



Austin Gardens Master Plan Revisited

Public Meeting
January 5, 2016



CYLA Design Associates, Inc.



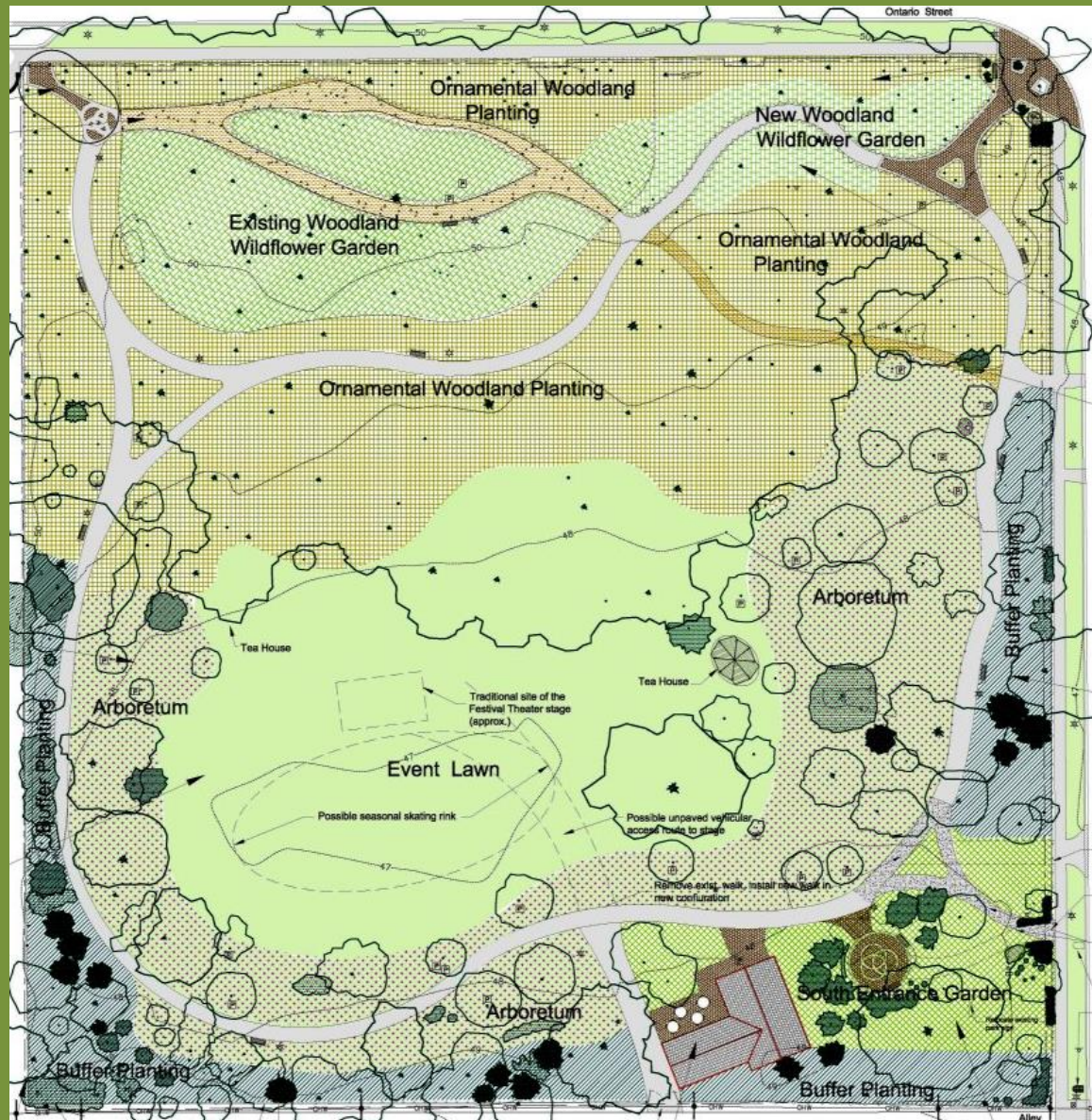


2015 Google Aerial image



Existing Conditions (2015)





Park Qualities & Amenities

- Passive-use park with nature theme and diverse tree species
- High-quality green space within urban core of the Village
- Walking path circuit with many benches for sitting is appreciated and well-used by neighborhood
- Special-use features include Festival Theatre in Summer and Ice-Skating in Winter
- Proximity to Downtown Oak Park & FLW Historic District
- Wildflower area on north with meandering paths
- Pedestrian lighting allows for park to be used in evenings



