



QUARRY SPRINGS PARK

MASTER PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

COLFAX, IOWA

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PROJECT PURPOSE

The Colfax Park and Recreation Auxiliary Board (Board) is a non-profit corporation [(501(c)(3) and 509 (a)(3)] that was formed in October 1999. The Board exists to serve the City of Colfax with the planning, development, enhancement, and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities in the City of Colfax and to make these facilities available to all. This Board is driven by their mission, which is:

To develop, operate and maintain a park and recreational system which enriches the quality of life for residents and visitors alike, and preserves it for future generations.

And the Board’s vision is:

We enrich lives through quality parks and programs. Colfax Park & Recreation Auxiliary Board is a public agency of volunteers, working to meet the recreational needs of the growing Colfax community. We uphold a philosophy of safe, healthy and unbiased programming. We strive to enhance the interaction of people and the environment in a manner which is accessible to all.

On April 20, 2015, The City of Colfax took possession of approximately 480 acres of land and lakes that comprised the former Martin Marietta quarry at the north edge of Colfax. The goal of the City of Colfax and the Board is to create a destination park on the property. To that end, the Board has entered into a 28E agreement with the City of Colfax which allows the group to plan, develop, finance and promote the park. Their intent is to do so with little or no cost to the City of Colfax. They will rely on capital campaigns through private donations and acquiring grants.

The three main components of this project are the development of recreational opportunities, promoting economic development and creating educational opportunities. The main focus is the creation of a city park that will offer area residents a wide variety of recreational activities including hiking, fishing, boating, swimming, camping, picnicking, cross country skiing and much more. Due to its close proximity to Interstate 80, we also see the park drawing visitors to the area which will lead to increased sales for existing local businesses and restaurants, drawing new businesses to the area and also being an enticement to recruit families to move into the area.



PARK HISTORY

Quarry Springs Park encompasses approximately 480 acres with 240 acres of water surface. Until 2015, the park was an active sand and gravel quarry operated by Martin Marietta Materials, Inc. The quarry had come to the end of its useful life and Martin Marietta began exploring the possibility of donating the property to the City of Colfax for reclamation and use as a public recreational facility. Along with the donation of the land, Martin Marietta also contributed \$200,000 for use toward reclamation activities, which included shore line restoration in critical areas.

Glacier rock and sand were first discovered at the site of the Historical Society Building in 1944 after a major flood. The material was deposited throughout this area from a glacier that came down from Lake Erie. Eben Van Dusseldorp Sr. started drilling for sand and rock in 1948. From 1948-1955, materials were pumped from the site and used, in part, for the construction of Interstate 80 and Highway 117.

In 1955, the operation moved to the property behind the existing Kum & Go, formerly the Roy Faidley property. In 1965, Eben Van Dusseldorp Sr. had a stroke and his son, Eben Jr., took over management of the operation. In 1966, Eben Jr. and his brother, Melvin, purchased the operation from their parents.

At the height of the operation, the company employed 68 employees and 24 trucks. Van Dusseldorp Sand and Gravel was the largest paying company in Colfax for 20+ years. They pumped six days a week for 24 hours straight from March 15 through November 15. The operation would average 350,000-400,000 ton of materials annually. They would pump material directly off the bottom of the lake with a 65-ft. ladder in 55-ft. of water.

In 1995, part of the operation was sold to Kaiser Corporation as a joint venture. Then in 1996, the combined company of Kaiser Corporation and Van Dusseldorp Sand and Gravel sold the company to Martin Marietta.

On April 20, 2015, Martin Marietta Corporation donated the property to the City of Colfax to be developed into a recreational facility.



