

MEMORIAL PARK TOMORROW

PUBLIC UPDATE MTG #3 Q&A
January 12, 2015

RUNNING TRAIL CENTER & TIMING TRACK

1. It looks like the timing track located south of the Running Center will interfere with the Camp Logan foundation ruins in that area. Will a complete archeological survey be done to identify and locate all of the CL ruins?

The master plan team is fairly certain that the timing track does not interfere with known ruins in the area. However, prior to construction, an archaeological field survey will need to be conducted to determine extant ruins.

2. How much parking at the running center?

There are currently approximately 36 spaces in front of the RTC. There is another lot adjacent to the Centerpoint easement that will have approximately 42 spaces. In addition, the master plan is proposing an additional 54 spaces in the Centerpoint easement. This makes for approximately 132 spaces.

3. Won't you have to put lights on the timing track which is counter to the idea of taking the lights out of the south side?

The goal of the master plan was to remove high candlepower lights that broadcast over large areas from the southside of the park. There should be low level lights for safety, security and wayfinding on the south side of the park. There will be areas of the park that are always dark, but access requires low level lighting in some areas. And the track will need to be lit, but this lighting can be subtle, low level and focused on specific areas without disturbing nocturnal animals.

PARKING & TRAFFIC

1. Re: Parking/traffic. Have any studies been completed or are planned to determine the effect of proposed changes to roads and parking in the park on the surrounding streets, parking, and communities?
2. Has a traffic study been commissioned to determine impacts of moving the east loop intersection 100 from the Crestwood intersection? What problems will result for Crestwood traffic?
3. Will the MPC publish or make publicly available the traffic studies or analysis to show the increased vehicular traffic impact on Crestwood, Blossom, and most importantly Arnot and Memorial Park Elementary with parent and bus student morning drop off?

A traffic study is currently underway.

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4. If the “green space” is used for trail rider or art festivals or concerts, how will parking, noise and traffic be accommodated?

HLS&R trail riders will be accommodated in the Cycle Track loop. Traffic will be controlled during this special event.

5. Will there be adequate parking? At the end of the programs in the park will there be a huge back up of traffic at 610 Loop?

Traffic at times will require traffic control. This will be no different than for any other large event within the city.

6. Could more of the parking be on street and not in large parking lots? One of the great parts of the park is being able to park along the trail and street.

Parallel parking along Memorial Loop is not safe as it requires pedestrian crossing midblock and can create traffic conflicts as users maneuver to find parking on the opposite side from their travel lane.

7. With a goal of increasing access and use of the park how many additional parking spaces will be added?

There will be a 30% increase in parking.

8. When you move the ball fields will you also move all of the parking that goes with them? What are your plans for additional parking within the park to accommodate all the new visitors?

See answer below

9. There has been concern about parking. Is any consideration being given to expanding parking?

Along with a 30% increase in parking spaces in the park, parking lots will be adjacent to amenities such as ballfields, swimming pool, and Running Trail Center. The plan also improves access to the park that does not require a car.

10. RE: Parking

The proposed parking lot at the tennis center is massive. Even with planning, this will be a tremendous area of paving. Any way to distribute these spaces in a more “sensitive” manner?

Until everyone can ride a bus or a bike or walk to the park, there will need to be parking in the park to accommodate users and to keep parking out of the neighborhoods adjacent to the park. Parking lots will have ample room for shade trees and will be designed in such a way to minimize what can be a less than pleasing experience.

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11. There are lines drawn that indicate parking all throughout the natural area on the west side of the park, just west of the outer loop. Why clear that much natural area for parking? That 54 acre segment accounts for over 5% of the natural area in the park?

One of the goals of the master plan is to increase access to the park for all users. There will hopefully be increased bus service and multiple ways for people to bike and walk to the park. Again, parking must be located near amenities that people want to access.

CONNECTIONS TO THE PARK

1. Will you create foot and bike access from the East, South, and North using utilities and other corridors?
2. Bike Houston is interested in hearing more about connectivity from the city into the park by bicycle ie: how can I ride my bike from my house to Memorial Park?
3. If you can give up park land equal to a 30% increase for parking, why can you not negotiate with Hogg heirs to give up a little land for a grade light rail?

A light rail along Memorial Drive is not in the scope of the master plan.

4. What about access to the park via Metro rail? There's also the potential to connect Uptown and the central business district with a Metro rail line running down Memorial Drive?
5. What is the idea/timeline to connect Buffalo Bayou to Memorial Park?

Light rail terminates at center Memorial Drive on edge of downtown. As we look at Master Plan can we look at reduction in busses and shift to light rail increasing non car transit. Re-stitching all Memorial corridor to downtown into the park, reconnecting bike trails into park from Bayou Bend Bridge.

