

HAMLIN PARK MASTER PLAN



*Adopted and Approved by the
East Aurora Village Board
September 21, 2020*



Consulting services provided by



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1 Plan Intent

Hamlin Park, located in the heart of the Village of East Aurora, is one of the oldest and most widely used local parks by both Town and Village residents alike. In addition, a number of community groups, such as the Roycroft Players, and athletic organizations utilize park buildings and grounds on an almost daily basis. As a result, park facilities have deteriorated at a higher than normal rate, requiring constant maintenance and upkeep. Park users and the Town/Village have also identified a number of deficiencies in both existing buildings and grounds as well.



Due to the popularity of the park, the community realized that a strategic plan for improvements and upgrades would be needed to keep it safe and functional for future users, all while balancing its unique history in the community. Though Hamlin Park is bound to its current extent by the surrounding residential neighborhood, this effort also provides an opportunity to expand on the existing amenities in the park using new guidelines for recreational facilities and responding to changes in desired activities.

The intent of this plan is to:

- ❖ Give historical background about Hamlin Park
- ❖ Provide a detailed inventory of the existing conditions of facilities
- ❖ Long-term vision/goals for the park
- ❖ Provide an opportunity for the community to give ideas on the future of the park
- ❖ Identify deficiencies and areas for improvement
- ❖ Develop recommendations and a phased strategy

The plan can be used by the Village of East Aurora and the Town of Aurora, as joint users/operators of Hamlin Park, as they develop capital plans as well as maintenance and seeking outside funding for improvements.

Planning Process

The master plan for Hamlin Park was overseen by an advisory committee made up of a variety of volunteers including Town and Village elected officials, local business owners and residents, and municipal department staff. In addition to overseeing the project, the committee also provided background information on the Park, acted as a liaison to the community, and provided feedback to the design team of Clark Patterson Lee. The list of advisory committee members is located at the end of this section (*Acknowledgements*).

As with an planning process, the plan began with an assessment and inventory of the existing conditions of the Park itself, including the grounds, any structures, and additional amenities, such as play equipment, benches, grills, etc. The inventory included a general assessment on condition, safety concerns, age, use, and capacity (if applicable). This information was weighed against general standards for recreational equipment and fields provided in guidance documents such as the National Recreation and Parks Association in addition to locally identified deficiencies and needs.



**Village of East Aurora
Hamlin Park Future Use
Survey**

Tell us about how you use the park

How often do you go to the park?

	Never	Once Per Month	Once Per Week	Every Day
Summer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Spring	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fall	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Winter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Why don't you use the park?

☐ Circumstance (I)

☐ Park conditions

☐ The park is too

☐ No activities are

☐ Parking concern

☐ Distance

☐ Other (please specify)

What areas are most important to you?

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Playground equipment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Open green space	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shaded green space	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sports fields/courts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quiet spaces (for reading, conversations, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gathering spaces (for picnics, movies, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What events do you attend in the park?

☐ Church in the Park

☐ Children's Recreational Programs

☐ 4th of July Fireworks

☐ Other (please specify)

As noted, a community survey was developed and circulated to the Town and Village community to gather additional input on the current condition of the Park as well as identify any safety concerns, areas of higher use, times for use, and opportunities for improvement. General demographics (age, children, general location) were also included to identify the range of users, which provides valuable information for selecting the type of amenities needed or desired in the future. Over 1,000 Town and Village residents responded to the survey.

As the Park is not only used by Town and Village residents, but also several community and athletic groups, separate user group meetings were also held to gather specific information regarding the conditions and future of the Park. These groups included East Aurora Little Loop (football/cheerleading), East Aurora High School, the Aurora Players, the Boys & Girls Club of East Aurora. The survey and results are found in [Appendix A](#).

Based on this information, several alternatives were developed and discussed with the advisory committee before deciding on a recommended program. A phasing plan was also developed to identify the most feasible approach for implementing improvements to Hamlin Park over time along with cost estimates.

Acknowledgements

As noted, this plan was developed through volunteer efforts of Advisory Committee members, made up of Town and Village officials and staff, residents, user group representatives, and local business owners. The committee was an integral part of the process through their embodied knowledge about the Park, dedication to the process, and overall desire to improve Hamlin Park. The Village of East Aurora would also like to thank the community-at-large who contributed to the plan at public meetings, surveys, and offering their thoughts to local officials.

Advisory Committee Members

Bryan Gazda - Village Administrator

Peter Mercurio - Village Trustee

Pat Shea - Village Trustee/Park neighbor

Chris Musshafen - Town of Aurora Parks Dept.

Elaine Schiltz - Town of Aurora Parks Dept.

Ken Bojak - Resident/Park neighbor

Rich Cox - Resident/Park neighbor

Technical consulting services for the preparation and coordination of this plan were provided by Clark Patterson Lee.

2 History of the Park

The history of the park can be traced back to 1899 when local business owner and horse racing breeder Cicero J. Hamlin (later moving to the City of Buffalo), purchased Holmes Grove and adjacent lands in and donated them to the Village of East Aurora. The only stipulation for the park was that the land would forever be utilized as a public park and that the Village was to spend \$100 per year to make improvements on it - failure to do so would result in the lands reverting back to heirs of the Hamlin family.



