

SECTION 2

PARK DESIGN

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This section describes the development of the Master Plan for Timber Linn Park. It includes three design options that were presented to the City for review, along with the refinements that led to the final Master Plan model. Key features in the final site plan are highlighted.

2.1 DESIGN OPTIONS

The community's vision for Timber Linn Park and the results of the site assessment were incorporated into three design options. The opportunities and constraints noted in the site assessment were factored in to these conceptual drawings. Each option addressed several aspects of park development, including the location of an on-site, multi-purpose recreation center, the park's connection to the fairgrounds, renovation of the amphitheater, sports field improvements, a potential property line adjustment, revenue-generating options, a pedestrian pathway system, the integration of a neighborhood park, and the removal and modification of existing structures.



Some park features were clearly desired by community members and were replicated in each of the three options. However, their locations and/or arrangements varied. For example, the number, positioning, and type of sports fields varied from one option to another, but each option contained a mix of soccer and softball fields. Moreover, each of the three options presents a variation of the renovated amphitheater, but there are differences in the arrangement of seating and the placement of the stage.

There was less clarity and unity in community desires for other site features at Timber Linn, so some facilities are presented in one or two options only. For example, a dog park, which was identified as a community need in Albany, is included in Option 3. A commercial, revenue-generating facility (e.g., a restaurant, coffee shop, etc.) appears in Options 1 and 2.

Below is a summary of each of the three options. The site drawings are presented on the following pages.

- **Option 1:** The first design option enlarges and retains the three existing ball fields, and retains the existing grove of trees and picnic area currently located near the fields. A revenue-generating facility is added, and improvements are made for five soccer fields to the south. The design contains several mitigation and wetland enhancement areas, upgrades to the existing picnic area, minimal amphitheater improvements, added parking, and a path system, entry plaza, and neighborhood park (Figure 2.1).

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- **Option II:** The second option provides for more extensive redevelopment, including four new softball diamonds, with parking to the north and west of the fields. Two full-sized soccer fields are located to the east of the ball field complex, and four smaller youth fields are to the north. Overflow parking is added across Price Road, and a revenue-generating facility is situated in the sports zone. The Veterans Memorial is removed, and a new play area is added near the picnic area. A new bridge leads to a new amphitheater with paved inner seating and a terraced grass slope. A small, pedestrian entry plaza is added in the north, with parking adjacent to a potential community center site and a neighborhood park to the east. Trails lead to an eastern pedestrian entry to the park (Figure 2.2).
- **Option III:** The third design option includes a sophisticated, landscaped, four-diamond softball complex in the east-central portion of the park. Like Option 2, this design also provides two full-sized and four smaller soccer fields, but this time to the south. A dog park is introduced across Price Road to the west. The central park wetlands contain an interpretive and educational boardwalk, which meanders toward the picnic area. The picnic/play area has a new large shelter and a new playground. Multi-purpose pathways cross the park, adding a nature trail and a connection to the eastern boundary of the park. Amphitheater renovations include new seating at the existing alignment. This design option also includes a small, pedestrian plaza, a larger parking lot in the north, a potential community center site, and a neighborhood park (Figure 2.3).

Design Option Review

The three design options were presented to City staff for review. After studying each option, staff identified which facilities and which arrangements from each option were most appealing, rather than choosing one option entirely over the others. In this review process, City staff also reflected on the fact that Timber Linn could not address all sport field needs and still retain its natural qualities. Furthermore, City staff took into account the results of the Community Needs Assessment, which identified citywide needs for parkland and recreational facilities based on Albany's projected population growth, trends in recreation participation, community preferences, and recreation opportunities in the city. The Community Needs Assessment revealed a greater need for sports fields and other types of recreation facilities than could be addressed through the redevelopment of Timber Linn Park and other existing City parks. As a result, a new community park with a multi-field soccer complex was proposed for south Albany. Soccer field development at this new site would allow Timber Linn to retain its natural areas and to focus field development on adult and youth softball. This change is reflected in the final Master Plan model.

Insert Figure 2.1: Design Option 1

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Insert Figure 2.2: Design Option 2

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Insert Figure 2.3: Design Option 3

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2.2 MASTER PLAN MODEL

Through a series of refinements to the three design options, a Master Plan model was created. Figure 2.4 illustrates this model.

Key Amenities and Features

Significant amenities, facilities, and features in the Timber Linn site plan are described below:

- **Parking Lot:** A north-south elongated lot near Price Road will serve the ball fields with approximately 375 delineated, paved parking spaces.
- **Revenue-Generating Facility:** At the north end of the main parking lot is a restaurant, coffee shop, or other similar food operation to serve park users, attract customers to the park, and generate income for the City to offset park costs.
- **Softball Complex:** Seven new ball diamonds will include four adult fields and three multi-purpose ball diamonds (youth or adult). The length of the fields is 300 feet to serve adult recreational league/tournament play. The outfield fence can be moved in for youth field use. The center of each field group has restrooms/concessions. Also, wide pathways will facilitate access between the parking lot and each field grouping.
- **Ball Field Maintenance Facility:** A storage shed for field maintenance equipment is located just to the east of the primary ball field complex.
- **Practice Field/Open Space:** Open space around the southeast corner of the park will create a buffer between the developed ball fields and the residential area (mobile home park) just beyond the park boundary, minimizing the impact of noise and lighting. This area also can be used as practice space or as event space during fairs and festivals. The outfield fences for the ball fields are removable, so the size of this open area can be expanded for ballooning during the Northwest Art and Air Festival.
- **Acquisition Area:** The plan includes an option for the City to purchase property and realign the boundary on the eastern side of the park to accommodate the second set of ball fields. The proposed acquisition area is shaded on Figure 2.4.



