

MACKAY PARK VISION PLAN

Technical Advisory Report

HISTORY



Mackay
Park

01

IDENTITY



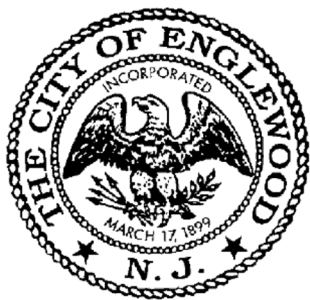
Mackay
Park

02

COMMUNITY



03



**CITY OF ENGLEWOOD
NEW JERSEY**
AUGUST 2015

Prepared by The National Consortium for
Creative Placemaking & Sikora Wells Appel



SIKORA WELLS APPEL
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE





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**INTRODUCTION
MACKAY PARK 01**

This technical advisory report provides an analysis of physical, social and environmental issues affecting Mackay Park in Englewood, New Jersey. The report is based on the consultant team's direct observation of the park, interviews with key stakeholders and city officials, analysis of comments made by Englewood residents at two visioning sessions, and a review of the history of the park and the community.

ABOUT MACKAY PARK

Mackay Park is a triangular 28.6 acre open space in the heart of the City. It is a block away from the downtown business district. It contains the city's largest concentration of recreational facilities, including an ice rink, a swimming pool, baseball fields, soccer fields, basketball courts and tennis courts.

The park is bordered by Englewood Avenue to the north, Overpeck Creek and William Street to the east, Metzler Brook and 1st Street to the south, and the backyards of Elmore Avenue to the west.

Surrounding the park are a combination of small moderate density houses and apartment buildings, as well as a senior care facility, a child care center, stores and retail spaces along Englewood Avenue. Further east, but within walking distance, are light industrial businesses, car dealers, and city offices such as the Police Department and Public Works Department.

Englewood is an economically and culturally diverse older suburb of around 27,000 people in northern New Jersey. Its downtown area, anchored by a mix of uses such as city offices, a Shoprite and the Bergen Performing Arts Center. In recent years, Englewood city officials have encouraged the development of higher density apartments in the downtown area. There is a desire to attract a light rail station in the downtown area, which could bring more visitors and residents who enjoy a village environment that Englewood offers.

Mackay Park is in the Fourth Ward, one of four wards in the city. The Fourth Ward is the most ethnically diverse and least wealthy ward. It is also the most populous, with the highest population density, and the greatest population growth since 2000. It contains the largest number of residents under 19 years of age and the greatest number over 65. Together, these statistics indicate that there is a need for quality parks and open space that serve a variety of interests in the Fourth Ward.



Figure 2: Mackay Park regional context

ROLE OF MACKAY PARK TODAY AND FUTURE

Englewood's 2014 Master Plan includes several items pertinent to Mackay Park. The plan indicates that Mackay Park serves a wide range of roles. Throughout its history, the park has been a key anchor and one of the main recreational facilities within the city. Mackay Park is one block south of West Palisade Avenue, the spine of Englewood's shopping and civic center. This proximity emphasizes the importance of Mackay as a large park within the city's core. The 2014 Master Plan calls for improving the use and connectivity of public open space near and around the downtown area through physical improvements and improved programming.

The Master Plan promotes the idea of connecting the park to the downtown area and fosters a more pedestrian-friendly and livable community. Improving and beautifying these connections in and around the city's core, the plan suggests, will unify a disparate group of amenities and serve a wider range of residents and visitors. The Master Plan also recommends the use of public art and programming as one of the tools to highlight and strengthen a connection between downtown and Mackay Park. For these connections and the park itself, the Master Plan also calls for safety-related improvements, the installation of wayfinding signs, and the use of lighting to promote greater use and visibility.

* From the 1922 edition of the Negro Year Book, an index of African-American issues, institutions and news. Community based organizations tend to be located in areas where there is community support (as well as need) and where there are people with the skills to sustain them. Source: <http://books.google.com/books?id=bHLXAAAMAAJ&pg=PA412&dq=englewood+negro+fourth+ward+new+jersey&hl=en&sa=X&ei=4i5ZVJbnMafjsASArIDQCw&ved=0CDsQ6AEwBw#v=onepage&q=englewood%20&f=false>

** This comes from various sources detailing the history of the school desegregation struggle in Englewood.

The special history of the Fourth Ward
The Fourth Ward has long been among the most ethnically diverse communities in one of the most ethnically diverse cities in Bergen County. The Fourth Ward plays a distinct role in the history of African-Americans in Bergen County. For much of the 20th century, because of discriminatory housing policies in the county, the Fourth Ward was one of the few places where African-Americans were able to build a community. As a result, the Fourth Ward was home to African-American professionals, artists, athletes and other noted professionals.

The Fourth Ward has a long history of organized community activity. For example, a chapter of the National Urban League was formed in Englewood in 1918¹. The social and organizational capital in the community helped residents advocate for improved and desegregated schools in the 1960s. A key focus of this struggle was the former Lincoln School, which is along Englewood Avenue about a block from Mackay Park. After years of protests -- including one protest held in Mackay Park -- Englewood schools were desegregated**.*

In the 20th century, there were also some developments placed in the Fourth Ward that were largely opposed by residents - or at the very least, done without their consultation. This included a low-income housing project and the John T. Wright Arena.

These developments appear to have developed lingering tensions and mistrust of city officials among some Fourth Ward residents.

Despite all of this, and with the exception of a plaque in Mackay Park honoring local athletes, there is little in the Fourth Ward that would make residents and visitors aware of the area's distinct history.

Today, the Fourth Ward is growing more diverse. The number and percentage of African-American residents is declining as Asian-Americans and Latinos become a larger share of the community. With the addition of the New Jersey Light Rail Station in the downtown area in the next few years, the neighborhood is likely to become even more diverse. As African-American residents who remember the history of the community die or move out, there could be fewer residents to mark the Fourth Ward's distinct history.

1 Today, the chapter is called Urban League of Bergen County

THE PARK AND ITS CONTEXT

SOCIAL CONDITIONS

02

ENGLEWOOD SOCIAL CONDITIONS

There are many factors that determine how parks are used. Among the most important are culture, age and income of residents.

Englewood is a diverse community and is becoming more so. According to the 2009-2013 American Community Survey, of the estimated 27,308 residents of Englewood, 21% now identify themselves as Hispanic or Latino (up by 4%) and 31% African-American (down by 7%). However, the 2013 estimate shows a smaller overall population than 2010. Asians-American experienced a 60.90% population growth; at a 6% rate per year (Figure 3).

Population by Race and Ethnicity	2000	2010	2013 Estimate	2000-2010 Change
White	8,389	8,474	8,456	1.01%
African American	9,887	8,373	8,944	-15.31%
Hispanic	5,703	7,460	5,784	30.81%
Asian	1,356	2,169	3,232	59.96%
Other	868	671	892	-22.70%

Figure 3: Englewood's population by race

In 2000, approximately 26% of Englewood residents were under 18, 60% were between 19 and 64 years old and 13% were 65 and older. There was not much difference in 2010. Residents over 65 years of age and those in the 19 to 64 age group experienced a gain of approximately 1.2%, while residents 19 years and under experience a 1.2% decrease, having moved up to the next age bracket.

The 2008-2012 population estimates show a similar loss of residents over 65 and those under 18 years of age, while residents between the ages of 20 and 64 experienced an increase of about 1% (Figure 5).

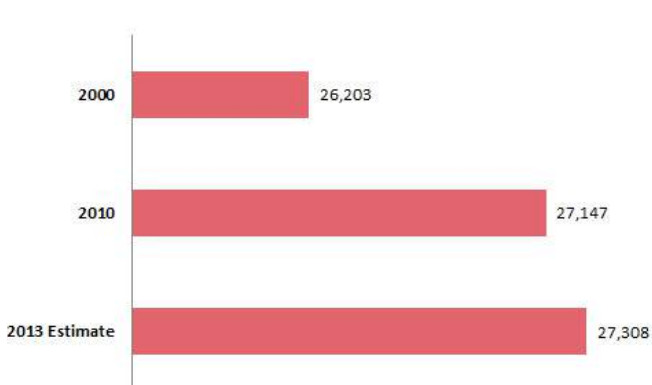


Figure 4: Englewood's population change from 2000 -2013



Figure 5: Englewood's population by age groups

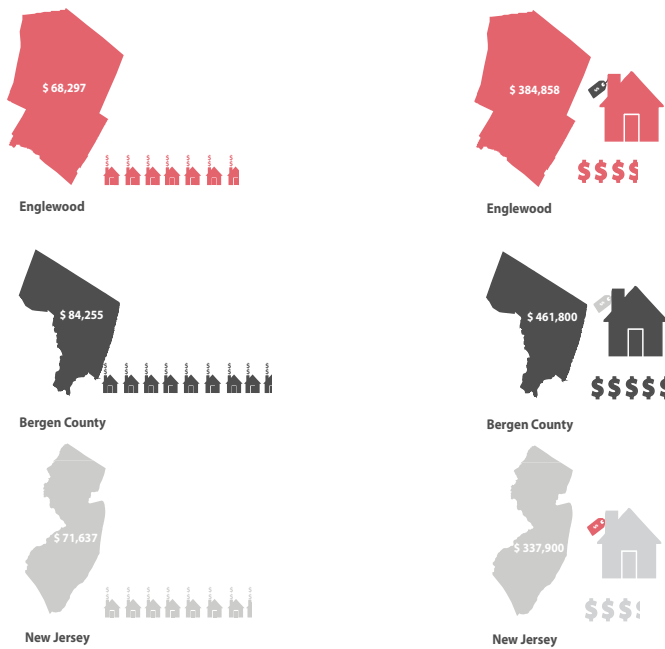


Figure 6: Median household income comparison

Figure 7: Housing values comparison

2013 estimates suggest Englewood's median household income was \$71,509, (\$72,651.71 in 2015 inflation adjusted dollars). In 2000, median household income was \$58,379 (\$80,301.24 inflation adjusted dollars). While there appears to be an increase over \$10,000 from 2000 to 2013, in reality the median household income decreased by 9% due to inflation.

The estimated median house or condo value in 2013 was \$386,300, 18% higher than the State median value of owner-occupied housing units. Housing values experienced an estimated increase of more than 90% in housing prices from 2000. In 2000, median housing price was \$198,200.

FOURTH WARD SOCIAL CONDITIONS

The Fourth Ward is the most densely populated ward. It is composed of two census tracts, 153 and 154. The average population density for the Fourth Ward is 8,349.05 people per square mile. In 2010, the Fourth Ward total gained 1168 new residents, accounting for 97% of the total population change in the city from 2000 to 2010.

In 2010, the Fourth Ward had the highest number of people within the 20-64-year-old age range; 63.86% were in this bracket. The number of people under 19 years represented 24.36% of residents of the ward. The Fourth Ward has the highest number of people over the age of 65. Seniors represents 11.79% of residents of the Fourth Ward.