6. What is the plan for cyclists commuting east/west through the park? (route/ on road/off road)

The MP planning process is not complete, but the COH is pushing for funding for a 1.38 mile trail to connect Memorial Dr. to San Felipe.

7. Explain why it is ok for the integrity of the planning process to be breached to allow this trail to move forward.

8. What options to connect to Buffalo Bayou Park are considered? A dedicated bike/jog lane along Memorial Drive?

Overall Answer: The Master Plan looks to make connections wherever possible to provide continuous trails between existing parks and city and regional trail networks, as well as mass transit connections. We have been and will continue to partner with other organizations leading these efforts.

NEIGHBORS

1. A goal is to “stitch” the park back together but much of the park will still be broken by roads, why have consultants chosen to move amenities towards neighborhoods rather than away or closer to the golf course?

- a. The placement of amenities is constrained by multiple factors, including roads, other amenities, ecological considerations, drainage requirements, maintenance, and archeological considerations.
- b. If this question refers to the ball fields, there is a need to place them together for improved maintenance, a better user experience, and reduced operating costs.
- c. The best place given the above considerations as well as the fact that there is noise and light coming off of 1-10 is along the 1-10 corridor.
- d. Note that there are already ball fields near the neighborhood in that area; the planners have moved the ball fields further away from the neighborhood.

2. What noise study has been conducted to determine impact on adjacent neighborhoods from increased public use/assembly spaces?

- a. A number of decibel readings were taken to give the design team a general sense of existing loud and quiet areas within the park.
- b. Proposals are included that will help address current and potential future noise issues, including a 30 acre tree buffer, moving the ball fields further away from Camp Logan, covering the pool, plantings and other potential types of screening.
- c. HPARD manages noise in parks through its permit process; e.g. it may and often chooses to deny permits for potentially large and noisy events such as large corporate picnics near neighborhoods or may site in less sensitive locations.

3. Move the E. Loop to within 250 feet of Crestwood? Why? What about resident impact, such as traffic/noise/crime/parking?

- a. The road will be moved to provide greater access and connectivity to the acreage that is currently divided by the road, which makes that land inaccessible and unusable.

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- b. There is only one place where the proposed East Loop is proposed to be this close to Crestwood Drive. This is already a pedestrian access point and was one of the historic entry points to the park.
 - c. The plan proposes augmenting parking in the Park by 30%, will foster greater access to the park by hike/bike, and will make other recommendations to alleviate parking and traffic issues.
 - d. Some of the neighborhood parking and traffic issues will need to be addressed by other City Departments; the plan will include recommendations for these
 - e. A traffic study is underway.
4. **There is a glaring absence of any consideration for impact on existing residential areas. The plan impinges on Crestwood and other subdivisions in a major way. This is a dereliction of duty by the planners and the Conservancy. You have ignored the impact on some major stakeholders. You are moving traffic and amenities to our front doors. You do not need to adversely affect existing residential areas. (see next question)**
5. **At the start of the presentation the word sensitive was used to describe the work being proposed. Why can't the changes proposed be sensitive to the quiet residential communities that border the park? Can we explore other design options that will improve the park and have a positive impact on the neighboring areas? Improving the park shouldn't destroy these areas that surround it.**
6. **Why haven't you considered the neighborhoods adjacent to the Park in the plan?**
- a. The planning team sought input from all Houstonians including neighbors prior to the planning beginning, has received input from neighbors during the course of planning, and has incorporated input as possible into the plan.
 - b. For example, to accommodate the neighborhoods, the plan proposes 30 acres of tree screening; enclosing the pool to address noise issues; moving ball fields further away from the neighborhood in the 1-10 corridor; distributing parking throughout the park; increasing parking by 30%, and including recommendations of actions that the City of Houston should take to alleviate traffic and parking issues related to the park but that cannot be addressed by the master plan. These recommendations may include increased metro stops along Memorial Drive paired with b-cycle stations; neighborhood parking permit programs; and greater connectivity to other parks to encourage hike/bike access to Memorial Park vs. car.

