

# Lincoln Park | Mini Master Plan

City of Duluth | DRAFT February 12, 2016



# Project Stakeholders & Contributors

City of Duluth Community Development

City of Duluth Parks and Recreation

Duluth Public Schools ISD 709

Duluth Police Department

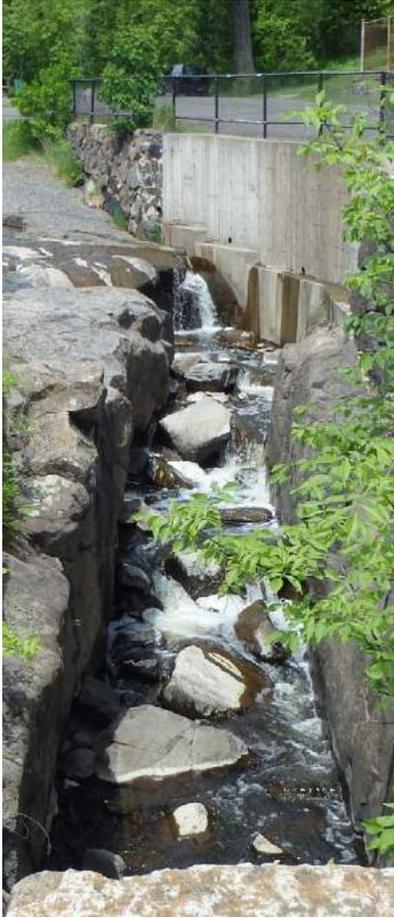
Lincoln Park Business Group

Duluth Local Initiatives Support Corporation

St. Louis County Public Health & Safety Department

SRF and LHB





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DULUTH



*View in Lincoln Park at Twenty-fifth Avenue West.*

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## History/Background

Lincoln Park is one of Duluth's oldest parks. It was established in 1896 and has remained one of the city's most naturalized community parks with Miller Creek and its scenic rock ravine being the signature feature of the park. The surrounding steep topography of the 35 acre park provides a buffer with the surrounding residential neighborhoods to further enhance its intimate feel.

In the early to mid 1900's, the park was a favorite place for picnics and large gathering events, and was a popular place to stroll along the secluded creek paths. It was one of the first parks in the city to begin to address meeting the recreational needs for children by offering a skating rink and playground.

Over the years, its popularity as a gathering place also attracted problems and unwanted after hours activities. The great depression in the early 1930's also provided challenges for maintaining the park. Through the Emergency Relief Administration and the Civil Works Administration a new stone pavilion was constructed near the south end of the park to support performances of the annual Midsummer Festival which was the signature event held in the park through 1949.

Subsequent years have provided more challenges for addressing maintenance needs in the park because of aging infrastructure and storm events which have caused extensive

flood damage over the years. Recent sources of FEMA funding secured after the 2012 flood and volunteer efforts have helped maintained some of the soft surface trail systems and managing the spread of invasive plant material in the park.



# FEMA 2016 Restoration Plan

Recommendations in this mini master plan have taken into consideration construction efforts being implemented in 2016 from the 2012 flood which are focused on the shoreline restoration of Miller Creek, and it's associated flood plain. Master plan improvements have been proposed to complement and enhance these new improvement areas and avoid impacts after construction is completed. While future flooding will always be a threat to any new improvements being made in the park, avoiding constructing new improvements in the flood plain should minimize damage during any future flood event.





# Regional and Site Context

Lincoln Park is centrally located within the Lincoln Park neighborhood which is one of the largest residential districts in the City. The park is surrounded by mostly single family homes with some rental housing on the east side of the park. Lincoln Park Drive connects to West Skyline Parkway to the north and West 3rd Street to the south. The Superior Hiking Trail (SHT) is currently aligned through the north

end of the park and the future Duluth Traverse Trail will also travel through the north end of the park with an alignment still to be finalized. The current proposed alignment for the future Cross City Trail does not intersect with the park but efforts should be made to establish a spur trail connection to improve pedestrian and bike connections to Lincoln Park from other areas of the City.





## Existing Conditions/Issues & Opportunities

While Lincoln Park remains a popular place to visit for local residents who live in close proximity to the park, it currently is not programmed to host large group social gatherings or events as it once did. Many reasons can be attributed to this including a lack of parking, inadequate restroom facilities, and limited operations and maintenance resources. However, the park still has many unique attributes including Miller Creek's cascading water features and the surrounding natural character which make the park a well known recreation destination in the City.