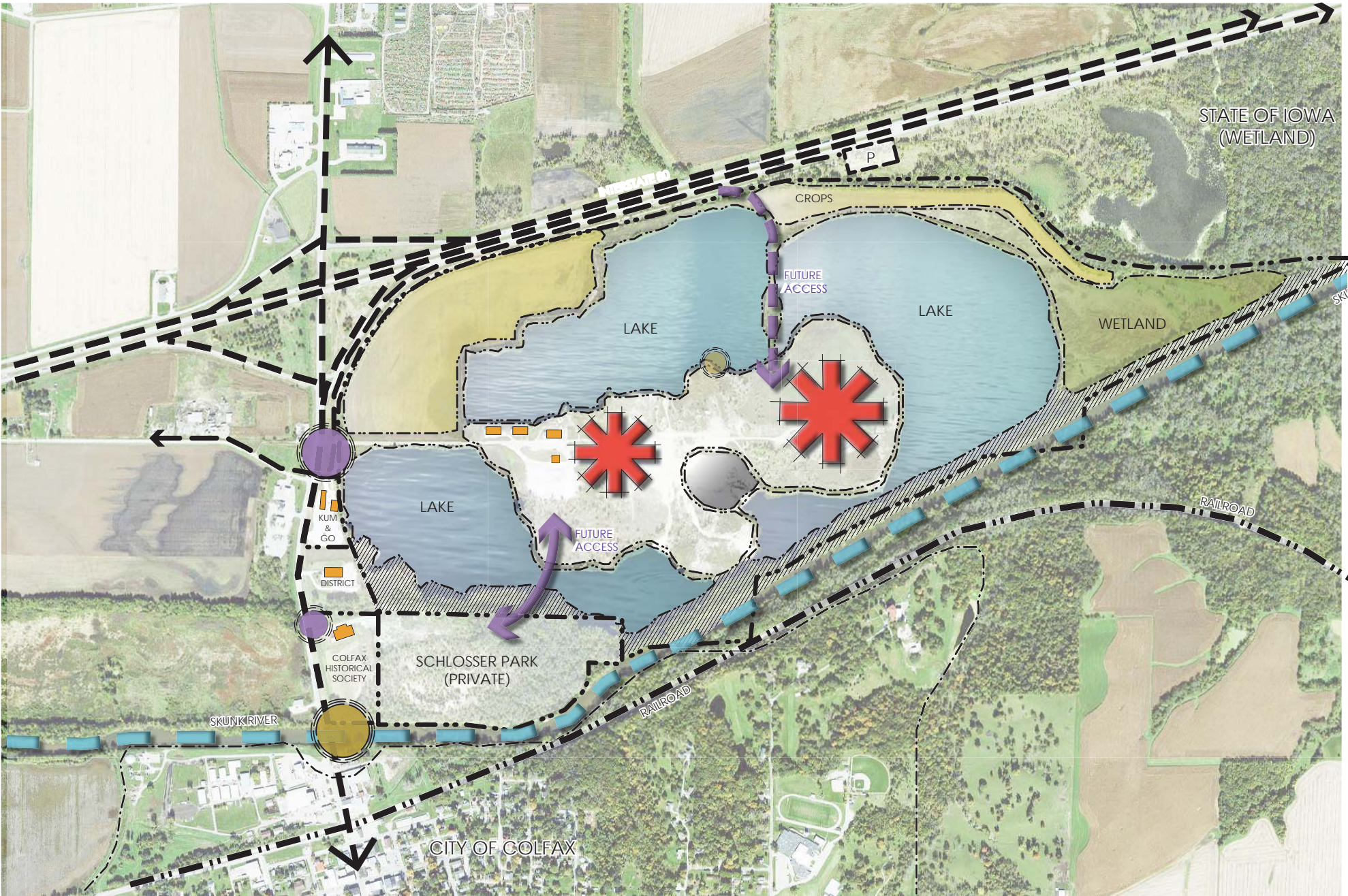
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SITE CONTEXT

Quarry Springs Park has prominent visibility and easy access from Interstate 80. The Park Board will leverage that by placing some of the retail and active recreation facilities in the northwest quadrant of the park. The more traditional recreation opportunities will occur on the central peninsula and the southern and eastern areas. The Schlosser Trust land adjacent to the southwest corner provides an opportunity to add about 50 acres to the park. This area is included in the plan, but further negotiation will be necessary to formally become part of the park.

Currently, only one access point exists to enter the park, which is on Highway 117 in a shared access with Kum & Go. As park facilities develop and attendance increases, a second access point will be necessary. This will require cooperation from the Schlosser Trust and the Colfax Historical Society.