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- c. The proposed plan will create spaces closer to the surrounding neighborhoods that will also be an amenity for park neighbors. The Eastern Glades will become a very convenient place for small gatherings -- to walk, sit and talk and enjoy the natural world of Memorial Park. It will not be suitable for large gatherings. Perimeter planting at the edges of the park will also serve to screen neighborhoods from park users, and users from neighbors.
 - d. This is a park for all Houstonians; the planning team seeks to balance the neighbor needs with other requirements in the best way possible.
- 7. Given the growth in Houston over the past 10 years, the projected growth in the next 10 years and the fact that Houston is a commuter city and no one who owns a car rides the bus (other than park-n-ride), only a 30% increase in parking spaces appears irresponsible. How are you protecting adjacent neighborhoods from being overflow parking?**
- a. Too much parking will encourage overuse and overcrowding of the park. The master planning team is making an effort to balance more parking with preserving usable park space in Memorial, which is the park's biggest draw.
 - b. The proposed plan and recommendations will encourage access to the park in other ways, such as hike/bike in and coordination of public transit and b-cycle stations.
 - c. The park is not the only driver of increased traffic and parking issues in the neighborhoods, and the master plan cannot solve all of the issues. The master plan will make recommendations related to traffic and parking that the City of Houston could adopt.
- 8. Do no impinge on Crestwood. There are other options. We do not want the amenities and parking and traffic moved closer to Crestwood.**
- a. The planning team has solicited input from all users of Memorial Park and neighbors, and incorporated as much of this feedback as possible. See answers to previous questions.
 - b. The great cities of the world have parks that allow all their citizens and visitors access to areas of natural beauty. The proposed plan makes an effort to create more connections to this jewel of a park for all people and to make areas that were inaccessible accessible.
 - c. Memorial Park is a City park for all Houstonians.

9. The residents of the Crestwood area are very concerned with the potential of the gathering area on the East side of the park to cause significant auto parking overflow into the neighborhood. What provisions are planned to prevent this or what consideration can be given to the relocation of the gathering area?
- There are 30 acres of tree screening dedicated to screening the neighbors from the park and the park from the neighbors.
 - There is a proposed 30% increase of parking in the plan.
 - Parking is dispersed throughout the park—not just in the area that is referenced here.
 - The park is not the only driver of increased traffic and parking issues in the neighborhoods, and the master plan cannot solve all of the issues. The master plan will make recommendations related to traffic and parking that the City of Houston could adopt.
 - The Eastern Glades are not large “gathering areas”. They are partially wooded areas with an open ground plane, suitable for picnicking, and other small-scale uses.
10. Moving the running trail and eastern glades to an area adjoining Blossom/Crestwood seems to contemplate using the Crestwood subdivision streets as overflow parking? Is this the intention? Does the Conservancy consider the homeowners in Crestwood/Glencove/Camp Logan as stakeholders in the plan?
- The planning team sought input from all Houstonians including neighborhoods prior to the planning beginning, has received input from neighbors during the course of planning, and has incorporated input as possible into the plan.
 - Using the neighborhoods as overflow is not intended or recommended.
 - The plan proposes 30% increased parking and recommendations will encourage access to the park in other ways, such as hike/bike in or use of a metro bus paired with a b-cycle station.
 - The park is not the only driver of increased traffic and parking issues in the neighborhoods, and the master plan cannot solve all of the issues. The master plan will make recommendations related to traffic and parking that the neighborhood working with the City of Houston could adopt. It would be helpful if the neighborhoods could identify and suggest other changes/improvements that need to be made within the neighborhoods to help address key issues related to the Park, and the planning team could potentially recommend these to the City of Houston.

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11. How come the MPC has never responded to the letters written by Jim Simmons President of Camp Logan HOA which raised many issues in Fall 2013?
 - a. The planning team has responded by taking Mr. Simmons' input into consideration and incorporating as much of it as feasible, such as proposing 30 acres of tree screening between the neighborhoods and the park, relocating ball field, making recommendations to address noise issues such as enclosing the pool and the tree screening mentioned above, and proposing adding 30% increased parking.
 - b. The planning team has also held neighborhood leadership meetings, and solicited neighborhood input prior to planning beginning and during planning.
12. How come the MPC has never responded to the letters (yes more than one) written by Mike van Dusen President of Crestwood HOA asking that our residents be allowed to provide input into the impact on Crestwood Drive?
 - a. The planning team is responding by taking Mr. van Dusen's concerns and input into consideration and incorporating as much of it as feasible, such as proposing 30 acres of tree screening between the neighborhoods and the park, making recommendations to address noise issues with tree screening and proposing adding 30% increased parking.
 - b. The planning team has also held neighborhood meetings, and solicited neighborhood input prior to planning beginning and during planning.
 - c. Finally, the team spoken directly with Mr. Van Dusen.
13. What are your plans to mitigate the traffic problems you are going to cause on Blossom (Crestwood) on the east end. Blossom is heavily used by runners, bikes, strollers, and dog walkers. There are virtually no sidewalks. People will likely choose to park on the street and convert broad avenues into one-lane streets. Suggest curving the parking on the other side of the circle.
 - a. Thank you for the suggestion.
 - b. There is a traffic study underway to determine the park's effect on the street network.
 - c. It would be helpful for the neighborhood to poll neighbors to find out what kinds of improvements they would make inside of their neighborhood to mitigate traffic/parking - while the plan is limited to changes inside of park boundaries, the plan can make recommendations on things outside of park boundaries for things that the City of Houston/neighborhood should address.

