

GRANITE QUARRY CIVIC PARK MASTER PLAN

TOWN OF
GRANITE QUARRY, NC
APRIL 2024





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Plan prepared with assistance from Stewart's Landscape
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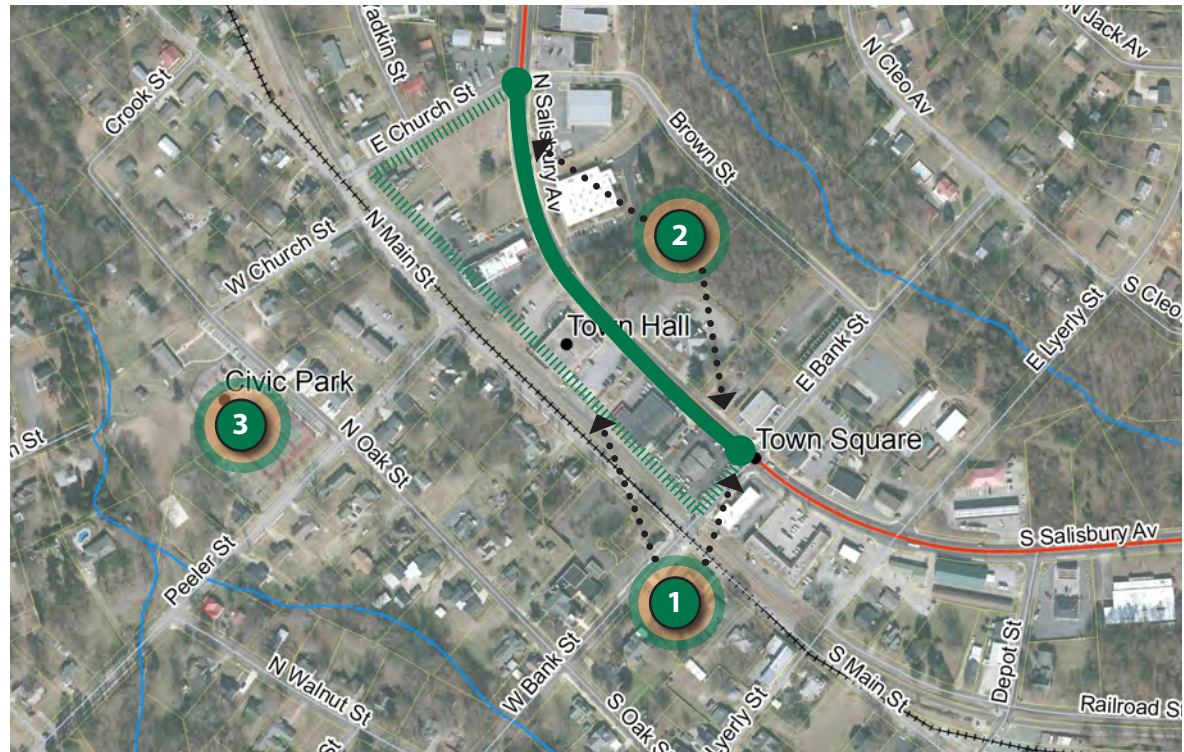
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part 1: **INTRODUCTION**

WHY A MASTER PLAN?

This Master Plan is meant to establish a vision for Civic Park. Civic Park is the Town of Granite Quarry’s oldest public park and home to Granite Fest. Minor improvements have been made to the park over the years but they have occurred piecemeal as needs or issues arose. Recently, significant upgrades to the park were identified as one of three transformational projects envisioned for the heart of Granite Quarry. This master plan was created through a public process and is meant to document and serve as a guide for recreational and physical improvements to this cherished public space. This effort allowed for a more detailed analysis of the park and seeks to create a long-term vision for the facility.



From the Granite Quarry Transformational Projects plan. The Civic Park Master Plan comes out of this planning effort. Civic Park is located at point 3 just a block away from the Town Hall.

PROCESS

The eight month planning process began in August of 2023. The process included the identification of existing usage trends, an analysis of the site, and recommendations for future enhancements to the park so that it can continue to serve the needs of the community.

The master plan includes the existing park, the American Legion property, and also analyzed surrounding areas.

The process was interspersed with community input points throughout including a community survey, a pop-up event at Granite Fest, and three public meetings.

The new master plan for the park will help with programming, facility, and maintenance changes in the coming years. It will also help the Town in grant applications and other funding opportunities for the necessary renovations. The goal is to identify major improvements and seek funding in early Summer 2024.

PARK PLANNING PROCESS



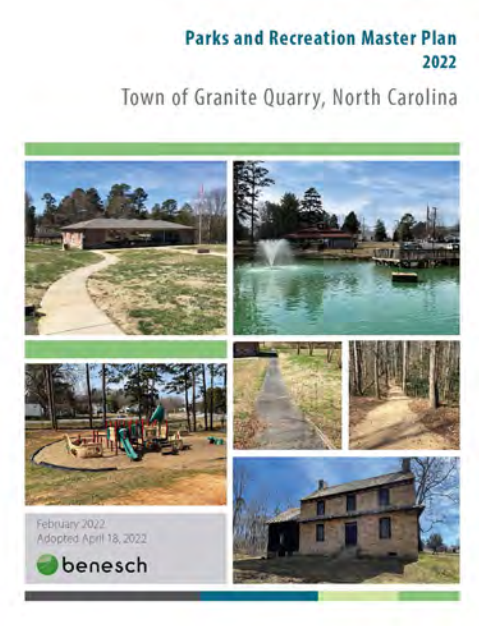
PREVIOUS PLANS

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2022) included an inventory of facilities, a statistically valid community survey, and general recommendations for all parks, including Civic Park. This plan called for a master plan for Civic Park and the following improvements:

- ▶ Resurface and re-stripe tennis courts and upgrade lighting
- ▶ Re-stripe one court for pickleball and add netting
- ▶ Remove volleyball court and convert to outdoor fitness cluster (*completed*)
- ▶ Remove basketball courts and replace with two half-courts and a pickleball court
- ▶ Widen Carolina Thread Trail (CTT) route to 8 feet
- ▶ Improve accessible routes and connections to parking within park and to Legion Building
- ▶ Upgrade play equipment
- ▶ Addition of shelters
- ▶ Land acquisition (*of 214 W. Peeler Street*)

The Granite Quarry Transformational Projects Plan (2023) identified recommended improvements at Civic Park as a top priority for the Town. This plan recommended a site specific master plan for the park and identified priority improvements including:

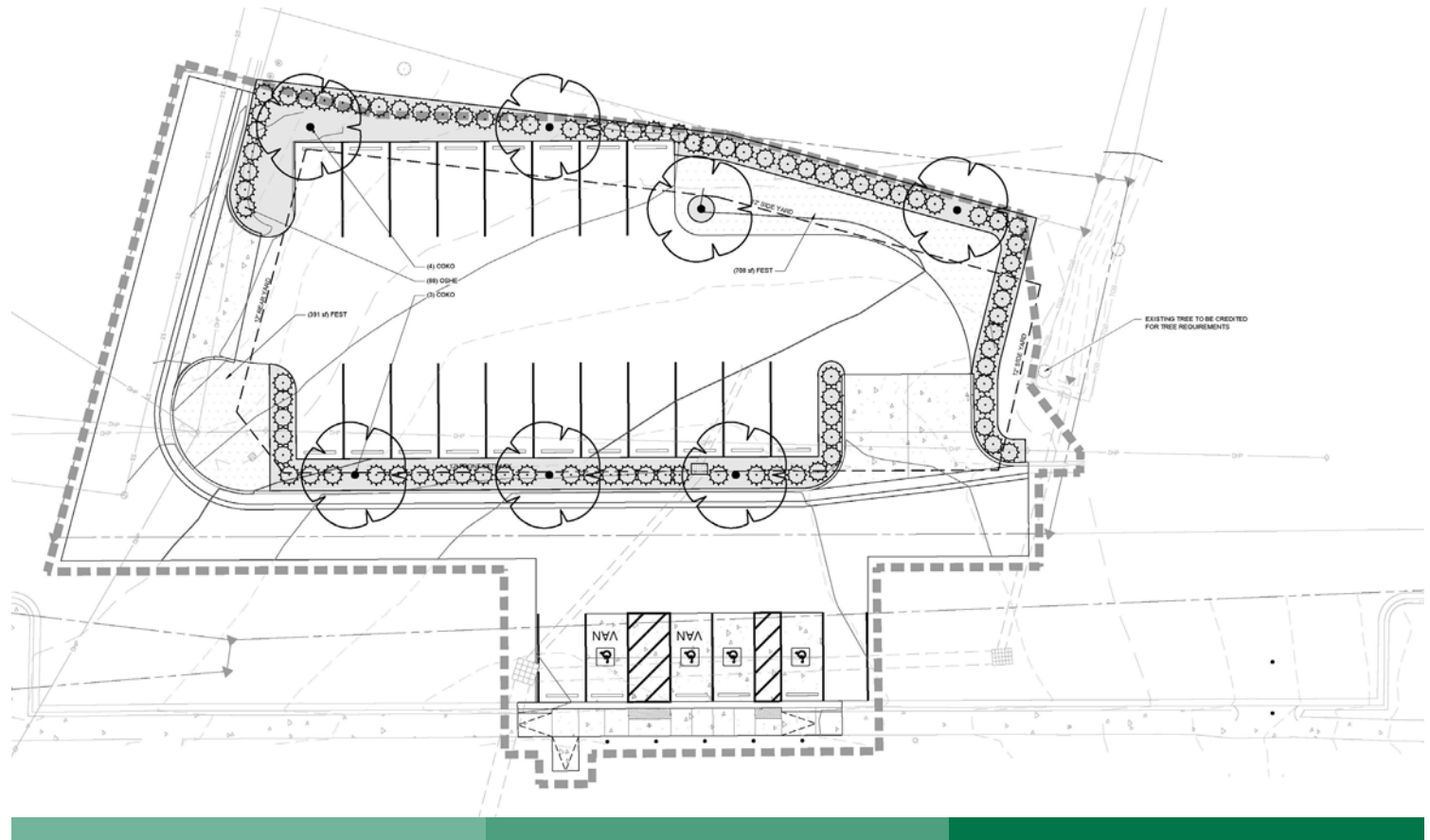
- ▶ Repave existing parking spaces
- ▶ New parking lot at the corner of Oak Street and Church Street
- ▶ Reconstruction of walking trails
- ▶ Stream Stabilization
- ▶ Shelter Renovations
- ▶ Addition of plantings, lighting and furnishings



PARKING LOT IMPROVEMENTS (PLANNED FOR SPRING OF 2024)

Following the Transformational Projects Plan the Town moved forward with designing additional parking and re-stripping existing parking along North Oak Street. The design includes 19 new spaces and ADA compliant spaces closer to the park.

Both the Parks Master Plan and the Transformational Projects Plan confirmed that there was a need for major improvements at Civic Park, but a public process was needed to gather feedback on priorities and options.





part 2: **SITE ANALYSIS**



CIVIC PARK SITE

LOCATION

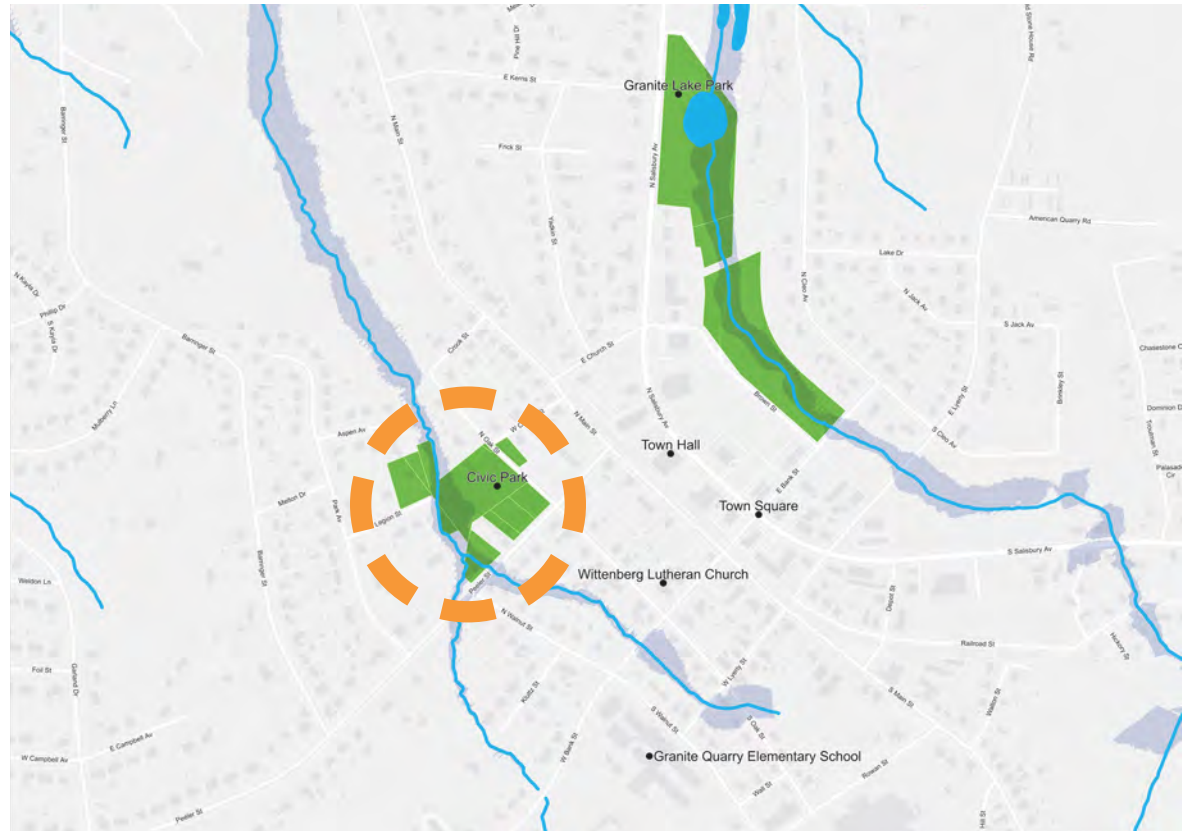
Civic Park is located in the heart of downtown Granite Quarry at the corner of North Oak Street and West Peeler Street. The park is less than a quarter of a mile from the Town Hall and a short walk from the Granite Quarry Elementary School.