The existing levee along the South Skunk River provides for an easy start to establishing the planned trail system. The trail system can eventually link to regional trails via Highway 117 and through the Iowa DNR property to the east.



PLANNING PROCESS

Project Goals

The planning team met with the Colfax Park and Recreation Auxiliary Board on October 26, 2015 to define the goals, objectives and milestones for the Quarry Springs Park (QSP) master plan. In discussing the project goals, we asked the question: What are we trying to accomplish? The answer was that the Park Board wanted to strike a balance between recreation and economic development. As stated previously, the Park Board intends to develop, operate and maintain QSP with little or no cost to the City of Colfax. The following points summarize the initial thoughts on recreation, economic development and other supporting goals:

- Recreation
 - Trails and Connections
 - Boating / Kayaking
 - Fishing
 - Camping – Tent/RV/Cabins
 - Swimming Beach
 - Natural / Adventure Play
 - River Access
- Economic Development
 - Hotel
 - Food
 - Housing
 - Other concessionaires
- Education
- Self-Sustaining
- Feasible
- Open and Flexible to Users
- Year-Round Use
- Events (multi-use)
- Entrance to City and Connection to City
- Character

Guiding Principles

With the overall goals set, the Park Board then considered a set of guiding principles that the planning team could reference to ensure the master plan stayed true to those established goals. The Board members felt the plan should always consider the following:

- Maintain our values
- Make it safe
- Promote health
- Designed for everybody
- Regional draw
- Feature recreation
- Sustainable – Environmental and Economic
- Low maintenance
- Resilient to flooding

Target Market

Finally, the design team wanted to find out what the Park Board considered the target market for the park. With its unique location and size, the Board thought that in addition to being a local park for Colfax citizens, it would also draw visitors from around the region, and if the right mix of facilities are developed, it could draw people passing through Iowa on longer trips. And the hope is that these visitors also benefit the downtown business district of Colfax. The following thoughts were put forth by the Board:

- Regional draw up to a 200-mile radius
- Capturing visitors to central Iowa for other things
- Capture cross country travelers
- Attract people to Colfax
- Tourist destination

Stakeholder Interviews

After these initial planning team exercises, the Park Board provided a list of stakeholder groups and individuals, that they thought would be interested in providing input into the facilities that might be considered for the park. A series of one-hour interviews were scheduled with the interested groups on December 16 and 17, 2015. The list below shows a consensus on many facilities and uses, but also some that had not been thought of in the initial discussions with the Park Board:

- Water park
- Bird watching
- Skate park
- Picnic shelters
- Playground
- Trails
- Fishing
- Boating
- Docks
- Tournaments
- Camping (Tent, RV)
- Cabins
- Beach
- Retail (Shops, coffee shop, brewery, winery, equipment rentals, outdoor market, crafts)
- Community garden
- Tubing, kayaking, paddle boarding
- Winter sports
- Indoor shooting facility
- Iconic bridge or other feature



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QUARRY SPRINGS PARK STUDY AREAS



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AREA A ENLARGEMENT - PUBLIC LAKE



The public lake, or Area A, is programmed with facilities that are more typical of an average park. Here, families will find easy access to opportunities for:

- Camping
- Picnicking
- Fishing
- Boating
- Hiking

The majority of these facilities will be considered publicly funded and managed by the Park and Recreation Auxiliary Board. It is the Board's intent to contract with a third party operator that will build and manage the RV camping loops.

The Board is considering constructing a first phase of RV camping with an RV dump station. This will be managed by the Board until such time as a vendor is solicited to expand and manage the RV camping facilities.

The boat launch, parking, and bait shop will be developed and managed by the Park Board.



In the early stages of development there will be only one access point into the park. As visitation increases, another entrance will be needed to lessen congestion. A secondary road is proposed that will provide access to Area D amenities and connect to Highway 117 utilizing the existing alignment that is on the Colfax Historical Society property. As a trade-off for that, the Park Board will build additional parking for the Society which they need for special events that make use of their building.