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14. With the multiuse space in such close proximity to the Crestwood Glencove subdivision what size will the forested buffer be separate the park from the neighborhood.

The total acreage proposed to separate the neighborhoods from the park and the park from the neighborhoods is approximately 30 acres.

15. What analysis was performed to determine any possible negative impact the master plan may have on adjacent neighborhoods? Traffic, noise, lighting, etc?

- a. There is a traffic study underway.
- b. Steps have been proposed to mitigate noise, including a tree buffer and covering the pool. The plan will also recommend other types of screening in some areas of the park's border.
- c. The next phase of design will look specifically at area-appropriate lighting.

16. Is there a sound limitation later at night for the gathering area to be developed in the present swimming pool location adjacent to Crestwood residential?

- a. The present swimming pool location is not proposed to move.
- b. The park closes at 11pm; this is not intended to change
- c. Steps have been proposed to mitigate noise, including a tree buffer and covering the pool. The plan will also recommend other types of screening in some areas of the park's border.

17. If adjacent property owners object to the plan but council, the spokes people of Houston citizens approves, what happens?

If the plan is approved by Houston City Council, it will be supported by city ordinance and will be a guideline for future development.

18. No consideration of what/how changes impact Crestwood S.D. residents? All comments are inside park views/impacts to outside? No addressing outside in?

- a. The proposed 30 acre tree buffer is intended to shield park users from the neighborhoods and the neighborhoods from park users.
- b. The Blossom Glades will be an amenity that the Crestwood neighborhood can also enjoy.

19. Why is the buffer distance to Crestwood so generous when the buffer to Camp Logan is so small? Camp Logan has all the parking and ball fields close, Crestwood just has gardens?

We made the buffers as generous as possible for all neighborhoods.

The plan considers many factors in the siting of recreational amenities, and sought to move activities that were noisy to areas away from the neighborhoods. For one edge of Camp Logan, along Haskell, the ball field is replaced by tennis. For the area of Camp Logan close to Westcott, Washington and I-10, the ball fields are proposed to move further away from the park boundary with the neighborhood, and a buffer is added where there was none before.

20. Will the plantings along Crestview & Haskell be elevated with soils or just thick plantings?

At this time the planting is conceived as thick planting at existing grade. This will allow the existing vegetation to remain and be added to with new planting.

21. RE: Streets into park, it appears Arnot will become a major artery into the park feeding the HUGE parking lot for the tennis and swimming center. Are there plans to widen this street?

At this time there are no plans to widen Arnot, but a traffic study is underway to determine the park's effect on the street network.

22. How about dedicating some resources to improving the Blossom Street entrance by widening the street and installing sidewalks?

- a. Unfortunately this is beyond the scope of what the proposed plan for Memorial Park can accommodate; the plan can only operate inside of the borders of the park.
- b. However, the plan can make recommendations as part of the proposal for actions outside of the park. If this is something that the neighborhood feels strongly about, the plan could recommend this.
- c. Blossom is not a vehicular entry into the park. If sidewalks were added here to improve pedestrian circulation that would be another City of Houston project, not a park master plan project.

23. What are the plans for a cross over Memorial at Crestwood? (see next question)

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24. Has the proposal regarding the pedestrian cross-over foot bridge at Memorial and Crestwood been abandoned?

The plan does not propose a foot bridge across Memorial Drive at the intersection of Memorial and Crestwood. It shows a foot bridge over Memorial 250 feet further west in the park.

25. Why can't the elliptic fields be consolidated and moved further west away from the residential areas?

The placement of amenities is constrained by multiple factors, including roads, other amenities, ecological considerations, drainage requirements, and archeological considerations.

BICYCLE COMMUTING

1. How many B-Cycles stations will be in the new park?

At this time, the number of B-Cycle stations has not been determined.

CAMP LOGAN FOUNDATIONAL RUINS

1. Regiment Lines? - Camp Logan? Camp Logan was a training camp for just a few years. Memorial to troops fighting there?
2. Will the shooting range of other features of Camp Logan be replaced?
3. Will the parking area within the Regimental area of Camp Logan located near the SP Railroad tracks be harmful to the preservation of the foundational ruins? Will it destroy the historic ditches?
4. The cultural areas of Camp Logan did NOT include the Force main pump facility located near the COH maintenance area. Why will it be destroyed? Should it also be preserved?

The Master Planning team has met with local historians to understand the story of Camp Logan and the location of any foundational ruins that still exist today. Measures will be taken to preserve these ruins and minimize the impact on the park's historic elements.

