

Soldiers Memorial Park Master Plan

La Porte, Indiana



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

OWNER



PARK BOARD

- Mitch Feikes President
- Nicole Messacar, Vice-President
- Zach Coulter
- Karen Ellison
- Tom Graham
- Jessica Romine

SUPERINTENDENT

Mark Schreiber

SPONSOR



This master plan was provided by a Healthy Living Grant from the Healthcare Foundation of La Porte.

PARK DESIGN & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT



SUPPORTING CONSULTANTS



LOCHNER



TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXISTING PARK

- Overview..... 3
- History..... 4
- Systems
 - Recreation & Facilities..... 5
 - Circulation.....6
 - Natural Resources..... 7

ENGAGEMENT & VISION

- Public & Stakeholder Engagement..... 8
- SWOT, Vision & Guiding Principles..... 9

MASTER PLAN

- Overall Plan..... 10
- North Sub-Area..... 12
- South Sub-Area.....14
- Circulation.....16
- Natural Resources..... 20

IMPLEMENTATION

- Phasing & Funding Strategy..... 22

APPENDIX

- Meeting Notes & Public Engagement.....

OVERVIEW



Soldiers Memorial Park is a wonderful local and regional resource for the City of La Porte, offering a wide variety of active and passive recreation opportunities throughout the park's 556 acres of woodlands and water.

Soldiers Memorial Park encompasses all 140 acres of Stone Lake and provides 628 feet of publicly accessible shoreline. In addition to Stone Lake, the park also connects Pine Lake, Crane Lake and Craven Pond for a variety of natural water features. While serving important ecological functions and providing environmental education opportunities, these water bodies also allow a variety of active recreation such as boating, fishing, enjoying the beach and swimming.

The remainder of the non-water areas of the park are primarily forested with old-growth native trees. Open areas have been utilized for diamond sports, along with playgrounds, volleyball, mountain biking and cross-country skiing.

This master plan was funded by a grant from the Healthcare Foundation of La Porte, as a continuation of the La Porte Park and Recreation Department's 5-Year Overall System Master Plan.

HISTORY

The park has a rich history since the settlement of La Porte. In the 1800s, the hill located next to the Stone Lake beach house, once surrounded by water and referred to as City Island. It was reportedly the site of a “pest house” where smallpox sufferers were quarantined, according to historical records. This hill was the first acres of many more to come.

The park came about after lengthy legal battles over land condemnations and acquisitions in the 1920s, headed by City Attorney Alfred Link and Mayor John Line. In 1928, the park was officially dedicated as Soldiers Memorial Park. Acreage was added over the years, with the last tract to date added in 1958.

Much of the original labor to develop the park’s facilities and memorials was provided by members of the Hamon Gray Post of the American Legion. Cummings Lodge was open in 1967 in Soldiers Memorial Park, and named after the late W.A. Cummings, park superintendent.

Craven Pond ice skating and bonfires were memorable events at the park into the 1980s. Cross-country and other winter activities were also more prevalent in years past.

Due to years of flooding and unpredictable lake levels, the City of La Porte installed a gravity-based siphon system in 1999. The system connects Pine, Stone and Lily Lakes to control elevations at roughly 797.2 feet above sea level. The excess water flows through underground piping south of the City.



Stone Lake Beach (circa 1987)



Windsurfing at Stone Lake Beach (circa 1986)



Cummings Lodge Groundbreaking (circa 1966)



Cross Country Skier (circa 1988)



Stone Lake Beach Flooding (circa 1990s)

Photos Courtesy of La Porte Parks and Recreation

SYSTEMS

RECREATION & FACILITIES

Soldiers Memorial Park offers a fantastic mix of land and water based recreation opportunities. Active play is a main component of the park with multiple diamond fields, playgrounds, mountain bike trails, volleyball courts, swimming and boating areas. These are well consolidated within the park, and buffered by great natural areas to serve more passive recreational uses.

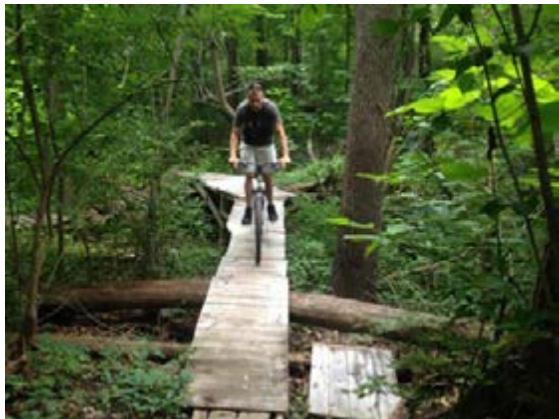
The park offers a variety of facilities for public use and also contains the administrative and maintenance offices for the department. Cummings Lodge, the beach house, restrooms, shelters and concessions all play a key part in providing visitor hospitality and revenue streams for the park's long-term success.

