



# Chief Yelkus Park Concept Plan

*February 2024*



# Acknowledgments

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# Introduction



## PURPOSE STATEMENT

The Concept Plan for Chief Yelkus Park is a vision to lay the groundwork for future design refinement and construction phases of the park. The plan provides an understanding of the existing conditions, site opportunities and constraints, and conceptual design for what park improvements and amenities are possible at Chief Yelkus Park.

## BACKGROUND

Chief Yelkus Park is located in west Molalla. The park is surrounded by single family home developments to the north and southeast, housing to the south, open space to the southwest, industrial manufacturing to the northwest, a storage center to the north, Billy Sheets Field and BMX Track to the northeast, and a city public works facility to the east. The road bisecting the parkland, S Molalla Forest Road, currently is not driven on by the general public, and is used as part of a greater trail system. The undeveloped site is 6.86 total acres (5.07 acres west of S Molalla Forest Road and 1.79 acres east of the road).

## RELATED PLANS

Chief Yelkus Park planning and design efforts will be incorporated into the broader Molalla's Parks Recreation and Trails System Plan. The system plan, which will be completed in 2024, identifies needs, opportunities, and priorities citywide for park and recreation properties, amenities, programs, maintenance, funding sources, partnerships, and more.









# Existing Conditions

# SITE ANALYSIS

## Topography

The topography across the site is gradual and fairly constant. It generally slopes from a high point in the southern portion of the site toward a low point in the northern portion of the site.

## Vegetation

The site vegetation is comprised of two sections: the open pasture of the west site and the dense vegetation of the east site.

The northern half of the east site has a heavy tree canopy, while its southern half is overgrown with a thicket of shrubs and smaller trees. The west site, which previously housed horses, is an open field of overgrown grasses. Dispersed throughout the field are mature trees of varying health. About 2/3 of these trees are evergreen and 1/3 are deciduous. The highlight of these trees is a large mature oak in the northern portion which appears to be in excellent health.

## Wetlands

The City completed a wetland delineation report which made evident that a vast majority of the site is comprised of designated wetlands. The findings from this report determined that a majority of the site would remain untouched due to the inherent restrictions associated with construction within wetlands.

# OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

After documenting existing conditions, the site analysis phase of the planning process evaluated the aspects and qualities of the site environment in order to identify site opportunities and constraints.

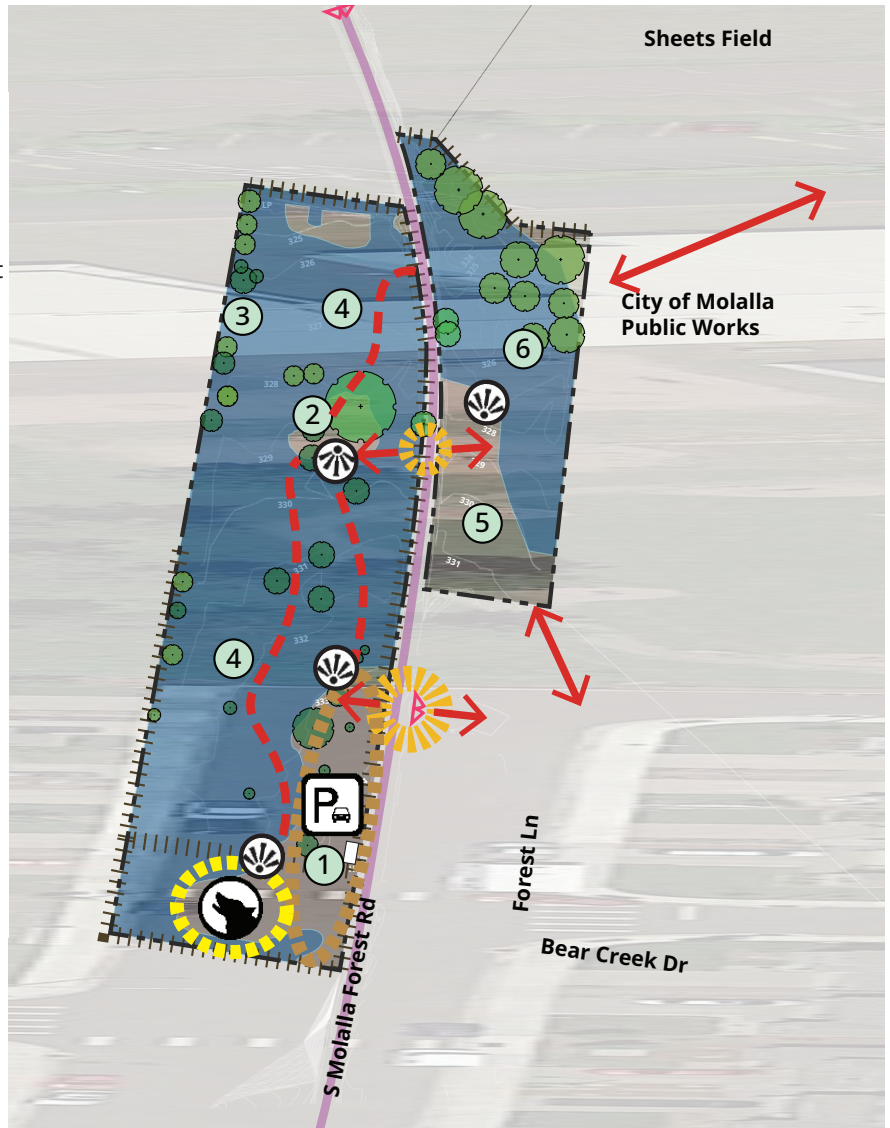
The area of the highest physical impact that is required on the site will be the parking. The largest portion of the site that can be developed without impacting the wetlands is in the southern portion, along S Molalla Forest Rd, so this area is a natural fit for the parking lot. Also, that area is large enough to place the other component with a larger footprint, the playground.

