



Staff Report

DATE: SEPTEMBER 9, 2024

TO: PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION

FROM: PUBLIC WORKS

ARTS AND RECREATION

SUBJECT: NEW AQUATIC AND COMMUNITY CENTER AT HEATHER FARM PARK:

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT PRESENTATION PACKAGE

STATEMENT OF ISSUE

The replacement of the existing swim center and community center at Heather Farm Park with a new combined facility is one of the City Council's priorities. Staff is seeking feedback from the Commission on the updated Design Development Presentation Package before staff takes this information to the City Council. This meeting will focus on the recommended options of exterior building materials, landscape plan and planting palette, recreational pool play structure, and updated site plan for the new facility.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Provide feedback on the Design Development Package presented for the combined aquatic and community center at Heather Farm Park, with a particular focus on the following items:

- Updated Project Site Plan
- Exterior Building Materials Palette
- Landscape Planting Palette and Plan
- Recreation Pool Play Structure

BACKGROUND

Project Initiation

The Heather Farm Aquatic and Community Center project was initiated in June 2023 after the conclusion of the first phases of the Your Parks, Your Future (YPYF) project in February 2023 and following passage of Measure O, a ten-year, ½ cent sales tax, that provides funding for several community programs and improvements, including this project.

Project Assumptions and Principles

A set of project assumptions and principles were developed to guide the design of the future facility and accepted by Council on September 19, 2023, and are shown in Attachment A. These were

prepared based on input from Council at the July 18, 2023, meeting and the principles established during the development of the Conceptual Site Plan approved by Council in February 2023.

Overall Project Timeline

Below is a summary of the estimated timeline for the design and construction of the Heather Farm Park facility:

- 1. **Design Process, Community Engagement & CEQA Documentation: September 2023 – April 2025.** This phase of the work includes the creation of detailed design documents, such as landscape plans, floor plans, pool plans, building elevations and materials selection, as well as the required environmental documents.
- 2. *Construction: May 2025 –2027.* The existing Community Center will be demolished for the new combined facility at that site, while Clarke Swim Center is projected to remain open to the public until the approximately two-year construction concludes.

Schematic Design Presentation Package

On February 7, 2023, City Council gave direction to proceed with the design and construction of the combined Aquatics and Community Center facility at the existing community center site in Heather Farm Park. The design phase of the project began in September 2023 and is expected to be completed in Spring 2025. The first step in the design phase was the preparation of the schematic design presentation package, which consisted of two building floor plan schemes, a site plan, and perspective illustrations. The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Commission met on January 9th and February 5th and provided comments on the designs to the project team. This feedback was shared with the City Council beginning in February 2024:

- Storage: A comment was made regarding the amount of storage space in relation to facility size.
- Shading Structures: It was suggested that more permanent shade features be implemented to help reduce the impacts of sun exposure.
- Windows: A comment was made regarding whether the windows of the community center would have UV protection/shades to allow for non-disruptive sun exposure and minimize reflections from the lake.
- Flagpole and Bike Racks: It was suggested to designate a location for a flagpole, along with nearby spots for bike racks.
- Low Permanent Fencing: It was recommended to install an aesthetically pleasing, low permanent fence around the pond to help control and mitigate issues caused by the geese.
- Recreational Pool: Comments were made about modifying the recreational pool to have deeper water.
- Water Depth: A comment was made regarding deep water in both pools being a need for the Aquanuts artistic swim team and an integral part of introducing a variety of different aquatic recreation activities to the community.
- Location of Aquatic Changing Rooms: It was suggested that the aquatic changing rooms be relocated to a more accessible and visible location for easier access and convenience to patrons entering the facility.

• Balance of Community Pool Needs: Suggestion to partner with the Walnut Creek Aquatic Foundation to refine plans for the schematic design of the pools.

The above Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Commission feedback and comments were taken into consideration at the design development phase:

- Additional storage areas have been incorporated into both the community center and aquatics areas of the current design.
- Additional shading structures have been incorporated into the current facility design.
- Windows all have operable shades, and additionally, large, and/or high window expanses have permanent wood louvers to reduce glare, particularly those facing the pond.
- Locations for a flagpole and bike racks have been incorporated into the design.
- Fencing around the pond has been incorporated into the design.
- The recreational pool has been expanded and deepened to accommodate swim team needs and the optional bulkhead was removed from the 50M pool to provide funds for this change.
- The aquatics changing rooms were relocated to near the facility entrance.
- Staff partnered with the Walnut Creek Aquatic Foundation to finalize the schematic design for the pools and deck area.

