

Historic Landscape Preservation Plan

for

North Park

Fall River, Massachusetts



prepared by

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for the

*City of Fall River
Department of Recreational Facilities, Cemeteries & Trees*

June 2006

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450 Middle Street, Kennedy Park

Fall River, MA 02722

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*The men who may secure to the people of this city for all future time,
the sight and use of a free park,
will have erected for themselves a monument more enduring than marble;
as each returning spring will clothe it with new verdure and beauty,
and thousands of visitors will lengthen its tables of praise.*

- Mayor George Fairbanks, 1867

SUMMARY

Park History

In the late 19th century, Fall River began a long relationship with the Olmsted Brothers, landscape architects of Brookline. The firm designed South Park, Ruggles Park (both 1868) and several other smaller parks within the city, and in 1902 began work on North Park. While the Olmsteds created a plan for the full 30 acres, only part – the area to the west of or below the central park road – appears to have been built. Also, several of the Olmsteds' features that were constructed, such as the men's and women's gymnasias, have been removed. Nevertheless, the park has served the people of Fall River's north end for over 100 years. It continues to maintain the most actively used amateur baseball field in the city.

Project Background

As with many large public urban parks in the US, Fall River's parks have suffered from years of limited funds for upkeep and management. The parks department has done a good job of maintaining lawns, roads and the athletic fields, but has had a more difficult time managing vandalism, growth of invasive plants, and overall deterioration of historic features, such as buildings, steps and decorative amenities. With the recent restoration of Kennedy (South) Park, Fall River began a multi-year effort to rejuvenate the city's Olmsted parks. In 2005, the city received a Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund grant from the Massachusetts Historical Commission and provided an equal monetary match to continue with this preservation effort, this time at North Park.

Project Goal

The North Park Historic Landscape Preservation Plan provides a step-by step guide to restoring the park's historic features. The plan balances the need to retain the park's historic character and maintain its historical integrity, but also provides for contemporary and future needs.

Process

Martha Lyon Landscape Architecture, LLC lead a team of consultants in preparation of the plan. The team followed a four-part process which included public outreach, research, assessment, recommendations, and management. To gauge public opinion about the park, the team interviewed park users, conducted a public meeting, and participated in a press conference. Research, completed in the fall of 2005, involved combing the historical records of the Library of Congress (Olmsted office files), city's library and historical society, and conducting oral histories with elderly people who grew up around the park. The team then assessed the current condition of the landscape and buildings, comparing them to what the Olmsteds' prescribed for the park. The team developed preservation recommendations, which included a list of improvements, a phasing plan for completing them and schematic estimates for their cost. The team also made specific suggestions for managing the landscape over time.

Park Program

In developing their recommendations, the team worked with the parks department to develop a program of uses for the park. The following wish list resulted:

- Preservation efforts should reflect a city-wide movement to restore all of the parks designed by the Olmsted Brothers.
- The park's primary users are adults, and therefore the restoration should focus on preserving and creating amenities for pedestrians, dog-walkers, bird watchers, picnickers, and others engaging in passive recreation activities.
- The North Main Street entrance offers an opportunity to extend the park to users residing in neighborhoods along the park's west side, and the plan should provide for this.
- The neighborhood along the park's east side would like to see the upper (higher) end of the park remain as is, with minor aesthetic enhancements only.
- The ballfields are used nightly in the summer, and will continue to be used as such. The restoration should provide for vehicles along the park roadway, with overflow parking, if possible.
- The steeper terrain in the park should remain un-obstructed, as children use these slopes for sledding.
- A place for skate-boarding and bike-riding is desired, either within the existing skateboard park or the wading pool, or both.
- A permanent comfort station is essential.
- Storage for athletic equipment is required.
- Restoration should result in a low-maintenance landscape.

Recommendations

Based on the park's history and the program outlined above, the team developed the following preliminary recommendations, listed in order of priority:

- *Project 1: Restoring the North Main Street Entrance* per the design created in 1908, which included a series of diagonal walkways lined with benches and ornamented with beds of perennial and annual plants.
- *Project 2: Treating the Bleachers.* The team is recommending that the existing concrete bleachers, added by the WPA in 1937 be removed, and replaced with a series of earth terraces, retained by stone, that follow the natural contour of the land.
- *Project 3: Addressing the Service House.* The team is recommending that the existing structure be demolished, and a new building constructed at the corner of President Avenue and the park entrance at Belmont Street, to include upgraded storage areas and an improved concession area.
- *Project 4: Restoring the Wading Pool,* including rebuilding the concrete edges, upgrading the perimeter walkways and removing/replacing existing overgrown plants.
- *Project 5: Restoring the Existing Comfort Station,* returning it to its original form, including reconstructing the grand porches that provided views of the Taunton River. It would be maintained as an open-air pavilion.
- *Project 6: Restoring the Northeast Corner,* by rebuilding a serpentine walkway leading from the corner to the central part of the park, and reconstructing an open air shelter or viewing platform, located at the mid-point of the park along Highland Avenue (across from Stanley Street).

Other ongoing management tasks, which could be handled by the park and/or DPW staff include:

- Placing signs/historical markers at each pedestrian entrance to the park
- Treating the landscape between the Morton School and park
- Improving parking along the park road and elsewhere
- Improving drainage
- Restoring circulation paths and structures (steps)
- Re-planting allees of trees along the park edges
- Re-planting trees in historic "grove" areas

Budget Projections

The project team developed projections of cost for each of the six projects, as well as the ongoing management tasks. The total of \$2,375,000 for the projects and \$482,500 for the ongoing tasks is schematic and intended to be used for fundraising purposes only. More precise calculations will be made during the design process for each of the projects.

Managing North Park's Historic Landscape

The plan concludes with a section devoted to long-term care of the park's landscape. It recommends maintenance practices for existing trees and turf, and strategies for controlling invasive plants. It also provides a list of new trees to be added to North Park, taken largely from the Olmsted Brothers' 1904-1905 planting list for the park. The section ends with a calendar for routine maintenance, guiding city staff on a month-by-month basis, through ongoing tasks.

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In preparing this plan, the project team received invaluable help from the Massachusetts Historical Commission and Library of Congress, and from many people and organizations in Fall River – Mayor Ed Lambert, the Mayor’s Office staff, the Department of Public Works, the Fall River Historical Society, and the Fall River Public Library. The team especially thanks Richard Kitchen and the staff of the Department of Recreational Facilities, Cemeteries and Trees, who openly shared their Olmsted Brothers’ files and plans, and shepherded the project through from start to finish.

INTRODUCTION

Project Background

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The northeast corner of North Park, looking westward to the Taunton River.

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- The steeper terrain in the park should remain un-obstructed, as children use these slopes for sledding.
- The depressed area in the northeast corner - once used for cricket - should remain for use as a skating area.
- A place for skate-boarding and bike-riding is desired, either within the existing skateboard park or the wading pool, or both.
- A permanent comfort station, storage for athletic equipment, and accommodations for concessions are all essential to healthy use of the park.
- Restoration should result in a low-maintenance landscape.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT of NORTH PARK

Beginnings – Before 1902

The origins of North Park date to the 1830s, before the incorporation of Fall River as a city. The Hon. Thomas Durfee owned a farm along the Taunton River, and in 1835, Fall River acquired a portion of Durfee's land to use as part of its poor farm. The land had been cleared of trees and likely remained as farmland through the 1890s.

Discussions about creating parks in Fall River began as early as the 1860s. Fall River was quickly becoming an industrial center, and its population boomed, crowding the city, and creating a need for open space. In his 1867 inaugural address, Mayor George Fairbanks promoted the idea of a "free park," proclaiming that, *"the men who may secure to the people of this city for all future time, the sight and use of a free park, will have erected for themselves a monument more enduring than marble; as each returning spring will clothe it with new verdure and beauty, and thousands of visitors will lengthen its tables of praise."* The result of the Mayor's plea was the establishment, in 1868, of two parks near the center of Fall River – South (Kennedy) and Ruggles Parks.

The city council dedicated land for North Park in 1883, parceled from the city poor farm. Design for the 28 acres developed slowly, beginning with a plan prepared by Thomas Kiernan under the direction of the Committee on Parks in 1891. Kiernan's plan showed park entrances off Main Street, Hood Street, President Avenue and Highland Avenue, a series of serpentine roads and paths weaving through the park, and a "lake" in the center of the park. While the plan was never implemented, it did provide many ideas which appeared in later park designs. The land for the park was viewed universally as "one of the most beautiful spots in the city," with views of the Taunton River to the west.

The Olmsted Brothers – 1902-1930

The building of North Park did not begin until the first decade of the 20th century. In 1901, the city appointed a parks commission and in 1902, a board of park commissioners to oversee South (Kennedy), North, and Ruggles Parks, as well as North Burial Ground and Oak Grove Cemetery. Per the advice of the city engineer, the park commissioners hired Mr. John Olmsted of the Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects of Brookline, Massachusetts to provide services for all the parks. The firm had created a design for South (Kennedy) Park in 1871 under the direction of Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., and the firm was now under the ownership of his sons, F. L. Olmsted, Jr., and John Charles Olmsted (the senior Olmsted died in 1903).



The men's gymnasium, designed by the Olmsted Brothers and located at the northwest corner of the park. A women's gymnasium was also built to the south of the men's, providing a place for active recreation for both genders. Postcard courtesy of the Fall River Historical Society.

The Wading Pool, North Park, Fall River, Mass.



The wading pool, designed by the Olmsted Brothers and located at the north end of the park. This feature remains as one of the park's focal points. Postcard courtesy of the Fall River Historical Society.



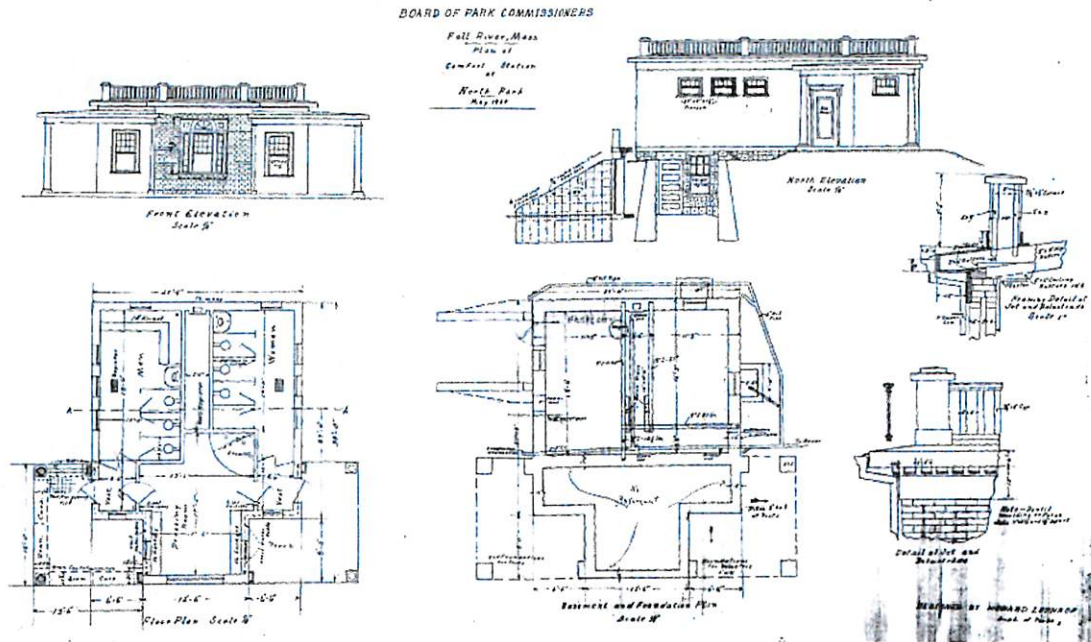
A series of broad concrete walkways, punctuated with trees and ornamental planting beds, replaced the original North Main Street entry, designed as a "music court" by the Olmsted Brothers. Postcard courtesy of the Fall River Historical Society.

main park drive at the park's geographic center. Designed "in-house," this one-story structure consisted of a shed and enclosed service yard, built into the western park slope. In 1920, the city added the comfort station. This red tapestry brick building, also designed in-house, was constructed below the central park road on an aggressively graded site.

By 1930, North Park served as a major active recreation site in Fall River, containing one regulation baseball field, one regulation football field, four tennis courts, one wading pool, one skating pond, one six-lap cinder track, one set of play apparatus, one outdoor shower, one indoor shower, one volleyball court, and one basketball court.

The Olmsteds completed their plan for North Park in 1904 (see Plan 1), and included in it a gravel music court (at the North Main Street entrance), a women's gymnasium, a children's playground, a men's gymnasium, a cinder running track, a field house, a wading pool, and a ballfield, all connected by gracefully curving walkways flanked by shade trees, shrubs and lawns. These features stood at the western half of the park. At the eastern half, the Olmsteds proposed a cricket crease, and driveway entrances at each of the eastern corners. A shelter was to stand along Highland Avenue, mid-way between Hood Street and President Avenue. Construction began in 1905 and within a couple of years most of the Olmsteds' plan had been implemented.

