

NORENE KILMER PARK and FIRST STREET PARK MASTER PLAN

Town of Mills, Wyoming

June 12, 2018



LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT:



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This report is also available in electronic format from the author.

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Thank You to Our Stakeholders

June 12, 2018

Town of Mills
Town of Mills Town Hall
704 Fourth Street
Mills, WY 82644

RE: Norene Kilmer and 1st Street Parks Master Plan

Dear Stakeholders in the Town of Mills,

Thank you for participating in the Master Planning process for the historic parks along 1st Street. Your contributions are appreciated and valued.

Each time we act in the public sphere we help move our communities forward by being part of the most democratic of processes - showing up. Participating in the community forums and events that our communities pursue is the very foundation of what makes us citizens.

The Town of Mills Mission is:

"To service our residents, businesses and visitors through leadership while providing a clean and sustainable community for our present and future citizens.

To develop and grow as a vibrant community that recognizes the value of economic prosperity through investments and partnerships.

Finally, to inform and involve our citizens by providing accountability, continued fiscal health and a community spirit that provides opportunities for all Town of Mills businesses and citizens."

Thank you again.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Town of Mills created this Master Plan to identify deficiencies and community needs at Norene Kilmer Park and 1st Street Park, and guide their future development.

The town of Mills has five dedicated parks within its borders. Norene Kilmer and 1st Street Parks are adjacent, but separate parks along 1st Street. Their proximity to Historic Mills neighborhood and the Platte River Trail System makes these parks more than simply neighborhood parks.



Photo 1: Private Nature Trail with Public Access

Norene Kilmer Park was named after Norene Kilmer after she passed away in 2002 and is comprised of approximately 2.75 acres of maintained area and potentially much more area if the adjacent trail and vacant streets are included. It functions as a Neighborhood park and is used by neighbors for its easy access and sports courts. The playground equipment is outdated and the building is unnecessary but being used for storage. Portable rest rooms have replaced the permanent ones for their ability to be easily replaced. The Platte River Trail borders the north side of the park on an old railroad berm, but more usable recreation space is available in the ROW north of the berm.

First Street Park is currently one of the town's best public recreational green spaces. A large field, often used for sports practice, and a small playground sit comfortably and safely behind large shade trees, creating a pleasant atmosphere. The playground is a "ground play" configuration that has not proved to be popular with the

younger children that play there. The park is bordered by the Platte River Trail and the Westech Nature Trail moves between the lawn and the Water Treatment Plant.

METHODS

In addition to assessing the parks for ADA and safety compliance, input was initially gathered from the town council and staff on the direction of the park. Public Input was gathered at the Halloween Trick or Treat event at the Fire Station and at a Christmas event. Parks were visually assessed for ADA compliance with the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design. ADA parking, access to amenities, bathrooms, structures, playground equipment and surfacing, sidewalk / accessible route availability and slope, and handrail compliance were all reviewed.

Playground safety was determined using the Public Playground Safety Handbook, published by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. Each play element was examined but it was generally understood we are looking for complete renovations of the play area because of the poor and unsafe condition of the existing equipment

DECISION MAKING

Town of Mills staff and council reviewed public comment and provided direction to the design team at staff meetings. Staff and council are deeply committed to the quality of their public spaces and are working hard to create long term plans for improving their parks and the overall community. At these two parks, improvements are needed, the community generally wanted to keep the core organizational principles of the parks in tact for practical, functional and nostalgic reasons.

PLANNING AND HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

The Town of Mills has conducted several recent planning studies that are informative for this Master Plan effort. The plan and the key take away for parks are listed below:

UNIQUELY MILLS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SEPTEMBER 2017

Several of the organizing Vision pieces speak indirectly to parks.

- Creating a Self-Sufficient Community
- Cultivating a Community Heart
- Celebrating Our Natural Assets and Amenities
- Revitalizing Connected Corridors
- Facilitating Complete Neighborhoods
- Advancing Our Strategic Growth

Vision element “Celebrating Our Natural Assets and Amenities” has six specific goals that this Master Plan will directly address:

1. Improve existing parks and pathways with additional landscaping and amenities to include a skate park, basketball courts, and baseball fields.
2. Develop recreational areas along the River to encourage visitors and to attract river recreation businesses.
3. Ensure equal access to parks within each neighborhood.
4. Market and promote unique recreational assets, including the connected trail system, the North Platte River pedestrian bridge, and the parks.
5. Develop a connected trail and pathways system that links all parks, community destinations, and schools via greenways or off-street bicycle corridors.
6. Build pedestrian connections over the North Platte River to connect Mills to the regional trail system, Fort Caspar, and Paradise Valley Park.

Norene Kilmer Park has a location that is suitable to address the first items’ suggestion of a skate park. The existing basketball court requires only access improvements.

First Street Park is adjacent to town properties that abut the river and efforts to better connect this park to the river will address the other goals. The Comprehensive Plan points out that the North Platte River “provides an exemplary

asset for residents and visitors.” While this plan only provides direction to do so, connecting First Street park more fully to the river is a worthy cause that will benefit residents and build the quality of life for the Historic Mills neighborhood.

MILLS TRANSPORTATION PLAN, 2017

Several of the Recommendations in the Short Term Prioritized List of Projects/Actions speak directly to parks (this is an incomplete list of all the recommended actions):

- Study opportunities to provide access across SW Wyoming Blvd. to Town Hall area (underway)
- Evaluate opportunities for access to North Platte River in new Downtown area (underway)
- Expand regional pedestrian and bicycle network, including the WAPA (Western Area Power Administration) Powerline Trail
- Provide Recreational opportunities
- Provide connectivity of existing sidewalks/paths
- Prioritize sidewalk/path needs
- Adopt Complete Streets typical cross sections
- Modify the Town Code to require construction of wider sidewalks (underway)

NATRONA COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2016

The last lines of Natrona County’s mission statement



Photo 2: Watco site was originally a gravel quarry for construction of the refinery across the river. The green shows area of public access with First Street Park highlighted.

addresses the need for making sure each park is vital and growing: "We wish to preserve and enhance our Cultural/historical heritage and our community values while enhancing our quality of life through responsible growth."

MILLS COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT RESOURCE TEAM REPORT 2014

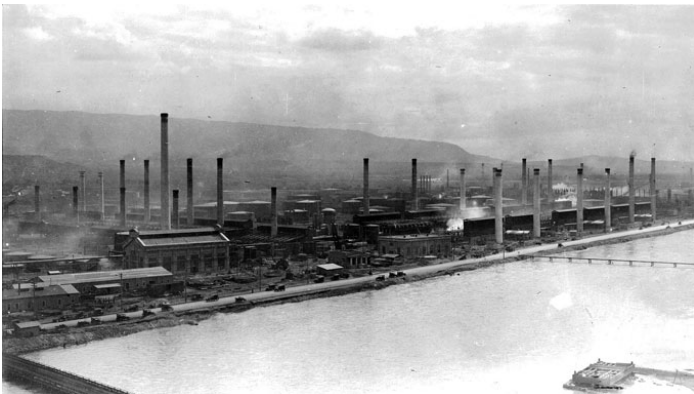


Photo 3: The Midwest Oil Company Refinery in Casper, shown here around 1920 with the North Platte River in the foreground, was later bought by Standard Oil. Blackmore Collection, Casper College Western History Center.

This Master Plan directly addresses Theme item: Things To Do in this report. Citizens of Mills identified that Mills needs more things to do for kids and families within Mills, including improving the existing paths, extending the opportunities along the trail system, installing landscape amenities and more playground equipment. Importantly, this report also identified grant resources, including:

- USDA Rural Development Office (Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan Program and the Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program and Community Facilities Program)
- Wyoming State Loan and Investment Board.

MILLS WAS ORIGINALLY A BOOMTOWN THAT SPRANG UP IN 1919 FOLLOWING CONSTRUCTION OF THE MIDWEST REFINING COMPANY, LOCATED ACROSS THE NORTH PLATTE RIVER. THE MILLS CONSTRUCTION COMPANY BOUGHT THE ENTIRE SECTION FOR THE PURPOSE OF MINING GRAVEL WITH WHICH TO CONSTRUCT ROADS AND TANK REVETMENTS. COMPANY EMPLOYEES PURCHASED LOTS

AND BUILT MAKESHIFT HOUSES. THE TOWN WAS MOSTLY COMPRISED OF TARPAPER SHACKS, WITH ONE BLOCK OF PERMANENT HOUSES, A HOTEL, AND AN AMUSEMENT PARK. BY 1921, THE TOWN HAD 1,000 RESIDENTS AND WAS OFFICIALLY INCORPORATED. WHEN THE REFINERY CONSTRUCTION WAS COMPLETE AND THE DEPRESSION BEGAN, MILLS NEARLY BECAME A GHOST TOWN. THE MILLS HOTEL, WHEN DEMOLISHED IN 1931, WAS DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: "IT STARTED OUT IN RESPLENDENT FASHION, A SMART HOTEL HURRIEDLY ERECTED TO CARE FOR THE HORDES IN PURSUIT OF THEIR FORTUNE. IT RAN THE GAMUT OF OPEN HANDED PATRONAGE, GAMBLERS, SURGING THROGS, BEAUTIFUL WOMEN – A SLICE AS IT WERE, OF THE FRENZIED BOOM PERIOD, BECOMING IN LATER YEARS, ITS FEATHERS BEDRAGGLED, A SPEAKEASY, DANCING HALL, GAMBLING DEN. THEN OBLIVION." MILLS BENEFITED FROM A HEALTHY LOCAL ECONOMY IN THE 1950s AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF A BRIDGE CONNECTING WITH THE FORT CASPAR AREA MADE TRANSPORTATION EASIER. THE 1970s BOOM AND MID-1980s BUST AFFECTED MILLS AS IT DID THE REST OF NATRONA COUNTY. AS THE REST OF THE STATE, MILLS IS CURRENTLY BENEFITING FROM RENEWED ECONOMIC ACTIVITY.

- FROM TOWN WEBSITE, 2017

Historical documents relating to Mills Parks are scarce, but the great history "Separate and Distinct, A History of the Town of Mills, WY" provided the following insight into the formation of First Street Park.

FIRST STREET PARK.

