Description

The master plan for Walnut Street Park incorporates a variety of elements for the community while preserving the natural environment. The percentage of the park preserves approximately 70% of vegetation. In order to achieve this percentage, the placement of program elements was important.

Master Plan Highlights

- Preserving the existing vegetation
- Constructed wetlands with viewing areas
- Boardwalks and observation deck
- Benches provided throughout the park
- Consolidated play areas
- Picnic areas near playgrounds
- Extensive trail network, both paved and natural
- Medium-size meandering lawn (about 2 acres)
- Redbud promenade to connect North and South
- Rain Garden in the parking area to collect and clean the run-off
- Art in selected areas of the park
- Sidewalk and trails connect to the surrounding neighbors and future greenway connections.
- Basketball Court (Future Program Element)
The Master Plan for Walnut Street Park proposes development to occur in the southern edge of the site. This includes parking, a children's play area, future basketball court and picnic areas. The eastern and northern edges of the park will consist of lawn areas while the western side of the park will be preserved. The following describes each of the program elements in the Walnut Street Park Master Plan:

**Pedestrian Promenade**

The most prominent feature of the Walnut Street Park Master Plan is a planned promenade which will connect the northern and southern ends of the park. The promenade arcs connect the primary entrances and provides an organizing element for the park. Along the promenade, a large number of flowering trees are proposed which will enhance the walkway and create an interesting sitting area with many benches along the way. The promenade is 10' wide and will include brick pavers to be distinct among the other trails.

**Open Space Lawn Area**

A large open space lawn area, approximately 1.5 acres, is located along the eastern side of the park, parallel to Lawrence Road. This area could be used for picnicking, throwing a ball, kite flying, or other recreational opportunities. The lawn area is designed to provide a large open space for free play as well as small areas for smaller events.

**Preservation**

The master plan preserves 70% of the existing woodlands, leaving them undisturbed. Areas along Walnut Street and Lawrence Street will be maintained have a park-like feel. The area internal to the park and particularly along the western border of the park will remain natural. In particular, the 100' buffer that extends through the site will be preserved and maintained.

**Natural Areas vs. Developed Areas:**
Pedestrian Circulation

The primary pedestrian entrance will be at North-East corner of the park (intersection of Walnut and Lawrence Streets). This will be designed not only as major entry into the park but also as major visual feature based on the amount of traffic along Walnut Street. This entrance is one of two areas linking the promenade to the North and the South. The Southern entrance connects the parking lot and the Southern neighborhoods to the park. The two entrances will have the same paving as the promenade.

Loop Trail: A loop trail is proposed to surround the park. This loop trail will be paved in asphalt and will be 8-10’ in width. This trail will surround the park and tie together the promenade as well as all other proposed facilities. The trails located to the North and the East of the park are also used as a sidewalk connection along Walnut Street and Lawrence Road. The maximum distance for a sidewalk from the road is 30 feet.

Natural Trail: There is one natural trail located in the North-West portion of the park near the stream. The natural surface trail will be 6’ minimum.

Public Art

Potential art works occupy 3 locations and are identified at the park entrances and along the pedestrian promenade. Public art may be provided by the Town of Cary and private organizations such as Cary Visual Arts.

Constructed Wetlands

Along the stream and within the buffer, the Master Plan includes a recommendation to construct wetlands. These will be located along the western side of the park. The purpose of these wetlands will be to collect and filter runoff, as well as provide an educational element to the park site. A boardwalk and observation deck will allow park visitors and students an opportunity to experience the wetland closely.
Children's Play Areas

An important aspect of the Master Plan will be the development of a children's play area. These will be divided into age groups. A younger children's play area and an older children's play area are consolidated at the south end of the site. The promenade will separate each of the play areas, but provides an opportunity for parents to view both areas. These areas are located near the proposed parking lot and restrooms for convenience and safety. The play areas will contain imaginative and natural elements and will have a rubberized, colorful surface material.

Picnic Shelters

The Master Plan provides four small picnic shelters which contain two small picnic tables each. The shelters are located near the playgrounds and the open lawn area. There are many other opportunities for picnicking on the open lawn areas.

Restroom

A restroom is located near the children's play areas and parking area. It will contain three stalls in each section. The central location is convenient to users of the park.

Parking Facility

A parking area for approximately 30 cars is shown at the Southern tip of the park site. It is an fair distance from the intersection of Walnut Street and Lawrence Road. The parking lot has two entrances/ exits and is planted with numerous trees for shade cover. The island between Lawrence Road and the parking lot provides a vegetative buffer which will collect rain water from the parking lot and filter through to the rain garden.

Basketball Court (Future Program Element)

A basketball court would be located near the parking lot and older children's play area. Initially this area would be a grass area for open play reserved for a future basketball court.