

A photograph of several bare trees in silhouette against a vibrant sunset sky. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright orange and yellow glow that transitions into a darker, purplish sky at the top. The trees are dark and intricate, with many thin branches visible. The foreground is dark and out of focus, showing what appears to be a grassy field.

# **SHELBY FARMS PARK**

**MASTER PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY • JULY 2008**

PREPARED BY **field operations**







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July 2008

**MASTER PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**  
SHELBY FARMS PARK

PREPARED FOR:

**SHELBY FARMS PARK CONSERVANCY**  
500 Pine Lake Drive  
Memphis, TN 38134

PREPARED BY:

**field operations**  
landscape architecture + urban design

with

**HR&A ADVISORS** · economics + finance  
**PICKERING FIRM INC** · engineering + hydrology  
**UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS ECOLOGICAL RESEARCH CENTER** · ecology  
**JPA INC** · landscape architecture  
**FAITHFUL + GOULD** · cost estimating  
**TERRY ADKINS** · public art



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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SHELBY FARMS PARK USER GROUPS

Bike and Pedestrian Advocates	Boy Scouts
Canoe & Kayak/Outdoors Inc.	Greater Memphis Greenline
Greening Greater Memphis	High School Cross Country Coaches
Master Gardeners	Memphis Amateur Retriever Club
Memphis Disc Golf Club	Memphis Ultimate Frisbee Association
Memphis Hightailers	Memphis in Motion
Memphis Runners Track Club	Memphis Whitewater
Mid-South Fly Fishers	Mid-South Hunting Retriever Club
Mid South Song Writers Association	Mid-South Trails Association
Model Airplane Club	Park Concession, LLC
SCSCTP (Clay Shooting)	SFPC Youth Alliance
Shelby County Community Gardens	Shelby Farms Assoc. of Neighborhoods
Shelby Farms BMX	Shelby Farms Equestrian Alliance
Shelby Farms Off-Leash Society	Shelby Farms Trail Crew
Sierra Club – Chickasaw Chapter	Stables at Shelby Farms Park
Tennessee Ornithological Society	Tennessee Trails
Tornado Alley Sailing Club	West Tennessee Clean Cities Coalition
Wolf River Conservancy	Women and Running



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1.0

PROJECT DESCRIPTION | ONE PARK, ONE MILLION TREES, TWELVE LANDSCAPES

THE SITE

Formerly a penal farm and agricultural area, Shelby Farms Park is today a 4,500 acre reserve of scenic fields, meadows, woodlands, lakes, pathways and trails. At more than five-times the size of New York’s Central Park, this enormous site affords a very broad range of uses, appealing to an equally broad range of users and interest groups. Its huge scale offers an extraordinary resource for people who are interested in large-scale recreation activities – strolling, jogging, cycling, roller-blading, picnicking, dog-walking, frisbee, horseback riding, fishing, boating, dog training, gardening and the like. Its agricultural heritage is also a great resource for land husbandry practices, including farming, research, food production, energy creation, education, markets and festivals. The site also offers ample opportunities for arts, music, culture and large-scale outdoor events, such as Earth Day and July 4th celebrations.

A NEW CENTRAL DESTINATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCE

With the new Master Plan, Shelby Farms Park will become a major landmark public open space and defining destination for Memphis. While the site is located east of the center of Memphis proper, it is actually quite central to the larger population settlement across the metropolitan area. Extensions along the Wolf River Greenway and the future greenline (former CSX rail line) further embed the Park in the fabric of the Memphis Region and help to connect it to a broad range of constituents and neighborhoods. The development of the Park is an important part of Memphis Fast Forward – the largest and most comprehensively supported economic development program in the region. It is in this context that investment in and transformation of Shelby Farms Park will not only enrich the lives of all who visit and use the Park, but will also enhance the attractiveness of Memphis for business, creative talent, families and individuals.

THE VISION

Continuing both the agricultural and more recent recreational uses of the site, the new Park offers a generous and beautiful large-scale public landscape for cultivation, growth, health and wellbeing (as in a sports farm, a tree farm, a culture farm, an arts farm, an energy farm, as well as the more familiar land husbandry farm) for a broad constituency of public user groups, families and individuals. In this way traditional land practices meet the new urban 21st century culture of health, fitness, leisure, play, education, and ecology, creating a unique place of large-scale interaction with the land. As such, the Park will become a leading-edge, international model for design and sustainable management practices.







1.0

PROJECT DESCRIPTION | ONE PARK, ONE MILLION TREES, TWELVE LANDSCAPES

THE MASTER PLAN

The Master Plan offers a vision and a guiding framework for how the Park may be improved and developed over time. At the same time, it is intended to be dynamic and flexible, capable of being adapted to changing needs and desires. The Master Plan is also designed to be implemented flexibly in realistic phases, depending upon the availability of funding and priorities set by the Conservancy.

As a guiding vision, the Master Plan provides a bold yet practical framework for future investment in the Park, creating a world-class Park of exceptional distinction, that appeals to the broadest possible constituency and heralds a new era where visionary parks are central to the creation of a wholesome, just and rich quality of urban life.

ONE PARK, ONE MILLION TREES, TWELVE LANDSCAPES

By framing the Master Plan around the threefold concept of “One Park, One Million Trees, Twelve Landscapes,” an otherwise complex series of site design initiatives can be more simply understood:

“One Park” addresses the goals of unity, connectivity, sense-of-place, ecosystem, identity and inclusion. New circulation systems plantings, signage and consistent design elements will shape the Park as one.

“One Million New Trees” addresses the goals of ecological improvement and biodiversity, defining edges and screening out undesirable views while maintaining some of the site’s most spectacular vistas; engaging the community in planting and stewardship; creating more shade for strolling; and reducing Memphis’s overall carbon footprint.

“Twelve Landscapes” addresses the diversity and richness of the different areas of the site; the varied user group needs; and the definition of future management zones, with respective goals and objectives.

Together, these three guiding principles will help to steer and form the basis around which the future Park takes shape. New entrances, pathways, plantings and facilities will shape a more defined and beautiful identity for Shelby Farms Park as a whole. In the center will be a magnificent new lake – nearly three times the size of the current Patriot Lake – able to support a wide range of non-motorized water sport activities. Twelve distinctive large-scale landscapes surround the expanded Patriot Lake, each supporting certain uses and events while allowing a strong ‘sense-of-place structure’ for the many varied user groups set within the larger park setting. The plan is respectful of current Park users and the unique qualities of the landscape, while at the same time affording enhanced amenities – improved and expanded trails, play areas, water bodies, performance spaces, activity areas and facilities – for an even broader spectrum of users.

The Master Plan describes a series of bold, yet pragmatic land planning and physical design improvements that will help to create a world-class park for the 21st century. Key strategies are driven by:

- a) over-coming the segmentation of the larger site created by Walnut Grove Road and the new north-south Shelby Farms Parkway (Kirby-Whitten Parkway), and creating instead a strong sense of a unified large-scale landscape with improved access and seamless pedestrian connectivity;
- b) enhancing and diversifying the natural ecosystems, plantings, water-bodies and landscapes across the site, primarily through the planting of new trees and careful land management practices;
- c) creating a unique, beautiful and contemporary sense-of-place where nature, physical health and fitness, agriculture and the production of food and energy, environmental education, arts and culture, and scenic beauty are all equally foregrounded;
- d) establishing distinctive landscape character zones where particular uses are accommodated;
- e) creating an iconic new center for the Park, in the form of a very large lake that supports a diverse array of non-motorized water sport activities;
- f) phasing Park improvements that work with funding capital and operating budget plans over the long-term; and
- g) promoting the highest qualities of landscape architecture, land preservation, environmental stewardship and sustainable management practices.





- 1 SHELBY FARMS PARKWAY (KIRBY-WHITTEN PKWY.)
- 2 COMMUNITY CENTER \*
- 3 SPORTS FIELDS \*
- 4 PUBLIC GARDENS \*
- 5 BISON RANGE
- 6 PATRIOT LAKE
- 7 BEACH + ACTIVITY BAR
- 8 EARTHEN AMPHITHEATER
- 9 PLOUGH PARK
- 10 THE OUTBACK
- 11 GREEN BRIDGE
- 12 FRUIT + NUT ORCHARDS
- 13 AGRICENTER
- 14 RESEARCH FIELDS
- 15 WOLF RIVER PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
- 16 STRAWBERRY FIELDS
- 17 THE REFUGE
- 18 CATCH 'EM LAKES
- 19 "Y" GATEWAY BRIDGE
- 20 ART MOUND
- 21 SCULPTURE PARK
- 22 WOLF RIVER PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
- 23 WOLF RIVER PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
- 24 LUCIUS BURCH NATURAL AREA
- 25 AREA10 / GOVERNMENT FACILITIES

\* PENDING AREA 10 APPROVAL



1.1

VISION + GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Shelby Farms Park Conservancy has outlined a unique vision and an ambitious set of goals for the transformation of the existing Shelby Farms territory in order to give rise to a celebrated 21st century park that defines and shapes a great city. The Conservancy has established a set of core principles that guide the stewardship of the design, planning, management and maintenance of Shelby Farms Park. These Guiding Principles are as follows:

- *We are leading the reinvention of large urban parks.*
- *We are creating a constantly improving park that is layered, flexible and adaptive.*
- *We are creating an exceptional and distinctive park that capitalizes on its unique natural resources and size.*
- *We insist on both environmental and financial sustainability.*
- *Shelby Farms Park will capitalize on its size to create options: places grand and expansive and others small and personal.*
- *Shelby Farms Park will connect and strengthen the fabric of community through its accessibility, inclusiveness and connections to the city.*
- *We are creating a beloved place where powerful memories are delivered to the people of Shelby County.*
- *We are known for work that is bold, dedicated, visionary and public-spirited.*

In addition, the Conservancy and the design team moved forward through the master plan process while keeping the following questions in mind:

- *Does it promote green and open?*
- *Is it flexible and adaptive?*
- *Is it accessible and inviting?*
- *Is it environmentally and financially sustainable?*
- *Is it exceptional and distinctive?*
- *Does it capitalize on the size of the park?*
- *Does it respect the limitations of the easement?*
- *Does it capitalize on our natural resources?*
- *Does it reflect the highest possible standards?*
- *Does it encourage a sense of community?*
- *Is it safe?*





  
**ART MOUND +  
PARK CIRCLE**

  
**PUBLIC  
GARDENS**

  
**COMMUNITY  
CENTER +  
SPORTS FIELDS**

  
**THE RANGE +  
ARBORETUM**

  
**PATRIOT LAKE**

  
**PLOUGH PARK**

  
**THE OUTBACK**

**CATCH 'EM LAKES**

**THE REFUGE**

**ORCHARDS +  
BERRY FIELDS**

**CROP +  
RESEARCH FIELDS**

**AGRICENTER**





# 1.2 PROCESS + PURPOSE

## PROCESS

While conducting an extensive first round of public input forums in the fall of 2007, the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy issued a Request For Qualifications (RFQ) for the *Shelby Farms Park Innovative Design Competition*. From the 33 responses to this RFQ, three teams were invited to Memphis to begin a three-month process of developing a proposal for the Schematic Design of Shelby Farms Park. At the end of this process, the three proposals were exhibited during the month of March 2008 at the Shelby Farms Park Visitor Center, the Benjamin Hooks Central Library, and the Cossitt Library. Visitors to the exhibition were asked to complete a questionnaire indicating what they liked and disliked about each design proposal. The three proposals and the questionnaire were also available via the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy's Web site from March 6 - March 31, 2008. The results from each of these venues were tabulated following the Master Plan competition exhibit. They represent thoughts from a wide cross-section of the Memphis community and include the ideas and opinions of both current Park users and those who do not currently use the Park.

At the end of this process, field operations was chosen by the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy to prepare a Master Plan for Shelby Farms Park. The Conservancy selected field operations based on several factors, including their responsiveness to the public's views on the future of the Park; design philosophy; big ideas; their approaches to environmental sustainability and project phasing needs; and the Conservancy's general impression of the firm's passion for the Park.

Since the awarding of the Master Plan, field operations has made multiple trips to Memphis to meet with stakeholders and related public agencies, as well as the Park Master Plan Committee to calibrate the content of the Master Plan Report to the priorities and vision of the Park users, and the Memphis community.



shelby farms park youth alliance public input meeting

## PURPOSE

The Shelby Farms Park Master Plan provides a vision and a strategic framework for review, discussion and decision-making. Its recommendations are not fixed or final, but offer a flexible framework for implementation. The continued input of many experts, policy makers and most importantly, the public, will be critical to the refinement of the plan as the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy moves forward in the implementation of the recommendations outlined herein. The following four points outline the purpose of this Master Plan Document.

- 1 Outline the goals, vision and organizational framework for Shelby Farms Park;
- 2 Demonstrate that the goals, vision and strategic direction are grounded and realistic;
- 3 Advance discussion at the leadership level regarding implementation, finance and long-term management options; and
- 4 Build broader understanding, support and leadership for the Park at the community, stakeholder and civic levels.

It should be noted that this is not a conventional Master Plan that organizes information in a manner that clearly responds to every specific existing condition. Rather, it is a bold but concise vision for Shelby Farms Park that describes the key principles, characteristics and opportunities that are enabled by such a vision. It is important to understand that this Master Plan is an integrated document. For any goal, objective or proposition to be fully understood, it must be read as a whole.



public input meeting

# CONSULTATION + OUTREACH 1.3

## CONSULTATION

Once field operations was awarded the contract to prepare the Master Plan Report for Shelby Farms Park, the design team reviewed all of the comments provided by the Conservancy from both the fall 2007 and spring 2008 public input meetings and surveys, and began a series of meetings with Park stakeholders and related public agencies. These consultations included meetings and review sessions with the Conservancy's Master Plan Committee; a series of meetings with the Conservancy leadership regarding finance and operations of an expanded Shelby Farms Park; working sessions with representatives from Agricenter International; a presentation and feedback forum with the leadership of each of the Park's user groups; meeting with representatives from the Memphis Community Connector (the group responsible for the acquisition of the former CSX rail line); meeting with representatives from the Wolf River Conservancy; as well as various discussions with the Shelby County Department of Public Works, the Memphis City Engineer, and the director of Germantown Parks and Recreation.

This public input, and the accompanying series of meetings and working sessions, were a critical aspect of the development of this Master Plan document. It is anticipated that these opportunities for public review and input will continue as the Conservancy begins the process of implementing the Master Plan.

## OUTREACH

The public and stakeholder process should not end with the completion and approval of the Master Plan document. Continued stakeholder and public participation in, and support for the Shelby Farms Park Master Plan are as crucial for its future success as they were for the development of a Master Plan that reflects the desires and needs of the Memphis Community. In this context, it is important to note that the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy is guided by a strong policy regarding minority and local participation. As the Shelby Farms Park project moves into future stages of design and planning, the public and relevant stakeholder groups - including all user groups - must continue to be consulted to ensure that the future Park achieves the objectives of the Master Plan, the goals of Park users, and abides by the guiding principles of the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy.

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exhibition at public library



shelby farms park public forum



## 2.0 MEMPHIS' ASSETS

For the thousands of people who visit Memphis every week, the wide range of social, cultural and historical assets of the City is quite well known and readily cited. Elvis, the Blues, Rock’n Roll, Gospel Music, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the National Civil Rights Museum, BBQ, the Memphis Zoo and its pandas, several great Museums for adults and kids, and a diverse amateur and professional sports scene all need little introduction.

Memphis is also the business center of the Mid-South and a major player in the global economy. Sited at the geographic center of the United States, overlooking the Mississippi River, Memphis is ideally positioned for industries associated with transportation and shipping related commerce, and has a rich history of agriculture, medicine and entrepreneurship. Fortune 500 companies FedEx, AutoZone, and International Paper, along with world-renowned medical and research companies such as St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital all call Memphis home. Memphis is home to the world’s busiest airport in terms of cargo traffic handled, boasts two major Mississippi River rail crossings, and is the convergence of a number of east-west and north-south rail lines. Memphis is also home to a growing bioscience industry. In 2000, the city was cited as one of the top 50 best places to start a new business in the United States.

This combination of culture and commerce places Memphis in an enviable position moving forward into the 21st century. It is well known that in addition to an available workforce and positive business environment, the real driver for corporate location managers is the potential quality of life available to their employees. With the new design for Shelby Farms Park, Memphis can add to its unique culture and a fertile business environment, as well as offer a one-of-a-kind civic amenity that can position Memphis as a national and international talent magnet through the exceptional quality of life the City can provide.



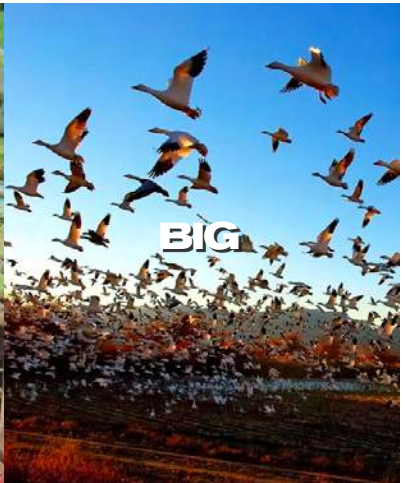


# A PARK FOR EVERYONE 2.1

Shelby Farms Park is envisioned to become a Park for all of those living in the Memphis Metropolitan Region. A top priority of the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy is to improve connectivity and accessibility to the Park, particularly for poorly served parts of the City. The Park's central geographic location affords the Conservancy a great opportunity to make these connections a reality. It is easy to imagine residents of Downtown, Midtown, Collierville, Germantown, Cordova, Bartlett, Millington, Arlington, Lakeland, Olive Branch, South Haven and West Memphis all coming to Shelby Farms Park, whether it is for a major event like the Fourth of July, or just for a weekend or evening outing. This new connectivity will allow the Park to become a place populated and activated by the diverse cultures and ethnicities of the entire Memphis Region.

In addition, the huge scale of the Park allows for such a wide range of uses and activities that nearly everyone – at every age and from every background – will be able to find something that interests and engages them at Shelby Farms Park. A huge range of amenities, paired with ample opportunities for active and passive recreation in a unique agrarian landscape at the center of a growing metropolitan region, will truly make Shelby Farms Park a place to be enjoyed by all.

17



2.2

THE PARK IN THE CITY

Shelby Farms Park is the single largest urban figure in the Memphis landscape after the Mississippi River. This exceptional scale affords the opportunity to grow a Park that is cherished not just by the residents of East Memphis where the Park sits, but by the entire Memphis Metropolitan region including the populations of Downtown, Midtown, Collierville, Germantown, Cordova, Bartlett, West Memphis and beyond. Though it lies just east of the I-240/I-40 loop, Shelby Farms is located at the geographic population center of Shelby County. This combination of size, location, and amenity generates a true destination potential for the Park within the Mid-South Region – a new “green heart.”

A major objective of the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy is to improve connectivity and accessibility to the Park, particularly for poorly served parts of the City. The northern and southern boundaries of the property already offer immediate opportunities to create these first linkages to the broader metropolitan region, and can be instrumental in promoting improved access for all.

To the north, the existing CSX line has the potential in the short term to become a recreational connection to the Fairgrounds and Midtown through the creation of a future pedestrian and bicycle oriented greenline. To the east, this future greenline will connect Shelby Farms Park with a number of other neighborhoods between the Park and Cordova. Over the long-term, it is imagined that this pedestrian corridor could be expanded to include a transit linkage like light rail that would connect Memphis' existing business centers with its growing population centers.

To the south of the Park is the Wolf River and the proposed Wolf River Greenway. This pedestrian connection is intended to tie Collierville and Germantown all the way to downtown Memphis and the Mississippi River via a paved recreation trail that runs along the Wolf River. A portion of this Greenway is already in place in Collierville and along the Germantown section of the River-Park boundary. It is currently in the planning stages as it moves west along the Park's southern perimeter and through the City of Memphis to the Mississippi River.

Both of these connections will link a variety of seemingly distant and disparate neighborhoods to Shelby Farms Park, creating a public venue that is directly accessible by a huge portion of the Memphis population. To optimize this potential, these connections need to be tied into a larger bike and pedestrian network that is not yet present within Memphis. It is our hope that the momentum behind Shelby Farms Park will translate into momentum for this broader bike and pedestrian network within the City.

In addition to these recreational and pedestrian linkages, the Master Plan recommends a regional transit link that will tie into the Memphis Area Transit Authority system. This transit link will improve access to Shelby Farms by connecting future bus routes to an internal circulation system (trolley) within the Park so that any place in Memphis will essentially connect to any place within Shelby Farms Park.

The transformation of Shelby Farms Park has the capacity to enhance the continued greening of Greater Memphis; promote a healthy lifestyle for the City's residents; and provide a resource that contributes to the overall quality of life for all current and future Memphians.

URBAN SCALE COMPARISON



shelby farms park: 4,500 acres



mem airport: 3,600 acres



cbd / downtown: 1,200 acres



central park, nyc: 840 acres







3.0

SITE HISTORY + THE SITE TODAY

The outcome and eventual social and cultural position of Shelby Farms Park within Western Tennessee and the Memphis Region has a long and storied history, and until very recently has remained unresolved to some degree.

During the mid-nineteenth century, Shelby Farms was home to Frances Wright's Nashoba Experiment. A Humanist reformer, Ms. Wright set up a commune on the land intended to prepare slaves for their future freedom by training them in the time's worthwhile skills and educating them in the liberal arts. Though there is some discussion as to the various successes and failures of this experiment, there is little doubt as to the vanguard role Ms. Wright played during period in West Tennessee's history.

In 1928, Shelby County acquired 1,600 acres of this land for use as a model penal farm. By 1942, the penal farm lands had been expanded to more than 5,000 acres, and it had become a national model visited by prison experts from around the country. In the late 1960's, Shelby County determined the penal farm was no longer viable and shut it down.

Though this land was initially a great distance from the City center, rapid expansion during the mid-twentieth century brought the territory within the Memphis City limits. It was following this expansion that a series of development plans were proposed for the site intending to transform it into the center of a new town concept. The three most well-known of these plans included the Bartholomew Report (1970); the American City Corporation Report (1972); and the Rouse-Boyle Proposal (1973). Though each of these three proposals increased the ratio of open space to development from the one that preceded it, each was met with strident public opposition and eventually discarded due in large part to the various open spaces offered being comprised mostly of lowland and flood plain areas of the site rather, than the more valuable rolling hills and hollows of the upland.

In October 1975, Garrett Eckbo submitted a final plan and report outlining “best alternative future land uses for Shelby Farms.” This plan transitioned from a development-oriented approach to one that treated the land as an important and impressive resource for the community. Though very little of this report was implemented, the document did loosely guide the development and transformation of the Shelby Farms territory over the past thirty years. Related products of the Eckbo Plan include the creation of Plough Park and the designation of the land near the present day Area 10 for County-related development purposes. In 1981, the Tennessee State Legislature established the Agricenter Commission to promote education, research and agribusiness with the explicit intent of spurring economic development. The Agricenter manages 1,000 acres in the southeastern portion of Shelby Farms Park for these purposes. This territory includes cropland, convention space, an RV park and the 45-acre Showplace Arena area.

Excluding the 1,000 acres at the Agricenter and the 300 acres comprising Area 10, the majority of the remaining 3,200 acres at Shelby Farms Park are currently used for recreation or recreation-related purposes. Of this 3,200 acres, 780 acres a designated and protected within the Lucius Burch State Natural Area, which runs along the Wolf River. Significant portions of the 3,200 acres not used for recreation-related purposes include a dormant landfill south of Walnut Grove Road adjacent to the Agricenter property and an inactive shooting range also in this area of the Park.

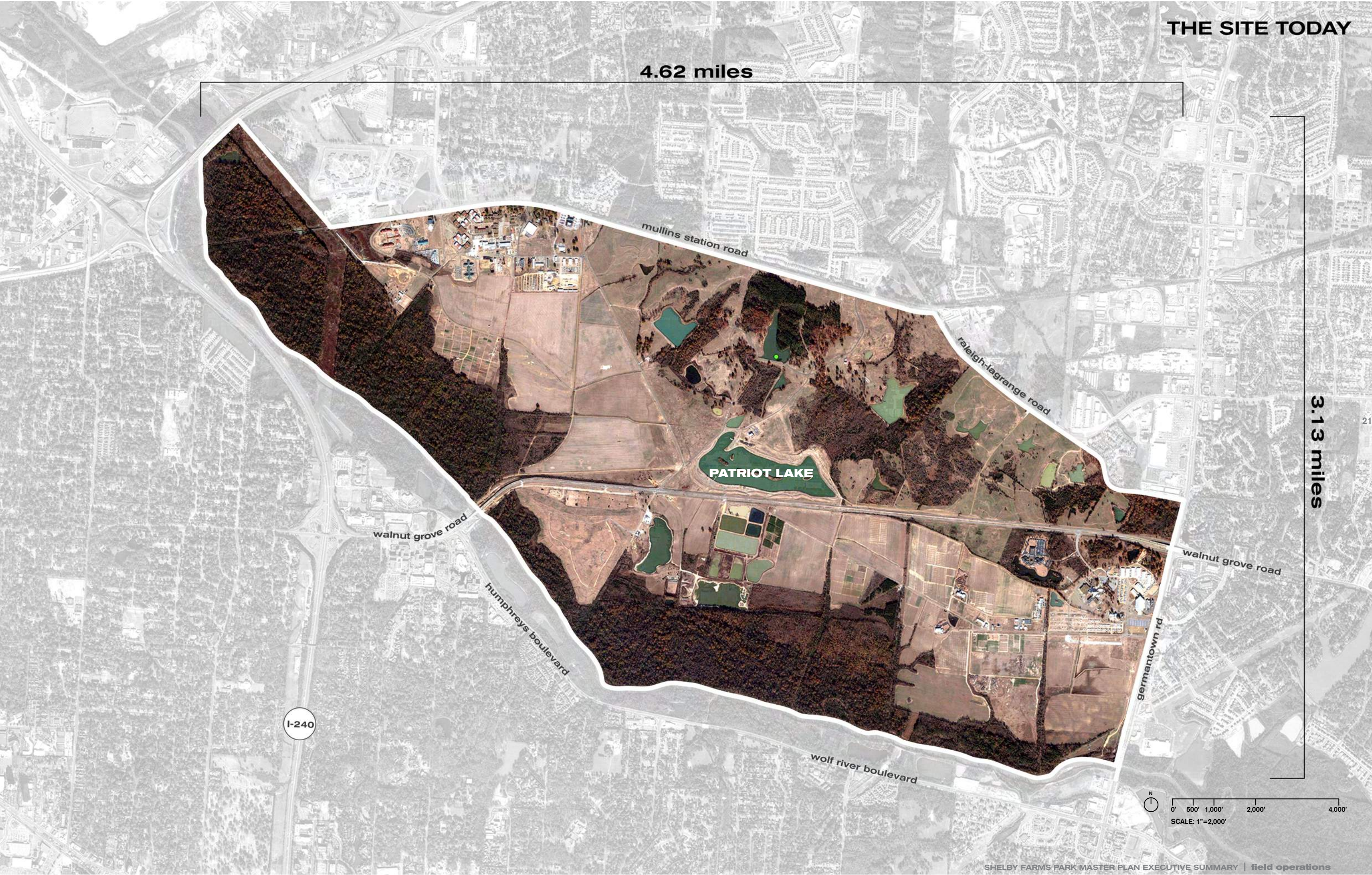
Currently, much of Shelby Farms Park remains zoned for industrial use. In response to a variety of development pressures, a permanent easement was proposed to protect the Park from what were deemed incongruent uses. In December 2006, the Shelby County Commission approved a Conservation Easement, which anticipated incorporating recommendations from this Master Plan. Pre-existing master plans or development proposals for Area 10 and tiers 2+4 of the Agricenter would be maintained within this easement. In August 2007, the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy assumed management of 3,200 acres of the Shelby Farms Park territory from Shelby County.



THE SITE TODAY

4.62 miles

3.13 miles



PATRIOT LAKE

mullins station road

raleigh-lagrange road

walnut grove road

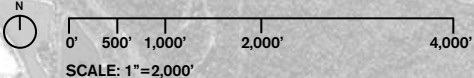
humphreys boulevard

walnut grove road

germantown rd

wolf river boulevard

I-240





3.1

CONSERVATION EASEMENT

In December 2006, the Shelby County Commission passed a Conservation Easement, which anticipated incorporating recommendations from this Master Plan. This Easement was entered into by the County of Shelby, Tennessee (“County”) and the Shelby County Agricenter Commission (“Agricenter”) as Grantors of the Easement and the Land Trust of Tennessee as the recipient of the Easement. The County has previously granted 1,000 acres of the Shelby Farms land to Agricenter for use as an agri-center pursuant to a state statute. The Agricenter Property is subject to reversion to the County under certain specific circumstances. The grant of the Conservation Easement may be terminated upon the 50th anniversary of its execution.

The Conservation Easement has been executed because the Property has been found to have “significant conservation, natural, scenic, recreational, agricultural, scientific and parkland resources and values in the fields, forests, open spaces, vistas, wetlands, ponds, lakes and streams on the Property, which resources and values are worthy of protection, maintenance, preservation, and enhancement for the benefit of the people of Tennessee.” This Easement was received and is enforced by the non-profit group, The Land Trust for Tennessee, Inc. The County, the Agricenter, and the Land Trust for Tennessee have agreed to protect, maintain, preserve and enhance the various natural resources and values of the Property.

This Master Plan is anticipated to become part of the Conservation Easement once it is approved by the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy, Agricenter and the Shelby County Board of Commissioners as defined under Section II, item 3 of the Conservation Easement– “Grantors and Grantee agree that Grantee shall become a party to the planning process for said Master Plan, which upon completion shall become incorporated into the Easement as though set out fully herein.”

The Conservation Easement includes provisions for permitted and existing uses within the Park including but not limited to, paved and unpaved recreation trails; observation structures; gardens; recreational sports venues; park pavilions; agricultural and horticultural uses; scientific research; boating and water sport activities including fishing; habitat and wildlife enhancement; short term events; way-finding and locational signage; outdoor classrooms; retreat facilities; maintenance and operation facilities; and/or a historic carousel. Standard maintenance; completion of any buildings or facilities under construction; and repair or replacement of existing roads and trails is also permitted within the Easement.

The Conservation Easement prohibits uses such as stadiums or arena facilities; the introduction of new transmission lines unless permitted by an existing leases; the use of motorized equipment on unpaved trails; real estate development; manufacturing or industrial uses; commercial mining; residential or hotel uses; subdivision of the property; zoos; permanent fairgrounds; billboards; and/or commercial advertising.

The Master Plan described herein is designed to be consistent with the uses and purposes of the Easement to promote “the use of the Property by the public as an urban park.” The full Conservation Easement can be found in Appendix B of this report. It can also be found on the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy web site:  
[http://www.shelbyfarmspark.org/sfpc/park\\_info/park\\_mgmt](http://www.shelbyfarmspark.org/sfpc/park_info/park_mgmt)

Conservation Easement Areas:

TIER 1: Shelby Farms Park

TIER 2: Agricenter Campus Area

TIER 3: Agricenter Crop and Recreation Area

TIER 4: Agricenter Showplace Arena Area

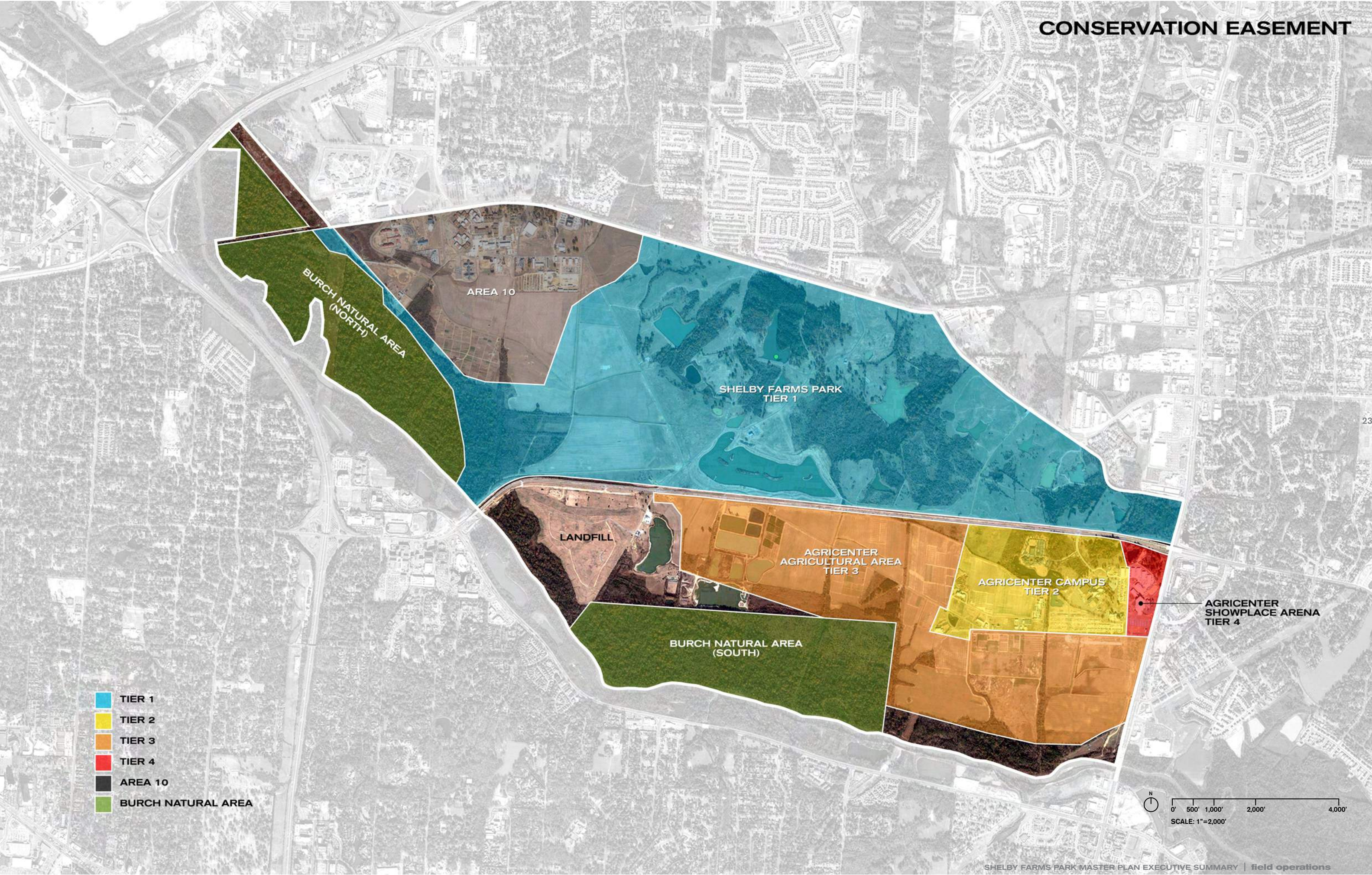
AREA 10: County property not restricted by provisions of this Easement

Lucius Burch Natural Area

*NOTE: The drawing to the right is a graphic representation only of the subject property. The controlling legal descriptions of metes and bounds of this property shall take precedence over the appearance of this document.*



CONSERVATION EASEMENT





4.0

KEY CHALLENGES

Shelby Farms Park is currently a successful public Park. However, it does possess four significant structural deficiencies which we believe the Master Plan must address in order to guide the long-term transformation and growth of the Park.

Poor Identity (Is it an agricultural farm, a penal farm or a park?) – Perhaps the single greatest deficiency of Shelby Farms is an absence of identity. The boundaries of the Park lack a strong physical presence that easily indicates it is a premier public open space venue. In addition, a large percentage of Memphians are unaware of its role within the city (that is, they don't know the Park exists). Driving along Walnut Grove Road is like driving on any other divided highway in Western Tennessee. What signage is present is not immediate and is therefore lost amongst the visual congestion of the road. Further, a public understanding of what the Park is and who it is for (everybody), would substantially help to increase the number of Park users and in turn, support for the Park.

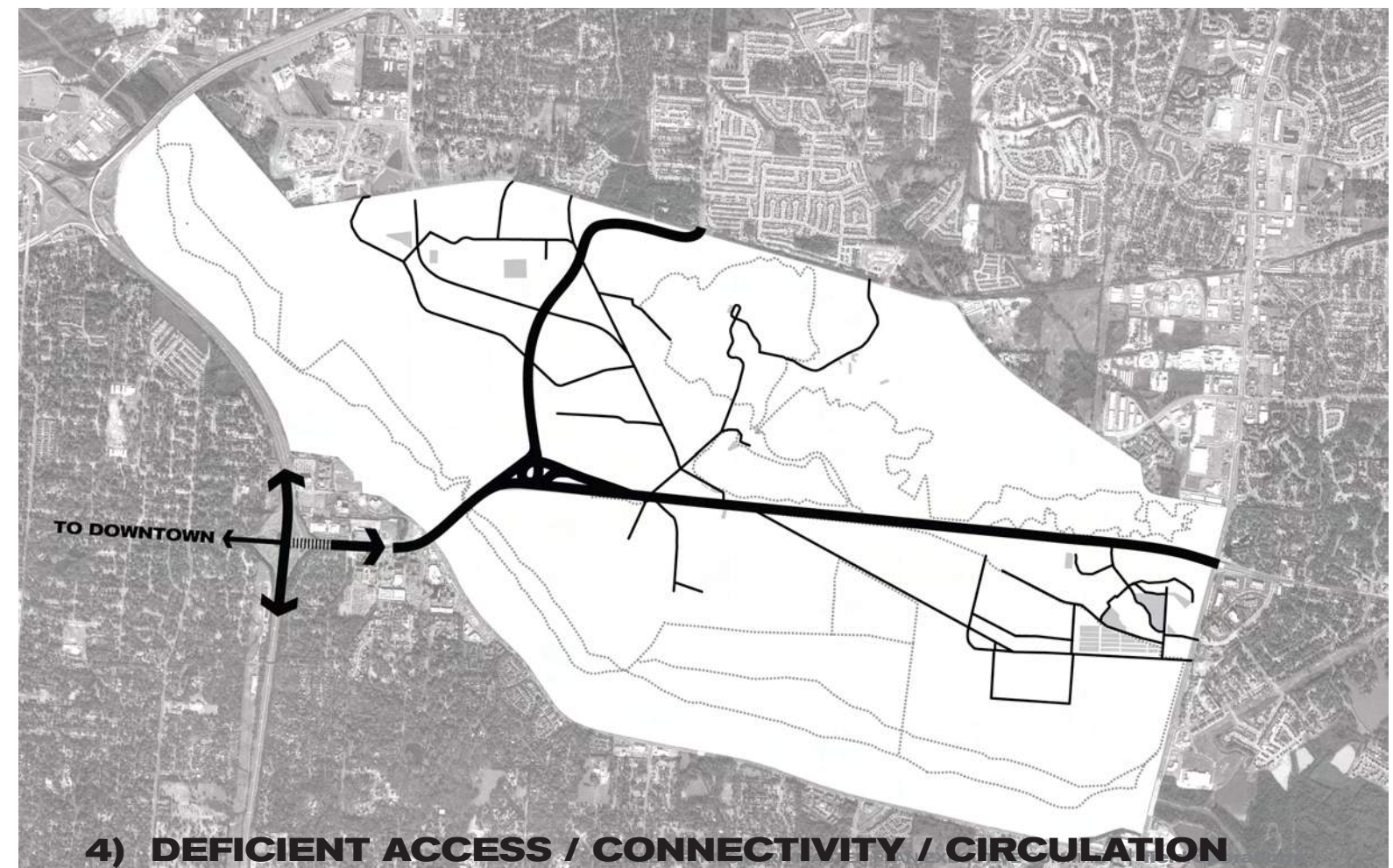
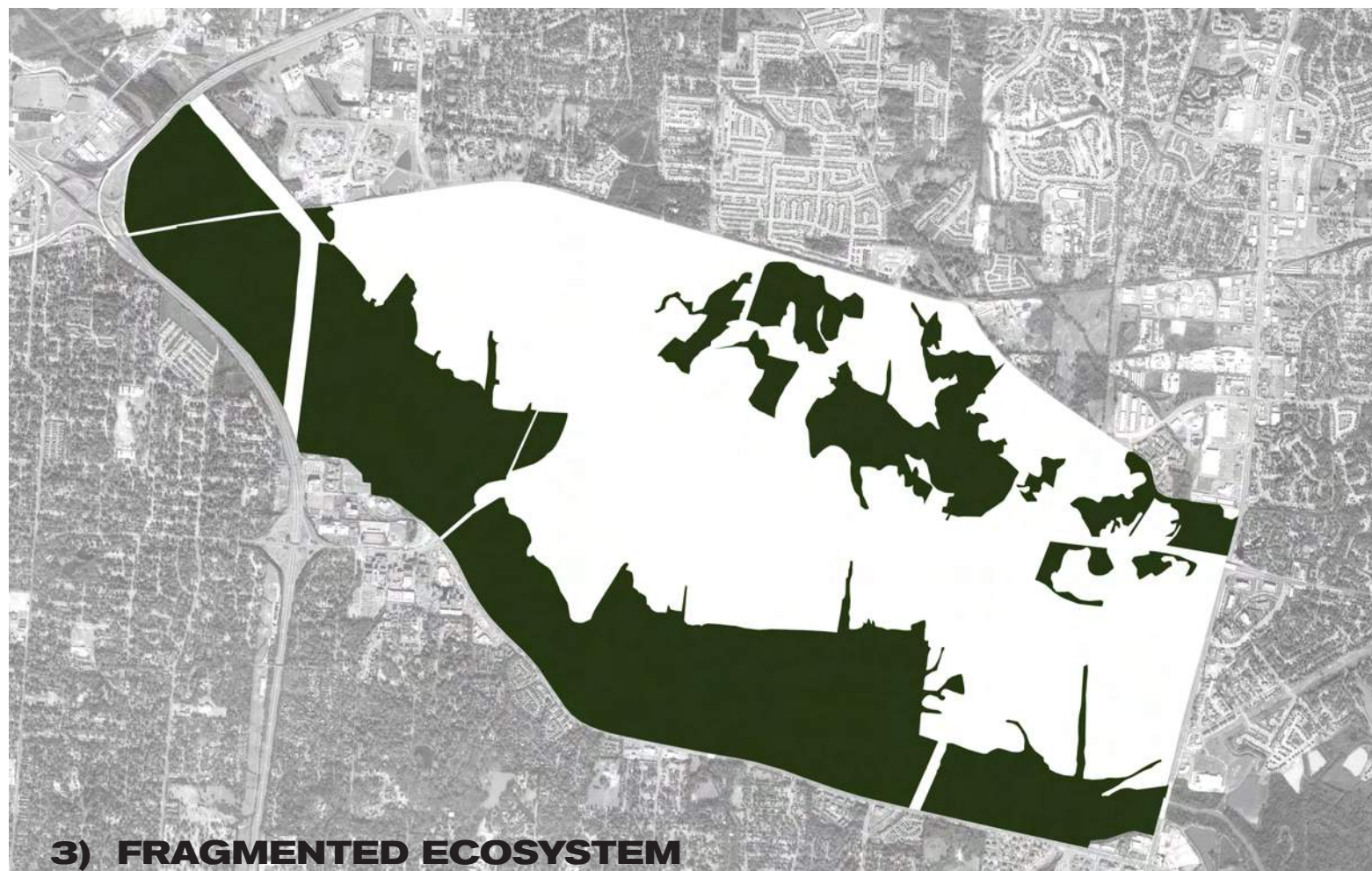
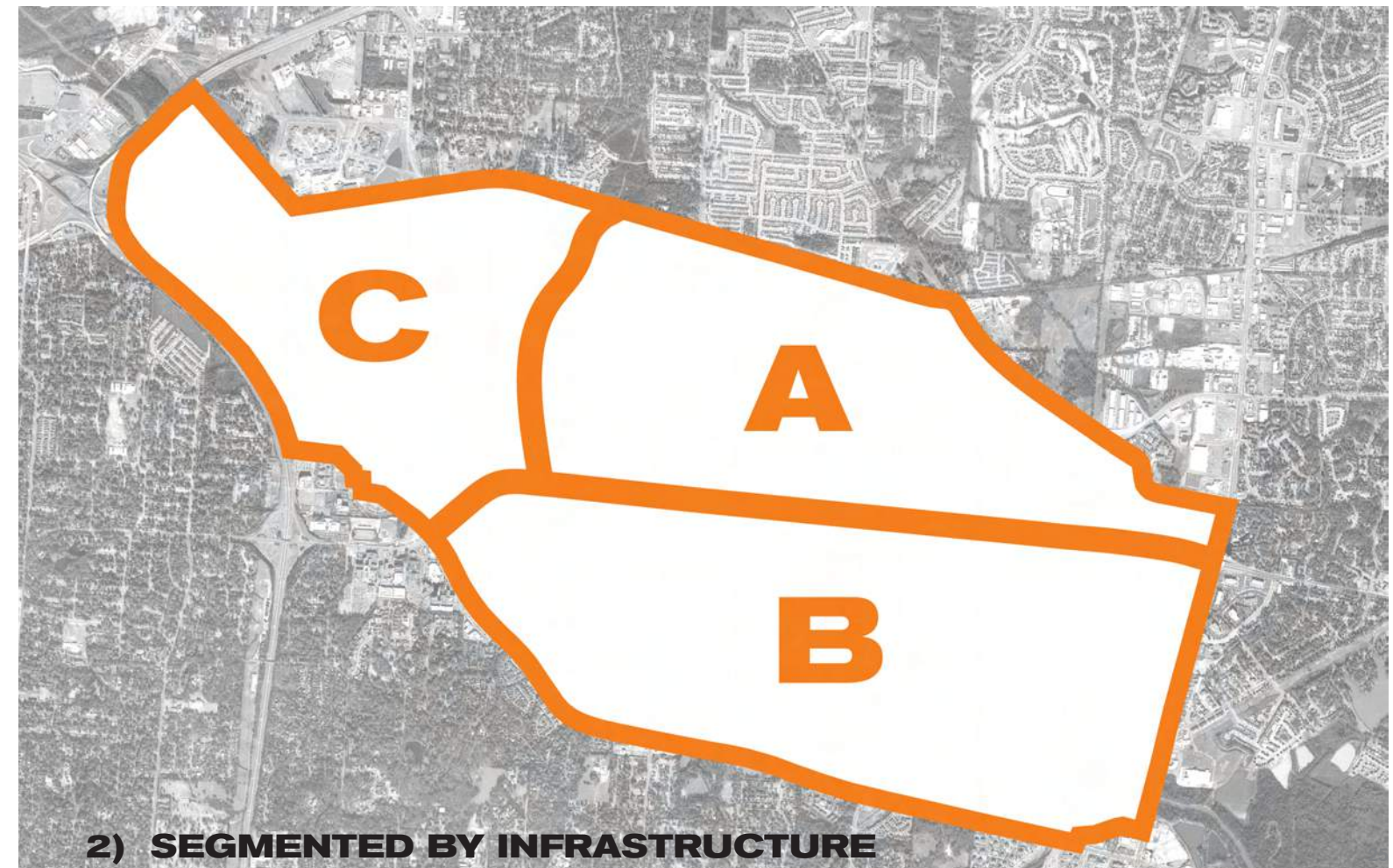
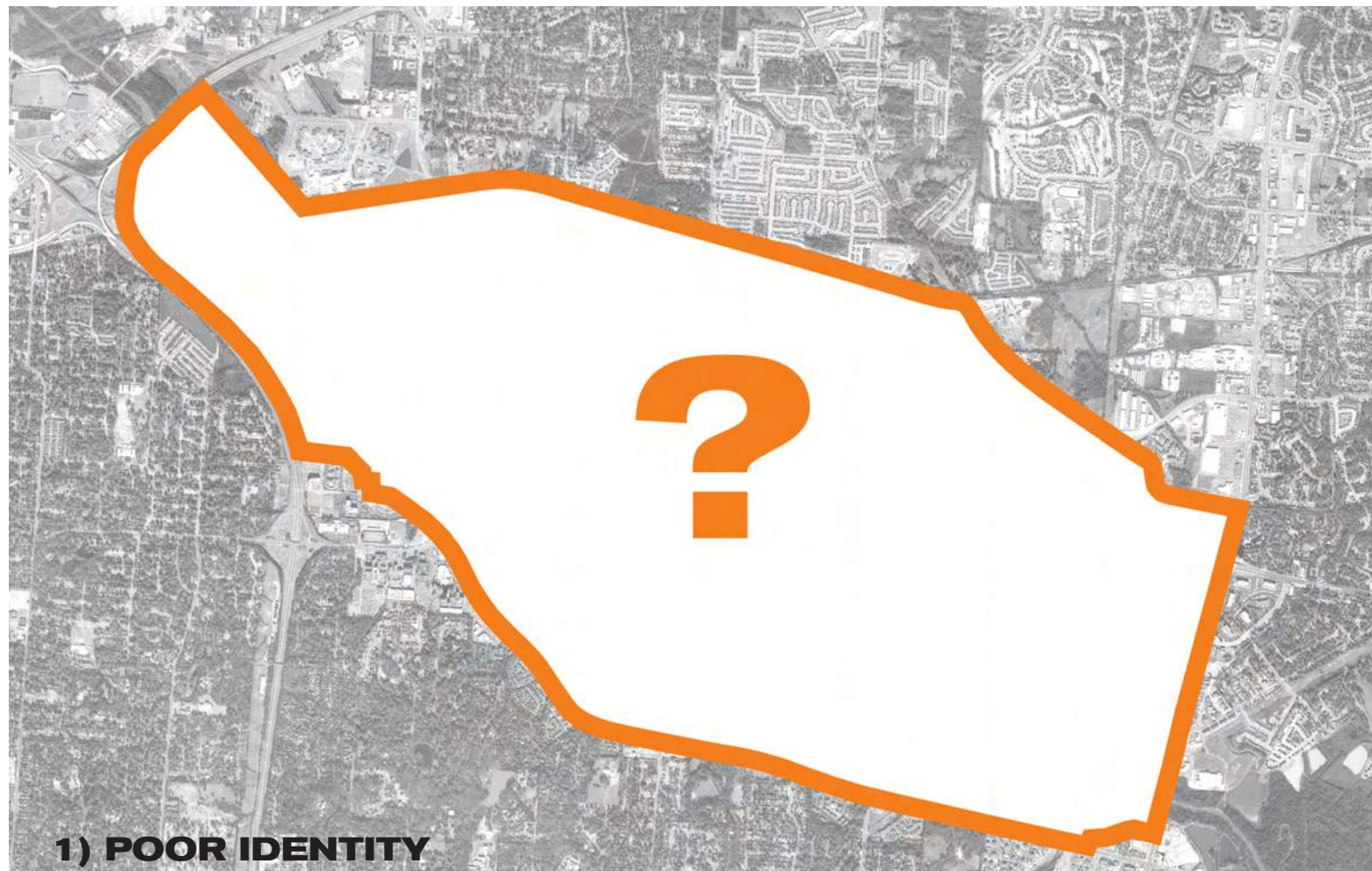
Segmented by Infrastructure – Walnut Grove Road already bisects the Park into northern and southern halves, isolating the programs and activities in each. Implementation of the new Shelby Farms Parkway necessitates a strong approach that will physically and perceptually link these areas of the Park into a single, legible whole. The alternative is a further erosion of the Park's physical presence within the City.

