



# JESTER PARK MASTER PLAN

December 16, 2009



WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE MEMBERS OF THE POLK COUNTY CONSERVATION PLANNING COMMITTEE AND POLK COUNTY STAFF. WE WOULD ESPECIALLY LIKE TO THANK THE PUBLIC PARTICIPANTS THAT ATTENDED THE COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS AND PARTICIPATED IN FOCUS GROUPS.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The master plan for Jester Park provides a clear development plan for the more than 1,834-acre park. The year-long planning process began in late December 2008 and has involved the local public, park users, US Army Corps of Engineers, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Polk County Conservation Advisory Board, RDG Planning & Design consultants and Polk County Conservation Board Staff through public workshops, working sessions and ongoing meetings.

Since 1958, when Jester Park became a park, recreation use has experienced steady growth. Originally, The Park was a river-based park along the Des Moines River providing camping, picnicking and fishing facilities. In 1975, the Saylorville Dam, on the Des Moines River, created the 6,000-acre Saylorville Reservoir. The creation of Saylorville Reservoir provided improved water-based recreation opportunities for Jester Park users. Additional campgrounds and picnic areas have been developed, as well as hiking and equestrian trails. The Jester Park Golf Course was added in 1971 and the Equestrian Center was added in 1979.

The Park is a combination of heavily wooded ridges and restored native grasslands. Spring flooding occurs most years and the occasional, more extensive, flooding restricts what facilities and activities that can be provided adjacent to Saylorville Reservoir.

Public input and park managers identified a variety of park needs in response to the changing amount and type of users. These needs include improved access to and within The Park, improved camping facilities, additional trail opportunities, expanded winter access, more fully accessible facilities, and increased amenities in support of interpretation and environmental education activities.

Several significant improvements are recommended in the master plan. The most significant is the relocation of the main entrance to the west side of The Park and the closing of the existing south and north entrances. This improved entrance location will reduce the travel distance to the various facilities within The Park and provide for improved park security. In conjunction with the relocated entrance, a conservation center is proposed at the new entrance and will serve as a park entry station, interpretive facility, environmental education center and Polk County Conservation office. Upgrading additional campsites to include electricity and developing an additional campground will respond to the growing demand for more highly developed campsites. Providing water and electricity to the heavily used picnic shelters will provide improved facilities for these users as well.

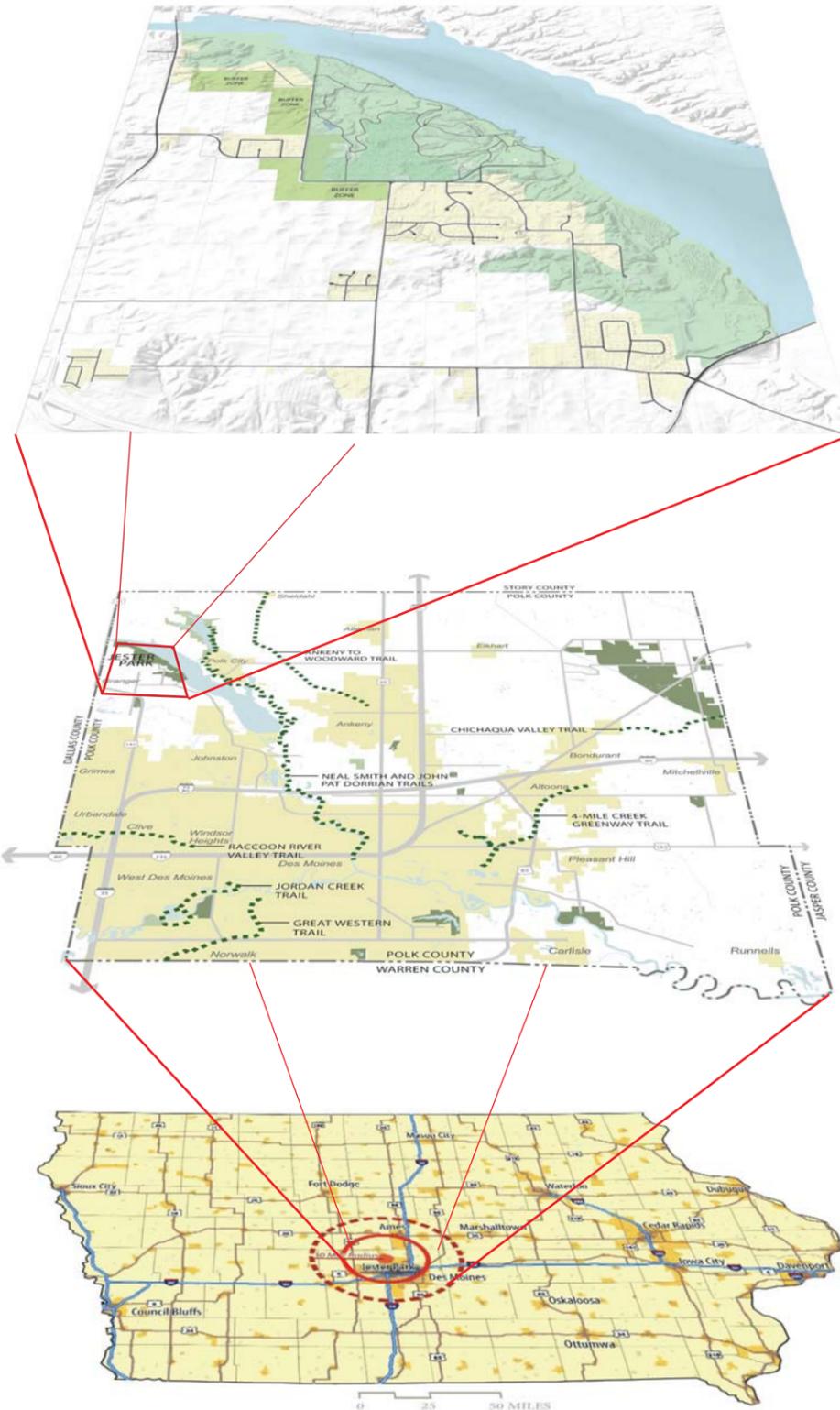
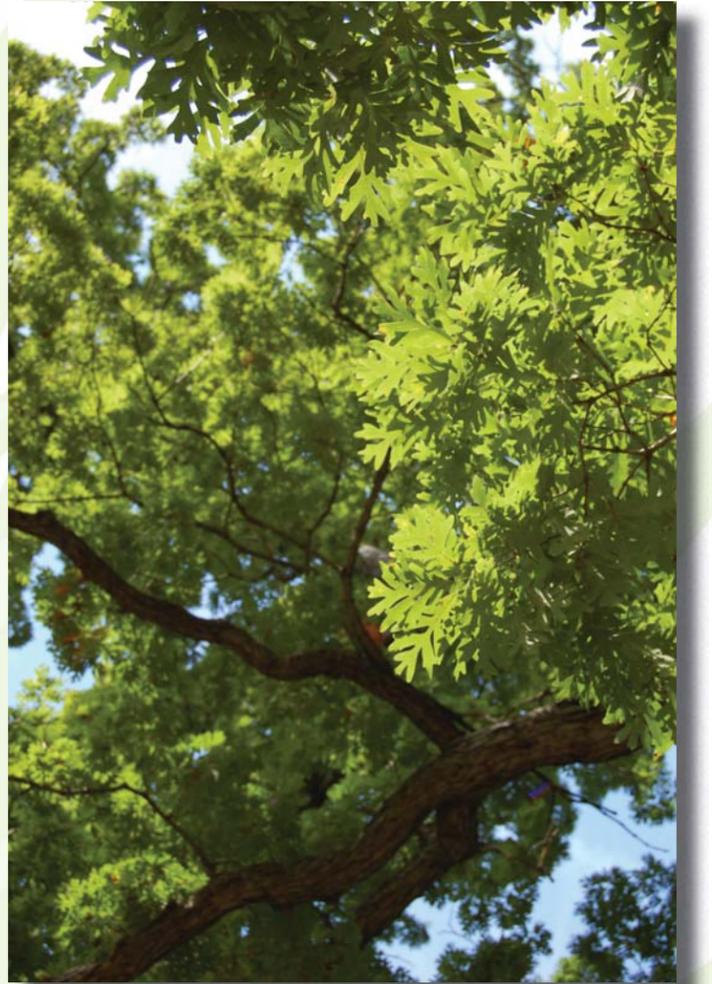


FIGURE 0.1 - 0.3  
State of Iowa, Polk County, Jester Park



FIGURE 0.4  
Jester Park Master Plan



## PURPOSE

The master plan for Jester Park provides a guide for future development of the more than 1,834-acre park. Park master plans provide a means to determine the best uses for a park and to optimize management of The Park's natural and man-made resources. The Jester Park master plan will serve as a general guide for future appropriate park uses and their approximate location within The Park. The plan will provide a long-range vision (10-20 year timeframe) for future development and programming. The plan is conceptual in nature and is not intended to address detailed issues related to site planning, facility designs, or ongoing park operations.

## PROCESS

The Jester Park Master Plan process began in late 2008. An initial public meeting was conducted in January 2009 to gather input from park users, neighbors and other interested individuals. A Polk County Conservation (PCC) Planning Committee was developed to oversee the planning process. The Committee completed an assessment of the physical and natural resources of The Park and surrounding areas. Additionally, the Committee gathered input from other agencies including the US Army Corps of Engineers and Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

A second public meeting was conducted in May 2009 to provide feedback to the public regarding their initial input and share the findings from the resource assessments. The Committee then developed preliminary recommendations based on the information gathered internally and from the previous public meetings. These preliminary recommendations were presented at a third public meeting in September. Based on the input received, a draft master plan was prepared and presented to the Polk County Conservation Board at their October public meeting. The Board approved the master plan two months later at their December public meeting, concluding the year-long planning process.



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## GOALS

Preliminary goals were identified to guide the planning process. These goals were based on concerns and opportunities identified by the public, other agencies and the staff. The goals can be summarized as:

- Improve The Park trail system
- Increase winter recreation opportunities
- Respond to the increasing demand for improved amenities at developed campgrounds
- Address existing park access and internal road system concerns
- Provide improved accessibility for visitors with disabilities
- Enhance opportunities for on-site passive and active environmental education activities
- Minimize impacts from reoccurring high water events

Additionally, the following outcomes were identified as products from the process:

- Foster improved collaboration with the US Army Corps of Engineers and Big Creek State Park
- Emphasize sustainable design construction maintenance principles
- Prioritize recommended improvements
- Reduce operating costs, where feasible

FIGURE I.1

The conceptual plan for future development of Jester Park will provide a 10-20 year vision for The Park, its facilities and operations.



## HISTORY

Jester Park became part of the Polk County Conservation park system in 1958. The original park lands were purchased from the Lewis A. Jester family. Additions have been made increasing the total acreage of Polk County Conservation park land to over 12,000 acres.

In 1981, Polk County Conservation (PCC) and the US Army Corps of Engineers (COE) agreed to a long-term lease that provides for PCC to manage an additional 1,000 acres of adjacent COE lands as part of Jester Park. The total park area today includes 1,834 acres.

The Saylorville Dam was completed in 1975 by the US Army Corps of Engineers. The original permanent conservation pool water level was established at an elevation of 833 feet. In 1985 the conservation pool level was raised to 836 feet which provided a lake of about 6,000 acres that extends 17 miles upstream.

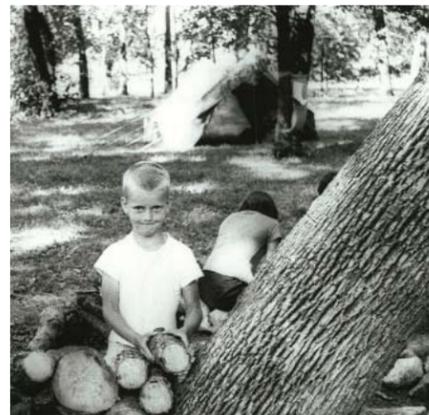
At full flood control (890' elevation), the lake covers 16,700 acres of land and extends 54 miles in length. In the last 25 years, water levels exceeded the 890' level causing extensive flooding and infrastructure damage (1984, 1991, 1993, 2008). Jester Park has been impacted by high water levels since Saylorville Lake was created. High water levels typically impact existing boat ramps, campgrounds, and major portions of the trail system. During times of high water, which typically occur at times of high recreation use, much of The Park is closed to public use.



Jon Crose & John Wymore



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FIGURE 2.1

The photographs above identify early planning and popular park activities.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

Jester Park is located on the west side of the Des Moines River Valley. Most of The Park was shaped by glaciers over 15,000 years ago. These glaciers and rivers, formed by meltwater, created flat uplands and steeply sloped bluffs along the Des Moines River. That glacially formed landscape is still found at Jester Park today.

The loam soils and diverse slopes provide for a landscape rich in vegetative diversity. In the early 1800's much of Jester Park was tall grass prairie with deciduous forests along the river bottom and steeper slopes.

Currently, three forest communities are found in Jester Park. The oak-hickory community occurs on dry uplands and south and west facing slopes. The oak-maple basswood community occurs on many of the north facing slopes and moist,

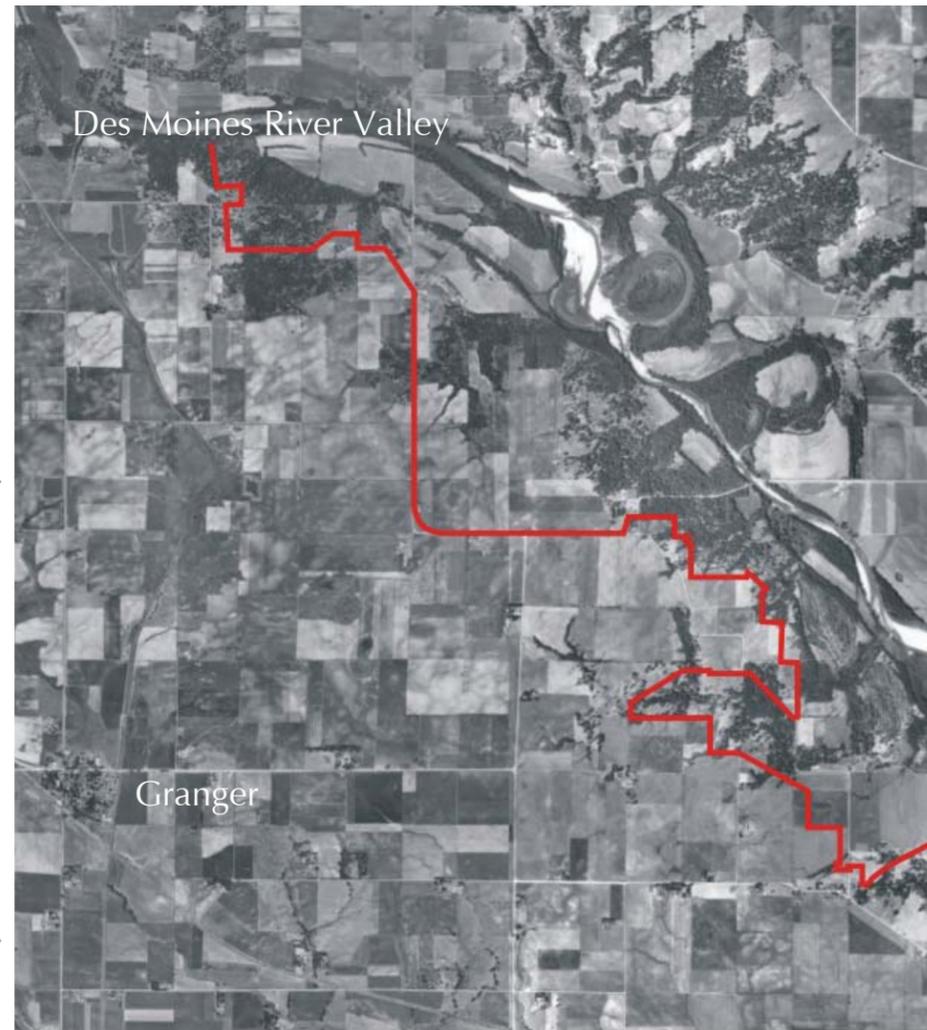


FIGURE 2.2

This 1950's aerial illustrates the limited development around Jester Park (red boundary). Note that the reservoir had not been constructed.

well-drained uplands. The riparian community consisting of silver maple, willows, and boxelder is typically found along the lakeshore and stream banks. A 50-acre reconstructed native prairie has been re-established within The Park.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

The rich natural environment found in Jester Park enabled past cultures to establish communities and provide for their existence. Four major archeological periods have been identified that represent past cultures that existed within the area. These periods were identified as the Paleo-Indians, Archaic, Woodland and the Oneota. Evidence of the Woodland and Oneota periods are common in the river valley. Over 200 known archeological sites have been inventoried in the nearby Des Moines River Valley, with 61 sites within Jester Park.

