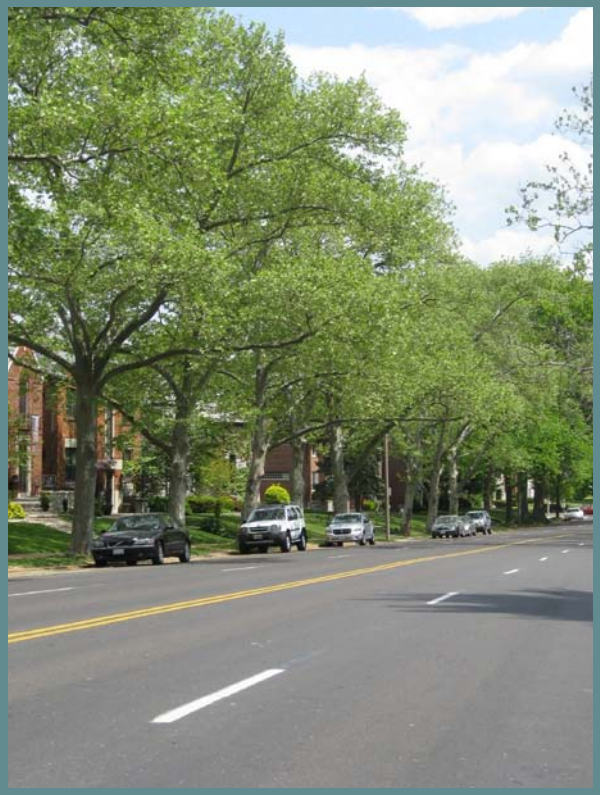
Goals and Objectives

- Research the History of Francis Park
- Gather Information from the Community
- Identify Key Issues for Planning and Implementation
- Develop Conceptual Plans Addressing Key Issues
- Gather Feedback from the Public
- Revise Concepts Based on Feedback
- Develop Probable Cost Analysis
- Develop Implementation and Maintenance Strategy
- Research and Provide Possible Funding Opportunities

Park Program

Program elements for the park were developed based on public, staff, and steering committee input, data collection and site analysis. Concept designs were presented to the community at the public forum where program elements were reviewed and discussed.

- Improve Overall Drainage
- Maximize Existing Recreation Fields
- Enhance the Lily Pond
- Improve Security
- Enhance Tennis Court Area
- Add Storage Areas
- Enhance Soft Running Trail
- Create a Teen Activity Area

