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University of Oregon
Department of Planning, Public Policy and Management



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON



PHOENIX PARKS MASTER PLAN

DECEMBER 2016

VOLUME II - BLUE HERON
DESIGN CONCEPT

Special Thanks & Acknowledgements

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Phoenix Parks and Open Space Commission

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Sandra Wine

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Jason Couch (*Planning Commission*)

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About the Community Service Center

The Community Service Center (CSC) is a research center affiliated with the Department of Planning, Public Policy, and Management at the University of Oregon. It is an interdisciplinary organization that assists Oregon communities by providing planning and technical assistance to help solve local issues and improve the quality of life for Oregon residents. The role of the CSC is to link the skills, expertise, and innovation of higher education with the transportation, economic development, and environmental needs of communities and regions in the State of Oregon, thereby providing service to Oregon and learning opportunities to the students involved.

Blue Heron Park Redesign Concept

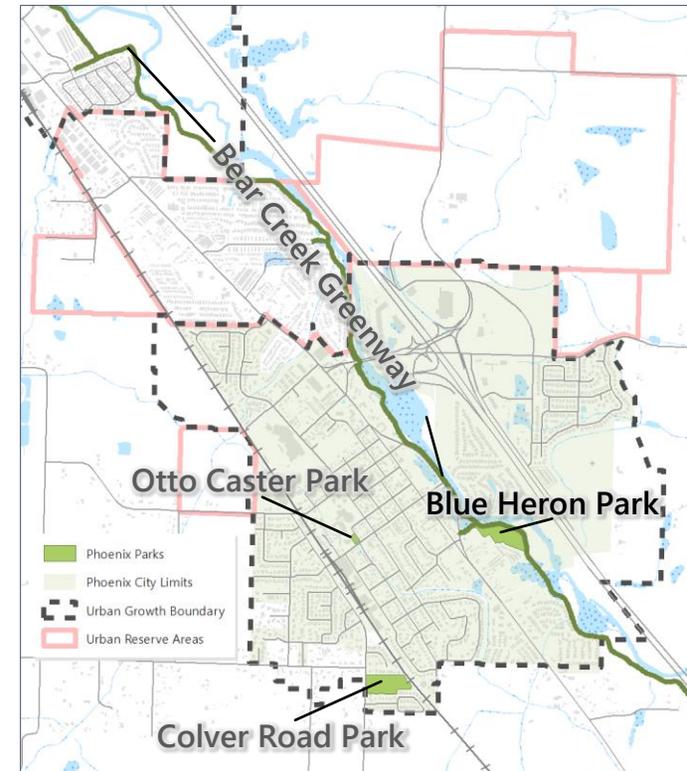
This supplement to the Phoenix Parks Master Plan describes the planning process used to generate a redesign option for Blue Heron Park, presents the final redesign concept along with key goals, and offers a phased breakdown of costs associated with the proposed park improvements. Given the scale of park improvements, we assume that upgrades to Blue Heron Park will likely occur over many years – perhaps ten or more. Although we present a long-term vision for the park, there are many exciting opportunities where the City can take immediate action. We hope that over the years, the park will continue to grow and reach its full potential as a community-wide destination for nature lovers, recreators, families, and friends.

Background

Supplemental to the Phoenix Parks Master Plan, the University of Oregon’s Community Service Center (CSC) planning team was engaged to develop an updated conceptual design for the 24-acre Blue Heron Park. Located adjacent to Bear Creek and including a portion of the Bear Creek Greenway, Blue Heron Park currently consists of undeveloped riparian natural areas as well as many existing recreational park features including covered picnic

pavilions, playground equipment, an events stage and an established community garden. The updated design was informed by a process that included site analysis, public engagement, and feedback from city staff and the Phoenix Parks Commission.

Map B-1. Phoenix and Its Parks



Source: Jackson County GIS, prepared by Community Service Center

Planning Process

The following timeline shows the steps taken by the CSC planning team to arrive at a final design for Blue Heron Park. The process involved extensive input from the public, both during the workshop held in Blue Heron Park, and through conversations with residents and the Parks Commission during community events and meetings.