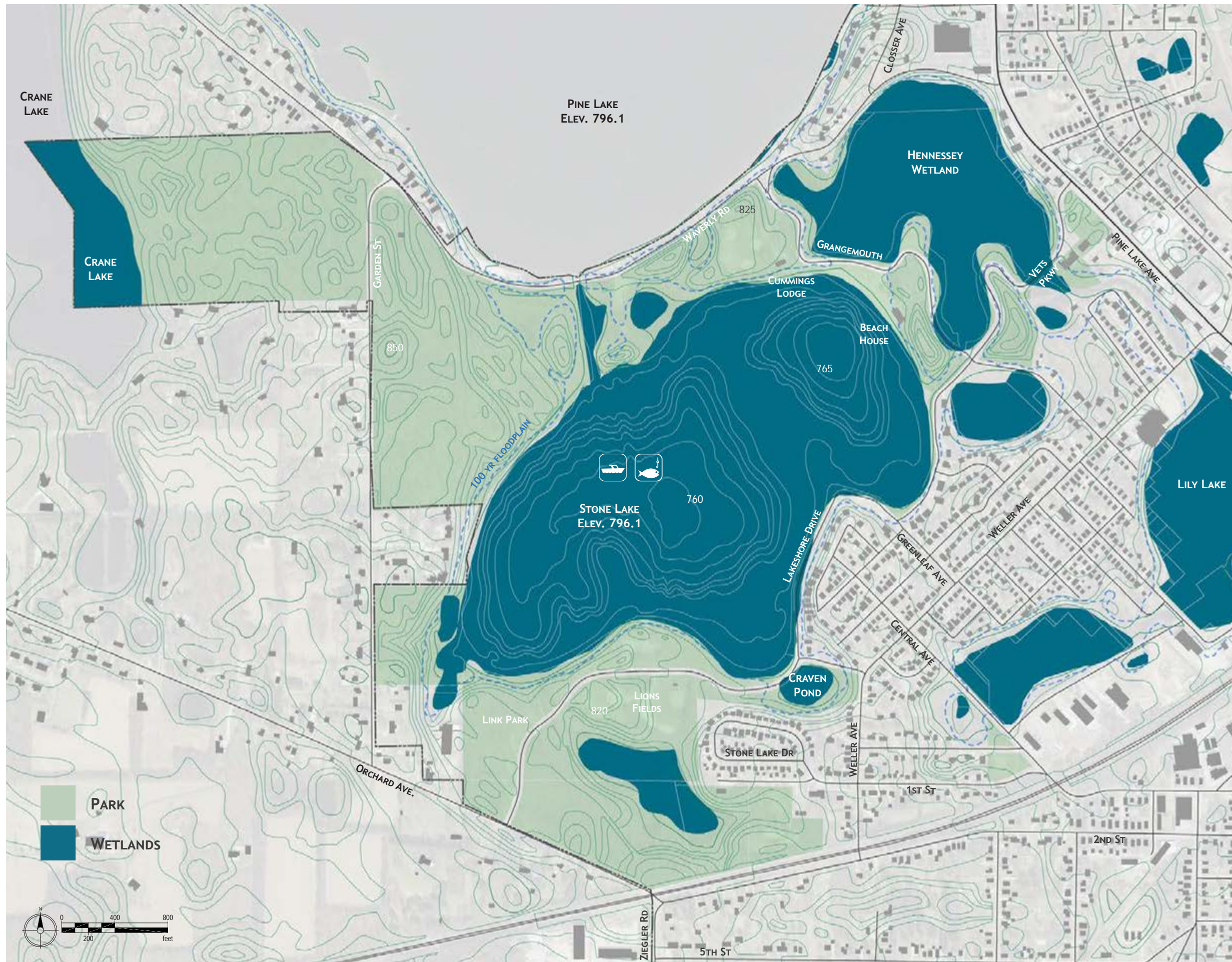


CIRCULATION

Soldiers Memorial Park contains over 3 miles of vehicular roadways, over 2 miles of hiking trails and over 8 miles of mountain biking trails. The plan to the right shows both the existing roadways and trails, along with the proposed City Greenways routes in the vicinity (per the 2012 Greenways Master Plan). Working with the City to build the greenways will help further link pedestrians and bicycles within the Park and externally to other portions of the City.

Another major circulation system is the natural water bodies (blueways). While Pine Lake and Stone Lake are easily navigable by most small craft, connecting to Hennessey Wetland and Lily Lake are more challenging due to constrictions at existing bridges.





NATURAL SYSTEMS

Soldiers Memorial Park encompasses all 140 acres of Stone Lake and provides 628 feet of publicly accessible shoreline. In addition to Stone Lake, the park also connects Pine Lake, Crane Lake and Craven Pond for a variety of natural water features. These are all in generally good ecological condition, with some milfoil and algae issues. While serving important ecological functions and providing environmental education opportunities, these water bodies also allow a variety of active recreation such as boating, fishing, beaching and swimming.

The Park also includes vast woodlands with rolling topography, perfect for hiking and other low-impact programming. Large mature trees and topography should be preserved where possible. Invasive species, timber harvesting and shoreline management are discussed later in this report.



PUBLIC & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

To provide an inclusive and transparent master planning process for Soldiers Memorial Park, the project team developed a series of touch points with staff, key stakeholders and the general public to solicit feedback on the project.

