



**BURNHAM PARK:
LAYTON BOULEVARD WEST**

OCTOBER 2011

Stakeholders + Process + Intent

On August 16th, 2011, Layton Boulevard West Neighbors (LBWN) held the fourth and final public charrette to assist with the Zilber Neighborhood Initiative (ZNI) Quality of Life Plan for the area. The focus of the four charrettes was to identify strategies for the physical improvement of areas of need identified by the community.

The purpose of the Burnham Park Charrette was threefold:

1. Examine the existing conditions in Burnham Park.
2. Educate residents about design elements that could be added to Burnham Park.
3. Gather information on how neighbors and stakeholders view and use the park today, what goals neighbors and stakeholders have for the future of the park, and, then, share this information with elected officials and those involved in shaping the future of the neighborhood.

Over 30 participants both young and old attended the charrette and generated creative and practical ideas for Burnham Park. The following report depicts these ideas through written and graphic representation. For more information on the Burnham Park Charrette or the complete ZNI Quality of Life Plan, please contact the following people:

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BURNHAM PARK

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Introduction | Background

Layton Boulevard West is fast becoming a community of choice. This centrally located Milwaukee neighborhood features affordable housing, a wealth of amenities, ethnic diversity and a strong sense of community. It's no wonder that young couples, families, professionals and business owners are increasingly choosing to live, work and invest in this neighborhood.

Bounded by Pierce Street on the north, Lincoln Avenue on the south, Layton Boulevard on the east and Miller Park Way on the west, Layton Boulevard West brings together three historic Milwaukee neighborhoods: Silver City, Burnham Park and Layton Park. With a wonderfully rich history, these neighborhoods offer homes of quality and beauty built in the early twentieth century by German and Polish craftsmen.

The neighborhood's convenient location provides access to jobs, shops, services and recreation. Minutes from downtown, Layton Boulevard West is encircled by the Mitchell Park domes, Miller Park with its booming Miller Park Way commercial district, the revitalized Menomonee Valley, and the recently developed Hank Aaron State Trail along the Menomonee River, extending east to Milwaukee's lakefront and west to the county line.

A newly restored passage on 37th and Pierce Streets, the Valley Passage, provides direct access to the Hank Aaron State Trail, which offers residents non-motorized options to commute to work and recreational opportunities for the family, including biking, skating, canoeing and fishing. The Layton Boulevard West branch of the Urban Ecology Center will engage the community in activities designed to preserve the environment along the

Hank Aaron State Trail and protect the water quality of the Menomonee River. Layton Boulevard West is a walking community. The neighborhood features the nearby Silver City Main Street district on National Avenue, with an array of international restaurants and unique shops, and the Burnham Avenue and Lincoln Avenue commercial districts. Also within walking distance are schools, parks and churches of many faiths serving a diverse population.

Layton Boulevard West has always been one of Milwaukee's most diverse neighborhoods. In the 2010 census, the community was 66% Latino, 22% Caucasian, 6% African American and 5% Asian. Resident Gerda Fransiskas explains: "What is so special about Layton Boulevard West is that it is an old neighborhood. There are people who were born in these houses, and they are still here. And then you have people that were born in different countries, and we all come together and we are all friends, and that makes it a community. We have wonderful, loving and caring people."

Although Layton Boulevard West has a lot to offer, it also faces challenges. By spring of 2011, 22.3% of families were living below the poverty level (compared to 19.9% in the city of Milwaukee) and unemployment had reached 14% (compared to 11% in Milwaukee). Also, in spite of the remarkable fact that 76% of all residents owned the property in which they lived, more than 100 houses were facing foreclosure.