Welcome to Summer Workshop

Interactive activities and conversations gathering input on concerns, hopes and desires for Blue Heron Park (at Blue Heron Park)

Dog Days of Summer Workshop

Activities including feedback on 3 Blue Heron concept alternatives using post-its, verbal comments, and dots (at Colver Rd. Park)

Parks Commission Meeting

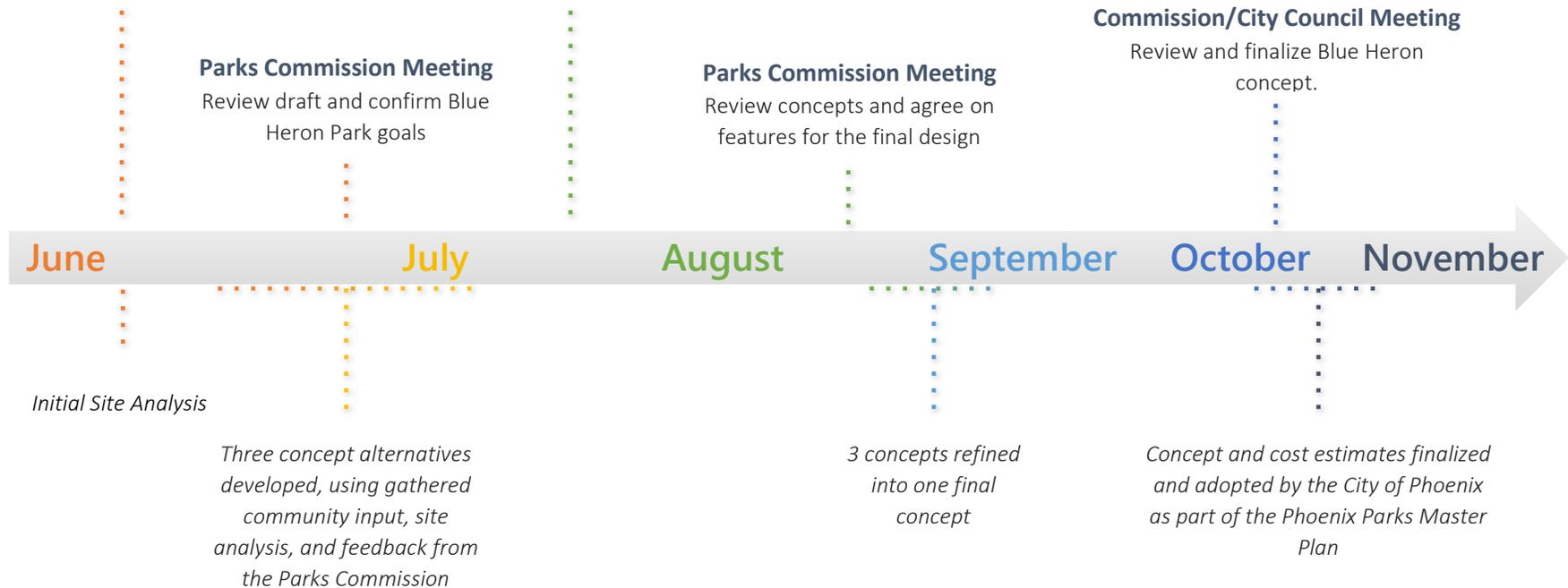
Review draft and confirm Blue Heron Park goals

Parks Commission Meeting

Review concepts and agree on features for the final design

Joint Parks Commission/Planning Commission/City Council Meeting

Review and finalize Blue Heron concept.



Blue Heron Goals and Actions

Based on the desires expressed during the public input phase, the CSC planning team developed six goals the shape the direction of Blue Heron's redevelopment. Those who attended workshops and responded to the survey emphasized a desire to preserve the park's connection to the Bear Creek natural area, increase opportunities to host community and educational events, and increase the park's use by making it more comfortable and adding desirable features.

These desires led to the following six goals, which are coupled with actions in the following pages:

- Goal 1:** Develop connections between the park and the creek.
- Goal 2:** Create park programming around outdoor education.
- Goal 3:** Increase parking capacity.
- Goal 4:** Create a functional, cohesive, and accessible park design.
- Goal 5:** Improve playground and add other desired site elements.
- Goal 6:** Restore wetland areas.

The full design for Blue Heron Park improvements and additions is displayed on the next page.



Bear Creek Greenway looking South
Source: Community Service Center



Goal 1: Develop connections between the park and the creek.