The team hosted stakeholders interviews and site tours on May 14 & 16, 2019, at Cummings Lodge. The stakeholders provided great insight on park history, usage and visions for the future.

Stakeholder Groups included:

- Healthcare Foundation of La Porte
- Mayor's Office
- City & Township Officials
- City & Park Department Staff
- La Porte Area Lake Association
- Indiana DNR
- La Porte Economic Advancement Partnership
- NW Indiana Paddling Association
- La Porte County Soil and Water District
- Maple City Bicycle Club
- Bicycle Smiles
- Local Mountain Bike Enthusiasts
- Rotary Club
- Residents/Neighbors

A public open house was advertised and held on June 12, 2019, at the Parks Department Office on Pine Lake Avenue. The team presented the initial findings detailed on the previous pages. In addition the preliminary Vision, Guiding Principles and site designs were reviewed and discussed. Potential grant sources, including Indiana DNR Land & Water Conservation Fund were identified.

The notes and attendees from these meetings can be found in the appendix.



VISION & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

SWOT Analysis is a strategic planning method used to evaluate the STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES and THREATS involved in a project, business venture or community. The key role of the positioning strategy is to help develop the foundation for the identity of Soldiers Memorial Park. The analysis also serves as a strategic tool that will lead to a well-rounded master plan.

STRENGTHS

- Variety of activities and programs
- Natural resources (water, woods, terrain, etc.)
- Close to downtown

WEAKNESSES

- Lack of park and facility awareness
- Limited parking capacity for large events
- Maintenance capabilities

OPPORTUNITIES

- Additional attractions & amenities
- Linking Stone Lake to Lily Lake
- Rental facility revenue potential
- Linking park with City amenities via Greenways

THREATS

- Alternative entertainment
- Decreasing capital and operational funds

In order to guide the development of the master plan, a series of Guiding Principles (listed to the right) were created with staff, stakeholder and general public input. These provide the framework of the park's future, along with being defensible and measurable aspects for evaluating master plan design alternatives. The following pages of this Chapter present the preferred master plan as developed by the design team and reviewed by staff, stakeholders and general public.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

PRESERVE & LEVERAGE THE NATURAL BEAUTY

Appropriately locate and size amenities to preserve natural resources and realize maximum potential of the Park.

Address erosion and invasive species issues through natural, sustainable and native methods.

EXTEND THE STAY

Provide a variety of activities for residents to spend the entire day & visitors to stay the weekend

Encourage repeat visitation by addressing user complaints and maintenance issues (i.e. gravel parking, restrooms).

CONNECT THE SPACES

Provide safe and accessible non-motorized routes within the park and nearby attractions.

Realize the waterway connection potentials with the nearby lakes and wetlands.

STRENGTHEN AWARENESS

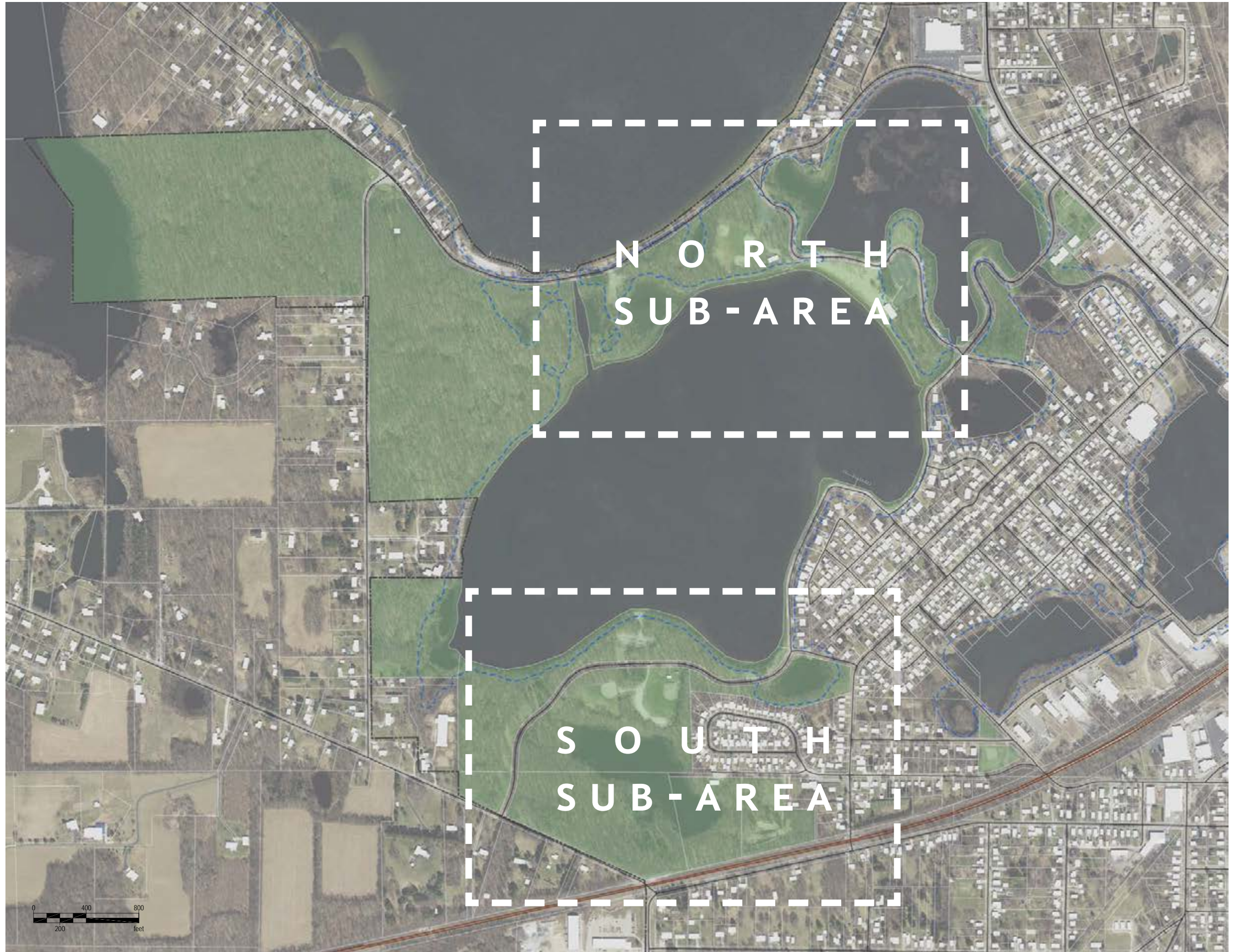
Increase smaller events for residents and a few large events regionally.