THE ORIGINAL TOWN HALL, BUILT IN 1921 AND TORN DOWN IN THE EARLY FIFTIES, WAS LOCATED AT FIRST AND BENTON ON A LOT DONATED TO THE TOWN BY THE MILLS CONSTRUCTION COMPANY. THIS WAS A CONCRETE BLOCK BUILDING, ONLY ABOUT SIXTEEN BY TWENTY FOUR FEET, WITH ONE MEETING ROOM UPSTAIRS AND A LARGE ROOM DOWNSTAIRS, WHICH HOUSED THE MILLS JAIL. THERE WERE NO TOWN OFFICES HERE, JUST MEETING ROOMS, AND IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE BOY SCOUTS USED THE JAIL MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE.

"Separate and Distinct" also describes the origins of the adjacent Wotco site as a gravel pit along the river and the adjacent Mills Hotel, which is revered as a symbol of the "Roaring Twenties" and the wild times had there that were legendary in the west. In the twenties and thirties the Plunge-Riverview Park was the entertainment destination for the whole hard working community, with an incredible swimming hole and dance hall.

PARK HISTORY



Photo 4: A boulder with the engraved plaque stating "This Park Dedicated in Memory of Norene Kilmer Clerk/Treasurer for the Town of Mills for 46 years indicates the grateful feelings of a town for a public servant."

While the Oregon Trail crossed near the Town Hall, but is not significant historically for these sites. Apart from the original town hall at First Street there were not historical buildings associated directly with either of them.

More recently, the play equipment at Norene Kilmer appears typical of 1960s or 1970s style construction. None of the equipment there meets modern safety standards and does not have any functioning safety surfacing. The "ground play" style playground at First Street Park was developed in the late 1990s. Benches and horseshoe pits have been added over the years.

Both sites contain unused rest room buildings. Because of issues with vandalism and improper public use they have been closed to the public from the first year after construction. In recent years, temporary portable toilets have been placed adjacent to them to serve the public.

PARKS AND RECREATION GOALS

The following goals provide some of the foundational thinking for this Master Plan:

- Retain and Protect Cultural Assets
- Reinvest & Rehabilitate historic properties and /or features
- Encourage a variety of recreation facilities and opportunities
- Provide ADA Accessibility - in areas with high levels of pedestrian activity

- Offer safe, quality, unique recreational opportunities at each park

And it is understood that the Town of Mills intended to:

- Maintain and improve upon the existing park system
- Provide for ADA access to parks and recreational amenities
- Expand the park system if in the best interest of the community
- Provide park amenities based on the needs and values of the citizens of Mills

The town of Mills has five dedicated parks within its borders. Norene Kilmer and 1st Street Parks are adjacent, but separate parks along 1st Street. Other parks are indicated on the map on the next page.

PARK RULES

We all love our parks and enjoy being able to use them. In order for our parks to remain safe and enjoyable please make sure to follow the Park rules.

- Place trash in the trash containers. Do not litter.
- Parks are generally available for public use from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.
- All dogs must be leashed and under control by the owner at all times in all parks.
- All pet owners are responsible for picking up their pet's waste and placing it in an appropriate container.
- No glass beverage containers are allowed in the parks.
- No alcoholic or malt beverage is allowed in the parks unless authorized by permit.
- Picnic shelters, tables, and other park areas may be reserved. If a shelter, table or area is reserved, the person holding the reservation has the right to use the shelter, table or area. Non-reserved shelters, tables, and other areas are available on a first come basis. To reserve a shelter, table or park areas call 234-6679.
- Playgrounds are open to the public at all times and cannot be reserved.
- Do not tie or secure any signs, memorials, decorative wraps, or other items to trees in the park. Trees can be damaged by these items.

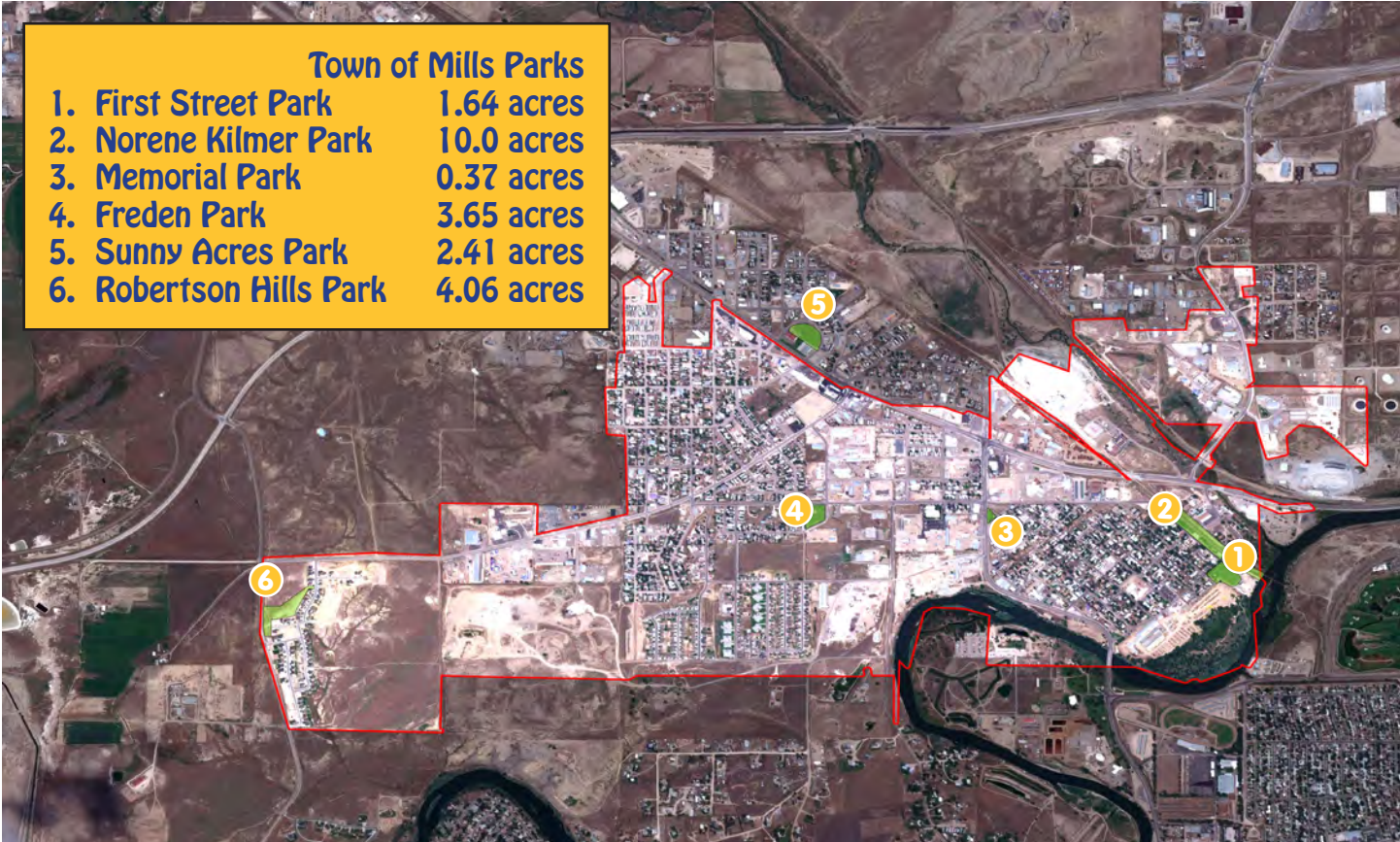


Figure 1: Town of Mills with City Parks identified.

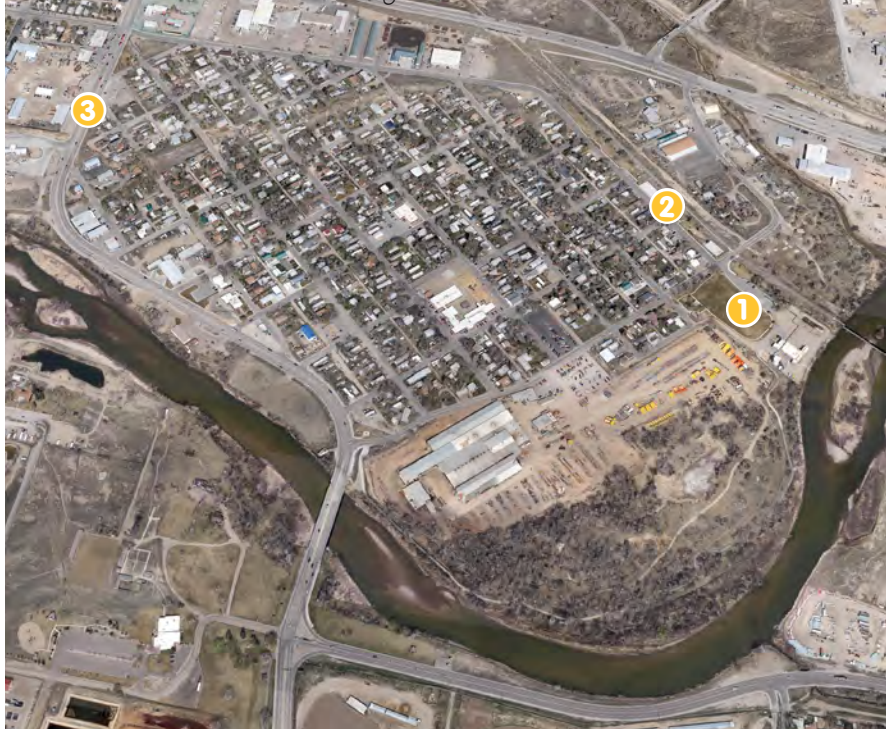
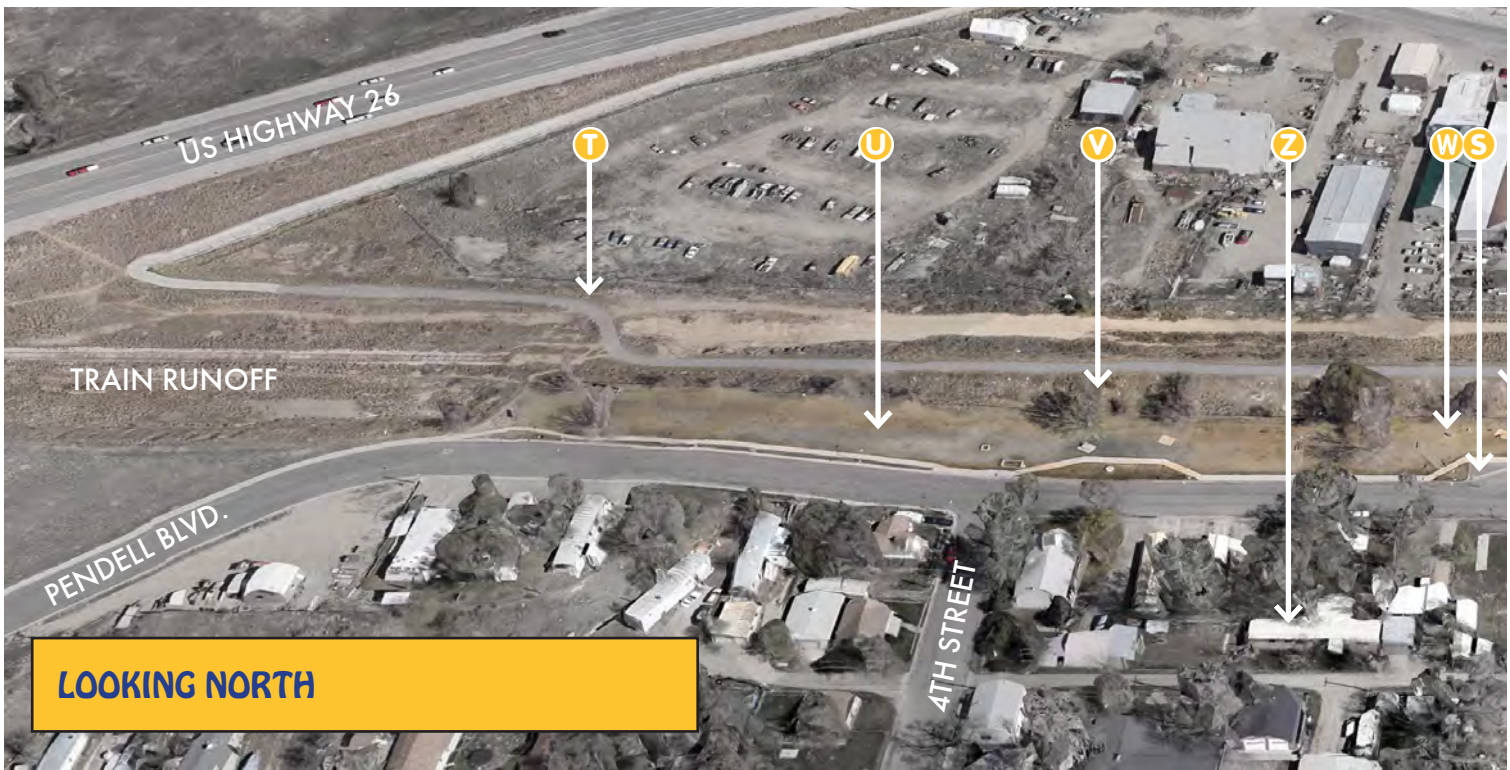