Cicero (C.J.) Hamlin (left) and a historic photo of the original Roycroft Pavilion. © *Images of America: Town of Aurora 1818-1930 & Turf, Field and Farm, December 27, 1902.*

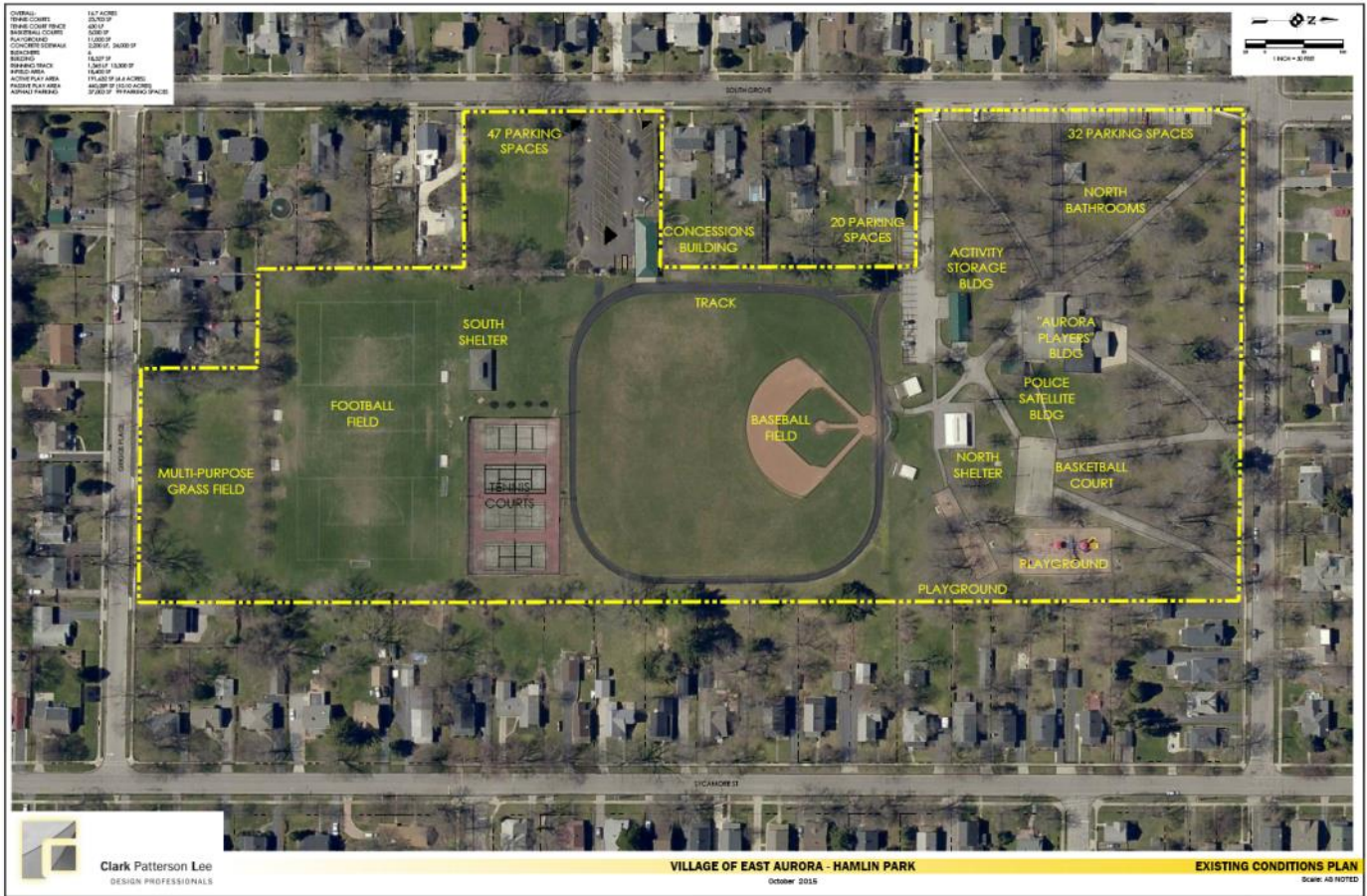
In the years that followed, several structures and recreational amenities were added, the most notable being the Roycroft Pavilion built by the Roycrafters in May of 1903. Early on, the Park consisted of an open field with mature trees and trails and used predominantly for community events and leisure activities. Eventually, playgrounds, athletic fields, additional shelters/pavilions, and three small parking areas were added, carrying on the recreational intent of the Park though adapting to meet the needs of the community over time.

3 Existing Park Conditions

Nestled within the Village of East Aurora, the 16-acre park is generally flat and as noted consists of two distinct areas - the more “historic” section consisting of more passive/leisure activities and the active/athletic portion. Within the passive section, mature trees dot the landscape, providing a more natural setting. Additional trees are located along the Park border providing a buffer to the adjacent residential neighbors. The Park is bounded on all sides by residential housing, with no room available for any expansion. Though the Park is fully contained within the Village of East Aurora, the Village retains ownership of the Park while the Town is responsible for maintenance. Division of financial responsibility has historically been uncertain.

A highlighted on the following page, the Park contains a number of athletic fields/courts including:

- ❖ Baseball field (approx. 60’ home to pitcher)
- ❖ Walking track (1/4-mile length)
- ❖ Rectangular field (328’ x 180’)
- ❖ Multi-purpose grass field (100’ x 200’)
- ❖ Four tennis courts
- ❖ Basketball court (located in “passive” section)
- ❖ Two small children’s playgrounds
- ❖ Volleyball net (near main parking lot)



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Both the baseball field and rectangular field also have bleachers, though the ones for the baseball field are permanent. There are no field lights for either field, limiting events only to day and early evening. The quarter-mile track that surrounds the baseball field connects to both parking lots on South Grove Street as well as the walking trails on the northern, passive section of the Park.

In addition to the Roycroft Pavilion, the Park also contains several other structures:

- ❖ North and South shelters
- ❖ Activity storage building (2,000 SF)
- ❖ Police satellite building (500 SF)
- ❖ North restroom (850 SF)
- ❖ Concessions building/central restroom (2,400 SF)
- ❖ Small gazebo (adjacent to main parking lot)

Each of the buildings are fully utilized with flexible space that is dedicated to a variety of users. For example, the activity storage building, while also being utilized as an actual storage facility for equipment, is also used for kid's summer recreational program, offering a sitting area for up to 40 people. The Police satellite building is used by not only the Village Police, but also the Town/Village Parks and DPW personnel for storage and the summer recreational program as a first aid station.