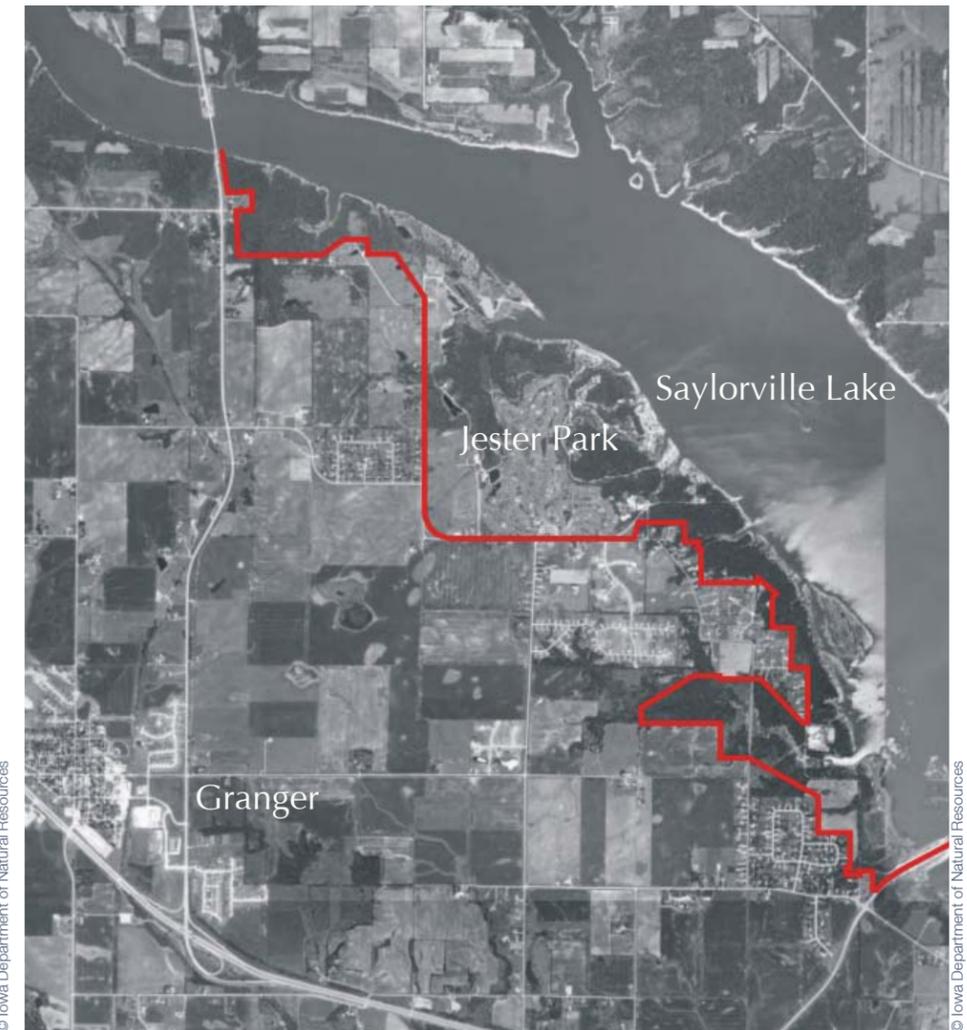


FIGURE 2.3

This 2002 aerial illustrates a significant land use change. Notice the significant amount of residential development and the extent of Saylorville Lake.

## PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Jester Park is a well known signature park in central Iowa. The Park offers a wide variety of facilities that support a range of recreation activities. The Park's longtime favorite attraction has been the 35-acre animal exhibit which includes both bison and elk. A growing favorite is the recently added Natural Playscape that provides a natural play area for children and encourages their imagination and introduces them to nature.

The Park has five campgrounds providing 203 developed campsites. Electricity is available at 52 of the existing campsites. Showers and flush toilets are located within two of the campgrounds, with the other three campgrounds serviced by vault toilets.

The Park has five open picnic shelters. These shelters are located throughout The Park and can accommodate groups ranging up to 150 people. In addition to the picnic shelters, picnic areas are scattered throughout The Park providing picnic opportunities to smaller groups.

The Park has one double ramp boat access and a single ramp boat access providing boating access to Saylorville Reservoir.

There are approximately eight miles of natural hiking trails within The Park maintained for hikers. During the winter some of these trails are groomed for cross country skiing.

An equestrian center provides an indoor and outdoor arena and both indoor and outdoor boarding. The indoor arena provides facilities for equestrian riding lessons, therapeutic sessions for children and adults with disabilities and a variety of public events. Trail rides are provided to the public from May - October. Wagon or sleigh rides are also provided year round to the public. The Park offers over 6.5 miles of equestrian trails to the public.

The Jester Park Golf Course has an 18-hole golf course, a 9 hole par 3 executive golf course, and a driving range with practice greens. The Jester Park Golf Course

has continued to see growth in usage and maintains certification by Audubon International as a certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary for course management. The golf course is operated by private management under a lease agreement with PCC.

The modern park lodge, built in 2001, can host up to 250 people. The lodge is operated by private management under a lease agreement with PCC. The lodge has become very popular for weddings, family reunions and office parties which are catered through a private operator. In addition, the lodge is used for public events including environmental education programs, public meetings and public concerts.

The Polk County Conservation Board office is located at Jester Park and provides support to all PCC facilities and areas within Polk County. In addition, much of the operations and maintenance staff and equipment for PCC are based at Jester Park.

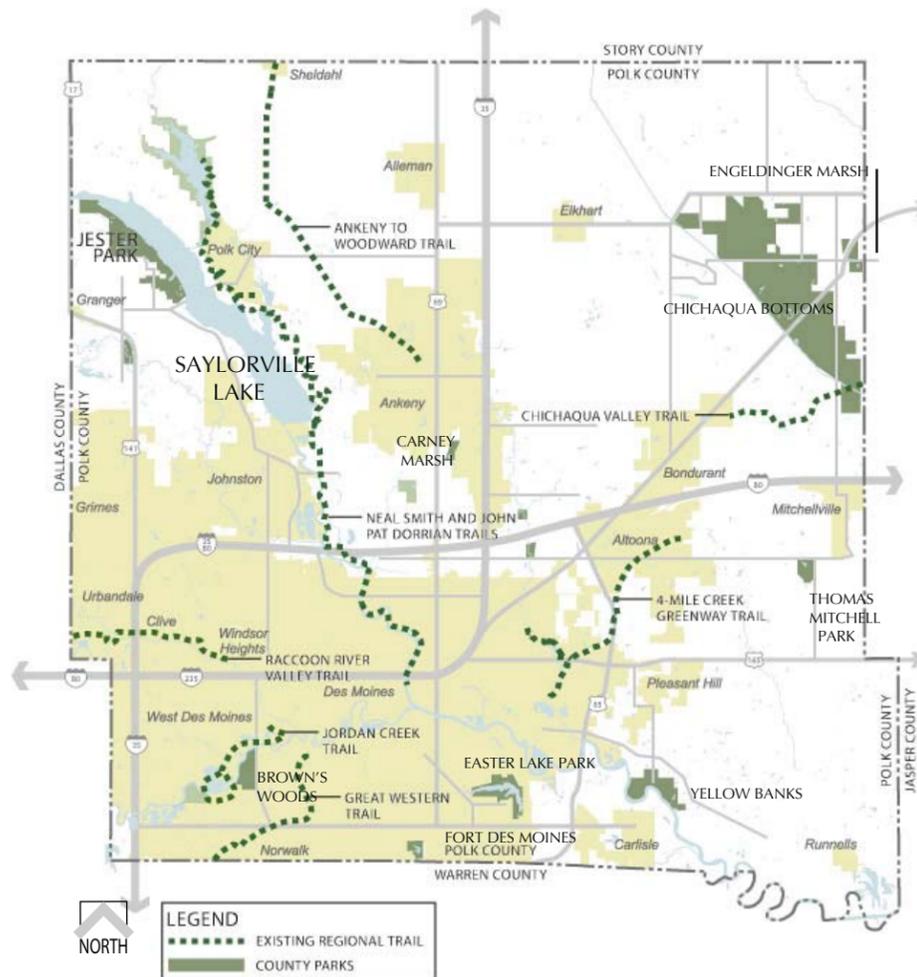


FIGURE 2.4

Polk County Conservation manages over 12,000 acres of park land. Polk County in total has more than 30,745 acres of public parks, open space and floodway combined. Saylorville Lake is the result of Saylorville Dam on the Des Moines River and is used for flood control, drinking water and recreation purposes. Construction of Saylorville Dam was completed in 1975. At normal levels, it has a surface area of 9.3 square miles. It is a US Army Corps of Engineers lake property. Additional information available at: <http://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/PublicWorks/PDFs/CompPlan/3LandUsePlan.pdf>

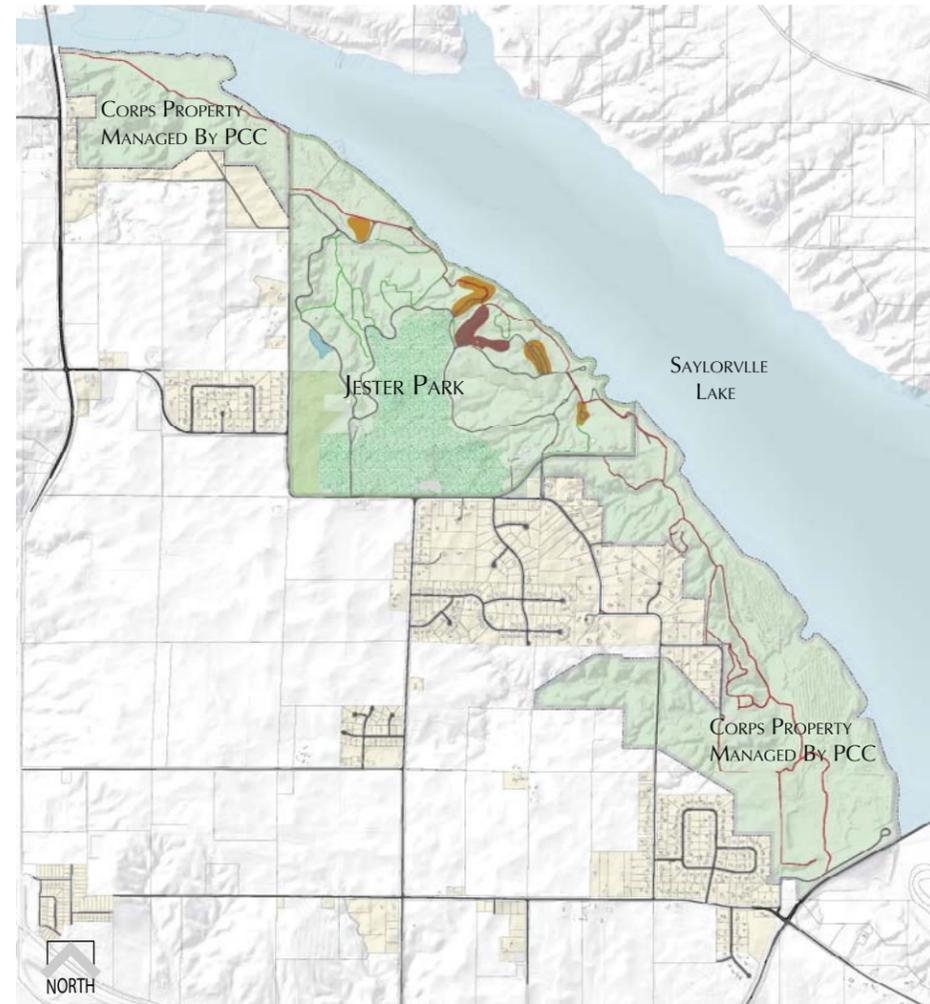


FIGURE 2.5

The Corps leases property to the county north and south of Jester Park. The county utilizes this land for trail access and habitat.