AREA B ENLARGEMENT - ACTIVE LAKE



The anchor of Area B is the cable wake park. There are 80 of these facilities in the United States, and 30 of those are in Florida and Texas. The closest to Iowa are located in Kansas, south of Olathe, and four around the western suburbs of Chicago. The way cable parks are constructed make it a natural fit for this former quarry site. The tower structures that suspend the cable tracks are reminiscent of the cranes used to dredge sand and gravel from the lakes. The placement of the wake park will make it a very prominent and visible curiosity to passing traffic on I-80. Average hourly rates make it a quite affordable activity, especially since you don't need an expensive ski boat, or gas; Just show up in your swimsuit, put on some sunscreen and you're wake boarding!

The resort hotel is an element that will help support the cable park. After spending a half day wake boarding, it's easy to imagine returning to the attention to service that this kind of lodging provides. Massage, manicure, drinks by the lake – all the pampering that would relax one for a gourmet meal at the hotel restaurant. This can also be a venue for corporate retreats, conferences, weddings and other special events.

Retail opportunities can be as varied as a coffee shop, bakery, clothing, ice cream shop, and other main street boutique retail. An obvious fit not only for the park, but the community and region, would be an outdoor recreation retailer providing support for fishing, biking, hiking, kayaking, camping and swimming.

The beach area would be developed and managed by the Park Board and should be a facility that gets built in the first phase of construction. Its central location is fed by day users to the park, hotel guests, campers and cabin guests.



This is described as the Active Lake area and for good reason. Programmed facilities for this area include:

- Cable Wake Park
- Lazy River
- Public Beach Area
- Resort Hotel
- Retail Space
- Restaurants
- Trails

The majority of these facilities will be privately funded and managed by concession agreements between the Park Board and an independent vendor(s). The mix of activities planned for Area B support many of the Board's goals such as:

- Unique amenities that draw visitors from the region
- Visibility from Interstate 80
- Recreation based activities
- Opportunities for economic development
- Revenue generating facilities that make the park self-funding
- Activities that appeal to varied age groups

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ACTIVE LAKE CABLE PARK + LAZY RIVER PERSPECTIVE



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AREA C ENLARGEMENT - PASSIVE LAKE



The lake in Area C is the largest and deepest of the water bodies. Water depth has been estimated as deep as 65 feet, and the quality is very clean. Diving clubs in the Des Moines area have expressed an interest in using this lake for classes as well as special events.

Fishing will be the most intensive activity on this lake with shoreline access and boats with electric motors to preserve water quality and reduce wake.

Land based amenities in this area include:

- Park Lodge / Event Space
- Rental Cabins
- Rental Shelters
- Primitive Camping

Located at the eastern end of the central peninsula, the park lodge will have breath taking views out across the easternmost lake. The lodge will be programmed for park office space, classroom space, and catering kitchen for weddings, birthdays, corporate events and fund raisers. A climbing tower is located near the facility and it could be either a simple viewing platform, or a team building tower.

Along the southeastern edge of the peninsula are 18 rental cabins that will be developed and operated by a concession vendor under contract to the Park Board. The agreement will stipulate design guidelines so that the Board will be able to direct the aesthetic of the park cabins. Cabins will be spaced and oriented for privacy and to maximize views. The mix of cabin types will be left to the operator, but it is anticipated that some will be two-bed, some four-bed and possibly one large multi-family cabin.



Across the land bridge to the north, the park road leads to an area with rental shelters with parking, and then terminates in a parking lot for the primitive camping area at the northeast corner of the park. This is also a shared use with Iowa DNR to access state land immediately adjacent to the eastern edge of the park. The existing DNR gravel access road that follows the western and northern boundaries of the park will more than likely be removed as part of eventual plans by the Iowa Department of Transportation to widen Interstate 80.

Approximately 2.5 miles of compacted limestone trail connect the amenities in Area C.