During three City Council meetings beginning in February and concluding in April 2024, Council provided direction on the following elements of the schematic design package: site plan, the preferred building scheme, the architectural style of the building, the layout and specifications of the two pools, and the outdoor event and gathering spaces. More specifically, Council directed staff to pursue the following:

- Design building Site Plan Scheme A, with roof enhancements to be more artistic, expressive, and symmetrical.
- Implement the schematic design package, as presented on April 16, 2024, and supported by the Walnut Creek Foundation, for the new aquatic facility at Heather Farm Park.
- Build the community center to LEED Silver equivalent (as opposed to getting LEED USGBC certification) with support for future battery storage add-on features.
- Upgrade the new building to an operational Emergency Operations Center (EOC) capability.
- Transition the project into design development phase.

DISCUSSION

Stakeholder Feedback on Preliminary Design Development Concepts

Following City Council direction, staff and the project team immediately went to work on implementing preliminary design development concepts. The project team met with the following key stakeholders in July 2024 to share and receive feedback on the updated site plans for the community center and aquatic facility, proposed building materials and proposed landscape plan and planting palette. The following is a summary of the stakeholder input on the preliminary design development concepts:

Environmental Focus Group:

- The Gardens at Heather Farm Park
- Mt. Diablo Audubon Society / Bird Alliance
- Open Space Foundation
- Friends of the Creek

The environmental focus group expressed interest in design elements such as the planting palette and considerations for how the design will impact the natural environment and wildlife. The group raised concerns regarding the need for incorporating solar panels and bird-safe glass at the facility. Additionally, they highlighted issues related to the tree selection within the landscape palette, provided a list of preferred landscaping materials and inquired about strategies to mitigate potential noise from the pool deck. They provided a list of suggested landscaping materials.

The impact of this project on urban forestry involves both the removal of existing trees and the planting of new ones. Specifically, the construction of the new aquatic and community center, along with necessary mitigation efforts, will result in the necessary removal of approximately 120 trees. To offset this, the project is estimated to plant approximately 60 new trees as part of the landscaping improvements around the new facilities. Additionally, the City will be enhancing Heather Farm Park with 140 more native trees, including Valley Oaks, Live Oaks, Buckeyes, and Willows, for a total net <u>increase</u> of 80 trees. The City will prioritize sourcing these native plants from local nurseries, and this tree plan has been shared with the Walnut Creek Open Space Foundation.

Aquatics Focus Group:

- Walnut Creek Aquatic Foundation
- Walnut Creek Aquanuts, Masters, Aquabears, and Swim Club

The aquatics focus group expressed interest in shade placement, seating arrangements, and amenities like power supply and Wi-Fi availability on the pool deck. The group was pleased with the overall design and provided feedback on how the new facility can best accommodate existing community events like Aquanuts shows and the All-City swim meet.

Design Review Commission Feedback on Preliminary Design Development Concepts

The Design Review Commission met on September 4 and provided comments on the designs to the project team. This feedback will be shared with the City Council in October:

- Clarity of Architectural Intent: It was recommended that exterior materials be applied rigorously in order to clarify and reinforce the design intent that underpins the articulation of the program volumes.
- Material Costs: Support was expressed for scaling back on expensive materials to offer a chance to allocate resources more effectively, such as opting for metal panels instead of shingle roofing.

- Preference Towards Exterior Materials Palette A: The Commission expressed a preference for Palette A, noting that the lighter materials in Palette B are likely to cause uncomfortable glare by reflecting too much light, and be more susceptible to showing wear and tear over time.
- Planting Palette: It was recommended that the project team explore the inclusion of more native plant/tree options in the planting palette, with a particular focus on incorporating native trees were possible.
- Expressivity Within Materials: A suggestion was made to use more distinctive and expressive materials already found with the materials palette in areas that are frequently visited and interacted with.
- LEED Rating: Committing to a LEED equivalency was emphasized to ensure that our design adheres to rigorous sustainability and energy efficiency standards.
- Site Plan: Received feedback that the recent improvements to the aquatics area are excellent, with a strong connection between the building, entry, gathering spaces, pond, and playground, and an appreciation for the path around the pond and the public overlooks.

<u>Design Development Presentation Package</u>

The Design Development Presentation Package now incorporates stakeholder feedback and consists of the following materials:

- Updated Site Plan
- Updated Park, Building and Planting Plan
- Exterior Building Materials Palette
- Plant Palette
- Updated Pool Plans and Recreational Pool Play Structure

These are each described in detail below.