It is the most ethnically diverse neighborhood in Englewood. Major minority groups are African American, Hispanics and Asian-American. Although African American are among the largest minority group in this ward, new trends in 2010 shows a decline of about 20% of this community. Asian-American, on the other hand tripled its population. Whites and Hispanics increased its dwellers by 49% and 40% respectability.

The Fourth Ward has a high density of social and cultural

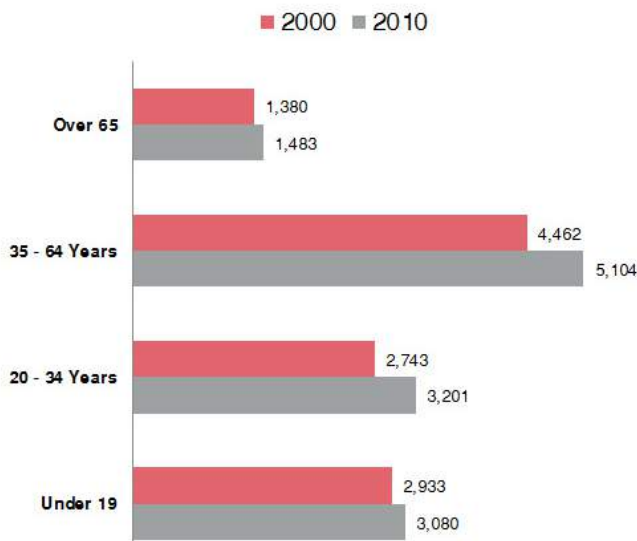


Figure 8: Fourth Ward age groups

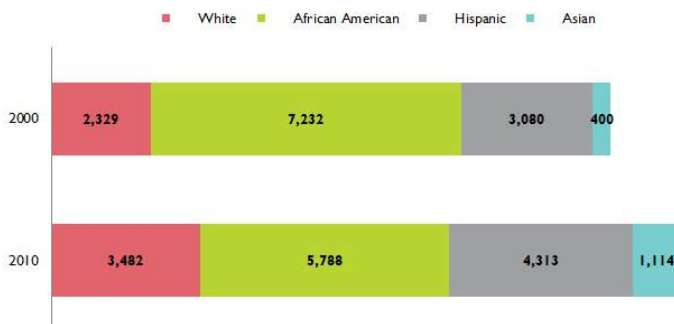


Figure 9: Fourth Ward major ethnic groups

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

Throughout the course of this project residents raised a number of concerns related to the programming and design of Mackay Park. Many of these concerns are also noted in other planning studies conducted by the City.

The vast majority of these concerns are related to safety and accessibility. Residents believe that some of the crime issues are due to a lack of access to specific areas of the park, which creates spots with poor visibility and reduced pedestrian traffic. To them, these factors tend to promote criminal activity.

Another concern was the history and meaning of the park. For many residents, Mackay Park represents a symbol of freedom. The park's Gatehouse is a registered National Historic Site. In addition, the natural history of the park is also relevant - the Phelps property once hosted hundreds of chestnut trees. Many have since fallen to chestnut blight, but many still remain. The park also served as the training space for various famous Englewood athletes and musicians.

Residents from the Fourth Ward and Englewood highlighted the need for more family-oriented activities and passive recreation choices. They feel that the current programmatic offerings do not serve all age groups. - For more information please see the Outreach section of this report beginning on page 34.

Although crime overall has declined in the city, several residents and city officials interviewed for this report raised concerns about the potential for crime in the park, such as vandalism, drug dealing and unlawful loitering. Among their concerns are:

- Trees that are not pruned at lower levels can provide cover for criminal activity, especially from spring to fall
- The placement and design of the arena building blocks views from the street and creates hiding spots
- The pergola is at a higher level than the rest of the park, which makes it easier for those engaged in criminal behavior to watch out for police.
- Not enough lighting along paths in the park.
- Too few park rangers to police the park during the day.

Mackay Park used to have several more pedestrian bridges over Metzler Brook and Overpeck Creek. Several of these were removed because of concerns that drug dealers and others engaged in criminal activities would use them to escape police.

PARK USER SURVEY RESULTS

In late 2014 and early 2015, Englewood residents and others interested in Mackay Park, were surveyed about their thoughts on Mackay Park. The survey was conducted online and at public meetings. There were 52 respondents, 45 of whom were Englewood residents. About 86% of respondents said they lived close enough to walk or bicycle to the park.

The respondents were asked how often they went to the park and why they went to the park. About 39% of the 44 people who answered this survey question (17 respondents) said they visited every day or a few days a week, about 18% (8) on weekends. About 27% (12) came to the park only for events or social activities.

The most common reasons for visiting the park were to 'watch others play or relax' (45%, 19 of 42 responses), 'relax or get fresh air' (43%, 18), 'exercise by myself or with friends' (40%, 17), and 'play a team sport' (21%, 9) (Respondents could select multiple entries. Walking, running/jogging and basketball were the most popular recreation activities in the park.

Respondents were also asked their level of agreement or disagreement with various statements. (Respondents could also respond 'neutral/no opinion') This type of questions helps identify issues that are important for planning purposes. Between 47 and 50 people responded to these statements. Key findings include:

- Most participants (about 74%) felt safe in the park during the day. Only 10% did not. 16% had no opinion.
- About half of participants (about 52%) said they felt unsafe in the park at night. About 19% felt safe there after dark. 29% had no opinion.
- About 54% said their neighbors would feel unsafe there at night, and only 8% said their neighbors would feel safe. 36% had no opinion.

- More than half of respondents (about 54%) said there was not enough lighting in the park. Only 13% said there was enough. 34% had no opinion.
- More than half of respondents (about 54%) disagreed with the comment 'The play spaces/equipment for children are good.' About 15% agreed. 31% had no opinion.
- Only about 16% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the 'spaces/equipment for adults are good.' Almost half (46%) disagreed. 37% had no opinion.
- Respondents were also divided on whether there are 'enough places to enjoy nature/fresh air' in the park. Almost half (about 48%) said there were, while 32% said there wasn't. 20% had no opinion.
- Similarly, respondents were divided on whether there are 'enough spaces to hold gatherings.' About 40% agreed, while 30% disagreed. Nearly 30% had no opinion.



Figure 10: Survey time during kick-off meeting

THE PARK AND ITS CONTEXT

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

03

ENGLEWOOD PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

Englewood is made up of four wards (Figure 11). Englewood has an area of about 4.9 square miles, of which 71.6% is residential. North of Interstate 80 and extending towards the city's northern boundary, commercial and industrial are the predominant uses. Industrial uses account for 5.6% of the total city area and commercial is 18.1%. Residential areas are spread throughout the city (Figure 12).

In the First and Second wards, the most common residential type consists of low density single unit residential areas representing large lot sizes. The 3rd and 4th wards are mostly medium to high density residential areas. The 4th ward has the highest residential density with some multiple family dwellings. The 2014 Master Plan encourages maintaining existing industrial, and commercial uses. A notable exception is the redevelopment of the former Lincoln School to housing. This development was already planned before the Master Plan was completed. It encourages varying densities in proximity to public transportation and downtown areas while maintaining the existing density of the periphery.

IMMEDIATE PARK CONTEXT

The most common land uses near the park are medium to medium-high density residential and commercial uses, ranging from single houses on small lots to three-story apartment complexes. West Palisade Avenue, the main commercial strip, is located less than 700 feet away. On the southeast border of the site, toward Route 4 there is a major concentration of light to medium industrial uses.

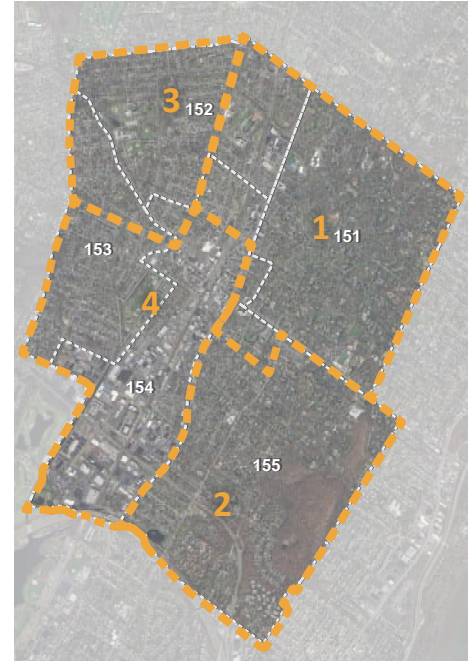
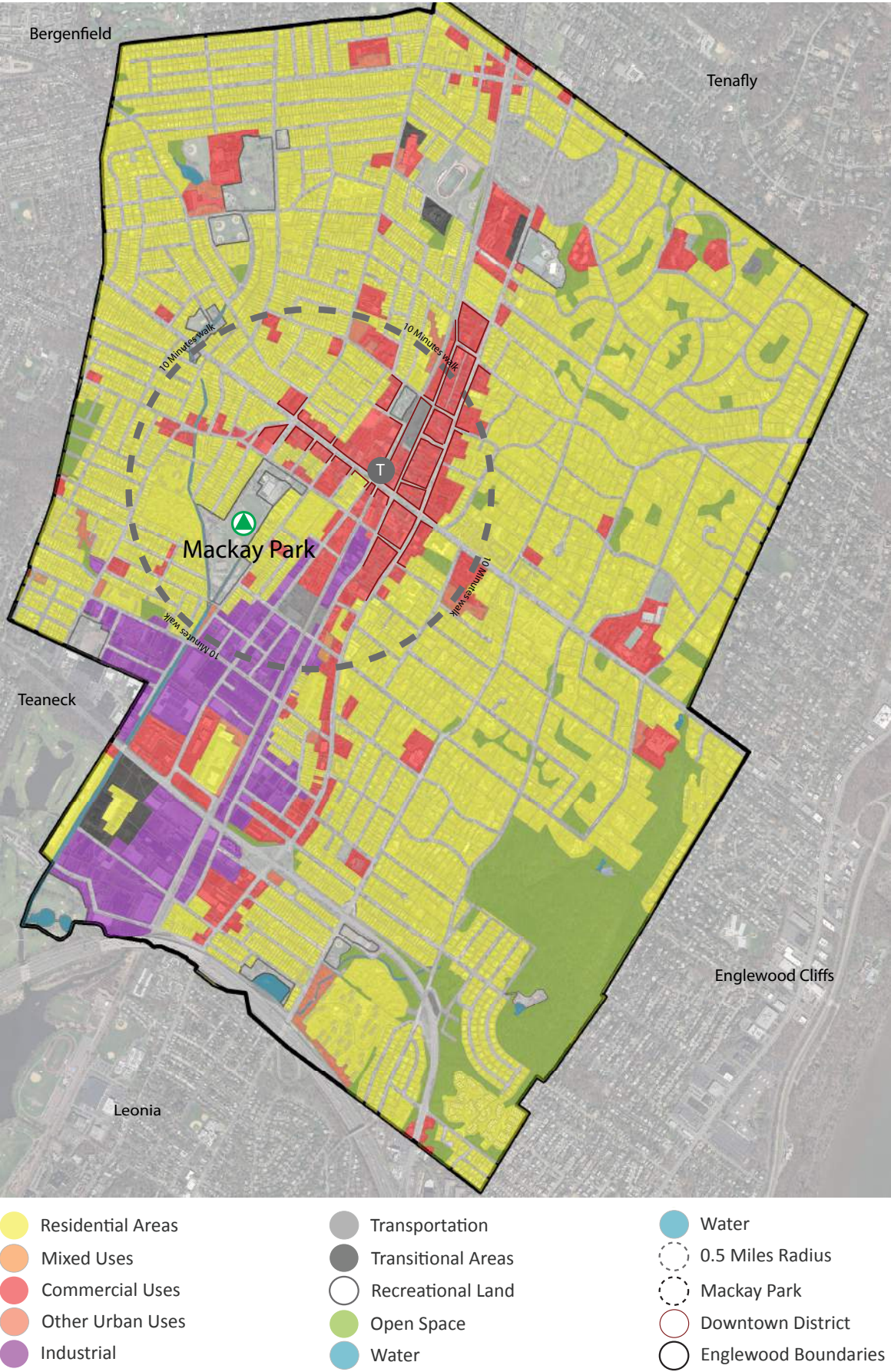