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AREA D ENLARGEMENT- ADVENTURE

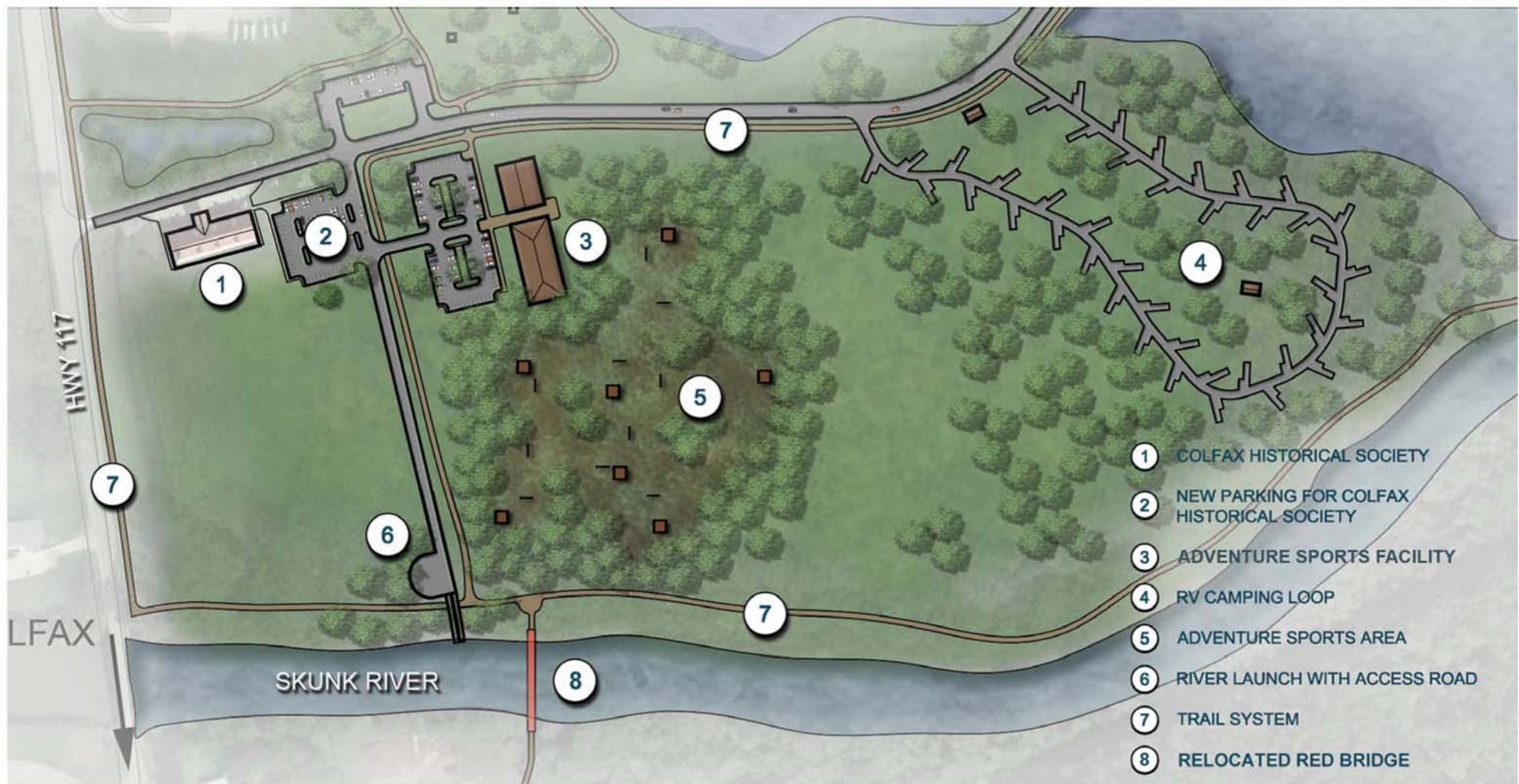


The area depicted here is not part of the park and is known as the Schlosser Trust land. The Trust was set up to benefit the City of Colfax as a whole, and is managed by three trustees. It typically gives an annual contribution to the Colfax Historical Society which leases land from the Trust. It is hoped that an agreement can be reached at some future date that will bring this land into the park boundary.

The Trust land is high enough to be above the 100-year flood elevation and has more dense tree cover than in most areas of the park, which would make it possible to construct a tree top obstacle course. Large sand hills offer the potential for BMX racing or a bike park or dune running. These attributes are why this land is called the Adventure Sport area.