Updated Project Site Plan (Attachment B.1)

Since the plan was last presented to the DRC, PROS and City Council earlier this year, the following key changes and developments were made to the *Site and Building Design during the Design Development Phase*:

- Updated vehicular circulation and parking design
- Building plan and massing optimizations to blend Schematic Design Options A & B, weighted toward Scheme A
- Public seating areas at entries, drop off and pond edge
- Maximized pool deck with plentiful shade, seating, outdoor showers and storage areas

Updated Park Plan, Building Plan and Planting Plans (Attachments B.2-B.5)

- Aquatics Wing plan and massing modifications to allow changing rooms to sit closer to the main aquatics entry
- Development of building systems and finishes, including trellises, shade louvers, deep overhangs, wall assemblies and exposed structural systems at the atrium and lakeside room

- Planting plan with delineation of plant type zones
- Tree Plan

Exterior Building Materials Palette (Attachment C.1)

- Natural exterior cladding materials including:
 - o Wood cladding, trellises, benches, and exposed wood structure
 - o Large format, stone-inspired porcelain tile cladding
 - o Plaster Cement wall finish
 - Metal and/or asphalt shingle roofing
 - o Metal window mullions and exposed metal structure
 - o Ground-face, large aggregate concrete masonry blocks
 - o Corten weathering steel accents (window surrounds, landscape features)

Plant Palette (Attachment C.2)

- Four planting zones, including:
 - o Entry area, with a mix of native and accent plants
 - o Event garden area, with showier, all-white blooming plants for backdrop
 - o Riparian area, with native riparian-appropriate plants
 - o Pool deck area, with hearty plants that can withstand exposure

Pool Design Update and Recreational Pool Play Structure (Attachments B.6, C.3)

- The pool design has been updated to include a larger, deeper 25m pool area incorporated into the recreational pool. This will allow for additional practice area for the artistic swimming and competitive swim teams. It will also allow for the continuance of an annual 25m Master's swim meet.
- The aquatics designer prepared a rendering of the proposed aquatics play structure, which is expected to be a popular and valuable amenity for the community within the recreation pool. The attached image is a representative sample that is meant to allow for individual features to be selected or swapped with other amenities. Features that have been prioritized by staff and the design team include:
 - o Interactive spray and bubbler features for smaller children
 - Dump bucket
 - Non-enclosed slides
 - Nature and farm themes

Perspective Views (Attachments D1-D8):

The key features depicted in the perspective views include:

- Aerial view looking east (D1.A-B)
- Aerial view looking west (D2.A-B)
- Entry Sequence two material color options (D3.A-B)
- Aquatics Wing two material color options (D4.A-B)
- Pond Side with Terraces two material color options (D5.A-B)
- Lakeside Room with views to the pond (D6)
- Atrium space with informal seating and views through the entry (D7)
- Aquatics Classroom (D8)

NEXT STEPS

1. Synthesize feedback and present to City Council for final direction on October 15th.

DOCUMENTS ATTACHED

- A. Project Assumptions and Principles
- B. Design Development Presentation Plans
 - B.1 Project Site Plan
 - B.2 Park Plan
 - B.3 Building Plan
 - B.4 Planting Plan
 - B.5 Tree Plan
 - B.6 Updated Pool Plans
- C. Design Development Presentation Palettes
 - C.1 Exterior Building Materials Palette
 - C.2 Plant Palette
 - C.3 Recreational Pool Play Structure Schematic
- D. Design Development Presentation Renderings
 - D1.A-B Aerial East
 - D2.A-B Aerial West
 - D3.A-B Entry Sequence
 - D4.A-B Aquatics Wing
 - D5.A-B Pond Side Terraces
 - D6 Lakeside Room
 - D7 Atrium
 - D8 Aquatics Classroom

COMMISSION ACTION NEEDED

Provide feedback on the Design Development Package presented for the combined swim center and community center facility at Heather Farm Park, with a particular focus on the following items:

- Updated Project Site Plan
- Exterior Building Materials Palette
- Landscape Planting Palette and Plan
- Recreational Pool Play Structure

STAFF CONTACT

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Heather Farm Aquatic and Community Center

Project Assumptions and Principles

Approved by Walnut Creek City Council on September 19,2023

1. Process:

- a) Input on the facility design will be balanced, taking feedback from the stakeholders, communityat-large, commissions and City Council
- b) City Council will provide final decision-making authority over the design of the facility
- c) The <u>Conceptual Site Plan</u> located at the existing community center site, and associated building program accepted by Council in February 2023 will serve as the foundation for the new facility design
- d) Recommendations will be realistic, implementable and budget conscious (considering both capital and operational budget)
- e) The facility is anticipated to open in summer 2027, the existing community center is scheduled to close by December 2024 and Clarke Swim Center is intended to remain open until the new facility is open
- f) There may be impacts to existing community events during construction of the new facility

2. Building:

- a) The new combined aquatic/community center is assumed to be an all-electric facility (to be confirmed after the sustainability workshop/charette)
- b) The building is assumed to be 1-story; between 25,000-27,000 sf including the pool mechanical equipment space.
- c) Existing interior community center and aquatics activities and supporting functions can be accommodated in the new facility

3. Pools and Pool Deck:

- a) The new facility will include two pools: a 50m lap pool and a recreational pool
- b) Existing aquatic events will continue to be supported in the new pools, on the pool deck, and beyond the fencing and into the adjacent park area.
- c) Existing aquatic activities can be accommodated in the new facility

