

# 7 Capital Improvement Program



# Introduction

The Capital Improvement Program (CIP) establishes a focused plan to address the priorities identified in the City of Liberty Lake's Parks & Recreation Master Plan. The CIP was shaped by direct community feedback and supported by the analyses of existing conditions and future demands. This plan then addresses the immediate needs of Liberty Lake's diverse communities while preparing the parks system to meet future demands, delivering significant economic, social, and environmental benefits.

This plan update serves as a pivotal blueprint, profoundly impacting residents' quality of life through the City's Parks & Recreation system. Given limited departmental capacity, the administration of these services necessitates a strategic allocation of resources from the municipal budget and pursuit of external funding opportunities.

## Public Feedback as Foundational to the CIP

Liberty Lake is committed to addressing public feedback and improving deficiencies within the parks system by making annual investments in parks staff, equipment, and supplies that are crucial for providing and maintaining a diverse array of outdoor recreational opportunities, ensuring safety, and meeting public expectations. This program outlines specific park projects and broader strategies to close service gaps and enhance recreational opportunities. The plan includes both short-term improvements scheduled for implementation over the next six years and long-term visionary projects, ensuring the County can take advantage of funding opportunities and evolving community needs.



The plan's recommendations are designed to tackle current challenges, anticipate future demands, and maximize funding flexibility while aligning with public priorities. By taking a balanced and sustainable approach, Liberty Lake aims to enhance its parks system in a way that serves both present and future generations.

Through two community surveys, key stakeholder interviews, and pop-up events, important themes have emerged that reflect residents' priorities and concerns regarding parks, recreation, and open space planning. These themes, shaped by community input, form the foundation for future improvements and strategic investments in Liberty Lake's parks system.

# Desired Capital Improvements from the Public Engagement Process

The community expressed strong support for expanding and enhancing recreation facilities to meet growing demand. Key priorities included:

- **Developing an aquatic center/community pool.** This improvement received 46% of the total CIP votes (224 of 487), including 201 resident votes, making it the single most supported project. In the Needs Assessment Survey, 44.7% of respondents selected water-based recreation as a top program priority, and aquatic amenities were the most frequently requested system improvement.
- **Upgrading and expanding playgrounds.** New playground equipment received the second most CIP votes (14%). The community most supported natural style playground equipment, above all other funding priorities, with 29% of the overall vote.
- **Expanding and improving trails and neighborhood connectivity.** Trails are among the most valued and used amenities, with over 50% of respondents reporting use of walking and biking paths in the past year. In CIP engagement, new trails received 63 of 487 votes (13%), including 55 resident votes, placing it among the top capital priorities.
- **Enhancing comfort amenities and equitable access.** While natural features and open space were rated positively by over 80% of respondents, barriers such as uncertainty about available programs (41.6%), overcrowded facilities (27.9%), and concerns about shade, restrooms, and accessibility were frequently cited, indicating the need to improve communication, comfort amenities, and inclusive access across the system.
- **Incorporating interactive and nature-inspired public art.** Interactive art received the most support in pop-up engagement (80 votes), and nature-inspired art was consistently preferred in both workshops and surveys, reinforcing the community's interest in art that reflects Liberty Lake's identity.

Overall, engagement results demonstrate broad and measurable support for a community pool/aquatic center, expanded programming and indoor space, enhanced trails and connectivity, upgraded playgrounds, and improved comfort amenities. Investments in these areas will honor and reflect community priorities and will help ensure Liberty Lake's park system continues to achieve high levels of user satisfaction.



# Developing the Capital Improvement Plan

The plan is designed for a full six-year lifespan with the intent that it will guide improvements from 2026 through 2032 while providing a conceptual vision of additional aspirational improvements beyond that are focused on the projected growth of Liberty Lake. As stated earlier, this plan is not a strict "script" to guide any and all park & recreation improvements. Since funding may be diverted or not secured or public needs or political will may change, this plan is designed to be a fluid and dynamic strategic guide for the city to base decisions around. Unforeseen opportunities may present themselves that are not covered in this plan, which may create better service to the public.

The proposed projects have been scheduled in the short-term, 1–6-year timeframe; mid-range, 6–12-year timeframe; or are grouped as aspirational to be completed in the later window of the 20-year planning horizon. For planning purposes, the timeline of implementation has been estimated but may be impacted by a multitude of factors, including likely design and permitting time, other critical public work projects, grant funding cycles and available budgets, and finally, city staff project management capacity. Note that this is for planning purposes only and is not a commitment to implementation in a particular year. This plan should be a living document, constantly updated as conditions change.

