

PLANT & PLAY CASTLEWOOD PARK

Conceptual Design
Package February 2018



G R E S H A M
S M I T H A N D
P A R T N E R S

DRAFT

THE SITE

NORTH LIMESTONE
NEIGHBORHOOD

CASTLEWOOD
PARK

SITE

ARLINGTON
ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL

THE LOUDON HOUSE

THE BARN

BRYAN AVENUE

HIGHLAND PARK DRIVE

CASTLEWOOD AQUATIC CENTER

PARK VIEW AVENUE

EXISTING CONDITIONS

OPEN SPACE



ENTRY DRIVE



BIOSWALE



BIOSWALE



SHELTER / DRIVE



ADA PLAYGROUND





BARN
USED FOR SUMMER CAMP
AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

EXISTING
TREE CANOPY

CASTLEWOOD PARK

Castlewood Park is a 32-acre park located near downtown Lexington (1st District) and is one of the city's oldest parks. The park consists of three ball fields, tennis courts, and aquatic center, community center and the historic Loudoun House.

Our site within the park is located on the south end. The site is very open with large, mature trees providing shade in the warmer months. As one of the lower spots in the park, there are bioswale areas to help collect and filter excess runoff from heavy rain events. There are also two structures on site that are used for summer camp activities and an ADA accessible playground. The site is currently underutilized and somewhat forgotten about, but has great potential as a promising location for an **ADVENTURE PARK**.

ACCESS PATH

GENTLE SLOPES



BIOSWALE

PROPERTY LINE

OPEN SPACE



In 2017, North Limestone Community Development Corporation recieved the Knight Foundation's Cities Challenge Award for their proposal to build an adventure playscape and community garden in Castlewood Park, a 32-acre neighborhood park on the north end of Lexington.



Designed with healthy outcomes, imaginative play and physical activity in mind, PLANT & PLAY creates an accessible and edible one-acre playscape to be enjoyed by low-income neighbors whose doors literally open onto the space. The natural playscape and maintained garden becomes a new front yard for kids and grownups to use from sunup to sundown. In addition, this park addresses serious storm water issues by correcting current flood conditions.

SO...WHAT IS FREE PLAY?



Historically, play spaces have consisted of typical prefabricated, post-and-platform structures where the activities are directed - swing on swings, slide on slides, etc. With free play, children are allowed to use their imagination to play however they want. It is that easy!

[Westmoreland Nature Play Area, Portland, Oregon, 2014](#)

By providing the materials and throwing out the traditional rules, children are able to explore a new type of play environment. Free play allows for personal direction and freedom to choose how one interacts with the space. Children can test their limits and learn to set goals and achieve them through climbing to greater heights, reaching faster speeds and exploring or “getting lost”.

HEALTHY CHILDREN HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

NURTURING



THE NATURE OF PLAY



REIMAGINING



EXPLORING

To kick off the community workshop, NoLi CDC partnered up with Claude Stephens, director of the Children at Play Network at Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest in Clermont, Kentucky. Specializing in nature play and free play, Claude and his team at CAPN provided insight and direction on the importance of allowing children to explore their imagination through nature. To learn more, please visit childrenatplaynetwork.com

Children at Play Network objectives:

- BUILD A NETWORK OF REGIONAL EXPERTISE THAT CAN FOCUS ON INCREMENTAL AND ONGOING SUPPORT FOR IMPROVING OUTDOOR PLAY ENVIRONMENTS.
- FACILITATE THE CREATION OF AMAZING OUTDOOR PLAY ENVIRONMENTS THAT CONNECT CHILDREN WITH NATURE FOR LIFE.
- HELP WHOLE COMMUNITIES CREATE OUTDOOR PLAY ENVIRONMENTS SO THAT ALL CHILDREN HAVE HEALTHY OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLORE THEIR NATURAL WORLD.



DESIGN PROCESS

Throughout the day, discussions and workshops were conducted with early childhood education professionals, teachers, parents, and most importantly, the children that are out there playing.



