



Yovani Baez-Rose
Assistant City Manager/DPD Director

Camilo Espitia
Deputy Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Thomas A. Golden, Jr., City Manager 

FROM: Yovani Baez-Rose, Assistant City Manager/DPD Director

CC: Jessica Wilson, Design Planner

SUBJECT: Motion of 9/13/22 – Councilor Robinson – Request City Manager Have Proper Department Look Into Feasibility Of Installing A Fence Along Backside Of The Reservoir.

Motion of 10/25/2022 – Councilor Robinson – Request City Manager Have Proper Department Provide A Report To Repurpose And Upgrade Centralville Reservoir While Preserving It As A Passive Park

The Water Department priced out the cost of installing a fence along the backside of the Reservoir and due to the cost and history with fencing at the site it was determined installation of a permanent fence was not a good option. Years ago there was a fence in that location that the city paid to remove because there were issues with dogs being left in the area unleashed and unattended. DPW did install a temporary fence along the backside of the Reservoir this year, to alleviate the number of leaves blowing into abutting properties from the Reservoir.

Years ago, DPD, the Parks Department, and the Water Department investigated the possibility of filling in the Reservoir and utilizing that space as recreational open space. Costs estimated back in 2016 were estimated to be roughly \$3 million to fill the Reservoir to an approximate elevation of 184' (top of the dam). Given cost escalation since that time DPD estimates costs to fill in the Reservoir to that same level will be closer to \$5 million.

Attached to this motion response is a case study completed by DPD. DPD welcomes an opportunity to talk with residents in the community about their interest in the Reservoir space and what types of amenities would be most beneficial to the community. The case study includes examples of passive uses that could be accommodated at this location, and some more active uses along the outer edge of the space. The Reservoir represents a great opportunity for the city to expand our network of usable green space.

YBR

Activating McDermott Reservoir

A Department of Planning and
Development Proposal

January 2023



LOWELL
FORWARD



Introduction

Park McDermott Reservoir

Activating McDermott Reservoir to Improve Community Health

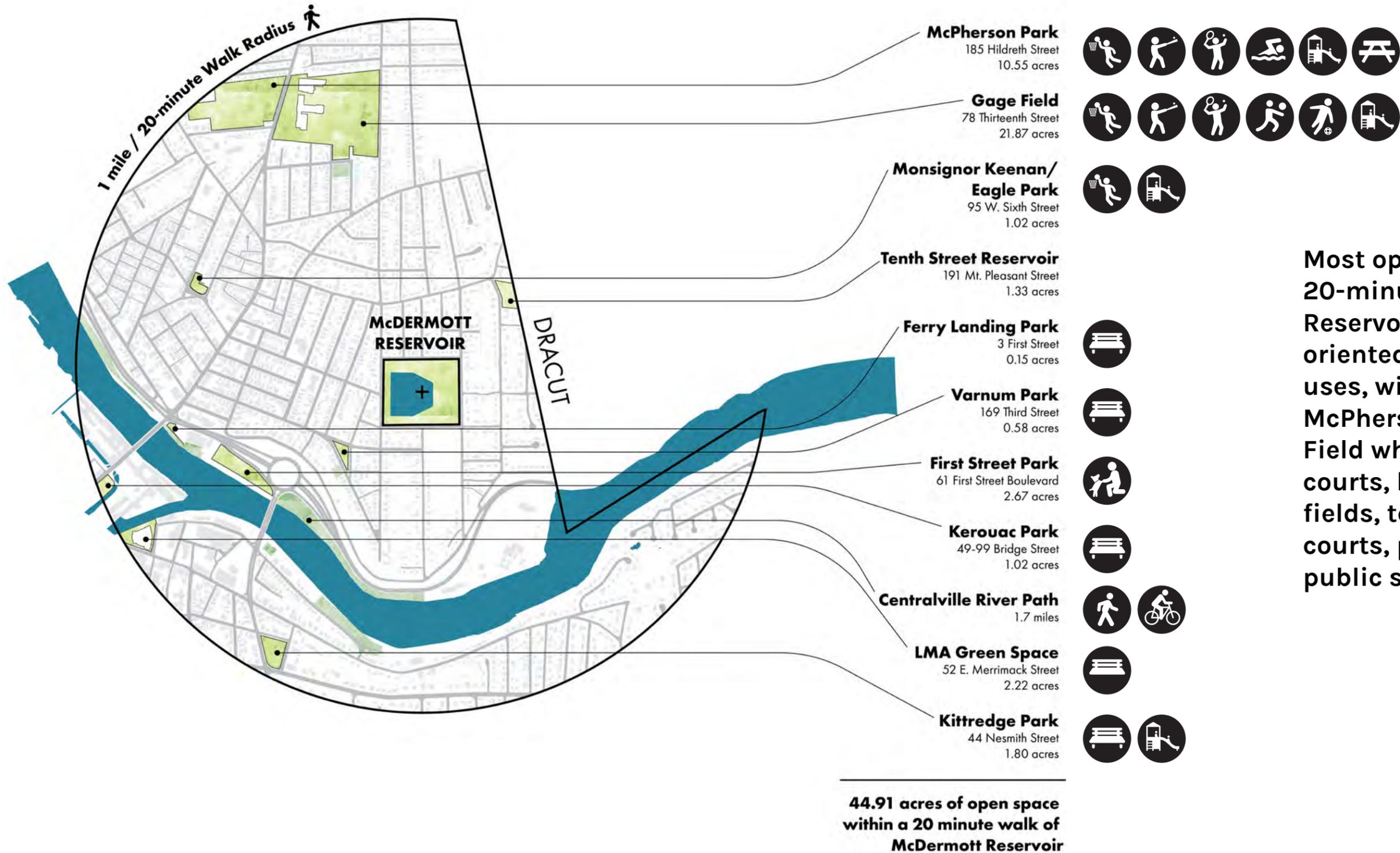
McDermott Reservoir is a 15 acre passive green space in the Centralville neighborhood. Approximately 5 acres of the site is occupied by a reservoir which is no longer in use. The reservoir is nearing the end of its structural life span and presents a significant risk to the surrounding neighborhood. The need to fill in the reservoir offers a unique opportunity for the City of Lowell to improve and expand both active and passive open space