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EQUESTRIAN & POLO FIELDS

1. Is anything being done to recover the property that is part of the park and now being used a practice polo field? Needs to be incorporated as part of the park.
2. Polo Club. If this property were to be donated to the park, how would it be treated?
3. Is there going to be a public horse stable close to the equestrian trails? A place for someone to rent a horse?

The master plan is not recommending a public stable for horse rental. There will be parking in the northwest quadrant of the park to allow for horse trailer access. Horseback riding of the park trails in the NW will be encouraged. The property currently being used as a Polo field is part of a standing agreement with the City of Houston.

MOUNTAIN BIKING & TRAILS

1. The mountain bike trails appear to be in an area of very poor drainage with minimal topography. How is this to be addressed for the purposes of sustainability and user enjoyment?

The master plan will locate zones for particular trails to be located. It will take trail designers working on site for extended periods of time to determine locations for trails and the techniques that will be required to make these trails ride-able during most of the year.

2. More specifically, where are the rock dust trails going to be located? Please define “natural surface”?
3. Is there any paved/asphalt/concrete trail on the south side of Memorial Drive?
4. The mountain bike trails appear to be located on areas of minimal shade - how do we expect this to effect trail usage?

There will be different types of trails, constructed of appropriate materials, located throughout the park.

The master plan team is modifying the ecologies of the south side of the park and will certainly look to have areas where mountain bike trails can be in the shade.

5. Where do trail runners fit into this equation?

All hiking trails will be open to trail runners.

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6. Is the bike center still included in the plan? What about the pump tracks that were previously included?

The structure adjacent to the Bayou Wilds trail head will be a restroom and concession space that could accommodate some of the program elements of a bike center. The pump track is in the Bayou Wilds site plan.

7. Does the plan include more trails that are appropriate for children to bicycle on?

Yes.

8. I purchased my house to be near the park mountain bike trails. I'm not seeing anything in the plan regarding maintaining existing off road trails or for replacing them with equivalent ones. My fear is they will be replaced with boring paved or crushed rock trails. I also volunteer with GHORBA to maintain the trails, these trails are one main reason I choose to continue to live in Houston.

9. What is the total change in mountain biking trail mileage after implementing the master plan?

10. How can you call this a "wilderness park" when there is going to be a long multi-use trail in the southern area of Memorial Park?

11. How will you keep the mountain bike trails intact? These mtn bike trails are the center of the Houston mountain biking community and very few, if any, other trails exist within Houston. Their location is critical as they provide elevation change found in few other places for mountain biking.

12. It seems like single track trails for trail running and hiking are missing? I only see MTN biking trails and 4 foot wide hiking trails. A huge segment of the Houston Running Community has been left out.

Refer to slide 52 in the January presentation to see the area that the mountain biking, hiking, and trail running trails are to be placed. Keep in mind that the exact layout of these trails has not been determined yet, the slide just shows the general area of placement, with the foot traffic trails located closer to the bayou and the mountain biking trails closer to Memorial Drive. Total mileage change is contingent upon actual on-the-ground design. The current blue, red, yellow, orange, and green trails are natural surface trails; future mountain biking trails will also be natural surface trails. Along with being designed to be more sustainable, future trails will allow for similar elements of enjoyment.

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POOL & FITNESS CENTER

1. Why no outdoor swimming pool? Houston hasn't been the same since the Shamrock Hotel pool was demolished.
2. For the natatorium is the pool new or are you covering the existing one?
3. Can you keep both the outdoor and new indoor pools?

The pool is being expanded and covered in order to allow year-round swimming.

NATURE AND WILDLIFE

1. With the full plan in place and anticipated removal of many trees, what is the net loss of trees?

We are still determining which trees if any will need to be removed, however, we will be potting and storing many of the trees removed during construction projects. Afterwards we plan to transplant them in the park accordingly. Additionally, we will reviewing the scope of future plantings to whether for mitigation purposes or forest restoration.

2. Flowers that are Texas. Will there be invitation of flowers?

Native flowers will be incorporated into the design.

3. The natural area that is the Camp Logan area that is west of the outer loop on the North side of Memorial Drive has been divided into 5 or 6 sections. Isn't that chopping up the natural area which is counter to the goal?

The intention is to highlight and reveal the ruins of Camp Logan. Currently it is overgrown with thicket and mostly impassable. Also, each proposal is reviewed by our team of local scientists for ecological efficiency. This area falls within the portion of the park that has been impacted most in the past. Although the groves of trees are intended to be a living memorial to the soldiers that perished in WWI, the groves are also intended to serve somewhat as a sanctuary for peaceful reflection and picnicking. Creating the small parking lots may seem counter to the goal, but this creation actually helps accomplish better connectivity and space planning overall. Lastly, these areas will not be fragmented; they will be connected by walking paths. Parking lot trees will be maintained to keep continuity of shade.