The Roycroft Pavilion is the only structure in the Park that is private and can only be used by the Aurora Players; neither the Town nor Village have access to this building. A more detailed inventory of the various structures, fields, parking lots, and other amenities within the Park is found in [Appendix B](#).



North pavilion (top) and Police satellite building (bottom).

4 Identified Issues/Concerns

An effective planning process includes a thorough review of the existing conditions, including both the potential opportunities in the Park as well as the deficiencies and community concerns and issues, which can lead to the development of specific recommendations. Several alternatives are explored as well, balancing estimated costs, maintaining the character of the Park, and providing a safe and inviting resource for the community.

Based on the inventory and assessment of the Park, several notable problems were noted as follows:

Park Area	Noted Problem/Deficiency	
Basketball Court	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface cracked and faded • OH wiring crossing at mid-court 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsecured electric panel on southern pole
Playground & Swingset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depth of mulch for fall protection insufficient • No mulch under teeter-totter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empty sign frame near tree • Installations (bench, table, trash) different than rest in park
Baseball field & Track	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ponding water in in-field & along west side of track • Vehicular damage on west side of track • Grass invading track/edging issues • Dimensional compliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bowed fencing/damaged support poles • Lawn under bleachers/benches unkempt • Conflict of uses (track and home plate)
Volleyball Courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OH wiring near eastern court • Dimensional compliance • Tree canopies in field of play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broken asphalt • Curb cut at South Grove Street looks like an entrance • No spectator area
Tennis Courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor surface conditions/localized structural failures • Substantial weed growth • Evidence of standing water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sagging nets • Damaged/rusted fencing • Poor lighting, inconsistent functionality
Sports field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control panels unprotected (weather/tampering) • Localized turf damage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abandoned pole & horn at southwest corner of field
North Pavilion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gutter (north side) damaged • Roof deterioration (weathering) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lighting removed to minimize vandalism

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Park Area	Noted Problem/Deficiency	
South Pavilion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lighting removed to minimize vandalism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roof runoff creates puddles/ trenches around perimeter
South Lawn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saturated areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open storm grate, limits use
Activity Storage Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office area not ADA accessible • OH wiring exposed near roof line • Exterior paint chipping • No toilet rooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire/building/electrical code compliance • Ceiling water damage • Damaged window screens
Police satellite building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broken gutter on west side • Fire/building/electrical code compliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No toilet rooms • General poor building conditions (water damage, temp. materials)
Roycroft Pavilion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sagging roof (east side visible) • Roof rot and damage to truss/ fascia • Several secondary doors non-ADA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire/building/electrical code compliance • Ponding around building/paths • Poor lighting when closed
North restroom building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missing downspout on northeast corner • Cracked and heaving sidewalk (trip hazards) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural cracks in building (exterior & interior)
Concessions/ Central restroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gutters and downspouts damaged/ detached • Overhead garage door latch damaged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West end doors non-ADA

Parking Area	Noted Problem/Deficiency	
Central parking lot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pavement damaged from standing water • Striping/signage non-ADA compliant • Poor lighting when closed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrance vegetation overgrown/ cluttered • No signage at entrance or traffic flow markings
Prospect Street on-street parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damaged sections of concrete sidewalk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No crosswalk across road near Park Place

Parking Area	Noted Problem/Deficiency	
South Grove on-street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utility poles located within parking stalls • Striping/signage non-ADA compliant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicles over-run edge of pavement when parking • Entrance vegetation overgrown • Poor visibility for drivers at S Grove and Prospect intersection
North parking lot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No ADA parking stalls • Pavement generally poor condition • No striping/signage for “No parking” areas • Speed bumps deteriorating and insufficient • Lawn at bike rack unkempt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posts along drive difficult for lawn maintenance • No storm inlets, grading issues resulting in ponding water • Public use of lot unclear • Unclear if vehicles can use stone path
Griggs Place on-street parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damaged sections of concrete sidewalk • Rotted lumber in fence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening in fence with no crosswalk • No park signage

In addition to these issues identified during the technical assessment, the community survey indicated other elements of the Park that were either liked the least or needing to be added/removed. (larger words = more response).

Q13 What do you like least about the park?

Answered: 516 Skipped: 584

Think Older Children Teenagers Upkeep Activities Dark
Track Walk Restrooms Enjoy
Playground Teens Bathrooms Grass
Park Community Tennis Courts Live
Kids July Fireworks Condition Complaints
Events Rooms Football Open Space Dogs Allowed
Bees

Q14 Is there anything that you think should be added to or removed from the park?

Answered: 441 Skipped: 659

Picnic Tables Football Games Trees Set Toy Fest
Water Fountains Activities Enjoy Remove Grove
Tennis Courts Baseball Field
Playground Track Park Covered
Bathrooms Outdoor Kids Volleyball Think
Trash Cans Benches Police Basketball Court
Football Field Splash Pad Nope

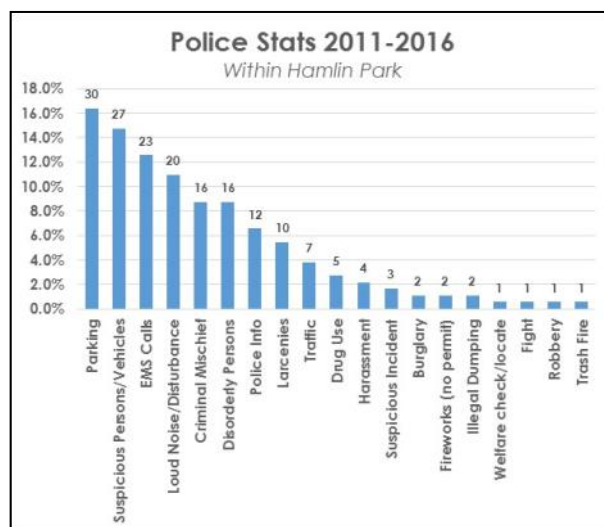
In general, the community had a favorable opinion towards the park, with the most positive viewpoints centered around the overall atmosphere and accessibility followed by the playgrounds and sports fields. Some of the suggestions for improvements relate to age conflicts (parents/seniors & teens), the ability to walk dogs on park grounds, overall maintenance/upkeep, additional water fountains, improved restroom facilities, upgrades to the track and tennis courts, and concerns about after hours hangout by teens.