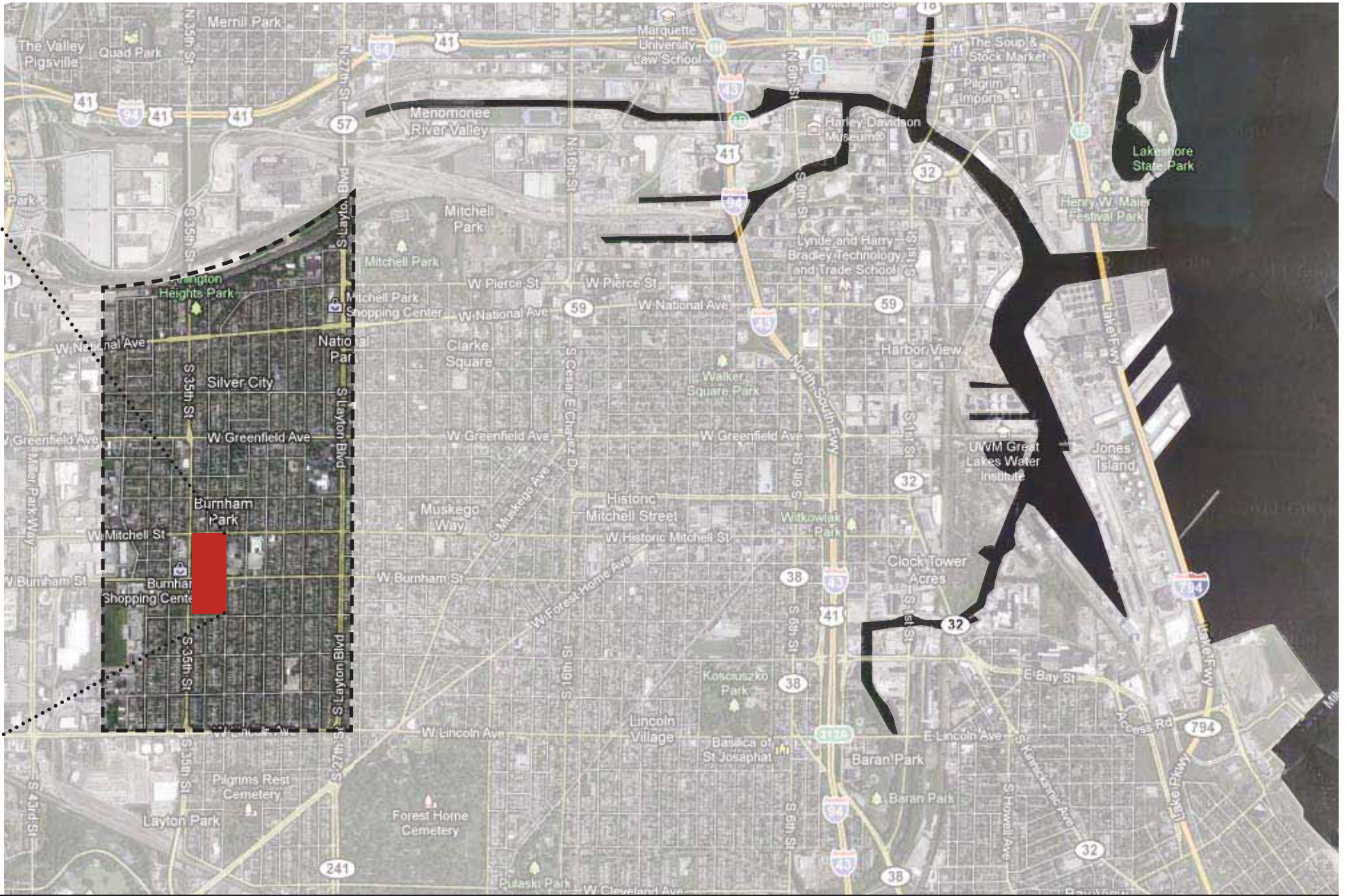
Residents old and new understand these challenges and are coming together to find solutions and take action. Building on the neighborhood's assets and rich history, they are strengthening the community and themselves.

Introduction | Location



Burnham Park Aerial Map
Mapa Aéreo de Burnham Parque



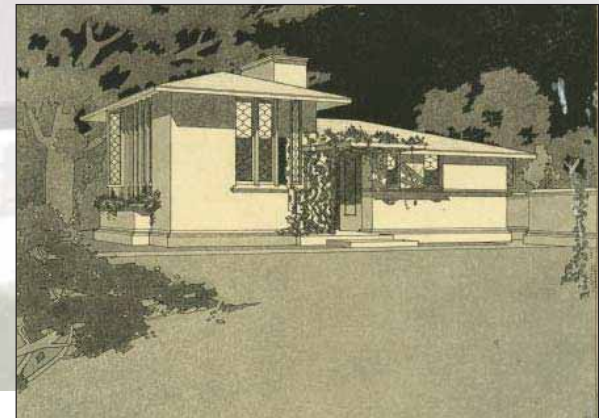
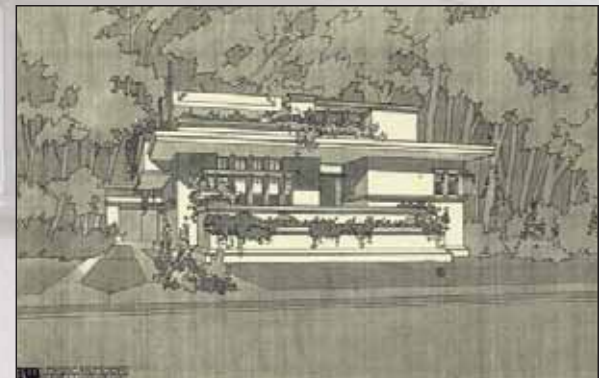
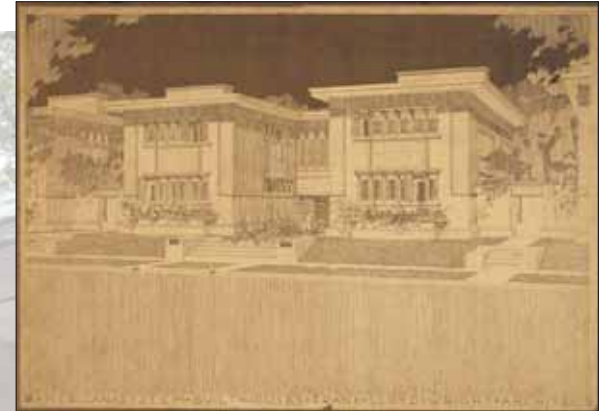
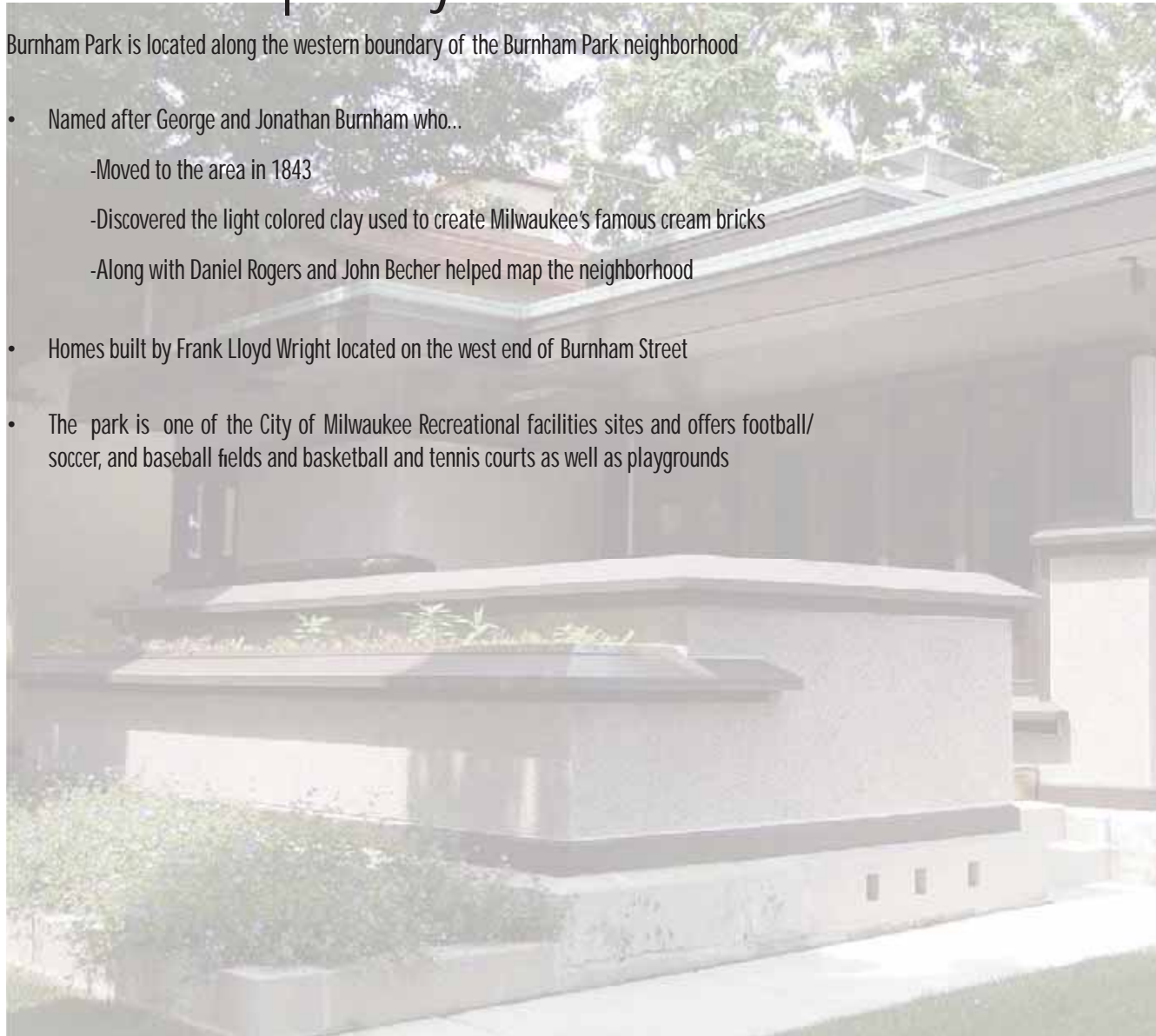