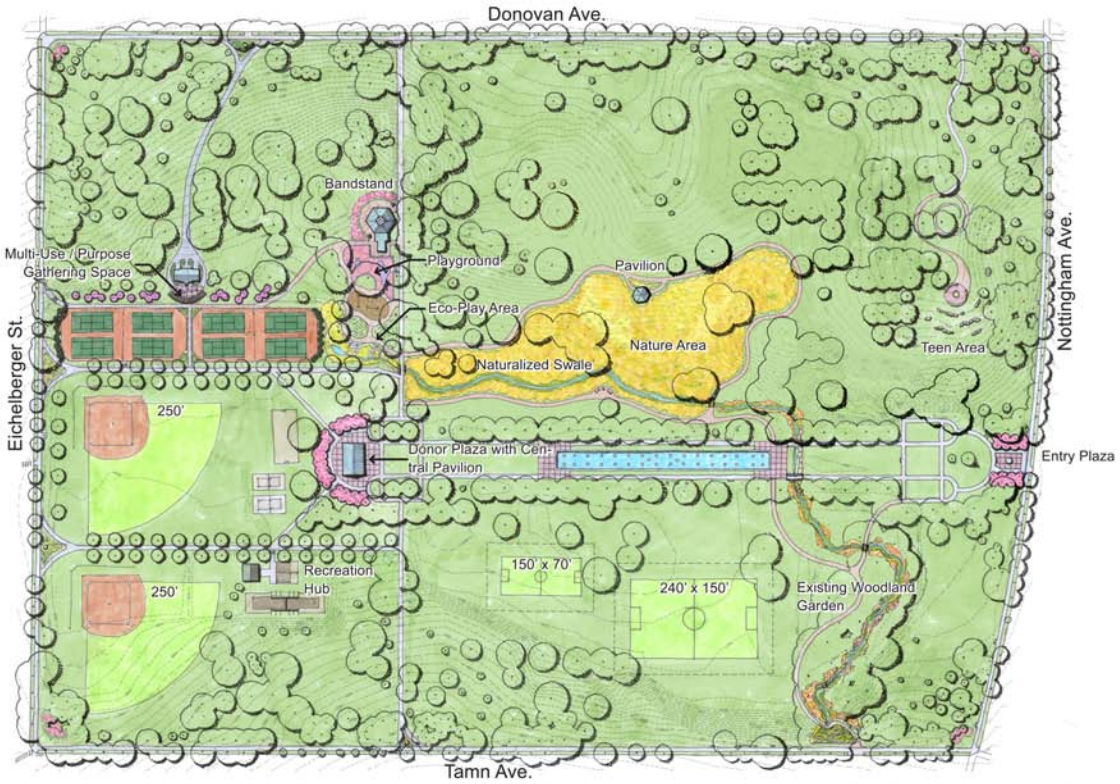


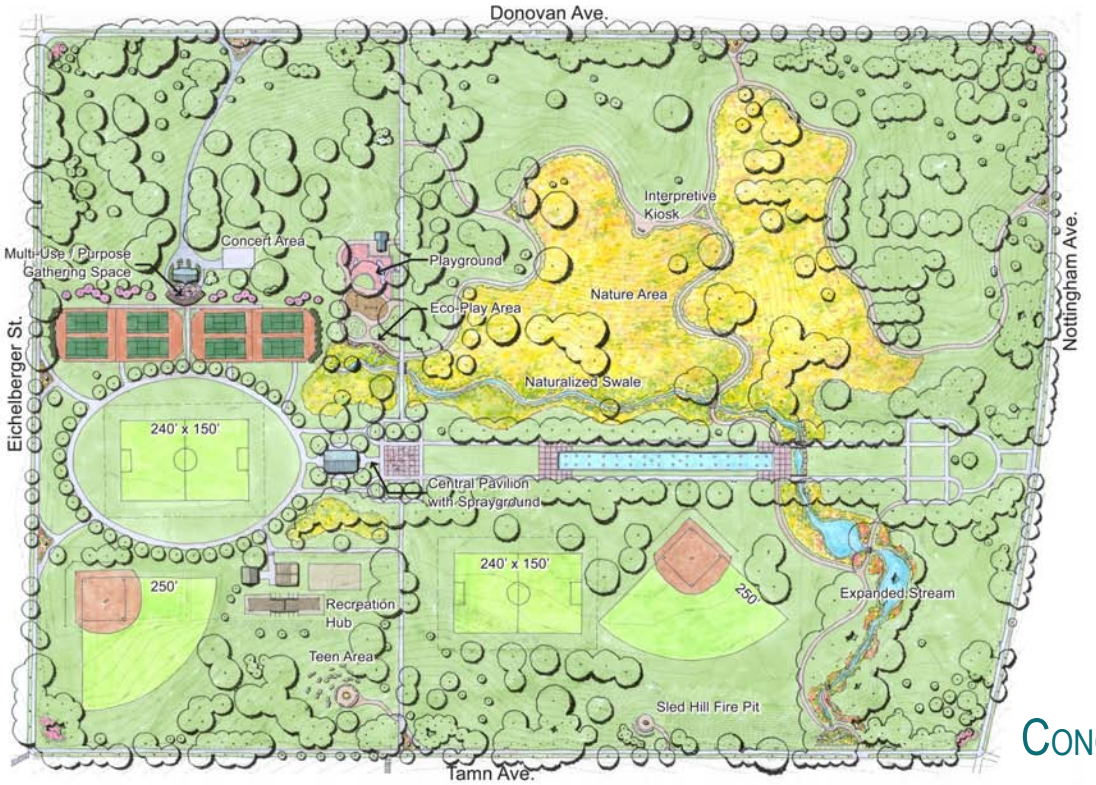
Concept Design

Two concept designs were presented to the steering committee and staff. These concepts reflect the goals, objectives and program items identified as being important during discussions with the staff and steering committee. The concepts were revised based on the discussion with the staff and steering committee and then they were presented to the community at a public forum. The concepts were presented, with photos of the site, inventory information, descriptions of the site analysis and proposed concept imagery.

Following the community review of the concepts, the design team met with staff and the steering committee for final concept determination. At this meeting the concepts were merged into a third concept and the final design was redefined based on input from the meeting. The final strategic plan was presented to the staff and steering committee for final approval prior to a public review of the plan.

Concept A




Donovan Ave.
Interpretive Kiosk
Multi-Use / Purpose Gathering Space
Concert Area
Playground
Eco-Play Area
Nature Area
Nottingham Ave.
Eichelberger St.
Naturalized Swale
240' x 150'
Central Pavilion with Spraygrund
240' x 150'
250'
250'
Recreation Hub
Expanded Stream
Teen Area
Sled Hill Fire Pit
Tamn Ave.

CONCEPT B

Final Design

The strategic plan is designed to build upon and enhance the existing amenities of Francis Park while providing additional passive and active recreation amenities for all park users.

Recommendations and design elements are based on the following nodes and focus areas: Central Pavilion and Formal Walk; Entry Features and Corner Monuments; Lily Pond Plazas; Tennis and Multi-Purpose Gathering Area; Children's Play Area; Nature Garden; Bandstand and Event Lawn; Teen Activity Area; Sled Hill Improvements; Stormwater and Drainage; Lighting and Security; General Landscape Improvements and Site Furnishings. Descriptions of improvements and enhancements are described on the following pages.


Donovan Ave.
Bandstand
Playground
Multipurpose Gathering Space
Eco-Play Area
Overlook
Nature Area
Teen Area
Nottingham Ave.
Eichelberger St.
Tennis Courts
Naturalized Swale
250' Soccer Field
Donor Plaza with Central Pavilion
Entry Plaza
Recreation Hub
250' Baseball Field
Open Multi-Use Lawn
(Potential for additional fields)
Existing Woodland Garden
Sledding Hill Overlook
Enhanced Corners
Tamm Ave.

