

# WEST CASE PARK

Vision Plan Summary - June 2023



COLUMBUS RECREATION  
& PARKS DEPARTMENT

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## CONSULTANT TEAM

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# INTRODUCTION

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

### PROJECT OVERVIEW

In 2019, Columbus Recreation and Parks Department acquired 58 acres from The Ohio State University at 2425 West Case Road for a new community park. The site will become one of the major greenspaces in northwest Columbus. The parkland has a wide range of possibilities—from sports to hiking to nature to special programming—all within a short walk for more than 6,000 residents.

### GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Per West Case Park Request for Proposals:

- Create a vision plan
  - Engage key stakeholders and neighborhoods
  - Consensus-driven program
  - Cost-conscious program of amenities
- Provide vibrant, accessible, multi-generational spaces
- Year-round synergy with community center
- Safe and intuitive connections to community
- Weave site's history into fabric of the park
- Develop a sustainable park



# SITE INVENTORY ANALYSIS



# CONTEXT

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

1938



1964



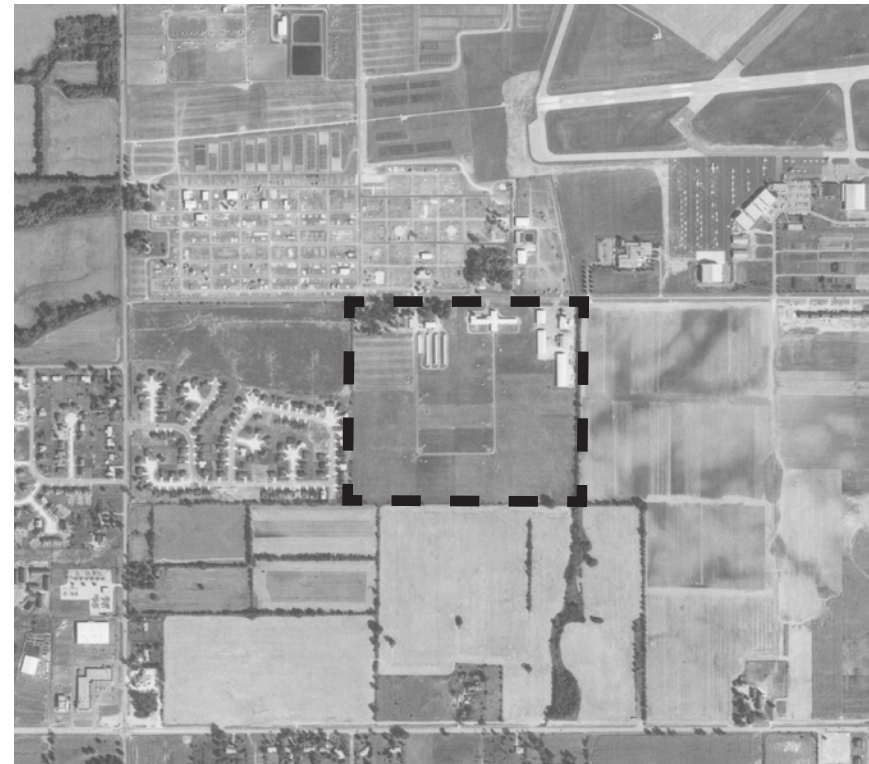
1971



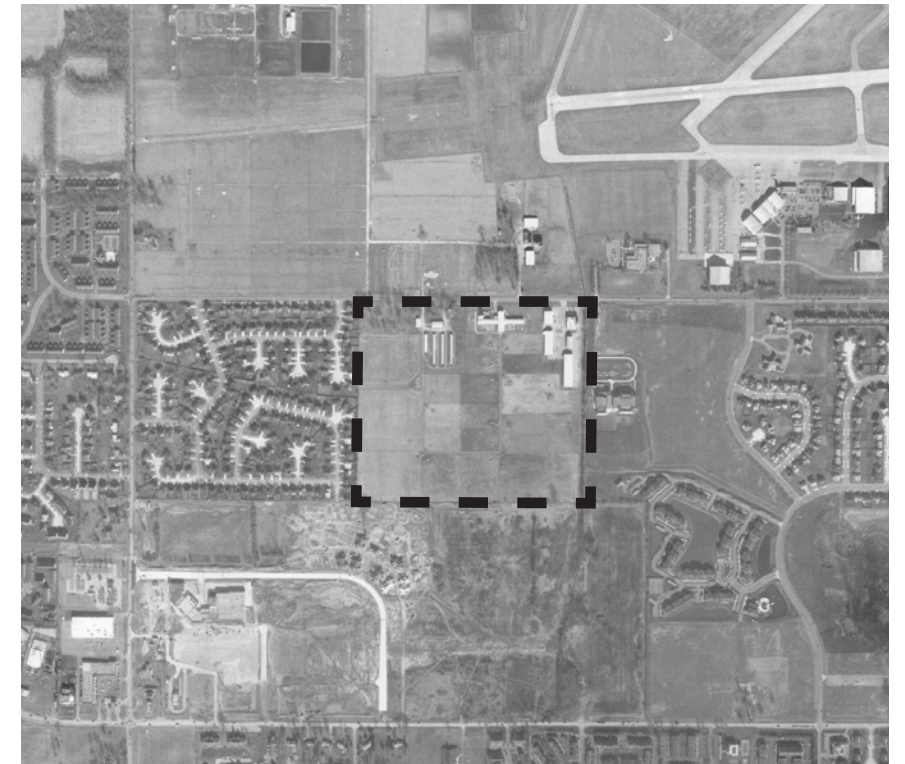
1972



1980



1989








# CONTEXT

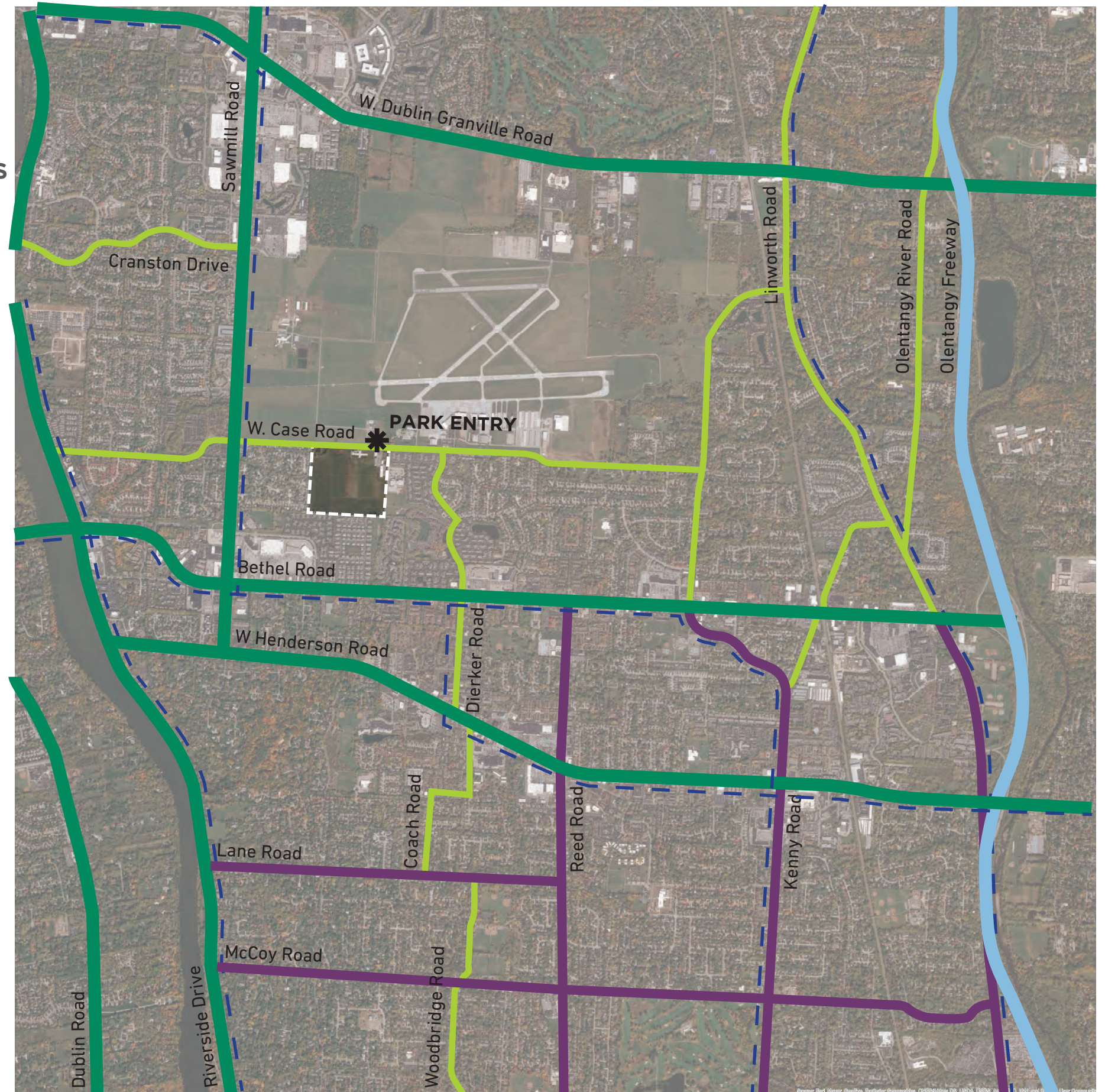
## VEHICULAR ACCESS

### OBSERVATIONS

- The site does not have a direct connection to State Route 315, the Olentangy freeway, limiting wider city access to the park.
- Visitors to the site must come off Bethel or Sawmill roads through West Case and Dierker roads. While Sawmill and Bethel are both four lane roads that are well-equipped to handle heavy traffic, West Case and Dierker are two lane roads and may need improvements to support larger volumes of visitors.
- A number of Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) lines connect to Carriage Place Community Center. COTA Line 1 connects to The Ohio State University and downtown Columbus. Line 21 connects to Hilliard, Line 33 connects to Worthington and Dublin and Line 72 connects to downtown and Upper Arlington.
- West Case Road near the site has a pavement width of +/- 20' within a 50 foot right-of-way with a posted speed limit of 45 mph.
- In 2019, West Case Road (west of Dierker) carried about 8,600 vehicles per day. Better understanding is needed of hourly traffic volumes, with a focus on commuter peak hours and peak arrival/departure times associated with the adjacent Daniel Wright Elementary.

### ROADWAY CLASSIFICATIONS

-  Freeway
-  Principal Arterial
-  Minor Arterial
-  Major Collector
-  COTA Bus Route



# CONTEXT

## BIKE ACCESS

### OBSERVATIONS

- Bike access to the park is currently very poor. There are no on-road bike facilities, multi-use paths or trails that reach the site, and the comfort level on the surrounding roads is poor.

