



6. CONCEPT PLANS

CONCEPT PLANS INTRODUCTION

WHAT ARE CONCEPT PLANS?

A conceptual plan is the graphic starting point of the planning process. It presents an idea of the type and arrangement of facilities that may fit on the site. Although to scale, a conceptual plan is not a suitable document for construction or project cost estimates. Conceptual plans provide a level of detail appropriate to evaluate options, spur discussion and provide a means to build consensus around a proposed plan.

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

Upon completion of the site assessment and public engagement in Phases I and II of the Master Plan process, the next step towards development of the final master plan was to prepare concept ideas for the future of Vilas Park.

RESEARCH AND SITE INVESTIGATIONS

A wide range of data collected was on the park, along with research into the original park master plan and later revisions. The inventory included review and documenting:

- soil types,
- slope analysis,
- existing utility infrastructure mapping,
- tree inventory,
- lagoon sediment conditions,
- (watershed),
- historical shoreline and lagoon boundaries,
- (and other environmental concerns)

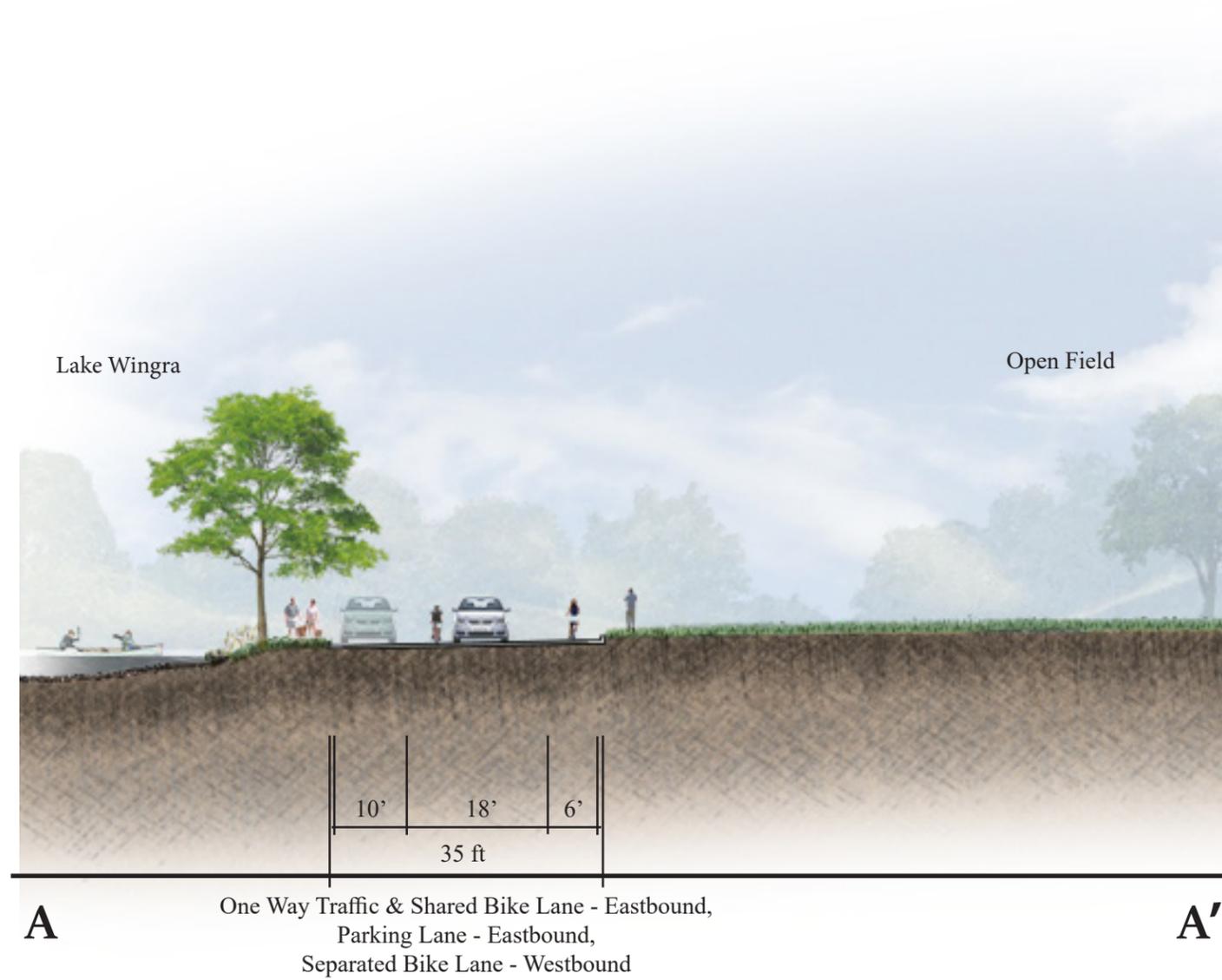
The above elements were studied and compiled into an Existing Conditions plan. (Please refer to Section 5, Existing Conditions). The existing park site with historical shoreline location and original extent of the lagoon is shown in Map 6.1. This map is an amalgam of unspecified original site plan (O.C. Simonds era), topography, with existing built park elements.

SITE ANALYSIS

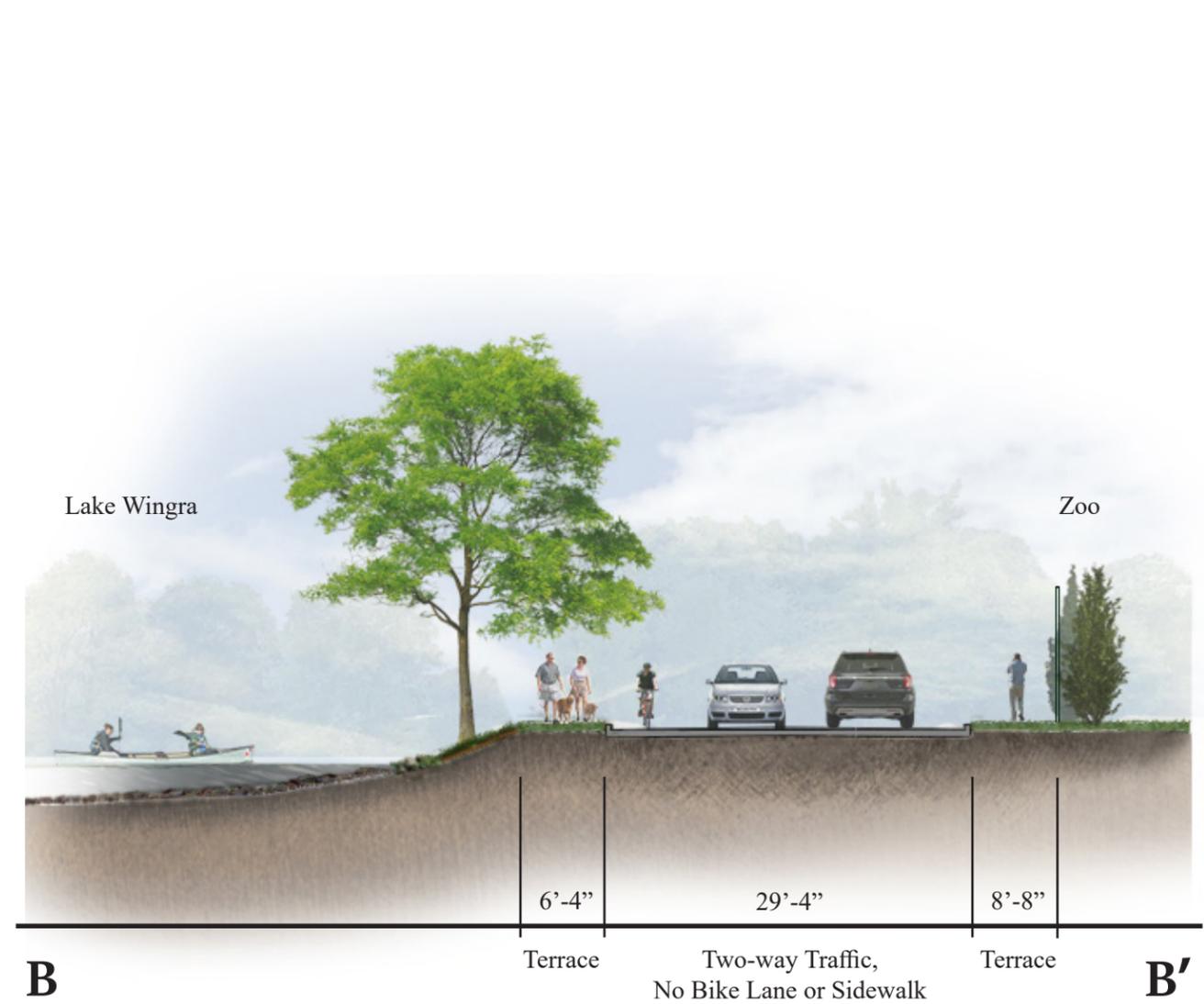
This information, when overlaid on the existing site plan, was utilized to document where changes have occurred over time. The concept ideas that were generated propose restoring, in some form, elements of the original park design as well as proposing new directions to explore for the future of Vilas Park.



Map 6.1. Existing Conditions at Vilas Park



CROSS-SECTION - WEST



CROSS-SECTION - EAST

Figure 6.0. Vilas Park Drive Existing Cross-Sections

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Alongside the assessment of physical and historical conditions of the site, a comprehensive public engagement campaign sought to determine what was important to City of Madison residents and what the future of the park may look like. The kickoff was a public meeting at the Main Park Shelter in June 2019. Outreach during the process included online surveys, site observations, on-site intercept interviews, comment cards, and stakeholder and focus group meetings. Section 3 of this report summarizes the full engagement efforts during the first two phases of the master plan process. Additional engagement documentation can be found in the standalone Benchmark Engagement Report.

COMMON ELEMENTS OF THE PLANS (Overall Design Considerations)

Three concepts were developed with different options within each aimed at stimulating discussions about the best approach to upgrading the facilities and uses within the park. The concepts are not intended to be standalone plans but rather a collection of ideas that can be interchanged to create a comprehensive master plan. There are common themes within all of the concepts, and they are described in the following “overall design considerations” section. From there, each concept will be described in detail, including the reasoning behind the design.

Gateway

In each concept, the term “gateway” describes landscape enhancements, monuments, or signage that create a sense of identity at entrances into Vilas Park. O.C. Simonds designed a formal entrance to Vilas Park that was known as Elm Court (Figure 6.1). The alignment of the court is now the angled entrance road from the intersection of Drake Street and Randall Avenue (originally Warren Street) into the north parking lot. There was a circular garden followed by a tree lined gravel road into the park carriage road, Burr Oak Drive. The

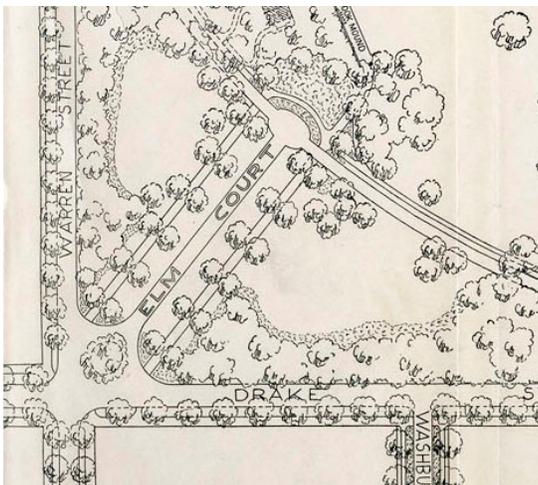


Figure 6.1. O.C. Simonds Elm Court Plan

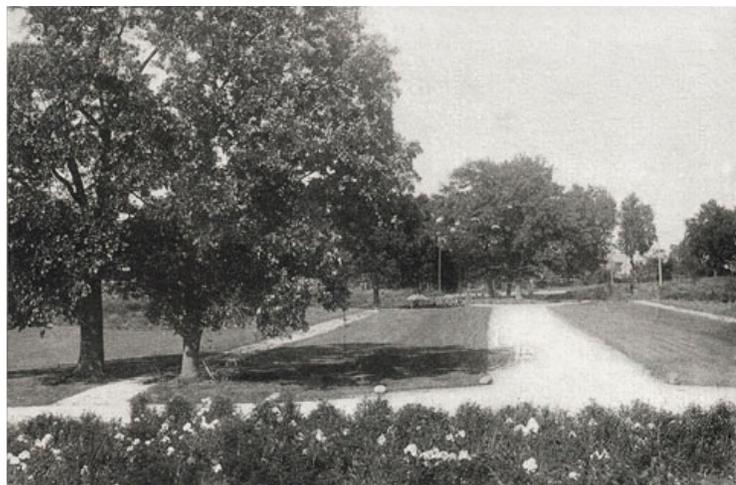


Figure 6.2. 1908 Photograph of Elm Court

intersection of the two roads was framed by a formal garden of flowing shrubs (Figure 6.2). Other park entrances also consisted of “Y” shaped road connections with vegetated centers in the triangular islands. These formal entrances were the inspiration for the gateway designs in the concept plans. The gateways are indicated by the letter “G” on the concept plans.

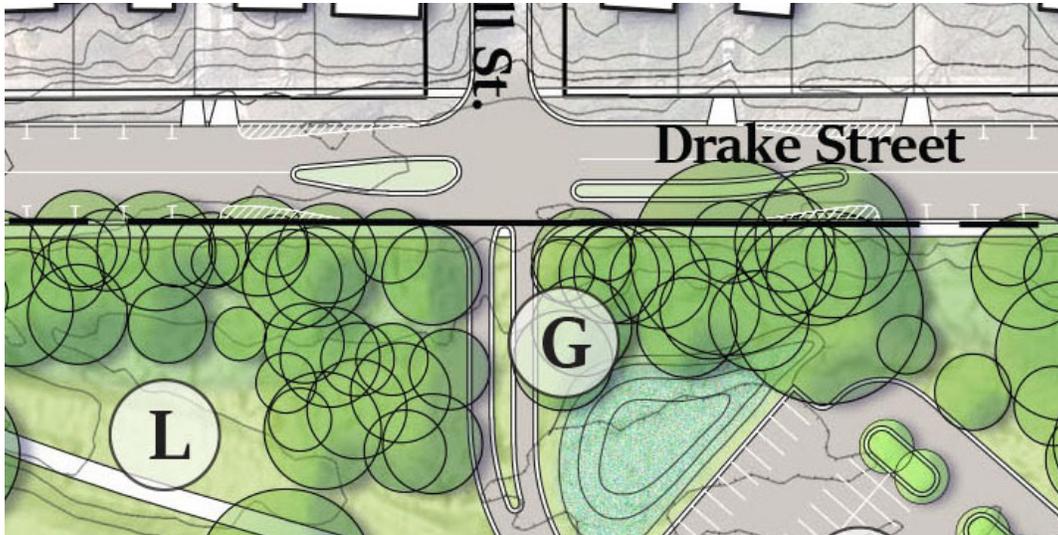


Figure 6.3. Relocated Park Entry Road from Drake Street

North Entrance

In each of the concept plans, the entrance to the north parking lot (north zoo entrance) is relocated from the Drake Street and Randall Avenue intersection to the Campbell Street and Randall Avenue intersection (Figure 6.3). By removing the west-east vehicular travel land terminating in the exit at Grant Street and Drake Street as well as the existing angled parking at this location in the park, the concepts eliminate a key conflict point between automobiles, bicycles, and pedestrians – the desire to find ways to minimize pedestrian-vehicular conflicts was frequently heard and expressed as a goal/interest from public input during the project.

Moving the entrance to the opposite side of Drake Street from Campbell Street creates a properly designed four-way intersection. The pavement width of Drake Street provides enough space to add a left turn lane to go south into Vilas Park. The landscaped islands along Drake Street at the entrance require removing 13 parallel parking stalls, mostly used by park users on the south side of Drake Street, which can be recouped in the redesigned park parking lot. There is no reduction of on-street parking on the north side of Drake Street. The proposed intersection would not be a four-way stop but would provide open flow to Drake Street with stop signs on Campbell Street and the park entrance road. The City of Madison Traffic Engineering will determine on-street markings and signage prior to implementation. The relocated entrance road allows for two-way traffic into and out of the park, eliminating the current one-way system that extends through the north boundary of the park. Appropriate signage of arrival and entry into Vilas Park and the zoo will prevent visitors from turning north onto Campbell Street and into the residential neighborhood.

Parking

Maintaining the same amount of total parking within Vilas Park while limiting the addition of stalls is another common consideration within each concept plan. The parallel parking on Drake, Randall and Erin Streets was included in the overall parking counts due to an undetermined amount of park users utilizing those stalls. The total amount of available parking, including the street parking, is 429 stalls. Parking is identified as the letter “P” on the concept plans. In order to provide the city with options, each of the 3 concepts addresses parking differently. Concept A shows less than what is existing, with 413 stalls, Concept B has more, at 464 stalls, and Concept C maintains almost the same count, at 435 stalls. These varying designs reflect the varying public opinions that were found in survey responses. The results of the survey are found at the end of this section of the report.