Beginning in early-to-mid 2030, a plan update process should be officially undertaken to engage the residents, staff, and parks-related committee members in reviewing changing level of service needs, proposing new capital improvements, and renewing WA RCO eligibility for the next performance period.

To reinforce, the CIP project lists reflect the demand and needs of the public and have been vetted with both city staff, commission members, and City Council. Actual implementation over the next six years will be driven by available funding, The City's success in securing grant funding as well as critical liability maintenance and repair improvements.

## Liberty Lake's Funding Sources

Liberty Lake's parks budget is supported by a diverse range of funding sources. The General Fund, which includes revenue from property taxes, sales taxes, and utilities taxes, serves as the primary funding source for the Parks and Recreation Department. Additional funding comes from Transportation Benefit District for trail improvements, as well as revenues from fees for recreational programs, facility rentals, and special events. The Recreation Department partners with the Planning and Building Services to apply for both state and federal grants to pay for park amenities. Historically, the city has been successful in obtaining grant funding for new parks and new park amenities in the past such as the skate park at Pavillion Park and Rocky Hill Park. City staff plan to apply for future Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) Local Park grants to continue to offer citizens improvements at local parks as well as future park opportunities.

To support growth, the county charges impact fees on new developments to help fund the expansion of parks and recreational facilities. A portion of the Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) and a dedicated sales tax also contribute to the budget. Occasionally, bonds are issued for large-scale park projects, with funds repaid over time. Additional resources come from donations, sponsorships, and partnerships with businesses, non-profits, and other governmental agencies.

Parks system budgeting consists of three basic elements:

- Land costs;
- Site improvement costs; and
- Ongoing operations and maintenance costs.

## Land Costs and Considerations

Land costs are typically the single most costly component of park system development. Fortunately, since the majority of housing within the City of Liberty Lake was platted as Planned Unit Developments (PUDs), developers donated land for parks and open space as a part of the platting process. Today, the City Development Code also requires that all proposed residential uses shall be located within ½ mile of a park or greenway area when land is divided, which also generally requires land donation. The City may have to purchase land for parks or open space if additional land is required.

For future park acquisition and development, the following criteria can be used as points to consider when looking at different parcels of land:

- Is the site located appropriately for its intended use? – (i.e. centrally for community parks)
- Are there safety concerns with the site? – (i.e. traffic, crime, etc.)
- Is the site topography proper for the proposed facility?
- Does the site have the necessary infrastructure available?
- Does the site have access to the Spokane River?
- Does the site have access to Liberty Lake?
- Does the site contain environmentally sensitive areas?
- If facilities on the site will be lit, will the lighting be a nuisance to nearby residents?
- Will the sounds from activities proposed at the site be a nuisance to nearby residents?
- Does the site topography allow naturally for the separation of activities?
- Will extensive site landscaping be needed?
- Is there existing off-site parking near the site?
- Is it desirable to have the site strategically located? (i.e. near the Central Business District, library, etc.)?
- Will existing traffic egress and ingress to the site be changed by higher intensity use?
- Is the site historically or culturally significant?

## Site Improvement, Operation, & Maintenance Costs

Once land has been acquired for parks and recreation uses, it is incumbent upon the City to improve that land with facilities that are in demand from the citizens. The types and quantities of facilities are discussed in this Plan. Cost for construction and improvements of park facilities should be determined prior to construction. Long-term maintenance expenses of the facilities must also be considered. Maintenance costs of various facilities will vary depending on facility type, location, or other factors and therefore should be calculated on a case-by-case basis as part of the planning process.

# Estimate of Probable Cost

Included in this chapter is an estimate of the probable construction costs associated with the improvements recommended for each park or city-wide. Note that these estimates are preliminary for use in budgeting and scoping future design and construction projects, and are subject to change due to site conditions, final design, and market circumstances. Many of the estimates are from the current park master planning projects that have already been started.

Each item in the estimate is keyed to the recommendations on the park plans in this section and includes funding source availability and anticipated cost. Inflation, annual cost escalators, cost & design contingencies, permitting and other soft costs have been factored in as well based upon staff experience with comparable projects. The cost for staff time is not included in the cost opinions.



# Developing Projects with Strategic Co-Benefits to Maximize Funding Opportunities

Funding improvements to the parks system should not rely solely on the City's resources. To maximize public investment in parks, recreation, and open space facilities and services, the City should adopt a proactive approach to securing grants, donations, and other external funding sources. This includes identifying and aligning specific improvements with well-established grant programs that have a strong history of funding success.