BURNHAM PARK

Introduction | History

Burnham Park is located along the western boundary of the Burnham Park neighborhood

- Named after George and Jonathan Burnham who...
 - Moved to the area in 1843
 - Discovered the light colored clay used to create Milwaukee's famous cream bricks
 - Along with Daniel Rogers and John Becher helped map the neighborhood
- Homes built by Frank Lloyd Wright located on the west end of Burnham Street
- The park is one of the City of Milwaukee Recreational facilities sites and offers football/ soccer, and baseball fields and basketball and tennis courts as well as playgrounds



LAYTON BOULEVARD WEST



1827 map of the neighborhood - notice how although there is open, undeveloped space, there is no park yet

BURNHAM PARK

Charrette Organization

The Burnham Park Charrette consisted of two public participation sessions. Session 1 was an ice breaker exercise to get participants' opinion of the park. Residents were split up into four different groups, which, then, walked around Burnham Park with a recorder describing what they liked, didn't like, and what potential activities could improve the park. Although a wide number of responses were collected, when sorted, some widely desired uses for the park were identified along with residents' general estimation of the importance of the park to their neighborhood.

After the ice breaker exercise, participants were split up into four different tables for session 2. Each table was asked to describe and draw specific design ideas for Burnham Park related to three elements: park amenities, landscape, and built environment. During this time, children were also asked to share design ideas for the park. A table was set up just outside of the pavilion and children came and went, each taking time to color and draw pictures on large sheets of paper describing how they wanted Burnham Park to look.





Ice Breaker / General Comments

Comments collected from participants during the ice breaker exercise focused around two main uses for the park: **passive and active recreation**. As the park exists today, active recreational elements, such as baseball fields, tennis courts and basketball courts take up the majority of space within the park. On the opposite spectrum, Burnham Park provides minimal passive recreation elements such as shaded seating areas, pedestrian or bike paths and picnic areas. This uneven distribution of uses came up as a problem to the majority of participants at the charrette. As a result, residents walked around and suggested uses for the park such as informal **seating areas**, **picnic/grilling zones**, benches underneath large trees, walking/running/biking **trails** and a number of other passive recreational uses.

