



Sechler Park Long-Range Plan **City Council Meeting**

October 15, 2024

Agenda



- Project Purpose, Goals + Timeline
- Project Engagement Review
- Concept Plans
- Meeting Outcomes
- Next Steps

Project Team



Casey Byers, PLA
(Principal-In-Charge)



Bryce Shearen, CPRE
(Project Manager)

Jonathan Nelsen, PLA
(Lead Senior Landscape
Architect)



Anna Springer, PLA
(Senior Landscape
Architect/QAQC)



Staci Williams
(Water Resources Strategic
Development Director)



Aus Perez
(Landscape
Designer)



Rachel LeMire
(Project Communication
Specialist)



**PROJECT
PURPOSE, GOALS
+ TIMELINE**



Project Purpose



The purpose of this long-range park planning process is:

to provide the City of Northfield with a usable comprehensive long-range plan for Sechler Park that includes actionable steps to move towards implementation with cost estimates and implementation phasing

Project Goals



Understand the community's needs and preferences for the park

Define action items for the long-range plan

Determine community priorities for phased implementation

Create and share a final long-range park concept

Project Timeline



Initial public involvement on parks issues and opportunities, site review, and development of two preliminary long-range plan concepts

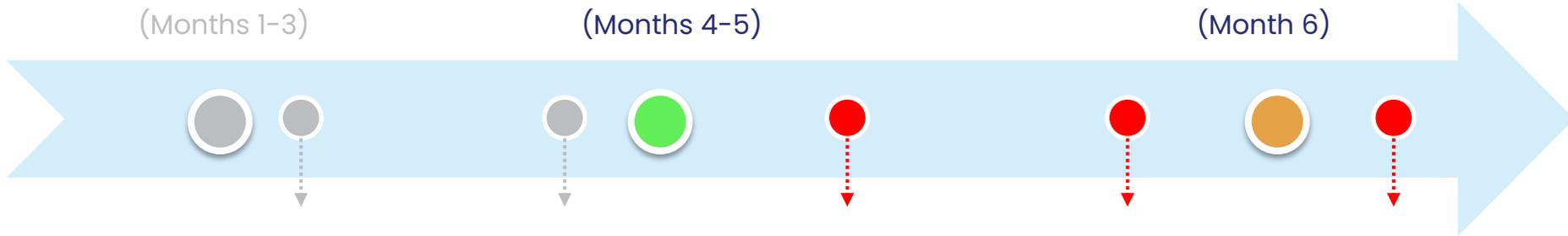
July to August
(Months 1-3)

Park concept review and revision to one recommended layout, construction cost estimate and implementation alternatives

September to October
(Months 4-5)

Finalize recommended long-range plan including summary documentation, and final presentation to the Northfield City Council

December
(Month 6)