4. Will there be a bird sanctuary?

Yes. The master plan will include plans to restore Hogg Bird Sanctuary.

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5. A sanctuary for primate animals like monkeys?

No.

6. Any aqua life (fish and ducks in lakes)?

That has not been determined yet as it applies to fish. Mainly the ponds would serve as water retention basins to support irrigation needs of the park. As far as ducks etc. are concerned, there are no intentions of deterring ducks from landing in the ponds.

7. How will shade effect tree growth around the edges?

Typically trees that grow along edges are shade tolerant or moderately shade tolerant which means that they should thrive nicely under these conditions. This does not mean that shade intolerant trees cannot grow hence there are other factors, like soil moisture and type, presence of nutrients, aspect, topography, and frequency of disturbances. All that said, there is no reason for concern provided tree placement mimics some natural order. The master plan intends to be respectful of what native plants are trying to persist where so typical edge trees should do fine on edges.

8. Before the drought, trees were required to be put back 150' from roadways. How will the east side of the park north of Memorial Drive be forested to control noise, etc. for neighborhoods given this restriction and that east loop will move approximately 100' from Crestwood?

Trees are not required to be placed back 150' from roadways. There is a 150' shaded fuel break adjacent to roads and houses. East Memorial Loop is not moving 100' from Crestwood.

9. Wildlife crossing? What? Coyote/possum/armadillo? What are we helping to cross?

The land bridge is intended as an innovative way to reconnect the north and south portions of the park. The concept was taken from the design of wildlife crossings created for large mammals (like elk, deer, moose, etc.) to cross roadways safely. The large mammals of Memorial Park just happen to be humans. Nevertheless, it will also be utilized by smaller mammals (like coyotes, possums, armadillos) but it is not intended to satisfy all of the wildlife crossing needs of the concept the design is drawn from.

10. Relocate picnic area—why?

The picnic area will be dispersed to lighten its impact and spread around the park. Removing the pavement will reduce the erosion currently affecting the drainages surrounding picnic loop. It is primarily used as a cycling loop so in order to retain that use a new loop will be created in the North West quadrant of the park and will be designed and maintained for that purpose.

11. Hiking trails-good! Equestrian requirement non-existent and will remain so. Traffic flow Crestwood/Blossom. If you do kiosks for citizen scientist will there be Park Rangers available for interaction?

All features of the final plan will include ways and means of maintaining or facilitating them. Including citizen scientist kiosks.

12. The memorial groves consist of approximately 50 acres. How can you justify destroying approximately 5% of the park's natural area for a memorial that could be done on 1 or 2 acres?

While the current proposal for the memorial groves will likely require some manipulation to achieve the goal there are no plans to destroy it. Aside from managing the underbrush many of the trees that are being proposed are actually already there. The size of the memorial is intended to create an experience for the park user and while 50 acres may not be the final product it would be very difficult to create the same experience with 1 or 2 acres.

13. Straight row pine forests are really boring—isn't this this soldier memorial too big?

The size of the memorial is intended to create an experience for the park user and while 50 acres may not be the final product it would be very difficult to create the same experience with 1 or 2 acres.

14. Regarding large fauna (rabbits, coyotes amongst other mammals) how will they be affected once they are displaced from their current habitat? For example: right in the "gathering areas" east connected via Blossom St. is where we still have seen large mammals inhabit the areas, how will they be protected?

Technically large mammals include the likes of deer, bears, cougars and bison. Coyotes, being one of the smallest, are virtually the only large mammals that frequent the park. Small mammals like possums, squirrels, rabbits etc, make up the majority of mammals in the park. None the less when considering all classes of animal life they fall into two categories: generalists and specialists. Specialist require very specific

habitat conditions to survive (like cougars, bears, pelicans). Generalists, however, do not have strict habitat requirements (like anoles, possums, squirrels or pigeons) which is why they are able to persist and even thrive in urban settings. Currently no sensitive, threatened or endangered species are present in the park. All of the observed animals will not be permanently displaced by any of the improvements or will find more desirable habitat in other areas of the park.

15. 9090 Invasive species: Are these all from birds if so who takes job of maintenance of understory of future—the problem will just come back—plans for plants that feed birds?

The goal is to reduce invasive plant species to manageable population densities while encouraging the re-colonization of desirable plant species. True understory maintenance needs to be ongoing and it will be. In order for memorial park to be pushed back towards balanced ecosystem, it will require a constant gentle hand to give desirable plant species a competitive advantage against invasives. Wildlife, especially birds, will be considered when habitat are being influenced. Food sources and cover will be important features of the restored forest structure.