To maximize funding potential in a competitive environment, the City should focus on projects that integrate multiple elements beyond traditional park improvements. By combining transportation, critical areas, open space conservation, and economic development components into park projects, the City can broaden their appeal to a wider range of funding sources and create more flexible implementation options.

For example, park improvements that include trail and access enhancements can align with transportation-focused grants such as Safe Routes to School or pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure programs. Similarly, Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) grants, like the Youth Athletic Facility or Land and Water Conservation Fund, can be paired with projects that address broader community needs, such as habitat restoration, stormwater management, or urban connectivity.

This multidimensional approach not only increases the likelihood of securing funding but also supports collaboration with County, State, and Federal programs. By strategically aligning park improvements with overlapping goals in transportation, environmental conservation, and economic development, Liberty Lake can expand its funding flexibility, optimize resources, and deliver projects with greater community impact.

# Performance and Monitoring

The Capital Improvement Program for Liberty Lake's parks, recreation, open space, and trails is intended to be a dynamic and adaptable tool to guide improvements throughout the life cycle of this plan. Recognizing the changing nature of community needs, funding opportunities, and priorities, it should be integrated into the City's annual capital improvement budgeting process and supported by consistent performance monitoring and evaluation.

To ensure the program remains effective and responsive to evolving circumstances, the following actions should be embedded into the City's annual processes:

## Annual Prioritization Review

Each year, City staff, along with advisory volunteers or committees, should evaluate the current state of the park system and review the recommendations in the plan. This process should consider changes in funding availability, demographic shifts, or emerging needs. Adjustments to the priorities and timelines should be made as necessary to ensure alignment with community goals and available resources.

## Funding Source Review

A detailed review of anticipated versus actual funding sources should be conducted annually. This includes evaluating the success of grant applications and identifying new funding opportunities. Staff should use lessons learned from previous funding cycles to refine strategies, adapt project scopes, and adjust timelines if funding goals are not met or if additional resources become available.

## Maintenance and Operational Review

Before implementing any park improvement or pursuing funding, the associated maintenance and operational costs should be thoroughly evaluated. Ensuring that resources are allocated for ongoing upkeep prevents overextension of the City's capacity and ensures long-term sustainability of improvements.

## Coordination With Other City Projects

Park and open space improvements should be reviewed alongside other planned municipal projects, such as transportation and public works initiatives. Coordinating efforts allows for shared resources, reduces redundancy, and enhances the overall impact of improvements. Aligning projects with broader Town goals ensures that parks contribute to Liberty Lake's desired quality of life.

# Capital Improvements Funding Sources

The project funding matrix (*see Table 7*- 2) for Liberty Lake's parks, recreation, and open space improvements outlines secured and unsecured funding options tailored to each proposed project. These funding options consider the unique characteristics of each improvement, providing a mix of pathways to finance both immediate and long-term goals.

## Secured Funding Sources

Secured funding sources include mechanisms that provide guaranteed financial backing. These include:

- **Municipal Bonds:** Debt issued by the City and repaid over time, typically through property taxes or other dedicated revenue streams. These bonds provide upfront capital for major park and recreation projects, allowing improvements to be made without immediate full payment from the City's budget.
- **Revenue Bonds:** Backed by specific revenue streams, such as user fees from park facilities or events.
- **General Obligation Bonds:** Secured by the City's taxing authority and used for larger-scale investments.
- **Park Revenues:** Operations and maintenance for Liberty Lake's park system are heavily supported by the General Fund. This fund plays a critical role in sustaining the City's parks and recreation system.
- **Municipal Budget:** Certain smaller projects or urgent needs may be financed directly from the City's existing parks budget or general fund.

# Unsecured Funding Sources

Unsecured sources depend on competitive or discretionary funding. These include:

- **Grant Programs:** Outdoor recreation funding available through the Washington Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), such as:
  - Youth Athletic Facility Grants
  - Land and Water Conservation Fund
  - Trails or Non-Motorized Infrastructure Grants
- **Donations and Sponsorships:** Partnerships with community organizations, local businesses, or individuals to sponsor specific improvements or events.
- **Partnerships:** Collaboration with local school districts, neighboring municipalities, or non-profit organizations to share costs and resources for mutual benefit.

To support Liberty Lake's planning efforts, Appendix D: CIP Supplemental Funding Guide (*Page 351*) provides a comprehensive description of all available funding options, offering additional guidance for financing park improvements. This appendix serves as a resource for identifying new opportunities and aligning funding strategies with project needs.