Fragmented Ecosystem – Though the Park is often thought of as “natural,” it is in fact a highly constructed and continually modified environment. The existing pockets of upland forest are healthy, but ecologically limited in that they remain unconnected and isolated. Further, habitat in this area is cut off from the more ecologically productive Wolf River corridor which is a critical piece of wildlife movement within the region. Connecting the various ecological components of the Park into an interconnected mosaic would serve to improve the overall health and ecological value of the land.

Deficient Access / Connectivity / Circulation – Shelby Farms Park is well positioned for access by vehicular traffic, however its location well east of Midtown and Downtown Memphis make the site difficult to reach by means other than an automobile. No mass transit reaches the interior or the Park, and the few stops at its perimeter are too far from any major Park destination to be of any real utility. Providing connections to recreation and alternative transportation linkages such as public greenways or bike lanes, as well as modifying and expanding existing transit service to the Park will help to truly make Shelby Farms accessible and usable by the entire Memphis Region.

Once inside the Park, taking advantage of the various venues is difficult because of the under-developed existing circulation system. Many of the roadways and circulation routes within the Park are re-appropriated field roads or user-defined trails. In fact, the heavily trafficked Farm Road is actually not a public thoroughfare but an internal “farm” road. Because it provide a direct connection between Walnut Grove and Mullins Station Roads, it is heavily utilized. Definition of a clear hierarchy of circulation types; implementation of way-finding elements; and the creation of redundant connections between Park areas rather than single linkages will help improve movement within and enjoyment of the Park.







4.1 CREATE ONE PARK

In order to expand the presence of Shelby Farms Park within the culture of Memphis, the Park needs to project a stronger identity – both physically and conceptually. It has been noted above, but is worth repeating that Shelby Farms Park is already home to a healthy mix of uses. These activities should be the basis upon which the Conservancy defines a strategy for attracting those who don’t yet use the Park.

We believe step one in generating an identity for Shelby Farms Park is emphatically demonstrating that it is in fact a totally accessible and welcoming public open space. This means creating a series of opportunities or events that will engage multiple segments of the Memphis population who are not currently using the Park. These could include a series of small group visits organized through Memphis schools, churches and/or community groups. It could also mean organizing and heavily publicizing highly visible activities such as a temporary art installations or public performances, as well as additional events along the lines of the current Earth Day or Fourth of July celebrations that will draw upon populations who wouldn’t readily define themselves as “park users”.

The second and equally important step in generating an identity for Shelby Farms Park is creating memorable, physical markings at the edges of the Park that are legible from the window of a passing automobile. These should include a strong sense of gateway along Walnut Grove Road and the proposed Shelby Farms Parkway (Kirby-Whitten Parkway), as well as clearly defined entrances to the Park – each distinctively marked with iconic signage and plantings. There should also be a clear delineation of the Park’s boundaries through elements such as a visually compelling fence or lighting. Ultimately, the intention is for Shelby Farms Park to be easily legible as a welcoming public open space from both within the Park and at its perimeter.



an idea for temporary gateway signage along walnut grove road

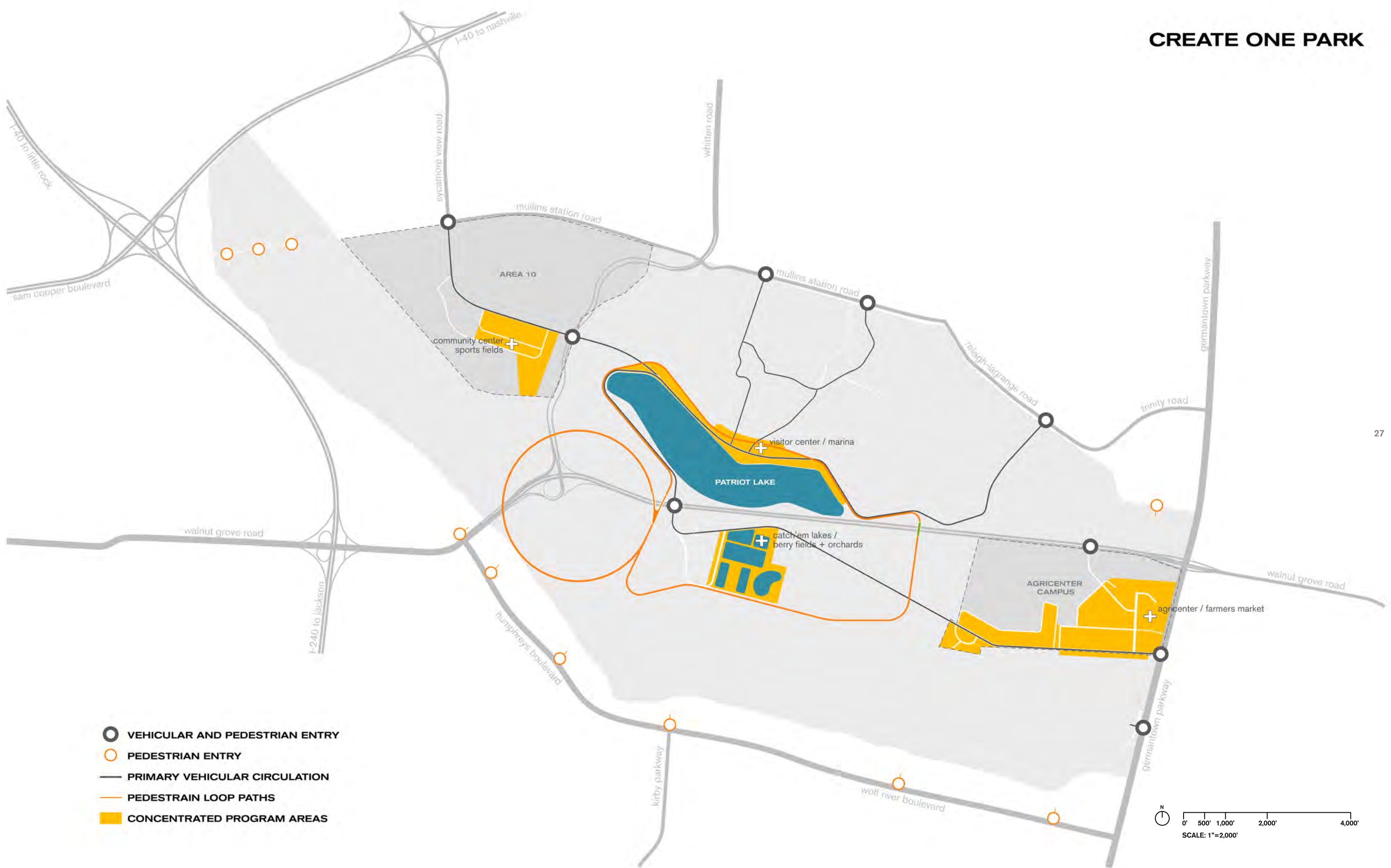
Once inside Shelby Farms Park, it is critical to clarify movement so that first time visitors know exactly where important venues are and how to reach their particular destination whether by bike, by bus or by car. In order to accomplish this, visually clear way-finding signage and a new vehicular circuit is proposed. This circuit will be tied to a 5.25 mi multi-use loop path that will connect all parts of the Park together and help centralize orientation, circulation, transit and parking. An internal park shuttle will provide connections to various points throughout Shelby Farms Park, departing from centralized activity areas with their associated parking facilities. A second 2 mi “circle” loop allows for pedestrian connectivity across major roads and intersections (via tunnels and bridges), and connects the upper Park to the Wolf River and neighborhoods to the south. An expanded network of paths and trails compliments the two central multi-use loops including 12+ miles of equestrian trails; 15+ miles of mountain bike trails; and 20+ miles of wilderness and unpaved trails.

The scale of Shelby Farms Park is its most important attribute. Therefore, the Master Plan promotes a strategy of concentrating programs and facilities at particular locations within the Park to maintain the various landscape characters already present within the site. This approach not only limits the presence of obtrusive architectural elements within the Park landscape, but allows large areas of the Park to remain “natural” and unoccupied by permanent Park activity. The Master Plan proposes less than 10% of the total Shelby Farms Park site area be actively programmed.

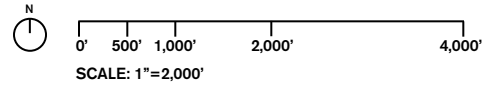


existing historic gate along mullins station road





- VEHICULAR AND PEDESTRIAN ENTRY
- PEDESTRIAN ENTRY
- PRIMARY VEHICULAR CIRCULATION
- PEDESTRIAN LOOP PATHS
- CONCENTRATED PROGRAM AREAS





4.2

PLANT 1,000,000 NEW TREES

One of the most effective moves in generating an identity will be the planting of one-million new trees at Shelby Farms Park. This seemingly simple operation will actually do five very important things for the Park to promote its long-term growth and transformation.

The first, as was noted above, is to help with the creation of identity for Shelby Farms Park by establishing a strong boundary definition and spatial enclosure.

Secondly, the plantings will diversify the ecology and habitat on site by expanding contiguous forest cover and adding new community mixes. These extensive plantings will create many varied woodland settings and ecologies, ranging from Swamp Cypress groves to Oak-Hickory stands, Birch Thickets, Pine Forests and Bottomland Hardwoods.

Third, this new planting will allow for undesirable outside qualities such as major vehicular thoroughfares to be screened from within the Park, creating a true sense of otherness and escape. At the same time, important views and vistas of open landscapes and horizons important to the site will be preserved.

Fourth will be the ability to create a strong sense of community engagement with the planting of these new trees. By partnering with local schools and religious groups to participate in the planting of many of the new trees, the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy can create an immediate momentum building transformation of the Park that will serve to excite and entice the public as other projects are developed and implemented over time. One could easily imagine thousands of local school children coming to Shelby Farms Park to plant these trees and thereby become invested stewards of the long-term health of the Park.

Finally, the planting of a million new trees will also create a potentially large-scale fund-raising intervention. Memphis is home to a number of regional and international corporations who might logically be interested in a contribution of part or all of these trees as a highly desirable “green” public relations opportunity and a way to truly give back to the Memphis Community.

It should be noted that the planting of the one-million new trees is not a singular or monolithic operation. The vast majority of the trees will be planted as small saplings in both unforested areas to expand canopy cover, and in already forested areas to diversify the existing habitat. Some of these saplings will be thinned out in the process of managing the woodland, while others will be allowed to grow to full size. A portion of this new tree planting regime is anticipated to be grown and transplanted to other areas of the City, helping to green Greater Memphis.



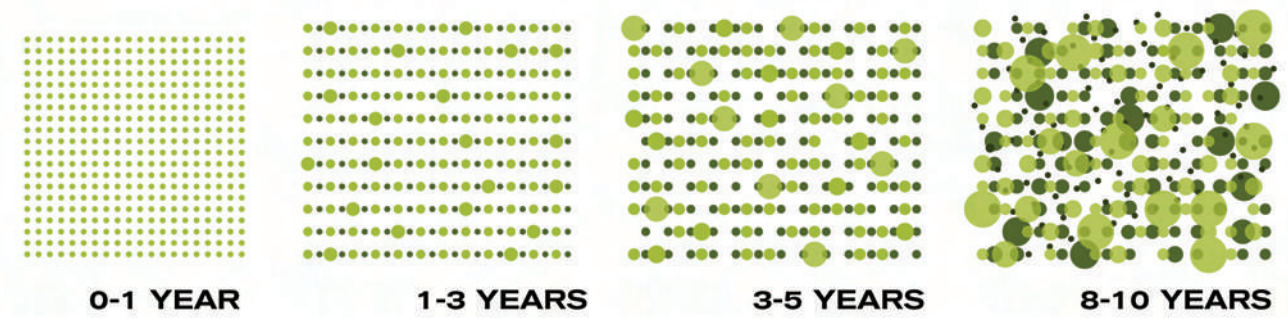
community tree planting



new forest cover



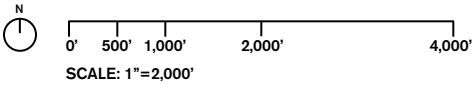
PLANT 1,000,000 NEW TREES



A mix of densely planted native tree saplings can be later thinned and transplanted elsewhere across the site to effectively “grow” a complex multi-aged woodland over time. Reforestation is most successful when a mixture of early-successional and later-successional tree species is planted.

49% OPEN LANDSCAPE  
51% WOODLAND COVER

- HORIZON VIEWS
- INTERIOR PARK VISTAS
- PROPOSED TREES
- EXISTING TREES





4.3

DEFINE 1 2 LANDSCAPE ROOMS

Shelby Farms Park is big. At more than 4,500 acres, the scale of the Park makes it difficult to navigate and spatially comprehend. The deployment of one-million new trees will allow for the definition of distinct landscapes or rooms within the Park, each with its own discrete set of physical and programmatic characteristics. Each landscape or room will be characterized by a different set of users and accommodate a unique set of programs. These large-scale public “rooms” will each support a coherent “sense-of-place” structure for the many varied user groups set within the larger Park setting. As such, each landscape room has its own discrete entrance(s) while also connecting openly into the larger Park system.

The definition of the individual rooms also provides a potential fund-raising mechanism and phasing scenario for Park development. The level of physical transformation varies from room to room and thereby lends itself to a strategy of development of Park areas based on the availability of resources and demands for use. Development at the core of the Park is the logical point of departure, but once this has been established, the transformation of other areas of the Park can occur under any number of scenarios.

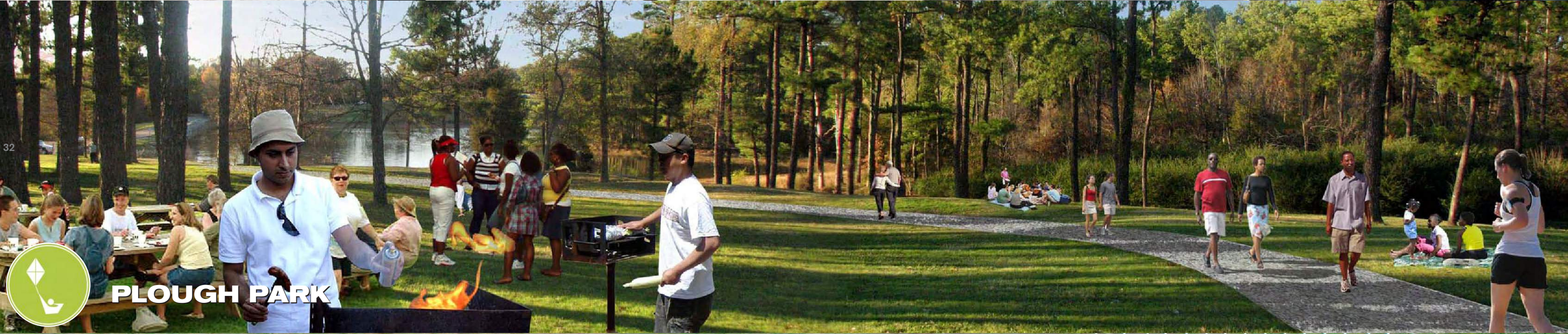








**PATRIOT LAKE**



**32**  
**31**  
**30**  
**29**  
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**8**  
**7**  
**6**  
**5**  
**4**  
**3**  
**2**  
**1**  
**PLOUGH PARK**



**THE RANGE + ARBORETUM**





**THE PUBLIC GARDENS**



**COMMUNITY CENTER + SPORTS FIELDS**



**THE OUTBACK**







## THE ART MOUND + PARK CIRCLE



## CATCH 'EM LAKES



## THE REFUGE





**THE ORCHARDS + BERRY FIELDS**



**CROP + RESEARCH FIELDS**



**THE AGRICENTER**





## 5.0 PROGRAMMATIC DIVERSITY | A UNIQUE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY MIX

Shelby Farms Park is more than just a place of recreation. It is Memphis's green heart – a place that is engaged in a variety of uses and activities related to health, exercise, play, nature, food, energy, ecology, research and education. This combination of programs is exceptional. It positions Shelby Farms Park and Memphis at the forefront of 21st century sustainable growth and civic development.

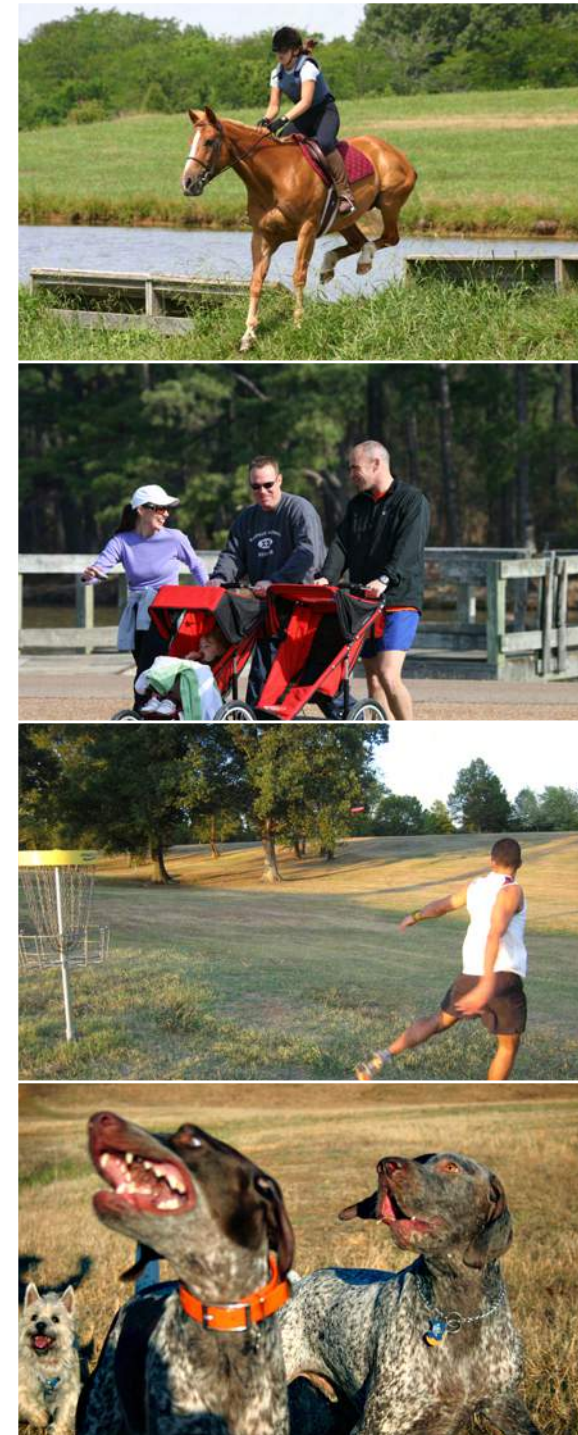
In the very near future, a visit to Shelby Farms Park might include a brisk five-mile jog through an expansive car free territory within the City, followed by a leisurely swim and afternoon reading on the beach of the region's largest recreation-only lake. A different day at Shelby Farms Park could start with a visit to an outdoor classroom sited at the edge of a healthy and productive cypress swamp, followed by a snack of locally cultivated fruit and berries purchased from a farmers market powered by on-site renewable energy sources like wind turbines or solar power. A different visitor to the Park might go for an early morning horseback ride before meeting up with a group of friends volunteering to help a church group set up for their summer picnic and choir performance at the Park's new woodland amphitheatre. Another Park user might spend the day working on cutting-edge agricultural practices at the Agricenter before taking a vigorous afternoon ride on the Region's premier skate venue and enjoying a picnic dinner watching the sunset over the newly expanded Patriot Lake.

The Shelby Farms Park experience is endless.

With the execution of this Master Plan Shelby Farms Park can become a place characterized by a dynamic environment that combines active recreation and a healthy lifestyle with state of the art green energy production, and local and organic agricultural practices; a place that will comprise diverse natural ecologies and cutting edge agricultural research. The Park has the potential to become a 4,500 acre natural science laboratory and classroom for the Greater Memphis Community that can help educate generations of Memphians on the value of their natural environment.

This “mix” of programs, uses and activities will set a global precedent for a new kind of Urban Park – one that does more than just provide a civic venue for active and passive recreation. Shelby Farms Park will transform Memphis. It will influence the culture of the City and the Region. It will redefine the reputation of the place, and the health and well being of its population. Shelby Farms Park will help Memphis offer a high quality of life that is both desirable and enviable.

Shelby Farms Park will impact the way Memphis and West Tennessee move forward into the 21st century.



existing park users

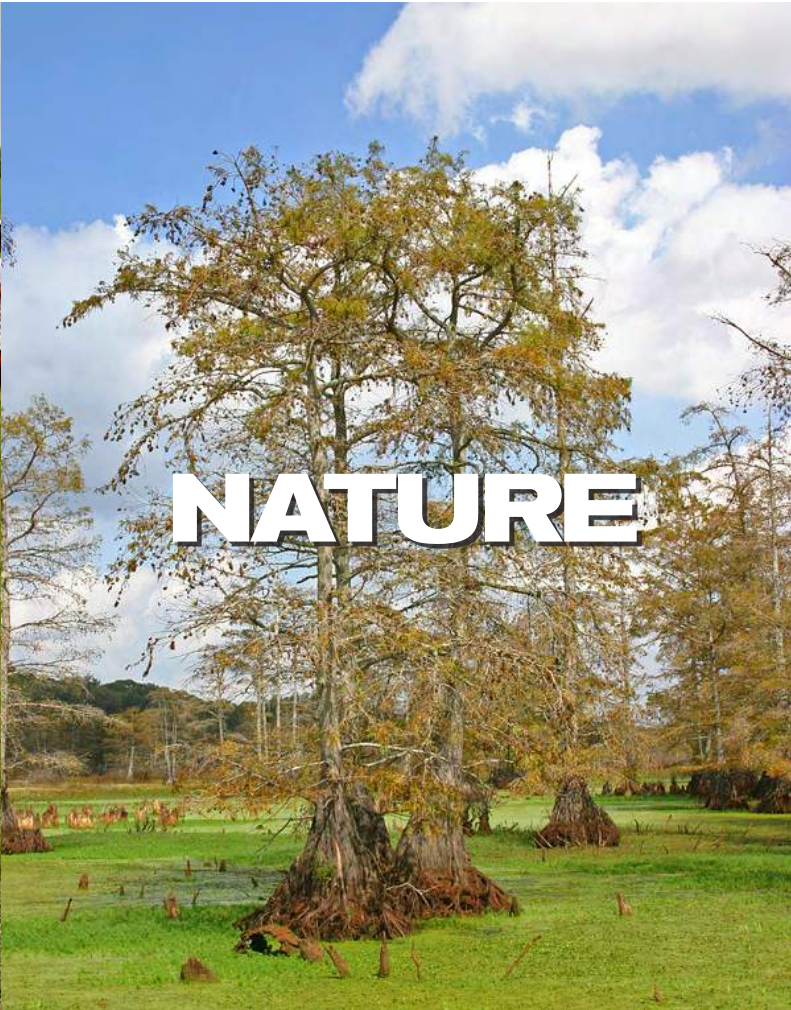




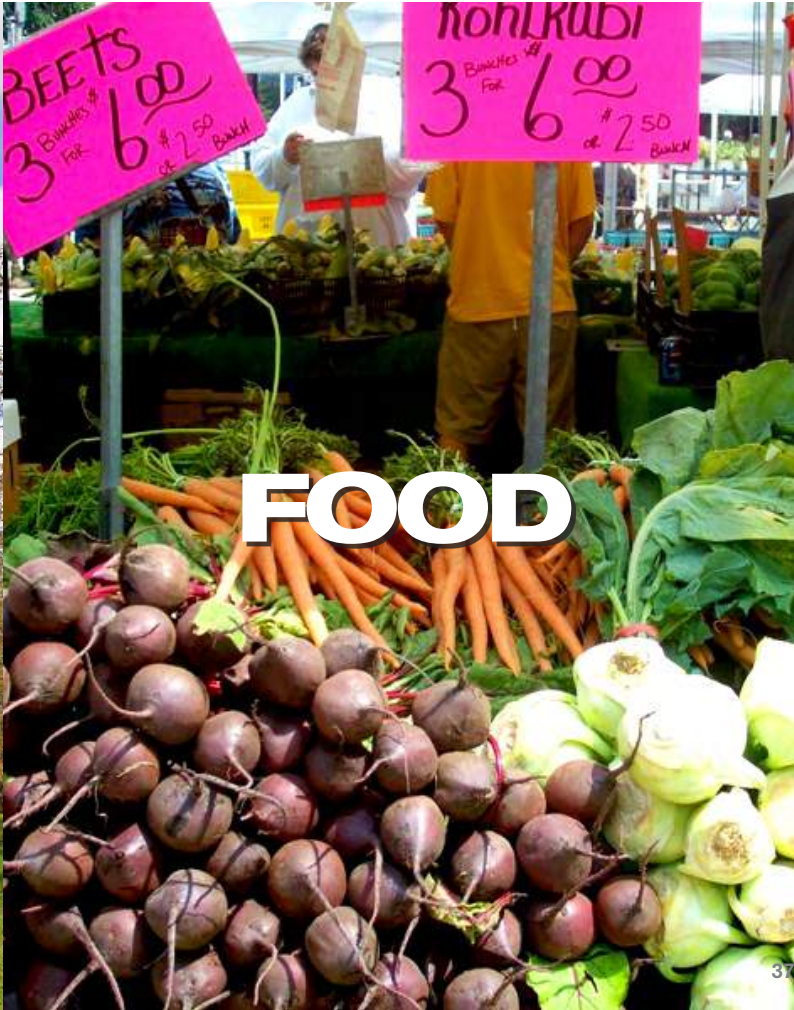
**HEALTH  
+  
EXERCISE**



**PLAY**



**NATURE**



**FOOD**



**ENERGY**



**ECOLOGY**



**RESEARCH**



**EDUCATION**



6.0

PHASING | GROWTH OF THE PARK OVER TIME

The large scale and complexity of Shelby Farms Park dictates that the implementation of the Master Plan for the Park will take time. It will likely be more than a decade before Shelby Farms Park is fully realized, and the planning processes over this period will need to address the existing challenges outlined above— including the lack of identity; segmented infrastructure; a fragmented ecosystem; deficient circulation; and poor regional access – as well as new challenges such as the environmental and economic sustainability of managing an expanded parkland. Add to this equation the anticipated public and stakeholder consultation processes, and it becomes clear that the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy needs a robust strategy for dealing with the shifting priorities and financial requirements of developing the Park over an extended period of time.

Due to this great complexity, Shelby Farms Park will need to be developed in phases or planned stages of growth that 1) target clear design principles; 2) expand on existing facilities, resources and character; 3) capitalize on the availability of funds, to maximize the exposure and legibility of the Park; and 4) build momentum and support for the Park with each project that is implemented.

It is critical to note however, that incremental, staged growth does not mean that implementation and detailed planning should happen in an ad-hoc or piecemeal fashion. Quite the opposite. To guarantee the long-term success of Shelby Farms Park, it is crucial that early stages of development are founded on clear design objectives while simultaneously building excitement for what is yet to come. The momentum for investing in later stages of the Park’s development will depend on public and stakeholder appraisal of the success of initial phases of implementation of the Master Plan.

The Master Plan sets out a strategic and intelligent framework to guide the growth of the Park, with public and stakeholder consultation supporting all future planning and design efforts. Shelby Farms Park is a unique landscape, both in terms of its features and character, as well as the type of efforts, cooperation and leadership that will be required from the Conservancy and the associated public agencies to move the implementation process forward. What the Master Plan phasing scenario outlined here provides is a structure for:

- creating early enthusiasm to propel the implementation process;
- establishing the principal framework necessary to guide long-term development of the Park;
- enhancing the site through ecology and habitat diversification;
- shaping a more defined and memorable identity for the Park; and
- respecting the highly valued existing places in the Park.

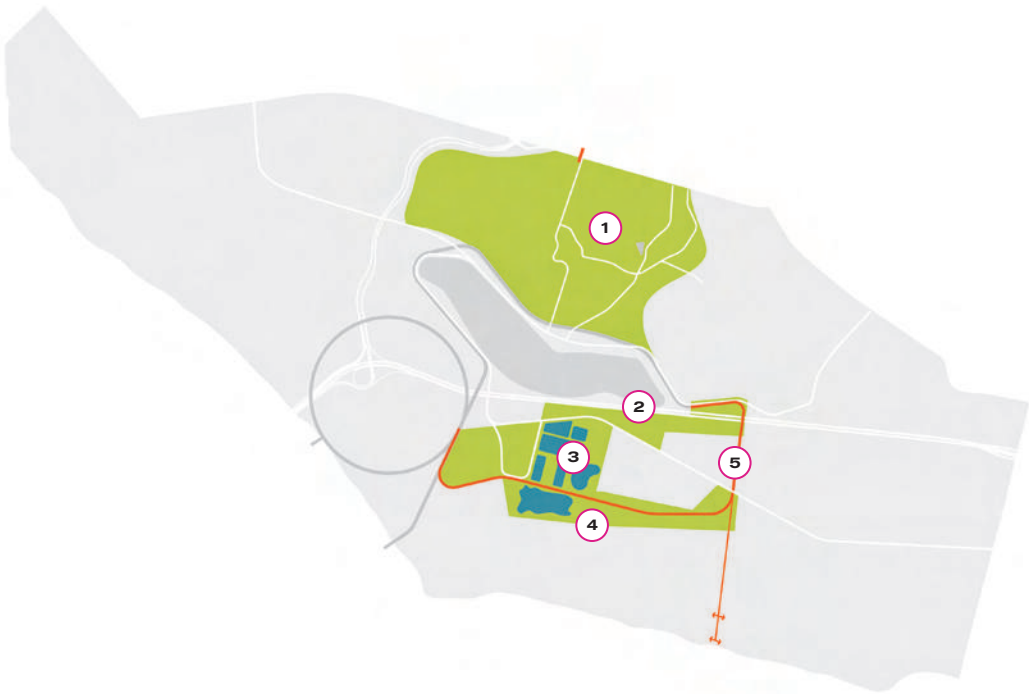
The Phasing diagrams shown below and to the right are not intended to comprehensively describe every project and the order with which they are to be implemented. Rather, the four phases are intended to indicate priorities in terms of the areas of the Park where we believe capital projects should be concentrated for maximum gain. As each phase of the project is developed, the limits of each will be clearly defined prior to any design work or construction taking place. It is expected that some adjustments can and will take place regarding the particular location of elements within the master plan provided these adjustments do not conflict with the Conservation Easement or the Master Plan Implementation Instrument. This flexible strategy will establish a strong spatial and organizational design framework for the Park so that its development over time is assured.



PHASE ONE: Establish the Core + Create Identity

- 1) Expanded Playground at Plough Park
- 2) Expanded Patriot Lake
- 3) Shelby Farms Parkway (Kirby-Whitten Parkway) - *by others*
- 4) New Walnut Grove Gateway + Park Entry
- 5) Park Circle Access + Trails





PHASE TWO: Expand Core Public Park Area

- 1) Trail + Facility Enhancements to Plough Park
- 2) Walnut Grove Planting Strip
- 3) Reconfiguration + Expansion of Catch 'Em Lakes
- 4) Development of Refuge Area
- 5) Completion of Mutli-Use Loop



PHASE THREE: Enhance Landscape Rooms

- 1) Trail Enhancements to Outback Area
- 2) Enhancement + Expansion of Agricenter Campus Area
- 3) Development of Amenities + Activities along Wolf River
- 4) Development of Wolf River Greenway - *by others*



PHASE FOUR: Enhance Landscape Rooms (later phases TBD)

- 1) Community Center + Sports Fields \*
- 2) Public Gardens \*
- 3) Agricenter Research +Crop Field Area

\* *pending area 10 approval*



6.1

PHASING | PHASE ONE CENTERPIECE

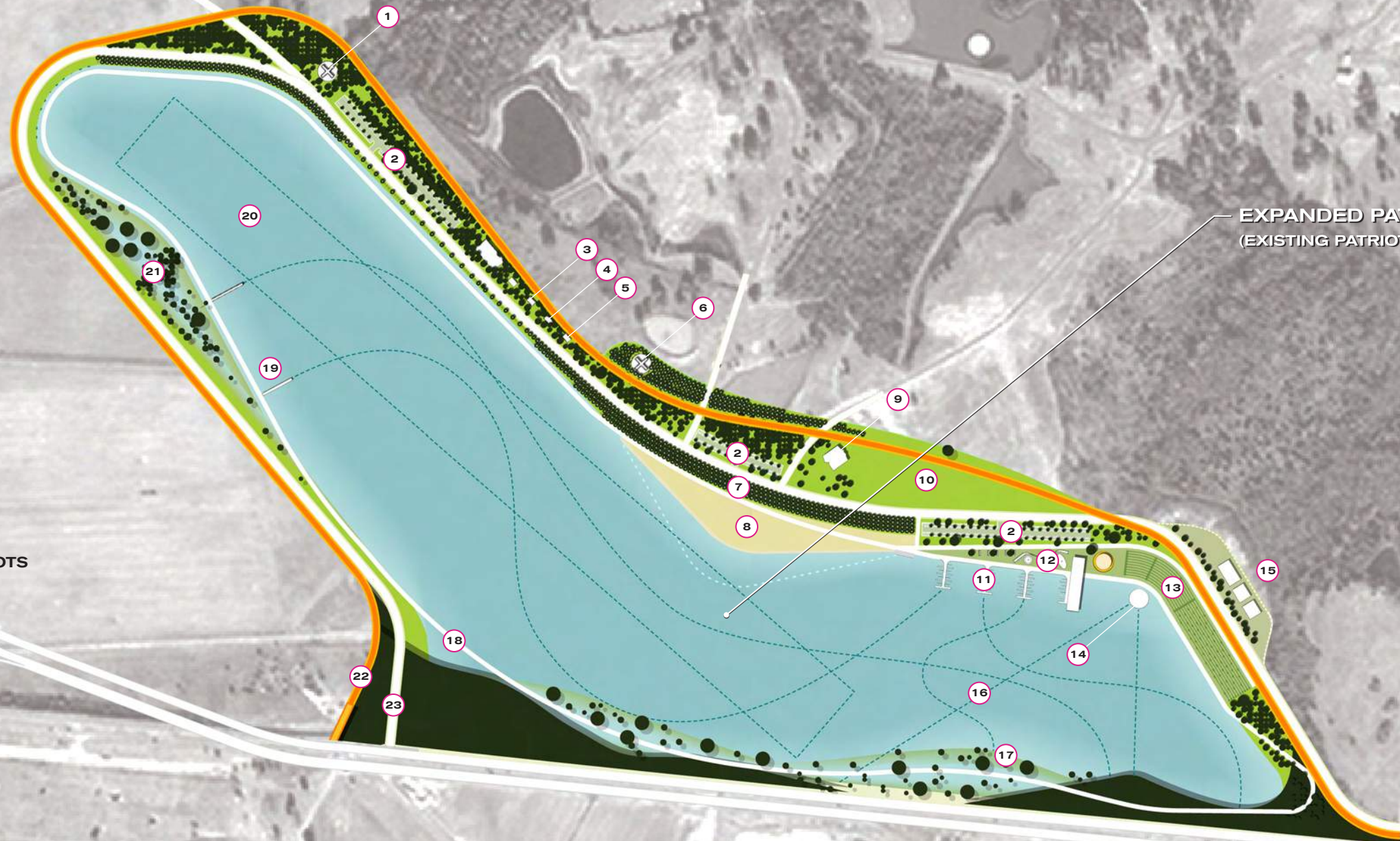
The centerpiece of Phase One will be the expansion of Patriot Lake at the center of the Shelby Farms Park property. The transformation and expansion of the lake will be a bold, dramatic and exciting step in the process of realizing the Shelby Farms Park project. As the iconic destination of the entire Park, the new Patriot Lake will be a highly visible and defining landmark for Memphis: one that is rich with new public amenities, diverse recreational opportunities, spectacular vistas and remarkably unique events.

The Patriot Lake Project is a complex one, as it involves works on land and in the water and will require the collective participation of a broad range of technical consultants, city agencies and the public. However, the promise of its spectacular presence in the future Park, replete with its great physical beauty and recreational resources, signals the importance of prioritizing this remarkable feature in the early stages of the Park's life.



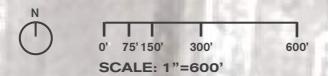
aerial view of the existing patriot lake





EXPANDED PATRIOT LAKE 150-ACRES  
(EXISTING PATRIOT LAKE 54-ACRES)

- 1 SMALL VIEWING TOWER
- 2 PERMEABLE SURFACE PARKING LOTS
- 3 PICNIC PAVILION
- 4 EQUIPMENT RENTAL
- 5 REST FACILITY
- 6 ICON BALLOON
- 7 TREE ALLEE
- 8 SWIMMING BEACH
- 9 VISITOR CENTER
- 10 GREAT LAWN
- 11 MARINA
- 12 WATER PLAYGROUND
- 13 EARTHEN AMPHITHEATER
- 14 FLOATING STAGE
- 15 M+O FACILITIES (15,000 SF BUILDING AND 2-ACRE YARD)
- 16 SAILBOAT COURSE
- 17 SWAMP CYPRESS GROVE
- 18 2.5-MILE BOARDWALK
- 19 FISHING PIERS
- 20 1250 METER / 1.25 KILOMETER ROWING COURSE
- 21 SWAMP CYPRESS GROVE
- 22 MULTI-USE CIRCUIT
- 23 PATRIOT LAKE ROAD (PRIMARY VEHICULAR ROAD)







cypress swamp and boardwalk at the expanded patriot lake





earthen amphitheatre at the expanded patriot lake



## 7.0 CONCLUSION

Shelby Farms Park is already an amazing reserve of public parkland, amenity and urban nature. Its huge scale offers an extraordinary resource for people who are interested in large-scale recreation activities – strolling, jogging, cycling, mountain biking, rollerblading, picnicking, dog walking, swimming, kayaking, windsurfing, sailing, fishing and the like. The site's unique agrarian character and diverse ecological habitat is a great draw to a public interested in escaping the frenetic quality of the city and immersing themselves in a large-scale 'green' landscape. Whether for hiking, bird watching, private refuge, reflection, plant and wildlife identification, ecological research or education, Shelby Farms Park offers a "Big Nature" setting that lays the grounds for creating one of the world's most distinct and distinguished urban parks.

The Shelby Farms Park Master Plan amplifies these qualities to provide for a higher intensity and variety of uses on site. A new legible physical identity highlighted by an expanded Patriot Lake; a revised circulation system replete with multi-use circuits and user-specific paths; concentrated areas of public programs; an expanded educational agenda and accompanying facilities; cutting edge agrarian practices; and a new focus on sustainable development and renewable energy sources will distinguish Shelby Farms as the 21st century example of what great urban public space is capable of contributing to a city and a region.

Through intelligent management and enhancement of Shelby Farms' distinct natural resources, the development of the Park has the capacity to transform Memphis and the Region. The Park will significantly enrich the culture of the City; it will redefine the reputation of the place, and help to attract new creative talent, business and families to the area; and it will offer a great resource for the improvement of public health, fitness and well-being. Shelby Farms Park will help Memphis offer a wonderful quality of life that is both highly desirable and globally enviable.

Shelby Farms Park will impact the way Memphis and West Tennessee move forward into the 21st century.























# **SHELBY FARMS PARK**

**MASTER PLAN REPORT • JULY 2008**

PREPARED BY **field operations**







# **SHELBY FARMS PARK**

**M A S T E R   P L A N   R E P O R T   •   J U L Y   2 0 0 8**

PREPARED BY **field operations**







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21<sup>st</sup> July, 2008

Rick Masson  
Executive Director,  
Shelby Farms Park Conservancy,  
500 North Pine Lake Drive,  
Memphis, TN 38134

Dear Rick,

It gives me great pleasure to submit to you and to the Board of the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy this Master Plan document. In the pages that follow are descriptions of a vision that has been shaped by carefully listening to the needs and desires of the many different users of the Park today, as well as to the potential aspirations of an even broader populace that may be attracted to the Park in the future. The document describes how the land may be enhanced, improved and modified over time to become even more beautiful and special than it is today, accommodating an even wider spectrum of visitors and creating a new “green heart” for Memphis. While the Master Plan outlines specific ideas for transforming parts of the Park over the next few years, it is also provides a good deal of flexibility to allow a fluid response to changing demands, needs and desires over time.

We look forward to continuing to work with you and the Conservancy as you move forward in making this vision for Shelby Farms Park a reality.

With my very best regards,



James Corner

















July 2008

**MASTER PLAN REPORT**  
SHELBY FARMS PARK

PREPARED FOR:

**SHELBY FARMS PARK CONSERVANCY**  
500 Pine Lake Drive  
Memphis, TN 38134

PREPARED BY:

**field operations**  
landscape architecture + urban design

with

**HR&A ADVISORS** · economics + finance  
**PICKERING FIRM INC** · engineering + hydrology  
**UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS ECOLOGICAL RESEARCH CENTER** · ecology  
**JPA INC** · landscape architecture  
**FAITHFUL + GOULD** · cost estimating  
**TERRY ADKINS** · public art



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

GOVERNOR OF TENNESSEE

Phil Bredesen

MAYOR OF SHELBY COUNTY

A C Wharton, Jr.

MAYOR OF MEMPHIS

Dr. Willie W. Herenton

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Wain Gaskins <i>Memphis City Engineer</i>	Pam Beasley <i>Germantown Parks + Rec.</i>
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SHELBY FARMS PARK USER GROUPS

Bike and Pedestrian Advocates	Boy Scouts
Canoe & Kayak/Outdoors Inc.	Greater Memphis Greenline
Greening Greater Memphis	High School Cross Country Coaches
Master Gardeners	Memphis Amateur Retriever Club
Memphis Disc Golf Club	Memphis Ultimate Frisbee Association
Memphis Hightailers	Memphis in Motion
Memphis Runners Track Club	Memphis Whitewater
Mid-South Fly Fishers	Mid-South Hunting Retriever Club
Mid South Song Writers Association	Mid-South Trails Association
Model Airplane Club	Park Concession, LLC
SCSCTP (Clay Shooting)	SFPC Youth Alliance
Shelby County Community Gardens	Shelby Farms Assoc. of Neighborhoods
Shelby Farms BMX	Shelby Farms Equestrian Alliance
Shelby Farms Off-Leash Society	Shelby Farms Trail Crew
Sierra Club – Chickasaw Chapter	Stables at Shelby Farms Park
Tennessee Ornithological Society	Tennessee Trails
Tornado Alley Sailing Club	West Tennessee Clean Cities Coalition
Wolf River Conservancy	Women and Running



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# 0.0 REPORT SUMMARY



0.1

REPORT SUMMARY | ONE PARK, ONE MILLION TREES, TWELVE LANDSCAPES

THE SITE

Formerly a penal farm and agricultural area, Shelby Farms Park is today a 4,500 acre reserve of scenic fields, meadows, woodlands, lakes, pathways and trails. At more than five-times the size of New York’s Central Park, this enormous site affords a very broad range of uses, appealing to an equally broad range of users and interest groups. Its huge scale offers an extraordinary resource for people who are interested in large-scale recreation activities – strolling, jogging, cycling, roller-blading, picnicking, dog-walking, frisbee, horseback riding, fishing, boating, dog training, gardening and the like. Its agricultural heritage is also a great resource for land husbandry practices, including farming, research, food production, energy creation, education, markets and festivals. The site also offers opportunities for arts, music, culture and large-scale outdoor events, such as Earth Day and July 4th celebrations.

A NEW CENTRAL DESTINATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCE

With the new Master Plan, Shelby Farms Park will become a major landmark public open space and defining destination for Memphis. While the site is located east of the center of Memphis proper, it is actually quite central to the larger population settlement across the metropolitan area. Extensions along the Wolf River Greenway and the future greenline (former CSX rail line) further embed the Park in the fabric of the Memphis Region and help to connect it to a broad range of constituents and neighborhoods. The development of the Park is an important part of Memphis Fast Forward – the largest and most comprehensively supported economic development program in the region. It is in this context that investment in and transformation of Shelby Farms Park will not only enrich the lives of all who visit and use the Park, but will also enhance the attractiveness of Memphis for business, creative talent, families and individuals.

ONE PARK, ONE MILLION TREES, TWELVE LANDSCAPES

By framing the Master Plan around the threefold concept of “One Park, One Million Trees, Twelve Landscapes,” an otherwise complex series of site design initiatives can be more simply understood:

“One Park” addresses the goals of unity, connectivity, sense-of-place, ecosystem, identity and inclusion. New circulation systems plantings, signage and consistent design elements will shape the Park as one.

“One Million New Trees” addresses the goals of ecological improvement and biodiversity, defining edges and screening out undesirable views while maintaining some of the site’s most spectacular vistas; engaging the community in planting and stewardship; creating more shade for strolling; and reducing Memphis’s overall carbon footprint.

“Twelve Landscapes” addresses the diversity and richness of the different areas of the site; the varied user group needs; and the definition of future management zones, with respective goals and objectives.

Together, these three guiding principles will help to steer and form the basis around which the future Park takes shape. New entrances, pathways, plantings and facilities will shape a more defined and beautiful identity for Shelby Farms Park as a whole. In the center will be a magnificent new lake – nearly three times the size of the current Patriot Lake – able to support a wide range of non-motorized water sport activities. Twelve distinctive large-scale landscapes surround the expanded Patriot Lake, each supporting certain uses and events while allowing a strong ‘sense-of-place structure’ for the many varied user groups set within the larger park setting. The plan is respectful of current Park users and the unique qualities of the landscape, while at the same time affording enhanced amenities – improved and expanded trails, play areas, water bodies, performance spaces, activity areas and facilities – for an even broader spectrum of users.

THE VISION

Continuing both the agricultural and more recent recreational uses of the site, the new Park offers a generous and beautiful large-scale public landscape for cultivation, growth, health and wellbeing (as in a sports farm, a tree farm, a culture farm, an arts farm, an energy farm, as well as the more familiar land husbandry farm) for a broad constituency of public user groups, families and individuals. In this way traditional land practices meet the new urban 21st century culture of health, fitness, leisure, play, education, and ecology, creating a unique place of large-scale interaction with the land. As such, the Park will become a leading-edge, international model for design and sustainable management practices.

The Master Plan

The Master Plan offers a vision and a guiding framework for how the Park may be improved and developed over time. At the same time, it is intended to be dynamic and flexible, capable of being adapted to changing needs and desires. The Master Plan is also designed to be implemented flexibly in realistic phases, depending upon the availability of funding and priorities set by the Conservancy.

As a guiding vision, the Master Plan provides a bold yet practical framework for future investment in the Park, creating a world-class Park of exceptional distinction, that appeals to the broadest possible constituency and heralds a new era where visionary parks are central to the creation of a wholesome, just and rich quality of urban life.





- 1 SHELBY FARMS PARKWAY (KIRBY-WHITTEN PKWY.)
- 2 COMMUNITY CENTER \*
- 3 SPORTS FIELDS \*
- 4 PUBLIC GARDENS \*
- 5 BISON RANGE
- 6 PATRIOT LAKE
- 7 BEACH + ACTIVITY BAR
- 8 EARTHEN AMPHITHEATER
- 9 PLOUGH PARK
- 10 THE OUTBACK
- 11 GREEN BRIDGE
- 12 FRUIT + NUT ORCHARDS
- 13 AGRICENTER
- 14 RESEARCH FIELDS
- 15 WOLF RIVER PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
- 16 STRAWBERRY FIELDS
- 17 THE REFUGE
- 18 CATCH 'EM LAKES
- 19 "Y" GATEWAY BRIDGE
- 20 ART MOUND
- 21 SCULPTURE PARK
- 22 WOLF RIVER PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
- 23 WOLF RIVER PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
- 24 LUCIUS BURCH NATURAL AREA
- 25 AREA10 / GOVERNMENT FACILITIES

\* PENDING AREA 10 APPROVAL







# 1.0 INTRODUCTION



1.1

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Shelby Farms Park is poised to join the ranks of the world’s great large contemporary urban parks. There is increasing recognition that parks of this generous size present a unique combination of opportunities and challenges with respect to design, ecology, programming and sense of place. At their best, large urban parks define the character of the neighborhoods around them, drawing both residents and visitors for a full range of experiences while catalyzing economic development and attracting creative talent to their region. At the same time, large parks make a fundamental contribution to environmental sustainability through their scale of open space, water, air and habitat opportunities, as well as their contribution to urban livability. These are parks that help to define the cities where they are located and their unique features make them calling cards for their home towns around the world.