Figure 11: Wards of Englewood



ENGLEWOOD OPEN SPACE AND CULTURAL AMENITIES

The city of Englewood has 214 acres dedicated to parkland and recreational facilities which make up about 7% of the total area. The city has 18 open spaces, parks and recreation facilities ranging from small playgrounds to the Flat Rock Nature Center. According to the 2014 Master Plan, the city’s parks should be strongly linked to create a connected network of the city’s recreational resources. Creating a park network within the city is a topic that has been discuss since the mid-1970s.

Currently the city manages 18 facilities throughout the four wards. Few parks have restrooms, Lawn area and dog runs. Some of the parks in the Second and Third Wards are mainly passive recreation oriented. There is a need for grassy areas for free play in the city. The majority of the city parks are tailored for active recreation (Figure 13).

- Passive
- Grass Fields

Playground

Picnic

Dog Park

Swim Club

Fishing
- Active
- Golf

Baseball / Softball

Soccer

Football

Hockey

Basketball

Tennis
- Cultural
- Civic & Service Organization

Theater

Event Center

Library

Museum
- Restrooms

Parking

Schools

Religious Institutions
- Map Key

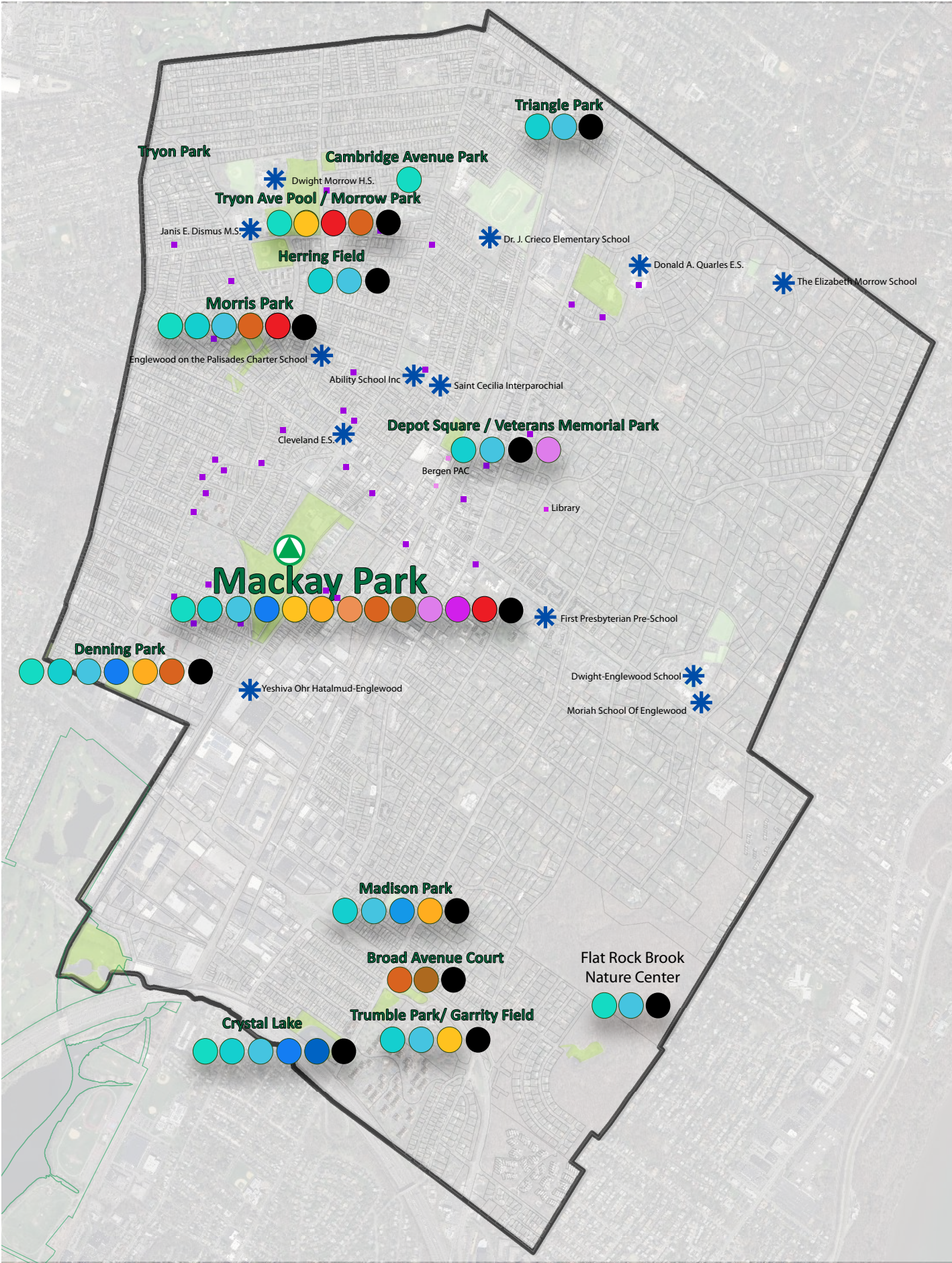


Figure 13: Englewood Open Space and cultural amenities

MACKAY PARK: SITE HISTORY

Mackay Park was created in 1906. It was a gift from then mayor Donald Mackay to the City of Englewood. Mayor Mackay purchased 20 acres of land. By 1910, 8 more acres were added to the Mackay Park tract of land. Assets of this property included both of the existing creeks; over 400,000 thousand trees; the gatehouse; and a horseshoe trail. Prior to its existence as a park, the land was the estate of William Walter Phelps, who was a U.S. Congressman, ambassador, and a state judge in New Jersey's highest court. Today, the Mackay Park Gatehouse, formerly known as the William Walter Phelps Gatehouse, is one of the few existing remnants of the Phelps estates in New Jersey. In and around Englewood, he is remembered for planting thousands of trees. Some of these trees are still present within Mackay Park.

In its early days, Mackay Park had a greater mix of wooded areas for relaxation and large open spaces for play. A photo from 1930 shows a larger concentration of trees on the western and northern borders than exists today (Figure 15). At the visioning sessions, Englewood residents who grew up in the area in the 1960s remembered the trees fondly (Figure 14). Today, there are more single specimens of trees scattered throughout the park when compared to the 1930s. However, the overall tree coverage is certainly smaller and more disconnected.

For most of its history, Mackay Park was used for concerts and large community events. These activities have stopped for the most part in recent years, but neighborhood organizations do continue to use the park for other smaller events. Two of the most recent citywide events held in the park were Englewood Day from 1999 to 2005 and the Community Baptist Church's 'Church in the Park' event in 2010. Throughout the visioning sessions, residents have shared their concerns about insufficient staff to support the cleanup required after large events held in the park. The lack of adequate staff support may be the reason for the diminished number in events held at Mackay.

The design of the park changed significantly in the 20th century. In 1970s, the park underwent its first major renovation. During this time, the "sportsplex" idea was mushrooming and facilities for skating, tennis; baseball and children's swimming area were added to the park design (Figure 16). Areas that were once open, passive, and multi-purpose became highly programmed for specific sets of users.

One of the biggest and most controversial changes to the park was the creation of the John T. Wright Arena in 1982. The complex, on the north end of the park, has an ice rink and an adjoining in-ground swimming pool. In the winter, it serves Englewood residents and others who enjoy ice skating and ice hockey, as well as youth hockey leagues. Critics of the arena argue that its design blocks out important views to the park from Englewood Avenue, thereby making the park less attractive (Figure 18,19).



Figure 14: Early pictures of the park



Figure 15: The Park in 1930



Figure 16: The Park in 1995



Figure 17: The Park in 2006



Figure 18: John T. Wright Arena, front view



Figure 19: John T. Wright Arena, side view

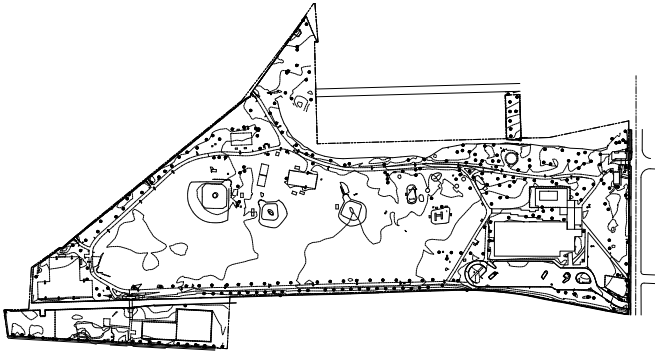


Figure 20: 1990s Landscape

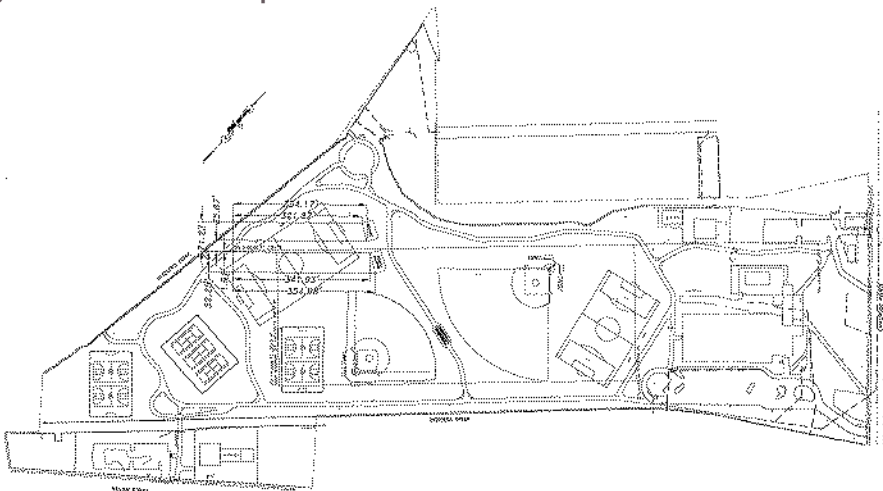


Figure 21: Approved concept design for 1977 reconstruction
Photo courtesy: Ken Albert Associates

Residents indicated that the park had a more rustic feel in the 1990s and they saw it as a rural oasis in the city (Figure 20). In 1992-93, community residents made a suggestion to the city that more organized places for kids to play be implemented.