Surrounding land uses include single-family residential homes and a few duplexes and townhomes located between the park and the railroad tracks.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

Granite Civic Park is a 5.25 acre Community Park that provides a variety of recreational amenities. A stream runs through the park. The American Legion Building sits on the southwest side of the stream. Parking is located along North Oak Street as well as in a parking lot accessed off of Legion Street.

CONTEXT MAP



AMERICAN LEGION BUILDING

One of Civic Park's most notable amenities is the American Legion Building, which was built by the Granite Park Post, Inc. Constructed in April 1950, the building was named the Livengood-Peeler-Wood American Legion Post #448, Inc. This building was home to Post #448 for almost 60 years. In November 2009, the Legion Building was transferred to the Town of Granite Quarry. According to the Town of Granite Quarry, "As the members of Post #448 aged and membership declined, the post could no longer continue with the necessary upkeep of the building itself. The members wanted to make sure the residents of Granite Quarry could continue to use the building as they had in the past." Post #448 and the Town of Granite Quarry reached an agreement stating that the Post would continue to use the building until they were no longer active. In 2010, the building was updated in partnership with the Granite Quarry Civitan Club. An Eagle Scout Project was completed for the part of the property in front of the building that consists of benches and flag poles with the US flag and flags of all branches of the US military. Today, the Legion Building can be rented for civic groups, gatherings and events. The inside is in need of renovation and some structural issues have been noted.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Civic Park is home to Granite Fest and an annual Easter Egg Hunt. Granite Fest, which occurs in October, is the Town's largest event. The event includes live music, inflatables for kids, vendors, and food trucks. The vendor court is set up on the tennis courts, food trucks are oriented along North Oak Street, vendor parking is located at the Legion building and off site parking occurs along streets and at nearby churches and the elementary school.

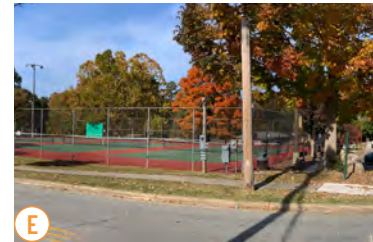




FACILITIES & CURRENT USES

Photos and descriptions of existing facilities

- A.** Lawn and Foreign Wars Memorial
- B.** Civic Park Trail (0.3 miles)
- C.** Playground equipment
- D.** Parking Lot on Oak Street
- E.** 3 Tennis Courts w/Pickleball striping on 2 courts
- F.** Granite Civic Park boulder sign
- G.** Benches and Picnic Table(s) along trail
- H.** Baseball Field with Bleachers
- I.** Channelized Creek with trails
- J.** Legion Building with Parking Lot
- K.** Bridge across the creek
- L.** Large Pavilion with Restrooms
- M.** Two Basketball Courts with one set of hoops
- N.** Adult Fitness Equipment



USES AND CIRCULATION DIAGRAM



ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES & CONTEXT

- A.** Stream: Legion Park Branch runs south to north through the park. A bridge crosses the creek near the baseball field to connect the main park area to the Legion building. The stream is channelized between concrete block walls for a portion of property. The walls are deteriorating in places and a long-term solution is needed.
- B.** Floodway and 100 Year Flood Plain: The floodway stretches east of the creek by as much as 34 feet just south of the baseball field. The 100 year floodplain is larger and covers as much as 185 feet east of the creek in the outfield.
- C.** Existing Tree Canopy: The park has a diverse tree canopy that includes mature oaks by the creek, a mature sycamore near the tennis courts, and a medium sized maple by the tennis courts that is stunning in the fall. A few mature trees sit at the top of the hill of the baseball field. A grove of mature pines sits on the downslope of the Legion building. There was a large tree between the swings and the tennis court but it was removed a number of years ago due to poor health. Large pin oaks were removed due to poor health after the installation of the playground. Reestablishment of tree canopy and shade are needed.
- D.** Existing Topography: There is significant grade change between the highest corner of the park in the vicinity of the intersection of North Oak Street and Peeler Street (782 ft) and the low point in the northwest corner of the park (748 ft).
- E.** Stream Buffer: The riparian area of the stream is mostly grass with some intermittent forest cover and low vegetation.



ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES



SITE HISTORY

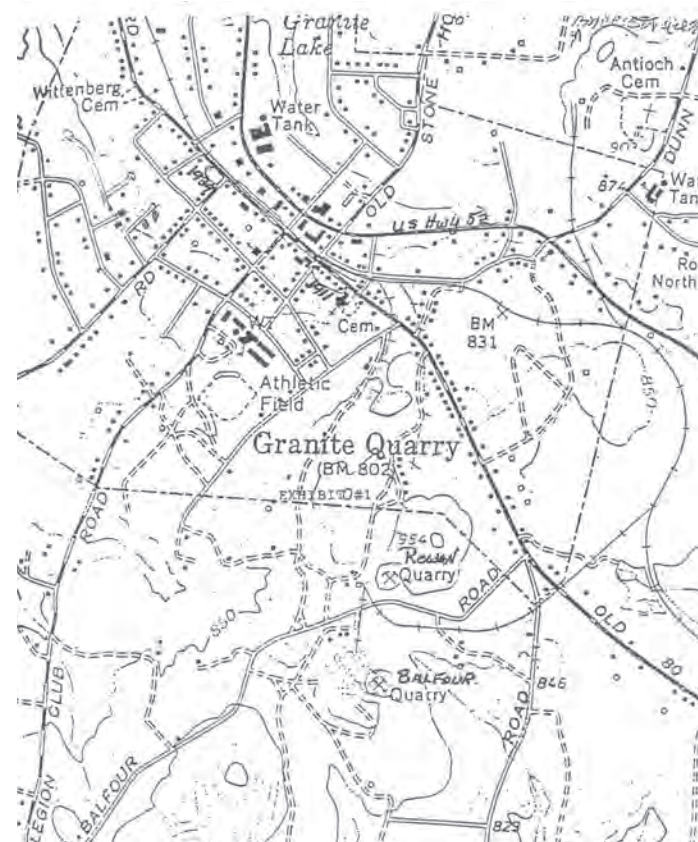
Granite Quarry’s Civic Park was established in 1950 and constructed from 1968 to 1973 by community members, civic groups, churches, local government, and others. Today, according to the Town of Granite Quarry, Civic Park is a “5.25-acre recreation memorial to the people of Granite Quarry. The existence of this park exemplifies what a small community can do with hard work and dedication.”

Civic Park was developed on land donated to Granite Post Park, Inc. by Mr. J. F. Crook. The land was originally part of a 15-acre farm with a barn located where the baseball field is now. Granite Quarry residents collected donations to purchase the land and gift the park to the Town. Volunteers graded and prepared the land, and development of the park was primarily paid for with donations from the community. Years later, the park continues to exemplify citizen engagement and pride. A recent example of this is a partnership between the Town of Granite Quarry and a local community group, Action for Community Teamwork Advisory Board, which resulted in grants that were successfully obtained to fund improvements for the park.

Civic Park is home to numerous amenities including Civic Park Trail, tennis courts, basketball courts, a baseball field with bleachers and lighting, playground equipment, a small picnic shelter with tables, and a large picnic shelter complete with restrooms and an enclosed kitchen. This large picnic shelter can be reserved for events and has been used for wedding receptions, family reunions, and more.

As stated by the Town of Granite Quarry, “The sole purpose of Granite Civic Park has always been, and will continue to be, to provide the citizens of Granite Quarry a safe and enjoyable

place to play and fellowship with friends and family.” Not only is the park a well-used outdoor recreation destination, but it’s also home to some of Granite Quarry’s most popular events, including Granite Fest. This festival is held each October at Civic Park and is a day full of food trucks, musicians, and celebrating Granite Quarry’s history. Civic Park was built from hard work and civic spirit, and it has continued to serve its community for over fifty years.



Historic map of Granite Quarry found in “History of Granite Quarry” by Harry Sifford

ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES SUMMARY

This list of issues and opportunities for the site was based on the project team's analysis of the site and input from the public and staff.

- ▶ Trail maintenance needed, wider trails desirable especially the main path
- ▶ Playground upgrades needed
- ▶ Underutilized space in the vicinity of the playground area
- ▶ Need for shade and seating near play area
- ▶ Drainage needs to be improved near the playground and on the baseball field
- ▶ Stream erosion issues and walls near stream need to be replaced or fixed
- ▶ Significant trees should be protected where possible
- ▶ Consistency / Design standards needed for furnishings and lighting between parks
- ▶ Bathroom upgrades needed - current bathrooms are closed Thanksgiving to Spring due to not being winterized. This could be addressed with shelter renovation
- ▶ History of the park is very unique but not visible on site, placemaking and park identification can be improved through the use of granite for site features and materials
- ▶ Internal and external wayfinding needed
- ▶ Baseball field mostly used for tee ball and local juniors baseball practice





part 3: **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**



OVERVIEW

During the course of this project, a public survey was developed, three dedicated public meetings were held, and members of the project team attended the Granite Fest, which is the primary annual event held at Granite Quarry Civic Park.

WHAT WE HEARD

THEMES

Through all of the engagement efforts, a number of themes were repeated at multiple touch points. These themes were:

- ▶ Accessibility and Inclusion
- ▶ Connecting to Town History and Character
- ▶ Meeting Day-to-Day Needs
- ▶ More Options, More Flexibility

GRANITE FEST

Early in the preparation for the this project, the team was able to attend Granite Fest and see the park on its busiest day of the year. Held annually on the third Saturday of October, this free event includes live music and entertainment, games and activities for all ages, over 40 vendor booths, over 10 food trucks, and classic fair offerings like inflatables, caricatures, face painting, and balloon twisting.

At the 2023 Granite Fest, attendees were asked to share a big idea and choose facilities and programming upgrades they would want to see at Civic Park.

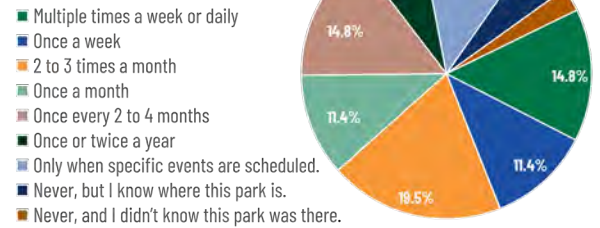


SURVEY RESULTS

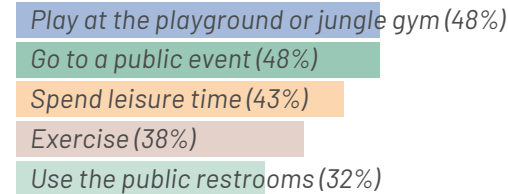
A 14-question community survey was developed and launched at the beginning of November 2023. The survey asked residents about their opinions on Civic Park, including what facilities they'd like to see at the park and how often they visit. To reach as many residents as possible who lived near the park, a postcard with survey information was mailed out to residential addresses within a half mile of the park, leading to 500 notices being sent out. It was promoted online and in person at several Granite Quarry events. The survey received 149 responses. From the results, 97 respondents indicated they lived in Granite Quarry, which would indicate participation from roughly 5% of the 2022 town population (3,035). More results from the survey are shared here.