### LEVEL OF COMFORT

- Good
- Moderate
- Poor

### ON ROAD FACILITIES

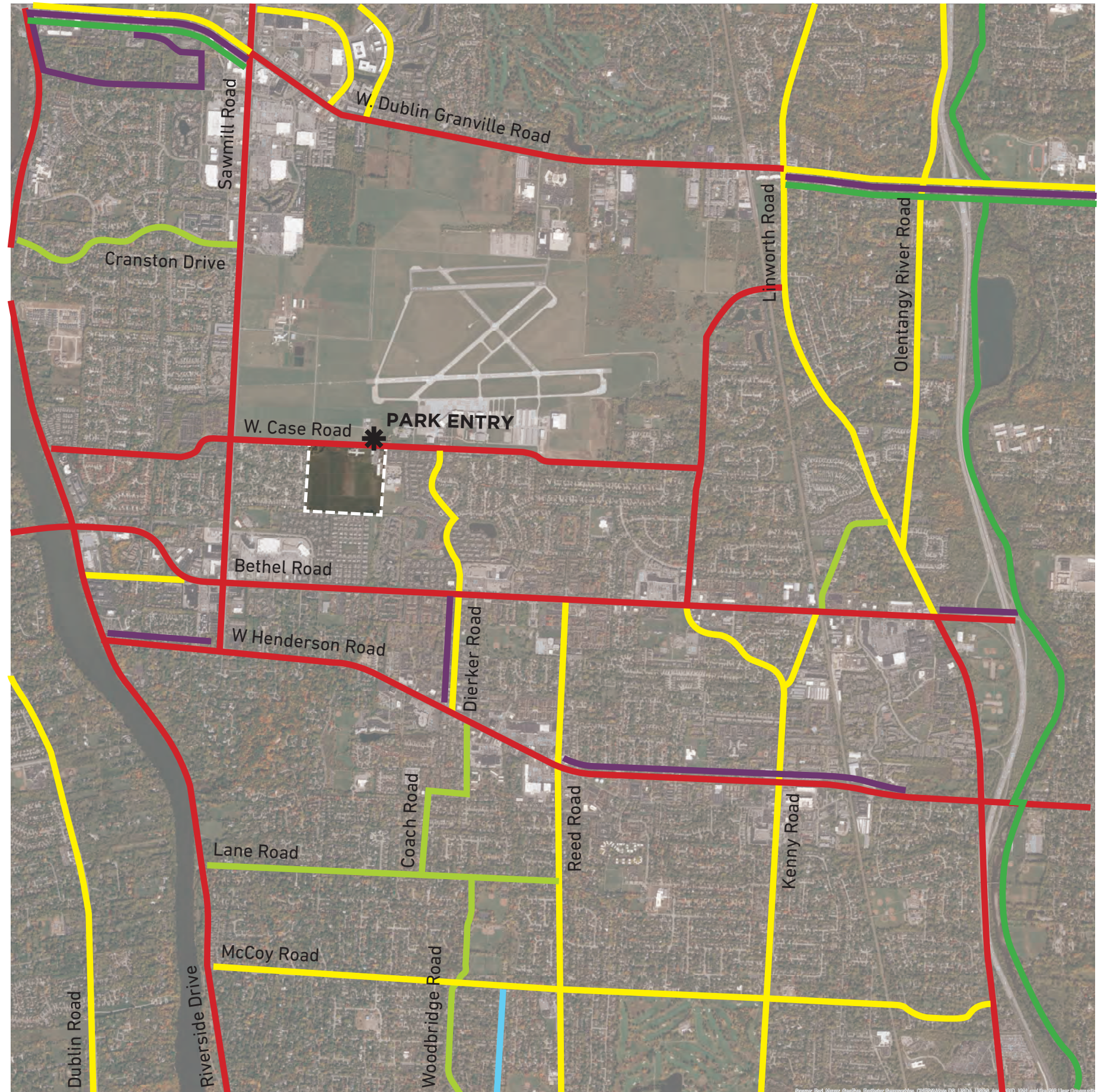
- Bike Lane

### MULTI-USE PATH

- Multi-Use Path

### CENTRAL OHIO GREENWAYS

- Greenway Trail






# CONTEXT

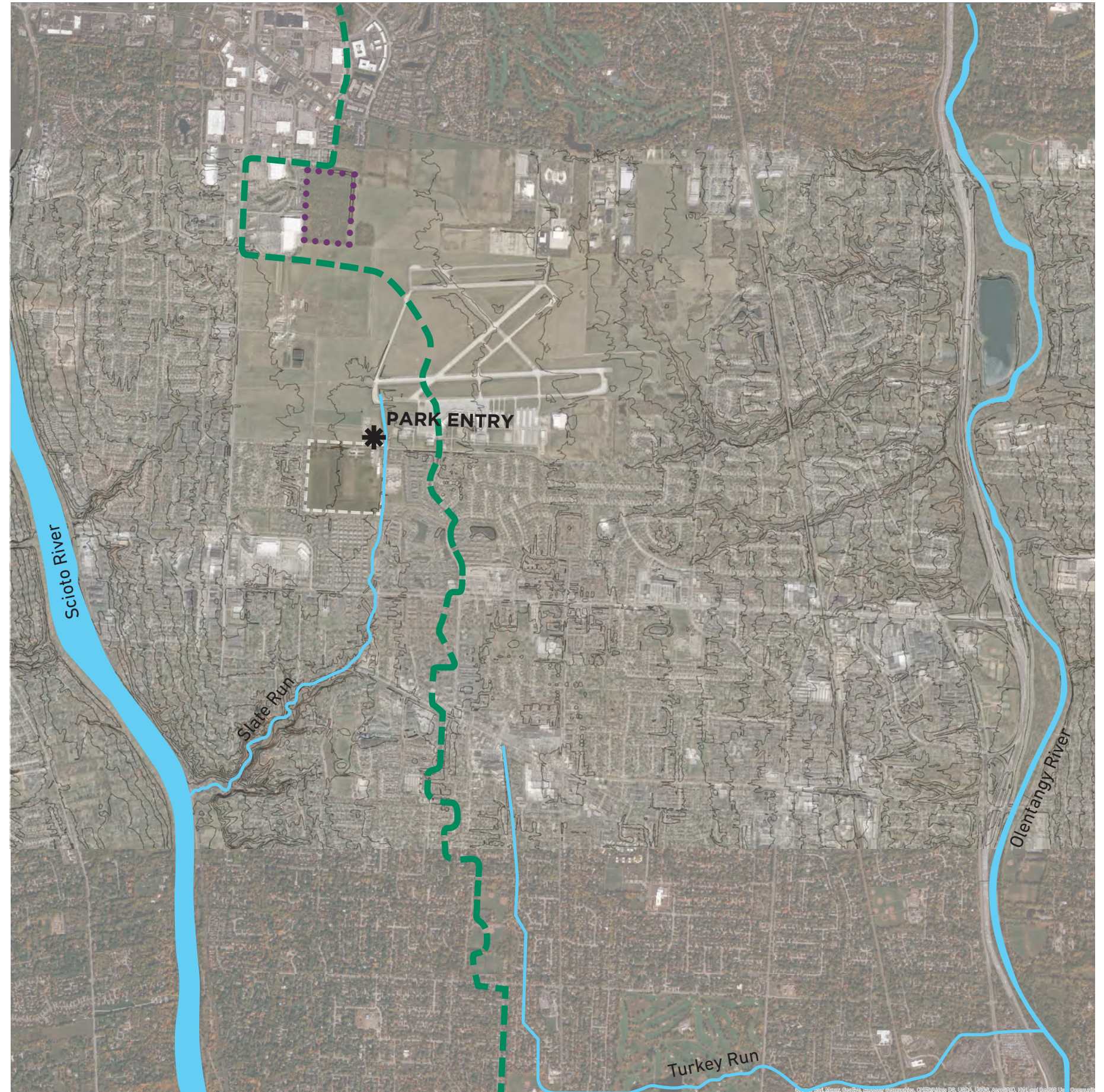
## HYDROLOGY

### OBSERVATIONS

- The site is located within the Middle Scioto River Watershed.
- Slate Run, which runs along the eastern edge of the site, is a tributary of the Scioto River.

### KEY

-  Waterway
-  Watershed Boundary
-  Potential Vernal Pool Restoration Site