Recommendations from 2004 Master Plan: Implemented or in-progress

- Passive use of park with emphasis on nature is intact
- Remains as green space within urban core of Village
- New Environmental Education Center expands capacity of park for education and interpretation of nature and sustainable design
- Learning Garden enhances interpretation for native plants and adds hands-on study for adult and children's classes
- Outdoor seating area under shelter – *feature of new Center*
- Restrooms accessible from park – *feature of new Center*
- Invasive trees have been culled enabling a better growing condition for the native plants
- Irrigation installed to support native plant area through summers of drought and new plant establishment



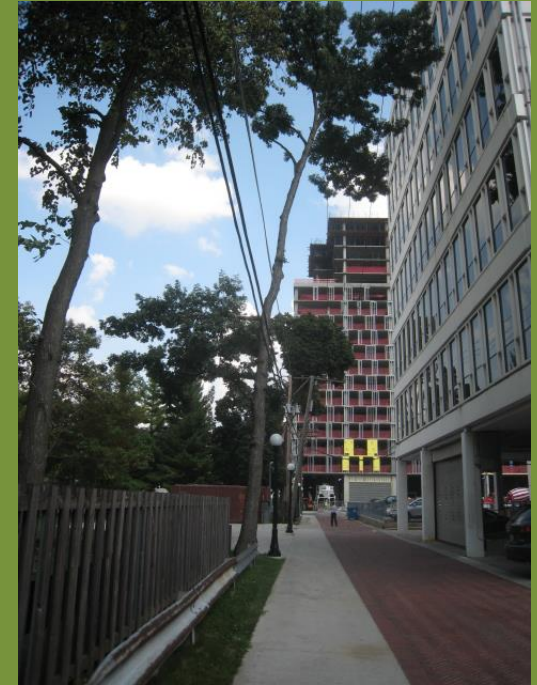
Recommendations from 2004 Master Plan: Implemented or in-progress

- Festival Theatre continues to produce quality theatre productions during the summer
- Infrastructure improvements - power and electrical support for the theatre was installed
- Ice Skating has been available in last few winters, temperatures permitting
- Park benches were replaced and set off path
- Pedestrian lighting has had some improvements
- Perimeter fences (west and south) have been upgraded
- Improvements to path for accessibility (to be completed late spring 2016)



Recommendations from 2004 Master Plan: Implemented or in-progress

- Village of Oak Park improved alley with permeable paving and pedestrian lighting making it more attractive, friendly, and sustainable
- Potential for connection to Lake Street still exists adjacent to 1010 Lake St. building
- Park's central location for visitors to Oak Park will be enhanced by new Center and additional entry improvements.
- New EEC enhances special events, such as Art in the Park, and other activities