In 1996-97, the park underwent its second major renovation to make room for baseball, soccer, basketball, and a tennis court center. The design shifted circulation paths toward the edge of the park to accommodate larger sports-related uses (Figure 21).

Around the 2000s, the city put resources for programming and festivals into the park. Festivals like Englewood Day and Colombian Day would take place at Mackay Park. These types of programs attracted very large crowds. Since adequate staffing for event management and cleanup was not available, these events began to have a negative impact on the park. Events and big programs in the park stopped in 2005. Today, the main uses for the park are programmed sports and summer camp.

In the last six years, the City of Englewood has made a number of improvements in and to the park. These include efforts to enhance drainage by dredging Overpeck Creek and placing new concrete retaining walls there; adding new playgrounds along William Street and behind the Gatehouse, and new garbage cans and maintenance protocols. Englewood will also be receiving funding to help restore the Gatehouse.









There have also been a number of improvements to the Arena. These include new boards and glass, a scoreboard, sound system upgrades and renovated bathrooms.

MACKAY PARK: EXISTING CONDITIONS

Mackay Park is the largest city park in the city of Englewood. It is located in the Fourth Ward and serves the most densely populated area of the city, including mixed use business district. According to the demographics analysis, the park serves the area of the city with the greatest need for quality park and recreational amenities. The park, as well as part of the Fourth Ward, sits within a flood plain area that extends north along Route 4 towards West Palisade Avenue. It is about 2500 feet wide from the train tracks west toward Teaneck Township. The consultant team heard about no regular flooding issues within the park. All areas seem to drain to the adjacent water bodies. As would be expected, there was significant flooding and other damage during Hurricane Sandy (Figure 22).

The two major water bodies within the city - Overpeck Creek and Metzler Brook- intersect just to the south along both sides of the park. As a result, the park is surrounded by channelized water bodies. On the east side, parallel to William Street and extending north towards Tenaflly Borough, is Overpeck Creek. This Creek is contained within a concrete channel and was the focus of recent engineering efforts to better contain water during a major flood event, such as Hurricane Sandy. Before reconstruction, Overpeck Creek had a gentle slope from the grass to water edge. Currently, it appears as a highly engineered channelized water course with little resemblance to its natural state. At the southwest corner of the park is Metzler Brook, which extends northwest towards Bergenfield Borough. On the west side of the site, parallel to Elmore Avenue is a tributary to Metzler Brook. This water channel is much more natural looking than Overpeck Creek and is not channelized. Currently a fence separates both brooks and stream from the park. The brooks and stream overflow with stormwater during extremely heavy rain events, such as Hurricane Sandy. The presence of the water surrounding the park is a unique feature for Mackay, and could be seen as an opportunity for environmental education, providing residents the opportunity to get closer to nature, and as a way to help make the park special.

The vegetation is made of well-established mature trees and shrubs as well as recently planted small ornamental trees. An indication of the site history is a collection of chestnut and oak trees that are spread along the edges of the park. Iconic trees like willow, birches and cherry trees were also spotted, representative of later site development efforts. Newer evergreens were planted along the east facade of the ice rink and along the newly channelized Overpeck Creek.

-  Residential Areas
-  1% Annual Chance Flood Hazard
-  0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard
-  Regulatory Floodway
-  Summer Prevailing Winds
-  Winter Prevailing Winds
-  Winter Sun Path
-  Summer Sun Path

Map Key

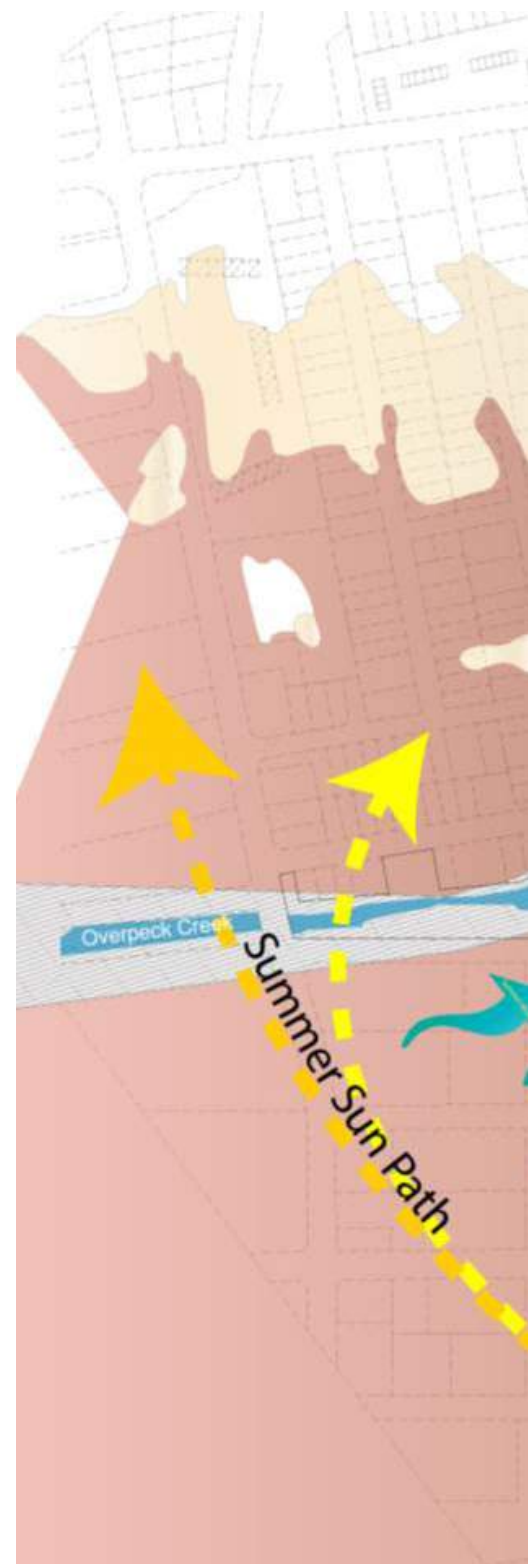


Figure 22: Enviromental conditions

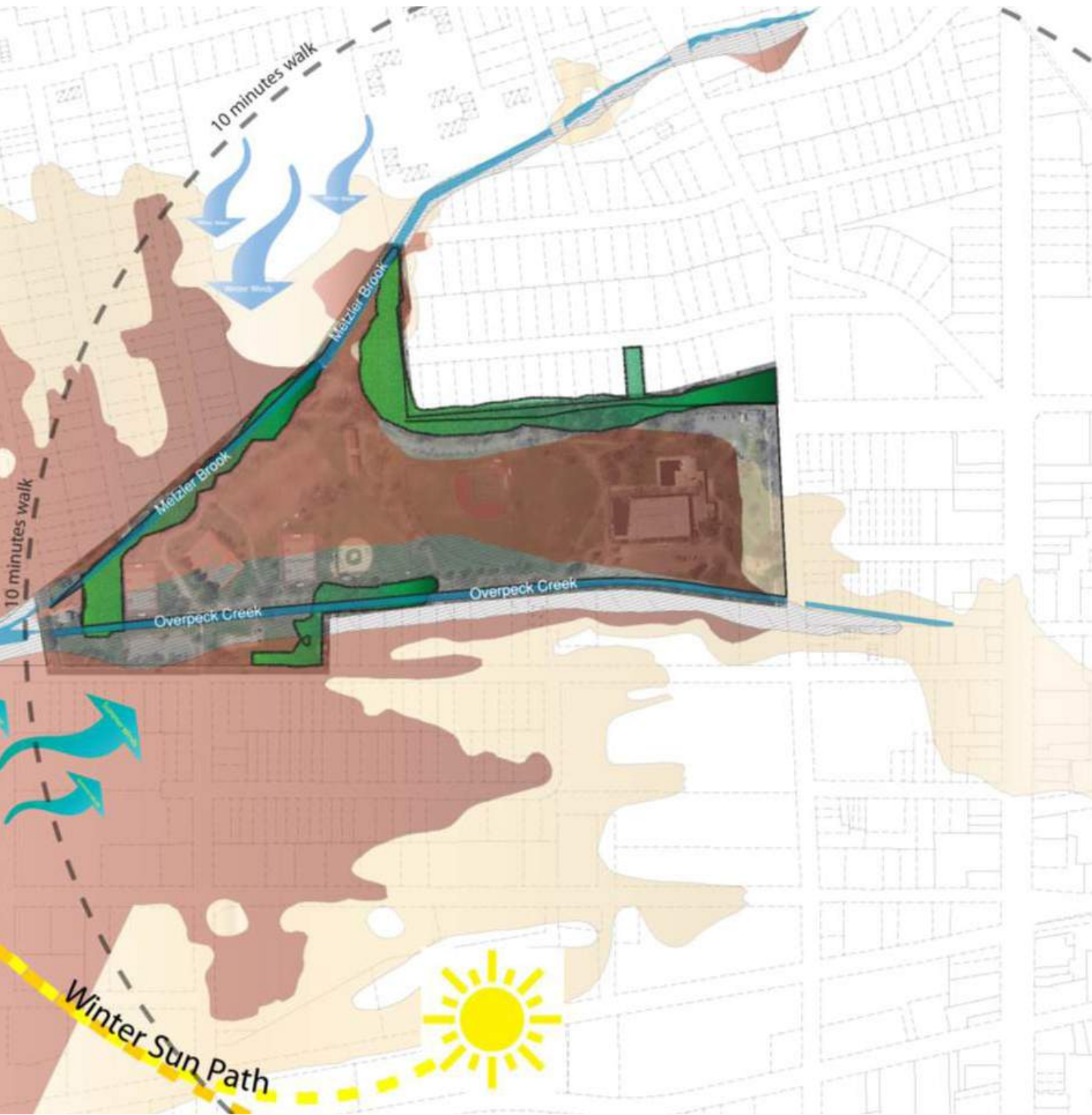




Figure 23: Mackay Park existing conditions

ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

The park has nine access points. Three are vehicular. Several of the entrances to the park involve accessing the site over bridges that span the water bodies. Some have been closed off by the police for perceived safety reasons, but all could be wonderful opportunities to connect the park to the surrounding communities in artful and unique ways. The main pedestrian access on Englewood Avenue through the Gatehouse does not offer good lines of sight to the interior of the park. Vehicular access from Englewood Avenue is ambiguous and may need better wayfinding signage. Generally, the pedestrian connections to the park are not inviting (Figure 24).