**Park & Recreation
Advisory Board Meeting -
Kickoff**
July 08, 2024

**Sechler Park concept
designs**
September 2024

City Council Meeting
October 15, 2024

**Final Plan Review &
Recommendation for
Approval**
November 2024

**Final Presentation at City
Council Meeting**
December 03, 2024

PROJECT ENGAGEMENT

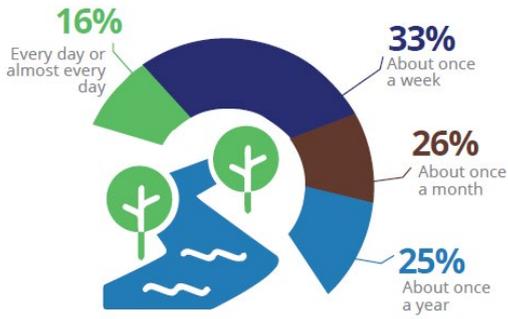


Online Survey

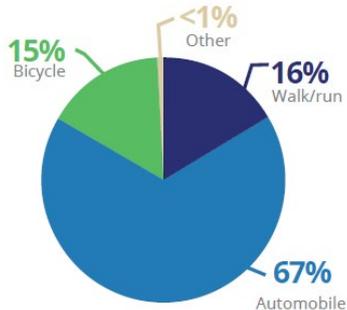


152 TOTAL SURVEY RESPONSES

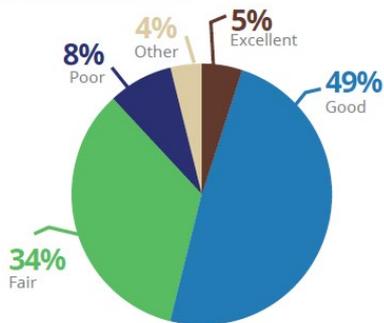
HOW OFTEN PEOPLE VISIT SECHLER PARK



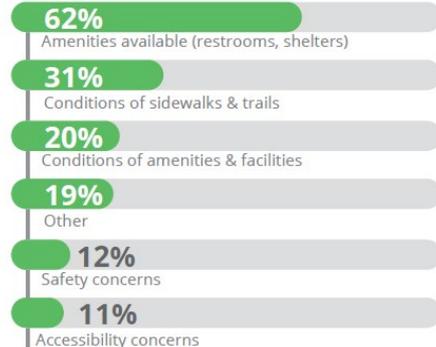
TOP MODE OF TRANSPORTATION TYPICALLY USED TO GET TO THE PARK



HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE PHYSICAL CONDITION OF THE PARK AND ITS FACILITIES?



WHAT DISCOURAGES USE OF SECHLER PARK?



Online Survey (cont.)



What amenities should be maintained/enhanced



1st (39%)
Trails and paths



2nd (36%)
Parking



3rd (35%)
Baseball fields



4th (32%)
Playground



5th (25%)
Access to Cannon River

TOP 5 NEW AMENITIES FOR THE CITY TO FOCUS ON ADDING TO THE PARK



Pickleball



Additional Lighting



Splash Pad



Picnic tables



Winter activities

OTHER POPULAR PARK FEATURES TO ADD:



Native/
pollinator
plantings



Restroom
facilities



Additional rental
space (picnic
shelters)



Accessibility
to amenities

Top activities to do at ANY park:

- Play pickleball
- Walk/run/bike on trails
- Watch/play baseball
- Play on playground equipment
- Walk dogs
- Use shelters/amenities for picnics and gatherings

What do you like MOST about Sechler Park?

- Baseball fields
- Green/open space
- Rural/undeveloped feeling
- Biking/walking trails
- Pavillions and shelters
- Proximity to river

What do you like LEAST about Sechler Park?

- Limited parking amenities
- Lack of actual bathrooms
- Location/proximity to where people live
- Outdated amenities
- Proximity to train tracks
- Small playground
- Lots of bugs

84%

Of respondents support enhancing family-friendly activities and spaces in the park

62%

Of respondents would like to see cultural or other community events programmed at Sechler Park

90%

Of respondents feel safe and welcome at Sechler Park

INPUTiD Online Engagement



Comment Panel

Ideas and Opportunities

- 1** **1** A lot of potential opportunity in this space [i.e. larger play area, water feature, etc.]
- 33** **4** This would be a great place for pickleball courts. There is room for 6 courts and potential future expansion. The site is away from housing developments where noise and lights might be a concern. It's accessible by car and bike. There is parking and a bathroom nearby.
- 21** **4** I would love more pickleball courts in Northfield and this park would be a great location.

Enter a comment... Submit

SOME OTHER COMMENTS INCLUDE:

“The traffic here and near the car wash makes this area dangerous for kids with bikes. Also, the access road should be open in winter.”

“This crossing is great! I'd love to see another one to the south by the bowling alley.”

“Fully accessible bathrooms and drinking water would make sense in this park.”

“Netting is needed along the first base line to behind home plate to prevent foul balls from going into the woods.”

“This open space would be a great spot for a disc golf course. This space is ideal, especially given how much of the forest/other unusable areas of the park will be out of good use!”

Pop-Up Meetings



During this planning process, there have been three pop-up meetings held to engage with the community:

1. Baseball Tournament (7/10/2024)
– At Sechler Park
2. Crazy Daze (7/25/2024)
3. Defeat of Jesse James Day (9/5/2024)



Stakeholder Meetings



- A revolving door style meeting was held at the Sechler Park pavilion on 8/6/24. The following stakeholder groups attended the meeting:
 - Recreation Programming
 - Northfield Fastpitch Softball Association
 - Northfield Youth Baseball Association
 - Pickleball
 - Canon River Offroad Cycling & Trails (CROCT) Mountain biking group
 - Disc Golf
 - Age-Friendly Northfield



CONCEPT PLANS



Concept Development



- The following concepts were developed by:
 1. Engaging with and receiving feedback from the community through various pop-up events and listening sessions
 2. Conducting a design charrette with the project team
 3. Coordinating with city staff to review and refine concept plans to ensure the concepts reflect the feedback heard from the community and alignment with other plans/projects.