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- **Meandering Trail/Boardwalk:** A new, multi-purpose, ADA accessible trail connects the ball fields to other facilities within the park. The trail meanders through a wetland enhancement area, providing opportunities for environmental education. Where creeks and wetlands occur, bridges and boardwalks minimize disturbance to the environment while affording public access through this previously inaccessible environment.

From the center of the park, the trail splits so that it connects to several use zones. One trail heads northwest, hugging the south side of the lake before connecting to the picnic/play area on the west side of the park. Another trail crosses Cox Creek and runs along the northern edge of the lake to the amphitheater and north gateway. A third trail heads eastward to a new pedestrian and bike entry, near the low-density residential area on the east side of the park. From this trail, a spur breaks off, crosses the creek, and winds northward to the playground/picnic area in the northeast corner. Part of this trail also links to the future community center site and connects back to the boardwalk on the northern side of the lake. These trails form a loop system and tie in to a perimeter trail running along Dogwood Street and Price Road.

- **Enhanced Veterans Memorial:** A landscaped plaza is proposed to surround the Veterans Memorial, which remains in its original location on the western edge of the park and is connected to two nearby parking lots by an accessible pathway. The artillery piece is moved closer to the Veterans Memorial.
- **Open Field/Disc Golf Area:** An open lawn area in the center of the park is ideal for an expanded disc golf course, special events, and both programmed and non-programmed activities.
- **Expanded Picnic/Playground Area:** An improved, large-group picnic and play area takes advantage of the tree cover on the mid-western edge of the park and provides opportunities in this zone for non-organized recreation. The picnic area adds a new shelter to the two existing shelters, the barbecue area, and restroom to accommodate groups of 100+ people and serve as a reunion venue. Two new playgrounds will be situated closer to the picnic area to support this use. The new play equipment, for children under age 5 and over age 5, may incorporate some existing equipment.
- **Parking Lot:** A paved, delineated parking lot for approximately 180 cars is located off Price Road (where the current gravel lot occurs) to serve the expanded picnic area, playground, and amphitheater.

Insert Figure 2.4: Master Plan Model

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- **Bridges:** The bridge that connects the picnic/play area to the amphitheater will be replaced with a new, wider bridge that will be relocated westward to use the existing bridge abutments in this area. A second new bridge will replace the existing bridge between the parking lot and the picnic area.
- **Natural Area:** The old (existing) bridge to the amphitheater will be removed when the new one is built, allowing for vegetation and habitat enhancement on the south side of the lake.
- **Boardwalk/Dock:** A new trail connection along the northeastern edge of the lake will include a boardwalk and, adjacent to the amphitheater, a dock extending out into the lake.
- **Amphitheater:** A renovated amphitheater positions a covered stage closer to the audience in a southwest orientation. Paved inner seating and a terraced grass slope to accommodate additional patrons. A new service entry and turn-around provides gated access to the stage area for pedestrians and service vehicles only. The public no longer has vehicle access directly to the lake, which reduces the safety concerns and improves the passive recreational quality of this zone. A pathway loops the amphitheater and connects it to the two parking areas and other facilities in the park. Security fencing will provide easier control for ticketed events.
- **Maintenance Facility and Park Headquarters:** The size of the existing maintenance facility in the northwest corner of the park will be reduced slightly to accommodate a new gateway to Timber Linn. Some of the current buildings in the maintenance area will be renovated to better meet the needs of maintenance staff while others will be removed.
- **North Gateway:** A gateway to the park from the Linn County Fairgrounds/Expo Center is provided with a paved plaza and central shelter to provide a focal point for further community events at the park. With a vantage point near the lake, the rental pavilion will be available for modest group gatherings, including weddings and picnics.
- **Parking Lots:** Parking for approximately 200 cars is provided in two paved, delineated lots on the northern side off of Dogwood Street, across from Western Street. These parking areas will serve the potential community center site, the entry plaza, and the amphitheater, along with the playground/picnic area and off-leash dog area to the east. The existing tree groves at the northern edge of the park will be preserved.



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- **Potential Community Center:** An area on the north side of the park has been reserved for a future community center, which is recommended to help meet significant community needs for programmable indoor space, activity and meeting rooms, gymnasiums, etc.
- **Playground & Picnic Area:** The northeastern corner of the park is designed to provide close-to-home recreation opportunities for nearby residents. The zone includes two playgrounds (for ages under 5 and over 5) along with a small picnic shelter. An open grass area is incorporated for non-programmed, outdoor play.
- **Dog Park:** The elongated area south/southeast of the neighborhood park will become a fenced, off-leash dog park. The site will help address currently unmet community needs for an off-leash dog area. The northwest corner of the dog park will be connected to the north parking lot and other park facilities via the trail system.