Figure 2: Norene Kilmer and First Street Parks' locations along the edge of the historic Mills Neighborhood is evident in this image.

Amenity	No.	Condition	Notes	
A	Park Sign	2	Poor	Made from foam material that is severely pocked.
B	Norene Kilmer Dedication Plaque	1	Good	Permanently mounted on boulder. Could be moved.
C	Bench (Black Metal)	3	Good	
D	Bench (Steel Wood)	1	Ruined	Remove immediately or repair.
E	Picnic Table, (Black Metal)	2	Good	
F	Picnic Table (Concrete)	2		
G	Bouncers (Play Equipment)	4	Fair	No surfacing.
H	Grill	2	Fair-Good	
I	Picnic Shelter	1	Fair	Fenced. No access except across lawn
J	Bicycle Rack	2	Poor	
K	Tennis Court	1	Good	No Accessible Access.
L	Portable Toilette	1	Good	Rented from Shawn's Johns (307) 247-2827. Accessible.
M	Rest Room Building/ Maintenance Shed	1	Fair	Structure has not been fully used to its purpose. Storage and irrigation now.
N	Dogipot	1	Good	Mounted on Maintenance Shed
O	Trash Can (Black Metal)	2	Good	
P	Playground - Slide	1	Fair	No fall surfacing, not accessible
Q	Playground - Swings	1	Good	Six swings, missing one seat and chains. No fall surfacing.
R	Basketball Court	1	Good	Fenced. No Accessible Access.
S	Parking Lot	2	Poor	Total of (2) accessible spaces and (18) standard



SITE INFORMATION: NORENE KILMER PARK

Norene Kilmer is a linear neighborhood park at approximately 10 acres, with less than half of that area fully maintained. It ties to the greater community via the Platte River Trail System that connects across the river just to the east of this site on an old train crossing.

THE KEY ATTRIBUTE OF A NEIGHBORHOOD PARK IS THAT THEY (AS THE NAME IMPLIES) SERVE A SPECIFIC NEIGHBORHOOD. THEY TYPICALLY RANGE IN SIZE FROM 1-5 ACRES, AND BENEFIT FROM STRONG PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS SUCH AS TRAILS AND SIDEWALKS TO RESIDENTS WITHIN THE SERVICE RADIUS. NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS ARE OFTEN COMBINED WITH A SCHOOL AND ARE LOCATED ON FULLY DEVELOPABLE LAND. NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS GENERALLY INCLUDE A PLAYGROUND, TABLES WITH OR WITHOUT A SHELTER, OPEN AREAS FOR ACTIVE PLAY, AND QUITE OFTEN HARD SURFACE COURTS FOR BASKETBALL, TENNIS OR OTHER RACKET SPORTS. THEY ARE INTENDED TO SERVE THE ACTIVE AND PASSIVE NEEDS OF ALL SEGMENTS OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD FROM CHILDREN TO MATURE ADULTS. GENERALLY THEY ARE NOT USED FOR EVENTS THAT INVOLVE LARGE GROUPS OF PEOPLE.

This park fits that description well. The park generally sits below and is sheltered by the old railroad grade alignment that the Platte River Trail follows. The active recreation draws people from across the city to play

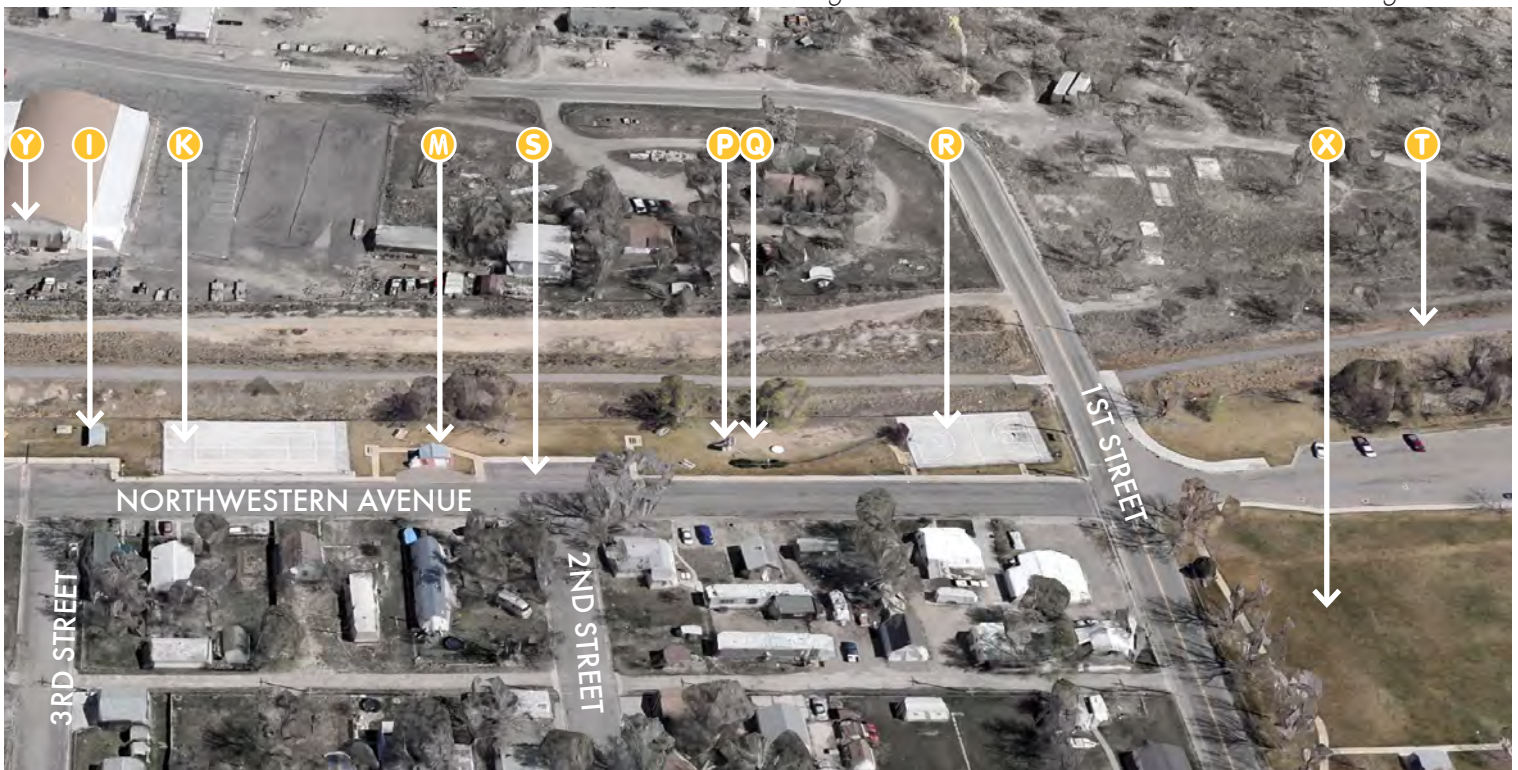
alone or with friends. The neighborhood keeps a watchful eye and there are no hidden areas south of the berm. In general the park simply suffers from the natural wear and tear of generations of play and the loss of cohesiveness that results from years of small projects that improve the park but don't work toward a single larger vision.

Major Features (continues numbering from left):

- T. North Platte Bicycle Trail
- U. Sloping lawn
- V. Level irrigated lawn
- W. Picnic area
- X. First Street Park
- Y. Wagon Wheel Roller Skating
- Z. Neighborhood

Finally, internal walkways are limited to a couple of small connections to the courts and behind the rest room. The sidewalk along Northwestern Avenue has varying condition, much of which has cross slopes that exceed ADA requirements. The western end of the street is very steep, but ADA allows for this if the walkway attaches to or follows the street. The trail is in good condition.

Figure 3: Norene Kilmer and First Street Parks' existing condition.