The use of active recreation was not forgotten about by residents either. In fact, residents felt that the baseball/softball/tennis/basketball fields were important components of Burnham Park and should not necessarily be replaced. Suggestions were given by participants about how use of the athletic fields could be better organized to assure meeting the needs of both the outside teams that now use the fields and the residents, who currently have little or no access to them. Burnham Park should be **a place for local residents** to be able to play on an athletic field/court without having to worry about an outside group coming and kicking them off the field.

Other comments collected from the group during the walk around included the need for **physical improvements** to the pavilion, an expanded and improved tot lot area, new use for paved surfaces within park, enlarged children's water play area, increased **lighting** throughout the park, and better overall park **signage**.

PASSIVE RECREATION
 WALK/RUN PATH
 PICNIC AREA
 DRINKING FOUNTAIN
 GRILLING/BAND STAND/ARTS
 TREES/HARDSCAPES
 SIGNAGE/IDENTIFIERS
 SCULPTURES
 TOOL UTILIZATION (ARTS)
 INPUT FROM SPORTS TEAM/RECREATION STAFF
 LEISURE LIGHTING/AMBIENT

HARDLY EVER
 WEEKLY
 MULTIPLE TIMES/WEEK

USES:
 DOG WALKING (AROUND)
 COMMUNITY GARDEN'S
 SPORTS + REC
 FLAG FOOTBALL
 RICKSHAW
 SOFTBALL
 FRISBEE
 TENNIS/FUTSAL
 *HOW TO USE TO OTHER IDEAS

PAVILION
 SITTING
 PRIVATE EVENTS

WANTS:
 FRISBEE GOLF PRACTICE COURSE/COURSES
 SAND VOLLEYBALL
 DOG PARK - JUMPED: PAVE AREA
 EXERCISE
 HISTORY
 *SOMEWHERE TO GO FRESH
 SKATING RINKS (WINTER)
 BIGGER SUNGSS!





BURNHAM PARK

Potential Redesign of Burnham Park | Park Amenities

Park amenities were a popular topic of discussion at each of the four tables and received the most comments as ways to improve Burnham Park. An element that all tables felt should be improved was the entrance to the park. Residents agreed that several different amenities could be added to improve the appearance of each of the four entrances to the park (North, South, East, West). Comments from residents included better **signage** at each entrance, **crosswalks** that would connect Burnham Park to the opposite sides of the street, and additional **passive recreational elements** scattered along the walkways leading into the center of the park. The type of amenities that residents wanted along the four main promenades leading to the centrally located pavilion varied from picnic tables, benches, seating areas, art sculptures, fitness stations and **skate parks**. What residents did agree upon was that each of the four major promenades needed to be better defined with amenities that would draw people into the park and give them more choices of ways to enjoy themselves.

Within the park itself, residents complained about how athletic fields are often unavailable for their use because outside athletic groups reserve them. The baseball/softball field located just to the southwest of the pavilion was brought up by several tables as a field that could be **turned over to the neighborhood**. The comments on how this field would get used varied from table to table. However, all of the tables felt that an athletic field reserved strictly for **neighborhood, recreational sports** was needed.

Residents spoke throughout the charrette about **safety** within the park. Burnham Street splits the two parks and is difficult to cross. Well-defined crosswalks, increased traffic signs (stop, yield) or even a pedestrian bridge were suggested as ways to help pedestrians safely cross from one side of the street to the other. Better lighting was discussed also as a way to improve safety in the park. Motion lighting, flood lighting and building lighting were suggested as ways to increase visibility at night. Additionally, residents also thought that decorative or **accent lighting** (lighted bollards, sidewalk ground lighting, building spot lights) would help to enhance the attractiveness of the park during evening hours.



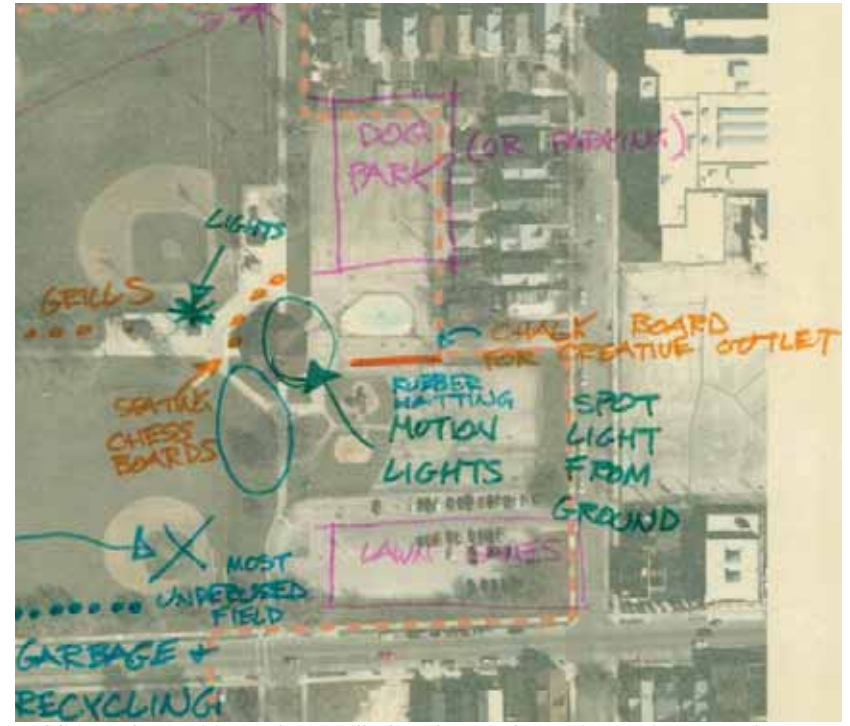
Pedestrian scale lighting throughout the park would provide a more friendly environment