SECHLER PARK LONG-RANGE PLAN: Concept 1

Key Differences

- Community amenities centrally located
- Additional softball field
- Bridge/river crossing at southwest end of park
- Adding approximately 161 parking stalls:
 - * Existing: 263
 - * Proposed: 424



Existing Baseball Field w/ Backstop, Dugouts and Bleachers Pushed in 15' to Bring Home Plate to 45' to Backstop

Existing Parking Lot w/ Improved Circulation + Drop-Off Area (~115 Stalls)

Existing Baseball Field

Additional Parking Lot w/ Drop-Off Area for T-Ball (~50 Stalls)

Existing T-Ball Fields

Bleachers Structure w/ Storage Space + Restrooms Below

New Concessions Building

Plaza Space with String Lights + Other Activities

Existing Baseball Fields (2)

Stormwater Treatment Feature

Playground Area

New Picnic Shelter

Additional Parking Lot for Recreational Amenities (~78 Stalls)

Pickleball Courts (6) w/ Shade Structures

Existing Softball Field

Existing Parking Lot w/ New Drop-Off Area (~84 Stalls)

New Picnic Shelter w/ Nearby Trailhead

Additional Softball Field

Existing Parking Lot (~47 Stalls)

Mill Towns State Trail - Surface Improvements

Existing Softball Field

Additional Parking Lot (~6 Stalls)

Native Planting

New Nature Pavilion w/ Educational Signage

Existing East River Trail System

Additional Parking Lot (~27 Stalls) - Accessible During Winter + Cannon River Access