Improve wayfinding & signage throughout the park and regionally.

OVERALL

The master plan focused on a phased-improvements approach on 2 main sub-areas of the park. The North Sub-Area includes the Beach & Beach House, Cummings Lodge, Rotary Old Timers Field. The South Sub-Area is focused around Craven Pond, Lions Fields, mountain bike trails and the DNR boat launch.

In addition to the sub-areas, the following pages include recommendations on circulation (greenways and blueways), signage, branding, invasive species management and natural shoreline restoration methods.



The short-term plan for the north sub-area includes installing the ADA kayak launch and lockers, inflatable water play "WhoaZone" and improved trail connectivity. This plan shows the potential of relocating the ice rink onto Rotary Old Timers Field in the winter months. Cummings Lodge can serve as a warming house and hub for ice skating, snow shoeing and other winter activities.

The ADA kayak launch is recommended between Cummings Lodge and the beach house. The launch will require associated nearby parking and dropoff area. Further assessment of placing the launch on Stone Lake or Hennessey Wetland should be evaluated for accessibility and ease of launching and navigating kayaks.



NORTH SUB-AREA OPTION - 1



The long-term plan for the North Sub-Area includes the assessment and potential removal of the Rotary Old Timers Field for additional parking and a second rental lodge (approx. 5,000 square feet). With the removal of this field, a possible new lodge could be located near Cummings Lodge to capitalize on the lakefront views and existing infrastructure. A feasibility study for the demand of a second lodge and preferred location is recommended.



NORTH SUB-AREA OPTION - 2



During the stakeholder interview process, the City Engineering Department referenced they have preliminarily reviewed the potential to realign Waverly Avenue through the Park. This plan graphic shows the realignment along with potential for Marina Redevelopment near the existing Huber's Annex. While impacting the existing woodlands and topography of the park, this option provides greater redevelopment potential on Pine Lake and increases the area and parking for Ski Beach on Pine Lake. Parks Department should continue coordination with City Engineering on the feasibility of this realignment, and recognize any restrictions with future grants that may preclude this work.



W A V E R L Y REALIGNMENT



MARINA REDEVELOPMENT

The short-term plan for the South Sub-Area includes paved and lit parking areas, additional trail links and improvements to the Mountain Bike trailhead at Link Park and the Girl Scout Building. An assessment of relocating the existing Lions Fields programs to another system park should occur prior to investing in field, fencing and lighting improvements.



SOUTH SUB-AREA OPTION - 1

The long-term plan for the South Sub-Area includes the removal of Lions Fields, if they can be recreated at another system park. This provides the opportunity to create a large, flexible lawn space with associated picnic and shelter opportunities. Lions Field #2 can be converted into a large BMX pump track, to further embrace the biking program in the Park. Another possible location for the second lodge is also shown near the existing boat launch.



SOUTH SUB-AREA OPTION - 2

GREENWAYS

The vast amount of open space, waterways and roadways in and around Soldiers Memorial Park provide incredible opportunities for connectivity. The plan to the right shows existing and proposed pathways and greenways network. These links have been identified in the City's Greenway Plan, along with input received during this master planning process.

All greenways should be developed to a minimum of 8 foot wide to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle usage. While the Park Department can implement some of these trails within the park, a majority of these links will require partnerships with the City and potential funders.

A major obstacle to connectivity was identified as the Pine Lake Avenue corridor. The traffic speed, volumes and road width make crossing Pine Lake challenging. The only existing traffic signal in the project vicinity is at Pine Lake Avenue and Weller Avenue (southeast of park).