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The latter issue is a common concern among public parks, especially within tight-knit, well-established residential neighborhoods such as the ones surrounding Hamlin Park. Further investigation into the extent of police calls within a one block area of the Park indicate that the majority of the calls are for parking followed by suspicious persons/vehicles. Overall, calls related to suspicious/disorderly behavior or activity account for approximately 40 percent (73 reports) over a five year period or one per month if evenly distributed.

It should be noted that these calls are not only for Hamlin Park itself, but also within a one-block geographic area, bounding approximately Walnut Street, Oakwood Avenue, Sycamore Street, and Linden Avenue. Maintaining public safety and security at community facilities such as Hamlin Park is and remains the most important responsibility for the Town and Village. Enforcement of local rules/regulations and providing security measures such as lighting and locking of structures after hours is the primary deterrent to these types of behavior while allowing residents and visitors the ability to continue the Park freely.

Though the development of this Plan for Hamlin Park provides an opportunity for improvements and upgrades, the relation of the Park to other nearby recreational facilities should also be considered to avoid significant duplication or to identify other amenities not offered at other locations. A brief overview of other parks and facilities within five miles of Hamlin Park includes:



- ❖ Aurora Recreation Dept. (0.5 miles) - 3.9 acres, community center, children's museum, sports, fields, green space, community pool, picnic tables
- ❖ East Aurora Middle School (0.6 miles) - 5.3 acres, sports fields, green space, playground
- ❖ Warren Drive Park (1.0 mile) - 2.5 acres, picnic shelter, baseball diamond, playground
- ❖ East Aurora Union Free School (1.5 miles) - 13.1 acres, sports fields, green space, playground
- ❖ Sinking Pond Wildlife Sanctuary (1.8 miles) - 57.2 acre nature preserve, hiking, biking, pond
- ❖ Majors Park (2 miles) - 203 acre marshland park, hiking (raised walkway), biking, pond
- ❖ Knox Farm State Park (2 miles) - 395 acres, variety of habitats, hiking, biking, winter trails, picnicking, playground



- ❖ Old Baldy Park (2.1 miles) - 15.3 acres wooded park, hiking trails
- ❖ East Aurora High School (2.4 miles) - 52.4 acres, sports fields, playground
- ❖ Hunters Creek County Park (4.5 miles) - 756 acre conservation park, hiking, ponds/wetlands
- ❖ Emery Park (4.8 miles) - 373 acres, hiking, biking, winter trails, pond, sports fields, picnicking, disk golf, ski lift, cross-country trails



As noted, there are several parks located within the vicinity offering a variety of recreational amenities (passive and active). The attractiveness and unique character of the Village of East Aurora and surrounding Town of Aurora will continue to bring visitors, families and new residents to the area, likely resulting in greater use of these parks. Though playgrounds and sports fields are noted at a number of these parks, the intensity of use of those at Hamlin Park and other facilities further support the need to upgrade and continue to maintain these facilities.

5 Evaluation/Findings

An assessment of the Park, coupled with the information gathered through steering committee meetings, user group meetings, and the survey, provided valuable background on the physical state of Hamlin Park, how it is used, and areas to focus on. In general, this assessment yielded the following findings (additional details are found in [Appendix B](#)):

- ❖ Most buildings have ADA compliance issues, including walkways, doors/access, and lighting
- ❖ Several buildings, most notably the activity storage building and Police satellite building, are in poor condition structurally or non-compliant with current building codes. Although upgrades can address these issues, over the long-term this cost may exceed reconstruction, resulting in the eventual need for reconstruction.
- ❖ Site lighting is insufficient for safety/security
- ❖ Park signage and markings at the entrances are inconsistent and do not adequately guide motorists
- ❖ Parking lots require maintenance for drainage, markings, etc.
- ❖ Overall maintenance of park amenities is inconsistent; a regular maintenance schedule is recommended.

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- ❖ Access to the park from the outside should clearly indicate pedestrian paths (i.e. crosswalks and/or signage)
- ❖ Wearing surfaces of hard surface courts are in poor condition and require reconstruction for safety
- ❖ Location of overhead utilities are in conflict with areas of activity, especially at the basketball, volleyball, and tennis courts. Relocation of these utilities or the activity areas is needed, with the latter preferred due to the surface conditions.
- ❖ The existing rectangular (football) field gets extensive use and, since it is the only field of this type in the park, it has no “rest period” to allow the turf to regenerate between use. Consideration of a second field or mandating “off-limit” times will provide regeneration periods and allow it to be used more efficiently. Otherwise, significant drainage improvements or installation of a synthetic surface should be considered to keep up with level of use.
- ❖ The location of the track, while efficient in the overall context of the park, cannot be used in tandem with the baseball field due to the conflict between the path and home plate. Re-routing the northern end of the track should be considered.
- ❖ Several areas of poor drainage are noted in fields and parking lots.
- ❖ Existing signage is in need of maintenance/reconstruction; should reconstruction be considered, a more consistent theme/design throughout the park is recommended, not only for signage but for all amenities.
- ❖ Public bathrooms are limited and not centrally located in the park. This is especially evident with the northern restroom building, located approximately 500 feet from the children’s playground.
- ❖ Many of the paths and sidewalks throughout the park are not ADA accessible and/or have inconsistent surfaces, limiting their use by a variety of users. A standard surface should be used throughout the park.



The surfaces of several courts have extended their useful life.



Trails, sidewalks, and other access points have various surface materials, making



Vegetation overgrowth is noted in several areas.