Main Park Shelter

The park shelter is also something that is considered in all of the concept plans. During the second Residential Resource Group meeting, the Vilas Neighborhood discussed the desire for a shelter building to include a community room. In the public survey, participants raised the notion of event space needs in the park, identifying the shelter as a potential use area. Newer shelters at Elver and Tenney Parks were identified as facilities to consider as models for Vilas Park (Figures 6.4 and 6.5). Though the Elver and Tenney Park shelters are models for consideration, this shelter would be designed specifically for Vilas Park at a future date as a recommended implementation item. The main shelter building shown on all 3 concept plans is the footprint of the Elver Park structure and is indicated with the letter “D” on the plans. The Elver Park shelter includes a community room, restrooms and a maintenance/utility room. The footprint is for diagrammatic purposes only and any future shelter in Vilas Park would have its own identity. In all of the concepts, the existing small pump house near the north pedestrian bridge to the island moves from that location to a utility room within the main shelter building.



Figure 6.4. Community Room at Tenney Park



Figure 6.5. Elver Park Shelter

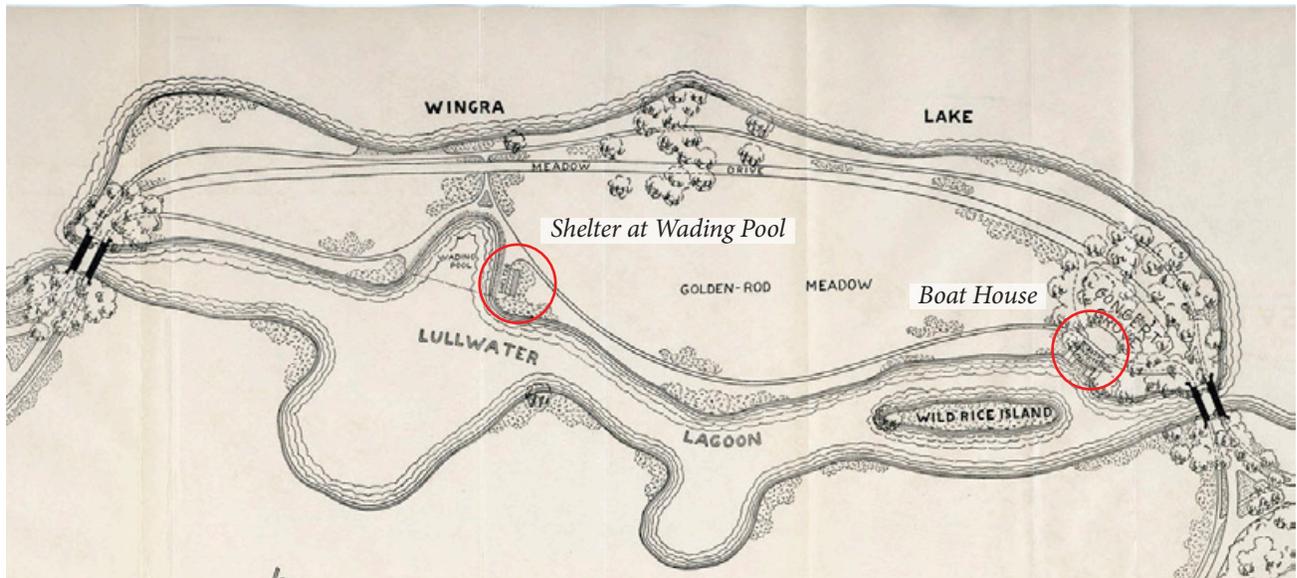


Figure 6.6. Original Building Locations

Also, in all of the concepts the main shelter is relocated to a place with open views from the north side of the park through the central open space to Lake Wingra. This was requested in several of the public engagement sessions. In the original Simonds Plan there were two structures in the park (Figure 6.6.), a boat house just east of the western historic bridge and a shelter east of the south pedestrian bridge over the lagoon. That shelter had a wading pool that is the small bump out toward Vilas Park Drive in the lagoon today. The concepts consider relocation of the main shelter nearer the historic wading pool.

Trees and Native Landscape

Removal or selective pruning of canopy trees to open and further enhance the viewshed should be considered. The trees identified as undesirable species in Section 5 Existing Conditions were removed from the concept plans. The perimeter of the open space and lagoon, along with the understory of the woodlands, are opportunities for reintroducing native landscapes. The vegetation will enhance wildlife habitats and reduce maintenance in some areas that are currently mown. These natural areas are identified on the concepts within the legends.

Lagoon, Wetlands, and Forebays

Allowing the lagoons to become more natural and unmaintained in some areas was also identified during public engagement. The concepts show areas of the lagoon that can revert to low-maintenance zones allowing native plant growth to occur. All of the concepts show the central part of the lagoon to have varying levels of open water versus natural marsh with a mix of plants and water. Again, as with parking, these varying designs reflect the varying public opinions that were found in survey responses. In order to create better conditions for ice, the waterway north of the island is proposed to be expanded in width.



Figure 6.7. Open Water at Vilas Park lagoon



Figure 6.8. Open Water with Wetland Edges



Figure 6.9. A Wisconsin Bog with a Mixture of Plants and Water

All of the concepts also show a wetland added to the lagoon to improve the water quality (see legend). This wetland would collect sediments prior to them entering the lagoon and Lake Wingra system. There is only one storm water discharge into the park site and it is located west of the existing pump house on the north shore of the lagoon. This wetland addition would collect the runoff from that storm line prior to it entering the lagoon. The remainder of runoff from surrounding streets and residences drain into storm lines that are directed around the park to below the Lake Wingra weir. A majority of runoff is surface runoff from the meadow and uplands which contains grass clippings that may add to the phosphorus level in the lagoon.

Compassionate Friends Plaques

A remembrance garden is shown on all of the concepts as a space in memory of local children and to celebrate them in a quiet garden setting. The remembrance garden was added to the plans for the park during the public engagement session. The remembrance garden is indicated with the letter “U.”

Concepts A, B and C are discussed in more detail below. For all of the concepts, we begin our discussions at the Drake Street and Randall Avenue intersection on the north and head clockwise through the park to the east.

CONCEPT A

Once into the north parking in Concept A (Map 6.2), the lot splits into two similar in size areas (73 stalls each). The former entrance road becomes a pedestrian promenade between the lots, which lines up directly with the new zoo entrance (currently under consideration by the zoo). There are 6 accessible stalls in the west lot with direct access to the promenade. There are flex picnic spaces flanking either side of the promenade. These spaces are labeled with an “L.” A tabletop pedestrian crossing gives priority to pedestrian traffic through the parking service drive between the lot, park walk and zoo entrance. There is bike parking located west of the zoo entrance along the walkway. A secondary access to Randall Avenue provides an opportunity for dispersing vehicles at peak times as well as providing a secondary access point for emergency vehicles. A stormwater basin for the parking lots is located between the entry road and west lot in an existing low area.

At the mound group location on Erin Street, the walk down to the lower park shifts south to the old road alignment that is a shallower slope than the existing walk. The existing walk has a slope of over 10%, while the new walk will have a slope of 5% or less, which meets ADA standards. The connecting walk to the Annie Stewart Fountain maintains the setback as outlined for mound protection by the Statement of Policies and Guidelines for a Maintenance Plan for Burial Mounds in Madison Parks. Two overlooks, as indicated by the



Map 6.2. Vilas Park Concept A

letter “O,” are along the brim of the bluff for views of the Lake Wingra valley. The overlooks are responses to discussions by the Greenbush Neighborhood. The walk continues along the bluff toward Orchard Street with a new connection to the lower park to provide a trail loop. The walk requires steps due to the steep topography of the bluff. Recently, park planners have found that communities throughout the country have been requesting measured trail systems be added to their urban parks. At Vilas Park, this can be achieved by adding signs designating half- to one-mile lengths within the loop system.

The existing small parking lot at the corner of Vilas Park Drive and Orchard Street is reconfigured as single bay of parking for more efficient use of pavement. There is a reduction of 8-stalls in this lot. More efficient layouts of parking areas in the park provide the opportunity to reclassify the use of this lot. The 28-stall lot is remote from the zoo entrance and may serve better as staff parking.

The intersection of Vilas Park Drive and Orchard Street provides an opportunity to enhance the east gateway into Vilas Park. There is enough road width to add a landscaped island, enhanced plantings and a new Vilas Park sign. The narrow corridor between the zoo fence and Lake Wingra along Vilas Park Drive can support walks and terraces on both sides with the reduction of the road width to 22 feet. The City of Madison Traffic Engineering allows streets to have 11-foot drive aisles. Figure 6.10 shows the potential improvements as indicated in section B.

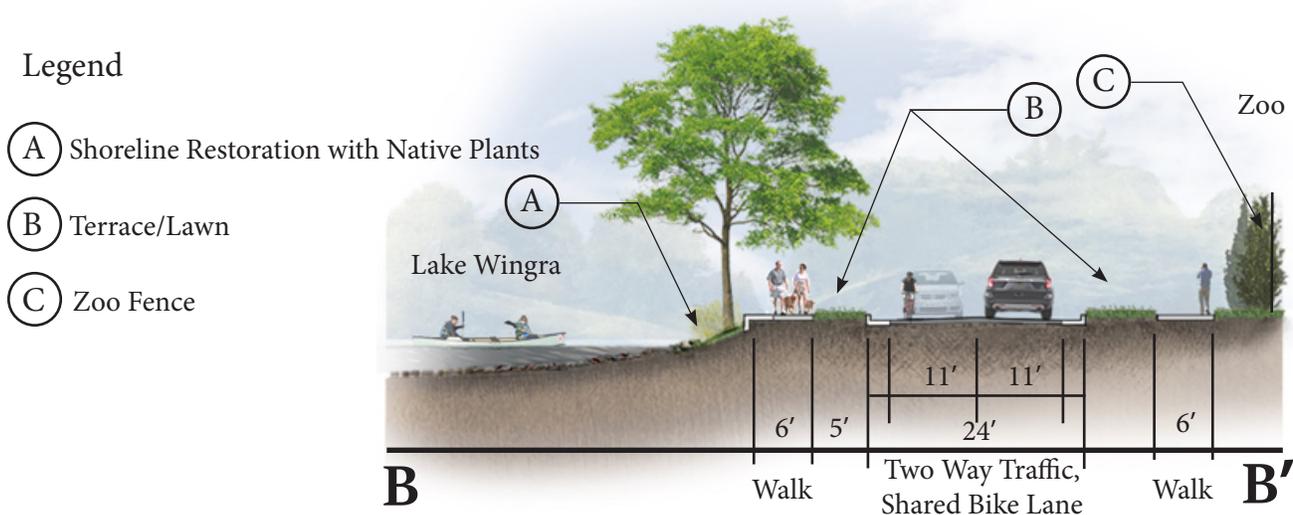


Figure 6.10. Vilas Park Drive Cross Section B-B' at the Zoo in Concept A

Within concept A, the south parking lot (south zoo entrance) layout is designed to be more efficient than the existing lot. The existing parking lot is much wider than a typical 60' bay. Reconfiguring the parking bays to be parallel provides enough space at the east end to add a bus drop-off. The teardrop island at the drop-off meets the turning radius required for school, city and inter-city bus-es. The orientation of the drop-off lane

allows for disembarking directly onto the connecting park and zoo walkway system. The parking lot and bus drop-off have direct access to the south zoo entrance, which will limit pedestrian and vehicular conflicts. There are 6 accessible stalls and bike parking nearest to the entry gate. A storm water basin is located in the green space south of the last bay of parking and before Vilas Park Drive.

The beach house (“F”) moves to the east to allow for extension of a grand walkway leading to the south zoo entrance. As patrons leave the zoo, the view opens directly to Lake Wingra. The parking for the beach area is east of the beach house with access to a plaza space between the building and beach. This plaza area provides an opportunity for café tables and bench seating. A small play-ground (“C”) is located near the beach house and beach. To lessen the erosion of sand, semicircular walkways help to confine the sand to the beach. On the west walkway there is an overlook with bench seating. The east walkway provides an accessible swimming ramp. The ramp walk continues into the lake with a handrail on one side and a transition seat in the lake to allow people to have direct access to the lake.

Moving west on the peninsula, the lagoon is opened to Lake Wingra at a second location to replicate the original design of the lake system. By condensing parking into distinct zones, the newly formed island in the park reverts fully to dedicated open space. The parallel parking spaces on Vilas Park Drive, as well as parking spaces at the shelter and additional small linear lots, are all incorporated into the south lot and the beach parking lot. A small lot along Vilas Park Drive will maintain parking for access to walks, fishing piers (“J”) and a canoe/kayak launch (“Q”) along the shoreline. A bridge will cross the new opening of the lagoon and is sized to allow for a 12-foot vehicle lane with 6-foot pedestrian walkways on either side.

In Concept A, the main shelter is removed from the peninsula to allow for open views from the north end of the park to Lake Wingra. In its place is open lawn, natural areas and wetlands (“I”). The wetlands also provide stormwater management by collecting runoff from walks and Vilas Park Drive prior to it draining into the lagoon or Lake Wingra. The wetlands provide an opportunity for boardwalks and provide habitat for birds and other wildlife.

Vilas Park Drive is reduced to 20 feet wide. It has a 12-foot drive aisle (to share with eastbound bikes) and an 8-foot westbound, counter traffic bike lane (Figure 6.11). The alignment of Vilas Park Drive bends and curves to reduce the speed of traffic through the park and to create a parklike feel to the road. The pedestrian walks are separate from Vilas Park Drive and circulate around the edges and shoreline of the new island.

Legend

- (A) Shoreline Restoration with Native Plants
- (B) Natural Areas
- (C) Open Lawn
- (D) Wetlands

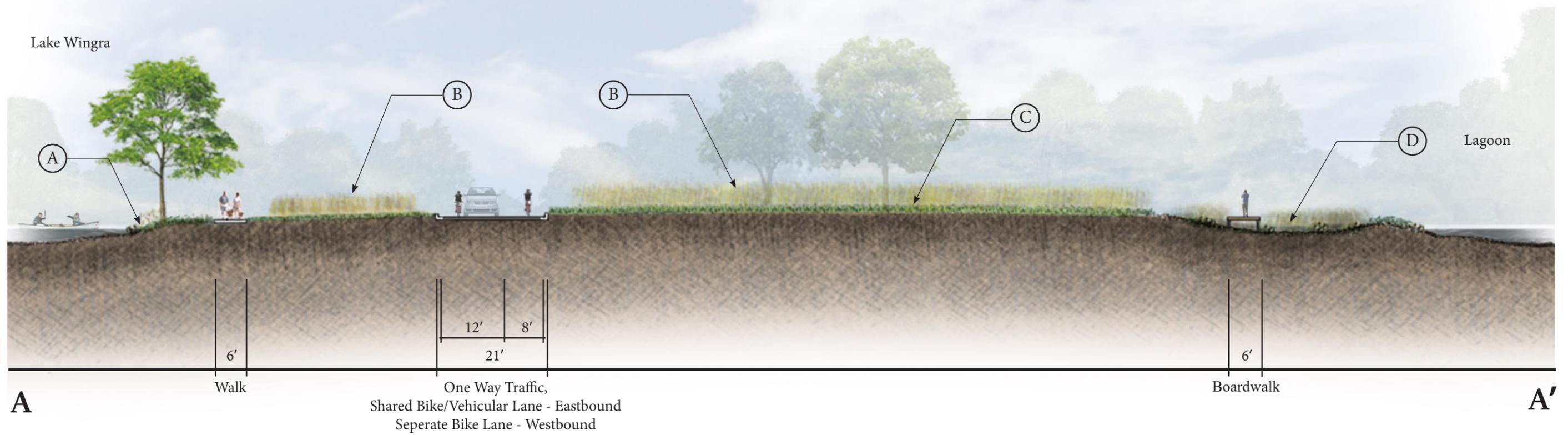


Figure 6.11. Vilas Park Drive and Peninsula Cross Section A-A' in Concept A

At Edgewood Avenue, the west park gateway culminates in an abrupt T-intersection to prevent flow-through traffic. The main park shelter (“D”) tucks in along the north shore of the lagoon and hillside on the west side of the park. The parking lot for the shelter will be slightly larger than the existing lot in that location and will include bike parking at the building drop-off circle. The parking lot supports the playground (“C”), basketball court (“B”), hockey rink (“H”) and trails that are near the shelter building. A berm extends outward perpendicular from the hillside that extends parallel to Vilas Avenue to buffer views of the parking lot from the north end of the park and neighborhood. The berm also provides an opportunity for a hillside playground.

The playground has separate spaces for school- and preschool-age children. This location provides close access to restroom facilities in the main shelter. The “old woman in a shoe” will be relocated into this play-ground. More wetlands extend along the lagoon near the shelter. The ice-skating area, shown with a blue dashed line, on the lagoon shifts to the west between the historic bridge and the existing island. The east lagoon would transition to a natural wetland landscape.