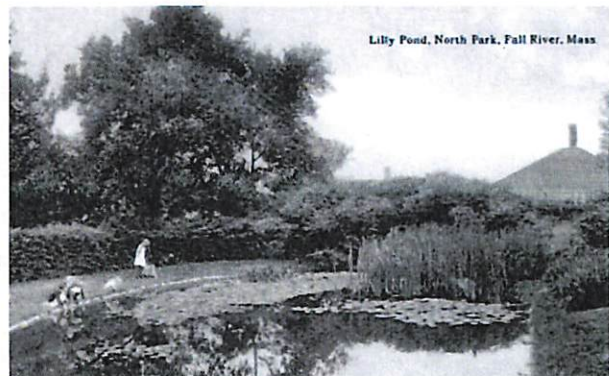
Between 1905 and 1930, the city added several prominent features that were not included in the Olmsted Brothers' plan. First, they created a lily pond to the northeast of the wading pool. According to local residents, springs fed the pond, and it became one of the most beloved features in the park. Second, the city replaced the gravel "music court" with a series of broad entry walks, separated by turf lawns. Residents had found the Olmsted's music court to be barren, giving strangers an unfavorable impression of the park as a whole. In 1916, the city added the service yard and house, alongside the



The 1920 design for the Comfort Station, featuring porches that offered views to the Taunton River. Drawing courtesy of the Fall River Department of Recreational Facilities, Cemeteries and Trees.

The Works Progress Administration – 1930-1942

With the onset of the Depression, the city began to cut funding for North and the other public parks, making it difficult for the commissioners and superintendent to maintain the landscapes at a level to which the city had become accustomed. In the late 1930s, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) supplied labor to Fall River to make park improvements. Workers built the poured reinforced concrete bleachers (overlooking the Pony Colt League ballfield), and two sets of concrete steps. During this period, the lily pond was filled. This effort may have been undertaken by the WPA, although historical documentation does not cite the agency's involvement with the pond.



The lily pond, located at the northern edge of the park, was likely filled during the 1930s by the Works Progress Administration. Postcard courtesy of the Fall River Historical Society.

Modernization – 1942-Present

After 1942, North Park entered a period of gradual change. The city added several modern elements and removed or neglected many historic park features. In 1954, the men's gymnasium was removed to make way for the Carroll Elementary School and later, a concrete skateboard park was built in place of the women's gymnasium. The wading pool and comfort station, popular attractions in the park's early decades, slowly declined into states of disrepair. The city added modern athletic structures to the baseball fields, including chain link backstops and pre-fabricated

storage sheds. The service yard was enclosed, and vandals attacked the building, causing damage to its roof and walls. Invasive plants began to encroach on the Olmsted's original plantings of trees and shrubs.

In the early 1980s, the City of Fall River and State of Massachusetts began to take notice of the park's condition, and the historical significance of its landscape. In 1983, North Park became part of a multiple listing nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, within the Highlands Historic District. In the early 1990s, the city restored the beloved wading pool, installing a new water line, drain, benches, and lighting, and re-opening the feature for skating only in winter. At the same time, the city re-opened the comfort station on a limited basis, after keeping the building closed for many years.



Children from the Carroll Elementary School, built in the 1950s in place of the men's gymnasium. The school uses the park as its playground.

Period of Significance

The *Historical Development of North Park* reveals that the most prominent and enduring features at North Park stem from the years 1904-1930 when the impact of the Olmsted Brothers ~ original designers of the park ~ is strongest. During this period, the firm created the overall concept plan, and detailed roads, paths, steps, athletic facilities, and plantings of trees and shrubs. Although some of the original elements have been removed ~ the men's and women's gymnasias, music court, and lily pond ~ the basics of the Olmsted Brothers' entrances, paths, roadways, steps, wading pool and some plantings remain. The firm's original design for the park was an elaborate one, serving as testimony to the importance of North and the other Fall River parks to public life in the City of Fall River during the first decades of the 20th century. If restored to this period, the North Park landscape will not only enhance public space in the northern end of Fall River, but become a means of interpreting this important period in the city's history.

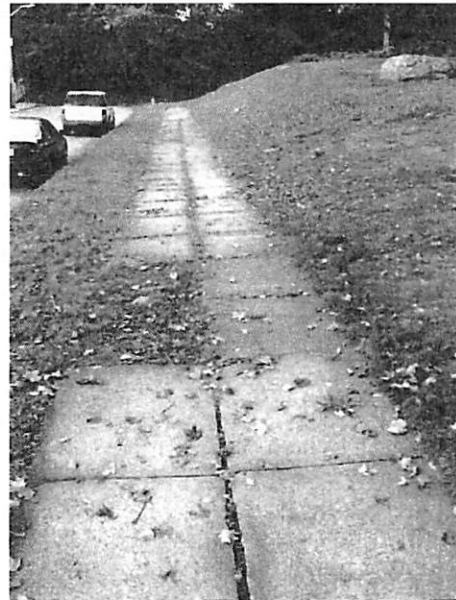
ASSESSMENT

The following assessment of the North Park landscape documents and evaluates the condition of its prominent natural, built and functional features – edges, views, access, circulation, slopes, drainage, plant communities, architecture, structures and other historic features. Its purpose is to identify specific preservation needs and provide direction to the preservation planning process.

Edges

North Park lies at the northern end of the City of Fall River, in the Highlands Historic District. Late 19th and early 20th century homes line the east, south, and most of the northern edges, and civic and educational institutions stand along the southern edge. A detailed inventory and assessment of each edge follows.

- Highland Avenue spans the eastern edge, with evenly spaced and set-back two-three story residences on the eastern side of the street. The late 19th/early 20th century style of these buildings complements the park's period of significance, and their height forms a nicely-scaled border to the park edge. An 8'-wide concrete sidewalk, lined with Norway maple trees and evenly spaced park benches, rims the park edge on the western side of the street. Several of the trees appear diseased and/or dying. While in average condition, the walkway forms a neat and accessible border. A pedestrian entrance to the park once existed across from the intersection of Stanley Street and Highland Avenue (see historic features, below). Remnants of this feature appear in the turf near Highland Avenue.



- President Avenue runs the length of the southern edge. Similar to Highland Avenue, the south side of President features evenly-spaced and setback late 19th/early 20th century style homes. The buildings are two-three stories high, creating a strong visual edge to the park. On the north side of President, mature shade trees – mostly lindens – line the street edge and reinforce a bituminous asphalt sidewalk. This sidewalk pitches inward, toward the park, allowing water to runoff and creating eroded areas along much of this street edge.
- The western park edge consists of a mix of educational and civic buildings, along with what was the main pedestrian entrance to the park. The Morton School stands at the corner of President Avenue and North Main, at the southwestern corner of the park. This building and its grounds are slated for renovation/reconstruction, with a parking lot proposed to replace a

The northern edge of North Park, along Hood Street. The wading pool sits just inside to of the park (to the right in the photo).

baseball diamond. Adjacent to the school is the historic fire station – a tall, red brick building built in an historic style that complements the park. At the northwest corner is the Summerfield M. E. Church (two-stories) and Carroll School (one-story with a large bituminous parking lot abutting the park). Across North Main Street, on the west side, is a mix of vernacular residential and commercial structures dating to the late-19th/early 20th centuries.

- Along the northern edge lies Hood Street. On the northern side of the street is an even row of two and 2-1/2-story vernacular style homes dating to c. 1900. Hood Street dead ends to the west of North Underwood Street, and resumes at the intersection of North Underwood Street (the road was likely terminated because of a very steep grade in this mid-section of Hood Street). The park edge along Hood Street west of North Underwood features mature deciduous trees and concrete walkways, both in fair condition. After ascending several flights of concrete and granite steps towards North Underwood Street, the walkway terminates. Remnants of a walkway appear buried in the turf along the northern edge of the park between North Underwood Street and Highland Avenue. This edge contains no trees, making it open, dry and barren in contrast to the remainder of the park and park edges.



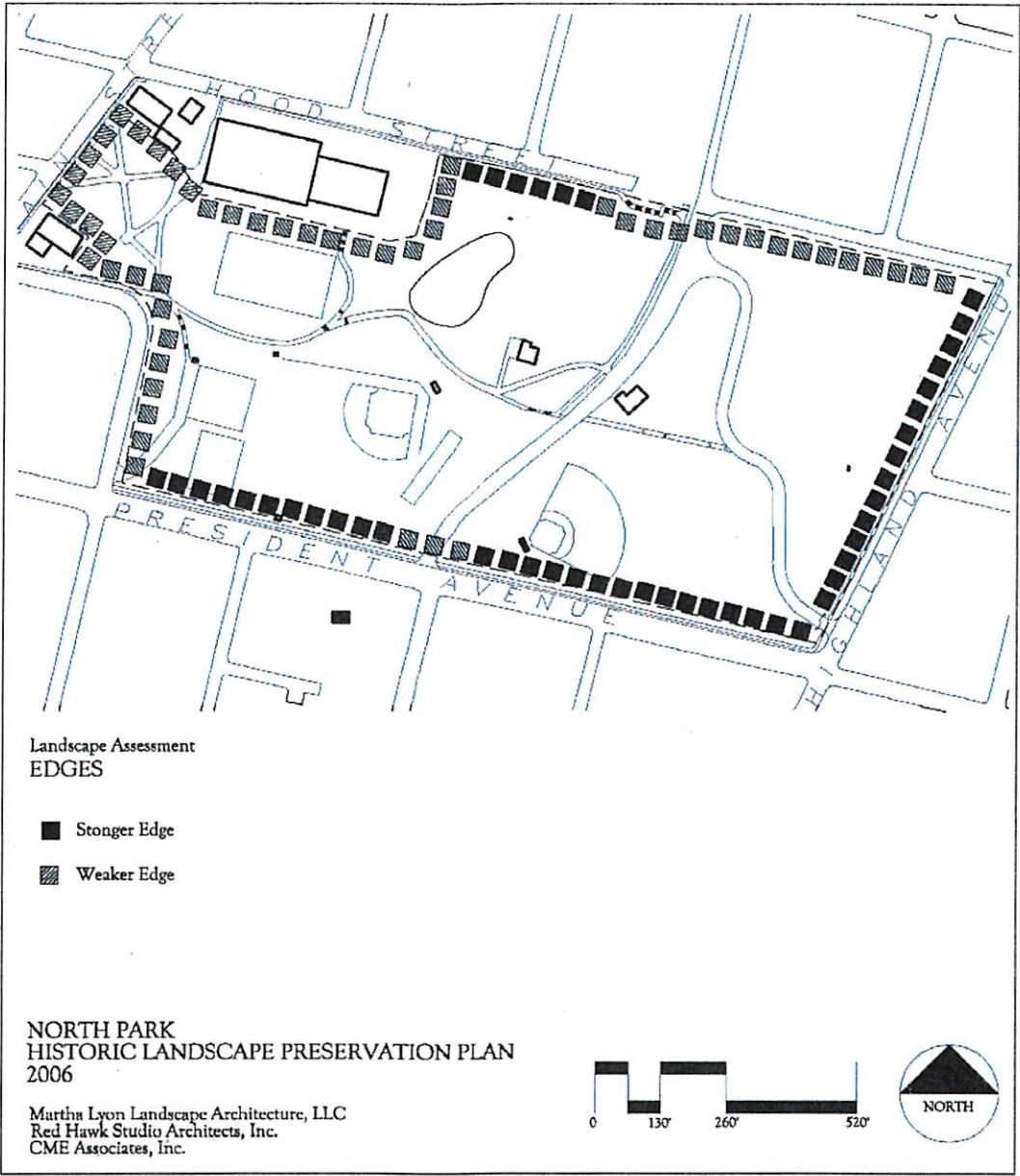
The North Main Street entrance, originally designed by the Olmsted Brothers as a gravel "music court." The city re-built the court in 1908 with a web of concrete sidewalks shaded by deciduous trees.