# INVENTORY site

## NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS

### OBSERVATIONS

- Informal access paths encourage community engagement with site.
- Southwest corner missing critical connection to Carriage Place Community Center. Could be easily achieved with addition of +/- 120' pathway through easement.
- Missing opportunity for a more direct connection with Daniel Wright Elementary.

### KEY

-  (E) Connection Point
-  Connection Needed
-  (E) Connection Path



1 Bridge, Daniel Wright Elementary



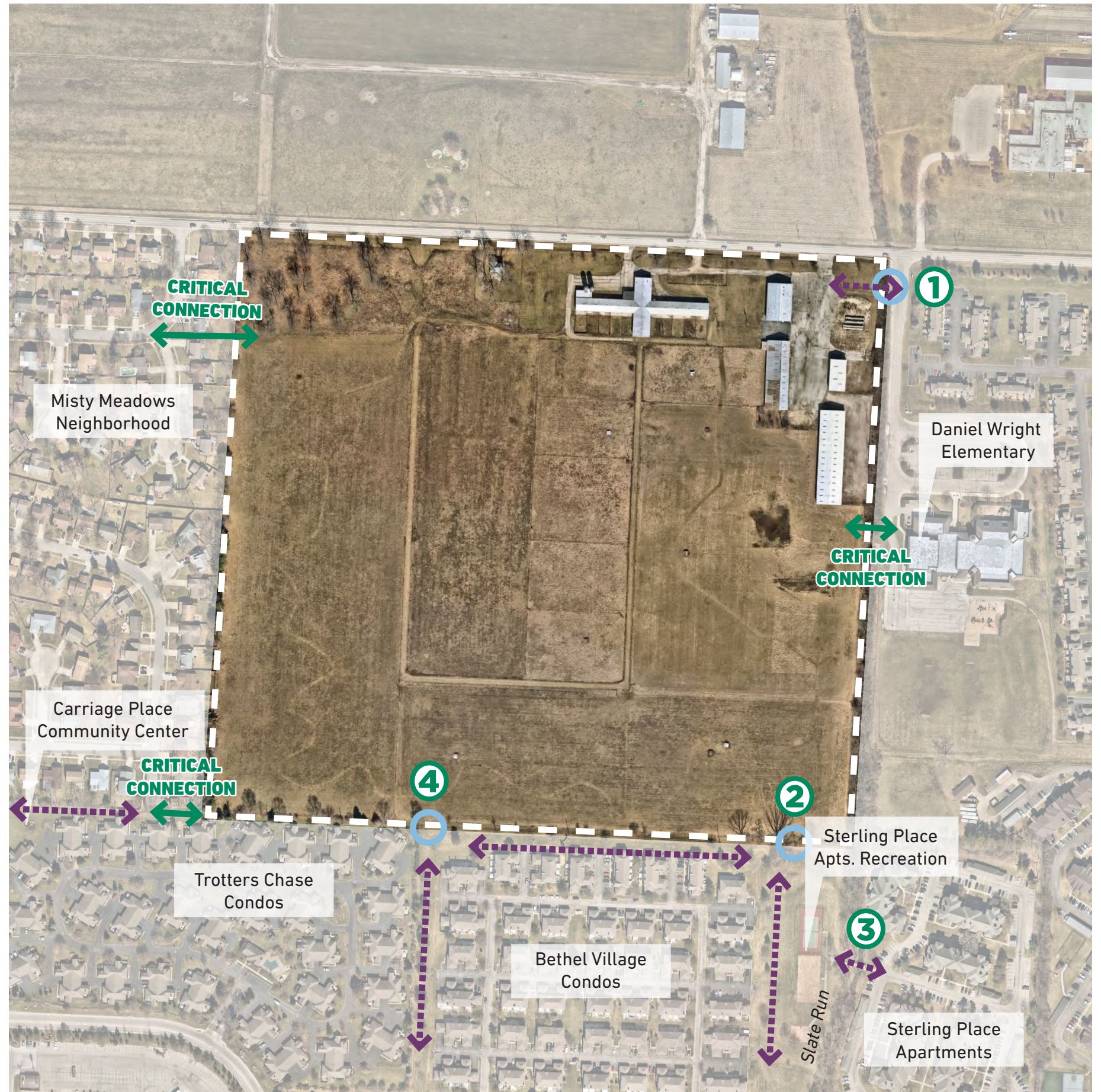
2 Connection, Sterling Place Apts.