6

Recommended Park Improvements

Taking into account all of the information gathered during the inventory and assessment, advisory committee meetings, community survey, and general standards for parks, a conceptual design for the park was developed. The preferred route for recommendations includes upgrades to existing facilities, relocation to account for existing conditions and conflicts, expansions to allow for greater and longer-term use, and universal accessibility. The plan on the following page provides a visual representation of the full breadth of the recommended park improvements; it should be noted that elements of the plan may change or occur at different times depending on local funds or the procurement of outside funding (e.g. grants). In general, the recommended improvements include:

- ❖ Expansion of the track to a half-mile with an extension to the south around the existing tennis courts and rectangular athletic field. To the north, the track would be re-routed behind the existing fenced backstop of the baseball diamond to allow tandem use.
- ❖ New multi-sport grass field perpendicular to existing rectangular field (south end) to provide “resting period” for fields between use.
- ❖ Relocated south pavilion at southwest corner of baseball field
- ❖ New multi-sport court area with rebound wall adjacent to new multi-sport grass field with sidewalk connection from track and south parking lot.
- ❖ New badminton/volleyball court at grass field adjacent to south parking lot
- ❖ Repair/restripe south parking lot
- ❖ Remove existing bathroom facility on north end of Park
- ❖ Replacement of existing activity storage building with a 4,000 SF combined activities/bathroom facility/storage building to service multiple functions, provide restroom facilities closer to children’s playground and other recreational facilities, and address the multiple issues with the current structure.
- ❖ New paved sidewalk network between the north parking lot, activity storage building and baseball field.
- ❖ Upgraded screened “dugouts” with bleachers on both sides of existing ballfield
- ❖ New fencing around the perimeter for safety/security
- ❖ Open multi-sport court area adjacent to existing playground
- ❖ New sidewalk/”gate entrance” for Roycroft Pavilion
- ❖ New parking area striping and sidewalk at South Grove Street on-street parking area

7 Implementation

In addition to the physical improvements noted in the previous section, implementation of this master plan also requires organizational/programming to ensure a consistent the future for Hamlin Park and the surrounding community. This section includes guidance for phasing and funding of improvements, but also other actions that need to be undertaken by the Town of Aurora and Village of East Aurora.

Park Management/Operations

Currently, the Town and Village share responsibilities in the Park, with the Village assuming ownership and the Town providing maintenance.

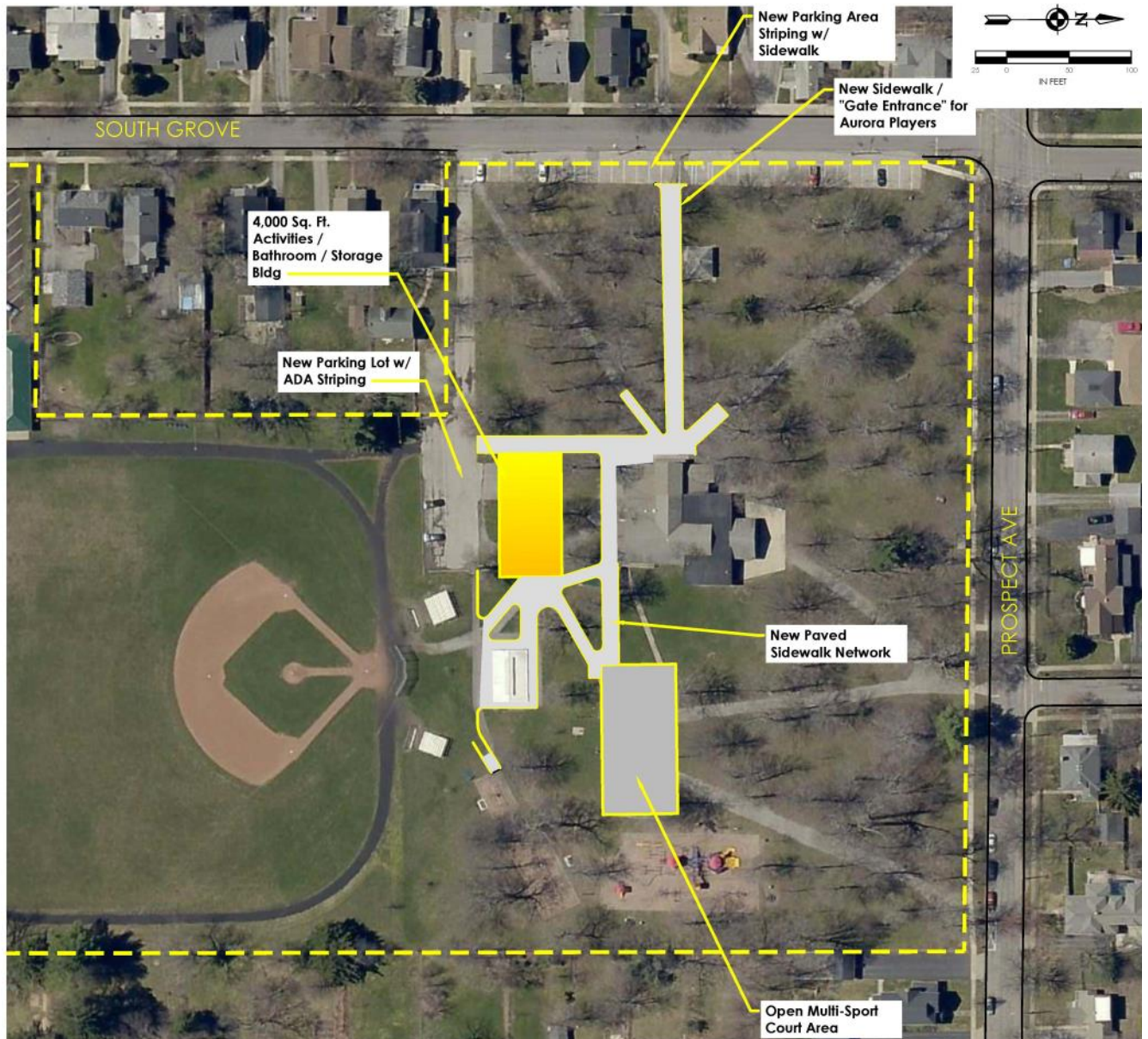
- ⇒ Updated maintenance agreement
- ⇒ Continued dedicated line item in budget (Town and Village)

Phasing

In order to prioritize and budget for these recommended improvements, a phased approach was developed - incremental improvements allow for the community to continue to use Hamlin Park with minimal intrusion and conflicts. Phasing was determined through discussion with the steering committee and considerations for level of effort in regards to engineering and construction.