Xcel Energy Power Line

Drop-Off Area for Water Access

Canoe/Kayak Launch + River Access Opportunities

Pedestrian Bridge to East River Trails

Improved Trail Circulation

Relocated Mountain Bike Skills Area + Pump Track

9-Hole Disc Golf Course

Existing Mountain Biking Trails

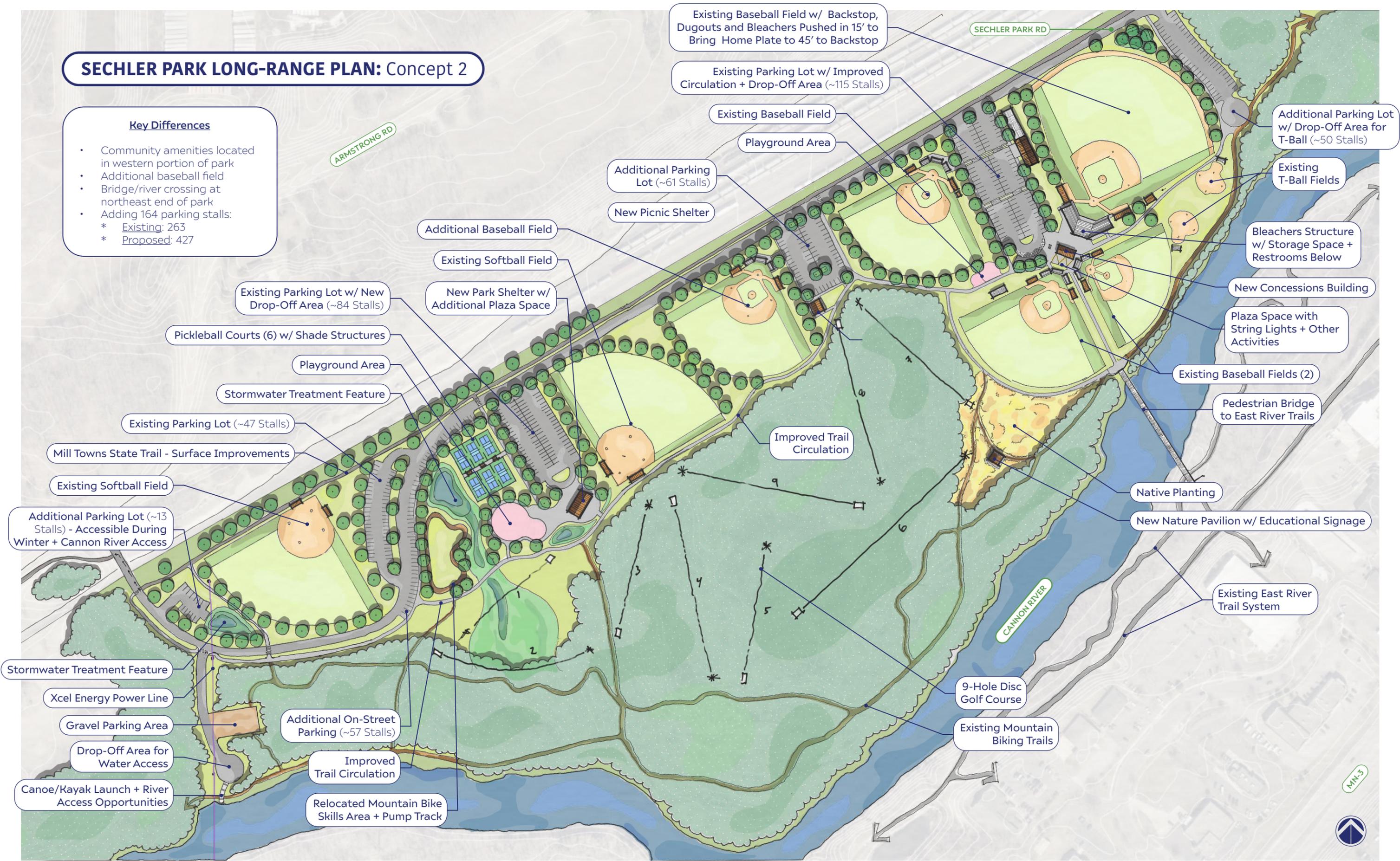
MN-3



SECHLER PARK LONG-RANGE PLAN: Concept 2

Key Differences

- Community amenities located in western portion of park
- Additional baseball field
- Bridge/river crossing at northeast end of park
- Adding 164 parking stalls:
 - * Existing: 263
 - * Proposed: 427



MN-3



SECHLER PARK LONG-RANGE PLAN: East Entrance Enlargement



Crosswalk

SECHLER PARK RD

LAUREL CT

Mill Towns State Trail - Surface Improvements

Additional Seasonal Parking (~18 Stalls)