Several residents have expressed concerns with the closed bridges and entrances to the park. Existing entrances are often far away, making it more difficult for residents on the east and west sides of the park to enter. Other residents simply jump over the fence. The major park circulation route follows the peripheral edges of the park and provides access to most park amenities. Pedestrians and bikers share the same path.

Visual cues can be an important way to encourage people to enter and use the park. If park amenities can be seen from entrances, they will be better used for the simple fact that residents know they are there. The placement of trees and structures may impede these views in some cases. Some park nodes lack visual accessibility, which contributes to territorial ownership of the space by gangs and reduces pedestrian traffic in those areas.

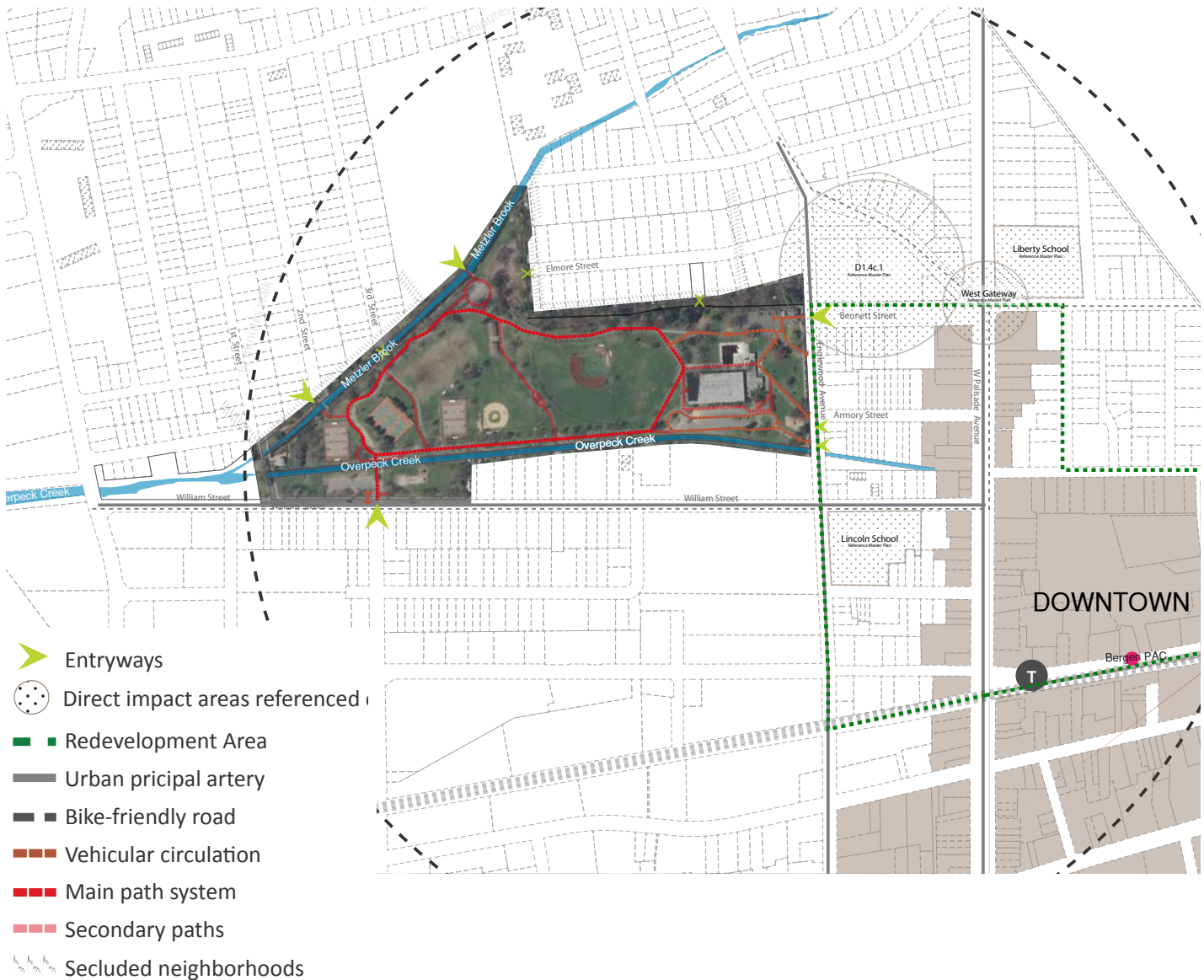


Figure 24: Mackay Park and Downtown Englewood

IMAGE AND FURNISHINGS

Overall, the park is in good condition. Beautiful mature trees contribute to the park setting by creating an edge between the park and its surroundings. The uninviting and poorly marked entrances and the lack of visual connections seem to be of concern to park users and to the consultant team.

Among some park users, there is an impression that “the park is closed” because some of its amenities and access points are either permanently closed or frequently not operational. The Gatehouse, used during summer camp session, in the off-season is being used by the Recreation Department for storage. Drug dealing is an issue at the front entrance of the Ice Rink due to poor visibility in and out of the main entrance. There has been a lack of adequate staffing to monitor and clean the restrooms, though the Department of Public Works recently added more staff hours to maintaining the park. The beautiful sheltered picnic area with its craftsman details is rarely used outside of the summer camp season. The wooden pergola feature, situated at one of the highest points in the park, is a sitting area overlooks the entire park.

There are a total of three playgrounds in the park. The playground adjacent to Englewood Avenue is used exclusively by the Bergen Family Center. The play equipment looks dated and deteriorated. The playground parallel to Elmore Avenue has a combination of old and newly installed playground equipment. The third playground, accessible from William Street, has been recently renovated with safety mats and newer play equipment. This appears to be the most used playground.

Fencing is a major issue interfering with a welcoming appearance. Some residents in the visioning session said ‘it looks like a prison’. Every organized sport or play area has a fence. The little remaining space between amenities is primarily used for circulation. The massive amount of fencing promotes the perception of space being tight. Fencing limits the available open flexible space for free play. This has been an issue raised by the Department of Recreation, especially when programs like summer camp are taking place. Fencing is confining, creates unnecessary barriers and should be removed where possible.

Park furnishings are dispersed throughout the park. These are in poor condition and in need of replacement. Benches are located along path or near the organized sports areas. Bike racks randomly placed, with some simply located on grass. Racks should be located near sports facilities and access to the park adjacent to bike paths.



Figure 25: Closed up bridges



Figure 26: Solitary seating settings



Figure 27: Connecting paths



Figure 28: Unappealing gardening



Figure 29: Main entryway



Figure 33: Uninviting sidewalks



Figure 30: Playground



Figure 34: Channelized creek



Figure 31: Underutilized comfort station



Figure 35: Malfunctioning equipment



Figure 32: Fenced in amenities



Figure 36: Lack of uniform signage

AMENITIES

As noted before, the park is mostly used for sports-oriented activities. Mackay Park has the largest number of amenities in Englewood, yet some age groups are still underserved. The following is an analysis and evaluation of the physical conditions of amenities at Mackay Park.

- **The Gatehouse:** Within the park sits the historic Mackay Park Gateway house, currently being used by Englewood Parks and Recreation department for storage and for summer camp staff. Park users don't have much interaction with it. The Gatehouse serves as a landmark and the gateway into Englewood Avenue. Overall, the Gatehouse is an underutilized amenity.
- **Skating Rink:** The recently re-opened John T. Wright arena is a unique feature of the park that is used by residents from all over the city and surrounding communities. Similar to the gatehouse, it is seasonal. The structure has not been equipped for year round uses. Currently it only operates during fall and winter seasons. The rink space has been used for events in the past.
- **Pool:** The pool is a very popular amenity during summer season.
- **Sheltered picnic area:** Overall the picnic area is in good shape, furniture and structures function properly but few park users use it.
- **Comfort Station** offers restrooms facilities and concessions.
 - o Restrooms Facilities: The Park has various restrooms facilities spread throughout. There is a restroom at the gatehouse which only in use when the gatehouse is operating. There is another set of restrooms at the ice rink / pool area also locked while the facility is not operating. And the official park restrooms facilities centrally located comfort station. These remained lock during most of the year. Users need to request access the restrooms from the park ranger. This measure was taken by the park management staff to prevent damages to the facility and inadequate behaviors. Restrooms remain open during most of the summer camp period.
 - o Concessions stand: The Park has a fully equipped kitchen and concessions stand that currently is not operating.
- **Multiple playground and toddler lots:** There are three toddler lots/playgrounds, two of which are often used by The Bergen Family Center (BFC) and the Vincente K. Tibbs Child Development Center. The former with newer equipment and often used by residents as well. The one at grade entrance of Englewood Avenue is permanently locked and used by the BFC. The third playground and toddler lot is located behind the parking lot of the Gatehouse. Toddler lot by the William Street entrance has newer equipment, while other playgrounds in the park are missing some of the play equipment.
- **Fire pit:** The fire pit is located at the end of the parking lot parallel to the arena. Some residents in the visioning sessions said is well used.
- **Parking lots:** There are three parking zones within the park at each entrance proving over 125 parking spots.
- **Tennis courts:** Tennis courts are in great shape and are regularly used by residents,
- **Basketball courts:** Basketball courts are one of the most used amenities throughout the park. There are two basketball courts. The one near to the core of the park is the most used one.
- **Baseball field:** The baseball field was renovated seven years ago with new synthetic lawn, lighting and functioning bleachers needs replacement. It is available for practice at a moderate fee.
- **Little League field:** The little league uses the kids' softball field regularly. The Recreation Department reported that the field has drainage issues.
- **Kids Soccer field:** The kids' field is somewhat flexible space to yield for multiple purposes such as flexible play area.
- **Cross fit route:** Often used by the adult community early in the morning. Some of the stations are in good shape, others have been vandalized and require repair.

While most of the amenities appear to be used by Englewood residents, the skating rink also draws users from outside the city.

Map of amenities follows (Figure 37).

USERS

There are different user groups in the park. Early mornings, elders and adults from the neighborhood use the exercise equipment. During rush hour commuters cross the park to get to buses traveling from the downtown.

During the day, fewer people use the park. After school, the park is used by organized sports teams. The most popular sports are baseball and soccer. There's a shortage of spaces for these sports.

Religious organizations around the park use the park for summer ministry and for baptisms. The local yeshiva brings kids into the park to play basketball during the day.

Dogwalkers use the park, although there are no dog runs. City ordinance needs to be changed to allow for dogs in certain areas of the park.