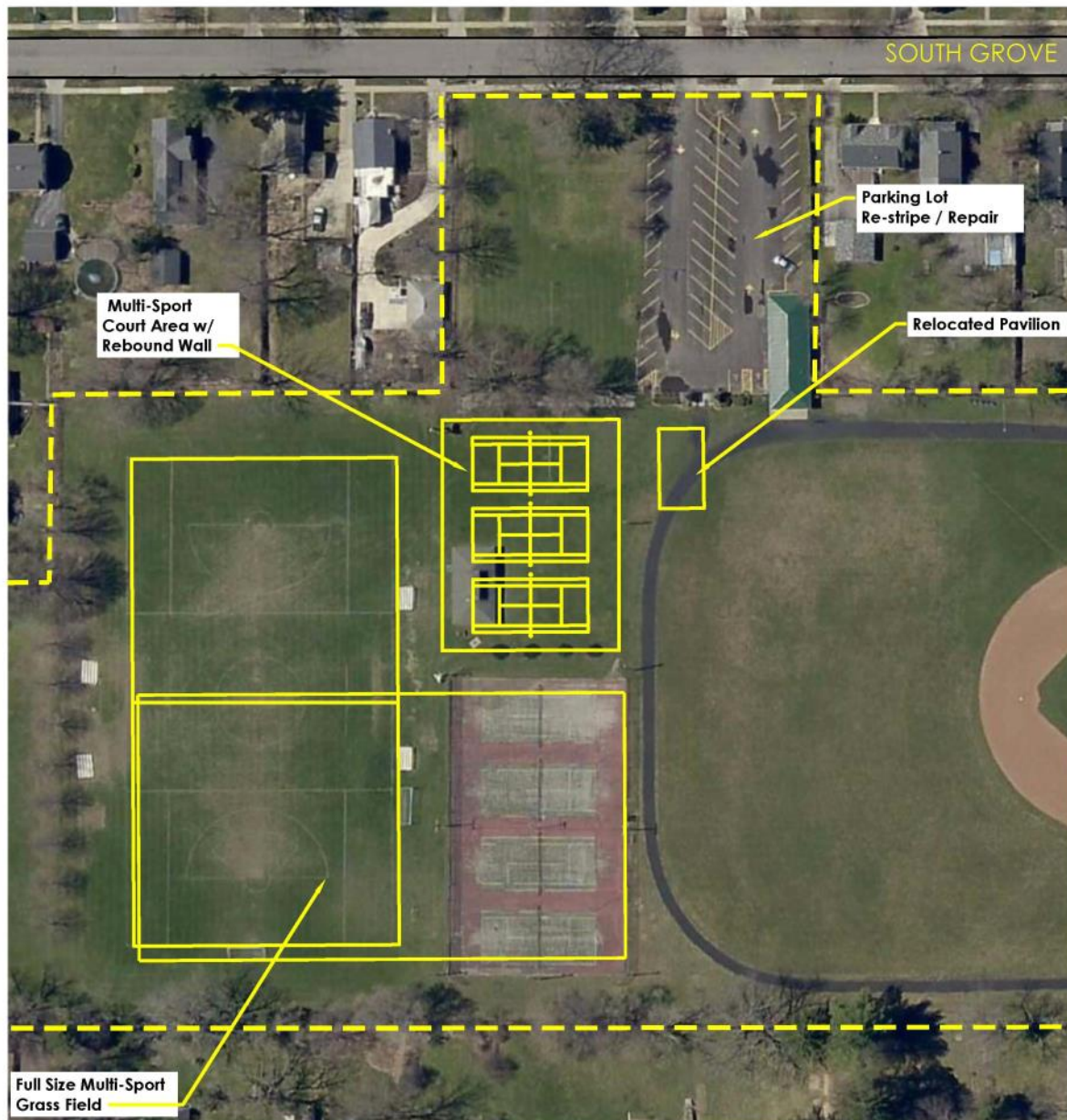
The recommended phasing is noted on the following pages along with estimated costs for improvements as of the date of this plan. The timeframe for each phase is also included to provide a general indication for priority of activities. Since the Town/Village may be able to undertake some of these activities as opportunities present themselves (e.g. capital planning, dedicated funds from outside sources, community volunteer efforts, etc.), strict adherence to the phasing is not critical unless otherwise noted.

Phase 1			Comments
1	4,000 Sq foot Activities / Storage / Bathroom Facility	\$ 1,196,000	
2	New Parking Lot at Activities Bldg	\$ 78,000	
3	New Concrete Sidewalk System around Aurora Players Bldg	\$ 260,000	
4	Open Court Surface	\$ 52,000	
Total Phase 1		\$ 1,586,000	