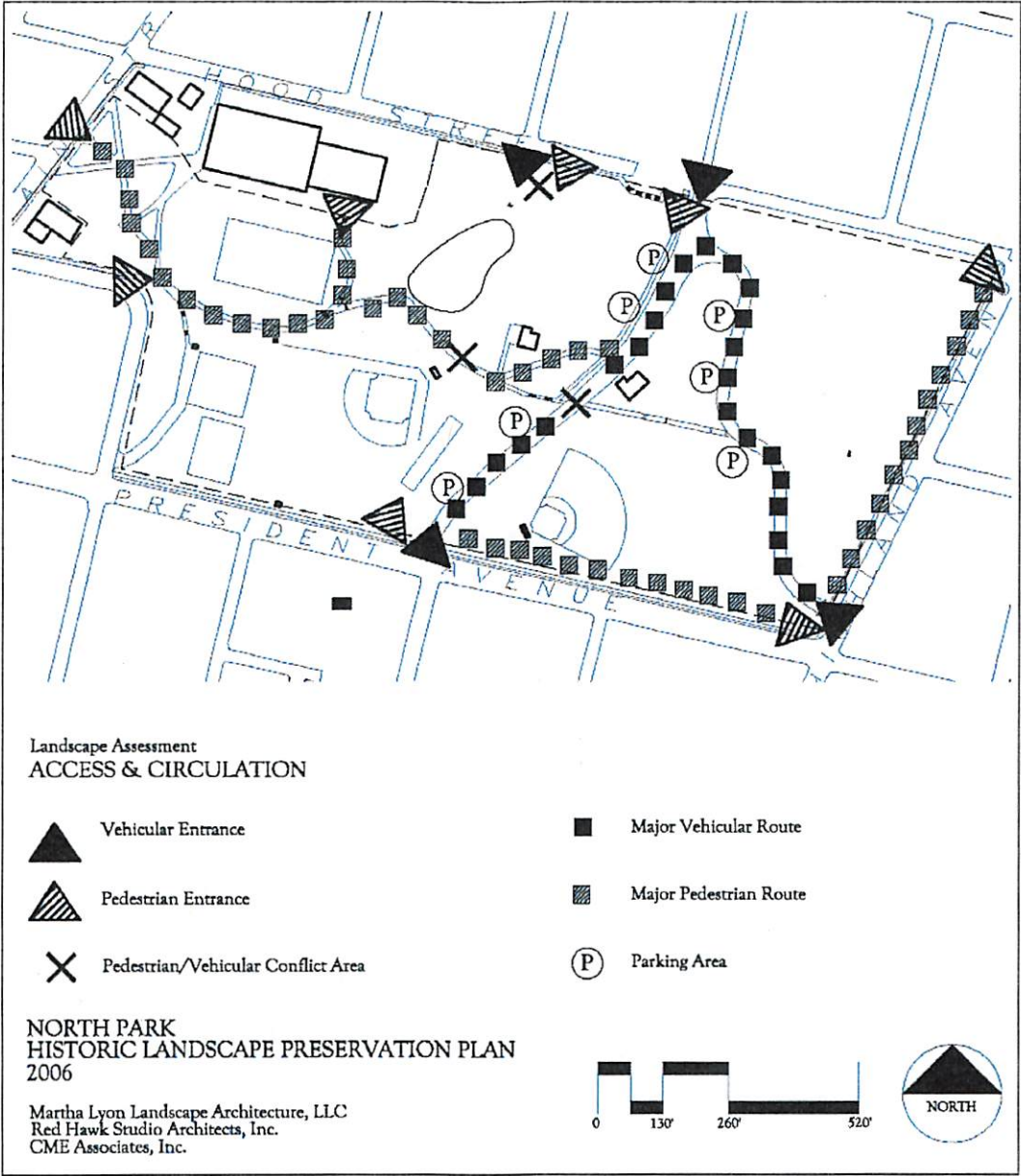
Access

In general, the park is very accessible from the outside to both vehicles and pedestrians. However, steep terrain, particularly in the center of the park, makes much of the landscape inaccessible to persons with disabilities.

Pedestrian entrances stand at seven points around the park edge and range in condition from good to very poor, as follows:

- The first and most prominent lies along the western edge, between the Summerfield Church and historic fire station. This was the original main entrance to the park, complete with a gravel music court and grid planting of *Ailanthus* trees. In 1908 this court was altered – the gravel was removed and replaced with a constellation of concrete walks, turf lawns, and perennial planting beds. Today the turf and plantings have been removed (except for a pair of lindens, likely planted around 1950), and the concrete remains in poor condition.
- A second pedestrian entrance lies along the western edge, at the end of Brownell Street adjacent to the Morton School. The entrance is marked by a concrete walkway in poor condition, which, at one time, was lined with a fence.
- The third entrance lies along the northern edge, off the parking lot/play area for the Carroll School. Granite steps take students up the steep slope leading to the wading pool and baseball diamond. This originally was a walkway between the men's and women's gymnasias. Today it is overgrown with invasive plants, strewn with litter, and the steps and walks are in very poor condition.





- A fourth pedestrian entrance lies along the park's northern edge, near the intersection of Hood and North Belmont Streets, leading to the wading pool. It consists of several flights of steps flanked by puddingstone boulders, and connected by bituminous pathways. Mature shade trees provide a canopy over the walkway. A makeshift vehicular way has been created along the west side of the path, eroding its edges. Overall the entrance is in fair condition.
- Pedestrians may also access the park along the northern edge at the intersection of North Underwood and Hood Streets – a fifth pedestrian entrance. Here, a concrete walkway leads from Hood Street part-way along the park roadway. Remnants of the walkway, once lined with granite pavers, appear in the turf along the much of the roadway. The concrete walkway also leads westward, down a series of steps. The entrance is in poor condition.
- Entry to the park along the eastern edge is possible at the corner of Highland and President Avenues – the sixth pedestrian entrance. This entry is marked by the bituminous walkway that extends the length of President Avenue. Pedestrians entering the park at this point must walk along the park roadway, as all pedestrian paths in the eastern section of the park have been removed. This entrance is in good condition.
- A final, seventh pedestrian entrance stands along President Avenue at the intersection of Belmont Street. Here, a bituminous walkway begins that rims the edge of the park roadway. This entrance is in good condition.

North Park contains just one vehicular roadway, allowing cars and trucks to enter and exit the park at fewer spots than pedestrians. Two defined vehicular entrances, two exits, and one makeshift service route allow cars and trucks to travel through the park, as follows:

- Defined vehicular entrances stand (1) at the corner of President and Highland Avenue, and (2) at the intersection of Hood and North Underwood Streets. Visibility for cars at both entrances is good, and the road conditions are adequate. Originally, these entrances were narrower and their pavement was lined with granite blocks. Today, they are wide and lined with granite and/or bituminous curb.
- Defined vehicular exits exist (1) at the intersection of Hood and North Underwood Streets (this is both an exit and entrance), and (2) at the intersection of President Avenue and Belmont Street. The condition of the first exit is described above. The second exit provides good visibility for cars and the roadway conditions are adequate. Similar to the entrances, the pavement at this exit has been widened and lined with bituminous curbing, giving it a contemporary look.
- The makeshift service road lies at the park's northern edge, at the intersection of Hood and North Belmont Streets. This gravel drive has been created to service the wading pool (possibly for snow blowing on the skating pond in winter). This drive is in poor condition and is compromising the integrity and historic character of the walkway (described above) along its eastern side.

Circulation

North Park retains much of the original circulation pattern, particularly in the western, or older end of the park. Alterations have been made to the Olmsted plan to accommodate new adjacent uses, such as

the Morton and Carroll Schools, and the makeshift roadway has been added to access the wading pool. The original route of the walkways and roadway remains the same. Several historic roads and paths, however, have been eliminated. These include the following:

- The park roadway beginning at the northeast corner, leading to the center of the park and meeting the existing park roadway. Remnants of the original granite block edging remain buried in the turf, indicating that the roadway was built, but removed at some time.
- The pedestrian walkways traversing the eastern end of the park. The Olmsted Brothers designed a series of walkways that would provide pedestrians with gently sloping routes throughout this area. Each has been removed.
- The pedestrian walkway around the north side of the women's gymnasium (now a skateboard park). Steps and granite edging lead to the beginning of this walkway, but the remainder is gone.
- The pedestrian walkway around the wading pool. Historic postcards show a generously sized pathway rimming the entire pool.

The following circulation routes have been added:

- A bituminous walkway and steps traversing the slope from the service house eastward, up the slope to the eastern end of the park;
- A bituminous roadway leading from the park roadway westward past the comfort station to the wading pool; and
- A series of concrete steps leading from the baseball diamond eastward to the park roadway.

Overall, the vehicular and pedestrian ways are in good to fair condition. Many of the original materials – gravel walkways lined with granite edges and macadam roads – have been replaced with bituminous roads walks, roads and curbs. Poured concrete walkways line the eastern park edge (along Highland Avenue) and criss-cross through the North Main Street entrance. While the eastern walkway has been maintained in good condition, the North Main Street entrance walkways have spalled and cracked, resulting in a deteriorated appearance.