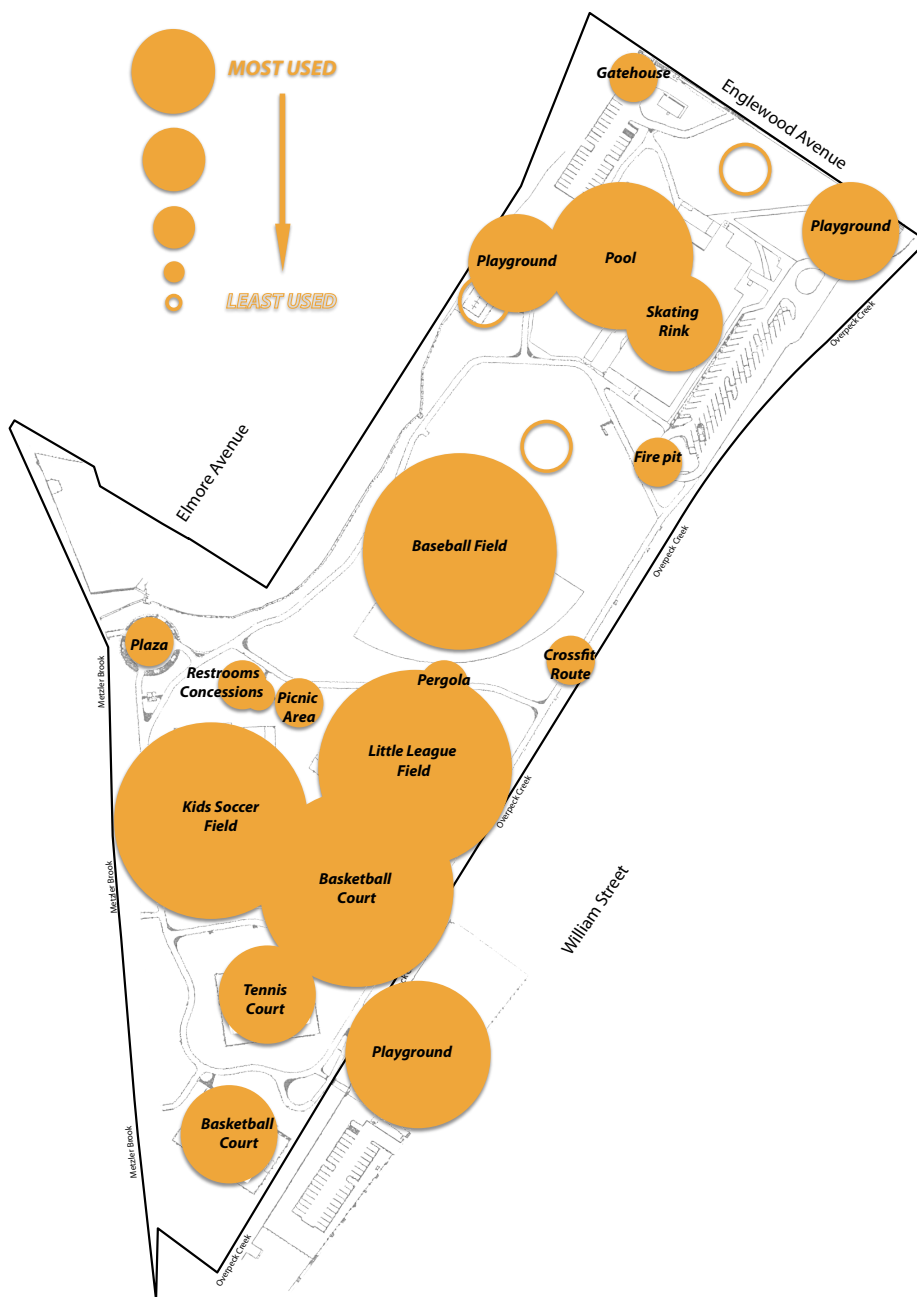


Figure 37: Use of park facilities and spaces

PROGRAMMING

Community programming has been a recurring topic raised in this project and the 2014 Master Plan by residents. Many see programming as a possible alternative to enrich residents' experience of all ages including keeping youth out of trouble. Park use is predominately sports related. Many of the city's sports related programs take place at Mackay Park. To mention a few, the summer camp and little league programs. Hence the main use of the park is sports related. Residents have expressed concerns that the majority of current programs are not family oriented.

In the early 1970s, during some holidays like Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day; the park used to be open for barbeques -no longer permitted in the park-; resulting in a huge community gathering. By the 1990s, the park was an empty park. There were not programs, events or activities programmed for the park. This created opportunities for criminal behavior to take place at the park.

From 1995 to 2000, a 12 week concert series was taking place at the park. In the early 2000s, community festivals were held at the park, attracting thousands of people. For about five years in a row, Englewood day, an event hosted by the city, was a successful community gathering event at Mackay Park. One time, there were about 10,000 people celebrating together. Englewood day stopped for different reasons. Residents of the area were overwhelmed with the numerous people in the neighborhood and the issues it involved, like parking. Another issue was the cleanup afterwards; there was not budget for it. Another event was the Colombian day which exceeded the 10,000 mark, later moved to Hackensack due to similar issues as Englewood day. In 2012, The Quick Check balloon festival brought a giant, 75-foot-tall hot air balloon to the park to promote PNC's "Grow Up Great" school readiness program with over a 150 preschoolers from Bergen Family Center (Figure 39).

The Fourth Ward hosts a yearly Softball Classic in July, with games for kids and adults. Many churches use the park for their community events and gatherings (Figure 40). The Korean Church hosts their community barbeque in the park. Other churches hold different activities through the year. Kids Summer Camp takes place from 8:30 am to 5:30 pm in the afternoon, running for nine weeks during the summer. The program offers sports, trips and other recreational activities for Englewood kids.

Various events and festival take place sporadically at the park, but currently there is not a single event that brings Englewood community together at once. Most community activities are contained within each ward with the exception of the carnival at Depot Square with music performances and rides for kids that would run for a week. In spite that not many residents used to attend the event, there were activities for all age groups.

Many events take place at Mackay Park, but consistency has been an issue with park users and visitors. The park has the potential to attract large crowds from anywhere in the region. For example, in 2007, the two days Avon Walk "Wellness Village" rested at Mackay Park after walking from Hudson River Park Pier 84 in New York City. The day was completed with hot showers, prepared meals and live entertainment¹.

¹ <http://www.avonfoundation.org/press-room/fifth-annual-avon-walk-for-breast-cancer-new-york-raises-10-2-million.html>



Figure 38: Civic convocation



Figure 39: 2012 Quick Check festival



Figure 40: Church in the park



Figure 41: Little League program



Figure 42: Community Pool

Image courtesy: Ken Albert Associates

THE PARK AND ITS CONTEXT

OUTREACH

04

OUTREACH

METHOD

Existing data and information can perhaps provide a useful background for any given park project, but the base of a vision plan are the ideas and insights secured from the people who live, work, learn, and play in the community. The success can be measured by the involvement of people living in the area who are the advocates of their own ideas.

The consultant team outreach approach included interviews, surveys, and community meetings. The team conducted interviews with residents, stake holders and city council members as well as Englewood; Departments of Recreation, Public Works and Police.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Two first kick-off meeting were held early October facilitated by the consultant team. The goals of these meetings were to:

- Introduce the project and the project team to the public.
- Help the consultants better understand issues and concerns about park from Englewood residents and users of the park.
- Help the consultants get a better sense of the priority of concerns for decision-making.
- Provide opportunities for Englewood residents and park users to share their recommendations.

To these ends, the sessions provided multiple ways for participants to express their ideas. These included:

- An in-session survey asking respondents about how they use and think about the park.
- An open conversation that encouraged participants to talk about the park
- Mapping exercises that allowed participants to pinpoint areas of the park that were of most concern, and to make recommendations for those areas.

Several themes emerged in the sessions that reflected residents' concerns and ideas in both meetings, like:

- Planning for the park should be inclusive of all groups and ages in Englewood. There should be several opportunities to residents to be engaged in planning.
- There is concern that the City Council will not listen to the voices of participants and skepticism that the plan will reflect their concerns.
- The plan should respect the history of the park and the Fourth Ward community.
- More should be done to make the park feel and be safer, especially in the afternoons and at night.
- The park is unattractive and unwelcoming.
- There should be better maintenance and care of facilities in the park.
- There should be better and more places for park users to relax.
- While there is support for organized sports activities in the park, there also should be flexible and unprogrammed areas for children to play and create their own games.
- There should be more events and activities that families can enjoy.
- There should be more arts activities, especially music events.



Figure 43: First kick-off meeting



Figure 44: First kick-off meeting



Figure 45: First kick-off meeting



Figure 46: First kick-off meeting

- The brooks are good features that should be designed for more enjoyment or education.

Some of the key ideas and recommendations resulting from this meeting are:

- Plant more trees.
- Provide better lighting.
- Provide better maintenance, especially of the bathroom areas.
- Turn the area of the park near Elmore Avenue into a public garden or quiet relaxation area.
- Create a skate park.
- Create a bandshell or gazebo for performances.
- Provide better signage and more attractive gateways into the park.
- Reopen or restore the bridges into the park.
- Reuse the gatehouse at the north end of the park; for example, as a history museum.
- Make the waterways more visible and a more attractive and educational feature of the park.
- Create a dog park or dog walking area.

LEADERSHIP SESSIONS

Nearly 30 people, representing a diverse cross-section of Englewood's communities, met together almost every two weeks between November 2014 and March 2015 to develop this plan. The team was designed to reflect the variety of interests in Englewood around the park. To this end, the consultants and City officials worked together to identify and recruit members who could create a balance of city residents and representatives of organizations in the Fourth Ward, representatives of city agencies or citywide organizations, and representatives of organizations that use the park regularly. In some cases, participants represented at least two of the categories above. The initial members were appointed by the Mayor; later on, several others with a special interest in the park joined.

Members of the team were encouraged to participate in public meetings and were provided with background information about the park and the Fourth Ward. Consultants Leonardo Vazquez and Joseph Sikora facilitated the meetings, in which members were encouraged to share and reflect on one another's concerns and ideas. The plan reflects the team's consensus around issues and ideas.

SURVEY OF PARK USERS

In Fall 2014, the consultant team conducted a survey of park users about their thoughts on the Mackay Park. The survey was offered in person at public meetings in October and online through the rest of the fall. Fifty-two people responded. Two-thirds of the respondents live close enough to walk to the park and 73% were between 35 and 74.

