

Soldiers Field Park

Master Plan Outline

Prepared for
The City of Rochester
Board of Park Commissioners
November, 2016

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the following groups and individuals who helped to develop the Soldiers Field Park Master Plan:

The City of Rochester Board of Park Commissioners
The City of Rochester Park Department
Representatives of the Mayo Foundation
University of Minnesota Rochester
Soldiers Field Veterans Memorial Group
Historic Southwest Neighborhood Association

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Summary

In October of 2013, the City of Rochester Board of Park Commissioners put out a Request for Proposal to prepare a Master Plan for Soldier's Memorial Field Park to serve the area for the next 20–30 years. Consistent with the mission of the Park Board, this plan must consider the historic aspects of the park. The components of the master plan will be implemented as funding allows over the next several years. The 140-acre park at the southern end of the downtown core includes an 18-hole golf course, a municipal pool, running track, tennis courts, two playgrounds, a park shelter, multiple gardens, two ball fields, a football/sports field, trail access and a veteran's memorial. Current uses include athletic activities, community events, and other small events. Portions of the park are subject to deed restrictions associated with past dedications and land acquisitions.

Last July, the Park Board created a subcommittee to review detail elements of the various potential improvements needed and desired that were shown in the Soldier's Field Memorial Master Plan. The work of the subcommittee focused upon the area the Board designated for improvement over the immediate and intermediate time frame. This area includes all the land north of the Club House excluding the pool area. The pool area will be reviewed under a separate aquatics study.

This plan is intended to guide stewardship of this community asset at a time when the area directly south of downtown Rochester and north of Soldier's Field Park will experience significant changes in the built environment and urban landscape because of planned future investment.

Current trends in urban design and contemporary lifestyles are anticipated to influence the development of the park over the coming decades. Golf is an extremely low-density use for land and most of the park is used for this purpose. Active lifestyles and interest in walking paths, bicycle paths, flexible uses for open spaces and natural water elements will influence the development of the park.

This summary focuses on the timing of different work elements, subject to funding, over the next five years which will impact the Soldiers Field Park Master Plan.

1. Background Information

1.1 Introduction

The park will be impacted by implementation of the Downtown Master Plan, UMR campus growth, changing demographics and changing trends for recreation in the community. Because of the historic significance of the park, this history has been considered within the process of creating the master plan. It is the mission of the Board of Park Commissioners and the Park Department to provide quality activities, programs, and facilities for citizens of Rochester and for visitors.

Soldiers Field Park exists to preserve green space and natural resources, and to promote healthy lifestyles. This report outlines which aspects of the plan have been implemented, and focuses on the timing of different work elements, subject to funding, over the next five years.

1.2 History of the Park

Originally a pasture, Soldiers Field came into being when the American Legion purchased land from Dr. Christopher Graham in 1924.

The Legion started development of this property for a golf course in 1925. In 1927, the Legion transferred their interest in this property to the City of Rochester with the understanding that the City would develop the area as a total recreation grounds.

The golf course was the first development on the area. It was six and then nine holes with sand greens. Later this was extended to an 18-hole course and bent grass greens were developed on all 18 greens, plus two putt greens. The first clubhouse was a simple wooden structure, which functioned primarily a concession stand and golf privileges were dispensed at this location.

In 1929, the first golf pro was hired. The Zumbro River runs through the park, at the eastern edge of Soldiers Field was a dam called "Strawberry Dam". It was installed in the river to create a water head via the mill race to operate a grist mill that was located about half a block east of Broadway on Third Street SE. Strawberry Dam was just slightly east of where the south end of First Avenue SW now is. The water above the dam backed up to the west and north.

That backing up to the west kept a very high water table in most of the pasture area and there were many low marshy areas and even some ponds.

The main channel of the Zumbro came approximately where the golf clubhouse now stands, and from there it went due east to about where the picnic sanitary building is, and from there it made a short turn to the north and west and made a big bend that encompassed the trees that are southeast of the ball diamond. In fact, the leaning maple tree in this group was right over the swimming hole.

The section of the river that backed up to the north extended up to 6th Street SW at the present location of the Colonial Park Restaurant. The mill race originated at this location and extended in a northeasterly direction, crossing the corner of the property now used by the gas company as a parking lot, and it ran right along back of the present Nelson Tire Company building and went through the building now occupied by Orlen Ross Company.

The river was diverted to its present position in 1933. The engineering, which includes the three dams, was done by the State Highway Department. The changes in the stream led many areas of old river bottom to populate quickly with weeds and brush. As soon as the river was diverted and this large pond became dry, people started using it as a place to dump rubbish. All types of rubbish were dumped here filling the area about 150 feet from 6th Street SW by 1951. In 1952, the Clinic was digging the basement for the Mayo Building. By arrangement with the contractor, the Park Department got all the large stone hauled to Soldiers Field at no cost. This area of the park was covered with spoil as the stone was moved into this depression.

The old mill pond was filled in and is now a lawn area where there had previously been a jungle, inhabited by rats and other undesirable characters. The area along Broadway that is now a picnic grounds was badly eroded. This was filled and leveled with material from Silver Lake during the summer of 1936. This area grew up into a veritable jungle until 1951, when it was cleaned up and developed for a picnic grounds.