In addition to improving the Weller Avenue corridor and intersection, a HAWK signal crossing should be further evaluated. During the planning process of the Chessie Trail Phase 1 in 2012, INDOT recognized the need for another HAWK signal approximately 1/2 mile south of the Chessie Trail crossing. We recommend partnering with the City of La Porte to further investigate a HAWK signal crossing between Waverly Avenue and Veterans Parkway. A map of pedestrian trip generation will be required as well as a map that shows the distance between crossing locations.



LAKESHORE

The City of La Porte's 2012 Trails and Greenways plan recommended improved cycle and pedestrian access along Lakeshore Drive. This links to part of a larger loop trail encircling Stone Lake and connecting to the Chessie Trail and the Clear Lake Loop Trail via a shared-use trail along Weller Ave and Truesdell Ave. More recently, during the Park Department's planning for Soldiers Memorial Park, planners heard from community members about the desire to improve the Stone Lake shoreline by providing a multi-use trail, landscape, and regular access points for recreation.

The City of La Porte is investigating construction of an approximately 0.8 mile multi-use trail along the shores of Stone Lake from Craven Drive to the Stone Lake Beach house. The trail is envisioned to be 8 1/2' wide asphalt side path along Lakeshore Drive and Grangemouth Rd. The trail will be offset from the roads by a 5' buffer zone of plantings and intermittent bollards. The shoreline trail will include nodes for resting, fishing, and wildlife observation that bump out into Stone Lake every 300' or so along the length of the trail. Trail construction will include the naturalization of the shoreline with native plantings and erosion stabilization using natural materials.



Prototype Lakeshore Drive One-Way

SIGNAGE

A major weakness of the Park identified by the design team, stakeholders and general public was the need for additional and consistent signage throughout the park. The design team recommends developing a series of new entry monuments at the major park entries to provide branding, identity and clear wayfinding opportunity into the Park. We recommend the monuments be made or clad with a rounded glacial boulder aesthetic to match elements at Fox Memorial Park and the Chessie Trail. This material will help create the identity and brand for the City Park System.

Additional City-wide wayfinding signage has been developed by the City to direct residents and visitors to amenities throughout the City. These wayfinding signs are noted on major roadways, and should be supplemented with additional wayfinding and interpretive signage within the park.



Chessie Trail Signage



Prototype Entry Monuments

BLUEWAYS

One of the greatest assets of Soldiers Memorial Park is its proximity to and connectivity to different water bodies. From the active boating on Pine Lake, to the no-wake of Stone Lake, Lily Lake and the Hennessey Wetland, a variety of water-based programming options exist.

A major challenge in the connectivity of the blueways are the four existing bridges in the project area. Short-term dredging should occur where needed to facilitate canoes, kayaks and small fishing boats to navigate the water bodies. The following page of this report discusses existing bridges, with design consideration and partnership opportunities.



BRIDGES

There are four existing bridges and/or culverts that control and restrict access between Pine Lake, Stone Lake, Hennessey Wetland and Lily Lake. Two bridges are owned and maintained by LaPorte County, while the other two are owned and maintained by the City of La Porte.

- Waverly (County)
- Grangemouth (County)
- Veterans Parkway/Lakeshore (City)
- Weller Ave culvert (City)

The Park Board should continue to review and assess the existing bridge conditions with both the City and County for eventual replacements. Future bridges should accommodate both vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians above (as shown in the rendering on this page), while allowing navigable channels for canoes, kayaks and small fishing boats. The concept rendering to the right shows a potential aesthetic of new replacement bridges. The glacial boulder cladding will help reinforce the park branding, as mentioned previously in the Signage section of this report.



Prototype Bridge

S H O R E L I N E

The existing southern shoreline of Stone Lake along Lakeshore Drive poses several major issues for the park. These include erosion, reduced water quality, lack of wildlife habitat, susceptibility to invasive plant species, park staff maintenance, and general public inaccessibility of the shoreline. The existing stone rip-rap provides some erosion protection, however does not help address all the other issues.

Reestablishing this shoreline with native vegetation, along with revised Lakeshore Drive traffic patterns, will address these issues by providing sustainable environmental and social benefits. The roots of native plant species will both prevent erosion and filter sediments and chemicals from stormwater prior to entering the lake. The native species additionally provide habitat for wildlife and prevent invasive species from monopolizing the shoreline. While some annual maintenance will be needed for the native landscape, the amount of staff hours will be greatly reduced from the weekly mowing.

In order to produce a more sustainable shoreline along Lakeshore Drive, initial excavation of the current slope must occur prior to installing coir logs and/or vegetated locking blocks. Planting native vegetation will allow for a “softer” shoreline compared to retaining wall and rip-rap.

Erosion blanket and coconut fiber filled coir logs can reduce runoff and wave impacts, and these can be planted into to allow for a gradual establishment of vegetation. The roots of the plants will help hold the soil in place, and overhanging branches and foliage will soften the impact of wave action. Coir logs may want to be evaluated as bid alternates when implementing this restoration, due to costs.



Existing Stone Lake shoreline



Initial installation in small pond (no slope present). Native plugs installed in erosion blanket.