Amenity	No.	Condition	Notes	
A	Recycle Center	1	Adequate	Conflicts with desired trail alignment
B	Chain Link Fence	300'	Fair	Damaged from vehicular collisions
C	Bench (Black Metal)	3	Good	
D	Horse Shoe Pit	1	Good	Made by local players
E	Picnic Table (Concrete)	6	Good	Standard design
F	Picnic Shelter	1	Poor	Unique design, ok roof, overall worn out
G	Bicycle Rack	2	Poor	
H	Portable Toilette	1	Good	Rented from Shawn's Johns (307) 247-2827. Accessible.
I	Rest room Building/ Maintenance Shed	1	Poor	Structure has not been fully used to its purpose. Storage and irrigation now.
J	Dogipot	1	Good	Mounted on Maintenance Shed
K	Trash Can (Black Metal)	2	Good	
L	Playground - Ground Play	1	Fair	Aging Equipment,
M	Playground - Swings	1	Good	Two swings, missing one seat and chains. No fall surfacing.
N	Park Lighting	4	Good	Cobra heads (3) with dual heads
O	Parking Lot	2	Poor	Total of (33), 8 in south, and a practical total of 25 on the north.

Figure 4: First Street Parks' existing conditions.



SITE INFORMATION: FIRST STREET PARK

First Street Park is the city's First dedicated park. It is a little more than 1.5 acres, depending on how much of the trail and parking lot you include. It functions as both a neighborhood and community park. It's primary feature is a large lawn used casually for athletics and a playground area.

COMMUNITY PARKS TYPICALLY HAVE A LARGER LAND AREA THAN NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS AND PROVIDE AMENITIES FOR USE BY THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY. BY OFFERING A VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES AND AMENITIES, COMMUNITY PARKS APPEAL TO A BROADER RANGE OF RESIDENTS AND VISITORS. THESE PARKS ARE TYPICALLY LARGER THAN 5 ACRES AND PROVIDE AMENITIES SUCH AS REST ROOMS AND DRINKING FOUNTAINS ACCOMMODATING LONGER STAYS AT THE PARK.

This park shows that standard descriptions do not always cover all parks. Because of its location adjacent to Norene Kilmer park and the Platte River Trails system it has a larger urban draw as a trailhead. Its larger lawn area allows it to have the capacity to host field athletic practices. Since Mills does not have another large park with these facilities, it acts as a larger park in this respect.

The playground is both showing signs of aging and appears to be under utilized. It is a "Ground Play" style of play equipment which means it is designed to keep kids active while using it - there is no place to rest. That is also a disadvantage to the only playground in the area that regularly hosts kids and their families to play - there is no destination in this type of playground. Staff feels that this playground is not adequately serving the community.

The enormous cottonwoods on the west side of the park cast shade and are the defining characteristic of the park - they provide an undeniable ambiance that, coupled with the lawn, creates a warm feeling of welcome.

Beneath the trees locals have built horseshoe courts and picnic tables populate the lawn around the playground. A unique shelter with V shaped posts is aging in a central location.

The restroom building here has proved to be unsuccessful. Within one season of construction it was permanently closed for its primary use due to vandalism. Since that

time it has only been used for park maintenance and contains the irrigation shutoff, controller, and other minor items.

Major Features (continues numbering from left):

- P. North Platte Bicycle Trail
- Q. Open lawn with informal baseball diamond
- R. Mature Cottonwood Allee
- S. Picnic area
- T. Norene Kilmer Park
- U. Westech Trail
- V. Neighborhood
- W. Water Treatment Plant

The park is also a popular walking destination for athletes, families and dog owners. The primary loop allows for a lap of nearly 1/4 mile (0.22 miles). The open grass is also a unique feature in the dry landscape of Mills and is an attractive destination in and of itself.

NORENE KILMER PARK



NORENE KILMER PARK



FIRST STREET PARK



FIRST STREET PARK



PARK CRITERIA: ADA COMPLIANCE

METHODS

A visual survey for ADA compliance and safety was conducted at all parks. Where significant issues were present, measurements were taken to confirm the exact nature of the compliance or safety issue. Generally speaking the greatest ADA and safety concerns are in the playground areas of the parks. Critical measurements were taken of each piece of play equipment to determine whether the equipment met playground CPSC safety requirements. The 2010 Standards for Accessible Design were used to determine ADA requirements and the Handbook for Public Playground Safety published by the CPSC was used to determine playground safety requirements.

NORENE KILMER GENERAL ADA COMPLIANCE:

- Parking: Each parking area contains one space



Photo 5: The old play equipment at Norene Kilmer Park should be removed as soon as possible.

designated for ADA parking. The spaces exceed cross slope requirements and the curb ramps are not adequate.

- Access to amenities: Existing play structures are not ADA compliant. Both play courts need access.

FIRST STREET GENERAL ADA COMPLIANCE:

- Parking: The parking lot does not contain a designated ADA space or a curb ramp to access the walks
- Access to amenities: The playground does not contain

an accessible route, the equipment is not accessible. The swings do not have clearance.

General ADA Compliance - accessible routes

According to the ADA, an accessible route to play equipment must be provided that is "firm, stable and slip resistant" and must meet other ADA accessible routes criteria for slopes, obstructions, handrails, etc. The route doesn't necessarily have to be concrete, but all ways to



Photo 6: The existing First Street park play equipment is generally in serviceable condition, but anecdotally is under used.

get from parking or adjacent sidewalks to playgrounds must meet the accessible routes criteria.

Sidewalk to playgrounds from parking lot has a 2" difference in elevation ($1/4''$ is allowed) If parking remains gravel, sidewalks must meet the gravel at grade. Sidewalks generally are four feet wide. ADA requires passing areas (or landings) sized 60"x60" every 200' along pathways. Lawns adjacent to walks are generally firm and stable, but wider pathways would both improve access throughout the park and meet the intent of the law. The rule of thumb for companion walking call for a minimum 60" walkway.

Neighborhood access is generally poor around the park because most streets do not have accessible sidewalks.

PARK CRITERIA: PLAYGROUNDS

PLAYGROUNDS

Playground play structures and swings do not meet current CPSC requirements. Pea gravel surfacing and lawn under the play equipment is NOT ADA compliant and has poor performance for impact attenuation.

First Street swings have multiple safety or ADA issues - toddler and strap seats located in the same swing bay, swings too close to support structures, no ADA swings and no surfacing. Norene Kilmer equipment needs to be removed immediately for safety concerns

PLAYGROUND ADA COMPLIANCE

ADA COMPLIANCE MUST BE PART OF THE PLAYGROUND PLANNING ALL NEW PLAYGROUNDS MUST BE COMPLIANT WITH THE 2010 ADA STANDARDS FOR ACCESSIBLE DESIGN.

THIS INCLUDES:

- PLAYGROUND COMPONENTS
- PLAYGROUND SURFACING
- AND ACCESS TO THE PLAYGROUND AREA
- AN ACCESSIBLE ROUTE FROM THE PARKING AREA TO THE PLAYGROUND MUST BE PROVIDED THAT IS STABLE, FIRM AND SLIP-RESISTANT.

SURFACING

Pea gravel is not an ADA compliant surfacing and in addition performs poorest for impact attenuation of all playground surfaces, according to studies by the National Program for Playground Safety. Pea gravel surfacing may look well maintained and does provide adequate fall protection, but quickly fills with dirt and solidifies, and in winter easily turns rock hard when wet.

The 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design (codified by the Americans with Disabilities Act), US Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) are the regulatory bodies covering public parks, play equipment and site furniture. The 2010 Standards for Accessible Design include provisions for historic sites and accessibility:

- (i) Alterations to historic properties shall comply, to the maximum extent feasible, with the provisions applicable to historic properties in the design standards specified in § 35.151(c).
- (ii) If it is not feasible to provide physical access to an

historic property in a manner that will not threaten or destroy the historic significance of the building or facility, alternative methods of access shall be provided pursuant to the requirements of § 35.150.

In addition new ADA rules for trail compliance are being proposed which will impact all pedestrian routes. Program accessibility will have to be addressed for all parks in Town of Mills. From the National Trails Training Partnership; Questions and Answers on proposed ADA trail guidelines:

“While the proposed accessibility guidelines address the special circumstances where designers and operators may not be able to achieve accessibility, they are encouraged to always provide access to the greatest extent possible. Departures from specific accessibility guidelines are permitted for any portion of the trail where compliance would:

1. cause substantial harm to cultural, historic, religious, or significant natural features or characteristics;
2. substantially alter the nature of the setting or the purpose;
3. require construction methods or materials that are prohibited by Federal, State, or local regulations or statutes;
4. not be feasible due to terrain or the prevailing construction practices.”



Photo 7: A boulder with the engraved plaque stating “This Park Dedicated in Memory of Norene Kilmer Clerk/Treasurer for the Town of Mills for 46 years indicates the grateful feelings of a town for a public servant.

INSPIRATION



PLAYGROUNDS



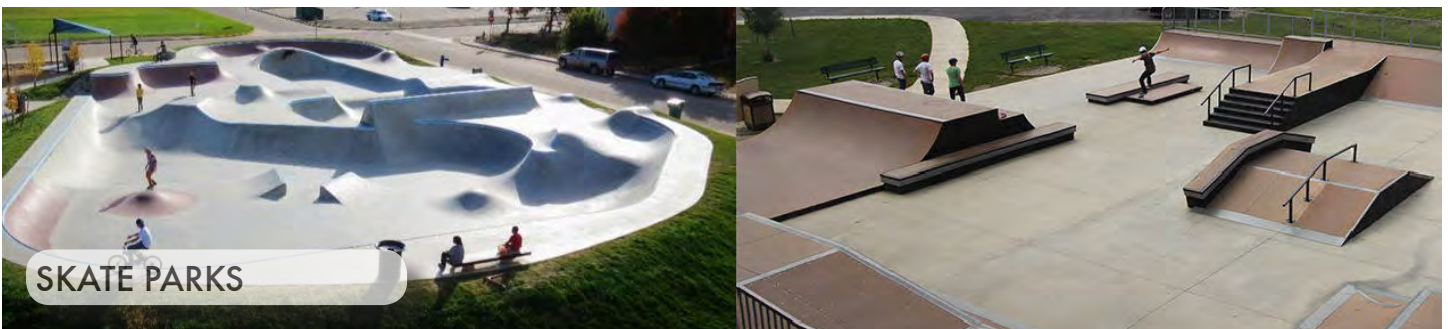
FENCES



TRAILHEAD SIGNAGE



COURT FENCING



SKATE PARKS



FAMILY SHELTERS



GROUP SHELTERS



SLEDDING



PUMP PARKS



TENNIS FENCING

COMMUNITY INPUT OVERVIEW

Community input was gathered at one Town Council meeting (no public attended this meeting) and two outreach sessions, one at the Halloween Hot Dog Roast October 31 and once at the December 16 Community Christmas events in 2017. Town staff attended these meetings and compiled the results for distribution via photograph.

