

**RESOLUTION 2018-15**

**A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE SOUTHEAST MUNICIPAL COMPLEX  
MASTER PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, on June 13, 2016, The Board of Mayor and Aldermen approved a professional services agreement with Barge Design Solutions to develop a master plan for the Southeast Municipal Complex; and

**WHEREAS**, the primary purpose of the master plan is to define expectations for the use and general layout of the park and to assist in planning and decision-making process regarding capital investments; and

**WHEREAS**, City staff has facilitated two stakeholder and core planning team meetings to obtain input from multiple stakeholders; and

**WHEREAS**, on February 5, 2018, the City facilitated a public meeting/open house to present the master plan to the public and obtain additional feedback from stakeholders, organizations, and residents.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF FRANKLIN, TENNESSEE**, that the Southeast Municipal Complex Master Plan (Exhibit A) is hereby adopted as depicted in Exhibit A attached hereto.

**IT IS SO RESOLVED AND DONE** on this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_

**ATTEST:**

**CITY OF FRANKLIN, TENNESSEE:**

**By:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Eric S. Stuckey**  
**City Administrator**

**By:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Dr. Ken Moore**  
**Mayor**

**Approved as to Form**

**By:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Shauna R. Billingsley**  
**City Attorney**

# Southeast Municipal Complex: Inventory, Analysis and Concept Plan Summary

## **INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS**

The proposed Southeast Municipal Complex site is 180.36 acres based on GIS property information provided by the City of Franklin. The site is owned by the City of Franklin. Purchased for a future water reclamation facility, the property now is being considered as a shared complex between Parks and Water Management. The need for a large park in the southeast portion of the City, currently underserved by park land, was identified in the 2015 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The master plan further recommended that the Cowboys Football program be moved from Jim Warren Park to a new park in this area to provide more multi-purpose fields and for better operation of Jim Warren Park.

The site is entirely bounded by the Harpeth River to the north, east, and south. I-65 lies along the entire western boundary of the site. Historically the site has been used for cultivation of agricultural crops. The site's proximity to many new and existing residential developments along Carothers Parkway, and visibility from I-65, make this an attractive location for a park site.

The site offers some opportunities for a multi-use sports field complex; however, there are significant constraints on a majority of the land. Additionally, access to the property is limited as currently there is no direct access from Carothers Parkway. The Harpeth River and stands of existing hardwood trees will allow for a variety of passive park uses. This could be further enhanced as the recently purchased, adjacent Lockwood property to the north and across the Harpeth River is being considered as a large passive park, creating a larger network of recreational opportunities.

Of the total 180 acres, approximately 142 acres of the site is located within the floodway (+/- 73 acres) and 100-year flood plain (+/- 69 acres) of the Harpeth River. The large floodway and flood plain will present challenges to the development of the site, as there are restrictions which limit development and uses.

In addition to the flood plain and floodway that cover much of the site, TDEC requires a 60' buffer along the Harpeth River. The buffer is measured from the top

of bank running the length of the Harpeth, totaling 15 acres. Like the floodway, the buffer area will restrict development; however, the acreage of the buffer is included within the 73 acres of floodway.

Two isolated wetlands totaling approximately 5 acres were identified from the National Wetlands Inventory and city staff near the NW corner of the site in the area of the proposed water reclamation facility. It's anticipated these wetlands will be impacted during mass grading operation.

The site topography is relatively flat along the Harpeth River and gently raises to a pair of knolls along the central western edge running parallel with I-65. Approximately 4% (+/- 7 acres) of the site is at a 15% slope or higher, with the remaining 96% (+/- 173 acres) of the site at less than 15% slopes.

Vegetation on the site consists of a variety of hardwood trees and understory plant cover, covering approximately 67 acres. Some of the hardwood trees are significant in size. Several large active crop fields make up much of the site's interior. These fields total approximately 113 acres. Dense vegetation lines the steep banks along the Harpeth River and fingers of vegetation outline the interior of the site and cover the high knoll areas, totaling approximately 10 acres.