Returning to the north, the main bike and pedestrian walk on the west side is another remnant of Burr Oak Drive from the Simonds Plan and continues to be an asset to Vilas Park. The ‘Wingra meadow’ area of the Simonds Plan is once again open and free of structures. Areas for open lawns that allow for informal play and relaxation are indicated with the letter “A.”

The existing parking capacity is 429 stalls at Vilas Park. The breakdown:

- North parking (including Drake Street and Randal Avenue parallel parking on park side) - 144
- Erin Street parking - 8
- South lot, beach, Vilas Park Drive parallel and peninsula parking - 196
- Main shelter parking - 56
- Tennis court parking - 25

Concept A has a total of 413 stalls, which is less than the existing amount of parking. The break-down:

- North parking (including Drake Street and Randal Avenue parallel parking on park side) - 189
- Erin Street parking - 8 (no change)
- South lot, beach and peninsula parking - 152
- Main shelter parking - 64

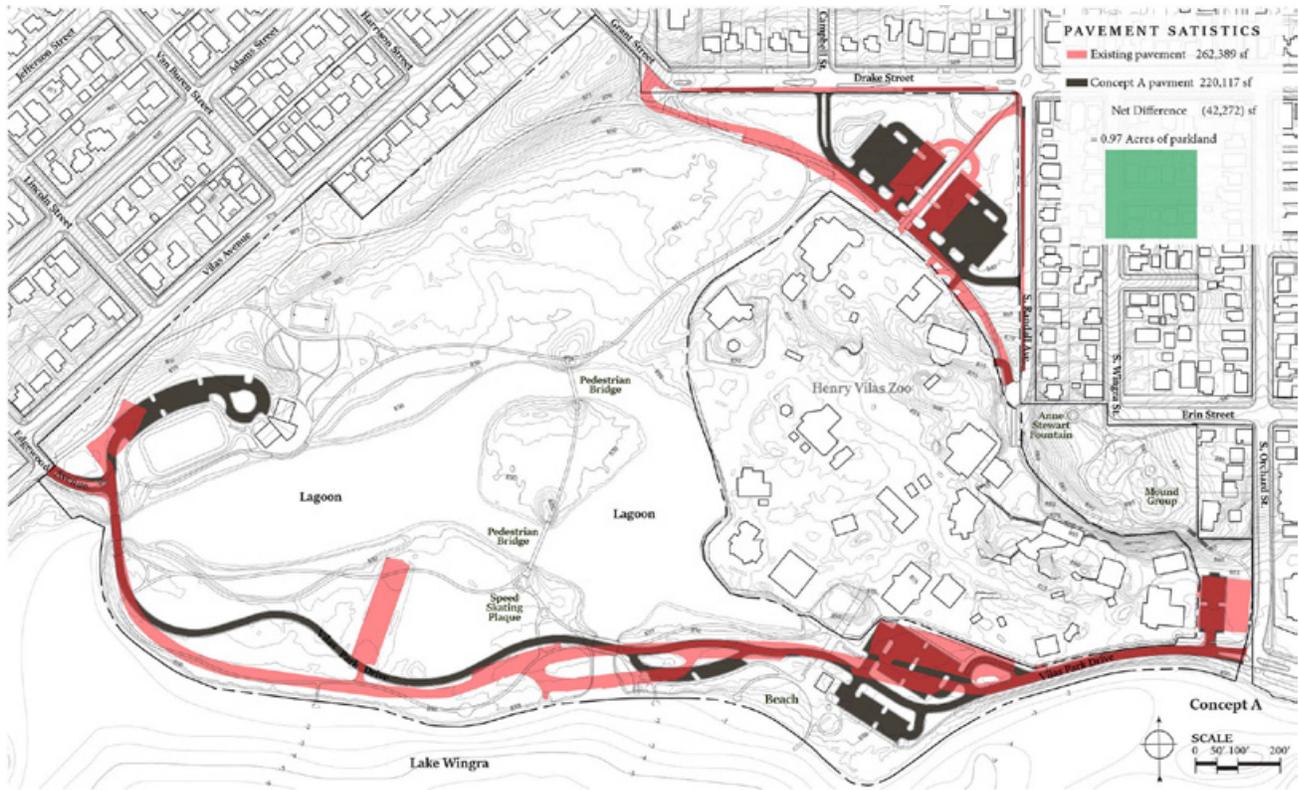


Figure 6.12. Vehicular Pavement Comparison in Concept A

The reorientation of the parking and the reconfiguration of roads in the park also change the amount of pavement dedicated to vehicles. In Figure 6.12, the areas in red are the existing roads and parking within the park. The areas shown in black are the proposed redesigned lots and the reduced Vilas Park Drive area. The existing pavement accounts for approximately 262,500 sq. ft., whereas the proposed pavement reduces the amount to 220,100 sq. ft. This difference adds nearly one acre of parkland to the site.

CONCEPT B

As with Concept A, the north parking lot is split into two similarly sized areas in Concept B (Map 6.3). In addition to the main park access road, the lots are also connected on the north end to allow for more circulation between them. The lots contain 79 and 82 stalls, respectively. The pedestrian gateway and promenade again align with the new zoo entry. Both lots have a total of 6 accessible stalls, all in the west lot, with direct access to the promenade, as with Concept A. The parking lot has a secondary connection to Randall Avenue on the north side of the east lot. This option creates two access points, but does not provide direct drive through from the access road, as with Concept A. The tabletop pedestrian crossings are shown at the parking access road and at interior lot connections. Bike parking is located east of the proposed new zoo entrance. The remembrance garden is sited along the walks as you enter the park from the parking lot. The storm water basin is in the same location as in Concept A.



Map 6.3. Vilas Park Concept B

At the mound group, one overlook is located at the top of the bluff, but a second overlook is added nearer the zoo fence and downslope from the mounds along the relocated walk. The walk connection to the lower park is moved to the former roadway and is the only connection from the mound group area to the rest of the park. A connection to the east of the zoo follows the existing street sidewalk system along Erin and Orchard Streets.

The parking lot at Orchard Street and Vilas Park Drive is proposed to be the same layout and function (as a zoo and park staff lot) as in Concept A. The east gateway (“G”) is consistent with Concept A as well in that it provides a landscaped island and safe pedestrian crossing. The multi-use path that currently ends at the intersection is extended along Vilas Park Drive to the beach along the Lake Wingra shoreline. There is enough width in the corridor to have a 5-foot wide walk along the zoo fence, a small terrace, 22 feet for the Vilas Park Drive roadway and a 10-foot wide multi-use path to match the existing path at the Orchard St. intersection as it extends eastward toward the UW Arboretum entrance (see Figure 6.13).

Legend

- (A) Shoreline Restoration with Native Plants
- (B) Terrace/Lawn
- (C) Zoo Fence

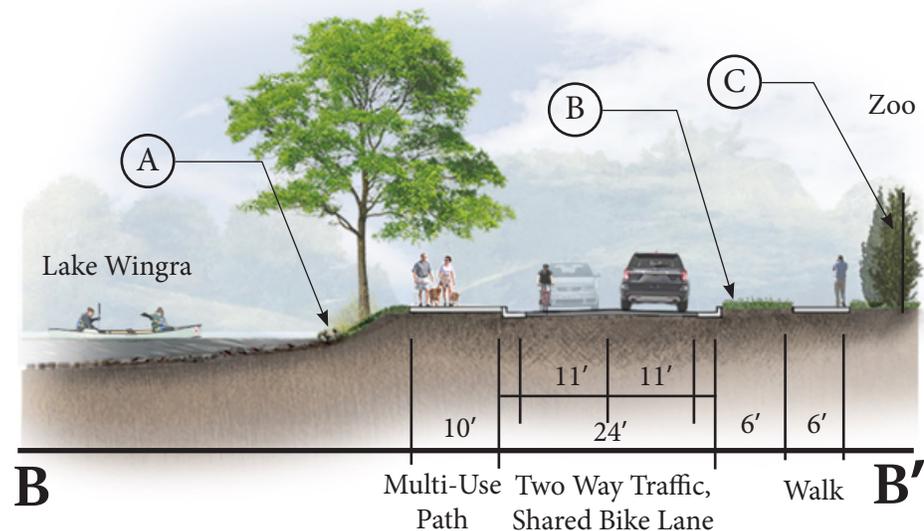


Figure 6.13. Vilas Park Drive Cross Section B-B' at the Zoo in Concept B

The south parking lot is expanded to contain more spaces than the other concepts. The bus drop-off (“R”) in Concept B is extended the full length of the parking lot to accommodate up to 7 buses at one time. The buses then exit past the accessible stalls and out to Vilas Park Drive in a large looping system. There are 6 accessible stalls and bike parking near the zoo entrance. A stormwater basin similar to Concept A is located south of the last bay of parking.

The beach house (“F”) is centrally aligned on the south zoo entrance walk. The building can be a covered open-air structure in the center to provide views to Lake Wingra from the zoo entrance. The restrooms and changing areas flank either side of the central walk. The beach containment is the same as in Concept A with the exception of a wider paved area along the west end for tables, chairs and umbrellas. A large playground (“C”) is located east of the beach house and has school- and preschool-aged zones. A kayak/canoe launch (“Q”) provides access to Lake Wingra near the bike parking, directly south of the shelter. The parking for the beach is located northwest of the beach house with direct access to the shoreline amenities. The multi-use path continues north of the beach house with bike parking next to the building. The path continues west toward the main shelter building, unobstructed by vehicular routes.

The most significant change in Concept B is the elimination of the through connection of vehicles on Vilas Park Drive. Vilas Park Drive terminates at the main park shelter (“D”), which sits on the shoreline of the lagoon, but nearer the zoo than the existing structure. An outdoor area to the west of the shelter provides steps into the lagoon and offers the opportunity to fish and connect directly to the water. The east side of the building has a drop-off area and parking lot that circulates traffic back out toward the eastern gateway.

The hockey rink and small family ice rink (“H”) are located just west of the new shelter. In Concept B the lagoon is left to revert to a more natural wetland placing limitation on maintaining open water. Ice skating on the lagoon would secede to natural vegetation.

The multi-use path continues across the peninsula to the existing historic bridge in a more direct route than the existing Vilas Park Drive alignment (see Figure 6.14). The pedestrian walks flow along the shoreline of the lagoon and lake in a circular pattern around the peninsula. As with the other concepts, the addition of wetlands along the shoreline and in existing wet areas provides the opportunity to add boardwalks with wildlife viewing platforms.

The Edgewood Avenue entrance is downplayed in Concept B. This entrance can be a gateway, but not as substantial as the other concepts since this access dead ends in a parking lot. This west parking lot serves a small open-air shelter (“E”) on the lagoon shoreline, a small playground (“C”), basketball courts (“B”) and tennis courts (“T”). The tennis area is reduced in size from 6 to 3 courts, similar to Tenney Park. Bike parking is located next to the basketball and tennis courts. The pedestrian walk continues along the north edge of the lagoon, meandering in and out of the wetlands. The walks connect back to the north parking lot, providing many unobstructed pathways meandering through the park. There are also several informal picnic areas (“L”) located along the pathways.

Legend

- (A) Shoreline Restoration with Native Plants
- (B) Natural Areas
- (C) Open Lawn
- (D) Wetlands
- (E) Fishing Pier

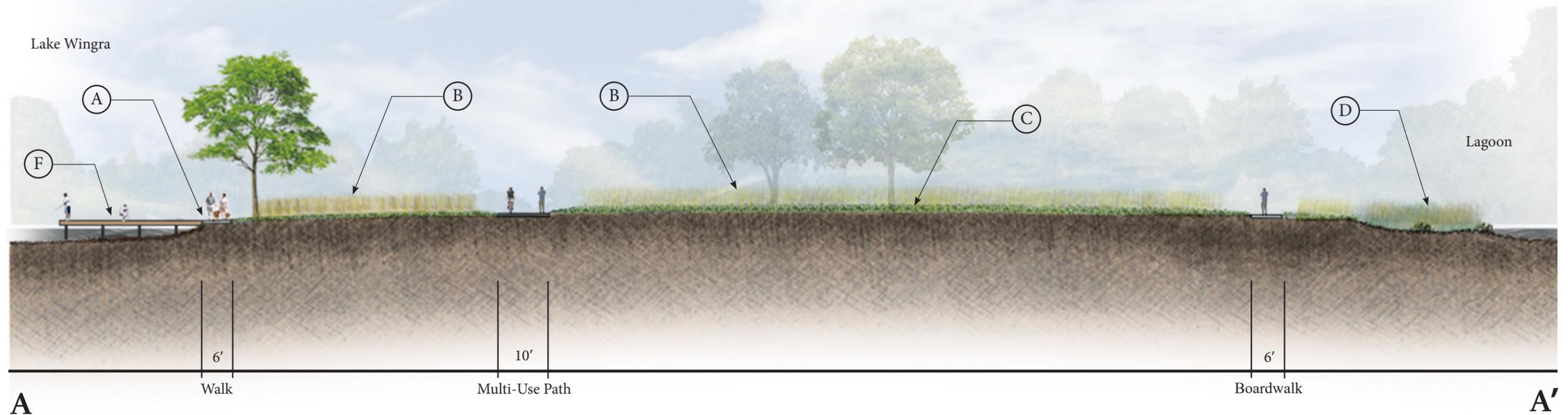


Figure 6.14. Vilas Park Drive and Peninsula Cross Section A-A' in Concept B

The existing parking capacity is 429 stalls at Vilas Park. Concept B has 464 stalls, which is significantly more than the existing capacity. This concept is meant to show the potential for more parking and how that could affect park uses and green space. The Concept B parking breakdown:

- North parking (including Drake Street and Randal Avenue parallel parking on park side) - 203
- Erin Street parking - 8 (no change)
- South lot parking - 139
- Main shelter and beach parking - 73
- Small shelter, basketball and tennis court parking - 41

Even though there is significantly more parking than existing, Concept B has the most reduction of pavement dedicated to vehicles. This is due to the elimination of Vilas Park Drive from the historic bridge to the relocated main shelter. Also, the south parking area is more compressed which short-ens internal service roads connecting the main lots together (see Figure 6.15). The existing pavement accounts for approximately 262,500 sq. ft., whereas the proposed improvements reduce that amount to 188,500 sq. ft. This difference adds approximately 1.6 acres of parkland to the site.

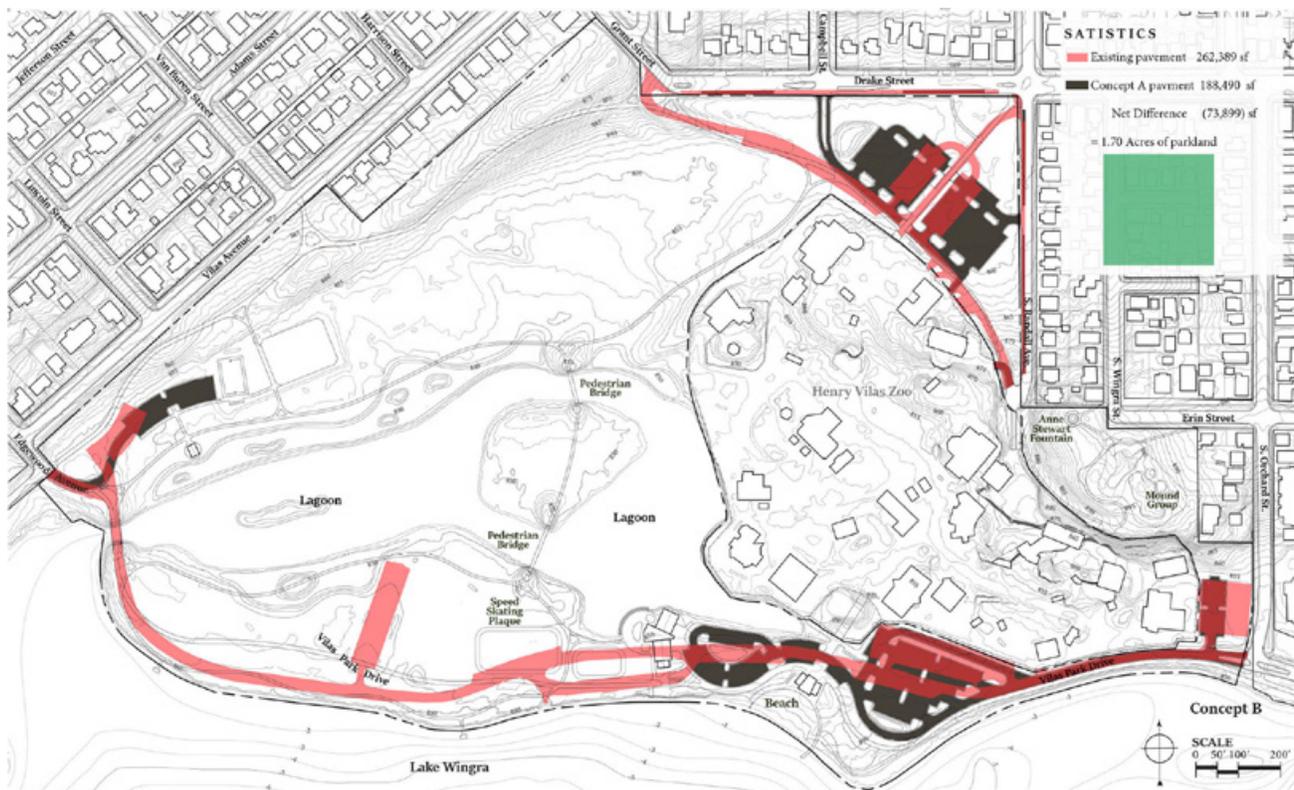


Figure 6.15. Vehicular Pavement Comparison in Concept B



Map 6.4. Vilas Park Concept C

The main south parking lot is narrowed to improve efficiency. The bus drop-off is located south of the main lot. It provides direct access to the zoo entrance requiring one crossing of the parking lot access road near the accessible parking stalls. The turning radius of the drop-off area meets requirements for school, city and inter-city buses. The drop-off can hold up to 4 buses at one time. There are 5 accessible stalls and bike parking nearest the entry gate.

In Concept C, the beach house location moves slightly to the east to extend the grand walkway at the south zoo entrance. Parking for the beach area is shared with the main south lot at the zoo entrance, as well as two angled lots to the west. The beach house has a covered shelter and is adjacent to an open plaza space. This area provides an opportunity for café tables and bench seating. Again, to lessen the erosion of sand, walkways help to confine the sand to the beach. The west side of the beach has an overlook with bench seating. The center walkway spine is an accessible swimming ramp. The easterly walk continues and terminates at an accessible fishing pier, towards the southernmost tip of the park.

In Concept C, the main shelter is situated east of the existing pedestrian bridge along the lagoon shoreline, overlooking the larger open water of the lagoon (former speedskating track). On the lagoon side of the shelter, a linear step edge extends along the shoreline, similar to the U.W. Memorial Union Terrace. On the west end of the space, a ramp provides access for canoes and kayaks in the summer and skating in the winter. The hockey rink is located directly west of the shelter. Ice skating is in the same location as in Concept B, circling the small island.

The remaining perimeter of the lagoons is wetland. The wetlands provide areas for stormwater collection for runoff from the shelter and parking lots before draining into the lagoon or Lake Wingra. The wetlands also provide an opportunity for boardwalks and wildlife viewing.

Two-way traffic flows on Vilas Park Drive up to a turnaround at the shelter. The turnaround is designed to allow for bus movement and drop-offs at the shelter. This drop-off could serve as a Met-ro transit shuttle stop on weekends or for special events. The alignment of Vilas Park Drive remains similar to the existing with slight curvature added. The pedestrian walks circle around the edges and shoreline of the peninsula with additional overlooks and a fishing pier along Lake Wingra. As in Concept A, Vilas Park Drive is reduced to 20 feet, including a 12-foot drive aisle (to share with eastbound bikes) and an 8-foot westbound bike lane (Figure 6.17).

At Edgewood Avenue, the west park gateway is also like Concept A, culminating at a T-intersection. A small, open-air shelter is located next to an expanded parking lot. The shelter includes a trailhead with bike parking, a bike repair station and a kiosk. The larger parking lot supports new playgrounds, basketball courts, 8 pickle ball courts and 2 additional open-air shelters. The playground also has separate spaces for school- and preschool-age children. There is an accessible fishing pier and linear dock on the lagoon south of the shelter.

Returning to the north, the main bike and pedestrian walkway continues as it does currently, with the addition of another open-air shelter near the north parking lot and zoo entry. The 'Wingra meadow' area is once again an unobstructed focal point. The perimeter of the open lawn, lagoon and woodlands are edged with natural areas of native plantings.

The existing parking capacity is 429 stalls at Vilas Park. Concept C has 435 stalls, which is similar to what is existing. The Concept C parking breakdown:

- North parking (including Drake Street and Randal Avenue parallel parking on park side) - 211
- Erin Street parking - 8 (no change)
- South lot parking - 106
- Main shelter and peninsula parking - 68
- Pickleball courts, trailhead and playground parking - 42

In Concept C, the continuation of Vilas Park Drive, similarly as it exists, with linear parking lots along Lake Wingra results in the least amount of reduced pavement of any of the concepts. The existing pavement accounts for approximately 262,500 sf whereas the proposed reduces that amount to 221,400 sf. This difference adds approximately 0.94 or, as with Concept A, nearly 1 acre of parkland. Figure 6.18 shows the correlations and reduction in pavement.

Legend

- (A) Shoreline Restoration with Native Plants
- (B) Natural Areas
- (C) Open Lawn
- (D) Wetlands
- (E) Overlook

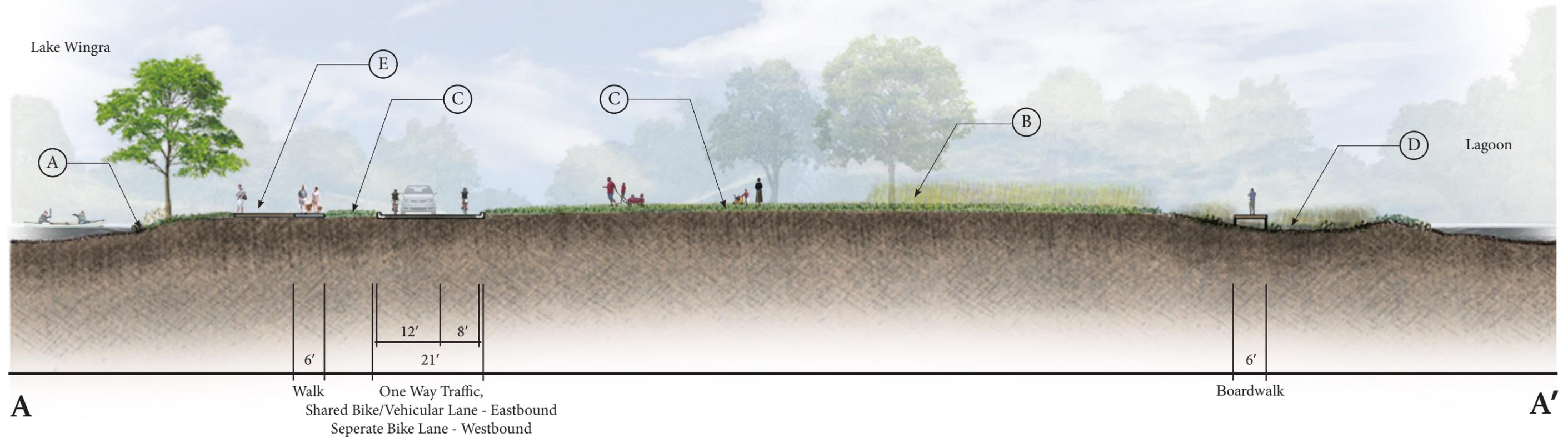


Figure 6.17. Vilas Park Drive and Peninsula Cross Section A-A' in Concept C

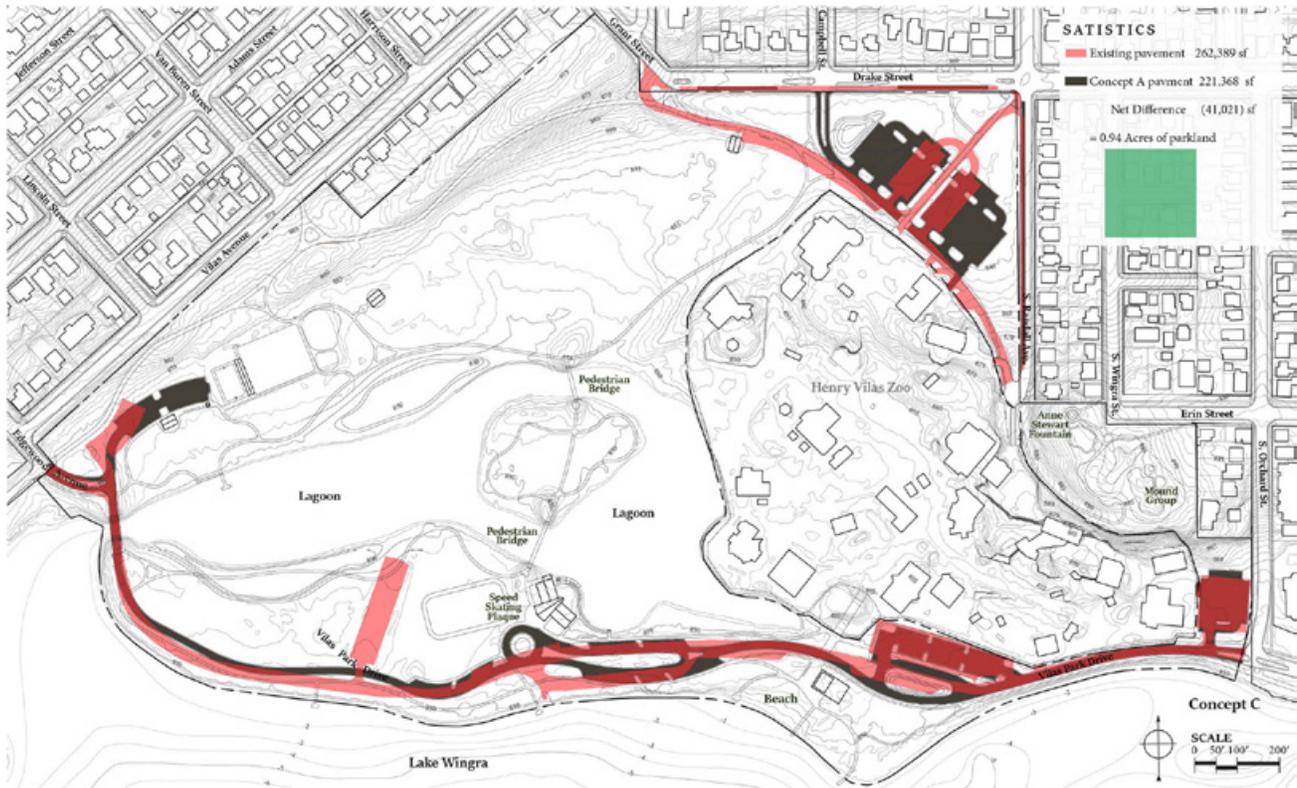


Figure 6.18. Vehicular Pavement Comparison in Concept C

REVIEW AND INPUT ON THE CONCEPTS

In Phase II of the project, community engagement occurred, in large part, virtually due to restrictions on public gatherings by Public Health Madison Dane County due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A large Community Input Meeting was held online via Zoom Webinar and accompanied an online public survey which was open prior to the meeting and remained open for three weeks after the meeting. The survey was also advertised in the park utilizing Burma-Shave style advertising placed along Vilas Park Drive, which was closed to vehicular use as an alternate bike-pedestrian option to the City’s bike paths, which were becoming increasingly overcrowded during the shutdown of schools and businesses and onset of warmer weather. These were in addition to concept reviews by the Resident Resource Group (RRG), Community Partner Advisory Group (CPAG), Interagency Staff (IAS) and Focus Groups. The community engagement process sought to collect input on design solutions provided in the 3 concept plans for Vilas Park improvements from a diverse cross-section of residents representing many different races, ages, abilities and genders. This process provided valuable feedback surrounding the ideas in each concept to coalesce into a master plan for the park.

The initial public engagement in Phase I identified key design issues that, when viewed together, inform the framework for the Vilas Park Master Plan. These issues include:

- Vilas Park Drive
- The Main Park Shelter
- Parking
- Open Space and Active Recreation
- Playgrounds
- Lagoons

As discussed earlier in this section, the three concepts include different options aimed at stimulating discussions about the best approach to upgrading the facilities and uses within the park. The concepts are not intended to be stand-alone plans but rather to represent some of the extremes of decision-making (in the case of the lagoons, as an example, to show varying levels of open water and their corresponding available ice skating access) so that feedback and alternate ideas that can be obtained to help inform decision making to create a comprehensive master plan.

Input from the various outreach methods focused on attaining feedback and gauging reactions to options proposed within the concepts. Typical engagement and outreach involved in-person discussions allowing for open comment and dialog on the proposed changes. However, the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) resulted in a shift from in-person meetings to virtual meetings. Initially, the loss of face-to-face meetings was a concern. However, the virtual platform allowed for opportunities not present with traditional public engagement methods, especially for those not comfortable speaking up directly in a public meeting and for those who would otherwise not be able to attend public meetings due to issues like lack of child-care.

STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

The public engagement kickoff to review the concept plans was a combined meeting of the Community Partners Advisory Group (CPAG) and the Resident Resource Group (RRG), which was held virtually via WebEx on April 22, 2020. Thirteen attendees from the two focus groups were given an introductory presentation of the concepts, which was followed by time for open discussion.

Takeaways from this meeting included:

- Tennis courts are in high demand and should be included in the final design.

- The final design should provide a description of the setback and design requirements for impervious surfaces and buildings.
- Preservation of lakefront greenspace is important.
- There is concern the plan is devoting significant effort to developing parking lots that appear to primarily serve the zoo.
- Shelter location in Option A (near existing tennis courts) is too close to the Vilas Ave. residences.
- Playground space is lacking in all three concepts. They appear to be smaller than the current sizes and the locations don't work well for residents and zoo users. A playground near the existing shoe playground should be retained in the final design.
- Concepts provide many good options for improvements to the park.
- Future engagement should provide mix and match opportunities to select preferences rather than three defined concepts.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the participants were encouraged to discuss the concepts further with their organizations. The Vilas Neighborhood Association, The Friends of Lake Wingra, South Randall Ave. Neighbors and Clean Lakes Alliance all provided statements regarding the concepts and ongoing design development. Those statements are summarized below.

Vilas Neighborhood Association (VNA)

Below is an excerpt from the VNA statement, which was submitted on May 3, 2020 by Wendy Fearnside on behalf of the Vilas Neighborhood Association. The full statement is available in Appendix B.

Main themes

- *Preference for some features but little support for any of the concepts in their entirety*
- *Keeping the open space and feel of the park, with mature trees and a green buffer between the park and neighborhood*
- *Strong support for retaining the tennis courts. Fewer than the current number would be OK.*
- *Preference for current playgrounds locations. Keep the Shoe playground location for access to open space, entrance to the Zoo, and easy school group use*
- *Keeping the Shoe*
- *Opposition to consolidation of playgrounds and other activity spaces.*
- *Support for a new playground near the beach*
- *A central location for the shelter, as in the current site or in Concepts B or C. Opposition to shelter*

location and increased parking near Edgewood/Vilas Avenues (Plan A)

- *Addition of walking paths*
- *Separating pedestrians and bikes from vehicular traffic on the Drive*
- *Continuing to provide for ice skating and hockey*

Topics on which preferences appear to be more divided

- *Through traffic on the drive*
- *Increased or reconfigured parking (more opposed, but significant minority supported)*
- *Keeping current shelter location vs. the other central locations in Concepts B and C*
- *Addition of small, open air shelters*
- *Pickleball*
- *Wetland restoration. Some want it natural; others see lagoon and lakefront as urban*

Friends of Lake Wingra (FoLW)

Below is an excerpt of the feedback from the Friends of Lake Wingra Board of Directors. The full statement is available in Appendix B.

Shelter Location: No comment.

Vilas Park Drive: FoLW preference: Concept B

Lagoon Management: FoLW preference: An alternative to [concept] A,B,C

- *Ice skating: According to feedback from our strategic planning process in 2018, about 1 in 4 people who visit Lake Wingra participate in ice skating during the winter. It is a favorite past time at Vilas Park Lagoon and groomed ice skating should remain an available option for park visitors in the winter.*
- *Wetlands: All three concepts show the use of wetlands and forebays. We have serious concerns about transitioning parts of the park or lagoon to wetlands without acknowledging tradeoffs or clarifying certain general design requirements. With that said, we do support the opportunity to find a more productive use for poorly graded and frequently wet areas of the park. Our concerns relate to the following:*
- *Without careful design and planning, constructed wetlands and wet ponds can become significant sources of phosphorus. Phosphorus is one of the three main areas of concern in the Wingra Watershed Management plan. FoLW would like the master plan to avoid potentially creating another source of*

phosphorus that could offset the reduction efforts the community and City of Madison are taking. See attached article summarizing a three-year study about wetland restoration at the UW-Madison Arboretum.

- *The creation and maintenance of artificial wetlands (and wet ponds) is difficult. Cattails, reed canary grass, and other invasive species will eventually overrun the wetland areas. Resources required to prevent invasive species overrunning the proposed wetlands would be significant. We acknowledge that any restoration of any kind will require resources to maintain it.*

We recommend:

- *Continue to enhance existing riparian buffers and transition existing wet areas of Vilas Park to native wet meadow and mesic prairie plantings. This would also help prohibit the movement of geese from land to water.*
- *Continue to prioritize features like elevated boardwalks to deter unstructured traffic flow through the wet meadows.*
- *Explain to the greater public the environmental tradeoffs of using wetlands at Vilas Park compared to other best management practices (BMPs).*
- *Look at additional BMPs to treat stormwater before it reaches the Lake. Explore the possibility of dredging areas of the lagoon, and use dredge material to modify grades in the park.*

Playground Layout: No comment.

Southern Parking Lot Layout: FoLW preference: An alternative to A,B,C

- *Friends of Lake Wingra supports removing Vilas Park Drive and understands that means parking will need to concentrate at gateways to the Park. We feel significant opportunities exist to provide a reasonable amount of parking without using waterfront property to do so.*
- *The amount of impervious surface so close to the beach and lake in Concept B concerns us. It will impact the character of the lake, the ambiance of the beach, and there are regulatory and stormwater management issues that don't seem to be addressed. We acknowledge that existing City/County agreements may dictate surface parking quotas in the short term. We would recommend enhancing the parking opportunities near South Orchard Street and also encourage the City of Madison to progressively assess future parking demands and brainstorm unique ways to satisfy parking during peak periods, such as shuttles, parking garages, or a potential partnership with St. Mary's on weekends.*

North Parking Lot Layout: Friends of Lake Wingra supports the modified north parking lot entrance and pedestrian gateway.

South Randall Ave. Neighbors

Eleven property owners on the 500 block of South Randall Ave. co-authored a statement in reply to the concept plans. An excerpt of the statement is included below, and the full statement can be found in Appendix B.

- *We strongly oppose the removal of the open green space along the 500 block of S. Randall Avenue. We value the open green space in front of our homes as a community asset. When we attended the initial meeting hosted by the City regarding the Vilas Park Master Plan in June 2019, we asked about this space. We were assured by Parks staff that this open space would not be removed; however, all three concepts eliminate nearly all open green space along our block in favor of a parking lot. This open green space is invaluable for several reasons, and its removal would have a significant impact on us and the community.*
 1. *The open green space and trees act as a buffer from the visual and noise pollution created by the existing parking lot. The elimination of the green space will reduce our property values and privacy and make this a much less pleasant place to live due to the added noise, air, and visual pollution.*
 2. *This open green space is the driest in the area and therefore is utilized more extensively than other areas. Coupled with the shade trees, it is one of the nicest areas in the park. For these reasons, we think it is the most logical area to maintain as green space. Adding picnic tables would further enhance the space.*
 3. *This open green space includes red maples that provide a wonderful splash of bright red each fall and is home to several 100-year-old oak trees in an area where many trees have been clear-cut due to Emerald Ash Borer. This space is one of the few areas of the park that provides a shady place for visitors to enjoy in the warmer months.*
- *We strongly oppose the expansion of the North End Parking lot. The proposed concepts (for side-by-side comparison <https://tinyurl.com/ybeonwvpv>) expand the north end rectangular parking lots. The proposals indicate the net pavement for the entire park is similar or less than the current park, however they concentrate the pavement in front of our homes, replacing the green space which is more usable and more attractive than other areas of the park. We believe the green space should be preserved and the parking lot should be expanded to other, less usable areas of the park. For example,*

the chronically wet area at the proposed new entrance, northwest of the current main lot - instead of in the highly valuable, well-used green space toward Randall.

- *We strongly oppose a zoo entrance and exit on S. Randall Avenue. Our narrow street can barely fit two-way traffic with parking and there is even less street space in winter months with snow accumulation. Additionally, all three concepts remove the alternate exit at the south end of S. Randall Avenue. Directing increasing zoo traffic onto S. Randall will result in congestion for zoo visitors and make it more difficult for residents on the block to get to their homes as well as emergency vehicles. The added entrance would exacerbate the issues.*
- *We are in favor of moving the angled zoo entrance from S. Randall Avenue and Drake Street to Drake Street opposite Campbell Street. Drake Street can accommodate a left turn lane, has a better natural border for the lot and coupled with our proposed parking lot location would result in a safer flow for traffic and pedestrians.*

Clean Lakes Alliance

An excerpt of the statement from the Clean Lakes Alliance is included below, and the full statement can be found in Appendix B.

Concept B (favored)

Pros:

- *Consolidation of parking at W, NE and S locations*
- *First choice for main shelter location (consolidates facilities and separates more active uses from passive/quiet/open space uses)*
- *Reduced tennis courts*
- *Location of tennis courts, basketball court, playground, and small shelter on W side*
- *Conversion of through-way street to a multi-use path*
- *Managing the lagoons and associated wetlands more as natural areas (cuts down on expense of maintaining as a very shallow yet open water area; improves wetland habitat; ice skating can move to the main lake and to the designated on-shore rink areas)*
- *Configuration of walking paths and multiple wetland boardwalks*
- *Addition of shore fishing piers (could use 1-2 more; trees that need to be removed should be incorporated as engineered treefalls to improve nearshore fish habitat)*

- *Pedestrian-only, raised gateway at NE corner*
- *Rain gardens, bioswales and other green infrastructure around parking lots and shelters (like shown in west edge of NE parking lot)*

Cons:

- *Amount of space devoted to parking is excessive and should probably be scaled back, particularly at S location*
- *All impervious surfaces should be set as far back from the water's edge as possible (75' or more) -- this especially applies to parking*

Concept A (second choice)

Pros:

- *Consolidation of parking at W, NE and S locations*
- *Second choice for location of main shelter (Concept B location preferred)*
- *Playground locations on W and S sides*
- *Moving the road off the lake edge and adding meanders (Concept B multi-use path preferred)*
- *Incorporation of walking paths and marsh boardwalk, and their configuration*
- *Addition of shore fishing piers (could use 1-2 more; trees that need to be removed should be incorporated as engineered treefalls to improve nearshore fish habitat)*
- *Pedestrian-only, raised gateway at NE corner*
- *Looping, connected pathway with viewing overlooks on E side*
- *Offset of small beach house on S side to preserve lake views when exiting zoo*
- *Rain gardens, bioswales and other green infrastructure around parking lots and shelters (like shown in west edge of NE parking lot)*

Cons:

- *Separate and unnecessary 20-stall parking lot at S location*
- *Maintaining a through-way road despite the planned improvements*
- *Cutting an open-water connecting channel from the lagoon to the main lake (adds to expense and gives carp access to prime spawning location)*
- *All impervious surfaces should be set as far back from the water's edge as possible (75' or more) -- this especially applies to parking*

*Concept C (least favored)**Pros:*

- *Consolidation of parking, court activities, playground and small shelters on W end*
- *Most parking concentrated around the zoo and beach*
- *Good number of fishing piers, including one in the lagoon that can serve just as well as a nature viewing platform*
- *Main shelter location*
- *Narrowing Vilas Park Drive and adding a walking path next to shore*
- *Having a slightly larger beach house that is offset to maintain lake views from the zoo exit*
- *Flex picnic spaces, especially next to the beach where shade trees would be planted*

Cons:

- *Keeping Vilas Park Drive as a through street and in its current location*
- *Maintaining diffuse parking areas along the roadway*

In general, Clean Lakes Alliance strongly encourages park enhancements that serve to:

1. *protect water quality using green infrastructure whenever possible*
2. *enhance lakeshore habitat and sustainability (ex: minimize amount of impervious surfaces and mowed turf outside of recreational courts and fields)*
3. *allow for the reasonable separation of competing uses (active vs. passive)*
4. *play to the strengths of this particular park (ex: preservation of natural beauty, wetlands and lakeshores)*

The statements provided by the above groups show there is strong support for maintaining open space within the park. Parking, and its impact on nearby residents, water bodies and open space was a specific concern. The groups requested that the final master plan carefully assess needs for parking and its layout, as well as consider the long-term shifts in transportation trends, such as the potential for autonomous vehicles, more public transit and bike and pedestrian access options. Parking and Vilas park Drive is one of the largest uses in the park, totaling about 6 acres. Additionally, the Henry Vilas Zoo relies on parking provided by the park and that relationship is expected to continue indefinitely. As a community park, Vilas must meet the needs of the neighboring residents as well as those who live elsewhere within the City of Madison and surrounding region. Parking and vehicular access must be maintained, but the master plan will also consider opportunities for non-automotive options such as bicycle and pedestrian access and public transit.

FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

Accessibility Discussion

On May 22, 2020 Keith Wanta, a board member of Access for Independence, met with the project team to provide input on the concepts with a specific emphasis on accessibility and mobility. A summary of his comments are as follows:

- Shelter should have bus/transit access. Could a trial be coordinated with Madison Metro?
- Wayfinding improvements could be coordinated with zoo. Provide handouts, maps, etc. to guide users around both facilities.
- Restroom and Changing rooms should have a lift system in stalls to assist those individuals in wheelchairs to better access toilets.
- Tactile maps at main entry/drop-off points would assist those with visual disabilities and other cognitive impairments.

In addition to reviewing the content, Mr. Wanta also provided comments regarding improvements to the legibility of the concept plans themselves:

- Describe what a multi-use path is and how it functions.
- A video or taped narrative would be helpful to describe the existing park and the opportunities and constraints.
- A narrative describing the plans should have the plan labels included to help viewers orient themselves between the text and the plans.
- Add subscripts to similar symbols to help differentiate them.
- Have a before and after image, so that a user can go back and forth and see what elements are changing between the options to better understand the scope and location of changes.

Youth Survey

Due to COVID-19, opportunities for face-to-face engagement with youth were not available. To reach the largest audience, an online survey was developed to gain input on types of activities to consider for Vilas Park. This survey was distributed to the students of Lincoln Elementary and Franklin Elementary, kindergarten through 5th grades, and 80 responses were received. A short video introduction preceded the survey to engage the students in making their selections.

The first six questions asked students to rank their favorites from within the categories of field activities, court

sports, playground features, water activities, trail exploration and winter activities.

The top results from each category:

- Field activity – capture the flag (36%)
- Court sport – four square (33%) and basketball (29%)
- Playground feature – swings (24%) and spinners (20%)
- Water activity – beach and swimming (64%)
- Trail exploration – biking on a trail (53%)
- Winter activities – sledding (34%) and skating/walking on a frozen lagoon (28%)

Next, students were asked to rank their favorite general type of activity using categories similar to the previous question: field play, winter fun, playgrounds, court sports, exploration/trails and Lake Wingra. Students favorites were well distributed across the activity types (Figure 6.19). Field activities were the most popular with an average ranking of 4.04 out of 5, while winter activities and activities at Lake Wingra were tied for

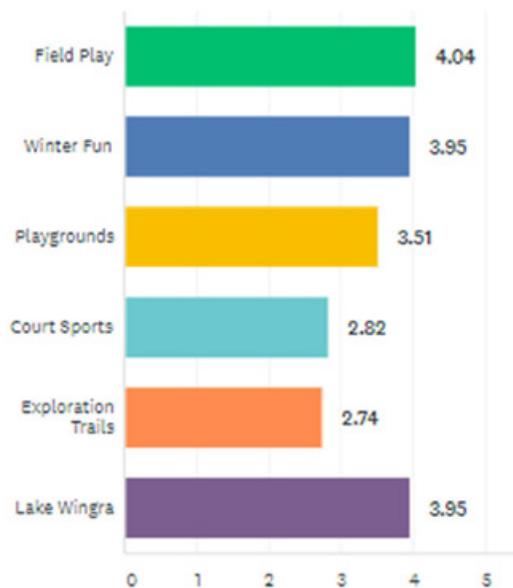


Figure 6.19. Youth Survey Favorite General Type of Activity Response

second with an average ranking of 3.95. This result confirms the findings of the online public survey, which found that maintaining open space (fields), water activity areas (beach) and ice skating are important to youth who use the park.

The survey also asked the students, “Tell us one thing that would make Vilas Park great.” The responses were

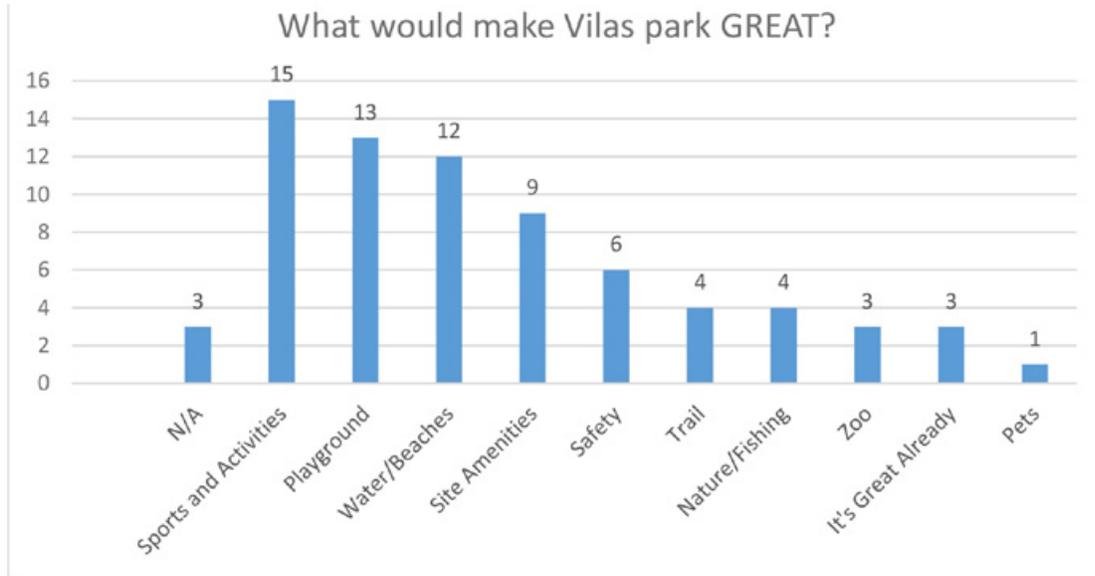


Figure 6.20. What would make Vilas Park GREAT Response

collected as open-ended comments. Comments were reviewed and analyzed to determine main themes and assigned a number for recording purposes. The total number of comments per main theme is reported on the graph below (Figure 6.20).

Examples of comments for each of the top three categories are shown below:

1. Sports and Activities (15 mentions)

- “Add more basketball hoops”;
- “A soccer field”;
- “If there were soccer nets in a soccer field!”;
- “An american ninja warrior course or a pool”;
- “organized capture the flag”;

2. Playground (13 mentions)

- “more playground”;
- “more swings”;
- “A big play grpund for more kids play then know”;
- “A BIGGER playground”;
- “rolercoasters free”;

3. Water and Beaches (12 mentions)

- “water park”;
- “A pool”;

- “Hoping stones on the lagoon.”;
- “A WATER SLIDE!!!!!!.....”;
- “Have multiple beaches”;

These results also confirm the findings of the online public survey in that there is a desire for Vilas Park to maintain much of its current character, such as open fields for recreation, access to water and playground spaces. This must be taken into account when designing improvements for these spaces. Improvements to these spaces could be subtle, such as regrading the fields for drainage to improve playability, to more extensive modifications to the playgrounds and lagoon.

INTERAGENCY REGULATORY MEETINGS

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WI DNR), US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) and the Ho-Chunk Nation Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) were all engaged in the planning effort during Phase I to provide regulatory input related to Vilas Park. Meetings in Phase II focused on identifying potential roadblocks or concerns related to permitting for future phases of the master plan build-out, specifically related to modifications of the lagoon and Lake Wingra shoreline. The meetings also focused on identifying sensitive cultural and natural resource areas that could be impacted by park improvements. Below are the key takeaways from the meetings with the ACOE and WI DNR during Phase II.

Army Corps of Engineers

During a meeting on May 18, 2020, the ACOE provided the following information to the project team:

- Army Corps jurisdiction is limited to discharge into navigable waterways.
- How the work is completed is the primary driver, rather than the type of work.
- Wildlife Pond Enhancement/Section 27 permits may need to be considered.
- Boardwalk install does not constitute a discharge and thus does not need an ACOE permit.
- Installation of stormwater ponds is not permissible in existing wetland areas under ACOE permitting. Ponds in wetland areas must be for wildlife enhancement, not specifically for stormwater management.
- Master plan should provide general recommendations construction methodology.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

The project team met with the WI DNR on April 20, 2020. Below are comments and questions from the meeting by DNR staff that the project team will address in the final master plan or master plan report:

- Will existing shoreline riprap be removed prior to planting?

- How will current and future runoff from the zoo be addressed in order to control nutrients being released into the lagoons?
- Is there a concern over mosquitoes?
- The plan should consider porous pavements for trails (Flexamat presented as an option but was determined to not likely meet ADA requirements).
- Has a wetland delineation been completed to assess the impact of concepts on existing wetlands?
- Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) review will be required.

The project team asked the WI DNR additional questions, which were answered via email on August 4, 2020:

- Setbacks:
Team question: “What development setbacks will be applicable in this situation? Specifically, the proposed shelter/restroom/warming house and a new Vilas Park Drive.”
WI DNR answer: “Setbacks from wetland and waterways will be handled at the city level with zoning, we do not have any requirements for setbacks.”
- In-Lake Fill:
Team question: “Some of the plans call for some in-lake fill (lagoon side) in front of the new shelters.”
WI DNR answer: “In-Lake Fill: It will be hard to do if you have alternatives to the fill (in which you already have presented). We normally do not permit fill into our lakebeds, especially for structures.”
- Maintenance of shoreline wetlands:
Team question: “Who would be the ‘owner’ and what type of maintenance agreement would be required?”
WI DNR answer: “City of Madison would be required to maintain as needed. A maintenance plan can be approved through the permitting process. Ownership pending on the location of the wetlands may be the City or part of Lake Wingra’s bed.”
- Runoff and Treatment:
Team question: “New impervious areas will need to comply with the redevelopment standards of the City of Madison, Chapter 37. What, if any, DNR standards would apply?”
WI DNR answer: “Please consult NR 151 and work with the City of Madison on their requirements.”

Ho-Chunk Tribal Historic Preservation Officer

Bill Quackenbush, The Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for the Ho-Chunk Nation,(THPO) was provided the preliminary concepts, concept descriptions and a compilation topographic survey of the mounds (prepared by City staff). The project team met with Mr. Quackenbush on May 14, 2020. Below is a summary of his suggestions:

- Development (such as the playground) has both a direct and indirect effect on the remaining mounds on site. These include impacts to viewscales and soundscapes.
- Viewscales and soundscapes need to be considered in plan development. Mr. Quackenbush stated, “These effects need to be taken into account when the City makes management and maintenance decisions. Do they only follow what is minimally legally required by the burial law, or do they create better management practices for the protection and preservation of these sacred sites?”
- Placement of built features and lighting that may block original views from the mounds to other natural or cultural features needs to be considered.
- Consideration needs to be given to noise levels (traffic, kids playing, etc.) adjacent to the burial mounds. Burial mounds are grave markers, per state law, and need to be respected as such.
- The mounds that are visible today are not necessarily the original extent of the mounds.
- Applicable regulations include State Statute 157.70 and Administrative Code 44.40.
- Soil disturbance on or adjacent to mounds should be monitored during future development by a qualified archeologist. Inadvertent discovery during excavation requires work stoppage and investigation by an archeologist, if not already present.
- If development occurs as shown in Concept C, inadvertent discovery is likely due to the original extent of the mound group.
- If no playground existed, the Ho-Chunk would recommend against placement of a playground near the mounds. The hierarchy of the site as a historic and cultural site outweighs the need for recreation in this type of space. Mr. Quackenbush stated, “Although the playground is conducive for a park-like location, the site is in fact a burial location and for a lack of a better term, a mortuary site.”

City of Madison Interagency Staff

At the completion of the community engagement for the concept plans, a July 2020 meeting with staff representatives from the City of Madison Traffic Engineering, Parks (Planning, Operations, and Ranger staff), Engineering and Planning Divisions, as well as representatives from the UW Arboretum, Henry Vilas Zoo and Madison Metro Transit to review public comments and provide feedback on the feasibility of topics discussed and questions raised during the public meetings. The interagency staff provided insights on functionality and

maintenance requirements of potential changes to the park and how best to balance wants and needs in the master plan. Key takeaways from this meeting are summarized below by topic.

Metro Transit

- Bus drop-off must accommodate passing busses. Buses prefer to not cross pedestrian travel areas.
- The shortest route into the park possible is preferred.
- The project team should look at revising the east lot to provide for a turnaround for buses.
- Consider routing from Erin St. to Orchard St. to Vilas Park Dr./Wingra Creek Dr.
- Drake St. and Grant St. are also a possible bus route.

Henry Vilas Zoo

- The zoo desires an emergency access to the east onto Randall Ave. as shown in the draft plan.
- The zoo had 800,000 + visitors in 2019, making parking a necessity to manage congestion in neighborhoods.
- A new main entry alignment to the north is consistent with master plan. The timeline for improvement is within the next 5 years.
- Semi-deliveries to the southwest parking lot at the corner of Orchard St. and Vilas Park Dr. need to be considered.
- The results of a recently completed master planning process for the zoo indicate that the zoo will likely maintain two public entrances for public safety and access control.
- The south entrance has only been closed during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Stormwater Engineering

- Treatment and/or bio-retention of runoff from impervious surfaces will be required. Recreational facilities (basketball courts, park shelters, etc.) count towards the added impervious surface, though they have low total suspended solids (TSS) loading.
- Parks noted that the plan will not show specific stormwater treatment options other than approximate areas dedicated to surface treatment.
- If dredging the lagoons is part of this project, then the lagoons should be used as a treatment area.
- If dredging is not part of this project, then the plans should identify spaces to control sediment erosion and encourage protection of the lagoons as a separate system.

Traffic Engineering

- The width of Drake St. should allow for a turn lane and a possible central median.
- The five-point intersection at Drake St./Randall Ave./zoo entrance does not allow for efficient traffic movement.
- Drake St. is not at design capacity, which could allow for restriping to add bike lanes.
- The impact of traffic on Grant St. is of more concern than Drake St. City of Madison Traffic Engineering can analyze earlier tube counts vs. known neighborhood streets data and estimate impacts if Vilas Park Dr. were to be closed.

General Comments

- There was consensus on the importance of a connecting system of paths within the park and from the park to Vilas Zoo.
- Creation of a pedestrian connection around the north shore of Lake Wingra was discussed. The master plan document will discuss possible easements to create the connection.
- Opportunities and challenges were discussed in regards to making connections through the Kubly & Friday Trust parcels on the west side of Lake Wingra.

COMMUNITY INPUT MEETING

On June 22, 2020 a virtual meeting was held via Zoom Webinar to publicly present the park concepts and provide time for discussion and questions in break-out rooms. While an exact count of attendees is not available, although registration to the meeting was requested by 204 unique users, some of whom had more than one participant on screen. The meeting began with a short presentation, which provided a description of the concepts broken down by the key design elements:

- Traffic on Vilas Park Drive
- Location of the main park shelter
- Parking layout
- Open space and recreation opportunities
- Playground location
- Lagoon (and ice skating) management

Following the presentation, two breakout sessions were held. In the first, participants were able to choose one of four rooms for a discussion on the following topics:

- Room A – Traffic, Access and Parking
- Room B – Lagoons, Natural Areas and Main Park Shelter

- Room C – Playgrounds, Recreation Areas and Open Space
- Main Room – General Q&A

The second break out session was an open discussion.

Two of the four polls administered during the meeting provided some insight into the demographics and level of previous engagement by participants. Participants were asked the following questions:

1. Have you already reviewed concepts online? (52 responses)
 - a. Yes (75%)
 - b. No (25%)
2. How far do you live from the Park? (145 responses)
 - a. Less than 3 blocks (50%)
 - b. 3-8 blocks (26%)
 - c. More than 8 blocks, but I can still walk or ride a bike to the park (14%)
 - d. I don't live near the park and I need a car or transit to get there (10%)

These responses show a majority (76%) of the participants were from the surrounding neighborhoods and about the same percentage (75%) had been informed about the process and taken the online concept survey prior to attending the meeting.

Below are general notes from each breakout room.

Room A – Traffic, Access, and Parking

- Several residents living on Randall Ave. do not like any alternative that has the parking lot access out to Randall Ave. Residents feel the road is already too narrow and would prefer not to lose any trees that line the west side of the road.
- Some felt that parking does not need to be expanded in the northeast corner of the park as it services mainly the zoo and is too far from other park amenities.
- Residents preferred alternatives with Vilas Park Dr. closed to through traffic.
- Trees are one of the park's best features and maintaining them should be a priority.
- Due to noise concerns, the park shelter should be located as far away from residential properties as possible.

- Residents who live on Drake St. have concerns about increases in traffic due to moving the entrance towards Campbell St. This included concerns about increased traffic on the Campbell St. circle.
- There was some concern that this plan was too similar to the one completed in the 1960s, which was rejected.
- There was concern about bike and pedestrian safety if the parking lots were built too close to walkways.
- A number of attendees felt that any multiuse path built near the southeast entrance should have a better connection to Arboretum Dr.
- Kate Kane with the City explained the process of working with local accessibility groups to help ensure the park can be used by people of all abilities.

Room B – Lagoons, Natural Areas and Main Park Shelter

- Shelter could face out onto the Lake rather than the Lagoons, especially if the lagoons are not maintained as open water.
- Desire to have skating on the lagoons (and skating in general).
- Temporary closure of Vilas Park Drive (to vehicle traffic) due to COVID-19 has been received favorably. It has had a perceived improved on the function of the peninsula open space.

Room C – Playgrounds, Recreation Areas and Open Space

- Tennis courts are well used and should be maintained in the final plan. Several courts are required for recreation programming. There are issues with maintenance and quality of the surface.
- If pickleball and tennis are both included it should be on separate courts. It was stated by an attendee there are only 6 pickleball courts in the city.
- Ice skating and hockey is important to the park. Preference would be to maintain skating on the lagoons if possible. A skating loop around the island would be great.
- Neighborhood residents desire a playground in the mounds area/'Wingra' overlook, this serves as a neighborhood playground, specifically for the Greenbush neighborhood.
- A playground near the existing shoe playground should be maintained in the final plan. Users include local residents as well as Zoo visitors.
- "Two medium playgrounds in the main part are a real asset - access from different directions and spread out the intensity of use."
- There was question about why the park shelter was determined to be at the end of its serviceable life.
- Adding bike racks and a b-cycle rack would be a good way to encourage more bike traffic.

- Final concept should help enforce sense of place and character of the park.

Main Room – General Q&A

- Several neighbors noted tennis courts are well used. Only place in the world where you can play tennis and listen to the lions roar at the same time.
- Plans should include a kayak and canoe launch on Lake Wingra and lagoon.
- Some concern the concepts doesn't address park use by families and children/youth.
- “ Neighbors and friends have told me we have to retain the road for access for the disabled. I have noticed, however, a great increase in park use by those with mobility challenges since the road has been closed. In the 12 years I've lived nearby I have never seen wheelchairs and walkers in the park.”

Key takeaways from the meeting:

- Parking needs to be developed that ensures the lowest impact to existing open space and vegetation. Maintaining the same number of stalls as currently exists is preferred.
- A playground needs to remain near the existing shoe playground. More than one playground within the park is desired.
- Closure of Vilas Park Drive and replacing the road with a multi-use path is preferred.
- The new shelter should remain in a location near the current shelter (south of the island).
- Keeping the lagoons open to allow for ice skating is desired.
- Path and trail systems should include improvements for drainage and accessibility.

Following the meeting, the Greenbush, Vilas, and Dudgeon-Monore Neighborhood Associations issued the following joint statement:

The Greenbush, Vilas and Dudgeon Monroe Neighborhoods value Vilas Park as a community asset for all Madison residents. We want the Vilas Park Master Plan to ensure a strong future for Vilas Park. Toward that end, we are making two requests: (1) transparency in how you will decide which elements to include in the final design; and (2) a focus on pedestrian and bicyclist safety both in the final master plan and in near-term funding decisions for Vilas Park.

Transparency

It is clear that difficult decisions need to be made for Vilas Park. The future of the lagoon and the balance between providing parking and preserving park green space are just two examples of such decisions. We believe that the Vilas Park Master Plan process will be strengthened by providing a clear explanation

of the criteria that will be used to select components for the final design (e.g., traffic patterns, the siting of key park features such as shelters, parking lots, and playgrounds, and the status of the lagoon). We request that this information be provided before the draft of the final plan is released for public review and comment. Further, an explanation of how these criteria were implemented as the design was finalized should be released as a companion document to the draft master plan. This type of transparency will help Vilas Park users understand what is included in the master plan and why—a vital part of building public support for the final design.

Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety

Public feedback to the Vilas Park Master Plan process has consistently highlighted concern about pedestrian and bicyclist safety in Vilas Park. Zoo patrons, neighborhood residents, and park users from Madison and the surrounding area are all affected by pedestrian and bicyclist safety issues. We are encouraged that the separation of pedestrians from motor traffic is included in all three of the design concepts; and we urge that the final master plan not only include rigorous pedestrian and bicyclist safety features but also prioritize near-term funding for such features.

We appreciate the challenges associated with developing a Vilas Park Master Plan, and we raise these issues with the hope of contributing to a productive and successful process and enhanced safety for pedestrians and bicyclists in the park.

ONLINE PUBLIC SURVEY

From May 2020 until July 2020, a public survey was available through a link posted on the City of Madison Parks Division Vilas Park Master Plan Project website. The distribution of the survey link occurred through postings on city social media accounts (Facebook and Twitter), as a City of Madison website news item¹⁰² and during the community and focus group meetings. A Spanish language version of the survey was also made available. A total of 908 responses were received to the survey, 906 to the English version and two to the Spanish.

The survey presented the overall concepts for context but focused on acquiring feedback about specific elements within the concepts, such as placement of the shelter and treatment of the lagoons. The survey results are summarized below. The full results can be found in Appendix B.

¹⁰² <https://www.cityofmadison.com/news/vilas-park-master-plan-concepts-ready-for-review>

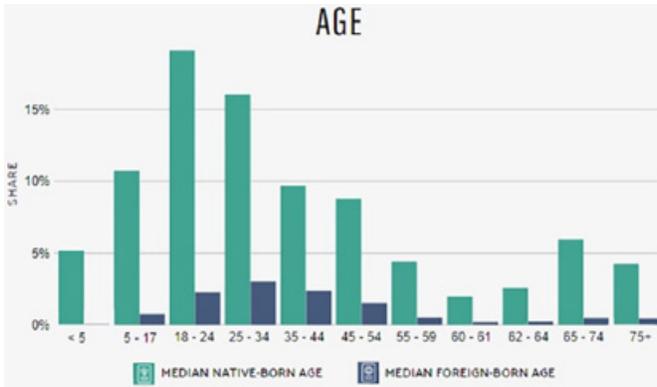


Figure 6.21. Data USA City of Madison Demographics

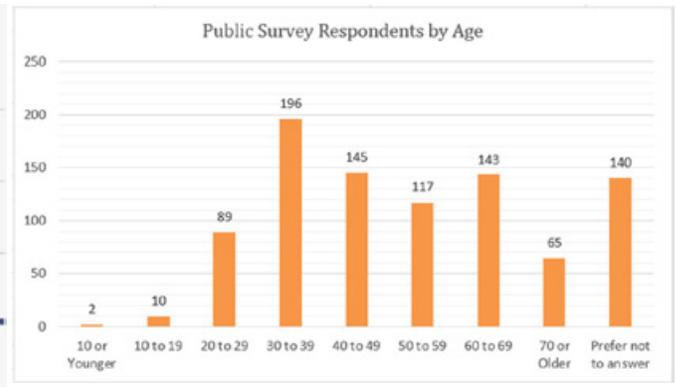


Figure 6.22. Public Survey Respondents by Age

Demographic information provided by respondents suggests that the typical survey taker was between 30-39 years old (24.3%), which is not a direct reflection of the City of Madison demographics. According to Data USA, the highest percentage of residents are between 18-24 years of age (see Figure 6.21)¹⁰³. Although the relative percentages of age groups from the survey did not correlate exactly to Madison’s numbers, the survey was able to obtain input from a broad range of ages, from persons 10 or younger up to 70 or older (Figure 6.22).

The US Census Bureau lists Madison as 78.4% Caucasian, 9% Asian, 6.9% Hispanic or Latino, 6.8% Black or African American and 3.6% reported two or more races¹⁰⁴. By contrast, 82% of survey respondents were Caucasian, 1.3% were Asian, 2.0% were Hispanic or Latino, 0.1% were African American or Black and 2.1% were from two or more races.

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The majority, 60.6% of the 802 respondents who provided a zip code with their response, were from the zip codes bordering Vilas Park (53711, 53713, and 53715), which include the Greenbush and Vilas neighborhoods as well as the Arboretum; 81.3%, or 652 respondents, were from zip codes within a 1.25 mile radius of the park (53703, 53705, 53706, 53711, 53715, 53726).

Question 1 - Shelter Location (805 responses)

The most favored location for the shelter was south of the island (41%), with the west shore of the lagoon

103 <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/madison-wi/#demographics> 2017

104 <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/madisoncitywisconsin/RHI125218> 2018

second and the east shore of the lagoon third. Only zip code 53715, primarily the Greenbush Neighborhood, preferred the west shore over the other alternatives. The results are shown in Figure 6.23.

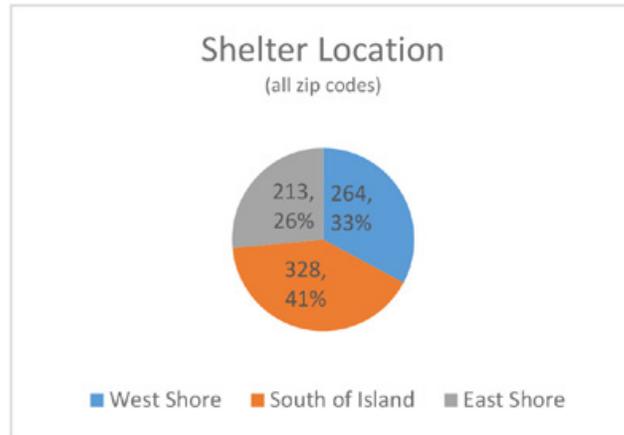


Figure 6.23. Question 1 Response

Question 2 – Vilas Park Drive (836 responses)

The concepts presented three options for Vilas Park Drive:

- A. A meandering park drive.
- B. Closed to vehicle traffic and replaced with a multi-use path.
- C. Similar to existing.

A majority of respondents (62%) favored closing Vilas Park Drive to through vehicle traffic. Zip codes farther from the park found closing the road to vehicles slightly less favorable (50% to 55%), but it still received more votes than either of the other two alternatives. The results are shown in Figure 6.24.

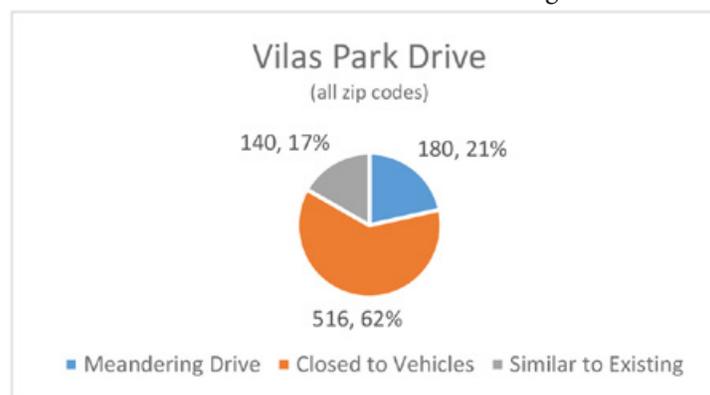


Figure 6.24. Question 2 Response

Question 3 – Lagoons (858 responses)

The concepts provided three options for the future treatment of the lagoons, with the most favored (50%) being about 50% open water and 50% bog or wetlands. In this concept, the opportunity to have open ice for skating would be maintained. A full transition to a bog or wetland condition was rated second (33%) and

keeping the lagoons as fully open water was third (17%). The rankings were about the same regardless of the respondent's zip code. The results are shown in Figure 6.25.

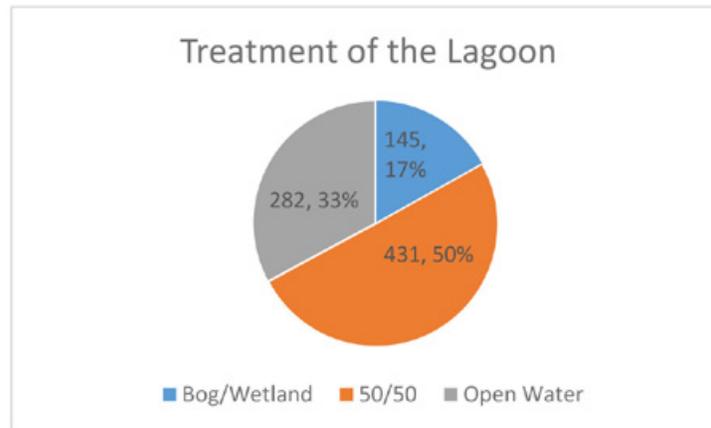


Figure 6.25. Question 3 Response

Question 4 – Playground (813 responses)

Within the concepts, five playground location options were provided for future playgrounds and survey respondents were asked to rank their favorites. The five options (Figure 6.26) were:

- A. West
- B. Mid-Park
- C. South
- D. East
- E. Existing Location

Location D, near the existing dinosaur playground and burial mound, was the most favorable, with an average ranking of 3.4 out of 5. Tied for second was location C, near the beach house (ranking of 3.08), and location E, near the existing location (ranking of 3.04). The existing location had the second most “favorite” rankings (235), but also had the most “least favorite” rankings (241) of the five concepts.

- The results of this question are of particular importance because the most popular concept is in conflict with the recommendations provided by Bill Quackenbush (Ho-Chunk Tribal Historic Preservation Officer) during discussions with the project team. The mound site is a sacred space to the Ho-Chunk and a playground is detrimental to the spiritual nature of the area. As such, Parks has made the determination, working in close consultation with the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for The Ho-Chunk Nation, that the focus of the mound sites will be to preserve and honor the sacred land in accordance with established standards – and that in its role as current and future stewards of the mounds within the City of Madison Parks system, it will not be placing children’s play environments in proximity to mound sites.

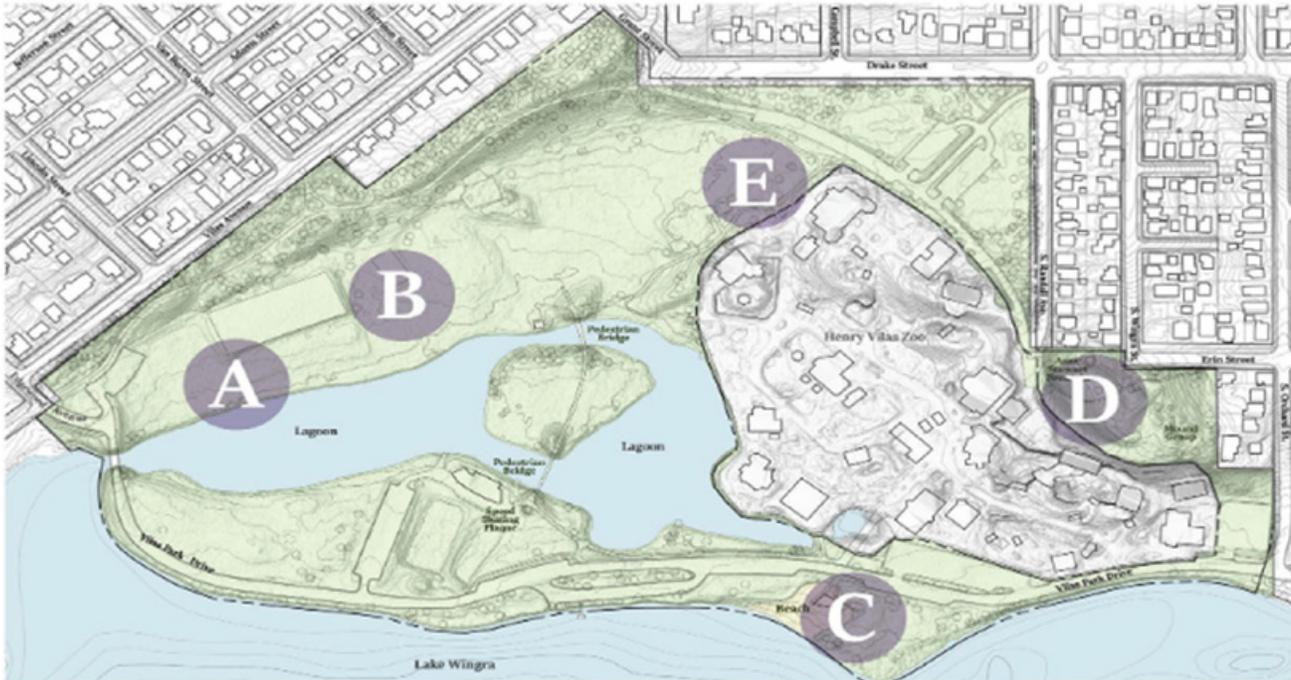


Figure 6.26. Potential Playground Locations

Master plan consideration could be given to including introspective spaces, such as benches and overlooks, as proposed by the Greenbush Neighborhood as well as accessibility enhancements to the site by pathway additions.

Question 5 – Southern Parking Layout (787 responses)

Respondents were shown three concepts for parking in the southeast portion of the park centered near the existing lot south of the zoo, as shown in Figure 6.27.

Concept B was favored by 41% of respondents. While not specifically identified within the survey text, it should be noted this concept also consisted of the closure of Vilas Park Drive to vehicle traffic. Concept A was the next most favored at 32% and Concept C received 27%. The results were similar for both the surrounding zip codes and those farther from the park. The results are shown in Figure 6.28.

Question 6 – North Parking Lot and Park Entrance (809 responses)

All concept plans provided similar options for overall parking layout in this location. Thus, the question was focused on the modified park entrance. Respondents were provided the following description and image (Figure 6.29) and then asked to rate the concept.

“The entrance to the north parking lot (north zoo lot) is eliminated from the Drake Street and Randall Avenue

A



B



C



Figure 6.27. Southern Parking Lot Options

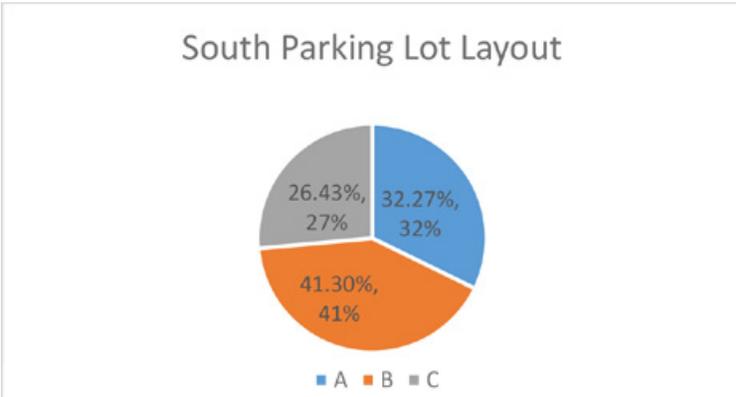


Figure 6.28. Question 5 Response

intersection. The existing angled entry is potentially hazardous to cross traffic as well as pedestrians in the crosswalks. Moving the entrance to the opposite side of Drake Street from Campbell Street creates a standard four-way intersection. The pavement width of Drake Street provides enough space to add a left turn lane into Vilas Park. The landscaped islands at the entrance require the removal of 13 parallel parking stalls on Drake Street, which can be recouped in the park parking lot design. This intersection would not be a four-way stop. Stop signs will be located on Campbell St and at the park entrance road. The relocated entrance road allows for two-way traffic into and out of the park, eliminating the current one-way system.”

The scale ranged from “dislike” (0) to “neither dislike nor like” (50) to “like” (100). The overall average score from all respondents was 68 out of 100. When viewed by zip code, those within walking or biking distance (53703, 53705, 53706, 53726), but not directly adjacent, gave a slightly higher rating (avg. 72).



Figure 6.29. North Parking Lot and Park Entrance Layout

Question 7 – Recreational Amenities (849 responses)

The various recreation amenities offered in the concepts were listed and respondents were asked to rank their preference for each amenity from “oppose” to “support.” Multi-use paths for biking and walking and paths for running were overwhelmingly supported: 94% and 88%, respectively, selected “support” or were between “support” and “no preference.” Open fields (86%), group picnic areas (85%), non-motorized boat access (83%), and skating on the lagoons (81%) were also strongly supported. Respondents preferred six tennis courts (67%) to three tennis courts (40%) or pickleball courts (38%).

The percent of responses in favor is listed below (either chose “support” or were between “support” and “no preference”):

- 94% - Multi-Use Path (Bike and Pedestrian)
- 88% - Walking and Running Paths
- 86% - Open Fields for Games
- 85% - Group Picnic Areas
- 83% - Non-Motorized Boat Access
- 81% - Ice Skating (on lagoon)
- 67% - Tennis Court (6)
- 60% - Ice Skating (on shore)
- 59% - Basketball Court
- 59% - Hockey Rink (on shore)
- 44% - Edible Landscape
- 40% - Tennis Court (3)
- 38% - Pickleball Courts
- 7% - Motorized Boat Access

While a motorized boat launch was not included in the design, the survey retained the option to provide verification that it was not a desired amenity. Only 7% of respondents were in favor of a motorized launch.

The full ratings for each amenity are shown in Figure 6.30.

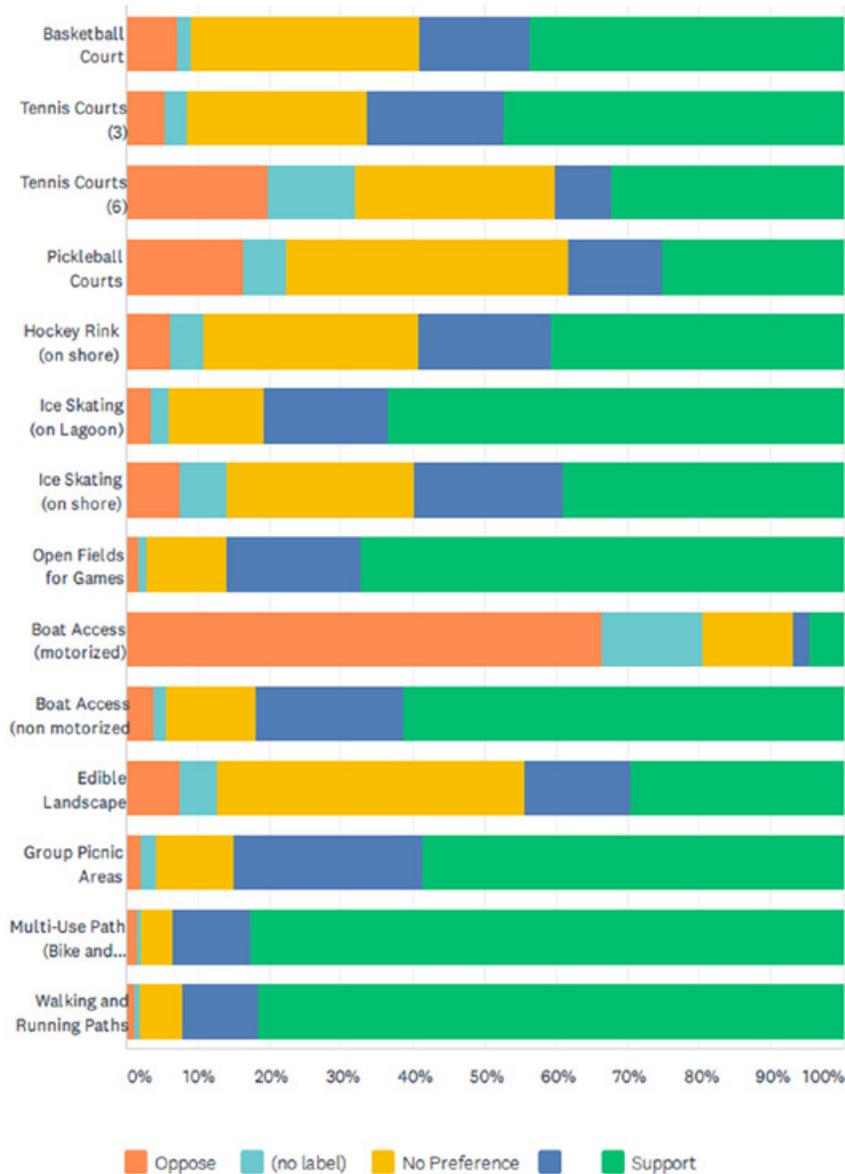


Figure 6.30. Question 7 Response

Question 8 – Favorite Features (608 responses)

Question 8 was open-ended, allowing for comments on the respondents’ favorite features from the concept plans or features they felt were missing from the concept plans. Comments were reviewed and analyzed to determine main themes and were assigned a number for recording purposes. Where comments included more than one feature, up to two categories were noted. The total number of comments per main theme is reported on the graph below (Figure 6.31).

Examples of comments for each of the top five categories are shown below:

1. Remove cars from Vilas Park Drive (226 mentions)

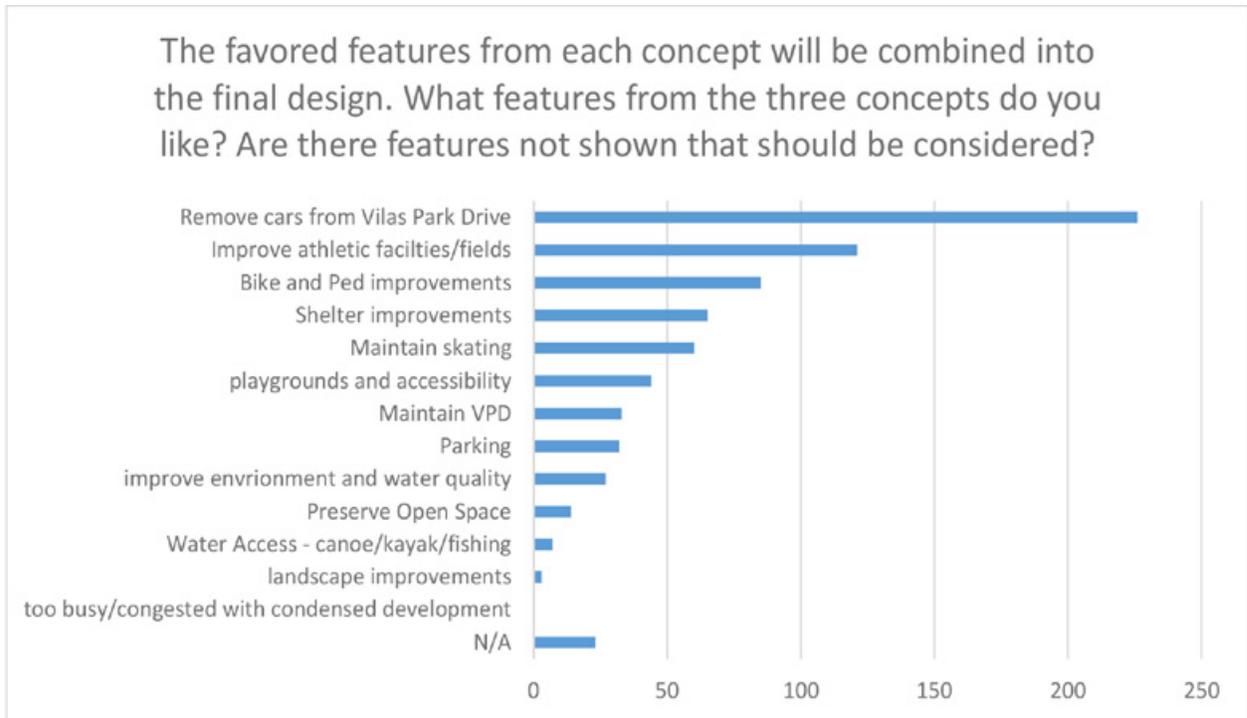


Figure 6.31. Question 8 Response

- “Getting rid of the roadway, and converting to a multi-use path, is genius. It changes the character of the park for the better, permitting more freedom for families wander around, and dramatically improving vistas and a sense of safety. Thank you for the proposal.”
 - “converting road to pedestrian/bike path. Also, minimizing incursion of motor vehicles into the central area for parking also seems very important. I could imagine tons of cars perpetually circling looking for open spots on popular days. Keeping parking at the periphery seems like a good solution.”
 - “I had not heard about the idea of eliminating the traffic from Vilas Park Drive. As the city grows, "quiet" spots - the feeling of being removed from all the hussle and bustle will take on greater importance. Keeping automobiles at the perimeter of the park - instead of driving through the middle, is brilliant. I also like the idea of having parking convenient to park shelters, playgrounds, etc. In my opinion, option B is far superior.”
2. Improve athletic facilities/fields (121 mentions)
- “Keep the existing six tennis courts. Maintain the surface so more people will use them. (People are afraid of tripping now.) Add lights!”
 - “Please keep the activities: tennis, basketball, skating, walking, biking. These are vital to the life of

people who live in a city and pay the high taxes to enjoy these activities rather than joining clubs that further segregate communities.”

- “three tennis courts Location of shelter in concept B Lagoon wetlands in Concept A because it seems safer to skate on the shallow lagoon”
3. Bike and pedestrian improvements (85 mentions)
- “I made choices based on access by residents, not just the relatively high income housing units between the park and Monroe Street. As a biker riding through every few days, I'd love to see the road closed to traffic, but that eliminates lots who depend (or think they must) on cars for getting out. I hope plans consider heavily access to the park by users from the larger community.”
 - “More walking”
 - “MORE multi use path for walking & biking are imperative. Lots of people walk & bike on current roadway along w cars & it's downright dangerous. I applaud the whole master plan idea.”
4. Shelter improvements (65 mentions)
- “Make sure there are adequate restroom facilities in several locations in the park.”
 - “Main shelter in existing location, so it can also be warming house for ice skaters, parking near the main shelter that also serves beach and zoo. Encourage addition of small educational butterfly garden with labeled plants— and some milkweed.”
 - “Having a large playground near a shelter building worth bathrooms. I really liked the location of the shelter in A.”
5. Maintain skating (60 mentions)
- “ice skating on lagoon- there are MANY luxury apartments going up on Park, Fish hatch street, with higher density of young singles/couples, who will want to ice skate. And its popular with families. Highly used. I appreciate widening the roads to allow safer passage.”
 - “Ice skating on the lagoon is a favorite of mine, and preserving pedestrian and bike paths through the park is a high priority.”

- “maintaining the lagoon for ice-skating is the most important feature”

Question 9 –Missing features (336 responses)

Question 9 allowed for open-ended comments on features the respondents felt were missing from the concept plans. Comments were reviewed and analyzed to determine main themes and assigned a number for recording purposes. Where comments included more than one feature, up to two categories were noted. The total number of comments per main theme is reported on the graph below (Figure 6.32).

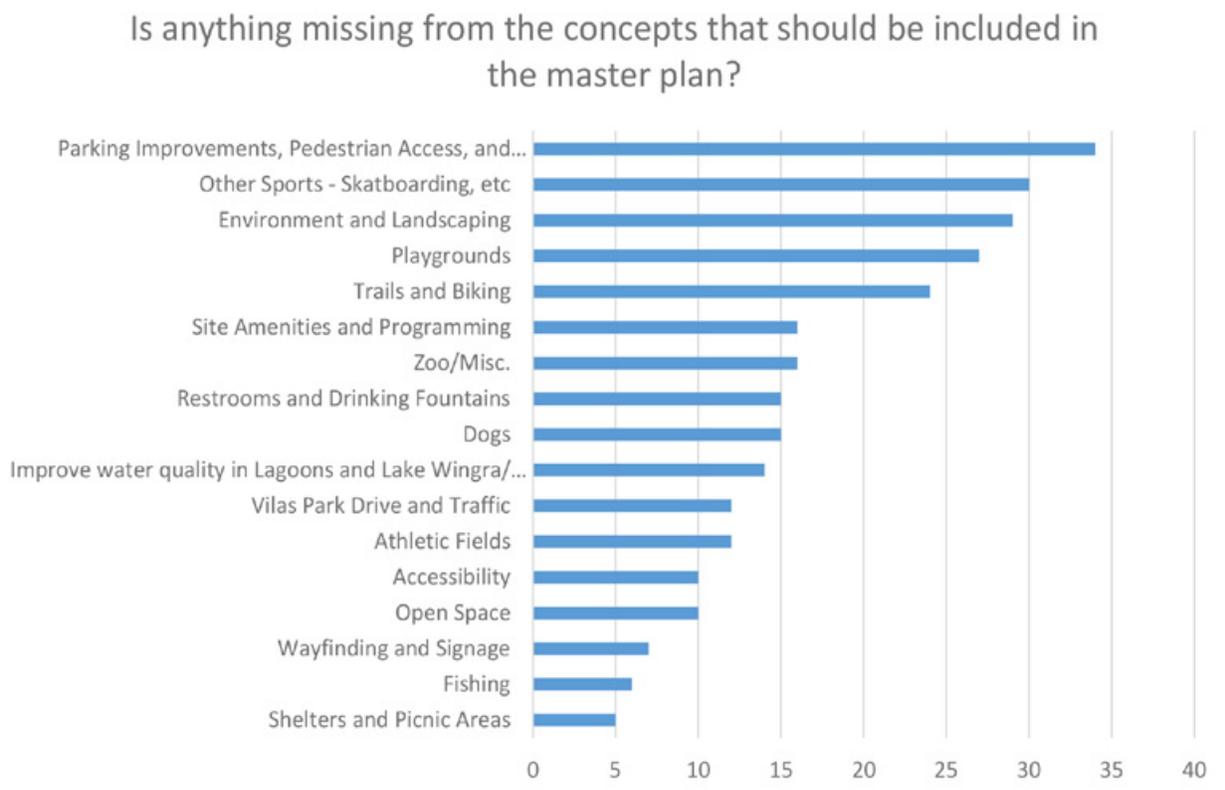


Figure 6.32. Question 9 Response

Examples of comments for each of the top five categories are shown below:

1. Parking improvements, pedestrian access and transportation (34 mentions)
 - “I strongly feel that there should be no more parking added to the west side of the park area. We live across the street and have rarely seen the current lot full. There is plenty of street parking along Vilas Ave and 3 “cut-throughs” from the street to the walking path close to Lincoln St and a couple places where more could be added. Those should be redone to make them more accessible for strollers, families, etc. to get through....”
 - “Remote parking and shuttle drop-off for the zoo.”

2. Other sports – skateboarding, etc. (30 mentions)
 - “Skatepark or small skate spot. Portland and Seattle are good models for incorporating small 'spots' into parks. We need more than one skatepark.”
 - “Outdoor equipments is an idea that should be put forth. Nowadays its hard for people to do vigorous exercises at any game fields.”
3. Environment and landscaping (29 mentions)
 - “Fully shaded walkways, driveways, and parking lots. Shaded sports viewing areas peripheral to and adjacent to sports fields for onlookers to enjoy the sport in shade. No over-lighting at night (especially of unused parking lots)... use of motion activated lights rather than lights on all the time along paths and parking areas at night. Use of native and flowering shrubberies and vines (these are rarely included in park design and should be) they create emotional nooks and crannies that enhance the park experience and inspire people beyond just fields of grass.”
 - “Management of plantings and animals and their droppings within the park, to improve land and water quality. Currently, there are areas which you cannot walk through without stepping in goose droppings, and these extra nutrients wash into the lake, compromising water quality. This could be much better.”
4. Playgrounds (27 mentions)
 - “The park can, and should, support more than 1 or 2 playgrounds. I can't support consolidating 3 existing playgrounds to fewer. Keep the main one near the zoo entrance, as many families and groups combine play there with a zoo visit. Also keep smaller ones scattered like the current locations, as they're a great neighborhood amenity and families can walk to them. Also, playgrounds should have rest rooms nearby!”
 - “Again, multi-age playgrounds and also having the playground in close proximity to both parking and bathrooms.”
5. Trails and biking (24 mentions)
 - “Again: Bicycle air/repair stations, bicycle parking. Access to bathrooms (not part of a huge shelter that might be taken up by a big party) for bike/ped traffic.”
 - “A b-cycle dock and a kayak storage rack”

Question 10 – General Comments (319 responses)

Question 10 allowed for open-ended, general comments on the concept plans. Comments were reviewed and analyzed to determine main themes and assigned a number for recording purposes. Where comments included more than one feature, up to two categories were noted. The total number of comments per main theme is reported on the graph below (Figure 6.33).

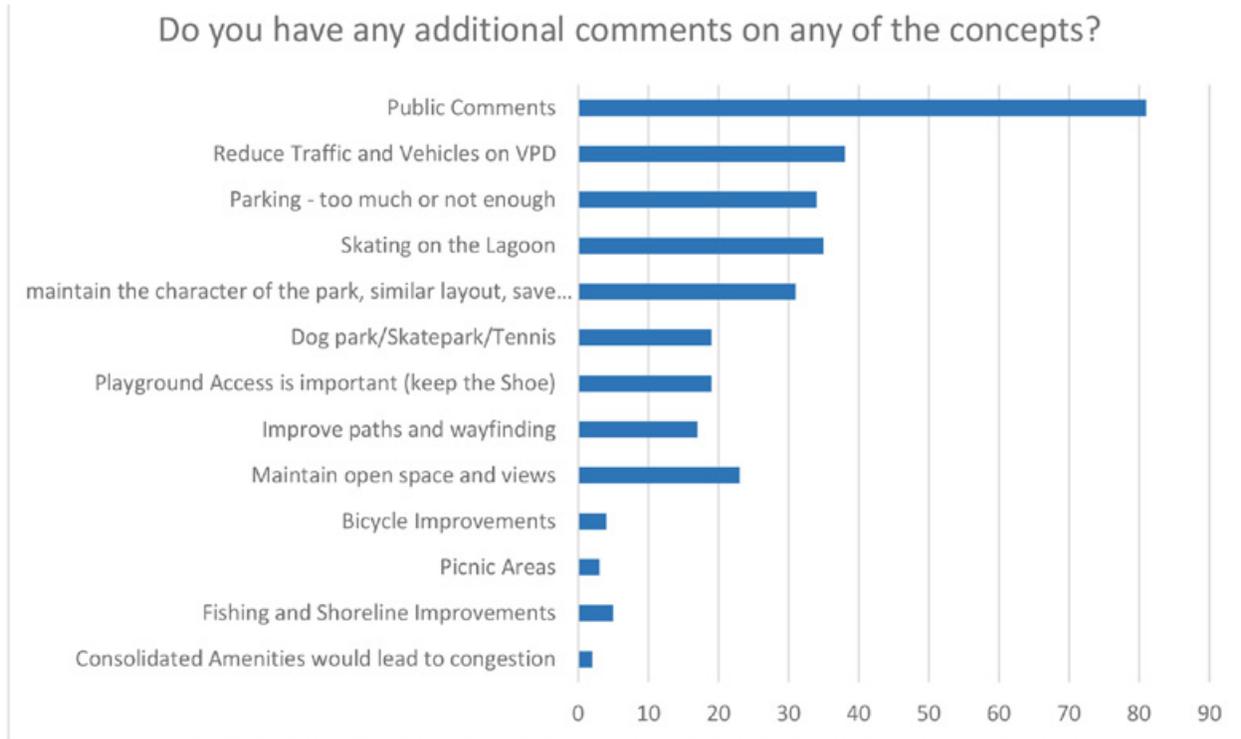


Figure 6.33 Question 10 Response

Examples of comments for each of the top five categories are shown below:

1. Public comment (81 mentions)
 - “I really appreciate all the work the City of Madison does! It feels like things are changing so rapidly here, and more often than not, for the better.”
 - “It may be helpful to develop a sequence of changes within the master plan, i.e, Drake/Campbell entrance first, shelter relocation second, lagoon changes third zoo/beach house parking next”
2. Reduce traffic and vehicles on Vilas Park Drive (38 mentions)
 - “As many in our Vilas neighborhood have said, we have significant concerns about relocating the entrance to the park. A two way stop at Drake/Campbell seems like a disaster. If this goes ahead, it must become a four way stop, similar to the current Drake/Randall entrance...”

- “Surprised that only one includes elimination of car use. With the 'pilot' currently underway of closing it off, hope that this gains momentum.”
3. Parking – too much or not enough (34 mentions)
- “The more you accommodate for cars, the more complaints you’ll get about parking and traffic. We drive here and have never found parking to be an issue within a few blocks. The desire for convenient, free, and abundant parking is a dragon you’ll be unsuccessfully chasing your whole life. One of the three has to give.”
 - “I understand that more parking is needed, but none of the current plans is ideal. I think Plan B offers the best options, parking-wise, except that the south parking area near the beach should not extend so far south. The beach and the open area to the east of it should not be sacrificed for parking or turned into part of the drive. The smaller south parking area in Plan C should be incorporated into Plan B...”
4. Skating on the lagoon (32 mentions)
- “I have really fond memories of skating on the lagoon. Though I no longer skate, I hope the plan will keep lagoon skating for others.”
 - “As one can tell from my answers, my primary use of Vilas is for ice skating. This is one of the gems of Madison's winter and it must remain so.”
 - “Keep ice skating on the lagoon!”
5. Maintain the character of the park – such as similar layout and save existing trees (31 mentions)
- “I would favor whatever concept involves the least disturbance. I feel very fortunate to live so close to Lake Wingra. It contributes massively to my psychic and spiritual health. I dread construction.”
 - “Why all the new mosquito breeding areas?”
 - “Emphasize that this is a city park. Keep the road going through the park for access. Thank you. Personally, I think the park is fine as is.”

COMMON THEMES FROM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The themes identified in Phase I were updated to represent the coalescing of feedback from the community that addressed concerns, desires and goals for the future of Vilas Park from the variety of outreach methods during Phase II. The themes continued to serve as the basis for the refinement of the concepts, into the final Master Plan for Vilas Park. The themes as they evolved and become more specific, are listed below. Specific details of how these themes are implemented within the master plan are identified in Phase III of the report.

MOBILITY AND SAFETY

- Improve pedestrian safety along the Vilas Park Drive corridor by considering the closure of Vilas Park Drive to through traffic and replace with a multi-use path.”
- Design of all new trails and park features to be accessible.

ENVIRONMENT

- Protect the existing character of the park while improving balance between passive natural areas and active use areas. Decisions impacting existing trees, vegetation, shoreline and open space should be transparent and defensible.
- Improve lagoon water quality and shoreline access and aesthetics through habitat enhancement.
- Increase quality and size of natural areas within the park through the consolidation of pavement and high use areas.
- Address stormwater and drainage issues in path and recreation areas.

COMMUNITY

- Continue engagement with neighborhoods and park users for improvements and programming changes.
- Provide space for community events.
- Incorporate park history into design and programming.

A PARK FOR EVERYONE

- Offer programmed active spaces for youth and adults.
- Consider allowing dogs in some areas of the park consistent with current Madison General Ordinances.
- Continue to offer amenities and activities that can be enjoyed year-round and are accessible by the entire Madison community.

CONNECTIVITY

- Improve the interconnection between the park and Madison through increased multimodal options (i.e. public transit, bike/pedestrian trails, bike rentals, canoe/kayak access).
- Improve existing and continue to expand pedestrian connections within park and through the zoo.
- Improve wayfinding to alleviate traffic congestion during heavy traffic times.

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