Key findings from this survey include:

- Residents in the area are likely to go to the park at any time, but mornings, early afternoons and after work or dinner are the most common times for visiting the park. Only 7% said they go to the park at night.
- The most common reasons cited for going to the park are to 'watch others play or relax' (45% of respondents said this); exercise 'by myself or with friends' (41%); and relax or get fresh air (43%) Respondents could provide more than one answer to this question.
- The most common sports activities of respondents are walking (62%); basketball (41%); running/jogging (33%); bicycling (31%); tennis (28%) and ice skating (26%)
- About 73% of respondents said they feel safe in the park during the day, but only 19% said they feel safe there at night. Only 8% said their neighbors would feel safe in the park at night.
- Only 13% of respondents said there was enough lighting.
- A small minority of respondents felt that the play spaces and equipment were adequate. Less than 15% agreed that the 'play spaces/equipment for children are good'; 16% agreed the 'spaces/equipment for adults are good.'
- Respondents were more positive about places to enjoy nature and to hold gatherings. About 48% agreed 'there are enough places to enjoy nature/fresh air' and 40% said 'there are enough places to hold gatherings.'

Although this survey provides a glimpse into beliefs in the neighborhood about the park, we encourage future park planners and community based groups to conduct more surveys -- especially with children and seniors.

APPENDICES

I: Visioning Sessions Meeting Notes

II: Public Meeting Flyers

III: Mackay Park User Survey

IV: List of Figures

VISIONING SESSIONS MEETING NOTES

Monday October 06 and Saturday, October 11, 2014

Kick off Meetings

Background

This report summarizes comments made by Englewood residents and other stakeholders in the visioning sessions of October 6 and October 11. The sessions drew more than 85 people, many of them from the Fourth Ward. All the members of the City Council and the Mayor also attended at least one meeting, as did the City's Director of Parks and Recreation and Director of Public Works.

The first meeting was held Monday, October 6, from 6:15 to 8:30 pm at the Liberty School (about one block from Mackay Park). The second session was Saturday, October 11, from 9:45 am to 12 pm in the Wright Arena in Mackay Park. The meetings were advertised through flyers at neighborhood organizations, a notice in the Suburbanite newspaper and northjersey.com, as well as through word of mouth by influential individuals in the community.

The meeting was facilitated by The National Consortium for Creative Placemaking, with assistance from Sikora Wells Appel (the landscape architecture firm working with NCCP on this project) and students from the Hunter College Urban Affairs and Planning program in New York City.

The goals of this meeting were to:

- Introduce the project and the project team to the public.
- Help the consultants better understand issues and concerns about park from Englewood residents and users of the park.
- Help the consultants get a better sense of the priority of concerns for decision-making.
- Provide opportunities for Englewood residents and park users to share their recommendations.

To these ends, the sessions provided multiple ways for participants to express their ideas. These included:

- An in-session survey asking respondents about how they use and think about the park.
- An open conversation that encouraged participants to talk about the park
- A mapping exercise that allowed participants to pinpoint areas of the park that were of most concern, and to make recommendations for those areas.

Index cards were also provided for participants who did not want to speak up or wanted to express themselves further.

Key comments

Several themes and many ideas emerged in the sessions.

Key themes (concerns or issues presented or supported by several individuals at either or both of the meetings)

- Planning for the park should be inclusive of all groups and ages in Englewood. There should be several opportunities to residents to be engaged in planning.
- There is concern that the City Council will not listen to the voices of participants and skepticism that the plan will reflect their concerns.
- The plan should respect the history of the park and the Fourth Ward community.
- More should be done to make the park feel and be safer, especially in the afternoons and at night.
- The park is unattractive and unwelcoming.
- There should be better maintenance and care of facilities in the park.
- There should be better and more places for park users to relax.
- While there is support for organized sports activities in the park, there also should be flexible and unprogrammed areas for children to play and create their own games.
- There should be more events and activities that families can enjoy.
- There should be more arts activities, especially music events.
- The brooks are good features that should be designed for more enjoyment or education.

Key ideas:

- Plant more trees.
- Provide better lighting.
- Provide better maintenance, especially of the bathroom areas.
- Turn the area of the park near Elmore Avenue into a public garden or quiet relaxation area.
- Create a skate park.
- Create a bandshell or gazebo for performances.
- Provide better signage and more attractive gateways into the park.
- Reopen or restore the bridges into the park.
- Reuse the gatehouse at the north end of the park; for example, as a history museum.
- Make the waterways more visible and a more attractive and educational feature of the park.
- Create a dog park or dog walking area.

Individual comments

The following reflects the notes from our staff and volunteers on comments made by individuals at the sessions. They are presented with comment and are meant to reflect only the views of the individual who expressed them. This is as complete a listing as our staff and volunteers were able to develop. Please excuse or identify any omissions.

Procedural Comments

How was outreach done?

- Marketing was not great
- Should be done in all wards....Mackay is a city park....this is a city project
- Outreach for kids?
- Teens
- Youth committee to mirror the adult committee
- In order to plan for Mackay Park, we should be looking at other parks as well, so as not to duplicate, but rather to supplement
- We need to look at the original will for restrictive clauses
- Honor the original intent
- Residents should be able to comment and have say in the final plan
- Process should be inclusive
- Diverse leadership team
- Representative of those that use the [park and have stake in the community
- Will the park be kept historic?
- NCCP should provide references for similar work that they have done.
- What is the outcome of this project?
- Should track what made Mackay Park great in the past
- Funding?

Concerns

- History of the park is not being honored
- The park serves kids, but not families
- Communication between community and government is lacking
- Lack of commitment and follow through by City Council
- Who is responsible for the park after 5pm?
- The park is taking the place of the 'promised' community center
- Security leaves at 5
- Entrances are closed off
- Bridges to nowhere....literally
- Elderly cannot access because entrances are blocked off – they can't walk all the way around to the other entrances
- Need more maintenance of plants, grounds and equipment
- No public transportation access from other areas of the City
- The entrances to the park that are still open are eyesores....not welcoming

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- No connection between downtown and the park
- Need permits to do anything in the park (simple softball/soccer games)
- Maintenance and management are not resident-friendly
- Safety issues due to crime history
- People feel isolated
- Drugs/drug dealers
- Kids are being kicked out by police
- No police presence
- Shortcuts through the park are now gone
- Is the park going to take place of the “promised” community center
- No safe space in the park (nowhere to retreat)
- No-dogs policy prevents people from using the park

Facilities:

- Closed up
- Poorly maintained
- Locked up
- Fences are not well maintained and are dangerous
- Kids are jumping fences to circumvent the closed entrances
- They are too low
- Issues with liability for homeowners that share fencing with the City
- Demographics are not taken into account
- Large Hispanic population – soccer is big now
- The results should balance the needs of all City of Englewood residents

Suggestions for improving Mackay Park

- Gazebo for amateur bands
- Skate park
- Bike trails
- More seating areas (patios, picnic areas)
- Planting areas
- Connected path systems (wider paths for walking AND biking)
- Inviting entrances to the park
- A community center with arts and music activities during nighttime and open play areas
- Use the gatehouse as a historical museum and educational institution
- Orchards/edible trees
- Incorporate arts and music
- Dance area
- Equestrian run
- Volley nets
- BBQ grills
- Shuttle bus from other parts of town
- Allow dogs to mitigate geese problems
- Kids should spend their mandated community service hours servicing the park
- Fitness circuit improvements
- Water fountains and restrooms improvement
- Mural project on history and park
- Festivals and special events
- The park should address the everyday uses needs of local residents
- With the appearance of the ice rink facade, the big park beyond the building lost its identity and purpose.
- Better connection with downtown
- A public art walk connection between the park and downtown
- Better signage about the park in downtown
- Re-establish Englewood Day in the park

- A place for kids to run around
- Safe surfaces
- Programming:
- Age and sex oriented
- A destination
- More trees
- Unprogrammed open space
- Maintenance
- Staff
- Re-install the bridges
- Reassess the idea of locking off the Elmore Ave. gate
- Reattach the small Park Area on Elmore Avenue to the Park creating a sitting area for Elmore Avenue residents. Install an attractive footbridge into the Park. (Many people do not even know that this build-able lot is actually part of MacKay Park).
- New lighting design
- Make the Arena a year round facility that serves the entire community
- Look at Mackay Park as part of the city parks network. Evaluate what needs to be replaced or remove thoroughly before suggesting a new design.
- Look at the original will for restrictive clauses.

Additional comments

- Mackay Park is a historic park. Improvements should celebrate and create awareness about this fact.
- A resident suggested that there should be a document with a clear intent and process, any guidance and regulation resulting from this plan and task, capacities and responsibilities of agency running the park.
- Teenagers should be included in this conversation.
- Community would like to be part of the planning process and would like access to comment on the draft of this plan
- The community would like to see the result of this effort. The plan should have guidelines and timeline for implementation. Mayor Frank Huttel III shared that City Council will be looking at possibilities to integrate this vision plan recommendations to the 2015 budget.
- City resident are concerned about inclusion in the leadership team. It is important for the community for this team and the city council to make an effort to get a balanced cross-section of the residents of Englewood. Every race, every age, every ward should be represented.
- Community would like for the team to provide references.

Comments made during the open discussion ("Tell us your Mackay Park story. Tell us what we need to know.") These comments paraphrase comments made by participants

- A resident seems to be happy with existing sports amenities and would like for the park to continue this way. In fact, residents would like to see more family oriented amenities and programs.
- Many of the residents agreed on the reinstallation of bridges and entrances to the park. Limited numbers of access points make it difficult for older residents residing far from current access to use the park.
- Community would like to have gardens and seating areas throughout the parks.
- Many areas in the park are programmed for certain sport activity; community would like to have family oriented and flexible spaces within these areas that encourage free style recreation. Perhaps, a place for events and other temporary activities.
- It is very important to residents for this plan to address issue of isolation within residential areas adjacent to the park to remediate issues of isolation and accessibility from and to the park.
- Similar thoughts on path system. Shared pedestrian and bike lanes in the park raise the problem of pedestrian safety. At the same time, path system breaks or changes in materials in certain joints pose similar issues.
- Residents really like Overpeck Park elements and they would like to see a small version of Overpeck Park at Mackay Park. Park needs to be more inviting.
- Maintenance seems to be a common concern among residents. They would like to have management staff who wants you to use the park.
- Long-time residents would like to see Mackay Park as they remember it. Mackay Park used to have many activi-

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ties that all ages could enjoy; horseshoes trails, volleyball, etc. it has a historic value to Englewood's residents. Many musicians and poets as well as football players started here.

- There are certain courts that are underutilized around the park. These courts can be reused as micro-soccer fields; this will help to integrate the Latino community presence in the park.
- People from around the park need to be taken in consideration. They are the immediate users and keepers of the park.
- The community would like to see more arts, open play areas, a gazebo, and more trees.
- The community cries for a place for their kids to go.
- The park looks like a prison, there are fences everywhere.
- Some young people would like to see a skate park.
- A resident expressed his feelings about the ice rink. He stated that the ice rink was close; it was a disgrace to residents of the 4th ward. The 4th ward and the children of the ward have been neglected. Communication is very important among City council and residents.
- Residents feel they cannot walk on the park. After 5:00 pm there is no police presence.
- Some of the exiting physical issues contributing to public safety are the need of pruning the trees to allow for more visibility throughout the park and lighting.
- We should allow dogs in the park. Not allowing dogs on the park prevent people from visiting the park. Having people in there is what contributes to the feeling of safety.
- The Gatehouse should be a museum for the history of Englewood, and a center for youth activities.
- There should be a wellness program connected to the fitness walk.
- A resident brought up the point of raising the fence along the creek for safety reasons.
- We have the facilities but we are not allowed to use them, a resident said.
- Integrate park network.
- In terms of management and executing, there is a lack of integrated work among city agencies.
- The team should review the past plans for the park.
- Few people were using the park in the 1970s and 1980s, which is why the park was redesigned with more organized sports activities.