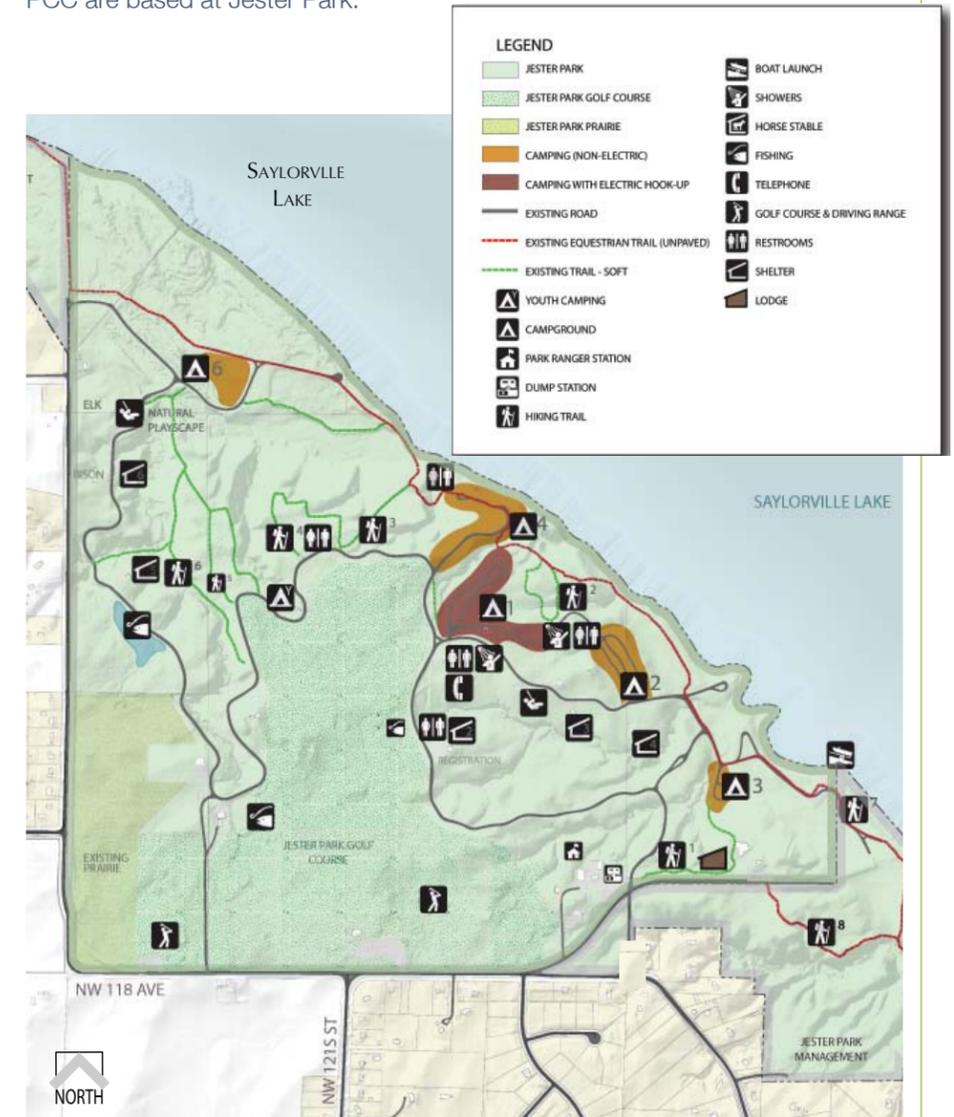


FIGURE 2.6

Existing facilities within Jester Park

## SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Jester Park use has seen steady growth, increasing to over 287,500 visitors per year. The main recreational activities include picnicking, camping and golf. Other significant uses include hiking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing and fishing. In addition, The Park hosts numerous youth environmental education programs throughout the year. These programs involve groups ranging from a few individuals to multiple classrooms.

The peak use is concentrated during the summer and into early fall, while winter uses such as cross country skiing, sledding and hiking are increasingly popular.

In 2001, and again in 2006, the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) was developed to provide a comprehensive approach to recreation and protection of fish, wildlife and historical resources. This plan utilized state demographic trends, recreational standards and trends. The culmination of this planning effort identified four primary planning goals with performance-based objectives supporting each goal. The primary goals are as follows:

- Meet local recreational needs by providing close-to-home opportunities;
- Increase availability of outdoor recreational resources to the public;
- Enhance the quality of the outdoor recreational resources;
- Encourage state, county, city and private sector planning for recreation to meet the needs of Iowans.

From these planning efforts, the Jester Park Master Plan process has been better informed with state-wide trends and considerations. Jester Park is in close proximity to the largest population base in the State of Iowa. As the State of Iowa's population growth is stagnant, Polk, Dallas and Warren Counties are all expected to grow in the next several years. The largest portion of this population is 65 years and older.

Resource availability in Polk County is aided by state, county and municipal parks. These resources are significant. Most state parks provide both access to natural resources and recreational facilities. County parks provide a similar offering. Most municipal parks are much more recreationally based.



FIGURE 2.7

The images above illustrate some of the opportunities at Jester Park.

Recent economic downturns in the local and national economy, paired with the increasing cost of gas, has continued and strengthened a "stay local" trend for vacations. That coupled with the growing green movement, provides a great demand for access to state and county parks including short and extended stays.

Both state-wide recreational trends and national trends are tracking closely. The following is a list of recreational activities that Iowans identified as top interests in a recent survey:

- Family-oriented outdoor activities
- Observing wildlife
- Using trails
- Fishing
- Hiking
- Camping

Design considerations that provide insight into the Jester Park Master Plan are as follows:

- Iowa and the Des Moines metropolitan area have a significant population that is 65 years and older
- The interests most commonly noted by the public were family activities and non-structured recreation including wildlife observation and pathway use, specifically recreational trails (hard or improved) and nature trails (soft or unimproved)
- Accessibility for an aging population
- Access to natural areas for observation, hiking or fishing
- Areas that provide shade and shelter for family-oriented activities
- Greater demand for primitive and enhanced camping and RV sites

For more information: <http://www.iowadnr.gov/grants/scorp.html>



FIGURE 2.8

Previous master planning efforts utilized in the development of the Jester Park Master Plan



## PROCESS

Public input and involvement in developing the Jester Park Master Plan was an essential and important aspect of the master plan process. Initial public meetings were held in January 2009. The first meeting involved park users, neighbors, organizations and staff. The second meeting involved the Polk County Conservation Advisory Committee. The purpose of these initial meetings included developing goals and priorities, identifying improvements to existing park facilities, and proposing facilities or services to be added to The Park.

A follow-up public meeting was held in May 2009 to share the information that the staff had gathered and to obtain additional input from the public. During this meeting, some of the key issues identified by the public in January were further defined. These issues included park entrances, recreation facilities improvements including campgrounds, picnic shelters and cabins, trail improvements and improvements to programs and services.

Key elements that came from these two public meetings are listed below.

- Park access
- Protection of park natural resources
- Internal traffic movement
- Increased winter opportunities
- Additional trail opportunities
- Improved accessibility to facilities
- Improved campground amenities
- Increased interpretive opportunities

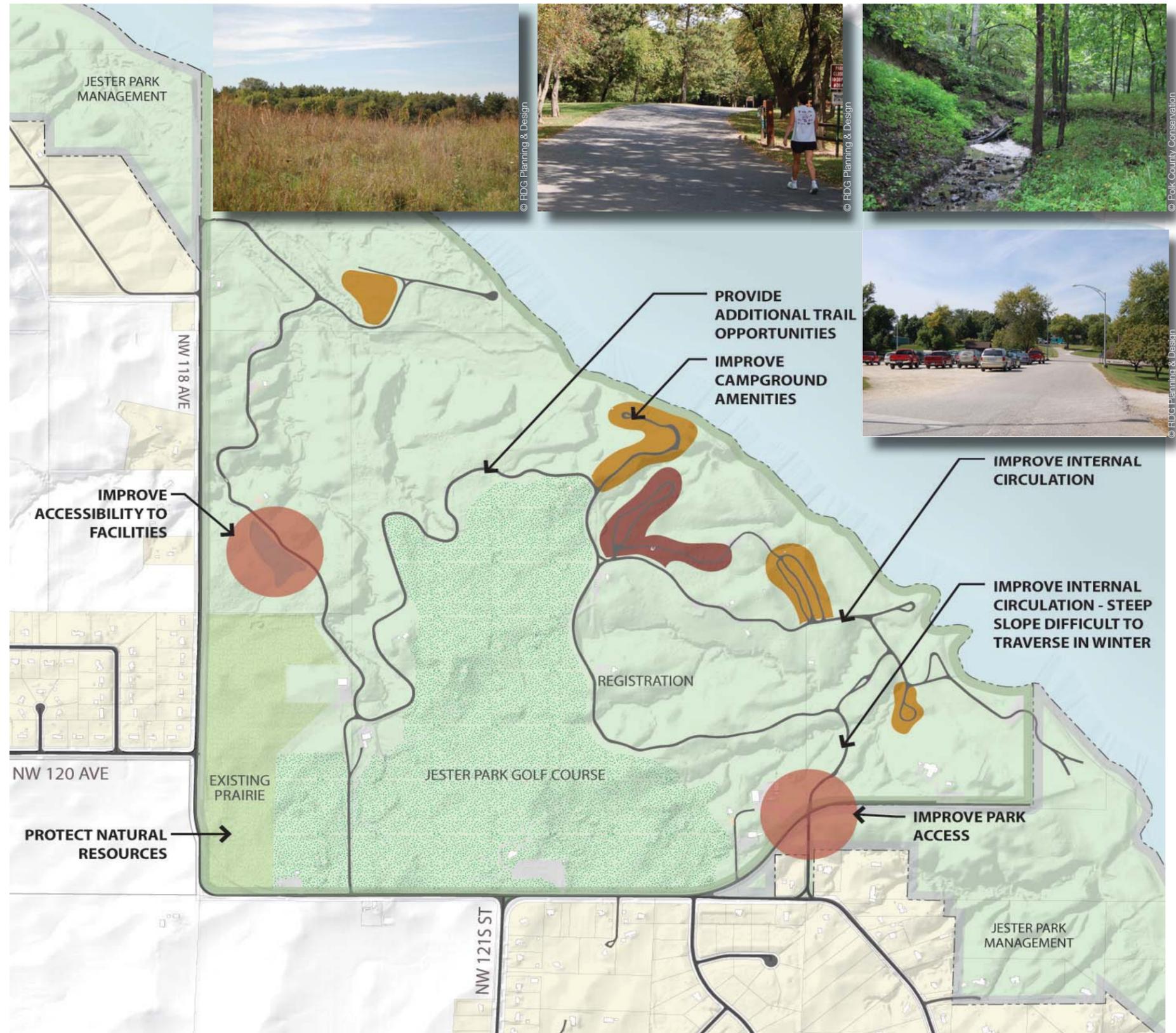
A public meeting was held in September 2009 to share the proposed changes and improvements to The Park. These proposals were also shared with the Polk County Conservation Advisory Committee. Public response to the proposals was received and considered in preparing the final recommendations.

The draft master plan was presented to the Polk County Conservation Board at their October meeting. The final master plan was approved by the Board at their December meeting.



**FIGURE 3.1**

Two Dam Pond is frequently used for education and interpretation programs. Access is currently limited and not accessible.

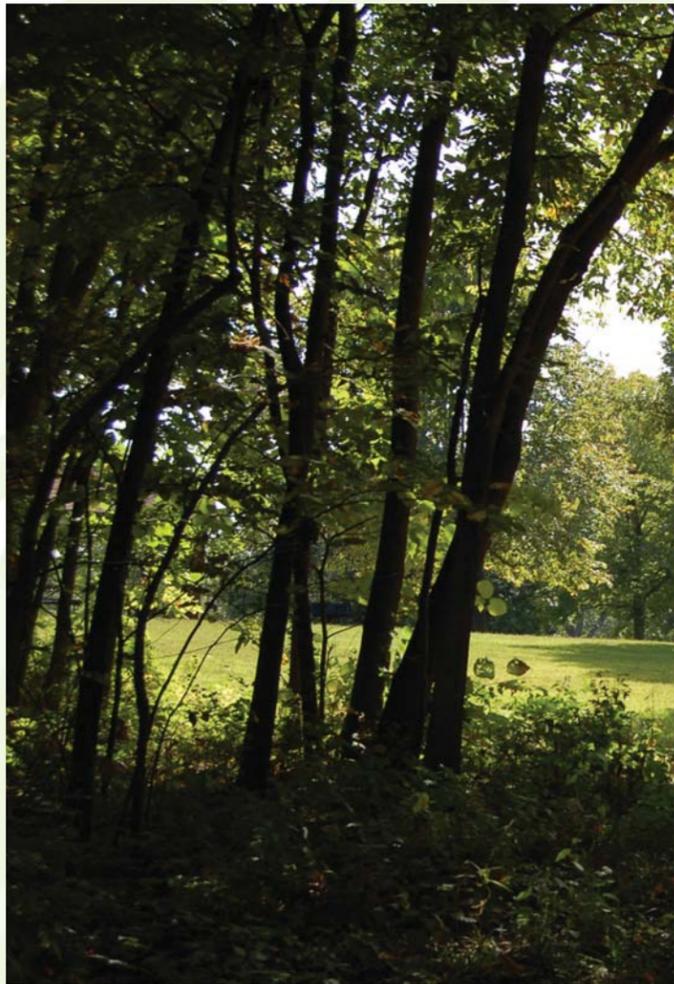


**FIGURE 3.2**

This graphic illustrates the key elements and their locations.



# Chapter IV: Evaluation of Current & Future Needs



## EVALUATION OF CURRENT AND FUTURE PARK NEEDS

The process of identifying the current and future needs of Jester Park involves a synthesis of the information received throughout the process. This information was gathered through public meetings, input from other governmental agencies, natural resource assessments and additional data obtained by the staff and consultants. The needs can be organized into four categories: land uses, natural resources, circulation and facilities.

### LAND USES

- Minimize impacts from surrounding residential development
- Provide safe access routes to The Park
- Minimize conflicts with adjacent landowners

### NATURAL RESOURCES

- Protect sensitive slopes
- Improve health of woodlands
- Manage native prairie
- Protect water quality in park ponds and streams

### CIRCULATION/PATHWAYS

- Provide improved vehicular access into The Park
- Improve vehicular circulation within The Park
- Provide improved winter access
- Connect park use areas with pedestrian trails

### FACILITIES

- Provide additional water and sanitary facilities at high use areas
- Improve equestrian trail system
- Provide additional campsites with electric hook-ups
- Improve opportunities for people with disabilities
- Expand facilities to support environmental education programs
- Increase interpretive facilities to support both active and passive interpretation

LEGEND			
	JESTER PARK		BOAT LAUNCH
	JESTER PARK GOLF COURSE		SHOWERS
	JESTER PARK PRAIRIE		HORSE STABLE
	CAMPING (NON-ELECTRIC)		FISHING
	CAMPING WITH ELECTRIC HOOK-UP		TELEPHONE
	EXISTING ROAD		GOLF COURSE & DRIVING RANGE
	EXISTING EQUESTRIAN TRAIL (UNPAVED)		RESTROOMS
	EXISTING TRAIL - SOFT		SHELTER
	YOUTH CAMPING		LODGE
	CAMPGROUND		
	PARK RANGER STATION		
	DUMP STATION		
	HIKING TRAIL		