The Master Plan describes a series of bold, yet pragmatic land planning and physical design improvements that will help to create a world-class park for the 21st century. Key strategies are driven by:

- a) over-coming the segmentation of the larger site created by Walnut Grove Road and the new north-south Shelby Farms Parkway (Kirby-Whitten Parkway), and creating instead a strong sense of a unified large-scale landscape with improved access and seamless pedestrian connectivity;
- b) enhancing and diversifying the natural ecosystems, plantings, water-bodies and landscapes across the site, primarily through the planting of new trees and careful land management practices;
- c) creating a unique, beautiful and contemporary sense-of-place where nature, physical health and fitness, agriculture and the production of food and energy, environmental education, arts and culture, and scenic beauty are all equally foregrounded;
- d) establishing distinctive landscape character zones where particular uses are accommodated;
- e) creating an iconic new center for the Park, in the form of a very large lake that supports a diverse array of non-motorized water sport activities;
- f) phasing park improvements that work with funding capital and operating budget plans over the long-term; and
- g) promoting the highest qualities of landscape architecture, land preservation, environmental stewardship and sustainable management practices.

The threefold concept of “One Park, One Million Trees, Twelve Landscapes” offers a simply understood vision for how the park should be transformed over time.

“One Park” addresses the goals of unity, connectivity, sense-of-place, ecosystem, identity and inclusion. New circulation systems plantings, signage and consistent design elements will shape the Park as one.

“One Million New Trees” addresses the goals of ecological improvement and biodiversity, defining edges and screening out undesirable views while maintaining some of the sites most spectacular vistas; engaging the community in planting and stewardship; creating more shade for strolling; and reducing Memphis’s carbon footprint.

“Twelve Landscapes” addresses the diversity and richness of the different areas of the site; the varied user group needs; and the definition of future management zones, with respective goals and objectives.

Together, these three guiding principles should help to steer and form the basis around which the future Park takes shape.







1.2

VISION + GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Shelby Farms Park Conservancy has outlined a unique vision and an ambitious set of goals for the transformation of the existing Shelby Farms territory in order to give rise to a celebrated 21st century park that defines and shapes a great city. The Conservancy has established a set of core principles that guide the stewardship of the design, planning, management and maintenance of Shelby Farms Park. These Guiding Principles are as follows:

- *We are leading the reinvention of large urban parks.*
- *We are creating a constantly improving park that is layered, flexible and adaptive.*
- *We are creating an exceptional and distinctive park that capitalizes on its unique natural resources and size.*
- *We insist on both environmental and financial sustainability.*
- *Shelby Farms Park will capitalize on its size to create options: places grand and expansive and others small and personal.*
- *Shelby Farms Park will connect and strengthen the fabric of community through its accessibility, inclusiveness and connections to the city.*
- *We are creating a beloved place where powerful memories are delivered to the people of Shelby County.*
- *We are known for work that is bold, dedicated, visionary and public-spirited.*

In addition, the Conservancy and the design team moved forward through the master plan process while keeping the following questions in mind:

- *Does it promote green and open?*
- *Is it flexible and adaptive?*
- *Is it accessible and inviting?*
- *Is it environmentally and financially sustainable?*
- *Is it exceptional and distinctive?*
- *Does it capitalize on the size of the park?*
- *Does it respect the limitations of the easement?*
- *Does it capitalize on our natural resources?*
- *Does it reflect the highest possible standards?*
- *Does it encourage a sense of community?*
- *Is it safe?*







1.3 PROCESS + PURPOSE

PROCESS

While conducting an extensive first round of public input forums in the fall of 2007, the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy issued a Request For Qualifications (RFQ) for the *Shelby Farms Park Innovative Design Competition*. From the 33 responses to this RFQ, three teams were invited to Memphis to begin a three-month process of developing a proposal for the Schematic Design of Shelby Farms Park. At the end of this process, the three proposals were exhibited during the month of March 2008 at the Shelby Farms Park Visitor Center, the Benjamin Hooks Central Library, and the Cossitt Library. Visitors to the exhibition were asked to complete a questionnaire indicating what they liked and disliked about each design proposal. The three proposals and the questionnaire were also available via the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy's Web site from March 6 - March 31, 2008. The results from each of these venues were tabulated following the Master Plan competition exhibit. They represent thoughts from a wide cross-section of the Memphis community and include the ideas and opinions of both current Park users and those who do not currently use the Park.

At the end of this process, field operations was chosen by the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy to prepare a Master Plan for Shelby Farms Park. The Conservancy selected field operations based on several factors, including their responsiveness to the public's views on the future of the Park; design philosophy; big ideas; their approaches to environmental sustainability and project phasing needs; and the Conservancy's general impression of the firm's passion for the Park.

Since the awarding of the Master Plan, field operations has made multiple trips to Memphis to meet with stakeholders and related public agencies, as well as the Park Master Plan Committee to calibrate the content of this Master Plan Report to the priorities and vision of the Park users, and the Memphis community.



shelby farms park youth alliance public input meeting

PURPOSE

The Shelby Farms Park Master Plan provides a vision and a strategic framework for review, discussion and decision-making. Its recommendations are not fixed or final, but offer a flexible framework for implementation. The continued input of many experts, policy makers and most importantly, the public, will be critical to the refinement of the plan as the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy moves forward in the implementation of the recommendations outlined herein. The following four points outline the purpose of this Master Plan Document.

- 1 Outline the goals, vision and organizational framework for Shelby Farms Park;
- 2 Demonstrate that the goals, vision and strategic direction are grounded and realistic;
- 3 Advance discussion at the leadership level regarding implementation, finance and long-term management options; and
- 4 Build broader understanding, support and leadership for the Park at the community, stakeholder and civic levels.

It should be noted that this is not a conventional Master Plan that organizes information in a manner that clearly responds to every specific existing condition. Rather, it is a bold but concise vision for Shelby Farms Park that describes the key principles, characteristics and opportunities that are enabled by such a vision. It is important to understand that this Master Plan is an integrated document. For any goal, objective or proposition to be fully understood, it must be read as a whole.



public input meeting



# 1.4 CONSULTATION + OUTREACH

## CONSULTATION

Once field operations was awarded the contract to prepare the Master Plan Report for Shelby Farms Park, the design team reviewed all of the comments provided by the Conservancy from both the fall 2007 and spring 2008 public input meetings and surveys, and began a series of meetings with Park stakeholders and related public agencies. These consultations included meetings and review sessions with the Conservancy's Master Plan Committee; a series of meetings with the Conservancy leadership regarding finance and operations of an expanded Shelby Farms Park; working sessions with representatives from Agricenter International; a presentation and feedback forum with the leadership of each of the Park's user groups; meeting with representatives from the Memphis Community Connector (the group responsible for the acquisition of the former CSX rail line); meeting with representatives from the Wolf River Conservancy; as well as various discussions with the Shelby County Department of Public Works, the Memphis City Engineer, and the director of Germantown Parks and Recreation.

This public input, and the accompanying series of meetings and working sessions, were a critical aspect of the development of this Master Plan document. It is anticipated that these opportunities for public review and input will continue as the Conservancy begins the process of implementing the Master Plan.

## OUTREACH

The public and stakeholder process should not end with the completion and approval of the Master Plan document. Continued stakeholder and public participation in, and support for the Shelby Farms Park Master Plan are as crucial for its future success as they were for the development of a Master Plan that reflects the desires and needs of the Memphis Community. In this context, it is important to note that the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy is guided by a strong policy regarding minority and local participation. As the Shelby Farms Park project moves into future stages of design and planning, the public and relevant stakeholder groups - including all user groups - must continue to be consulted to ensure that the future Park achieves the objectives of the Master Plan, the goals of Park users, and abides by the guiding principles of the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy.



exhibition at public library



shelby farms park public forum







## 2.0 EXISTING SITE OVERVIEW



2.1

OVERVIEW | THE PARK IN THE CITY

Shelby Farms Park is the single largest urban figure in the Memphis landscape after the Mississippi River. This exceptional scale affords the opportunity to grow a Park that is cherished not just by the residents of East Memphis where the Park sits, but by the entire Memphis region including the populations of Downtown, Midtown, Collierville, Germantown, Cordova, Bartlett, West Memphis and beyond. Though it lies just east of the I-240/I-40 loop, Shelby Farms is located at the geographic population center of Shelby County. This combination of size, location, and amenity generates a true destination potential for the Park within the Mid-South region – a new “green heart.”

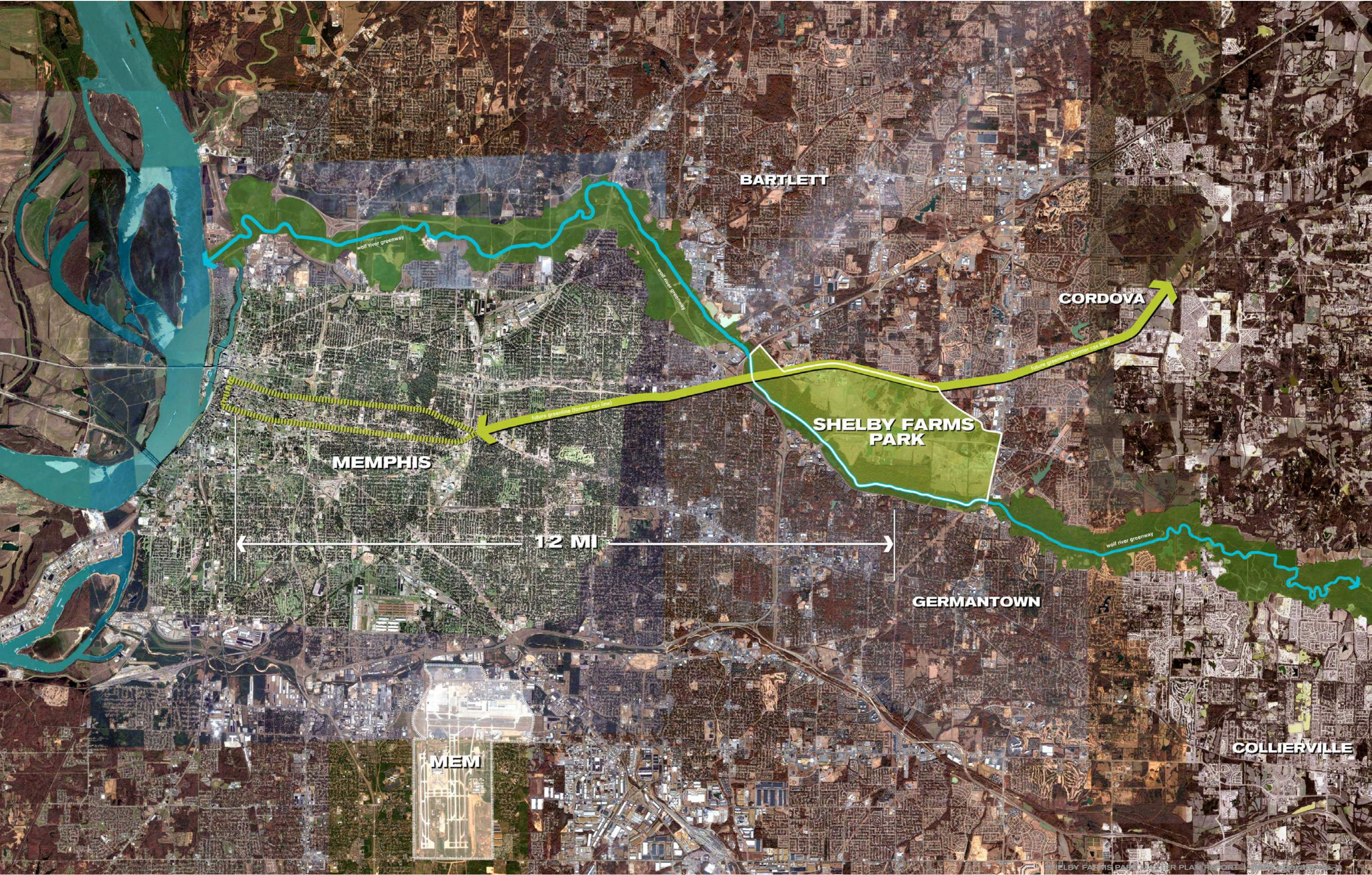
In addition to the creation of a one-of-a-kind civic amenity, the transformation of Shelby Farms Park has the capacity to enhance the continued greening of Greater Memphis; promote a healthy lifestyle for the City’s residents; and provide a resource that contributes to the overall quality of life for all current and future Memphians.

26

URBAN SCALE COMPARISON









2.2

OVERVIEW | MEMPHIS' ASSETS

For the thousands of people who visit Memphis every week, the wide range of social, cultural and historical assets of the City is quite well known and readily cited. Elvis, the Blues, Rock’n Roll, Gospel Music, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the National Civil Rights Museum, BBQ, the Memphis Zoo and its pandas, several great Museums for adults and kids, and a diverse amateur and professional sports scene all need little introduction.

Memphis is also the business center of the Mid-South and a major player in the global economy. Sited at the geographic center of the United States, overlooking the Mississippi River, Memphis is ideally positioned for industries associated with transportation and shipping related commerce, and has a rich history of agriculture, medicine and entrepreneurship. Fortune 500 companies FedEx, AutoZone, and International Paper, along with world-renowned medical and research companies such as St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital all call Memphis home. Memphis is home to the world’s busiest airport in terms of cargo traffic handled, boasts two major Mississippi River rail crossings, and is the convergence of a number of east-west and north-south rail lines. Memphis is also home to a growing bioscience industry. In 2000, the city was cited as one of the top 50 best places to start a new business in the United States.

This combination of culture and commerce places Memphis in an enviable position moving forward into the 21st century. It is well known that in addition to an available workforce and positive business environment, the real driver for corporate location managers is the potential quality of life available to their employees. With the new design for Shelby Farms Park, Memphis can add to its unique culture and a fertile business environment, as well as offer a one-of-a-kind civic amenity that can position Memphis as a national and international talent magnet through the exceptional quality of life the City can provide.





**HISTORY**



**TREES**



**MUSIC**



**COMMERCE**



**EVENTS**



**BIG RIVER**



**RIBS**



**CULTURE**



2.3

OVERVIEW | A PARK FOR EVERYONE

Shelby Farms Park is envisioned to become a Park for all of those living in the Memphis Metropolitan Region. A top priority of the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy is to improve connectivity and accessibility to the Park, particularly for poorly served parts of the City. The Park’s central geographic location affords the Conservancy a great opportunity to make these connections a reality. It is easy to imagine residents of Downtown, Midtown, Collierville, Germantown, Cordova, Bartlett, Millington, Arlington, Lakeland, Olive Branch, South Haven and West Memphis all coming to Shelby Farms Park, whether it is for a major event like the Fourth of July, or just for a weekend or evening outing. This new connectivity will allow the Park to become a place populated and activated by the diverse cultures and ethnicities of the entire Memphis Region.

In addition, the huge scale of the Park allows for such a wide range of uses and activities that nearly everyone – at every age, from every background – will be able to find something that interests and engages them at Shelby Farms Park. A huge range of amenities, paired with ample opportunities for active and passive recreation in a unique agrarian landscape at the center of a growing metropolitan region, will truly make Shelby Farms Park a place to be enjoyed by all.





**DIVERSE**



**ACTIVE  
PLAY**



**FAMILY**



**AMENITY**



**PASSIVE**



**ACCESSIBLE**



**COMMUNITY**



**BIG**



2.4

OVERVIEW | SITE HISTORY + THE SITE TODAY

The outcome and eventual social and cultural position of Shelby Farms Park within Western Tennessee and the Memphis Region has a long and storied history, and until very recently has remained unresolved to some degree.

During the mid-nineteenth century, Shelby Farms was home to Frances Wright's Nashoba Experiment. A Humanist reformer, Ms. Wright set up a commune on the land intended to prepare slaves for their future freedom by training them in the time's worthwhile skills and educating them in the liberal arts. Though there is some discussion as to the various successes and failures of this experiment, there is little doubt as to the vanguard role Ms. Wright played during period in West Tennessee's history.

In 1928, Shelby County acquired 1,600 acres of this land for use as a model penal farm. By 1942, the penal farm lands had been expanded to more than 5,000 acres, and it had become a national model visited by prison experts from around the country. In the late 1960's, Shelby County determined the penal farm was no longer viable and shut it down.

Though this land was initially a great distance from the city center, rapid expansion during the mid-twentieth century brought the territory within the Memphis City limits. It was following this expansion that a series of development plans were proposed for the site intending to transform it into the center of a new town concept. The three most well-known of these plans included the Bartholomew Report (1970); the American City Corporation Report (1972); and the Rouse-Boyle Proposal (1973). Though each of these three proposals increased the ratio of open space to development from the one that preceded it, each was met with strident public opposition and eventually discarded due in large part to the various open spaces offered being comprised mostly of lowland and flood plain areas of the site rather, than the more valuable rolling hills and hollows of the upland.

In October 1975, Garrett Eckbo submitted a final plan and report outlining “best alternative future land uses for Shelby Farms.” This plan transitioned from a development-oriented approach to one that treated the land as an important and impressive resource for the community. Though very little of this report was implemented, the document did loosely guide the development and transformation of the Shelby Farms territory over the past thirty years. Related products of the Eckbo Plan include the creation of Plough Park and the designation of the land near the present day Area 10 for County-related development purposes. In 1981, the Tennessee State Legislature established the Agricenter Commission to promote education, research and agribusiness with the explicit intent of spurring economic development. The Agricenter manages 1,000 acres in the southeastern portion of Shelby Farms Park for these purposes. This territory includes cropland, convention space, an RV park and the 45-acre Showplace Arena area.

Excluding the 1,000 acres at the Agricenter and the 300 acres comprising Area 10, the majority of the remaining 3,200 acres at Shelby Farms Park are currently used for recreation or recreation-related purposes. Of this 3,200 acres, 780 acres a designated and protected within the Lucius Burch State Natural Area, which runs along the Wolf River. Significant portions of the 3,200 acres not used for recreation-related purposes include a dormant landfill south of Walnut Grove Road adjacent to the Agricenter property and an inactive shooting range also in this area of the Park.

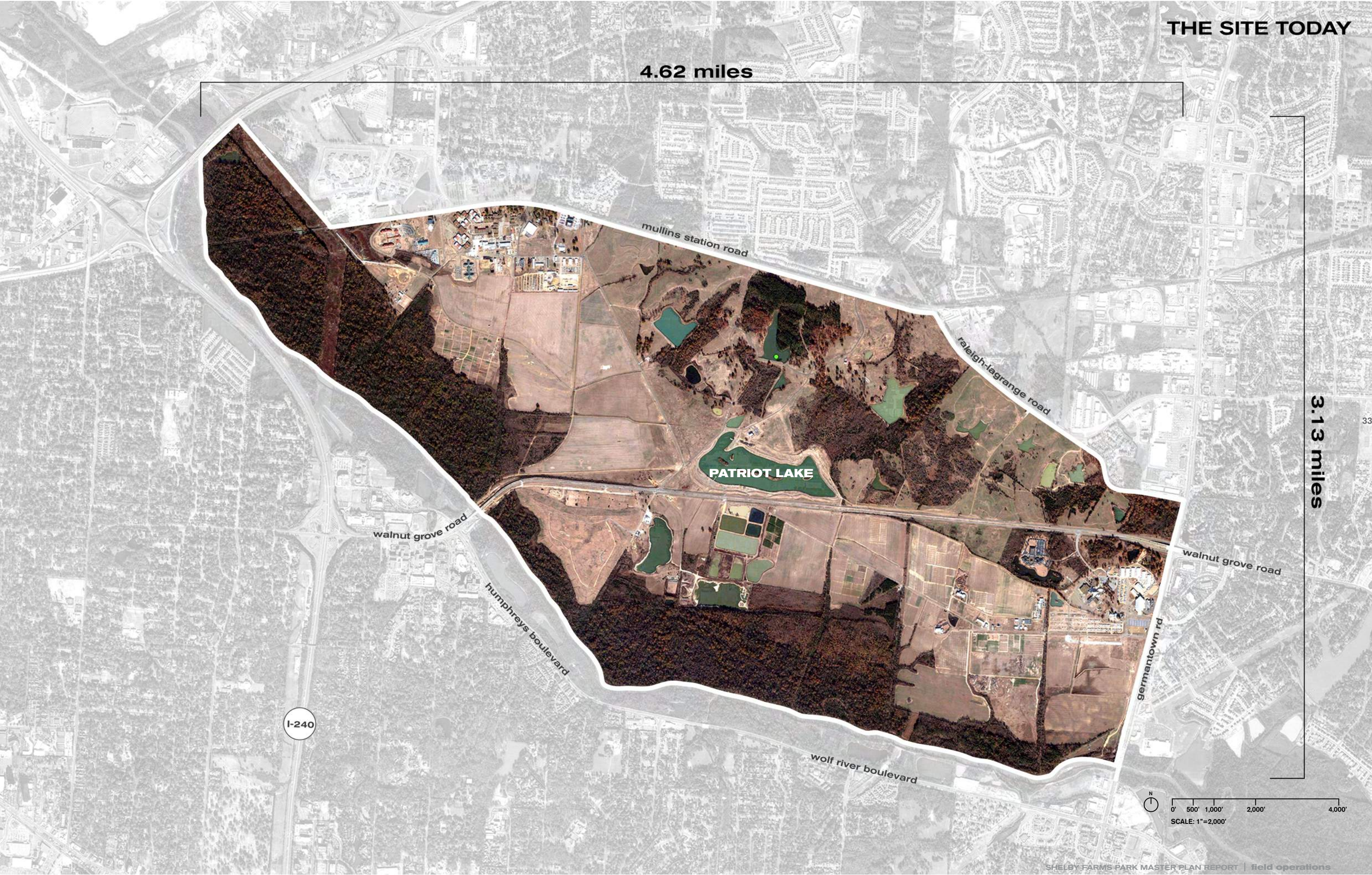
Currently, much of Shelby Farms Park remains zoned for industrial use. In response to a variety of development pressures, a permanent easement was proposed to protect the Park from what were deemed incongruent uses. In December 2006, the Shelby County Commission approved a Conservation Easement, which anticipated incorporating recommendations from this Master Plan. Pre-existing master plans or development proposals for Area 10 and tiers 2+4 of the Agricenter would be maintained within this easement. In August 2007, the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy assumed management of 3,200 acres of the Shelby Farms Park territory from Shelby County.



THE SITE TODAY

4.62 miles

3.13 miles





2.5

OVERVIEW | CONSERVATION EASEMENT

In December 2006, the Shelby County Commission passed a Conservation Easement, which anticipates incorporating recommendations from this Master Plan. This Easement was entered into by the County of Shelby, Tennessee (“County”) and the Shelby County Agricenter Commission (“Agricenter”) as Grantors of the Easement and the Land Trust of Tennessee as the recipient of the Easement. The County has previously granted 1,000 acres of the Shelby Farms land to Agricenter for use as an agri-center pursuant to a state statute. The Agricenter Property is subject to reversion to the County under certain specific circumstances. The grant of the Conservation Easement may be terminated upon the 50th anniversary of its execution.

The Conservation Easement has been executed because the Property has been found to have “significant conservation, natural, scenic, recreational, agricultural, scientific and parkland resources and values in the fields, forests, open spaces, vistas, wetlands, ponds, lakes and streams on the Property, which resources and values are worthy of protection, maintenance, preservation, and enhancement for the benefit of the people of Tennessee.” This Easement was received and is enforced by the non-profit group, The Land Trust for Tennessee, Inc. The County, the Agricenter, and the Land Trust for Tennessee have agreed to protect, maintain, preserve and enhance the various natural resources and values of the Property.

This Master Plan is anticipated to become part of the Conservation Easement once it is approved by the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy, Agricenter and the Shelby County Board of Commissioners as defined under Section II, item 3 of the Conservation Easement– “Grantors and Grantee agree that Grantee shall become a party to the planning process for said Master Plan, which upon completion shall become incorporated into the Easement as though set out fully herein.”

The Conservation Easement includes provisions for permitted and existing uses within the Park including but not limited to, paved and unpaved recreation trails; observation structures; gardens; recreational sports venues; park pavilions; agricultural and horticultural uses; scientific research; boating and water sport activities including fishing; habitat and wildlife enhancement; short term events; way-finding and locational signage; outdoor classrooms; retreat facilities; maintenance and operation facilities; and/or a historic carousel. Standard maintenance; completion of any buildings or facilities under construction; and repair or replacement of existing roads and trails is also permitted within the Easement.

The Conservation Easement prohibits uses such as stadiums or arena facilities; the introduction of new transmission lines unless permitted by an existing leases; the use of motorized equipment on unpaved trails; real estate development; manufacturing or industrial uses; commercial mining; residential or hotel uses; subdivision of the property; zoos; permanent fairgrounds; billboards; and/or commercial advertising.

The Master Plan described herein is designed to be consistent with the uses and purposes of the Easement to promote “the use of the Property by the public as an urban park.” The full Conservation Easement can be found in Appendix B of this report. It can also be found on the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy web site:  
[http://www.shelbyfarmspark.org/sfpc/park\\_info/park\\_mgmt](http://www.shelbyfarmspark.org/sfpc/park_info/park_mgmt)

Conservation Easement Areas:

TIER 1: Shelby Farms Park

TIER 2: Agricenter Campus Area

TIER 3: Agricenter Crop and Recreation Area

TIER 4: Agricenter Showplace Arena Area

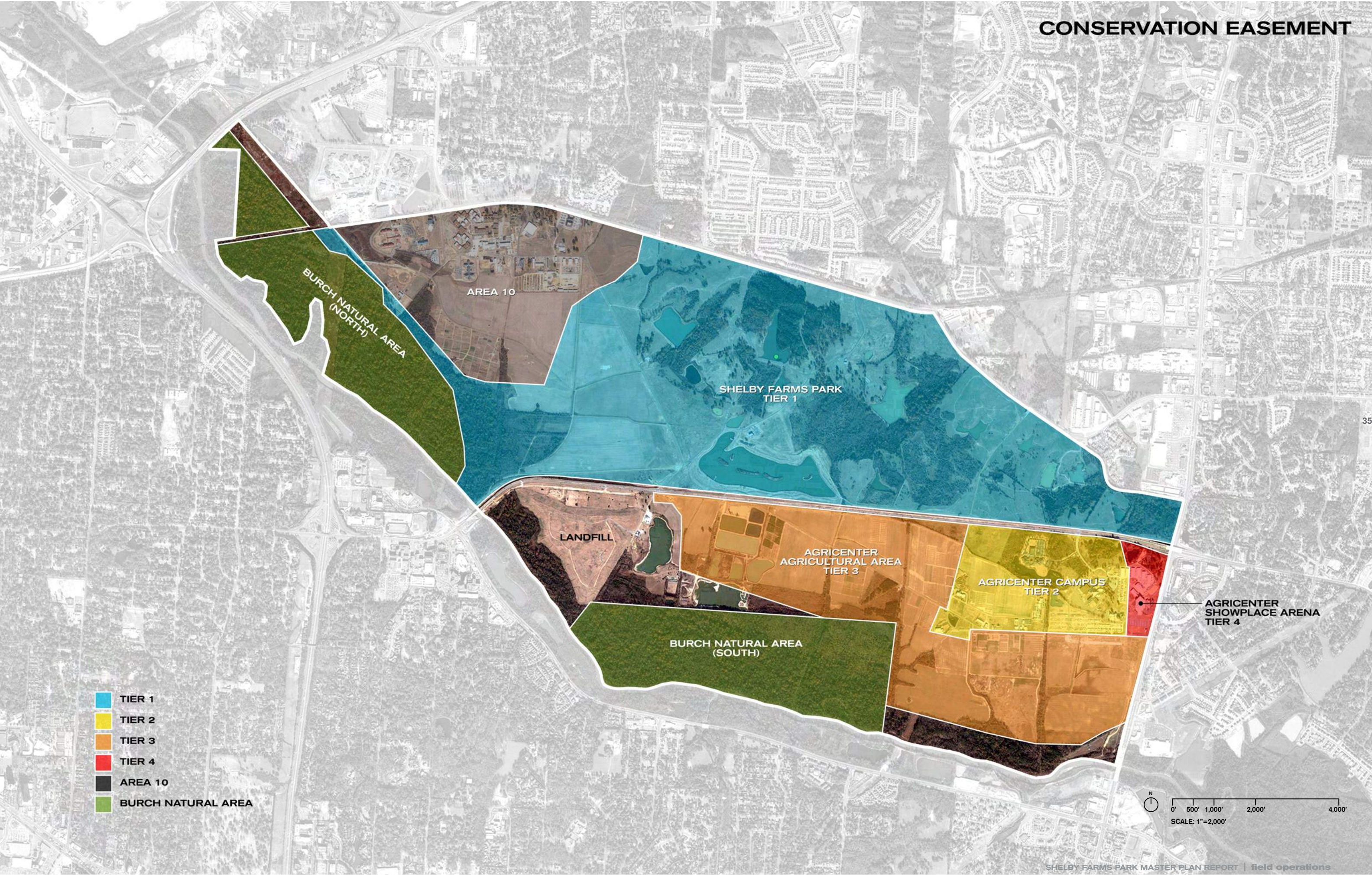
AREA 10: County property not restricted by provisions of this Easement

Lucius Burch Natural Area

*NOTE: The drawing to the right is a graphic representation only of the subject property. The controlling legal descriptions of metes and bounds of this property shall take precedence over the appearance of this document.*



CONSERVATION EASEMENT





2.6

OVERVIEW | EXISTING LAND-CHARACTER AREAS

The existing Shelby Farms territory is comprised of 10 major land-character areas that already accommodate a wide variety and diverse range of activities and uses.

Hills + Hollows (Plough Park): Northern section of territory developed most intensely as park following submission of the Eckbo Plan in late 1975. This area of Shelby Farms Park is home to more domestic uses including picnicking and grilling; paved pedestrian and bike paths; mown lawns and fields; playgrounds and picnic pavilions; small fishing lakes; as well as unpaved hiking and running trails.

Patriot Lake: The centerpiece of Plough Park, Patriot Lake functions as the gateway to Shelby Farms Park. Sited between Walnut Grove Road and Farm Road and wrapped by a well-used multi-use path, Patriot Lake provides kayak and paddle-boat rental; small picnic areas; and a splendid foreground for sunset vistas viewed from the visitor center patio.

Big Activities: The area east of Plough Park and north of Walnut Grove Road can be characterized by the scale and type of recreational activities it can accommodate. Home to the Shelby Farms' equestrian, mountain bike and off-leash dog users, this area of the Park offers a less managed, more varied landscape for Big Nature activities rarely able to be accommodated in a contemporary urban Park.

Bison + Farms Fields: Shelby Farms most iconic feature, if not its most cherished. The curiously located and ever-present Bison herd residing west of Patriot Lake along Farm Road offer a true destination for first-time and regular visitors to Shelby Farms Park alike.

Senior Gardens: Well used, though somewhat under-serviced, this area of Shelby Farms Park provides a welcome amenity to an important segment of Memphians.

Area 10: Home to various Shelby County Government facilities, Area 10 has little adverse impact on the Shelby Farms territory despite its seemingly incongruous set of programs and uses. The introduction of Shelby Farms Parkway (Kirby-Whitten Parkway) and the extension of Sycamore View Road will further isolate this area from the rest of Shelby Farms.

Landfill: The least valuable of the 10 existing land-use areas, the small landfill mound south of the proposed Shelby Farms Parkway (Kirby-Whitten Parkway) - Walnut Grove Road interchange remains a significant concern because of its questionable structural integrity; its inability to shed water; and its location near significant water bodies within the Park. Potential usefulness as a methane source is limited because of the landfill's age and its unknown subsurface conditions.

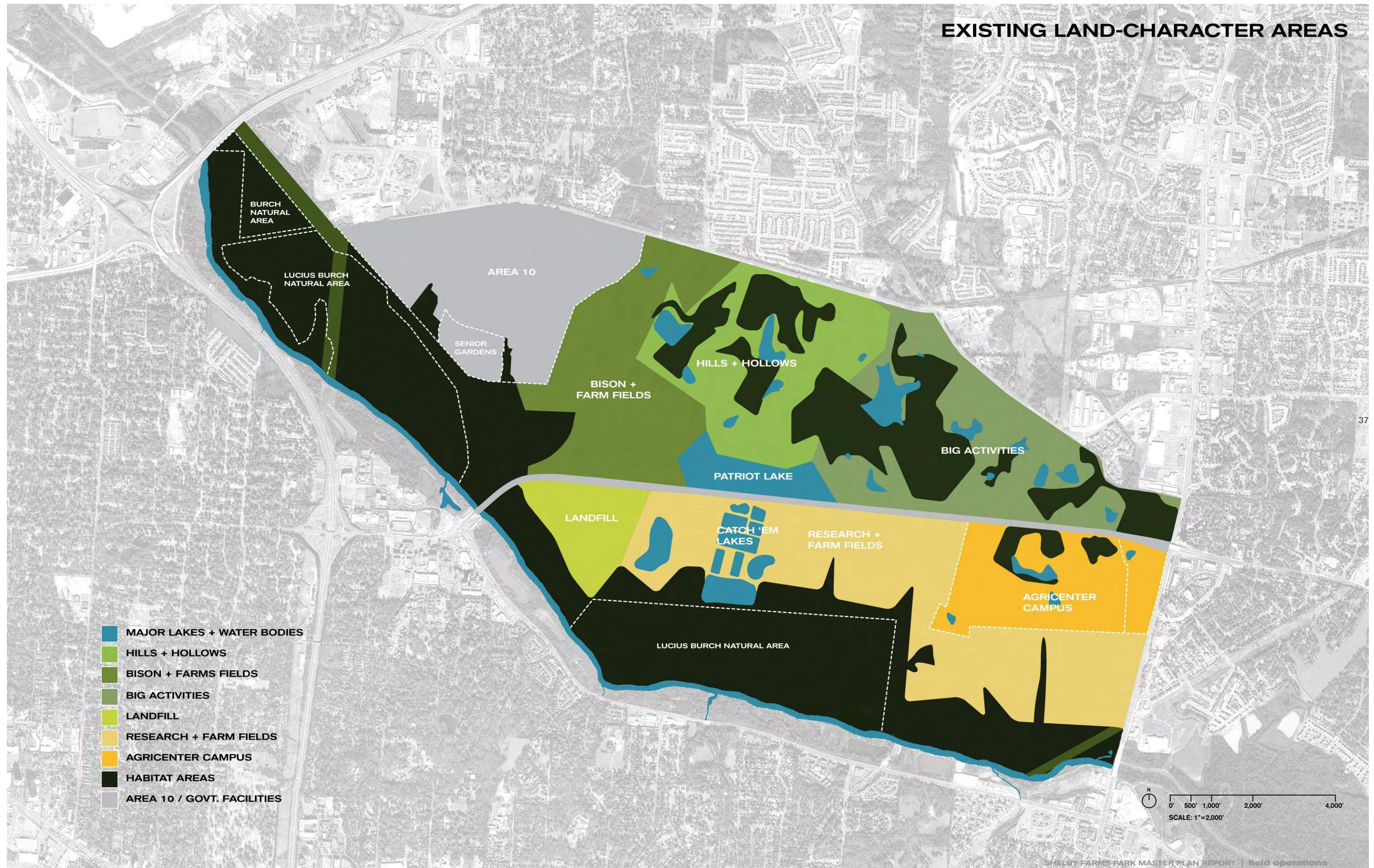
Research + Farm Fields: Perhaps the most memorable attribute of the Shelby Farms Park property, the various agricultural fields to the north and south of Walnut Grove Road provide unique vistas to both those inside and those passing through the Park. The managed and research-based fields contribute both programmatically and physically to the current identity of Shelby Farms Park within the Memphis landscape.

Agricenter Campus: Programmatically the most diverse area within the Park. The Agricenter Campus is home to convention and exhibition facilities; office and research spaces; retail elements; a restaurant; livestock boarding and show venues; a farmers market; bird refuge and wetland areas; as well as a limited-stay RV campground.

Lucius Burch Natural Area: Comprising a significant portion of the bottomland hardwood areas within the Wolf River flood plain, the Lucius Burch Natural area is home to a series of primitive trails including the White, Blue and Yellow trails. Access to the Wolf River is limited because of the River's erosion of sandy soils along its banks.



# EXISTING LAND-CHARACTER AREAS





2.7

OVERVIEW | EXISTING LANDSCAPE TOPOGRAPHY

The Shelby Farms Property can be characterized by three primary topographic zones within the territory. Though the three areas vary in existing health and potential value, they are each an important element within the ecological makeup of the overall Park. The distinct landscapes characterizing each of these three areas strongly influence both the existing and proposed character and uses of Shelby Farms Park.

Upland: The Upland area of the Park is home to rolling hills and hollows; managed lawns and wild meadows; as well as a diverse habitat area composed of an assortment of canopy trees including oaks, hickories, maples, pines, black locust, elm, sycamore, sweetgum, tulip poplar, American holly, hackberry and black cherry. The range in age classes of these trees is significant. Though much of the area is open fields, the various habitat areas support a high degree of plant and animal diversity. Historically-present native grasslands and wildflowers of Western Tennessee are sparse within Shelby Farms Park. The Upland area of the Park is populated by a variety of water bodies ranging significantly in size and health.

Lowland: Primarily comprised of agricultural research and managed fields, this area of Shelby Farms Park is most often viewed at a high rate of speed through the window of a passing automobile. The Lowland area extends from the Germantown Road perimeter in the southeast, across Walnut Grove Road to Mullins Station Road in the Northwest, essentially occupying the middle third of the Shelby Farms territory. Two of the three major water bodies at Shelby Farms Park – Patriot Lake and the Catch ‘Em Lakes – occupy this landscape zone. Historically, stormwater runoff in particular in this area of the Park has been highly controlled for irrigation purposes and because of the zone’s bisection by Walnut Grove Road.



lowland agricultural fields

River Plain: Composed primarily of Bottomland Hardwood, the River Plain section of the landscape defines the southern edge of the site and frames the agricultural fields to the north. Nearly 800 acres of this zone is protected as part of the Lucius Burch Natural Area. However, despite the “natural area” designation, this area is in fact not “natural” in that it is mostly fill deposited by the Army Corps of Engineers when they realigned the Wolf River during the early 1960’s. The River Plain is comprised of an assortment of canopy trees including oaks, hickories, sycamore, maples, sweetgum, tulip poplar, cottonwood, baldcypress, hackberry, green ash, river birch as well as willow and other species in lesser numbers. The River Plain is populated by permanent and intermittent sloughs and pools of standing water, as well as areas of wetland habitat. This area is part of a larger forested corridor along the Wolf River that allows for movement of animal species and is an important site for wildlife in the region.

Landfill: See description under Existing Land-Use Areas



upland habitat



# EXISTING LANDSCAPE TOPOGRAPHY









## 3.0 CONCEPT AND APPROACH



3.1

KEY CHALLENGES

Shelby Farms Park is currently a successful public Park. However, it does possess four significant structural deficiencies which we believe the Master Plan must address in order to guide the long-term transformation and growth of the Park.

Poor Identity (Is it an agricultural farm, a penal farm or a park?) – Perhaps the single greatest deficiency of Shelby Farms is an absence of identity. The boundaries of the Park lack a strong physical presence that easily indicates it is a premier public open space venue. In addition, a large percentage of Memphians are unaware of its role within the city (that is, they don't know the Park exists). Driving along Walnut Grove Road is like driving on any other divided highway in Western Tennessee. What signage is present is not immediate and is therefore lost amongst the visual congestion of the road. Further, a public understanding of what the Park is and who it is for (everybody), would substantially help to increase the number of Park users and in turn, support for the Park.

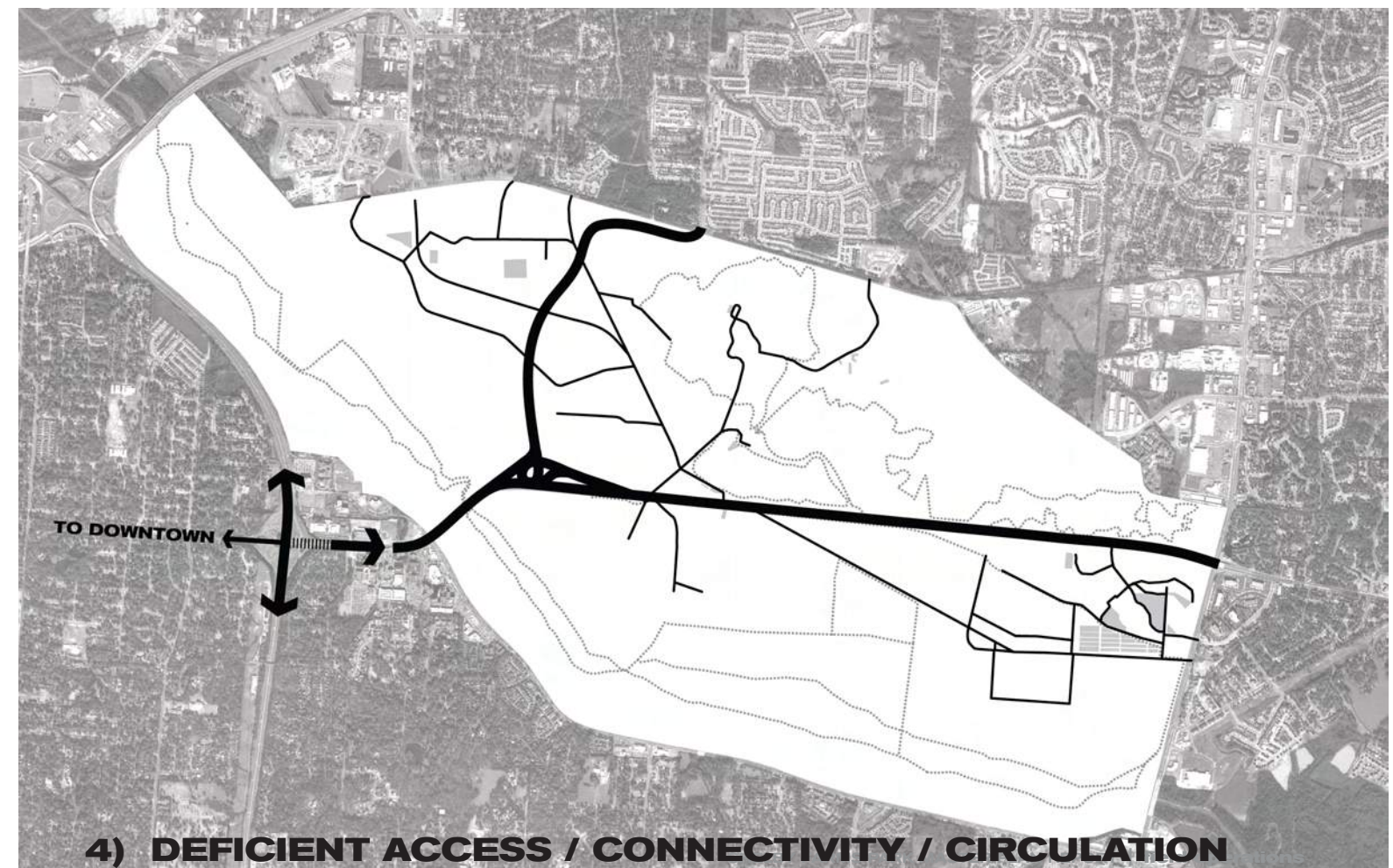
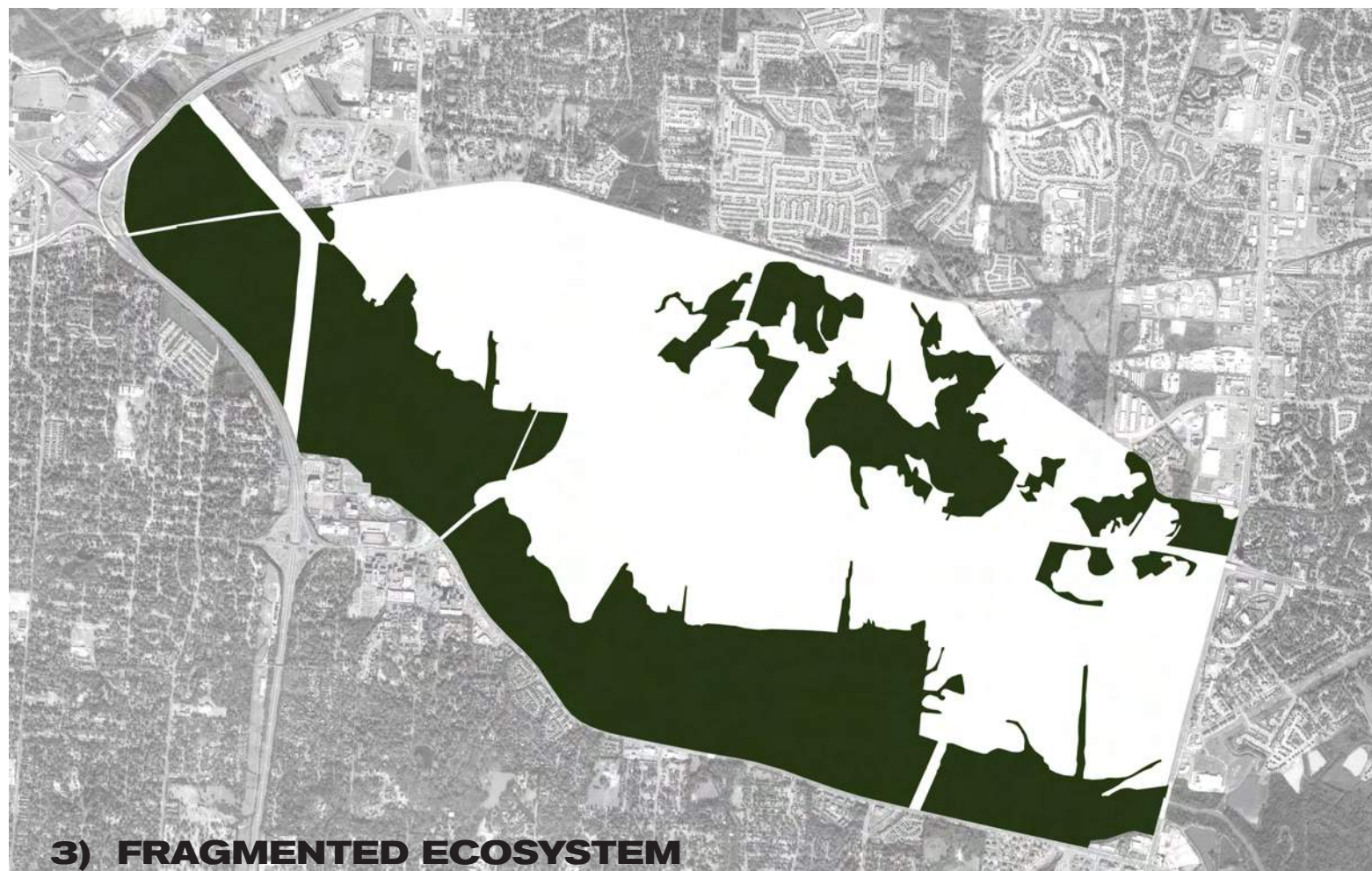
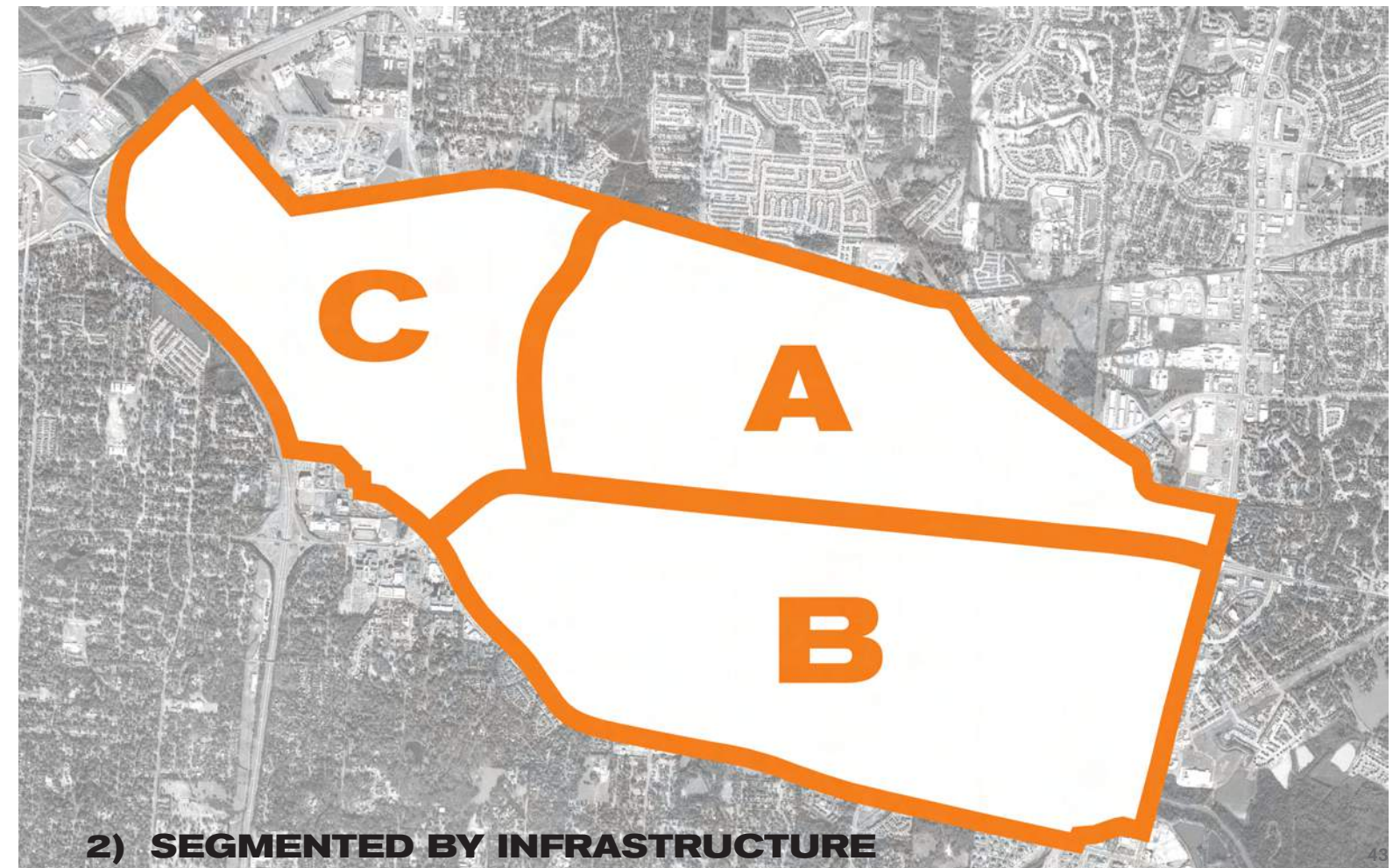
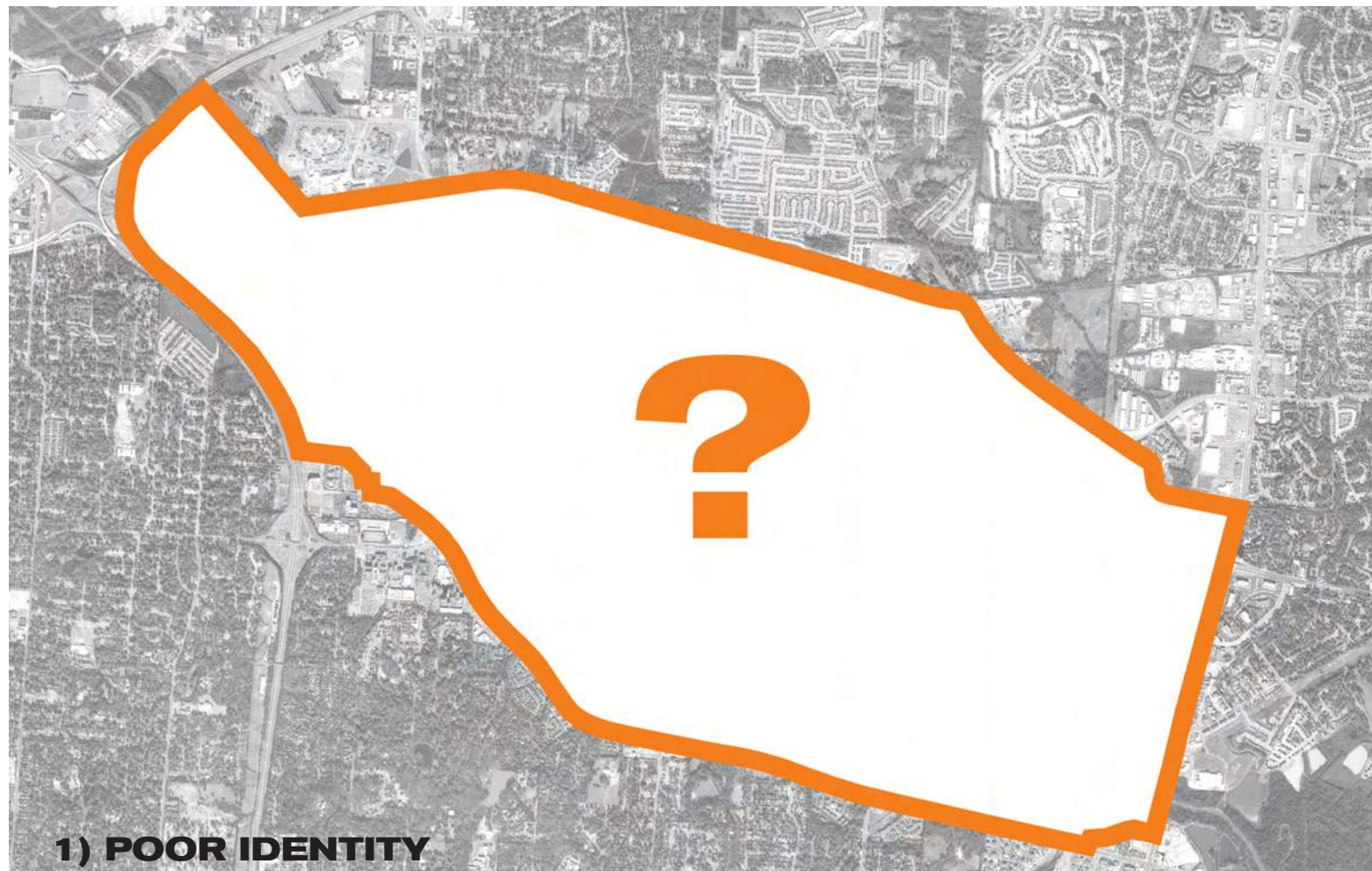
Segmented by Infrastructure – Walnut Grove Road already bisects the Park into northern and southern halves, isolating the programs and activities in each. Implementation of the new Shelby Farms Parkway necessitates a strong approach that will physically and perceptually link these areas of the Park into a single, legible whole. The alternative is a further erosion of the Park's physical presence within the City.