3 Bridge, Sterling Place Apts.



4 Connection, Bethel Village Condos





# INVENTORY site

## AVIAN POPULATIONS

### OBSERVATIONS

- Hidden gem for birders already having a rich diversity of migratory and breeding birds.

- Year-round, migratory and breeding grounds for 184 species.

- In 2020, Stone Environmental studied the 171 species that had been observed on site. Of the 171 species, 72 used the location either year-round or during breeding season, 70 were spring/fall migrants, and 10 were winter migrants.

- Of the 15 species highly vulnerable to climate change, 12 are key grassland birds (per Natural Resources Conservation Service definition).

Source: <https://ebird.Org/hotspot/15725554?Yr=all&m=&rank=mrec>

Number of Species Occurrence						
Vulnerability	Breeding Season	Intermittent Migrant	Winter Migrant	Year Round	Grand Total	
Unclassified		3	35	9	3	50
Highly Vulnerability	6		7		2	15
Low Vulnerability	8	4	3	1	6	22
Moderate Vulnerability	11	1	20		5	37
Stable	16	11	5		15	47
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>171</b>

Climate change impact on species observed at OSU Livestock Farm

Occurrence	Number of Species	Percentage
Breeding Season	41	23.98
Intermittent	19	11.11
Migrant	70	40.94
Winter Migrant	10	5.85
Year Round	31	18.13
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>171</b>	

Year-round, migratory and breeding grounds for 171 species of birds

# INVENTORY site

## KEY GRASSLAND BIRDS

### OBSERVATIONS

- The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) identifies 27 species of grassland birds. The site is either a breeding ground or overwintering location for 12 of these species.



Species: Bobolink  
Occurrence: Breeding Season



Species: Dickcissel  
Occurrence: Breeding Season



Species: Eastern Meadowlark  
Occurrence: Breeding Season



Species: Grasshopper Sparrow  
Occurrence: Breeding Season



Species: Henslow's Sparrow  
Occurrence: Breeding Season



Species: Horned Lark  
Occurrence: Year-Round



Species: Northern Harrier  
Occurrence: Winter Migrant



Species: Savannah Sparrow  
Occurrence: Year-Round



Species: Sedge Wren  
Occurrence: Breeding Season



Species: Short-Eared Owl  
Occurrence: Winter Migrant



Species: Upland Sandpiper  
Occurrence: Breeding Season



Species: Vesper Sparrow  
Occurrence: Breeding Season

# INVENTORY architecture

## BUILDING 1 - FARMHOUSE

### OBSERVATIONS

- The brick farmhouse has been estimated to be built during the 1880s as a residence at 2425 West Case Road, Columbus, Ohio 43235. At that time, Case Road was a residential dirt road leading to the 58-acre parcel. This home is one of the oldest remaining structures in northwest Columbus and is an important example of rural architecture for the community.

- The home was originally owned by William F. and Maude Lane as a residence. The brick house was built in the simple Federal Style, with windows that are three-ranked (three windows across on the second story with two windows and a door on the first story), stone lintels over door and window openings, limestone foundation (basement) walls and a hipped roof with exposed rafter ends. The front door overhang and rear extension were later additions.

- The farmhouse is in fair condition and was recently used as a meeting space when The Ohio State University owned the sheep farm property.



Source: columbuslandmarks.org

# INVENTORY architecture

## BUILDING 1 - FARMHOUSE - EXTERIOR

### OBSERVATIONS

- Federal brick architecture with symmetrical 3-ranked front windows/door.
- There is an early wood porch and one-story brick addition.
- There is a later wood siding kitchen addition to the back (south-east).
- Non-compliant ADA entries (min. door width, steps only, no ramp).



Building 1 - North Elevation



Building 1 - South Elevation



Building 1 - North Elevation



Building 1 - South Elevation



Building 1 - East Elevation



Building 1 - West Elevation



Building 1 - East Elevation



Building 1 - West Elevation

# INVENTORY architecture

## BUILDING 1 - FARMHOUSE - BASEMENT

### OBSERVATIONS

- 6'-0" Clear ceiling height is non-compliant, no occupancy allowed.
- Existing stair width and rise/run dimensions are non-compliant.
- Crawl space is non-accessible, shoring added for structural support.
- Water heater and furnace are dated, propane heat.



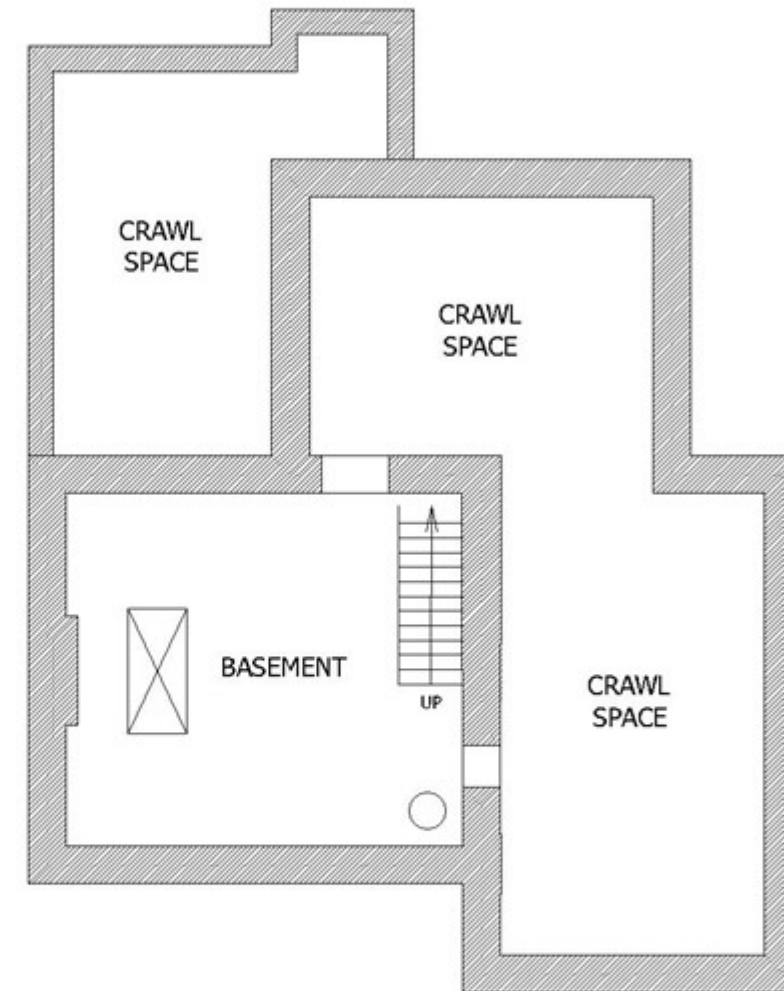
6'-0" Ceiling height - stone foundation walls