The tree with the highest interest, a large oak that has some space around it that is not in the wetlands, so this area is fit for some additional seating.

In order to minimize impact in the wetlands, the only elements being considered to be placed there are walkways. This is identified in the Opportunities & Constraints diagram by dashed lines. These lines identify possible paths to connect site elements and access viewpoints.

## LEGEND

- Project Site
- Existing Fence
- Existing Shared Bike / Ped Path
- # Area of Opportunity or Constraint
- Surveyed Wetland Zone
- Interior Circulation Opportunity
- Exterior Circulation Opportunity
- Major Node Opportunity
- Minor Node Opportunity
- Existing Trees
- Viewpoint Opportunity
- P Parking Opportunity
- 👤 Play Structure Opportunity



Pictured above is a graphic featuring the existing conditions at Chief Yelkus Park.

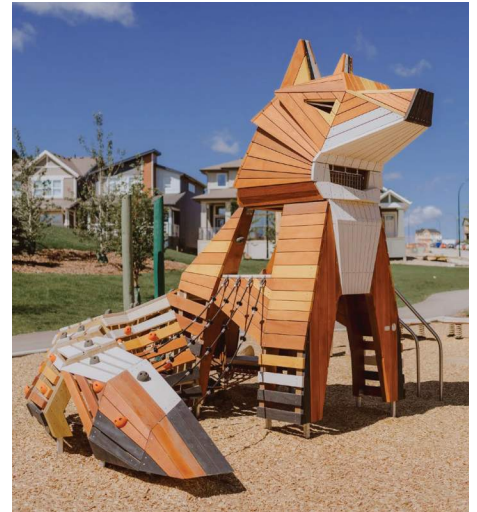
## OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <p><b>1 Main Site's Southern Portion along Road</b></p> <p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Largest site area outside of wetlands</li> <li>Near Forest Ln (possible entry)</li> <li>Parking</li> <li>Informational signage</li> <li>Entry signage</li> <li>Phase 1 development</li> </ul> <p><b>CONSTRAINTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Near residential properties</li> </ul> | <p><b>3 Northern West Site Boundary</b></p> <p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Buffer plantings</li> <li>Phase 1 development</li> </ul> <p><b>CONSTRAINTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large building abutting property</li> <li>At the main noise source of site</li> </ul>  | <p><b>5 Eastern Site - Southern Portion</b></p> <p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large site area outside of wetlands</li> <li>Connection to main site &amp; neighborhood</li> <li>Educational signage</li> <li>Phase 2 development</li> </ul> <p><b>CONSTRAINTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Noise from Public Works</li> <li>Disconnected from Main Site by road</li> <li>Shrubs need to be cleared for usage</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>2 Main Central Tree</b></p> <p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gathering space</li> <li>Unobstructed views</li> <li>Outside of wetland zone</li> <li>Phase 1 development</li> </ul> <p><b>CONSTRAINTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Near noise source</li> </ul>  | <p><b>4 Main Site - Wetlands</b></p> <p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revegetate with wetland/native plantings for education</li> <li>Pathways - boardwalk or raised path</li> <li>Educational signage</li> <li>Phase 1 development</li> </ul> <p><b>CONSTRAINTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wetlands</li> </ul> | <p><b>6 Eastern Site - Northern Portion</b></p> <p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Possible secondary entry</li> <li>Pathways - boardwalk or raised path</li> <li>Phase 2 development</li> </ul> <p><b>CONSTRAINTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mostly wetlands, except NE corner</li> <li>Noise from Public Works</li> <li>Disconnected from main site by road</li> </ul>  |



PROTECTED  
WETLAND  
DO NOT  
ENTER

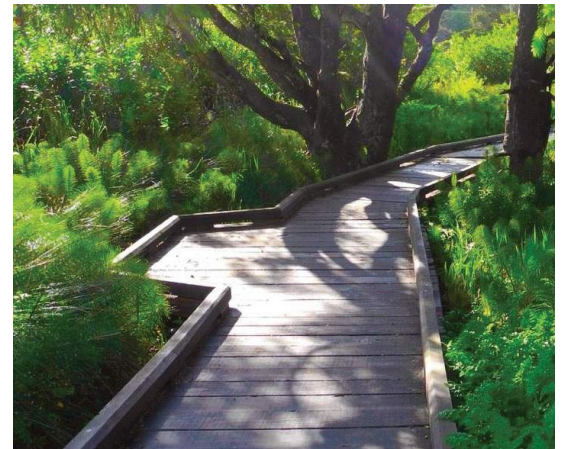
# Design Process



Pictured above are playground precedents and options. Top left is an example of nature themed playground elements. Top right is a animal themed play structure from Earthscape. Bottom is a coyote themed play structure from Earthscape.