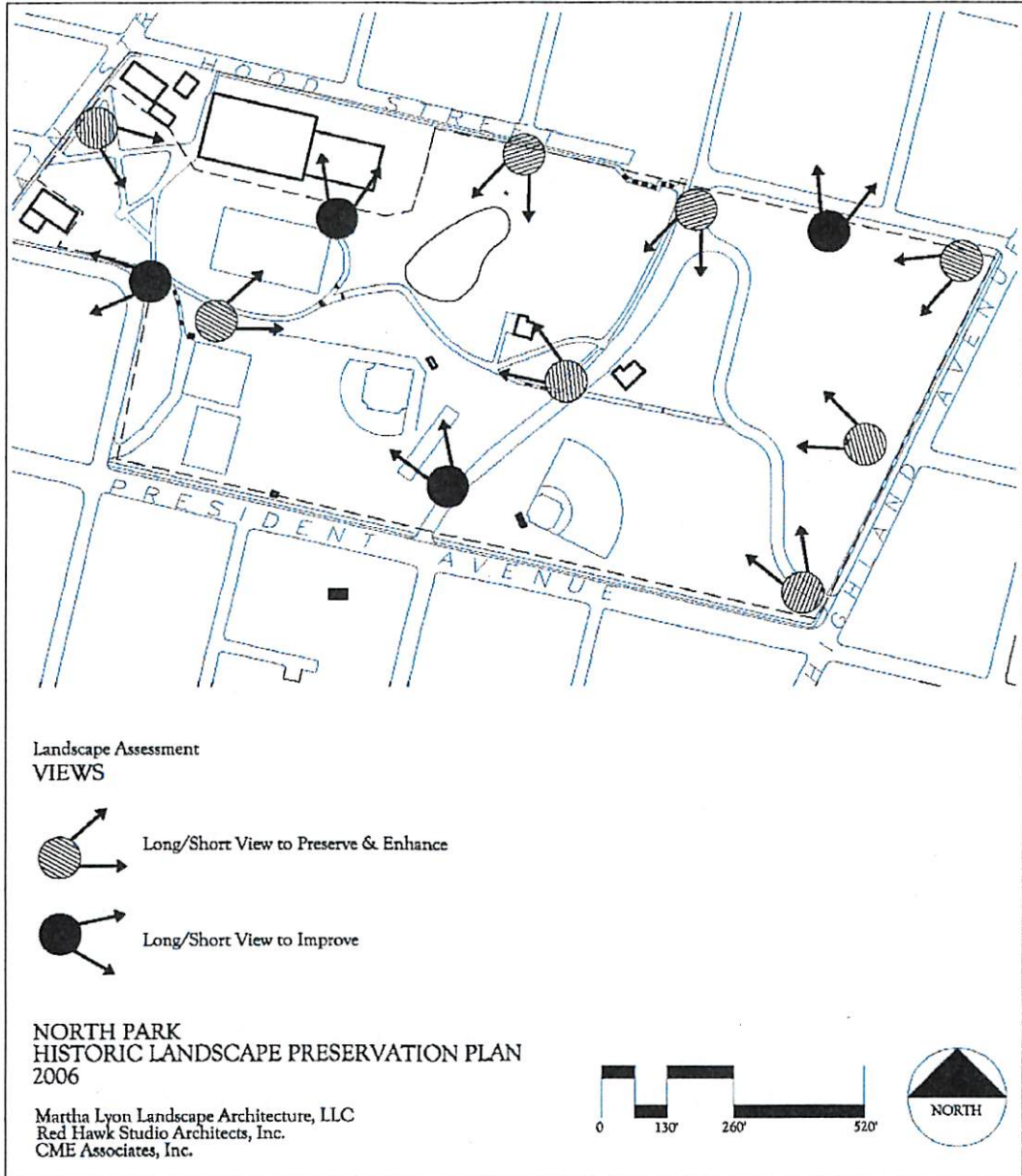


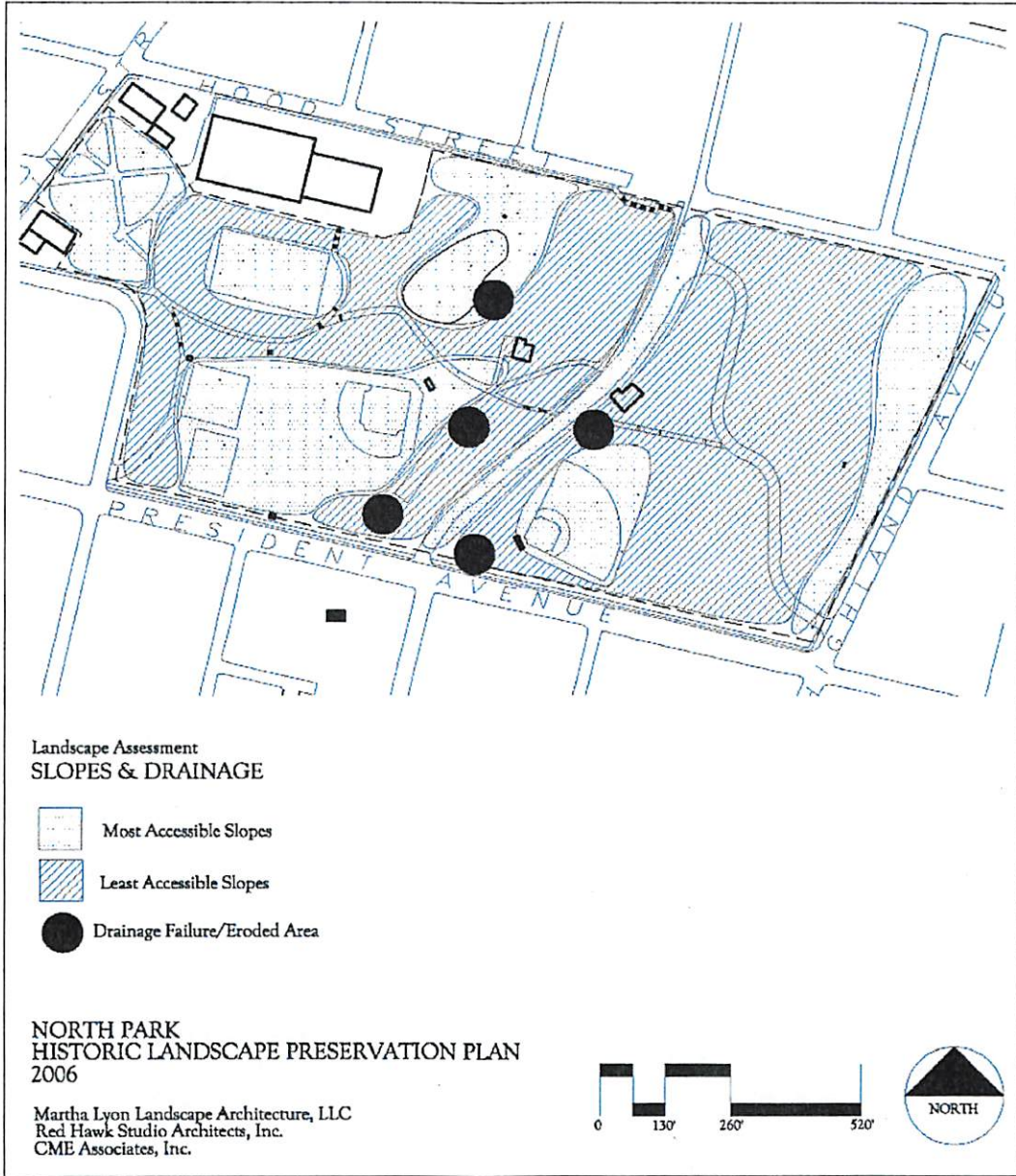
The long view from the park roadway northwestward, toward the Taunton River.

Views

Once inside the park, visitors may enjoy many outstanding views. These include long views, or vistas outside the park, and short views, or vistas to features inside the park, as follows:

- Long views to the west across the Taunton River are possible from the northeast corner of the park. Some of these have been obstructed by invasive tree growth in the middle of the park, but several are still very visible.





Short views include views (1) from the southeast corner to the northwest, down the park roadway, (2) from the north and south ends of the park roadway (mid-section of the park) along the length of the route, (3) from the entrance at North Main Street southeastward, towards the interior of the park, (4) from the north side of the Morton School along the park walkway towards the wading pool, (5) from the entrance at Hood and North Belmont Street southward towards the wading pool, and from the service house, westward, down the slope toward the comfort station, playground, and wading pool.

Several views from inside the park also conflict with its historic character. These include (1) the view of the Carroll School and Morton School parking areas, (2) the view over of the rundown bleachers (see structural assessment) from the park roadway, and (3) the view of Hood Street along the park's northeastern edge (lack of trees detracts from this view).

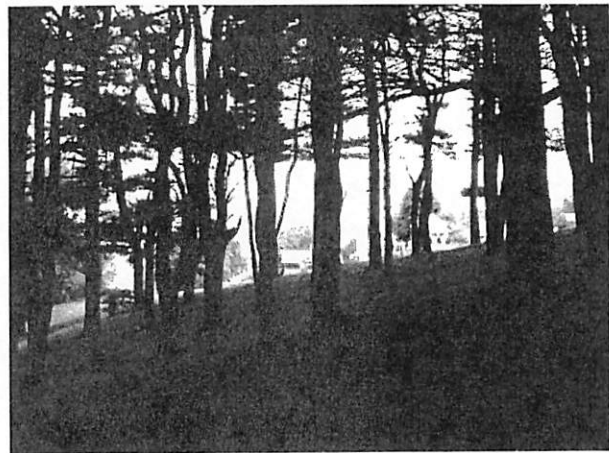
Slopes & Drainage

Land across North Park drops approximately 160 feet over approximately 1800 feet from its southeast corner to its northwest. This results in an average grade of nine percent, which is inaccessible to disabled persons. The Olmsted Brothers paid particular attention to the natural landform at North Park, softening the grades at several points in the park to accommodate roadways, athletic fields, buildings and entryways, but retaining steeper slopes in between. The more gently sloping areas (5% or less) lie at east (Highland Avenue) and west (North Main Street) pedestrian entrances, along the center to accommodate the park roadway, and at the ballfields and wading pool areas. Slopes in between exceed 9%.

The steep slopes have provided terrific opportunities for taking in long views and sledding, but they have also created high water velocities, resulting in many drainage and erosion problems. The Olmsted Brothers created a significant underground drainage system, concentrating their work on the park's east side. Here, a series of structures (catch basins) drain water from the roadways, as well as from low lying grassy areas. Despite this system, several problem areas remain, the largest lying along President Avenue to the south of the Little League field. Here, the sidewalk along President Avenue pitches towards the field, rather than toward the street. The result is a significant amount of runoff down into the Little League field area and a severely eroded slope.

Plant Communities

The Olmsted Brothers' plan for North Park included an array of tree and shrub plantings consisting of dozens of different species. While some of these original plantings exist, many have died, been removed, or have been overtaken by invasive vines and other exotics. Of the original plantings, all that remain are (1) the lindens along President Avenue, (2) the oaks near the service yard and comfort station, and (3) oaks and maples lining the edges of walkways near the wading pool and women's gymnasium (skateboard park). The other plant communities consist of the following:



The pine grove, planted between the upper and lower portions of the park.

- A stand of pines, planted on the slope to the north and east of the service yard. Judging from their size, it is likely these were planted during the Works Progress Administration's efforts at the park (1930s).
- Mature trees clustered with dense understory and invasives standing in groves. These communities appear (1) along the northern edge between the park and Carroll School, (2) in the middle of the park, to the west of the park roadway (north of the comfort station), (3) along the east side of the wading pool, (4) to the east of the upper ballfield, (5) in the northeast corner (set 250' from the park edge), and along the eastern border, near the intersection of President and Highland Avenues.
- Wetland species, specifically Phragmites, grow along the eastern edge of the wading pool. These likely have volunteered as the result of water from the comfort station collecting at this low spot.
- New street tree plantings, along the park roadway (in the middle section of the park) and Highland Avenue (many in poor condition).



The 1916 comfort station, designed by parks department staff and located between the wading pool and park roadway, at the center of the park.

Architecture

The original Olmsted Brothers' plan showed several structures, each located near the periphery of the park. These include a "shelter" along Highland Avenue (near Stanley Street), a band shell near the North Main Street entrance, and a field house between the men's and women's gymnasias. The field house, although designed in 1940 by a Chicago architect, was never built. The band shell, added in the first decades of the park, was removed at an undocumented time. The existing flat platform along Highland Avenue may have supported a foundation for the "shelter," but there is no historical documentation of such a structure, and elderly Fall River residents ~ users of the park as children in the 1920s and 1930s ~ do not remember it.

Today, the park contains several other structures which were not part of the original Olmsted Brothers' plan:

- The *service house and yard*, constructed in 1916 (see Plan 2), appears to have been constructed in two phases, with the more formal front part constructed first, and was probably designed by a city staff person. Plans from 1916 show a shed and service yard being added to an existing building. These additions, which still exist, feature columns on pedestals and overhanging roof remnants. The shed additional also appears to have had a low wooded parapet with corner posts around its front portion.

Over the years the building served a variety of functions such a equipment storage, a work area for park personnel, and according to some reports, a location for guards. Today maintenance equipment and personnel are dispatched from elsewhere. The wooden superstructure of this

building is so severely deteriorated that it is beyond repair, though the stone foundation is in good condition (see Appendix B: *Engineering Assessment*, for further detail).

- The brick *comfort station* (see Plan 3), was constructed in 1920 and designed by Howard Lothrop, the superintendent of parks. In its original condition, building was rather formal, with porches at the men's and women's entries and a balustrade around the roof. From the porches, park users could take in western views of the park and Taunton River. Interior amenities included a dressing room with lockers, a shower and a Palladian window. Access to the shower was shared by both the men's and women's vestibules.

Today the porches and balustrade are gone and the windows covered or, in the case of the Palladian window, blocked up with brick. However, the general condition of the structure is good. It was durably built to begin with and should provide many more years of use if renovated and brought up to date.

- *Concrete blockhouses* at the baseball fields have been introduced more recently. The condition of these structures was not evaluated as part of this study and their ad hoc character, along with associated portable toilets and portable storage structures, does not compliment the historic character of the park. However, they serve a necessary function.

The appearance of blockhouse at the lower ballfield is somewhat masked by the grade change and the baseball backstop. The blockhouse at the upper Little League ballfield is near the President Avenue entry. The need for better accommodation of restroom functions and replacement of the functions served by the Service House may provide an opportunity for a new building that will fit more appropriately with the park's character.