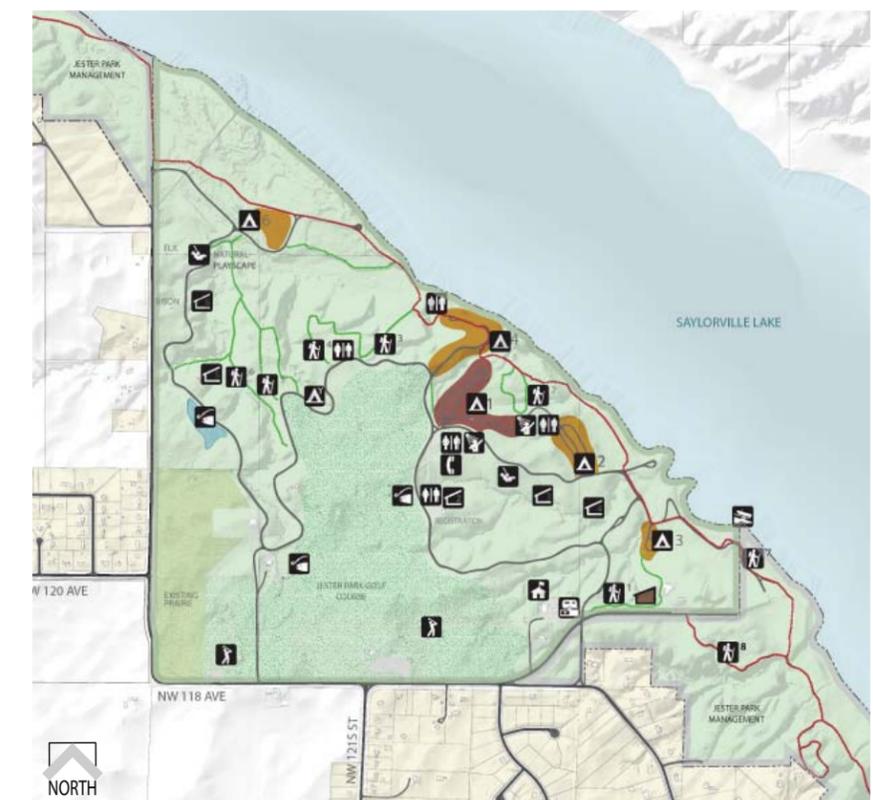
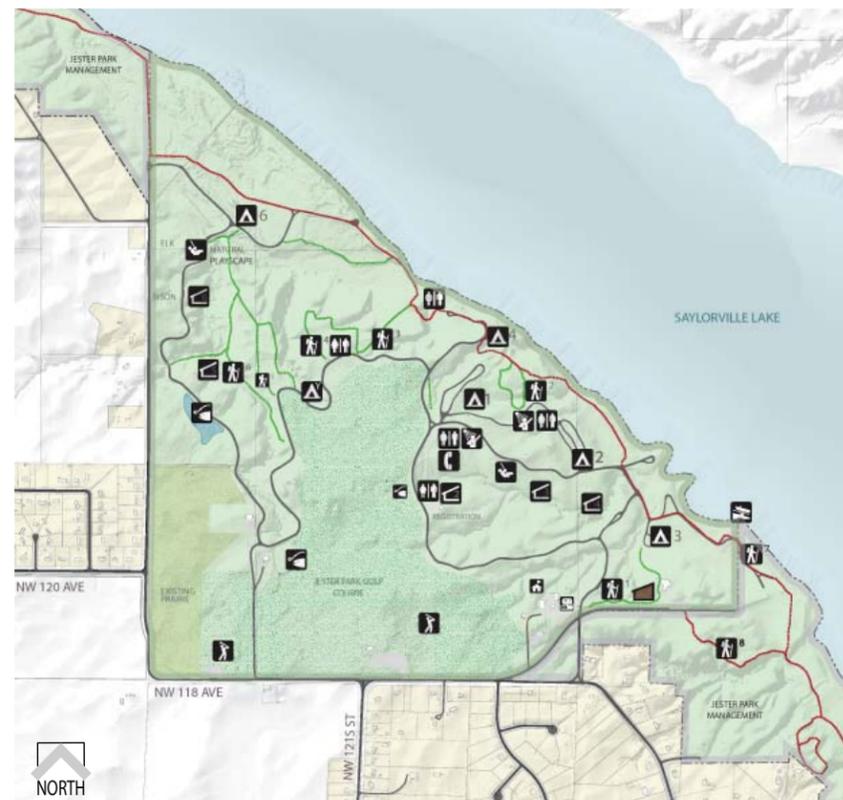
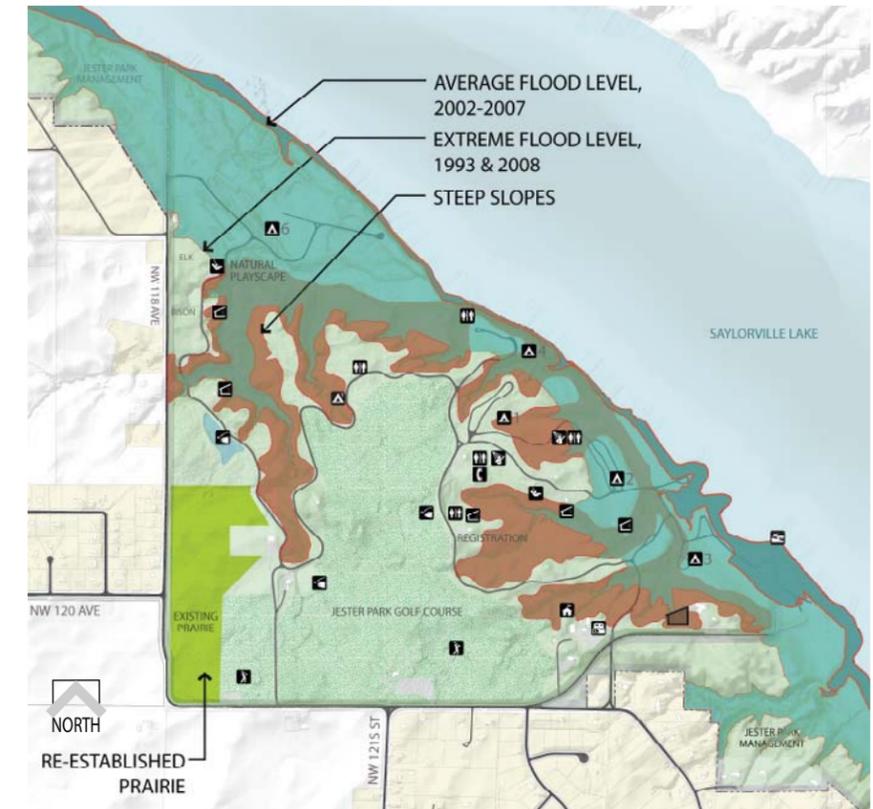
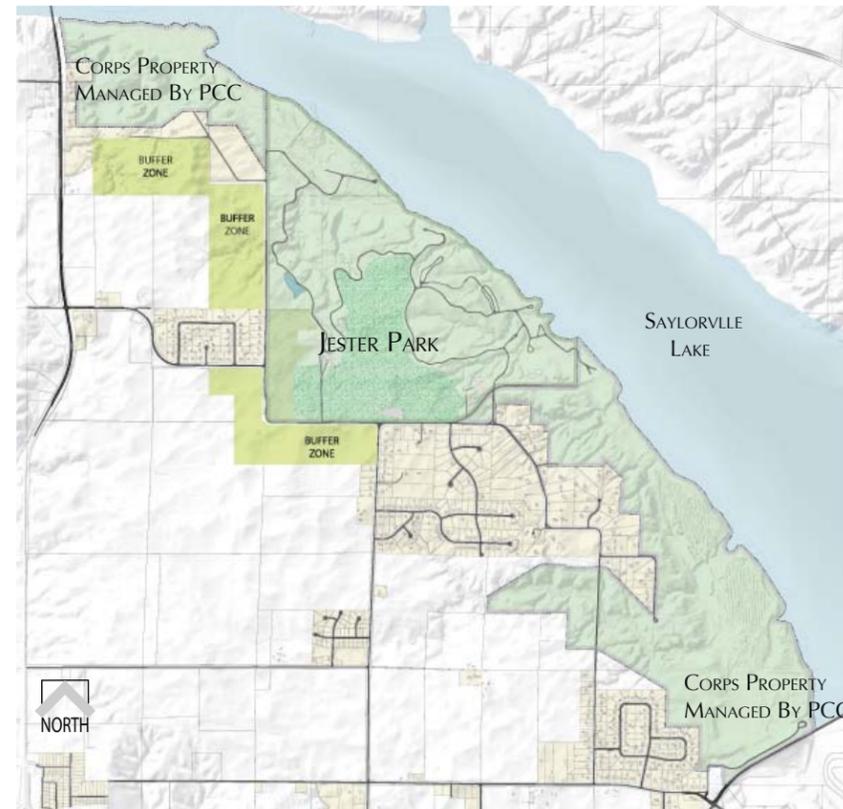


FIGURE 4.1 - 4.4

Top Left - Land Use, Top Right - Natural Resources, Lower Left - Circulation, Lower Right - Facilities



### MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATION

The key outcome of a master plan is the actions that are proposed as a result of the planning process. Recommendations were arrived at after considering a range of alternatives. The recommendations respond directly to the needs identified through the planning process and shape the future for how The Park will be improved. The following recommendations include a brief explanation of the basis for the recommendation. The recommendations are grouped by category.

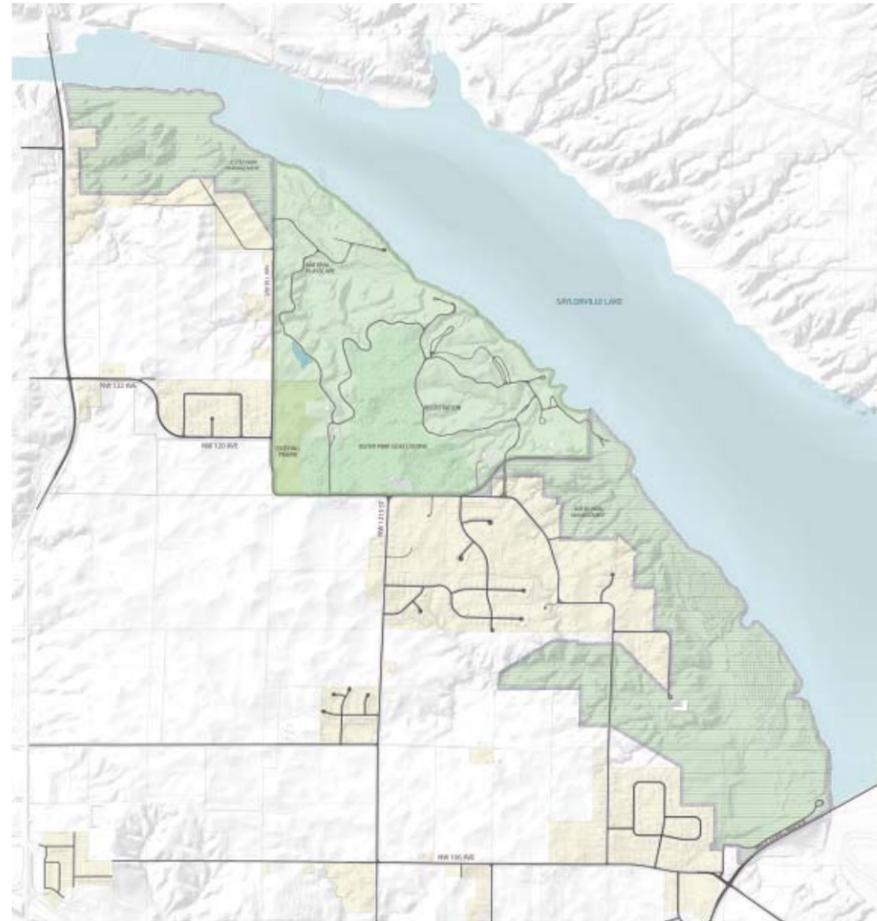


FIGURE 5.1

Master plan with steep slope overlay

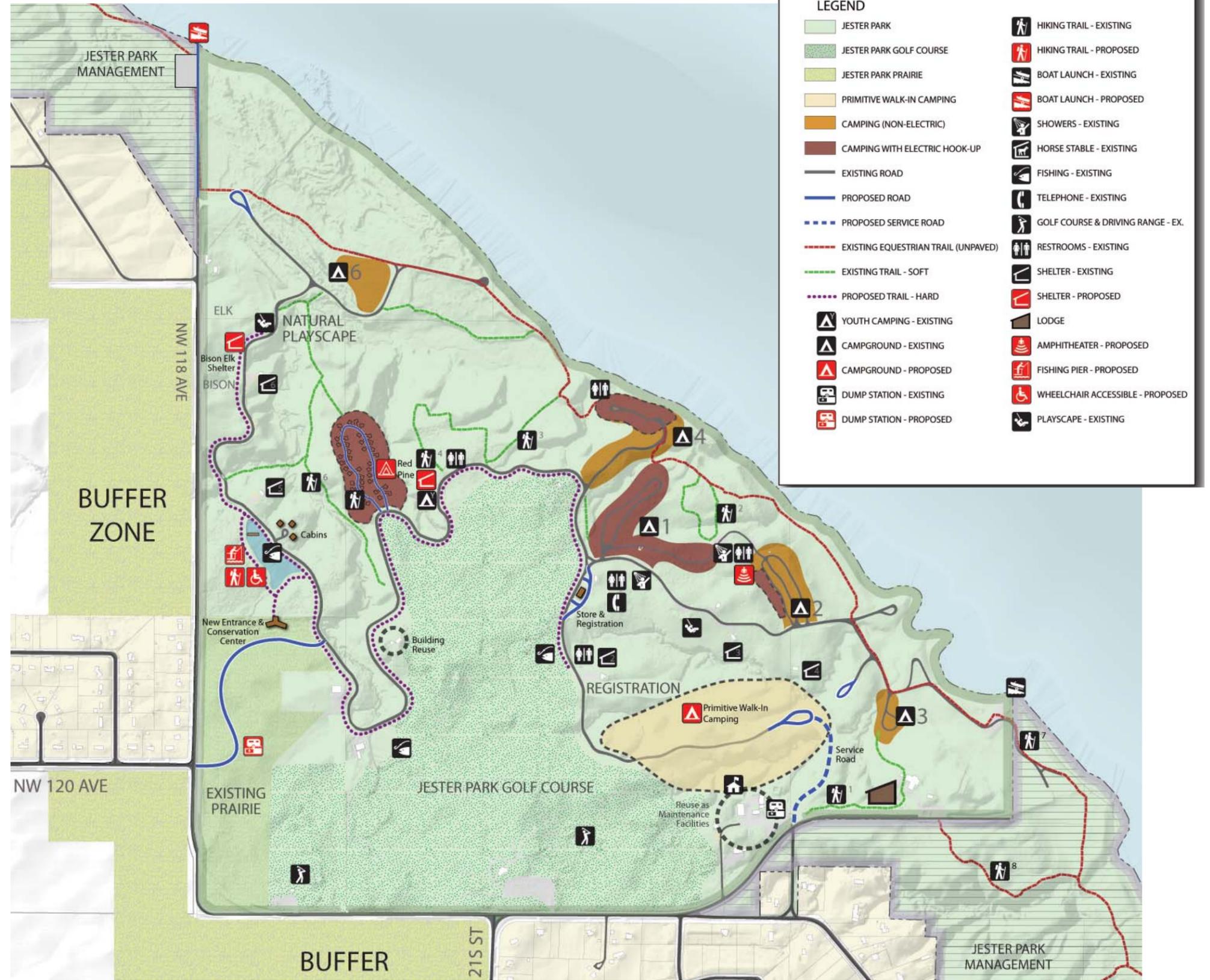
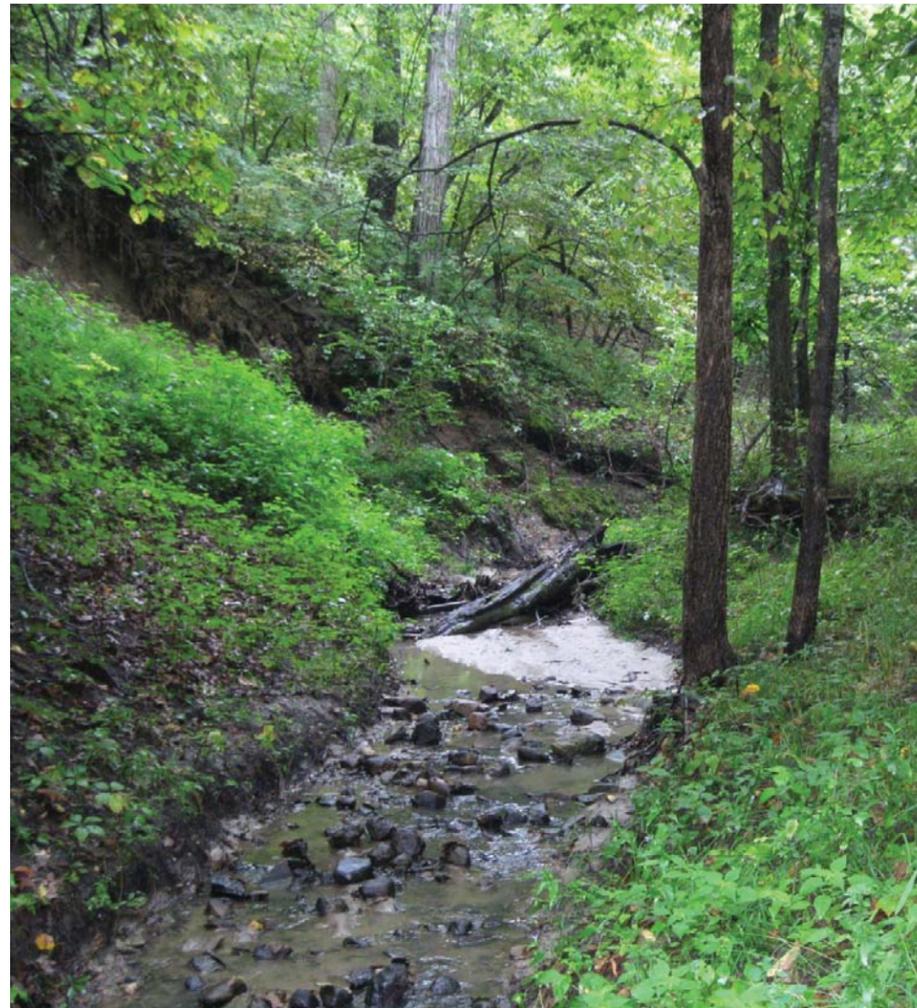