Central Pavilion and Formal Walk

The central pavilion is set at the terminus of the existing formal walks surrounding the lily pond. This feature creates a node for social gatherings and activities in the center of the park. It will punctuate the already dramatic, long views across the lily pond. The formal oval walk added south of the central pavilion enhances the southern entry into the park continues the existing walk geometry and will draw park users into the heart of the park. A soccer field will be located in the center of the oval walk, however this space could also be utilized as a formal lawn and event space. A spray ground located just north of the central pavilion will provide seasonal opportunities for water play but also provide an additional plaza space when the fountains are deactivated.

A. Central Pavilion

- The pavilion should be sized to accommodate 30 to 40 people and include plumbing for a drinking fountain. It should contain an adequate electric subpanel to accommodate power needs for community events, contain security lighting, and accommodate plumbing needs for the sprayground.

- The pavilion will provide a covered location in the heart of the park. It should be used for small group gatherings or as a backdrop, or stage, during community events.

- The pavilion should contain a locked, secure, storage area for more centralized park access of maintenance equipment.

- The architectural detailing of the pavilion should reflect the architecture of the existing park house structure.

- Paving surrounding the pavilion should be decorative and accentuate the architecture of the structure. This paving could provide an opportunity for donor brick placement.

- A formal planting of flowering trees should surround the pavilion and act as a backdrop for the structure.

B. Formal Walk

- The formal walk surrounding the central soccer field will be a 12' wide, heavy duty, concrete walk. It will provide pedestrian access into the park and to the central pavilion. It will also act as limited vehicle access for park and forestry department staff as well as event vendors.

- The geometry of the walk will be a symmetrical oval and shall maximize the lawn contained in the central field.

- Grading modifications will need to be made to accommodate the walk and associated soccer field and to ensure proper drainage in the area.

C. Central Field

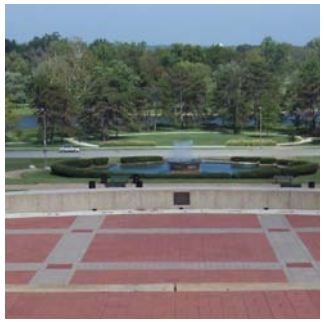
- The central field should be dedicated to soccer. This will help reduce overuse of the field by eliminating overlapping softball and baseball activities.

- The layout of the soccer field allows for proper grading and drainage of the field and accommodates bleachers on the sidelines.

- Connections to the tennis area and hand ball/racquet ball area shall be maintained.

D. Sprayground

- The spray ground should serve as an active recreation area for users during warm months and be an extension of the playground.



Stanchions in the park with a quick link to emergency services.

- The pavement should be decorative enough that when the sprayground is not in use the area is aesthetically pleasing and can serve as an event plaza or stage.

- Two large stone benches should line the edges of the space so sprayground users will have a place nearby for resting, drying off and observing activity.

E. Rain Garden

- Rain gardens should be utilized to meet MSD requirements.

- Rain gardens should be planted with native vegetation to serve as filters for stormwater and expand native habitat.

- Educational and interpretive signage located along pathways should inform park visitors about the use of rain gardens and their benefits.

F. Sand Volleyball

- Sand volley ball courts should be added near the hand ball and racquet ball courts to provide more diversified active recreation opportunities for park users.

- These courts would be easy to install and easy to remove if demand was not great enough.

G. Security Stanchion

- One, of two, stanchions in the park with a quick link to emergency services should be provided.

Entry Features and Corner Monuments

The park entrances and corner monuments are some of the most important features of the park because they provide the first impression for all users and passers by. The entries and corners should be welcoming gateways inviting park users in and announcing the park's presence. The features should be designed to provide a good first impression, give a "taste" of what lies within the park, and draw park users into the heart of the park.

A. Main Entry

- The main entry on Nottingham Avenue should be enhanced with special paving, possibly providing donor brick locations.

- A monument feature or sculptural feature should denote the significance of the entry and may contain the parks name.

- A formal planting of ornamental trees, shrubs and perennials should be added to provide visual diversity and aesthetic enhancements at the primary gateway into the park.

- One of two stanchions in the park with a quick link to emergency services should be provided.

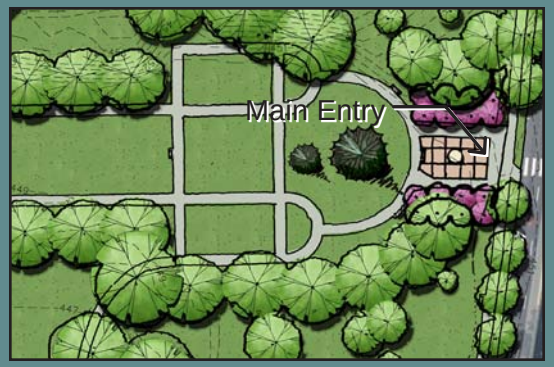
B. Corner Monuments

- All corners should have matching material palettes, architectural features, and landscape to ensure a unified and cohesive look at the corners of the park. These elements should reflect the same elements utilized at the main entry.

- Paving at corner monuments should be enhanced and slightly enlarged. This will provide a significant visual cue announcing the park and provide a wider area for people circling the park as they walk or run.

