the housing market.
	13	8	Please do not waste money on an ice-skating trail or dog park. Let's celebrate our natural heritage and green spaces with this park.
	24	22	Would be nice to Include a bit of a dog park somewhere
	25	24	Some sort of off leash dog area would be nice!
	18	4	I think something for the winter is a good idea, but a refrigerated skate trail is very expensive. Still, maybe an outdoor rink?
14. Wet Meadows	1	0	Looks amazing. Can you consider a fishing pond?? Not many places for kids to fish for panfish and such. Would be nice to have a safe spot.
	6	5	I think it would be great if low impact development Stormwater features were used. Also a spot for Indigenous ceremony.
16. Woodlands	6	4	To keep my children away from the dogs inevitably brought to this park, I would encourage the city to include a fenced off-leash area.
	11	2	Mountain bike flow track.
	1	29	A campground like the one at Beavermead Park in Peterborough or Victoria Park in Cobourg might be a good idea.
	31	0	In general, all trees, shrubs and plants should be native to Ontario in order to support and conserve our remaining wildlife.
	28	23	Is there room for an off-leash dog park somewhere within the 34 acres? That would be a lovely addition to this already beautiful plan.

17. Potential Trail Connection	3	10	https://www.clarington.net/en/news/clarington-unveils-designs-for-the-municipality-s-first-ever-outdoor-refrigerated-skating-rink.aspx#:~:te
Other Comments	9	0	It would be great to see educational and interactive signage along the trails. Maybe some permanent exercise equipment to promote health
	0	11	Affordable housing lands is the MAJOR need at the moment for seniors and young families. Clarington could be a model in this initiative.
	16	0	Not exactly sure what action could be taken but some effort should be put into protecting the Soper Creek and native fish in the park!
	18	1	Would like to see some youth-oriented infrastructure in the park, basketball courts, picnic tables, shady areas (umbrellas possibly), etc.
	16	1	More accessible washroom spaces spread out in the park.
	24	21	Please keep as many existing trees as possible and make the park as natural as it can be. No dog parks. Don't need more of them
	27	1	Will there be dedicated spaces to butterfly sanctuaries and/or wildflower gardens? Would be nice to see our native plants given love!
	23	0	The old zoo's splash pad was excellent. If the plumbing is still intact, why not use it? Bathrooms too!
	10	11	Splash pad and ice-skating trail!
	21	3	Overall, the park concept is great. I would love to see the community park reflect some aspect of a zoo theme to recognize the previous use
	1	21	I want to see an ice-skating trail on the former Zoo site

In-person Workshop Comments

An in-person public workshop was held on April 16, 2024, where The Planning Partnership presented the vision and park concept. There were two 2-hour sessions (one at 3:30pm and the other at 6:30pm), held at the Municipal Administrative Centre (Town Hall) in Bowmanville. There was a total of 20 participants who then made notes/comments on the concept plan, organized under the subheadings of Environment and Ecology, Access and Circulation, Building and Structures, Play and Recreation, and Education and Culture.

Environment and Ecology

- Please don't take down mature trees
- No lighting behind houses
- Butterfly garden?
- Plant natural wild flowers/plants
- Adequate waste containers that are emptied regularly
- No excessive lighting to protect wildlife
- Cut as few existing trees as possible
- That you for including greenspaces, gardens and forest
- Keep an organic feel
- Want lots of wild areas – for insect populations
- What happens to the present vegetation
- Attract for birds – over and above existing wildlife
- Replanting with native flora and trees
- Community garden
- CLOCA? Protected lands?
- What is being done to protect the fish and wildlife? (Salmon and trout, deer, coyotes)
- Instead of just a stormwater pond is it possible to introduce a natural pond?

Access and Circulation

- Wet area let grow in
- Mixed use can produce “conflicts” e.g. cyclists vs pedestrians
- No issues with access and circulation – good job with concept design
- Love idea of wooden pedestrian bridges
- Limit the amount of parking to the circle of green
- Security? /Squatters?
- Walkway entrance over king st
- Parking Fees!
- Free Parking Please
- Will the visitor welcome centre be manned? If so, will it be manned by volunteers?
- Great plan for trails for walking, biking
- Mearns traffic is already VERY bust
- Impact on Mearns residences on our property, we were told we could not build because of flood zone

Building and Structures

- Take out this part of path, avoids cutting trees + place here instead – already cleared
- Minimal structures and buildings
- Thank you for washroom building and visiting welcome centre
- Keep buildings looking ‘natural’ and not modern and shiny (no primary colours)
- Like references to zoo and installations referring to. Like idea of wooden structures for play – which allows all age groups to use
- Amphitheatre – great idea – keep it. #8 love and outdoor classroom
- Love board walks

- Amphitheatre acoustics? Tree surrounded? Private? Great idea
- How many storeys?
- Cost of maintenance?
- Lighting for pathways
- Designated parking/ no parking on side streets and Mearns Ave.
- Has the original bridge over the creek been retained?
- What are the CLOCA rules for structures?
- Washroom location – why not by parking? – how is waste going to be dealt with in flood situation?

Play and Recreation

- Can we consider another dog park in these plans. The current dog park near the marina has become too small for the population as well, the overhead hydro lines shock people and dogs
- Creative play structure
- Natural ‘work-out’ station – you can stop + do chin ups, etc.
- NO dog parks
- NO refrigerated ice skating trail – waste of money – climate change
- Greensward – where informal games/sports/ play can occur #13
- Park benches for relaxing
- Exercise stations build along major paths
- Use pond for skating
- Permits for park use?
- Bike park i.e. bmx – bump track?
- More things for children to play with “pump park”
- Intent of Amphitheatre? Noise? Time of use?
- Remove bike lane on Mearns to encourage use of the trails
- Privacy fence - Mearns

Education and Culture

- You mentioned Indigenous place keeping, what are the plans? Some sort of land acknowledgement
- Provide power in amphitheater on pavilion for education presentations, public events
- Love the amphitheater idea (multi use space)
- Add zoo history plaques – with old photos of zoo and brief history
- Keep park as a natural space – a space that celebrates green area and Bowmanville’s natural spaces
- Organic, minimalist natural colours and materials
- Skating parks
- Seasonal?
- Bike/walk trails – stops
- Splash pads
- High Park model
- Amphitheatre
- Gravel vs asphalt
- BBQ
- Cost for educational purposes/ schools
- What historic features of the original zoo have been retained? If not, more needs to be incorporated
- Have indigenous considerations been consulted?
- include a sculpture/representation of the elephant