HOW FREQUENTLY DO YOU VISIT CIVIC PARK?

Over **50%** of current survey respondents visit Civic Park at least once monthly. Less than **10%** reported never having been to the park. **14%** of respondents said they only go to Civic Park for events. **8%** of said they never visit Civic Park.



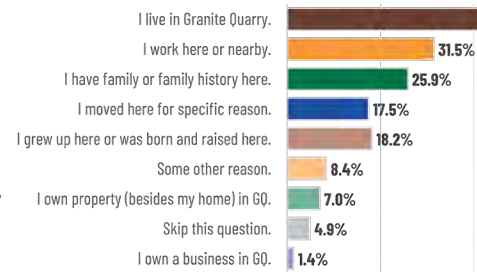
WHAT DO VISITORS TYPICALLY DO AT CIVIC PARK?



WHAT ISSUES HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED WHEN ACCESSING FACILITIES IN THE PARK?



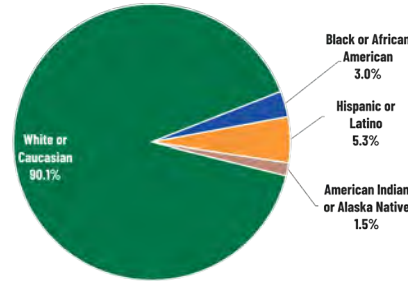
WHAT IS YOUR CONNECTION TO GRANITE QUARRY?



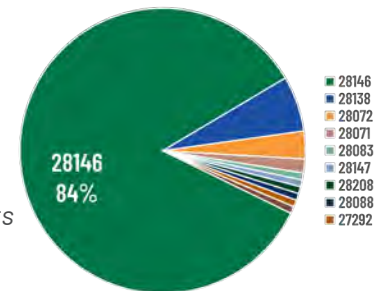
HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED IN GRANITE QUARRY?



WHAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR RACE OR ETHNICITY?



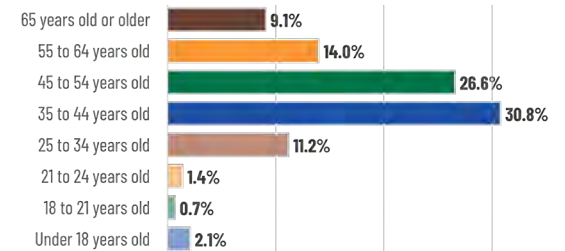
DO YOU LIVE IN OR AROUND GRANITE QUARRY? WHAT IS YOUR ZIP CODE?



Most respondents (84%) live in the 28146 zip code.

Nearly half of respondents reported no issues accessing areas of the park, however, most reports were for lack of restroom access in the winter months. Town of Granite Quarry locks the shelter restrooms in the offseason for park use.

WHAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR AGE?



Respondents to the survey were predominately white residents of Granite Quarry or the immediate area who have lived here for at least 10 years and are over 35 years old.



PUBLIC MEETINGS

The first meeting was held January 30th at the Legion Building located in Civic Park. During this meeting community members and active users of the park were given the background of the project and the opportunity to provide feedback. Community members were also able to comment on the draft goals and vision of the project. Multiple informational and visual preference poster boards were displayed, and project team members were able to answer questions and in-turn ask for clarification on comments that were provided.

Having the meeting at the project site was an intentional choice. Aside from attendants who had already planned on arriving, the project team was able to meet with families, couples, and residents using the park and hear from them directly. This also provided the opportunity to hear from children who visit the park often.



Comments and votes from the first public meeting were counted and compiled. The results are shown here.



The second public meeting was held on March 6th under the large shelter in Civic Park. This meeting followed a similar format as the previous, but this included two concept designs for participants to view and compare. From the shelter, attendees were able to look at the proposed designs and the park as it is today.

Discussions, dot-voting, and comments that were collected showed that the overall preference was for Concept B but with the inclusion of certain elements shown on Concept A.

The final public meeting was held at Town Hall on March 27th and presented the Final Concept Design for Civic Park. Attendees were asked to give feedback on the design and recommendations.



PUBLIC MEETING 2 RESULTS:

Participants preferred Option B, but with some suggested edits from Option A

Option A received **2** votes and **2** comments requesting a splash pad to be included.

Option B received **19** votes and **18** comments.

Most comments on Option B were requesting elements shown in Option A.

The most requested feature was to incorporate granite stones into the creek. Also requested were the large granite stones for climbing, the hill slide, the stage/amphitheater, the play area using grade, slides, and steps, and the dog park. (Note: the dog park was included in both concepts.)

Other comments included:

- ◆ More planned events with food trucks and brewery participation
- ◆ All year restroom access
- ◆ Making the creek more of a focal point
- ◆ Not including the ball field in favor of better utilizing the space
- ◆ Making a better baseball field
- ◆ Keeping naturalized areas instead of adding parking



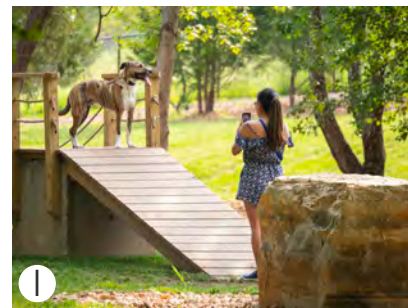
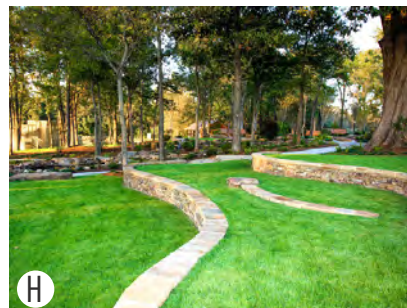
part 4: **CONCEPT DESIGNS**