- A small monument feature or sculptural element, reflecting that at the primary entry, should be utilized to accentuate the corners of the park.

- A water hook-up should be provided at these locations for ease of maintenance.



C. Secondary Entrances

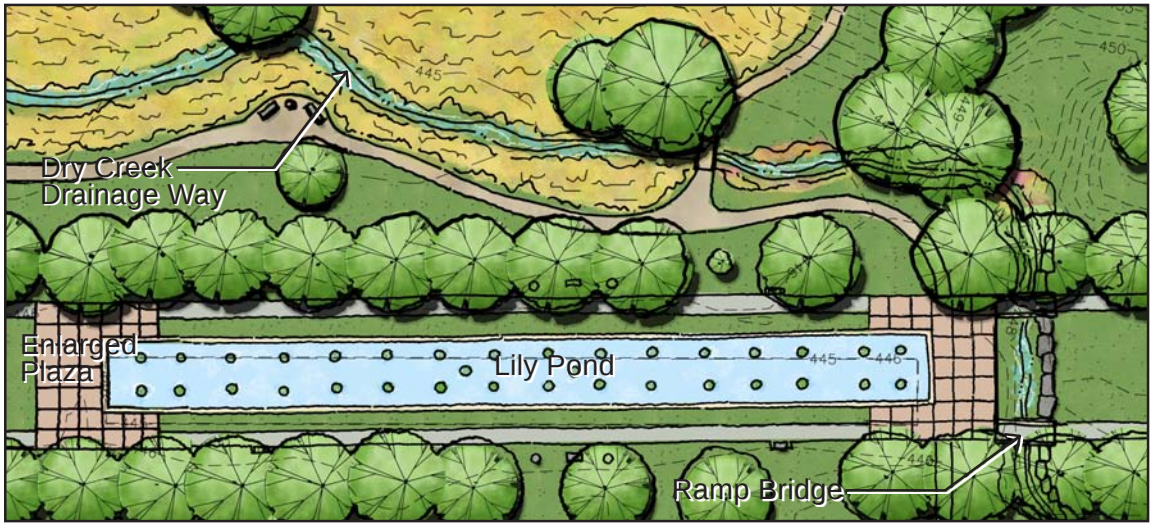
- All secondary entrances should have matching material palettes, architectural features, and landscape to ensure a unified and cohesive look to the park entries. These elements should reflect the same elements utilized at the main entry.

- A small monument feature or sculptural element, reflecting that at the primary entry, should be utilized to accentuate the secondary entries.

- A water hook-up should be provided at these locations for ease of maintenance.

Lily Pond Plazas

Plazas added to the ends of the lily pond will provide formal spaces to view the pond, extra room for circulation, and an opportunity for donor paving. Simple improvements should be made to the lily pond to reduce water loss and improve its aesthetics. Bald cypress plantings along the edges of the linear space should be reinforced as necessary when trees need to be replaced. Access to the lily pond plazas should be made ADA accessible.



A. Plazas

- Plazas should be paved with decorative paving. These areas could be utilized for donor paving and fund raising purposes.

- Geometry of the space should align with the geometry of the existing sidewalks.

B. Lily Pond

- Improvements to the pond should include replacement of all plumbing, input and output, to ensure a reduction in water loss.

- Pond outflow structures should be replaced to minimize debris entering plumbing system.

- Pond water proofing paint should be checked for leaks approximately every five years. A dark grey paint color should be utilized to help minimize visual impact of debris and algae in the pond.

- A precast coping should be added to the perimeter of the pond to prevent water from lapping out of the pond and to help visually define the edge of the pond.

C. Ramp Bridges

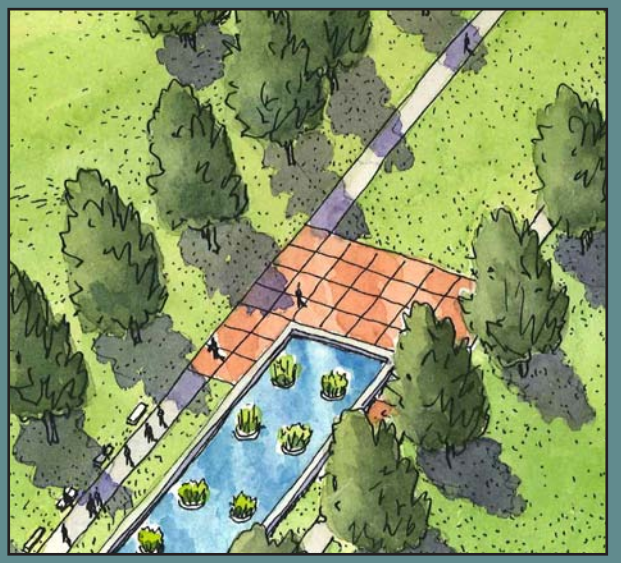
- Sidewalk grades should be altered to meet ADA requirements.