By leveraging a combination of secured and unsecured sources, along with operational revenues, Liberty Lake can effectively fund its parks, recreation, and open space initiatives. This diversified approach ensures the flexibility and adaptability needed to respond to evolving community needs and funding opportunities.

**Table 7-1: Funding Sources Key**

| Key | Funding Program |
|---|---|
| A | City General Fund (unspecified) |
| B | Real Estate Excise Tax |
| C | Parks and Arts Fund |
| D | Parks Maintenance and Operations Fund |
| E | Developer Transportation Impact Fees |
| F | RCO WWRP - Local Parks Category |
| G | RCO Land and Water Conservation Fund |
| H | RCO WWRP – Trails Category |
| I | RCO - Planning for Recreation Access |



# Capital Improvement Projects

## Short-Term, Medium-Term, and Long-Range Parks and Recreation Capital Improvement Projects

Across the following pages are listed the short-term, medium-term, and long-range parks and recreation capital improvement projects for the City of Liberty Lake.



# CIP Map

**Figure 7-1: Parks and Recreation Capital Improvement Program Project Locations**



# Capital Improvement Project Table

Short-term projects were ranked based on their importance to the community, as indicated by participation in the CIP funding survey. Rankings reflect how frequently each project was selected within the 500-point budget exercise. For example, 81% of participants allocated funding to the Community Pool Feasibility and Site Planning Study (150 points), making it the most widely supported project and the top-ranked priority.

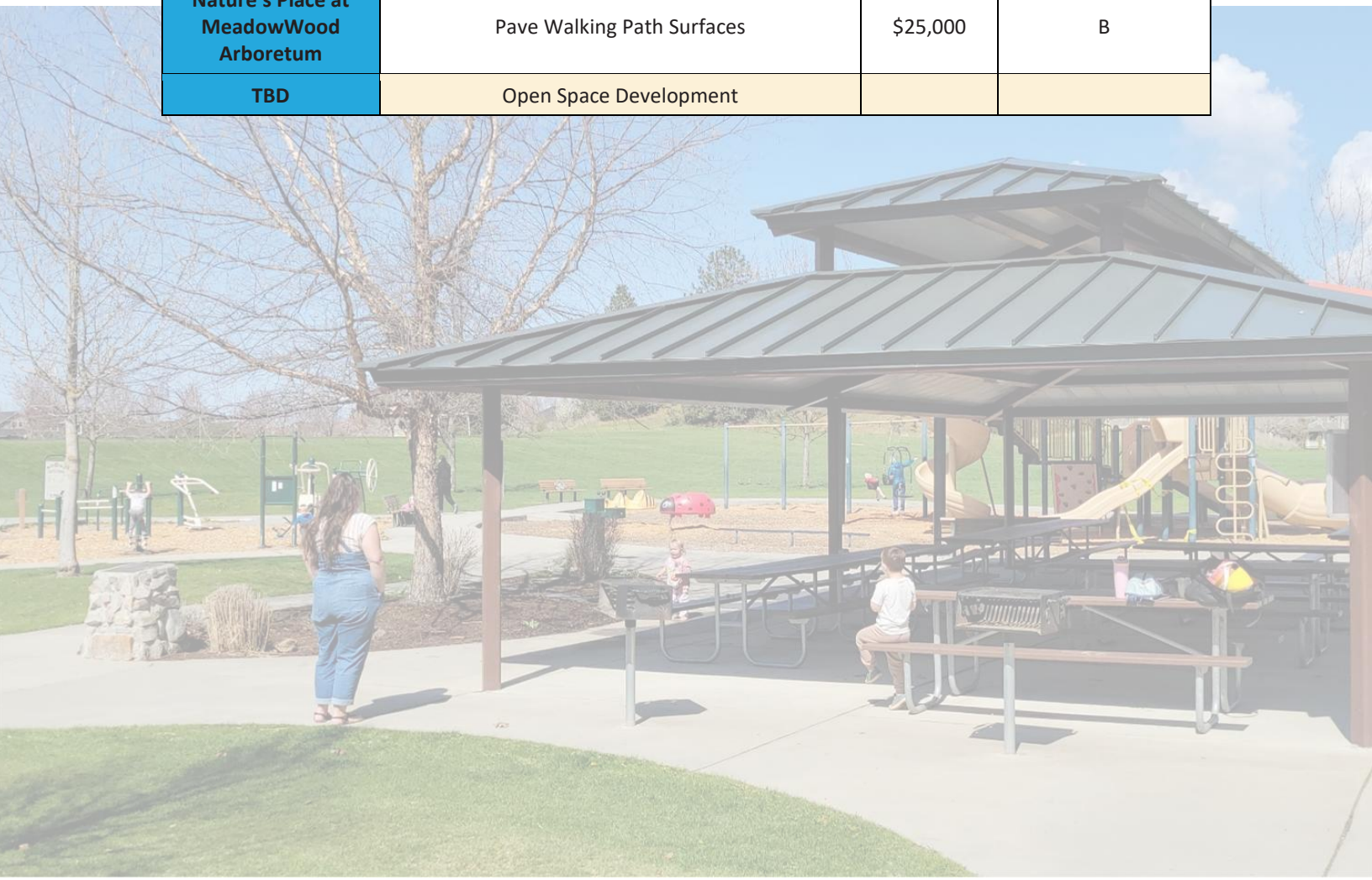
**Table 7- 2: Capital Improvement Program 1-to-6 Year Schedule**

