

Town of Old Saybrook Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan



OLD SAYBROOK
OSPR
PARKS AND RECREATION

March 2021

Acknowledgments

Funding for the plan was approved by the Town's Board of Finance with the aim of creating a plan that will guide investment in the Town's parks system. This plan was conceived and guided by the Old Saybrook Parks and Recreation Department Staff and Commission. Those staff and members include:

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In addition to staff and commissioners, multiple stakeholders and residents contributed their time, thoughts and ideas towards this plan.

Plan Produced by:



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Overview

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Introduction

This plan provides a vision for improving Old Saybrook's Parks system by focusing on four of the Town's parks. These parks include Clark Community (Town) Park, Harvey's Beach, Main Street Park, and Saybrook Point. While all of the Town's parks, fields, and playgrounds are important to the parks system and require investment and maintenance, these properties are deserving of attention and hold the most promise for transforming the experience of a wide range of users and visitors.

As a strategic plan, the planning process leading to this document considered many options for each of the parks, and the parks system as a whole, but only those options that are believed to provide the greatest value, and are most feasible for the Town to implement and sustain are presented within this document. The goal of this planning effort and of this plan is to encourage investment that will best serve the community as a whole and will provide a benefit to the Town.

The plan was commissioned and managed by the Old Saybrook Parks and Recreation Department and the Town's Parks and Recreation Commission. Funding for this plan was provided by the Town as approved by its Board of Finance. FHI Studio and their subconsultants provided the technical planning expertise that guided the planning process and the production of this document.

Purpose and Need

Old Saybrook has a parks system that attracts a wide array of users, including year-round residents, seasonal residents, visitors from surrounding communities, and in the case of its beaches, from multiple states. The parks system and its beaches, parks, fields, courts and other facilities are highly utilized and require ongoing maintenance and investment to ensure that those facilities remain usable and inviting.

As the Town's demographics and user preferences change, the Parks system needs to evolve to respond to user demand. Sports that were highly popular twenty or thirty years ago, such as tennis, are giving way to games such as pickleball as the Town's population ages. Additionally, youth preferences in recreation have shifted over time with sports such as lacrosse being increasingly popular while participation in tackle football has diminished. It is the responsibility of the Parks and Recreation Department, as guided by the Parks and Recreation Commission, to ensure that the facilities that it provides and maintains are closely aligned with the needs of users.

This plan provides recommendations for the development of new facilities and the conversion or abandonment of existing facilities that will provide the greatest benefit to its users and the greatest value to the Town for its investment.

Recreation Trends

As previously noted, the popularity of sports and recreational activities shifts over time, with new sports and activities gaining popularity and once popular sports and activities waning. The sports and fitness industry closely monitors these trends and the most comprehensive and timely data regarding these trends is provided by the Sport & Fitness Industry Association Sports, which publishes annual trends data in its Sports, Fitness, And Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report. The report provides nationwide sports and fitness activity and participation statistics that are organized into the following activity types (and further divided into specific activities):

- Aerobic Activities
- Conditioning Activities
- Racquet Sports
- Individual Sports
- Team Sports
- Outdoor Sports
- Water Sports
- Winter Sports

The following trends were identified in the most recent (2019) Topline report, which provides statistics on activity participation between 2013 and 2018:

- The participation rate in recreation and fitness activities has remained stable over the past several years at approximately 73% of people nationwide engaged in some form of activity.
- Activity rates among all age groups below age 55 has increased since 2013.
- Participation in fitness sports is at a six-year high and participation in outdoor sports has increased by 6% since 2013.
- Of aerobic activities (such as cardio classes, running, and swimming), aquatic exercise and high impact/intensity training grew most in participation (4.6%) since 2013. Running participation contracted the most (-1.7%). Some of this shift can be attributed to Baby Boomers who are relinquishing running in favor of lower impact aquatic exercise.
- Conditioning activities (such as pilates and yoga) has grown in participation in all forms with barre participation growing the most (4.2%) since 2013.
- Of racquet sports, cardio tennis (10.3% since 2013) and pickleball (9.7% since 2014) grew the most while badminton, squash, and table tennis contracted.

- Individual sports (which range from boxing to skating) experienced the greatest growth in mixed martial arts (8.9%) and trail running (8.1%) since 2013. The greatest declines were seen in skating sports with inline skating down 3.8% since 2013.
- Team sports experienced the greatest increase in roller hockey (6.9%) and rugby (5.9%) since 2013. Ultimate frisbee saw the greatest decline (-11.7%) and tackle football (-4.9%).
- Participation in outdoor sports grew most in BMX bicycling (9.8%) and day hiking (8.8%) since 2013. The greatest declines were experienced in birdwatching, down 2.5% since 2013.
- Water sports experienced the greatest increase in stand-up paddling (12.3%) and kayaking (4.8%). The greatest decreases were in water skiing (-4.3%) and jet skiing (-3.6%).

The most common activities aspired to by people who do not currently participate in those activities is presented below by age group.



Recreation Activity of the Town's Residents

According to data available from ESRI, 2019 participation in the following recreation activities by Old Saybrook residents was distributed as indicated in the table below. Of these activities, walking for exercise (31.9%), swimming (19.0%), and hiking (14.3%) were the most popular activities participated in by residents.

Participation in some activities such as ice skating are influenced by the availability of facilities whereas walking and running opportunities are readily available to most residents.

Activity	Resident Participation	Activity	Resident Participation
Aerobics	7.5%	Ice Skating	3.7%
Baseball	4.0%	Jogging/Running	12.1%
Basketball	6.4%	Pilates	2.9%
Mountain Biking	4.5%	Soccer	4.2%
Road Biking	11.6%	Softball	2.3%
Canoeing/Kayaking	8.5%	Swimming	19.0%
Fishing (freshwater)	10.8%	Tennis	3.8%
Fishing (saltwater)	4.9%	Volleyball	3.6%
Football	5.1%	Walking for exercise	31.9%
Frisbee	4.5%	Yoga	10.8%
Golf	10.4%	Zumba	3.8%
Hiking	14.3%		

Parks and Recreation Profile

Old Saybrook is a relatively small community with a robust parks system and recreational programming. The Town has eleven parks totaling approximately 168 acres although only 40 of those acres are active park spaces. The Parks and Recreation Department has an annual budget of approximately \$766,000. The Department only has three full-time staff but many seasonal and part-time employees which equate to a full-time equivalent of ten employees. Two-thirds of the Department's budget is dedicated to staffing costs for both maintenance and recreation programming. Seventy-one percent of the Department's budget is dedicated to recreation programming. The Department generates an average of \$300,000 per year in revenue from program fees and from facilities such as mini-golf and the beaches. This accounts for 39% of its budget.

Parks and Recreation Profile	
2018 Population	10,087
Total Park Area	168 acres
Active Park Area	40 acres
Annual Revenue Generated (2019 approximate)	\$300,000
Annual Operating Expenditures (2019 approximate)	\$766,000
Staff (Full-Time Equivalent)	10
Staffing Cost (2019 approximate)	\$512,000
Recreation Budget (2019 approximate)	\$545,000
Parks	11
Miles of Trails	14.5

Old Saybrook's Park System

Old Saybrook has a variety of parks, green spaces, athletic fields, beaches, and other recreation facilities that are managed by the Parks and Recreation Department. Excluding Town-owned conservation properties, there are eleven sites in total, these include:

- Clark Field
- Clark Community (Town) Park
- Ferry Crossing Ballfield
- Founders Memorial Park
- Harvey's Beach
- Kavanagh Park
- Town Green/MacMurray Ball Field/Recreation Center
- Main Street Park
- Maple Avenue Ballfield
- Saybrook Point (Gardiner's Landing/Mini-Golf/ Fort Saybrook Monument Park)
- Town Beach



How Old Saybrook Measures Up

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) publishes annual survey data (the 2020 survey data is referenced here) that is provided by parks and recreation departments across the country that provides information on budgets, staffing, and facilities. The survey is organized by region and by community size. For the purposes of comparing Old Saybrook's Park and Recreation Department's budget, staffing, and park resources to other communities, only communities with 20,000 or fewer residents and located in the Northeast are used for comparison.