Older furnace



Shoring posts and older water heater



Building 1 - Basement Plan

# INVENTORY architecture

## BUILDING 1 - FARMHOUSE - 1st FLOOR

### OBSERVATIONS

- Existing stair width, ceiling height, and rise/run dimensions are non-compliant.
- Existing front, rear, and side door widths are non-ADA compliant.
- Existing restroom fixtures are non-ADA compliant, no 5' turning radius.
- Existing kitchen counter height and sink configuration are non-ADA compliant.



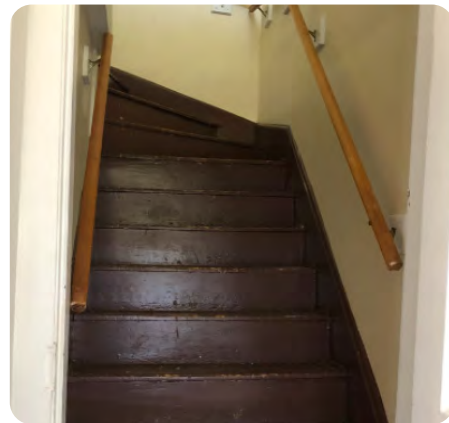
Painted brick fireplace used as a furnace vent



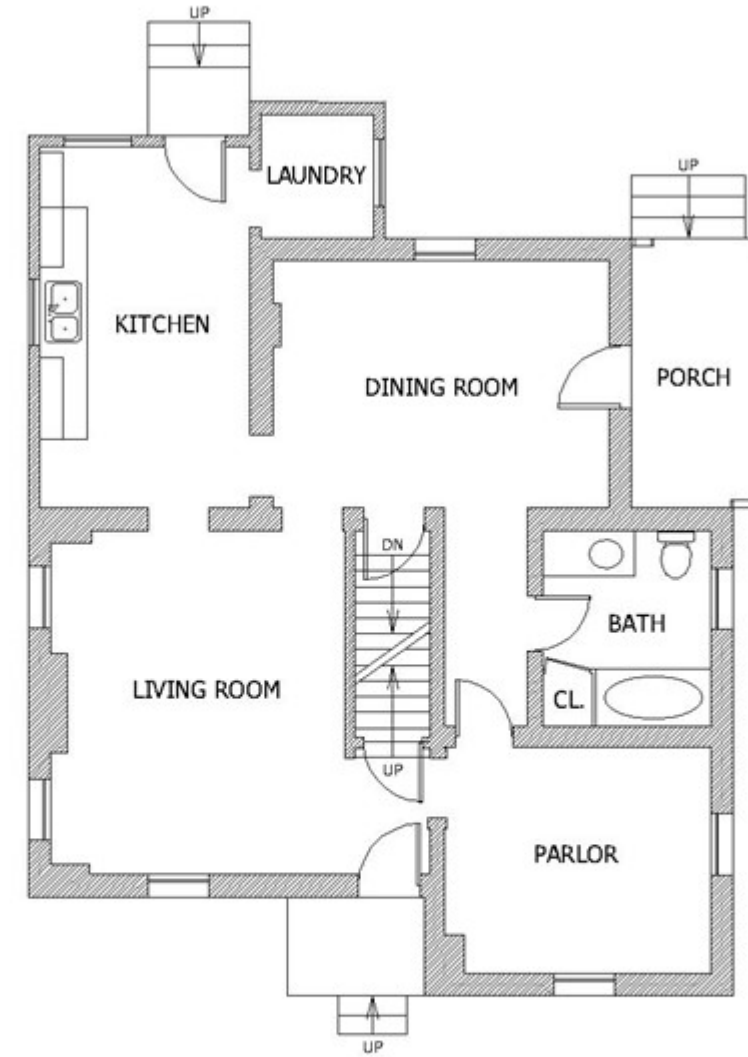
Existing kitchen sink and counter



Existing restroom and toilet



Existing stair to 2nd floor



Building 1 - First Floor Plan

# INVENTORY architecture

## BUILDING 1 - FARMHOUSE - 2nd FLOOR

### OBSERVATIONS

- Existing stair width, ceiling height, and rise/run dimensions are non-compliant.
- Existing stairway guard-wall assembly non-compliant (height).
- Low window heights will need to be protected if room is occupied.



Existing stairway guard-wall assembly



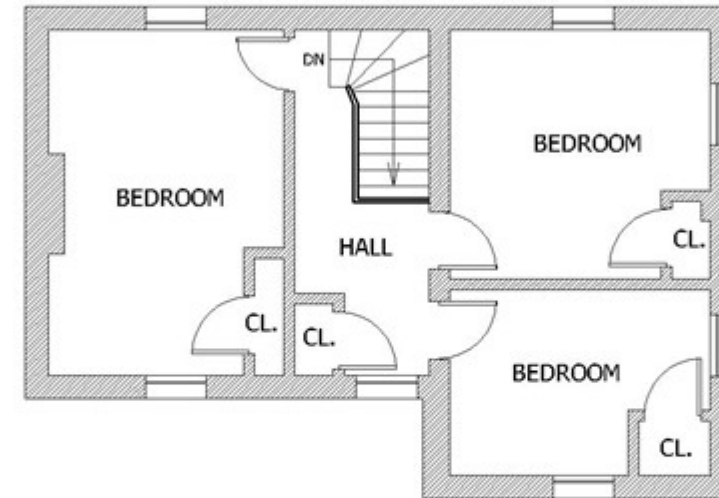
Existing attic access panel in hallway



Existing bedroom with added closet



Existing bedroom (exposed vent pipe)



Building 1 - Second Floor Plan

# INVENTORY architecture

## BUILDING 2 - RED BARN STRUCTURE

### OBSERVATIONS

- Wood truss pole barn construction, metal roofing and siding, wood wainscot.
- Entries and interior door dimensions appear to be ADA compliant.
- Existing restroom fixtures are non-ADA compliant, no 5' turning radius.
- Existing kitchen counter height and sink configuration are non-ADA compliant.