Current Project : Environmental Education Center & Learning Garden

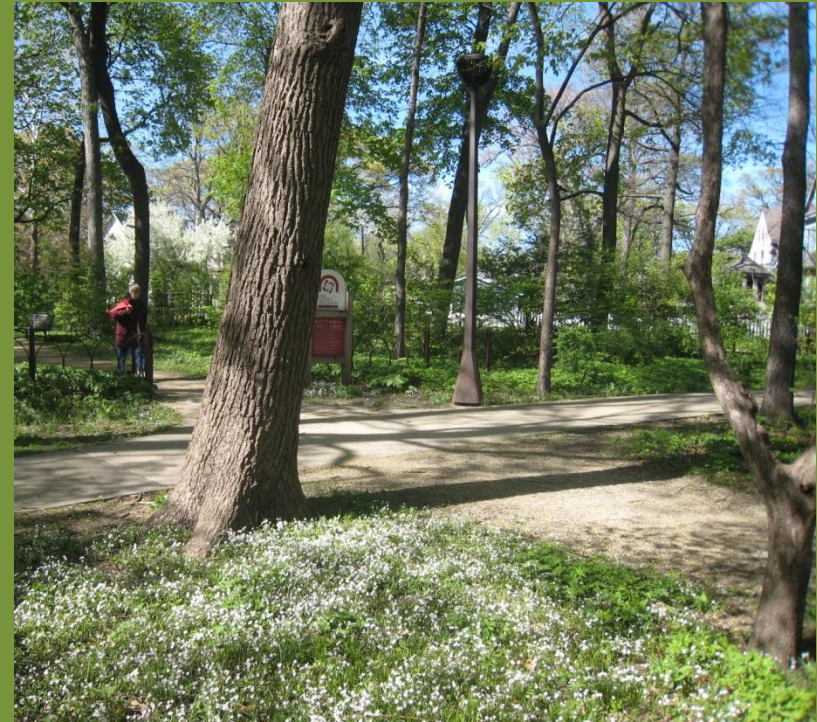
Open: Summer 2016

- Center's compact footprint and wood cladding are respectful of park setting
- Solar panels on roof supply power to offset costs
- Rain harvesting for toilet flushing & irrigation
- LEED Platinum sustainable design features as examples of homeowner-scale improvements
- Geo-thermal supply for mechanical systems
- Main assembly room and classroom, plus storage for theater
- Washrooms accessible from exterior for use by park patrons
- Sheltered seating area under roof
- Park entry from new pedestrian-friendly alley
- Potential connection to Lake Street
- Bio-swale absorbs storm runoff
- Additional bike racks in key locations



Recommendations for 2016 Master Plan

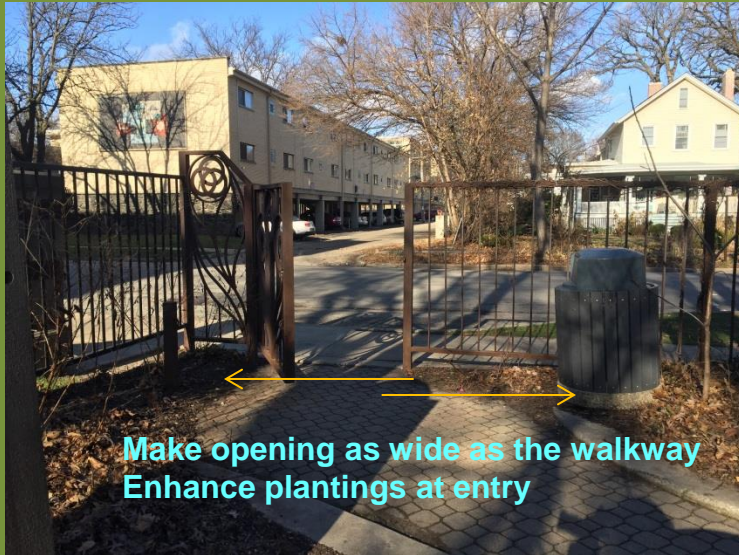
- Make entries to park more gracious by enlarging openings to park (removing select fence panels) at key locations
- Increase pedestrian lighting in several locations and switch to LED energy-efficient and effective light fixtures
- Improve maintenance strategy for the native area on north end and upgrade other ornamental shrub and groundcover plantings throughout park
- Add bike parking as park gets additional use
- Add discreet interpretive signage for history and natural features
- Potential for additional art in park



Recommendations for 2016 Master Plan



More Gracious and Welcoming Entries



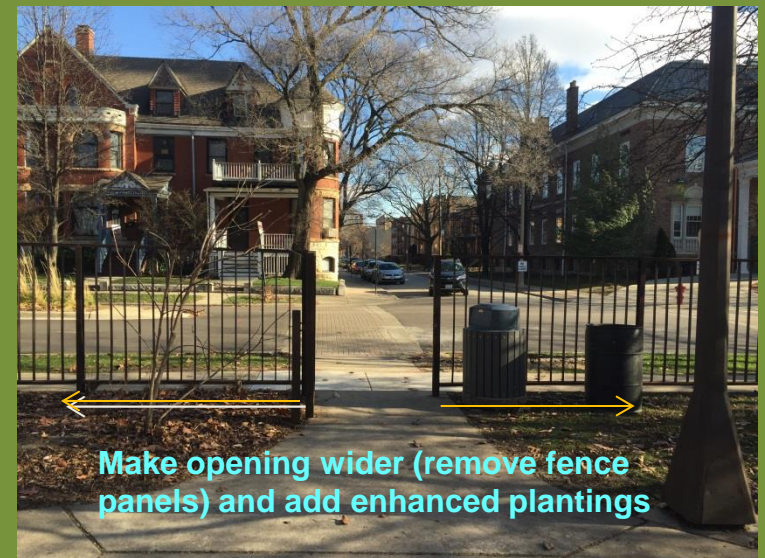
Park entry at northwest corner - Ontario from inside park



Park entry from Ontario St.