Many opportunities exist for improving the park to better meet the needs of park user groups. These include:

- » **Repair existing park infrastructure to reduce short and long term maintenance**
- » **Upgrade park destination areas to improve safety and meet ADA accessibility requirements**
- » **Introduce updated park amenities to better serve the needs of children, adult, and senior park user groups.**
- » **Increase visibility and improve access to the Duluth Traverse and Superior Hiking Trail system.**





# Existing Conditions | North Segment



Existing Conditions | **Middle Segment**



Existing Conditions | **South Segment**



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# Park Infrastructure

Much of the park's existing aging infrastructure is in need of repair or replacement to help reduce its continual short and long term maintenance needs. The following site observations were made on some of the existing infrastructure in the park.



*Roadway paving and shoulders in poor condition throughout park*



*Lack of wayfinding and well defined trail access points within park*



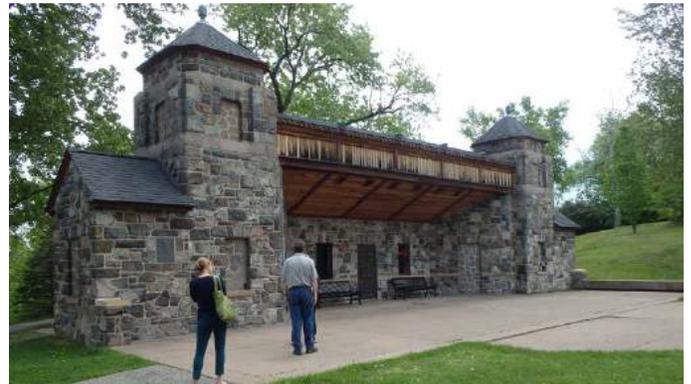
*Lack of defined parking areas and pedestrian circulation along Lincoln Park Drive*



*Retaining wall Infrastructure in need of tuck pointing repair or replacement*



*Poor approach sight lines for vehicular and pedestrian traffic at 10th Street bridge underpass*



*No operational restroom facilities in pavilion building*

# Accessibility

Many destination areas in the park do not meet ADA accessibility requirements and improvements should be made to meet the needs of physically challenged park visitors where possible. Identifying opportunities to improve access from parking areas and along walkways which provide access to park building facilities, playground, and picnic areas should be accommodated with all future site improvements.



*Steep grades around perimeter of park limit ADA access opportunities from surrounding neighborhoods*



*Existing playground does not meet ADA accessibility requirements*

## Park Amenities

Many of the park's existing amenities have been retrofitted to be accommodated around the park's existing roadway circulation, challenging steep terrain, and Miller Creek flood plain. Efforts should be made to organize active and passive use areas in the park so conflicts can be minimized between pedestrian and vehicular traffic and park user groups and activities.



*Existing disc golf course is a popular activity for park user groups*



*Upper terrace athletic field in poor condition and is disconnected from other park amenities and activities*