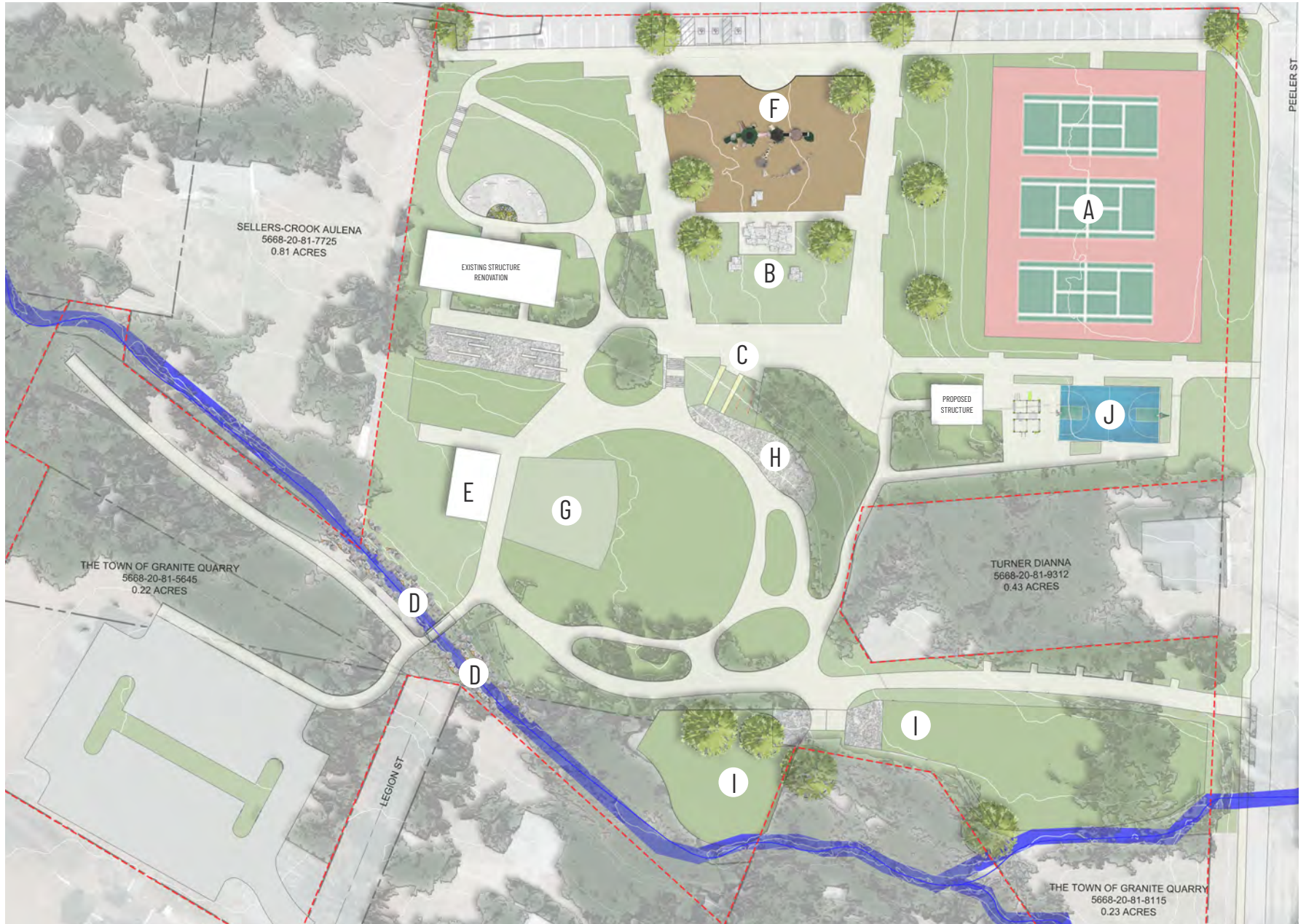
CONCEPT PLAN A

This concept included a new playground, naturalized play and slide feature down to a new re-purposed field with a small, permanent stage. Amphitheater style seating utilizes the existing hillside behind the baseball field to provide additional seating for events. A small outdoor fitness center is located near a new shelter at the existing basketball court. A dog park with separate large and small dog facilities is proposed. Stream restoration with bank improvements will offer access to water's edge and additional play opportunities. On this concept the American Legion Building was removed for additional parking.

This concept also includes rehabilitation of the tennis/pickleball courts, upgrades to the main shelter, an updated basketball area, and a new bridge for ADA accessibility.