Make new entry from alley and path through under-used southwest corner



Park entry at Ontario from inside park



Park Amenities, including LED Energy-Efficient Light Fixtures



Center provides increased space for adult, children's and pre-school programming including outdoor classroom and study gardens

Bird Houses promote theme of wildlife sanctuary



New LED fixtures would provide more uniform lighting



Interpretive signage in park



Shadow studies: impact of height of proposed Lake & Forest Bldg. at Northwest Corner

- Longer periods of shadow in spring delay spring thaw on southern portion of site and shorten growing season
- 125 foot building on 1000 Lake Street increases impact of spring thaw period
- Greater shadows during colder season morning hours when patrons use the park

(EEC was designed with assumption of 20-story Vantage Oak Park building and max. 80 foot bldg. heights, per zoning, along Lake St.)

IMPACT OF BUILDING AT 80 FOOT HEIGHT



December 21 10 am



April 15 & September 15 10 am



April 15 & September 15 12 pm



June 21 8 am

IMPACT OF BUILDING AT 125 FOOT HEIGHT



December 21 10 am



April 15 & September 15 10 am



April 15 & September 15 12 pm

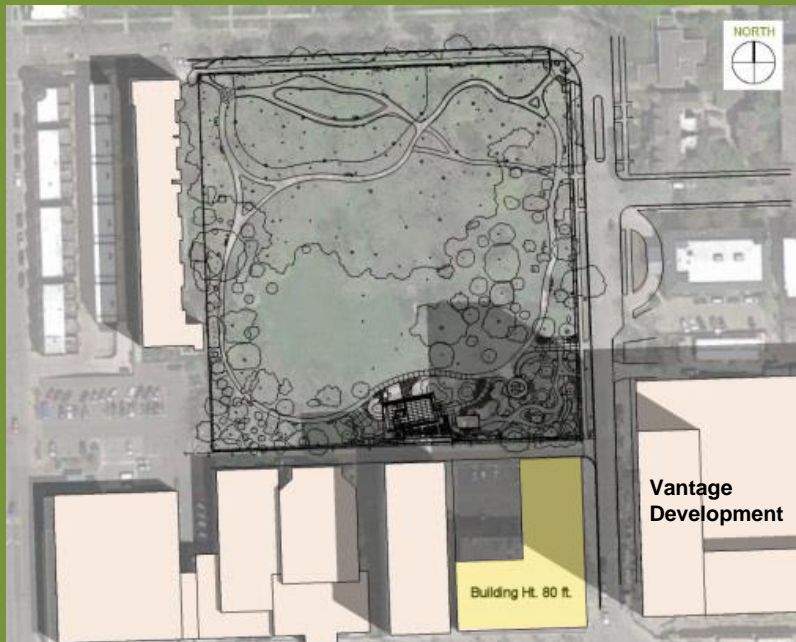


June 21 8 am



Shadow studies: impact of height of proposed Lake & Forest Bldg. at Northwest Corner Enlarged Plans

