

# Overton Park Transportation and Parking Report

## Recommended Solutions



April 2016

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Prepared for:

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## *Overview*

The purpose of this report is to examine travel and transportation to and within Overton Park, with the goal of providing the City of Memphis, the Overton Park Conservancy and the park tenants with options on how to best serve the needs of park patrons, while at the same time conserving and protecting historic parklands and resources. Specifically, this report examines possible improvements to parking, traffic flow and multi-modal mobility and access.

Overton Park is one of Memphis' most historic parks and in 1979 was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The 342-acre urban park is host to popular venues including the Levitt Shell, Brooks Museum of Art, Memphis College of Art and the Memphis Zoo. The 115-year old park contains two historic landscapes largely unchanged by decades of park development, the Greensward and Old Growth Forest.

During the past four decades Overton Park venues have been modernized and enlarged to accommodate the interests and needs of patrons. Today it is not unusual for Overton Park to host more than 10,000 patrons at various venues on a single day. The success of these institutions and their programming is placing stress on the historic park landscape, which was planned and laid out before the automobile was invented. Much of the stress on the Park is manifested through insufficient automobile parking and by directing overflow parking to the historic Greensward. Other problems include inadequate bicycle and pedestrian access to and throughout the park, poor connections to transit and inadequate wayfinding and signage. In addition to impacts on parkland, there are significant impacts to adjacent land uses as patrons are forced to park cars in adjacent neighborhoods and walk to Park venues.

The City of Memphis is the owner of Overton Park and as such bears responsibility to both accommodate the needs of park patrons and simultaneously steward the resources of the park. Historically, the City has not adequately balanced these responsibilities. Today, the City relies on contract management agreements with tenants, and with the Overton Park Conservancy, to address venue operations, automobile parking, travel demand, and stewardship of park resources.

## *Process of Input*

The Overton Park Conservancy commissioned this report, and employed the team of Looney Ricks Kiss, Alta Planning + Design and Kimley Horn Associates (the LRK team) to prepare this report. The LRK team conducted a robust public engagement process that provided an opportunity for multiple stakeholder groups



and thousands of residents to have input in the planning process. The LRK team specifically conducted the following:

1. *Park Partner Interviews*: one-on-one interviews with “park partners” including the Brooks Museum of Art, Levitt Shell, Memphis College of Art, Memphis Zoo, Overton Park Conservancy and the City of Memphis, Division of Parks & Neighborhoods.
2. *Focus Group Meetings*: a day long series of meetings with representatives from 32 separate stakeholder groups.
3. *Public Meetings*: two public meetings attended by more than 600 persons. The first meeting was held at the Brooks Museum and was attended by 250 persons. The second meeting was held at First Baptist Broad Church and was attended by 350 persons.
4. *Public Surveys*: two on-line public surveys that were completed by 3,400 respondents.

This public input was used to inform the results of the planning process and content of this report.

### ***Key Short Term Strategies/Recommendations***

The Overton Park Transportation and Parking Report provides short-term strategies and recommendations that the City of Memphis can implement to both better serve the needs of Overton Park patrons, and simultaneously steward the resources of the Park. Most of these strategies are affordable, easy to implement and offer the potential to immediately change travel and transportation habits for those who visit Overton Park. All of these strategies are explained in greater detail in the body of the report. The key short-term strategies include:

1. **Create Unified Web Site Message for All Park Tenants**: All Park venues would broadcast a consistent travel and transportation message, and encourage patrons to use a mode of travel other than the automobile.
2. **Provide a Car Parking App**: Allows patrons to check real-time parking supply and possibly reserve a parking space in advance of their Park visit.
3. **Provide a Overton Park Visitor Information App**: Provides up-to-date information about daily events at the Park, enabling patrons to plan their visit.
4. **Provide Incentives for Park Patrons to Use Alternatives to Automobile Travel**: A pricing strategy rewarding park patrons who don't travel by automobile.
5. **Sequence Zoo overflow parking and prioritize to minimize impact to Greensward**: Strictly abide by a prioritization parking approach to minimize use of the Greensward for overflow parking.