Tennis Courts
- very well used
- skateboarders
↳ move to parallel w/ north entrance strip/path

- LIGHTING IMPORTANT



Upgraded play equipment in the tot lot and additional seating around the pool area were frequently suggested at the charrette



Addition of amenities such as grills, benches, and exercise stations were just some of the suggestions for park amenities

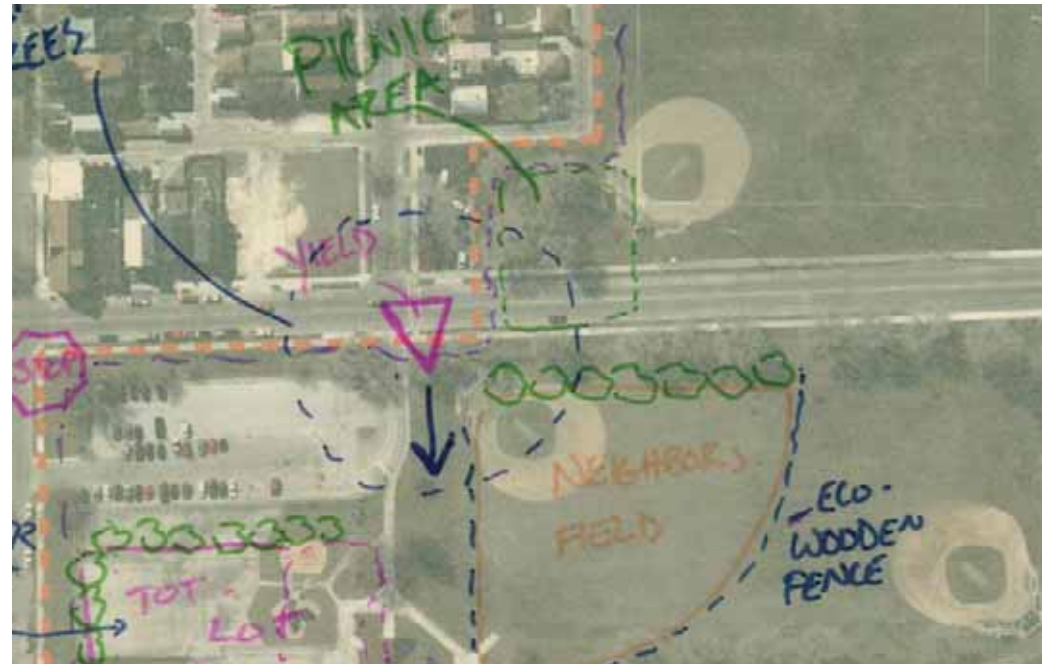
- BASKETBALL COURTS ATTRACT TROUBLE
- MORE BENCHES IN GENERAL
- TOT-LOT IS TOO SMALL

- BRING BACK HISTORIC USES OF PARK
- ICE SKATING

Potential Redesign of Burnham Park | Landscape

The comments regarding landscaping of Burnham Park also focused on the major entrances and pathways of the park. Residents wanted to see **more trees** planted throughout the park, but especially along walking paths. The community garden, currently located just to the north of the pavilion, was seen by most tables as a valuable component and several tables felt that it could even be extended further north towards Mitchell Street. The concrete slab located in the northeast corner of Burnham Park came up from all the tables as one of the least attractive existing conditions of the park. Different comments were given as to how that slab could be used such as: expanded splash pad area, **community gardens**, dog park, and **green space** for lawn games. Although each table came up with different uses for the slab, the majority of residents agreed that the area should not be left as a solid, concrete playground.

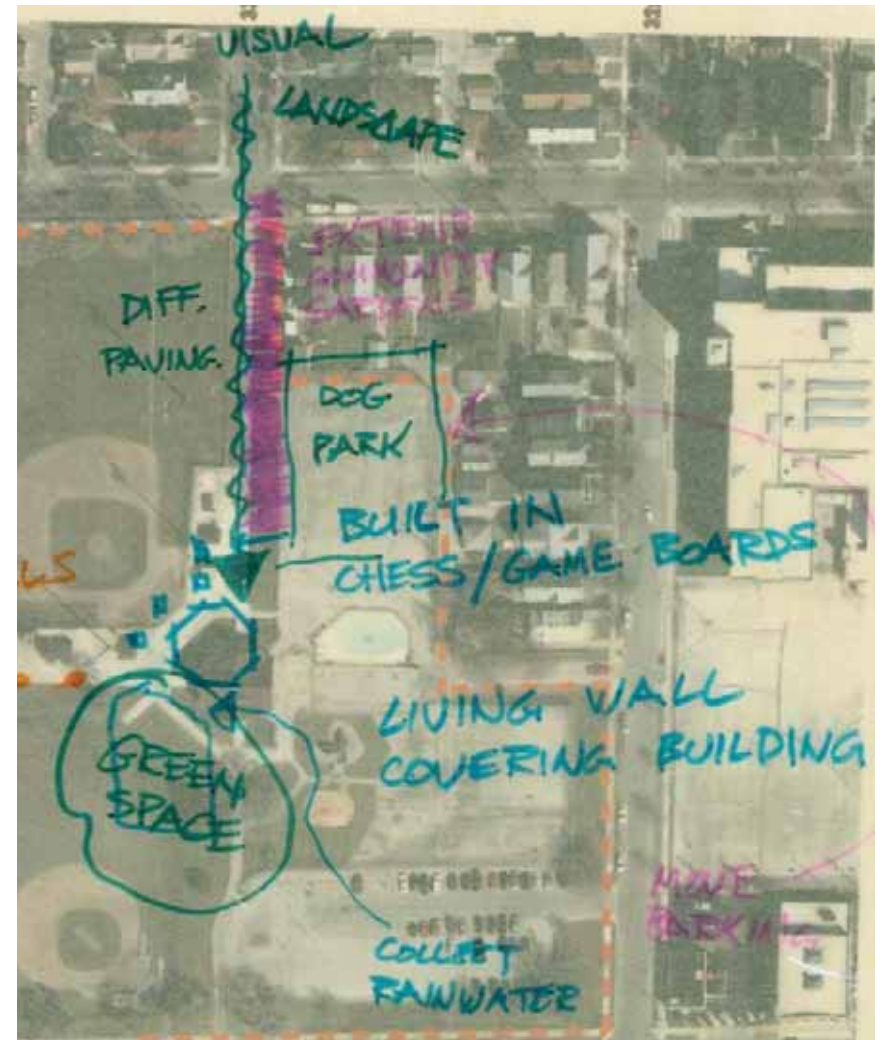
Several tables asked about two properties located adjacent to Burnham Park. The first property is on the opposite side of Burnham St. just to the north of the entrance into Burnham Park and east of the Rogers Park playing field. The second property is the land on the east side of 35th St. across from Rogers Park. Both of these areas were viewed by residents as **possible expansions** to the existing boundary of the park that could host picnic areas, tot-lots, a dog park or **community center**.