Coir log installation and 2-3 weeks after installation of plantings



Planting and shoreline post installation (approx. 14-18 months later)

I N V A S I V E S

Invasive plant species overtaking naturalized areas of the park is a major issue and will continue worsening without immediate and on-going actions. Invasive species of concern in under-story include multiflora rose, honeysuckle, garlic mustard, buckthorn and a small patch of Japanese knotweed. Addressing these species will allow for greater native species regeneration and increase under-story diversity. As of this time, there are a good number of desirable native species present in the under-story, including jack-in-the-pulpit, may apple, and false Solomon's seal. Removing invasive species in these areas will allow for an increased spread and regeneration of natives in the entire forest under-story layer.

The small patch of Japanese knotweed located near the corner of Waverly and Garden is a high priority species to treat, as it is persistent and will spread quickly forming a monoculture along the roadsides. Treatments of foliar herbicide as well as cut stem methods will control this species, provided they are performed over multiple growing seasons.

Techniques and methods of control of these invasive species include hand cutting and pulling, spot application of herbicides, and cut stem herbicide treatments. Applications of herbicides should only be performed by trained personnel, but projects such as hand pulling and bagging of flowering garlic mustard plants can be performed by volunteer groups. Small isolated patches of other more infrequent invasives such as burdock can also be easily identified and hand pulled by volunteer groups. Species such as honeysuckle, knotweed and buckthorn will require a brushcutter or chainsaw with a followed up herbicide treatment to the cut stem. These activities will need to be performed by a licensed contractor. However, some smaller honeysuckle and buckthorn shrubs can be hand cut with loppers and hand trimmers, and this can be a volunteer activity.

OBSERVED INVASIVE SPECIES

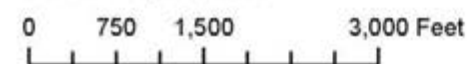
- Oriental Bittersweet
- Burning Bush
- Bush Honeysuckle
- Multiflora Rose
- Vinca
- Lily of the Valley
- Snow Drops
- Daylily
- Japanese Knotweed
- Glossy Buckthorn
- Garlic Mustard
- Purple Loosestrife
- Phragmites
- Winter creeper
- Japanese Barberry



Purple Loosestrife



1 inch = 1,500 feet



● Points of Interest
 □ Soldiers Memorial Park



H A R V E S T I N G

Several areas in the mapped woodlands have numerous smaller (<6" diameter) sugar maples that would make good candidates for removal. This would allow under-story native plant species to gain additional light and increase their populations. Several larger cherry trees in the center of the NW mapped woodland would also be good candidates for harvesting, as it can be used for many applications including woodworking. This work would need to be performed by a licensed contractor.

IMPLEMENTATION

This Chapter of the report takes a comprehensive look at the entire Soldiers Memorial Park master plan to determine logical project bundles that the La Porte Parks and Recreation Board may wish to implement over the following years as funding becomes available. Since the Park is an existing resource within park system, a variety of funding sources will need to be carefully identified depending on the type of park development or program intended for construction. Items that are new additions to the park may have one funding source while replacements of existing structures or programs may require another.

Since projects may be bundled and self-performed, implementation costs reflect projected construction costs and do not include consulting fees. Consulting fees may be 5% - 20% of the construction cost, depending on complexity. The implementation cost for the proposed second lodge for either the north sub-area or south sub-area is not included and a feasibility study has been identified as a first step on the following pages. Additionally, the removal of any diamond fields throughout the Park should be further studied to accommodate this program need at other parks within the system.

While the report has ranked priority projects, specific elements or projects could be phased as funding becomes available.

PROJECT	COST	PRIORITY	FUNDER	
CUMMINGS LODGE & BEACH SUB-AREA				
1	RENOVATE CUMMINGS EXTERIOR	\$25,000	HIGH	PARK NON-REVERTING
2	RENOVATE CUMMINGS INTERIOR	\$10,000	HIGH	PARK NON-REVERTING
3	REPLACE CUMMINGS TABLES & CHAIRS	\$2,000	HIGH	PARK NON-REVERTING
4	INSTALL KAYAK LOCKERS	\$20,000	HIGH	HFL, DONATIONS, CVB
5	INSTALL ADA KAYAK LAUNCH	\$30,000	HIGH	HFL, DONATIONS, CVB
6	PAVE PARKING & DROPOFF FOR KAYAK LAUNCH	\$50,000	HIGH	HFL, DONATIONS, CVB
7	ADD SAND TO STONE BEACH	\$35,000	HIGH	DONATION/PN-R
8	REPLACE BLEACHERS AT ROTARY/OLD TIMERS	\$4,800	MID	PARK NON-REVERTING
9	RENOVATE BEACH HOUSE INTERIOR	\$15,000	MID	BUDGET
10	INSTALL SOUND SYSTEM AT STONE BEACH	\$2,000	MID	PARK NON-REVERTING
11	REPLACE LIFEGUARD STANDS	\$1,000	MID	PARK NON-REVERTING
12	FLOATING BEACH FEATURES (I.E. WHOAZONE)	\$80,000	MID	PRIVATE PARTNER, PARK FOUNDATION, HFL, CVB
13	CONCESSIONS STAND AT OLD TIMERS FIELD	\$30,000	MID	PARK FOUNDATION/PN-R
14	SEALCOAT EXISTING BEACH & LODGE PARKING	\$13,000	MID	BUDGET
15	CLOSE CUMMINGS LODGE ENTRY DRIVE & DROPOFF	\$25,000	MID	HFL, DONATIONS, CVB
16	CUMMINGS LODGE NATURE TRAILS	\$50,000	MID	HFL, DNR
17	HENESSEY WETLAND BOARDWALK & PLATFORMS	\$175,000	LOW	HFL, DNR
18	HENESSEY WETLAND PARKING AREA	\$150,000	LOW	HFL, DNR
19	ADDITIONAL PICNIC SHELTERS (4)	\$120,000	MID	PARK FOUNDATION, HFL, DNR
20	BEACH VOLLEYBALL AT STONE BEACH	\$2,500	MID	PARK FOUNDATION, PN-R, BUDGET
21	OLD TIMERS FIELD PARKING CONVERSION	\$300,000	LOW	HFL, CVB, REDEVELOPMENT
22	PAVE PARKING & TRAILHEAD ENHANCEMENTS	\$200,000	MID	HFL, DONATIONS, CVB