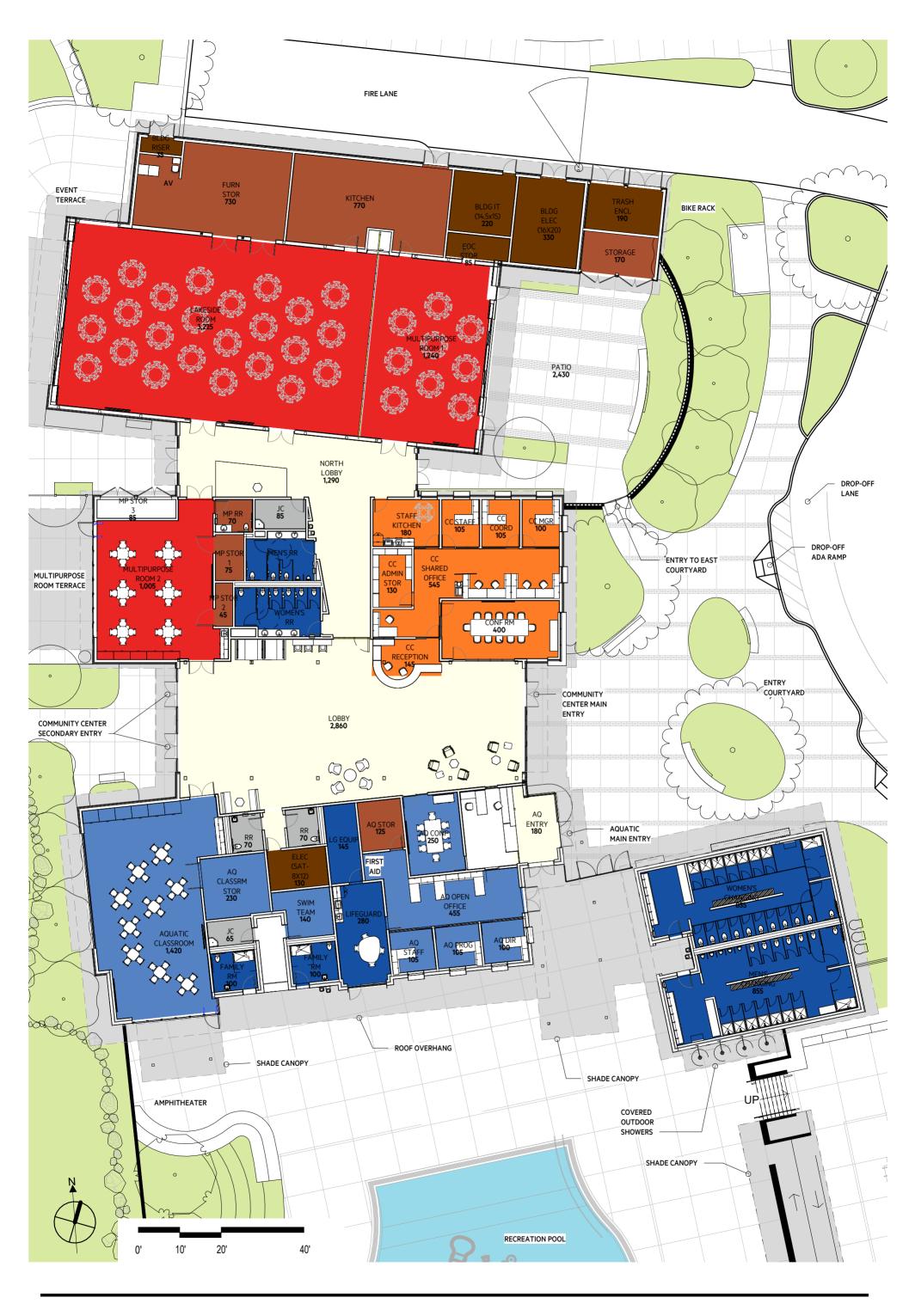
4. Adjacent Pond and All Abilities Playground