The introduction of landscaping around the tot lot, along with eco-friendly fencing around existing baseball fields, will help to define and separate spaces from one another. Picnic areas could be added to underutilized portions of the park, particularly the small lot to the south of Burnham Street



- = Get rid of concrete on N/W corner
- Light all paths w/ motion sensors
- Move Community Garden
 - to Northern edge
- Bike path around Bike perimeter
 - also walking
 - Secondary paths which cut through park
- ↳ Neighborhood Baseball Field
 - landscaping
 - lighting
- ↳ Tot-Lot on East Edge
 - larger
 - shade trees
- ↳ Picnic Area
 - North East corner of Roger's Park
- = Get rid of Community Gardens
- ↳ Wooded Fence Around Neighborhood Zone
- = Surround Area w/ trees & benches

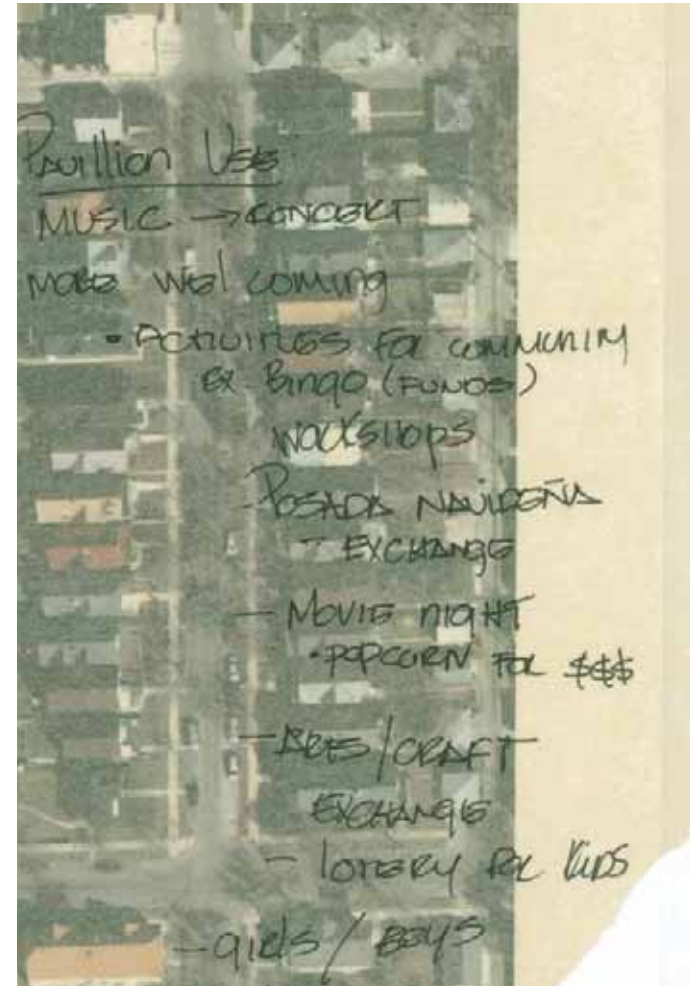


Some of the ideas included the extension of the community gardens as part of a landscaped promenade. Different paving options were suggested for some of the pathways. The importance of open green space was stressed, perhaps with the addition of raingardens or other landscaping.