Building 2 - East Elevation



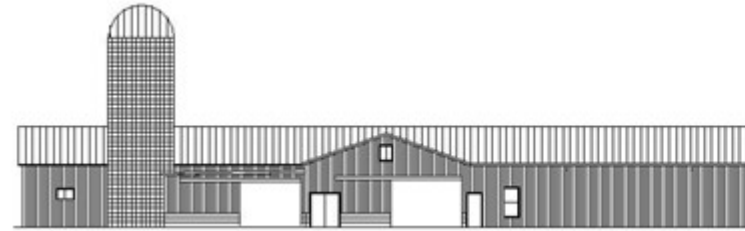
Building 2 - North Elevation at silos



Existing barn interior



Existing kitchen



Building 2 - East Elevation



Building 2 - West Elevation



Building 2 - South Elevation



Building 2 - North Elevation



# INVENTORY architecture

## BUILDING 3 & 4 - BARN STRUCTURES

### OBSERVATIONS

- Wood truss pole barn construction.
- Metal roofing and siding.
- Gravel or soil floor surfaces.



Building 3 - East Elevation



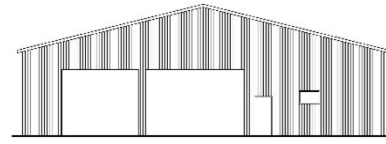
Building 4 - East Elevation



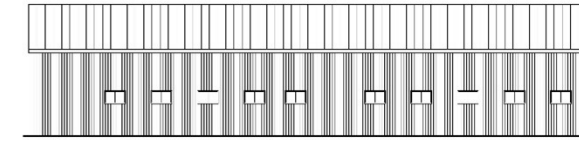
Building 4 - North Elevation



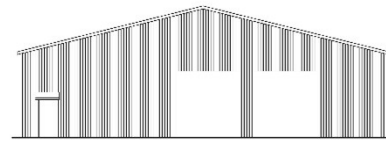
Building 4 - West Elevation



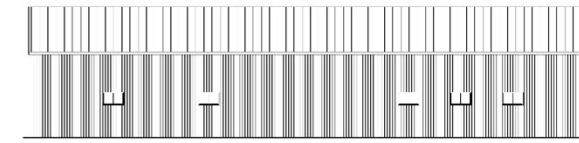
Building 4 - South Elevation



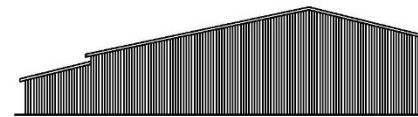
Building 4 - East Elevation



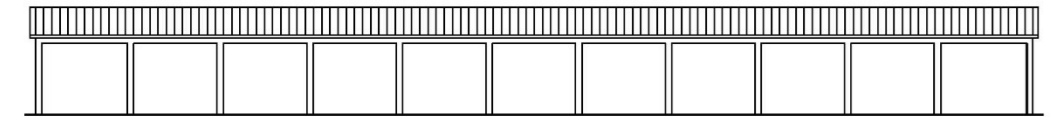
Building 4 - North Elevation



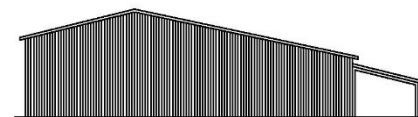
Building 4 - West Elevation



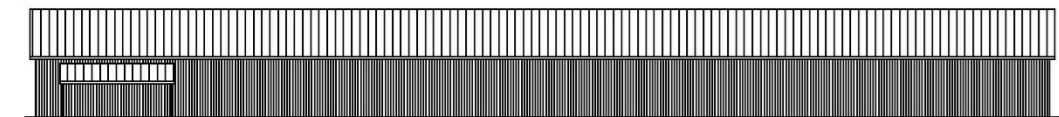
Building 4 - South Elevation



Building 4 - East Elevation



Building 4 - North Elevation



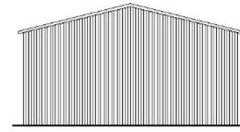
Building 4 - West Elevation

# INVENTORY architecture

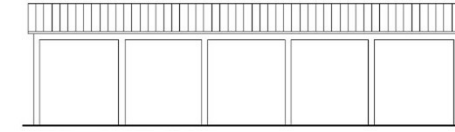
## BUILDING 5 & 6 - BARN STRUCTURES

### OBSERVATIONS

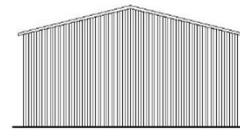
- Wood truss pole barn construction.
- Metal roofing and siding.
- Gravel or soil floor surfaces.



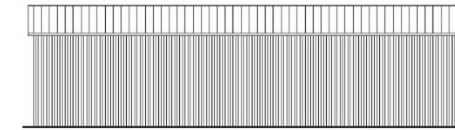
Building 5 - South Elevation



Building 5 - East Elevation



Building 5 - North Elevation



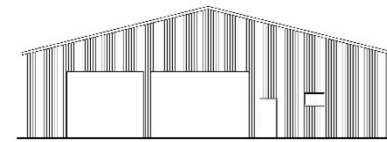
Building 5 - West Elevation



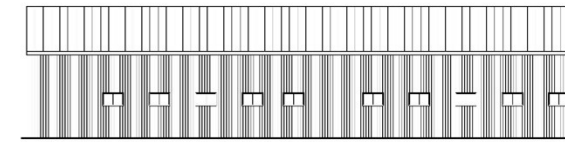
Building 5 - West Elevation



Building 5 - East Elevation



Building 6 - South Elevation



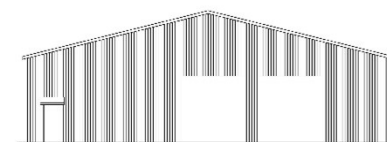
Building 6 - East Elevation



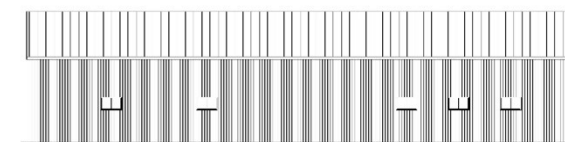
Building 5 & 6 - West Elevation



Building 6 - East Elevation



Building 6 - North Elevation



Building 6 - West Elevation

# INVENTORY

## KEY TAKEAWAYS



### ECOLOGY

- Important site for **local and migratory birds**.
- Opportunity to create critical native **grassland habitat** and enhance **existing wetlands**.
- Rare chance to **preserve healthy**, never bulldozed, **soil**.



### ACCESS

- A **connection is needed** between the site and the Misty Meadows and Trotters Chase neighborhoods.
- Improve the **connection** between **Daniel Wright Elementary** and the site.
- Site currently lacks **accessible, multi-modal paths**.
- Hardscape improvements are needed in several areas, including the entrance/exit.



### IDENTITY

- Character of existing site features create a **distinctive, rural experience**.
- **Aesthetic** of existing barns, fences, lean-to's **should be preserved and celebrated**.



### ARCHITECTURE

#### FARMHOUSE

- In **good shape** for its age, simple to update from a code/cost standpoint.

#### RED BARN

- In **good shape, simple to update** from a code/cost standpoint.
- **Usable for a variety of functions** depending on final program.