STUDENTS AT ARLINGTON ELEMENTARY



The day began at Arlington Elementary School, where a handful of students presented their idea of the perfect adventure playground. It was great to see their enthusiasm and hear their thoughts on how they like to play outside.



GROUP 1

- FLOWER GARDENS
- OBBY OBSTACLE COURSE
- TREEHOUSE



GROUP 2

- FISH POND
- TREE HOUSES
- JUNGLE GYMS

CONCEPTS

OPTION 1



OPTION 1 allows the user to get lost in the fun town mulch mounds, where they can continue through to walk the planks! The user can then continue on through the wetland walk and play in rock island.

OPTION 2



OPTION 2 allows the user to challenge themselves through the obby obstacle course. They can then continue on to the bioswale area where they can play in the mud pit. As they continue through the park, they will have to traverse through the mystic maze.

OPTION 3



OPTION 3 allows the user to gain a higher advantage point as they run and climb through the mound meadows. With a large free play area, the user can play freely or climb tree parts scattered throughout the space. continue through the park, they will have to traverse through the mystic maze.



EVENING WORKSHOP

Heading back to Arlington Elementary for the evening workshop, the students got to present to friends, family and other community members as well as see the concepts that were developed. A brief presentation was given on the design process and the benefits of nature play.

rd!



[Unreadable paper posted on the wall]





OPTION 1

like an infinite as
threshold - maybe
this happens in
more than one place
energy drink?

Great

Love the
water areas!!

↑

I Second this!

Love the
water areas!!

↑

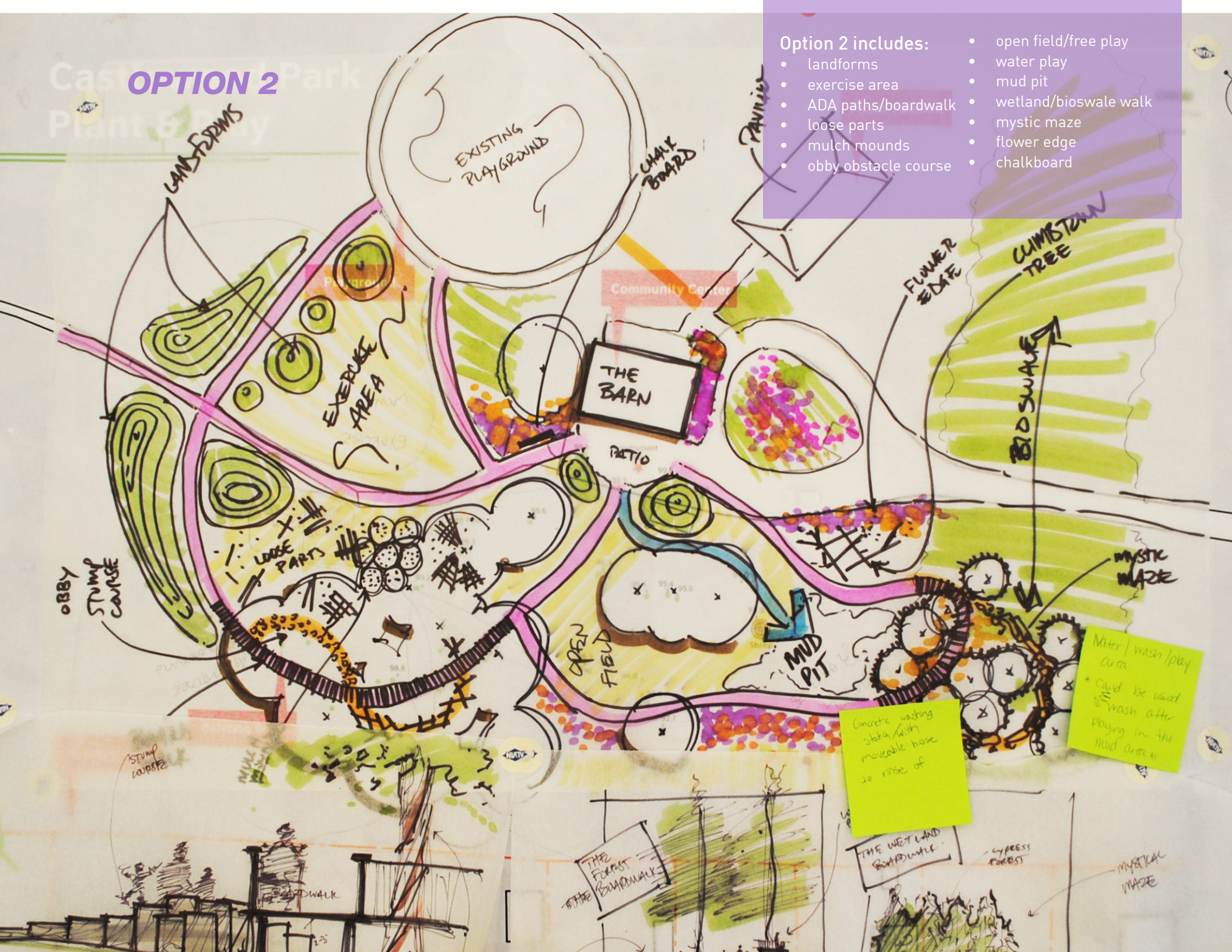
I Second this!

