

# The Ties That Bind



*Open space and parks are so critical to a healthy community. In White Center, we lack clean, safe areas for our children to play in. Parks are also important to community members, as they become community gathering places to share information, catch up on the latest neighborhood news or simply, as a place to eat lunch or drink coffee.*

*-Aileen Balahadia, Executive Director White Center Community Development Association (WCCDA)*

The **Ties That Bind** reflects upon our very nature as humans on this planet and the community of **White Center** as well. This wonderfully **diverse community** needs a park to come together, the design features areas for **all ages** to play, relax, and interact.

The main entrance comes off the NW corner of the site. The large boardwalk serves as a **grand promenade**. This is flanked by informational signs attached to the handrails. At the edge of the lawn space the user is given the choice of a staircase, an **ADA accessible ramp**, or a **short slide**. Next, they enter the large mosaic plaza with a water fountain coming out of a rock sculpture.

They can then choose to go East to the **Backyard**, an assortment of picnic tables, and horseshoe pits. Or, they can go south through the **Playroad** which includes play structures and permanent **chair & table sculptures** for games. As the paths weave and they meander through the path system they are brought in intimate connection with the landscape and with the implied connection to the hydrological cycle and the mirroring wetland to the west and south.

At the far east of the site is a series of **undulating meadows** of grass and wildflower mounds that include seating facing the park. The larger mounds next to the central field have been reshaped to provide grass seating. The large central lawn is kept intact and it will be resodded for the various activities the public enjoys. The surrounding **wetland has been retained**, with the invasives being cleared creating better visual access.

The site features are all low to the ground or created out of metal skeletal structure. This allows for a visitor to quickly survey the majority of the park and feel safe and comfortable.

The visitor has three choices; a **grass amphitheatre** on **Green's Pond**, an **Eco-education** site further off in the distance, or the boardwalk directly to their left. They take either the near shore boardwalk or the open water path and admire the vegetation and rare animals. The visitor could exit the park via the new **SW 104st, & 7th Ave SW** connections, all along having great views of the wetland and Green's Pond.



## phase 1 (June 2007)

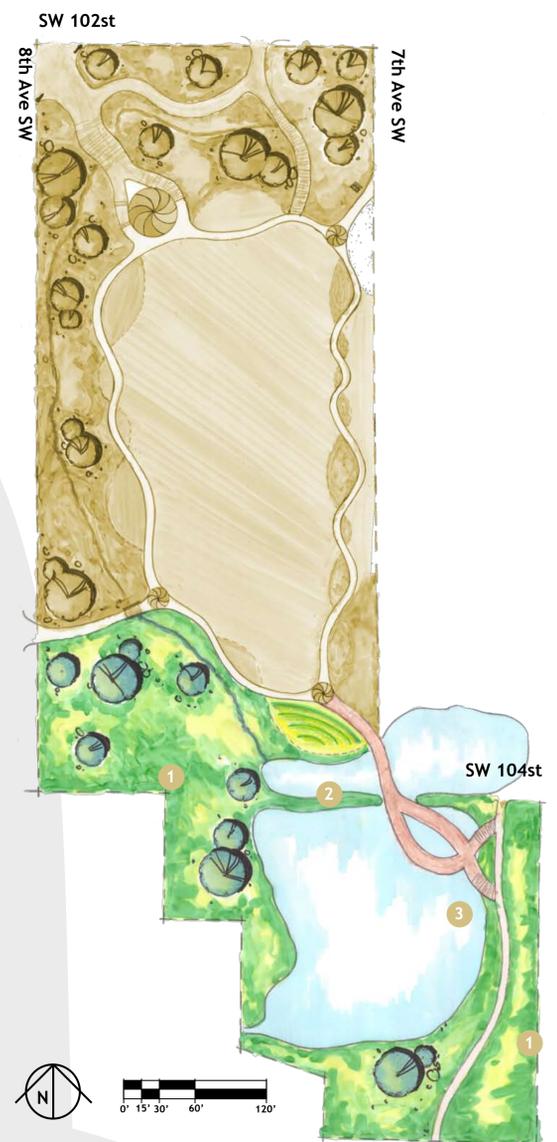
1. remove invasive vegetation on 102nd st SW and 8th Ave S
2. establish gravel parking lot for maintenance access and handicapped parking
3. create the paths and the entry-way plazas at the four main entry points:  
install the fountain sculpture at the large plaza  
embed White Center Community inspired mosaic
4. install Backyard, picnic area, and horseshoes pits
5. create the Undulating Meadow of grass mounds on East side:  
regrade the site for the mounds and grass seating  
install the new benches  
plant the meadow grass mix for periodic mowing
6. install the play structures for adults & kids on the western edge of the path.
7. create the Eco-Education site at the South end:  
remove vegetation  
install kiosk and info booth



## phase 2 (2008-2009)

The second phase will:

1. remove remaining invasive vegetation on 102nd st SW and 8th Ave S
2. provide grand entrance on the NW corner of the park, to include:  
gateway  
large boardwalk promenade  
connects to park with, ramp, slide, and stairs  
information structures (on boardwalk)
3. secondary boardwalk further east:  
extended elevated nature walk area  
connects park to SW 102 St  
allows extra exit for visitors



## phase 3 (2010-2015)

The third phase will:

1. remove invasive vegetation on 8th Ave S & at access points and trail
2. construct the Green's Pond Amphitheatre overlooking the pond to the south  
regrade hillside  
install grass mound Amphitheatre
3. develop boardwalk / trail to the SE connection to include:  
Boardwalk across pond  
Connecting trail to 104th St SW & 7th Ave S

**[design concept & project phasing]**

**White Center Heights Park**

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Department of Landscape Architecture, University of Washington