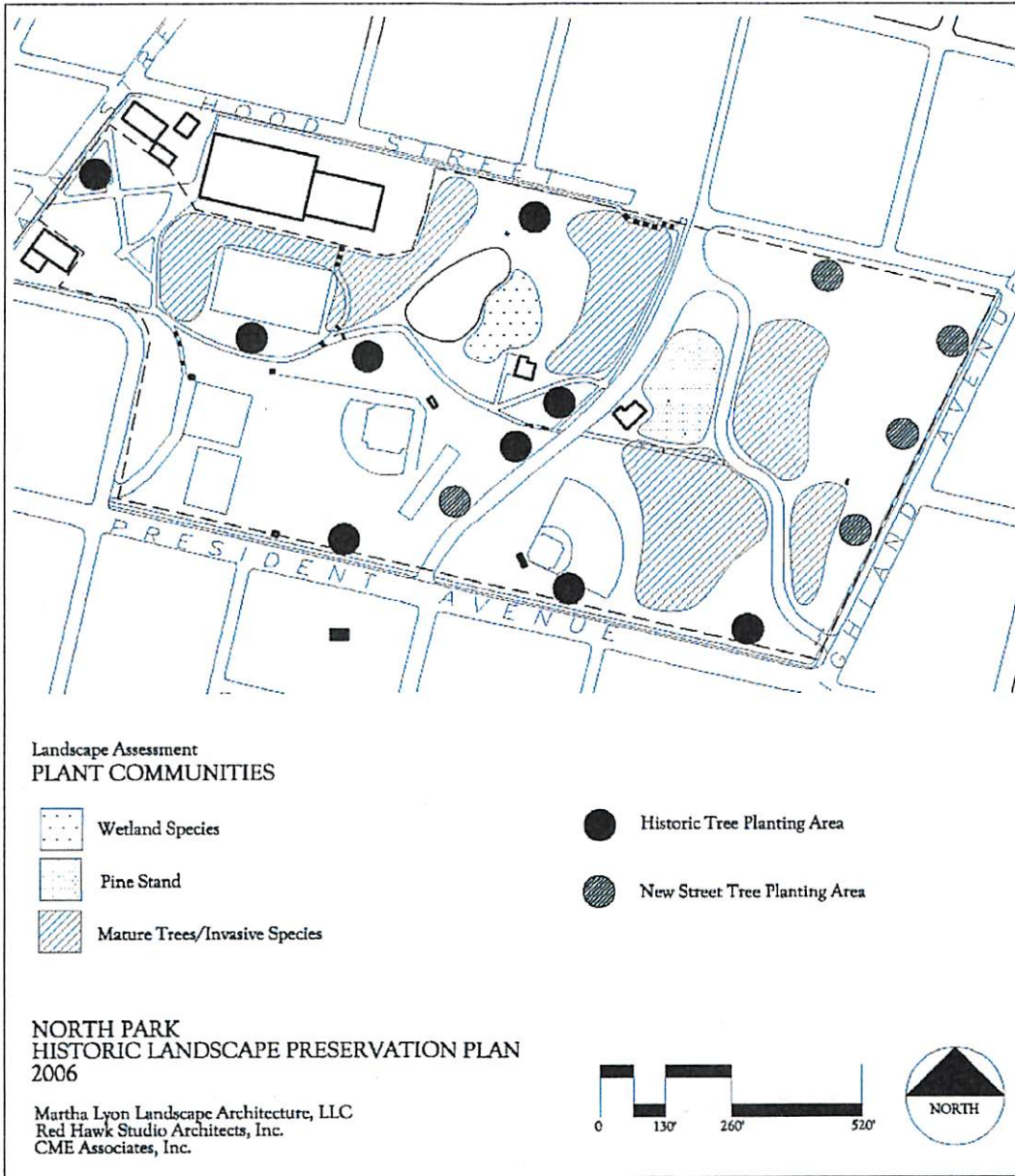
Historic Structures

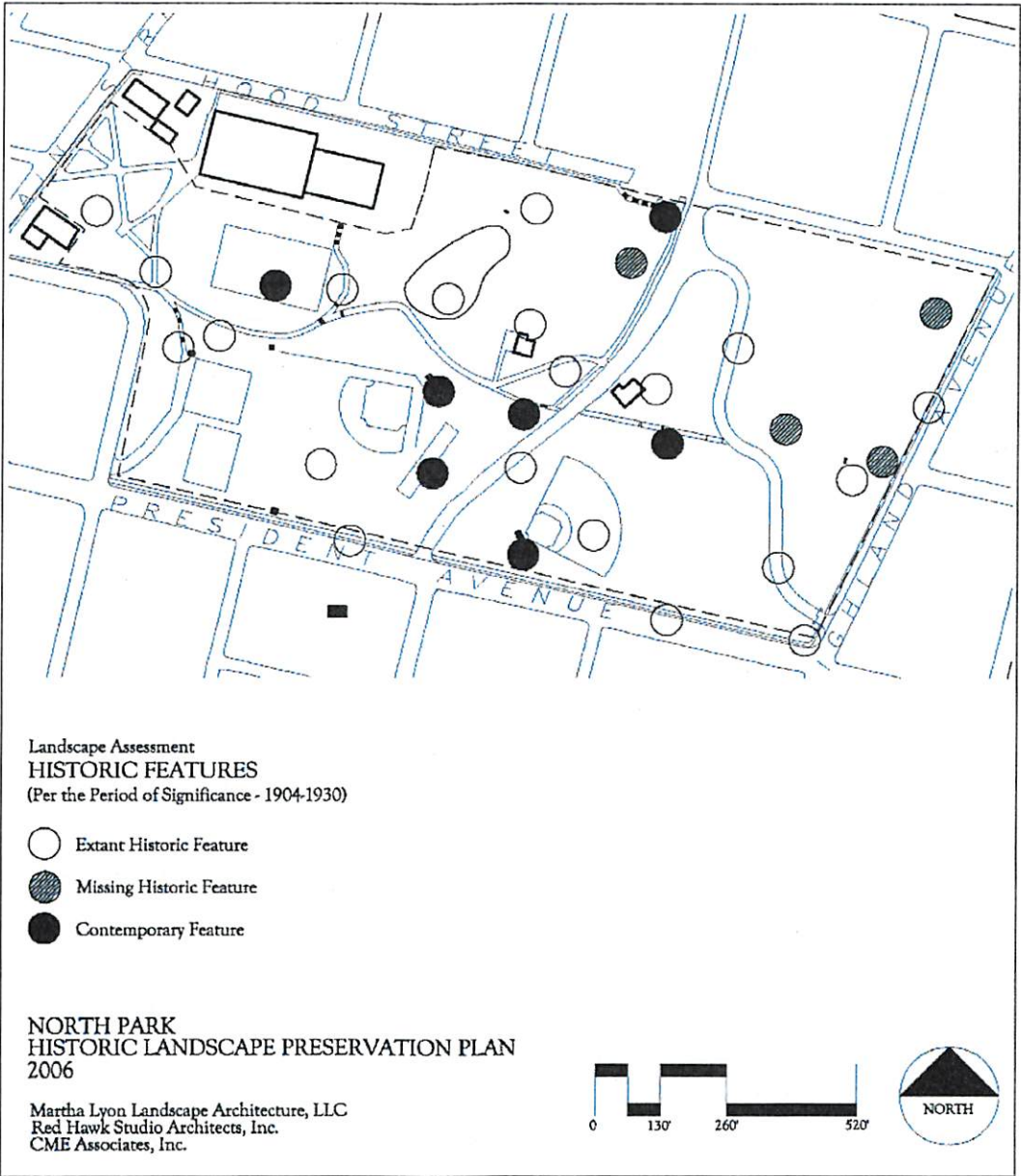
North Park's many historic structures provide amenities for park users and add detail to the park landscape. They include granite and puddingstone steps, concrete steps and bleachers, and a concrete-rimmed wading pool. *Note: The park also contains several contemporary structures, including chain link fencing and chain link backstops. These structures support the park's baseball activities were not assessed as part of this plan.*

- *Granite & Puddingstone Steps.* The Olmsted Brothers located several sets of granite and puddingstone steps along walkways throughout the park. Most lie at the western or lower half, allowing visitors to traverse the slopes between various park features. Typically, these steps appear in "flights," or a series of rough-cut granite treads, edged with puddingstone boulders, and are built into steep slopes. Most have shifted and settled, and some of the granite treads are missing altogether. None of the flights has a handrail placing them out of compliance with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) code. Because the flights are original to the Olmsted Brothers' design, preserving and/or restoring them to their form should be a high priority.



One of the several flights of granite and puddingstone steps, original to the Olmsted Brothers' design.





- *Concrete Steps.* Flights of concrete steps were likely added to North Park during the 1930s, when the Works Progress Administration completed several projects for the City of Fall River. These flights appear near the Comfort Station and along Hood Street, connecting the upper and lower park halves. Their condition is good to very good, although they do not contain handrails, also placing them out of compliance with the ADA code. Because the concrete flights are not original to the Olmsted Brothers' design, retaining them should be low priority.
- *Concrete Bleachers.* A set of concrete bleachers supports the eastern park slope, above the lower ballfield. Likely added in the 1930s by the WPA, the set is not original to the Olmsted Brothers' plan. Elderly park users recall that in the 1940s, hundreds of spectators would use the bleachers during the baseball season, making them a very desirable park feature. Today, approximately 50% of the concrete surface has cracked, spalled or delaminated. In addition, surface water has collected behind, resulting in dam-like conditions. Water streaming around either end of the bleachers had created eroded gullies. Because the bleachers are not original to the Olmsted Brothers' design, retaining them in their existing form should be a low priority.



The historic wading pool. A drainage failure, originating at the comfort station (right of photo), created the wetland area on the east side of the pool.

- *Wading Pool.* This kidney-shaped feature was designed by the Olmsted Brothers and remains as one of the park's most historic and beloved features. It retains its original concrete curbing, but its historic dirt floor has been lined with bituminous concrete. It also appears to retain its original water feed system. The builders of the pool, Warren Brothers of Boston, placed a bronze medallion on the concrete rim. While the pool and its rim appear in good condition, the elevation of the rim may have settled, requiring reconstruction. Because this feature is original to the Olmsted Brothers' design, restoring its rim, floor, water system and setting should be a high priority.

Other Historic Features

As described above, North Park retains several of its historic features while, at the same time, exhibiting many more contemporary ones. Extant features dating to the park's period of significance include:

- Pedestrian entrances at North Main Street, Belmont Street and President Avenue, North Underwood and Hood Streets, near the wading pool, and near the Morton School.
- The park roadway, known locally as "snake road," leading from the southeast corner northwestward, down the slope, making a hairpin turn, and proceeding southward.

- Pedestrian ways along the eastern edge (Highland Avenue), west side of the park roadway, from the service house westward, toward the entrance by the Morton School, and from Hood Street southward to the wading pool.
- Granite and puddingstone steps throughout much of the park.
- Lindens along President Avenue, and stands of oaks and maples near the wading pool and women's gymnasium (skateboard park).
- The wading pool.
- The service house (1916) and comfort station (1920)

The park once housed several features that are no longer extant including:

- A pedestrian entrance at the northeast corner.
- Pedestrian walkways with granite and puddingstone steps throughout the eastern section.
- The park roadway leading from the northeast corner southwestward, meeting the existing roadway in the center of the park, approximately 250' from Highland Avenue.
- A grand pedestrian entrance at the center of the park along Highland Avenue, complete with a shelter (no written evidence of this structure exists, although it appeared as a footprint on the Olmsted Brothers' 1905 plan).
- The lily pond, located near the northeast corner of the park.
- The music court, replaced in 1908 with a greener entrance.
- Granite block-lined walkways along the park roadway and in other locations, such as the wading pool edge.
- Tree plantings in allees along all sides of the park (only the lindens along President Avenue remain).
- Other tree and shrub plantings throughout.
- Electric lighting along the park roadway.

Several new features have been added to accommodate contemporary park needs. They include:

- The makeshift gravel drive leading from Hood Street to the wading pool.
- Concrete steps leading from the comfort station eastward to the park roadway/service house.
- The bituminous walkway and concrete steps leading from the service house eastward toward to eastern area of the park.
- Concrete bleachers along the eastern slope above the lower ballfield.
- The grove of pines to the north and east of the service yard.
- Memorials to Fall River war veterans, including the Jewish memorial at the corner of Highland and President Avenues, and the WW II memorial tree plantings at the North Main Street entrance.



The memorial to Jewish war veterans, located at the corner of Highland and President Avenues.

Evaluation/Preliminary Recommendations

The following are preliminary recommendations for proceeding with preservation treatment of North Park, based on (1) the period of historical significance, 1904-1930, (2) program of uses, and (3) assessment of the landscape and its features.

- Restore the planting scheme (minus the monoculture) proposed for the north, east, and south edges of the park by the Olmsted Brothers.
- Restore the main entrance to the park off North Main Street to its 1908 form (preferred by the city, but not what was proposed by the Olmsteds).
- Reconstruct the pedestrian entrances proposed by the Olmsted Brothers at the northeast and southeast corners – paved “foyers” connecting to pedestrian walks leading into the park.
- Restore the entrance near the wading pool and at Hood and North Underwood Streets, and rehabilitate the entrance near the Morton School (in conjunction with plans to improve the school property and parking area).
- Restore/reconstruct the entrance from the Carroll School southward into the park.
- Restore the park roadway leading from the northeast corner to the center of the park, 250’ from Highland Avenue.
- Devise a palette of paving materials from the roadway, considering the use of chip seal and granite edging.
- Restore walkways and steps in the eastern section of the park, per the original design of the Olmsted Brothers.
- Remove the concrete steps and replace the bleachers built in the 1930s by the WPA.
- Restore/reconstruct the steps and pathways throughout the western section of the park.
- Devise a palette of walkway and walkway edging materials.
- Devise solutions to eroding slopes and drainage failures.
- Reconstruct the service house, possibly in a different location, equipped to house multiple athletic field-related functions (storage, restrooms, concessions).
- Restore the comfort station per the drawings on file with the parks department.
- Re-establish long views across the Taunton River by selectively removing stands of trees.
- Provide a planted screen between the park and Morton and Carroll School parking areas.
- Remove all invasive plant species and overgrown masses of trees, understory and vines.
- Selectively reintroduce the plant communities proposed by the Olmsted Brothers.

- Reconstruct pole lighting along the park roadway.
- Consider reintroducing the lily pond, a feature beloved by city residents and dating to the park's period of historical significance.

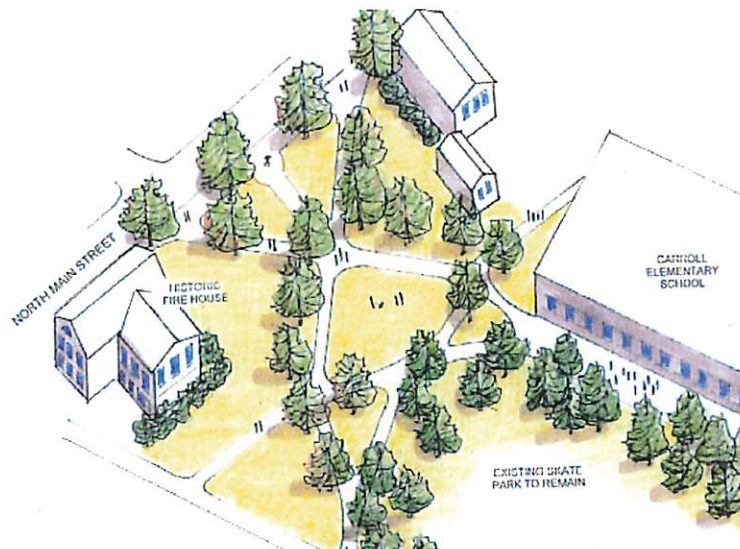
RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are specific recommendations for restoring the landscape of historic North Park. The Fall River Department of Recreational Facilities, Cemeteries and Trees agreed that the Preservation Plan should strive, as much as possible, to restore the landscape to the original design of the Olmsted Brothers, created in 1904-1905 and modified by the city up until 1930. The recommendations reflect this thinking by proposing a series of projects that (1) preserve or restore existing historic features, and (2) reconstruct some lost historic features. While most of the recommendations involve physical treatment of the landscape in specific geographic areas, several address park-wide concerns, such as caring for trees, paths and roads, and placing signs. Refer to Plan 4 for an illustrative overview of the recommendations.

Preservation Projects

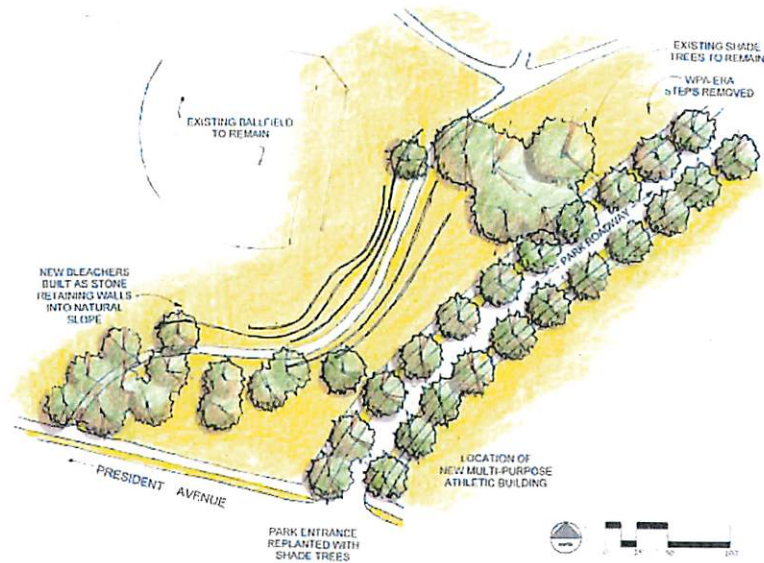
Based on the park's history and the program outlined above, the team has developed the following preservation projects. To complete these, the city will need to commission a park-wide topographical survey, as well as develop more detailed design and engineering specifications for each project.

- *Project 1: Restoring the North Main Street Entrance.* This historic park entrance was designed and built by the city in 1908, and included a series of diagonal walkways leading from North Main Street into the park's northwest corner. Project 1 would involve removing all existing pavement and re-establishing the poured concrete walkways, turf areas and plantings of shade trees. Benches would be placed to line the walkways, and areas for beds of perennial and annual plants would be established. The historic granite drinking fountain (placed c. 1907), mature linden trees, and plaques commemorating two World War II soldiers would be retained, and where necessary, restored.



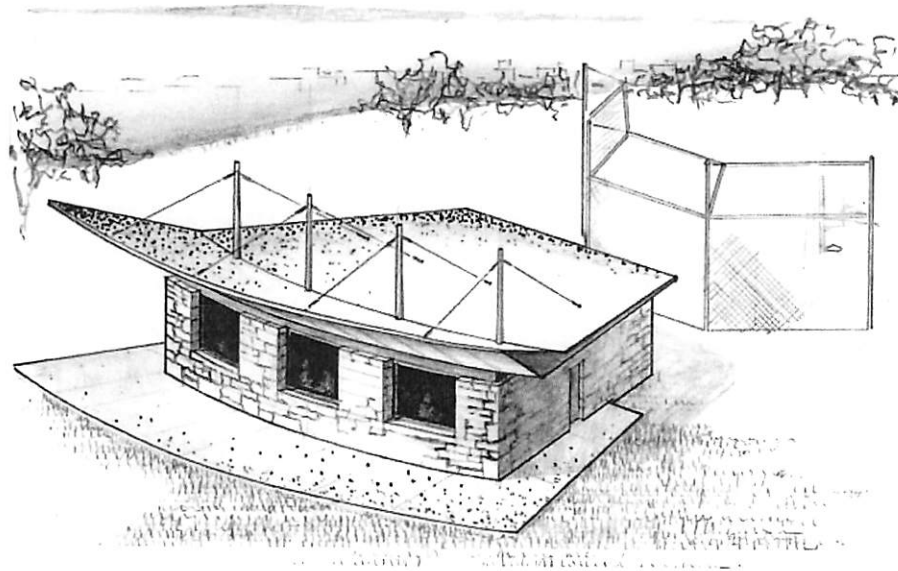
The restored North Main Street entrance will include new walks, shade trees, benches and seasonal plantings.

- Project 2: Treating the Bleachers.* The existing concrete bleachers, added by the WPA c. 1937 have significantly deteriorated, are unsafe, and do not meet current Americans with Disability Act (ADA) codes. Project 2 would involve removing the concrete structure and replacing it with a series of earth terraces, retained by stone, that follow the natural contour of the land. The terraces would vary in width (depending on the land's form), and, where appropriated, would be punctuated by plantings of deciduous trees. An ADA-complaint walkway would lead visitors from the sidewalk on President Avenue to the terraces, and then pass through the terraces, eventually connecting to the comfort station (see Project 5). The precise length and number of terraces would be determined as they are designed in more detail.



The new bleacher area will feature a series of terraces, built into the existing slope, and supported by 18" retaining walls.

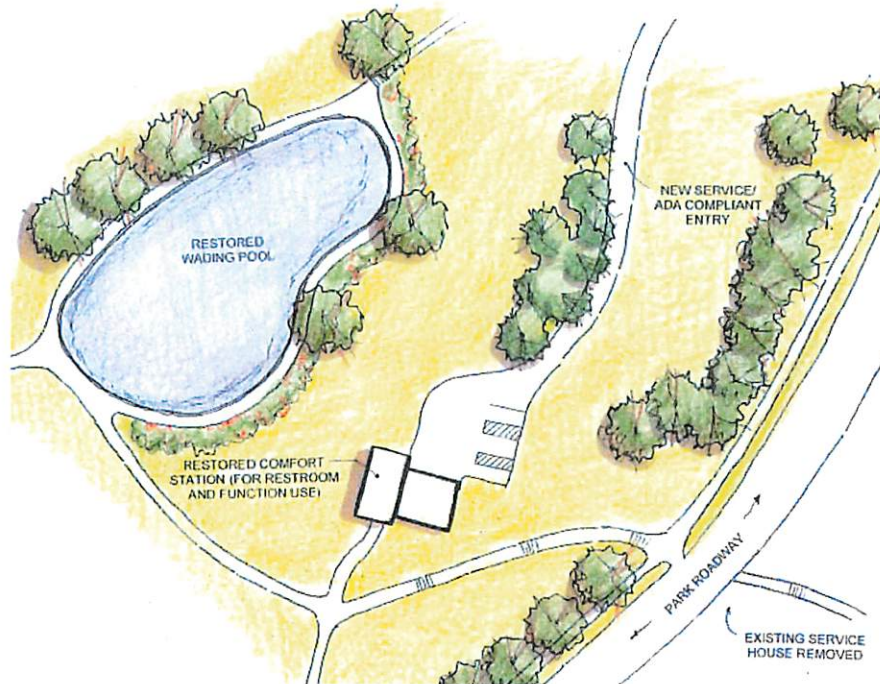
- Project 3: Addressing the Service House.* The existing Service House is beyond repair, and does not currently meet the needs of park staff or athletic league members. To accommodate these needs, the athletic leagues have placed concrete blockhouses and portable toilets near each of the athletic fields, resulting in a cluttered look in the park. Project 3 would involve demolishing the existing Service House and constructing a new park building to house storage, toilets, handicapped accessible facilities, and a concession area for distributing refreshments during baseball season. Located at the corner of President Avenue and the main park entrance adjacent to the Little League field, this structure would combine all of the required amenities under one roof. Parking would be available along the park roadway, and walkways lining President Avenue would lead directly to the new building. The design of the new building would complement the park's period of significance, 1904-1930.



The new athletic league building, located at the President Avenue entrance and adjacent to the Little League field. It will replace the existing service house and concrete block storage buildings.

- Project 4: Restoring the Wading Pool.* This historic feature was part of the Olmsted Brothers' original 1904-1095 design for North Park. Although it is no longer maintained for wading, residents still value its elegance and historic character. Restoration would include stabilizing and/or restoring the concrete edges, upgrading the perimeter walkways and removing/replacing existing overgrown plants. Provisions should be made for flooding the pool in summer (for wading) as well as winter (for ice skating), as the city may some day desire a water feature in the park during the warmer months. Also included in Project 4 would be restoration of the granite and puddingstone steps, leading from the pool to Hood Street, along with the connecting pedestrian path.
- Project 5: Restoring the Existing Comfort Station.* Project 5 would involve returning the comfort station to its original form, which included grand porches overlooking the Taunton River. This durable masonry building is readily adaptable for new use serving the lower (western) half

of the park with handicapped accessible toilets on the first floor, and a storage facility on the lower floor. As an option, the city could restore and maintain the building as an open-air pavilion. With either option, Project 5 would create a service access road leading from Hood Street to the rear of the comfort station, and place a service vehicle parking area behind the building. Other elements of Project 5 include removing the existing playground equipment from the lawn to the north of the building, repairing the buildings' plumbing so that it no longer drains to the wading pool, and clearing overgrown trees and brush from the vicinity of the building.



The restored wading pool and comfort station. A new service entrance off Hood Street will provide access to both features for service vehicles.

- Project 6: *Restoring the Eastern Park Edge.* Residents in the Highlands Historic District value the quiet, uncluttered feel and look of the eastern park edge. Project 6 would maintain this appearance, but would reconstruct several features original to the Olmsted Brothers' plan. The serpentine walkway leading from the northeast corner to the central part of the park would be reconstructed in chip seal lined with granite edge stones. An open-air shelter or viewing platform would be constructed at the intersection of Highland Avenue and Stanley Street. The poured concrete sidewalks along Highland would be patched and re-poured, and new plantings of shade trees would replace any diseased or dying trees growing along the sidewalk edge.

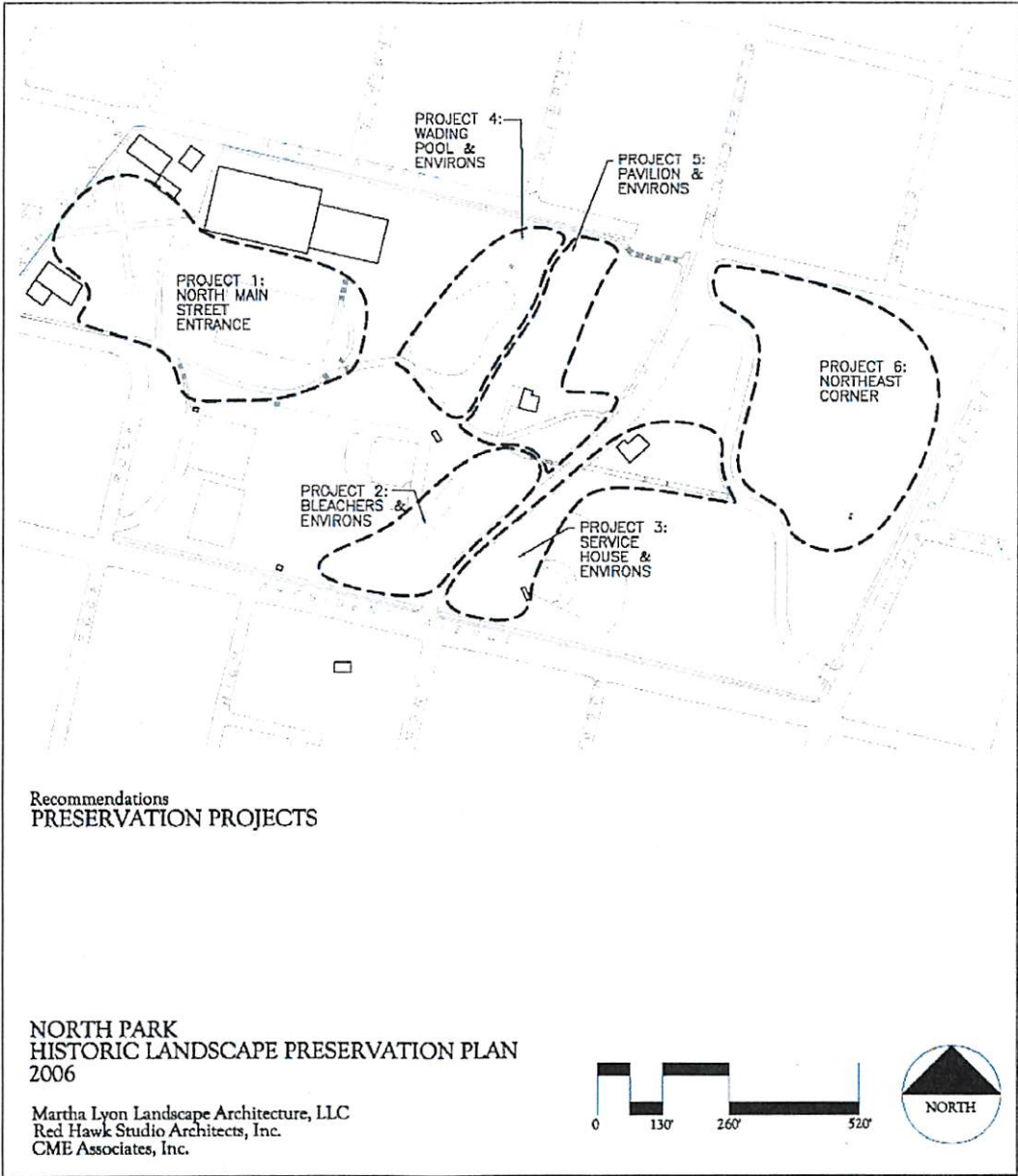


The restored eastern edge (northeast corner) would include new pedestrian walkways leading into the park, as well as a shelter or viewing platform along Highland Avenue at the intersection of Stanley Street.

Park-Wide Recommendations

Other ongoing management tasks, which could be handled by the park and/or DPW staff include (refer to Plan 5 for schematic details of the proposed structural and drainage repairs):

- *Task 1: Signs.* Currently, the park does not contain signs explaining its importance of as an historic site, work of landscape architecture, and part of a larger city-wide park system. Such signs, if tastefully designed and carefully placed, could include this information, as well as park rules and regulations. The design of the signs should be coordinated with those for Fall River's other Olmsted parks. They should be placed at each of the seven pedestrian entrances.
- *Task 2: Park Landscape at the Morton School.* In the next few years, the Morton School will be rebuilt and its landscape upgraded. Because the school sits at North Park's southwest corner, students will likely use the park landscape on a regular basis. Therefore, circulation between the school and park should be clearly connected, and plantings should help screen school facilities (such as the parking areas and basketball courts) from the park landscape. Specifically, a planting of evergreens along the east side of the new Morton School parking area and basketball court will help separate these facilities from the park's lower baseball field.
- *Task 3: Park Roadway, Parking & Lighting.* The original park roadway measured 40 feet in width, and was covered with macadam and edged with granite stones. Parking areas were not part of the original Olmsted Brothers' plan. Over the years, the park roadway has been widened and overlain with bituminous paving, and its edge stones obscured. Parking during



busy athletic events takes place on both sides of the roadway. To maintain the roadway's historic character and, at the same time provide for parking, the city should introduce chip seal paving to the roadway surface, and restore the edge stones. To provide for events requiring large amounts of parking, the city should consider limiting the roadway to one-way traffic, entering at Highland Avenue and exiting at President. The city should also consider closing the secondary entrance at Hood Street, to eliminate cut-through traffic. Finally, to provide better visibility to park users at night, the city should restore the luminaries, introduced into the park c. 1912, to line the park roadway.

- *Task 4: Drainage.* Most drainage failures and erosion problems throughout the park may be mitigated through re-grading of sloped areas. The bleacher and President Avenue slopes are the most critical of these areas. Erosion around the bleachers will be remedied by the construction of terraces (see Project 2, above). Erosion along President Avenue may be lessened if the existing sidewalks are re-graded to slope at 2% toward the street (and away from the park).
- *Task 5: Paths & Steps.* Macadam covered North Park's pathways, and granite and puddingstone were used to construct its steps. The city should aim to resurface all the walks with chip seal and line them with granite edge stones (many of which are still in place but obscured by turf or overlay pavement). Each set of steps should be stabilized and/or reconstructed with materials to match the original. Handrails must be applied to the steps in order to comply with ADA codes.
- *Task 6: Hood Street & President Avenue Planting.* The original Olmsted Brothers' plan called for shade trees to line all edges of the park. Highland Avenue and parts of President Avenue retain this planting, but some of President and all of Hood Street have lost their trees. As trees become diseased and die, the city should replace them with a mix urban-tolerant species (refer to *Section 6, Managing North Park's Historic Landscape* for a list of appropriate species). Citizens wishing to donate trees and/or commemorate loved ones with trees should consult the Parks Department for species and locations.
- *Task 7: Historic "Grove" Area Plantings.* The original Olmsted Brothers' plan designated areas where groves of trees should be planted, largely to separate park functions and create a series of outdoor "rooms" within the larger park. Specifically, these groves stood (1) to the east of the Little League field, (2) to the northeast of the Comfort Station, and (3) between the women's and men's gymnasias (now the Carroll School and skateboard area). Today, these groves have become overgrown and invaded with exotic species. From these areas, the exotics should be, the mature trees should be retained, and the historic plantings should be re-introduced (refer to *Section 6, Managing North Park's Historic Landscape* for a list of appropriate historic grove area species).

Budget Projections

The following are summary budget projections for the preservation of North Park's historic landscape. More complete projections for Projects 1 through 6 appear in *Appendix D: Budget Projections* of this plan. Note that these projections are schematic and are to be used for fundraising purposes only. More precise calculations will be made during the design process for each of the projects.

Project 1: North Main Street Entrance	\$ 341,000
Project 2: Bleachers	\$ 221,000
Project 3: Service House	\$ 722,000
Project 4: Wading Pool	\$ 106,000
Project 5: Comfort Station	\$ 732,000
Project 6: Northeast Corner	\$ 253,000

Subtotal, Projects 1 through 6	\$ 2,375,000
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The following projections reflect approximate costs for Tasks 1 through 7 employing city staff members.

Task 1: Signs	\$ 20,000
Task 2: Morton School Edge	\$ 7,500
Task 3: Roadway, Parking & Lighting	\$330,000
Task 4: Drainage	\$ 10,000
Task 5: Paths & Steps	\$ 50,000
Task 6: Hood Street and President Avenue Planting	\$ 15,000
Task 7: Historic "Grove" Area Plantings	\$ 50,000

Subtotal, Tasks 1 through 7	\$482,500
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MANAGING NORTH PARK'S HISTORIC LANDSCAPE

This section of the plan will help the City of Fall River care for the landscape at North Park. It includes strategies for the care of plants (trees, shrubs and turf), structures (steps and buildings), and pavement. By following these strategies, city employees will help ensure the long term health and beauty of one of Fall River's most prominent historic landscapes.

Management Log

Before the city begins management of the North Park landscape, staff should set up a "management log," or ongoing written record of inspections, repairs, and introductions of new features listed by date. The log should include methods and materials employed, as well as names and contact information for any specialists employed in the park's care. The log should be stored, in both electronic and manual format, in a secure location within the Fall River Department of Recreational Facilities, Cemeteries & Trees.

EXISTING PLANTS

Trees

As noted in several places in this plan, trees greatly impact the park's appearance, with mature trees and tree stands playing dominant roles. To maintain the trees' health the city should adhere to the measures that follow. For treatment of individual trees, the city should consult a Massachusetts Certified Arborist.

General Tree Management Guidelines

1. Test the park soil for quality in relationship to the mature tree population. The test will detect any soil deficiencies, and determine a remedy for correcting them.
2. Provide and install cables. These will help stabilize any weakly-joined tree limbs.
3. Treat trees with a systemic insecticide to minimize stress caused by leaf-feeding pests.
4. Prune trees, removing all dead wood greater than ½" in diameter.
5. Create rings of mulch around the base of each tree, as wide as possible and up to the diameter of the tree crown.
6. Where soil has built up at the base of trees, remove enough to expose the root collar.
7. Remove any dead trees.

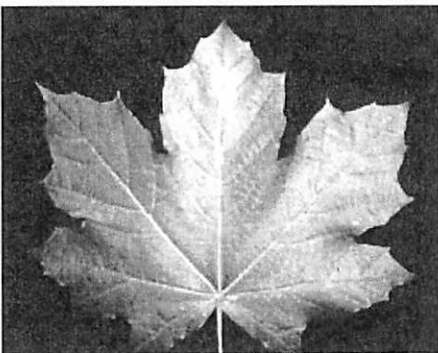
Turf

The following fertilizing and mowing guidelines will help maintain the turf areas, promoting a lush, green appearance and healthier, longer living plants.

1. Fertilize sparingly, as too much fertilizer can cause grass to grow too rapidly, requiring more mowing and making the plants more susceptible to disease. Not enough fertilizer can result in weaker plants that are more susceptible to disease or stress brought on by drought.
2. Apply fertilizer three times per year – around Memorial Day and Labor Day, and finally, around Halloween.
3. Do NOT fertilize in mid-summer. At this time of year, roots have become dormant. Fertilizer will cause the leaves to grow, making the plants less tolerant of drought, heat and disease.
4. Follow these fertilizing instructions:
 - *Memorial Day* – apply 1 pound of Nitrogen per 1,000 sf (with 50% of Nitrogen slow-release). Use an N:P:K Ratio of 14-14-14.
 - *Labor Day* - apply 2 pounds of Nitrogen per 1,000 sf (with 50% of Nitrogen slow-release). Use an N:P:K Ratio of 14-14-14.
 - *Halloween* - apply 1 pound of Nitrogen per 1,000 sf (with 75% of Nitrogen slow-release). Use an N:P:K Ratio of 28-3-9.
5. When mowing, remove no more than one-third of the height of the turf at one time, always leaving twice as much leaf height as is cut.
6. The best level for mown grass is 2 ½ inches, with 2 to 3 ½ inches the range.
7. It is best to mow lawns on an as-needed basis, not on a regular schedule, such as once per week.
8. When mowing around monuments and markers, the City and Friends should avoid contact between the equipment and stones. Slashes near the base of stones are one of the most common causes of breakage. Weed-whackers should be used sparingly, and preferably not at all.

Exotic Invasive Plants

Invasive plants are non-native species that were introduced to the United States by horticulturists as ornamental or exotic plants. They quickly adapted to the growing conditions of U.S. climates, and spread, overtaking and crowding out native species. Invasive plants are difficult to control and must be monitored closely to prevent them from eliminating other more desirable plant species. North Park contains several invasive species, including, Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*), tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), and Asian bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*). The following are general measures for controlling these species.



Norway Maple (Acer platanoides)

Norway maple is native to Europe and Western Asia, and was introduced in the United States as an ornamental landscape plant. It reproduces prolifically in forests, fields, and other natural habitats, forming dense, shady stands and displacing native trees and shrubs. The tree has smooth, grey bark that becomes furrowed with age, and its leaves are dark green. The leaves have little or no fall color, which is one of the easiest ways of distinguishing it from the brilliant orange-colored sugar maple.

Norway maples spread by sending their mature fruits, or “samaras” through the wind. Small seedlings may be uprooted from the ground by hand, and small and large trees can be cut to the ground level. An application of glyphosate (Roundup) or triclopyr (Garlon 3A or Garlon 4) herbicide can also help control. The best means of control, however, is simply not planting them.



Tree of Heaven (Ailanthus altissima)

The tree of heaven is a rapidly growing deciduous tree native to Central China. A Philadelphia gardener mistakenly introduced the tree of heaven to the U.S. in 1784, believing its seeds to be those of the lacquer tree. During the California gold rush, Chinese miners brought seeds with them for uses in traditional medicines. The tree has smooth stems with pale gray bark and light chestnut brown-colored twigs. The leaves range from one to four feet in length and are compound, containing 11-25 smaller leaflets. The tree produces clusters of small, yellowish green flowers in the spring and twisted seed pods (“samaras”) in the late summer and early fall. Each tree can produce as many as 325,000 seeds per year, and the seeds are easily dispersed by the wind.

The tree of heaven grows very rapidly and can take over an entire site, forming an impenetrable thicket and crowding out other less aggressive species. Its roots can also damage sewers and foundations. The most effective way to control tree of heaven is to pull seedlings by hand before the tap root develops. Systemic herbicides, including glyphosate (Roundup) and triclopyr (Garlon 3A or Garlon 4) may also be used when the trees are in full leaf.* The chemicals should be applied to leaves and green stems, basal bark and/or cut stumps. Finally, research suggests that fungal pathogens may control the plants.



Asian Bittersweet (Celastrus orbiculatus)

Asian Bittersweet is a deciduous, woody, perennial vine native to Eastern Asia. It was introduced in the U.S. as an ornamental plant and is still widely planted and maintained as an ornamental vine. Its leaves are rounded and glossy and it produces clusters of small greenish flowers. Mature plants produce green to yellow fruits which split open to show red-orange seed sacs (“arils”). Many people cut the vines containing the fruits to make floral arrangements and wreaths. While attractive, the cuttings promote further spread of the vines.

Bittersweet invades the groundcover, shrub, understory and canopy layers of both wooded and open areas. In addition to blocking light and starving other plants, it girdles and chokes the trunks of trees. Two methods of control are possible for the plant. In areas of small investment, the vines may be uprooted before fruiting. Herbicides such as glyphosate (Roundup) or triclopyr (Garlon) may be applied after the vines have been hand-cut or mown.*

*The city should use pesticides wisely by reading the entire pesticide label carefully, following all mixing and application instructions and wearing all recommended personal protective gear and clothing. The Massachusetts

Department of Agriculture should also be contacted prior to any chemical applications, as the agency may dictate pesticide use requirements, restrictions or regulations.

NEW PLANTS

Today, North Park contains three distinct plant communities – street tree plantings, grove plantings and turf areas. When introducing new plants to these communities, the city should select species from the Olmsted Brothers original planting plan, as well as others plants typically grown throughout the early 20th century in American parks and other large-scale landscapes. A list of such plants, organized by plant community, and recommended planting methods follow. *Note: the original Olmsted Brothers' plan also specified many areas for plantings of ornamental shrubs. The project team recommends that the city avoid shrubs plantings, as they can be difficult to maintain, quickly become overgrown, and when left un-pruned, become masses which can attract litter and encourage inappropriate public behavior.*

Street Tree Plantings

The Olmsted Brothers specified plantings of shade trees – in the form of allees – along each of the park edges. The following is a list of these trees, expanded to include additional species typically planted throughout American parks in the early 20th century. Olmsted Brothers' plants have been marked with an asterisk (*).

Acer pseudoplatanus	European Sycamore
Acer rubrum	Red Maple
Aesculus hippocastanum	Horse Chestnut
Fraxinus americana*	White Ash
Ginkgo biloba	Maidenhair Tree
Gleditschia triacanthos*	Honey Locust
Koelreuteria paniculata	Golden Rain Tree
Liriodendron tulipifera*	Tulip Tree
Platanus occidentalis*	Sycamore
Platanus x acerifolia	London Plane Tree
Quercus robur	English Oak
Quercus rubra*	Red Oak
Quercus velutina	Black Oak
Tilia americana*	Basswood sp
Tilia europaea	European Linden
Ulmus americana 'Liberty'	Liberty Elm

Grove Plantings

On their 1904-1905 plan, the Olmsted Brothers designated several areas for planted groves. These included both specimen trees and small trees. After the city clears these areas of invasive plants, they should slowly introduce the following plants specified by the Olmsteds and expanded upon by the project team:

<i>Specimen Trees</i>	
Cladrastis tinctoria*	Yellowwood sp
Fagus sylvatica	European Beech
Liquidambar styraciflua	Sweetgum
Nyssa sylvatica*	Northern Black Tupelo
Populus sp*	Poplar

Salix alba*
Salix babylonica
Salix pentandra*
Sophora japonica

White Willow
Babylon Weeping Willow
Laurel Willow
Scholar Tree

Small Trees

Acer negundo*
Acer tataricum*
Amelanchier canadensis*
Carpinus americana*
Cornus alternifolia*
Crataegus crusgalli*
Ostrya virginiana*

Boxelder
Tatarian Maple
Shadblow Serviceberry
American Hornbeam
Pagoda Dogwood
Cockspur Hawthorn
American Hophornbeam, Ironwood

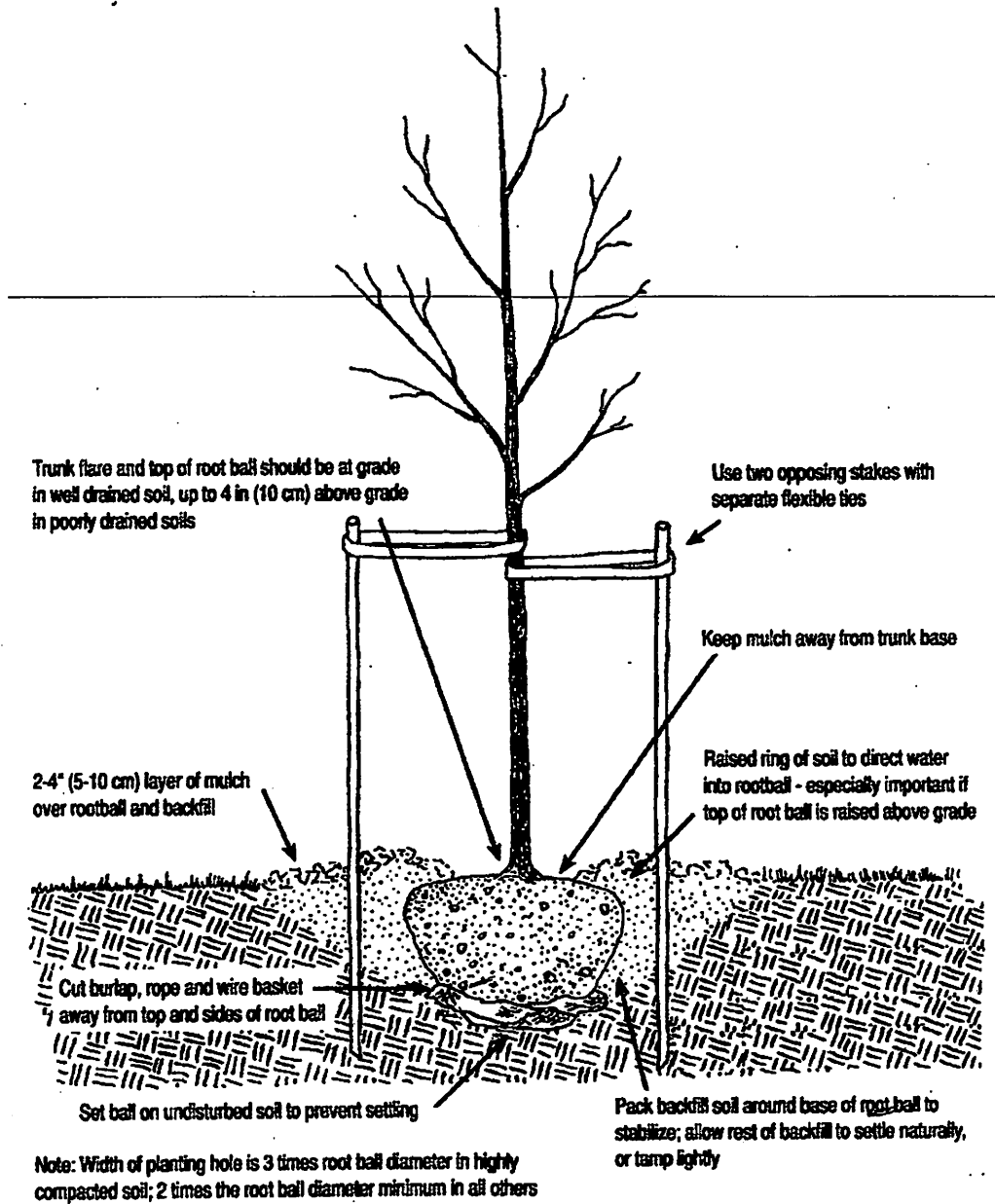
Turf Areas

Turf areas make up the remainder of the North Park plant communities. The following measures will help insure long-lived, healthy turf areas:

1. A seed mixture, consisting of Kentucky bluegrasses, fine fescues and perennial ryes is best, as it minimizes the amount of mowing (each grows at a different rate) and provides a consistent green appearance. Using a mix will avoid the problems arising from monocultural plantings. A local seed market will offer mixes appropriate for the Manchester area.
2. Once applied, seed should be covered with straw mulch. Hay should be avoided as it encourages weed growth.
3. The seeded area should be watered as frequently as possible to encourage germination (approximately once inch of rainwater per week).
4. Do not use herbicides to control weeds when the turf is becoming established.
5. Once the turf is established, remove the straw mulch and follow the instructions listed above for ongoing management.

Planting Methods

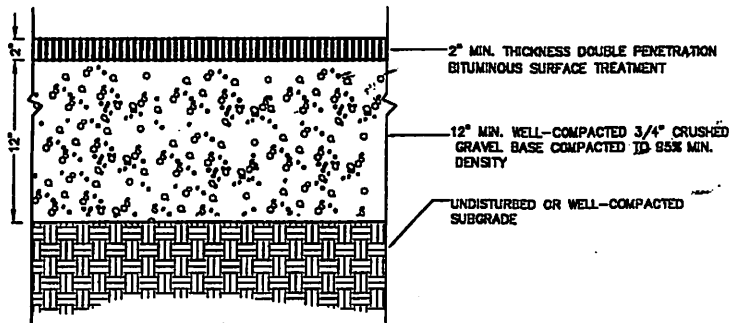
When introducing new trees to each of the existing communities, the city should adhere to industry standards for planting. At a minimum, the city should follow the recommendations included following planting detail.



Tree Planting Detail. Source: University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension Service.

ROADWAYS & PATHS

The city should inspect the paved roadways and paths yearly, looking for damage from frost heaves or vehicle tires. If the routes require patching, the following measures should be followed to maintain an even, unblemished appearance.



Chip Seal Roads

The plan has prescribed chip seal paving on the park roadway and pedestrian ways to maintain the appearance and feel of gravel, while keeping a permanent surface. Despite the durability of the chip seal, the surface will wear over time, requiring repair. When making these repairs, the city

should refer to the accompanying construction detail, and replace what is worn accordingly.

STRUCTURES

The city should inspect the park's structures (steps and buildings) yearly, looking for dislodged stones, cracked mortar, dirt and graffiti. Major repairs should be made according to the recommendations in *Appendix B: Engineering Assessment* of this plan, by qualified professionals only.

Yearly Cleaning

To prevent build up of dirt and grime on the granite and puddingstone steps, the city should wash the surface yearly with a low-pressure application of water (less than 250 psi).

Graffiti Removal

Graffiti should be removed with solutions approved by the *National Park Service Preservation Brief 38, Removing Graffiti from Historic Masonry*. In particular, the city should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Identify the material used to make the graffiti. Most often, vandals employ spray paint (polyurethane, lacquer, enamel), brush-applied paints (oil and synthetic resins including vinyl, acrylic, acetate, methacrylate, or alkyd), permanent and water-soluble felt markers, ballpoint pens, chalk, graphic and colored pencils, pastels, wax and oil crayons, liquid shoe polish, and lipstick.
- Identify the substrate material of the object containing the graffiti. Masonries are porous materials, making them sensitive to abrasion.
- Consult a historic masonry specialist before attempting to remove the graffiti. Specialists should maintain membership in the American Institute for Conservation (AIC), and perform all work in accordance with the AIC Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. These individuals will assess the porosity of the substrate material and propose the best removal method. Methods include employing poultice (an absorbent material mixed with a cleaning solution and applied in the form of a paste), water and detergent, organic solvents, alkaline compounds, bleaches, mechanical treatment, and laser cleaning. The method should be tested on a small, obscure area of the graffiti-ed object prior to proceeding with removal.*

- Where appropriate, apply an anti-graffiti coating to the vandalized object. Such coatings can help facilitate easier removal of graffiti, but they do not prevent graffiti from occurring. Some are permanent, and others must be re-applied once the graffiti has been removed. Because the coatings can seal the object, they can lead to water build-up and eventual water-related deterioration.

In addition, the city can take the following measures to minimize the occurrence of graffiti:

- Remove graffiti immediately after it occurs. Studies have shown that graffiti that remains on objects attracts more graffiti, complicating the problem. Graffiti artists gravitate and return to sites where their work will remain for longer periods of time.
- Perform regular maintenance throughout the park, including tree care, brush and understory removal, mowing and road maintenance. Well-maintained landscapes draw far fewer vandals than do poorly maintained ones.
- Install improved lighting and motion sensitive lighting in areas where graffiti has occurred in the past.
- Implement programs and activities that draw people in large numbers to the park at all times of year. Vandals are less likely to attack landscapes that are being watched.

NORTH PARK MANAGEMENT SCHEDULE

January - March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ When removing snow, minimize (or eliminate altogether) the use of salt.
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Remove dead leaves from turf areas and historic grove areas, using a mulching blade, if possible. ▪ Inspect the historic structures (steps and buildings) for damage that may have occurred over the winter. Consult a specialist about repairing any major damage. ▪ Inspect roads and paths for damage that may have occurred over the winter. Patch accordingly. ▪ Replace any burned-out bulbs in the park luminaires.
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inspect trees for damage that may have occurred over the winter and note any needs for pruning and removals. ▪ Begin removing Norway maple seedlings to control growth. ▪ Begin mowing turf on an as-needed basis to a height no less than 2-1/2 inches. ▪ Around Memorial Day, fertilize turf areas (14-14-14). ▪ Inspect the park for invasion of exotic species. Remove, cut, and apply herbicides to the species, as appropriate. ▪ Plant new trees and lawns, as required.
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct pruning and removals of trees. ▪ Continue mowing turf on an as-needed basis to a height no less than 2-1/2 inches. ▪ Continue removing Norway maple seedlings. ▪ Pull or cut Asian bittersweet vines. Apply systemic herbicides to the cut stumps. ▪ Continue to plant new trees and lawns, as required.
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue mowing turf on an as-needed basis to a height no less than 2-1/2 inches. Suspend mowing during hot, dry periods. ▪ Continue removing Norway maple seedlings. ▪ Apply systemic herbicides to tree of heaven colonies.
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue mowing turf on an as-needed basis to a height no less than 2-1/2 inches. Suspend mowing during hot, dry periods. ▪ Around Labor Day, fertilize turf areas (14-14-14). ▪ Continue removing Norway maple seedlings.
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue mowing turf on an as-needed basis to a height no less than 2-1/2 inches. ▪ Resume planting of new trees, slope species and lawns, as required. ▪ Inspect historic masonry for damage that may have occurred over the summer. Consult a specialist about repairing any major damage.
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Remove dead leaves from the turf areas and in historic grove areas using a mulching blade, if possible. ▪ Around Halloween, fertilize turf areas (28-3-9).
November December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ When removing snow, minimize (or eliminate altogether) the use of salt.