When compared to other communities, Old Saybrook:

- Has 4.8 more acres of parks per 1,000 residents (although 80% of its park area is not active space due to much of that area being wetland or wooded land).
- Has annual per capita operating expenses that is nearly \$21 less.
- Has 11.5 more miles of trails.
- Has 363 fewer residents per park.
- Generates more revenue as a share of operating expenses (10 percentage points more).
- Has the same full time equivalent employees (staff is largely comprised of part-time and seasonal employees).
- Has operating expenses that are 44% lower per acre.
- Has staffing cost as a share of budget that is 14 percentage points higher.
- Has recreation as a share of budget that is 28 percentage points higher.
- Is comparable to other communities in share of operating expenses that come from general fund.
- Generates 42% more revenue per capita.
- **Has five-year capital budget spending that is 75% lower.**

Metric	Old Saybrook	2019 NRPA Average
Acres of park per 1,000 residents	16.8	12
Annual per capita operating expenses	\$75.94	\$96.77
Miles of trails	14.5	3
Resident per park	917	1,300
Revenue as a share of operating expenses	39%	29%
Median FTE staff per 10,000 residents	10	10
Operating expenses per acre	\$4,560	\$8,208
Staffing costs as a % of annual budget	68%	54%
Recreation as a % of annual budget	71%	43%
Operating expenses from general fund	61%	60%
Revenue generated per capita	\$29.74	\$20.93
Five-year capital budget spending	\$174,710	\$713,000

The NRPA also provides national data regarding specific recreation facilities that allows for comparison. When compared to national averages of communities with populations of 20,000 or less for indoor and outdoor recreation facilities Old Saybrook:

- Has one recreation center like most communities.
- Has one teen center, which is above the national average.
- Has none of the following facilities which many communities have approximately one of per 10,000 residents: community center, senior center, performance amphitheater, nature center, stadium, ice rink.
- Has more basketball courts, multipurpose fields, outdoor tennis courts, playgrounds, youth baseball fields, and youth soccer fields than other agencies reporting those facilities.
- Has a deficit in all other types of outdoor facilities, most notably adult baseball and soccer fields, lacrosse fields, multi-use courts, outdoor ice rinks, and skate parks when compared to other agencies with those facilities.

Indoor Facility	Agencies with the Facility Type	Number of facilities per 10,000 residents (national average of agencies with the facility type)	Old Saybrook	Deficit (-) or Surplus compared to national average of agencies with the facility type
Recreation Center	61.0%	1.1	1	-0.1
Community Center	59.7%	1.1	0	-1.1
Senior Center	40.9%	0.8	0	-0.8
Performance Amphitheater	35.0%	0.9	0	-0.9
Nature Center	29.3%	0.9	0	-0.9
Stadium	17.9%	1.2	0	-1.2
Ice Rink	14.8%	1.1	0	-1.1
Teen Center	13.8%	0.7	1	0.3
Arena	7.5%	1.2	0	-1.2

Outdoor Facility	Agencies with the Facility Type	Number of facilities per 10,000 residents (national average of agencies with the facility type)	Old Saybrook	Deficit (-) or Surplus compared to national average of agencies with the facility type
Adult Baseball Field	52.8%	2.2	0	-2.2
Adult Soccer Field	40.7%	2.7	0	-2.7
Adult Softball Field	64.8%	1.3	0	-1.3
Basketball Court	86.5%	1.3	4	2.7
Community Gardens	47.2%	1.0	0	-1.0
Dog Park	62.9%	1.3	0	-1.3
Football Field	37.2%	1.0	0	-1.0
Lacrosse Field	11.4%	3.1	0	-3.1
Multipurpose Field	64.5%	1.0	3	2.0
Multipurpose Synthetic Field	19.4%	1.4	0	-1.4
Multi-use Court	43.1%	3.5	0	-3.5
Outdoor Ice Rink	17.4%	3.0	0	-3.0
Outdoor Swimming Pool	50.9%	1.2	0	-1.2
Outdoor Tennis Court	81.1%	2.0	4	2.0
Overlay Field	8.0%	1.8	0	-1.8
Playground	93.9%	1.3	3	1.7
Skate Park	38.2%	4.0	0	-4.0
Tot Lot	47.6%	1.3	0	-1.3
Youth Baseball Field	78.3%	2.5	4	1.5
Youth Soccer Field	46.9%	1.3	5	3.7
Youth Softball Field	59.0%	1.5	1	-0.5

Feedback from Residents

The Town engaged residents regarding their parks and recreation needs, concerns, and desires via two online surveys, one conducted in 2017 and the other in 2020. Over eleven hundred people participated in the surveys.

The online survey conducted in 2020 had 649 participants, with most (88%) being year-round residents. A wide distribution of age groups participated although very few children and twenty-somethings participated (participation from these age groups is typically low in civic surveys).

Key Parks and Recreation Survey Results:

- Most (65%) think the parks system should continue to change and improve, but incrementally.
- A comparable amount think parks should stay the same (16%) or need significant improvement or change (11%).
- The shore was identified as the greatest attraction (80%) with running and walking the next most attractive activity or place (61%).
- The natural aspect of the parks system was most valued by participants (67%), trails (58%), passive recreation (45%).
- Parks and recreation facilities mostly rated as “good” (60%) with more “excellent” responses (23%) than “OK” responses (16%). Only 1% rated the facilities as “not good”.
- Recreation programs were rated somewhat better than facilities, mostly rated as “good” (55%) with more “excellent” responses (32%) than “OK” responses (12%). Only 1% rated programming as “not good”.
- Most participants (60%) don’t believe that the Town needs a facility type or programming other than what is currently offered.
- Of those who think the Town needs new offerings (40%), a dog park, a town swimming pool, more beach programming, better bicycling options, and more adult exercise such as yoga were consistently identified as desirable.
- Most participants believe that the Town does a good (50%) or excellent (29%) job of protecting natural resources in its parks and open spaces.

- Many participants (40%) felt that the Town is adequately protecting natural resources, those who think that the Town should or could do more had differing opinions on the role of the Town and the areas requiring attention. Many (50%) felt that the shore and beaches should be the focus of attention (preservation and litter removal).
- 55% of participants believe that the Town should focus on sustainable development within its parks, 35% of participants are not sure about this, only 10% are opposed.
- 66% of participants believe that the Town should expand town-owned open space for conservation, 24% of participants are not sure about this, only 10% are opposed.
- Routine maintenance of parks (44%), improving trails (43%), and expanding trails (49%) were the most common areas identified for the Parks and Recreation Department to place more focus on. Improving ball courts (11%) and building more courts (12%) were the least recommended areas of focus.
- Participants were evenly split on which ideas for improvements should be priorities. Park restrooms with touchless amenities rated highest (likely influenced by the pandemic) next to that was walking and hiking trails followed by investment in green initiatives, and improvement of athletic fields. The least popular idea was updating parks with wi-fi.
- Other ideas that were frequently identified as being a priority include improving beach access, updating and providing new playgrounds, providing a dog park, providing bicycle paths/lanes, and provide a Town boat launch. Many more ideas were identified as potential priorities (134 in total).

Survey results specific to Town/Clark Community Park, Harvey’s Beach, Main Street Park, and Saybrook Point are presented in those sections of this plan.

Feedback from Key Stakeholders

The Town conducted two focus group format meetings with key stakeholders in September of 2020 including Parks and Recreation Commissioners, league representatives, and members of other Town commissions and boards. Approximately thirty people participated in-person or via Zoom (online meeting platform). Key findings from those meetings are summarized below and on the following page(s).

Parks System Discussion Summary

Issues and Needs

- The age of the park facilities and the lack of investment in the parks is a concern.
- The parks are not maximized to their potential.
- There is the feeling that the Parks Department is just keeping its heads up above the water with respect to improvements and maintenance.
- More wayfinding signage is needed.
- Need to improve bathroom facilities and other areas.
- There needs to be a greater maintenance budget for upkeep.
- Maintenance personnel activities are focused primarily on mowing, are unavailable for other work such as tree and plant care, repairs.
- Facilities are aging
- There is very little access to the Connecticut River.
- The Parks system needs a capital fund.
- Maintaining athletic fields such as mowing and striping is challenging.
- Travel from field to field with maintenance equipment is time consuming, there is not enough equipment to keep equipment at individual parks and no facilities to house them.
- It would be easier to maintain fields that were centrally located together although that location might not be convenient to some residents.
- Field use is too high to allow for proper field rest.
- Parks are acquired and established but are never finished or fully improved.
- Bike lanes and paths are needed.

Ideas and Recommendations

- The Town might be able to eliminate one of the baseball fields as not all of the fields are needed.
- The Maple Ave field would benefit from irrigation.
- Town owned beaches should be expanded -Harvey's beach could be connected to Town Beach if properties were acquired.
- The Town needs a park that offers comprehensive amenities (similar to Madison Surf Club Park)
- The Town should fully develop one park at a time.
- DPW could use a maintenance person dedicated to repairs who is capable of a wide variety of repairs at the Town's parks.
- A dog park in Town is desired.
- Frisbee golf should be considered.
- A fitness park and/or trail would be beneficial.
- The Town needs more playgrounds.
- The Town could use a nice outdoor rental facility for picnics.
- Full field space for soccer is needed, many fields overlap with other facilities such as baseball fields.