CONCEPT PLAN A





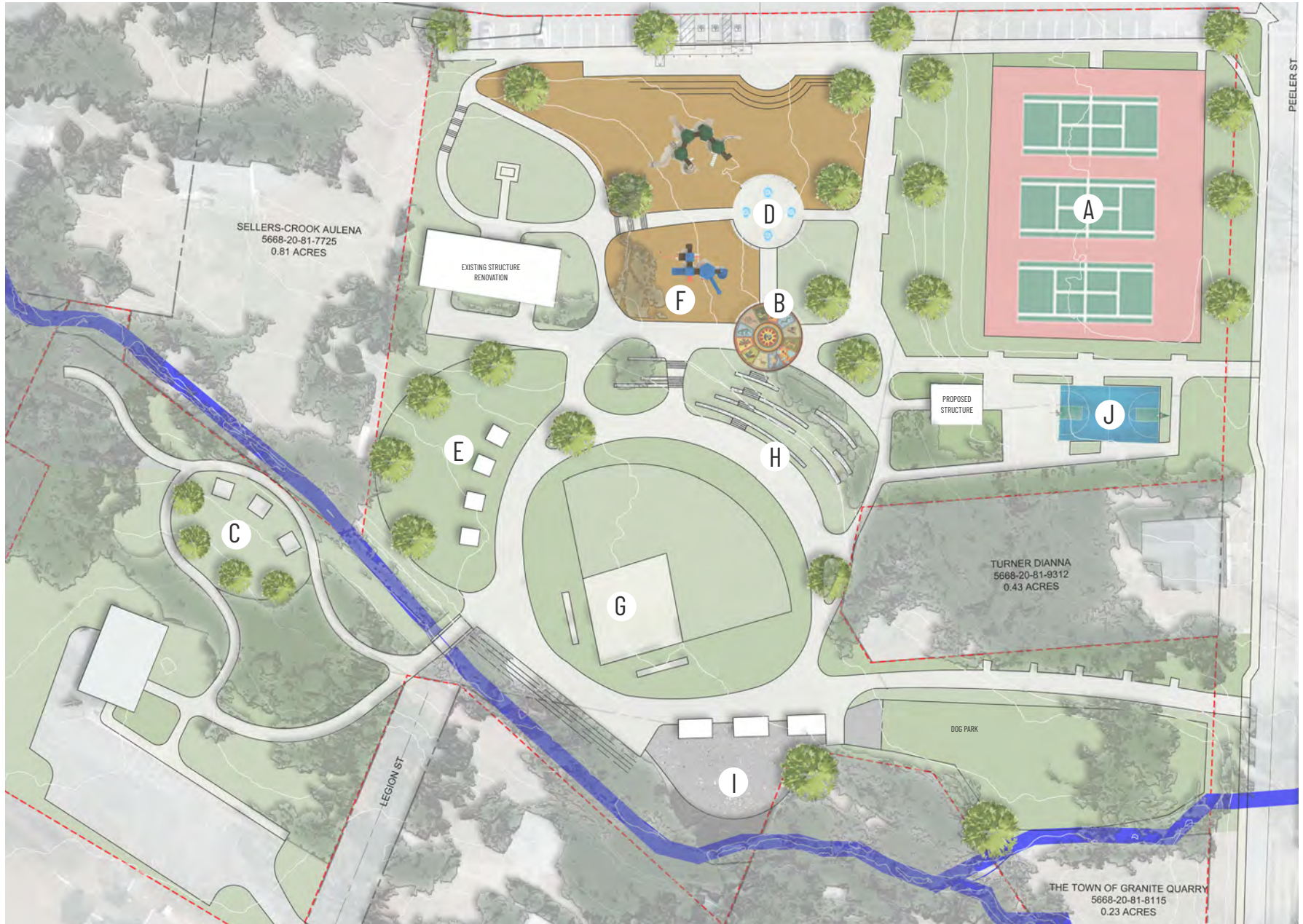
CONCEPT PLAN B

This concept included a new toddler or inclusive playground, a splashpad, and tiered seating using the hillside facing a reoriented ball field. Additional use for the existing totem pole to include a sundial is proposed. A food truck area and picnic areas flank the creek. This concept keeps the American Legion building in place.

This concept also includes rehabilitation of the tennis/pickleball courts, upgrades to the main shelter, updated basketball area, and new bridge for ADA accessibility.



CONCEPT PLAN B



SCALE: 1"=30'



FINAL CONCEPT DESIGN

The final, preferred concept plan utilizes Concept B as the starting point and incorporates some key features from Concept A. The features that were incorporated to the final include the hill slide, the stage and open green, stream bank improvements and preserving and rehabilitation of the American Legion building.

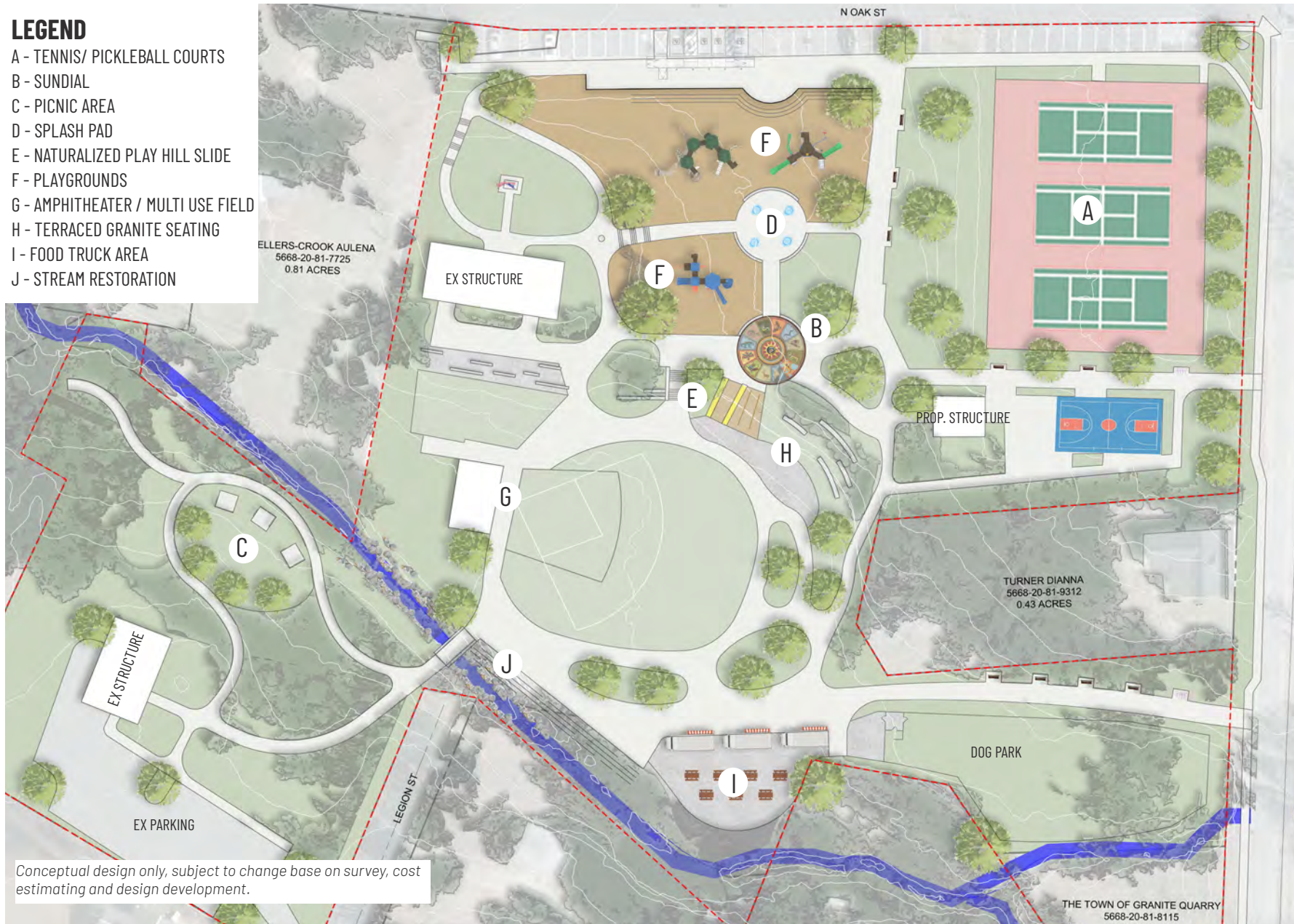
This concept also includes rehabilitation of the tennis/pickleball courts, upgrades to the main shelter, updated basketball area, and new bridge for ADA accessibility.



FINAL CONCEPT DESIGN

LEGEND

- A - TENNIS/ PICKLEBALL COURTS
- B - SUNDIAL
- C - PICNIC AREA
- D - SPLASH PAD
- E - NATURALIZED PLAY HILL SLIDE
- F - PLAYGROUNDS
- G - AMPHITHEATER / MULTI USE FIELD
- H - TERRACED GRANITE SEATING
- I - FOOD TRUCK AREA
- J - STREAM RESTORATION



Conceptual design only, subject to change base on survey, cost estimating and design development.