Fragmented Ecosystem – Though the Park is often thought of as “natural,” it is in fact a highly constructed and continually modified environment. The existing pockets of upland forest are healthy, but ecologically limited in that they remain unconnected and isolated. Further, habitat in this area is cut off from the more ecologically productive Wolf River corridor which is a critical piece of wildlife movement within the region. Connecting the various ecological components of the Park into an interconnected mosaic would serve to improve the overall health and ecological value of the land.

Deficient Access / Connectivity / Circulation – Shelby Farms Park is well positioned for access by vehicular traffic, however its location well east of Midtown and Downtown Memphis make the site difficult to reach by means other than an automobile. No mass transit reaches the interior or the Park, and the few stops at its perimeter are too far from any major Park destination to be of any real utility. Providing connections to recreation and alternative transportation linkages such as public greenways or bike lanes, as well as modifying and expanding existing transit service to the Park will help to truly make Shelby Farms accessible and usable by the entire Memphis Region.

Once inside the Park, taking advantage of the various venues is difficult because of the under-developed existing circulation system. Many of the roadways and circulation routes within the Park are re-appropriated field roads or user-defined trails. In fact, the heavily trafficked Farm Road is actually not a public thoroughfare but an internal “farm” road. Because it provide a direct connection between Walnut Grove and Mullins Station Roads, it is heavily utilized. Definition of a clear hierarchy of circulation types; implementation of way-finding elements; and the creation of redundant connections between Park areas rather than single linkages will help improve movement within and enjoyment of the Park.







3.2

FOUR STRATEGIES | CREATE IDENTITY + CLARIFY ACCESS

In order to expand the presence of Shelby Farms Park within the culture of Memphis, the Park needs to project a stronger identity – both physically and conceptually. It has been noted above, but is worth repeating that Shelby Farms Park is already home to a healthy mix of uses. These activities should be the basis upon which the Conservancy defines a strategy for attracting those who don’t yet use the Park.

We believe step one in generating an identity for Shelby Farms Park is emphatically demonstrating that it is in fact a totally accessible and welcoming public open space. This means creating a series of opportunities or events that will engage multiple segments of the Memphis population who are not currently using the Park. These could include a series of small group visits organized through Memphis schools, churches and/or community groups. It could also mean organizing and heavily publicizing highly visible activities such as a temporary art installations or public performances, as well as additional events along the lines of the current Earth Day or Fourth of July celebrations that will draw upon populations who wouldn’t readily define themselves as “park users”.

The second and equally important step in generating an identity for Shelby Farms Park is creating memorable, physical markings at the edges of the Park that are legible from the window of a passing automobile. These should include a sense of gateway along Walnut Grove Road and the proposed Shelby Farms Parkway (Kirby-Whitten Parkway), as well as clearly defined entrances to the Park – each distinctively marked with iconic signage and plantings. There should also be a clear delineation of the Park’s boundaries through elements such as a visually compelling fence or lighting. Ultimately, the intention is for Shelby Farms Park to be easily legible as a welcoming public open space from both within the Park and at its perimeter.

Once inside Shelby Farms Park, it is critical to clarify movement so that first time visitors know exactly where important venues are and how to reach their particular destination whether by bike, by bus or by car. In order to accomplish this, visually clear way-finding signage and a new vehicular circuit is proposed. This circuit will be tied to a multi-use loop path that will connect all parts of the Park together and help centralize orientation, circulation, transit and parking. An internal park shuttle will provide connections to various points throughout Shelby Farms Park, departing from centralized activity areas with their associated parking facilities. A second “circle” loop allows for pedestrian connectivity across major roads and intersections (via tunnels and bridges), and connects the upper Park to the Wolf River.

By building early interest in the Park beyond those who already enjoy its resources, momentum can be created that will help transform Shelby Farms Park over the coming years.



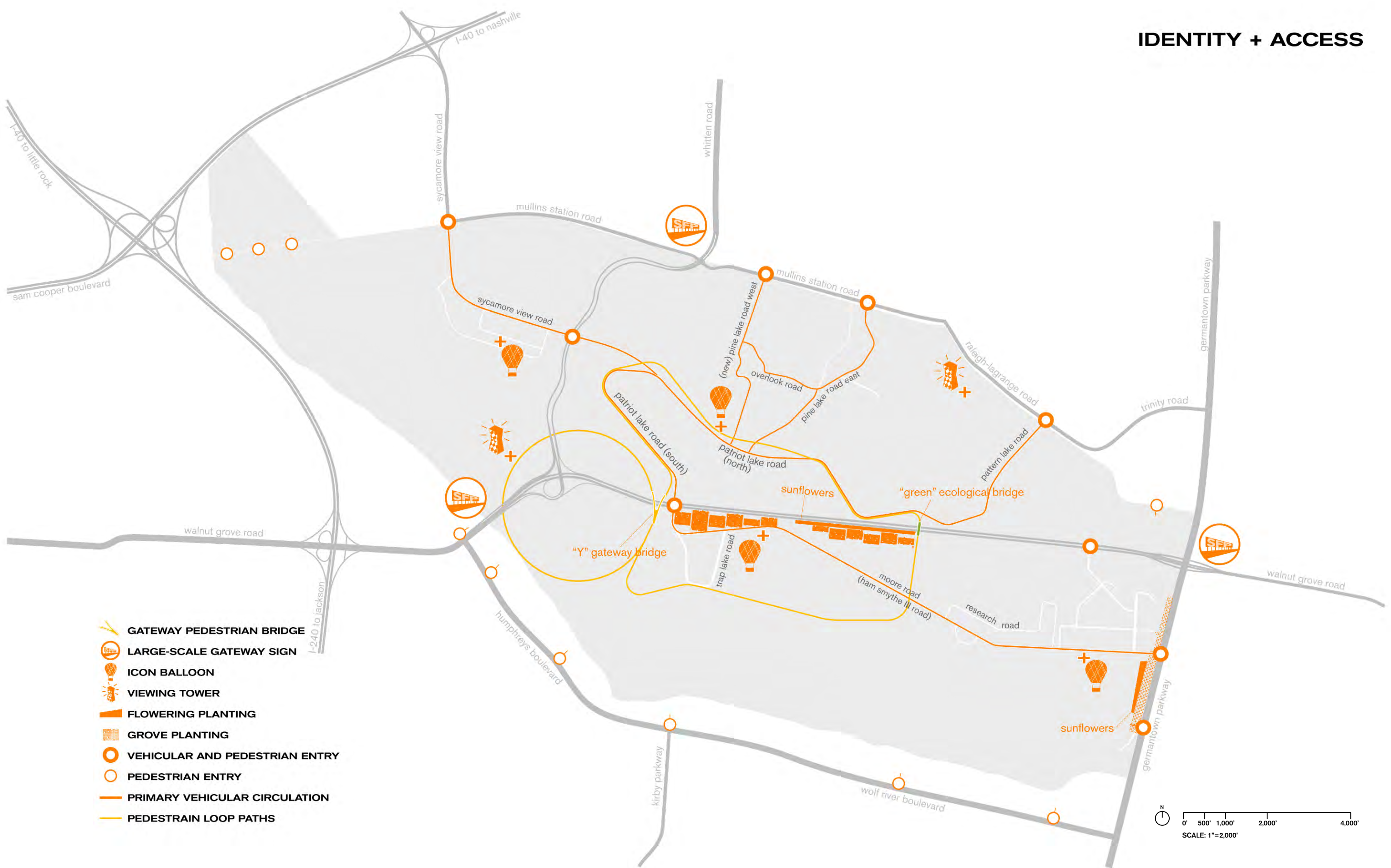
existing intersection of walnut grove road and farm road



existing historic gate along mullins station road



IDENTITY + ACCESS





3.2

FOUR STRATEGIES | PLANT 1,000,000 NEW TREES

One of the most effective moves in generating an identity will be the planting of one-million new trees at Shelby Farms Park. This seemingly simple operation will actually do five very important things for the Park to promote its long-term growth and transformation.

The first, as was noted above, is to help with the creation of identity for Shelby Farms Park by establishing a strong boundary definition and spatial enclosure.

Secondly, the plantings will diversify the ecology and habitat on site by expanding contiguous forest cover and adding new community mixes. These extensive plantings will create many varied woodland settings and ecologies, ranging from Swamp Cypress groves to Oak-Hickory stands, Birch Thickets, Pine Forests and Bottomland Hardwoods.

Third, this new planting will allow for undesirable outside qualities such as major vehicular thoroughfares to be screened from within the Park, creating a true sense of otherness and escape. At the same time, important views and vistas of open landscapes and horizons important to the site will be preserved.

Fourth will be the ability to create a strong sense of community engagement with the planting of these new trees. By partnering with local schools and religious groups to participate in the planting of many of the new trees, the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy can create an immediate momentum building transformation of the Park that will serve to excite and entice the public as other projects are developed and implemented over time. One could easily imagine thousands of local school children coming to Shelby Farms Park to plant these trees and thereby become invested stewards of the long-term health of the Park.

Finally, the planting of a million new trees will also create a potentially large-scale fund-raising intervention. Memphis is home to a number of regional and international corporations who might logically be interested in a contribution of part or all of these trees as a highly desirable “green” public relations opportunity and a way to truly give back to the Memphis Community.

It should be noted that the planting of the one-million new trees is not a singular or monolithic operation. The vast majority of the trees will be planted as small saplings in both unforested areas to expand canopy cover, and in already forested areas to diversify the existing habitat. Some of these saplings will be thinned out in the process of managing the woodland, while others will be allowed to grow to full size. A portion of this new tree planting regime is anticipated to be grown and transplanted to other areas of the City, helping to green Greater Memphis.

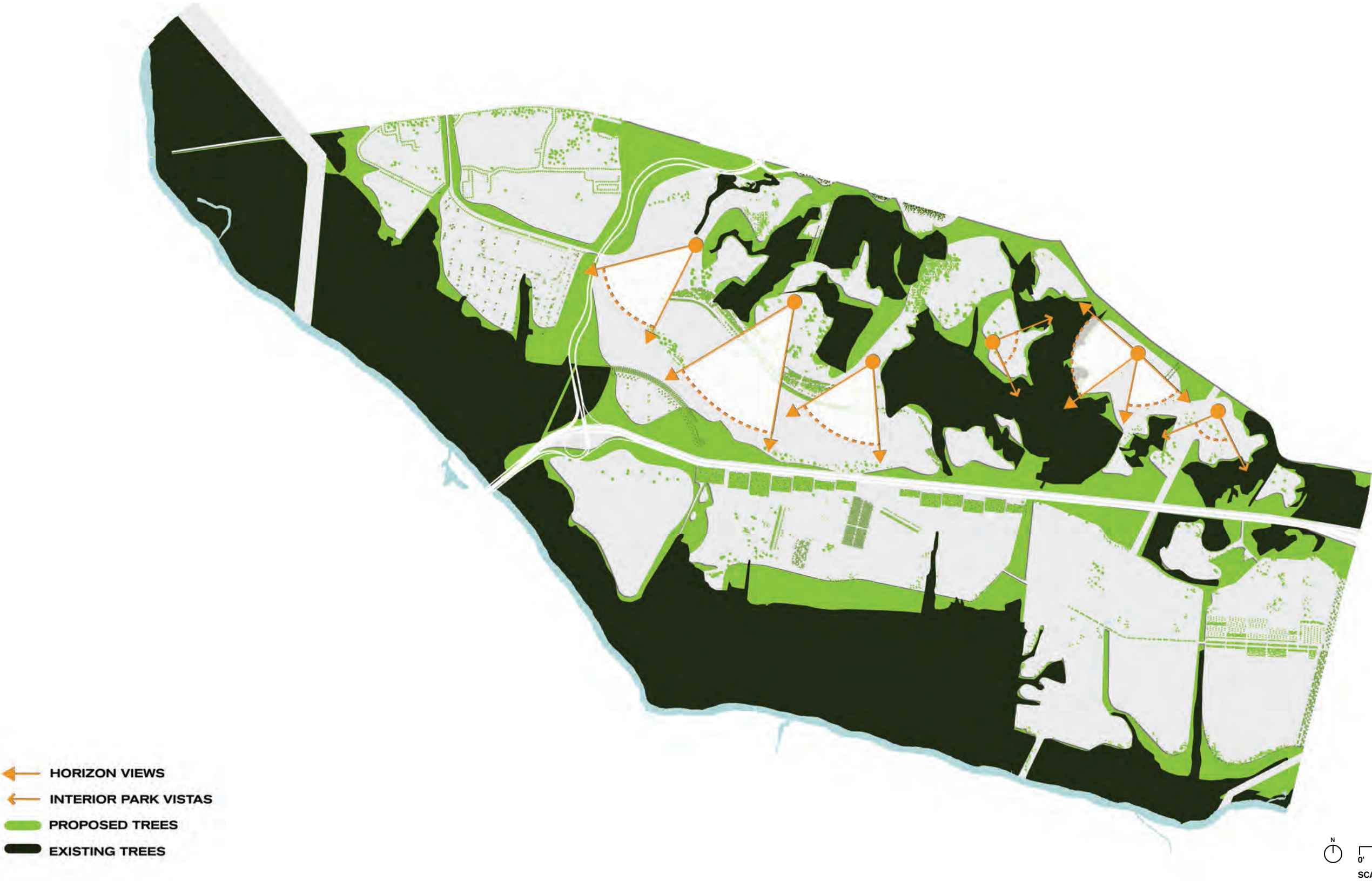


community tree planting



new tree saplings







3.2

FOUR STRATEGIES | DEFINE 12 LANDSCAPE ROOMS

Shelby Farms Park is big. At more than 4,500 acres, the scale of the Park makes it difficult to navigate and spatially comprehend. The deployment of one-million new trees will allow for the definition of distinct landscapes or rooms within the Park, each with its own discrete set of physical and programmatic characteristics. Each landscape or room will be characterized by a different set of users and accommodate a unique set of programs. These large-scale public “rooms” will each support a coherent “sense-of-place” structure for the many varied user groups set within the larger Park setting. As such, each landscape room has its own discrete entrance(s) while also connecting openly into the larger Park system.

The definition of the individual rooms also provides a potential fund-raising mechanism and phasing scenario for Park development. The level of physical transformation varies from room to room and thereby lends itself to a strategy of development of Park areas based on the availability of resources and demands for use. Development at the core of the Park is the logical point of departure, but once this has been established, the transformation of other areas of the Park can occur under any number of scenarios.







3.2

FOUR STRATEGIES | CONCENTRATE PROGRAMS + FACILITIES

The scale of Shelby Farms Park is its most important attribute. Therefore, the Master Plan promotes a strategy of concentrating programs and facilities at particular locations within the Park to maintain the various landscape characters already present within the site. This approach not only limits the presence of obtrusive architectural elements within the Park landscape, but also serves a more pragmatic purpose by allowing these facilities to share basic infrastructures and thereby create a high degree of economic and environmental efficiency in their implementation. Additionally, the concentration of new Park facilities will provide a clear sense of transformation within a particular area.

The type of new structure or facilities we imagine would include things like a viewing platform or tower; market and event roofs; an earthen amphitheater; a boathouse; and pedestrian bridges or tunnels. These elements should be carefully sited, and only proposed at locations where they can intensify the quality of the Park experience. Fundamentally, it is the position of the Master Plan that overwhelming the Park with architectural interventions would only detract from its inherent agrarian beauty.

50



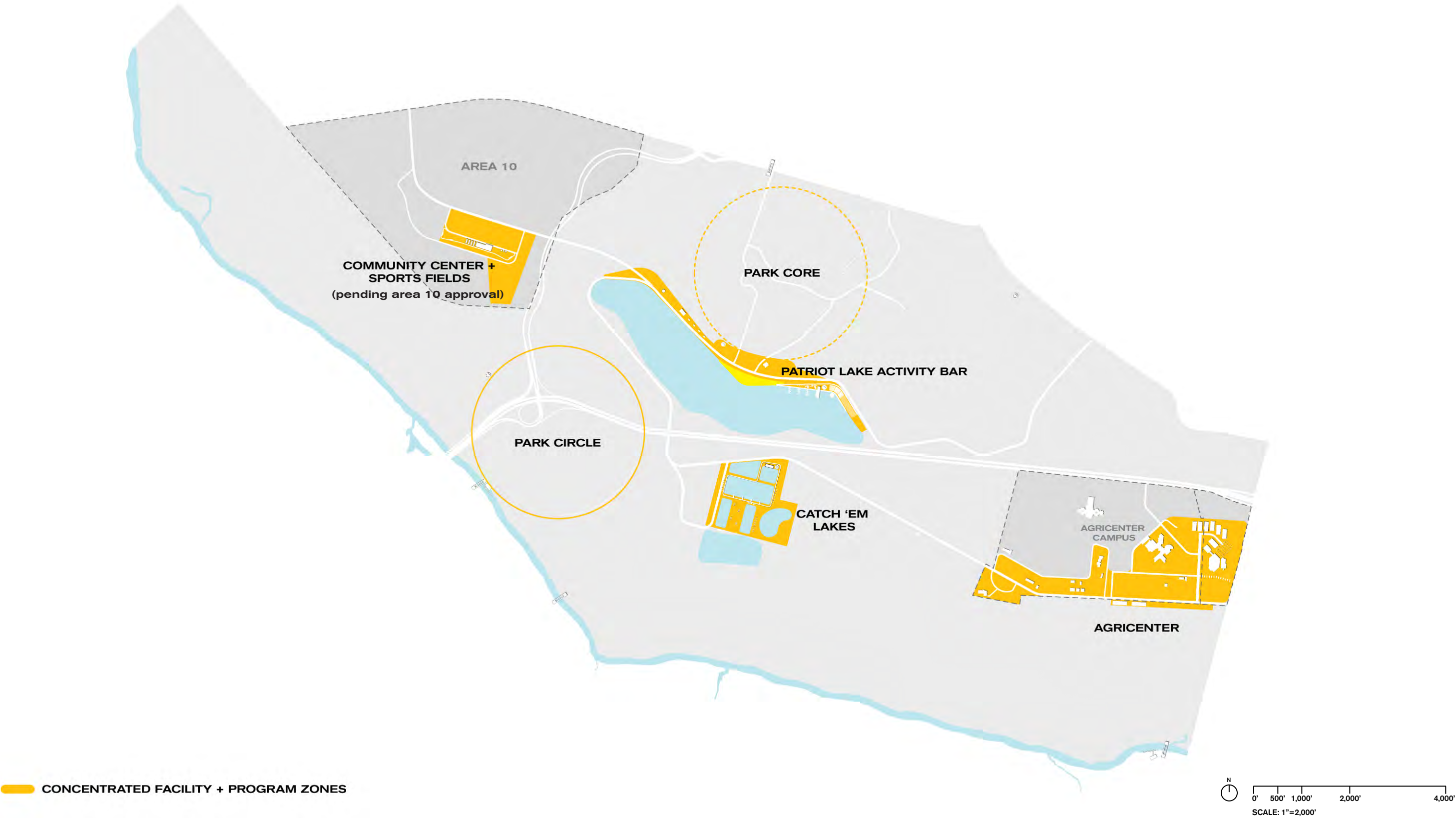
earthen amphitheater



new pavilions



CONCENTRATE PROGRAM + FACILITIES





### 3.3 PROGRAMMATIC DIVERSITY | A UNIQUE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY MIX

Shelby Farms Park is more than just a place of recreation. It is Memphis's green heart – a place that is engaged in a variety of uses and activities related to health, exercise, play, nature, food, energy, ecology, research and education. This combination of programs is exceptional. It positions Shelby Farms Park and Memphis at the forefront of 21st century sustainable growth and civic development.

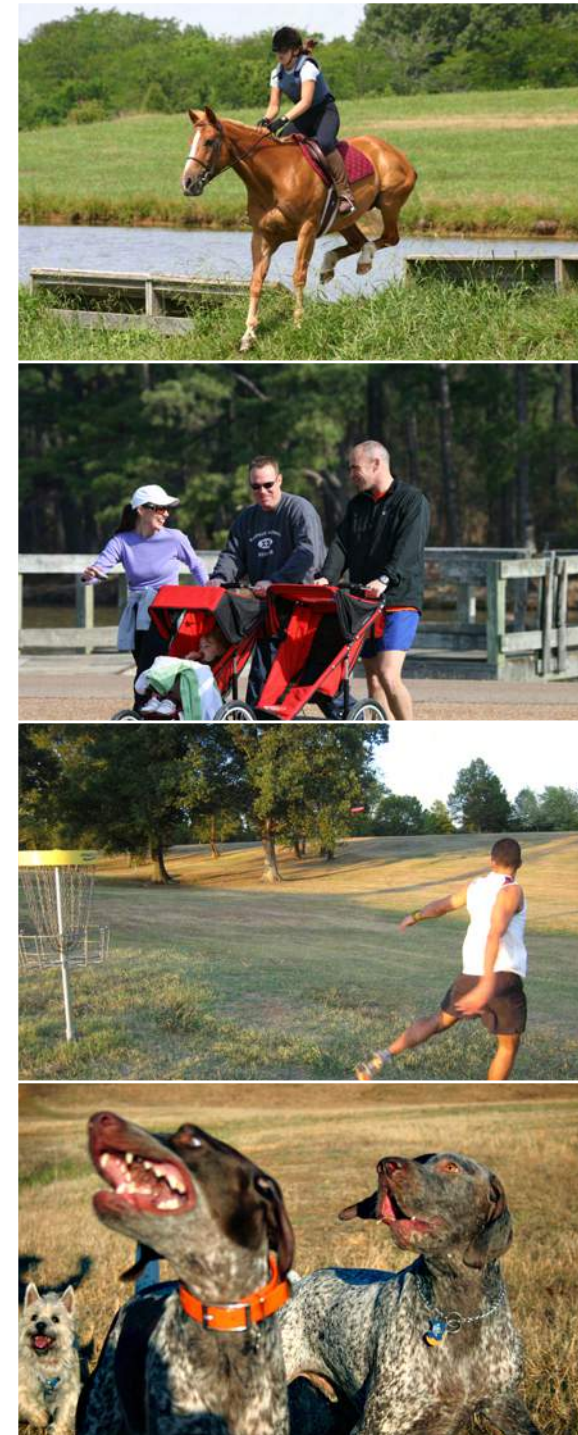
In the very near future, a visit to Shelby Farms Park might include a brisk five-mile jog through an expansive car free territory within the City, followed by a leisurely swim and afternoon reading on the beach of the region's largest recreation-only lake. A different day at Shelby Farms Park could start with a visit to an outdoor classroom sited at the edge of a healthy and productive cypress swamp, followed by a snack of locally cultivated fruit and berries purchased from a farmers market powered by on-site renewable energy sources like wind turbines or solar power. A different visitor to the Park might go for an early morning horseback ride before meeting up with a group of friends volunteering to help a church group set up for their summer picnic and choir performance at the Park's new woodland amphitheatre. Another Park user might spend the day working on cutting-edge agricultural practices at the Agricenter before taking a vigorous afternoon ride on the Region's premier skate venue and enjoying a picnic dinner watching the sunset over the newly expanded Patriot Lake.

The Shelby Farms Park experience is endless.

With the execution of this Master Plan Shelby Farms Park can become a place characterized by a dynamic environment that combines active recreation and a healthy lifestyle with state of the art green energy production, and local and organic agricultural practices; a place that will comprise diverse natural ecologies and cutting edge agricultural research. The Park has the potential to become a 4,500 acre natural science laboratory and classroom for the Greater Memphis Community that can help educate generations of Memphians on the value of their natural environment.

This “mix” of programs, uses and activities will set a global precedent for a new kind of Urban Park – one that does more than just provide a civic venue for active and passive recreation. Shelby Farms Park will transform Memphis. It will influence the culture of the City and the Region. It will redefine the reputation of the place, and the health and well being of its population. Shelby Farms Park will help Memphis offer a high quality of life that is both desirable and enviable.

Shelby Farms Park will impact the way Memphis and West Tennessee move forward into the 21st century.



existing park users

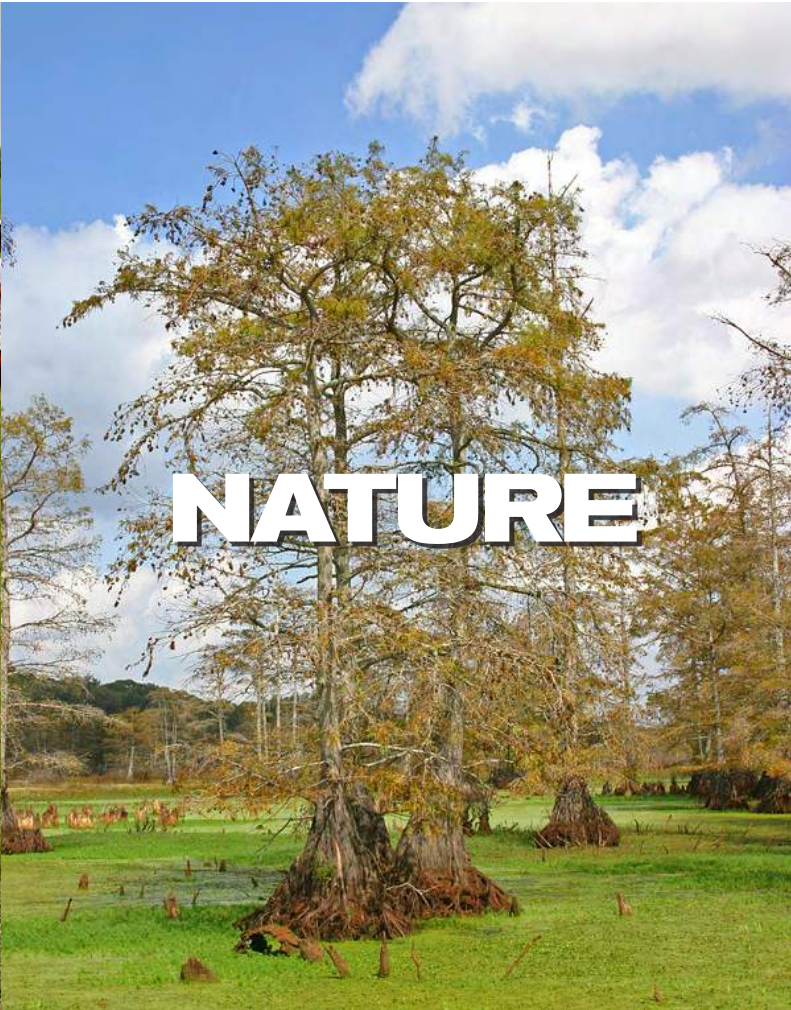




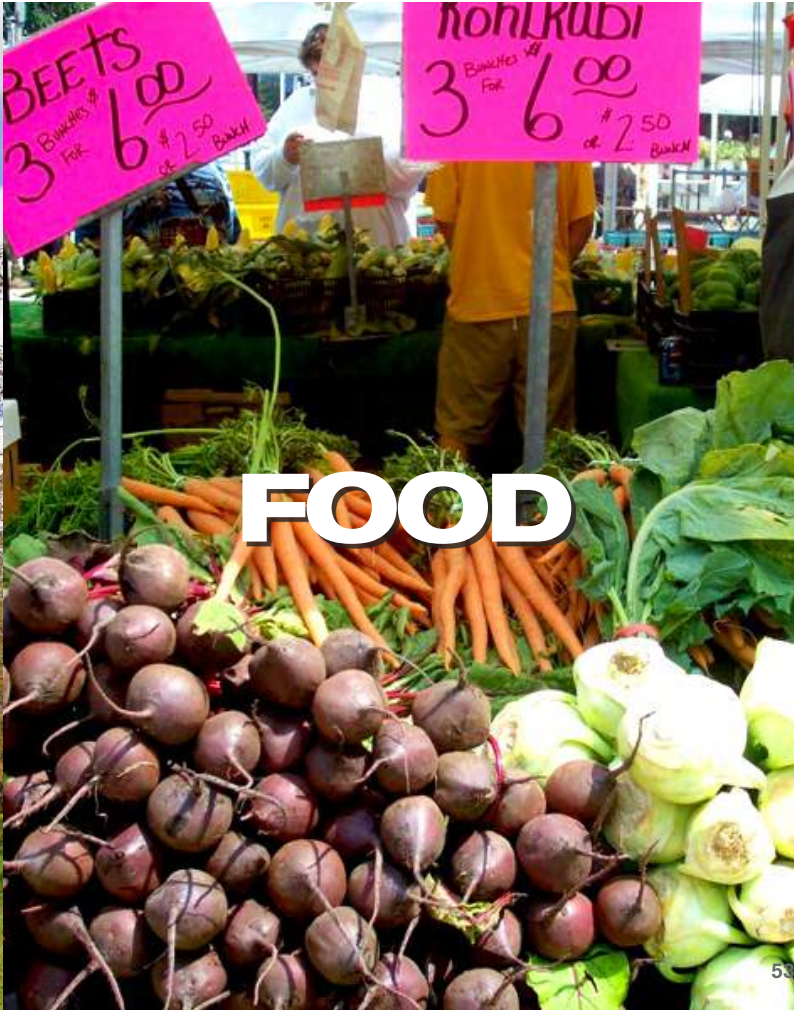
**HEALTH  
+  
EXERCISE**



**PLAY**



**NATURE**



**FOOD**



**ENERGY**



**ECOLOGY**



**RESEARCH**



**EDUCATION**







# 4.0 MASTER PLAN



4.1

THE MASTER PLAN | ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN

The Shelby Farms Park Master Plan amplifies and enhances the existing agrarian characteristics of this unique site – a landscape of rolling hills, flat fields, open meadows thick woods quiet lakes and diverse habitats. These landscapes provide a memorable series of views and vistas, exposing the Park user to the expanse of the Memphis horizon and the vast scale of the park territory. The Master Plan intensifies an already active parkland into a venue for extensive opportunities for physical exertion and play, as well as for passive and ambient uses. The Master Plan is also intended to diversify the range, extent and health of the Park’s various ecosystems.

Shelby Farms Park is intended to become a regional Park that will provide a signature destination and amenity for the Greater Memphis Area as well as continuing to serve the adjacent neighborhoods of Memphis, Germantown and Cordova, which are anticipated to change dramatically over the next 30 years. The Park will become the defining feature of the broader greening of greater Memphis as the City and Region push forward into the 21st century.

In the context of changing priorities and pressures, it should be understood that the greatest efficacy of the Master Plan is in providing a series of strategic recommendations to guide the organization of land-use principles, key program sites, Park features, circulation systems and ecological restoration. Although some of the Park features currently exist, the Master Plan largely reflects a long-term vision that will require continued consultation and design prior to implementation.

A project of this scale requires determined leadership at the civic level in addition to a clear set of guiding principles that will ensure that the Park grows into a coherent signature feature of Memphis. To this end, the Master Plan is intended to be both a bold, big-picture vision for the future Park as well as a grounded, practical framework of realistic opportunities and recommendations. To a large extent, the Master Plan proposals are based on the challenges and opportunities identified through the research and consultation phases of the project. However, additional information regarding the project site is continuing to be compiled and will be folded into the process of implementation for the Master Plan.

For reference purposes, the four primary challenges of Shelby Farms Park are:

- 1) POOR IDENTITY
- 2) SEGMENTED BY INFRASTRUCTURE
- 3) FRAGMENTED ECOSYSTEM
- 4) DEFICIENT ACCESS / CONNECTIVITY / CIRCULATION





- 1 SHELBY FARMS PARKWAY (KIRBY-WHITTEN PKWY.)
- 2 COMMUNITY CENTER \*
- 3 SPORTS FIELDS \*
- 4 PUBLIC GARDENS \*
- 5 BISON RANGE
- 6 PATRIOT LAKE
- 7 BEACH + ACTIVITY BAR
- 8 EARTHEN AMPHITHEATER
- 9 PLOUGH PARK
- 10 THE OUTBACK
- 11 GREEN BRIDGE
- 12 FRUIT + NUT ORCHARDS
- 13 AGRICENTER
- 14 RESEARCH FIELDS
- 15 WOLF RIVER PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
- 16 STRAWBERRY FIELDS
- 17 THE REFUGE
- 18 CATCH 'EM LAKES
- 19 "Y" GATEWAY BRIDGE
- 20 ART MOUND
- 21 SCULPTURE PARK
- 22 WOLF RIVER PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
- 23 WOLF RIVER PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
- 24 LUCIUS BURCH NATURAL AREA
- 25 AREA10 / GOVERNMENT FACILITIES

\* PENDING AREA 10 APPROVAL



4.1

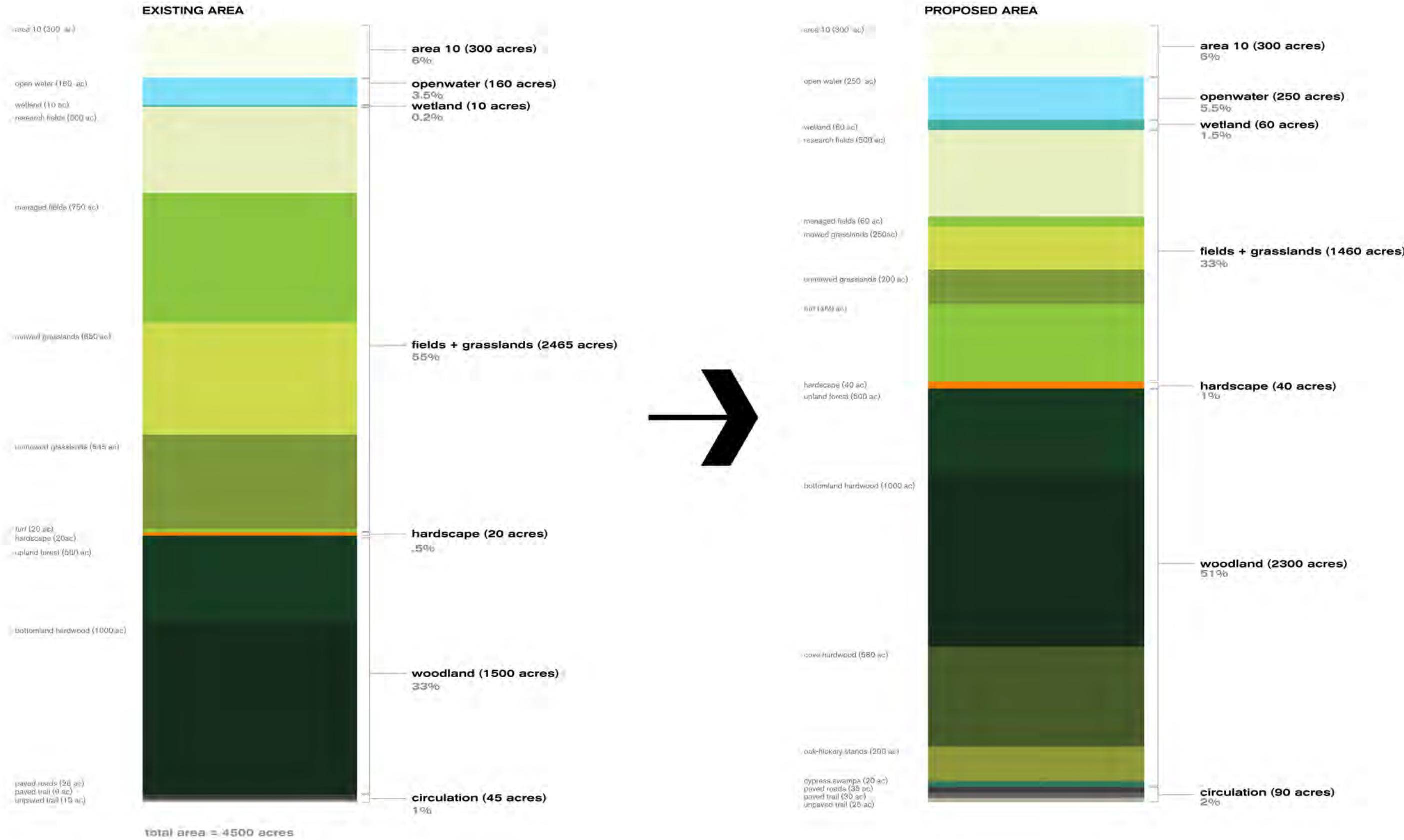
THE MASTER PLAN | SURFACE COMPARISON

Shelby Farms Park is made up of a varied combination of ground surfaces that influence the use and character of particular areas of the Park. The most common surface condition currently present at Shelby Farms can be characterized as fields and grasslands comprising nearly 2,500 acres. Approximately one-third of the existing site is woodland. Excluding the 300 acres designated around Area 10, approximately 5% of the remaining site is a combination of water, hardscape and circulation.

The proposed Master Plan increases the area of open water and wetlands on site to 310 acres, nearly doubling the percentage of the total site area from 3.7% to 7%. Circulation and hardscape are modestly increased (mostly in the form of new trails and multi-use paths), but still account for only 3% of the total site area. Though the total area of fields and grasslands is reduced, the approximately 500 acres devoted to research and crop production fields remains unchanged. This reduction in field and grassland area is consumed by 800 acres of new woodland planting comprising much of the proposed one-million new trees. Woodland cover increases from 33% to 50%, which is important for both ecology and shade.

The proposed ratio of nearly one-tenth water, one-half woodland, and the remainder open space represents an ideal equation for ecological health and robustness.







# 4.1 THE MASTER PLAN | PROGRAM COMPARISON

Much of the appeal of Shelby Farms Park comes from the vast expanses of agricultural fields, managed grasslands and habitat areas. At present, nearly 77% of the total site area is devoted to passive recreation and/or ecological habitat, while approximately 5% of the site is occupied by active recreation programs and Park facilities. The proposed Master Plan increases the areas of active recreation programs and Park facilities by nearly 80 acres, much of which is in the form of new recreation trails and multi-use paths. The habitat area of the Park is also generously expanded through the proposed tree planting, diversifying and increasing the ecological habitat area of the Park from 1,510 acres to more than 2,360 acres – an increase of nearly 20% of the total Park area.

The Master Plan retains more than three-quarters of the total Shelby Farms Park area for passive recreation and/or ecological habitat areas, while carefully enhancing strategic areas suited for active recreation programs. The program areas defined as municipal (Area 10), or agricultural research and crop production fields, remain under current land use in the proposed Master Plan.







4.2

REGIONAL CONNECTIONS | GREENWAYS + TRANSIT

Shelby Farms Park sits at the geographical center of the Memphis Metropolitan Area. A major objective of the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy is to improve connectivity and accessibility to the Park, particularly for poorly served parts of the City. The northern and southern boundaries of the property already offer immediate opportunities to create these first linkages to the broader metropolitan region, and can be instrumental in promoting improved access for all.

To the north, the existing CSX line has the potential in the short term to become a recreational connection to the Fairgrounds and Midtown through the creation of a future pedestrian and bicycle oriented greenline. To the east, this future greenline will connect Shelby Farms Park with a number of other neighborhoods between the Park and Cordova. Over the long-term, it is imagined that this pedestrian corridor could be expanded to include a transit linkage like light rail that would connect Memphis’ existing business centers with its growing population centers.

To the south of the Park is the Wolf River and the proposed Wolf River Greenway. This pedestrian connection is intended to tie Collierville and Germantown all the way to downtown Memphis and the Mississippi River via a paved recreation trail that runs along the Wolf River. A portion of this Greenway is already in place in Collierville and along the Germantown section of the River-Park boundary. It is currently in the planning stages as it moves west along the Park’s southern perimeter and through the City of Memphis to the Mississippi River.

Both of these connections will link a variety of seemingly distant and disparate neighborhoods to Shelby Farms Park, creating a public venue that is directly accessible by a huge portion of the Memphis population. However, to optimize this potential, these connections need to be tied into a larger bike and pedestrian network that is not yet present within Memphis. It is our hope that the momentum behind Shelby Farms Park will translate into momentum for this broader bike and pedestrian network within the City.

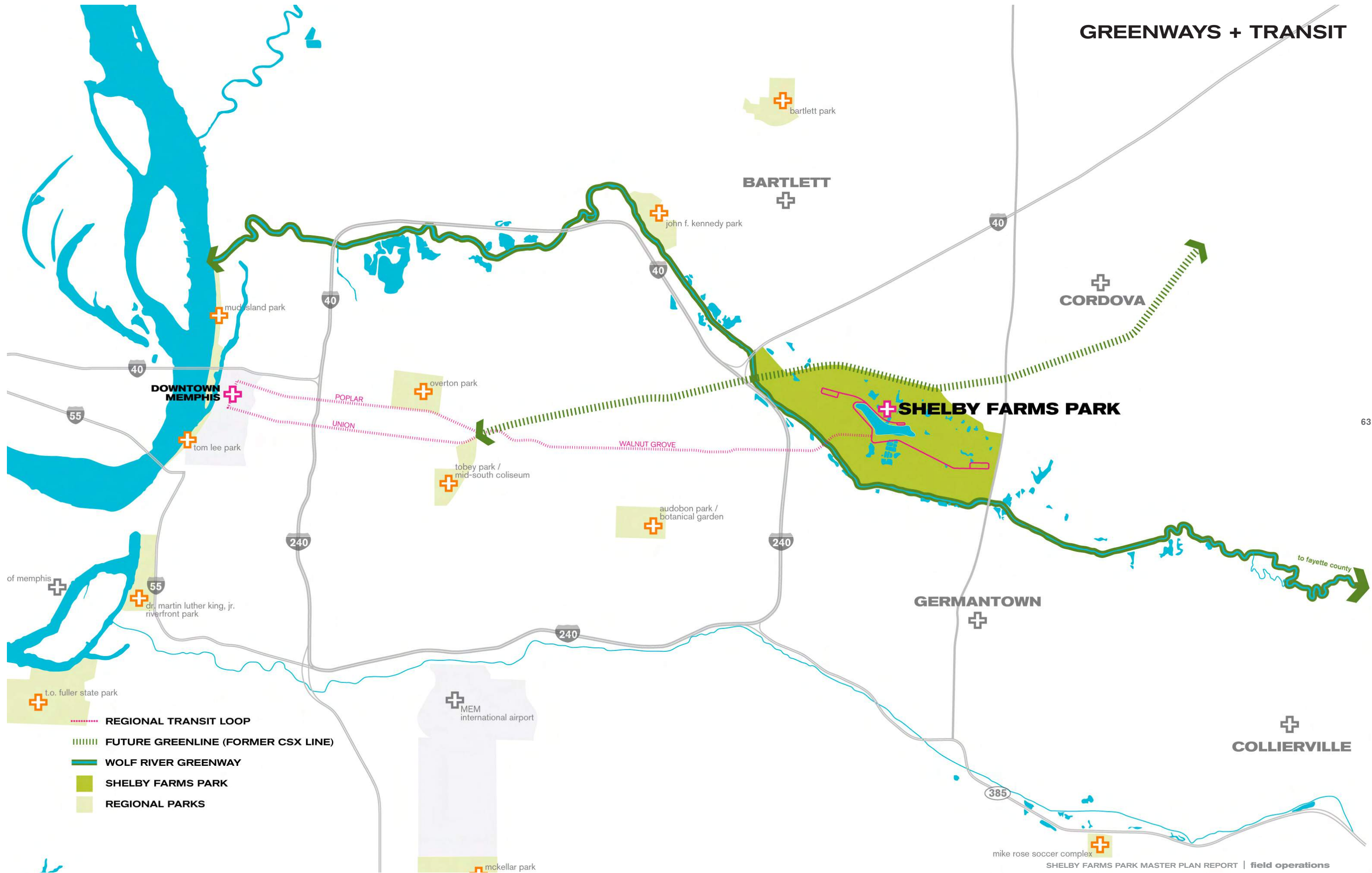
In addition to these recreational and pedestrian linkages, the Master Plan recommends a regional transit link that will tie into the Memphis Area Transit Authority system. This transit link will improve access to Shelby Farms by connecting future bus routes to an internal circulation system (trolley) within the Park so that any place in Memphis will essentially connect to any place within Shelby Farms Park.



shelby farms park in the foreground with downtown memphis in the distance



## GREENWAYS + TRANSIT





4.2

REGIONAL CONNECTIONS | EXTERNAL VEHICULAR CONNECTIONS

In addition to the recreational and transit connections linking Shelby Farms Park to Greater Memphis, the Park is positioned at a location easily served by regional and arterial vehicular thoroughfares. The major ring-road around the city (I-40 / I-240) provides signed exits to Shelby Farms Park from both the north and the south. These thoroughfares regularly carry traffic from as far away as Nashville, Little Rock and Jackson, Mississippi.