Vision

The vision for Old Saybrook's park system (below) was developed from multiple discussions with Parks and Recreation staff, the Parks and Recreation Commission, and from feedback received from stakeholders and the public. This vision guides all of the recommendations of this plan.



The Parks Vision

Old Saybrook's parks will accommodate the needs of a wide array of users including program participants, leagues, and visitors seeking active and passive recreation opportunities. The Town's residents will have pride in their park system and the Town's parks will reflect a standard of excellence.

Park Improvement Concepts

The park improvement concepts presented on the following pages were developed in response to community input, discussions with key stakeholders, comparison with other communities, assessment of existing facilities, and guidance from the Parks and Recreation Commission and Staff.

The concepts presented in this plan provide a vision that the Town should work towards in improving and providing facilities at the four parks that are the focus of this plan. In some cases, improvements may best be accomplished incrementally; in other cases, improvements will be most effective if conducted in a comprehensive manner. Funding the improvements, as with all major capital investments, will be a challenge. This plan will, however, better position the Town to apply for private, state, and federal grants to assist in this endeavor.

An implementation plan is provided following presentation of the park improvement concepts as a means of guiding the Town in realizing this vision.



Sustainability

Sustainability is a key component of this plan. Sustainability is a broad definition that generally implies that a practice can be continued well into the future without adverse impacts associated with that practice. With respect to Old Saybrook's parks, sustainability implies that the parks and the services provided within the parks can be sustained by the Town, even through challenging economic periods. It also implies that facilities and maintenance practices can be continued without damaging the local environment and without depleting resources.

As such, this plan recommends improvements that will maintain and attract users locally and from across the region as a means of sustaining operations. Additionally, this plan advocates for the use of materials and technologies that would minimize environmental impacts and reduce the operational costs of proposed facilities.

Examples of materials and technologies recommended by this plan include:

- Pervious Surfaces
- Environmentally Friendly Lighting (dark sky and LED technology)
- Solar Energy
- Native Planting
- Stormwater Infiltration Areas



Example of pervious pavement. Image Source: mmsd.com



Solar panels on a park pavilion. Image Source: Solaripedia



Stormwater infiltration with native plants. Image Source: grownative.com

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Town/Clark Community Park

About the Park

Clark Community Park, commonly referred to as Town Park, is the Town's largest park and features a range of facilities. The park is located on an 84-acre parcel although only 4.5 acres of the site are actively used. The facilities at Town Park include:

- Youth baseball field
- Softball field
- Batting cage
- Multi-purpose field (overlay on outfields)
- Basketball court
- Horseshoe pits
- Open-air pavilion
- Lake
- Paths and trails
- Off-street parking

The functional area of the site is constrained by topography, as there are wetlands and a flood zone east of the ball fields and a hillside north of the ball fields.



Softball field with backstop and sheltered dugouts visible.



Baseball field with backstop and sheltered dugouts visible.



Soccer fields overlaid on baseball and softball outfields.



Park welcome sign.



Basketball court: Court is undersized and water puddles on surface.



New park entrance sign at center of driveway.



Open air pavilion near Crystal Lake.



Boardwalk section of trail through wetlands near Crystal Lake.



Wooded picnic area near pavilion.

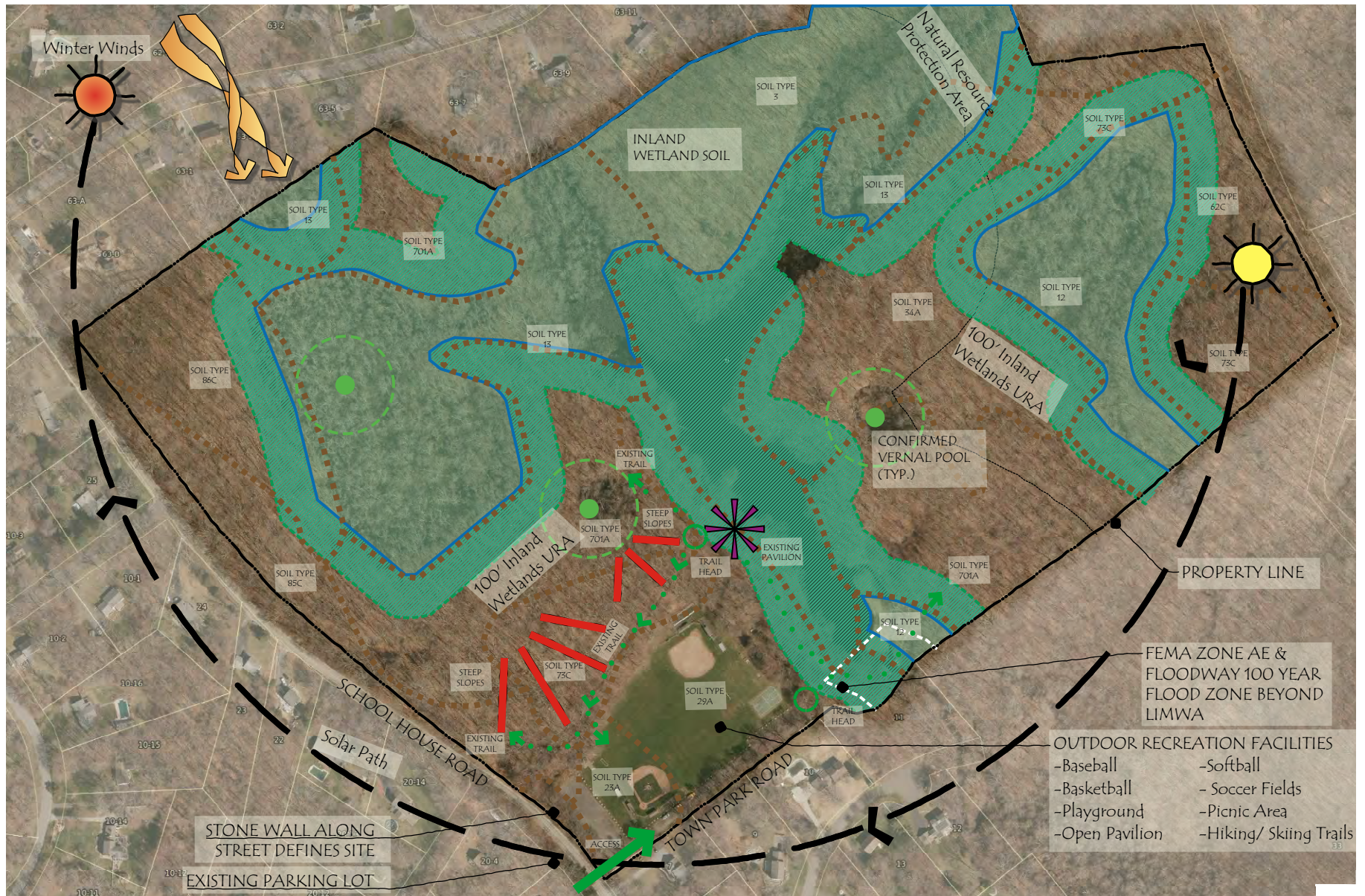


Horseshoe pits with play area in background.



Town/Clark Community Park





Town/Clark Community Park Site Analysis

The Community's Preferences

The community provided the following guidance through their participation in the online survey ranking their priorities for Town Park as follows:

1. Provide outbuilding for year-round, touch-less bathrooms near Lake/camping area.
2. Provide low maintenance picnic tables made from "green" materials.
3. Provide a modern playground with a splash pad.
4. Renovate and modernize the pavilion near the lake/camping area.
5. Create trail heads with signage.
6. Provide concession building with seating areas.
7. Expand ball field and provide lacrosse field.
8. Add a disc golf course near the trail head.

Multiple other ideas and priorities were provided by participants including winter ice skating.

Focus group discussions with key stakeholders revealed the following needs and ideas for Town Park:

- Bathroom facilities need improvement.
- The picnic area is underdeveloped and the pavilion needs improvement.
- The playground needs updating.
- The basketball court is not well used.
- The park needs better wayfinding on trails, trailblazing needs to be improved and remarked.
- A bathroom is needed near the trail entrance.
- There could be a better bike and pedestrian connection to the park.
- The field should be expanded as many of them are overlaid which leaves little time to rest the fields.
- Use of the trail should be encouraged and more education should be provided on the trails.

Priorities for Town Park

The following improvements were recommended for consideration for Town Park based upon consideration of feedback received from the online survey, focus group meetings, recreation trends, and discussion with Parks and Recreation staff and the Parks and Recreation Commission.