## PLAYGROUND

The coyote is understood to be a significant animal to the Molalla people. Implementing a coyote themed play structure has been determined by the community to be a foundational element for the park. As the design process continues, the design team will work collaboratively with Earthscape to craft a similar, yet unique coyote play structure based on the images shown above. The coyote will be the main focus of the play area however, additional nature play themed elements will be included to provide a variety of play features for all.



Pictured above are restroom enclosure options for Chief Yelkus Park.

Pictured above are examples of a boardwalk at Yachats Community Park

## RESTROOM ENCLOSURE

Public restrooms are a community need and are critical to the success of park facilities. The design team and City discussed and reviewed various types of restrooms and determined that a single, portable ADA accessible restroom was the preferred choice for the park (based on existing utility infrastructure, maintenance, and cost). It was also determined that the portable restroom should be housed in a structure that is visually appealing and blends with the design and materiality of the park. The enclosure will allow for site signage while also protecting the portable restroom from being moved or pushed over (minimizing vandalism). Various example steel and wood enclosures were reviewed with the lower right-hand image above being selected as the preferred style to move forward to the next design phase.

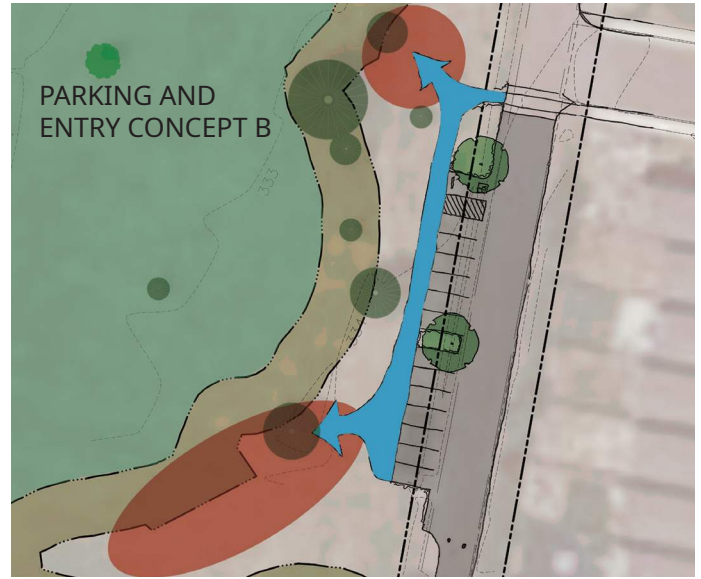
## BOARDWALK

With a large percentage of the available land at Chief Yelkus Park designated as wetlands, development within these areas will focus on walkways and educational overlooks. The walkways are intended to be raised boardwalks or light impact paved paths. The paths will be fully accessible to allow all users access to these areas. Example images of boardwalk style paths at Yachats Community Park were well received by the City and were determined to be the preferred approach to move forward to the next design phase.



## PARKING AND ENTRY CONCEPT LEGEND

- Parking Area
- Pedestrian Circulation
- Opportunity Zone
- Delineated Wetland
- Wetland 25' Buffer



