



C I T Y O F
RENO

Memorandum

DATE: May 8, 2025

TO: Mayor and City Council

THROUGH: Jackie Bryant, City Manager

FROM: Nathan Ullyot, Parks and Recreation Director
Karina Mercier, Project Manager – Park Planner

DEPT: Parks and Recreation

SUBJECT: Wingfield Park, Whitewater Park, and Barbara Bennett Park Master Plan

The Parks and Recreation department started the Master Plan process for Wingfield, Whitewater and Barabara Bennett Parks to guide planning and improvements at these parks which are highly valued by the community and centrally located in the heart of Downtown Reno. The department identified the need to prepare this master plan in preparation for the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) Arlington Avenue Bridges replacement project to consider the project's impacts on the park and coordinate improvement of the parks if possible. In September of 2022, Council approved an agreement for professional services selecting Stantec Consulting to develop the Master Plan in the amount of \$139,100.

The development process for this Master Plan included several rounds data collection and public input which included:

- Site visits and analysis of existing park conditions.
- Review of recommendations within the Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS). Master Plan and the Reimagine Reno Master Plan related to Wingfield and Barbara Bennett Parks.
- Presentation at the Ward 1 Neighborhood Advisory Board (January 2023).
- Stakeholder meetings: Whitewater Park and river users (March 2023), special events organizers and promoters (April 2023).
- Internal feedback meetings with City Public Works, Planning and Development, Utility Services and Park Maintenance staff.
- Three rounds of online community surveys.

- Two public workshops to present the conceptual plan designs and the preferred plan.
- Recreation and Parks Commission meeting to review draft plan (January 2025).

Details of the public feedback throughout this process are available within the plan document, including stakeholder comments and survey results (pages 22-27). Contained within this memo is a broad overview of elements included in the Master Plan documents for each of the parks. The complete Master Plan design and enlargements showing each park are available within the plan on pages 33-37.

Wingfield Park



WINGFIELD PARK LEGEND <i>(all keynotes with green outline/letters)</i>	
(A) Permanent Signature Bandshell Structure w/ Stage	(H) Bridge Removal or Landing Redesign
(B) Remove Walls (Improved Visibility & Flood Flows)	(I) Accessible Picnic Node
(C) Turf Terraces w/ Seat Walls Improves Viewing	(J) Vehicular Access Path
(D) Limb Up or Replace Trees for Visibility/Safety	(K) New Pad for Removable Restroom/Greenroom
(E) New Trees: Perimeter Turf and River Edge	(L) Climb on Tree Trunk from Salvaged Tree
(F) Lighting: Replace + Add Cameras (Whole Park)	(M) Food Truck & Vendors Area w/ Trees
(G) Regrade Path for ADA Without Railings	(N) Portable/Removable Storage Unit for Events

The master plan proposes a design to plan improves pedestrian flow from Arlington Avenue for users to access the vendor/food truck area and to walk down to seating and the amphitheater. This involves replacing the amphitheater with an upgraded open pavilion and relocating it east to make use of the park's natural grading and improve visibility of performance. A pad to

accommodate a portable restroom and green room for performers is also added. Additionally, it proposes the removal of the existing screen walls to allow for better sightlines into the park to reduce vandalism. Other features include:

- Upgraded structure that can accommodate aerial silks with a larger stage platform.
- Retractable shade devised for instrument protection.
- Proposed development of the tree canopy plaza near Arlington.
- Entry pavilion shade structures to create transition into the park.
- Picnic tables to be placed within a tree canopy area when no special events are scheduled.
- Added a pad for portable storage.
- Log play climber using salvaged trees.
- Improved pathways to meet ADA standards.

Public feedback related to this design was generally positive, however staff received concerns related to this design from the Reno Philharmonic over reorienting the amphitheater. The Reno Phil has bargaining agreements in place preventing performers from performing in direct sunlight and the group also expressed concerns over potential damage to instruments resulting from sun exposure. These concerns are noted in the master plan document and there are proposed mitigation measures to address these issues including a retractable shade device to shield instruments. The final decision on whether to relocate the amphitheater will be fully vetted once funding for design and construction is identified.