- Expand field space to accommodate a dedicated multipurpose athletic field to serve soccer, lacrosse, and other field sports.
- Improve one of the baseball/softball fields to adequately accommodate the needs of adult softball.
- Provide a new playground.
- Replace the existing pavilion with a four-season facility.
- Create a more open area around the existing pavilion.
- Improve the existing picnic area.
- Provide new bathrooms.
- Provide new park signage including trail wayfinding signage.
- Improve the park entrance.
- Redesign parking lot and expand parking capacity.
- Integrate "green" design into improvements.
- Explore the feasibility of adding a disc golf course.

Proposed Improvements

The improvements listed below are proposed for Town Park as shown on the park masterplan on the following page. The improvements are recommended in two phases with the Phase 1 improvements being the highest priority improvement. Phase 2 improvements comprise mostly of improvements near Crystal Lake.

The proposed improvements and their phases include:

Phase 1

- A full-size softball field with a 300' outfield including, bleachers, dugouts, and backstop fencing.
- A full-size soccer/lacrosse field overlapping with the softball field.
- Expansion and improvement of existing parking areas to increase capacity by twenty spaces.
- A new 1,800 sf pavilion close to the park entrance.
- Compostable bathrooms near parking lot and entrance.
- A playground.
- "Gateway" improvements to park entrance including new signage.
- Native tree planting and additional landscaping enhancements.
- "Dark Sky" lighting to minimize light pollution.
- Low impact/sustainable measures such as use of solar energy and permeable surfaces.

Phase 2

- Selective tree clearing near Crystal Lake to provide functional areas and to manage the health of the forest.
- Trail signage.
- Trail/pathway improvements.
- An 18-hole disc golf course.
- ADA accessible picnic areas.
- Camping sites.
- Renovation of existing pavilion at Crystal Lake.
- New bathrooms near Crystal Lake.

Probable Cost of Improvements

The cost estimate provided here is intended to provide guidance on the probable cost of providing improvements visioned by the plan. The cost estimate is intended for planning purposes to support budgeting and procurement of grants. There are multiple variables that could impact this cost estimate including discovery of site issues that would need to be resolved such as utility infrastructure improvements and environmental compliance requirements. Additional variables may include modifications to the plan, materials selection, inflation and cost escalation, variance in construction bids, etc. The cost estimate is based upon information known to the consultant and professional judgment and expertise. The cost estimate for each line item represents the typical or average cost in 2021 dollars.

The total cost of improvements presented in the concept plan is **\$3.0 million**. The new softball field and associated improvements comprises almost a third of this cost. Line item cost estimates are provided in the table below.

Phase	Improvement	Cost
1	Athletic Field Improvements	\$ 1,280,600
	Parking Lot Improvements	\$ 230,000
	Signage & Entrance Improvements	\$ 197,000
	Playground	\$ 232,000
	New Pavilion	\$ 205,000
	Landscaping	\$ 31,000
	Sidewalks	\$ 80,000
	Bathroom Renovations at Parking Lot	\$ 384,000
	Site Lighting	\$ 137,000
	Subtotal	\$ 2,776,600
	2	Pathway Improvements
Pavilion Renovations		\$ 77,000
Disc Golf		\$ 32,000
Camping Sites		\$ 51,200
Bathroom: Near Crystal Lake (STEAP Grant Funded)		-
Subtotal		\$ 255,200
Total	\$ 3,031,800	



Disc Golf



Entry Wall (stone walls and columns only)



Neighborhood Pavilion



Picnic Area



Signage



Town/Clark Community Park Masterplan

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Harvey's Beach

About Harvey's Beach

Harvey's Beach is located on Great Hammock Road (Route 154). The beach includes a parking lot, bathhouse with showers and restrooms, a sandy beach protected by a breakwater, and a small playground. The beach is located on a seven-acre property although only two acres of the site are actively used; the balance of the site is comprised mostly of tidal wetlands. While the beach is relatively small at high tide, it expands dramatically at low tide.

Harvey's Beach is a popular regional draw in the summer, drawing visitors from across the state in addition to local residents and summer dwellers. The Town charges a gate fee for vehicles during daytime hours, walk-in access is free.

The facilities at Harvey's Beach include:

- 900 sf bathhouse with 900 sf deck
- Parking lot with gatehouse approximately 80 spaces
- 12,000 sf beach at high tide
- Small play area
- Benches and picnic benches



Small playground at Harvey's Beach.

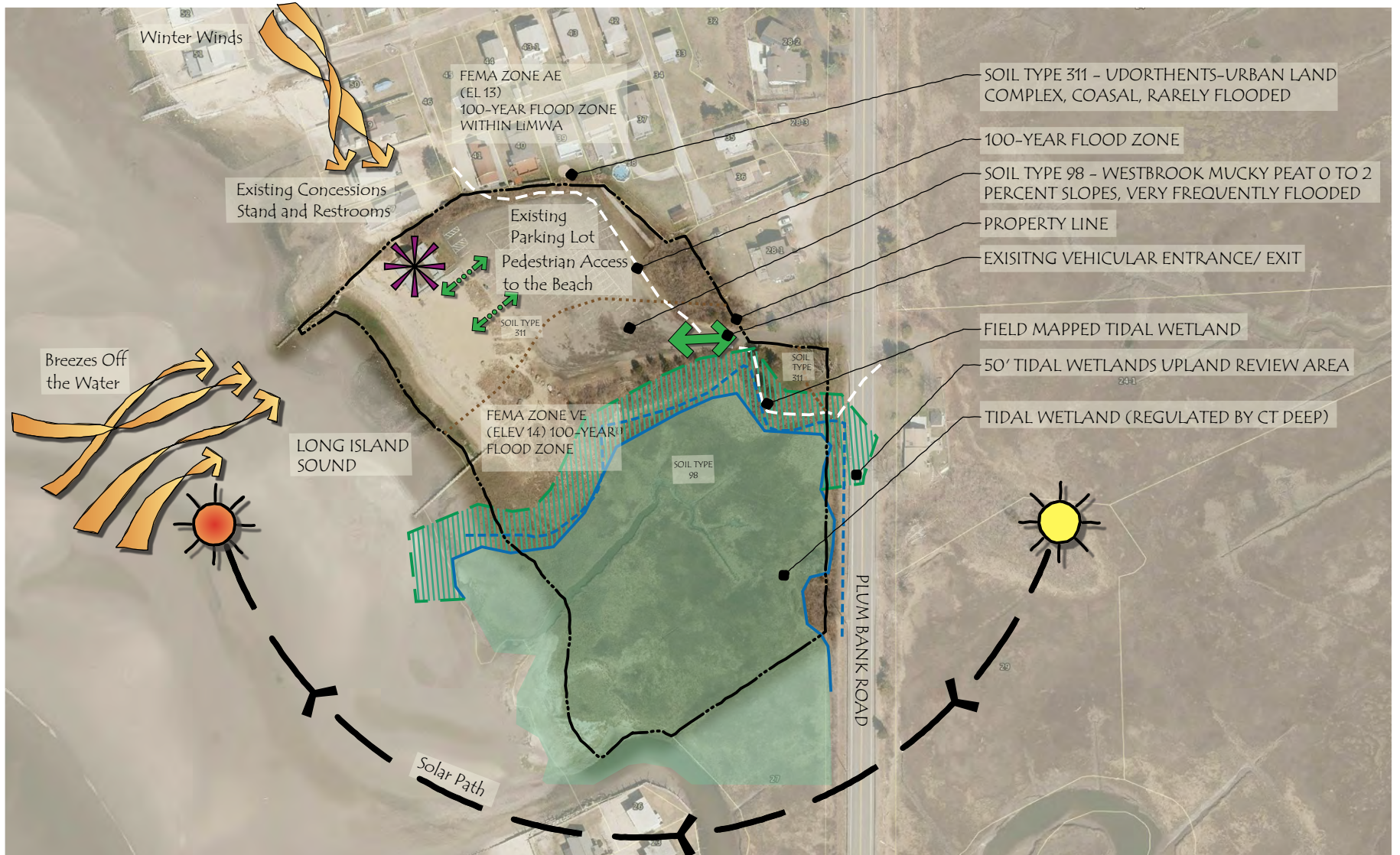


Beach and bathhouse.

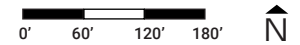


Harvey's Beach





Harvey's Beach Site Analysis



The Community's Preferences

The community provided the following guidance through their participation in the online survey ranking their priorities for Harvey's Beach as follows:

1. Improvements to bathhouse.
2. A bathhouse addition including deck for concerts.
3. Bathhouse addition for concessions.
4. Renovate playground area.
5. Provide fire pit area.
6. Provide wifi service.
7. Other ideas include restoring the beach at the sinkhole, improving the sand, repaving the parking lot, and improving maintenance.