6. **Utilize automobile parking around perimeter of Overton Park:** Install 300 parking spaces around the perimeter of the Park on existing streets. (\$260,000)
7. **Reconfigure Zoo main parking lot to maximize auto parking:** Reconfigure the main Zoo parking to maximize parking efficiency and gain 200 additional parking spaces. (\$1M)
8. **Institute Peak Demand Pricing for Automobile Parking:** During peak demand, parking spaces are priced accordingly.
9. **Install Sidewalks along Perimeter of Overton Park:** Continued improvements to pedestrian access around the perimeter of the Park.
10. **Make Improvements to Intersections:** Make pedestrian improvements to seven (7) key roadway intersections around the perimeter of the Park. (\$50,000/intersection)
11. **Improve Wayfinding and Signage System:** Improve signage within the park to guide interior travel of Park patrons.
12. **Provide Pedestrian Lighting:** Install a system of human-scale lighting both within and surrounding Overton Park to improve multi-modal safety during nighttime use.
13. **Provide Bicycle Facilities to and within the Park:** Continued improvements for bicycle access and travel to and within the Park.
14. **Participate in a Bike Share System:** Install a Memphis Bike Share station.
15. **Make Transit Improvements:** Improve bus shelters around the perimeter of the Park and provide a north-south transit route to service the Park.
16. **Establish a Park Ambassadors Program:** Deploy an Ambassadors program that would enlist volunteers to assist patrons in traveling to and throughout the Park.

### ***Key Long Term Strategies/Recommendations***

This *Transportation and Parking Report* also provides long-term strategies that are more costly to implement, but in the long term will address automobile parking and travel demand management to meet the future needs of Overton Park patrons. Again, these are explained in more detail within the body of the report.

1. **Provide an Overton Park Circulator:** Create a dedicated bus system for Overton Park that would link off-site parking to popular venues through dedicated transit routes. (\$25,000/week)
2. **Improve Roadway Design and Travel Flow within Park:** Modify the roadway system within the Park to improve travel and traffic flow.



3. **Provide New Automobile Parking throughout Overton Park:** Provide for an additional 100-300 paved parking spaces throughout the park. (\$600,000)
4. **Construct Parking Structure(s):** possible locations for structured parking include:
  - a. *Inside Overton Park:* locations within the Zoo main parking lot for structures that could accommodate between 240-480 auto spaces. (\$6.5M-10.6M)
  - b. *Prentiss Place Structure:* between 200-900 auto spaces depending on size of structure. (\$7.8M-13.2M)
  - c. *Zoo Maintenance:* between 100-300 auto spaces and would also require addressing important service needs of the Zoo. (\$4.8M-6.6M)
  - d. *Rhodes College:* between 274-548 auto spaces created through a partnership with the College. (\$7.4M-12.1M)
  - e. *North Parkway Structure:* between 274-548 auto spaces created through a partnership with the College. (\$7.4M-12.1M)

**A Recommended Scenario** (p. 41) is provided which outlines a measured approach to resolving parking pressures on the park. The first phase of improvements would result in 350 new spaces, and divert an estimated 100 to 150 vehicles to alternate modes of transportation. Improved information sharing, new parking policies, improved pedestrian/bicycling/circulator/public transit access, and incentives programs would require a modest financial commitment initially. Subsequent phases would reconfigure existing parking areas, add new surface and structured parking, and fully implement other improvements with more considerable costs yielding another 300 to 700 parking spaces, depending on configuration.

## Conclusion

There is no single magic solution to solving the travel and transportation needs of Overton Park patrons. The Park and the cultural institutions within the Park are magnets for public use. How patrons arrive at and travel through the Park to participate in the offerings of each venue is critically important. The City of Memphis is the steward of this historically significant Park – one of “Ten Parks that Changed America,” a responsibility that should not be taken for granted. Overton Park is simultaneously a neighborhood urban park, and a regional destination. It is highly valued and economically valuable on both accounts.

This *Overton Park Traffic and Transportation Report* provides a myriad of solutions that, when implemented, offer the potential to resolve chronic travel and transportation problems. The solutions proposed by the LRK team, while not easy to implement, are practical, affordable and achievable. It requires investment and leadership by the City of Memphis and community stakeholders. Difficult decisions must be made and the solutions defined by this Report must be transformed into actions.

# INTRODUCTION

Overton Park was established in 1901 as a large civic park in the distant eastern part of the Memphis city limits at the time. The park is comprised of 342 acres including recreational areas such as:

- Old Forest Arboretum and State Natural Area
- Greensward
- 9-hole Links at Overton golf course
- Two playgrounds
- Rainbow Lake
- Overton Bark dog park
- Several picnic areas
- Veterans Plaza, and
- Formal Garden

Several cultural institutions and entertainment venues also reside in the park, including:

- Memphis Zoo
- Memphis College of Art
- Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, and
- Levitt Shell.

The City's General Services yard also resides in a portion of the park. The park joined the National Register of Historic Places in 1979.