PROJECT	COST	PRIORITY	FUNDER
SOUTH SUB-AREA			
23 FINISH INTERIOR LIONS FIELD CONCESSIONS	\$5,000	HIGH	DONATION/PN-R
24 RESTROOMS AT LIONS FIELDS	\$122,000	HIGH	HFL, DNR?
25 RESTROOMS AT LINK PARK	\$50,000	HIGH	HFL, DNR?
26 PAVE & LIGHT EXISTING LIONS FIELD PARKING	\$250,000	HIGH	HFL, DNR?
27 PAVE & LIGHT EXISTING MOUNTAIN BIKE PARKING	\$60,000	HIGH	HFL, DNR, PRIVATE GRANTS (REI)
28 PAVE & LIGHT DNR LAUNCH PARKING	\$150,000	HIGH	DNR
29 REPLACE BLEACHERS AT LIONS FIELDS*	\$18,000	MID*	PARK FOUNDATION, DNR
30 REPLACE BACKSTOPS AND FENCE AT LIONS FIELDS*	\$100,000	MID*	PARK FOUNDATION, DNR
31 REPLACE LIGHTING AT LIONS FIELD #1*	\$60,000	MID*	PARK FOUNDATION, DNR
32 REMOVE LIONS FIELDS*	\$50,000	MID*	PARK FOUNDATION, DNR
33 RENOVATE DNR BOAT LAUNCH	\$40,000	HIGH	DNR
34 CONSTRUCT VIEWING DECK & TRAILS AT LINK PARK	\$30,000	HIGH	DNR
35 CRAVEN POND BOARDWALK	\$15,000	MID	HFL, DNR, DONATIONS
36 ADDITIONAL PICNIC SHELTERS (4)	\$120,000	MID	PARK FOUNDATION, HFL, DNR
37 NATURE PLAYGROUND	\$80,000	LOW	PARK FOUNDATION, HFL, DNR
38 8' TRAIL GIRL SCOUT BUILDING TO LIONS FIELDS	\$50,000	LOW	PARK FOUNDATION, HFL, DNR
39 RENOVATE GIRL SCOUT BUILDING	\$25,000	MID	PARK FOUNDATION, PRIVATE
40 GIRL SCOUT BUILDING PARKING	\$35,000	MID	PARK FOUNDATION, PRIVATE
41 BMX PUMP TRACK	\$40,000	MID	PARK FOUNDATION, HFL, DNR, PRIVATE

Transportation projects open up other potential source of funding and partnership opportunities involving federal, state, local and private resources. INDOT administers a number of different funding programs available through the Federal Highway Administration to perform transportation improvements in local communities. The Park Department should continue to coordinate with the City of La Porte and with NIRPC to monitor funding cycles for:

- Highway Safety Improvement Projects (HSIP): 90% project funding
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ): 80% project funding
- Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG): 80% project funding
- Transportation Alternatives (TA): 80% project funding

The eligibility requirements for the funding sources vary, but many of the projects are eligible under multiple programs. In addition, seek dedicated funding from the following sources:

- Local Redevelopment and TIF money
- Locally as well as an Adopt-a-Trail Program with other entities such as the schools, University, local businesses, utility agencies and developers to develop local pathways
- Land and Water Conservation Fund
- Indiana DNR Next Level Trails Grant
- Flood Control dollars from U.S. Corps of Engineers
- CDBG monies
- Non-Profit Organization Grants
- Private Grants (REI, North Face, etc.)
- Private Local Donations
- County and Township partnerships
- Stormwater District & MS4

The Park Board should review all conditions and requirements of grants prior to application. For instance, the DNR Land & Water Conservation Fund could be a great funding source but carries conditions that would designate the Park as a Section 6(f) resource and potentially restrict some future uses/developments.

