

TOWN OF READING

Birch Meadow Park Master Plan Phase I - Project Funding Request

Town Meeting April 27, 2023



PRESENTED BY:
Richard Hand
Genevieve Fiorente
Emily Sisson



PROJECT HISTORY / TIMELINE

2 0 0 7

FORMED MASTER PLAN SUBCOMMITTEE

The plan has been revisited and reviewed multiple times in the capital planning process (2007 – 2009 and 2014 – 2015).

2 0 1 8 - 2 0 1 9

RECREATION COMMITTEE APPOINTS BMMP WORKING GROUP

Group revisits existing Master Plan and makes recommendations based on recreational trends and community input. A community survey was sent out in December of 2018 and over 1,000 responses were received in 2019.

2 0 2 0 - 2 0 2 1

ACTIVITAS IS RETAINED BY THE TOWN OF READING

The mission of the Master Plan update was to create a community-based recreation and open space plan for the acres of land within the Birch Meadow footprint. Final report included 64 pages of a detailed conceptual plan.

2 0 2 2

PHASE I DESIGN WORK BEGINS

Activitas starts work with the Town of Reading on identified multiple critical projects and starts Phase I Design Work for Birch Meadow Park. Recreation presents in front of the RAAC Committee multiple times and is awarded \$1.5 Million in ARPA funding for Birch Meadow Master Plan Phase I.



2019 COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

Top Desired Improvements:

- **Restrooms**
- **Passive Recreation Paths**

2020-2021 STAKEHOLDER AND USER GROUP INTERVIEW RESULTS

The top reoccurring focus areas were:

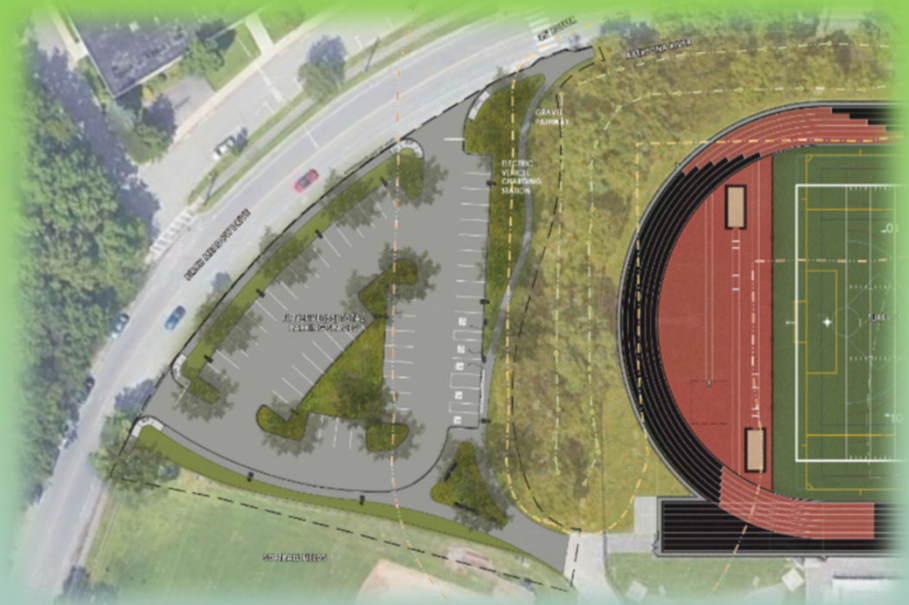
- **Lighting** (more lighting at fields and walkways)
- **More Passive Recreation Opportunities** (walkways, path and unprogrammed space)
- **Restrooms/Pavilion Building**
- **More Parking**