Develop connections between Blue Heron Park and Bear Creek to provide recreational and educational opportunities and increase desirable activity throughout the riparian area.

Actions

1. Develop a gravel or asphalt trail system and observation areas along creek and within riparian area.
2. Enhance natural riparian corridor through restoration and vegetation management (partnership and a phasing plan should be developed to make restoration feasible and sustainable).
3. Maintain understory vegetation between Bear Creek and the greenway path to provide open site lines and discourage undesirable activities.
4. Provide bilingual (Spanish/English) signage to inform visitors about the Bear Creek watershed, riparian restoration, and the site's history.
5. Install additional bench seating in appropriate viewing areas along the Bear Creek Greenway.



Bear Creek at Blue Heron Park

Source: Community Service Center

Actions

1. Incorporate a nature play area near northwest parking lot.
2. Use the central parking lot island and additional planting beds as display gardens for native and bee habitat plants.
3. Expand the “Monarch Waystation” on the south side of the Bear Creek Greenway trail and add bilingual (Spanish/English) interpretive signage.



Monarch Waystation and path to Bear Creek
Source: Community Service Center

Goal 2: Create park programming that promotes outdoor education.



Bear Creek Greenway sign at Blue Heron Park
Source: Community Service Center

Goal 3: Increase parking capacity.

Actions

1. Add 33 parking stalls (with 2 designated as ADA accessible) to the main parking area.
2. Assess potential for parallel parking on the southern access road.
3. Assess potential for future events parking (permanent or temporary) on adjacent properties.



Parking lot near play area and picnic pavilions

Source: Community Service Center

Actions

1. Create a system of concrete pathways to provide form and allow access to and separation of use areas.
2. Construct an asphalt access road from the central parking area to the Bear Creek greenway path to the east. A section of this road will provide access to the stage.

Goal 4: Create a functional, cohesive, and accessible park design.



Community Stage at Blue Heron Park

Source: Community Service Center

Create a highly functional, cohesive park design that integrates the existing park elements (stage, playgrounds, community garden, open lawns, covered picnic areas, etc.) and is in compliance with guidelines from the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Goal 5: Improve playground and add other desired site elements.

Improve the existing playground area and add site elements that are most desired by the community (as determined through public input).

Actions

1. Reconfigure the east section of the playground area to have specified use areas by age. This should include the addition of a new 2-5 year-old play area.
2. Incorporate a water play area into the existing playground space.
3. Add a full size sand volleyball court.
4. Add trailside fitness stations (5-10 stations could be installed as a circuit along the greenway and new paths).
5. Add 6 new picnic tables with 6 BBQ grills, with at least 2 being ADA accessible.
6. Add public art (potentially sculptures) at park entrances.
7. Install solar lights around the playground and along concrete pathways (currently, the City has 10 light fixtures).
8. Install additional bike parking near the restrooms and at the west entrance to Bear Creek Greenway.
9. Plant additional shade trees using native and drought tolerant species with possible.

Actions

1. Create native wetland swales at the southeastern corner of the park.

Goal 6: Restore wetland areas.