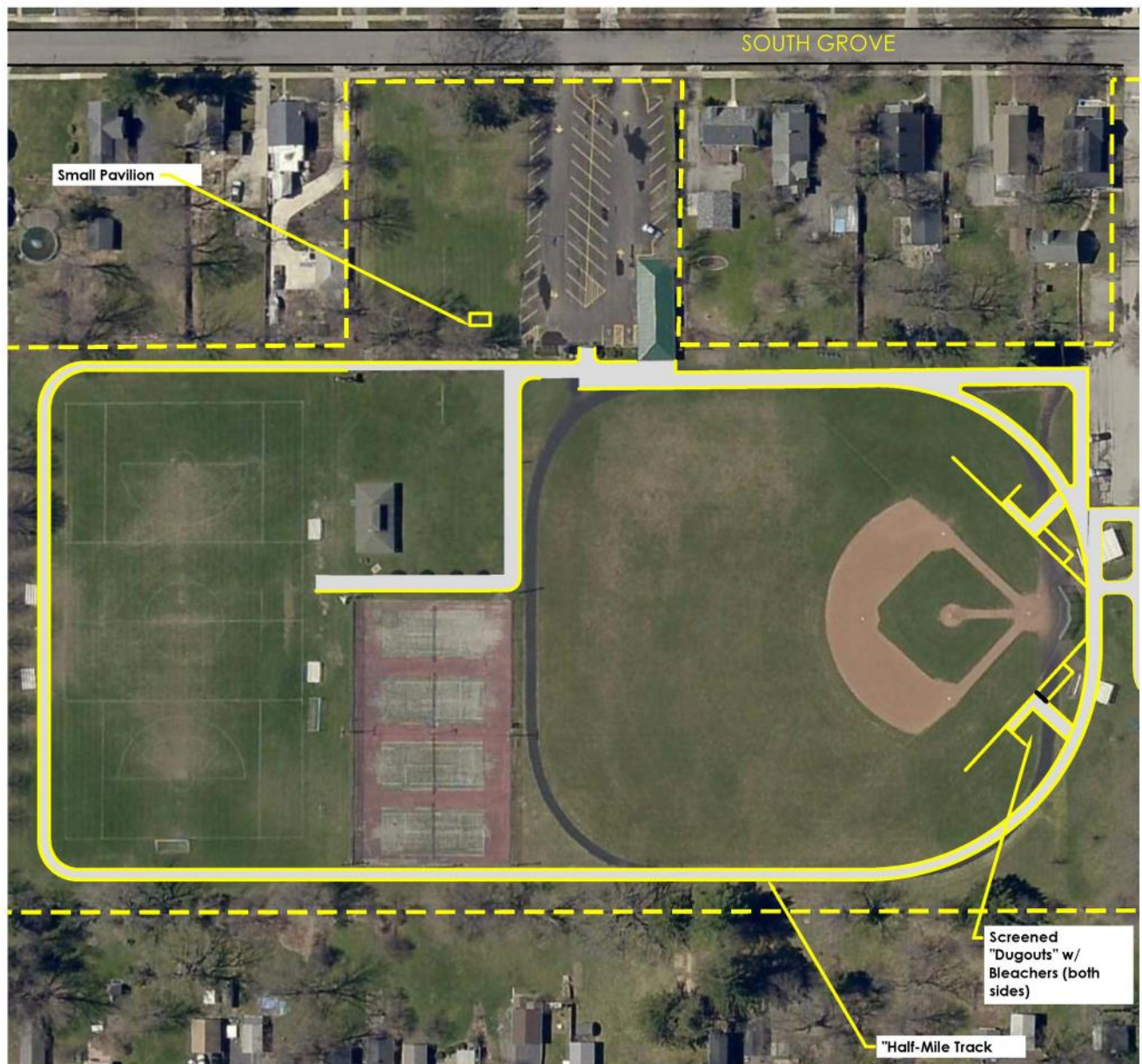


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Phase 2			Comments
5	Relocate Main Pavilion	\$ 32,500	
6	New Multi-sport Courts	\$ 253,500	
7	Repair "South" Parking Lot	\$ 78,000	
8	Playfield Renovations	\$ 130,000	
Total Phase 2		\$ 494,000	