Development of the drives on the north end were completed in 1936, and it was the intention of the designer that the east and west panels be used as flowerbeds to embellish the area. The center circle was to contain the Legion Memorial. This was installed in 1951 with an appropriate dedication ceremony. The area east and west of the Third Ave entrance, which was to be the formal entrance, was to contain an athletic building. The original design of this building was intended to be a two-part building with a connecting arch and passageway over the Third Avenue entrance to the park.

The lights on Soldiers Field gridiron were paid for out of the student athletic fund of the high school. By agreement with the Park Department, the school was to have full control of the usage of the track and gridiron and could charge admission to events. For many years, 1929 to 1958, this cooperative arrangement worked very well. The Park Department furnished the grounds and buildings complete with seating for approximately 5,000 and the school took care of lighting the field, opening and closing gates, and turning on the lights and controlling the crowds.

The swimming pool was built in 1936 and it was designed to take advantage of the existing athletic building and to line up as a terminus of the view down the Third Avenue entrance. The pool was a W.P.A. project and was financed by matching funds with a federal grant. The matching funds were provided by an arrangement where the Legion borrowed money from the Mayo Properties Association and paid it back over a period of years. The Park Department furnished the operating costs out of its regular budget and turned the receipts over to the Mayo Properties Association for the retirement of the Legion's indebtedness. This loan was paid off in 1944.

The swimming pool receipts have been retained by the Park Department since that time to help finance operation. The receipts have never been equal to the expenditures, although in the peak years, it came very near balancing. In 1955, the Soldiers Field Pool had 123,000 swimmers. In 1956, a campaign was started to show the need of additional swimming facilities. The population spread was such that it would take two additional pools to accommodate the population in the future. The Silver Lake Pool was located in northeast Rochester with consideration that the third pool would have to be in the northwest.

The bridges on the golf course have had many changes. As mentioned, the Highway Department built the dams in Soldiers Field. When building the dams, they incorporated a set of steps down each flashing and a row of piers 10 feet apart across the river in the apron below each dam. These piers had two eye bolts protruding out of the top of each one so that a plank could be laid from one pier to the other thus forming a bridge for the golfers.

Each successive flood tore the planks up, subsequently, the Department decided to build above flood level bridges. The first bridges were built in 1935 and were of two types. One of them was made by the stringing of cables between trees on either side of the stream and installing planks on these. The other bridges were rigid structures constructed on stilts over the previously mentioned piers. Neither bridge type could withstand the force of floods, consequently, they had to be replaced frequently.

In 1939 the Highway Department had three permanent bridges built across the river. One was located at the dam by #5 tee and one on #9 fairway, which were footbridges 5 feet wide and one below #10 fairway ten feet wide for a vehicle bridge. These stood up until the flood of 1945 tipped the two footbridges over and they had to be rebuilt. The flood of 1951 twisted the upper one of these again. The Park Department personnel rebuilt the bridge and it has withstood all floods since that time, the middle bridge was rebuilt in a like manner following the flood of 1956.

In 1951, the Park Department a footbridge between #18 and #10 fairways would speed up play. The Park Department built a suspension bridge at this location. The flood of 1963 ruined the 10-foot vehicle bridge, it was rebuilt 4-feet above the former level, with no center column, it should never suffer flood damage again.

One of the most historically significant events held at Soldiers Field was in 1934, President Franklin D. Roosevelt conferred American Legion citations to Drs. C.H. and W.J. Mayo.

1.3 Purpose of the Master Plan

Soldiers Field Park is situated directly south of downtown and is a shared amenity for the public, the University of Minnesota Rochester and the renowned Mayo Clinic. In the foreseeable future, downtown Rochester has the ingredients to remain vibrant – historic architecture, established walkable neighborhoods and the Zumbro River. The future economic health of the city looks bright; a diversified economy is bolstered by similarly diverse residents. The University of Minnesota Rochester and the Mayo Clinic have plans to grow and the urban areas adjacent to the north of Soldiers Field are slated for future development.

In the Downtown Master Plan, the area north of the park entrance along 3rd and 4th Avenues is proposed to become a green spine connecting the UMR campus to the established Mayo Clinic campus. Directly adjacent to the west along 1st Avenue SW several new facilities will be built to expand the Mayo Clinic campus. These will be the new connections to Soldiers Field Park that present contextual opportunities for the park to develop.



Grooming trails for cross country skiing is a way to increase year-round-use of parks

1.4 Trends Influencing Park Use

Golf is a sport with a low-density use of land. The 18-hole course occupies about 70 percent of the area of the park. Participation in the game is declining, the number of golfers ages 18 to 34 has declined 30 percent over the last 20 years. The long-term trend suggests that participation in the sport will continue to decline, at the same time that current trends are defining the way that people use parks.

The public enjoys programs in parks, with programs, park attendance is stronger. Millennials are drawn to walkable environments near cultural amenities.

Cities are growing faster than suburban areas and this shift will affect urban core areas. Interest in health and wellness continues and parks are increasingly viewed as places beneficial to mental and physical health. Interest in not only walking and biking but in year-round use can turn underused parks into community oasis for recreational opportunities and cultural events.

2.Context and Analysis

2.1 Introduction

Soldiers Field Park is situated directly south of downtown and is a shared amenity for the public, the University of Minnesota Rochester and the renowned Mayo Clinic. In the foreseeable future, Downtown Rochester has the ingredients to remain vibrant; historic architecture, established walkable neighborhoods and the Zumbro River. The future economic health of the city looks bright; a diversified economy is bolstered by similarly diverse residents. The University of Minnesota Rochester and the Mayo Clinic have plans to grow and the urban areas adjacent to the north of Soldiers Field are slated for future development.