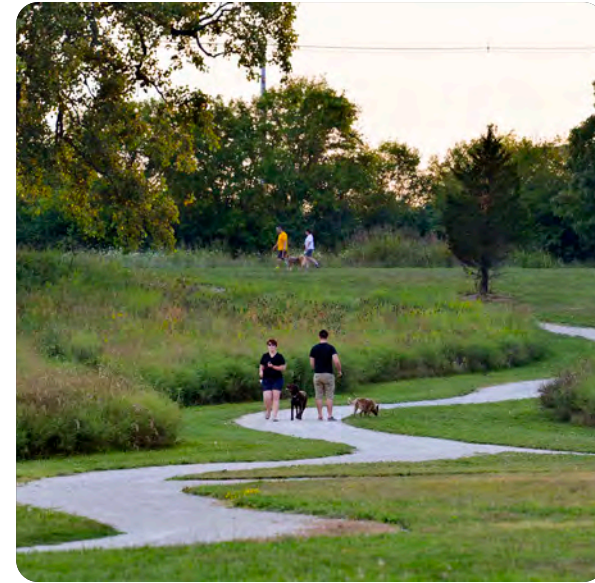
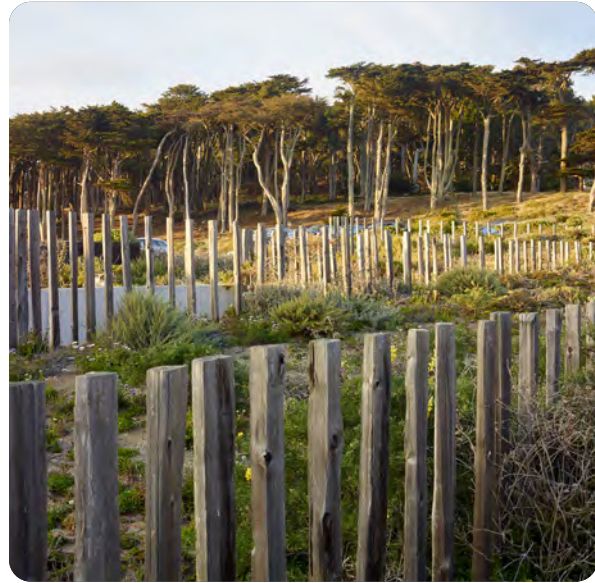


### PROGRAM

- Existing neighborhood amenities include **playgrounds, tennis courts, a dog park, sports fields, basketball courts, and a community center**.
- Current site program includes mown walking trails and nature preserve. Public engagement shows a desire to **maintain passive programming** on site.

# BENCHMARKING & BEST PRACTICES

## KEY COMPONENTS



### IDENTITY

- **Preserve and enhance unique characteristics** of the site.
- Use materials and products that **reference the site's history** and character.
- Planting fits into **local ecology**.

### ECOLOGY

- Native and climate adapted plants that **support local ecosystems**.
- Reduce paved surfaces.
- **Restoration** of on-site stream and improvement of wetlands.

### ACTIVATION

- Neighborhood **park** with regional draw.
- Provide **flexible infrastructure** for programmed activities to take place.
- **Connect** to adjacent school and community center, provide opportunities for engagement.

### ACCESS

- Create **safe and intuitive connections** to surrounding neighborhoods.
- Design for **multi-modal** use.

### MAINTENANCE

- Minimize lawn and irrigation.
- Use **natural** materials with lower maintenance requirements.

# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

## PUBLIC WALKING TOUR RESULTS

On Oct. 16, 2021, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., the planning team hosted a public walking tour at the West Case Park site. The public walking tour allowed people to visit the site so participants could meet with the planning team and take part in envisioning activities for the site. The activity stations included: (1) welcome, (2) park opportunities, (3) desired activities, (4) other parks visited and (5) building tours. More than 60 people attended the public walking tour.



# PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

## SUMMARY

On Aug. 3, 2022, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., the planning team hosted a public open house at the Carriage Place Community Center to introduce the two concept plans. The event allowed the public to meet with the planning team to ask questions about the project and share what they were interested in seeing at the new park. Approximately 100 people attended the public open house.

## WEST CASE ROAD PARK DESIGN PUBLIC MEETING

Aug. 3, 5:30 - 7:30 P.M.

Carriage Place Community Center



THE CITY OF  
**COLUMBUS**  
ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

RECREATION AND PARKS  
DEPARTMENT

# CONCEPT PLAN





# PROGRAM

## KEY FEATURES



### NATURAL

- Walking trails
- Stream / wetland restoration and water access
- Native meadow / conservation area
- Birding observation areas
- Shaded areas
- Maintain and enhance natural tree/plant buffer between park and adjacent residential



### CULTURAL

- Outdoor education area
- Shelter/cultural gathering facility
- Community gardens
- Picnic areas
- Event lawn
- Walkway connection to Carriage Place Community Center
- Preservation of silos, pay homage to the agricultural heritage and history of site



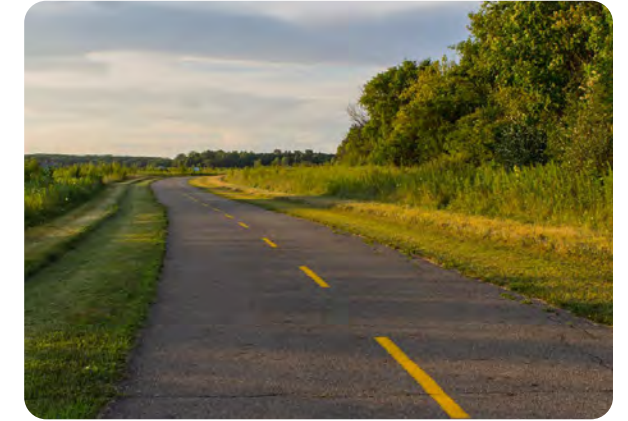
### RECREATIONAL

- Natural play area
- Multi-purpose fields:
  - 1-3 Soccer fields
  - 1 Cricket field
- Court sports:
  - 2-4 Basketball courts
  - 2-6 Pickleball courts
  - 1-2 Handball courts
- Park shelters



### PARTNERSHIPS

- Forestry complex
- Columbus Metropolitan Library Branch



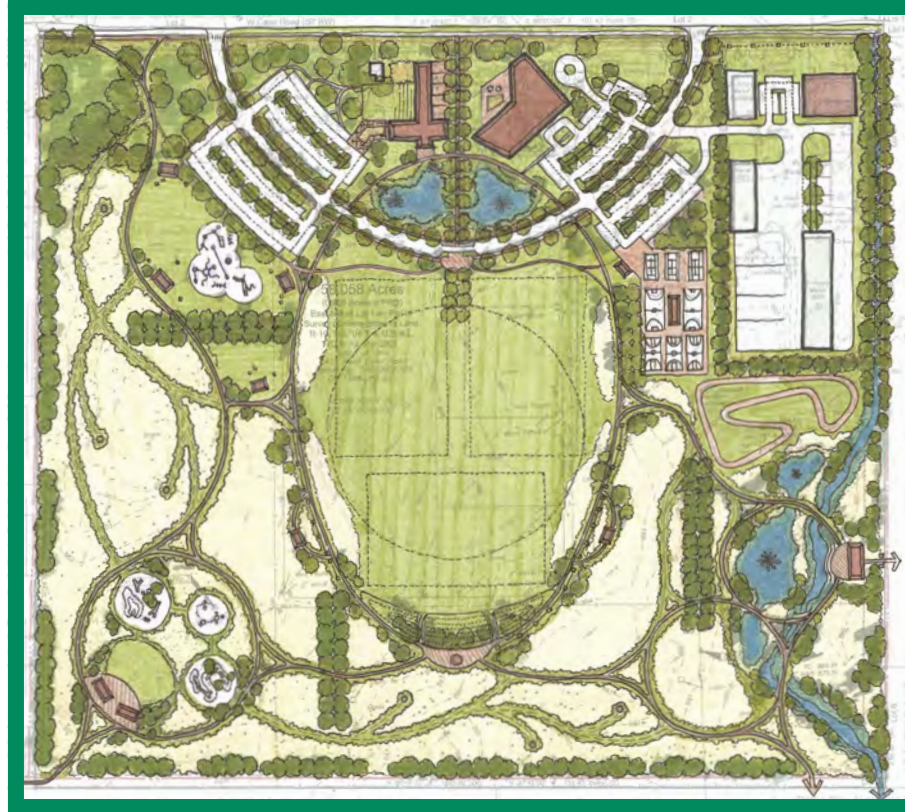
### INFRASTRUCTURE

- Parking lots for library and park
- Improvements along West Case Road
- Restrooms
- Signage and wayfinding
- Stormwater management