Additional Comments made on the evaluative mapping exercise and index cards

- The park looks like a prison in the front and from the sides
- A community center should be placed on the lot near the vehicular entrance on Englewood Avenue, close to William Street.
- A big lawn for music performances
- Performing space, art in the park
- Signage
- Staff and maintenance issues
- Police presence in the park is important
- Political agendas could get in the way of good decisions

Additional notes

In both sessions, participants were seated at rectangular tables that held up to 8 seats each. About 65 people attended the October 6 session; about 25 attended the October 11 session. A handful of participants from the first session also attended the second.

In the first meeting, Councilman Marc Forman welcomed residents and introduced the project and the project team. The sessions were led by Leonardo Vazquez of The National Consortium for Creative Placemaking (NCCP), with assistance from Denisse Ortiz of NCCP. Deborah Schulze of NCCP was available to help children and teens at the October 6 session complete the survey or the mapping exercise. Leo emphasized that the sessions were designed to help the consultants hear and learn from participants, and that no decisions for the final plan would be made at the sessions.

There were several facilitators at the tables in the October 11 session. They were Diana Fernandez of Sikora Wells Appel; and from Hunter College, Daniel Vieira, Jeremiah Cox, Jocelyn Dupre and Dan Bianco. The October 6 meeting became heated at times, reflecting what appeared to the consultants to be a significant level of distrust and skepticism about the outcomes of this project. The October 11 session was calmer.

Many of the comments raised by participants echoed those raised in community meetings offered for the Englewood Master Plan. However, there were a number of new ideas raised that are not reflected in the Master Plan.

This report was produced by Denisse Ortiz and Leonardo Vazquez, with contributions from the NCCP and Sikora Wells Appel staff and Hunter College volunteers.

Handouts and supporting materials

- Large format site map
- Large format local land use map
- Evaluative mapping exercise
- Mackay Park survey
- Sing-in sheets
- Index cards
- Pens

VISIONING SESSIONS MEETING NOTES

Thursday, March 12, 2015

Public Meetings

Summary

The goal of this public meeting was to get feedbacks on design improvement for the Mackay Park from residents and community leaders of Englewood. Mayor Huttel and Councilman Marc Forman welcomed the community and encourage them to help on reorganizing Mackay Park. The meeting led by Joe Sikora, SWA and Leo Vazquez, NCCP was open to the public. Over 50 Englewood residents attended this meeting including the Mayor and two councilmen, directors of DPW, Recreation Department, Police Department and members of the leadership team.

SWA shared the vision plan and explained how each zoning and land use aspect of the vision plan addresses the goals previously identified by residents and leadership team members.

The following are notes from the meeting including comments from the leadership group.

The Vision Plan

Joe Sikora, SWA presented the revised vision plan concept reflecting on team concerns and recommendations with focus on reorganizing existing land uses to allow for current needs of Englewood residents. It is important to note that the proposed concept is a high scale design idea emphasizing on the location and functionality of existing and proposed uses. Esthetics, materiality and other design element are to be addressed in the park master plan. He explained the process and how the leadership team in conjunction with city officials and consultant team got to this point.

Group Comments:

- Tennis courts generate a high level of noise. Relocation near residential units can be an issue -- not only because of noise but also because of light intensity.
- Tennis courts generate high level of noise, proposed relocation near residential units can be an issue, not only because noise but also because of light intensity.
- Parents of different age group kids might find difficult monitoring the kids if playgrounds are separated.
- Residents in favor of a dog park shared their need to have a dog park. To this matter, many residents present at the meeting are not in favor of a dog park due to the impact on neighboring areas.
- Residents recommended maintaining the current location of the playground by William Streets and Linden Avenue, since this is a closer location for Vincent K Tibbs Child Development Center.
- Generally tennis courts are in good shape, changing the location might not be a great idea.
- Some residents are in favor of a more naturalistic looking environment, not so much of an urban park.
- The "vision" idea feels like something too futuristic, far from happening soon, I would like to see something happening now if budget allows; maybe some improvement on the more practical things.

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- The park should have programs that interest the people of Englewood.
- There is still the need to reach out to Elmore Ave. residents; they need to know the potential impact of the playgrounds and dog parks near them.
- One of the reasons why many residents don't use the park is because of access issues.
- City should mail in letters to each resident of the surrounding areas to the park informing them about this effort as this could impact their quality of life.
- Students should be hired to work in the park.
- Park improvements should avoid cutting Phelps's trees.
- Consider making every area of the park universally accessible.
- Reinforce education programs through park's programs. Outcomes

Although there were some discrepancies in terms of the proposed location for some land uses in the park, residents agree on the proposed land uses of the vision plan.

Some of the areas of consensus are:

- Nature Park
- Space for people to gather
- Front Porch
- Playgrounds
- Great Lawn
- Expanded parking arrangements

YOUTH VISIONING SESSIONS

Anita Newkirk, Englewood resident and member of the leadership team; organized five focus group meetings in Englewood School District to engage youth to share their ideas and concerns for the future of Mackay Park. NCCP provided visual materials and support for these meetings.

The following are key ideas and comments from the meetings. Ideas in italics are already being addressed or explored in the plan. Ideas in **bold** were not previously discussed by the leadership team.

- *Better bathrooms*
- *Improved lighting*
- *Fixed water fountains*
- *Lounging and picnic areas*
- *Concession stand*
- *Maintenance*
- *Safety*
- *Jobs for high school kids*
- *Open access to the park*
- *Upgraded playground equipment*
- *More color*
- *More trees (Girl Scouts planting)*
- *Gardens*
- *Better surfacing on playgrounds*
- *Turf rather than grass*
- *Dog park*
- *Areas to work out*
- *Arts and crafts programs*
- *Janitors (more maintenance)*
- *Tranquility garden for adults*
- *A recreation center*
- *Skate park*
- *Bike path*
- *Social space at the Ice Rink*
- **Indoor basketball courts**
- **Year round teen club, recreation / lounge area**
- **Community driven green house**
- **New swings**
- **New monkey bars**
- **Nature museum Half football field**
- **Cushion tracks around soccer field**
- **Make paths smooth for skating, biking, roller blading**
- **Cotton candy stand**
- **Dance parties**
- **Trampoline**
- **Outside food court**
- **Bouncy house**
- **Shuttle**
- **Indoor roller-skating at the Arena**
- **Movie theatre**
- **Tire swing**
- **Recycling stations**
- **Telescope to see nature**

PUBLIC SESSIONS FLYER

English version

Help make YOUR Mackay Park better...



*More fun
Safer
More relaxing
More enjoyable
More vibrant*

Mackay Park Visioning

Learn how. Share your ideas. Help write the next chapter of Mackay Park's story.



Monday, October 6,
at Liberty School, 12 Tenaflly Road
6:15 pm - 8:30 pm

OR

Saturday, October 11,
at Mackay Park
9:45 am - 12:00 pm
(Rain date to be announced)

Please RSVP to Denisse Ortiz at dortiz@artsbuildcommunities.com



Espanish version

Ayuda a hacer TU Mackay Park mejor...



*Mas divertido
Mas seguro
Mas relajante
Mas placentero
Mas dinamico*

Vision para Mackay Park

Descubre como. Comparte tus ideas. Ayuda a escribir el proximo capitulo en la historia de Mackay Park.



Lunes, Octubre 6,
en Liberty School, 12 Tenaflly Road
6:15 pm - 8:30 pm



Sabado, Octubre 11,
en Mackay Park
9:45 am - 12:00 pm

(En caso de lluvia, nueva fecha sera anunciada mas adelante)

Para mas informacion contactar Denisse Ortiz a dortiz@artsbuildcommunities.com



PARK USER SURVEY

What would make Mackay Park a better place for you, your friends, or your family? The City of Englewood would like your ideas and feedback. Please take a few moments to complete this survey. **Your answers are confidential.** Only the consultants will see the raw scores, and we will share overall results, not individual ones.

1. How close do you live to Mackay Park?

Right next to it	Too far to walk, but I could bike to it
Within 2 to 3 blocks	I would have to drive or get a ride
More than 3 blocks, but close enough to walk to it	

2. If you do not live in Englewood, what town do you live in? _____

3. How often do you go to Mackay Park?

Every day or almost every day	Only when my club or team meets there
A few times during the week	Only for events
About one day a week (weekdays)	Never or almost never
On weekends	Other:

4. What time of day or evening do you go to the park (Check all that apply)

Any time	Early afternoon
Morning	After work or dinner
Lunchtime	At night

5. Why do you go to the park?

Relax or get fresh air	Watch others play or relax	Meet friends
Exercise by myself or with friends	Coach others in a team sport	As a shortcut
Play a team sport	Children or teens I watch go there	

Other reasons? _____

6. If you go to the park to relax, where do you usually go? _____

7. If you go to play sports or exercise, what sports do you play or exercise do you do? (Check all that apply)

Basketball	Ice skating	Tennis
Bicycling	Running/ jogging	Walking
Ice hockey	Skateboarding	Workout
Ice hockey	Soccer	Yoga/ Tai Chi

Other? _____

8. What types of programs (sports, arts, recreation, etc.) would you like to see in Mackay Park?

APPENDIX III

9. To what extent you agree or disagree with these statements about Mackay Park:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral/ no opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel safe there during the day					
I feel safe there at night					
My neighbors would feel safe there at night					
There is enough lighting in the park					
The play spaces/equipment for children are good					
The spaces/equipment for adults are good					
There are enough places to enjoy nature/fresh air					
There are enough places to hold gatherings					

10. What do you like best about Mackay Park? _____

11. What would most make Mackay Park better? _____

12. What other parks do you go to often? _____

13. What best describes you?

I live alone	I live with at least one child or teenager that I take care of
I live with at least one other adult, but no children	I live with at least one other adult and at least one child or teenager

14. What best describes your age?

Under 12	35 to 54
13 to 18	55 to 74
18 to 34	75+

15. What best describes your culture/ethnicity? (check all that apply)

African-American	Latino: Central/Mexican American	White American
Caribbean	Latino: Cuban/Dominican/Puerto Rican	White European
East Asian-American	Latino: South American	Other:
South Asian-American	Native American	

16. Is there anything else you think we should know? _____

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