VOTE HERE FOR

B

Add F from Concept A

Better Baseball Field

add dog park

ADD Dog Park

Keep naturalized area instead of parking

A to concept B

Amphitheater

Add B C D to concept B

Ballpark/ stage from A to B

add P to B

in B missing anything?
Write in your thoughts and

More Events With Breakeries and food truck

More Events with food trucks + breweries

Add D from Concept A

ADD D from Concept A

Restrooms all year long

ok is - at focal point

Climbing Builders to B

Ball field is wasted space

part 5: **RECOMMENDATIONS
& IMPLEMENTATION**



GOALS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 1: Continue role as a civic center for the community and improve the accommodation of Granite Fest.

- ▶ Replace internal pathways with a new system of paved trails that accommodate everyday pedestrian use and vehicular movement needed for Granite Fest.
- ▶ Upgrade and replace bridge to be higher in elevation, longer (*approximately 20' long*), and wide enough to accommodate wheel chairs.

Goal 2: Acknowledge site features and improve natural environment.

- ▶ Take advantage of the natural topography and utilize the edges of the “bowl” to provide tiered seating that can be used for everyday use and during events.
- ▶ Preserve existing mature trees to the extent possible and plan for plantings of hardwoods that will grow to provide shade for key features for the next 50 years of the park.
- ▶ Apply for grants to assist with the design and construction of restored stream banks which utilize tiered stone block to stabilize banks and provide access in key areas.

Goal 3: Appeal to more visitors and increase usage by diversifying and improving facilities, and allowing for extended hours.

- ▶ Upgrade shelter to include 3-4 all season bathroom stalls in both mens and womens restrooms. This will require the removal of the kitchen that is rarely utilized.
- ▶ Install new tables at the existing shelter.
- ▶ Provide at least one new structure in the vicinity of the basketball court.
- ▶ Upgrade play equipment and play areas. Appeal to as many potential users as possible including older kids, toddlers and those that may require inclusive equipment.
- ▶ Enhance programming in the park (*could include summer concert series, popsicles in the park, yoga classes, etc.*)

Goal 4: Integrate history of Granite Quarry into Civic Park.

- ▶ Install historical educational signage to tell the story of the park, its founders, nearby residents, the American Legion building, and downtown Granite Quarry.
- ▶ Utilize blocks from the town owned quarry site for features where possible.

Goal 5: Improve furnishings and plantings and establish a design standard for Town parks.

- ▶ Seating areas and lighting should be placed near areas of activity.
- ▶ Establish plantings in key areas that utilize low maintenance shrubs, native grasses and flowering plants.

Goal 6: Improve parking and access, including along park edges.

- ▶ Improve park edge along North Oak Street to include wider walkway, plantings, etc.
- ▶ Connect sidewalk along Peeler Street.
- ▶ Re-sign the designated Carolina Thread Trail through the park on larger pathways.
- ▶ Improve internal and external wayfinding (*e.g. to American Legion building, to Granite Lake Park, etc.*)

Goal 7: Pursue upgrades of the American Legion building and property and consider future priority property acquisitions for additional parking.

- ▶ Activate the grounds of the American Legion property with an improved picnic area.
- ▶ Pursue upgrades of the American Legion building.
- ▶ Study future land acquisitions in the vicinity of the park for additional parking.



PLANTING PALETTE

SHADE TREES



ORNAMENTAL TREES



SHRUBS



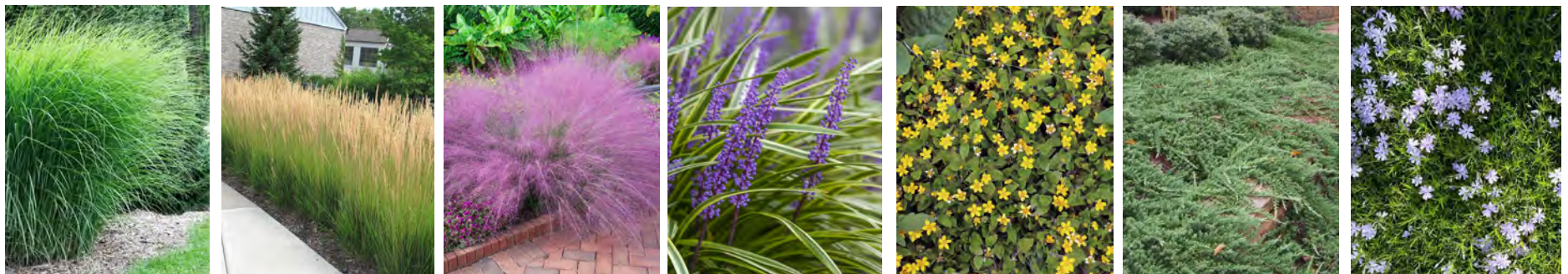
PERENNIALS



RAIN GARDEN

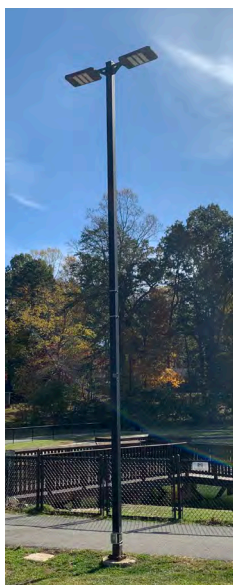
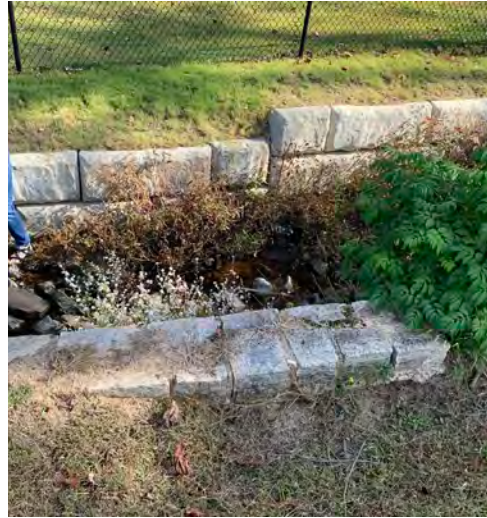


GRASS / GROUNDCOVER





FURNISHING RECOMMENDATIONS / STANDARDS





GRANITE QUARRY CIVIC PARK MASTER PLAN

TOWN OF
GRANITE QUARRY, NC
APRIL 2024