Currently, direct access to the site is by a narrow gravel road on the west of I-65 which passes under an I-65 bridge over the Harpeth River. Access to the gravel road is currently restricted to city personnel at the Goose Creek sewer lift station located at the end of the Redwing Meadows neighborhood. A primary access from west of I-65 is not feasible.

The more direct and favorable access point to the site would be on the east side with a bridge crossing the Harpeth River connecting to Carothers Parkway. The wide floodway of the Harpeth River will present a challenge for a bridge crossing as the bridge will have to be elevated above the flood elevation. Access points along Carothers Parkway are limited by planned median cuts. The City does have a dedicated access to

the site via Mainstream Drive through the Water's Edge residential neighborhood; however, this access would not be an appropriate primary access to the site due to the traffic it would generate through the neighborhood. The recently purchased Lockwood property provides access from Carothers at a planned median cut.

There are three utility easements encumbering the property. One is a 100-foot wide TVA overhead power/utility easement that runs along the western edge of the site along I-65. The others are sanitary sewer easements running east and west on the northern portion of the property and north and south along the Harpeth River. The sewer lines connect to an existing sewer pump station on the opposite side of I-65.

The north-south sewer line is currently being installed across the site for developments along Carothers. It's assumed this line will be available for sanitary use for the proposed park. Water service is available through Milcrofton Utility district, and Electric service will be provided by Middle Tennessee Electric. Both water and electrical service to the site is available across the Harpeth River from the site along Carothers Parkway. Although costly, electrical service to the site can be underground by boring under the Harpeth River.

### **PROGRAM ELEMENTS**

The 2015 Master Plan recommended that the new park include a minimum of 8 multi-purpose fields, playgrounds, sand volleyball courts, basketball courts, a splash pad, walking trails, and other neighborhood/community park elements. Other items that Franklin Parks staff identified as needs include environmental interpretation/education facilities, pavilion/picnic shelters, picnic sites, and pickleball courts.

In August 2017 a presentation of the site's inventory analysis was made to the Core Planning Team (CPT), a group established to give the Barge Design Solutions design team guidance on developing the master plan for the park. The CPT members include City staff, representatives from neighborhood associations in the area, and youth sports program providers (Franklin Cowboys football, etc.). The group was presented with the potential program elements listed above and were asked to provide other suggestions. Their primary suggestions included lawn bowling, bocce courts, and a dog park. Pedestrian connections to the surrounding neighborhoods and a canoe launch were considered very important to the group.

### **CONCEPT PLAN DEVELOPMENT**

Following the CPT meeting, Barge worked with subconsultant CDM Smith and City staff to define the location and orientation requirements for the future water reclamation facility. A 30-acre area currently outside the 100-year flood plan was reserved for the water facility. A conceptual facility layout such that the park could be designed to be compatible with it in the future was presented.

Next, preliminary engineering studies were undertaken to assist in determining potential access points from Carothers Parkway, the best location for a bridge crossing, preliminary mass grading, and flood plain modeling.

Following the completion of these preliminary engineering studies, Barge prepared two alternative concept plans. The plans were presented to the CPT in January 2018. Minor modifications were made and the two plans were presented to the public on February 5, 2018. Almost 100 people attended the meeting and provided a variety of comments on the two plans. After consultation with City staff regarding the public comments, a single final concept plan was developed for presentation to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.

### **FINAL CONCEPT PLAN**

It must be noted that although preliminary engineering studies have been completed, most of the park will be developed in the floodplain and floodway. Development in these zones is a complex process. There are many detailed engineering studies that must take place before the final park design can be determined. Therefore, the concept plan presented is subject to revisions based on the detailed engineering studies.