resources to meet the diverse recreational needs of the entire community, regardless of age or ability. This proposal provides conceptual options for the short-term (pre-fill) and long-term (post-fill) transformation of the reservoir and contains a number of conceptual studies illustrating some of the possibilities for laying out both recreational and passive open space amenities.

The McDermott Reservoir design concepts respond to physical and mental health needs highlighted by the COVID-19 Pandemic by providing a broad range of amenities including exercise equipment, a universal playground, accessible multi-use trails, a healing garden, a pandemic memorial/public art installation, and a climbing wall to an observation deck offering views of the whole City.

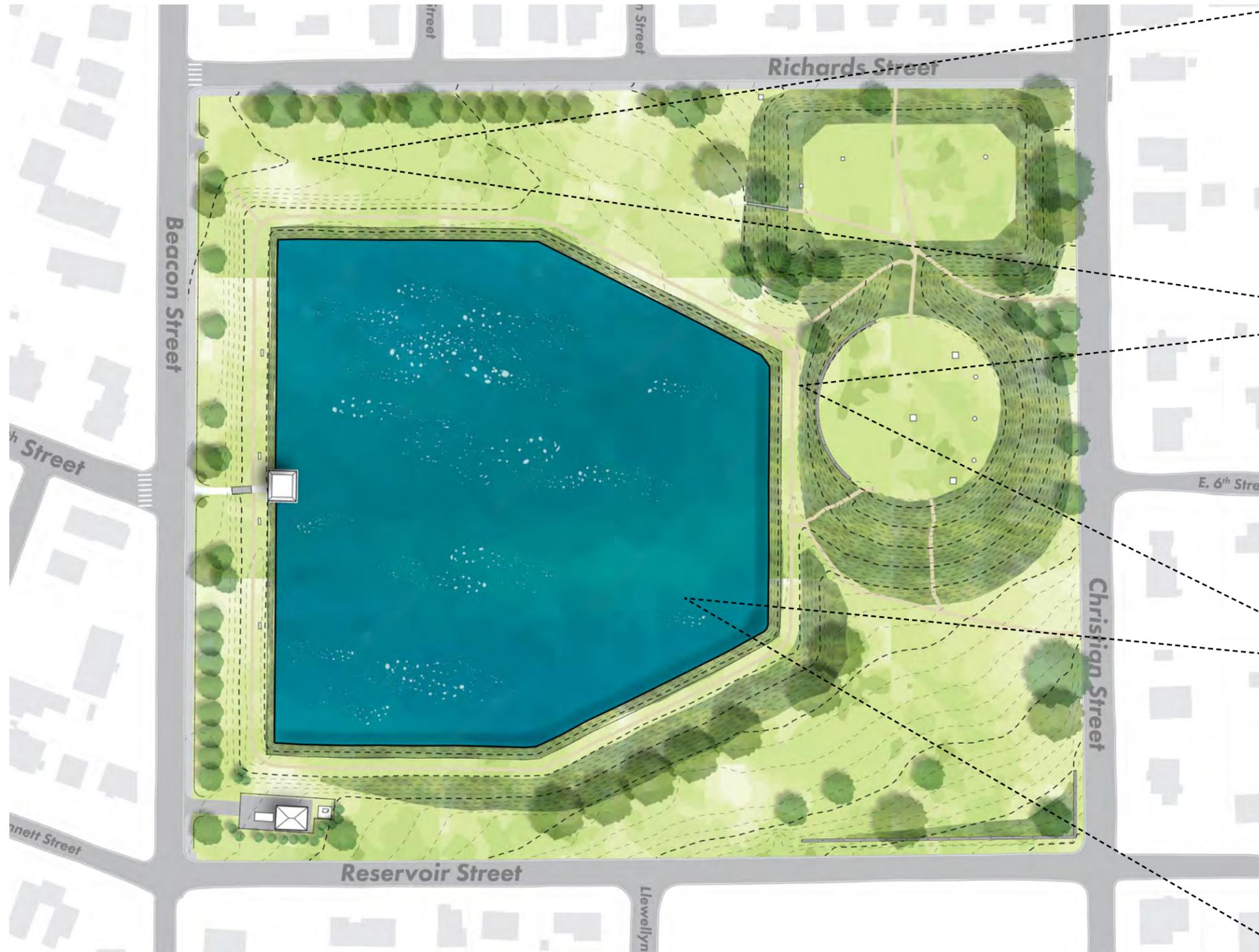


Open Space Context



Most open spaces within a 20-minute walk of McDermott Reservoir are small and oriented toward passive uses, with the exception of McPherson Park and Gage Field which feature basketball courts, baseball fields, soccer fields, tennis courts, volleyball courts, playgrounds, and a public swimming pool.

Existing Conditions



Short-Term Improvements



Long-Term Improvements



- ① Fitness Trail
- ② Small Amphitheater
- ③ Terraced Seating
- ④ Fitness Court
- ⑤ Picnic Pavilion
- ⑥ Climbing Wall
- ⑦ Observation Deck
- ⑧ Playground
- ⑨ Healing Garden
- ⑩ Passive Open Space / Urban Ecology (Filled Reservoir)

Passive Open Space/Urban Ecology Options



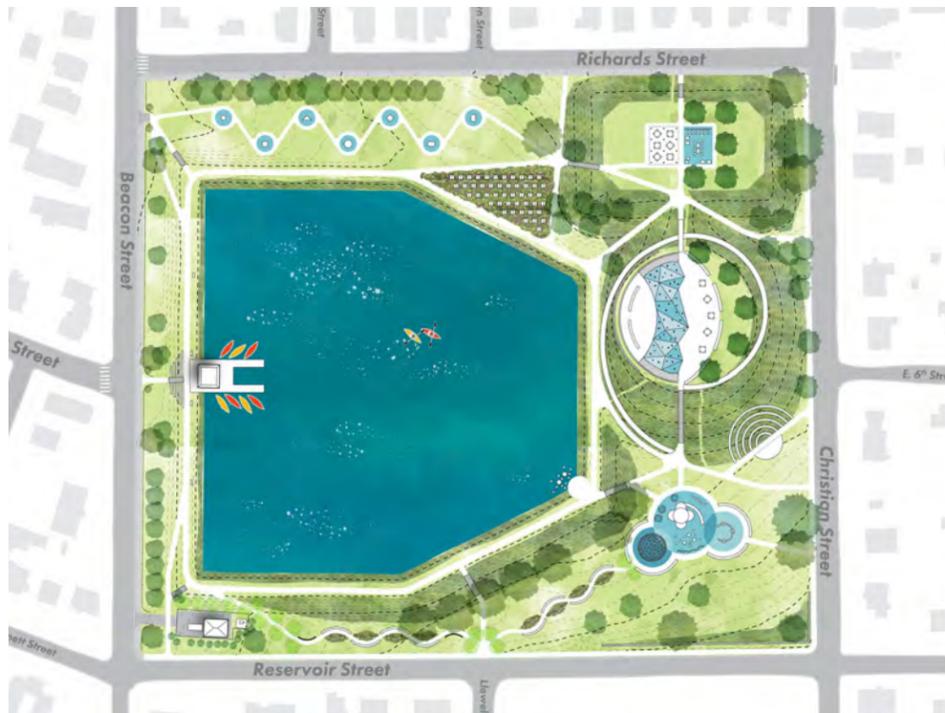
A) SHALLOW POND WITH "SOFT EDGE"