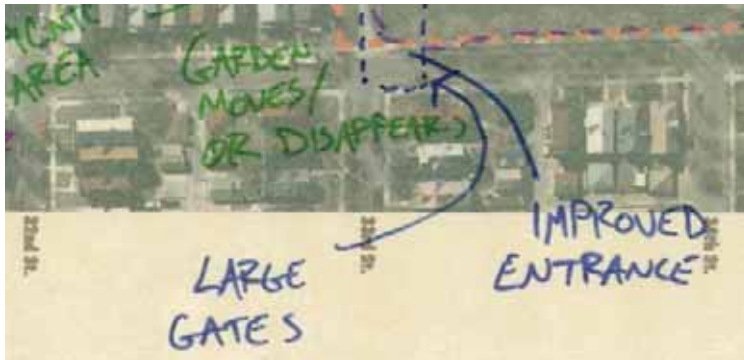
Potential Redesign of Burnham Park | Built Environment

The existing Burnham Park pavilion was the main topic of discussion when talking about the built environment possibilities for the park. All of the tables agreed that the pavilion is integral to the park and should remain as the central node. However, residents felt that the pavilion's current usage and appearance did not make it an attractive central gathering space for the park. Residents wanted some **basic improvements** to the pavilion such as a new paint job on the exterior and **better acoustics** on the interior. The pavilion should also host **more community functions** such as "bingo night", food concession stand, and sporting equipment rental and show movies to attract neighborhood residents to the park.

Aside from the pavilion comments, several tables thought that a **gazebo** or band shell could be a valuable addition to the park. Concerts could be held and the structure could also be used as a **farmer's market shelter**. Larger, more visible, park branding signage was another recommendation given by several tables.



Above are some of the ideas for different functions which could take place in an upgraded pavilion building, taking advantage of the existing building and making it a focal point of the park.



Residents suggested a neighborhood gateway entrance from the north boundary of the park

- Pool - Bigger
- Benches Surrounding
- Waterslide

- Pool - Larger Pool
- Ways to Attract People
 - Picnic Tables
 - Gazebos



The addition of upgraded bus shelters around the park, as well as a new bandshell or gazebo would add a greater variety of activities to the entire park.

Community-based Recommendations | Diagrammatic Plan

The plan below shows an aerial map of Burnham Park with key design ideas and interventions expressed by participants in the charrette.



Existing splash pad water zone



Existing tot-lot



LAYTON BOULEVARD WEST

Examples of amenities that were suggested for the four main entrance promenades



recycled-plastic picnic tables placed under existing trees



fitness stations placed together with seating elements

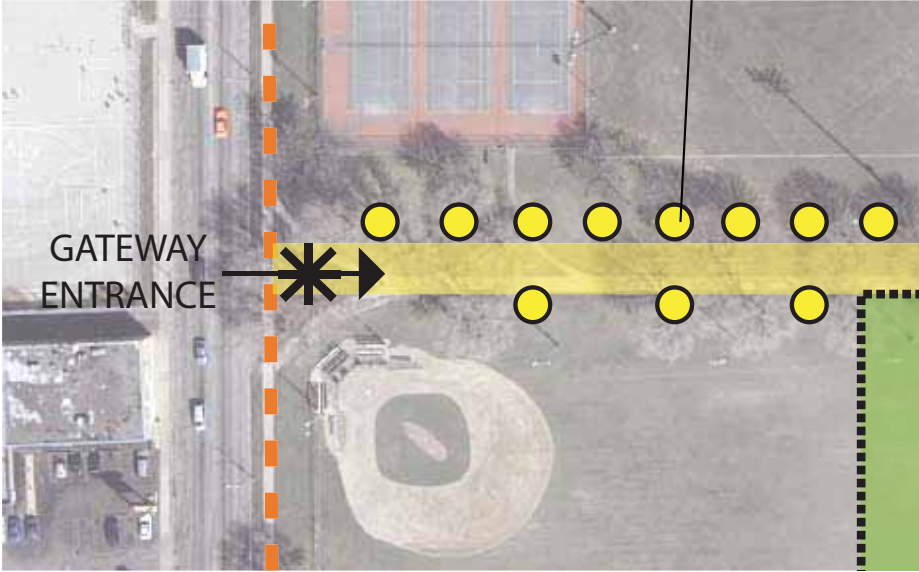


freestanding grills for bbqs and cookouts



solar powered light bollard for increased pedestrian lighting

Community-based Recommendations | West Entrance

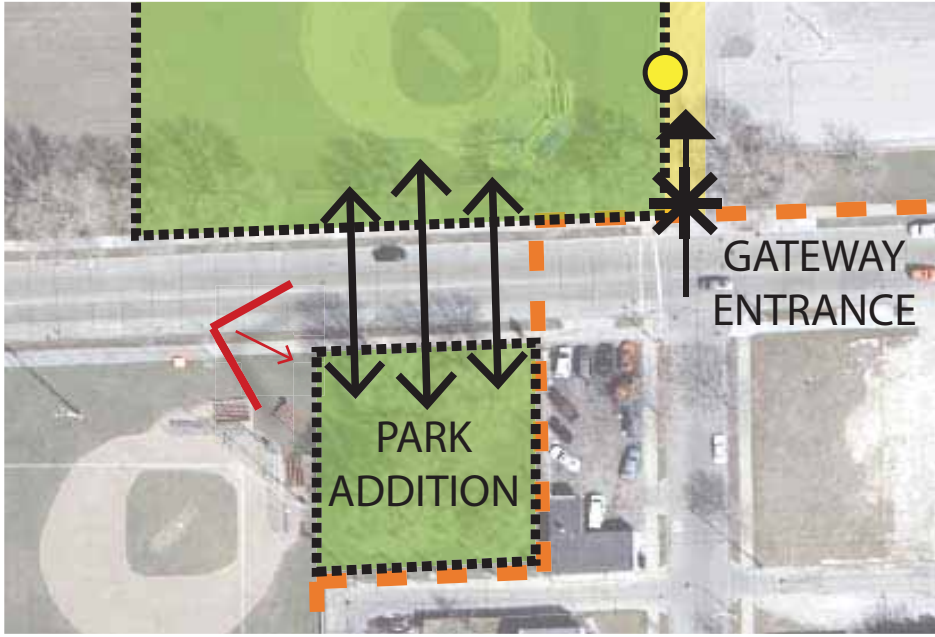


Diagrammatic plan of where perspective is drawn



Perspective image showing the new entrance to Burnham Park from the West (35th Street) The new entrance features signage, lighting, vegetation and social gathering spots along the main promenade towards the existing pavilion. Each of the four cardinal entrances to Burnham Park should follow this design concept to help create a welcoming environment.