Barge completed an initial traffic study to assist in the early planning for the total number of access points. It was determined that to best serve the park and future water reclamations facility, a minimum of two points of access would be preferred. The complex's primary access to the north entry into the park is a new entrance road from Carothers Parkway. The new entry road intersects Carothers at a planned median cut when Carothers is widened to 4 lanes. The intersection aligns with the main entrance into the Lockwood Glen development. Barge worked with City Engineering staff to determine the best location for the entrance and the bridge across the Harpeth. The entrance road would

lead to a new bridge crossing the Harpeth River. Out of safety concerns and to serve as a functional access for the future water reclamation facility, the road and bridge is to be elevated above the 100 year flood elevation. Based on existing grades and known flood elevation, these elements will have to be elevated 10'- 15' until the road reaches higher elevations along the boundary identified on the plan as "Reserved for Future Water Reclamation Facility".

A planned secondary entrance is shown on the southern end of the property. The city is currently exploring extending a drive from this location to Long Lane through the Ladd Park subdivision. Barge is working on finalizing the traffic impact study to determine the required improvement to Carothers Parkway, as well as recommended traffic control measures.

From the primary entry, the first park elements the road passes by on the northern portion of the park include those typically found in a neighborhood or community park. Included in this area is:

- parking
- restroom/pavilion
- two playgrounds (which could be combined into one large one)
- dog park
- outdoor table tennis
- lawn bowling
- bocce court
- 2 basketball courts
- 2 sand volleyball courts
- separate pavilion
- 3 pickle ball courts

The area northeast of the dog park could be used for open play or practice for athletic teams. By separation from the athletic field complex to the south, this area could serve as a neighborhood park for City residents without competing for parking and dealing with the number of people that would use the athletic complex.

The inclusive playground that will be in the park is planned for this area. This playground would serve people of all ages and abilities. Future detailed design studies of this playground will determine if it will be one large playground or separated into two areas. Appropriate fencing around the playground would be provided. For this to happen, the playground would need to be elevated above the flood elevation.

The southern end of the park is designated for the athletics complex. It features 10 large multi-purpose fields that could be used for football, lacrosse, rugby, ultimate frisbee, etc. Two of the fields are proposed to be synthetic turf and set up as championship fields. The synthetic turf fields will have to be elevated above the 100-year flood elevation.

All the sports fields would be lit with state-of-the-art LED lighting, which will eliminate light spill and glare to the surrounding neighborhoods. Four of the fields would be located entirely or partially in the floodway. Therefore, they will be subject to periodic flooding as would any sports field that is below the flood elevation. Per Staff interpretation of current zoning regulations, no structures (including fencing) can be placed within the floodway. Bleacher pads and bleachers are proposed for the fields which can be elevated above the flood elevation. ADA accessible routes would be provided to the edge of each sports field and to any/all fixed spectator and player seating.

It is very common practice to place multi-use sports fields in flood zones. However, even with special design measures, the fields may not be playable for several days after they are flooded. In addition, cleanup of silt and debris may be necessary after a flooding event. Introduction of well-groomed sports fields in the flood zone can improve flood flow because of lessened resistance of water moving over their surface as compared to other types of vegetative covers.

Adequate parking to serve the complex is separated into three areas to limit visual impacts and provide convenient access to playing fields. The total number of spaces was sized based on similar sports complex facilities recently designed by Barge. Adjacent to the main entry is proposed a fenced playground, a splash pad, and 2 pavilions. These features would serve as amenities primarily for the families using the athletic complex, and for everyone when the complex was not in use.

A main building housing a restroom, concessions, football/lacrosse equipment storage, and space for football weigh-ins is proposed in the center of the complex. This building will have to be elevated above the flood elevation. A separate restroom/pavilion is proposed north of the main building to better serve field users and spectators in this area.

A maintenance building and compound is proposed across the main entry drive from the athletic complex. The building and complex would be tucked into the trees to limit its visibility. The building would have space for storage of equipment and supplies and space for maintaining equipment. It would also provide office space and restrooms for park operations staff. It may also include a lower level storm shelter for park staff. The complex would be fenced and gated and provide space for outdoor storage of equipment and supplies.