B) WILDFLOWER MEADOW WITH BOARDWALK



C) URBAN FOREST PATCH WITH WOODED TRAIL



Precedent Images



Solar-Powered Picnic Pavilion



Fitness Court



Inclusive Playground



Climbing Wall/Observation Deck



Healing Garden



Passive Open Space / Urban Ecology

Case Study

Francisco Street Reservoir Improvement Project

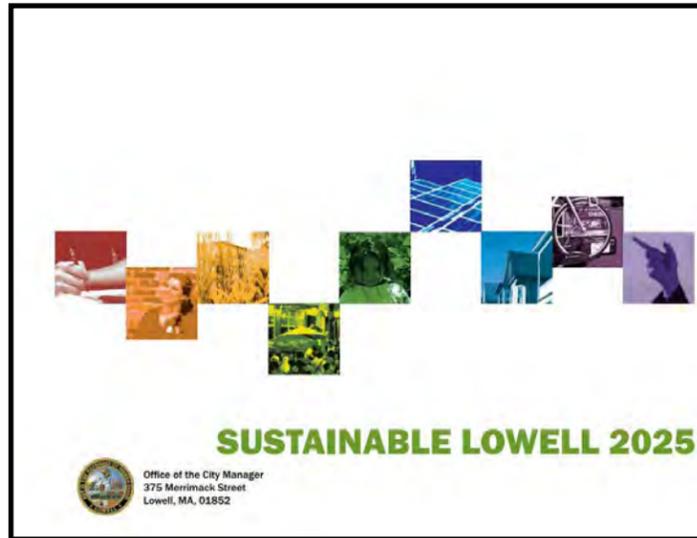
San Francisco, CA

“In 2014, the [San Francisco] Recreation and Park Department acquired an underutilized reservoir site. The Francisco Park project has transform this abandoned reservoir site into a new public park, providing access to some of San Francisco’s most famous views of the bay alongside open spaces lined with native plants and trees... The 4.5 acre...site, located in the Russian Hill neighborhood added a unique ADA-accessible pathway starting at Bay Street winds its way up the park to a central lawn area, children’s playground, picnic area, restroom, and other amenities. The project also includes a fenced dog play area.”

<https://sfrecpark.org/1137/Francisco-Street-Reservoir-Improvement-P>



Alignment with City Goals



+ Sustainable Neighborhoods

- + Objective #3: Prioritize land-use policies that promote walkable, well-networked neighborhoods.
- + Objective #7: Ensure the integration of nature, green space, and high quality recreational resources into the urban landscape.

+ Mobility + Access

- + Objective #1: Promote bike and pedestrian mobility.

+ Vibrant and Unique Urban Hub

- + Objective #1: Promote Lowell as a welcoming, safe, and attractive urban hub that serves the needs of residents, business, visitors, and other stakeholders.

+ Healthy + Sustainable Local Economy

- + Objective #16: Repurpose vacant or under-utilized spaces for new, creative uses to eliminate blight that may discourage investment in surrounding properties.

+ Environmental Resilience

- + Objective #1: The City of Lowell will set an example by prioritizing environmentally sustainable policies and practices.
- + Objective #6: Promote urban forestry as a method for improving public health as well as the physical and built



+ Goal #4: Prioritize improved maintenance, security, and preservation of parks and open spaces across the City and enhance these spaces with the new amenities requested by residents.

- + Action #12: Increase vegetation and natural landscapes in more densely populated neighborhoods that have limited park spaces.
- + Action #18: Install more picnic tables at select park locations to provide more picnic locations at parks across the City.
- + Action #20: Provide better restroom facilities at parks.

+ Goal #6: Increase recreational opportunities and modify existing parks and open spaces so that all residents regardless of age, ability, and neighborhood of residence can enjoy them.

- + Action #4: Install equipment geared toward older children, teens, and adults such as obstacle courses and climbing walls.

Timeline + Budget: Long-Term (5-10 years)

Proposed Scope of Work	Estimated Cost
Design + Engineering (20% of construction budget)	\$1,098,000.00
Fill In Reservoir*	\$3,600,000.00
Fitness Court	\$50,000.00
Picnic Pavilion	\$300,000.00
Climbing Wall + Observation Deck	\$400,000.00
Playground	\$500,000.00
Healing Garden	\$40,000.00
Public Art Installation/Pandemic Memorial	\$100,000.00
Urban Ecology Project (Shallow Pond, Wildflower Meadow, or Urban Forest)	\$500,000
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION BUDGET	\$5,490,000.00
Contingency (20% of construction budget)	\$1,098,000.00
TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET	\$7,686,000.00

The proposed long-term improvements are eligible for the same funding sources as the proposed short-term improvements, and may also be eligible for a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Grant. The scope of this project will likely require multiple funding sources and phased implementation.

*The estimated cost for filling in the reservoir is based on a 2017 estimate prepared by Woodard & Curran, adjusted for inflation.