FIGURE 5.2

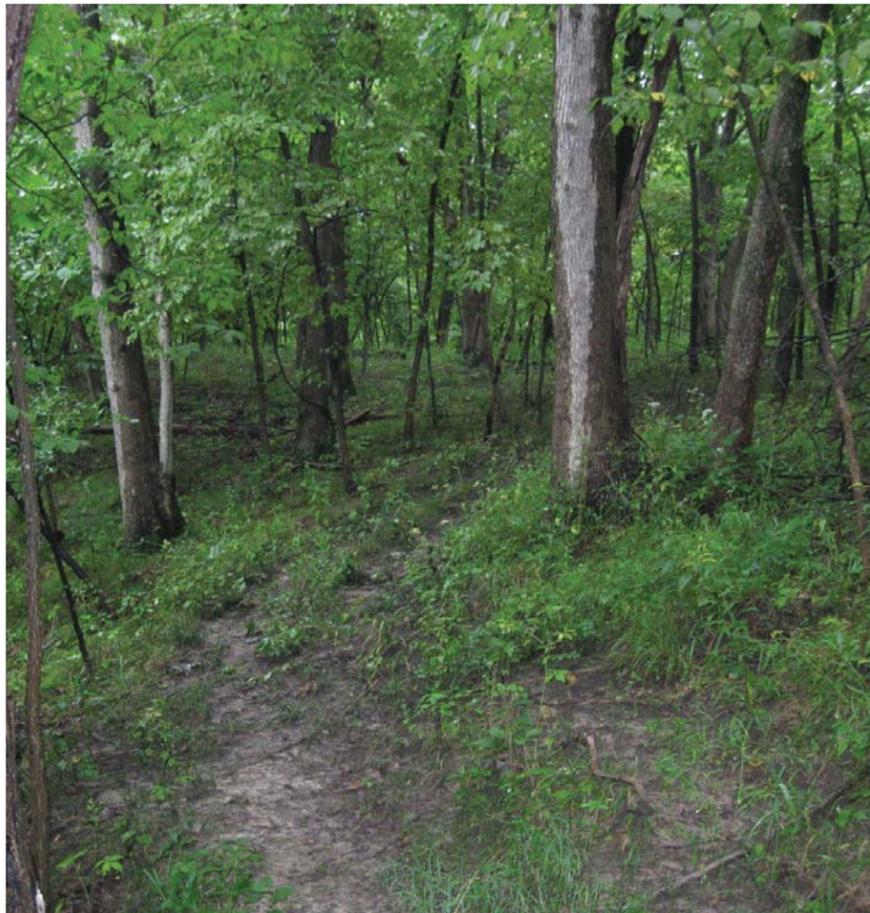
Jester Park Master Plan - December 2009



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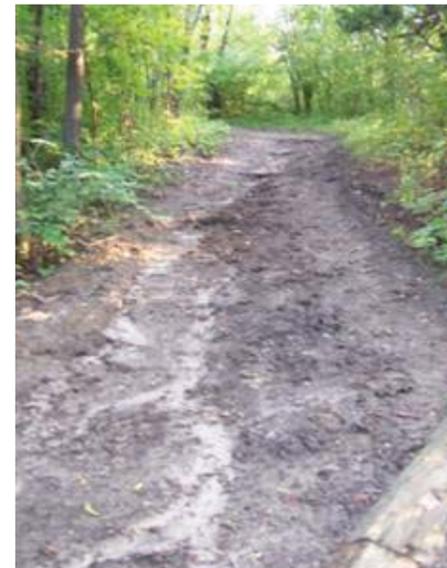
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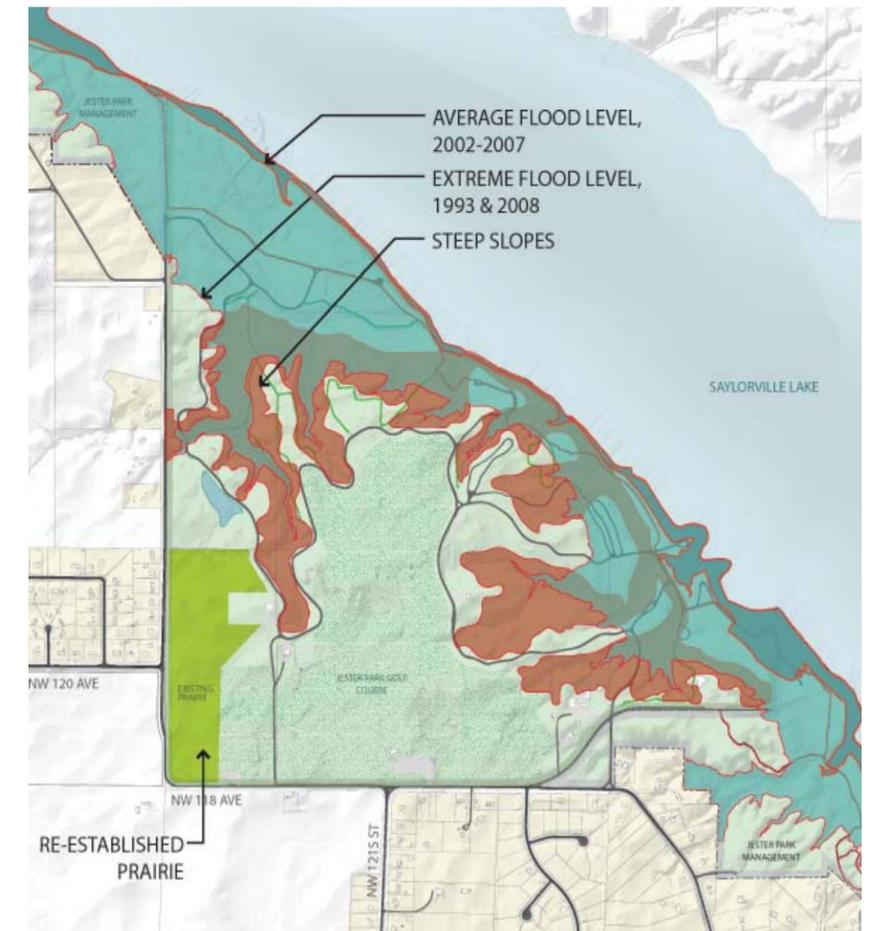
**FIGURE 5.3**  
Erosion within Jester Park

### LAND USES

- Provide buffer zone surrounding the park through acquisition and/or easements to protect the quality and integrity of The Park.

### NATURAL RESOURCES

- Manage woodland areas and steep slopes to maintain healthy vegetation and minimize erosion
- Actively manage invasive species to reduce occurrences and promote native species
- Inventory and protect cultural resources
- Improve perennial and intermittent stream beds through bank stabilization and vegetation management
- Enhance aquatic resources to provide improved habitats and support recreation and environmental education opportunities
- Enhance Shadow Pond by raising water level and expanding area to improve aquatic habitat and increase recreation opportunities
- Develop a wetland sedimentation pond southwest of Two Dam Pond to protect and improve water quality and provide increased interpretive and environmental education opportunities

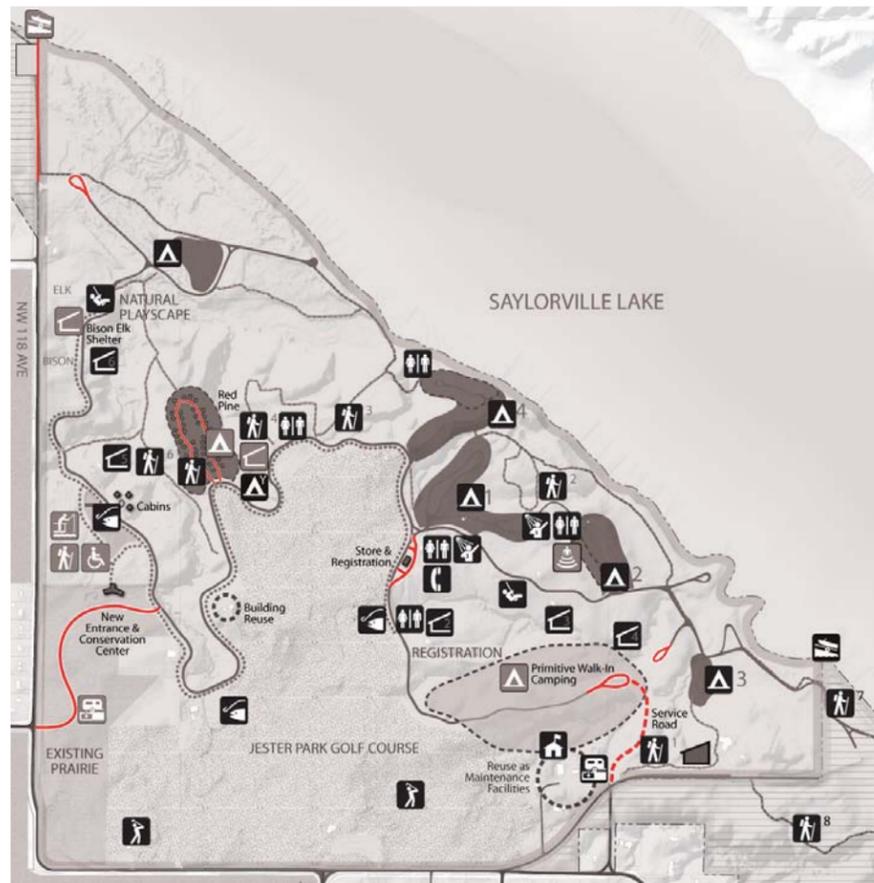


**FIGURE 5.4**  
Slopes and historic flood levels

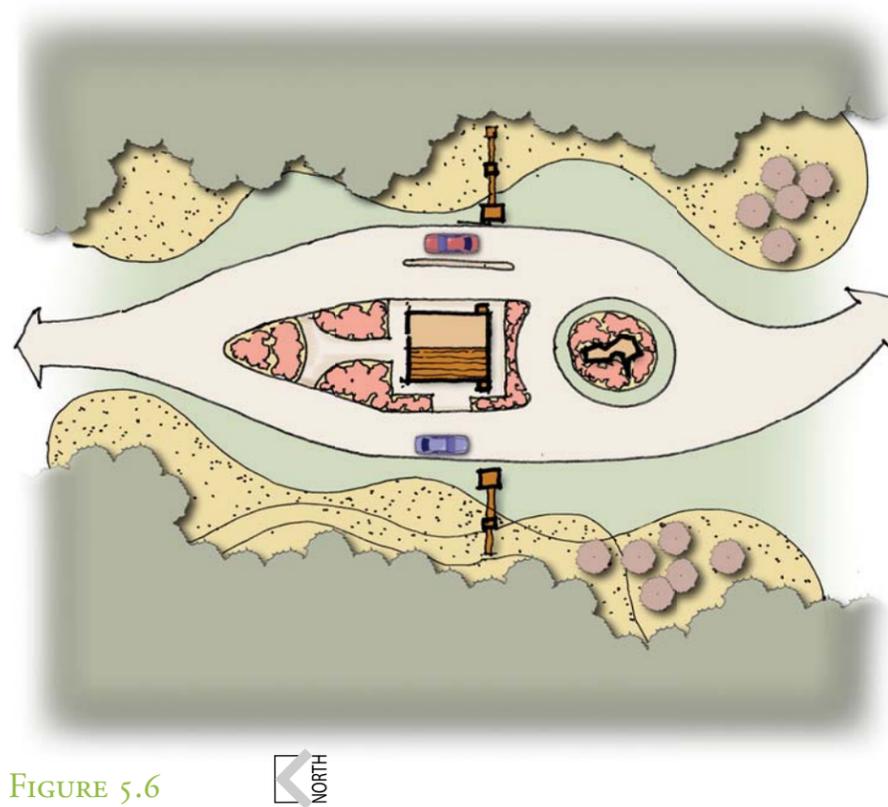


## VEHICULAR CIRCULATION

- Relocate entrance to west side of The Park to improve park access, improve park security, reduce travel distances to park amenities and provide a more attractive park entrance
- Improve internal park system roads including paving, widening shoulders, realignment and signing to provide safer and more efficient travel
- Improve vehicular access to the lodge and equestrian center for visitors with special needs
- Provide additional parking at park facilities in response to increased use site impacts and safety concerns
- Develop cul-de-sac turnarounds at north and south ends of main park road to support traffic movement
- Improve bridges within The Park to support commercial/bus traffic and allow for pedestrian traffic