Wetland swale
Source: Community Service Center



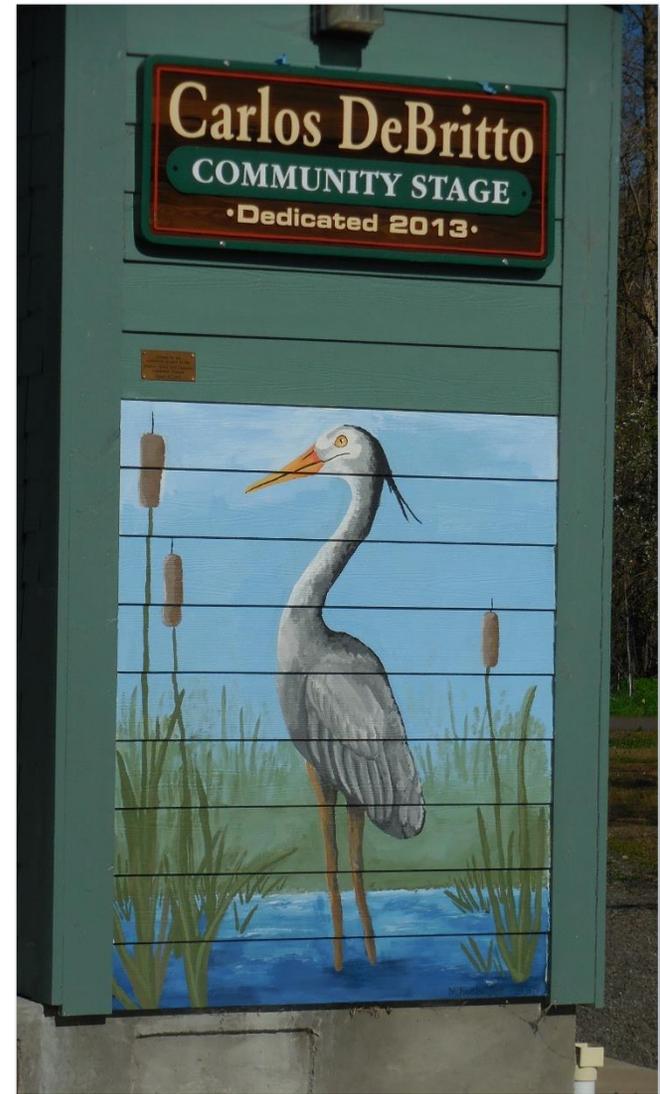
Path down to Bear Creek riparian area
Source: Community Service Center

Cost Estimates and Phasing

We recommend that the City phase in improvements and additions to Blue Heron Park by concentrating on three different areas of the park over time.

Phase 1: Central Parking and Playground Area	1-3 years
Phase 2: Natural Play Area and Wetland Swale Restoration	4-6 years
Phase 3: Bear Creek Restoration	7+ years

This proposed timeline will likely require adjustment based on the availability of funding. On the following pages, we present one possible option for phased additions to the park, along with cost estimates for each park element. These elements should be incorporated into the City’s capital improvements plans, and are estimates only – the City will need to gather more accurate bids to understand the true cost of redevelopment.



Blue heron detail on the Community Stage
Source: Community Service Center

	Program Element	Quantity	Unit	Cost/Unit	Total	
Phase I	Central Parking and Playground Area					
	<i>Parking Improvements</i>					
	Parking cost per space (does not include demolition and removal of existing materials)	33	1 space	\$ 1,692.50	\$ 55,852.50	
	<i>Playground Improvements</i>					
	Splash pad (1200 - 1500 sq. ft.)	1	Each	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 100,000.00	
	2-5 year old play area (1000 sq. ft.)	1	Each	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 35,000.00	
	<i>Site Ammenities</i>					
	Sand volleyball court (50' x 80' with concrete border)	1	Each	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	
	<i>Paths</i>					
	Paved paths (4" concrete)	5,300	Sq. Ft.	\$ 7.50	\$ 39,750.00	
	Solar lighting (45' spacing along major pathways)	35	Each	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 52,500.00	
	<i>Vegetation</i>					
	Trees (2" caliper)	24	Each	\$ 250.00	\$ 6,000.00	
	Planting beds (Soil prep, fertilizers, plant materials, mulch)	6850	Sq. Ft.	\$ 3.50	\$ 23,975.00	
					Subtotal	\$ 333,077.50

	Program Element	Quantity	Unit	Cost/Unit	Total
Phase III	Bear Creek Restoration				
	<i>Site Ammenities</i>				
	River observation deck	1	Each	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
	<i>Paths</i>				
	Unpaved paths (crushed gravel)	5600	Sq. Ft.	\$ 0.74	\$ 4,144.00
	<i>Riparian Restoraton</i>				
		7	Acre	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 45,500.00
	<i>Signage</i>				
Interpretive signs	8	Each	\$ 500.00	\$ 4,000.00	
			Subtotal	\$ 68,644.00	

Combined Phases 1, 2, and 3

Phase 1	\$ 333,077.50
Phase 2	\$ 204,796.00
Phase 3	\$ 68,644.00
SUBTOTAL	\$ 606,517.50
<i>Add 10% Design/Engineering</i>	\$ 60,651.75
<i>Add 15% Contingency</i>	\$ 90,977.63
<i>Add 2% Fees</i>	\$ 12,130.35
TOTAL	\$770,277.23



Community garden at Blue Heron Park
Source: Community Service Center