Birch Meadow Park – Phase I

New parking area on Birch Meadow Drive



EXISTING CONDITIONS

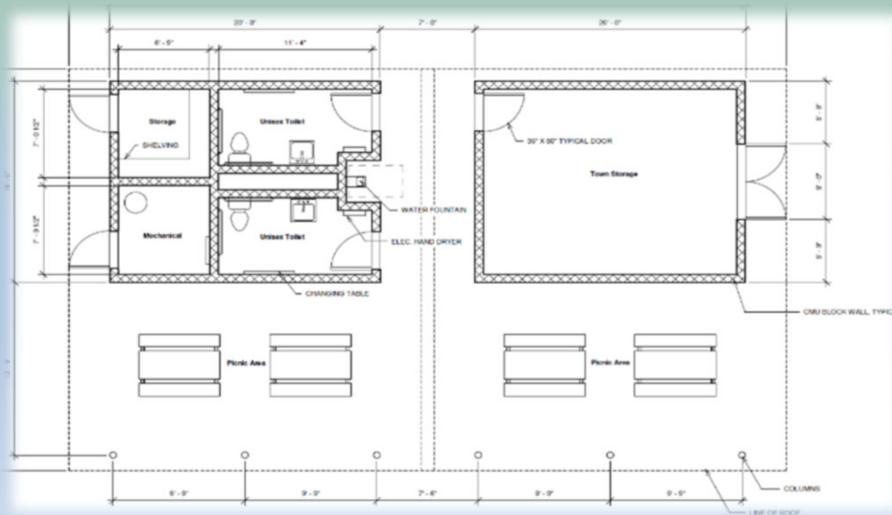


- Delineated lined parking spots with the lot meeting ADA compliance
- Designated entry and exit points
- Safety Lighting
- Environmental improvements with drainage/storm water management as well as electric car charging stations
- Improved walking area along Aberjona
- There will be a total of about 55 parking spaces
- Creates a safe drop-off and pick-up area for Coolidge Middle School
- Lot function and design included town, school and police collaboration

Birch Meadow Park – Phase I Pavilion & Central Spine Walkway

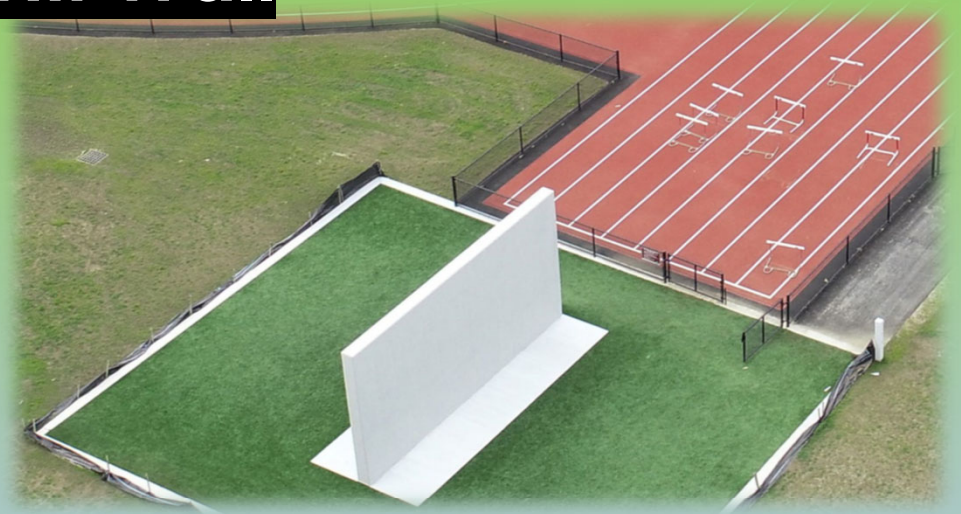


- Overall pavilion area (roof limits, structures, picnic area) is 1,800 SF. Storage and restrooms structures total about 650 SF.
- Mechanical Room upgrades capability for lights on Driscoll Field as well as potential future lighting projects throughout the Park.
- Outside Picnic Area/Gathering space
- Central spine will be a safe ADA compliant walkway of a quarter of a mile with low level pedestrian lighting
- Many walk or bike to and from sporting events, school, etc. through the park
- Most current Open Space & Recreation Plan shows same feedback from community for more areas for walking and biking



Birch Meadow Park – Phase I Lacrosse Hit Wall

- Youth Lacrosse has tried to donate a hit wall project several times in the past and it has been put on hold due to uncertainty of Master Plan
- Enhances the practice capabilities for both High School and Youth organizations. (Baseball and Softball already have batting cages that are highly used for skill development.)
- For beginners and youth players, this is the most fundamental and important skill to practice every day.
- Advanced and elite players dedicate time to hitting the wall every day to maintain their stick skills.
- Can be used recreationally for wall ball when not being utilized by organized sports
- Towns in MA with Hit Walls → Winchester, Lincoln-Sudbury, Medfield, Hingham