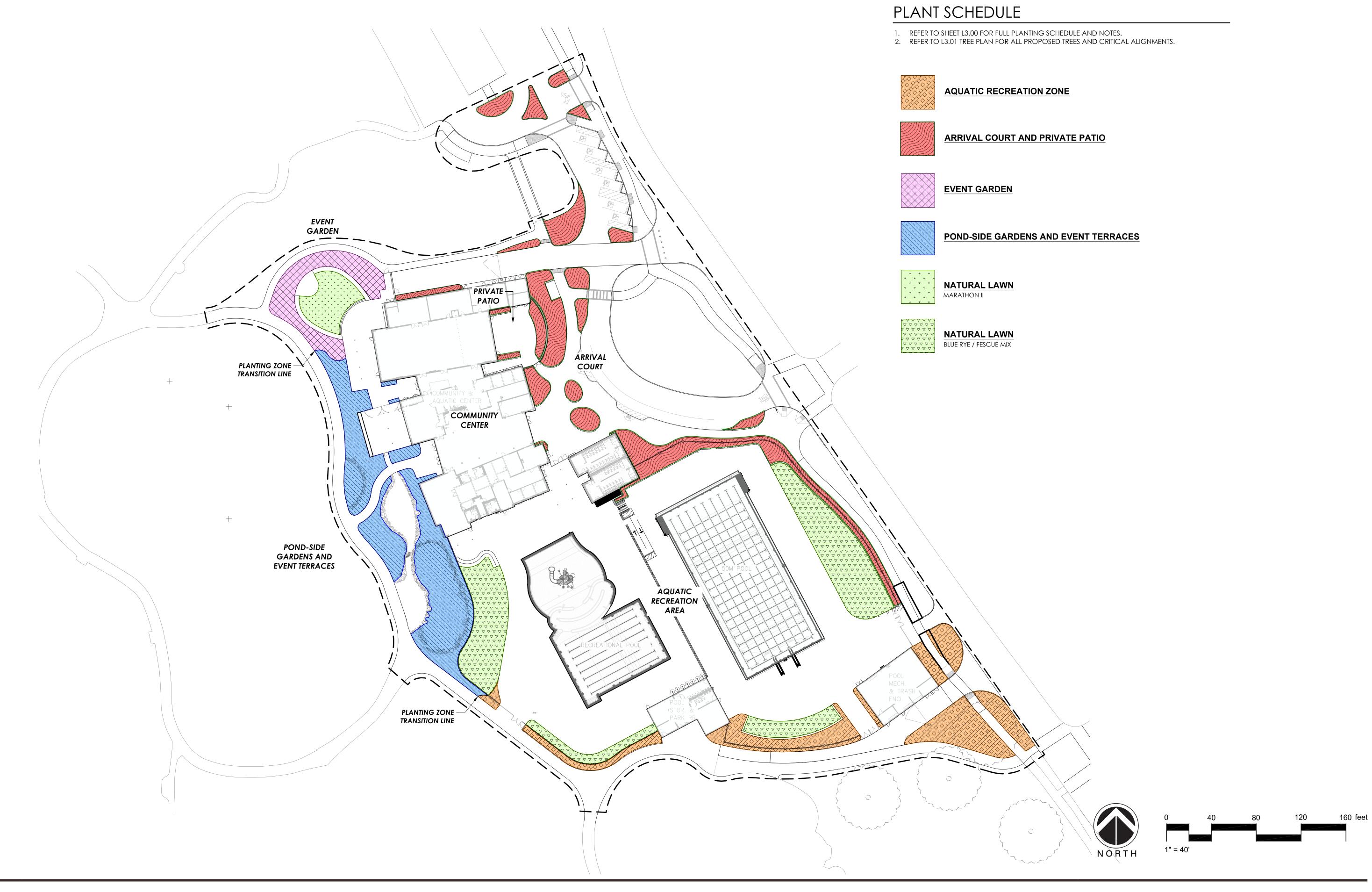
- a) A portion of the pond will be repurposed for the design of the new facility
- b) The all abilities playground will remain in place