On the southern end of the park a small parking area and canoe/kayak launch is proposed. Ideally this launch will work in conjunction with a proposed launch planned within the Water's Edge Development, giving an additional means of access to the park.

A 2+/- mile multi-use greenway runs through the park along the Harpeth River. There are 3 connection points into the various park features and walkways which could be loops of various lengths. Access points from the trail to the river will be provided where possible. Public comments suggested an additional trail be run along I-65, thereby creating a loop. This potentially would add an additional 1 mile, creating a 3-mile loop.

The multi-use path would connect to the planned greenway to be developed within the Water's Edge Subdivision and the planned Lockwood property via pedestrian bridges. These bridge crossings would not be elevated above the 100-year flood plain. The multi-use path would utilize the existing access under I-65 to give pedestrian access to neighborhoods (Red Wing Meadows, Berry Farms, Ellington Park) on the west side of the interstate. Lastly, the multi-use path could connect to the Ladd Park trails to the south, as this point of access in to the park is further developed.

There are several areas noted on the concept plan to be constructed wetlands. The City staff has painted a vision for this park to be a model of sustainable development that can be used for environmental and public education. The constructed wetland areas would be used to treat run off from pavement and the sports fields before discharging into the Harpeth. They could also be used as a buffer to help protect the sport fields from high flowing flood waters. The detailed design of the park would incorporate extensive green infrastructure and other Low Impact Design elements in the hopes to serve as a model and teaching tool for surrounding developments.

Appropriate landscaping would be introduced to provide shade for the parking lots and park users across the park and to present the appropriate image of a high-quality park and recreation facility. Existing mature hardwoods will be preserved to the best extent possible and will be focal points of planned passive uses along the Harpeth River.

### **COSTS AND PHASING**

Once the Board of Mayor and Aldermen provide direction on the final concept plan, Barge will produce an opinion of probable construction cost for the entire park development as illustrated on the concept plan. Based on Barge's experience with similar facilities, it is anticipated that all of the park elements shown on the concept plan cannot be constructed for the \$13.1 million that is currently budgeted. This is particularly true since Phase I will have to include the main entry drive, the bridge across the Harpeth, and other essential infrastructure improvements.

Barge will work with City staff to develop a phasing plan that best fits within the City's budgetary requirements and identify elements of the park recommended to be constructed in the initial phase and subsequent phases.



**KEY**

- ■ ■ PROPERTY LINE
- ● ● TRAIL SYSTEM
- - - FLOODWAY BOUNDARY
- - - EXISTING SANITARY LINE
- SANITARY MANHOLE (TYP)
- PARK ENTRANCE

**LEGEND**

- A MULTI-PURPOSE FIELD (370'x210')
- B VEHICULAR BRIDGE
- C PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
- D CANOE/KAYAK LAUNCH
- E DOG PARK
- F INCLUSIVE PLAYGROUND
- G PICNIC PAVILION
- H RESTROOM/ PAVILION/ CONCESSIONS
- I EXERCISE STATION
- J BOCCE BALL COURT
- K BOWLING LAWN (6 LANES)
- L OUTDOOR TABLE TENNIS
- M SAND VOLLEYBALL COURTS
- N PICKLE BALL COURTS
- O BASKETBALL COURTS
- P PARKING
- Q MAINTENANCE FACILITY WITH STAFF ROOMS AND STORM SHELTER
- R SPLASH PAD WITH SEAT WALLS
- S BLEACHERS (TYP.)
- T PEDESTRIAN WALK
- U OVERLOOK
- V PEDESTRIAN PLAZA
- W CONSTRUCTED WETLAND
- X CONCESSIONS/ RESTROOM/ EQUIPMENT/ WEIGH-IN BLDG.
- Y PAVILION/ RESTROOM
- Z SYNTHETIC TURF CHAMPIONSHIP FIELD

**SOUTHEAST MUNICIPAL COMPLEX - CONCEPT 1**  
FRANKLIN, TENNESSEE

January 2018