16. There seems undue emphasis on native vs. nonnative plants. Are you serious about the maintenance required to keep this up? This is very expensive and likely to stay difficult given climate change, some changes in species type is going to/needs to happen. A rigid definition of native plants does not seem like the best course.

The goal is to reduce invasive plant species to manageable population densities while encouraging the re-colonization of desirable plant species. True understory maintenance needs to be ongoing and it will be. In order for memorial park to be pushed back towards balanced ecosystem, it will require a constant gentle hand to give desirable plant species a competitive advantage against invasives. Considering things like climate change, we understand that not all exotic plants are invasive and while the objective is to encourage plants native to Harris County that is not always the case. Also given the typical effects of urbanization on plant species migration a rigid definition of native would be impractical.

17. What about the Bird Sanctuary?

The master plan will include plans to restore Hogg Bird Sanctuary.

18. Also how long will it take for the trees to grow to ensure a viable barrier?

While different tree species grow at a variety of rates it is difficult to say how long. The good news is that some of the trees needed are already in place. On top of that the plan is to plant both large and small trees of various species to achieve this goal.

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COMMENTS

1. Thank you for allowing significant public input! The park plan nicely balances the competing interests of those who love this park.
2. Please hurry up and finish improving the park.
3. How could anyone not be in favor of all this?
4. Comments: sound system “muddy” sounding, get crisper sounding speakers. Particularly difficult to understand some presenters. Why not ask if anyone needs or would like a summary in Spanish- it may not be needed.
5. I hope you are not planning to use limestone
6. Change is hard! Please keep up the good work!
7. I love the plan!! Get it finished soon!
8. The swimming pool dressing and restroom needs to be expanded.

MISCELLANEOUS

1. My concern is about the possible relocation of the Memorial Park Tennis Center. Where (hopefully not nearer the freeway and with adequate parking for the tennis players. How many courts and how soon?
Refer to slide 94 to see future placement of the Memorial Park Tennis Center. The number of courts will not change. The parking lot for the Tennis Center, Swimming Pool, and Fitness Center will be located adjacent to the amenities.
2. Adequate picnic areas?
Picnic areas are dispersed throughout the park.
3. What is going to be done about the noise from Highway 10-berm? This disturbs of peace of those using the park
A berm or sound wall will be put in place along I-10 to mitigate the noise.
4. It seems other design options may achieve the same or similar results with fewer layout changes and less overall cost and disruption (including removal of mature native trees). Have any options been developed or available for consideration?
As the design process has advanced, careful consideration has been made to minimize disturbance to natural areas. While some disturbance is inevitable, the impact has been minimized.

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5. **What is the total cost of the improvements combined? What resource (financial) are being used for park improvements? I.e. taxes, TRIZ, new funds, etc. federal funds? Compare costs, expenditures to other parks in city?**

The total cost of the project has not been determined yet. As the design progresses, specific projects' cost will be determined.

6. **How long will we be without trails to walk on during construction?**

As with all amenities in the park, the new amenities will be open before the old ones are removed so as to minimize park use disruption.

7. **Currently there is plenty of petty crime inside the park. How can we prevent this crime by increasing and dispersing parking lots? Who is going to pay for extra security?**

Crime in Memorial Park is currently very low. By locating parking lots near amenities, surveillance will increase, which will deter thieves. Signs will be installed in parking lots reminding park users to take their belongings with them.

8. **Will they allow running in the Arboretum? Can the Arboretum become a more active park amenity rather than something uninteresting to people that are not "horticulturally savvy?"**

The Arboretum Master Plan can be viewed at www.houstonarboretum.org.

9. **What is the distance between Picnic Loop (where road bikes ride now) and new location around the equestrian center?**

The distance is about a mile between the two.

10. **The information on the handout is very vague. Mostly it just says it is under consideration when will there be specifics?**

As the plan develops, more specific information will be available. The final plan will be presented at the Public Update meeting on Monday, March 9, 2015.

11. **Boating in lakes? Adequate parking near picnic areas? Mini train rides thru the entire park? Adequate signage system? Food courts? Fountains- drinking and landscape? Camping areas?**

There will be parking lots located adjacent to picnic areas. A signage plan is being developed to go along with the Master Plan. Water fountains will be dispersed throughout the park near amenities. As of now, there are no plans for boating in the ponds, camping areas, landscape fountains, mini train rides, or food courts.

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12. Will you produce a timeline of when each segment is completed i.e. southern mountain bike paths, northwest cycling/blading trails?

Yes, a timeline will be made of when each segment is to be completed.

13. In a city public park whose interest is served... the entire city or local residents?

Because Memorial Park is classified as a City park, it serves the entire City of Houston.