**FIGURE 5.5**  
Master plan recommendations - vehicular circulation

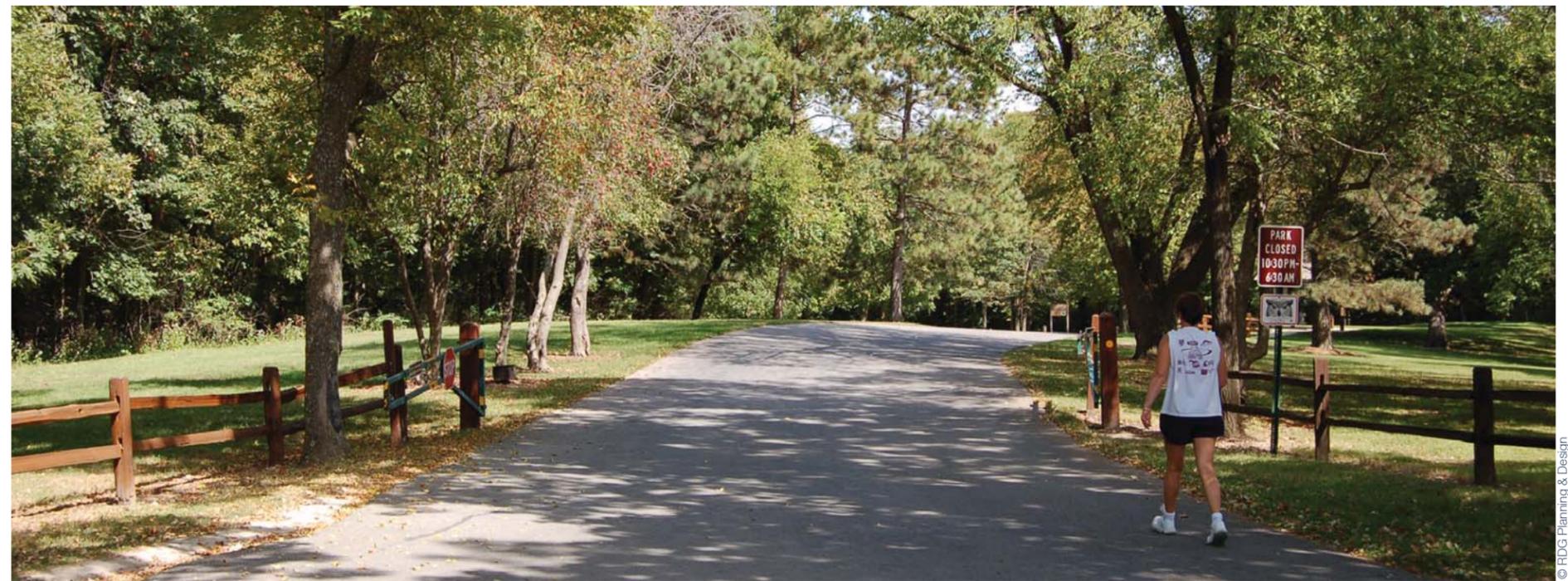


**FIGURE 5.6**  
Entry concept



**FIGURE 5.7**  
Entry concept. Image provided by Cutty's Okoboji Resort Club

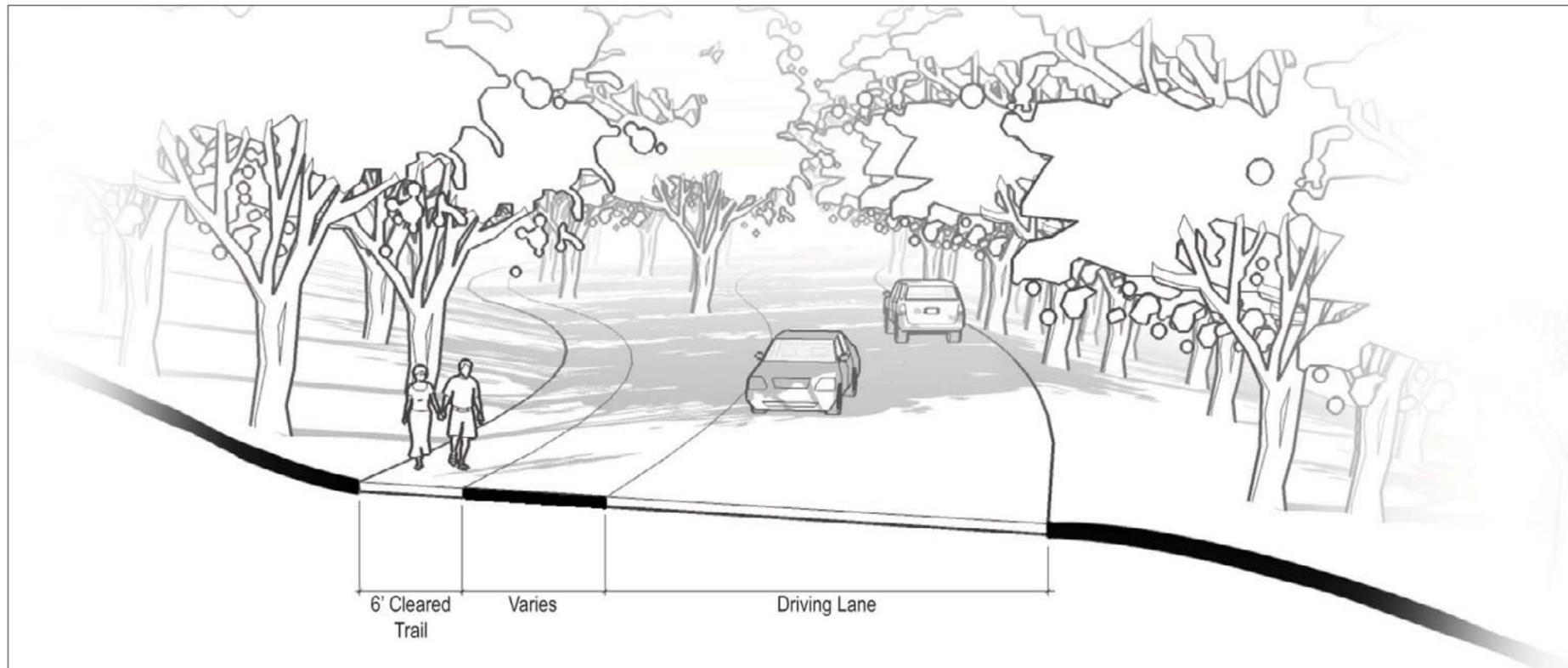
© Cutty's Okoboji Resort Club



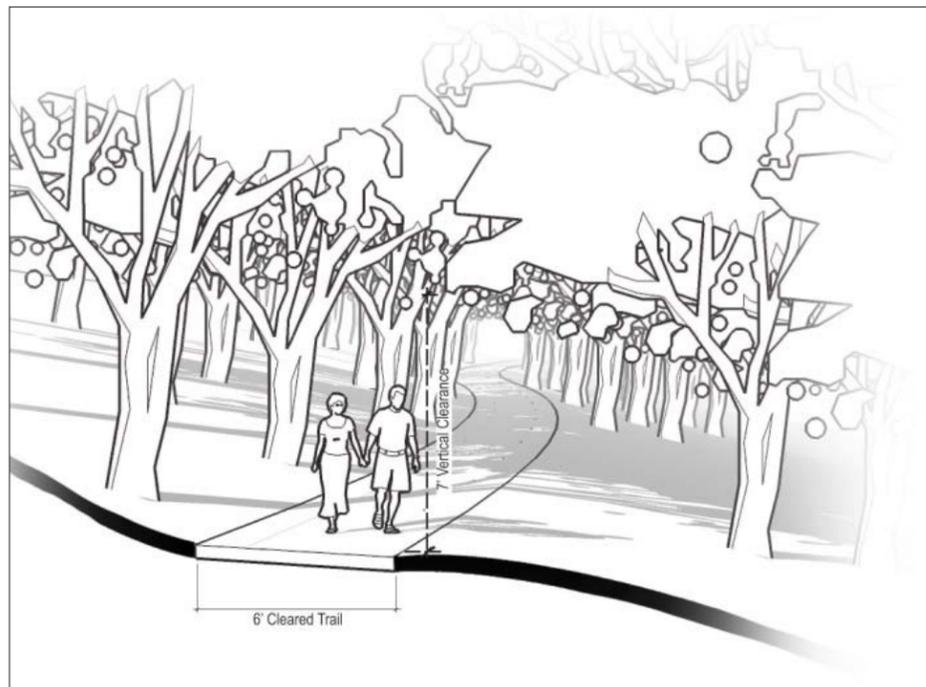
**FIGURE 5.8**  
Potential conflict between pedestrian and vehicular traffic



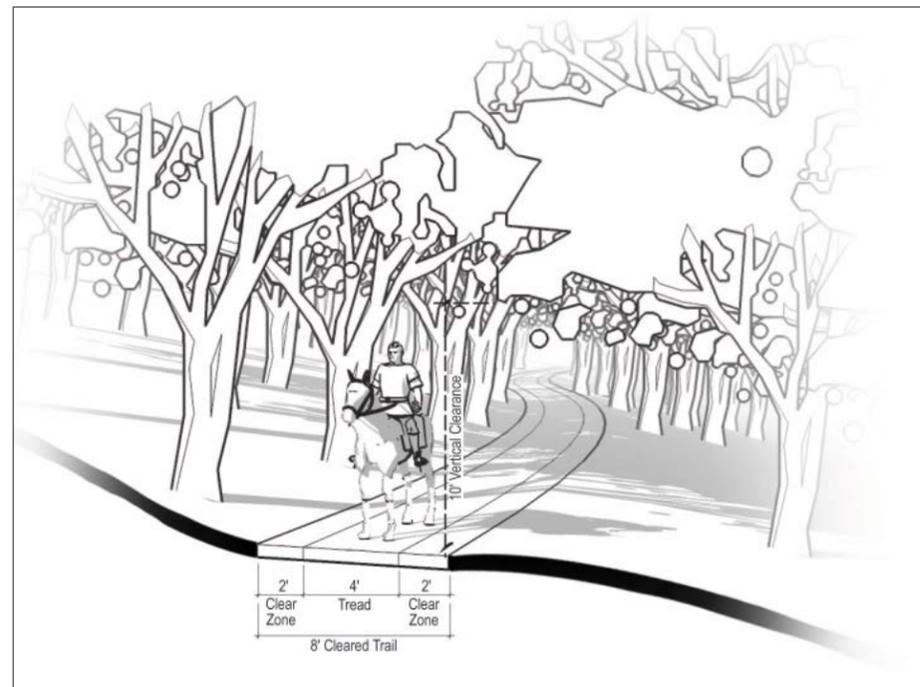
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**FIGURE 5.0**  
Hard trail



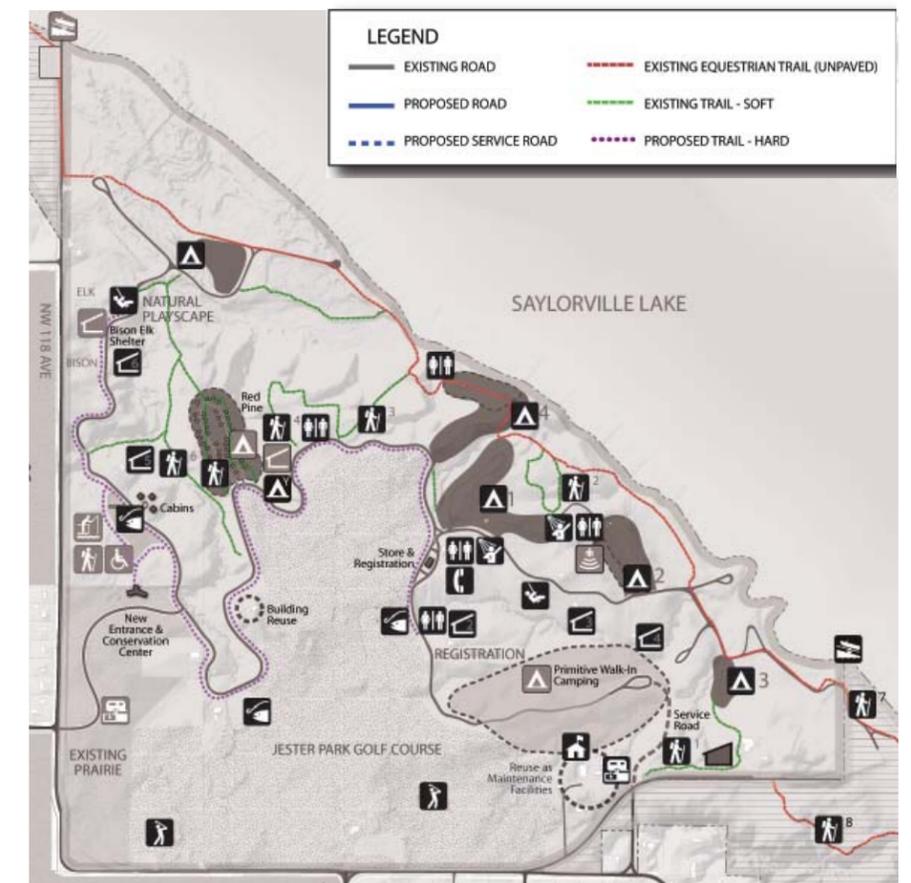
**FIGURE 5.10**  
Soft trail



**FIGURE 5.11**  
Equestrian trail

### TRAIL CIRCULATION

- Develop additional hiking trails to improve connections between park facilities, enhance interpretive opportunities and provide increased hiking opportunities
- Improve the existing equestrian trail system to improve and expand equestrian trail riding opportunities
- Develop an accessible trail around Two Dam Pond and an accessible fishing dock to provide additional opportunities for people with disabilities and provide additional environmental education opportunities
- Develop a hard surface trail adjacent to the main internal park road to provide a safe accessible pedestrian trail connecting the main areas of the park
- Expand existing trail system maintained for cross-country skiing to enhance winter recreation opportunities
- Support efforts to connect The Park to existing and proposed regional trail systems



**FIGURE 5.12**  
Master plan recommendations - trail circulation

## RECREATION FACILITIES

- Develop a campground registration station, including a camp store, to provide improved services to campground users and better facilitate registration process, including the reservation system
- Install permanent vault toilets at Camp Area #3, Camp Area #5, and at The Playscape to provide improved services to users at these locations
- Provide water adjacent to the existing toilet at picnic shelter #6 and water and electricity to picnic shelters #5 and #6 to provide improved services to users at these locations
- Develop three rental cabins to provide additional overnight recreational opportunities within The Park
- Provide electricity to campsites in the lower portion of camp area #4 and west side of camp area #2 in response to the growing demand for electric campsites
- Develop a new 20-30 site campground with electric campsites and a shower house to provide for campers desiring improved sites with increased amenities
- Develop up to 12 walk-in primitive campsites to provide for campers desiring solitude and less developed camping experiences
- Develop a smaller shelter within camp area #5 to support special events as part of the group camping area
- Modify an existing shelter including adding three sides and a fireplace to support three-season uses
- Develop a boat ramp at the north end of NW 128th Street to provide improved access for smaller boats, canoes and kayaks to the north end of Saylorville Lake