| Rank | Project | Location | Cost | Potential Funding Source | Note |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Community Pool Feasibility and Site Planning Study | Unspecified | $100,000 - $200,000 | I, A | -- |
| 2 | Playground Replacement | Pavillion Park | $250,000 - $500,000 | F, G, B | Assumes a structure cost of $100k to $200k with prevailing wage install at 2.5x cost of structure. |
| 3 | Playground Shade Structure | Orchard Park | $12,500 - $30,000 | B | Assumes a structure cost of $5k to $12k with prevailing wage install at 2.5x cost of structure. |
| 4 | Splash Pad Replacement | Pavillion Park | $250,000 - $500,000 | F, G, B, D | Assumes a pad with more features with a price range of some equipment being reused (surge tank, filter, and pump) up to a complete replacement of all equipment. |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **5** | Tree Canopy Enhancement | Orchard Park & Pavillion Park | $10,000 - $15,000 | C | 20-30 tree installations priced at $500 apiece. |
| **6** | Playground Shade Structure | Pavillion Park | $12,500 - $30,000 | F, G, B | Assumes a structure cost of $5k to $12k with prevailing wage install at 2.5x cost of structure. |
| **7** | Install electrical power to shelters | Orchard Park | $11,000 – $15,000 | D | -- |
| **8** | Recreation, Community, or Senior Center Feasibility Study | Unspecified | $100,000 - $200,000 | I | No RCO Match Requirement. |
| **9** | Construct Restrooms | Nature's Place at MeadowWood Arboretum | $100,000 - $300,000 | B | Estimated based on recent project quote for nearby peer community. |
| **10** | Develop and Install New Public Art Elements | Systemwide | Varies | C | $540,500 currently allocated for Parks and Arts. See Chapter 3 Arts recommendation. |
| **11** | Add Gazebo / Shade Structure | Nature's Place at MeadowWood Arboretum | $250,000 - $500,000 | B | Assumes a structure cost of $100k to $200k with prevailing wage install at 2.5x cost of structure. |

### Table 7- 3: Capital Improvement Program 6-to-12 Year Schedule

| Location | Project | Cost | Potential Funding Source |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Pavillion Park** | Upgrade Restroom Facilities for Year-Round Use | $20,000 | B, D |
| **Orchard Park** | Add a Community Garden | $15,000 | B, C |
| **Rocky Hill Park** | Playground Replacement w/ Inclusive Play Equipment | $250,000 - $500,000 | F, G, B |
| **Rocky Hill Park** | Add a Splash Pad | $350,000 - $500,000 | F, G, B |
| **Town Square Park** | Develop Full Site via Master Plan (PF-13) | TBD | F, G, B |
| **Town Square Park** | Complete Sidewalks on N Signal Dr and N MeadowWood Ln in the Public Right-of-Way. | $300,000 | A, B, E |
| **Nature's Place at MeadowWood Arboretum** | Pave Walking Path Surfaces | $25,000 | B |
| **TBD** | Open Space Development | | |