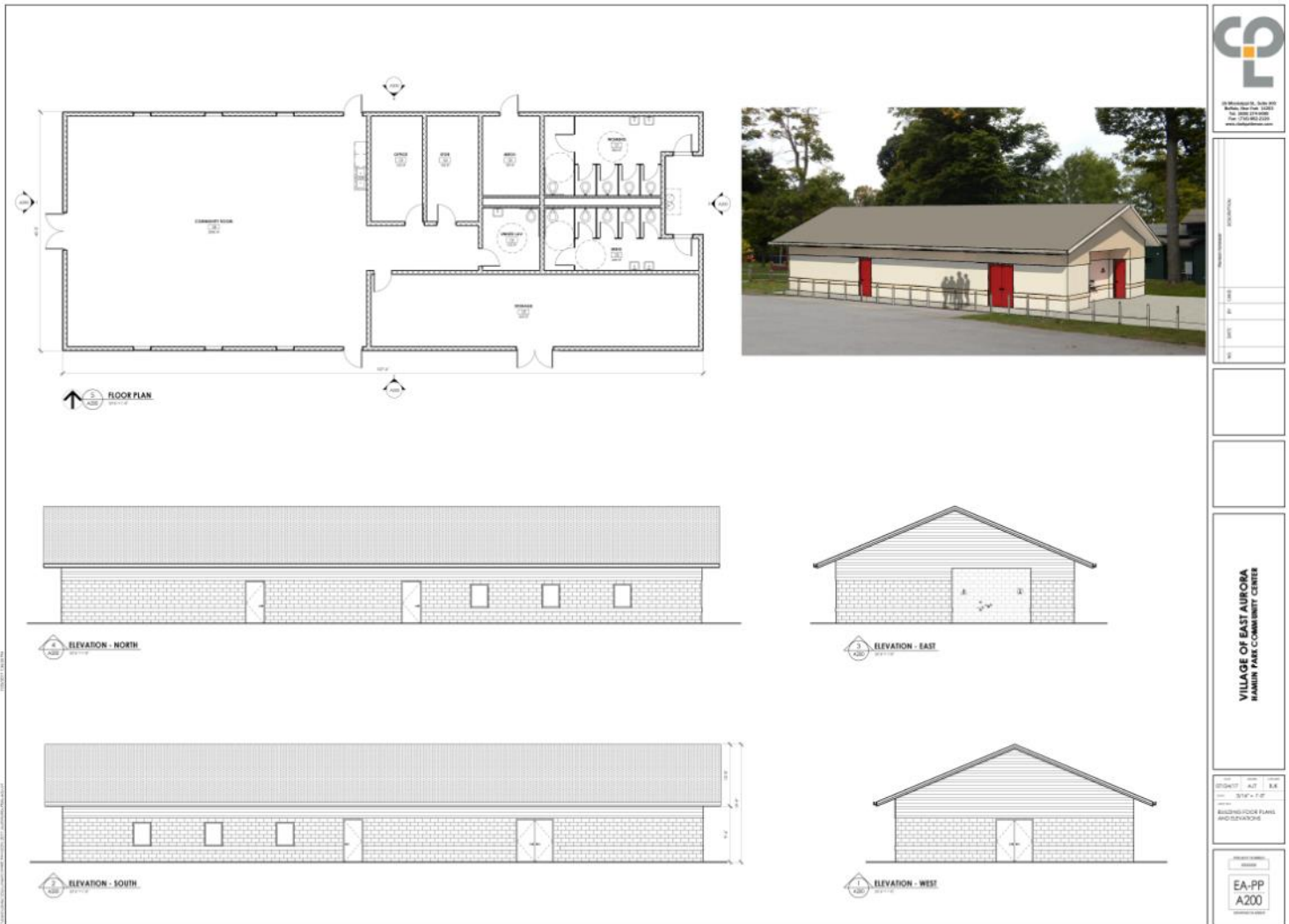


Phase 3			Comments
9	New Half Mile Asphalt Walking "Track"	\$ 156,000	
10	New Screened Dugouts	\$ 32,500	
11	New "Small" Pavilion (2)	\$ 39,000	
12	Roof Repair / Replacement on Aurora Players Bldg.	\$ 260,000	
	Total Phase 3	\$ 487,500	



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"On Hold"			Comments
13	New Perimeter Fencing	\$ 130,000	
14	New Hard Court Area	\$ 6,500	
	Total "On Hold"	\$ 136,500	
	Total Project Budget	\$ 2,704,000	



Conceptual layout & design for new activities/bathroom/storage building in Year 1.

Funding

Many resources or combinations of resources are available for financing park improvements. Local funds and resources (e.g. equipment, labor) can be leveraged against various sources of funding to achieve maximum value. Although state and federal funds for parkland vary widely from year to year, the sources on the following pages are some of the larger sources that the Town and Village could pursue for financial assistance. The applications for most of these grants are available through the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) that is opened once a year in late spring/early summer to applicants across the State.

The development of this master plan provides an important first step in that process - a community-supported document that provides a strategic vision and direction for the park. Without a document such as this, many applicants start off the grant process in a lower ranking by comparison. The Town and Village, as a joint effort, can utilize this plan to go after certain State funding, especially when coupled with dedicated local matching funds.

Some of the grants to consider include:

NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation (OPRHP) - Environmental Protection Fund Municipal Grant Program

OPRHP funding programs include the EPF Municipal Grant program, which offers matching grants for the acquisition, planning, development, and improvement of parks, historic properties listed on the National or State Registers of Historic Places and heritage areas identified in approved plans for statutorily designated Heritage Areas. Funds are available to municipalities or not-for-profits with an ownership interest. The maximum award is \$500,000. Grants are for a maximum of 50% reimbursement of eligible costs. Competition for the relatively limited funds is very high and typically a minority of applicants is funded, sometimes at less than the requested amounts. It is necessary to document a clear planning process that identifies needs, demonstrates appropriate development, and includes community support.

Legislative Appropriations

State appropriations for projects of local interest, such as acquisition and development of parks and recreational facilities, are initiated through state legislative representatives and are acted on by the state legislature. This has been an important ongoing source of funding for special projects of immediate need, such as band shells and amphitheaters, picnic shelters, special gardens, and memorials.

Other Sources

Another possible avenue for funding or other material support for trail projects may be state and county public health departments. Some public health officials and programs are targeting opportunities to provide active living environments – communities and neighborhoods that can support physical activity through its normal infrastructure of sidewalks, bicycle-friendly streets, trails, easily accessible parks, etc. Public health departments may be good sources for assistance with programs or projects that encourage the use of trails through maps, signage, and promotions. Additionally, private foundations with health-oriented missions are also more receptive to supporting trails as a means of encouraging healthy lifestyles (e.g., the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Active Living Program).

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In addition to direct funding sources, there are various resources and alternative opportunities available in the community that can be utilized to assist in the development and continued maintenance of the park. The use of these “alternative” resources can also help to instill a larger sense of community ownership and pride as these are members of the community contributing to the park’s success and enjoyment. Some of these include:

- ❖ Local youth groups such as Cub and Boy/Girl Scout troops can be approached for community service projects or informed of the various amenities desired. Boy Scouts especially are always looking for community service projects as part of their rise to the rank of Eagle Scout. Trail kiosks, picnic tables, gazebos/shelters and interpretive signage are some examples of projects that could be undertaken.
- ❖ Adopt-a-trail or other similar community adoption type initiatives for trail maintenance or funding an amenity can be offered to local businesses in exchange for limited advertisement at trail kiosks.
- ❖ Semi-retired and retired residents with backgrounds in construction, landscaping and other services could offer assistance in various tasks if informed of what can be done. This would require some additional review by the Town and Village to ensure appropriate liability.
- ❖ Community-based service clubs, such as but not limited to Lions Club and Kiwanis, are willing to assist in community projects when the opportunity presents itself.

Addendum

The following two features are hereby added as part of the Hamlin Park Master Plan.

- 1) Installation of a water feature, such as a splash pad, geared toward younger park patrons. The minimum cost estimate for this item is \$25,000.
- 2) Installation of items for park safety and security, including lights and cameras. Estimated costs could vary greatly, depending on the scope of what is installed, with the lowest minimum estimate starting at \$15,000.

Appendix A

Hamlin Park Future Use Survey

Appendix B

Facilities Inventory