Community-based Recommendations | Community/Resource Center



Diagrammatic plan of where perspective is drawn



The vacant site across Burnham Street would be a great location for the Layton Boulevard West Community Center. The design of the community center should have strong connections to the surrounding park areas and provide both indoor and outdoor space for residents to use. The perspective shows a pedestrian bridge linking Burnham Park to the community center and also shows a small plaza space outside the building for social gatherings.

Community-based Recommendations | Neighborhood Zone

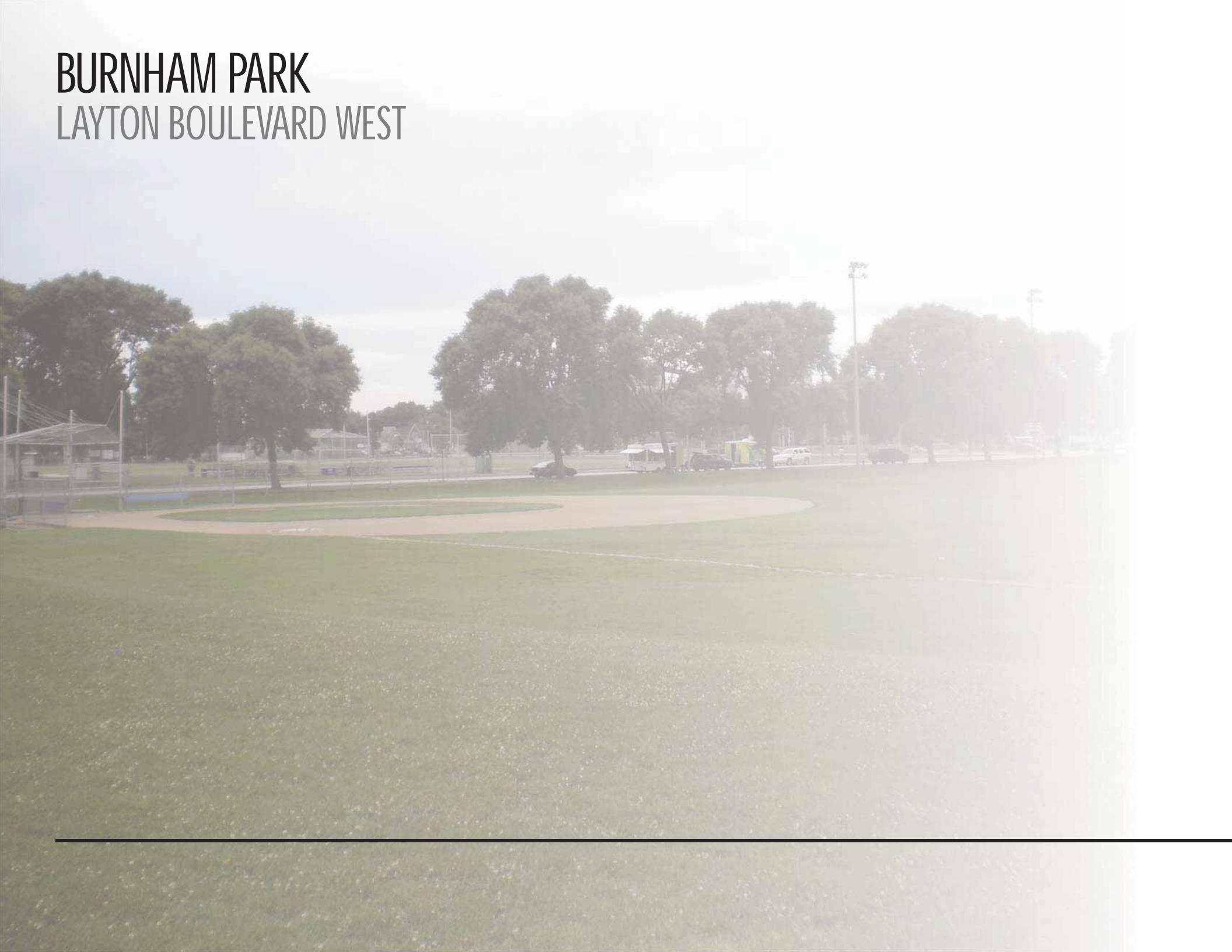


Diagrammatic plan of where perspective is drawn



Within the "neighborhood zone" of the park identified on the map to the left, residents wanted to see a gazebo/bandshell or some form of physical structure that could accommodate entertainment venues. The rendering above shows the structure placed on the northeast corner of the "neighborhood zone" and would still allow for the athletic field to be used at the same time. The outfield of the current baseball/softball field could also host a soccer field during the summer months, and then be flooded in the winter, transforming it into an ice rink.

BURNHAM PARK
LAYTON BOULEVARD WEST





PREPARED BY COMMUNITY DESIGN SOLUTIONS