Town Council

The Town Council provided direct feedback to the park options that were presented to them. Their feedback was directly received in a meeting that is documented on the site concepts page of this plan.

Public Input

Kids and adults were invited to weigh in with their favorite park amenities by voting and writing comments. Comments received included to include a dog park, a skate park, and a splash pad. The splash pad was very popular!

Dot voting was the second exercise. A tally of the dots places the total number of kids that participated at about 65. Nearly 35 adults voted as well.

The dot voting exercise indicated that kids would like to see play events they might not normally see



Photo 8: The Halloween event! (Town of Mills Photo)



Mills Fire Department
**Halloween
Hot Dog
Roast**



Town of Mills
First Street & Noreen Kilmer
**Parks
Master Plan
Input
Opportunity**

Tuesday, October 31

The Town of Mills is master planning our parks to beautify and revitalize some of our community's outdoor spaces. Take a break from trick-or-treating and bring your kids to the Mills Fire Department Halloween Hot Dog Roast to warm up and let us know what you'd like to see!

5:30 - 9 pm

Meet The fire fighters Community Parks Input

HOT DOGS & HOT CHOCOLATE **Explore Fire Trucks**

Mills Fire Department
300 Lakeview Drive
Mills, WY



Figure 5: Flier for the public input session

in a playground, including ground slides, modern or space-age play structures, tube slides, natural play areas, hanging out spaces, unique play features like nests or hammocks, and lots of hands on play events.

These concepts were considered in the development of this plan and should be reviewed when the playground at First Street Park is developed.



	Favorite Amenities	Kid Votes	Adult Votes	Notes
A	Embankment Slide - Formal	9	7	Both ground slide options proved popular with the kids.
B	Big Slide Play Feature	7	6	Standard play feature with BIG tube slides and canopy
C	Tree Canopy Play	7	4	Not easily feasible in a public park, but extremely fun.
D	Ground Slide - Natural	6	1	Natural play ground slides were less popular with adults.
E	Hammocks	6	0	Kids love hammocks.
F	Globe Climber Play Feature	5	2	Kids crawl on this kind of equipment like ants.
G	Free Play Super Lego Kit	5	0	These kits can be ordered online and are good for events.
H	Zip Line	5	1	Zip lines can be incorporated into play several ways.
I	Ground Play Climber	5	2	A better version of ground play!
J	Shade Sails with Ground Play	4	3	
K	Lounge Hammocks	4	5	Adults like this idea, a LOT!
L	Rope Bridge	4	0	
M	Built it yourself	4	1	Good for a monitored park.
N	Climb Over Play Equipment	4	0	
O	Sand Box	4	1	
p	Bird Nest	4	1	It's easy to pretend in a nest.



Photo 9: Someone considers the plan at the e Halloween event! (Town of Mills)

DESIGN OPTIONS: NORENE KILMER PARK and



PUMP PARK



GROUP SHELTER



SKATE PARK



REST ROOM BUILDING



DISC GOLF AND TRAILS



SLEDDING



FAMILY SHELTERS

THESE OPTIONS WERE PRESENTED FOR CONSIDERATION TO THE TOWN COUNCIL. THE CONCEPTS WERE DISCUSSED AND THE PARK OPTION RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE WERE THE RESULTS OF THAT MEETING.

FIRST STREET PARK



TENNIS DETAIL



HORSESHOE COURTS



PLAY AND SHELTER



OVERLOOK AT TENNIS



GROUP SHELTER



LARGE PLAYGROUND

PARK CONCEPT: NORENE KILMER PARK

PARK CONCEPT

Based upon discussion with Town Staff, Town Council, and a review of the public input the following ideas for the Master Plan at Norene Kilmer Park were formed:

- Use the west end as simply as possible
- Use the street right of way to the north of the trail however possible
- Simplify use of the big slope, sledding is dangerous with the above ground pipeline there. Don't discourage it, but don't directly encourage it.
- Let the shady west end of the level lawn be a great family picnic area
- Provide access from south to north through the park
- Get ride of the maintenance building
- Have a family shelter
- Keep the tennis court and basketball court where they are
- Improve access to the Platte River Trail
- Have an exercises station course
- Have some bigger dream items in the plan
- Make a phased plan



COLLAGE THAT WAS CREATED FROM THE OPTIONS PRESENTED TO COUNCIL

PARK CONCEPT: FIRST STREET PARK

PARK CONCEPT

Based upon discussion with Town Staff, Town Council, and a review of the public input the following ideas for the Master Plan at First Street Park were formed:

- Plan for a larger playground
- Keep the play field
- Allow for multiple shelters
- Make a Trail Head
- Look at signs at the four corners of First and Northwestern
- Look at access to the river north and south of the bridge
- Look at a new fence along First
- Tear down the existing unused rest room building





MASTER PLAN DESCRIPTION

Based upon feedback from Staff and council, a Phased concept plan was developed for both parks, geared to allow the renovations to be developed slowly over time. A single larger project could remake either park at one time, but smaller pieces with clear objectives need to be identified for long term improvements that can be tackled as budgets allow.

THE PHASES ARE PRESENTED SEQUENTIALLY, BUT NOT NECESSARILY PRESENTED IN THE ORDER IN WHICH THEY SHOULD BE BUILT OR FUNDED.

Nine independent phases are proposed:

PHASE 1: PLAYGROUND

Build a large playground that replaces the existing under used play area at First Street Park with a much larger play area with small shelters and other basic improvements geared towards making this the go-to family park destination in Mills.

PHASE 2: WATER ACCESS

A project that provides direct water access to the North Platte near the Platte River Commons trail bridge adjacent to First Street park.

PHASE 3: TRAILHEAD

Provide a designated Trailhead at 1st Street Park northeast of the intersection of Northwestern Avenue and First Street. The adjacent parking and three different trail directions make this a great jumping off point for trail users and will provide a landmark location within the Town of Mills for trails.

PHASE 4: GROUP LAWN

Create a destination for large gatherings at a group shelter where the current playground is in Norene Kilmer Park. This is a significant reorganization of the space between the basketball court and the tennis court and would renovate all of the public amenities in that area making safe places for groups to gather while being separate from the playground across the street. Remove the fence along the slope and reclaim the barren slope. Add a ground slide for play. Repave the eastern parking

lot and repair or replace existing sidewalks as necessary.

PHASE 5: COURTS

Address the fences and provide ADA access to the courts. Repave the western parking lot and repair or replace the sidewalks around it providing appropriate access points.

PHASE 6: SKATE PARK

Add a skate park to the city property north of the trail to expand the function of the park while improving a vacant and under utilized area. The designated area is adjacent to the roller rink and will provide additional traffic and eyes in this area. Currently the property is unused.

PHASE 7: BRIDGE

Cut a chunk out of the old railroad embankment that the Platte River Trail follows and replaces it with a bridge, providing an at grade connection from historic Mills to the skate park and roller rink to the north. This work effort also includes several opportunities to create additional amenities along the trail and connections to the park that reinforce the advantages having a great trail system cross the community.

PHASE 8: WEST PICNIC

Build several small picnic shelters around level and shaded lawn areas for family lawn games and informal gatherings. This phase includes a larger tree planting effort for the whole park as well. Reclaim the slope by removing the fence and replanting.

PHASE 9: ATHLETICS

Diversify the uses at the park with several smaller projects that make it a destination for healthy living choices. These projects include developing a 1/4 mile fitness course that takes advantage of the western slope of the park and the railroad embankment slope, installing a disc golf course in the railroad runoff area and along the north side of the embankment, creating an informal bike trail network for dirt bikes north of the embankment and west of the skate park, and creating a better Platte River Trail connection at the west end of the park from the neighborhood.

In total these phases represent a total remodel of the two parks while adding many of the amenities that the town is

Other projects along the way...

missing overall.

GATEWAY SIGNS

New Gateway Signs should be designed and installed at the corner of Northwestern Avenue and First Street, where indicated on the plans. These signs might match the other new signs around town, but should be appropriately scaled to the park. This corner offers a unique opportunity to create a single entry statement that at one time marks both parks, the trails and the historic neighborhood.

MASTER IRRIGATION PLAN

Implement a total park irrigation plan (In conjunction with Phases 1 and 4) with at least the following provisions: Controller, remote control of valves, ET control, master valve, flow sensor, looped mainline, and sports field irrigation. Separate programs for dry park, play lawn, ball field, and the open slopes to the west should be included to control the amount of water applied to each area type throughout the season. Provisions for tree and ornamental planting should be included as well.

MEMORIALS

The existing memorials only consist of the Norene Kilmer boulder. Future donor memorials should be incorporated into the projects outlined in this Master Plan. Individual benches and the like are appropriate, but playgrounds and bridges can also be named. The goal is to limit random pathways, trees, and sitting areas that are not part of the overall plan.

MILLS TRAILHEAD: WALKING AND BICYCLING LOOPS WITHIN MILLS

Having a walk that creates loop is one thing, marketing it is another. Same goes for the exercise loop. Once loops are made, develop signage and web pages that promote these loops as events and get people outside!