Whitewater Park



WHITewater PARK LEGEND *(all keynotes with blue outline/letters)*

- | | |
|--|---|
| A Concrete Drop Structure* | H Kayak Freestyle Area |
| B Remove Cobble* | I Pedestrian Bridge Built in Flood Shadow of Island |
| C Improved River Access* | J Trail, 10' Wide Concrete, Flood-Proof, Built on Existing Concrete/Rock (No Wetland Impact) |
| D New Boulder Toe Pedestrian Access | K Non-ADA River/Cochran Ditch Access* |
| E New Dedicated Fish Passage | L ADA River Access Improved* |
| F New Surf Wave | M Floodable Trail* |
| G Rock Island at Pier | |
- *indicates work by separate project

The master plan for the Whitewater Park aims to improve the functionality of the existing park features, prioritize safety and provide new opportunities for recreation for river users. Proposed features include:

- Added surf wave.
- A fish passage.
- Floodable path in the north channel.

Public input for this portion of the park was generally positive. River users emphasized the importance of safety and improving access points to enter/exit the river. The floodable path was retained in the design despite the complicated permitting process for it as it would be a worthwhile asset for safety and access.

Barbara Bennett Park



BARBARA BENNETT PARK LEGEND *(all keynotes with grey outline/letters)*

- | | |
|---|--|
| (A) Portland Loo Restrooms (2) | (I) Dog Park (quarter-acre) |
| (B) Destination Playground w/ Shade (5,000 sf) | (J) Perimeter Loop Path or One-Way Roadway |
| (C) Full Court (1) and Half Court (2) Basketball | (K) Lighting: Replace + Add Cameras (park-wide) |
| (D) Vehicular Circulation: One Way Loop | (L) Removed Wall for Improved Sight Lines |
| (E) Parking: Parallel (35), Angled (7) | (M) Tennis Court (1) with Pickleball Overlay (2)*
<i>*optional removal to Open Turf</i> |
| (F) Pedestrian Bridge | (N) Existing Sycamore Tree w/ Raptor Nest |
| (G) River Edge: Grass Picnic w/ Terraced Boulders
(solution to match opposite side of channel) | (O) Flexible Space |
| (H) Open Turf Picnic Area | (P) Formal Shade Picnic Structure |

The master plan for Barbara Bennett Park aims to envision the way the park is currently used by realigning the road and expanding the opportunity for community members to access the riverbanks. A new pedestrian bridge is also proposed to connect Barbara Bennett to the West side of Wingfield Park to improve circulation and park use. The plan also proposes:

- Improved and added sidewalks along the driveway.
- Repositioning and replacement of the existing restroom structure with Portland Loo type restroom for greater security and easier access from Wingfield Park.
- Retaining one full basketball court and two half courts to allow for greater youth skills practice.
- New themed playground located in the center front area for safety/visibility with incorporated shade.
- A new dog park.
- Flexible space which could be used as open turf, play area or pollinator garden.

Public feedback related to the design of this park included debate regarding whether the dog park should or should not be included. Some community members felt there were sufficient parks in the area while others felt more dog parks are needed. There were also comments concerning the proposed layout of the basketball courts. Some expressed a desire to retain two full courts, however the addition of half courts creates the opportunity for youth skills practice and less competitive play.

The attached master plan document is complete and was adopted by the Recreation and Parks Commission at its meeting on February 25, 2025. There is currently no funding identified to complete the improvements outlined in the master plan. In the event funding is identified, staff will bring forward an item to Council to move forward and complete a construction design that is again vetted through additional public input. Historically, park master plans such as the Mayors/McAlinden Parks master plan and Sierra Vista Park master plan have appeared before City Council for formal adoption. Given that no funding is yet identified, staff can provide a presentation of the master plan document at a scheduled City Council meeting if desired by Council.

Attachments

Wingfield and Barbara Bennett Parks Master Plan