# SUMMARY

## KEY FEATURES

### OPTION A



- 1) Provides multiple entries off West Case Road - shared access for park, future library branch and Forestry complex.
- 2) Future development - medium flexibility.
- 3) Retain historical influence - medium.
- 4) Slate Run improvements - stream realignment and native plant restoration.
- 5) Site infrastructure - minimizes impact on 3/4 of the site.

### OPTION B



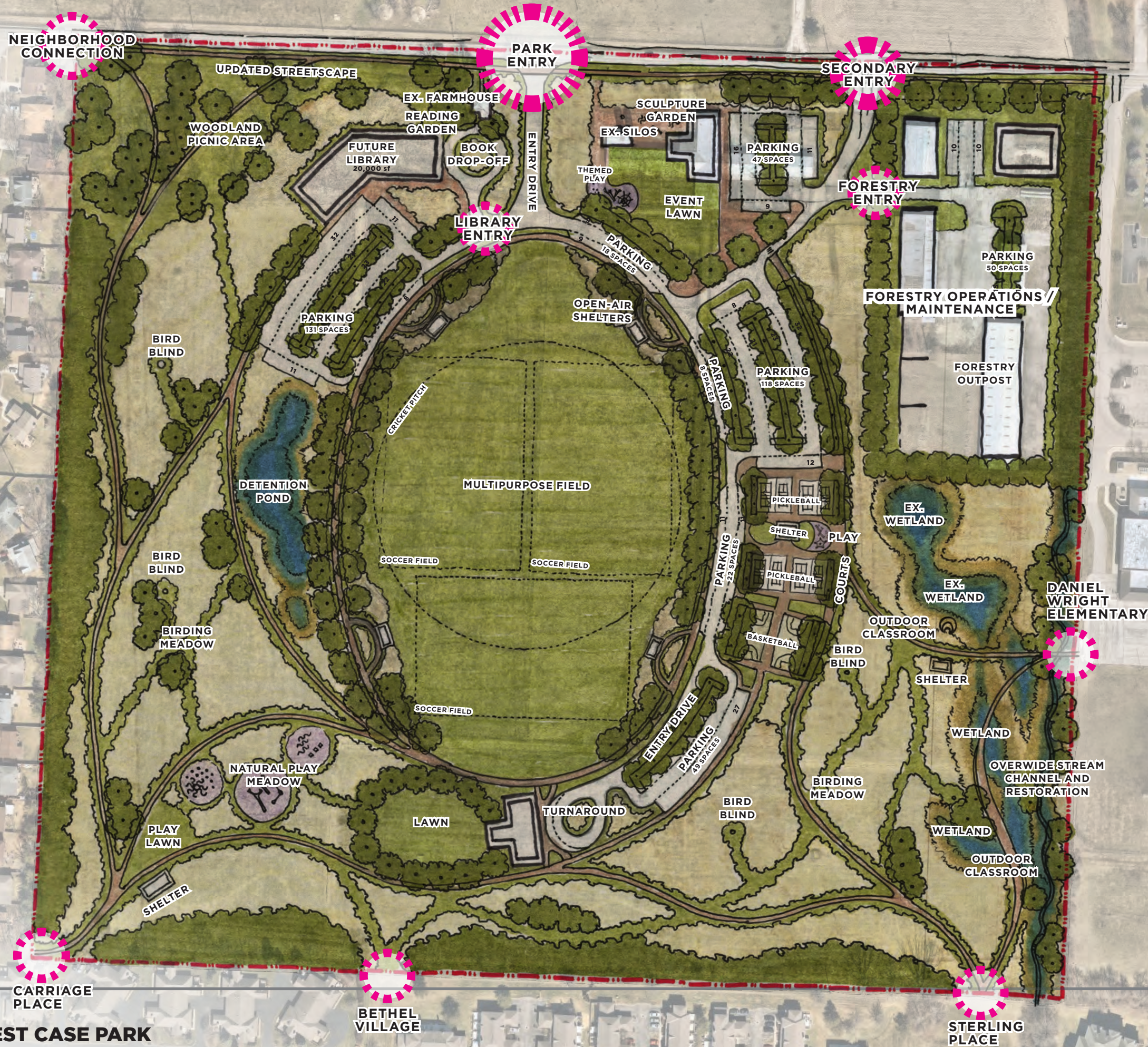
- 1) Provides single entry off West Case Road- shared access for park and future library branch, with separate Forestry complex entry.
- 2) Future development - high flexibility.
- 3) Retain historical influence - high.
- 4) Slate Run improvements - overwide stream channel and native plant restoration.
- 5) Site infrastructure - moderate/high impact on 3/4 of the site but provides direct vehicular and pedestrian access throughout the park.

# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Options A and B score practically even in their average ratings among respondents for the five goals of the park concept plans (overall, a 3.99 average for Option A and a 3.94 average for Option B.)
- There is a fairly mixed bag of favorite elements in Option A, signifying that the design has something for everyone.
- Many people identified the various gardens as favorite elements in Option B, with the pollinator gardens as the most popular.
- There is some contention between adding more recreational sport options or reducing the amount of sports programming overall.
  - 26% and 17% of respondents in Options A and B respectively want more sports programming, requesting disc golf, tennis, more pickleball, fitness stops along the trails and a swimming pool, among various other suggestions.
  - 20% and 17% of respondents in Options A and B respectively want less sports programming, suggesting reducing the number of soccer fields and/or courts in favor of more casual open green space or more undisturbed nature.
- A balance between accessibility and unobtrusiveness needs to be met with the parking lot design.
  - In Option A, many worry about the park's accessibility since parking is strictly limited to the north end, though this was preferable to others as a way to contain the danger and nuisance of cars further into the park.
  - In Option B, there were many complaints about how intrusive the parking feels as it protrudes far into the heart of the park. However, this design makes more park amenities accessible to people of all ages and abilities.
- There's an overall belief that the park should remain as natural as possible, with minimal pavement or manicured lawns.
- Many respondents describe feeling happy and excited about the conceptual plans and are appreciative of the community engagement opportunities in the design process.
- Accessibility, connectivity and efficient traffic management are key concerns that remain for many respondents, with many calls for improving West Case Road so that the park can be conveniently accessed by both vehicular and alternative transportation methods.

# SITE PLAN



# CONTEXT PLAN

## NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT