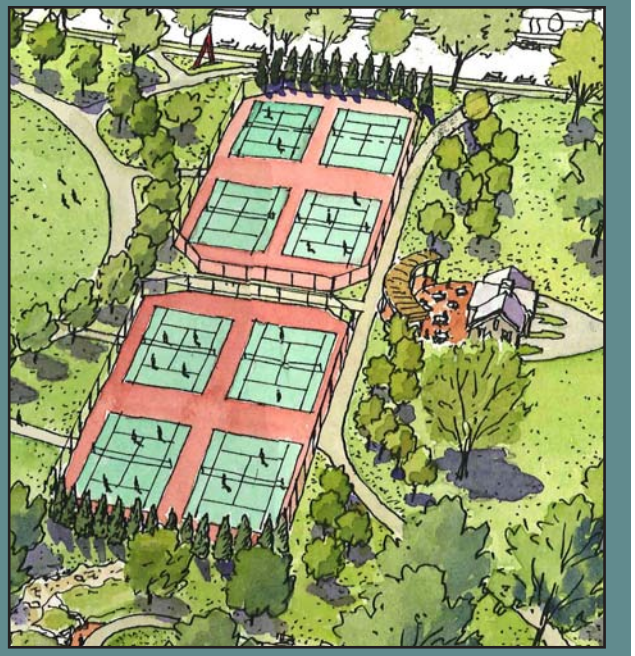
- Ramps should be constructed to appear like bridges with the same architectural characteristics of other bridges within the park.

- Ramps with ADA approved grasping rails should bridge the proposed dry creek drainage way.

D. Dry Creek Drainage Way

- The dry creek is part of the greater park drainage improvements. See the Stormwater and Drainage section, on page 41, for a full description.





Tennis and Multi-Purpose Gathering Area

Improvements in this area of the park should build on the existing amenities. The tennis courts are well used and therefore require some repair and replacement of well worn materials. Access in and out of the tennis and multi-purpose area should be enhanced by opening access from the formal walk through the courts to the park structure. The area adjacent to the exiting park structure should be utilized as a multi-purpose gathering space and provide a location for passive recreation. The structure's interior should be remodeled to accommodate additional functions and a more active use.

A. Tennis Courts

- Courts should be resurfaced. Fences should be replaced. Corners of courts should be clipped to ease the court configuration and help return balls into play. Evergreen screens should be added at the ends of the courts to provide better backdrops for balls in play and reduce the overall visual impact of the facility.

- A central isle through the tennis courts should be opened up for centralized and more direct access to park house and new multi-purpose gathering area. A low retaining wall will need to be added to accommodate the centralized walk.

- Lighting of the courts is not recommended due to the proximity of residents. Wilmore Park, also in St. Louis Hills, provides lit tennis courts that are appropriately located.

B. Multi-Purpose Gathering Area

- A plaza space should be created for a seating area for small social gatherings.

- Vendors could be encouraged to run temporary concessions in this area of the park. This could be done on a seasonal basis or on weekends, as demand would allow.

- Chess tables should be utilized and could serve dual purposes of dining or playing chess.

- A pergola / trellis should be added to provide shade to the seating area and also act as a terminus to the new, centralized walk that bisects the tennis courts.

C. Park Structure

- The existing building should be enhanced to house an active use. The building could be utilized for security staff, historical interpretive exhibits about Francis Park, or a conditioned storage facility for the St. Louis Hills Neighborhood Association.

- The structure would require upgrades to make it habitable, aesthetically pleasing, and ADA accessible.

- The existing concrete pad utilized for the temporary band shelter should be removed. This area will be returned to lawn. A new location for the band shelter is proposed in the Bandstand and Event Lawn section. See that section for a full description.

Children's Play Area

The existing playground could be enhanced to create a premier playground in Francis Park. A concrete sidewalk should be added around the playground, to divide play amenities and to create a unified continuous edge to the area. Grades surrounding the playground should be adjusted with walls to provide more seating and landscape opportunities. The addition of earthen play berms would allow children alternative play areas to the existing traditional structures. Two additional play pieces that focus on interaction with nature and the physical world should be added adjacent to the earthen berms. These elements will naturalize the playground and provide more opportunities for children to interact with nature.

A. Sidewalk

- A five foot wide perimeter sidewalk should define the playground limits, help contain playground surfacing, and provide a unifying element around the entire playground.

B. Play Berms

- Two lawn covered berms should be added for a diversity of play surfaces and to provide alternate seating opportunities.

C. Eco-Oriented Play Pieces

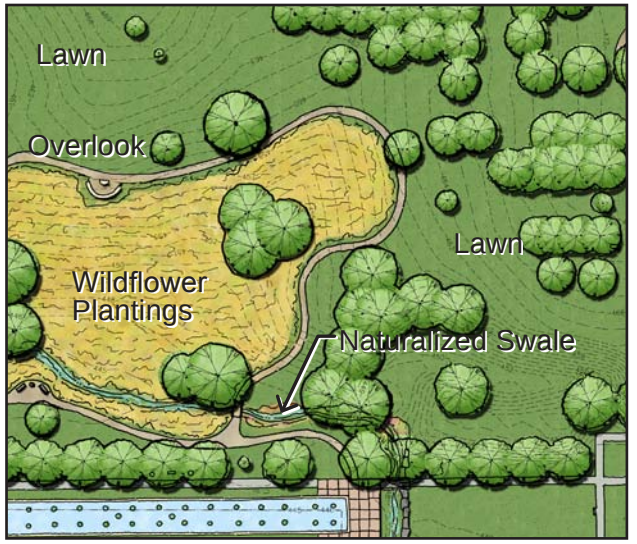
- Two eco-oriented play pieces should be added at the southern end of the playground. These pieces will help naturalize the playground and allow children to interact with nature and the environment.

D. Rain Garden

- The adjacent rain garden should provide an interactive location for children to observe the natural environment. Eco-oriented play pieces and interpretive signage should be linked to the rain garden visually.

Nature Garden

The nature garden is an area of the park dedicated to the native environment. Within the nature garden unique species of plants will be fostered to provide habitat for Missouri native species. Bird feeders and protective houses should be erected to attract wildlife. An asphalt trail should loop the perimeter of the area and provide opportunities for placement of interpretive signage. These signs should provide information to visitors about the benefits of the ecosystem, its flora and fauna. The nature garden should provide learning and education opportunities for small groups and could be an extension of class room programs in schools adjacent to the park. Groups of students, scouts or nature enthusiasts could all benefit form this educational opportunity. Additionally, the natural ecosystem will help reduce mowing maintenance needed in the park, it will provide habitat for mosquito predators, and it will provide water quality treatment for storm runoff that flows through the area.



A. Native Plantings

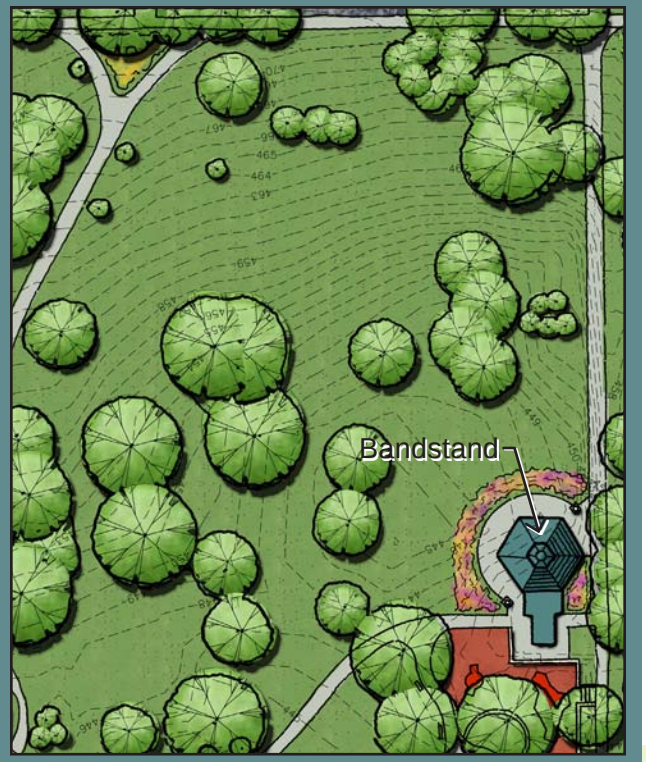
- The area should be planted with native vegetation to serve as an educational tool and enhance and expand native habitat. Native plants will help water quality and provide habitat for mosquito predators.

B. Loop Walk

- A continuous walk should be provided around the perimeter of the nature garden. It should tie into the formal walks in the center of the park. On steeply graded areas, this walk should be asphalt. On areas of minimal grade change, the walk should be chat.

C. Interpretive Signage

- Opportunities for interpretive signage should be located on the east and west sides of the nature garden. Small paved areas and benches should be associated with the signage so visitors can stop and make the most of the educational opportunities provided by the signs.



D. Sculpture

- Sculptural elements should be incorporated into the native planting area and could provide donor opportunities if desired. Sculpture should reflect the flavor of the native garden.

E. Edges and Plantings

- Native plantings should have defined edges that are kept very short. A buffer of mown grass along the pedestrian path should provide a well maintained edge to the native plantings.

- Native plants within the nature garden should be short in stature, not maturing more than 3' in height. Plants should be a mix of grasses and forbs for maximum diversity and visual interest.

- The native plantings in the nature garden should physically and visually tie into the native plantings along the dry creek. The dry creek is part of the greater park drainage improvements. See the Stormwater and Drainage section for a full description.

Bandstand and Event Lawn

The bandstand and event lawn are amenities used for community wide activities. The proposed location for the bandstand allows better view angles of the shelter than the original location. The new location sits at the bottom of a gently sloping, natural shaped amphitheater lawn. In this location the bandstand should be utilized for concerts in the park and movie viewing night. The structure could be phased into construction. First the bandstand's foundation and infrastructure could be installed and the existing mobile band shelter could be utilized. The physical structure could be added in a second phase of work. The bandstand should be located adjacent to the existing playground comfort station and should share utilities. Slight grading modifications will need to be made at the bottom of the event lawn, in front of the bandstand, to ensure proper drainage in the area. The event lawn, after minor grading adjustments, could once again be the location for the annual Easter egg hunt and provides a gentle slope for concert viewing.

A. Bandstand

- A new bandstand should accommodate the Compton Heights Concert Band. It should be equipped with electrical service for all concert needs. The bandstand should reflect the architectural character of the park. It should visually tie into the existing comfort station.

- Decorative walls and architectural elements should be utilized to help elevate structure for maximum view angles.

- Ornamental plantings should be used to soften the architecture of the bandstand, provide a back drop for activities and provide a buffer between the bandstand and the sloping hillside.

B. Event Lawn

- The event lawn should receive minor grading adjustments to ensure positive drainage and allow maximum view angles.

C. Connector Sidewalk

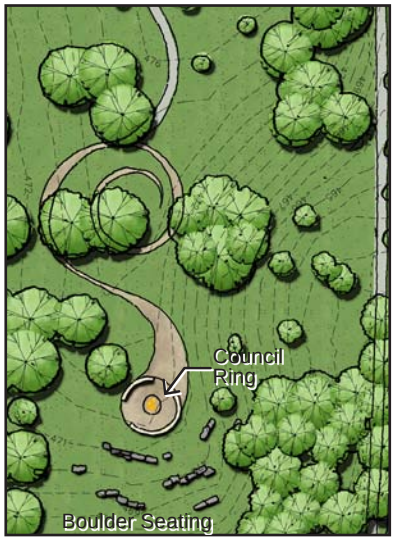
- A sidewalk should be added to link the bandstand and comfort station to the tennis and multi-purpose gathering space.

D. Widened Sidewalk

- The sidewalk from Donovan Avenue to the bandstand should be widened to accommodate vehicular traffic necessary to support the concert events. Grading should be modified to accommodate the widened sidewalk.

Teen Activity Area

The teen activity area should provide passive recreation amenities with a focus on teens and young adults. Because teens are often under served in traditional park planning this area should fill that gap in planning. This zone's use will not be limited to teens and young adults but elements within it will be geared toward them and away from traditional park elements for children. This zone should appeal to teens and be integrated seamlessly into the existing park character.



A. Interactive Sculptural Element

- A mosaic sculptural element should be installed as the central focus of the teen area. The sculpture should be interactive and provide an opportunity for teens to help with its construction. This should provide a sense of ownership by the teens who will be utilizing the area. A council ring structure should be incorporated into the center of the sculpture to provide seating opportunities.

B. Boulder Seating and Wi-Fi Zone

- Natural boulders should be nestled into the existing slope to create random and relaxed settings for teens. This area of the park should be constructed to provide wireless internet access.

C. Teen Play Structures

- Several small structures, geared toward teens, should be installed.

D. Frisbee Golf

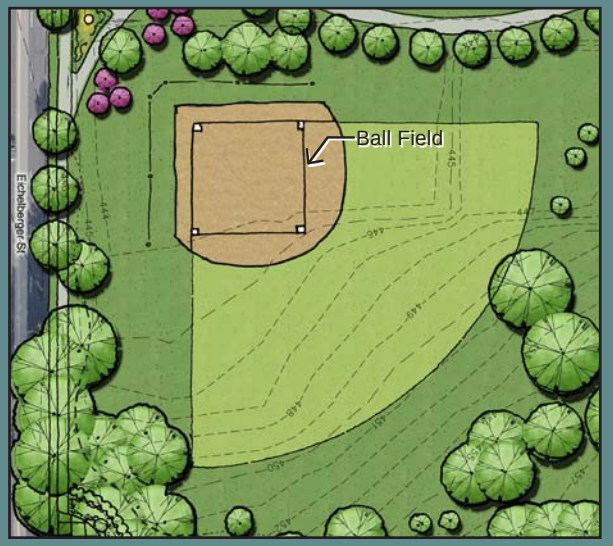
- Golf holes should be incorporated throughout this area and along the western edge of the park. These holes make little physical impact on a landscape and can provide a good source of active recreation.

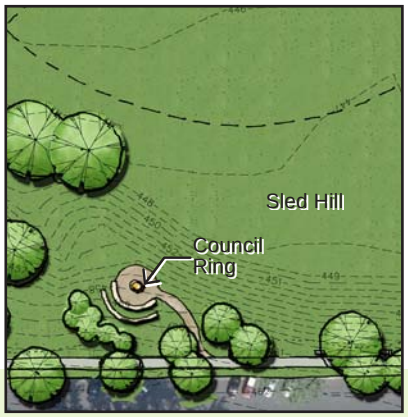
Ball Field

A full size, dedicated, ball field should be located in the south east corner of the park and be part of the active recreation hub. This field should be adjacent to other active recreation amenities including the racquet ball courts, the handball courts, the soccer field, and sand volleyball courts. The field should be fully equipped with a backstop, dugouts, and bleachers. Slight grading modifications will need to be made to accommodate the field and ensure proper drainage in the area.

Sled Hill Improvements

A seating area should be provided at the south end of the sled hill. At this location, a council ring and amphitheater type seating should be created using natural boulders nestled into the hillside. The area should be buffered with an evergreen planting that will help block winter winds and provide winter interest.





Running Path Improvements

The existing soft running path should be improved in place with simple grading adjustments to eliminate low spots. A layer of soft gravel should be added and lightly compacted on the existing path. The dimension of the path should remain narrow and be no more than 2 feet in width.