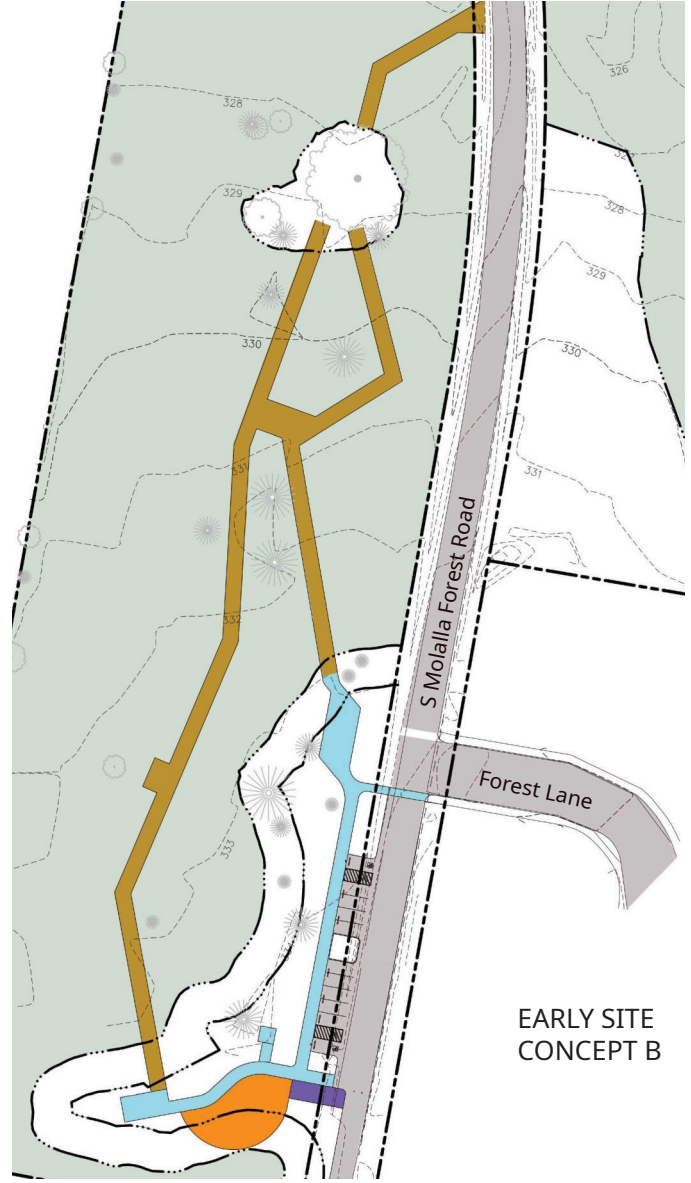
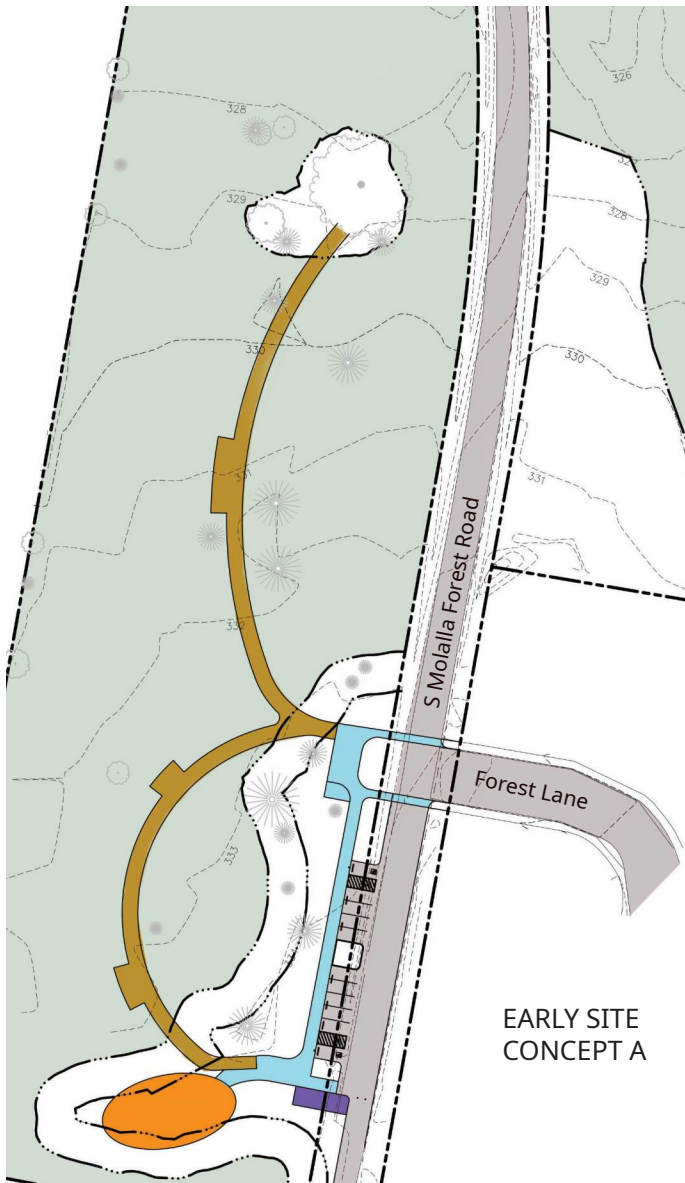
Pictured above are various parking and entry concepts for Chief Yelkus Park.

## PARKING AND ENTRY CONCEPTS

Determining the size of the parking area and its relationship to the park entry were critically important to the design of the remaining park features. Several iterations for the size and location of the parking were presented for review, discussion, and feedback. Concept A was selected as the preferred option based on the amount of parking, the separation of parking to allow for spaces near the park entry as well as the play area, and the potential for storm water collection within the planter islands.

## CONCEPTUAL PLAN LEGEND

 Roadway / Parking	 Bike Parking
 Pedestrian Pathway	 Delineated Wetland
 Play Zone	 Path in Wetland Zone



Pictured above are the graphics for Early Concept A and Early Concept B for Chief Yelkus Park.