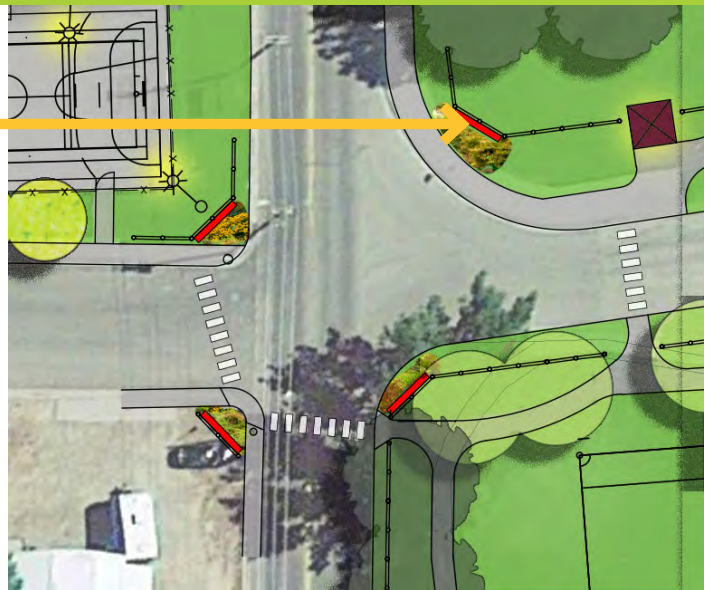
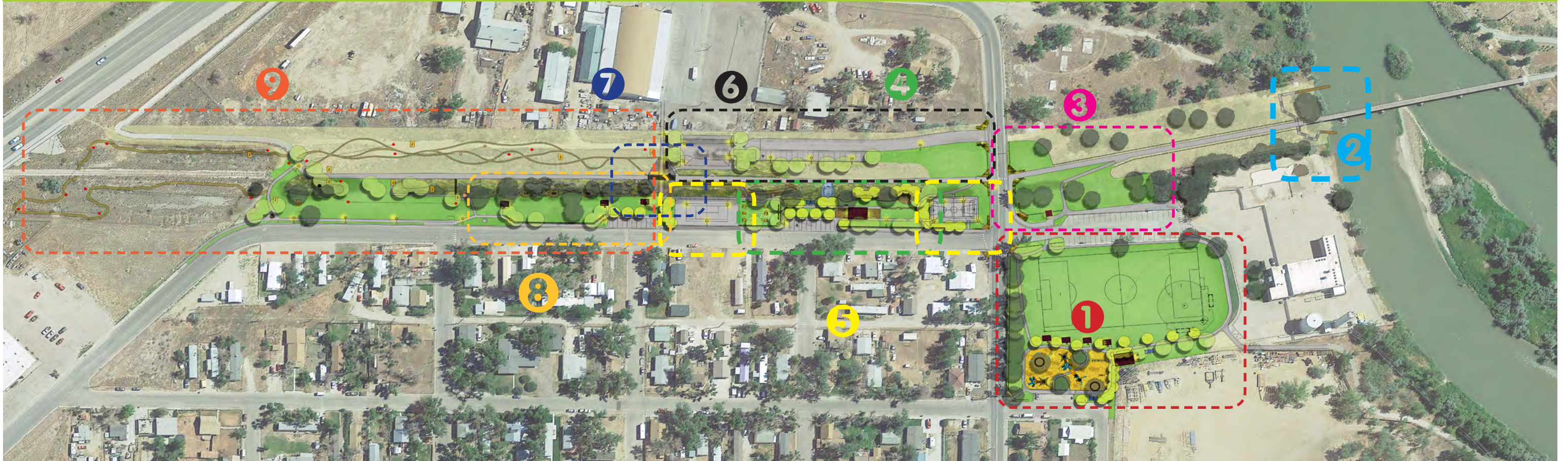


Figure 6: Plan detail showing how the Gateway Signs Landmark the Intersection of First Street and North Western Avenue.



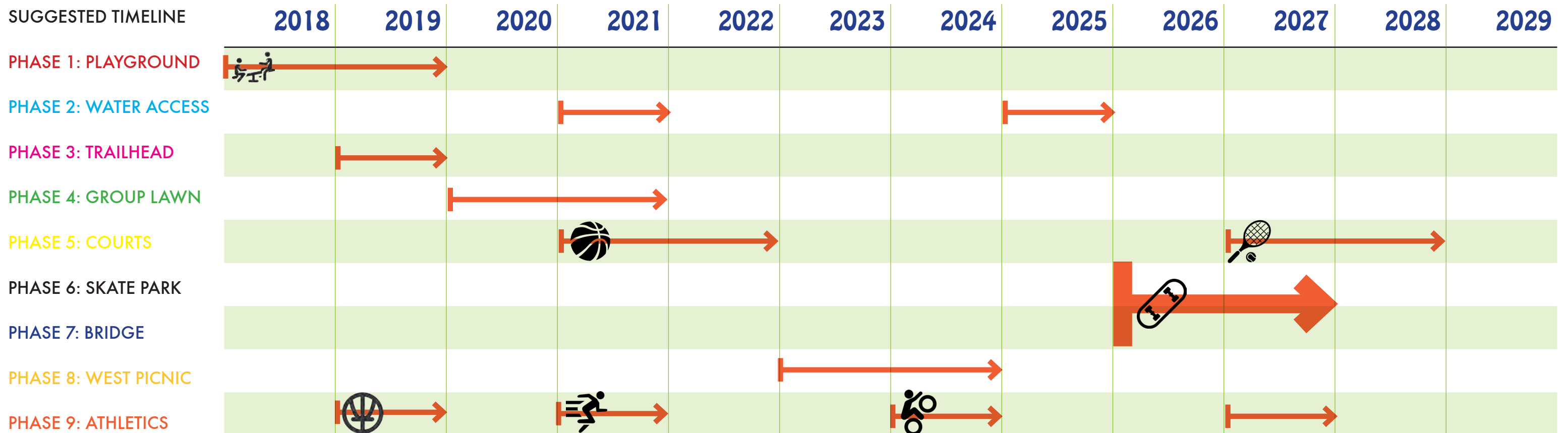
Figure 7: Promote Community Assets.

MASTER PLAN AREAS



^Figure 8: Master Plan Phases / Figure 9: Timeline

SUGGESTED TIMELINE





FULL PRINTED MASTER PLAN AVAILABLE FROM TOWN OF MILLS



DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

This Master Plan is predicated on the initial project being the development of the playground at First Street Park.

The First Street Park design concept includes three major elements:

1. A greatly enlarged play area to serve the community. The idea is to greatly enlarge the play area, allowing for two major play equipment features for 5-12 year old range and one play equipment feature geared towards younger kids. Also included would be plenty of room for minor single play pieces, swings, and a group swing - a popular item in the dot voting.
2. Multiple Shelters accommodate multiple groups at any one time. While the plan calls for one larger structure for large groups, four smaller shelters allow multiple groups to visit the park at the same time while not commandeering the only shaded table in the area.
3. Walkways define the edge of the play area. Because play surfacing is difficult to maintain in dusty areas we propose edging the entire play area with the walkways. The smaller green areas within the play area are to preserve trees by encircling them with a small fence to protect planted landscape areas (that might have paths through). Other trees will be protected by circular benches. The idea is to strike a balance between protecting the trees and some landscape and having clearly defined play areas that are safe. A fence is proposed between the play area and the parking lot so kids don't directly wander out of the play area.

Play features will be selected based on the dot voting matrix and finding good prices within the market.

Two other common park elements introduced in this phase are the rest room structure and the park fence. Rather than developing permanent rest room structures, we've suggested creating smaller, cheaper, but aesthetically pleasing shelters that house the portable toilets. This allows them to be replaced by the vendor when necessary, and the permanent structure is lighter on the ground while maintaining a clean look to the park.



Photo 10: Portable Toilette Shelter Facility

The Park fence established by these projects will be a common feature thorough out the community of Mills. This fence should be modular, clean, easy to maintain, yet distinguished and representative of the long term community vision for Mills' parks.

Other design characteristics should include:

- 4" maximum gap to keep kids from getting stuck, or



Photo 11: Proposed Mills Park Fence

greater than 8" gaps.

- Transparency - being able to see through the fence
- Simplicity - no complicated tools needed to repair
- Availability of replacement parts
- Classic character - not that it needs to be timeless, but it shouldn't speak too directly to any specific era.
- Sturdy enough to keep a kid from pushing it over, but not so sturdy that it stops a truck.
- Adaptability - nice next to playground and street.



PH1 Figure 1: Freestanding Play Equipment Example



PH1 Figure 3: School Aged Play Equipment Example



PH1 Figure 2: Preschool Play Equipment Example



PH1 Figure 4: Climber Example



PHASE 1: PLAYGROUND

PRIMARY PROJECT ELEMENTS:

- A. Playground remodel and expansion including:
 - 2-5 or Preschool aged play feature including shade canopy, slides, climbers, play panels, play tunnels sized for young children
 - 5-12 school aged play feature including slides, climbers, play panels, play tunnels, bridges, ramps, platforms
 - Freestanding play equipment including motion play, climbers, and others
 - Natural Play elements from locally harvested trees for balance beams, seats, and climbers
 - Group Swing
 - Standard swings
 - Accessible play surfacing (both tiles and engineered wood fiber will be used)
- B. New walks around play area act as play edging, including grading and drainage for
- C. (4) New family shelters with single picnic table and grill at each
- D. (1) Large group shelter with (2) grills and (4) picnic tables
- E. (2) Circular benches protect existing trees that provide shade in the play area
- F. (2) rest room arbors and handwashing stations
- G. Move horse shoe courts to Norene Kilmer Park
- H. Park fence along 1st Street
- I. Remove rest room buildings in Norene Kilmer Park and in First Street Park
- J. Irrigation upgrades
- K. Landscaping, including additional trees, some screening along fence of Westech

PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS:

- Existing play equipment could remain as an interim way to grow the playground.
- Truck access to Water Treatment Plant to east is the limitation on how far east the lawn can go north of the fence
- Westech provides an interesting back drop to this playground. Is there a way they could provide a canopy from an old truck bed or some other creative use of their expertise? It would enhance the uniqueness of this park considerably

- The initial project at the playground can have a sub-phase, initially implementing the playground and bringing in the shelters in a future year. However, the initial phase needs to include at minimum the sidewalks, circular benches, and demolition.

t



PH2 Figures 1, 2: River Access Adds Vitality



PH2 Figure 3: Access Stairs Example



PH2 Figure 4: Existing River Condition - No Easy Access From the Platte River Trail above.



PHASE 2: WATER ACCESS

PRIMARY PROJECT ELEMENTS:

- A. Water access by bridge from trail to north, with a dock and a potential boat ramp
- B. Water access by bridge from trail to south with a dock
- C. Vehicular access along north side of trail through town property
- D. Remove chain link where possible along Water Treatment Side.
- E. Interpretive stations along trail and at docks
- F. Provide fence along trail to begin the feeling of care and definition between actively maintained areas and more wild landscape.

PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS:

- Access through Water Treatment Facility? Look for a way to open up the north side of the treatment center to the river. This is a huge opportunity, but will require some adjustment of operations at the plant.
- Water access in town property should be encouraged at every opportunity. Recreation opportunities like water access are how communities are measured for livability by visitors and residents.
- The boundary of the Water Treatment Plant must be maintained, but should be reduced wherever possible to increase river access and openness.
- Some of these projects may be accomplished by other entities that have a specific interest in opening the river to more access.
- The fence is intended to provide a “cue to care” that visitors can easily identify with as they approach the parks. This cue tells people that this area is cared for and maintained deliberately as a natural area.