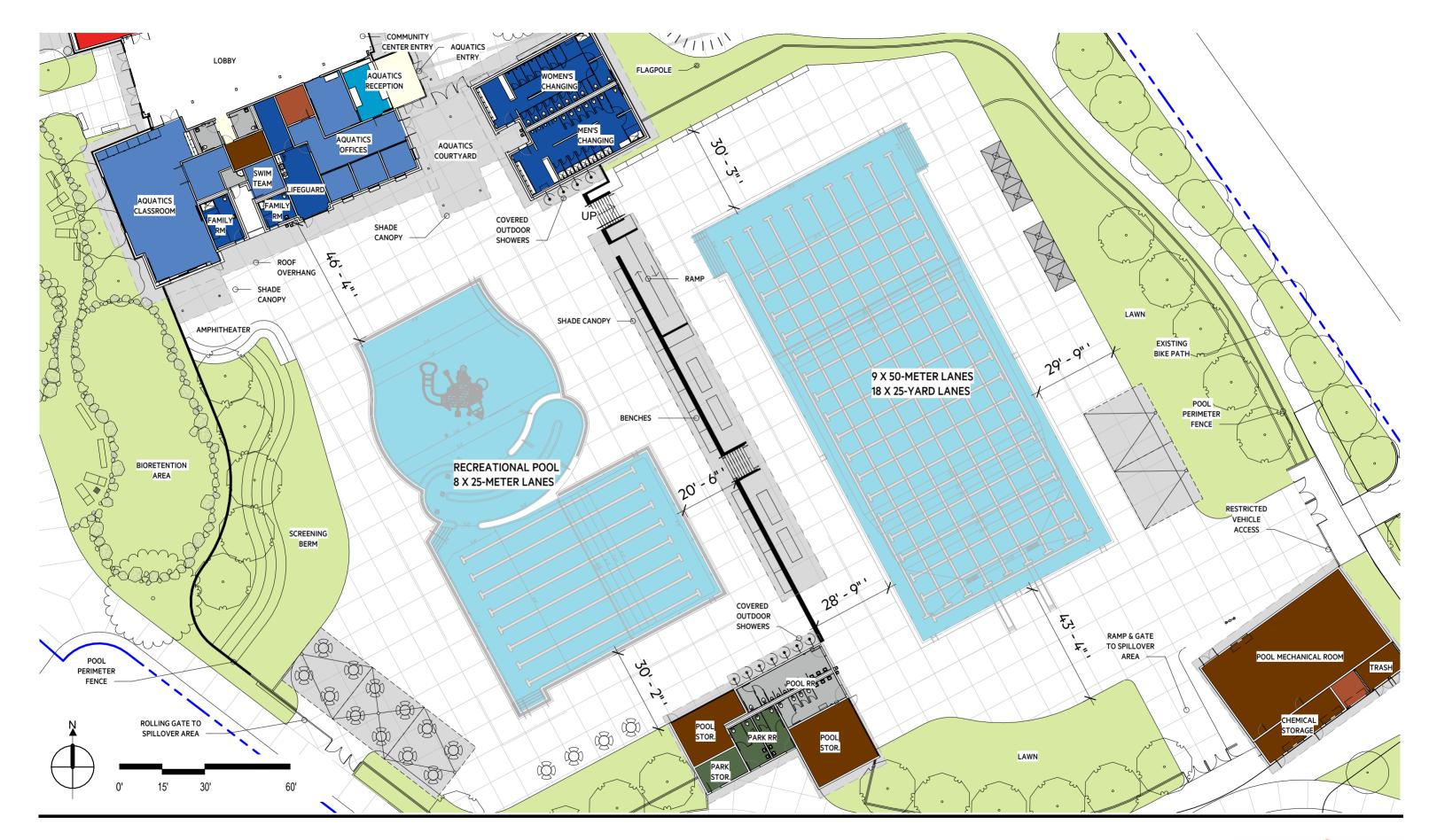














EXTERIOR MATERIAL PALETTE - A

OPTION 1: METAL

LOW SLOPE AND

OPTION 2: METAL

CORTEN STEEL

WINDOW SURROUND

METAL WINDOWS,

TRELLIS COLUMNS

ACCENT TILE:

LARGE FORMAT

PORCELAIN TILE

GROUND FACE

CONCRETE BLOCK (CMU)

LOW SLOPE, ASPHALT

SHINGLE GABLED ROOF

GABLED ROOF

EXTERIOR MATERIAL PALETTE - B

OPTION 1: METAL LOW SLOPE AND **GABLED ROOF** OPTION 2: METAL LOW SLOPE, ASPHALT SHINGLE GABLED ROOF CORTEN STEEL **WINDOW SURROUND** METAL WINDOWS, TRELLIS COLUMNS ACCENT TILE: LARGE FORMAT PORCELAIN TILE WOOD SIDING, TRELLIS, STRUCTURE **GROUND FACE** CONCRETE BLOCK (CMU) WOOD LOUVERS LARGE FORMAT PORCELAIN TILE

SITE



WOOD COURTYARD SCREEN



GROUND FACE CMU SITE WALL



METAL FENCE



WOOD BENCHES

LARGE FORMAT

PORCELAIN TILE

IN AQUATIC WING

OPTIONAL MATERIAL IN

COMMUNITY CENTER WING

CEMENT PLASTER

CEMENT PLASTER

IN AQUATIC WING

OPTIONAL MATERIAL IN

COMMUNITY CENTER WING

WOOD

SIDING,

TRELLIS,

STRUCTURE

WOOD

LOUVERS

PRIMARY PLANTING ZONES 1 AND 2: ARRIVAL COURT AND PRIVATE PATIO

Transitional zone between riparian and upland communities. Characterized by drier soil conditions, larger trees, and presence of longer-lived shrubs.