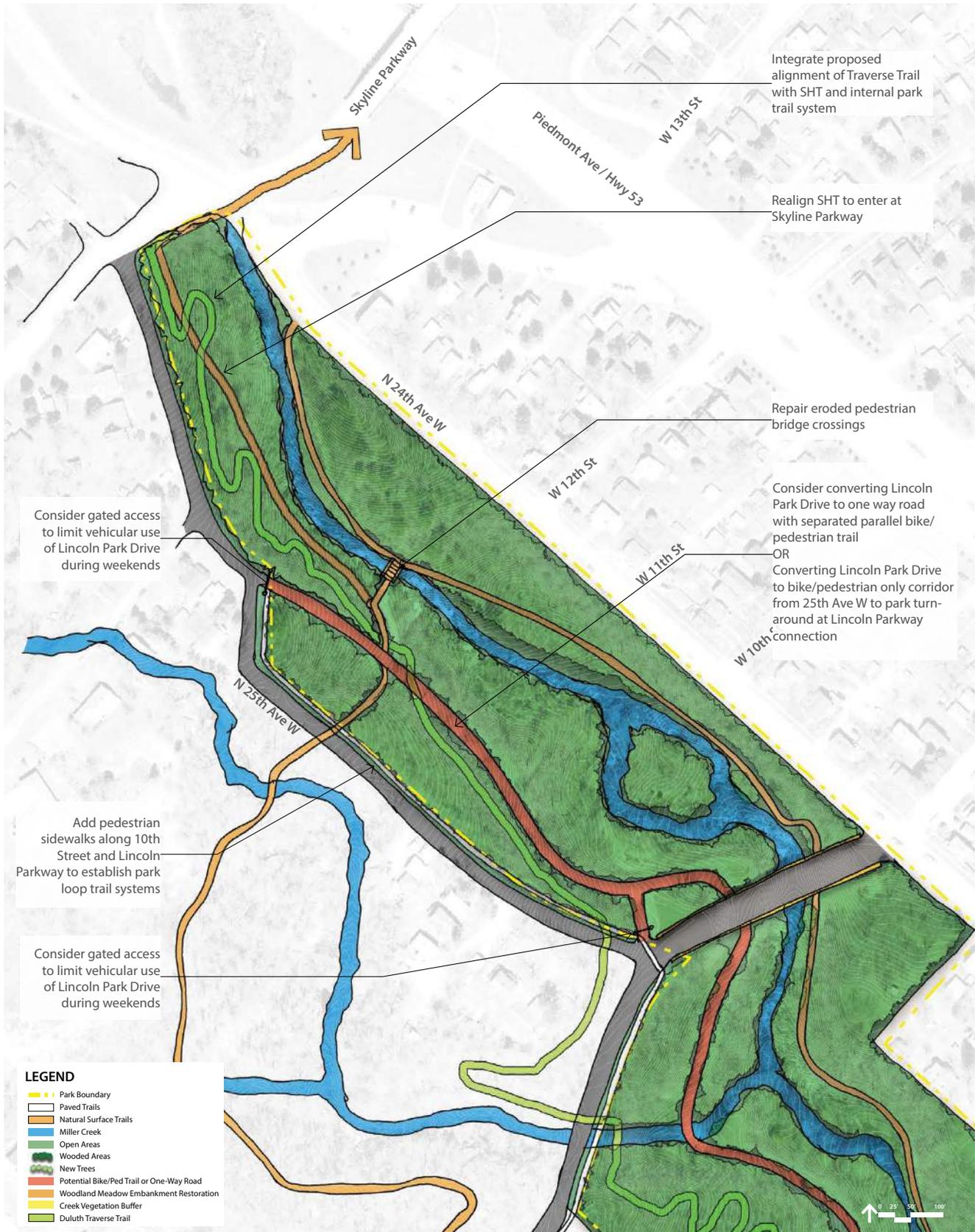
*Existing playground is separated from existing gathering and picnic areas*



*Continue to maintain easy access to Miller Creek bed for water play*

# Mini Master Plan Recommendations

## North Segment



### Middle Segment



### South Segment



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## Lincoln Park Drive Entrance Realignment and Off Street Parking Accommodations

A new off street parking lot is proposed in the location of the existing playground by completing a slight realignment of Lincoln Park Drive. This will provide a more defined arrival space for the park and include a way finding kiosk to orient visitors to picnic areas, trail systems, and new playground facilities without having to cross Lincoln Park Drive. A small boardwalk overlook is also proposed along the creek to provide better views of the Miller Creek outfalls. A smaller off street parking lot and turn around area is also proposed near elephant rock to serve the needs of the natural play and picnic area.



## Restoration of WPA pavilion

With a desire to attract more visitors, providing running water and flush toilet facilities should be addressed at the park. The existing restroom facilities located in the WPA pavilion have not been used since the 2014 arson fire and efforts should be made to complete repairs or incorporate new restrooms in a new picnic shelter adjacent to the playground. After the pavilion is repaired, efforts should continue to place the building on the National Register of Historic Places. To minimize risks for future vandalism at the restroom building, the addition of security lighting and highly visible cameras will help prevent unwanted after hours activities in the park. Organizing volunteer neighborhood watch group patrols can also help deter crime and illegal dumping activities occurring in the park.



## Playground and Picnic Area

A new and more expansive playground area is proposed on the south side of Miller Creek to better integrate it with the existing picnic open space and shelter, restroom facilities, and trail circulation connected to a new natural play area with climbing boulders, tree fort building area, and informal picnic area with a small shelter near elephant rock.