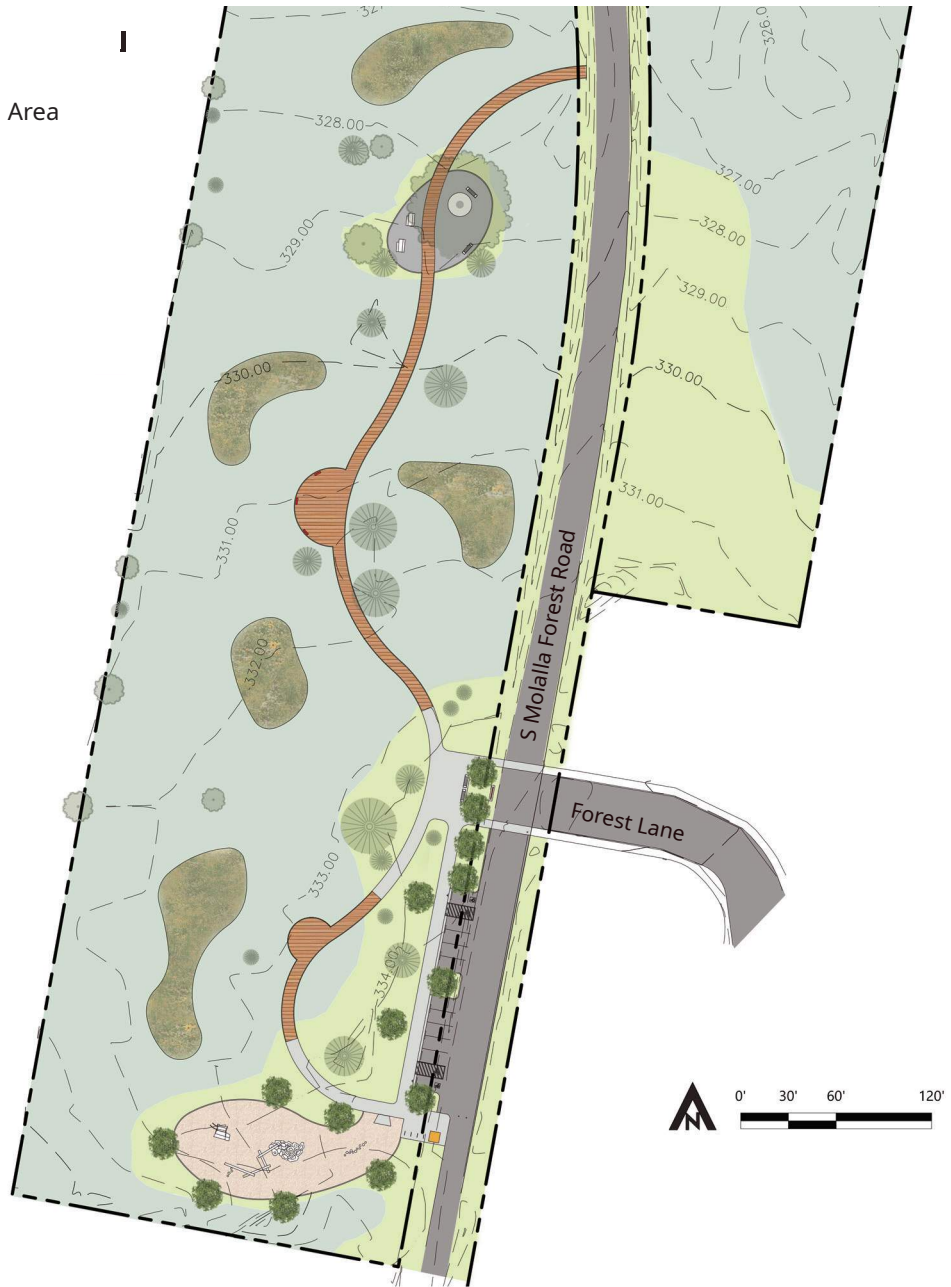
## EARLY SITE CONCEPTS

Following the selection of the parking and entry concept, the design team created early site concepts that explored pedestrian circulation locations and forms as well as playground placement and shape. The concepts also began to look at plaza and wayside locations and placement of the restroom. Of these early site concepts many elements from Concept A were preferred by the City. These included the overall curved forms creating a softer design language, the playground holding its own space, the two segments of the boardwalk path converging at the Forest Lane entry, and the waysides being dispersed throughout the path. Although Concept A was preferred overall there was one design element from Concept B that was preferred: the boardwalk path connecting to S. Molalla Road north of the large oak tree.

With this information and direction, the design team developed two draft concept plans that are shown on the following two pages.

## DRAFT CONCEPT PLAN LEGEND

- Enhanced Wetland Plantings
- Existing Designated Wetland Area
- Vegetation
- Existing Trees
- New Trees
- Crushed Roch Surface
- Play Area
- Boardwalk
- Concrete Walk
- Roadway / Parking
- Accessible Restroom
- Tables and Benches
- Signage