Cassidy Park Planting

OPTION 2

Option 2 includes:

- landforms
- exercise area
- ADA paths/boardwalk
- loose parts
- mulch mounds
- obby obstacle course
- open field/free play
- water play
- mud pit
- wetland/bioswale walk
- mystic maze
- flower edge
- chalkboard

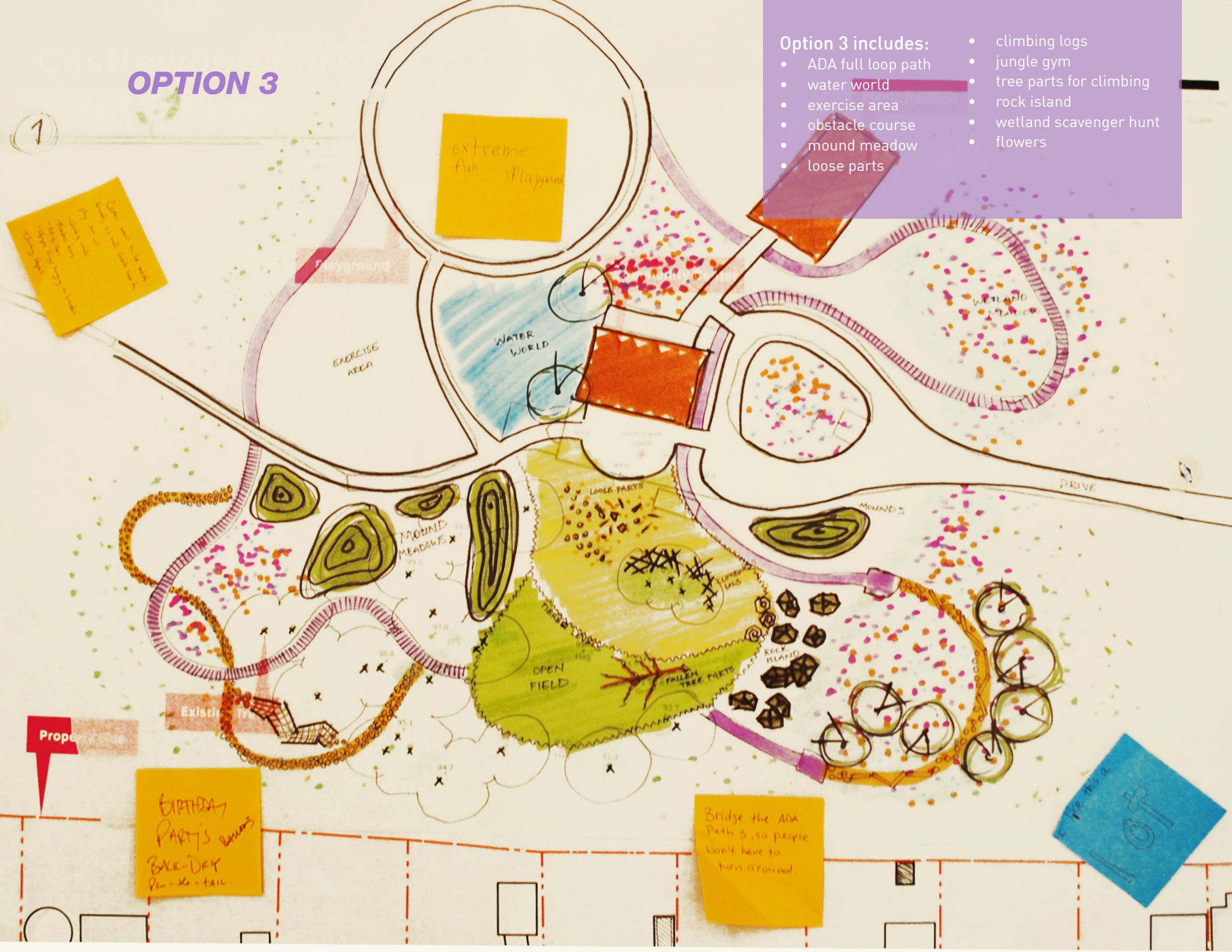


OPTION 3

Option 3 includes:

- ADA full loop path
- water world
- exercise area
- obstacle course
- mound meadow
- loose parts

- climbing logs
- jungle gym
- tree parts for climbing
- rock island
- wetland scavenger hunt
- flowers



PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

After speaking with community members and getting feedback from the workshop, a preferred alternative has been developed that includes amenities and opportunities that will allow the user to engage in new ways while playing.

The **PLANT N PLAY ADVENTURE PARK** will provide activities that will challenge the user to think creatively, solve problems, work together and interact with one another while climbing, running, jumping, crawling and exploring the park.

- 1 EARTHWORK MOUNDS
- 2 MULCH MOUNTAINS
- 3 LOOSE PARTS
- 4 OBBY OBSTACLE COURSE-STUMPS
- 5 SILLY TREEHOUSE-JUNGLE GYM
- 6 ROCK ISLAND
- 7 MYSTIC MAZE-CYPRESS RAIN GARDEN
- 8 CLIMBING TREE



CYPRESS HILL

POP-UP
EVENT SPACE

EXISTING ADA
PLAYGROUND

SHELTER

BUTTERFLY
GARDEN

2

PLAZA

EXERCISE
AREA

BARN

PARKING

1

3

5

FREE PLAY

8

6

7

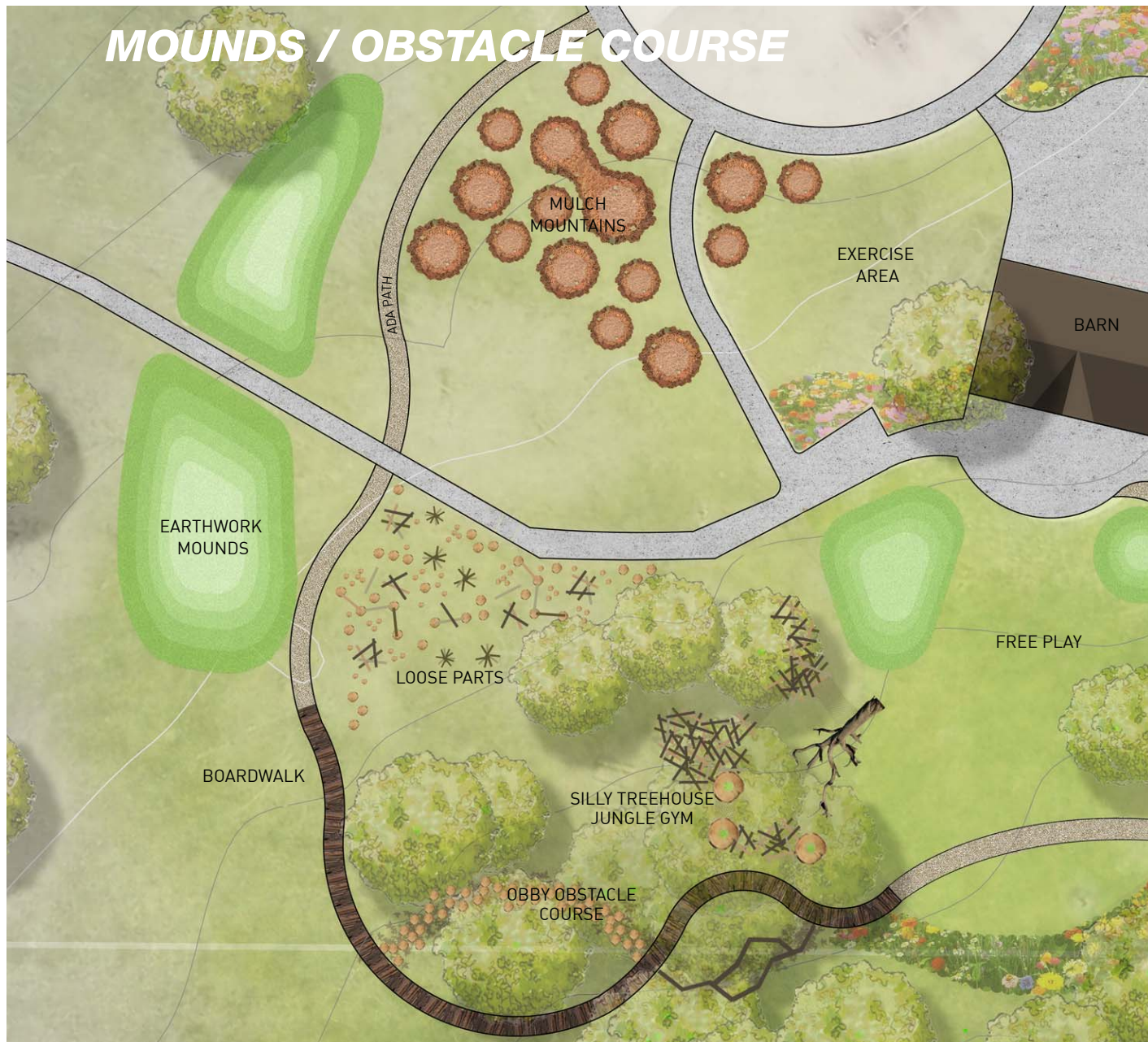
BOARDWALK

4

HIGHLAND PARK DRIVE

NORTH





Beginning your play experience through large mounds provides a great vantage point to see what awaits. As you begin to travel along the path and onto the boardwalk, you will encounter loose parts where you can construct the ultimate vessel, or dare to complete the obby obstacle course and hang around the silly treehouse and jungle gym.



As you continue through the park you will find a large open space to run as fast as you can to chase your fellow explorers. You may find friends climbing around rock island or playing in the mystic maze, where you can play with water and learn more about the importance and functions of a rain garden. Don't forget to climb on the tree parts that allow the user to climb trees in a whole new way.



BUTTERFLY GARDEN



POP-UP EVENT - MUD PIT



POP-UP EVENT



POP-UP EVENT

See how many insects you can spot along the butterfly rain garden as you continue on towards the pop-up event space. One week there may be a huge mud pit to roll around in, and the next be home to towering box structures to be constructed and deconstructed. If you can think of a new activity to have in the park, this is the place to make it happen.

MOVING FORWARD

There will be continued efforts to meet and discuss the opportunity with stakeholders and Lexington Parks and Recreation. The alternative will continue to be refined and further discussions to prioritize how to phase in certain components at certain times. expectations are for implementation to be completed by 2018.