## Upper Terrace Active Use Area

The upper terrace athletic field area on the east side of the park is somewhat disconnected from the rest of the park because of its higher elevation and primary access along 25th Avenue. The existing stone clad retaining wall is also failing and in need of short term repair or long term replacement. Other recommendations call for an expanded parking lot which can support overflow parking for the rest of the park, restoration of the athletic field turf area, the addition of half court basketball, and establishing a new, more direct stair connection to the lower parking lot and adjacent park amenities.



## Disc Golf Course

Lincoln Park is host to a popular 9-hole Disc Golf Course. Suggested park improvements will alter the existing course. Parks staff, along with contractors working on the improvements, will work directly with the Duluth Disc Golf Club on the removal and relocation of the existing disc golf infrastructure. The user group and Park staff will work together to identify the optimal course reconfiguration.



## Vegetation Restoration

With a majority of Lincoln Park maintained as a natural resource environment, continual efforts should be made for managing the removal of invasive plant material in the park and restoring its upland and floodplain native plant communities. Turf areas are only recommended to be maintained within active use areas around the pavilion, playground and picnic areas and steeper lawn embankments restored to native woodland and meadow plant communities to reduce operations and maintenance needs for the park.



# Rethinking Lincoln Park Drive

As Lincoln Drive transitions to the north end of the park, it provides access to Lincoln Parkway, 10th Street, and 25th Avenue West which run parallel with the south boundary of the park. As a long term recommendation, several options were studied for how Lincoln Park Drive could be modified to better accommodate bike and pedestrian use and contribute towards establishing more looped trail systems within the park.

## Preliminary Recommendation

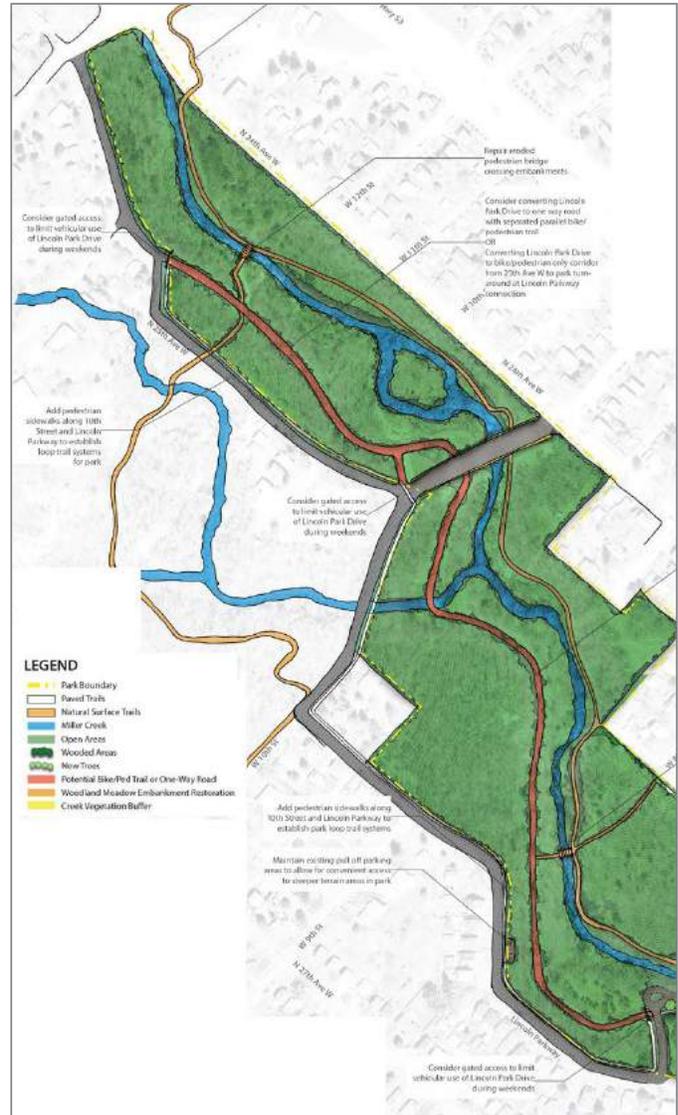
As a recommended first step to evaluating temporary closure of Lincoln Park Drive to vehicle traffic on the north end of the park, gates could be installed at the 25th Avenue W, 10th and 7th Street entries to allow for the drive to be closed for limited periods of time (time to be determined) and dedicated toward bicycle and pedestrian use. The installation of gates at these entrances could also help discourage unwanted after hours activities currently taking place in this area of the park.