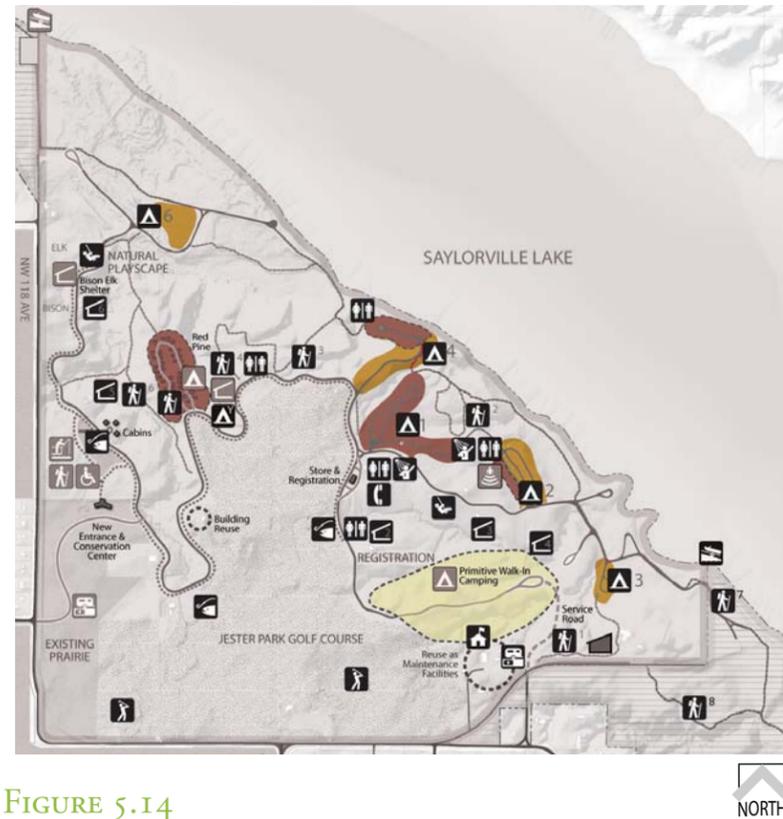


FIGURE 5.14  
Master plan recommendations - recreation facilities

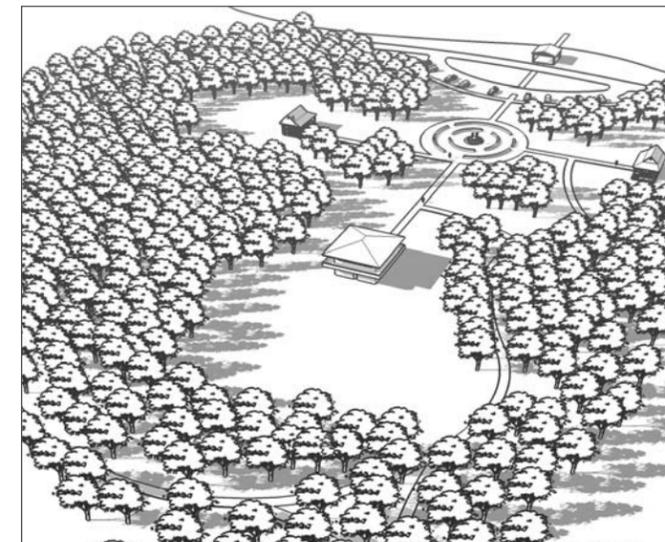
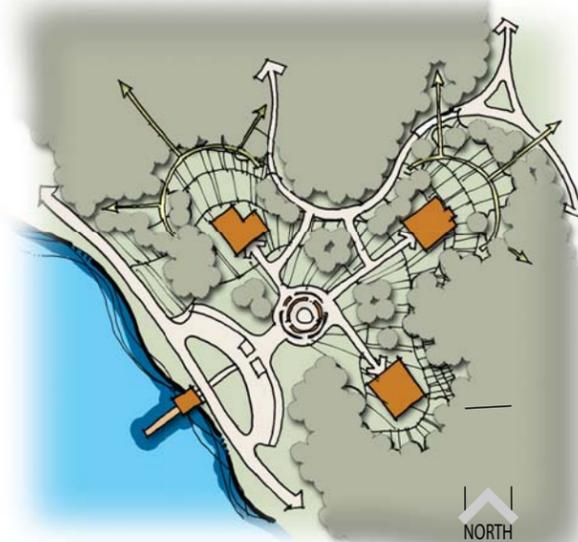


FIGURE 5.15  
Cabins concept, perspective and character

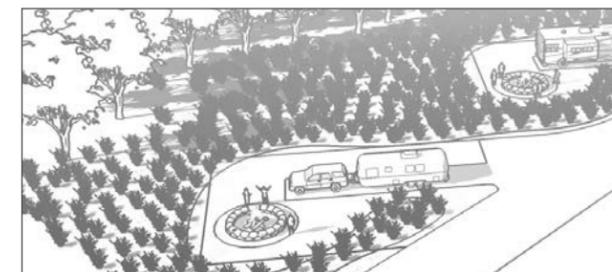
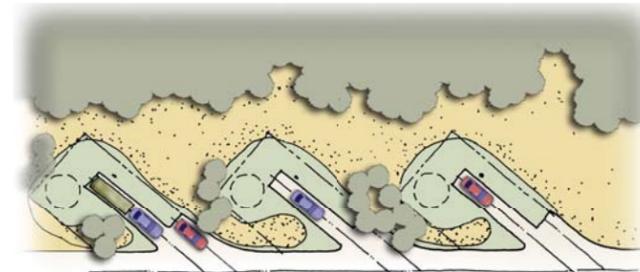


FIGURE 5.16  
R.V. camping concept, perspective and character

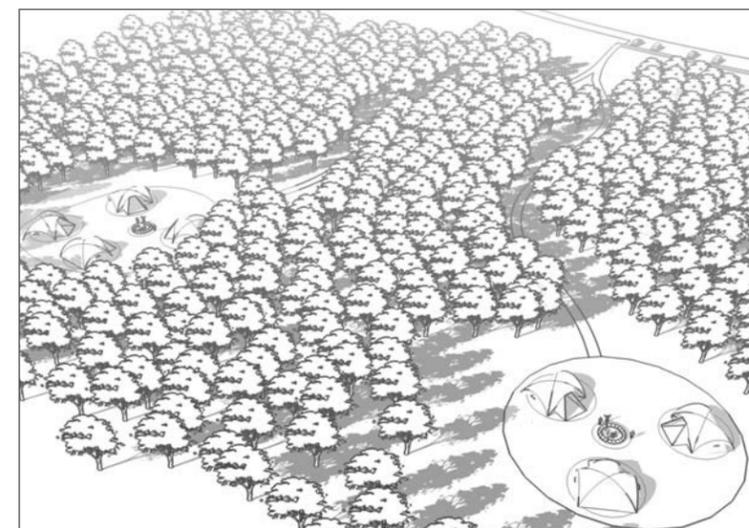
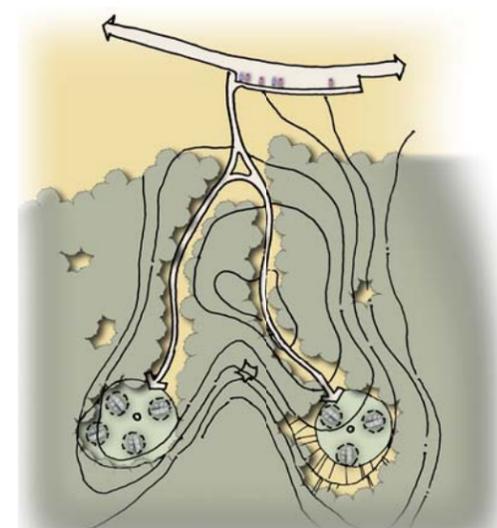
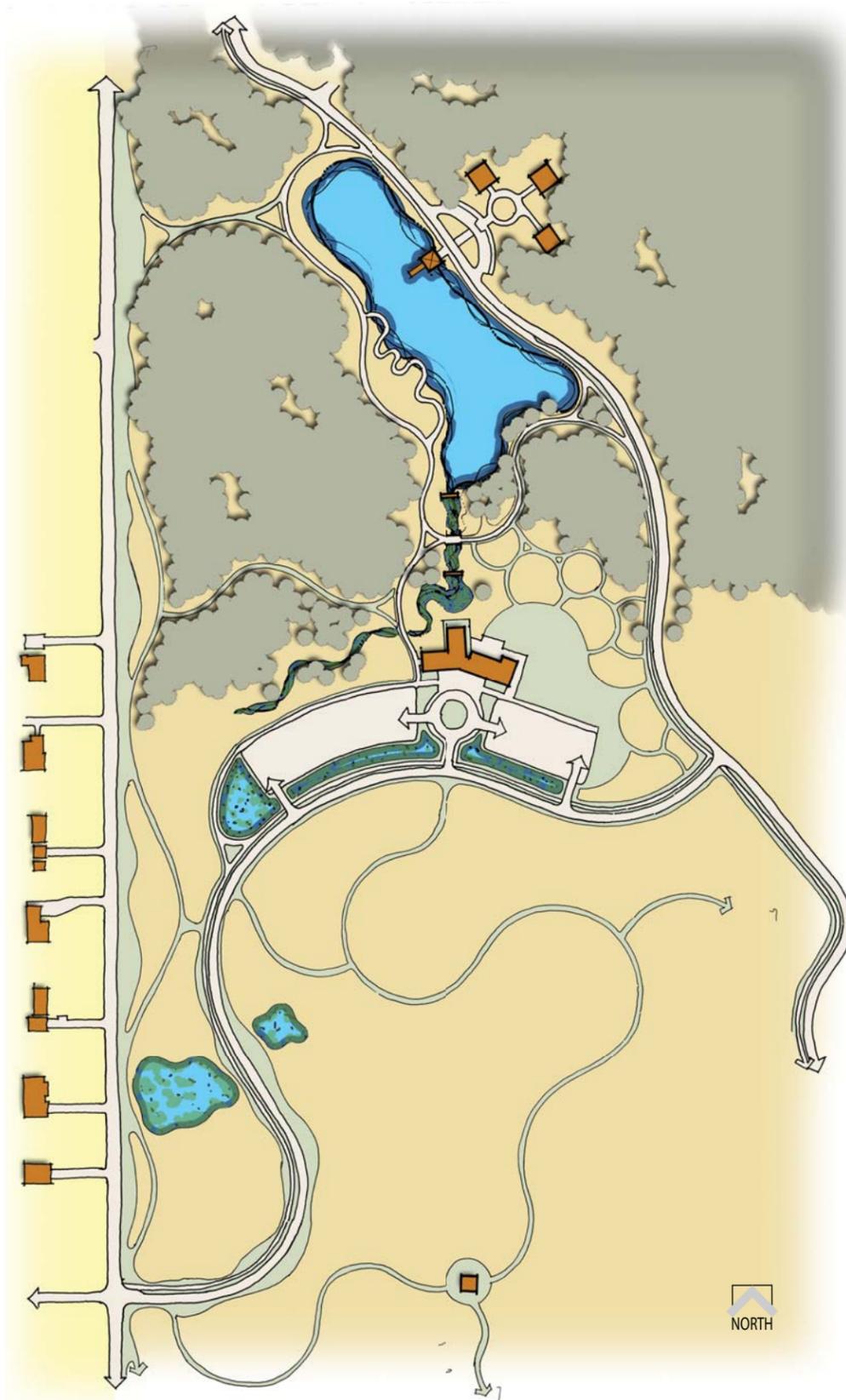


FIGURE 5.17  
Primitive walk-in camping concept, perspective and character



**FIGURE 5.18**  
Conservation center concept

### INTERPRETATION/ADMINISTRATION FACILITIES

- Develop a conservation center near the new entrance to provide improved public services including an interpretive area, environmental education classroom and Polk County Conservation Administrative office space
- Consolidate all park maintenance facilities at existing office location for improved operational efficiencies and security
- Develop a bird viewing blind and feeding station near shelter #5 to provide improved bird viewing and interpretation for groups and individuals
- Develop a viewing structure for the elk/bison enclosures including a shelter and interpretive exhibits
- Develop a rustic amphitheater north of the mini shelter to provide improved interpretive program opportunities for campers and environmental education groups
- Develop 2-3 wildlife observation areas to provide improved wildlife viewing opportunities

### LODGE FACILITIES

- Relocate the picnic shelter adjacent to the lodge and to the equestrian center area and construct a storage building to support lodge operations
- Upgrade the lodge sound system to provide improved and expanded programming opportunities



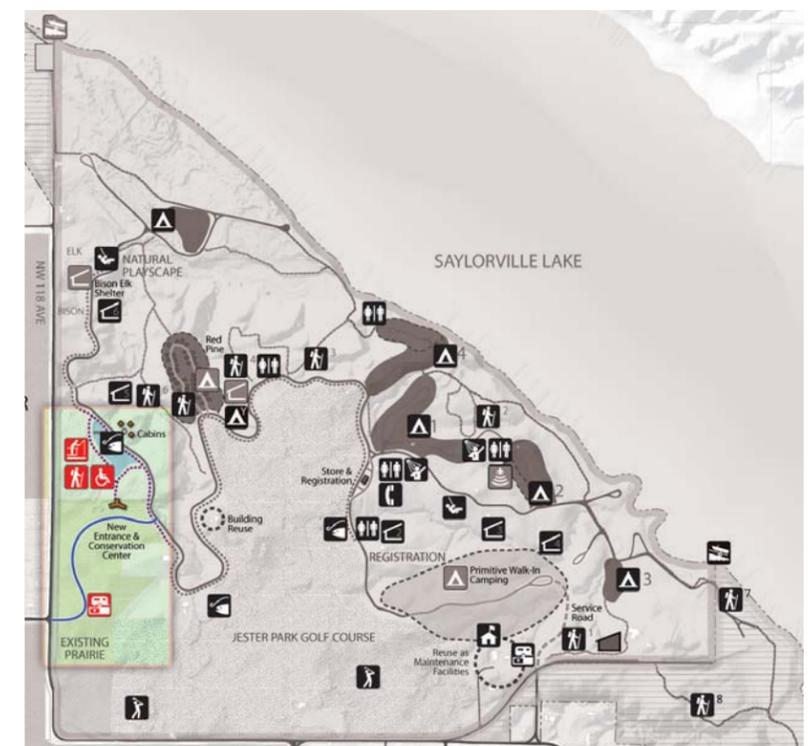
**FIGURE 5.19**  
Character images of perceptions

### EQUESTRIAN CENTER FACILITIES

- Improve camp area #6, including providing water, vault toilet, interior road, designated spurs and equestrian site amenities to enhance equestrian camping opportunities
- Upgrade equestrian center outdoor arena to support outdoor programs and activities
- Improve outdoor paddocks to improve operations.
- Develop a storage building for equipment and hay
- Relocate a picnic shelter from the lodge to support trail riders and equestrian groups

### GOLF COURSE FACILITIES

- Relocate and enhance clubhouse for improved association with driving range, expanded large group activities and improved operations
- Continue fairway enhancements to improve course appearance and golfing experience for visitors