PROPOSED TREES



Coast Live Oak



Quercus agrifolia



Princeton Sentry Ginkgo Tree Ginkgo biloba 'Princeton Sentry'



Ace of Hearts Redbud Cercis canadensis 'Ace Of Hearts'

SHRUBS GRASSES AND GROUNDCOVERS



Moonshine Yarrow Achillea 'Moonshine'

Pine Muhly

Muhlenbergia dubia

Bouteloua gracilis



Carex divulsa

Lindheimer's Muhly

Muhlenbergia lindheimeri

Artemisia 'Powis Castle'



Pacific Wax Myrtle

Compact Coffeeberry

Rhamnus californica

'Eve Case'

Myrica californica

Pigeon Point Coyote Bush Baccharis pilularis

Little Ollie Dwarf Olive

Rosmarinus officinalis

'Huntington Carpet

Olea europaea 'Little Ollie'



Howard McMinn Manzanita Moonlight Grevillea Arctostaphylos densiflora



Grevillea 'Moonlight'



Canyon Prince Wild Rye Leymus condensatus



Yellow Monkey Flower

White Sage

Salvia apiana

Grey Musk Sage



Salvia clevelandii 'Pozo Blue' Mimulus 'Eleanor'



Huntington Carpet Rosemary Terra Seca Black Sage Autumn Joy Sedum Salvia mellifera 'Terra Seca' Sedum 'Autumn Joy'

PRIMARY PLANTING ZONE 3: EVENT GARDEN

Transitional zone between riparian and upland communities. Characterized by drier soil conditions, larger trees, and presence of longer-lived shrubs.

Polystichum munitum

PROPOSED TREES



Lagerstroemia indica 'Natchez'



Marina Strawberry Tree Arbutus 'Marina'

SHRUBS GRASSES AND GROUNDCOVERS

Blonde Ambition Blue Grama Western Sword Fern



Profusion Santa Barbara Daisy Creeping Fig

Blue Oat Grass

Helictotrichon sempervirens















Island Alum Root









Immortality Bearded Iris



Artemisia 'Powis Castle'



Little Ollie Dwarf Olive Olea europaea 'Little Ollie'

PLANTING CONCEPT

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 1. Bring the character of Heather Farms into the aquatic center and tie into the feeling of the adjacent plant communities.
- 2. Focus on three main plant community types that are adjacent to the site: Riparian, Mixed Riparian/ Upland, and Functional/Urban.
- 3. Play up adjacencies, interfaces, and riparian systems for form-giving.
- 4. Emphasize native plants when possible.
- 5. Minimize maintenance where possible and consider the mature size of plants at installation.

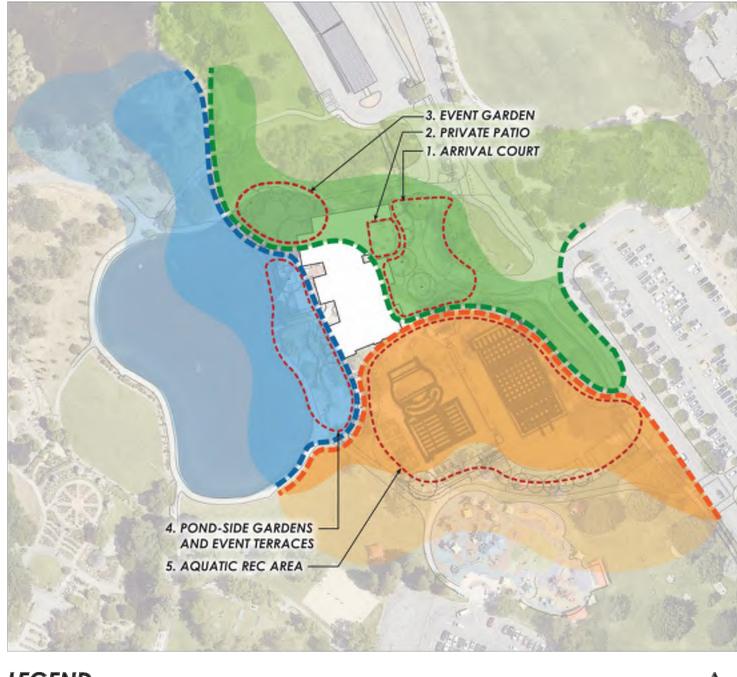
PLANT COMMUNITIES, REFER TO PLANTING CONCEPT DIAGRAM BELOW

- 1. Riparian Transitional zone between freshwater aquatic environment and terrestrial (upland) environment. Has access to pond and water table.
- 2. Mixed Riparian/Upland Transitional zone between riparian and upland communities. Characterized by drier soil conditions, larger trees, and presence of longer-lived shrubs.
- 3. Functional / Urban Lawn and heavy-duty planting for spaces adjacent to recreational areas. Utilitarian planting with a functional purpose, e.g. lawn, hedges, barrier planting.