Walnut Grove Road which bisects the site provides linkages to Poplar and Union Avenues, Midtown and Downtown. This road is the primary vehicular corridor servicing the Park and carries the vast majority of traffic to Shelby Farms Park. Thus, Walnut Grove provides the single most important vehicular gateway to the Park and requires particular attention to its landscape treatment. This is a doubly important consideration should the road be widened as has been widely speculated.

The new Shelby Farms Parkway will replace the over-burdened Farm Road and connect traffic using Walnut Grove Road to the neighborhoods to the north by connecting the east-west thoroughfare to the north-south Whitten-Kirby Road. Germantown Road, which bounds the eastern edge of the Park, also connects the Park to significant population centers to the north and to the south.

It is imperative that both the new Shelby Farms Parkway and an existing or widened Walnut Grove Road be companioned with multiple bike/pedestrian crossings and treated in such a way that their impact on the Park is significantly minimized.



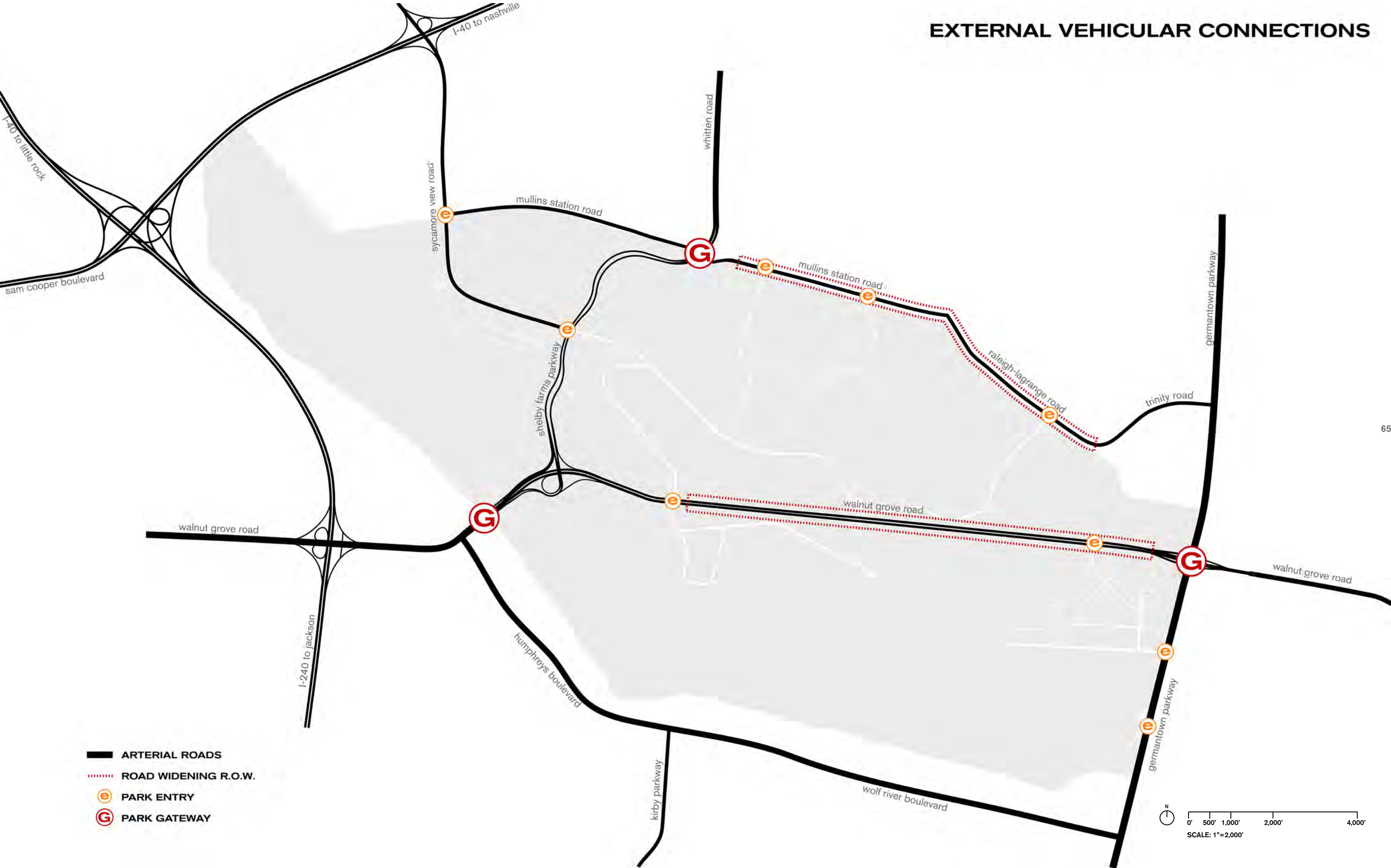
I-40 / I-240 interchange at the edge of shelby farms near area 10



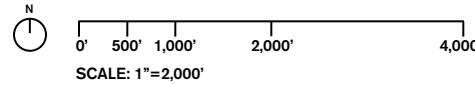
walnut grove road within shelby farms park



EXTERNAL VEHICULAR CONNECTIONS



- ARTERIAL ROADS
- ROAD WIDENING R.O.W.
- PARK ENTRY
- PARK GATEWAY





4.3 INTERNAL CIRCULATION | PARK SIGNAGE + IDENTITY STRATEGY

As was noted above, marking the edges to Shelby Farms Park is critical to defining the presence of the Park within the City and the Region. By defining a sense of gateway and a clear hierarchy for entry, the perimeter circulation system for the Park will invite people slow down and enter, rather than reinforce their quick passage through. We propose the creative use of large-scale graphic signage, distinct plantings and the use of temporary installations to mark points of entry and edges of the Park while also helping to create a memorable public identity that provokes the curiosity of passersby and invites people to explore the Park for themselves.

The Master Plan proposes using a combination of elements to clearly indicate both vehicular and pedestrian entries to the Park, as well as clearly marking connections to/from the future greenline (former CSX line) and the developing Wolf River Greenway.

66



an idea for temporary gateway signage along walnut grove road



institutions like the ornamental metals museum could help curate or develop a series of shelby farms park gates







4.3

INTERNAL CIRCULATION | INTERNAL VEHICULAR CIRCULATION

Existing Park vehicular access and circulation is deficient and unclear. The revised vehicular circulation system builds upon the presence of Walnut Grove Road and Shelby Farms Parkway to create a hierarchy of routes and a logical series of entries into the Park that are intuitive and easily navigable. A main circuit consisting of the New Patriot Lake Road, Moore Road (Ham Smythe, III Road) and the extension of Sycamore View Road will link the three sections of the Shelby Farms Park territory and serve as the primary points of access into the Park. Secondary access points, including the three proposed off of Mullins Station Road as well as the Agricenter entry off Walnut Grove Road, will provide direct access for local traffic and those park users not needing to visit the central program areas of the Park.

Clearly marked entries and turning lane provisions within the surrounding roadway system are critical to this strategy. Supplementing these primary and secondary points of access and circulation are internal roadway that connect particular elements within the Park including the individual rooms.

All roadways within the Park – excluding Walnut Grove Road, Shelby Farms Parkway (Kirby-Whitten Parkway) and Sycamore View Road west of the new Shelby Farms Parkway – will have their access controlled by the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy and/or the Agricenter. Portions of these roads may have access restricted and/or be temporarily closed to accommodate particular Park-related events.

VEHICULAR CIRCULATION ALTERNATIVE

Over the course of the Park’s development, the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy and the Agricenter may find it necessary to supplement the primary vehicular circuit (comprising the New Patriot Lake Road, Moore Road (Ham Smythe, III Road) and the extension of Sycamore View Road) with a second connection across Walnut Grove Road to allow for the two sides of the Park to have a stronger physical and conceptual linkage. This additional connection would logically be sited at the location of the proposed Green Bridge. Should such an alternative be pursued, it will require the Green Bridge to be designed and dimensioned in such a way that it can accommodate the proposed multi-use loop and an ecological corridor, as well as the additional vehicular route. Motorized traffic along this alternative connection will be limited to the Park Trolley and Park maintenance vehicles to reduce any potential impact on the adjacent Agricenter research fields.



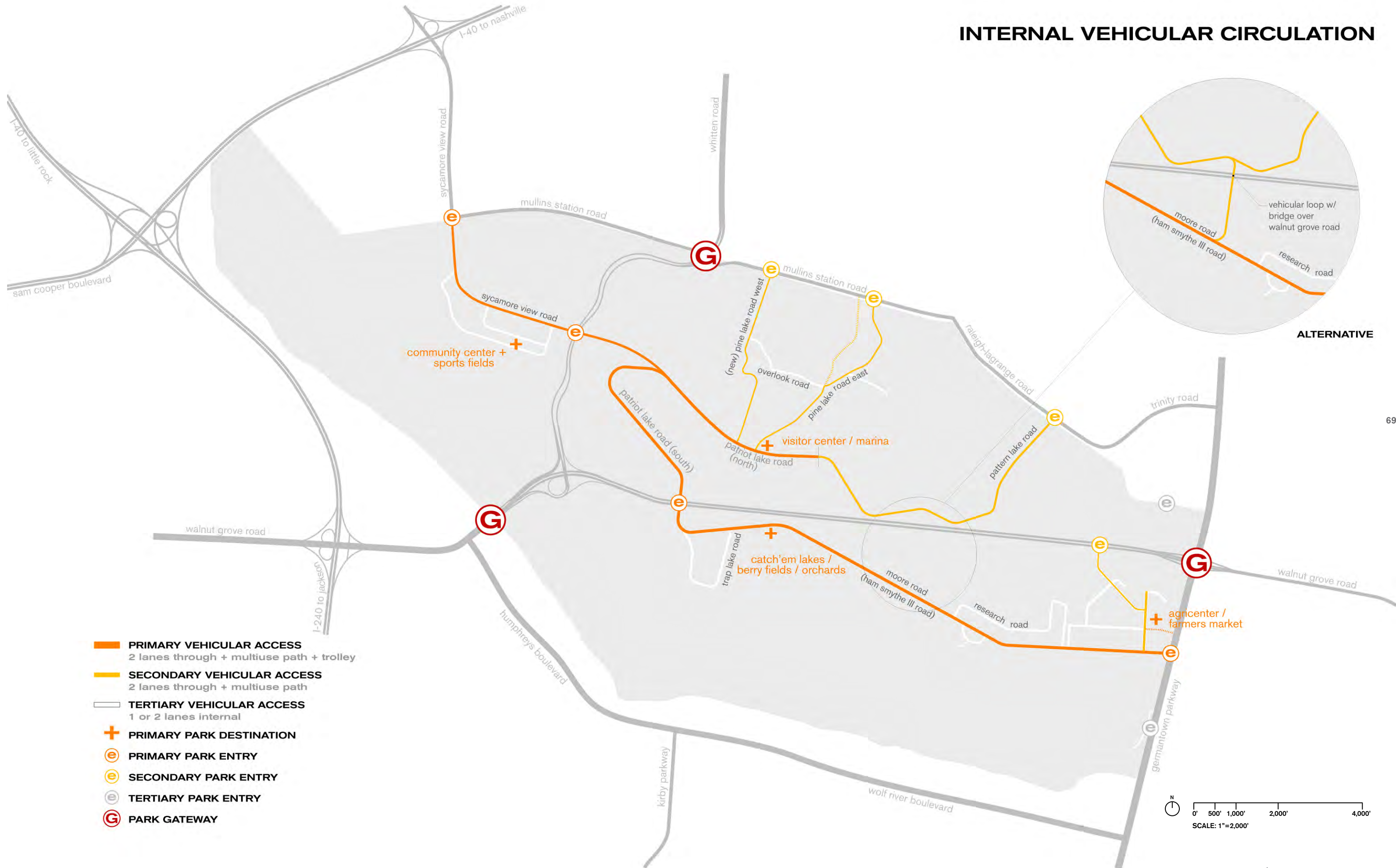
primary roadways should minimal, in material yet designed with a distinct character and palette



illumination and material change can mark special areas within the park



INTERNAL VEHICULAR CIRCULATION





4.3 INTERNAL CIRCULATION | PARKING STRATEGY

The proposed approach to parking within Shelby Farms Park is to concentrate parking areas at four particular locations adjacent to the most highly programmed areas of the Park. As such, the bulk of parking will be located near the expanded Patriot Lake, the Agricenter Campus, the Catch 'Em Lakes and the Community Center. Smaller parking areas will be distributed at various locations throughout the Park adjacent to existing venues like the upland amphitheatre, the equestrian facilities and some of the picnic areas. Despite their distribution, these areas will provide only a minimum number of parking spaces necessary for local use. Overflow areas can be accommodated in a number of locations throughout the park nearby major program areas.

Even though the goal of the Master Plan is to focus on public transportation, the Park must be prepared to accommodate visitors to the site arriving by car. However, because the site is intended to be a major urban habitat, the parking program needs to be carefully integrated into the overall landscape and phasing of the Park. Basic requirements of all parking areas include permeable surfaces to reduce the heat island effect and control stormwater runoff, as well as screening or shading parking areas with trees in combination with sinking these areas into the ground so as not to be visually legible within the landscape.

The Master Plan calls for overflow parking to be accommodated in a number of locations within the Park with a focus on siting these areas adjacent to the major proposed program areas. For reference purposes, the existing northern half of the Shelby Farms Park territory has approximately 790 permanent parking spaces. The southern half of the Park – encompassing the Agricenter and Catch 'Em Lakes areas – has approximately 2,300 permanent parking spaces. The proposed distribution of parking in the Master Plan is as follows.

Patriot Lake:	520 permanent / 1,000 overflow
Community Center:	460 permanent / 300 overflow
Catch'Em Lakes:	350 permanent / 400 overflow
Agricenter Campus:	2,050 permanent / 1,000 overflow
Satellite Areas:	520 permanent
<hr/>	
Total:	3,900 permanent / 2,700 overflow



parking surfaces should recede into the park rather than standing out



parking surfaces should be tough and resilient, yet porous an green







4.3

INTERNAL CIRCULATION | TRANSIT CONNECTIONS + PARK TROLLEY

To minimize the impact of the automobile and discourage its use within the Park, an internal shuttle is proposed to connect the Park’s four major program areas with the 12 landscape rooms. This shuttle will be provided free of charge and will circumnavigate the Park in approximately 30 minute intervals. The circuit would follow the main vehicular spine of the Park, coursing along the New Patriot Lake Road, Moore Road (Ham Smythe, III Road) and the extension of Sycamore View Road. This route will link the three sections of the Shelby Farms Park territory created by the presence of Walnut Grove Road and Shelby Farms Parkway, and serve to reinforce Patriot Lake, the Agricenter Campus, the Catch ‘em Lakes and the Community Center as the concentrated activity areas of the Park.

In order to operate this trolley, it is anticipated that some preferred parking areas may require a fee to fund the trolley service. Other lots that are less popular or in areas of less impact would remain free.

Though the trolley system would be managed by the Conservancy through an operator, it is assumed that this system will be coordinated with the MATA bus route(s) serving Shelby Farms Park in terms of drop-off and pick-up locations, as well as timing and routes. This too is intended to discourage vehicular traffic within the Park and increase opportunities for local and regional accessibility to Shelby Farms Park.

VEHICULAR CIRCULATION ALTERNATIVE

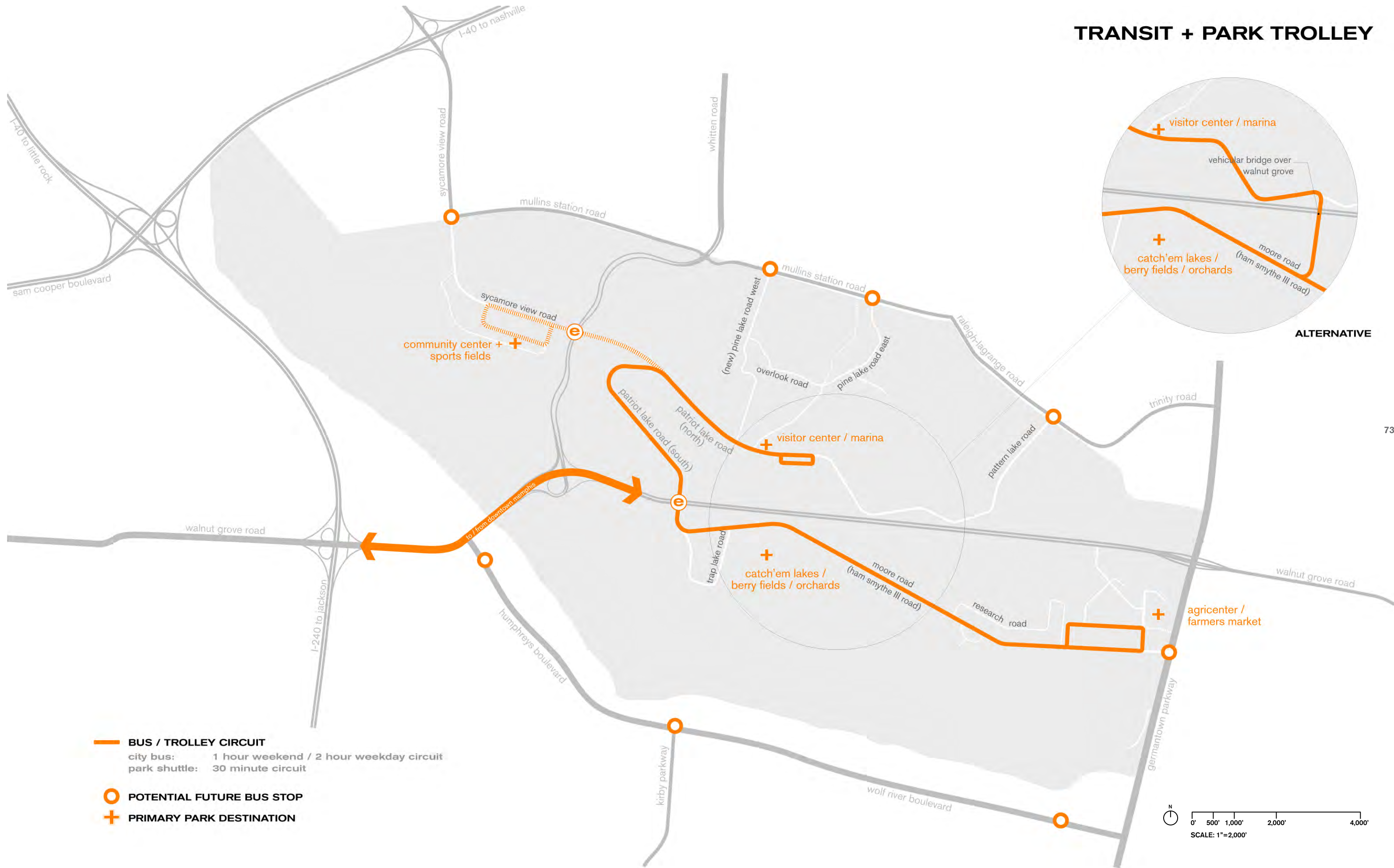
As was noted above, over the course of the Park’s development, the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy and the Agricenter may find it necessary to supplement the primary vehicular circuit with a second connection across Walnut Grove Road to allow for the two sides of the Park to have a stronger physical and experiential linkage. This “loop” would effectively be managed by the Conservancy, allowing parts of the road to be opened and closed as needed to minimize traffic and maximize pedestrian use.



the park shuttle will become a icon of shelby farms park



TRANSIT + PARK TROLLEY





4.3

INTERNAL CIRCULATION | USER-SPECIFIC PATH + TRAIL SYSTEM

The primary recommendation for pedestrian access and circulation in the Master Plan is to preserve the unique capacity for large-scale recreation and habitat through an efficient pedestrian network. In addition to renovating and improving the existing user-specific trails and paths on site, the Master Plan proposes a double loop circuit as the primary organizing device for pedestrian movement within Shelby Farms Park. The main loop is a 5.25 mile multi-use path that will connect all parts of the park together and will help centralize orientation, circulation, transit and parking. It would include both a gateway pedestrian bridge as well as a Green Bridge – an ecological and pedestrian corridor intended to mitigate the adverse effects of Walnut Grove Road by re-linking the two sides of the Park. This loop would be a combination of an asphaltic speed surface for bikes and rollerblades, and a rubberized walking / jogging surface for pedestrians.

The smaller “Park Circle” path is 2 miles in circumference and allows for connections across major roadways like Walnut Grove and the new Shelby Farms Parkway (Kirby-Whitten Parkway). This stone dust trail would connect the three sections of the Park through a series of bridge and tunnel connections and would link the Park via pedestrian access to neighborhoods to the south, near Shady Grove Road, and along the proposed Wolf River Greenway. The “Park Circle” path would also link to the multiuse path along the new Walnut Grove Road bridge providing direct pedestrian access to the Park from the south.

Important paths and trails in addition to the double loop circuit are the 3.5 mile Patriot Lake boardwalk and path; the 12.25 mile equestrian circuit linking the northern half of Shelby Farms with the southern half and the Wolf River corridor; a renovated Chickasaw Trail and Tour de Wolf; a series of 3k, 5k and 10k cross-county circuits; as well as 20+ miles of diverse wilderness trails. Although some paths will be designated for single use, many others will be designed to accommodate a bundle of multiple users. All paths and trails will be separate from roads, with special attention paid to pedestrian crossings as needed to facilitate safe passage.

TRAILS	LENGTH	USER-TYPE
Loop	5.25 mi	walker / runner / bike / rollerblade / horse
Circle Trail	2 mi	walker / runner / bike / horse
Equestrian Trail	approx. 12.25 mi	horse
Tour De Wolf	approx. 5.85 mi	mountain bike
Cross Country Trails	approx. 20 mi	walker / runner
Chickasaw Trail	approx. 3 mi	walker / runner
Patriot Lake Boardwalk	3.5 mi	walker / runner
Catch 'Em Lakes Boardwalk	0.75 mi	walker
Wilderness + Unpaved Trails	approx. 20 mi	walker / runner / bike / horse



the paths materials palette should include a broad mixture of surface with a rustic, but 'tough' character





USER-SPECIFIC PATH + TRAIL SYSTEM





4.3

INTERNAL CIRCULATION | PARK LIGHTING STRATEGY

A distinct lighting vocabulary specific to Shelby Farms Park should distinguish the site from its context and help to shape the agrarian and remote character that defines much of the Master Plan design. Large areas of Shelby Farms Park should remain dark. Although major activity areas that may be used at night like the Bar at Patriot Lake, the Community Center and the Agricenter should be sufficiently lit, the skies atop Shelby Farms Park should remain predominately dark in order to preserve habitat quality in natural areas. Glare controls on major program area fixtures will protect surrounding areas where darkness is desired. Gateways, defined by landscape and architectural elements, might double as light markers that express the perimeter and access points. Distinctive lighting along the program bars will reinforce the idea of these areas as the primary activity and event locations of the site.

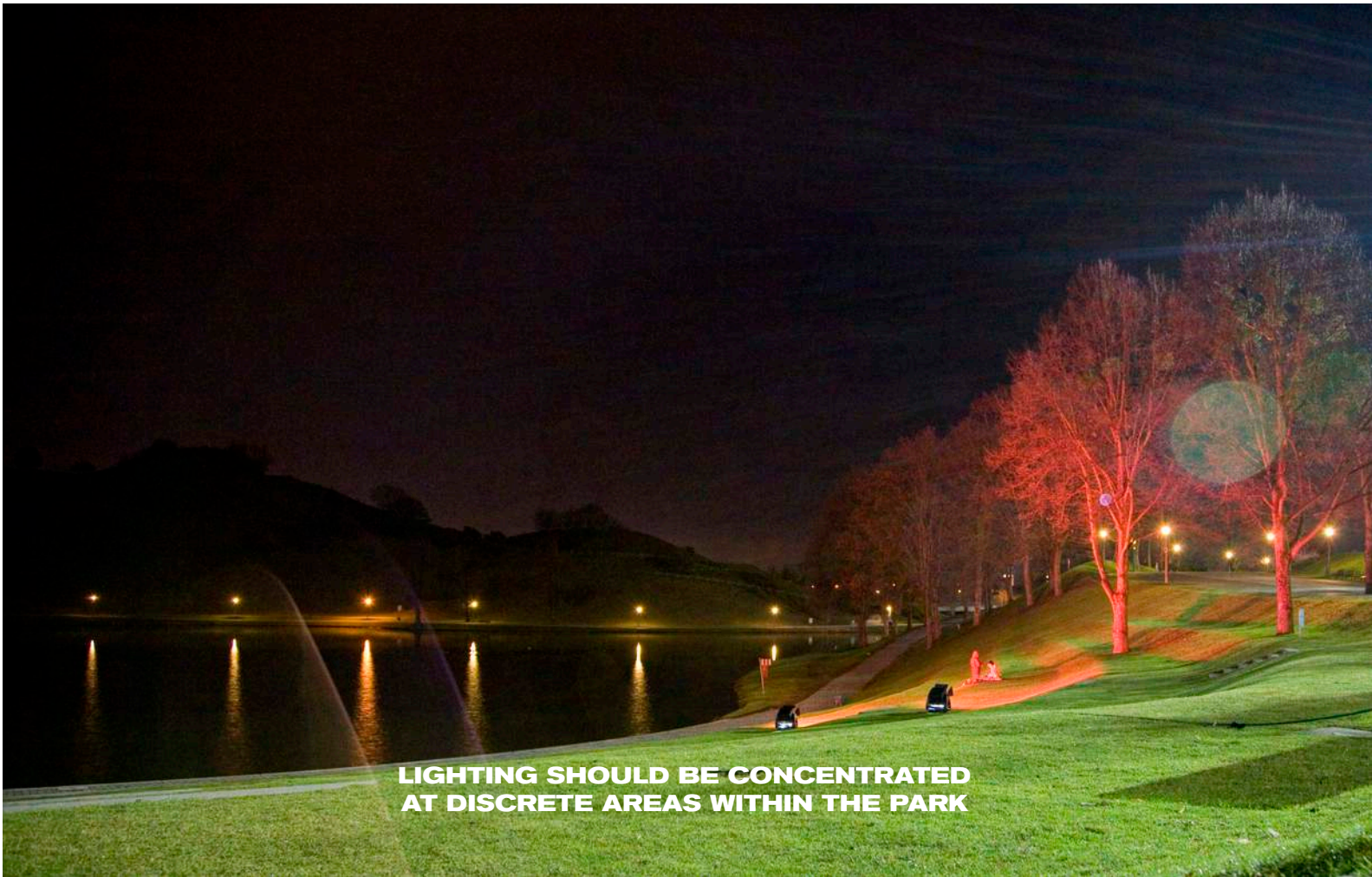
A distinctive treatment for Walnut Grove Road and Shelby Farms Parkway should enhance the sense of gateway and difference between these “parkways” and ordinary city streets or highways. Several credible studies suggest that directing light away from the center of the road and to the sides increases the overall field of vision for the driver. A more efficient lighting solution that calls for the major roadways crossing Shelby Farms Park to have less light and less contrast should be explored with the Shelby County Department of Public Works and the Tennessee Department of Transportation.

Lighting can continually refresh expectations as new areas of the Park undergo change and are re-opened to the public. Lighting design is inherently linked to temporality. In keeping with the phasing plan, the Shelby Farms Park lighting design should build over time, emphasizing the site's evolution.

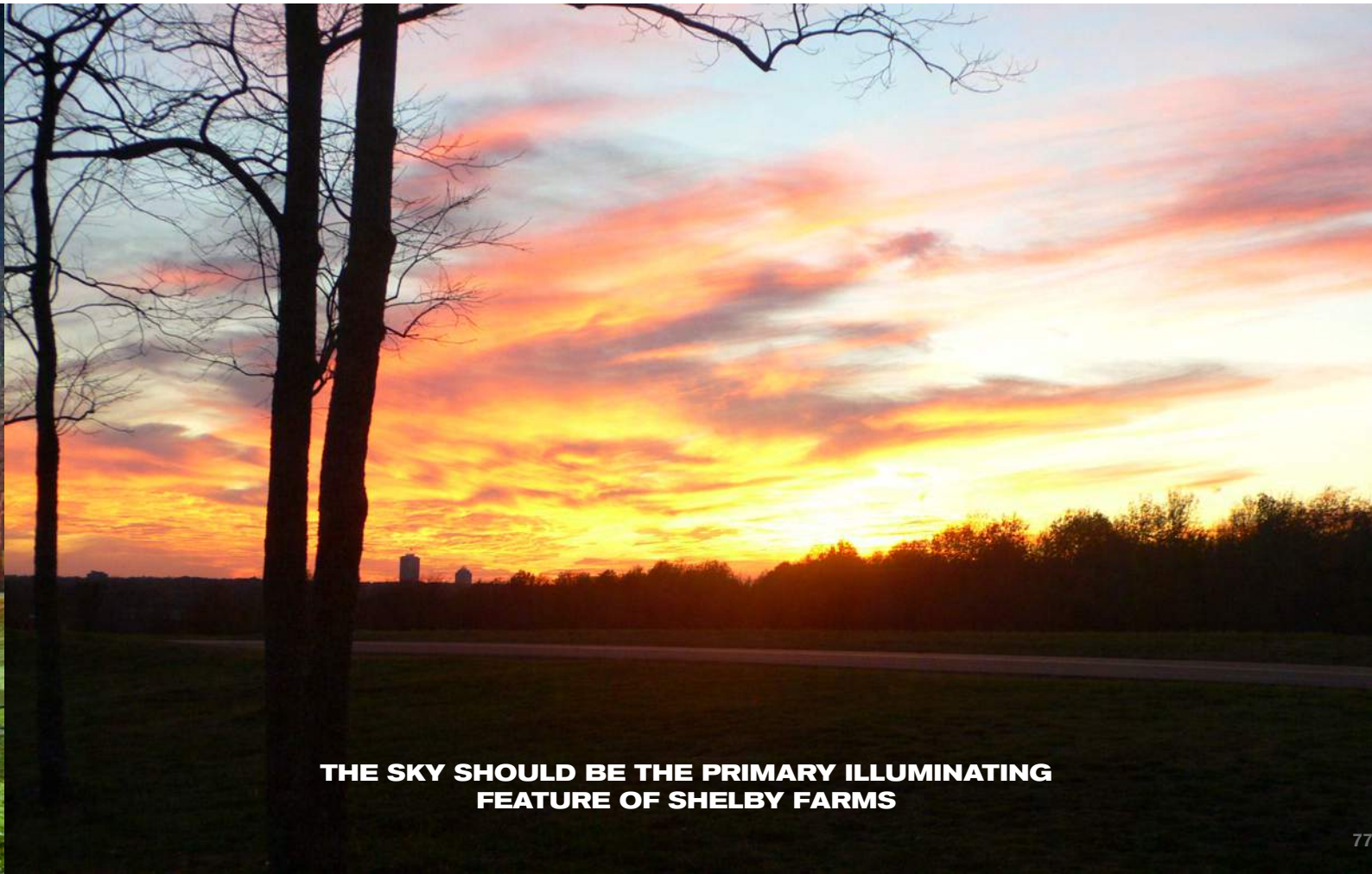
Lighting design should explore ways in which Shelby Farms Park might produce its own energy. Solar-powered fixtures, energy-efficient light sources (high brightness LEDs, for example) and networks of sensor controls that respond to motion, occupation, and dawn and dusk should be incorporated as fully as possible to demonstrate a commitment to conservation and sustainability.

The Shelby Farms Park Conservancy's philosophy and approach towards lighting should focus as much on moonlight, dark skies, dawn/dusk and stars as it does on artificial means of illumination. This will allow the site to retain a truly distinct experience within the urbanized areas of the Memphis Metropolitan Region.

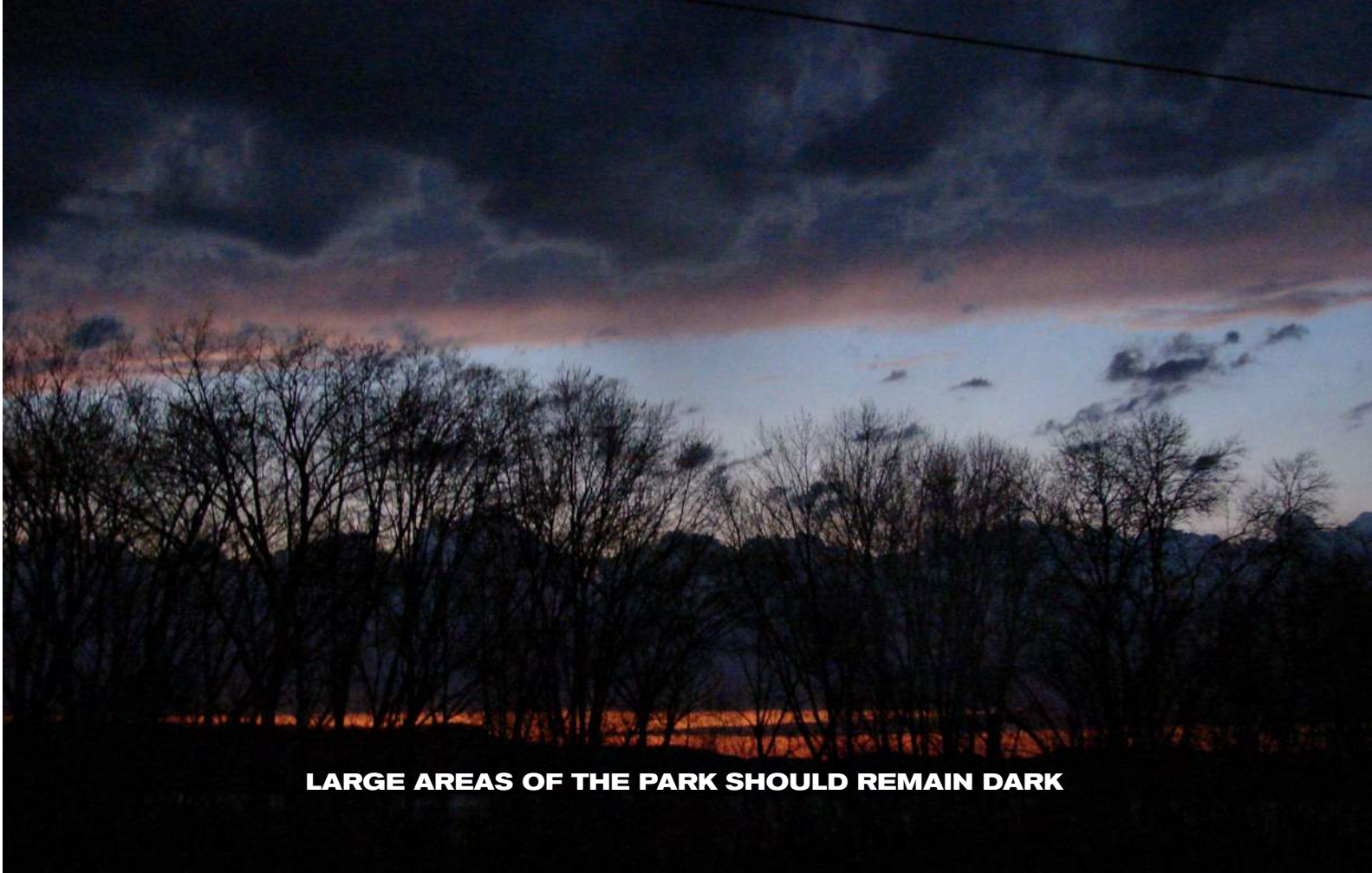




**LIGHTING SHOULD BE CONCENTRATED  
AT DISCRETE AREAS WITHIN THE PARK**



**THE SKY SHOULD BE THE PRIMARY ILLUMINATING  
FEATURE OF SHELBY FARMS**



**LARGE AREAS OF THE PARK SHOULD REMAIN DARK**



**EVENT-RELATED LIGHTING CREATES A SENSE OF  
TEMPORALITY + SPECTACLE**



4.4

WATER BODIES | SITE-WIDE HYDROLOGICAL APPROACH

In combination with the improvements for Patriot Lake which are outlined in the following pages, it is recommended that three other zones within the upland area of Shelby Farms Park be addressed – Chickasaw Lake, Mayor Lake and the slough west of Pine Lake.

Based on preliminary discussions with Brian Waldron, Ph.D. PE, Assistant Professor of Civil Engineering at the University of Memphis, there are indications of seepage across the dam at Chickasaw Lake. If seepage is occurring through this dam, it can undermine the structural integrity of the dam and could pose a safety issue for the downstream land. Geotechnical investigation can confirm the possible seepage and identify the magnitude of the problem, helping to direct the Conservancy towards a potential solution.

To enhance the quality and function of Mayor Lake, it is recommended that the adjacent low-lying areas be connected to the Lake. This would expand the drainage basin and create a more visually attractive water body. A discharge pipe or weir could be added to regulate the stormwater function of the lake and route the discharge to Patriot Lake.

A similar, but less extensive remedy is suggested for the marshy area just south and west of Pine Lake. Based on field observation, this slough is stagnant and odorous. Cleaning this area of debris and locating the discharge route may be enough action to provide a properly functioning habitat. If this does not seem sufficient, the area could be connected directly to the downstream swale on the south end. The goal here should be to promote positive drainage within the slough.

Additional alterations to the existing site-wide hydrological system will help guarantee long term sustainability of the Park’s stormwater drainage system. These alterations include:

1. Enhancement of vegetation and habitat within the existing swales and sloughs where possible to increase wildlife diversity, water quality and groundwater recharge throughout the site;
2. Adjustments and rehabilitation of discharge structures adjacent to the existing lakes to maximize drainage flows and prevent stagnant water bodies; and
3. Where possible, maintaining the uplands area of the Park with vegetation to secure the soil and limit sediment and run-off from contaminating the adjacent lakes.

78



wetland habitat



healthy water bodies







4.4

WATER BODIES | PATRIOT LAKE EXPANSION

Expanding Patriot Lake into a recreational lake with 150 acres of surface area is an ambitious, but feasible, goal. The important factors in transforming Patriot Lake into a successful amenity for Shelby Farms Park involve water quantity, water quality and the aesthetics of the banks. Additional concerns include constructability and permitting.

For the purposes of analyzing Patriot Lake, the study area is comprised of three major drainage basins. These basins are the Patriot Lake Basin, the area northwest of Patriot Lake and the area east of Patriot Lake.

Patriot Lake currently has a water surface area of 54 acres at elevation 262.00 feet. Per original construction plans, the depth of the Lake varies from nine to fourteen feet. Although much of the adjacent land has been graded to drain away from the Lake through a system of concrete swales, approximately 329 acres of surface drainage still enters the lake.

The expanded 150-acre Patriot Lake will maintain the existing water surface elevation of 262.00 feet. The adjacent drainage basin will be expanded to accommodate the additional lake volume. A ratio ranging between 4:1 and 10:1 for drainage area to surface water area is desirable to balance water levels and manage stormwater in lakes. The restructured basins shown to the right and in Appendix C of this document include approximately 980 acres. This drainage area compared to the expanded lake water surface provides a ratio of 6.5:1 which is well within the acceptable range.

MINIMIZING WATER LOSS

It is expected that some water will be lost through evaporation. Based on average monthly precipitation data, the lowest lake elevation estimated for the expanded Patriot Lake is 261.00 feet. Details of this calculation can be found in Appendix C of this document. If this is an unacceptable amount of change in water surface elevation for the surrounding amenities, pumping water from the Wolf River could be used to supplement the overland drainage. The unpredictable nature of drought events makes this an attractive alternative. Details regarding this permitting process and allowable volume of water pumped can be found in the full feasibility report.

Further study is needed to verify soil conditions on site, but geotechnical investigations on adjacent properties indicate that the soils will be comprised primarily of silt and clay. The silty overburden is susceptible to erosion and seepage, but the deeper clay layers provide a fairly impermeable surface. The clay depths vary but it seems feasible that the lake could be lined with this clay to avoid water loss through seepage. If the depths of clay in this area make this impossible, a liner could be installed to address the loss of water through seepage.

MAINTAINING WATER QUALITY

A key component of good water quality is the depth and variance of the bottom surface. To promote a healthy fish habitat, the lake bottom needs to be irregularly shaped and sloped with depths varying from eight to sixteen feet. In order to promote natural aeration and water circulation within the lake, much of the water body should be twelve to sixteen feet deep. This depth is the ideal depth for the majority of the lake. Additional lake aeration by means of air compressors is possible, but not necessary if the lake is deep enough.

AESTHETICS

There is much concern over the appearance of the slopes above water surface and the ability of the water’s edge to maintain a high quality appearance. This is a valid concern since the existing soils in the area have a large silt content that can be highly erodible.

One recommended edge treatment involves sea walls or sheet piling. This installation is successful at creating a definite boundary for the water body. The rigid structure adapts well to the change in water surface elevation and is relatively weather-proof. Areas that seem most compatible with a sea wall edge include the marina, boathouse and amphitheater. Another edge treatment alternative is created with a combination of erosion control products and careful vegetation selection. A third edge treatment will be required for the beach area. Each of these potential edge treatments has one thing in common – maintenance requirements. The edges of the lake must be carefully managed in order to ensure an attractive and healthy edge.

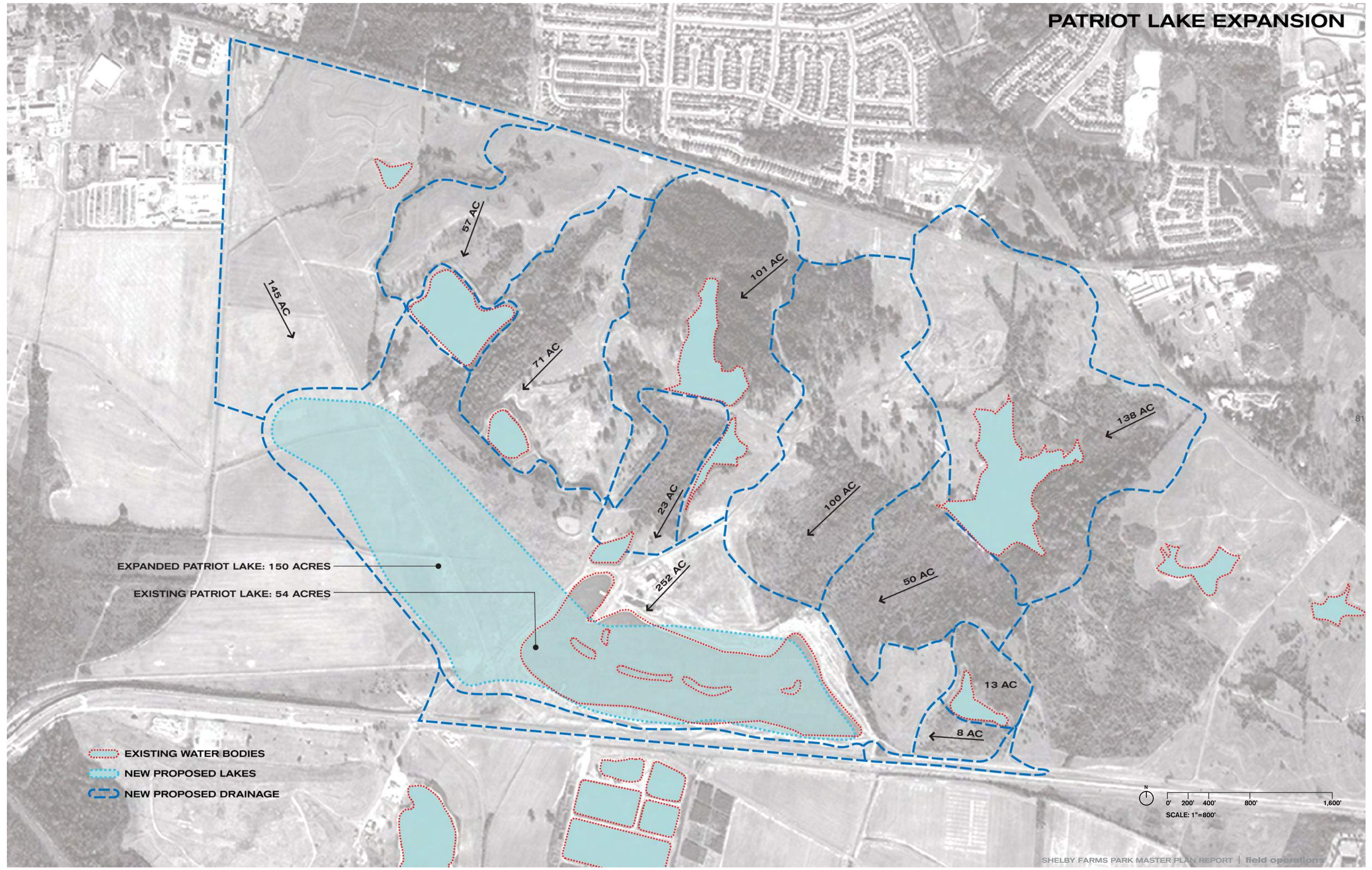
CONSTRUCTABILITY

Constructing a lake of this magnitude requires moving large quantities of dirt. The lake was modeled with a top of bank elevation of 265.00 feet and a bottom elevation of 248.00 feet throughout the entire expanded Patriot Lake. In reality, the bottom of the lake will be varied to create a diverse habitat but the 14 foot depth provides an average depth for analysis. One recommendation to avoid costly hauling fees is to use this excess excavation to fill the roughly 80 acres west of the expanded lake but east of Shelby Farms Parkway. Another suggestion is to coordinate with the construction of Shelby Farms Parkway for the earthwork needs at the intersection and roadway.

It is important to remember that any final design can and will vary from the conceptual ideas that are presented here and in the full feasibility report. However, the basic principles of the design are expected to remain the same.



# PATRIOT LAKE EXPANSION





4.5

ECOLOGY | HABITAT + NATURAL AREA OVERVIEW

Situated within the lower Mississippi River basin and Wolf River watershed, Shelby Farms Park plays an important regional ecological function by enhancing water quality of and connectivity to the Mississippi River. The floodplains and natural areas of Shelby Farms Park provide a crucial interface between aquatic, cropland and terrestrial habitats, and is thus critical to ecosystem health and the diversity of species in the greater Memphis region. Numerous opportunities exist for enhancing the ecological health and sustainability of natural resources at Shelby Farms Park. A first goal in planning should involve establishing ecological objectives and priorities for development of the Park. The most apparent opportunities include the following:

Restoration Potentials:

1. Improve bottomland and upland forests through the removal of invasive species, especially Chinese privet;
2. Link habitat patches through appropriate corridors;
3. Restore native grasslands;
4. Improve stream drainage;
5. Establish additional and improved wetland habitat;
6. Enhance and expand aquatic and terrestrial species;
7. Expand ecological territories; and
8. Improve ponds and lakes.

Education and Outreach:

1. Foster ecological literacy through interactive educational programs focused on understanding how we sustain our natural resources;
2. Develop an outreach group with the Shelby Farms Conservancy to communicate with stakeholders as to the development and implementation of management activities with a goal of providing information, and fostering interaction with stakeholders;
3. Provide opportunities for nature appreciation and interpretation;
4. Foster local and national partnerships that could enhance the wildlife experience at the Park, expand habitat diversity, draw visitors, and play an important conservation role; and
5. Provide agricultural research education programs to bring awareness to youth and adults concerning the diverse ecological systems involved in and around a farm.

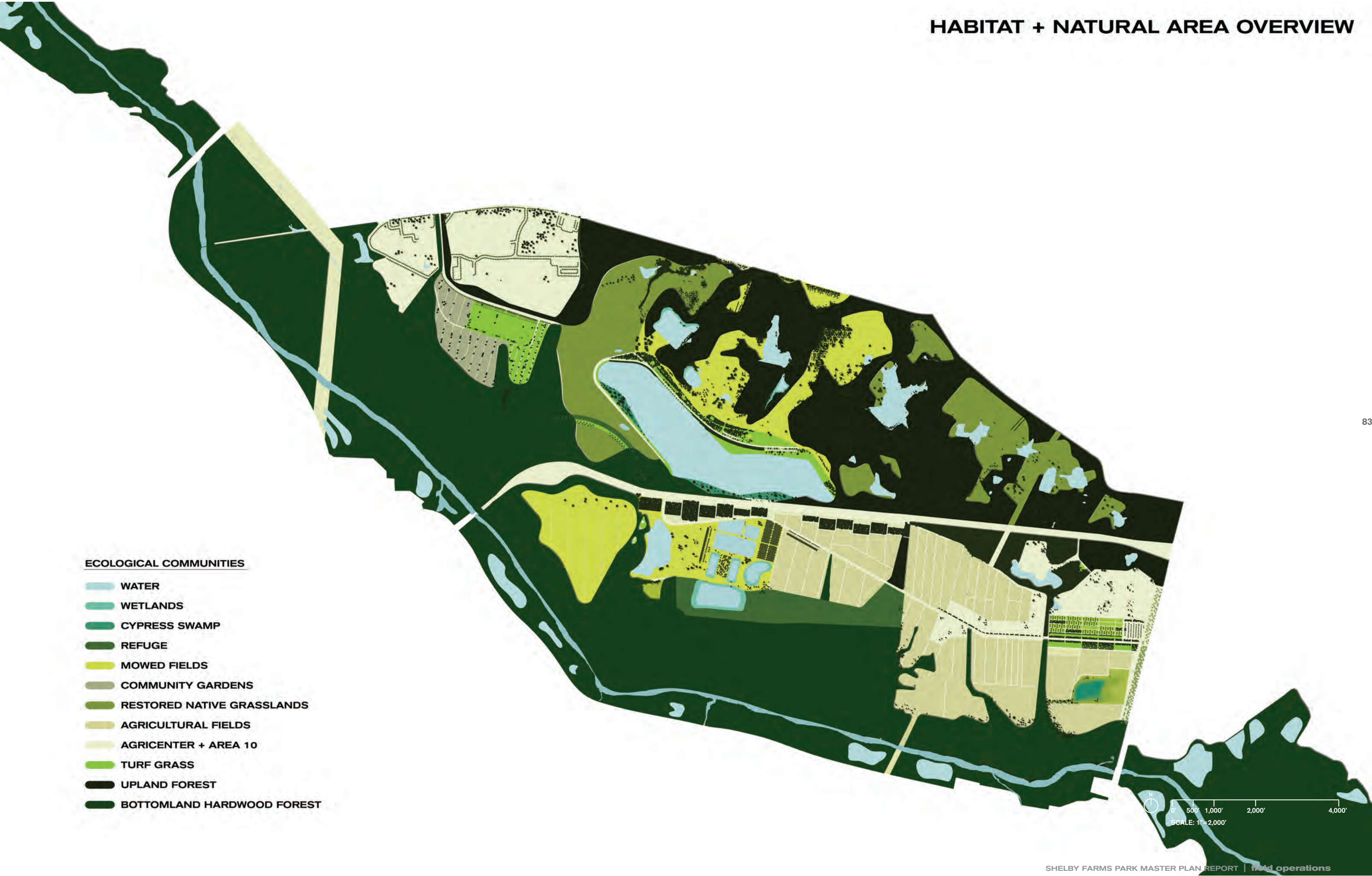
Research:

1. Research potential for Shelby Farms Park to qualify as one of 26 Long Term Ecological Research (LTER) program sites set up by the National Science Foundation to support long-term ecosystem and research (of which only two sites in Baltimore and Phoenix are urban);
2. Develop an Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan for integrative and management-adaptive conservation and management programs;
3. Incorporate novel research approaches for interfacing people and wildlife and for reducing wildlife damage to habitats at urban parks;
4. Catalogue the status and distribution of existing biodiversity to provide a measure for success in the future and an assessment for management consideration; and
5. Foster new and innovative ideas in crop and bio-energy research that can aid in renewable solutions to food, fuel and environmental concerns.



shallow water ponds







4.5

ECOLOGY | NEW CANOPY COVER

Shelby Farms Park is already home to remarkable stands of bottomland and upland forest. Overall the upland forest habitat represents a mosaic of successional stages that supports a high degree of plant and animal diversity. While a wide range of age structure and species diversity are present within the existing forest stands, several exotic species (e.g. Chinese privet, Japanese honeysuckle, Kudzu, Puerania lobata, and nettle) run rampant through them. The Master Plan aims to preserve existing canopy species to the greatest extent possible and expand the ecological assets of the Park through the addition of one-million new trees.