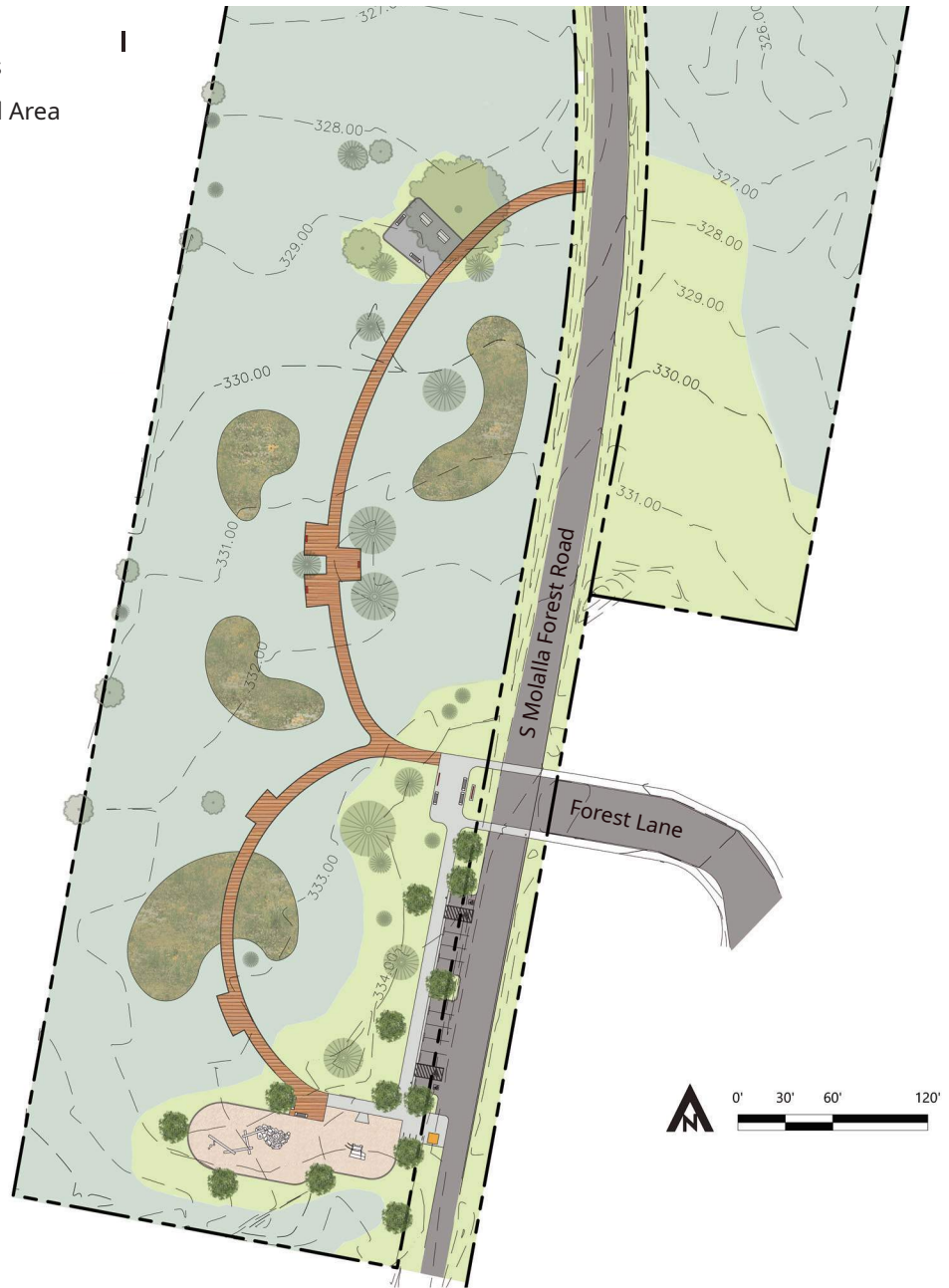
Pictured above is the Draft Concept A for Chief Yelkus Park.

## DRAFT CONCEPT A

Draft Concept A is the preferred design option by the City. In particular the City preferred the following items:

- Use of standard concrete paving for paths outside of wetland areas to reduce cost while providing variety in materials and enhancing the paths that are in the wetland.
- Design of less boardwalk path between the park entry and play area to minimize construction impact to the wetland.
- The organic design of the play area.
- The curving nature of the paths.

- DRAFT CONCEPT PLAN LEGEND**
- Enhanced Wetland Plantings
  - Existing Designated Wetland Area
  - Vegetation
  - Existing Trees
  - New Trees
  - Crushed Roch Surface
  - Play Area
  - Boardwalk
  - Concrete Walk
  - Roadway / Parking
  - Accessible Restroom
  - Tables and Benches
  - Signage



Pictured above is the Draft Concept B for Chief Yelkus Park.

## DRAFT CONCEPT B

Draft Concept B was not selected as the preferred design option by the City. However, the City preferred the following items from this option be incorporated into the final design:

- The smaller gathering area under/near the large oak tree.
- The boardwalk path connection at the north end of the park to allow for a future connection to the east park area. This includes the boardwalk curving to the south of the oak tree rather than extending further north.
- The enhanced wetland plantings extending under the new boardwalk in at least one location.