Focus group discussions with key stakeholders revealed the following needs and ideas for Harvey's Beach:

- The bathhouse needs to be modernized.
- A better location should be considered for the food truck.
- The gate house needs to be safer from collision and more secure and equipment/technology should be considered for the gate house to prevent access at night.
- Handicap access to the beach should be improved.
- The sinkhole needs to be addressed.
- Resiliency design should be considered for the bathhouse.
- The bathhouse building should have an expanded deck that could act as a stage for concerts.
- An annual topographic survey of the beach should be conducted to ensure access to federal funds should the beached be damaged by a storm event.
- Sand quality is an issue, there are lots of rocks.
- Routine debris removal needs to remain a priority.
- There is a lack of storage for maintenance equipment.
- The playground is small.
- A better fence is needed around the edge of the site.
- More landscaping and grass at the site although space is limited.
- A better bike and walking connection to the beach is needed but CT DOT has rejected such requests due to limited right of way.
- The bathhouse building needs improvement and bathrooms need to be made more sanitary.

Priorities for Harvey's Beach

The following improvements were recommended for consideration for Harvey's Beach based upon consideration of feedback received from the online survey, focus group meetings, recreation trends, and discussion with Parks and Recreation staff and the Parks and Recreation Commission.

- Renovate the bathhouse.
- Enlarge bathhouse building to incorporate deck, avoid consuming beach space.
- Provide concession stand or improved food truck location.
- Improve the playground.
- Improve entrance and parking attendant structure (more secure).
- Survey beach annually per federal standards.
- Extend boardwalk across the beach.
- Provide space for maintenance equipment in building and ADA equipment.

Proposed Improvements

The improvements listed below are proposed for Main Street Park as shown on the following page. These improvements include:

- A reconstructed and expanded bathhouse (1,425 sf) in its existing location. Includes new bathrooms with touchless features and a rooftop dining deck.
- A boardwalk providing ADA compliant access between the parking lot and the beach.
- A designated food truck parking area.
- A reorganized parking lot expanding capacity to 71 designated spaces.
- Improved playground area with new playground equipment.
- Expansion of beach area and restoration of existing dunes.
- New sign at entrance of park.
- New post and rail fencing along driveway.
- New secure gatehouse building with automated access control equipment.
- Removal of invasive plant species and planting of native vegetation.

Probable Cost of Improvements

The cost estimate provided here is intended to provide guidance on the probable cost of providing improvements envisioned by the plan. The cost estimate is intended for planning purposes to support budgeting and procurement of grants. There are multiple variables that could impact this cost estimate including discovery of site issues that would need to be resolved such as utility infrastructure improvements and environmental compliance requirements. Additional variables may include modifications to the plan, materials selection, inflation and cost escalation, variance in construction bids, etc. The cost estimate is based upon information known to the consultant and professional judgment and expertise. The cost estimate for each line item represents the typical or average cost in 2021 dollars.

The total cost of improvements presented in the concept plan is **\$4.9 million**. A new bathhouse and site improvements including a boardwalk comprise most of this cost. Line item cost estimates and a ranking of priorities are provided in the table below.

Priority Ranking	Improvement	Cost
1	New Gatehouse (Entrance Station)	\$ 50,000
2	New Bathhouse/Dining Deck	\$ 4,000,000
3	Beach/Dune Restoration	\$ 50,000
4	Playground Improvements	\$ 200,000
5	Parking Lot Improvements	\$ 100,000
6	Boardwalk and shade structure	\$ 250,000
7	Site Furnishings	\$ 50,000
8	Fence and Landscaping	\$ 100,000
9	Signage & Entrance Improvements	\$ 50,000
	Total	\$ 4,850,000

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Main Street Park

About Main Street Park

Main Street Park is located across from Town Hall on a 2.6 acre site that spans two parcels. The park includes a parking lot, landscaped seating areas, and pickleball courts. Those elements, constructed in 2017, are located on a 1.2 acre parcel that faces Main Street. The park site also includes a largely vacant 1.4 acre area at the rear of the Police Station complex and located on the Police Station parcel. The balance of the area is reserved for a future park use, although no specific use has been identified. The vacant area is connected to the rest of Main Street Park via the sidewalk that serves the pickleball courts. The vacant area is separated from the new park elements by a 2,000 sf area that is home to the Police Station's radio tower. The area also has an easement connection to Lynde Street, which would allow for the construction of a sidewalk connecting to Lynde Street.

The facilities at Main Street Park include:

- Three pickleball courts
- Landscaped seating area
- Landscaped parking lot with 32 spaces



Landscaped area at front of park.



Stone benches at front of park.



Sidewalk leading to pickleball courts and towards Lynde Street.

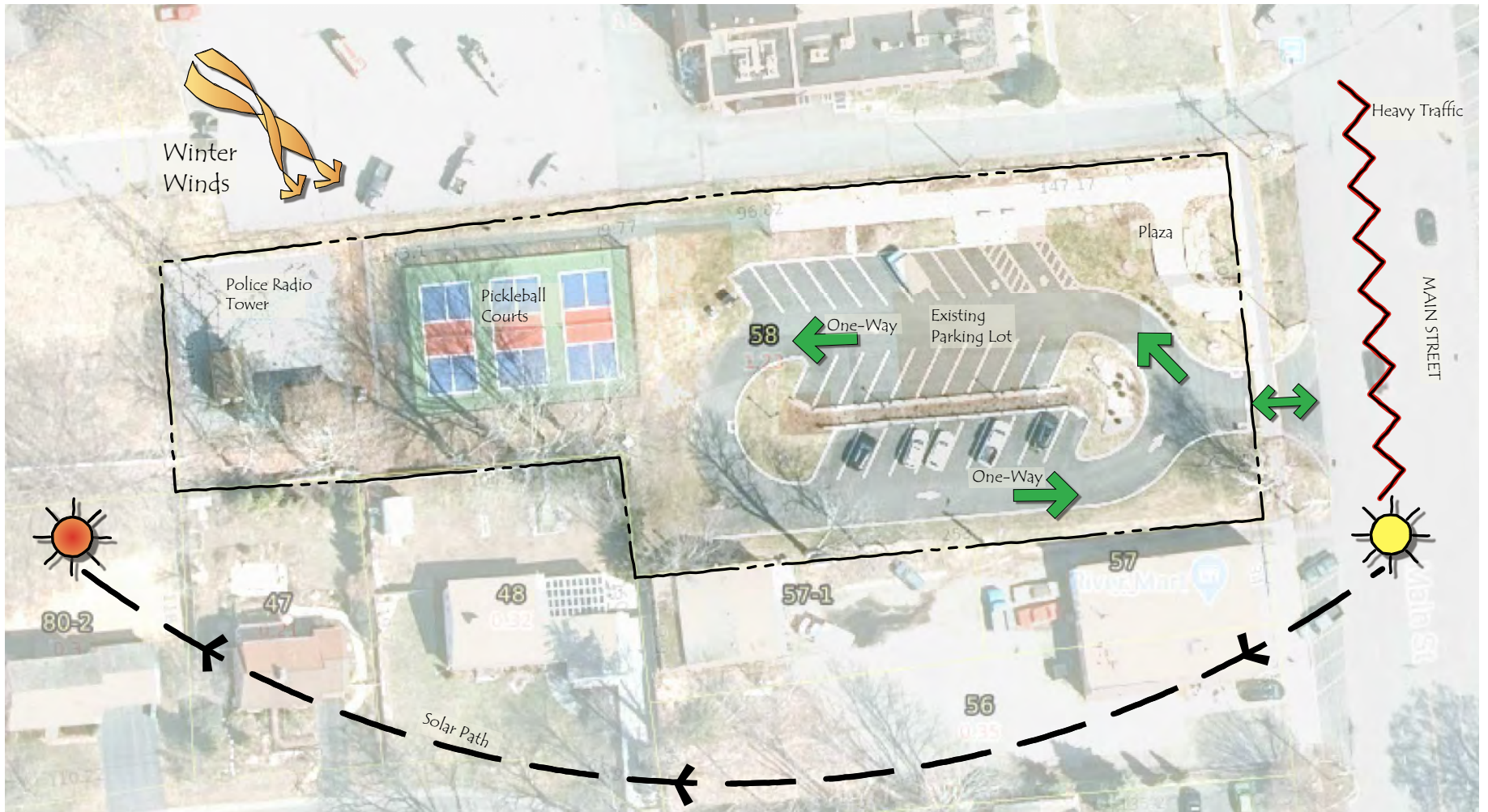


Pickleball courts.

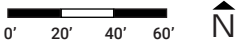


Main Street Park





Main Street Park Site Analysis



The Community's Preferences

The community provided the following guidance through their participation in the online survey ranking their priorities for Main Street Park as follows:

1. Provide outbuilding for year-round bathrooms with touchless features.
2. Provide ice skating rink for use in colder months and convert to volleyball court in warmer months.
3. Provide bocce courts.
4. Provide a dog park area.
5. Provide access from Lynde Street.
6. Other ideas include a teen friendly gathering area, more seating, better crosswalk, lights for evening pickleball, playground equipment, horseshoe pits.

Multiple other ideas and priorities were provided by participants including winter ice skating.

Focus group discussions with key stakeholders revealed the following needs and ideas for Main Street Park:

- The planned bathrooms, which will be financed by a grant, should be constructed.
- A connection to Lynde Street via the easement by the Police Station should be provided.
- The location is challenging due to nearby residences, so future uses need to be compatible with a residential environment.
- A two-season use is desirable such as winter hockey and summer volleyball.
- An ice rink would be expensive to construct and maintain but it would be it would likely draw people from the wider region which would be beneficial to local businesses.
- A dog park should be considered.
- Features such as a horseshoe pit, tables, and bocce should be considered.
- A shaded seating area is needed.
- An outdoor stage for summer theater and concerts would be good this is a better location than the Town green.

Priorities for Main Street Park

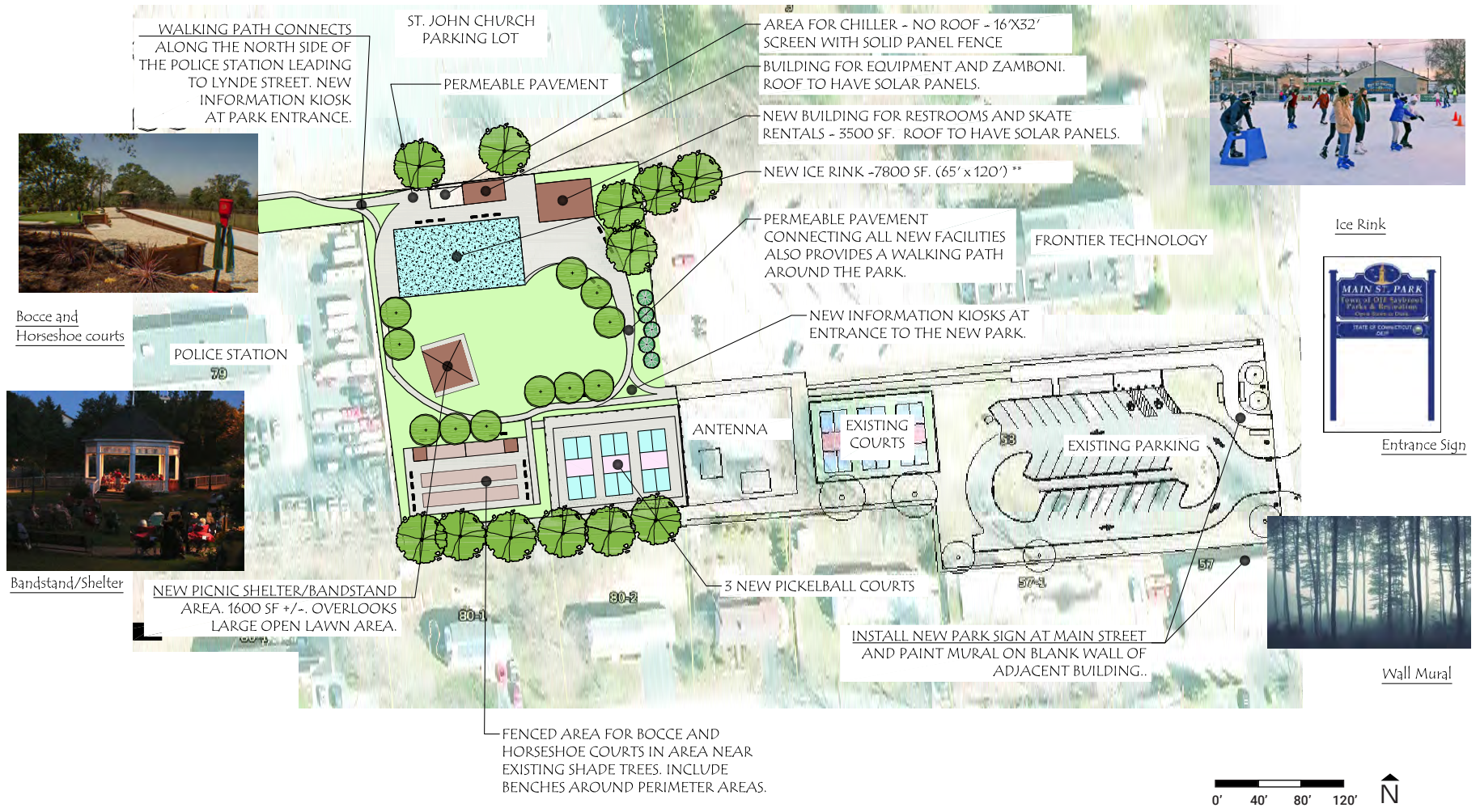
The following improvements were recommended for consideration for Main Street Park based upon consideration of feedback received from the online survey, focus group meetings, recreation trends, and discussion with Parks and Recreation staff and the Parks and Recreation Commission.

- Provide a connection to Lynde Street.
- Provide additional pickleball courts.
- Provide bathrooms.
- Provide a pavilion or gazebo.
- Provide more seating.
- Explore the feasibility of an ice rink.
- Consider a dog park.
- Consider a splash pad.

Proposed Improvements

The improvements listed below are proposed for Main Street Park as shown on the following page. These improvements include:

- A 7,800 sf outdoor ice skating rink for winter operation.
- Bathroom building with space for equipment rentals.
- 1,600 sf pavilion for picnicking or use as a bandstand.
- 3 new pickleball courts.
- Bocce and horseshoe play area.
- Lawn area for play or picnicking.
- Pathway connection to Lynde Street.
- Signage and art installations.
- Information kiosk.
- Native tree plantings.
- Permeable pavement materials for paved areas.



Main Street Park Masterplan

Probable Cost of Improvements

The cost estimate provided here is intended to provide guidance on the probable cost of providing improvements visioned by the plan. The cost estimate is intended for planning purposes to support budgeting and procurement of grants. There are multiple variables that could impact this cost estimate including discovery of site issues that would need to be resolved such as utility infrastructure improvements and environmental compliance requirements. Additional variables may include modifications to the plan, materials selection, inflation and cost escalation, variance in construction bids, etc. The cost estimate is based upon information known to the consultant and professional judgment and expertise. The cost estimate for each line item represents the typical or average cost in 2021 dollars.

The total cost of improvements presented in the concept plan is **\$2.9 million**. Most of that cost is associated with the proposed skate rink and related facilities. The cost estimate for the rink is inclusive of all required improvements including construction of a concrete pad and ancillary structures and the purchase of chilling equipment and other operational equipment.

A line item cost estimate, with a priority ranking of improvements is provided in the table below.

Priority Ranking	Improvement	Cost
1	Bathroom Building (STEAP Grant Funded)	-
2	Pickleball Courts, Horseshoe and Bocce Area	\$ 292,800
3	Ice Rink and Supporting Facilities	\$ 1,310,000
4	Walkways and Lynde Street Pathway	\$ 250,000
5	Pavilion and Site Furnishings	\$ 543,900
6	Landscaping and Lighting	\$ 500,000
	Total	\$ 2,896,700

About Outdoor Ice Skating Rinks

Outdoor ice skating rinks are unique facilities that attract users from a large geographic area. Excluding skating ponds, Connecticut has only five outdoor rinks with those rinks located in Fairfield and Hartford County. There are no rinks in Southeast Connecticut.

Outdoor ice rinks are typically operated on a seasonal basis, with a three or four month season often ranging from late November to February or early March. Rinks vary in size; a full-size hockey rink measures 85 feet by 200 feet (17,000 sf) but outdoor rinks are often smaller. Hartford's Bushnell Park rink is 8,000 sf, Stamford's Mill River Park rink is 14,000 sf, while Westport's PAL Rink at Longshore is full-size.

Rinks are costly to build, operate, and maintain. Construction costs typically range from \$150 and \$200 per sf. This includes the construction of a concrete pad which underlies the ice surface, dasher boards that line the edge of the ice, surrounding pathways, ancillary structures, utility improvements, and the purchase of chilling and maintenance equipment. Operational costs include the annual set-up and take-down of the rink, maintenance and management of the rink while in operation, maintenance and running of equipment including a Zamboni, utility costs for the chilling equipment, and staffing of operations. Energy cost for a medium size rink (8,000 sf) is approximately \$20,000 per year.

Given the cost associated with the construction, operation, and maintenance of an outdoor ice rink, most rinks have a fee system for single passes or season passes that provides funding for their operations. The Westport PAL rink charges \$14 for one hour of adult skating and season passes are \$175 for adults. Hartford's rink, however, has corporate sponsors and provides free skating.

