



NORTHFIELD RIVERSIDE LIONS PARK – THE DISCOVERY ZONE

MAYOR and CITY COUNCIL MEETING . . . August 19th 2025

NORTHFIELD'S CANNON RIVER REGIONAL PARK EXPERIENCE



City of
Northfield
MINNESOTA

ESTABLISH

ESTABLISH NORTHFIELD'S CANNON RIVER REGIONAL PARK

Northfield is on the cusp of making a tremendous opportunity to build on the four connected riverfront parks designed in the 1960s for a unified Regional Park Visitor Plan. This will build an environmental experience, recreation and connectivity to the Parkway for a dual and regional park destination. With a unified vision, including the Ames Mill and Sechler Dam, and the Cannon River Regional Partnership, Northfield is well positioned to apply for federal designation as a Regional Park in 2025.

Immediate Actions:

- Begin the application process with the goal of submitting by the end of 2024, 2025 deadline.

2

ENHANCE + ACTIVATE YOUR RIVERFRONT PARKS

Key to a successful application is an existing, vibrant, regional park on the riverfront. The four parks in Northfield have strong distinct identities based on history, culture, and recreation. With a unified vision, including the Ames Mill and Sechler Dam, and the Cannon River Regional Partnership, Northfield is well positioned to apply for federal designation as a Regional Park in 2025.

Immediate Actions:

- Develop all elements of Ames Park as a first priority.
- Start planning for multi-use facilities at Babcock Park.
- Recreate/reconstruct and design from Babcock Park.
- Recreate/reconstruct multi-use.

ENHANCE



COMPLETE

COMPLETE YOUR LOCAL + REGIONAL TRAIL SYSTEM

As important as the distinct quality of each of the four city-owned parks and the connection between them and to the regional trail system, it is important that the system of trails in the Cannon River and beyond complete the local, regional, and national trail system. The system of trails in the Cannon River and beyond complete the local, regional, and national trail system. The system of trails in the Cannon River and beyond complete the local, regional, and national trail system.

Immediate Actions:

- Develop a comprehensive trail system.
- Connect Ames Park to Sechler Park.
- Complete the Ames River Trail.
- And other trails to complete the system.

4

EXPLORE AMES MILL DAM RECONSTRUCTION OPTIONS

There is movement building around the possibility that the Ames Mill Dam might offer an important role in restoring the health, aesthetics and safety of the Cannon River. The dam is designated as a wild and scenic river. The Ames Mill Dam is a historic structure and its reconstruction is a key element of the river's restoration. The dam is designated as a wild and scenic river. The Ames Mill Dam is a historic structure and its reconstruction is a key element of the river's restoration.

Immediate Actions:

- Conduct the dam study recommended by DNR staff.
- Research options for the future of the dam.
- Apply for grant funding design + construction.

EXPLORE



PROMOTE

PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT + TOURIST DESTINATION

Northfield is a beautiful and historic community, providing a unique and scenic experience for visitors. The city has the opportunity to build on its historic and scenic assets to become a premier destination for visitors. The city has the opportunity to build on its historic and scenic assets to become a premier destination for visitors.

Immediate Actions:

- Explore incentives to encourage local businesses to open up.
- Work with local businesses to open up.
- Apply for grant funding.

5

IT BEGAN WITH THE RIVERFRONT ENHANCEMENT ACTION PLAN

Adopted by Mayor and City Council in November 2020

1. February 27th 2023 Kick-Off Meeting with Northfield Lions Club
2. June 14th 2023 Meeting with Village on the Cannon Residents
3. May 1st 2023 Meeting with DJJD Work Group + Carnival Vendor
4. May 31st 2023 Meeting with Northfield Area Veterans Memorial Reps
5. September 20th 2023 Park Work Group Workshop #1
6. October 11th 2023 Meeting with Northfield Garden Club Reps
7. November 2nd 2023 Park Work Group Workshop #2
8. November 29th 2023 Park Work Group Workshop #3
9. January 17th Park Work Group Workshop #4 – discuss + refine draft Master Plan
10. January 25th Neighborhood Open House – present draft Master Plan
11. February 5th Park and Recreation Advisory Board – review draft Master Plan
12. February 13th Council Work Session – review draft Master Plan
13. February 28th Park Work Group Workshop #5 – agree on final Master Plan
14. March 4th Park and Recreation Advisory Board – approve final Master Plan
15. April 2nd – Council Meeting – approve final Master Plan



RIVERSIDE LIONS PARK – Long-Range Park Master Plan

approved by Mayor and City Council April 2024



RIVERSIDE LIONS PARK – Long-Range Park Master Plan
recommended project priority areas

Cannon River

Highway 3

1a

THE DISCOVERY ZONE
nature-based play space

1b

RIVERSIDE LIONS PARK PAVILION
existing structure + playground



Cannon River

Highway 3

1a

THE DISCOVERY ZONE
nature-based play space



existing playground @ 7th Street



Proposed enhancements – focus on nature-based play elements with series of ‘Discovery Zone’ rooms.



RIVERSIDE LIONS PARK – nature-based playground @ 7th St.

[concept presented at Park and Recreation Advisory Board meeting – March 2024]