# Final Concept Plan

The Final Concept Plan includes improvements that will benefit the community and increase usable park land within Molalla while also enhancing and protecting the habitat and vegetation within the site. Key elements of the plan are described below:

### Paths and Entrances

Accessible entrances and a network of paths are proposed throughout the park to improve neighbourhood access and provide continuity throughout the site and its amenities. There are three entrance locations along S Molalla Forest Rd. The primary entrance is at the intersection of Forest Lane. The secondary entrance is at the southern edge of the site, where the S Molalla Forest Rd trail transitions from bike and pedestrian only, to shared use. The tertiary entrance (informal) is to the north of the primary entrance and leads to the large oak on site. Path materials include concrete and wood (boardwalk). All paths are intended to be eight feet wide and fully accessible to all.

### Parking

There are 11 total vehicular parking spaces proposed, with 2 being ADA compliant. One accessible spot is located at the main entrance and the other is located near the playground. Additionally, there are 4 proposed bike racks located at the southern portion of the site, adjacent to the restroom (where the parking area and drive transitions to the pedestrian path/trail). A network of paths can be accessed easily from the parking zone.

### Enhanced Wetland Plantings

Areas along the boardwalk are designated for enhanced wetland plantings. These pockets of enhanced planting with adjacent signage will help educate visitors about wetland plants and their uses.

### Play Area

The playground area is located at the southern portion of the site and features natural materials including boulders and logs to provide opportunities for play. In addition to the natural inspired play elements a coyote themed play structure will be the primary play feature and provide a unique beacon to represent the park, Chief Yelkus, and the Molalla people.

### Accessible Restroom

An accessible restroom is located at the southern edge of the site along S Molalla Forest Road (where the road transitions from a trail with no cars to a shared use road). A shelter will be built to enclose the portable restroom. The adjacent parking area will provide access for maintenance and care of the restroom facility.

### Tables and Benches

Individual park style benches can be found at the primary entrance, at a boardwalk gathering area (between the entrance and large oak), and near the large oak. Accessible tables with benches can be found beside the playground and large oak.