As an alternative, rink equipment can be leased, and a vendor can be hired for operation and maintenance. Many outdoor rinks begin as a trial seasonal operation which lowers initial capital costs and assists with establishing the feasibility of a permanent seasonal operation.



Saybrook Point

About the Saybrook Point

Saybrook Point is comprised of five parcels that total 22.9 acres. The largest parcel, with an area of 19.5 acres, is occupied by Fort Saybrook Monument Park including the Historic Connecticut Valley Turntable and Roundabout site. The Point is also home to the mini-golf course, Duffy Pavilion, and a riverwalk and plaza areas that occupy 2.5 acres of the site. Gardiner's Landing, located north of the mini-golf course is located on a 0.9 acre site that provides riverfront access and is used for picnicking and fishing. Much of the site is tidal wetlands, which reduces the usable area of the site.

The Town's properties at Saybrook Point surround the privately owned former Dock and Dine property, which is a 2.3 acre parcel that is now occupied by the grounds, parking lot, and docks of the former restaurant. Access to Gardiner's landing is provided through the Dock and Dine property.

The facilities at Saybrook Point include:

- Duffy Pavilion, a 2,000 sf indoor gathering space.
- Mini-Golf Course (Town owned and operated).
- Riverfront walk and plaza areas.
- Fort Saybrook grounds including boardwalk and bird observation area, monument, seating areas, and interpretative signage.
- Historic Connecticut Valley Turntable and Roundabout site.
- Passive open space and picnic areas.
- Three parking lots with a total capacity of 112 spaces.



Front entrance of Duffy Pavilion building.



Picnic area at mini-golf.



Seating area and view of Connecticut River.



Boardwalk and viewing platform.



Pathway through parking lot towards Fort Saybrook.



View of monument from Fort Saybrook.



Gardiner's Landing.



View from Fort Saybrook towards waterfront.

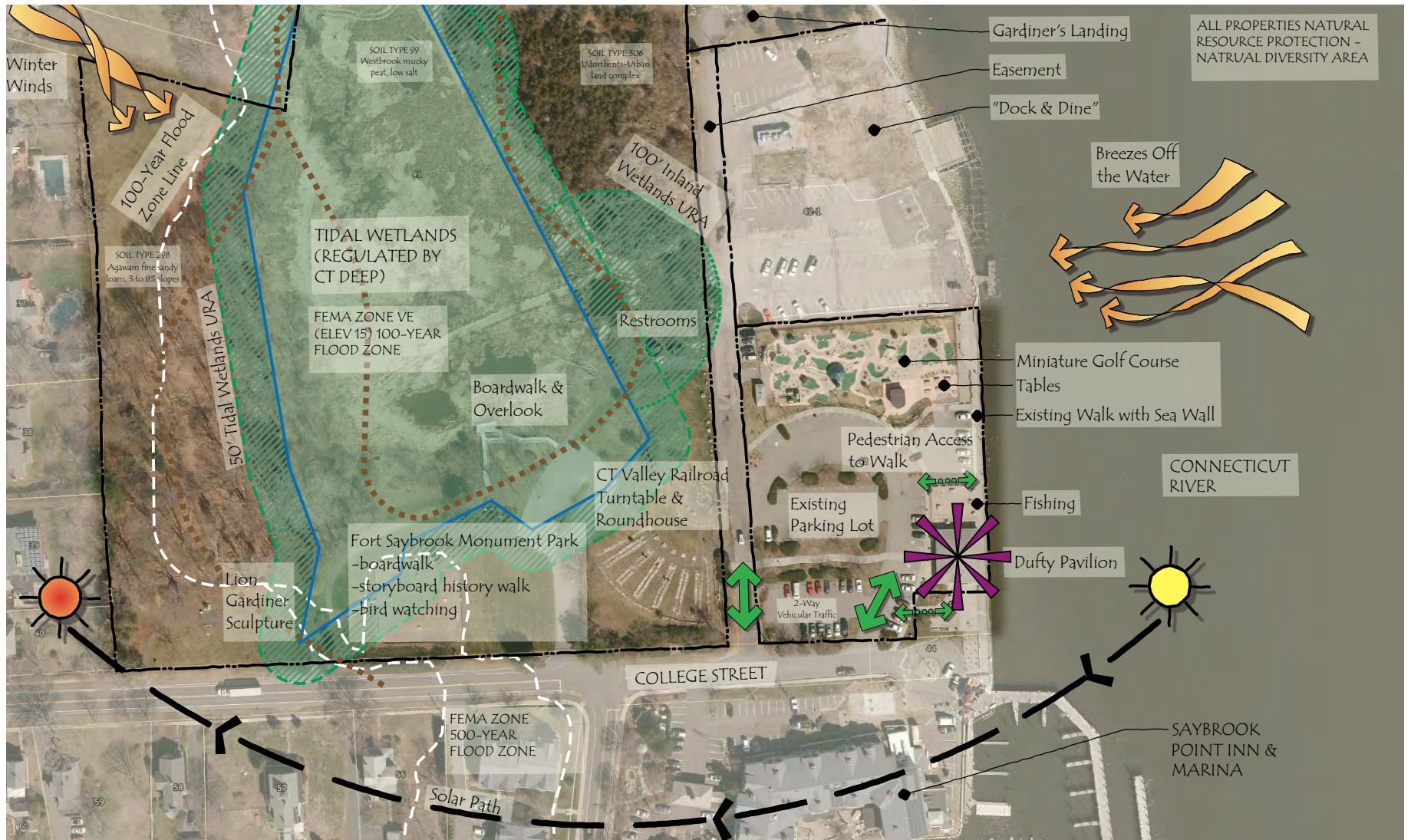


View from Dock and Dine property looking towards Gardiner's Landing.

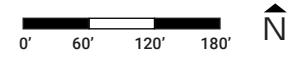


Saybrook Point





Saybrook Point Site Analysis



The Community's Preferences

The community provided the following guidance, through their participation in the online survey, ranking their priorities for Saybrook Point as follows:

1. Provide an outbuilding for year-round, touch-less bathrooms near the mini-golf area.
2. Explore ideas for how to incorporate former Dock and Dine property into park.
3. Create a complete trail network connecting all parks and facilities with the site and provide wayfinding signage.
4. Provide a concession area suitable to operation by a vendor.
5. Relocate designated fishing areas and provide additional cleaning tables and regulatory signage.
6. Provide improved lighting throughout Saybrook Point, fixtures should be "green" (dark sky and powered by renewable sources).
7. Provide historic tours or features highlighted by updated interpretative signage, technology, and a social media campaign.
8. Other ideas include: More patrolling and enforcement in the area, a boat launch, better connection between park sites, and a playground.

Multiple other ideas and priorities were provided by participants including winter ice skating.

Focus group discussions with key stakeholders revealed the following needs and ideas for Saybrook Point:

- Sidewalk access could be improved.
- The parking lot layout could be improved to accommodate more cars.
- Gardiner's Landing needs to be improved, parking lot is too small.
- Gardiner's Landing could be used to provide better access to the River.
- The area needs better connections between all of the sites for pedestrians and cars.
- Bathroom facilities are needed however the flood plain and historic district are challenges for siting them.
- There needs to be increased lighting for the path especially at Fort Park.
- The Dock and Dine property should be considered for expansion of the park, although the Town does not own the property.
- The flood zone is a limiting factor to development.
- The location of fishing and casting is problematic as it is too close to the Marina.
- There should be an improved river walk and lighting along the shore/river bank.
- A lighting plan is needed for the site.
- Options should be explored for the Dock and Dine property such as a tax increment finance district to encourage redevelopment.
- The area should be considered for mixed-use development.
- Pop-up retail should be considered such as vendors with booths and or food trucks.
- A transient dock should be considered –coordination with the Harbor Management Commission would be required.
- A tour boat or water taxi should be considered if a transient dock is provided –parking is currently limited for such use.
- The history of the rail Roundhouse should be presented it could be possible to get a historic rail car from Essex to display.

Priorities for Saybrook Point

The following improvements were recommended for consideration at Saybrook Point based upon consideration of feedback received from the online survey, focus group meetings, recreation trends, and discussion with Parks and Recreation staff and the Parks and Recreation Commission.

- Incorporate (acquire) Dock and Dine property.
- Provide a dock for an excursion boat.
- Picnic areas at Gardiner's Landing.
- Better access to river
- River walk/trail network through site connecting to causeway
- Provide a boardwalk.
- Lighting along riverfront.
- Fishing pier, canoe/kayak launch.
- Location for food truck(s).
- Bathrooms.
- Expand and reconfigure parking lots.

Proposed Improvements

The improvements listed below are proposed for Saybrook Point as shown on the park masterplans on the following pages. These improvements include:

- A new boardwalk connecting Gardiner's Landing with Fort Saybrook and the mini-golf.
- Kayak launch and fishing pier at Gardiner's Landing.
- Benches and picnic areas at Gardiner's Landing.
- New compostable bathrooms.
- Reconstructed parking lot with 110 spaces and landscaped drainage islands.
- Native tree planting.
- Outdoor eating areas.
- Improved area lighting.
- Retail kiosks for vendors.
- Signage enhancements.
- Seawall restoration.

Additional improvements are proposed at Saybrook Point should the Town acquire the former Dock & Dine property, which is located between Gardiner's Landing and the mini-golf. Proposed improvements at this property include:

- Open lawn area.
- Sidewalks.
- Expanded boardwalk.
- Additional parking.
- Food truck parking.
- Boat dock.
- Playground.
- Seating areas.

Probable Cost of Improvements

The cost estimate provided here is intended to provide guidance on the probable cost of providing improvements visioned by the plan. The cost estimate is intended for planning purposes to support budgeting and procurement of grants. There are multiple variables that could impact this cost estimate including discovery of site issues that would need to be resolved such as utility infrastructure improvements and environmental compliance requirements. Additional variables may include modifications to the plan, materials selection, inflation and cost escalation, variance in construction bids, etc. The cost estimate is based upon information known to the consultant and professional judgment and expertise. The cost estimate for each line item represents the typical or average cost in 2021 dollars.

The total cost of improvements presented in the concept plan is **\$4.6 million** for improvements excluding the Dock & Dine property and **\$7.5 million** for improvements including the Dock & Dine property (not including property acquisition costs). The boardwalk represents a significant share of the cost.

Line item cost estimates and a priority ranking of proposed improvements are provided in the table below.

Priority Ranking	Improvement	Cost
1	Parking Lot Reconstruction and Associated Improvements	\$ 800,000
2	Seawall Repair at Mini-Golf	\$ 144,000
3	Gardiner's Landing Access and Parking Improvements	\$ 300,000
4	Boardwalk	\$ 2,868,000
5	Gardiner's Landing Fishing Pier	\$ 166,000
6	Gardiner's Landing Furnishings	\$ 50,000
7	Gardiner's Landing Pathway	\$ 220,600
8	Dining Terrace	\$ 100,000
	Subtotal	\$ 4,648,600
Option	Dock & Dine Property Improvements (excludes property acquisition costs)	\$ 2,893,200
	Total	\$ 7,541,800



Saybrook Point Masterplan



Saybrook Point Masterplan: Option with Dock & Dine Property

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Implementation Plan

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Approach for Moving Forward

The total cost of proposed improvements at the four parks that are a focus of this plan is up to \$18.3 million. Given the substantial investment that would be required to realize the proposed improvements, it is not expected that all improvements would occur as planned. Additionally, improvements would likely be implemented over a period of several years as funding becomes available through capital improvement budgeting, grant awards, fundraising and private donations, and revenue generation from the park facilities.

It is the goal of this plan to recommend a sequence of improvements that addresses the most pressing needs of the community and its park facilities. Improvements that are prioritized by this plan will also provide the highest value for the investment.

Through the course of the plan development stakeholders and Parks & Recreation Commissioners expressed a strong preference for “seeing projects through”. This means conducting a wide array of improvements at a park in one sequence rather than taking a piecemeal approach over several years. While funding will limit the extent of work conducted in any park at one time, improvements should be planned and implemented with the intention of providing all of the improvements needed and planned at a park in unison, as feasible.

Recommended Priorities for Improvements

The following recommended priorities for improvements are based upon the cost of proposed improvements, the value added by proposed improvements, the need for improvements based upon the condition of existing facilities, and input from the community and Parks and Recreation Commissioners.

1 Priority #1: Town/Clark Community Park

Town/Clark Community Park is an aging park that has not had significant reinvestment in several years. The park has tremendous potential to be a jewel in Old Saybrook’s park system but needs reinvestment. The proposed total cost of improvements at Town Park is \$3.0 million.

2 Priority #2: Harvey’s Beach

Harvey’s Beach is a heavily used property that is visited by Town residents, seasonal residents, and visitors from across the region. The beach generates. The beach grosses \$70-\$80k annually in parking fees. The total cost of improvements proposed at Harvey’s Beach is \$4.9 million.

3 Priority #3: Main Street Park

Main Street Park is the newest park in the system yet is only partially developed. Its location on Main Street holds tremendous potential to add additional vitality to Main Street and to provide features that could attract users to Main Street. The total cost of improvements is \$2.9 million.

4 Priority #4: Saybrook Point

Saybrook Point is comprised of multiple unique sites and assets including the mini-golf and Vicky Duffy pavilion which gross approximately \$200k per year in revenue. While the income generating assets are well maintained, other areas of the Point such as Gardiner’s Landing is relatively unimproved. Additionally, the property lacks adequate bathroom facilities. Given the number of visitors drawn to the Point, investment in this area would serve a wide audience of users and would likely attract more visitors. The total cost of improvements ranges from \$4.6 to \$7.5 million.

The recommended priority level of each park provides a broad strategy for sequencing improvements, but this does not preclude a specific improvement at a location such as Main Street Park from being conducted prior to conducting or completing improvements at Town/Clark Community Park.

Grant Funding Sources

Towns in Connecticut have access to multiple grant programs that can assist with the development of park and recreation facilities. While these funds available to these programs are limited, towns with an up-to-date parks and recreation plan are more competitive than towns that lack a comprehensive plan.

Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant Program

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is a federal grant program administered by the Department of Interior, National Park Service (NPS). LWCF consists of a federal side and a State side. The State side program provides funding for recreation planning, acquisition of lands and waters, and facility development. The goal of the LWCF is to increase opportunities and the quality of outdoor recreation.

The LWCF has provided over \$60 million to develop and enhance many Connecticut's outdoor recreational resources since the program was created in 1965. Any property that has benefited from the assistance of the LWCF must be maintained for outdoor public recreation. Recipients of LWCF funding have agreed to:

- Make the property available for public outdoor recreation
- Maintain the project area and ensure it is accessible
- Keep the property open for public use
- Provide signage at the property indicating property is open for public outdoor recreation

Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) Grants

STEAP funds are issued by the State Bond Commission and can only be used for capital projects. A project is considered to be a capital project if it is new construction, expansion, renovation or replacement for an existing facility or facilities. Project costs can include the cost of land, engineering, architectural planning, and contract services needed to complete the project. The program is managed by the Office of Policy and Management, and grants are administered by various state agencies. Recreation projects are eligible for STEAP grants.

Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Funds (CDBG)

Connecticut's CDBG Program, also known as the Small Cities Program, provides funding and technical support for projects that achieve local community and economic development objectives. The Small Cities Program principally benefits low-and moderate-income persons. This program is only available to Connecticut towns and cities with populations of less than 50,000; Old Saybrook is listed as an eligible community.

Eligible CDBG projects include but are not limited to:

- Acquisition of real property
- Public facilities and improvements
- Public services
- Planning and capacity building
- Program administrative costs

Connecticut Recreational Trails Program

The Recreational Trails Program is an assistance program of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration. The program is administered locally through the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP). Recreational Trails Program funds are used for projects that include:

- Construction of new trails (motorized and non-motorized).
- Maintenance and restoration of existing recreational trails (motorized and non-motorized).
- Access to trails by persons with disabilities.
- Purchase and lease of trail construction and maintenance equipment.
- Acquisition of land or easements for a trail, or for trail corridors.

Other Funding Mechanisms

Fee-in-Lieu of Open Space Requirement Ordinances

The requirement of open space for developments could be replaced by a fee directed to parks and recreation funding and is best directed towards parks in proximity of the development.

Land Leases/Concessions

Land leases and concessions are public/private partnerships in which the municipality provides land or space for private commercial operations that enhance the park and recreational experience in exchange for payments to help reduce operating costs. They can range from vending machines to food service and recreation operations.

User Fees

User fees are fees paid by participants of programs or recreational facilities to offset the costs of services provided by the municipality. The fees are set by the municipality based on cost recovery goals and the level of exclusivity the user receives compared to the general taxpayer. An example of user fees is the parking fee at Harvey's Beach.

Corporate Sponsorships

Corporations can also underwrite a portion or all of the costs of an event, program, or activity based on their name being associated with the service. Sponsorships typically are title sponsors, presenting sponsors, associate sponsors, product sponsors, or in-kind sponsors.

Maintenance Endowment Fund

This is a fund dedicated exclusively for parks maintenance, funded by a percentage of user fees from programs, events, and rentals. Many communities across Connecticut have robust endowment fund that were established through private donations and municipal allocations.

Business/Resident Donations

Individual donations from businesses and residents can support parks and green spaces. Fundraising can be conducted as part of a campaign for the entire parks system, a specific park, or a specific improvement.