Given the significant ecological role that a park of this size could play regionally and the current ecological fragmentation, there are many parts of the Park that can be reclaimed by forest. The majority of new canopy cover wraps the existing stands of Upland forest in the northern part of the Park and flanks major roadways (e.g., Walnut Grove Road, Mullins Station Road and the proposed Shelby Farms Parkway). New tree planting has been designed to maximize connectivity between existing habitats and screen the interior of the Park from the aural and visual impact of major transportation corridors.

In addition to new forested areas, infill of young canopy species should be coordinated with mature tree stands to ensure their health and perpetuity. The strategic infill of young canopy species within relatively mature stands will ensure that the presence of canopy persists for the life of the Park. The location, extent and severity of remediation areas will determine the potential for preserving, restoring or regenerating canopy species.



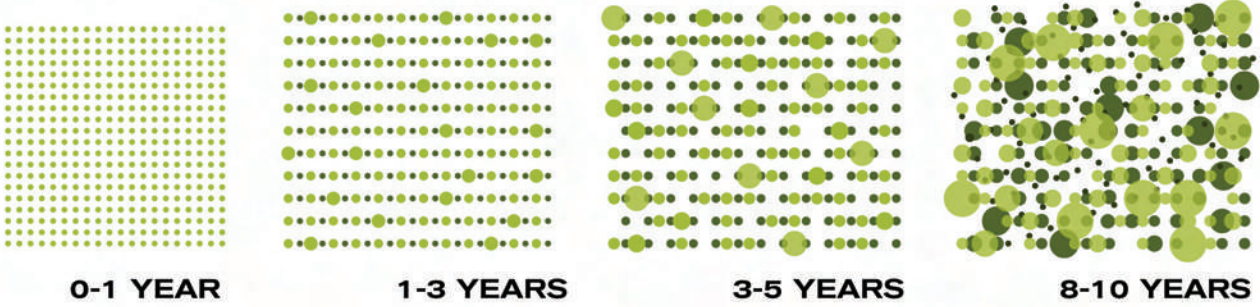
community tree planting



new forest cover



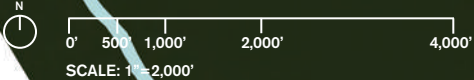
CANOPY COVER



A mix of densely planted native tree saplings can be later thinned and transplanted elsewhere across the site to effectively “grow” a complex multi-aged woodland over time. Reforestation is most successful when a mixture of early-successional and later-successional tree species is planted.

49% OPEN LANDSCAPE  
51% WOODLAND COVER

- HORIZON VIEWS
- INTERIOR PARK VISTAS
- PROPOSED CANOPY
- EXISTING CANOPY





4.5

ECOLOGY | CONNECTIVITY OPPORTUNITIES

Shelby Farms Park presents an opportunity to refine and expand the ecological resources of this largely man-made landscape. The location of the Park just outside of downtown Memphis, within the heart of Shelby County and the Mississippi River watershed, provides an ideal opportunity to simultaneously promote the enhancement of a public recreational landscape while maintaining and improving the ecological quality and regional ecological role of the Park. Regionally, opportunities exist to link the Park to downtown Memphis and to the Shelby County suburbs through the future greenline and the existing Wolf River corridor.

Given the fragmented nature, disjunct spatial associations of habitats and anthropogenic practices associated with the Park, there is great opportunity for improving the ecological quality and connectivity of the Park's terrestrial and wildlife habitats. Currently, habitat patches within the Park are isolated from each other and from the Lucius Burch Natural Area by the heavily trafficked Walnut Grove Road. With the installation of 1,000,000 new trees and a green bridge crossing Walnut Grove Road, new corridors will allow movement of animals and people through the Park to enhance biodiversity and serve the needs of visitors in a friendly and beneficial manner.

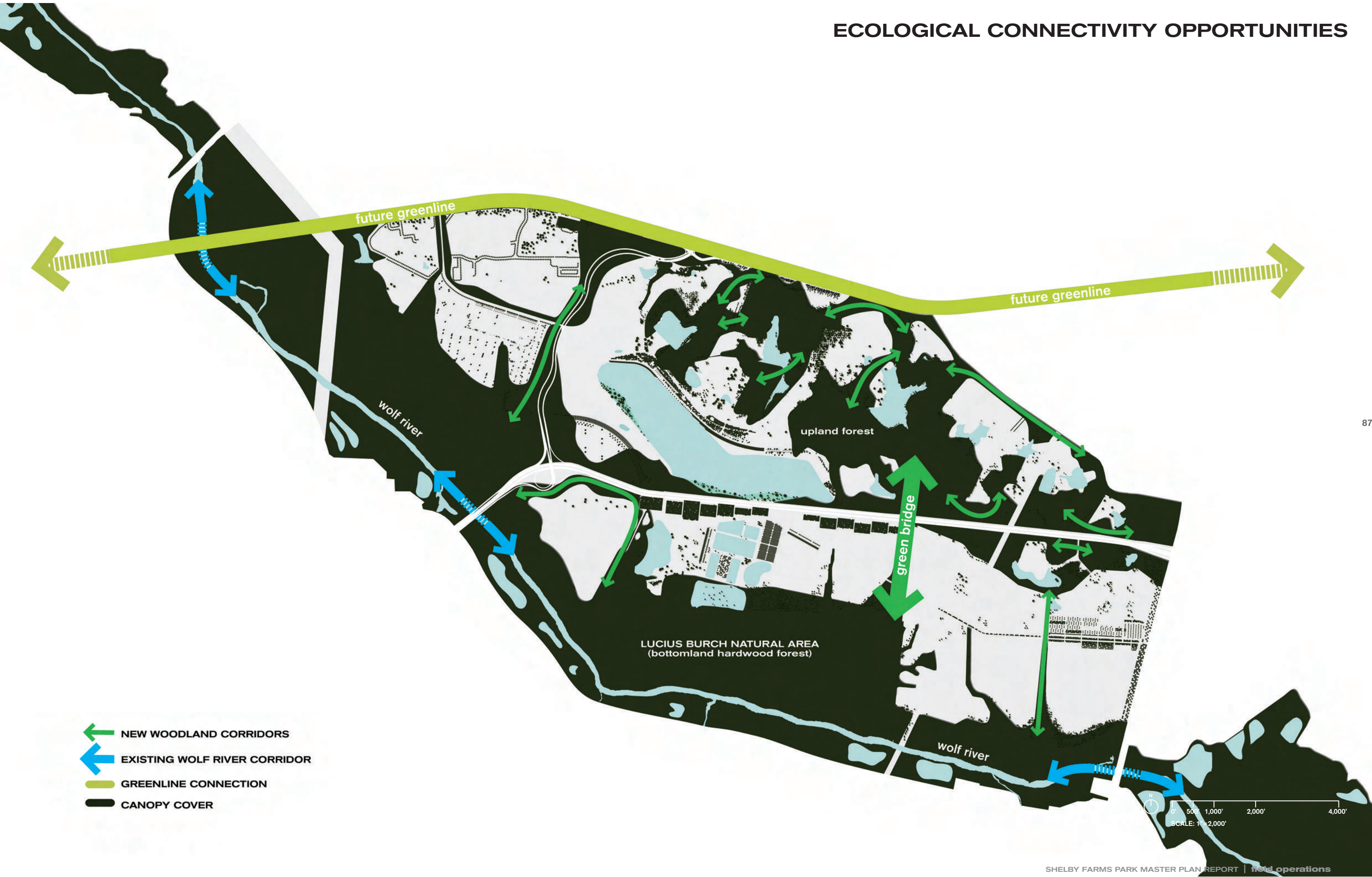
To the greatest extent possible, the Master Plan will utilize environmental site management and strategic park implementation practices to promote contiguous habitat conditions to ensure a high-value wildlife network throughout the Park. The expansion of ecological territories includes:

1. Cluster human activities;
2. Minimize barriers to animal movements (e.g., powerlines and roads);
3. Soften hard edges;
4. Maintain connectivity through existing corridors;
5. Construct bridges or underpasses that allow movement of animals and people across well traveled corridors, such as Walnut Grove Road;
6. Minimize fragmentation and maximize area of habitat patches;
7. Develop new habitats or historic habitats as appropriate (e.g., shallow water ponds for shore birds and amphibians);
8. Re-establish predator-prey dynamics;
9. Restore native species (plant and animal);
10. Establish monitoring programs at a variety of spatial and temporal scales for assessing success in conservation programs;
11. Establish greater linkage between SFP and other green spaces in the region through the Wolf River corridor and the abandoned CSX rail line; and
12. Incorporate the Wolf River into mainstream park activities.



green bridge







4.5

ECOLOGY | ENHANCEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Park's major habitat types (e.g., bottomland forests, upland forests, grasslands, and wetlands) could all be enhanced in relation to exotic species eradication; overall species richness; and ecological integrity. Several areas of the Park will have limited to no access by the general public in order to provide sanctuaries for wildlife. Enhancement opportunities for the Park include:

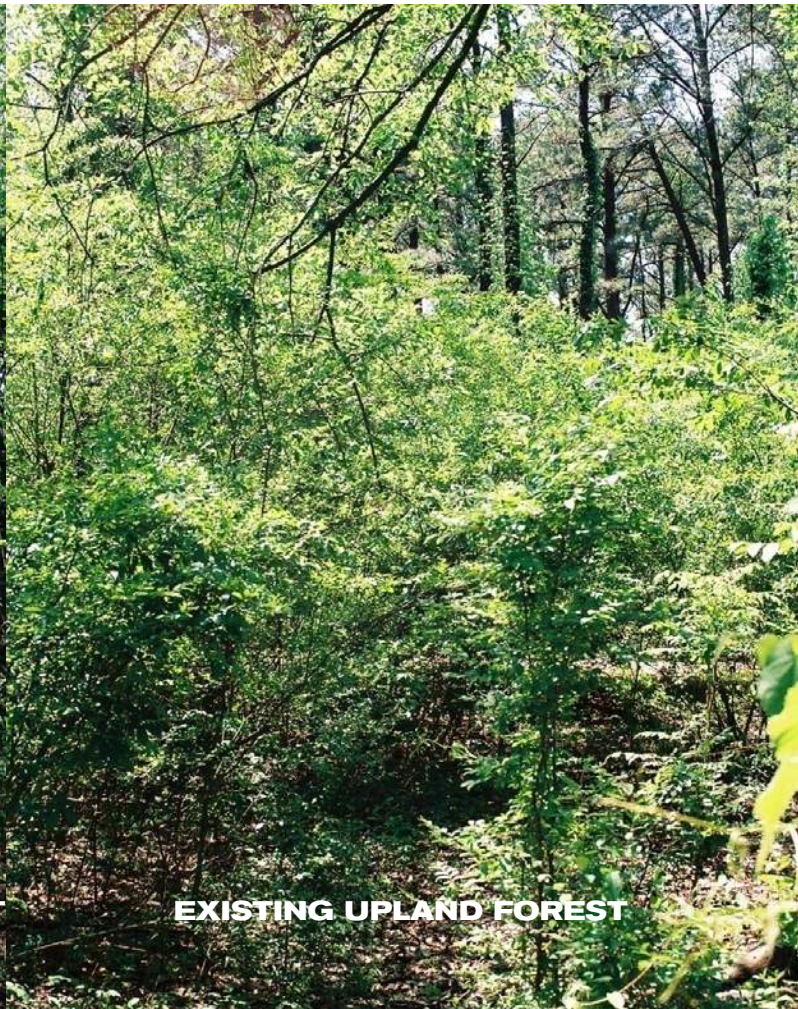
1.
- Historically native grasslands and wildflowers typical of Western Tennessee are sparse in the Park and significant opportunities for restoration of native grasslands exist on the site;
2.
- Most habitat edges throughout the Park could be made more biodiversity friendly through the conversion of hard to soft edges;
3.
- Stream drainage and sloughs in most parts of the Park could be improved to slow the flow of water and bank erosion, and to encourage ground water recharge;
4.
- Areas associated with landfill on the south end of the park will need restoration;
5.
- Establishment of additional and improved wetland habitat, including shallow water ponds for shore birds and amphibians;
6.
- Enhancement of aquatic and terrestrial species; and
7.
- Improvement of ponds and lakes.







**EXISTING BOTTOMLAND HARDWOOD FOREST**



**EXISTING UPLAND FOREST**



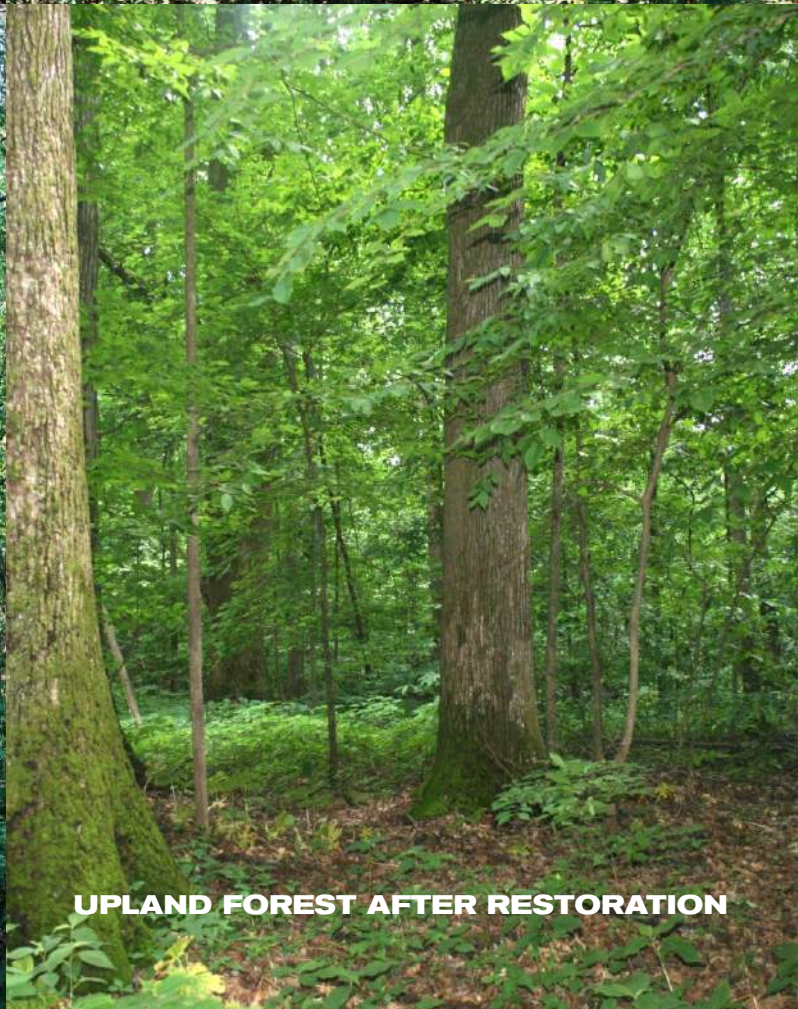
**EXISTING WETLANDS**



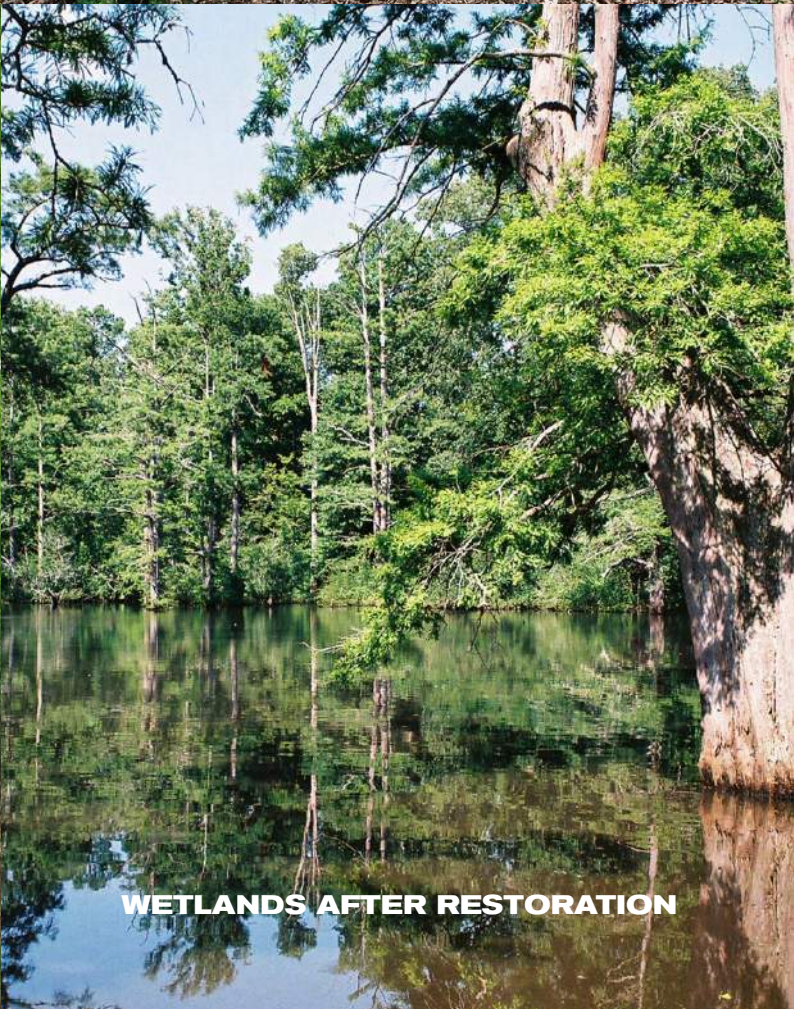
**EXISTING HARD EDGE CONDITION**



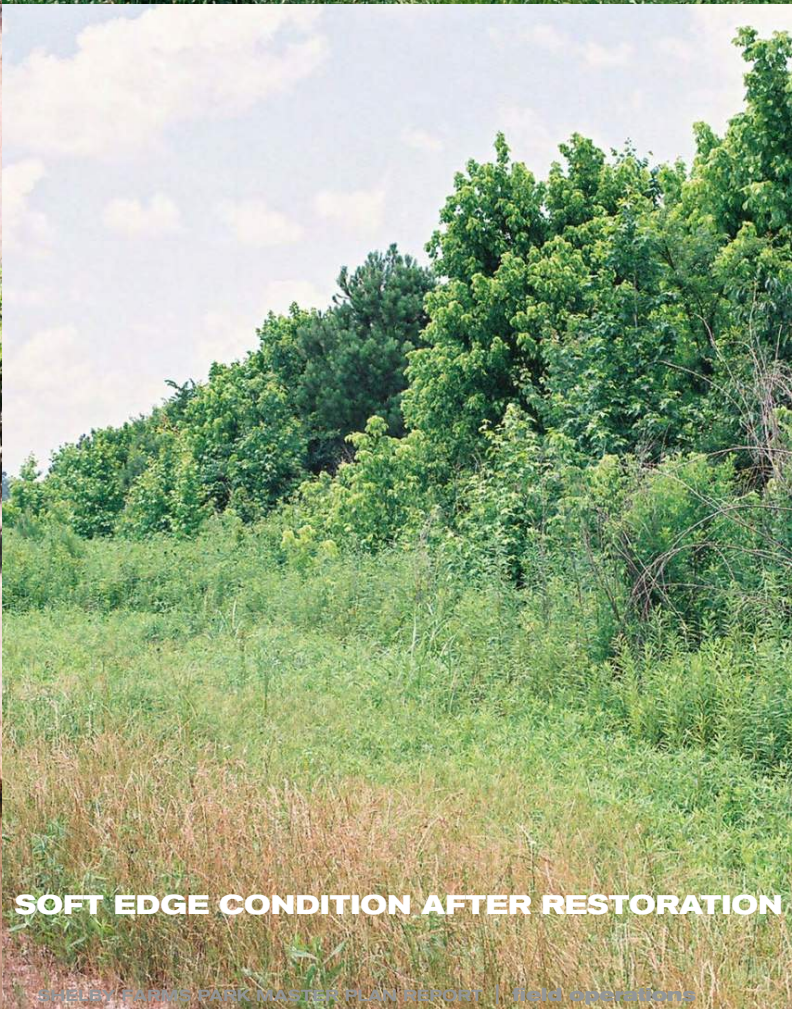
**BOTTOMLAND HARDWOOD FOREST  
AFTER RESTORATION**



**UPLAND FOREST AFTER RESTORATION**



**WETLANDS AFTER RESTORATION**



**SOFT EDGE CONDITION AFTER RESTORATION**



# 4.6 PROGRAM | ZONES + LAND-USE

At Shelby Farms Park, a wide range of active uses are set within a generous and extraordinary landscape. The Park has tremendous potential to expand and bolster its range of amenities and diverse landscapes to become a rich reserve for nature and wildlife, cultural and social life, environmental education and outdoor activities. The sheer size of the site allows seemingly incompatible programs (wild, natural areas and major public gatherings) to coexist.

Shelby Farms Park has an extensive and diverse range of user groups that have already capitalized on the many recreational uses the Park has to offer: hiking and exploring the upland hills and hollows, picnicking in Plough Park, kayaking on Patriot Lake, attending events at the Agricenter and fishing for catfish in Catch 'Em Lakes. As the twelve distinct landscapes rooms within the Park become further defined, each with its own discrete set of physical and programmatic characteristics informed by existing land uses, the range of amenities and possibilities for informal, passive and active uses will increase tremendously.

Shelby Farms Park will be a destination park. The future park will attract users - including new active recreation participants - from across the city and beyond. In addition, Shelby Farms Park will also have to fulfill the role of a neighbourhood park for residential communities that will continue to grow and densify along its edges. Understanding that Shelby Farms Park will require designated active recreational facilities, the Master Plan looks to concentrate new facilities in proximity to parking and primary vehicular intersections. The program strategy for the Park has several major goals:

1. Enhance a variety of multi-purpose, informal park features and landscapes that exploit the great recreational potentials and unique settings of the park site;
2. Ensure that the scale, configuration and topography of park features enrich the experiences of the varied, rugged character of the Park;
3. Ensure a means for protecting sensitive natural areas, regeneration zones and habitats through a clear, legible system of signage and wayfinding.
4. Concentrate active programs and structures at major intersections in the Park, responding to both central connectivity and the preservation of large open landscape areas;
5. Create diversely-scaled, multi-purpose recreational facilities for different users and age groups;
6. Identify opportunities for programs that will help generate revenue and sustain the Park; and
7. Define large-scale public “rooms” to support a coherent and appropriate “sense-of-place” structure for the many varied user groups within the Park.



kite flying



paddle boating



disc golfing







## 4.6 PROGRAM | SMALL STRUCTURES + FACILITIES

The landscapes at Shelby Farms Park will provide settings for new cultural landmarks in Memphis: iconic performance venues, a wildlife refuge, catfish ponds, public art and exhibition spaces, community gardens and clubs, outdoor classrooms, picnic areas, playgrounds, restaurants, meeting places and an active lakefront esplanade. These new, eventful landscapes should correspond with the natural character of the Park. New and continued events at Shelby Farms Park should support the Park's rustic, raw and wild character in emphatic ways - potentially giving rise to drastically different means of using public park spaces.

Shelby Farms Park will offer a broad range of facilities to accommodate both daily and special event uses. New facilities will be concentrated into four high-intensity areas: the Patriot Lake Activity Bar; the Catch 'Em Lakes mollusk farm and catfish ponds; the Community Center and Sports Fields; and the Agricenter. For the most part, these zones currently operate as active program areas within the Park and already offer service facilities and parking areas to support various activities. The Visitor Center is equipped with offices, restrooms, classrooms and a large outdoor terrace. In order to support a heightened concentration of new activities in these areas, facilities such as washrooms, change rooms, picnic shelters and rest facilities will be required.

The locations and form of these facilities have yet to be determined but when implemented would be complementary to the adjacent areas and other new facilities within Shelby Farms Park. New facilities proposed for each of the high-intensity areas are illustrated in the diagram to the right.



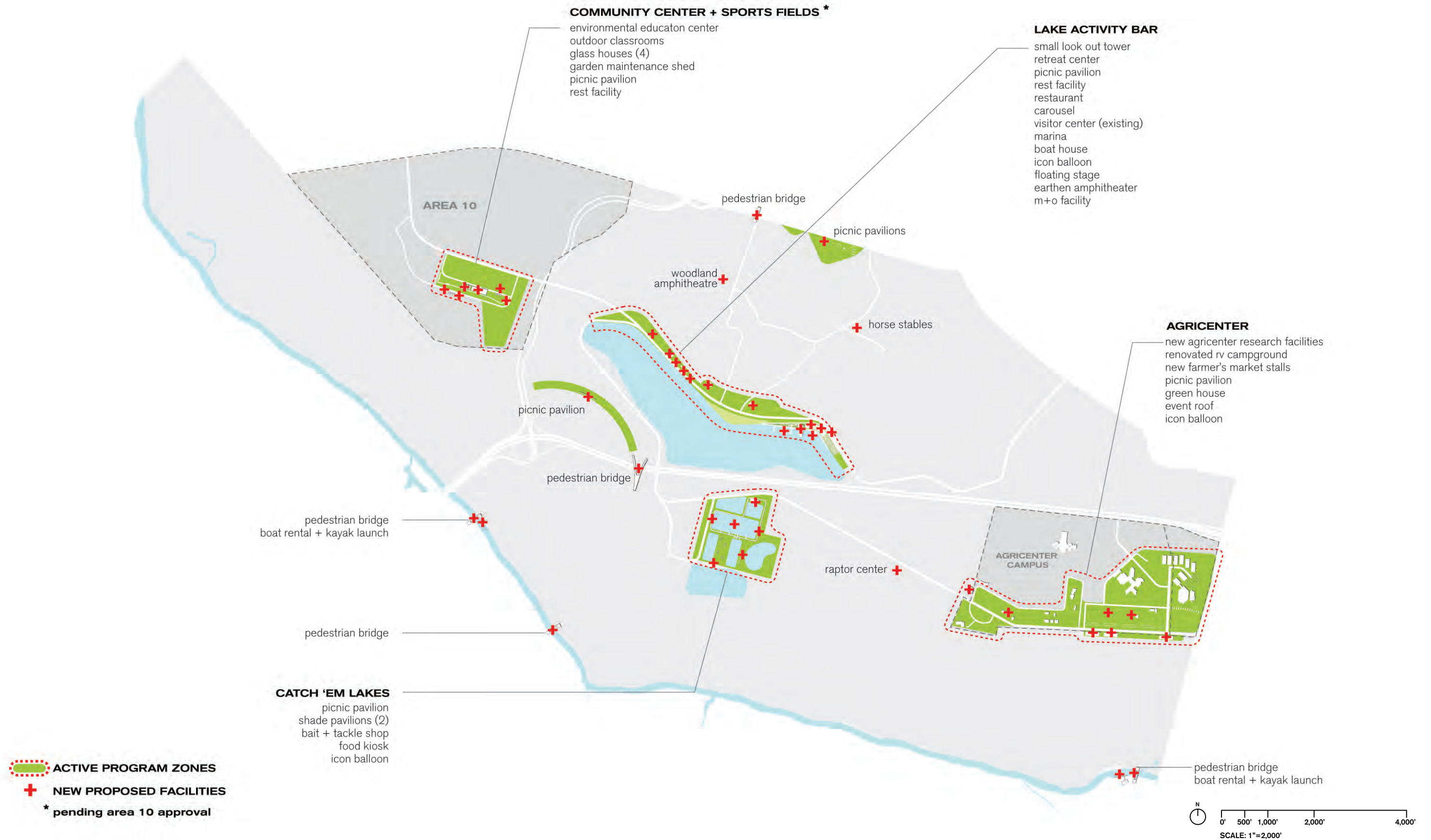
rest facility



woodland viewing tower



## SMALL STRUCTURES + FACILITIES





4.6 PROGRAM | ACTIVITIES + DESTINATIONS

Shelby Farms Park is already a defining amenity for Shelby County and will continue to grow into a world class amenity for the Memphis Region. The Master Plan aims to expand the development of an already lively mix of programs by enhancing extraordinary settings to accommodate an even broader range of activities at Shelby Farms Park.

The program strategy for the Master Plan aims to further define a distinctive programmatic identity for the Park that is contemporary, active and green. New Park programming will be organized and staged around existing natural resources, site features, and an existing recreational framework of trails, activities, productive landscapes and facilities.

The many recommendations for additional recreation, educational amenities and cultural enrichment at Shelby Farms Park include:

- 1. Running, walking, cycling, rollerblading and seating along the new 5-mile multi-use circuit;
- 2. Hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding and running along the enhanced extensive network of multi-use trails;
- 3. Wading and swimming at the new Patriot Lake beach;
- 4. Kayaking, paddle boating, sailing, foiling, windsurfing, canoeing, kite boarding and rowing in the newly expanded Patriot Lake;
- 5. Exploring the unique habitat of the upland and bottomland forests;
- 6. Viewing the downtown skyline from a new woodland viewing tower;
- 7. Hosting picnics, bonfires and fireworks;
- 8. Renting a canoe for the afternoon on the Wolf River;
- 9. Paddling through the new Cypress Swamps at Patriot Lake;
- 10. Playing competitive soccer, tennis, basketball, ultimate frisbee and beach volleyball;
- 11. Eating at a new restaurant along the Patriot Lake activity bar;
- 12. Eating freshly caught catfish and shellfish at a new Catch 'Em Lakes cafe;
- 13. Touring emergent wetlands, native grasslands and successional forests;
- 14. Take a guided birdwatching tour through the Refuge;
- 15. Bringing children to the distinctive playgrounds and eco-education 'classrooms' scattered throughout the Park;
- 16. Enjoying sailing lessons at the lake boat clubs;
- 17. Fishing at Catch 'Em Lakes and the Patriot Lake Piers;
- 18. Riding a carousel next to Patriot Lake;
- 19. Watching a concert on a floating stage;
- 20. Picnicking and watching the sunset from an earthen amphitheater;

- 21. Observing and learning about bison, llama, goats, elk, rhea and Friesian cows;
- 22. BMX racing and skateboarding at a new extreme sports facilities;
- 23. Learning about farming, sustainable agriculture, renewable energy and natural resources;
- 24. Taking horseback riding lessons;
- 25. Training your dog and participating in a training clinic;
- 26. Picking fresh strawberries, apples, peaches, pecans, nectarines and plums at the Orchards;
- 27. Wandering through the outdoor sculpture park and observing various temporary art installations on the Art Mound;
- 28. Going on a tractor-pulled hay ride;
- 29. Walking along an interpretive wetland walk; and
- 30. Listening to live music at the woodland amphitheater.

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kite boarding at plough park







4.6

PROGRAM | SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES

Shelby Farms Park will be a defining park of the 21st Century. The Park celebrates life; wilderness; diverse forms of recreation and play; ecological restoration; and innovative measures for designing world-class parklands in creative, sustainable ways. Indeed, Shelby Farms Park can be a model for design and sustainable management practices for future parks in the Memphis Region and around the world. Given that Shelby Farms Park is very large, an adaptive approach for long-term sustainability demands the capacity for resilience - the ability to recover from a long history of disturbance, to adapt to a new state of health and to accommodate future change.

As a model park for the City of Memphis, Shelby Farms park should push innovative and sustainable practices for the following park operations:

Energy Strategies

Given its large scale and fairly remote natural areas, future planning and design at Shelby Farms Park should incorporate measures that reduce the overall energy consumption throughout the Park. Whether through energy saving - or producing (biomass, wind or solar) - fixtures and elements, Shelby Farms Park can set a new standard for energy savings in parks. Together with the Agricenter's mission of agricultural research and environmental conservation, Shelby Farms Park should continue to grow and expand crops such as corn, sweet sorghum and soybeans for bio-fuel production, research and educational purposes.

Stormwater Management

Water is a primary resource and feature in the Park that should be engaged to support an exceptional range of sustainable, natural areas and vegetal landscapes. Stormwater management design should improve water quality through nutrient uptake and reduced sediment discharge into the upland lakes and Patriot Lake. Vegetated filters, buffer strips, and other measures should be used to clean storm water prior to release. Stormwater design must account for the broad range of drainage areas in the park plan, including roadways and parking lots, aquatic environments and enhanced wetland, meadows and woodland areas, each which affects flow differently and requires unique methods of control.

Waste Management / Recycling

Given its size, the diversity of its landscape and the proposed intensity of programming, Shelby Farms Park will undoubtedly generate large amounts of waste through the normal maintenance of the Park and as a by-product of the park's numerous users and events. It will be critical to consider the potential for on-site composting of natural waste and the creation of a general maintenance facility that can process, store and effectively distribute the composted material. Equally critical is a smart approach to recycling materials such a paper, plastic, aluminum and glass that sets a precedent for both parks in general, and the Memphis Region specifically.







4.7

OPERATIONS + MAINTENANCE | MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

With public transportation, enhanced recreational amenities, and new programs, Shelby Farms Park is anticipated to attract large numbers of visitors and be subject to high levels of use throughout an extended seasonal period. Notwithstanding the fact that the Master Plan promotes the use of high quality, durable materials in the construction of the Park, the intensity of use will act as a stressor on the park landscape that will need to be addressed through the implementation of an effective and comprehensive maintenance program. The maintenance program will need to be developed to respond to the diversity of landscape types that comprise Shelby Farms Park as well as the myriad of programs that enliven the Park. Although much of the Park will be comprised of wild, natural landscapes, it should not be perceived that these areas will not require maintenance and management. In actuality these landscapes may require a more intensive degree of management in the early stages of succession than traditional pastoral landscapes to facilitate the establishment of new plantings and catalyze succession. The maintenance program will need to be developed in consideration of both specific short-term and routine maintenance requirements and long-term management needs.

MAINTENANCE FACILITY

Given its size, the diversity of its landscape and intensity of programming, Shelby Farms Park will require a dedicated central maintenance facility to house the equipment and materials necessary to maintain the park landscape and to serve as a base of operations for park maintenance personnel. Although the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy staff will ultimately determine precise facility needs, specifications and location, the following preliminary recommendations have been provided for consideration in the future planning process.

In consideration of the configuration and size of Shelby Farms Park, the maintenance facility is situated centrally, with easy accessibility to the core active zones of the Park. The facility is located so that it is accessible by public transit and proximate to cycling routes with the objective of providing staff with alternative transportation options. The facility itself should be designed with a view to integrating the building and compound discretely into the landscape. The architecture of the building should be integrated with and complementary to the image and character of other buildings and structures within the Park. The facility should be designed with consideration given to its relationship with adjacent natural heritage features and habitats and their functions. The facility should be designed to accommodate the Park’s maintenance and administrative staff, vehicles, equipment and supplies within a secure compound that is located away from primary activity areas and adjacent residential communities.

MANAGEMENT INTENSITY

Shelby Farms Park is comprised of a mosaic of landscape types knitted together to accommodate a broad spectrum of recreational, social, practical and ecological objectives.

Each of these landscape types is subject to different stresses and is required to support varying programmatic objectives at different times throughout the year. In order to ensure that each landscape type functions as intended over the long term, differing management regimes will be further defined in order to be applied to each new landscape type.

Management regimes can vary from the intensive and frequent to limited and periodic, contingent on anticipated intensity of use, seasonal demand and desired ecological function and evolutionary outcome within the overall park landscape. The distinct landscape types that comprise Shelby Farms Park include:

- Active Surfaces
- Managed Woodland
- Passive Parkland
- Managed Meadow
- Managed Agriculture
- Landfill

The location of each management area within the overall context of Shelby Farms Park is illustrated in the plan to the right.



park maintenance



PARK MAINTENANCE AREAS









# 5.0 PARK LANDSCAPE AREAS



5.1

12 LANDSCAPE ROOMS | OVERVIEW

Shelby Farms Park will be one of the defining recreational amenities of Memphis and the region. The Park is big and offers a diverse range of landscapes - from vast pastoral farmland to intimate playgrounds to extensive wild woodlands. Varied zones of distinct character within the 4,500-acre site offer dramatically different landscape experiences and opportunities for Park programming. The Master Plan attempts to enhance and exploit the unique beauty and distinctive recreational settings of the existing Park through the development of 12 landscape rooms.

The development of these landscape rooms has several benefits for Shelby Farms Park including: definition of distinct landscapes with discrete physical and programmatic characteristics; a coherent “sense-of-place” structure for the many varied user groups; and a potential fund-raising mechanism for the Park where user and donor groups can be specifically aligned with certain areas and features of the Park. The 12 landscape rooms are defined by existing site qualities that draw specific user groups, existing and historic land uses, and boundaries identified in the Conservation Easement.

Consultation with existing Park users, boaters, and activists has been instrumental in defining the full range of characteristics, qualities and features that make the existing places so memorable. Continued consultation with the public and Stakeholders through subsequent design phases will be critical to the Park’s success.

The proposed definition of 12 landscape rooms, concentrated program zones, a strong identity, clear access and areas of refuge are strategic; they represent a solid and practical means of creating a connected parkland without being overly prescriptive or transformative. The effect will be a vast, fully accessible landscape that is defined by a richly varied collection of places for play (5 of the 12 rooms have playgrounds), big activities, exploration, learning, wildlife and refuge.



# 12 LANDSCAPE ROOMS OVERVIEW

TO MEMPHIS

TO CORDOVA

AREA 10

WOLF RIVER CORRIDOR SOUTH

AGRICENTER

1 PATRIOT LAKE

2 PLOUGH PARK

3 THE RANGE + ARBORETUM

4 THE PUBLIC GARDENS

5 COMMUNITY EDUCATION + SPORTS FIELDS

6 THE OUTBACK

7 THE ART MOUND + PARK CIRCLE

8 CATCH 'EM LAKES

9 THE REFUGE

10 THE ORCHARDS + BERRY FIELDS

11 CROP + RESEARCH FIELDS

12 THE AGRICENTER

----- AREA 10 + AGRICENTER EASEMENTS

— 12 LANDSCAPE BOUNDARIES

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SHELBY FARMS PARK MASTER PLAN REPORT | field operations



5.2

12 LANDSCAPE ROOMS | PATRIOT LAKE

233 ACRES

The iconic centerpiece of the entire Shelby Farms Park is an expanded Patriot Lake - nearly three times the size of the existing Patriot Lake. At 150 acres in area - more than one mile in length and three miles in perimeter - the Lake offers a major regional attraction for various water sports, including a 1.25 kilometer rowing course and facilities for sailing, windsurfing, kayaking, and paddle-boating. It is intended that the Lake only support non-motorized boating activities, and that different areas of the Lake be assigned to different kinds of boating and watersports.

The Lake Activity Bar will be the active and playful heart of the Park. A boathouse, a marina, a water playground, equipment rental facilities, a restaurant, a generous swimming beach, and spectator lawns line the northern edge of the Lake. As one of the concentrated program zones, this area creates opportunities for a diverse array of waterfront experiences and programs that cannot be found elsewhere in Memphis. The existing topography lends itself to a gently sloping, sculpted earthwork amphitheater nestled into the north-eastern elbow of the lake. Informal lawn terraces set into the existing slope will allow an audience to watch a performance against the backdrop of the lake and the setting sun. The expanded lake and adjacent activity bar will allow the Park to hold various large scale events (festivals, competitions and performances) that will generate revenue for enhancement and maintenance of the overall park.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

- Create a rich and eventful landscape that supports diverse forms of recreation and passive play;
- Showcase a diverse range of landscape settings along the Lake perimeter - for passive enjoyment and ecological health;
- Ensure that existing Lake and Lake-side uses are preserved and/or enhanced;
- Establish hydrologic linkages with other lakes and sloughs to increase the ecological and sustainable character of Patriot Lake; and
- Develop landscape treatments for screening Walnut Grove Road from the interior views of the Lake landscape.







- 1 SMALL VIEWING TOWER
- 2 PARKING LOT
- 3 RETREAT CENTER
- 4 RESTAURANT
- 5 PICNIC PAVILION
- 6 BOAT + EQUIPMENT RENTAL
- 7 REST FACILITY
- 8 ICON BALLOON
- 9 TREE ALLEE
- 10 SWIMMING BEACH
- 11 VISITOR CENTER (EXISTING)
- 12 BOTANICAL DISPLAY GARDENS
- 13 BOAT LAUNCH
- 14 MARINA
- 15 WATER PLAYGROUND
- 16 BOAT HOUSE
- 17 CAROUSEL
- 18 EARTHEN AMPHITHEATER
- 19 FLOATING STAGE
- 20 M+O FACILITIES (15,000 SF) AND 2-ACRE YARD
- 21 SAILBOAT COURSE
- 22 SWAMP CYPRESS GROVE
- 23 3-MILE BOARDWALK
- 24 FISHING PIERS
- 25 1250 METER / 1.25 KILOMETER ROWING COURSE
- 26 SWAMP CYPRESS GROVE
- 27 EXPANDED PATRIOT LAKE
- 28 MULTI-USE CIRCUIT
- 29 PATRIOT LAKE ROAD NORTH
- 30 CONTROLLED SWIMMING AREA
- 31 EXISTING PATRIOT LAKE FOOTPRINT (FOR REFERENCE)



5.2

12 LANDSCAPE ROOMS | PLOUGH PARK

308 ACRES

The most pastoral and intense area of the Park, Plough Park is a centerpiece of domestic visitor activity and scenic settings. Rolling hills and hollows create a landscape with extraordinary vistas, panoramic overlooks and various scaled spaces for Park use. Extensive paths and trails support strolling, jogging, cross country running, cycling, mountain biking, roller blading and dog walking, while providing access to lawn and lake areas for swimming, picnics, barbecue cookouts, disc golf, informal games and play.

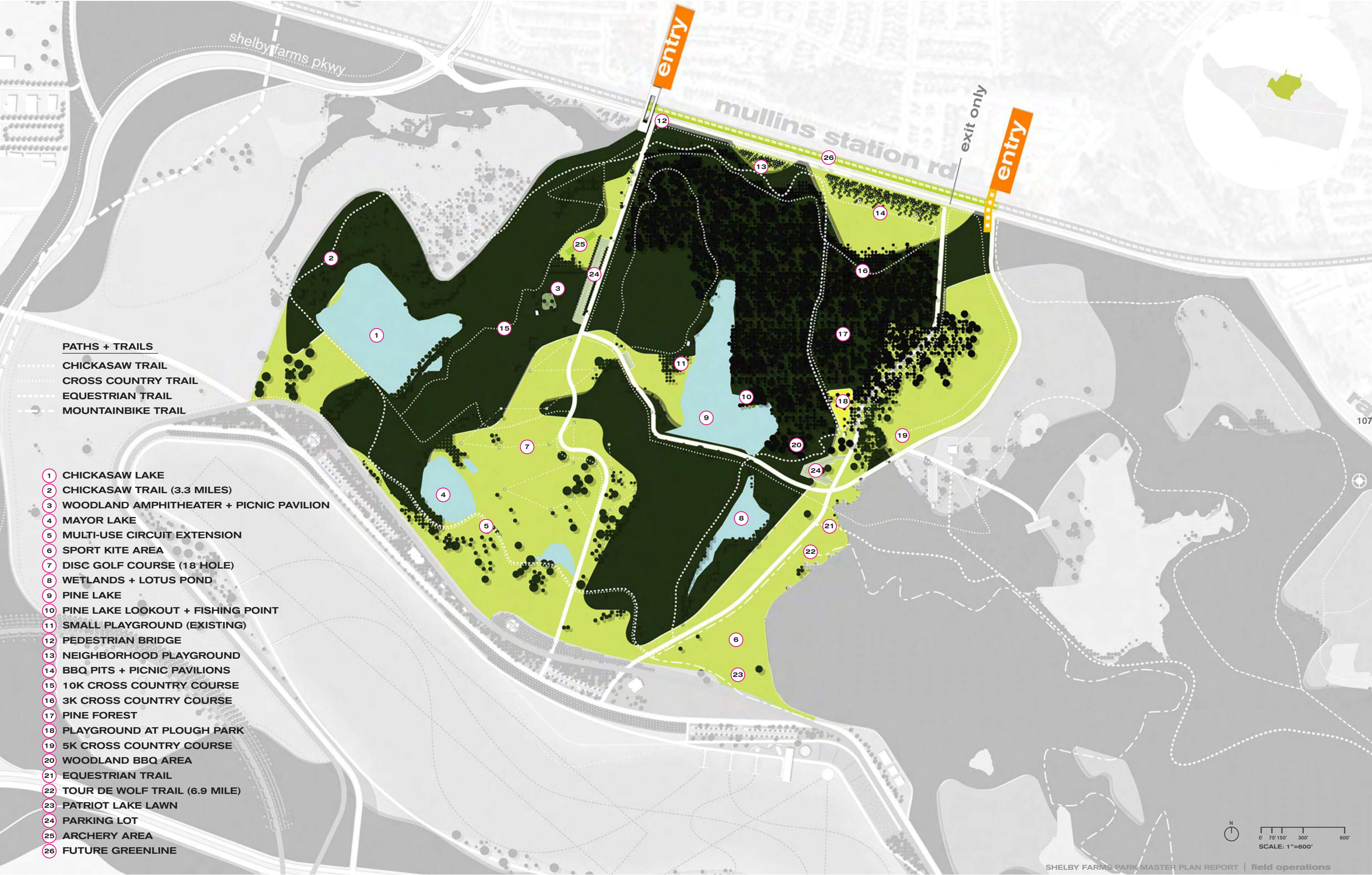
Two existing playgrounds can be found in Plough Park today, the larger of which (referred to as the playground at Plough Park in the plan shown opposite) has been voted one of the most popular playgrounds in Memphis. The Master Plan aims to expand and enhance this popular amenity as a regional draw for the Park. A new, smaller playground along Mullins Station Road will serve the neighborhoods north of the Park and the anticipated influx of visitors from the adjacent future greenline. There are also dedicated areas for archery, tai-chi, yoga, outdoor classrooms and children’s playgrounds.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

- “Refresh” and expand the existing network of pedestrian and multi-use trails to create a world-class destination;
- Preserve existing park uses and much-loved elements and settings;
- Restore and reconnect the network of upland lakes and sloughs to establish a more ecologically sustainable water system; and
- Restore and enhance existing forest landscapes through selective management of the vegetal understory, increased canopy plantings and greater connectivity between the various forest stands.



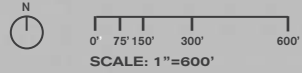




**PATHS + TRAILS**

- CHICKASAW TRAIL
- CROSS COUNTRY TRAIL
- EQUESTRIAN TRAIL
- MOUNTAINBIKE TRAIL

- 1 CHICKASAW LAKE
- 2 CHICKASAW TRAIL (3.3 MILES)
- 3 WOODLAND AMPHITHEATER + PICNIC PAVILION
- 4 MAYOR LAKE
- 5 MULTI-USE CIRCUIT EXTENSION
- 6 SPORT KITE AREA
- 7 DISC GOLF COURSE (18 HOLE)
- 8 WETLANDS + LOTUS POND
- 9 PINE LAKE
- 10 PINE LAKE LOOKOUT + FISHING POINT
- 11 SMALL PLAYGROUND (EXISTING)
- 12 PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
- 13 NEIGHBORHOOD PLAYGROUND
- 14 BBQ PITS + PICNIC PAVILIONS
- 15 10K CROSS COUNTRY COURSE
- 16 3K CROSS COUNTRY COURSE
- 17 PINE FOREST
- 18 PLAYGROUND AT PLOUGH PARK
- 19 5K CROSS COUNTRY COURSE
- 20 WOODLAND BBQ AREA
- 21 EQUESTRIAN TRAIL
- 22 TOUR DE WOLF TRAIL (6.9 MILE)
- 23 PATRIOT LAKE LAWN
- 24 PARKING LOT
- 25 ARCHERY AREA
- 26 FUTURE GREENLINE





5.2

12 LANDSCAPE ROOMS | THE RANGE + ARBORETUM

212 ACRES

An extensive open landscape of fields supports a bison herd in the lower area and a collection of stunning southeastern specimen trees in the upper area. The existing bison herd will be added to in number and the area of range expanded to create a regional attraction. Other livestock such as llama, goats, elk, rhea and Friesian cows will also have dedicated pastures as part of a larger animal husbandry exhibit.