14. Please clarify how Memorial Drive/Woodway current path (at the fork) will be modified if at all?

Refer to slide 34-35 in the presentation to see specifics.

15. Is Memorial Drive going to be buried?

No, Memorial Drive will not be buried.

16. Will there be a community center that will continue to have classes (educational, aka academics, crafts, athletics, horticulture, historical artifacts, etc.) ...as well as the more traditional aspects of public parks?

There is not a plan for a community center to be built in Memorial Park.

17. After the renovation do you foresee real estate development emerging along the edges of Memorial Park as in NYC's Central Park?

Research has shown that real estate values near parks are increased. See: http://agrilife.org/cromptonrpts/files/2011/06/4_1_6.pdf

18. Is Memorial Park developing the paths?

Yes, paths will be developed in Memorial Park.

19. Does Houston have or plan to have a forester on staff for all the parks? It would seem that a city of this size with the number of large parks would benefit from forestry management expertise.

Yes, Victor Cordova is the forester for the City of Houston Parks and Recreation Department.

20. What happens to the children's park across from St. Theresa's?

The children's play area will be moved to the south side of the park within the family recreation area. See slide 63.

21. Can we have a number of clay tennis courts? And thank you for your vision.

The number of clay courts tennis courts has not been determined at this time.

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22. How many people use the park each month? What is the percentage of feedback you have received relative to the number of the people who use the park?

The number of users of the SLT is currently being counted every day and this data will ultimately be available.

23. Has the design team taken into consideration the likely transformation of the elementary school into high density development?

The master plan team has no knowledge of this.

24. What about flooding in this area for the land bridge? Standing water breeding mosquitos?

The team is working on a plan for water mitigation.

25. What is the plan for trail lighting/security in the southern quarter?

The natural surface trail will not be lighted. In may be that the Southern Arc trail will require some lighting at dusk and the first hours of the night as a way-finding and security measure. These fixtures could be low light level bollards placed every 200 to 300 feet apart.

26. Light for these areas. How much will be lighted?

Some of the playground space and the kid's cycle areas in the Bayou Wilds area may require low level lighting for the early evening hours when the park is still open.

27. This is a great plan that gives Houston a civic amenity that has been missing. What or who was the impetus behind such an insightful effort?

28. I live near Buffalo Bayou Park and the life that has come to that area. Do you expect Memorial Park to get similar vitality?

29. Any plans for access to bayou for kayakers or stand up paddle boards?

30. Does the cycle track/loop only get built if Memorial Drive is moved?

The cycle track will be built following the moving of Memorial Drive.

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CONSTRUCTION

31. How long to complete construction?
32. When will it start? How long will it take? And will be able to use the park during construction?
33. Cost of construction?
34. Will park be open in phased construction?

The timeline and cost of construction has not been determined. The construction will be phased. Parts of the park will be closed, but the park as a whole will remain open during construction.

BUFFALO BAYOU

1. What is the best course of action to remediate erosion in the area known as “the demonstration project”?

The Memorial Park Demonstration Project (MPDP) is not a Memorial Park Conservancy project. Although the overall management of Memorial Park will include additional re-vegetation efforts that include both woody and non-woody plants this area will require our coordination with Harris County Flood Control District. For more information about the MPDP visit <http://www.preservingbuffalobayou.org/>.

2. What is the total environmental impact the master plan will have on Buffalo Bayou and surrounding creeks, streams and watersheds?

Due too Memorial Park’s particular soil geology many areas of the park actually retain water and minimize runoff. By reducing the pavement near buffalo bayou (Picnic Loop), replacing the major culvert under Memorial drive with a bridge, improving plant biodiversity and restoring forest structure and functions the master plan is expected have a positive impact on the tributaries feeding Buffalo Bayou from Memorial Park. There is no evidence that any of the park improvements will have any negative impacts on Buffalo Bayou or any of the surrounding creeks.

3. What mediations will be put in place to minimize or eliminate the impact?

Ongoing maintenance expectations are being integrated into plan design. This would include monitoring to determine when and where adaptive management practices should be adopted.

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4. Will the master plan be monitored and/or evaluated for sustainability?

Yes, in fact we have already initiated the first phase of our new ongoing monitoring plan. We are surveying our seedling mortality rates for both planted and natural regeneration (also called volunteers). Also keeping track of how many trees make it from understory to mid story and mid story to over story (also called recruitment). We are surveying population densities of all the varieties of native and exotic trees, shrubs and non-woody vegetation. This allows us to determine if our invasive removal treatments are sufficiently reducing the encroachments of competing non-natives and if our planting efforts are effectively encouraging biodiversity. We will be able to set plan for adaptive management strategies with greater clarity.