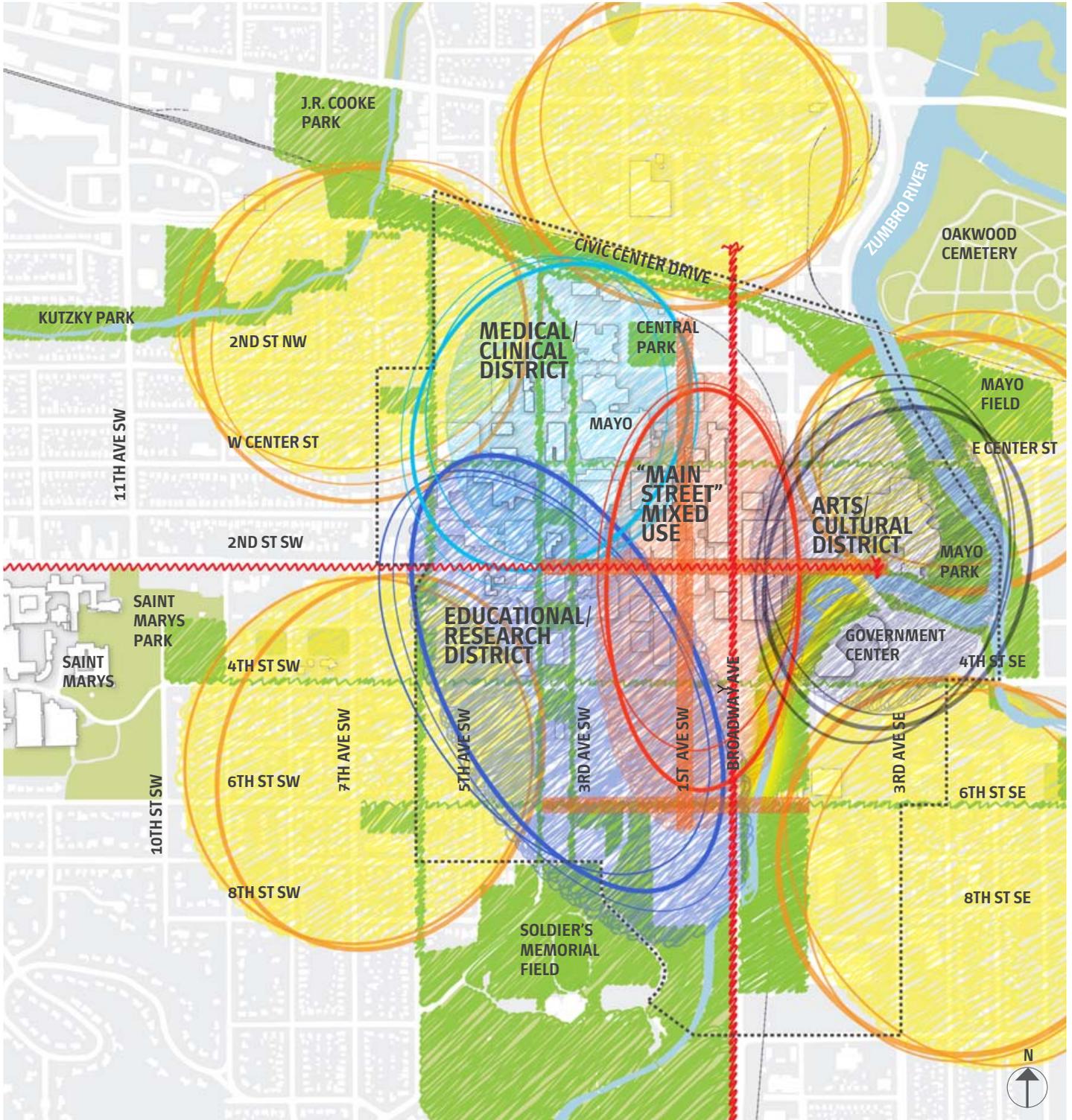
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Left - site map outlining the boundaries of the Downtown Master Plan.

Right - diagram showing the context of Soldiers Field Park in relation to Downtown.

Images borrowed from -
The Downtown Rochester Master Plan:
<http://www.rochestermn.gov/departments/planning-and-zoning/rochester-downtown-master-plan>



2.2 Site Analysis

Most of Soldiers Field Park is occupied by an 18-hole golf course bisected by the Zumbro River. The course is mostly flat. The northern portion of the park has two baseball fields, a 400-meter running track, tennis courts, a swimming pool, children's water play features and bituminous asphalt surface parking lots. The northern portion of the park has several buildings which include a pool house, a clubhouse for the golf course and utility buildings, many of which are showing signs of age and need maintenance.

The park is bounded generally by 12th Street / Highway 14 on the south, Broadway on the east, 7th Street on the north and a residential neighborhood on the west. The formal entrance to the park is at 3rd Avenue at the north by the war memorials, a secondary entrance is at 1st Avenue and access to parking is off Soldiers Field Drive and George Gibbs Drive.

The South Fork of the Zumbro River is prone to seasonal flooding in the spring which must be mitigated and considered in any design.





2.4 Guiding Principles

As part of community outreach during the development of the Master Plan, several Guiding Principles were developed with community input to influence the design of the Master Plan.

In May of 2014 the final Guiding Principles were established to:

- Preserve the park and the park boundary from future encroachment
- Provide a welcoming park for all ages and abilities
- Provide a variety of outdoor park spaces and programs, including opportunities for non-programmed recreation
- Consider the significant history of Soldiers Field Park and preserve the intent of the memorial area for the Soldiers/Veterans
- Strengthen park access and connections to downtown, and other surrounding neighborhoods
- Provide trails and gathering spaces that engage park users with the river
- Enhance the signage and way-finding system to orient and direct park users
- Provide winter use activities such as cross-country skiing, skating, ice hockey, and seasonal public events, etc.
- Incorporate sustainable design practices
- Consider life-cycle costs as well as capital costs for park improvements



Late fall sunset in Soldiers Field Park

3. Preliminary Concepts

3.1 Preliminary Concept 1

Four concepts of the Master Plan were presented in March of 2014. All concepts included the conversion of 1st Avenue SW as a campus pedestrian oriented street, and tree plantings along Broadway providing filtered views into the park. All concepts incorporate community gardens, improved signage and a stronger pedestrian connection to the entrance at 9th St SE.

In Concept 1 the 18-hole golf course, the pool, parking, tennis courts, and playground are retained. The northern gardens are improved; the ball fields are removed for picnicking areas and trails are on both sides of the Zumbro River. Community gardens are part of this scheme and play courts include volleyball, basketball and bocce. The track is removed to incorporate a formalized lawn to incorporate sculptures, an arbor and a winter ice skating rink.

Overall Park Theme

- Building on Veterans Memorial – improvements to northern gardens
- Formalized lawn
- More picknicking, trails, and gardens – less athletics

Parking / Circulation

- No parking changes
- Stronger pedestrian connection at 9th St SE
- River trails

Park Features

- Community gardens
- Playgrounds (2)
- Expanded picnic
- Veterans Memorial
- Tennis courts
- 18 hole golf course & clubhouse
- Pool
- Sculpture garden / great lawn
- Ice skating / cross country skiing
- Play courts (volleyball, basketball, bocce)



3.2 Preliminary Concept 2

Concept 2 keeps the southernmost 9-holes of the golf course and makes improvements to the course in the form of natural water features, a pitch and putt area and a new clubhouse building and parking along Highway 14.

This scheme creates a southern entrance to the park, Soldiers Field Drive and George Gibbs Drive are turned back to parkland. The ball fields are retained and the playground area is relocated. Play courts include volleyball, basketball and bocce. An off-leash dog park is located near the 9th Street SE entrance.

Formal gardens, sculptures and a great lawn are incorporated at the north end of the park, a new pavilion is at the southern end of the great lawn and would incorporate a restaurant and warming chalet to compliment use of the lawn area for ice skating in the winter. The pool is removed in this scheme and in the area formerly used for 9-holes of golf, walking trails are expanded and groomed in the winter for cross country skiing. This area also incorporates a natural water feature, open areas and increased tree plantings.

Overall Park Theme

- Green space, picnicking, trails and open space, 9 hole golf, new club house

Parking / Circulation

- Entrances off Broadway and Hwy 14
- Soldiers Field Dr & George Gibbs Dr turned back to parkland
- Stronger pedestrian connection at 9th St SE
- River trail

Park Features

- Community gardens, formal gardens, sculpture garden / great lawn
- Playgrounds (2)
- Expanded picnic
- Veterans Memorial
- Ballfields (2)
- 9 hole golf course & new clubhouse
- Pavilion (winter chalet, restaurant)
- Ice skating loop / cross country skiing
- Water features



3.3 Preliminary Concept 3

Concept 3 eliminates the entire golf course and re-envision the use of the park for flexible green spaces with trails, picnic areas with a new arboretum and visitor center located at the south of the park along Highway 14.

This scheme converts the southern portion of the park into an area with tree plantings and walking trails that can be groomed in the winter for cross country skiing. The southern entrance is emphasized with a new Visitor and Learning Center, parking and several gardens. The portion of the park just north of the river incorporates flexible open green space, a restaurant and expanded pool facilities.

The northern entrance by the memorial is retained and along Soldiers Field Drive, play courts and a rope course are situated next to gardens. The ball field to the east is retained and the area where the west ball field was located is converted to gardens. The great lawn is a central feature for gatherings and is used for ice skating in the winter.

Overall Park Theme

- Flexible use green space, trails, picnicking
- Arboretum / visitor center

Parking / Circulation

- Entrances off Broadway and Hwy 14
- Stronger pedestrian connection at 9th St SE
- No change at north end of park
- River trails

Park Features

- Community gardens, formal gardens, great lawn
- Playgrounds (2)
- Expanded picnic
- Veterans Memorial
- Tennis courts, ballfields (1)
- Ice skating / cross country skiing
- Arboretum / visitor center, winter chalet, restaurant, water features
- Play courts (volleyball, basketball, bocce)
- Dog park



3.4 Preliminary Concept 4

Concept 4 also eliminates the entire golf course and re-envision the use of the park as an arboretum with a variety of multi-use trails and a single large natural water feature and a significant flexible open green space north of the Zumbro River.

Unique to this scheme is the enhanced intersection and gateway at the southeast corner of the park. A southern entrance is emphasized with a new Visitor Center and Winter Chalet, parking and several gardens. A conservatory is envisioned to draw visitors in the winter. This scheme brings a terraced slope to the north bank of the Zumbro River complimented by a community building. Further north, Soldier's Field Drive is reworked and George Gibbs Road is extended further south to relocate parking. There are significantly more tree plantings and the northern portion of the park incorporates picnic and playground areas and gardens around the memorial.

Overall Park Theme

- Green space, picnicking, trails, and open space
- Community building
- Arboretum / learning center, conservatory
- Strong connections to UMR campus

Parking / Circulation

- Single north vehicle entry
- South entrance off Hwy 14
- Gateway feature at Broadway and Hwy 14
- Soldiers Field Drive as pedestrian street
- Stronger pedestrian connection at 9th St SE

Park Features

- Community gardens, formal gardens, flexible open space
- Playgrounds (2)
- Expanded picnic
- Veterans Memorial
- New community building (multi-use, winter chalet, restaurant)
- Terraced seating at river
- Arboretum / visitor center / conser



4. Master Plan

4.1 Preferred Plan

The draft of the Master Plan was presented in May of 2014 and incorporates the preferred plan recommendations:

- Phased reduction of the golf course to 9-holes
- Retaining the Veteran's Memorial
- Enhancing the pool/splash area, locker room facilities
- Improving the running track, use of the interior of the ring as a wintertime skating rink
- Maintaining the location of the tennis courts
- Eliminate the east ball field, maintain the west ball field for flexible neighborhood games
- Include volleyball and basketball courts by the YMCA
- Maintain west play area, relocate east play area
- Plan for flexible open meadow areas north of the river
- Consider an ice track on running track or in the open meadow area north of the river
- Provide new trails, along park and river edges
- Provide winter use activates and facilities – ice rink/track, skiing, warming house
- Provide new shelters, pergolas, seating areas, public art, sculptures, etc.
- Incorporate traffic calming measures along park drives
- Include rental opportunities – golf, ski, skating, bicycles
- Enhanced park signage and way-finding system, improved and new picnic areas
- Maintain existing roadway access into park
- Eliminate roadway access to 6th Avenue
- Maintain and improve existing parking areas
- Improved pedestrian crossings
- Relocate the park maintenance building

4.2 Vision

It is the mission of the Board of Park Commissioners and the Park Department to provide quality activities, programs, and facilities for citizens of Rochester and for visitors. Soldier's Field Memorial Park exists to preserve green space, and to promote healthy lifestyles and a sense of community.

The park is to be accessible and affordable to people of all age groups and abilities, and should be programmed to include year-round activities with an emphasis on physical recreational activities. Modifications to the park should be based on community need.

The vision of the Master Plan is to allow the park to evolve for the current and next generation of users and visitors to the park. The design incorporates elements historically found in the park and recognizes the evolution of the landscape. Historic precedent exists for water features, gardens, and open community gathering space that coexist with various athletic facilities. The park exists to provide recreational and leisure enjoyment and is intended to be of benefit to the health and well-being of the Rochester community.

4.3 Key Recommendations

The preferred plan considers the public's stated preference to retain and improve the golf course. Due to declining interest in the sport amongst younger user groups, the plan recommends a phased reduction of the golf course to a 9-hole course, located south of the river. The future grounds will be improved and will include water features, of which there is some historical precedent. The future 9-hole course will also include a new clubhouse and adjacent parking at the south of the park, and should include an enhanced destination restaurant within it.

The Veteran's Memorial should be preserved and enhanced. It should be the formal entrance to the park. As envisioned when the park was designed, this area should be enhanced through the inclusion of gardens and gathering spaces, knitting it into the rest of the park.

The pool and splash area should be enhanced. There should be a lap pool, a diving pool, and a toddler pool and splash area.

These enhancements should include patio areas, seating, tables, concessions, locker room facilities and showers.

The track should remain in its current location; however, the shape of the track, materials and grading should be improved so that an ice skating rink can be located in the open space inside of the track.

The tennis courts and one ball field should be retained; sand volleyball courts and basketball courts should be located near the YMCA. The west play area should be maintained and the east play area should be relocated.

An open meadow area should be incorporated in the future. This can allow for flexible accommodation of various activities – casual Ultimate Frisbee games, kite flying, and public gathering space. An ice track should be considered to provide a unique ice skating experience in the park. New trails should be introduced throughout the park, particularly along the park edges, the river, to park features and park entrances. New trails should connect to gathering spaces along the river.

The park should be enhanced for winter use activities and facilities to include an ice rink/track, cross-country skiing trails, and a warming house/chalet.

Gathering areas should include new park amenities – park shelters, pergolas, seating areas, public art, and water features. Park drives should minimize automobile and pedestrian/bike conflicts, by incorporating traffic calming measures to include - bump outs, raised pedestrian crossings, pedestrian crossing markings and/or material change, improved signage, and lighting.

Affordable rental opportunities for golf, skiing, skating, biking and roller-blading should be offered. The park signage and way-finding system should be improved; it should include new and fun park signage/monuments at key park entry points to direct and inform park users. Picnic areas should be enhanced and a new picnic area should be established where the east ball field is currently located.

The existing roadway access into the park should be retained. The roadway access to 6th Avenue, should be eliminated and the west drive access should be realigned to be more symmetrical with the east drive access. The existing parking areas should be maintained and improved and the edges of the park should be designed to include plantings, improved pedestrian crossing into the park from Broadway and Highway 14. Lastly, the park maintenance building should be relocated.

5. Implementation Plan

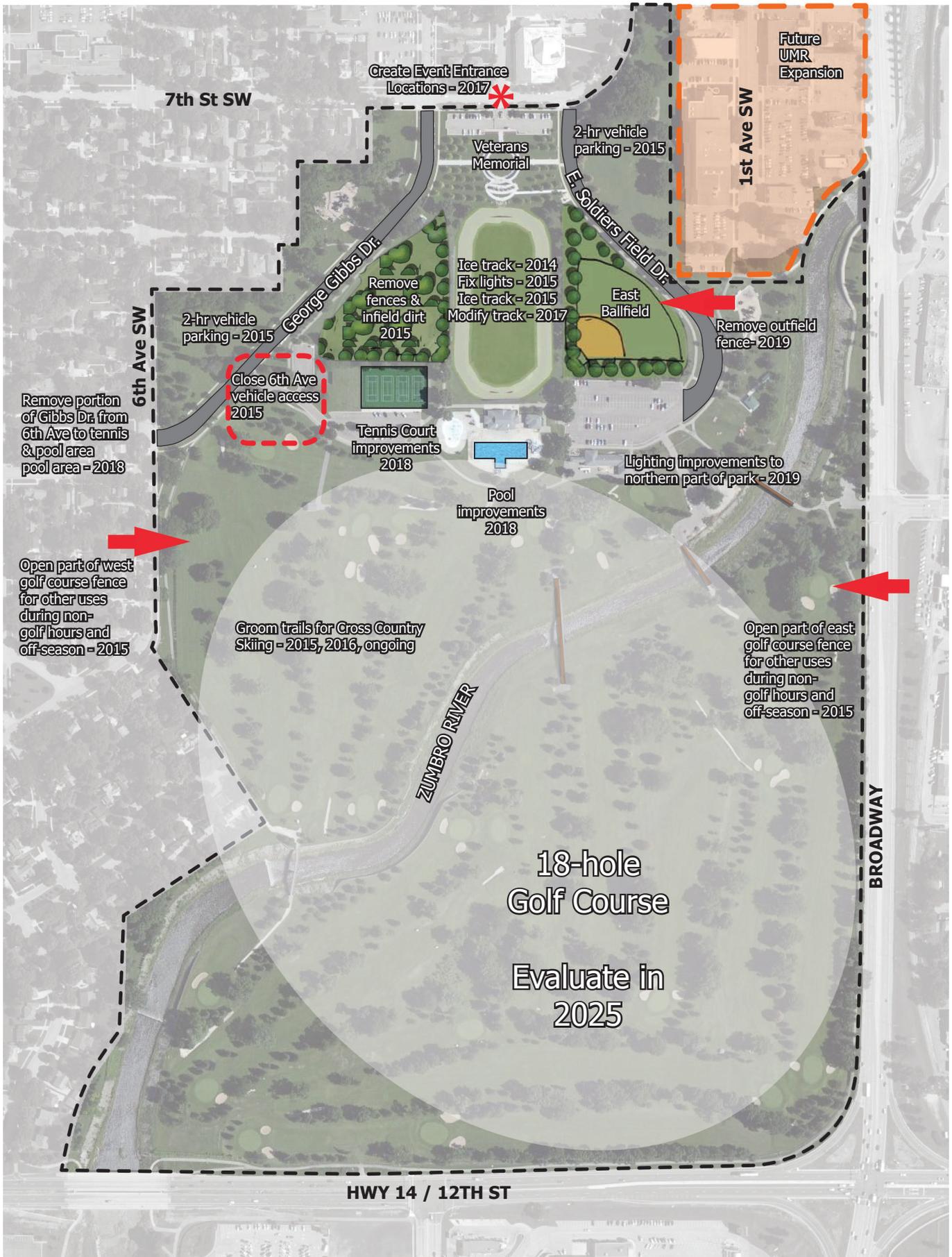
5.1 Project Costs - Spreadsheet

		<i>Planning Task</i>	Deliverables	
			<i>Narrative</i>	<i>Drawings</i>
Data Collection & Analysis		Kick-Off Meeting: Week of November 11, 2013		
		Introduce Design Team members and specify roles in design process	Contact List	
		Review schedule, confirm milestones, set meeting dates	Work Plan	
		Review existing open space, facilities, and research requirements	Inventory Summary	Base maps / plans / systems
		Discuss project vision and goals	Initial Vision and Goals Statement	
		Design Meeting One: Week of December 9, 2013		
		Review of Existing Plans: Downtown Rochester Plan, Demographic Projections, Development Guidelines, and Use Projection Information	Assessment of accomplishments, unanticipated issues, new opportunities	Existing plans and documents for discussion, initial analysis documents
		Define site criteria including utility and infrastructure requirements. Identify areas of infrastructure concern for future growth or life-cycle replacement. Review traffic and transportation data	Site Criteria and Utility Constraints	Property Analysis; Maps, Drawings, Illustrations
		Initial Community Engagement Planning	Plan to solicit targeted input from identified stakeholders including neighbors and residents, community associations, and civic partners	Identification of stakeholder groups and key contacts, and areas of discussion for each
		Report on present traffic analysis and future projects; review intermodal opportunities	Preliminary Transportation / Traffic Assessment	Site Plans
		Review of Initial Projections – Open Space Planning, Migration, Land Use	Notes	Plans, renderings, illustrations
		Review of Park Sustainability opportunities	Notes	Building and Open Space Documents; Maps, Drawings, Illustrations
		<i>Ongoing Tasks: Stakeholder Interviews</i>		
		Design Meeting Two: Week of January 13, 2014		
		Open Space and Amenity Planning	Notes	Building and Open Space Documents
		Facility and Historic Resources Strategy	Notes	Building and Open Space Documents
		Initial Sustainability Strategy	Notes	Building and Open Space Documents
		Review of Initial Projections – Space Needs, Migration, Land Use	Notes	Plans, renderings, illustrations
		Report on Community Engagement	Notes and Feedback	
		<i>Ongoing Tasks: Stakeholder Interviews</i>		

Vision & Guidelines; Plan Development	Design Meeting Three (50% Review) – Concept / Alternative Review with Park and Recreation Board – February 4, 2014		
	Open Space and Amenity Planning	Notes	Building and Open Space Documents
	Facility and Historic Resources Strategy	Notes	Building and Open Space Documents
	Sustainability Strategy	Notes	Building and Open Space Documents
	Draft Design Guidelines	Notes	Drawings, diagrams
	Community Connections	Notes	Plans, renderings, illustrations
	Report on Community Engagement	Notes and Feedback	
	Review of Draft Document	Continued development of graphics and text	
	Community Forum: Week of February 10, 2014		
	Design Meeting Four: Week of February 17, 2014		
	Open Space and Amenity Planning	Notes	Building and Open Space Documents
	Final Sustainability Strategy	Notes	Building and Open Space Documents
	Design Guidelines	Notes	Drawings, diagrams
	Community Connections	Notes	Plans, renderings, illustrations
Report on Community Engagement	Stakeholder Involvement Documentation		
Plan Production	Statement of Vision, Principals, and Objectives	Vision and Goals narrative and illustrations	
	Future Community Engagement Planning	Define Ongoing Community Engagement Plan to be included as part of Master Plan	
	95% Review: Week of February 24, 2014		
	Review of Final Draft Document	Final edits and proceed to publication	Finalized Master Plan Document
	Final Completion and Adoption by Park and Recreation Board – March 4, 2014		
	Project completion and publication	Printed or Electronic Document, Webcasts, or PowerPoint materials as appropriate	

5.2 Interim Master Plan 2015-2015

Since completion of the Master Plan recommendations in 2014, this map shows the changes made since, and the changes proposed to be made in the near future as funding allows.



5.3 Phasing Strategy

Completed and Ongoing Work

2014

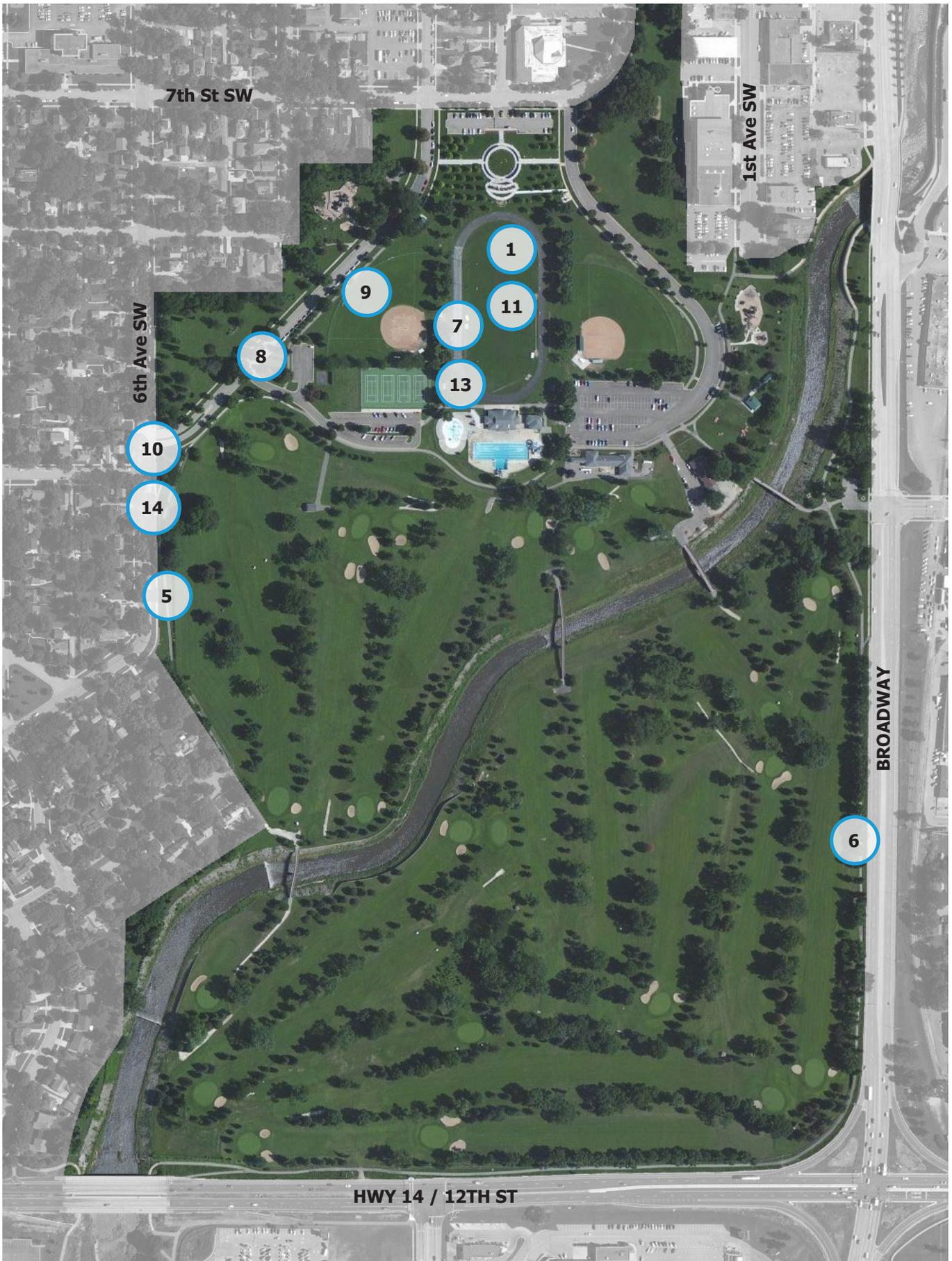
1. Ice the track for winter skating - December **Completed**

2015

2. Promote events at the park **Ongoing**
3. Promote winter ice skating events through various media **Completed**
4. Promote Rochesterfest moving to Soldier's Field Park **Completed**
5. Open portion of the west golf course fencing to allow for non-golf uses during off-hours and off-season **Completed**
6. Open a portion of the east golf course fencing to allow for non-golf uses during off-hours and the off-season **Completed**
7. Install electrical upgrades to Soldier's Field Track area **Completed**
8. Change all park road signage to 2-hour parking year-round **Completed**
9. Remove West Ballfield outfield fence and infield dirt, install irrigation **Completed**
10. Close 6th Ave vehicular access into Soldier's Field with **Completed**
11. Ice the track for winter skating - December **Completed**
12. Groom trails for Cross Country Skiing - December **Completed**

2016

13. Begin reviewing alternatives for Track replacement **May**
14. Closure of 6th Ave using curb and gutter and landscaped entrance sign **October**



Immediate Future Work to be Completed

2017

1. Create event entrance locations **Summer**
2. Modify track for event activities and running activities **August**
3. Create permanent event access drives east and west of the track areas **October**

2018

4. Remove portion of Gibbs Drive from 6th Ave to Tennis/Pool access **September**

2018

5. Begin implementation of aquatics solutions for the park **September**
6. Begin Tennis maintenance and improvements **October**

2019

7. Lighting modification to the northern half of the park to provide pedestrian level, event, and trail lighting **September**
8. Remove permanent outfield fence on east ball field **September**



5.4 Potential Funding Sources

The potential funding sources for this project are to be determined.

6. Appendix

6.1 Community Outreach

Public comments were taken from March – April of 2014, in general there was strong support for the Guiding Principles that were in the process of development.

Most respondents supported keeping the golf course as an 18-hole course but improving its appearance. There was support to reduce it to a 9-hole course, to light it at night and to evaluate its use over time due to declining participation in the sport amongst young user groups. Many respondents supported removing the course entirely and establishing an arboretum, walking / biking paths and higher density recreational uses. There was support to keep a public pool as part of the program, and removing at least one of the ball fields. There was a stated desire to incorporate more winter activities to include an ice skating rink, warming house and groomed cross-country ski trails. There was support to expand and improve upon the trails in the park, but there were some concerns about golfing and trail user conflicts.

There was great support for establishing new natural spaces such as a terraced river connection, flexible open spaces, and developing the park for active recreational activities, and not exclusively for leisure. There was support for new elements such as an off-leash dog park, and basketball courts which are perceived to be lacking in the community. It was suggested that removing some roads would make the playground safer. The community liked the idea of establishing formal gardens, but didn't think that community gardens necessary because they are available nearby.

It was suggested that mini-golf and Ultimate Frisbee be added to the park, and a domed track and permanent pavilion. Fly-casting pools may establish this portion of the Zumbro River as a fishing destination if they were to be added to the park, and there was support for keeping a pool as a part of the program whether it remained outdoors or was moved indoors.

There was a desire to see better connections to the commercial areas of Downtown, improved signage, and the ability of all residents to be able to enjoy use of the park. The Veterans Memorial is valued by the community, and there was support to maintain it.

6.2 Downtown Rochester and University of Minnesota Rochester - Master Plans

The context in which Soldiers Field will change is dynamic and is influenced by the Downtown Rochester Master Plan and the University of Minnesota Rochester Master Plan. The development of these areas in close proximity to the park will undoubtedly influence the evolution of Soldiers Field Park as the Master Plan is implemented.

Downtown Rochester Master Plan:

<http://www.rochestermn.gov/departments/planning-and-zoning/rochester-downtown-master-plan>

University of Minnesota Rochester Master Plan:

<https://r.umn.edu/about-umr/growth-umr/campus-master-plan>