refined concept northern play zone



Meandering trail featuring distinct nature play features on the interior

1 CANNON RIVER THEMED PLAY



2 PASSIVE PLAY RETREAT



3 PARENT PATIO



4 ROCK CLIMB

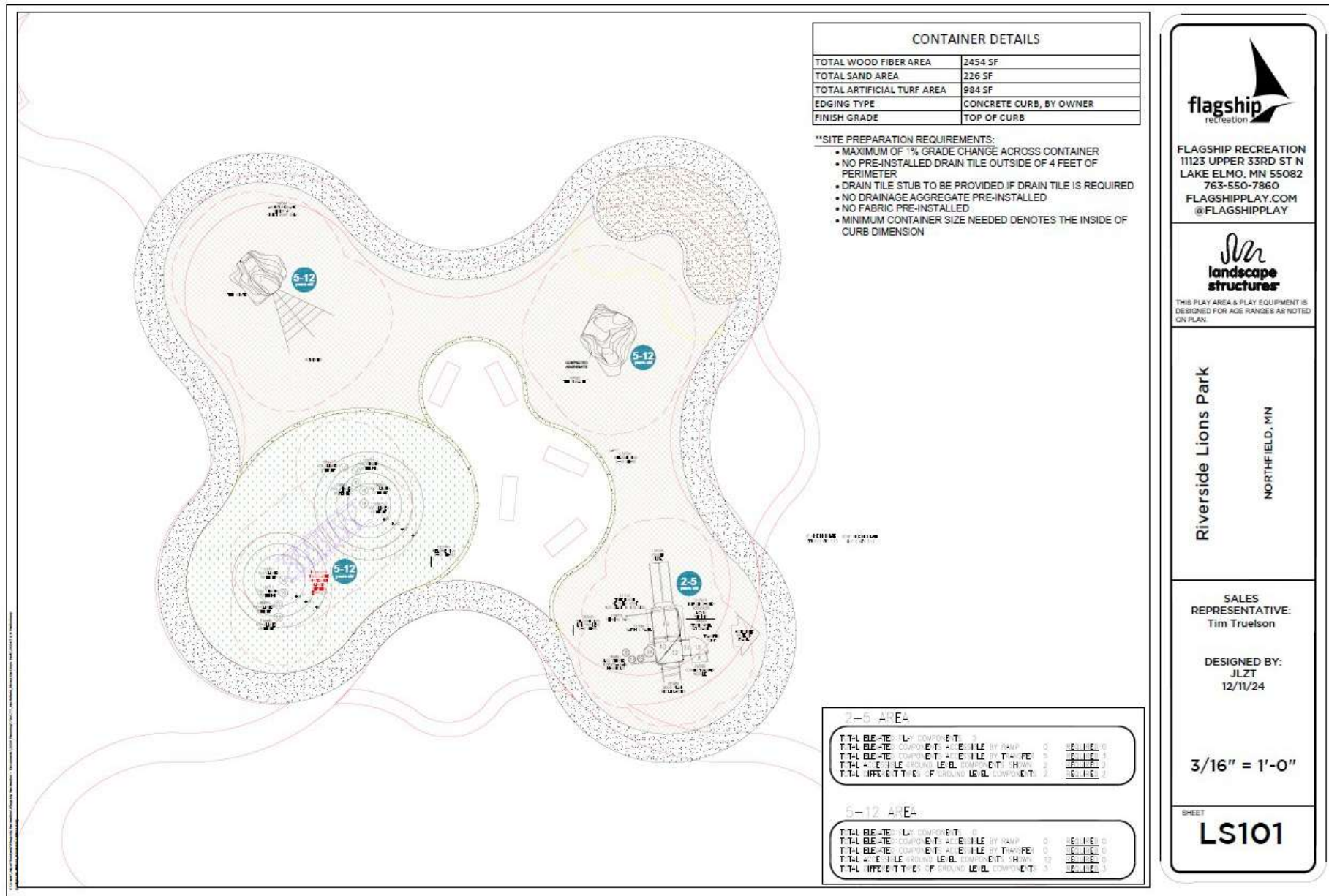


5 BLUFF REGION



CONCEPT MEETING/ 2024





RIVERSIDE LIONS PARK – nature-based playground @ 7th St.

[concept presented at Park and Recreation Advisory Board meeting – January 2025]



RIVERSIDE LIONS PARK – nature-based playground @ 7th St.

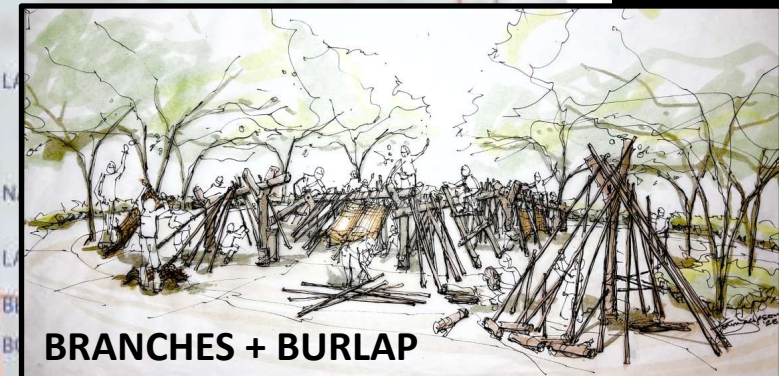
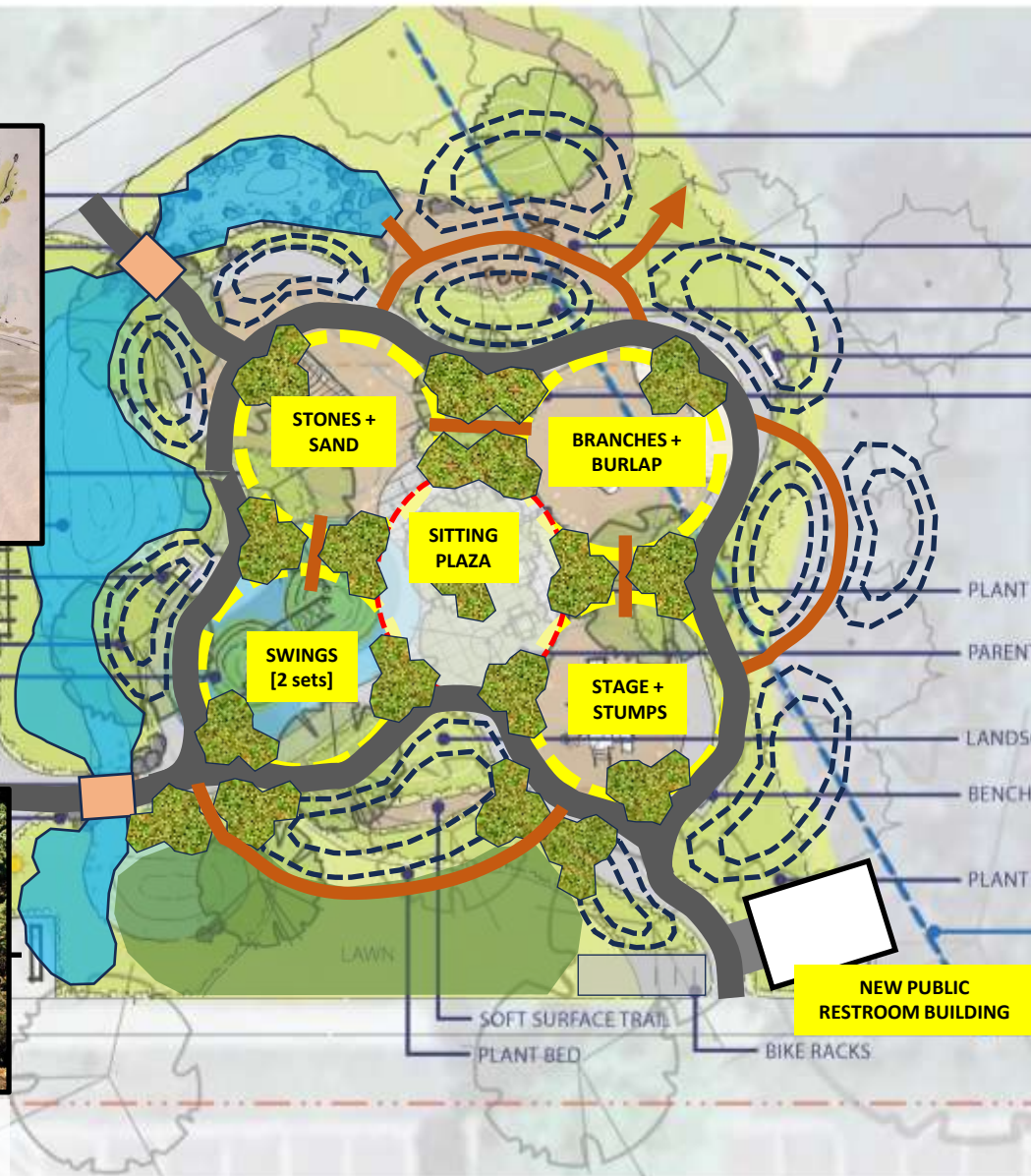
[concept presented at Park and Recreation Advisory Board meeting – January 2025]