The arboretum area will feature distinctive and unusual tree specimens, both native and cultivar, as well as some of the finest examples of flowering trees, all set individually within expansive meadows. This large area can also support kite-flying, strolling and jogging.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

- Cultivate the open vistas, distinctive character and public attraction of the Livestock fields;
- Enrich the educational aspects of the pastures through an increase in the range of livestock;
- Ensure that the pastures are developed and managed in a manner that contributes to the sustainability objectives of the Park; and
- Increase the aesthetic qualities of the fields with the introduction and curation of a unique range of tree specimens.







- 1 BISON RANGE
- 2 BISON WATER HOLE
- 3 LIVESTOCK FENCE
- 4 SPECIMEN TREES
- 5 KITE-FLYING
- 6 LIVESTOCK RANGE
- 7 NATIVE MEADOWS
- 8 CHICKASAW TRAIL
- 9 ARBORETUM
- 10 PEDESTRIAN TRAIL
- 11 SHELBY FARMS PKWY / KIRBY-WHITTEN PKWY



5.2 12 LANDSCAPE ROOMS | THE PUBLIC GARDENS

52 ACRES

The Public Gardens improve, expand and enrich the existing senior gardens area. Pathways, hedgerows, small storage sheds, picnic pavilions and restrooms enrich the existing gardens to support more year-round activity by a wider range of gardeners. There will also be areas devoted to exhibition, display and flower markets for broader public enjoyment and horticultural education. The public gardens fall within the northwest quadrant of the Park referred to as ‘Area 10’ and all proposals within this zone will require Shelby County approval.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

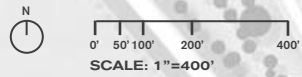
- Preserve and expand the interactive, community garden landscape;
- Increase the visibility of the gardens through distinctive signage and community outreach;
- Establish linkages with youth programs and schools in the greater Memphis area to further cultivate a rich and broad educational aspect to the gardens; and
- Encourage diverse and sustainable agricultural practices as a means to showcase the innovations involved in organic farming.







- 1 INFORMAL FIELDS
- 2 PUBLIC GARDEN PLOTS
- 3 VEHICULAR ACCESS ROAD
- 4 GARDEN MAINTENANCE SHED
- 5 PICNIC PAVILION
- 6 REST FACILITY
- 7 SPECIMEN TREES
- 8 PARKING LOT





5.2

12 LANDSCAPE ROOMS | COMMUNITY CENTER + SPORTS FIELDS

45 ACRES

A new community center and sports fields located in the northwest quadrant of the Park will help accommodate the increasing number of children and families settling in the area. Given its size, Shelby Farms Park is an ideal location for large recreational facilities and can offer a venue for underrepresented activities (such as ultimate frisbee, beach volleyball, climbing, BMX and skate boarding) in the state and Mid-South region. Intended to comprise the bulk of structured recreational programs, this room will include: a running track, a climbing wall, various sports fields and courts, a skatepark facility and a world class BMX circuit (relocated from its current home adjacent to the landfill). This concentration of diverse programs will promote cross hybridization of activities in a safe environment, while simultaneously offering entertainment to all Park users.

These recreational amenities will be anchored by a community center with a special focus on issues related to health, environment, recreation and education in order to capitalize upon the resources of the larger Park. Such public amenities require easy access and benefit from being part of a larger social district of diverse activities in order to share basic infrastructures and resources for a more successful, efficient and lively environment.

Located within 'Area 10', this room is adjacent to myriad governmental facilities and is highly accessible to the whole community. All proposals within this zone will require 'Area 10' approval.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

- Promote a model, innovative and destination facility for environmental, sustainable agricultural and earth sciences education;
- Promote cross hybridization of activities in a safe environment where families of all ages can recreate and play;
- Cultivate relationships with local school districts, universities, the Agricenter and regional environmental programs to create greater depth to the activities, educational services and resources offered; and
- Create a broad range of recreation and playing fields that can be shared by the community center and the public alike, thereby linking the educational programs with facilities for health, fitness, well-being and public enjoyment.







- 1 SOCCER FIELD
- 2 TENNIS COURTS (4)
- 3 BASKETBALL COURTS (3)
- 4 PARKING LOT
- 5 SOCCER FIELD
- 6 SOCCER FIELD
- 7 CLIMBING WALL
- 8 OUTDOOR CLASSROOM
- 9 GLASS HOUSES (4)
- 10 ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER
- 11 PICNIC PAVILION
- 12 OUTDOOR CLASSROOM
- 13 SMALL CONCESSION STAND
- 14 CHILDREN'S GARDENS
- 15 BEACH VOLLEYBALL COURTS (5)
- 16 ICON BALLOON
- 17 BMX COURSE
- 18 SKATE PARK (10,000 SF)
- 19 ULTIMATE FRISBEE FIELDS (4)
- 20 EQUESTRIAN TRAIL
- 21 LAWN



5.2

12 LANDSCAPE ROOMS | THE OUTBACK

610 ACRES

An extensive, rolling landscape of large meadows, lakes and woodlands provides a setting for large-scale recreation activities such as horse back riding and equestrian sports, dog training, mountain bike trails, cross-country running, hiking and camping. Different areas of the Outback will be assigned to particular user-groups to avoid conflict, while paths and trails would allow for extensive sharing of this large landscape. The Outback will be managed over time to sustain its large, open scale and sense of pastoral “country.”

The existing network of horseback riding, mountain biking and cross country running trails will be improved and expanded. A viewing tower sited at the Park’s high point (just off Raleigh Lagrange Road) will rise up through the woodland canopy and offer stunning views toward downtown Memphis and the surrounding Shelby County.

- DESIGN OBJECTIVES
- Preserve existing Park uses and the much-loved, expansive settings;
  - “Refresh” and expand the existing network of equestrian and multi-use trails;
  - Restore and enhance existing meadow and forest landscapes through sustainable, ecological management practices;
  - Promote stronger wildlife habitat landscapes by creating greater connectivity between the various forest stands; and
  - Improve the existing hydrological system to guarantee the long term sustainability of the Park’s stormwater functionality, groundwater elevations and surface water quality.







**PATHS + TRAILS**

- CHICKASAW TRAIL
- CROSS COUNTRY TRAIL
- EQUESTRIAN TRAIL
- MOUNTAINBIKE TRAIL

- 1 HORSE RENTAL STABLES
- 2 HORSE PASTURE
- 3 BEAVER LAKE
- 4 FISHING PIER
- 5 PARKING LOT (EXISTING)
- 6 BOY SCOUT LAKE
- 7 10K CROSS COUNTRY COURSE EXTENSION
- 8 VIEWING TOWER
- 9 HORSE JUMPING CIRCUIT
- 10 RETRIEVER CLUB TRAINING
- 11 PATTERN LAKE ROAD
- 12 PATTERN LAKE
- 13 GAS LINE
- 14 RESTORED GRASSLANDS
- 15 OFF-LEASH DOG AREA
- 16 INDIAN LAKE
- 17 EQUESTRIAN TRAIL
- 18 WILLOW LAKE
- 19 PARKING LOT
- 20 TOUR DE WOLF TRAIL
- 21 MULTI-USE CIRCUIT



5.2

12 LANDSCAPE ROOMS | THE ART MOUND + PARK CIRCLE

282 ACRES

Pending a landfill assessment and feasibility study, the old landfill mound will be transformed into a new venue for large-scale outdoor sculpture and public art. The abstractness of the flat-top mound and level horizons lends itself to extraordinary interpretation by artists. We imagine a rotating series of installations by both regional and international artists, curated around themes such as “Memphis Outdoors,” “Sustainability” or “Climate Change.” Such programming would bring high visibility to the Park as an arts and culture destination.

The Park Circle is a pedestrian and multi-use loop path (stone dust) that circumnavigates the landfill mound, Shelby Farms Parkway (Kirby-Whitten Parkway) and Walnut Grove Road through a series of pedestrian bridges and at-grade underpasses. The Park Circle connects the Park to a pedestrian bridge across the Wolf River, which links to the Germantown Greenway and neighborhoods to the south and west of the Park. The circular path passes through the Wolf River Corridor forest, across the landfill mound and along side the Bison Range. A distinctive shade tree alley buffers the Park Circle path from the Bison Range and helps to enclose a small sculpture park and several sculptural play features just inside the circle.

Also pending a feasibility study, possibilities for methane collection will be considered.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

- Coordinate with Shelby County and on-going geo-technical studies to ensure that clear criteria is established with regard to Master Plan proposals and future public access;
- Promote an appropriate land-use for the landfill mound that supports the educational, scenic and cultural goals of the Park, while ensuring that the integrity and performance of the landfill surface is preserved and/or improved; and
- Explore alternative forms of suitable land-uses - whether art or energy-based - to ensure that there is broad public appeal to the experience of this feature. The image presented below is only an impression of one temporary art installation. A broad range of alternatives will be explored and coordinated with County and Conservancy review.









5.2

12 LANDSCAPE ROOMS | CATCH ‘EM LAKES

126 ACRES

The existing fish farm ponds will be enhanced to create a regional attraction centered around fishing, fish cultivation and mollusk farming. There will be a boardwalk, fishing piers, a bait and tackle shop, a mollusk farm, exhibits where one can learn about fish species and cultivation and a small restaurant for sampling local fish and shellfish delicacies. Wetland edges will ensure the health and vitality of the aquatic ecosystems, while also enhancing the scenic and educational value of the area.

Two of the three southern most ponds at Catch ‘Em Lakes are mostly dry and lend themselves to fantastic wetland garden plantings. The third pond (the center pond) is completely dry and will be replaced with a pine forest bosque and BBQ pits for picnics and gatherings. Three large shade structures and new canopy trees will offer a shaded respite from the sun while fishing, wildlife viewing and picnicking.

- DESIGN OBJECTIVES
- Expand and diversify the Catch ‘Em Lakes to create a greater range of recreational, educational and ecological experiences;
  - Cultivate distinctive landscape settings - with shaded lawns, beautiful canopy trees, boardwalks, fishing piers, and picnic areas - to maximize public enjoyment and further define the ponds as a regional destination; and
  - Promote innovative water filtration and management techniques to increase the ecological role of the ponds, as well as to further define Shelby Farms Park as a showcase of leading environmental land management practices.









5.2

12 LANDSCAPE ROOMS | THE REFUGE

90 ACRES

This part of the site already functions as a bird sanctuary and wetland area. The Mid-South Raptor Rehab Center is located in the north-east corner of this area on Moore Road (Ham Smythe, III Road). The Refuge is envisioned as an enhancement of the existing bird sanctuary into an extensive nature reserve and bird refuge habitat, linking water resources, wetlands, meadows and woodlands to the forests of the Wolf River Corridor.

Over time, this area can be managed to create an extraordinarily diverse ecology of aquatic, amphibian, insect, mammal and bird life, living within a naturalized landscape of meadows, thickets and wetlands. The Refuge will manage habitat to maximize the production of food for wildlife and offer a great scenic and experiential amenity to nature lovers, bird-watchers, walkers and ecologists. The adjacent agricultural fields can be planted with crops such as corn, milo (sorghum), millet, and winter wheat to supplement natural foods that occur on the Refuge. Refuge farming provides ideal feeding and resting areas for thousands of migrating and wintering waterfowl.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

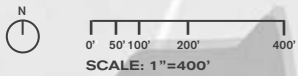
- Develop suitable management practices that ensure that the Refuge develops into a healthy, diverse and self-sustaining habitat landscape;
- Promote coordination between habitat and recreational uses;
- Develop a delicate, ecologically sensitive approach to public access and exposure to the unique habitat environments; and
- Establish clear connections to the Lucius Burch Natural Area and the Wolf River.







- 1 VIEWING DECK + SHADE PAVILION
- 2 MEANDER LAKE
- 3 WETLANDS
- 4 MULTI-USE CIRCUIT
- 5 WET FOREST
- 6 RAPTOR CENTER





5.2

12 LANDSCAPE ROOMS | THE ORCHARDS + BERRY FIELDS

59 ACRES

A new orchard and tree farm running along the southern edge of Walnut Grove Road and adjacent to the Agricenter will help to provide an important local food resource that would be part of the farmers market operation. The orchard both frames the Walnut Grove Road corridor and screens the interior of the Park from vehicular traffic. The orchard could cultivate pecans, figs, nectarines, plums, peaches, apples and pears. A large pick-your-own strawberry field will be located just south of the orchards.

The operational and horticultural aspect of the orchard, tree farm and strawberry fields could also offer great educational benefits as well as beauty and economy. By linking the term “farming” with trees, the Park will communicate the concept of sustainable production of forest products over time and will create an on-site method to help grow the 1,000,000 million new trees proposed for the Park. The Shelby Farms Park free farm blocks will be varied in nature and will contain many different habitats and stages of forest regeneration, from seedlings to mature trees.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

- Coordinate with the Agricenter to create a unique public amenity that supports their educational and economic goals;
- Establish linkages with local and regional youth programs and schools to ensure that the orchard is a productive, highly visible and much-loved community resource in the Park; and
- Utilize a broad range of fruit and nut species to maximize aesthetic appeal, ensure economic productivity and increase the interactive and educational experiences of the Park’s agricultural landscape.







- 1 NATIVE WILDFLOWER MEADOW
- 2 TREE FARM BOSQUES
- 3 FRUIT + NUT ORCHARDS
- 4 STRAWBERRY FIELDS
- 5 SUNFLOWER STRIP
- 6 WHITE TRAIL
- 7 MULTI-USE CIRCUIT
- 8 PARKING LOT
- 9 SHAKE SHACK
- 10 GREEN BRIDGE

N  
0' 75' 150' 300' 600'  
SCALE: 1"=600'



5.2

12 LANDSCAPE ROOMS | CROP + RESEARCH FIELDS

454 ACRES

The extensive area of agricultural fields should continue to be used as a research farm - for genetic hybridization of new crops and food sources; for conducting reasearch (including alternative energy resources and the development of new agricultural technologies); and for protected research plot land leases. The Agricenter works with universities, agricultural companies and various farm research partners in R+D and product evaluation. While the agricultural fields are a well-loved and expansive presence within the Park, they need to be maintained as working research fields with limited public access. The Agricenter offers significant programs and demonstrations of advanced agricultural technologies and products to showcase their resources to the public.

Field research services are conducted on Mid-South crops such as: corn, cotton, rice, soybeans and wheat. Several areas of the research fields are used seasonally for alternative programmatic purposes such as: a seasonally flooded wetland area for migrating waterfowl and a corn maze.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

- Foster the Agricenter's mission to showcase agriculture through educational programs and demonstrations of the most advanced agricultural technologies, techniques and products;
- Continue to promote the forum for individuals, universities and agricultural companies to share first-hand information with each other, as well as make face-to-face contact with researchers, educators, manufacturers and government officials;
- Manage and develop the fields and research plots in a manner that is consistent with the Conservation Easement;
- Develop a means for public experience and enjoyment through a clear network of accessible paths and drives, each contributing to the aesthetic goals of the Master Plan; and
- Establish clear connections to the Lucius Burch Natural Area and the Wolf River.







- 1 RESEARCH FIELDS
- 2 WIND TURBINES
- 3 CROP PRODUCTION
- 4 SEASONAL CORN MAZE
- 5 WETLAND (SEASONAL FLOODING FOR MIGRATING WATERFOWL)
- 6 WET FOREST



5.2

12 LANDSCAPE ROOMS | THE AGRICENTER

233 ACRES

The centerpiece of the agricultural heritage of the site is the Agricenter, with a focus upon advancing agricultural practices and improving the cultivation of land, the provision of food and the sustaining of the environment. The existing Agricenter can be further enhanced and expanded by allocating an Agricenter “Campus” along Moore Road (Ham Smythe, III Road). Such an area designated to accommodate new facilities (such as greenhouses, research laboratories, and other facilities for various private, public and entertainment events) associated with future growth will allow these new venues to share basic infrastructures and thereby create a high degree of economic and environmental efficiency in their implementation.

In addition to the designation of an Agricenter “Campus”, the Master Plan promotes several public amenities to further knit the resources of the Agricenter into the whole of the Park. Three large event roofs will house an expanded farmer’s market, festivals, fairs, demonstrations, lectures, workshops and performances. A generous cookout facility and renovated RV camp area with tree bosques, courts and picnic pavilions to increase useability and appeal will generate additional revenue. Improved signage and educational resources will also enhance the Agricenter operations and increase visitorship. The Agricenter should be a major attraction for the Park as a whole in terms of the programs and events it supports.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

- Expand the reputation and role of the Agricenter as a cutting-edge, international resource for agricultural research and industry collaboration;
- Foster greater physical and thematic and linkages between the educational programs of the future Shelby Farms Park and the Agricenter; and
- Continue to promote the Agricenter facilities as destination venues for private, public and entertainment events (weddings and receptions, banquets, trade shows, conventions, equestrian events, festivals, concerts, circuses, trade shows, car & boat shows, etc.).







- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 FARM EQUIPMENT TRAINING FACILITY     | 14 WARM-UP BUILDING                       |
| 2 AGRICENTER RESEARCH CAMPUS           | 15 MAIN SHOW PLACE ARENA                  |
| 3 DUCKS UNLIMITED                      | 16 RESTAURANT                             |
| 4 DUCKS UNLIMITED LAKE + CYPRESS SWAMP | 17 PARKING LOT                            |
| 5 BOY SCOUT HONOR PARK                 | 18 EVENT ROOF                             |
| 6 RENOVATED RV PARK                    | 19 TREE ALLEE                             |
| 7 COURTS                               | 20 WHITE TRAIL (RE-ROUTED)                |
| 8 PARKING LOT (EXISTING)               | 21 GERMANTOWN RD BOSQUE                   |
| 9 PICNIC PAVILION                      | 22 SUNFLOWER STRIP                        |
| 10 EXPO CENTER                         | 23 WILDLIFE OBSERVATION TOWER (EXISTING)  |
| 11 STABLES                             | 24 EQUESTRIAN TRAIL                       |
| 12 OUTDOOR ARENA                       | 25 PARKING LOTS (SHOWPLACE ARENA RV LOTS) |
| 13 MULTIPURPOSE ARENA                  | 26 FARMERS MARKET (EXISTING)              |



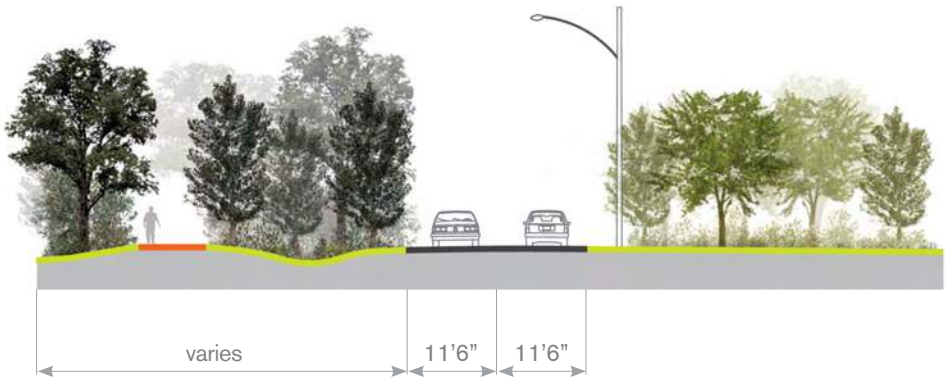
5.3

PARK EDGES | MULLINS STATION ROAD

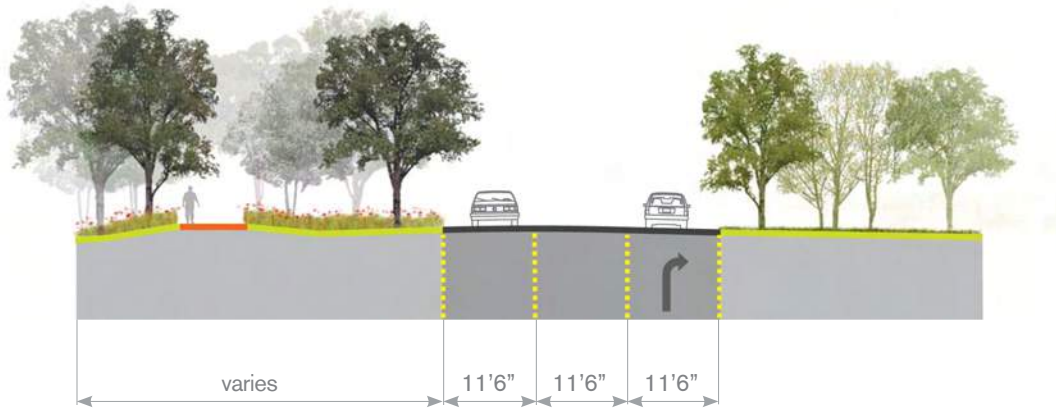
Mullins Station Road is a primary edge of Shelby Farms Park and an opportunity exists to create greater connections between the Park and the neighborhoods to the north. The presently abandoned CSX rail corridor runs along the northern edge of the Park parallel to Mullins Station Road. The future greenline is a proposed recreational park/hiking-biking trail system that would run from Midtown Memphis to the suburbs of Shelby County along the abandoned CSX rail corridor. Three bike and pedestrian crossings cross Mullins Station road from the future Greenline into the Park, including a new pedestrian bridge.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

- Define and improve Park entrances with signature signage, new fences and lighting, restored forest and meadow landscapes and new pathways and recreational amenities; and
- Create physical linkages (pedestrian bridges and crossings) between the Park and the future greenline (former CSX rail line).



TYPICAL SECTION (looking east)



PEDESTRIAN CROSSING SECTION (looking east)





- 1 PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
- 2 NEIGHBORHOOD PLAYGROUND
- 3 BBQ PITS + PICNIC PAVILIONS
- 4 FUTURE GREENLINE
- 5 MULLINS STATION ROAD
- 6 SHELBY FARMS PKWY / KIRBY WHITTEN PKWY

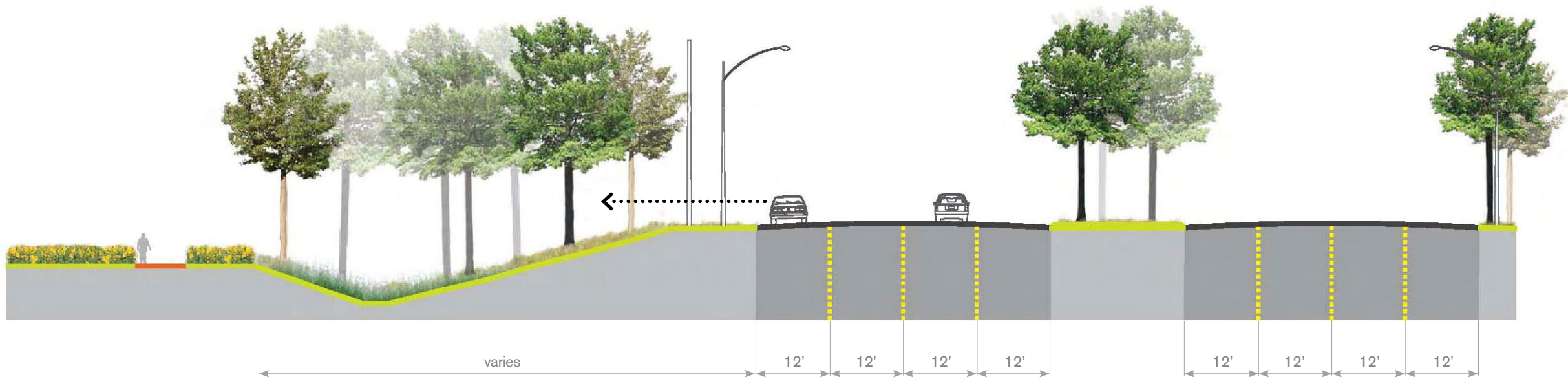


5.3 PARK EDGES | GERMANTOWN ROAD

Because of its high-level of use, the Germantown Road edge needs to be considered from two perspectives: 1) from the point of view of the Park user and 2) from the point of view of commuters traveling along Germantown Road. On the one hand, western views across the research fields offer commuters a powerful glimpse into the distinctive, scenic character of the Park landscape. For Park users, however, the experience of the future Park landscape - the farmer's market, the RV Park and the seasonally flooded fields - would greatly benefit from a physical screening of the Germantown corridor. The Master Plan proposes creating a mixed bosque of tall, native canopy trees that will be pruned high to preserve views into the Park, while simultaneously reducing visual and aural impact of Germantown Road. In addition to the bosque, a sunflower stripfield will run parallel with Germantown Road and add to the scenic impact of this highly visible Park edge.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

- Develop the bosque plantings in a manner that screens the vehicular traffic from the interior park, while simultaneously preserving views into the agricultural landscape; and
- Increase the visibility of the Park through greater definition of the edge landscape (tree bosque and sunflower field) , distinctive lighting, and bold, iconic signage.

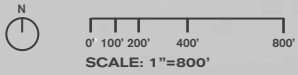


TYPICAL SECTION (looking north)





- 1 GERMANTOWN RD BOSQUE
- 2 SUNFLOWER STRIP
- 3 BIRD VIEWING STAND
- 4 ACCESS ROAD + PARKING LOT (EXISTING)





5.3 **PARK EDGES | WOLF RIVER CORRIDOR SOUTH**

The southern and western edges of the Park are bound by the Lucius Burch Natural Area, the Wolf River and Wolf River Greenway. When complete the Wolf River Greenway will connect downtown Memphis to Germantown and Collierville as well as a future greenline along the abandoned CSX rail corridor. The Wolf River itself and the adjacent natural area offer passive recreation activities such as day hiking, bird watching, wildlife viewing, kayaking, canoeing, swimming and learning.

Within the larger Wolf River Corridor, the Lucius Burch Natural Area is a State-designated Natural Area and is protected by restrictions to conserve valuable habitat and resident wildlife. The area is a remnant of historic river meanders, bald cypress-water tupelo swamps, bottomland hardwood forests, and open river channel habitat. Unfortunately, much of this ecosystem has been significantly altered as a result of change in hydrology and the invasion of common privet, an invasive exotic plant. It provides a refuge for forest dwelling birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians within an urbanized environment. The Shelby Farms Park Conservancy is responsible for management of the Lucius Burch Natural Area.

Two facilities for boat rentals and three small pedestrian bridges will connect the Wolf River Greenway to Shelby Farms Park. Methods for creating an area along a portion of the Wolf River with fast water and rapids for whitewater kayaking and rafting are being considered. A new eco-playground nestled into the forest will enhance visitorship and opportunities for all ages to experience this beautiful natural resource. The eco-playground will use sustainable materials and unique play features (such as a ropes course, a zip line and a tree house) to combine play with learning and team building within the Wolf River's unique natural environment.

Continued consultation with the Wolf River Conservancy, the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation Natural Areas division will ensure the long term health of the River and the adjacent River Plain.

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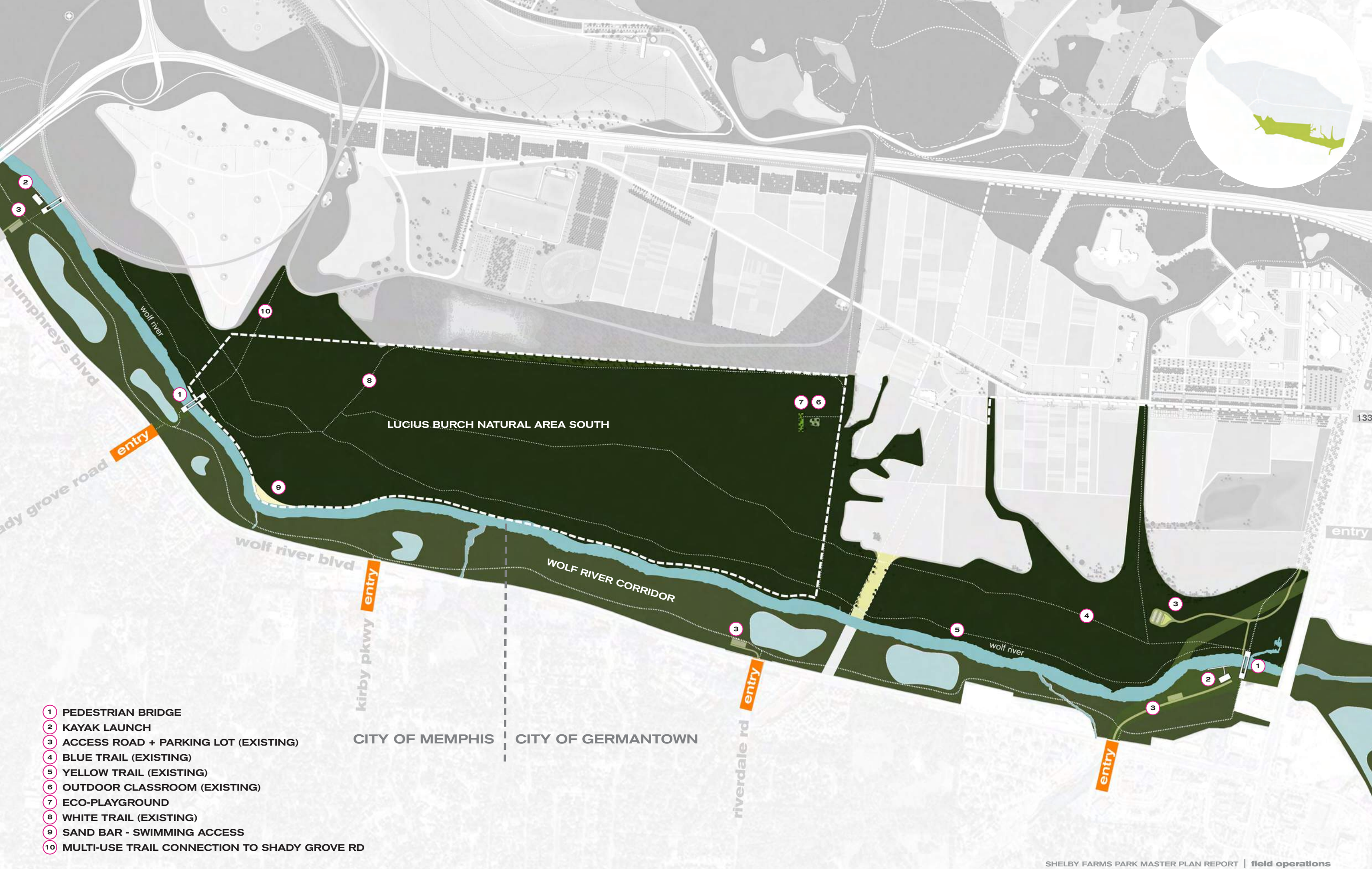


canoeing on the wolf river



hiking through the lucius burch natural area





- 1 PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
- 2 KAYAK LAUNCH
- 3 ACCESS ROAD + PARKING LOT (EXISTING)
- 4 BLUE TRAIL (EXISTING)
- 5 YELLOW TRAIL (EXISTING)
- 6 OUTDOOR CLASSROOM (EXISTING)
- 7 ECO-PLAYGROUND
- 8 WHITE TRAIL (EXISTING)
- 9 SAND BAR - SWIMMING ACCESS
- 10 MULTI-USE TRAIL CONNECTION TO SHADY GROVE RD







# 6.0 PHASING



6.1

PHASING | GROWTH OF THE PARK OVER TIME

The large scale and complexity of Shelby Farms Park dictates that the implementation of the Master Plan for the Park will take time. It will likely be more than a decade before Shelby Farms Park is fully realized, and the planning processes over this period will need to address the existing challenges outlined in section 3.1 of this report– including the lack of identity; segmented infrastructure; a fragmented ecosystem; deficient circulation; and poor regional access – as well as new challenges such as the environmental and economic sustainability of managing an expanded parkland. Add to this equation the anticipated public and stakeholder consultation processes, and it becomes clear that the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy needs a robust strategy for dealing with the shifting priorities and financial requirements of developing the Park over an extended period of time.

Due to this great complexity, Shelby Farms Park will need to be developed in phases or planned stages of growth that 1) target clear design principles; 2) expand on existing facilities, resources and character; 3) capitalize on the availability of funds, to maximize the exposure and legibility of the Park; and 4) build momentum and support for the Park with each project that is implemented.

It is critical to note however, that incremental, staged growth does not mean that implementation and detailed planning should happen in an ad-hoc or piecemeal fashion. Quite the opposite. To guarantee the long-term success of Shelby Farms Park, it is crucial that early stages of development are founded on clear design objectives while simultaneously building excitement for what is yet to come. The momentum for investing in later stages of the Park’s development will depend on public and stakeholder appraisal of the success of initial phases of implementation of the Master Plan.

The Master Plan described herein sets out a strategic and intelligent framework to guide the growth of the Park, with public and stakeholder consultation supporting all future planning and design efforts. Shelby Farms Park is a unique landscape, both in terms of its features and character, as well as the type of efforts, cooperation and leadership that will be required from the Conservancy and the associated public agencies to move the implementation process forward. What the Master Plan phasing scenario outlined here provides is a structure for:

- creating early enthusiasm to propel the implementation process;
- establishing the principal framework necessary to guide long-term development of the Park;
- enhancing the site through ecology and habitat diversification;
- shaping a more defined and memorable identity for the Park; and
- respecting the highly valued existing places in the Park.

The Phasing diagrams shown below and to the right are not intended to comprehensively describe every project and the order with which they are to be implemented. Rather, the four phases are intended to indicate priorities in terms of the areas of the Park where we believe capital projects should be concentrated for maximum gain. As each phase of the project is developed, the limits of each will be clearly defined prior to any design work or construction taking place. It is expected that some adjustments can and will take place regarding the particular location of elements within the master plan provided these adjustments do not conflict with the Conservation Easement or the Master Plan Implementation Instrument. This flexible strategy will establish a strong spatial and organizational design framework for the Park so that its development over time is assured.



- PHASE ONE: Establish the Core + Create Identity**
- 1) Expanded Playground at Plough Park
  - 2) Expanded Patriot Lake
  - 3) Shelby Farms Parkway (Kirby-Whitten Parkway) - *by others*
  - 4) New Walnut Grove Gateway + Park Entry
  - 5) Park Circle Access + Trails





PHASE TWO: Expand Core Public Park Area

- 1) Trail + Facility Enhancements to Plough Park
- 2) Walnut Grove Planting Strip
- 3) Reconfiguration + Expansion of Catch 'Em Lakes
- 4) Development of Refuge Area
- 5) Completion of Mutli-Use Loop



PHASE THREE: Enhance Landscape Rooms

- 1) Trail Enhancements to Outback Area
- 2) Enhancement + Expansion of Agricenter Campus Area
- 3) Development of Amenities + Activities along Wolf River
- 4) Development of Wolf River Greenway - *by others*



PHASE FOUR: Enhance Landscape Rooms (later phases TBD)

- 1) Community Center + Sports Fields \*
- 2) Public Gardens \*
- 3) Agricenter Research +Crop Field Area

\* *pending area 10 approval*



6.2

PROVISIONAL PROJECTS | EARLY WINS 2008-2010

The design and construction of the proposed Phase One projects outlined in the following pages will take anywhere from 3-6 years to implement. Early start projects prior to the larger scale transformations are a useful way to build enthusiasm and to establish a new identity for the future park. These “provisional” projects are as much about building greater awareness of the Shelby Farms Park project as they are about physical change. They do not require substantial amounts of investment or time, rather they act as a clear signal of change and an opportunity to strengthen connections with the surrounding neighborhoods, existing park users and the greater Memphis community.

The Master Plan identifies a set of initial targets to increase the visibility of and access to the Park, with a lens towards upholding the primary organizational and design principles of the Shelby Farms Park project. These “provisional” projects could include:

- Community Participation in Tree Planting;
- Refreshing and expanding existing user-specific trails such as the Equestrian and mountainbike trails;
- Developing distinctive park signage (both permanent and temporary) at Walnut Grove and Mullins Station Roads;
- Developing distinctive interior way-finding signage for both Plough Park and Agricenter areas in order to begin to conceptually link the two halves of the Park;
- Planting pick-your-own berry fields at the Agricenter;
- Expanding the sunflower / wildflower planting strips along Walnut Grove and Germantown Roads
- Initiating the internal Park Trolley for use on weekends or during major events, and connecting the Park to the broader MATA bus system.

Each of these projects can be undertaken immediately following the approval of the Master Plan and as such, can be “on the ground” as soon as spring 2009. This will create increased visibility and interest in the Park and the proposed Master Plan.

*In addition, it is the recommendation of the Master Plan that an Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan be developed for the Park following the approval of the Master Plan in order to coordinate conservation and management principles with areas of Park redevelopment such as the expanded Patriot Lake.*





**INTERNAL PARK TROLLEY**



**COMMUNITY TREE PLANTING EVENTS**



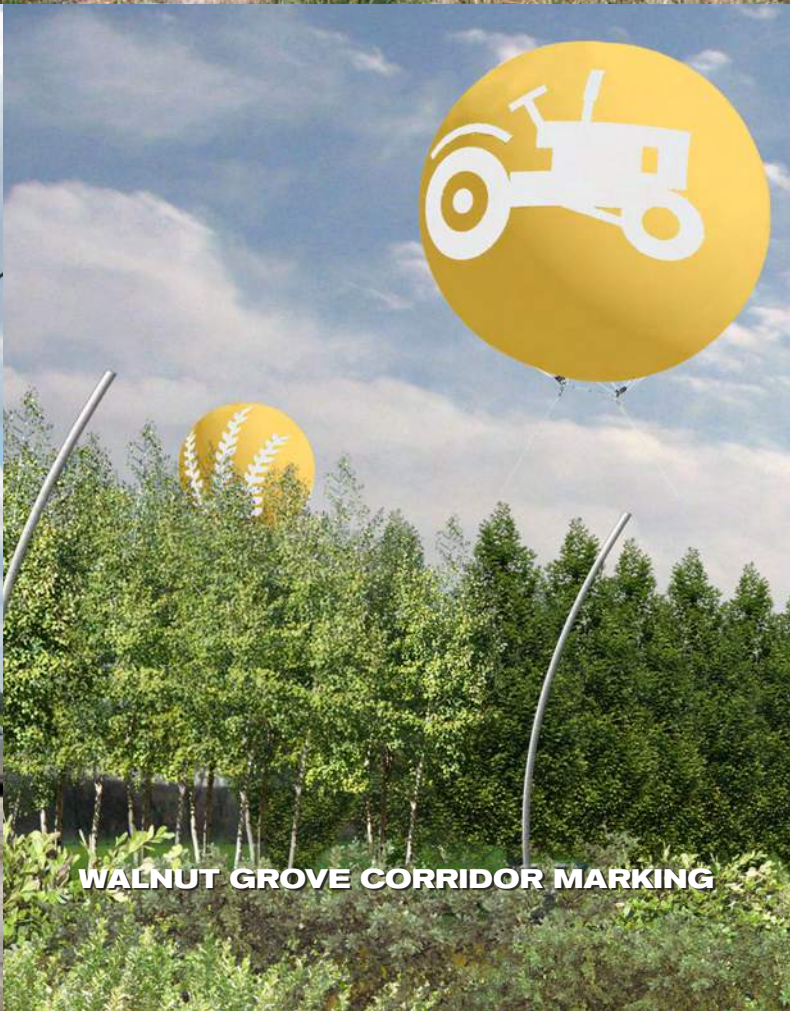
**SUNFLOWER PLANTING STRIPS**



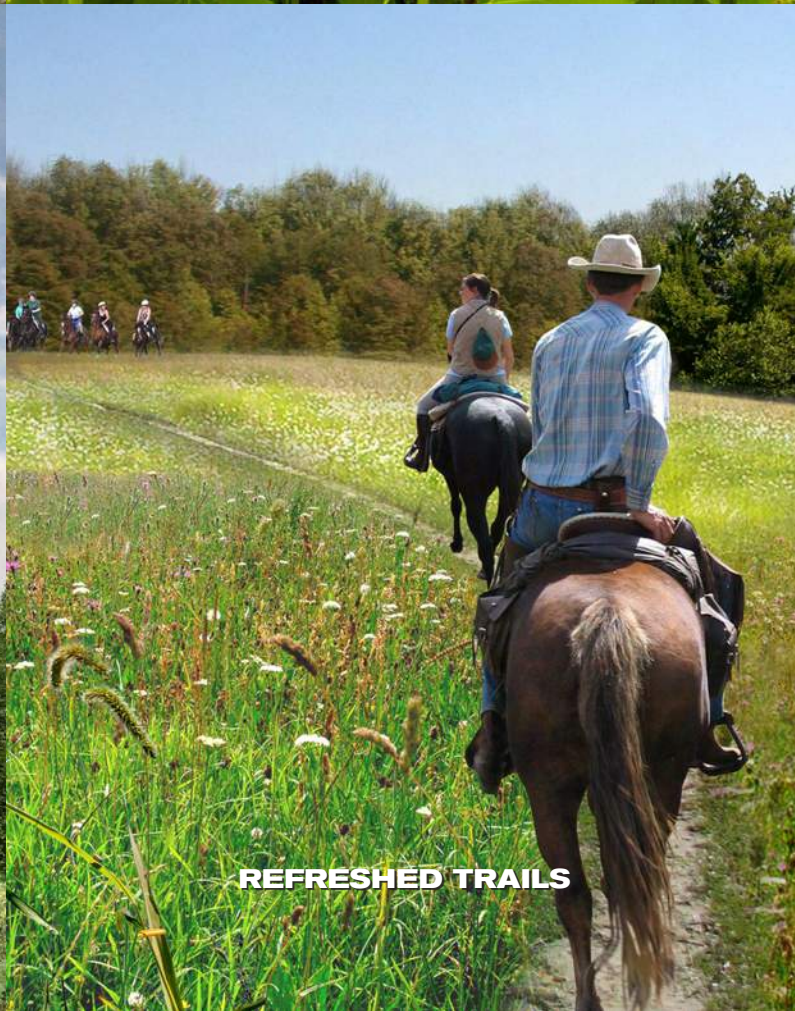
**STRAWBERRY PICKING**



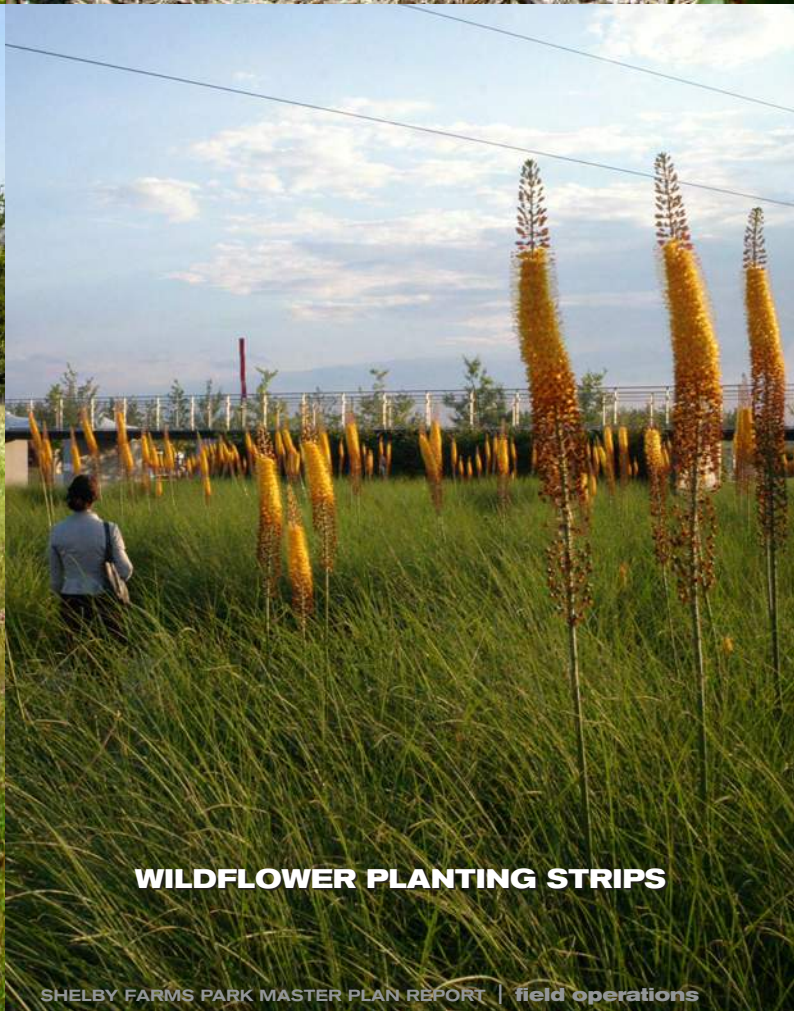
**PARK SIGNAGE ON MULLINS STATION ROAD**



**WALNUT GROVE CORRIDOR MARKING**



**REFRESHED TRAILS**



**WILDFLOWER PLANTING STRIPS**



6.3

PHASE ONE PROJECTS | BIG, BOLD AND PRACTICAL

Four Phase One projects will establish a new center and set up the basic framework for the renovation and enhancement of Shelby Farms Park. These projects provide both a bold physical transformation, as well as a logical first step in establishing an active core for the Park. In turn, the other less populated landscape rooms can be developed over time as the financial resources and the Conservancy’s priorities dictate. These Phase One projects are highly pragmatic in that they can be tied to other work outside the Conservancy’s domain (such as the new Shelby Farms Parkway) that will potentially allow for coordination and cost sharing, and can help to streamline the overall development of Phase One.

This practical outline for the Park’s initial development includes:

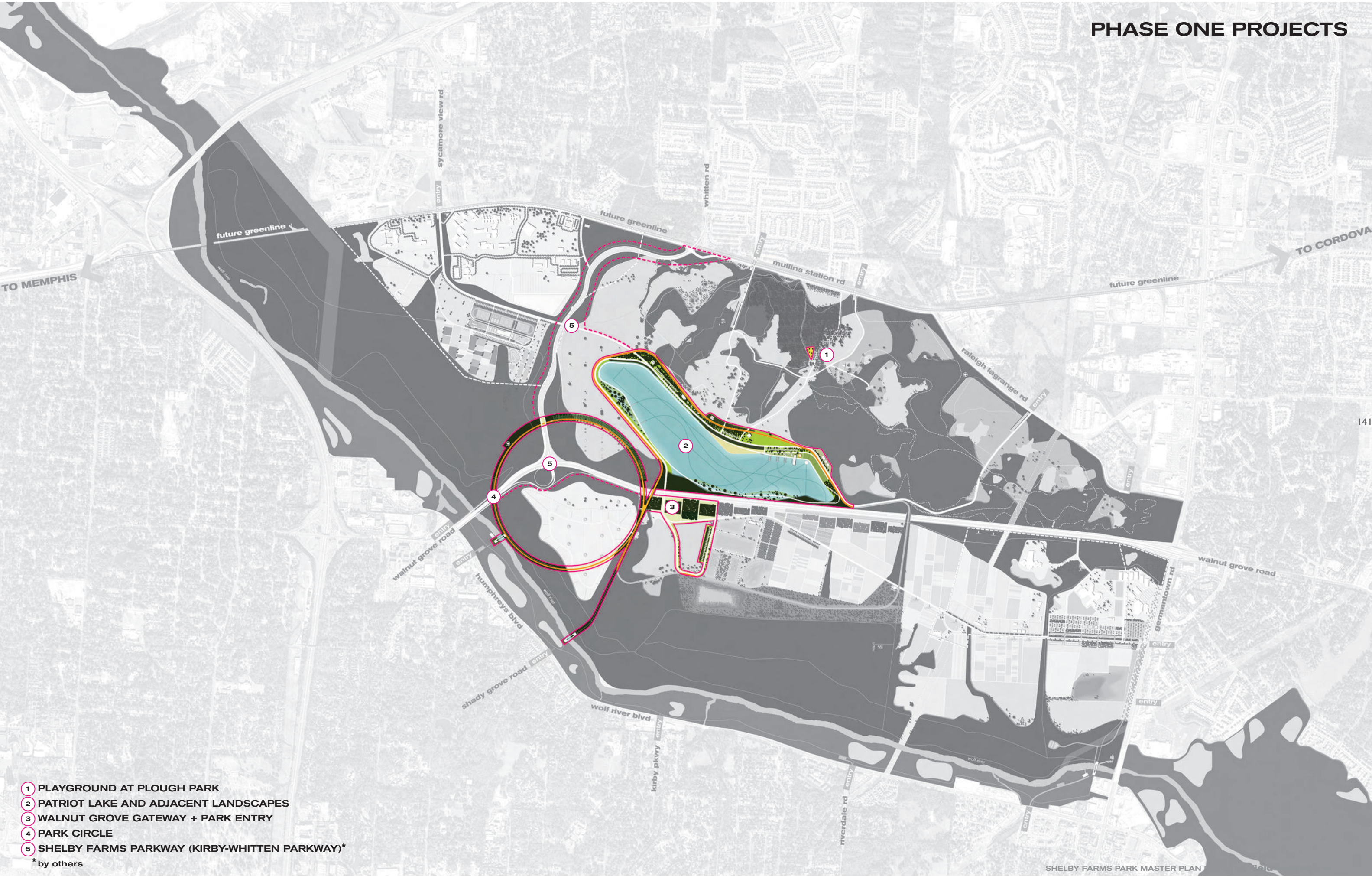
- Expanding the Playground at Plough Park;
- Expanding Patriot Lake and developing its adjacent landscapes;
- Developing a new Walnut Grove Gateway + Park Entry; and
- Developing the Park Circle to allow pedestrian navigation of the new Shelby Farms Parkway–Walnut Grove interchange and access to the Park from the south via tunnel, bridge and pathway.