PH3 Figure 1: Proposed Trail Head Sign Style



PH3 Figure 2: Trail Sign in Casper



PHASE 3: TRAILHEAD

PRIMARY PROJECT ELEMENTS:

- A. Trailhead structure, maps and orientation area
- B. Trail connection to Platte River Commons
- C. Trail connection to Platte River Trail North
- D. Trail Connection to Platte River Trail South via the Westech corridor
- E. Re-stripe Northwestern Ave and add curb to north side to separate bike path
- F. Expand lawn and landscape areas along trail to enhance the sense of arrival in Mills.
- G. Walk/Trail connections up bank and along road to safely make the connections
- H. Park fence
- I. Planted gateways
- J. Community Trailhead branding signs at four corners
- K. Recycling area clean up and organize bin locations to be clear and separate from trail corridor. (See Project Consideration below for further recommendations.)

PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS:

- Parking lot striping could provide an aisle reduction on the north side which could allow the bike lane to pass north of parked cars on existing asphalt.
- Move recycling to another location. One location more central to the Town of Mills is Sunny Acres Park. This is further from the center across the river and more easily accessible from a greater number of Mills' neighborhoods.



PH4 Figure 1: Proposed Group Shelter Style



PH4 Figure 2: Embankment Slide on Slope



PHASE 4: GROUP LAWN

Primary project elements:

- A. Group shelter & patio of brick or stained and stamped concrete
- B. BBQ grills (4)
- C. Picnic tables (8)
- D. Mini amphitheater made from concrete walls or block with crushed gravel material for path and seating
- E. Irrigated Lawn - this work will set the foundation for the rest of the park
- F. Walkways, including access to trail, other walks within the project area and replacing walk along back of curb toward First Street.
- G. Park fence to protect picnickers from traffic (160')
- H. Tree planting and minor landscaping
- I. Repave east parking lot (9) spaces, including (1) ADA van accessible space.
- J. Rest room arbor and handwashing station
- K. Expand horseshoe courts developed in Phase 1, including (2) additional horseshoe pitches, 120 LF of fence, concrete curb and six benches
- L. Embankment slide and climbers up to trail level
- M. Slope reclamation of approximately 9,000 sf of slope area, adding a seat wall, removing fence and vegetation, and replanting with appropriate plant material.

Project considerations:

- Amphitheater cuts into the railroad bank to make a small gathering area for people to sit and hang out, take photos, or see a performance or talk by their group
- Picnic shelter active area is increased by "patios" on either end that have the grills and extra room for tables.



PH5 Figure 1: Surfacing Treatment



PH5 Figure 2: Drop fence height along back.



PHASE : COURTS

Primary project elements:

- A. Refresh tennis court with an acrylic court surfacing system - other systems could be considered.
- B. Remove tennis court fence fabric and extra posts at front gates, provide new colored chain link fabric, new gates in back, and lower fence along back edge. Use a green court, orange out of bounds, with white lines color scheme.
- C. Refresh basketball court with an acrylic court surfacing system, with a moderate color scheme.
- D. Remove and replace basketball court fence where damaged, replace fabric with colored fabric, paint poles, and provide new gates and hardware.
- E. New longer walk to provide ADA tennis access in back with new gates - only 4' height gates needed.
- F. New gates and walkway access to basketball court to provide ADA access.
- G. Repave west parking lot
- H. New sidewalk around west parking lot with ADA parking space and curb cut

Project considerations:

- The tennis fence is proposed to drop in back at an angle to open the feeling of the court up to the berm where a seating area at the top would allow casual observation of a game.
- Current lighting is sufficient.
- A cushioned hard court is recommended if tennis aficionados request a slower play. Rubberized cushioning systems provide a surface that is easier on the joints, allows better ball play, and reduces the heat reflected off of the court. Several systems are available for consideration including rolled cushioned mats, rubber granule systems, or even clay systems. These are all more expensive and require greater maintenance, but can still be very durable with proper care.
- Acrylic surfaces can also be durable for the basketball court as well and offer multiple color schemes that can significantly brighten the court. Lighter colors reflect less heat, but darker colors melt more quickly. A moderate color scheme with blues and greens would provide a clean appearance with practical maintenance considerations.



PH6 Figures 1,2,3: Skate Parks on Slopes.



PHASE 6: SKATE PARK

PRIMARY PROJECT ELEMENTS:

- A. Skate park 80'x100' is built into the old railroad grade berm to allow for tall drops - the park is built on the ground, no bowl is required.
- B. Parking lot for 20 vehicles
- C. 450 linear feet of street access improvements
- D. Lighting
- E. Tree plantings and landscaped open area with lawn as appropriate.
- F. Waste receptacles
- G. Allow for emergency vehicle access through the skate park with an open 12'-20' lane

PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS:

- The size of skate park shown here is very large for the Town of Mills (see chart) and could certainly be reduced. However, while providing a

Skatepark Size Typology

	Skate Spot	3,000—5,000 sf Serves 12,000 residents 5 patron capacity
	Neighborhood Skatepark	8,000—11,000 sf Serves 25,000 residents 65 patron capacity
	Regional Skatepark	20,000+ sf Serves 75,000 residents 100+ patron capacity

“Neighborhood” skate park may seem like overkill, it would create a draw from the entire Casper community.

- Parking lot size may be reduced or enlarged depending on the ultimate size of the skatepark.
- Skateparks are typically driven by youthful community activists who want a place to play their sport. They are interested in getting a skatepark, not building parking lots and roads. If Mills has an interested party, keep an open mind and welcome their ideas!
- Phase 6 and 7 should be accomplished as a single construction effort.



PH7 Figure 1 & 2: Bridge Style



PH7 Figure 3: Seat Wall - Option to Add Veneer Stone and Cap.



PHASE 7: BRIDGE

PRIMARY PROJECT ELEMENTS:

- A. 50' pedestrian bridge on trail - cut bank to achieve. Railings should match city fence to a degree.
- B. On grade paved connection to rink, skate park & trails, making the back of house the primary neighborhood connection to the roller rink
- C. Landscape rock seat wall along edges of path.
- D. Lighting
- E. Steps up to Platte River Trail from park level
- F. Tennis overlook Seating
- G. Add benches along Platte River Trail
- H. Bridge Abutments
- I. Rock Slope
- J. Excavation - approximately 1,000 cy of material removed, may be less or more depending upon final design.

designed element that creates sitting places on the ascent and a wide spot in the trail on top. In this case, the Tennis overlook should still be built into the slope.

PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS:

- This is an ambitious project - to create a bridge where none is needed. Consider its context: A renewing historic residential district with young families, an attractive family friendly destination to the north, a family friendly park near the Platte River, and a busy skate park to the north. This project provides an "On Grade" connection to the north while maintaining the bike trail connection east west.
- An open bridge is proposed, with an interesting design to the span. The slopes below would be finished with a landscape rock to make seating areas so that the cut becomes part of the park rather than a dark thoroughfare. An open design would be a popular photo destination!
- This bridge will create an attractive destination for family photos. The design of the bridge, the seating, and the slopes below should be arranged to maximize the seating and aesthetic view from the south.
- Consider lighting under the bridge.

Option:

If the bridge is not constructed with the skate park, the connection from the south is still important. In this place a wide set of steps, with seat walls built in should allow for easy access over the trail from the south. This should be a



PH8 Figure 3: Family Shelter - Matching Group Shelter Style.

PH8 Figure 1&2: Rock Garden Slope Near Bridge



PHASE 8: WEST PICNIC AREA

PRIMARY PROJECT ELEMENTS:

- A. (3) Family shelters, large enough for a single picnic table with adjacent outdoor grill.
- B. Park fence along back of walk to create safe lawn for play and activities
- C. Irrigated lawn for games, requires some levelling
- D. Street side tree and landscape planting to define the lawn spaces and accent the fence.
- E. Reclaim slope as park landscape, seating, and lawn. See project consideration below.
- F. Add picnic pods - additional unsheltered picnic tables on the slope with stepped access and a short wall below. These provide tables with a bit of prospect/refuge without a roof, and keep the lawn open below.
- G. Rock slope / terraced gardens built along slope with multiple walking paths and garden areas. Planted areas would be available for adoption by a local gardening group, but should be planned as native wildflower gardens to minimize maintenance requirements and expectations. This area can contain benches, small pathways, steps, unique boulders, and rock garden features.

PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS:

- Shelter style should match Group Shelter, does not need to match 1st Street Park shelters, but could.
- Fence along railroad berm should be removed and replaced with a seat wall or landscaped edge, or both.
- Remove existing picnic tables on sloped bases.
- Maintain open lawn in this area between shelters for lawn games



PH9 Figure 1: Disc Golf is a Good Match for Open Country - Even in the Wind!



PH9 Figure 3: Dirt Bike Course is Fun for All Ages.



PH9 Figure 2: Fitness Course Activities.

FITNESS COURSE /CHALLENGE COURSE	
WARM UP STATION	
HILL CLIMB	
HILL SPRINT	
STRETCH AND CORE	
LIFT, PUSH, PULL	
CORE AND MORE	
HIGH CLIMB	
LIFT, PUSH, PULL	
HIGH STEPPER	
CORE AND MORE	
BALANCE	
CHILL AND STRETCH	
FITNESS COURSE REPRESENTED BY	
	1
DISC	GOLF
REPRESENTED BY	
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PHASE 9: ATHLETICS