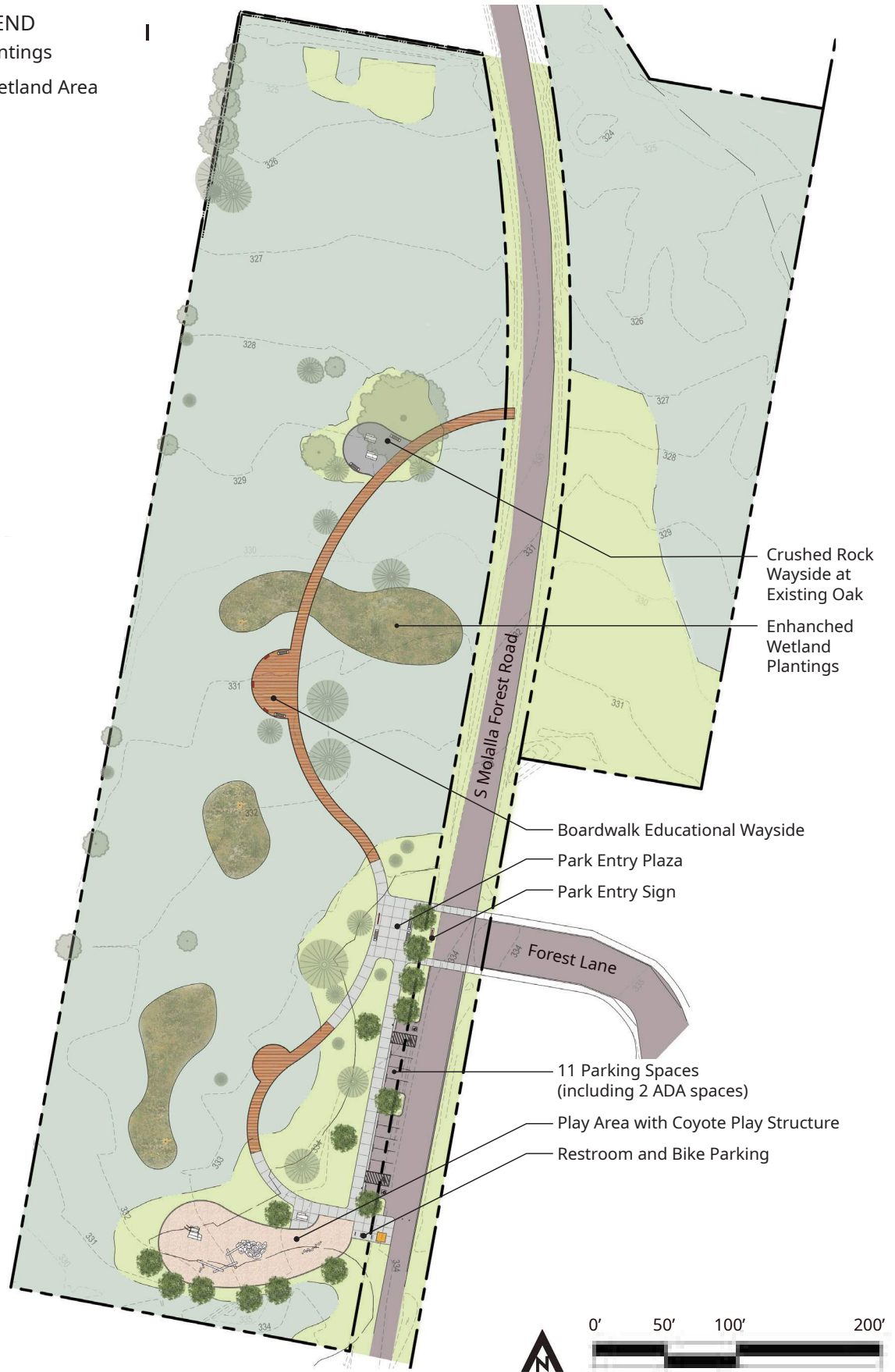
### Signage

A main park sign is to be located at the primary entrance at Forest Lane. Informational signage is proposed at the main park plaza, and at the boardwalk gathering area (between the primary entrance and the large oak). Additional informational signage will be placed near the playground as well as other key areas within the park.

## FINAL CONCEPT PLAN

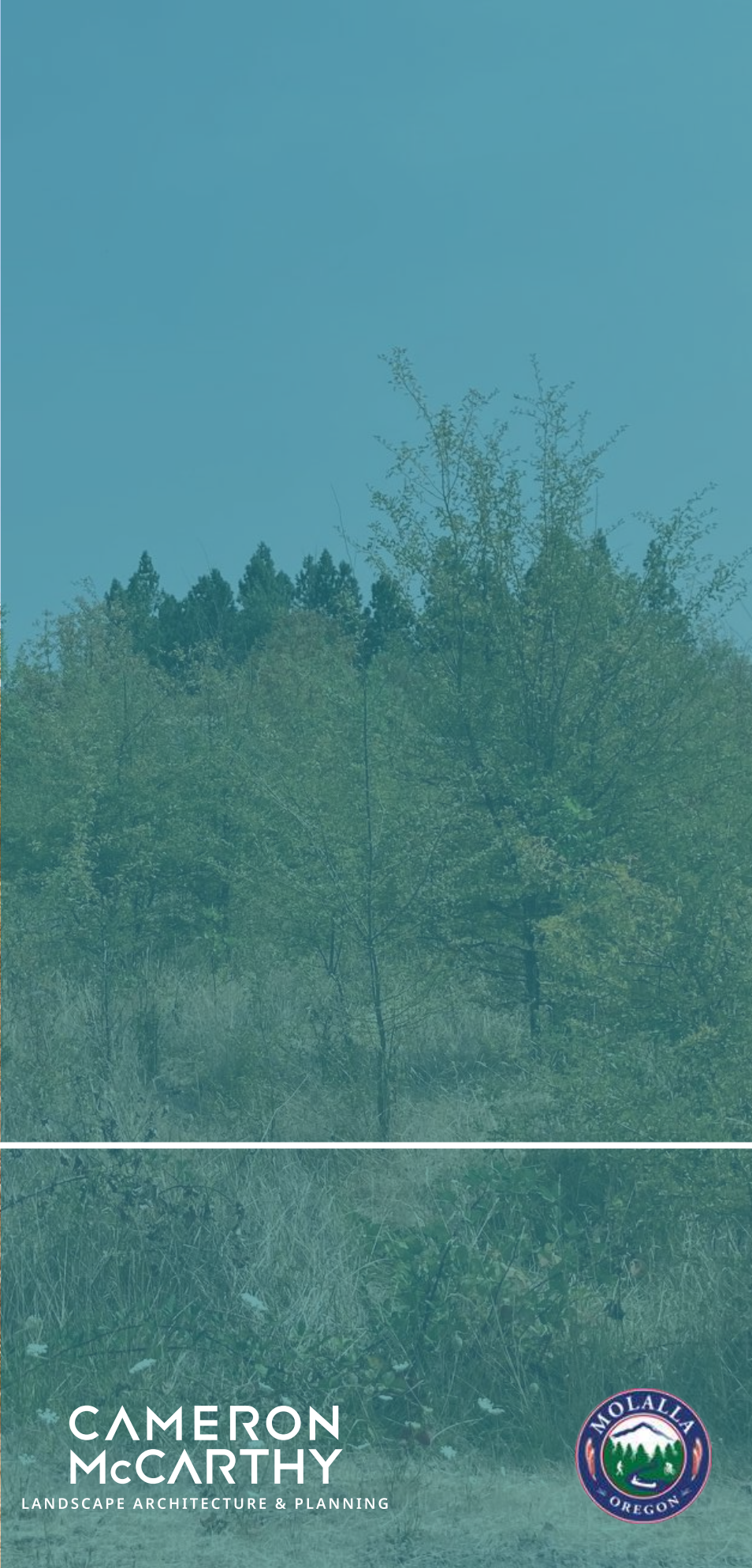
**FINAL CONCEPT PLAN LEGEND**

- Enhanced Wetland Plantings
- Existing Designated Wetland Area
- Vegetation
- Existing Trees
- New Trees
- Crushed Rock Surface
- Play Area
- Boardwalk
- Concrete Walk
- Roadway / Parking
- Accessible Restroom
- Tables and Benches
- Signage



**FINAL CONCEPT PLAN**





**CAMERON  
McCARTHY**

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING