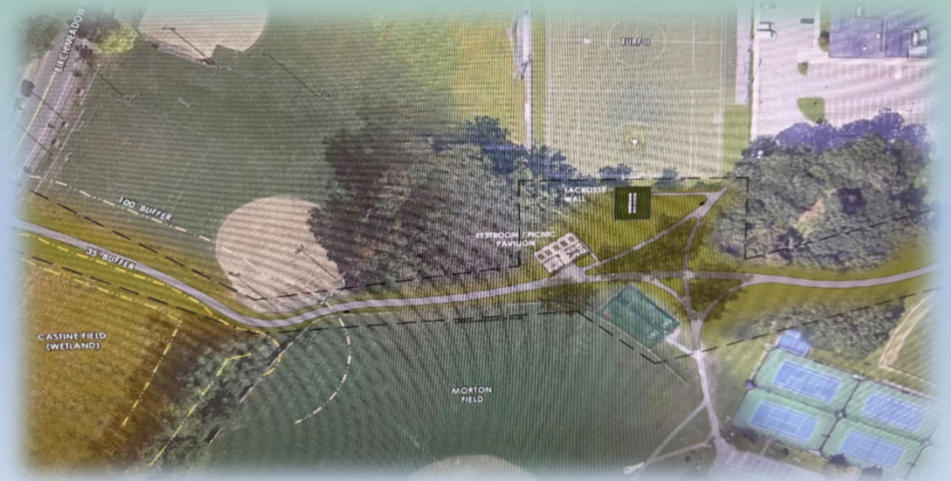
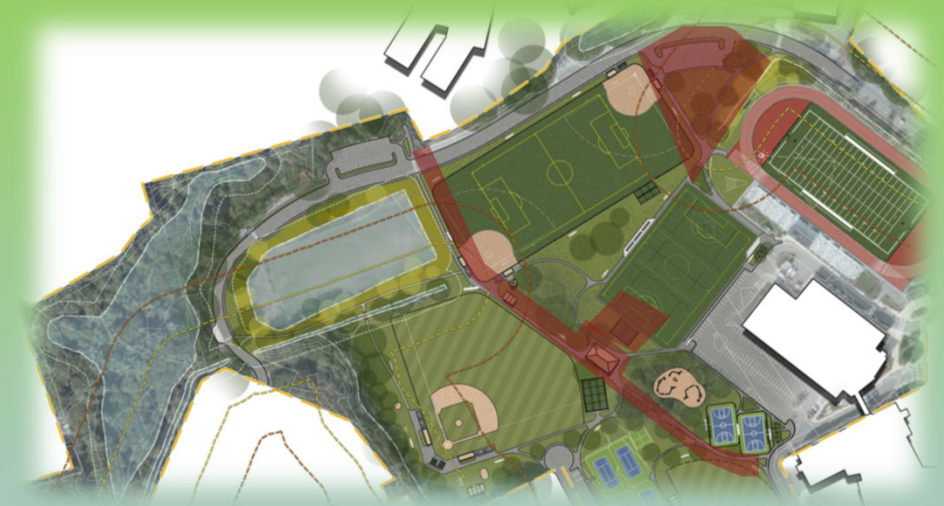
Birch Meadow Park – Phase I

SUMMARIZING CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE ITEMS

- Restructuring the parking area Coolidge/Imagination Station parking lot which includes designated parking spots, electric charging stations, safety lighting, and improvements to walking and conservation areas abutting the lot
- Pavilion with restrooms, storage and picnic area
- Central Spine Walkway with low level pedestrian lights
- Lacrosse Hit Wall

WHY INFRASTRUCTURE?

- Creating safe and accessible areas for our community to park and walk while utilizing multiple areas of our park is of the utmost importance
- Gives us the opportunity to focus on our open space and conservation areas by restoring structure and function
- Passive Recreation and a Restroom Facility have been priorities of our community in the past 3 surveys since 2007
- Recommended by the Consultant, Activitas, as the best starting point for phasing. Recommendation also supported by the BMMP Working Group and Recreation Committee.



Birch Meadow Park Phase I Project Funding



- Bids were over the \$1.5 Million from ARPA. Recreation Committee discussed asking Town Meeting for the remaining funds for the entirety of the project.
- Requesting 20% Contingency to anticipate unknowns
- FINCOM supports and recommends taking funds from existing projects that no longer need the funds and a portion of the 40R Incentive Account.

Birch Meadow Phase I Project Costs	
Parking Lot, Corridor, Lighting, Benches	\$ 1,349,900.00
Pavillion, including restrooms	\$ 787,000.00
Police Details and Architect Cost	\$ 159,845.00
Contingency - 20%	\$ 423,255.00
TOTAL	\$ 2,720,000.00

Birch Meadow Phase I Project Funding Sources	
ARPA Funds	\$ 1,500,000.00
Parker Middle Roof Project	\$ 600,000.00
Police Station Renovation	\$ 180,000.00
40R District Incentive Payments	\$ 440,000.00
TOTAL	\$ 2,720,000.00

THANK YOU!