PROJECT	COST	PRIORITY	FUNDER
PARK OFFICE			
RENOVATE GAZEBO	\$25,000	HIGH	DONATION
REPLACE OFFICE PHONE SYSTEM	\$3,000	HIGH	BUDGET
ADD A/V SYSTEM IN PARK OFFICE	\$2,500	HIGH	BUDGET
INSTALL FENCE & GATE BEHIND MAINTENANCE	\$10,000	HIGH	BUDGET

WEST PARCEL			
DEVELOP PARKING & TRAILHEAD	\$100,000	MID	HFL, DNR, PRIVATE GRANTS (REI)
DEVELOP RUSTIC TRAIL NETWORK	\$50,000	MID	HFL, DNR, PRIVATE GRANTS (REI)

OTHER CIRCULATION & PARKING			
LAKESHORE DRIVE TRAIL (CRAVEN TO BEACH HOUSE)	\$888,000	HIGH	HFL
LAKESHORE DRIVE ONE-WAY	\$570,000	HIGH	CITY (COMM. CROSSINGS)
PAVE, LIGHT & ENHANCE WAVERLY TRAILHEAD	\$225,000	MID	HFL, DNR?
PINE LAKE AVENUE HAWK SIGNAL CROSSING	\$75,000	MID	INDOT, CITY
8' GREENWAY FROM CRAVEN TO ORCHARD AVE	\$550,000	MID	HFL, DNR, CITY
8' GREENWAY GARDEN STREET LINK	\$800,000	LOW	HFL, DNR, COUNTY, INDOT
5' PATH FROM CRAVEN POND TO LIONS FIELDS	\$65,000	MID	HFL, DNR
8' TRAIL FROM CUMMINGS TO TRAILHEAD	\$150,000	MID	HFL, DNR, CITY
8' TRAIL FROM PINE LAKE AVE TO GRANGEMOUTH	\$400,000	MID	HFL, DNR, CITY
WAVERLY BRIDGE REPLACEMENT	\$125,000	LOW	CITY, COUNTY, INDOT
GRANGEMOUTH BRIDGE REPLACEMENT	\$90,000	MID	CITY, COUNTY, INDOT
VETERANS PKWY BRIDGE REPLACEMENT	\$75,000	MID	CITY, COUNTY, INDOT
WELLER AVE BRIDGE REPLACEMENT	\$90,000	MID	CITY, COUNTY, INDOT
GRANGEMOUTH & WAVERLY REALIGNMENT	\$80,000	MID	CITY, COUNTY, INDOT

NATURAL RESOURCES			
DEVELOP TIMBER HARVESTING PROGRAM	\$0	HIGH	HARVESTING CONTRACT
INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT	\$30,000 (initial) (50% annually after)	HIGH	HARVESTING CONTRACT, DNR, LPS&W

MISCELLANEOUS			
DNR LWCF GRANT ASSESSMENT	\$0	HIGH	PARK BOARD REVIEW
DIAMOND FIELD RELOCATION FEASIBILITY*	\$5,000	HIGH	PARK FOUNDATION, CVB
2ND LODGE FEASIBILITY STUDY	\$5,000	HIGH	HFL, CVB, REDEVELOPMENT
WAVERLY REALIGNMENT STUDY	\$10,000	MID	CITY
ENTRY MONUMENTS (WAVERLY)	\$40,000	MID	PARK FOUNDATION, CVB
ENTRY MONUMENTS (GRANGEMOUTH)	\$40,000	MID	PARK FOUNDATION, CVB
ENTRY MONUMENTS (ORCHARD)	\$40,000	MID	PARK FOUNDATION, CVB
PERMANENT ICE RINK (LOCATION TBD)	\$200,000	LOW	PARK FOUNDATION, CVB, PRIVATE, DONATIONS
PARK WAYFINDING SIGNAGE	\$25,000	MID	PARK FOUNDATION, CVB, PRIVATE



N E X T S T E P S

While this report represents the culmination of the master planning process, in reality it serves as a launching pad for the future of Soldiers Memorial Park. Grounded on public input and a better understanding of the park's ecological history, the plan presents a vision for enhancing an already popular and treasured park for current and future generations to enjoy. Upon presentation of the draft master plan to the Park Board on July 17, 2019, this report will be made available to the public for further review and comment. Based on the input received and any direction provided by the Park Board, appropriate revisions will be made to the plan for consideration by the Park Board. It is anticipated that the final master plan will be presented to the Park Board in August 2019 for formal adoption. Once adopted, this master plan will be used to help guide the future development of Soldiers Memorial Park as funding permits.

With total projected costs far exceeding available Park Department funds, implementation of this master plan can only occur through a phased approach, likely beginning with items previously identified in the 5-Year Parks Master Plan. The phasing will also need to take into consideration the life cycles of existing park infrastructure. Construction should be staged in a manner to keep as much as the park open to the public as is safely feasible. Multiple funding sources, both existing and new, will be required to fully develop this plan.

Schematic design plans will be developed for each development phase as funding becomes available. These plans will make any necessary refinements to the site and facility plans envisioned within this report, taking into consideration the budget, surveys, soil conditions, regulations, and other factors that were not part of the scope of this master plan.