These first phase projects identify an achievable and compelling beginning for the Park: providing highly visible gateways; new means of access, circulation and entry into the Park; expanded opportunities for play; and a bold, iconic centerpiece for the Park, rich with new public amenities and scenic views. In addition to representing a strong beginning for the Park, the Phase One projects provide a structure for:

- creating early enthusiasm to propel the implementation process;
- establishing principal connections necessary to link disparate parcels and provide access across the site;
- shaping a more defined and beautiful identity for the Park; and
- respecting the highly valued existing places in the Park;



PHASE ONE PROJECTS



- 1 PLAYGROUND AT PLOUGH PARK
- 2 PATRIOT LAKE AND ADJACENT LANDSCAPES
- 3 WALNUT GROVE GATEWAY + PARK ENTRY
- 4 PARK CIRCLE
- 5 SHELBY FARMS PARKWAY (KIRBY-WHITTEN PARKWAY)\*

\* by others



6.3

PHASE ONE PROJECTS | PLAYGROUND AT PLOUGH PARK

Because of its high level of use and close proximity to the “park core”, the Playground at Plough park is a logical target for early stage improvements. Although it is well-used and much-loved, the playground is very much in need of renovation and expansion. The current playground is approximately 1/2-acre. The Master Plan proposes doubling this size to one-acre in order to provide a wider range of play activity, equipment and experience. The expansion and remaking of the Plough Park Playground will include new lighting, seating, numerous play elements, preserved and increased canopy plantings, as well as water and shade features. These simple changes will transform the experience of the playground, enabling this much used feature to become fully integrated with the overall identity of Shelby Farms Park.

EARLY OBJECTIVES

- Expand the range, quantity and character of the playground amenities and features;
- Preserve and enhance the presence of existing tree canopy;
- Utilize soft surfacing materials that contribute to the overall range and types of play; and
- Ensure that new elements and features are safe and durable, yet innovative and coordinated with the playground’s distinctive setting.



existing view of the playground at plough park





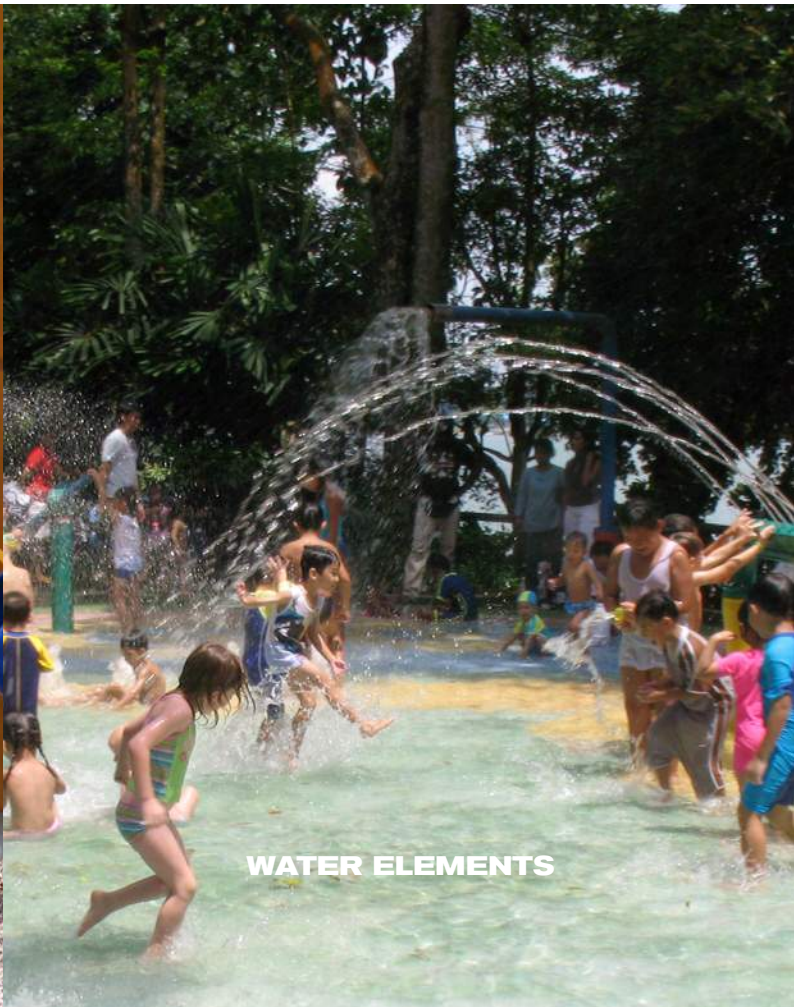
**UNIQUE FORMS**



**SOFT SURFACING**



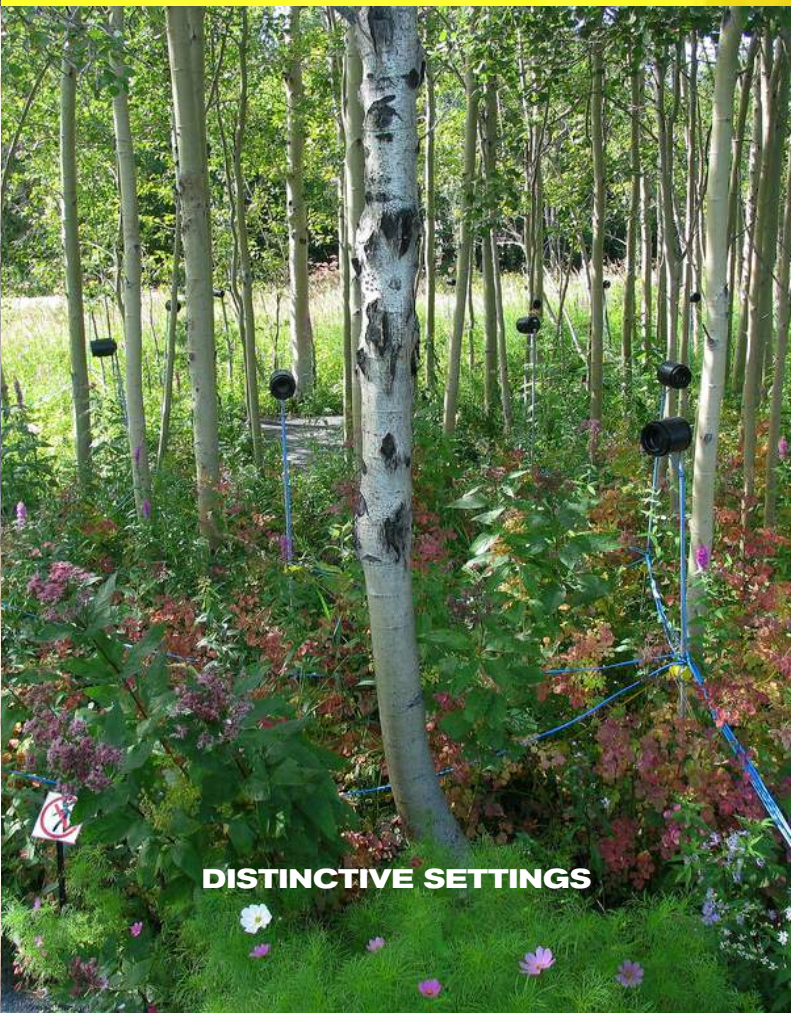
**MULTI-AGED PLAY**



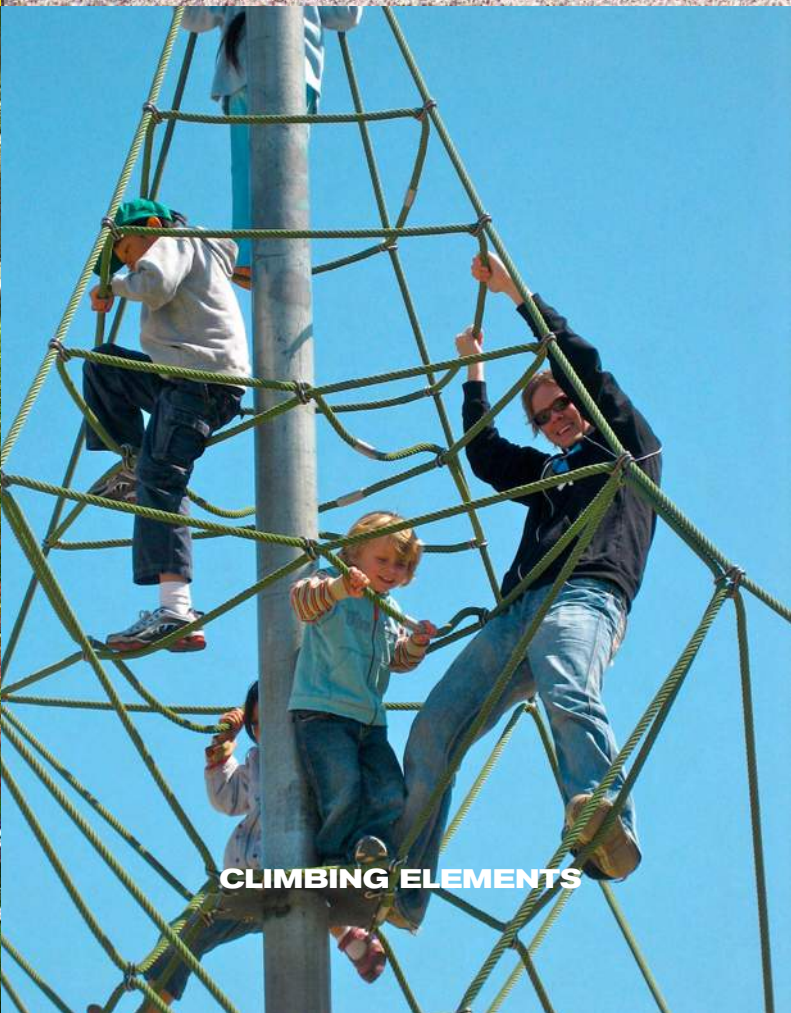
**WATER ELEMENTS**



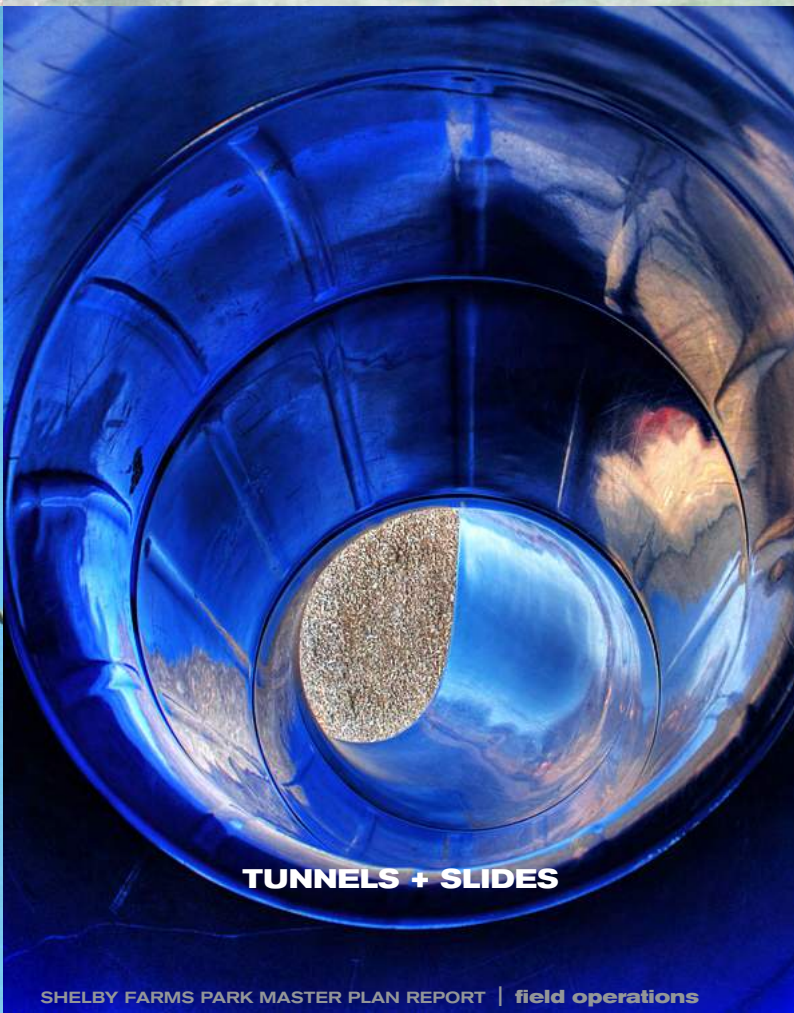
**PRESERVED + EXPANDED CANOPY**



**DISTINCTIVE SETTINGS**



**CLIMBING ELEMENTS**



**TUNNELS + SLIDES**



6.3

PHASE ONE PROJECTS | PATRIOT LAKE AND ADJACENT LANDSCAPES

The transformation and expansion of Patriot Lake will be a bold, dramatic and exciting step in the process of realizing the Shelby Farms Park project. As the iconic centerpiece of the entire Park, the new Patriot Lake will be a highly visible and defining landmark for Memphis: one that is rich with new public amenities, diverse recreational opportunities, spectacular vistas and remarkably unique events.

The Patriot Lake Project is a complex one, as it involves works on land and in the water and will require the collective participation of a broad range of technical consultants, city agencies and the public. However, the promise of its spectacular presence in the future park, replete with its great physical beauty and recreational resources, signals the importance of prioritizing this remarkable feature in the early stages of the Park’s life.

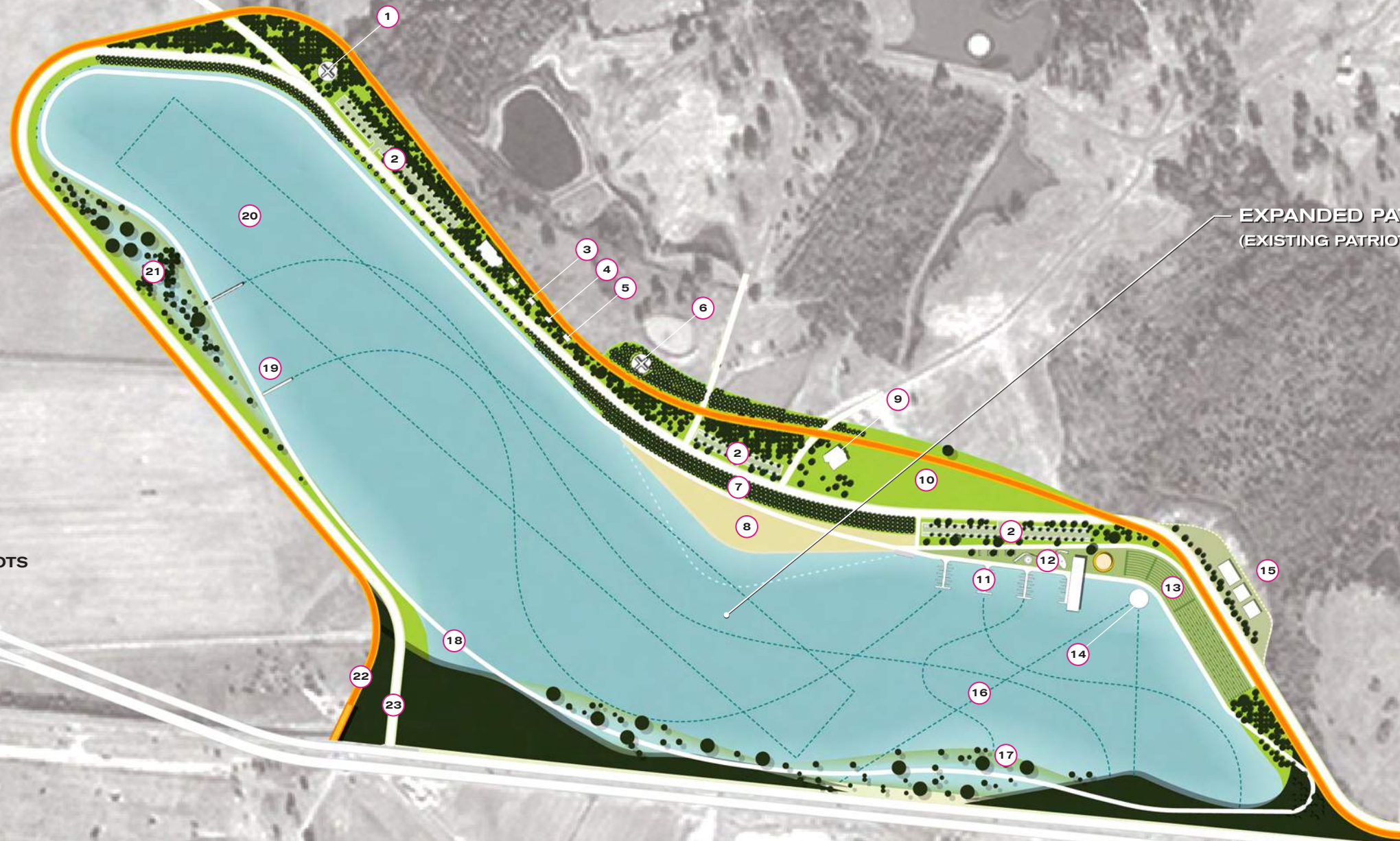
EARLY OBJECTIVES

- Develop a strategic implementation plan that allows existing park uses to continue in areas adjacent to Lake construction;
- Provide for a great diversity of features, elements and landscapes for recreation and passive play; and
- Establish hydrologic linkages with other lakes and sloughs to increase the ecological and sustainable character of the park landscape;



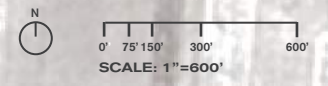
aerial view of the existing patriot lake





EXPANDED PATRIOT LAKE 150-ACRES  
(EXISTING PATRIOT LAKE 54-ACRES)

- 1 SMALL VIEWING TOWER
- 2 PERMEABLE SURFACE PARKING LOTS
- 3 PICNIC PAVILION
- 4 EQUIPMENT RENTAL
- 5 REST FACILITY
- 6 ICON BALLOON
- 7 TREE ALLEE
- 8 SWIMMING BEACH
- 9 VISITOR CENTER
- 10 GREAT LAWN
- 11 MARINA
- 12 WATER PLAYGROUND
- 13 EARTHEN AMPHITHEATER
- 14 FLOATING STAGE
- 15 M+O FACILITIES (15,000 SF BUILDING AND 2-ACRE YARD)
- 16 SAILBOAT COURSE
- 17 SWAMP CYPRESS GROVE
- 18 2.5-MILE BOARDWALK
- 19 FISHING PIERS
- 20 1250 METER / 1.25 KILOMETER ROWING COURSE
- 21 SWAMP CYPRESS GROVE
- 22 MULTI-USE CIRCUIT
- 23 PATRIOT LAKE ROAD (PRIMARY VEHICULAR ROAD)







cypress swamp and boardwalk at the expanded patriot lake





earthen amphitheatre at the expanded patriot lake



6.3

PHASE ONE PROJECTS | PARK CIRCLE + SHELBY FARMS PARK GATEWAY

The implementation of Phase One projects will achieve some of the fundamental objectives of the master plan, including establishing the connections between the edges of the Park and the interior landscapes. As a means to coordinate with the implementation of the Shelby Farms Parkway (Kirby-Whitten Parkway) and to ensure that the Park’s objectives are upheld through the Parkway’s implementation, the Master Plan recommends the prioritization of the “Park Circle”. This new pedestrian and multi-use loop links across the Wolf River to circumnavigate the landfill mound and the reconfigured Parkway interchange through a series of pedestrian bridges, at-grade underpasses, tunnels, forest trails and distinctive shade tree allees. Pedestrian bridges at the Wolf River will allow for direct connection from the southern edge of the Park which does not currently exist. Although a high level of coordination is required with the Parkway planning team, the elements of the Park circle are relatively easy to implement and their impact will be greatly appreciated by new and existing park users.

EARLY OBJECTIVES

- Collaborate with the Parkway planning team to ensure that the necessary pedestrian linkages are accommodated;
- Provide clearly defined pathway connections and entry points at Shady Grove Road and at the Walnut Grove entry; and
- Coordinate with Shelby County to ensure that all work associated with the Landfill preserves and/or improves the integrity of the landfill cap;

The construction of Shelby Farms Parkway (Kirby-Whitten Parkway) will necessitate a reconfiguration of the Farm Road-Walnut Grove Road intersection. This creates the opportunity to define a grand new entry gateway for the Park that ties the northern and southern halves together through the introduction of a highly distinct planting and landscape installation. This area of the Walnut Grover Road corridor should be used to announce the Park in a bold, immediate and highly visible way. Blocks of tree plantings will line the southern edge of Walnut Grove Road, spatially tying this side of the Park back to the forested planting regime on the northern side of the road. Punctuated by the proposed “Y” pedestrian bridge, the implementation of this project will serve to reinforce the connection of the two sides of the Shelby Farms territory and provide a true address destination to visitors of the Park.

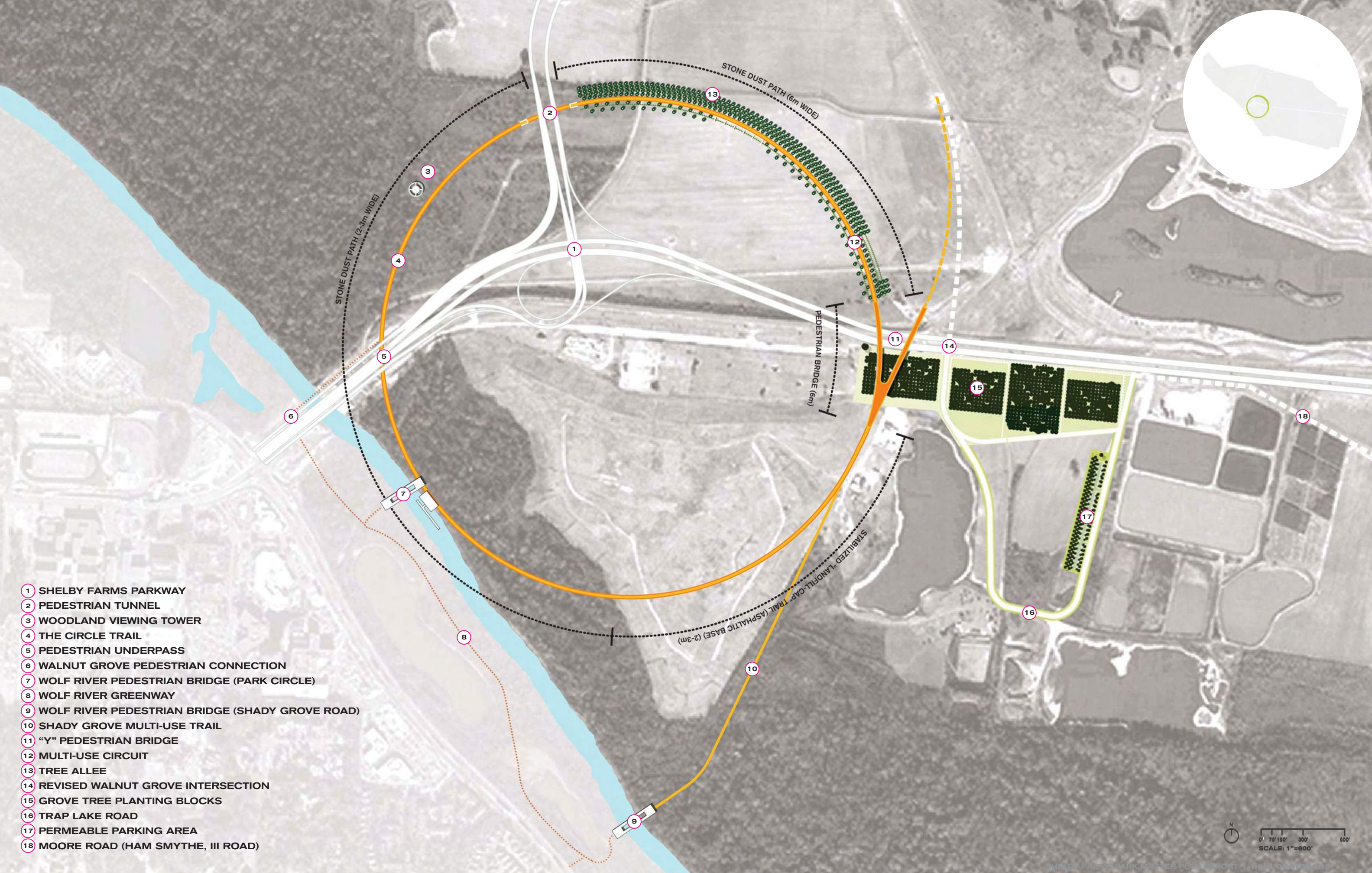
EARLY OBJECTIVES

- Collaborate with the Parkway planning team to ensure that the necessary turning and pedestrian provisions are accommodated at the new intersection;
- Create a spatially memorable definition for the primary Shelby Farms Park entry;
- Ensure the presence of clear way-finding elements for visitors to both the northern and southern halves of the Park; and
- Expand the public park landscape to the southern half of the park adjacent to the existing Catch ‘Em Lakes areas.



aerial view of walnut grove road and the landfill mound











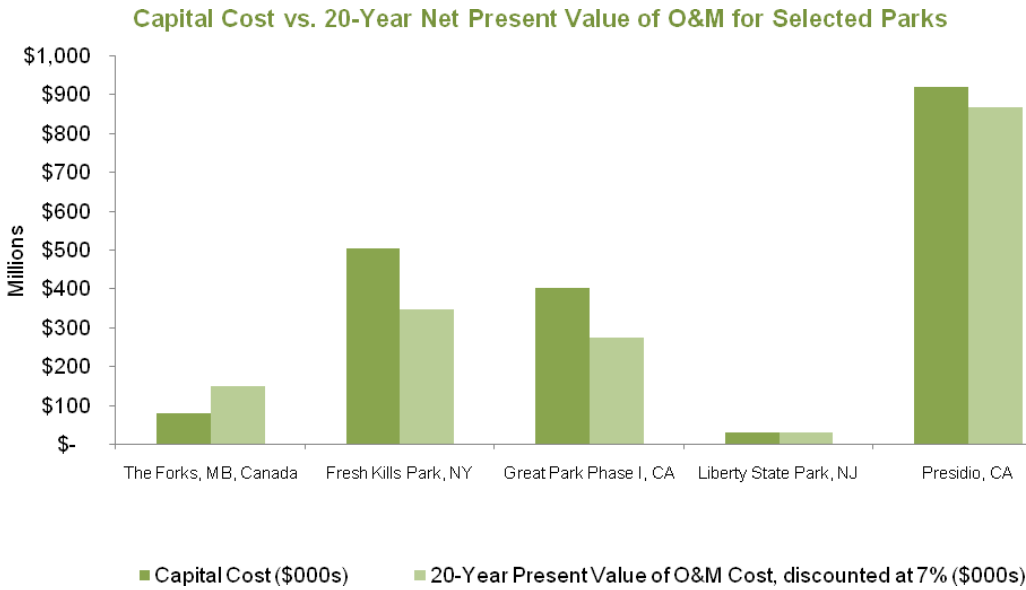
# 7.0 OPERATIONS RECOMMENDATIONS



7.1 OPERATIONS FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Developing a funding strategy for the operations and maintenance (O&M) of the new Shelby Farms Park is a critical part of the Master Planning process. Over the long term, O&M costs will equal or exceed the initial capital cost of a park, and underinvestment in O&M costs can lead to park decline and necessitate considerable reinvestment in capital. Realistic expectations for operations and maintenance should therefore be built into the capital program and phasing plan. Inclusion in the initial capital planning of uses that generate revenue, are compatible with the Master Plan vision, and generate life and activity is an important means of meeting those expectations.



The Shelby Farms Park Conservancy (SFPC) and Field Operations commissioned a preliminary study by HR&A Advisors, Inc. (HR&A) to support efforts to plan for park programming, routine maintenance, and capital maintenance (collectively, “O&M”) for the new Park. HR&A estimated the annual cost of O&M for Phase I of the Master Plan, and identified revenue sources that might feasibly be used to fund O&M costs.

The findings and recommendations presented here derive from research and analysis of parks and recreation areas in a number of jurisdictions in the United States and Canada; and interviews with a range of local experts and government officials, including:

- Consulting Natural Resource Scientist, Richard C. Young, M.S.
- Memphis Parks Department, Larry Smith, Deputy Director
- Memphis Shelby County Office of Economic Development, Charles Gulotta, Executive Director; Maggie Conway and Clara Harris
- Pittco Management, Pitt and Barbara Hyde
- Science Applications International Corp. (SAIC), Connie Kontogiannis
- Shelby Farms Park Conservancy, Laura Adams & Kate Phillips
- Tennessee DOT, John Hewitt, Manager, Natural Resources Office
- US Army Corps of Engineers, Roger Allan, Permit Manager

ESTIMATING OPERATING & MAINTENANCE COSTS

Prior to preparation of detailed line item budgets, future O&M needs of new or substantially renovated parks are generally estimated based on either a comparison to per acre O&M costs of similar parks or on a percent of initial capital cost. Per acre O&M costs vary greatly depending on a park’s size, climate and labor market in which it is located, and intensity of use and programming.

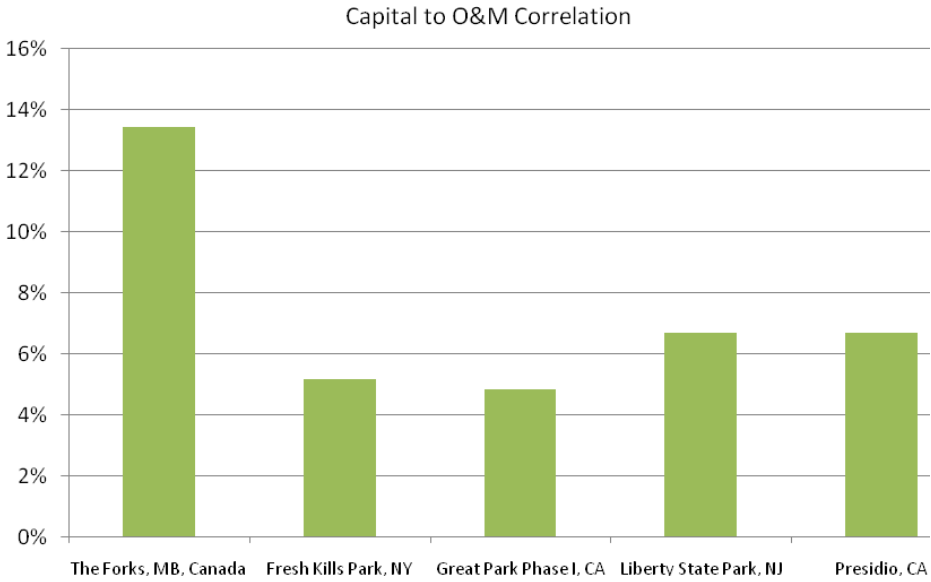
City Park Systems O&M Costs	
Denver	\$1,550 / acre
Greensboro	\$5,300/ acre
New York City	\$13,500 / acre
Memphis	\$2,200 / acre
Minneapolis	\$8,500 / acre

Greensboro, NC		
	Acres	O&M
All Parks	3,700	\$5,400/ acre
Center City Park	2	\$180,000/ acre

Given the very early stage of planning in which the Shelby Farms Park is currently engaged, we suggest that the percent of capital method is the best means to anticipate the future operating needs of the Park. As capital costs become better understood, the resulting dollar estimate should be reviewed in light of current per acre O&M Costs at Shelby Farms and of comparable parks in the Memphis area.



For discussion purposes, HR&A recommends planning for an annual O&M cost of 5% of initial capital investment. This figure is at the lower end of a range observed in large urban parks across North America and reflects the area's relatively moderate labor costs and usage, less dense programming than most urban core parks, and favorable climate, as well as an assumption that much programming will continue to be offered by third parties.



The Shelby Farms O&M budget estimate can be refined as more information regarding these factors is collected:

- Program options
- Cost sharing with complementary projects such as the Parkway
- Allocation of responsibility for programming
- Cost of maintaining lake water level

**BEST PRACTICE: LIBERTY STATE PARK, NEW JERSEY.**

Liberty State Park is a 1,150 acre park on the New Jersey Shore directly across the Hudson River from Manhattan. The park hosts 4.9 million visitors per year and has a total land area of 1,150 acres, of which 600 have been developed. The park features 250 acres of natural habitat, 350 acres of open space (with another 250 acres planned), 1.5 miles of waterfront promenade, 3 miles of bike paths, two playgrounds, and a boat launch. Cultural attractions in the park include the Liberty Science Center (currently undergoing a major renovation) and the historic Central New Jersey Railroad Terminal (CNJRR). Commercial uses include a restaurant and 20,000 square feet of office space planned for the CNJRR. The park also includes Liberty Landing Marina with 500 slips and a 350 slip dry dock. Visitors can take the Circle Line from the park to the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. The park currently has a \$2 million annual operating budget and generates \$1 million in revenues on site, primarily from the marina, paid parking, and concessions on the Circle Line.





REVENUE SOURCES

HR&A examined an initial list of potential revenue streams to support operations of the Park, including public, on-site/earned income, and off-site/private sources. The initial analysis suggests that new forms of public support are unlikely in the short term, both because a consensus that there is little popular willingness to raise taxes to fund the park and because the more fruitful public revenue streams will likely be restricted to capital uses. Therefore, the primary sources of new operating funding will need to be:

- On-site, earned income from ground leases and user fees, consistent with restrictions on uses within the park established by the Grant of Conservation Easement for the Park and Agricenter Campus, and by the County for the so-called Area 10.
- Philanthropic contributions, including corporate sponsorships, toward an operating endowment.

PUBLIC FUNDING

The Shelby Farms Conservancy currently operates on a \$2 million annual budget with income coming primarily from grants, dedicated County funding, and user fees.

County Funding

The County currently dedicates \$575,848 to the maintenance and operations of Shelby Farms pursuant to the 2007 Management Agreement with the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy. While the amount of funding is not likely to change, it remains critical to park operations and serves as the base funding to secure private philanthropic contributions. Major donors will likely require a demonstrated public commitment before supplementing it with private contributions.

Recommendation: Maintain Management Agreement with Shelby County.

City Funding

HR&A examined potential Memphis City government funding through either a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District, and/or a dedicated Sales Tax or Hotel/Motel Tax increase. TIFs utilize the incremental property taxes in the neighborhoods which benefit from an investment to help pay for the investment itself. While TIFs have been successfully implemented in two areas of Shelby County, they require a finding of blight and take several years to establish. More importantly, TIF revenues can only be used for capital costs, exclusive of capital maintenance expenses. While it is technically feasible to increase the City Sales Tax or the Hotel/Motel tax to create a dedicated funding stream for Shelby Farms (or for all Memphis City Parks), the current climate is highly unfavorable for new or increased taxes.

Recommendation: Do not pursue City funding in the short term.

State Funding

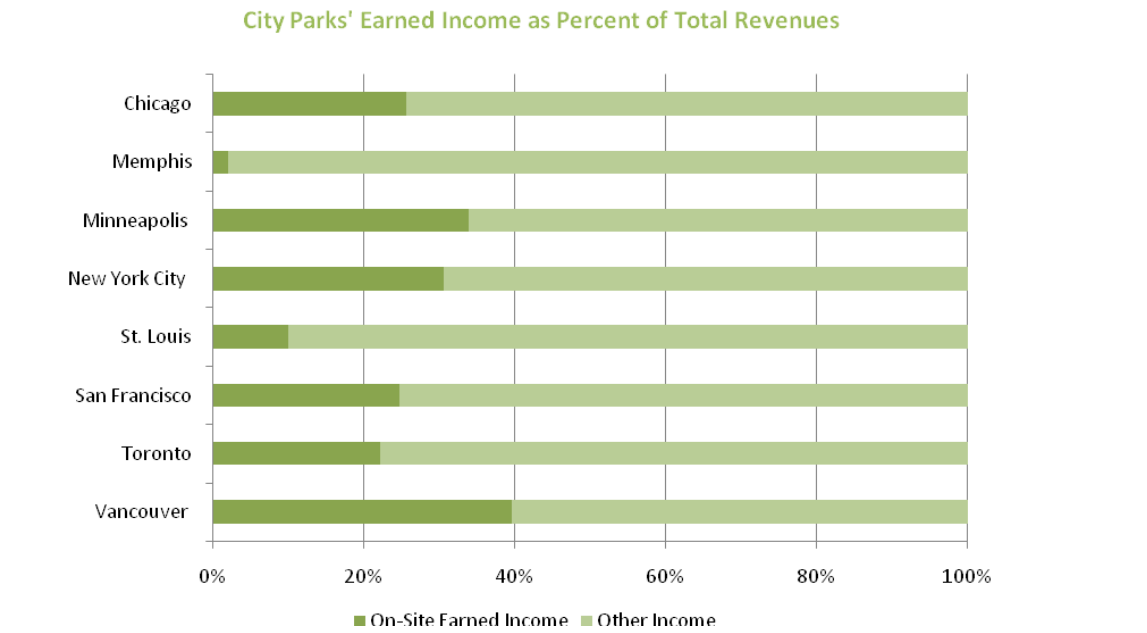
HR&A investigated potential State funding through either a Tourism Development Zone (TDZ) or direct financial support from the State. A TDZ functions similar to a TIF except that it captures incremental sales taxes in the area surrounding the investment. TDZs require a total capital investment of over \$200 million and may be used only for convention centers or major tourism destinations. While Shelby Farms may meet these requirements, TDZ funds (like TIFs) can only be used for capital investments. Moreover, the areas surrounding Shelby Farms are primarily residential and are therefore less likely to accrue significant incremental sales taxes.

Direct operating support from the State may be achievable, and should be pursued, ideally through an agreement that guarantees, to the extent possible, a steady stream of funds. Given the inherent uncertainty of the receipt of such funding, however, we do not assume that it will form a significant, long term source of operating support.

Recommendation: Explore the potential for State support of O&M.

ON-SITE REVENUE

On-site revenue generating uses, ranging from active recreation opportunities to restaurants, events, and meeting facilities, can provide important amenities to park users and increase activity year round. Memphis' parks currently generate considerably less on-site earned income than park systems in comparable cities, demonstrating a substantial opportunity for Shelby Farms.





That said, Shelby Farms Park will need to be operated consistent with the provisions of the Grant of Conservation Easement between Shelby County and the Shelby County Agricenter Commission, and the Land Trust for Tennessee, Inc. Preliminary indications are that the recommendations set forth below will comport with those requirements, although this conclusion merits additional examination.

*Rentals, User Fees & Events*

Most recreational uses in parks are considered user amenities and are designed to break even, not to generate revenue. Despite this, the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy currently generates \$100,000 per year from rentals of the picnic areas and meeting rooms, and from per-participant fees for special events not organized by the Conservancy. Recreational groups do not pay to use the Park.

The Master Plan includes many new uses which will require additional resources to maintain. Some of these uses can potentially generate revenue or will require a specialized expertise to manage, such as the expanded meeting facilities with a catering kitchen, as well as the stables, paddle boats, skating/ BMX course and pick-your-own fruit activities. For these uses, the Conservancy should consider entering into a contract or ground lease with a private operator as discussed in further detail in the next section.

The Conservancy will likely retain management responsibility for some of the recreational uses, the picnic area rentals and oversight of any non-SFPC events in the new park. User fees and equipment rental fees should be reevaluated to ensure a minimum break-even scenario. To maximize potential revenue, pricing can be scaled so that public users pay lesser fees while corporate users pay more. The Conservancy should also consider charging nominal “good faith” fees to recreational groups for ongoing use of the Park.

The Conservancy generates \$350,000 from three large events each year: the Green Shoe Gala, Down to Earth, and Starry Nights. Special events generate revenue while building brand identity and driving visitation to the Park. As such, special event programming should be increased in the new park. An opening gala and related programming throughout the first year present ideal opportunities to raise operating funds and increase public awareness and engagement.

*Recommendations:*

- *Evaluate new recreational uses and identify those appropriate for third party operators or ground leases.*
- *Establish a pricing policy for user fees and rentals to ensure a break even scenario for those uses.*
- *Expand SFPC's event programming.*

*Ground Leases*

Leasing to a private operator can maximize operating efficiency, reduce liability, and guarantee a revenue stream to the Park. Shelby Farms already generates \$15,000 per year from its lessees, including the Agricenter, Shelby Farms Stables, Paddle Boats (county-run), and an office tenant. However, significant demand appears to exist for uses such as expanded meeting and event venues, a full service restaurant, and additional active recreation opportunities.

The Master Plan currently includes a 10,000 SF boathouse, a 7,500 SF restaurant and a 15,000 SF retreat center. While there is demonstrated demand for these uses, a market study is needed to gauge the exact product most likely to succeed and comport with the restrictions on use of the site. The Conservancy may also consider adding office space to the Master Plan to rent to mission-compatible non-profits or research and educational organizations.

*Recommendations:*

- *Determine uses compatible with the Conservation Easement and Master Plan.*
- *Perform a market study to determine demand for these uses and adjust the Master Plan accordingly.*
- *Develop a leasing and management plan to evaluate, price, and manage potential operators, vendors, and ground lessees.*
- *Begin dialogue with potential partners including restaurateurs, meeting and event center managers, active recreation vendors, and potential research, educational or non-profit tenants.*

*Paid Parking*

Many other parks in the United States and Canada have successfully captured parking revenues to support operating expenses. Chicago and Vancouver are leaders, with 5.6% and 4.4% of operating expenses generated by parking revenues, respectively. Parking at Shelby Farms is currently free, and will remain primarily free to support the Park’s mission as a public resource.

SFPC can encourage satellite parking and internal bus use by charging for a portion of those spaces in the center of the Park. Paid parking is also a relatively low cost measure to implement. Using conservative assumptions, paid parking could generate \$300,000 per year, assuming the park charges \$10 for day-long parking at 400 spaces, and the spaces are filled once per day on weekends for six months of the year.

*Recommendation: Develop a paid parking program.*



Green Revenue

Shelby Farms’ considerable natural areas may enable some non-traditional revenue generating uses including a wind farm and/or a wetlands mitigation bank, both of which are compatible with the Park’s Easement and with the Master Plan. HR&A investigated the potential financial benefits of these uses.

A wind farm requires 14 mph of wind at the rotor height and must be located more than 1,000 feet from the tree line or buildings. Since rotor heights vary, a rule of thumb for site feasibility is 20 mph of wind at 200 meters. Sites can typically accommodate one turbine per acre, and each turbine can generate up to \$250,000 per year depending on local utility prices. There are currently 5-6 turbines planned near the research fields in Shelby Farms. The setback in this area is more than sufficient and turbines would actually be much taller than the treeline. Initial research indicates a wind speed of 17 mph at 200 meters.

Establishment of a wetlands mitigation bank has some potential to offset capital costs, if not generate significant operating income. Ideal sites for mitigation banks have hydric soil, which typically indicates that the site was once a wetland and was filled in for other uses but could still be restored. Mitigation banking requires an initial capital investment to reestablish the wetland; credits are then released over seven years as the wetland develops successfully. One credit is given for every two acres of restored wetlands, and one credit is given for every four acres of newly created wetlands (because they are often less successful). In the Memphis area, a credit sells for \$15,000-\$25,000 (one time payment). The Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) often buys credits for its capital projects, and it is likely that the planned Parkway adjacent to Shelby Farms will require wetland mitigation credits.

Field Operations has identified three sites within Shelby Farms which may have hydric soil, and where wetland uses would be compatible with the Master Plan:

- Area in south of Agricenter campus along Wolf River (50-80 acres)
- Around Patriot Lake (25-30 acres)
- Around Catch’em Lake (40-50 acres)

Thus, in a best case scenario, mitigation banking could yield a seven year revenue stream on the order of a total \$2 - \$3 million. While mitigation banking may not generate significant ongoing revenues for park operations, transferring a portion of the land for use as a mitigation bank would relieve the Conservancy of the responsibility of developing and maintaining that area. Various options for mitigation banking might be explored, including partnering with a private mitigation banking firm to

maximize revenue to the SFPC, and partnering with TDOT, possibly including transferring soil from the expanded lake to be used for the adjacent Parkway.

Recommendations:

- Perform wind tests and talk to local utility operators to determine the feasibility and revenue potential of a wind farm.
- Perform soil tests to confirm size and location of potential mitigation banks.
- Explore potential partnership with TDOT or a private mitigation bank.

OFF SITE, PRIVATE FUNDING

Philanthropy

Public parks organizations are generally more successful at raising funds for high profile capital projects and programming than for routine operations and maintenance. However, some conservancies such as the Rose Kennedy Greenway and Millennium Park’s Lurie Gardens, have successfully raised funds for both capital and operating needs though “legacy” contributions in which a capital gift is coupled with a contribution dedicated to the ongoing maintenance of the capital item. The capital campaign for Shelby Farms Park should work to ensure that a portion of each philanthropic contribution is earmarked for an operating endowment.

Strong champions are the most critical element in maximizing private philanthropic contributions. Shelby Farms already has champions who are actively engaged in the Master Planning process and are seeking out other major donors. In addition, the SFPC is planning a membership campaign to begin this August. The Park has a strong existing donor base and the communities immediately surrounding the park are ideal potential donors.

Recommendations:

- Support park champions as they pursue new major donors
- Link major capital gifts to operating endowment contributions
- Provide staff support for a comprehensive capital campaign

Corporate Sponsorships

Sponsors are willing to pay for capital naming rights and event sponsorships for advertising purposes as well as to be good corporate citizens. The value of naming rights for events and capital features is based on the projected number of “views” by visitors. As a public amenity with a large and diverse visitor base, Shelby Farms can likely capture considerable income from corporate sponsorships. Shelby Farms has an established corporate sponsor base for its events, and sold last year’s title sponsorships for Down to Earth and the Green Shoe Gala for \$25,000 and \$15,000 respectively.



Current major sponsors include:

- AutoZone
- Blue Cross/Blue Shield
- FedEx Corporation
- Harrah's
- International Paper
- McVean Trading Company
- Methodist Healthcare
- Nike
- Smith Nephew
- Wolfchase Toyota
- Baptist Heath Care
- Chuck Hutton Chevrolet
- First Tennessee Bank
- Hyde Family Foundations
- Landers Ford
- Medtronic Sofomar Danek
- MLGW
- Pinnacle Air
- Wild Oats / Whole Foods

While SFPC has successfully cultivated an event sponsor base, it does not currently have a capital feature naming rights policy. The Master Plan centers on 12 “landscape rooms” within the Park, which could be named for major contributions. Smaller iconic capital features could also be included in a naming rights campaign. A naming rights policy, as with philanthropic contributions, should include a capital and an operating component.

*Recommendations:*

- Continue event sponsorship program, adjusting price points as visitorship increases.
- Identify and value naming rights opportunities based on projected visitorship.
- Include twelve landscape rooms and all major capital features in a naming rights program.

*Grants*

Significant grant resources exist for parks, but obtaining grant funding requires considerable staff support. Shelby Farms raised \$725,000 last year in grants, and anticipates \$815,000 in the coming year. The SFPC should conservatively anticipate ongoing grant support at this level, as it may not increase incrementally with park development.

*Recommendation:*

- Continue pursuing grant opportunities
- Evaluate future staff needs to support enhanced fundraising efforts.

**KEY QUESTIONS**

As the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy and Field Operations move forward in the development of Shelby Farms Park, the following key questions should be taken into consideration:

- *How can capital investments be phased to correspond with increased revenue opportunities?*
- *Which additional on-site uses are compatible with the easement and Master Plan and can therefore be incorporated into the Park?*
- *Which activities and amenities are appropriate for SFPC to manage, and which are better suited for a vendor, fee operator, or ground lease?*
- *What additional staff capacities are needed to manage new uses?*
- *What additional staff capacities are needed to obtain increased private support from philanthropic, corporate, and grant sources?*
- *How can the SFPC and the Agricenter share in both capital and operating responsibilities to maximize the benefit to both organizations?*







# 8.0 CONCLUSION



## 8.1 CONCLUSION

Shelby Farms Park is already an amazing reserve of public parkland, amenity and urban nature. Its huge scale offers an extraordinary resource for people who are interested in large-scale recreation activities – strolling, jogging, cycling, mountain biking, rollerblading, picnicking, dog walking, swimming, kayaking, windsurfing, sailing, fishing and the like. The site's unique agrarian character and diverse ecological habitat is a great draw to a public interested in escaping the frenetic quality of the city and immersing themselves in a large-scale 'green' landscape. Whether for hiking, bird watching, private refuge, reflection, plant and wildlife identification, ecological research or education, Shelby Farms Park offers a "Big Nature" setting that lays the grounds for creating one of the world's most distinct and distinguished urban parks.

The Shelby Farms Park Master Plan amplifies these qualities to provide for a higher intensity and variety of uses on site. A new legible physical identity highlighted by an expanded Patriot Lake; a revised circulation system replete with multi-use circuits and user-specific paths; concentrated areas of public programs; an expanded educational agenda and accompanying facilities; cutting edge agrarian practices; and a new focus on sustainable development and renewable energy sources will distinguish Shelby Farms as the 21st century example of what great urban public space is capable of contributing to a city and a region.

It has been mentioned a number of times previously within this report, but its importance bears repeating. Through intelligent management and enhancement of Shelby Farms' distinct natural resources, the development of the Park has the capacity to transform Memphis and the Region. The Park will significantly enrich the culture of the City; it will redefine the reputation of the place, and help to attract new creative talent, business and families to the area; and it will offer a great resource for the improvement of public health, fitness and well-being. Shelby Farms Park will help Memphis offer a wonderful quality of life that is both highly desirable and globally enviable.

Shelby Farms Park will impact the way Memphis and West Tennessee move forward into the 21st century.

