April 15 & September 15 10 am

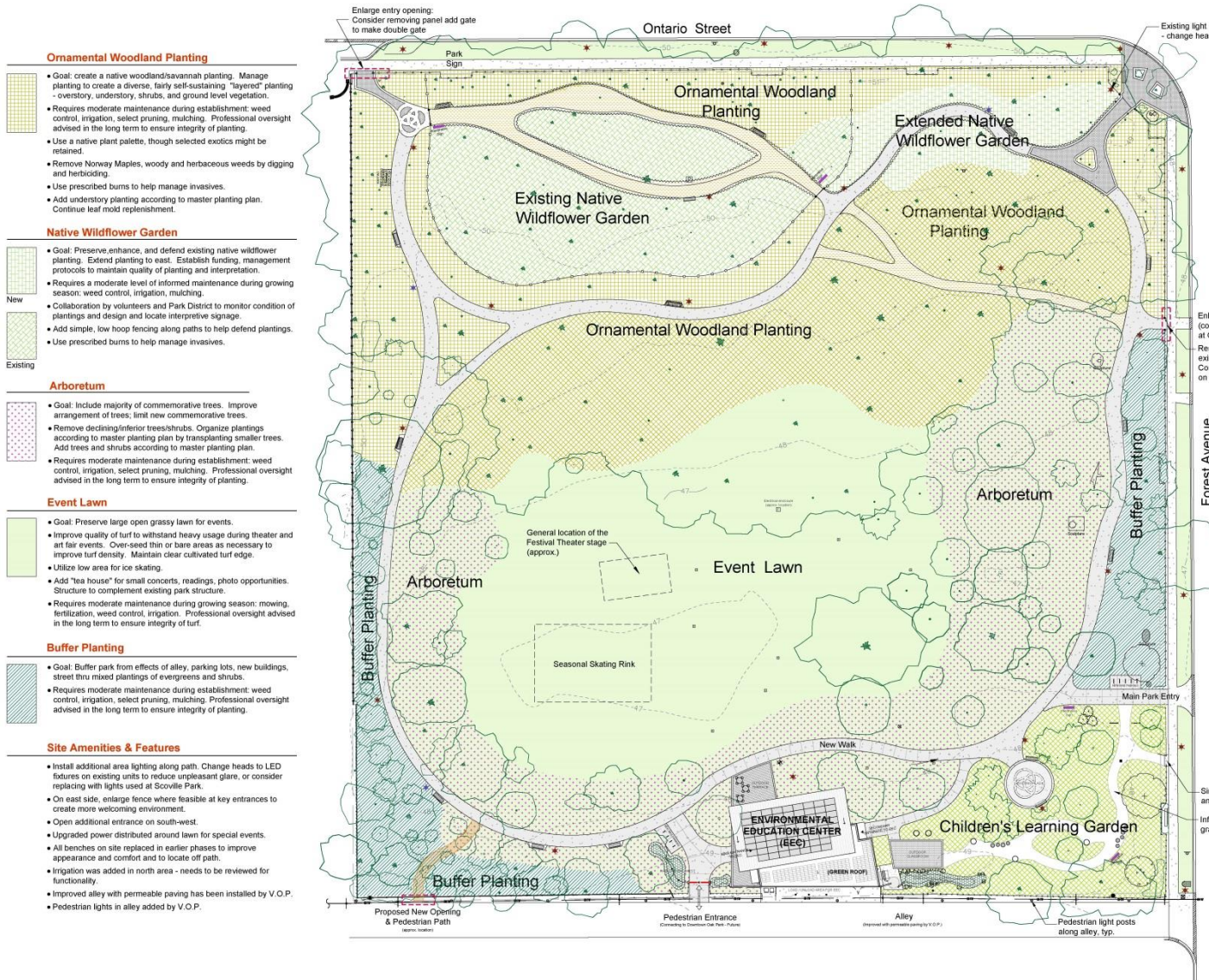


At 80 feet, proposed building would not shade Center at key times of year and would allow solar panels to function as planned.



At 125 feet, proposed building would shade Center at key times of year and would limit function of solar panels on roof.





Legend

- Property Line
- Existing gravel path to be re-surfaced as necessary
- Pavers to be re-laid to create flush surface.
- Existing concrete pavement
- Concrete sidewalk
- Gravel path
- Pavers
- Low loop fence
- Replaced bench
- New bike racks on concrete patios
- Interpretive sign
- South alley light posts
- New lights & posts
- Existing light posts
- Electrical handholes

(See Site Amenities for lighting recommendations)

New Conditions since 2005

- Shade is a major concern due to addition of 22-Story Apartment Building (Vantage Oak Park) at northeast corner of Forest Ave. and Lake St., and proposed building (8 to 12-Stories) planned for northwest corner of Forest Ave. and Lake St.

Environmental Education Center Building

- New multi-purpose building to house interpretive elements related to the natural and cultural history of the park, public restrooms, and limited event-related storage. Provides seasonal or event-related concessions also possible. Building can also serve as shelter. Building to have electrical, plumbing, and heating for year-round use.
- Additional paving would permit seating for picnics, craft events.
- Sustainable design features throughout the new building.

Children's Learning Garden

- Goal: Re-configure pedestrian entrance to park, relate circulation patterns to new building. Rehabilitate and enrich plantings, replace site furnishings to create a more coherent garden space.
- More attention to detail: diverse plantings with trees, shrubs, groundcovers, and flowers. Up-graded paving and site furnishings.
- Requires moderately-high maintenance during establishment and growing season: weed control, irrigation, select pruning, mulching. Limited professional oversight advised in the long term to ensure integrity of planting.
- Outdoor education space that relates to programming for the EEC.
- Shadow studies of new buildings show impact and may influence plant selection.



Thank you!

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