## Option A

This option considers converting Lincoln Park Drive to a one way road (direction to be determined by additional traffic study) and dedicating a separated trail to accommodate bike and pedestrian traffic.

## Option B

This option considers converting Lincoln Park Drive to a designated bike and pedestrian trail system with the bike trail designed to accommodate police and fire emergency vehicle use.



**OPTION A:** One-way vehicle traffic, vegetated buffer, and combined bicycle/pedestrian trail



**OPTION B:** Bicycle trail, vegetated buffer, and pedestrian trail



## Preliminary Phasing Plan and Cost Estimate

The following cost estimate and phasing plan is intended to be used as a long term strategy for planning and implementing site improvements at Lincoln Park as well as a tool for soliciting grant funding. Short and long term improvements are identified based on needs and priorities established for the park and efficiencies for implementing improvements in concentrated focus areas. Some variability in the sequence of site improvements may occur depending on how funding sources are secured. Estimates are preliminary and all identified improvements will require additional detailed review to generate more accurate construction costs. Estimates are based on 2016 construction costs. Add 5% inflation rate per year for construction costs beyond 2016.

## EXHIBIT A - 16-0125R

| PHASE 1 IMPROVEMENTS (1-3 YEARS)   |       |    |   |                  |
|--|-------|----|---|------------------|
| Structured Playground  | 1     | LS | Pre K and K-5 play containers             | \$275,000        |
| Natural Play Area  | 1     | LS | boulder scramble, tree fort building area | \$25,000         |
| Concrete Walk Circulation (6' wide)  | 1,000 | LF | connecting to structured playground       | \$36,000         |
| Gravel Walk Circulation (6' wide)  | 600   | LF | connecting to natural play area           | \$10,800         |
| Site Furnishings   | 1     | LS | benches and picnic tables                 | \$15,000         |
| Landscape Enhancements   | 1     | LS | tree planting, seed, and sod restoration  | \$25,000         |
| Repair Upper Terrace Stone Face Retaining Wall                             | 2,100 | SF | mortar and tuck point repair              | \$63,000         |
| Repair Modular Block Retaining Wall  | 250   | SF | modular block replacement                 | \$12,000         |
| Repair Eroded Embankments at Pedestrian Bridge Crossings Along Creek Trail | 1     | LS | 2 bridge crossing locations               | \$5,000          |
| WPA Pavilion Restoration   | 1     | LS | roof and restroom repairs                 | \$125,000        |
| Gate Entrance at 25th Avenue & W 10th & 7th                                | 3     | LS | manual gate                               | \$15,000         |
| <b>Sub Total</b>   |       |    |   | <b>\$606,800</b> |
| Contingency, Design, and Administration (25%)                              |       |    |   | \$151,700        |
| <b>Total</b>   |       |    |   | <b>\$758,500</b> |

| PHASE 2 IMPROVEMENTS (4-6 YEARS)                        |     |    |  |                  |
|---|-----|----|--|------------------|
| Large Picnic Shelter Adjacent to Structured Playground  | 1   | LS | accommodates 20-25 people                    | \$75,000         |
| Small Picnic Shelter near adjacent to Natural Play Area | 1   | LS | accommodates 10-15 people                    | \$35,000         |
| Site Furnishings  | 1   | LS | benches and picnic tables                    | \$10,000         |
| Parking Lot on North Side of Lincoln Park Drive         | 870 | SY | 20-25 spaces adjacent to existing pavilion   | \$34,800         |
| Parking Lot on South side of Lincoln Park Drive         | 200 | SY | 10-12 spaces adjacent to natural play area   | \$8,000          |
| Boardwalk and Overlook Along Miller Creek               | 600 | SF | north side of creek                          | \$30,000         |
| Gravel Walk Circulation along Miller Creek              | 500 | LF | north side of creek                          | \$9,000          |
| Wayfinding Kiosk and Directional Signage                | 1   | LS | locate at parking lot and along trail system | \$15,000         |
| Woodland Meadow Embankment Restoration                  | 1.2 | AC | at park entrance along Lincoln Park Drive    | \$18,000         |
| New Trail Connection into Park from 3rd Street West     | 680 | LF | connect to existing park trail system        | \$24,500         |
| Landscape Enhancements                                  | 1   | LS | tree planting, seed, and sod restoration     | \$25,000         |
| <b>Sub Total</b>  |     |    |  | <b>\$284,300</b> |
| Contingency, Design, and Administration (25%)           |     |    |  | \$71,075         |
| <b>Total</b>  |     |    |  | <b>\$355,375</b> |

| PHASE 3 IMPROVEMENTS (7-9 YEARS)                    |       |    |   |                  |
|---|-------|----|---|------------------|
| Parking Lot on Upper Terrace Active Use Area        | 1,090 | SY | 20-25 spaces                              | \$43,600         |
| Half Court Basketball                               | 2     | EA | 10' high hoop and 8' high hoop court      | \$44,000         |
| Realigned Walk and Stair Access to Lower Terrace    | 200   | LF | align with new lower parking lot location | \$7,200          |
| Fine Grade and Reestablish Turf on Open Field Area  | 1.1   | AC | does not include irrigation               | \$16,250         |
| Replace Chain Link Fencing on top of Retaining Wall | 330   | LF | includes removals                         | \$9,900          |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                                    |       |    |   | <b>\$120,950</b> |
| Contingency, Design, and Administration (25%)       |       |    |   | \$30,328         |
| <b>Total</b>  |       |    |   | <b>\$151,188</b> |

| LONG TERM IMPROVEMENTS (10+ YEARS)                        |       |    |  |                  |
|---|-------|----|--|------------------|
| Repave Lincoln Park Drive (W 3rd Street to West 7th)      | 3,067 | SY | includes removals 500' of road to be realigned to north side of main parking lot | \$111,933        |
| Turn Around Drive at Lincoln Parkway Entrance             | 1     | LS | includes controlled gate entrance  | \$10,000         |
| Repave Lincoln Park Drive (W 7th to West Skyline Parkway) | 4,267 | SY | includes removals  | \$155,733        |
| Add 6' Walk Extensions Along W 10th and Lincoln Parkway   | 2,050 | LF | connect to existing park trails  | \$73,800         |
| Add 6' Walk Extension along 25th Ave W up to West 8th S   | 1,000 | LF | connect to existing park trails  | \$36,000         |
| <b>Sub Total</b>  |       |    |  | <b>\$387,466</b> |
| Contingency, Design, and Administration (25%)             |       |    |  | \$96,867         |
| <b>Total</b>  |       |    |  | <b>\$484,336</b> |

|  |  |  |  |                    |
|--|--|--|--|--------------------|
| <b>TOTAL FOR ALL PARK IMPROVEMENTS</b> |  |  |  | <b>\$1,749,396</b> |
|--|--|--|--|--------------------|

## Operations and Maintenance Costs

By beginning to repair and replace older park amenities and infrastructure, short and long term maintenance costs will initially begin to decrease in some areas of the park and then begin to increase again when life cycle costs will require new improvements to be made in the park. The restoration and management of natural resources will also require a long term investment strategy in order to improve the overall quality of vegetation and wildlife habitat in the park. The following base level operations and maintenance costs are anticipated to be expended at Lincoln Park on a yearly basis based on overall master plan recommendations.

| ANNUAL OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE COSTS |   |    |                 |
|---|---|----|-----------------|
| Washrooms                               | 1 | LS | \$18,400        |
| Porta Potties                           | 1 | LS | \$4,871         |
| Snow Removal                            | 1 | LS | \$2,660         |
| Trash Removal                           | 1 | LS | \$4,200         |
| Spring Clean Up                         | 1 | LS | -               |
| Mowing                                  | 1 | LS | \$4,600         |
| Tree Work                               | 1 | LS | \$3,917         |
| Stair Maintenance                       | 1 | LS | \$3,172         |
| Playground Maintenance                  | 1 | LS | \$2,871         |
| Site Furnishings                        | 1 | LS | \$4,017         |
| Trail Maintenance                       | 1 | LS | \$5,130         |
| Safety                                  | 1 | LS | \$3,497         |
| <b>Total</b>                            |   |    | <b>\$57,335</b> |