PRIMARY PLANTING ZONES

- 1. Arrival court Upland tree canopy, show interface of waters edge. Grassy plantings at edges with large perennial shrubs behind. Boulders and rock mulch to signify history of water. Focus on sequence of spaces as you move through canopy. Compression and expansion of space and arrival sequence for pedestrians and vehicles.
- 2. Private patio high-intensity area, more curated version of arrival court with emphasis on pedestrian scale and "wow" moment when entering from key points.
- 3. Event Garden White-flowering, no bright colors. Build up edges with thick vegetation for separation. Focal point signature tree. Borrow from adjacent heavily wooded area. Mixed texture and color of vegetation, dark green to grey-green. Formal, symmetrical structure with some organic treatment at
- 4. Pond-side gardens and event terraces Pond-side gardens to be most "water-adjacent" planting. Bioswale planting, grasses, reeds, poplar tree or similar. Should feel like a ponds-edge. If we can incorporate habitat value even better. Feel like it's been there for years. Event terraces will be a more curated version that blends the space between pond gardens and event gardens. More rectilinear application of planting but starting to use wilder plants and more grasses to feather into edge.
- 5. Aquatic area Lawn, low-litter trees, and highly durable plant material. Play up edges if possible with trees and shrubs to create a feeling of enclosure, a green hug around the large deck. Borrow some key materials from playground area to the south if possible to strengthen that connection.

PLANTING CONCEPT DIAGRAM



LEGEND





PRIMARY PLANTING ZONE 4: POND-SIDE GARDENS AND EVENT TERRACES

Transitional zone between freshwater aquatic environment and terrestrial (upland) environment. Has access to pond and water table.

PROPOSED TREES



Princeton Sentry Ginkgo Tree



Coast Live Oak Quercus agrifolia



Moonshine Yarrow

Achillea 'Moonshine'

El Campo Cape Rush



Elk Blue California Gray Rush Powis Castle Artemisia Juncus patens 'Elk Blue'

Lindheimer's Muhly



Artemisia 'Powis Castle'



Pigeon Point Coyote Bush Dwarf Pink Coral Rockrose Baccharis pilularis Cistus x skanbergii



Grassland Sedge Carex divulsa





Black Elderberry Sambucus nigra ssp.

PRIMARY PLANTING ZONE 5: AQUATIC REC AREA

Lawn and heavy-duty planting for spaces adjacent to recreational areas. Utilitarian planting with a functional purpose

PROPOSED TREES



SHRUBS GRASSES AND GROUNDCOVERS

Chondropetalum tectorum Muhlenbergia lindheimeri 'El Campo'



El Campo Cape Rush Little Ollie Dwarf Olive Chondropetalum tectorum Olea europaea 'Little Ollie'

Pigeon Point Coyote Bush Baccharis pilularis



Grassland Sedge Carex divulsa



Blue Oat Grass

Helictotrichon sempervirens

Myrica californica



Compact Coffeeberry

Rhamnus californica

'Eve Case'

Dianella caerulea 'Cassa



Canyon Prince Wild Rye

Leymus condensatus

Moonlight Grevillea Grevillea 'Moonlight'

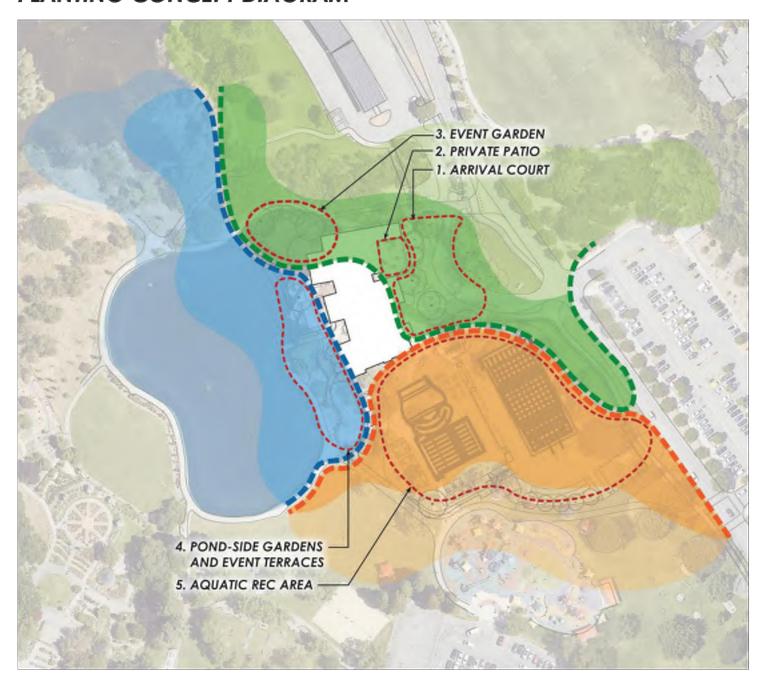


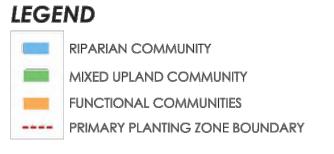
Canyon Prince Wild Rye Leymus condensatus



Lindheimer's Muhly Muhlenbergia lindheimeri

PLANTING CONCEPT DIAGRAM



















































NOLL& TAM ARCHITECTS