Bike Racks

Plaza Space w/ Mapping + Wayfinding Kiosk

Additional Plaza Space w/ Seat Wall

Seat Wall

Bike Repair Station

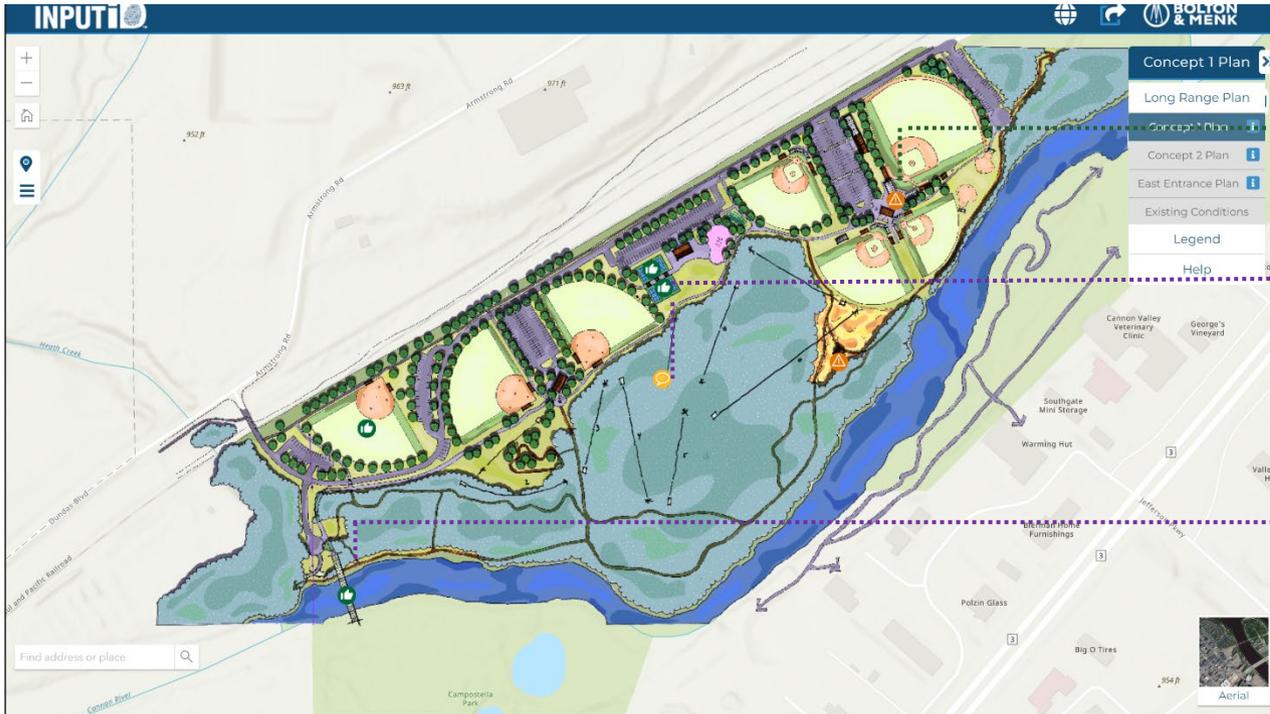
Canoe/Kayak Launch w/ River Access Opportunities

Proposed Future Trail Connection

Existing Pedestrian Bridge to East River Trails

MN-3

Concept Engagement



SOME OTHER COMMENTS INCLUDE:

“Shaded areas by all ball fields..”

“Yes, please! More pickleball courts..”

“I love the idea of a bridge here! I think it would really increase access to the park from the middle and southern half of the city. It also allows easy bike access. - I would amend my like... I think the crossing in plan 2 is better. This area is farther south but is in an area that I feel people would not see as easily. I worry that it would be less travelled. Plus, there are no good crossings of the highway here, which would make it underused.”

Park & Recreation Advisory Board Meeting



- The concept plans were presented to the Park & Recreation Advisory Board at its September 9, 2024, meeting.
 - Appreciated the extensive engagement process
 - Curious where soccer and ultimate frisbee would go if not at Sechler (Spring Creek Park and field space south of Spring Creek Elementary)
 - Safety around ballfields (i.e. additional netting)
 - Numbers to justify decisions and reference to the Park & Rec Capital Plan
 - How does the city benefit from upgraded facilities
 - Cost/Phasing/Priorities
 - Mills Town Trail Safety
 - Funding Opportunities
 - Stormwater Management

NEXT STEPS



Meeting Outcomes + Next Steps



MEETING OUTCOMES

- Feedback from City Council members on concept plans
- Q&A

NEXT STEPS

- Finalize community engagement
 - INPUTiD
 - Review comments from Stakeholders
- Final concept development
 - Utilize feedback to develop final concept plan
- Long-range plan development including cost estimates
 - Share draft of full report at November Park & Recreation Advisory Board Meeting

Long Range Plan Contents



Contents of Plan

- **Executive Summary**
- **Introduction**
 - Background + Purpose
 - Past Planning Document
 - Park Overview
 - Existing Conditions
- **Inventory + Analysis**
 - Overview
 - Site Circulation + Park Access
 - Natural Resources + Vegetation Management
 - Programming + Facilities
 - Partnerships
- **Community Engagement**
 - Overview
 - Community Engagement Results
- **Plan Recommendations**
 - Overview
 - Access/Accessibility
 - Vegetation + Stormwater
 - Amenities + Enhancements
- **Budgeting + Implementation**
 - Overview
 - Budgeting + Implementation Strategies
- **Appendix**
 - Complete Online Survey Results
 - Detailed Cost Estimates
 - Meetings
 - Additional Information

DISCUSSION + QUESTIONS

Bryce Shearen

Bryce.shearen@bolton-menk.com

Anna Springer

Anna.springer@bolton-menk.com

Thank you!