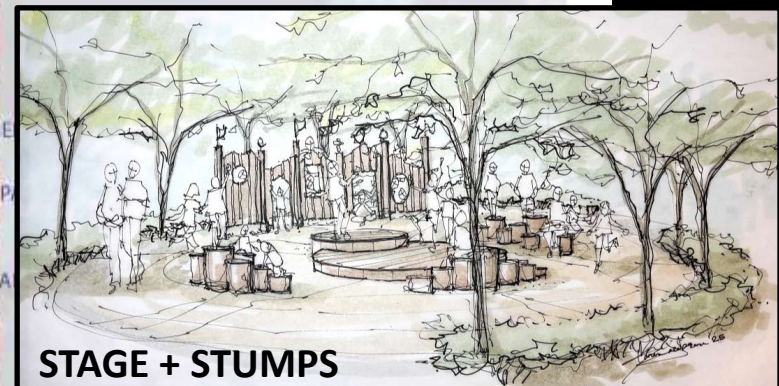
STONES + SAND



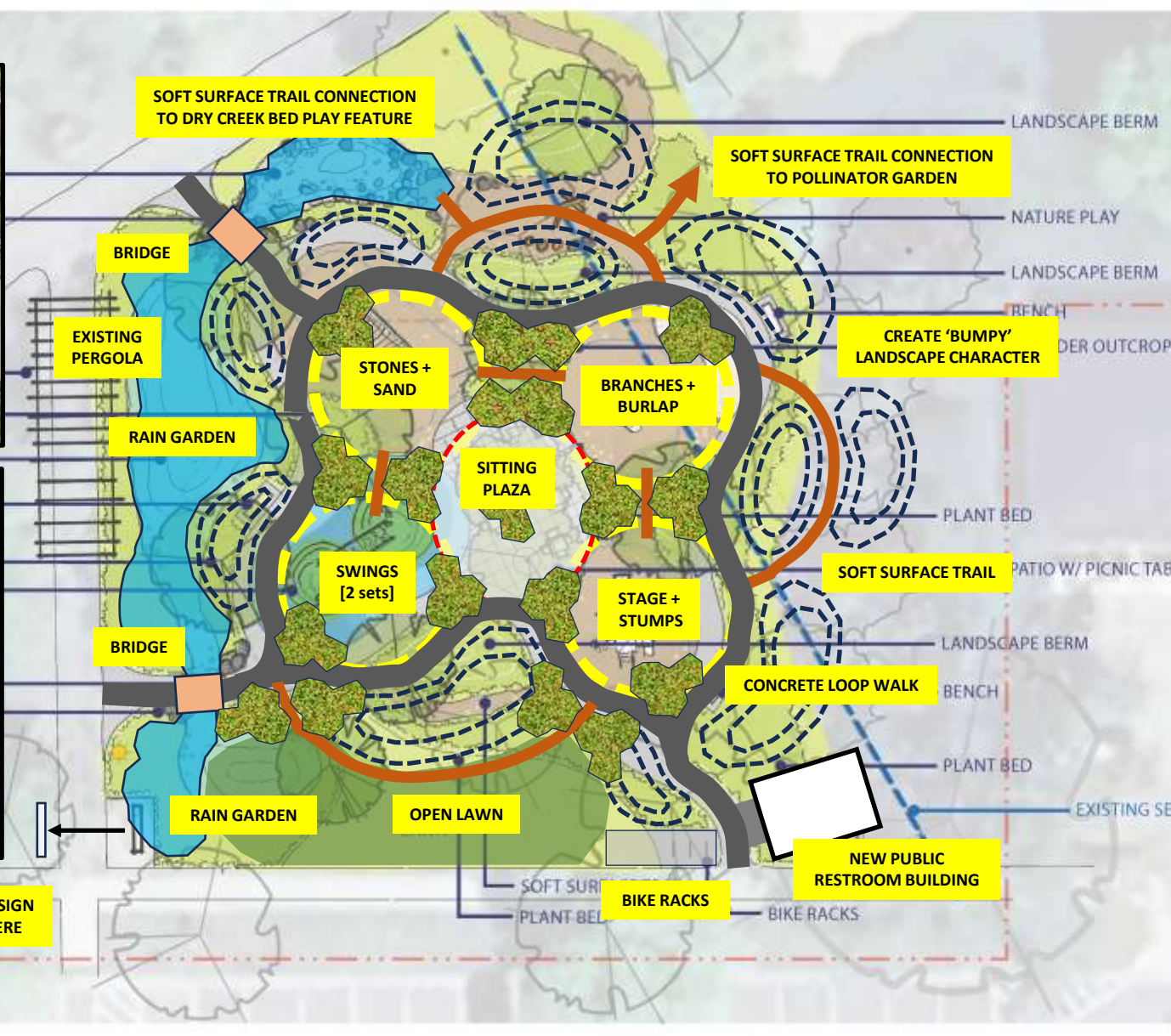
SWINGS
[toddlers and older kids]



BRANCHES + BURLAP

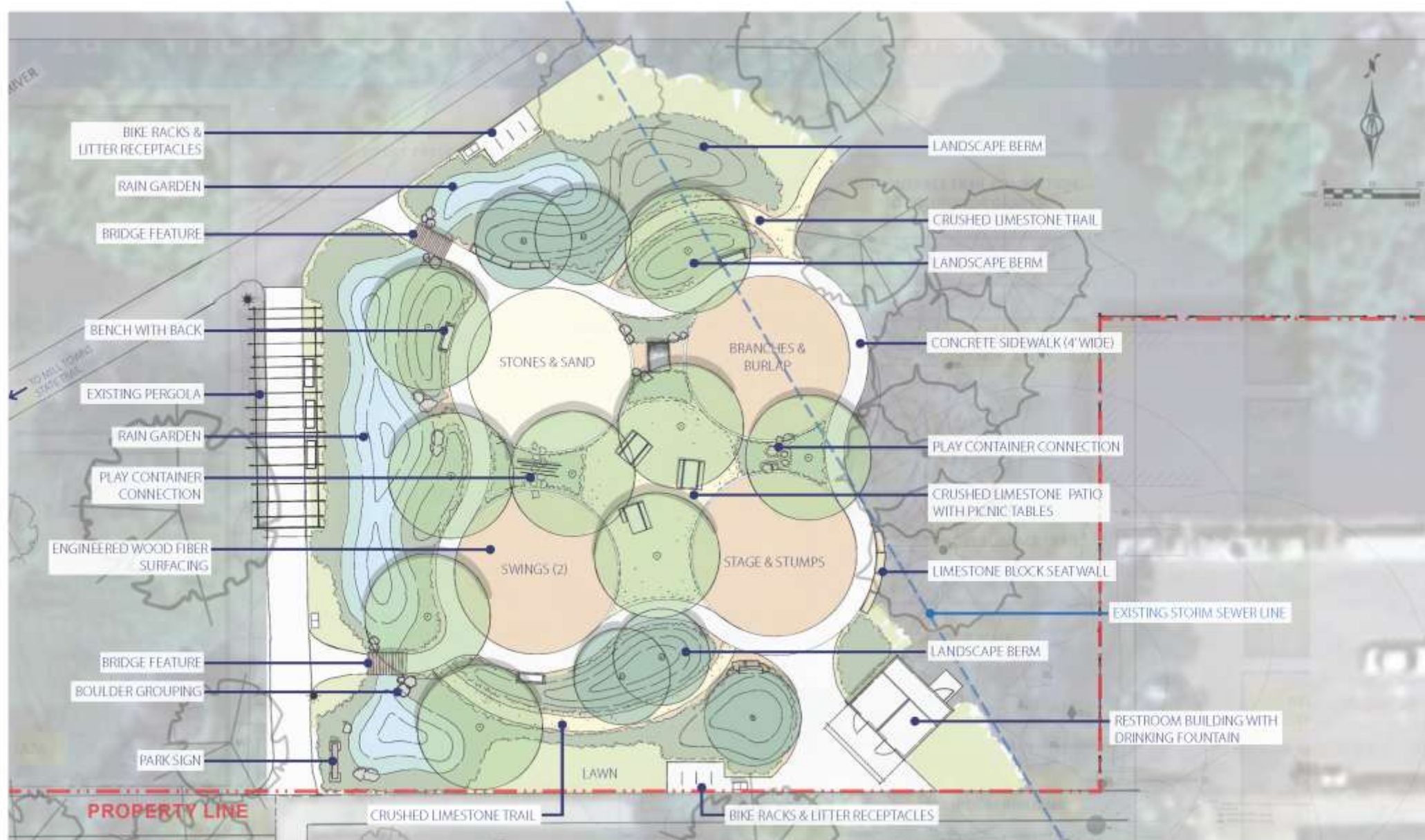


STAGE + STUMPS



1a – THE DISCOVERY ZONE

additional site features + amenities



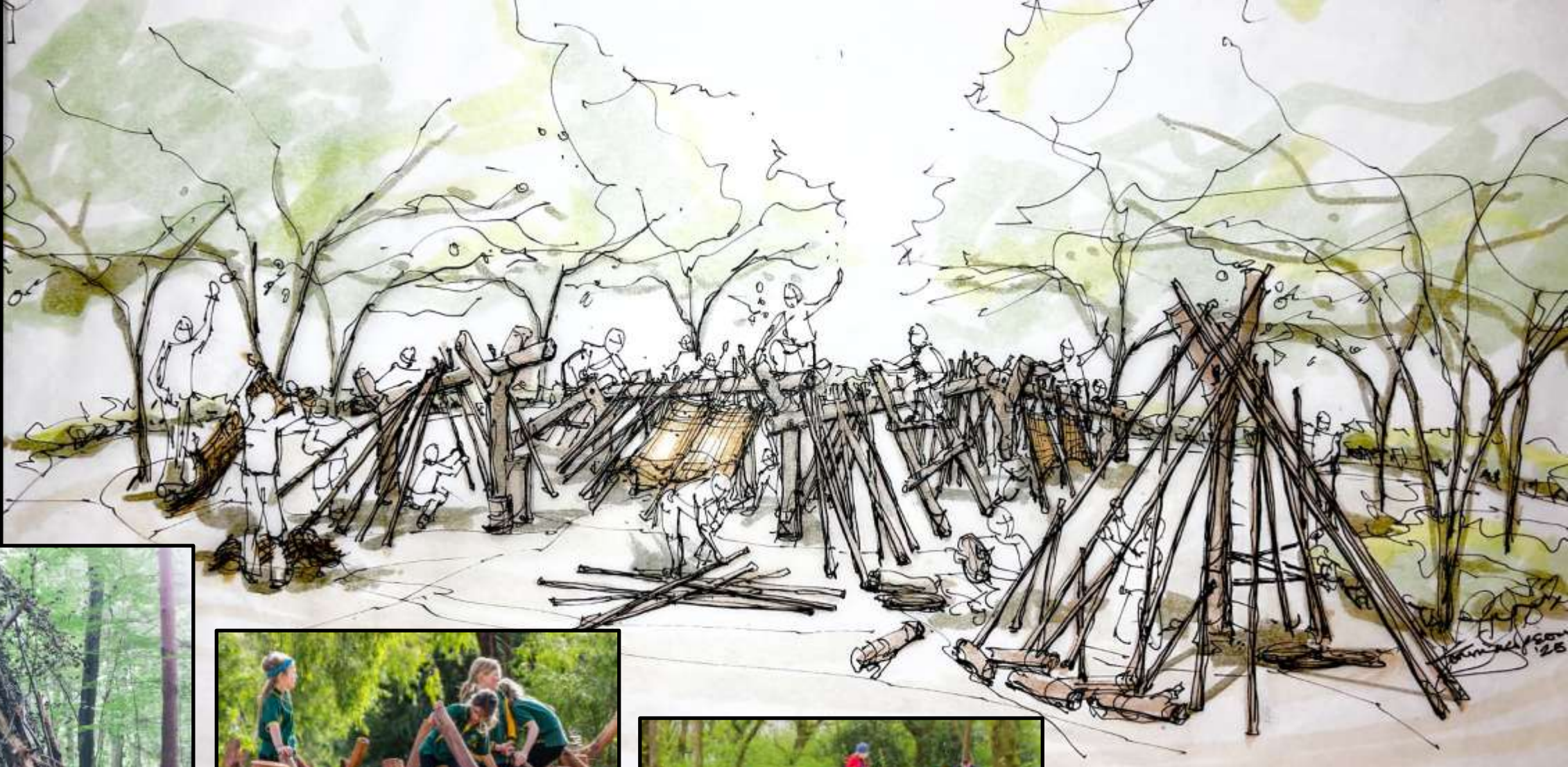
1a – THE DISCOVERY ZONE

current refined concept design . . . for review + comment + approval

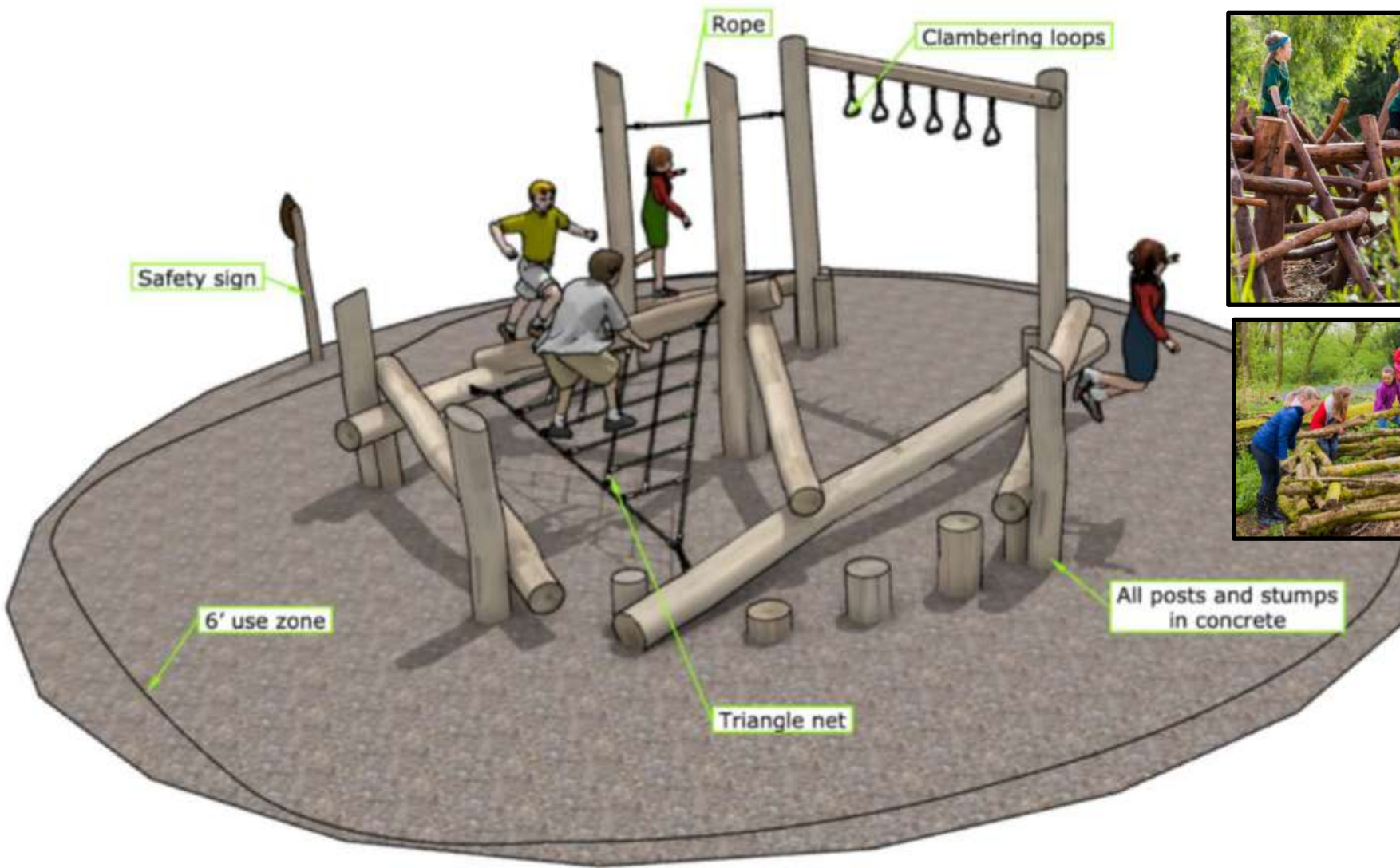


STONES + SAND
climbing and digging





BRANCHES + BURLAP
building and hiding



FINAL LAYOUT + DESIGN WOULD STILL INCLUDE MOVEABLE CREATIVE PLAY ELEMENTS SIMILAR TO THESE EXAMPLES

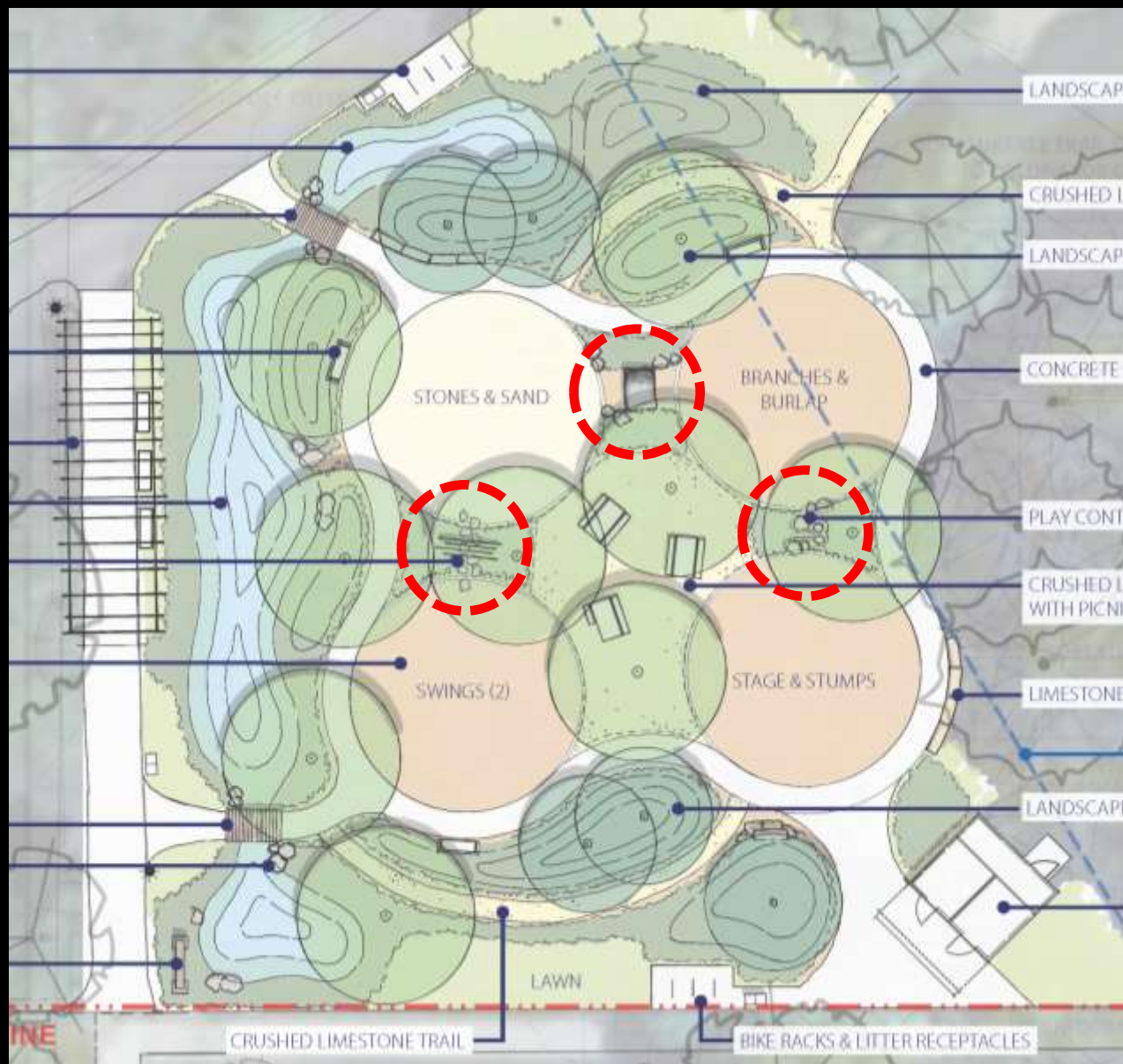
STAGE + STUMPS

performing and pretending





1a – THE DISCOVERY ZONE
swings for different age groups







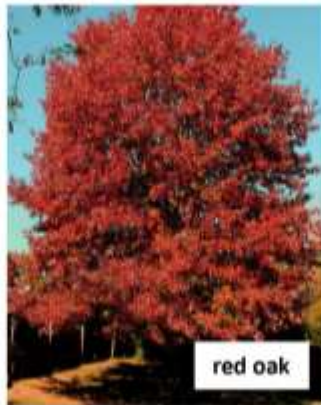
Add surface stormwater management system features, integrated with other play elements and park features.

GRANT APPLICATION FOCUS STORMWATER MANAGEMENT



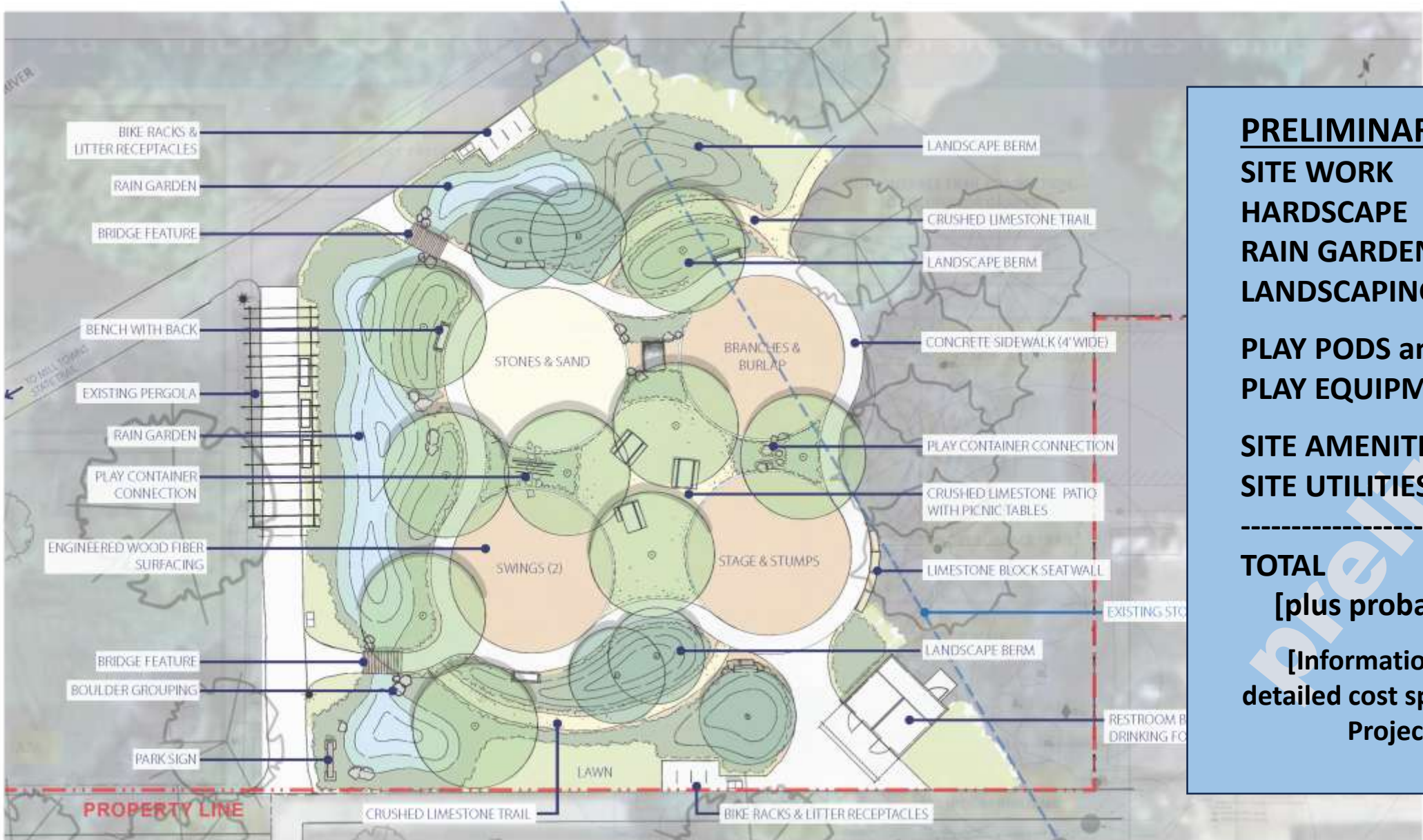
1a – THE DISCOVERY ZONE

Climate Action Plan response – natural systems demonstration project



1a – THE DISCOVERY ZONE

Immersion Landscape Concept – native plants + habitat creation



PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE

SITE WORK	\$ 60,000
HARDSCAPE	\$ 50,000
RAIN GARDENS	\$ 40,000
LANDSCAPING	\$ 40,000
PLAY PODS and PLAY EQUIPMENT	\$ 175,000
SITE AMENITIES	\$ 20,000
SITE UTILITIES	\$ 20,000

TOTAL \$ 405,000
[plus probable contingencies]

**[Information summarized from
detailed cost spreadsheet prepared by
Project Design Team]**

NEXT STEPS TOWARD PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

**MASTER PLAN
REVIEW +
APPROVAL**

**[PRAB + MAYOR /
CITY COUNCIL]**

**APPROVED
APRIL 2024**

**REFINED CONCEPT
DESIGN +
RESTROOM
OPTIONS
[design + costs]**

**WORK-IN-
PROGRESS**

**WORKING GROUP
MEETING

REVIEW +
COMMENT**

**CONVENED
JUNE 2025**

**PARK and
RECREATION
ADVISORY BOARD

REVIEW +
APPROVAL**

JULY 2025

**MAYOR and
CITY COUNCIL

REVIEW +
APPROVAL**

AUGUST 2025

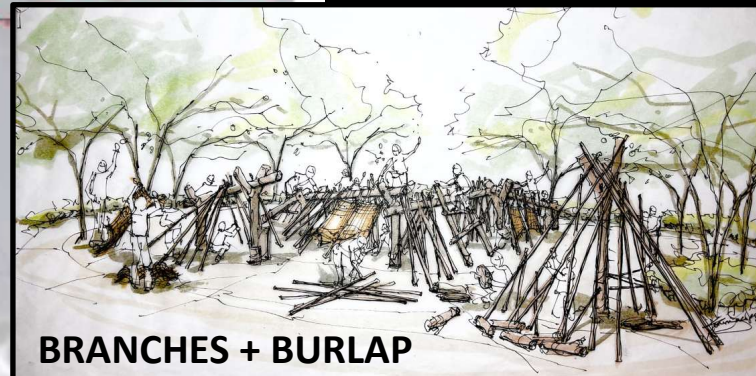
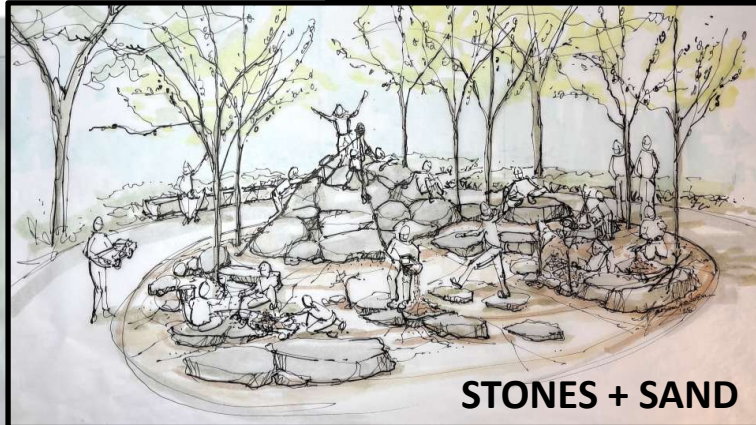
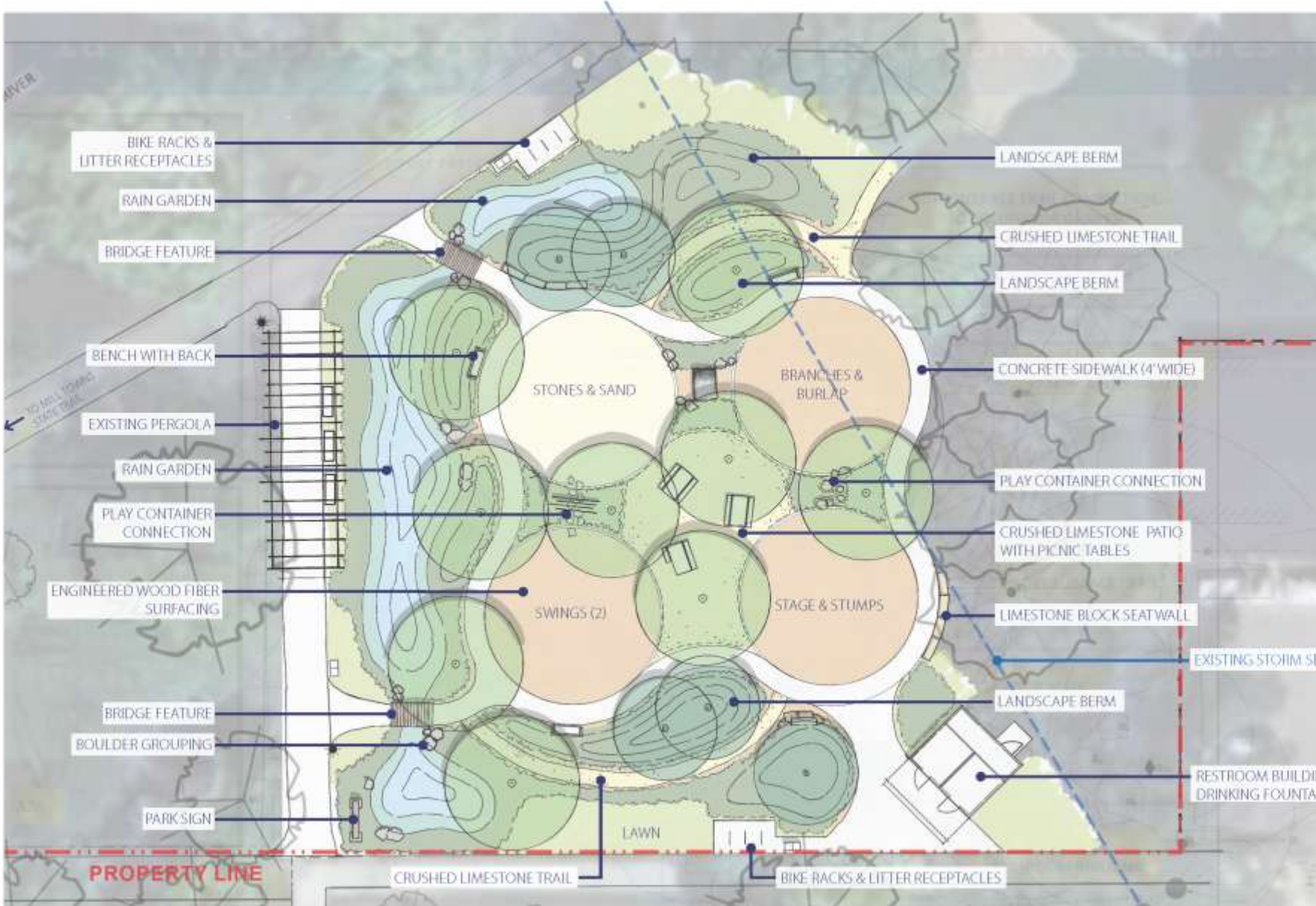
**COMPLETE
DETAILED DESIGN
+ CONFIRM
PROJECT BUDGET
and FUNDING**

**FALL/WINTER
2025**

**BIDDING +
CONTRACTS +

DISCOVERY ZONE
CONSTRUCTION**

**BEGINS
SPRING 2026**



Cannon River

Highway 3

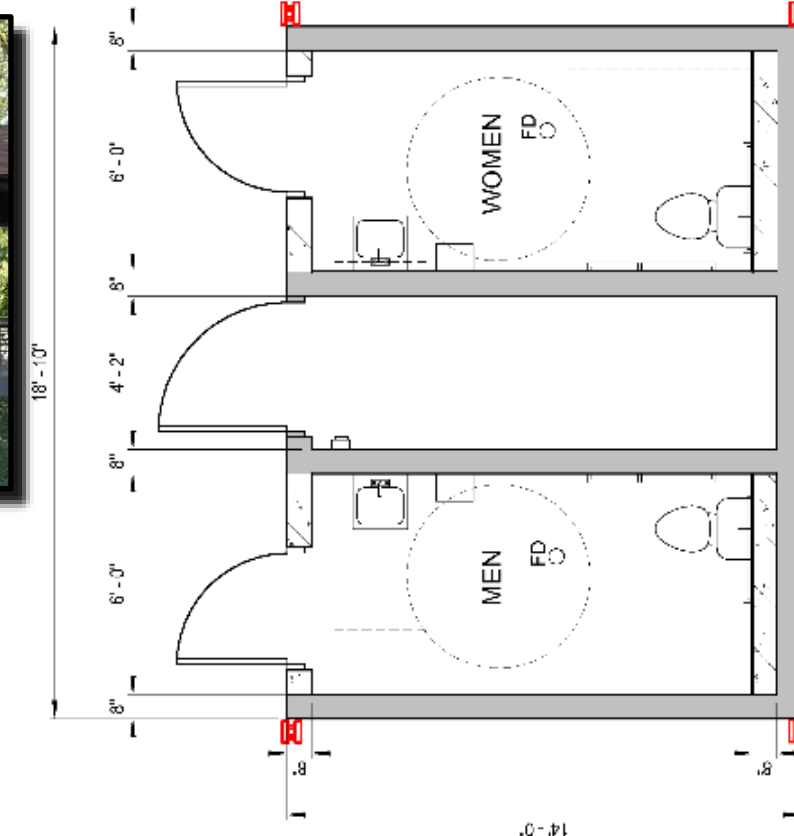
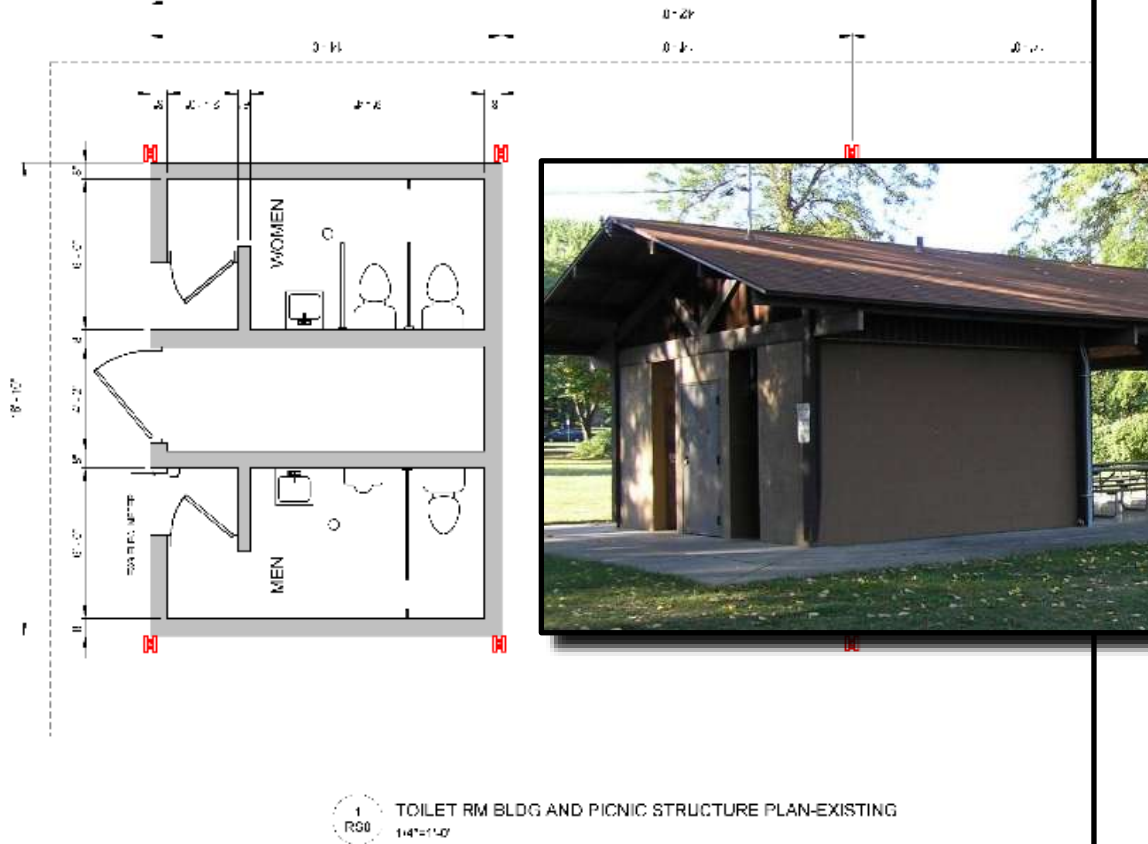
1a

THE DISCOVERY ZONE
nature-based play space

1b

RIVERSIDE LIONS PARK PAVILION
existing structure + playground

RIVERSIDE LIONS PARK – UNIVERSALLY ACCESSIBLE RESTROOMS
two unisex bathrooms at each location – exploring options + costs



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EXISTING RESTROOMS ATTACHED TO LIONS PAVILION

RIVERSIDE LIONS PARK RESTROOMS

Option One – renovate existing restrooms to meet ADA accessibility criteria



Cost for this structure is \$132,000 for complete design & supply delivery to the site; installation can be 1-1.5 times the cost of the building package; estimated cost - \$300,000

POTENTIAL COST SAVINGS OPTION

Vendor provides the basic 'box facility' delivered to site; City of Northfield contracts for additional building enhancements [roof, siding, etc.]; total cost for this building was \$100,000



RIVERSIDE LIONS PARK RESTROOMS

Option Two – stand alone prefabricated ADA restrooms



ESTIMATED COST: \$500,000

POTENTIAL COST SAVINGS OPTION
Vendor provides the basic 'box facility' delivered to site; City of Northfield contracts for additional building enhancements [roof, siding, etc.]

RIVERSIDE LIONS PARK RESTROOMS

Option Three – new prefabricated pavilion with attached ADA restrooms



RIVERSIDE LIONS PARK RESTROOMS

Option Four – on site construction of new restroom building

NORTHFIELD CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

City of Northfield Capital Improvement Plan for Parks, Open Space, Trails and Recreation Facilities											
PRIORITY INITIATIVES											
Location or Area	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	10-yr total
RIVERFRONT PARK MAINTENANCE											
Replacement of dated playground equipment to serve a wider age range and address accessibility											
Riverside Lions (playground 1)	\$ 300,000										
Riverside Lions (playground 2)					\$ 300,000						
Replacement/rehabilitation of dated park structures (gazebo, pavilion or warming houses)											
Seidler (shelter, skate space, ADA)				\$ 1,000,000							
Seidler (gazebo replacement)				\$ 120,000							
Improvements to existing courts, fields and rinks (baseball/softball, soccer, ice)											
Replace outdoor rink / lights by ice arena				\$ 350,000							
Lighting and other improvements											
Riverside Lions trail lighting					\$ 150,000						
Seidler Parking lot Maintenance					\$ 900,000						
Seidler Baseball Scoreboards			\$ 32,000		\$ 32,000		\$ 32,000		\$ 32,000		
Seidler replace field lights with LED			\$ 150,000		\$ 150,000		\$ 150,000		\$ 150,000		
Total investment by year	\$ 300,000	\$ --	\$ 382,000	\$ 1,470,000	\$ 1,032,000	\$ --	\$ 182,000	\$ --	\$ 182,000	\$ --	\$ 3,348,000
RIVERFRONT ENHANCEMENT ACTION PLAN PARK IMPROVEMENTS											
Implement Riverfront Enhancement Action Plan											
Bridge Square Phase 1 - Design	\$ 300,000										
Bridge Square Phase 2 - Construct		\$ 4,000,000									
Ames Plan Implementation (1)				\$ 1,117,000							
Butcock Plan Implementation (2)					\$ 4,210,000						
Riverside Lions Picnic Shelter/Restrooms	\$ 1,000,000										
Riverside Lions Splash Pad	\$ 1,000,000										
Riverside Lions Plan Implementation (3)					\$ 287,500						
Seidler Phase 1 Implementation (4)			\$ 2,500,000								
Seidler Phase 2 Implementation (5)								\$ 1,405,000			
Total investment by year	\$ 2,300,000	\$ 4,000,000	\$ 2,500,000	\$ 1,117,000	\$ 287,500	\$ 4,210,000	\$ --	\$ 1,405,000	\$ --	\$ --	\$ 18,812,500

**AND
AGGRESSIVELY
PURSUE ALL
CO-FUNDING
OPTIONS**

FIND WAYS TO INTEGRATE PARK IMPROVEMENTS WITH OTHER CITY PROJECTS/BUDGETS SUCH AS STREETS, UTILITIES, SIGNAGE, LIGHTING, PUBLIC ART, RIVER ECOLOGY, AND OTHERS.

VARIOUS PARK + TRAIL FUNDING GRANTS

+

PARK + TRAIL DEDICATION FEES

+

LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX

+

PHILANTHROPIC GIVING

+

ADVOCACY PARTNER INITIATIVES

+

VOLUNTEER EVENTS + FUNDRAISERS



FIVE STAR AND URBAN WATERS RESTORATION GRANT PROGRAM

2025 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Full Proposal Due Date: **January 30 2025, by 11:59 PM Eastern Time**

Habitat Enhancement Landscape Program [through BWSR]

HELP supports efforts to restore and enhance strategically located diverse native habitats found in Minnesota's natural areas, conservation lands, and open spaces to benefit declining populations of bees, butterflies, dragonflies, birds, and other wildlife species that are essential for ecosystems and food production. HELP prioritizes large-scale initiatives on the landscape that support these declining populations, with an emphasis on protecting pollinators. With HELP, BWSR intends to build new partnerships and fill gaps left by other conservation programs.

- \$3.5 million available in grant funding
- Eligible applicants: tribal governments, soil and water conservation districts, watershed districts, watershed management organizations, local government joint powers boards, counties, municipalities, non-government organizations, park districts and contractors
- Applicants can apply for a minimum of \$50,000 and a maximum of \$500,000
- Applications will be accepted through June 27, 2024

Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources

2026 ENRTF Request for Proposal



Minnesota's Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

Minnesota Constitution Art. X, Sec. 14: "The assets of the fund shall be appropriated by law for the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources."

Summary

The Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) welcomes proposals for projects of all sizes that address the priorities and requirements described within this Request for Proposal (RFP) and that aim to protect, conserve, preserve, and enhance Minnesota's air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources. The LCCMR reviews applications and makes funding recommendations to the Minnesota Legislature from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF). Approximately \$103 million is available from the Trust Fund through this RFP for projects beginning July 1, 2026. Most projects funded are two to three years in duration. Proposals must be submitted online at lccmrprojectgrant.leg.mn by March 19, 2025.

OUTDOOR RECREATION GRANT PROGRAM

2025 PROGRAM MANUAL