Site Furnishings

A program for site furnishing should be developed to provide a cohesive plan for improvements. All benches, ornamental planters, memorials, site lighting, trash receptacles, interpretive graphics, and signage should provide continuity throughout the park. Many of these elements could provide opportunities for donor recognition.

Stormwater and Drainage

Resolving stormwater and drainage issues in the park is critical for the strategic plan success. Surface drainage should be improved, storm sewers should be cleaned, repaired, and upgraded. Natural areas of bio-retention should be added to handle the current stormwater needs in the park.

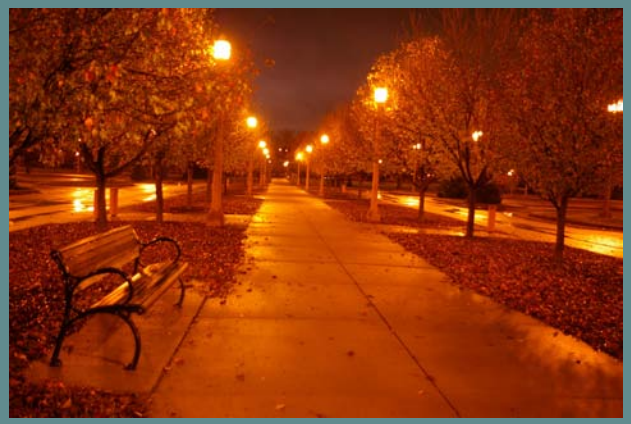
Due to excessive ponding, Francis Park will require extensive grading adjustments. These adjustments are required to improve surface flow to inlet structures, grates or natural discharge points. All swales and ditches should be modified or constructed to provide positive drainage throughout the park. All new construction shall provide positive drainage to storm structures and/or natural discharge points to minimize damage to landscaping. New construction shall be designed per Metropolitan Sewer District's best practices.

To accommodate the long term needs of the park, an inventory to determine the location, depth, capacities and size of all infrastructure should be conducted. (Infrastructures includes storm sewer pipes, inlets, manholes, etc.) Structures and storm sewers pipes may require cleaning and CCTV to determined the conditions and capacities of the existing system. When upgrading utilities, the city should consider providing underground utilities within utility corridors to minimize disruption to the

landscaping. If the sewers were upgraded to meet MSD standards, the responsibility of maintaining them could be transferred to MSD.

Where possible, the park's natural drainage system, the remnant creek, should be restored and reconfigured to handle overland flow of stormwater. Extension of the natural creek should be graded and designed with flexibility. It should function as an additional discharge point to help alleviate surface ponding west of the lily pond. The creek will also collect sheet flow from the west, improving landscape quality and wildlife diversity, while providing natural drainage during times of flooding. The system should function as a unifying element of the passive open space, accentuating land forms, views and landmarks. This creek should be located in a manner to minimize loss of healthy specimen trees, groves, other quality vegetation and desirable land uses. The creek should be created at a desirable depth of 12 to 18 inches. The creek's design should provide the ability to reduce long term maintenance and the need for other drainage and water input structures. Terminating the creek with a small pond, utilizing an outfall structure to maintain water levels and water quality, should be considered.

Rain gardens and bio-retention areas should also be utilized when possible to alleviate drainage issues and treat polluted water prior to it discharging into the combined sewer system. These types of natural drainage systems help recharge local groundwater, filter runoff, improve water quality, and help increase beneficial insects that eliminate pest insects, like mosquitoes.



Lighting and Security

A variety of security methods were taken into consideration to ensure public safety and the quality of structures and amenities in the park. The most effective way to divert vandalism is to improve lighting and visibility in the park.

Current cobra head lighting along the center of the main axis through the park should be replaced with a decorative, pedestrian pole. These poles should be utilized on the long central walk, around the Central Pavilion, and around the new formal walk and soccer field. This type of pedestrian scale fixture will bring light levels closer to walking surfaces and therefore make park users more visible. The fixtures should be placed close enough together so light levels overlap slightly and reduce the areas of shadow. The poles along the main walks should be placed to the outside of the walks to keep long view of the park and lily pond open.

All new and existing structures should include security lighting that is operated by photocell and is activated when light levels are low.

Surveillance cameras should be installed at five strategic locations throughout the park. These locations include: the Central Pavilion, the Bandstand, the Multipurpose Gathering Space, the Recreation Hub, and the Teen Activity Area. Each area should be equipped with at least one camera and enough lighting to provide visibility on all sides of the structures. The cameras should provide a constant and dependable record of activity in these areas, therefore solving any low visibility issues. These cameras would be activated by motion and all would transmit their recording to one digital video recorder (DVR) placed in the Central Pavilion. Transmitting all surveillance to one DVR is an effective way to cut cost, eases implementation throughout the phases, and would consolidate data in one secure area.

Two security stanchions with a direct link to emergency services should be added to the park. One should be located centrally, near the main entry plaza, on the north end of the park. The other should be located centrally, between the tennis courts and the formal walk. These stanchions provide an added sense of security and can allow police quick notification of trouble or an emergency in the park.

Along with lighting and surveillance, it is recommended both routine security patrols of the park and the neighborhood foot patrol of the park be continued.