Amenities in this area may include:

- Tree top obstacle course
- BMX racing course
- Mountain bike park
- Paintball course
- RV camping
- Indoor/Outdoor climbing walls
- Indoor/Outdoor archery range



An archery range is envisioned for this Adventure Sport area. It could be indoors, outdoors, or a combination. At the time of this writing, the Park Board is moving forward with this component located in one of its existing buildings. So far there is very good support and as the master plan implementation progresses, the facility may change locations within the park.

The development of this area will also require coordination with the Colfax Historical Society. The secondary access road alignment crosses a portion of the Society's property, and there is concern that the increased visitation in the area could have an impact on their already inadequate parking area. The master plan proposes the construction of a new parking lot that will give them more capacity for special events.

One of the main issues the park faces is a safe trail connection to downtown Colfax. With no pedestrian bridge over the Skunk River, park users would have to cross the river on the narrow pedestrian walk on the east side of the Highway 117 bridge. The Park Board is exploring the possibility of relocating an abandoned historic bridge that is located south of Reasoner, Iowa. This bridge would be located in the SW corner of the park where it could connect to existing City owned property on the south side of the river. It would also be near the Historical Society which is a natural fit. The City will continue to gather data to ascertain the logistical and financial feasibility of pursuing this effort.

Approximately 2.5 miles of compacted limestone trail connect the amenities in Area D.

AREA E ENLARGEMENT- CONSERVATION



The far eastern end of the park will be accessible by trail only. The topography is flat and the elevation is within a foot of the lake surface elevation. Hence it is a marshy area that lends itself to preservation and education. The park board has been approached by groups that would like to see pollinator gardens developed in the park, and Area E would be well suited for this educational opportunity. There is a growing movement in the Des Moines metro to establish monarch habitat. Homeowners, businesses, and corporate campuses are planting pollinator gardens. The Blank Park Zoo in Des Moines has been a leading voice in this movement. Partnerships will certainly be explored for corporate involvement in supporting this program at Quarry Springs Park. There has also been interest expressed in developing bee hives in the park – another important pollinator that has seen habitat diminishing over the last decade.

Quarry Springs Park is fortunate to have a core of dedicated volunteers contributing many thousands of hours to the development and maintenance necessary to make this a great experience for users. Area E will present opportunities to get a younger generation involved in volunteering through educational projects that not only teach about the environment, but about citizenship and stewardship. Approximately 1 mile of compacted limestone trail circulate through Area E and connect to the larger park trail system.



PHASING OVERVIEW

The phasing diagrams in this section are presented in two categories – Publicly Managed and Privately Managed Facilities. Within these categories, there are three phases that generally coincide with Years 1 – 3, Years 4 – 6 and Years 7 – 10.

While the Park Board formulates its plans for funding large scale capital improvements, it is moving forward with developing some facilities with local contractors and volunteer help. Shoreline grading and cleanup has occurred on the southwest pond and ten campsites have been designated. Plans are progressing for developing an indoor archery range in one of the existing buildings along the main road into the park. The Park Board is also working to develop a first phase of RV camping that will be designed more as a temporary facility. In other words, it will be laid so that it can be upgraded and expanded upon, at such time as the Board comes to agreement with a third party, private operator to take over.

The financial analysis and pro forma give a clear picture of the degree of subsidy the park will require to build, operate and maintain itself with no burden to the City of Colfax. The pro forma focuses on facilities that will be developed and operated by the Park Board. The amount of subsidy will steadily be provided by more and more private, third party concession operated facilities.

In addition to these private lease agreements, the Park Board has other options for encouraging some economic development on the park. The Board has about 25 acres of land at the northwest corner of the site where retail development is shown on the master plan. This land could be sold outright to a development interest that would plan for the mix of shops to occur there.

While the master plan shows an exciting, aggressive and challenging long range plan, it is possible to achieve. As with all master plans, it is flexible and can be revisited over time as it unfolds. The park’s greatest current asset is the dedication of its Park and Recreation Auxiliary Board to the ultimate success of Quarry Springs Park.



PHASING DIAGRAM - PUBLICLY MANAGED FACILITIES



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PHASING DIAGRAM - PRIVATELY MANAGED FACILITIES



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