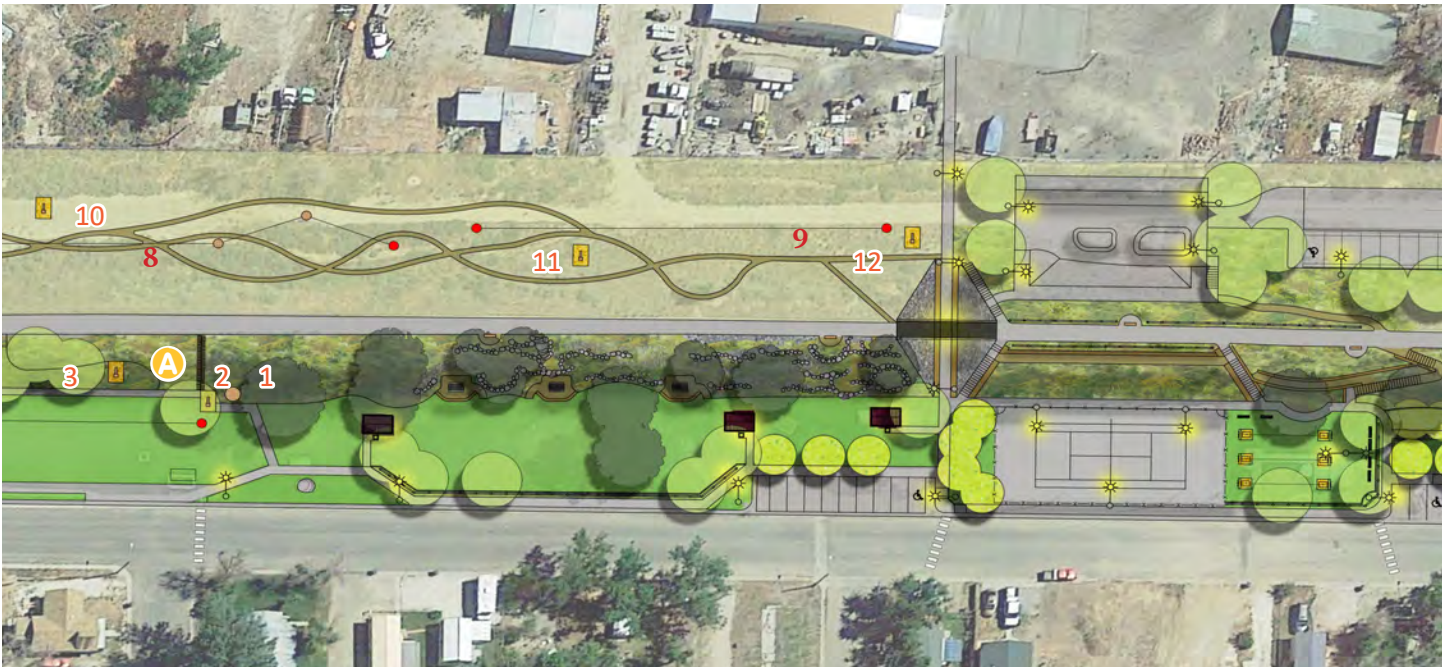
PRIMARY PROJECT ELEMENTS:

- A. Quarter mile 12-station fitness course, organized to use the natural railroad grade up to the trail, and the east west lawn climb as fitness stations that take advantage of the existing environmental features. Stations numbered on plan.
- B. 9-hole frisbee golf course with obstacles with a narrow gravel trail built on top of the grade to stay dry
- C. Dirt bike trails on north bank. These may be built as intensively as the proponents may wish.
- D. Clean up path access at west end with a paved sloping connection. Additional connection may take place across the sloping lawn at the point that Northwestern and the trail are at equal elevations.
- E. Widen walk behind curb on Northwestern Avenue, fix cross slope issues. Extend as Northwestern turns into Pendell and connect to the larger trail system.
- F. Stabilize back slope and revegetate as appropriate.

- Several of these activities play over each other. There may be points of conflict and some warnings needed for fair play. On all but the very busiest of days there should not be any significant issues. Seeing other sports in play should serve to expand people's interest in visiting the park!

PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS:

- These items can all happen individually, or as an aggregate project.
- The dirt bike trails needs an organization dedicated to its maintenance.
- Each fitness element requires its own signage
- Town can maintain disc golf and fitness course.



DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

This Master Plan recommends a phased approach to development for these parks. This allows the town to both make a reasonable commitment to the park improvement over time and have a defined expectation for investment and return to the community.

COSTS

The raw overall cost projected to develop the amenities outlined in this master plan are available from the town. This does not include a contingency, overhead and mobilization, taxes, or design. Typical planning numbers for these are as follows:

- Design: 6-12% of total costs, depending on the specific features, required specialists, and complexity.
- Overhead and Mobilization by the contractor: 10-20% of total costs, but these may also vary greatly in a public bid - a competitive bidding season will see lower numbers, but already busy contractors will be willing to risk losing the project for a higher

profit.

- Contingency: Planning books recommend up to 25% for Master Plan phase, reducing to 5-8% for construction estimates.

REDUCING THE COSTS

Parks are often at the end of the budget line - but parks are one of the defining aspects of a town, they comprise a big part of the intangible quality of place, the *Je ne sais quoi*. Put them at the beginning of budgeting, make a plan and stick to it!

There are other ways to reduce the costs itemized in the opinion of probable cost provided with this document. Some ideas include:

- Specialty clubs and sports groups: Active groups within your community may be looking for places to play their sport. Receive their interest openly and they may provide much of the labor needed to build these features.
- Small projects: The phases of this project can be approached as small projects that staff implements through different budgets, i.e. streets for parking lots.
- Big donor: Rare!

RECOMMENDED PATHS TO IMPLEMENTATION

The following planning steps are necessary to reach complete park redevelopment:

- Master Plan - Complete!
- Survey - a complete site survey allows the accurate development of future design plans and cost estimating. Preliminary surveys of both parks have been made. Additional information will be necessary for both parks to complete construction documents.
- Schematic Design and program verification - The stakeholders for each of the park's planned "Phases" should be involved in the final design and feature selection for those parts of the park. This will allow continued community involvement in the park's development.
- Construction Documentation - the creation of bid ready documents ensures the improvements will be constructed according to code and applicable regulations. During this time opportunities for



Figure 10: Fund Raising needs specific goals.

STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION

community groups and volunteer efforts are also identified by the community and design team, coordinated with the activity groups, scheduled to minimize conflict with the overall construction, and planned out logistically. There are many opportunities for volunteer involvement in this project.

- Public Bid - A public bid allows fair competition and ensures a competitive price for the improvements.
- Construction - The period of time where active construction takes place on the site.
- A contractor will be responsible for installing improvements, and will be responsible for safety on the site during their construction period.
- A designated City Project Manager will be responsible for coordinating the volunteer efforts with the contractor and making sure materials and supplies arrive on time. The project manager will act as the City's Project Representative during construction, making final decisions and responding to requests from the contractor for information.
- The Project Designer will be responsible for Construction Observation, reviewing submittals by the contractor and ensuring compliance with the plans.

Additionally, in specific cases there will be opportunity to procure amenities directly from a contractor or manufacturer. For example, in the case of the playground the town may choose to develop the play area and host bids from play equipment provider/installers for the play equipment based on a not-to exceed bid or through another buying program.

These are clear paths for organizing the park feature development. Others may exist, but these are the direct routes to implementing these proposed improvements.

Phased Development: Focus on developing each phase, utilizing the stakeholders for each area to drive the extent and implementation of those improvements. The advantage is that improvements are focused in one area of the park with smaller incremental expenditures. The disadvantage is that it is easy to lose momentum with this approach.

Combined or Complete Development: Develop the



Photo 12: Fund Raising needs specific goals.

complete project at one time. The advantage is that construction prices are usually better with a larger project and that there is only one project to manage. The disadvantage is that there is a large price tag to pay at one time.

The primary concern for either development plan is identifying funding and fund raising strategies through the town, through grants, and through opportunities identified by the parks department. The survey and Schematic Design are necessary to identify fund raising targets.

ANNUAL BUDGETING

Municipalities of all size struggle to serve the development needs of their communities. Often public spaces flounder, not because of inattentiveness or lack of desire, but because of a lack of a clear plan when budgeting time comes around and it is time to set the numbers in stone. Committing to setting aside a specific amount for several years towards one park or one project is a way to start the momentum and get the project rolling that we recommend.

LAND & WATER CONSERVATION FUND PROJECT (LWCF)

Project sponsors such as cities, towns, counties, school and recreation districts are eligible to apply for L&WCF monies. The L&WCF is a matching grant program based upon a fifty percent (50%) reimbursement of the total cost of the project. Only costs for the development and/or acquisition of public outdoor recreation lands and facilities are eligible for assistance

Tracy Williams
Division of State Parks, Historic Sites & Trails
2301 Central Avenue, Barrett Building
Cheyenne, WY 82002
307-777-8681

RTP GRANT

Wyoming State Parks, Historic Sites and Trails (SPHST), is offering funding for trail-related projects throughout the State of Wyoming. Wyoming Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Grants are administered through the Federal Highway Administration and are derived from federal gas taxes paid on fuel used in off-highway vehicles.

Trails Office: Supervisor Joshua Milek
phone (307) 335-8229
email joshua.milek@wyo.gov

MOTORBOAT GAS TAX GRANT

In accordance with W.S. 39-17-111(c)(iii), Wyoming State Parks & Historic Sites (SPHS) provides \$100,000 every biennium through its Motorboat Grants Program to governmental entities for public boating facility improvements. The purpose of the program is to increase boating opportunities for the public throughout the state.

SPHS motorboat grantees are restricted to local (city and county) government agencies in Wyoming. SPHS makes motorboat program grants on a 50:50 cost share basis. Applicants must pay half the total cost of the project. Applications are due no later than August 21st, 2015.

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DIRECT FUNDRAISING

The Town of Mills may consider forming a Parks Foundation that directly solicits and receives funds from its citizens for the development of park land and amenities. A Park Foundation can be a successful vehicle for long term community investment if it has strong leadership and a few specific goals that it tackles.

RECREATIONAL MILL LEVY

A mill levy is the number of dollars a taxpayer must pay for every \$1,000 of assessed value on real property. Mills' total 2017 Mill Levy is comparable with surrounding communities within Natrona County, the entity that bills and receives the tax at \$72.890. The recreation Levy is also comparable at \$1.00.

WYOMING COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Most grants amounts awarded are between \$500-\$5,000, with other amounts considered. WCF offers several types of grants, viewable here: <http://wycf.org>

DANIELS FUND

"Bill Daniels established the Daniels Fund to operate in perpetuity as a permanent part of the communities we serve." The category under which these parks may be applicable is "Facilities that accommodate and encourage community gatherings (such as senior centers, youth centers, and community sports complexes)" <http://>

MANUFACTURER GRANTS

The Town of Mills should carefully evaluate and pursue grants available from manufacturers that are relevant to these parks. Examples of manufacturer grants are:

- Burke Playgrounds: www.bciburke.com/resources/funding-resource-center/grants - a matching grant.
- <https://www.playlsi.com/en/playground-planning-tools/playground-funding/playground-grants/> - A guide for other grants.

A GUIDE

The following is a useful guide to pursuing grants provided by Landscape Structures who also has a comprehensive grant resource posted on their website:

1. Understand the purpose of the grant and write to the grant requirements
2. Establish goals and activities that are clear
3. Outline your proposal before you begin writing
4. Write clearly, concisely and professionally
5. Write as if you have already been funded for the grant and are explaining what you will be doing
6. Make sure the proposal answers each question asked
7. Be sure to consult with required stakeholders and get appropriate approvals to submit the grant early in the process
8. The appearance of your proposal matters; use visuals when possible
9. Read and edit your proposal in its entirety
10. Have someone not familiar with your program read the proposal for clarity