**FIGURE 5.20**  
Master plan recommendations - new entry and conservation facility

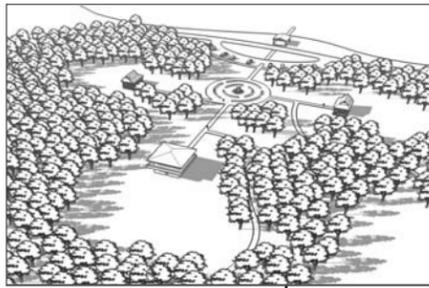


FIGURE 5.21  
Cabins perspective



FIGURE 5.31  
Bird blinds



FIGURE 5.31  
Registration

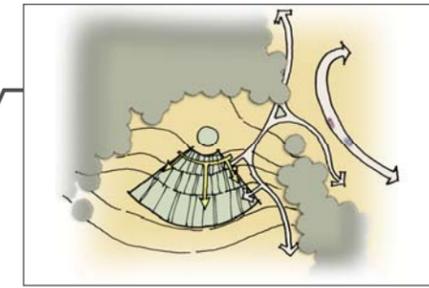


FIGURE 5.32  
Amphitheater concept



FIGURE 5.33  
Amphitheater character



FIGURE 5.22  
Cabins character



FIGURE 5.23  
Cabins concept

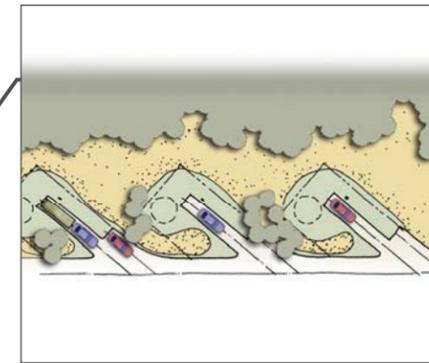
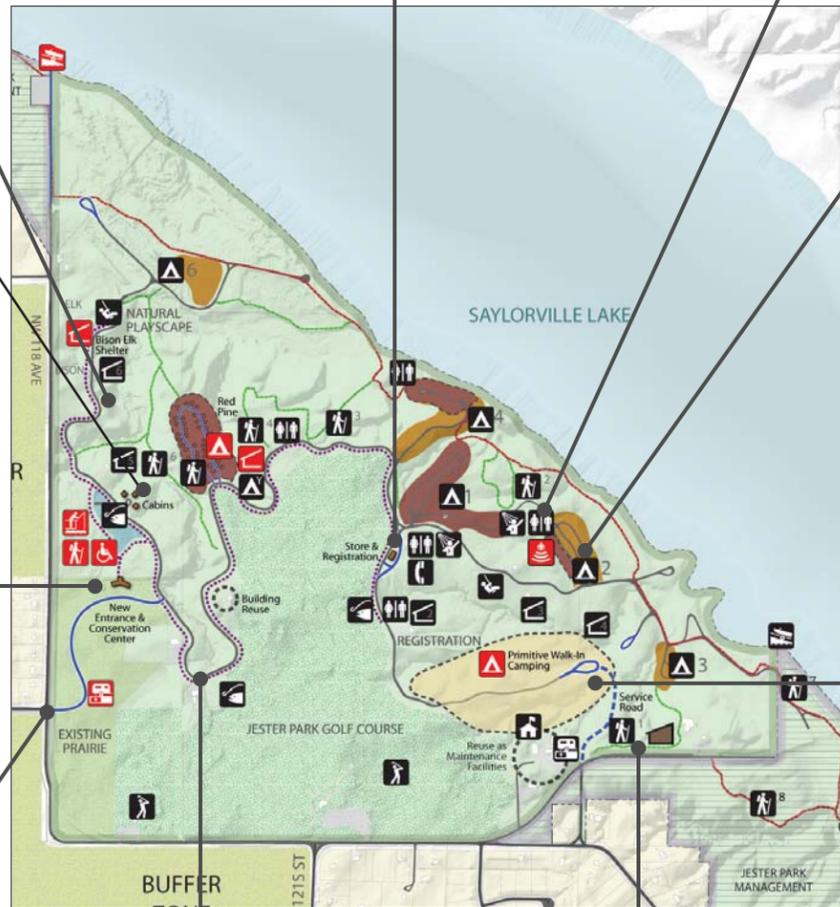


FIGURE 5.34  
R.V. camping concept

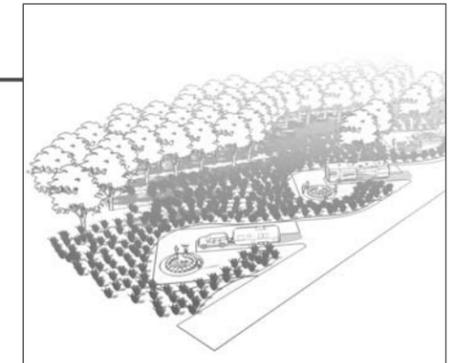


FIGURE 5.35  
R.V. camping perspective



FIGURE 5.24  
Conservation center character

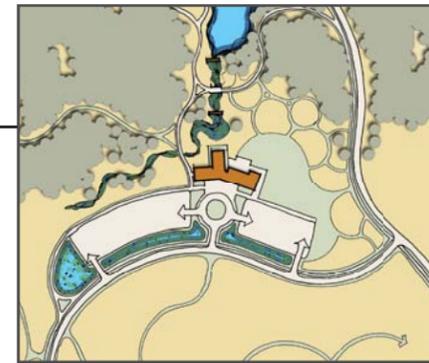


FIGURE 5.25  
Conservation center concept

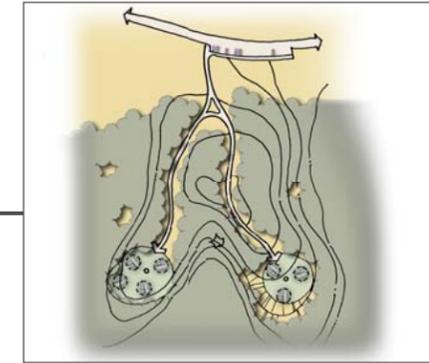


FIGURE 5.36  
Primitive walk-in camping concept

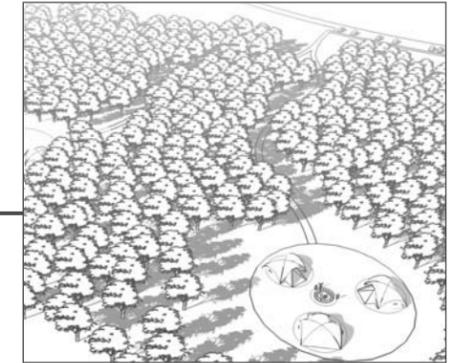


FIGURE 5.37  
Primitive walk-in camping perspective



FIGURE 5.26  
Entry character

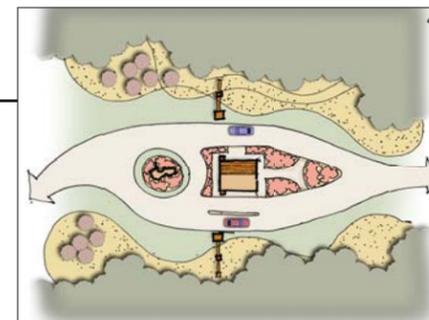


FIGURE 5.27  
Entry concept

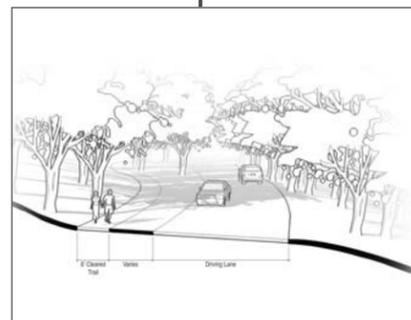


FIGURE 5.28  
Hard trail

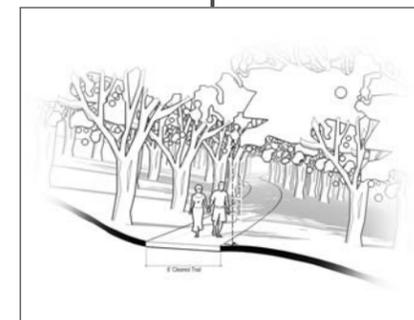


FIGURE 5.29  
Soft trail

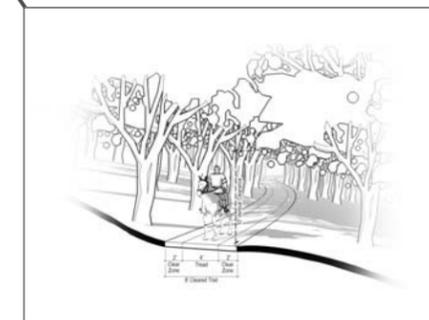
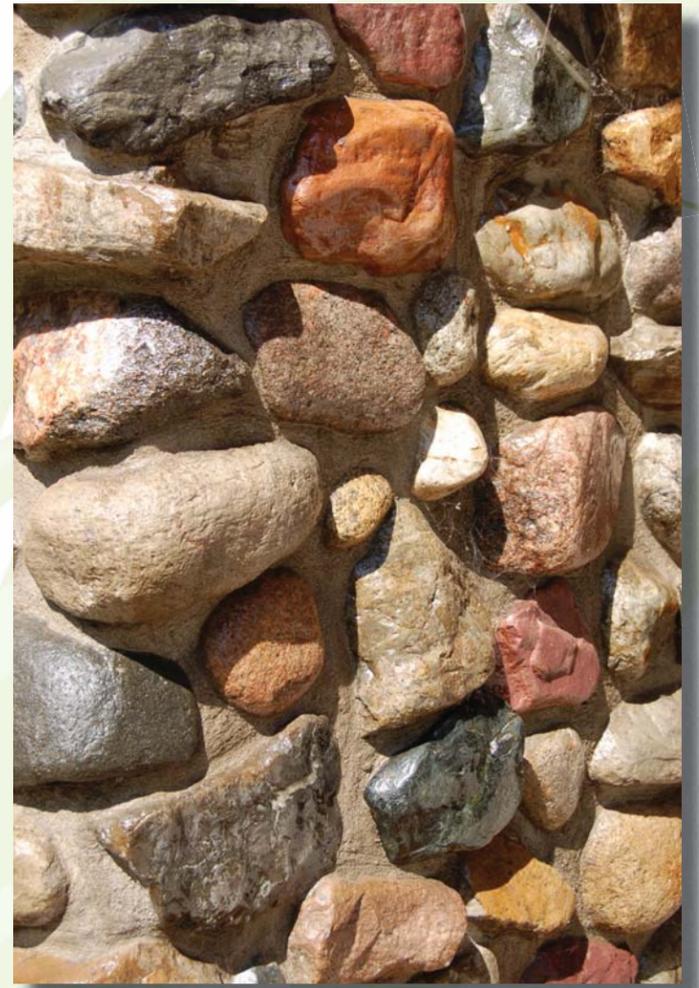


FIGURE 5.30  
Equestrian trail



## TIMING

The recommended improvements identified in this plan are anticipated to be implemented over time. Some recommendations require more detailed planning and design which would extend implementation of those recommendations. Projects that require less planning and design and can be done with limited funds may be completed earlier.

## PRIORITIES

Higher priorities are assigned to those recommendations that are more responsive to the goals of the plan. Projects related to improving trails, camping and environmental education opportunities are considered high priority. Additionally, those projects that improve park access, provide greater accessibility for people with disabilities and generate increased revenues are considered a higher priority.

## COST ESTIMATES

Cost estimates have been developed for each recommendation within this plan. These estimates are intended for budget planning efforts only and will be updated over time. The following cost estimates are summarized by category. Projected costs for implementing this plan in its entirety range from \$6-7 million. These estimates are current year costs and do not reflect future year inflation. Projects completed in-house may result in cost savings. Annual operations and maintenance costs associated with the existing facilities are not included in these estimates. More detailed cost estimates will be developed when planning and design is completed on individual projects and as funding becomes available.

<u>IMPROVEMENT CATEGORY</u>	<u>ESTIMATED COST</u>
Vehicular Access	\$ 1,200,000
Trails	\$ 400,000
Interpretation/Environmental Access	\$ 20,000
Facilities – Structures	\$ 2,800,000
Equestrian Center	\$ 300,000
Day Use – Picnicking	\$ 900,000
Overnight Use – Camping	\$ 1,000,000
Accessibility	\$ 200,000

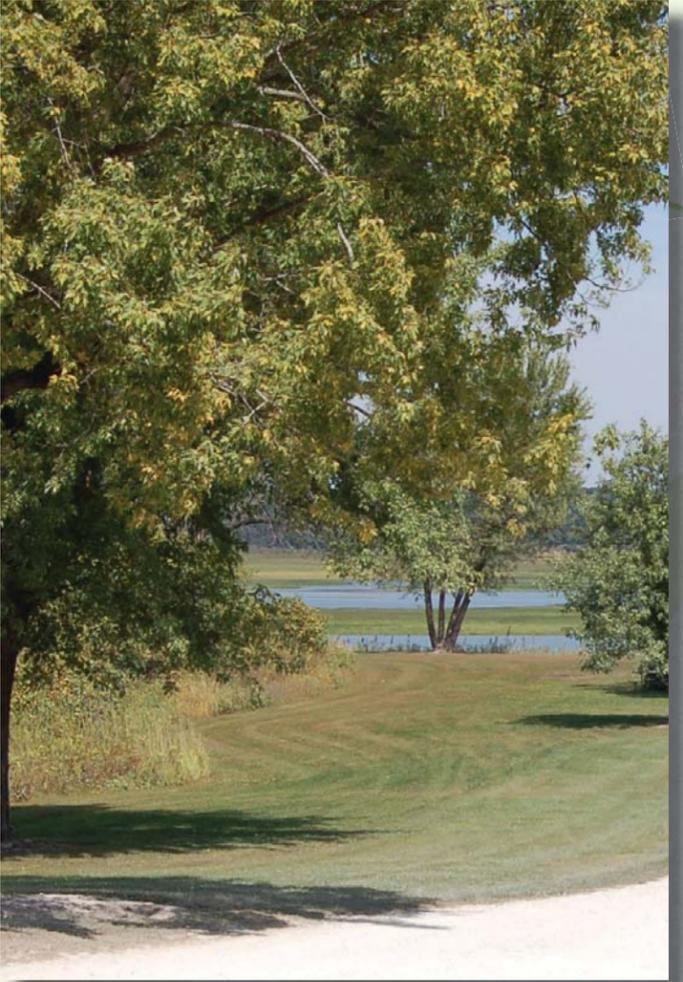
## FUNDING STRATEGY OPTIONS

The proposed improvements within this plan for Jester Park must be integrated into the overall budget/program needs of Polk County Conservation. As master plans are completed for other parks within the Polk County Conservation Park System, the proposed improvements will be considered comprehensively across the entire system. Additionally, the needs associated with maintaining the existing facilities within the park system will be considered along with the proposed improvements.

Some recommendations may be completed through the annual program of work as part of the continuing operations and maintenance of Polk County Conservation parks.

Potential funding sources include annual appropriations, grants, partnerships and long-term public financing.





## REFERENCES - MASTER PLANNING DOCUMENTS (FEATURED ON PAGE 14)

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Leon Younger & PROS, LLC, Ciaccio Dennell Group and ETC/Leisure Vision. (2002). *Polk County Conservation Board: Parks & Recreation Strategic Plan Findings Report 2002*

Polk County Conservation Board. (2006). *Polk County Comprehensive Plan: Polk 2030*

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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Lancaster, R.A. (Ed.). (1990). *Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines*. Ashburn, VA: National Recreation and Park Association.

Polk County Conservation Board. (2006). *Polk County Comprehensive Plan: Polk 2030*. Retrieved from <http://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/Public-Works/PDFs/CompPlan/3LandUsePlan.pdf>

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## PUBLIC MEETINGS (REFERENCED ON PAGE 16)

Public Meeting 1: January 2009

*To obtain Meeting Minutes, contact Polk County Conservation*

Public Meeting 2: May 2009

*To obtain Meeting Minutes, contact Polk County Conservation*

Document Prepared by:

