

NEXT STEPS

- Establish timeline for periodic mowing regime
- Engage professional design team to move the Parkland Plan into design development and construction documents
- Undertake hydrologic assessment of the remaining ponds as to their expansion/wetlands connection
- Construct continuous trail network with exercise stations
- Engage local garden clubs for creation of community flower garden
- Identify and construct short term parking areas
- Create park signage and wayfinding
- Establish a final central water feature plan
- Construct new pedestrian bridge spanning the central water feature
- Cultivate partnerships with potential Nature / Education Center
- Initiate design of outdoor pavilions



WHAT IS A MANAGED MEADOW?

The natural vegetation of much of the Midwest is deciduous forest, and cleared or open grassy areas that are not maintained will eventually revert back to forest. Once an area is left unmowed for a length of time, the process of ecological succession begins with an increasing diversity of grasses and wildflowers. Golf courses are highly maintained and well fertilized. They require a relentless daily regime of maintenance in order to maintain the performative and aesthetic characteristics. As this level of continuous upkeep is unsustainable, a “managed-meadows” approach is being pursued which allows certain areas of the park (e.g. former roughs) to grow more mature while larger swaths of land (e.g. former fairways) are mowed on a more frequent basis.

Meadows are extremely important habitats for wildlife and also serve as preserves for native plants. Additionally, they act as natural buffers in protecting waterways, wetlands and water resources. Golf courses are highly manicured open space environments that require constant upkeep, pesticides and chemicals to maintain their use for the sport of golf. A managed meadow means that mowing schedules are amended to be annual or less frequent. No mowing does not, however, mean no maintenance. All managed meadows and maintained open areas need to be monitored for invasive toxic plants that may become established once regular mowing has ceased.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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THE PARKLANDS

THE PARKLANDS OF JASPER, INDIANA



A Vision for the Future

March 9, 2015



THE VISION

Jasper Parklands is a publicly-accessible, passive recreational landscape and educational asset for the City of Jasper and Dubois County.

CONNECTIVITY

Towns and cities are seldom in a position to acquire a large track of open space that is centrally located in or near the downtown. Jasper is in the enviable spot to reimagine the character of this former Country Club site as a new community asset in ways never before envisioned. The creation of Jasper Parklands represents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create a new community landscape which is unique unto its own while still remaining well connected to the broader network.

PARKS AS CATALYSTS

Many American cities are implementing urban parks and unique landscape areas in challenging environments. Jasper now has a large landscape space surrounded by strong neighborhoods and numerous educational and community assets. All planning relates to health, and investments in parks create opportunities for physical activity for people of all ages and levels of mobility. The existing cart path forms the basis of a trail system geared towards enhanced health and wellness.

EXISTING OPPORTUNITIES

The park's 48 acres comprise not only a contiguous site, but also a lush landscape with a great deal of topographic change, mature tree canopy, a number of ponds and a network of paths. These existing site conditions should be celebrated. An underlying challenge in development of the former Jasper Country Club property has been to retain the character or cohesion of a large landscape space while still accommodating some small scale community uses which can activate the property.

WATERBODIES

Two ponds south of Klubhaus 61 form the basis of a focal point for the site. The two waterbodies follow the path of the groundwater and mitigate issues of stormwater runoff and water retention during periods of heavy rainfall. A new pedestrian bridge spans the lakes, linking the trail network together and creating an iconic, art-inspired design element in the middle of the Parklands. The third smaller pond on the west portion of the site is drained.

FUTURE INTERVENTIONS

Some activation of the property has already occurred with the occupation of Klubhaus 61. Additional pavilions for picnics, restrooms and shade structures will animate the trail. A landscape amphitheater creates opportunities to watch fireworks and intimate outdoor performances. An area is reserved for a future Nature / Educational Center. With these modest interventions, the benefits of the Jasper Parklands will be immediate and substantial as the site evolves over the next generation.



IMAGINE a Jasper Parklands that is:

- Publicly accessible** and open year-round
- A **contiguous landscape** with a wide range of passive programming opportunities
- A network of **recreation and fitness trails** for all ages and physical abilities
- A **learning laboratory** that educates people about the site's ecology and natural aspects
- Able to accommodate facilities that advance **environmental stewardship**
- A place that provides opportunities for **artistic endeavors** within a beautiful natural setting
- Easily accessible with a series of small, **distributed parking areas**
- An **asset to the neighbors** that border it
- A **destination unlike any other** in the City yet an integral, connected part of the park system
- A place of beauty and civic pride with photo-ops and **public gathering/performance spaces**
- Easy to maintain** with a managed-meadows approach
- Implemented in a manner that **allows flexibility and change**
- Respectful of the large landscape character** yet accommodating uses that activate the site

PROGRAM IDEAS

- Nature trail that builds on current paths**
- Exercise stations and bike paths**
- Nature, Arts, and Cultural Center**
- Community flower gardens**
- Picnic and seating areas**
- Fishing and lakeside paths**
- Small, dispersed parking lots**
- "Managed meadows" along fairways**



CASE STUDIES

A range of national case studies were investigated to learn lessons from other communities who have decommissioned golf courses. The studies were selected to highlight the broad spectrum of reuse possibilities, from highly manicured to wild. A continuum of possibilities exist, with a "Light Touch" as the preferred reuse strategy.