# Project Locations

**Figure 7- 2: Pavillion Park Improvement Projects**



**Figure 7- 3: Orchard Park Improvement Projects**



**Figure 7- 4: Rocky Hill Park Improvement Projects**

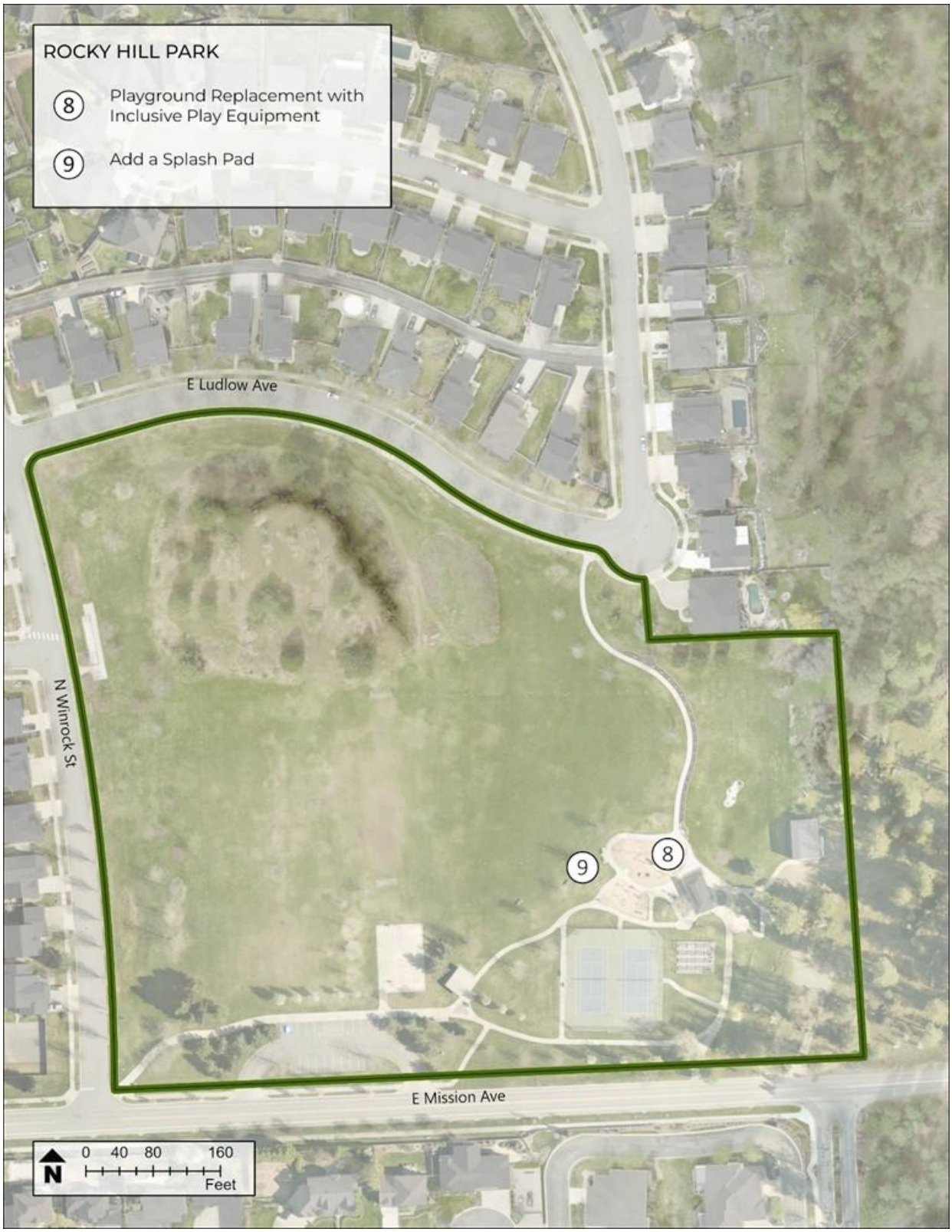


Figure 7- 5: Town Square Park Improvement Projects



**Figure 7- 6: Nature's Place at MeadowWood Arboretum Improvement Projects**



# Long-term Maintenance and Aspirational Projects

Various categories of intended improvements have been identified in planning for, and addressing, the life cycle costs associated with specific elements within the park system. One proposed solution involves the establishment of a revolving fund or account dedicated to specific park elements that require a substantial investment to replace. These funds could be utilized for emergency repairs, enable the city to seize unforeseen opportunities, and prepare for larger O&M specific costs, e.g., sport court play surfacing replacements, Tree City USA funds, Recreation & Programming funds, and Wayfinding & Signage funds.

## Aspirational Projects

- Construct an Indoor Aquatics Facility;
- Develop a Dog Park;
- Construct a Community/Senior Center;
- Add Protection to Bike Lanes; and
- Develop a new park between 10 and 20 acres in the service area gap with unique amenities to serve the whole community.