Success and attractiveness of the venues, institutions and events programming have been drawing ever-increasing numbers of visitors in recent years. The result has been increased pressures and stress on the park that is now being manifested through a number of issues:

- Insufficient on-street parking or in designated parking lots within the park
- Overflow parking being directed to the recreational Greensward and/or neighboring residential streets
- Pedestrians and bicyclists risking themselves navigating busy intersections
- Concerns about public safety services (police, fire and ambulance) not being able to have adequate access during peak events



- Lack of accessible routes to and throughout the park, including missing sidewalks, ADA-accessible curb ramps
- Lack of pedestrian safety lighting at night when many events conclude, and
- Lack of adequate public transportation serving the park.

## The Task

In November 2015 the Overton Park Conservancy (OPC) board and staff along with a committee consisting of Memphis College of Art, Brooks Museum, Levitt Shell, and representatives from the Mayor's Office issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for professional assistance in developing a Parking & Traffic Plan for Overton Park including each of the institutions housed within the park. Ultimately the team of Looney Ricks Kiss, Alta Planning & Design, and Kimley Horn Associates was selected to assist in this effort. The focus of the plan was to identify possible improvements to parking, traffic flow, and multi-modal mobility and access to all park destinations, as well as address pedestrian safety issues including lighting and street crossings. A public planning process was anticipated to vet the solutions with park stakeholders and the public, which would include potential solutions, order of magnitude cost estimates, and provide a timeline for anticipated improvements that would meet as many of the needs as possible at the time.

As important as the above focus of work is, it is also important to recognize that this effort was not expected to serve as a master plan for the park, secure funding or approvals for improvements, gain complete consensus for all solutions, or exhaust all possible permutations for improvements. Instead, this plan serves as a policy framework for addressing the most critical needs of the park in a way that benefits all users of the park in a reasonable time-frame.



# GIVENS

## Equal Access Is a City Responsibility

Overton Park is property of the City of Memphis and therefore a shared asset among all citizens. Management of the various park institutions and venues are carried out either by City departments or third-party organizations, the park remains a place for everyone. Similarly, because it appears that the City's operating agreements with the park institutions and venues does not address parking, The responsibility for parking and access resides with the City. Many of the concerns documented by the team were identified in the original 1988 Overton Park Master plan but were never adequately addressed. Meeting the demands for access and parking will remain an issue the City cannot ignore despite having deferred the serious matter of automobile parking for many years. The lack of an appropriate access and parking has resulted in lawsuits, counter lawsuits, mediation for rival park managers, and angry residents.

Just as private development is required to provide adequate access and automobile parking in accordance with regulations like the City's Unified Development Ordinance or Federal Acts like the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), public facilities are also required to provide adequate access to all, regardless of ability or mode of transportation. Significant impediments to accessibility and usage of the park must be resolved, including inadequate parking for visitors at peak times, the absence of continuous accessible sidewalks and ADA-compliant curb ramps, and insufficient infrastructure for bicyclists that does not conflict with motorists or pedestrians.

## Park Patrons Are Owed a Duty of Care

By law patrons of the park are classified either as "invitees", visitors who use the park's amenities free of charge (e.g., Levitt Shell, Overton Bark, Greensward), or "licensees", those who pay admission for events (e.g., Zoo, Brooks Museum). A "duty of care" regarding access to and use of facilities within Overton Park is expected to be provided to both invitees and licensees, and extends throughout the park grounds including an accessible path of travel under the ADA to all park patrons, regardless of ability. This responsibility belongs to the City of Memphis as owner of Overton Park.

Sidewalks and curb ramps are absent in many locations (particularly between transit stops and venues). Lack of accommodations put bicyclists in danger of competing for the same operating space as vehicles and/or pedestrians.



Paths within the park and between the surrounding neighborhood and park are insufficient. These are indications that the typical park patron is essentially expected to use the park “at their own risk.” This is unacceptable from several legal points of view.

Likewise the lack of a hospitable people-friendly environment is unbefitting a city’s premiere urban park. A valid argument can be made that the 65 days the Zoo reports it uses the Greensward for overflow parking are the exact same days that park patrons would make full use of the Greensward for the free play activities as it was intended. This creates a conflict between users, none of whom are adequately served to utilize the Greensward.

## National Historic Register Designation Is At Risk



Overton Park is a public resource that the City of Memphis is obligated to steward under the Public Trust Doctrine. This 115-year old park is historically significant. Overton Park was nominated and placed on the U.S. Department of the Interior’s National Register of Historic Places in 1979, for two primary attributes: 1) the historic relevance of George Kessler’s plan from 1902 is an example of early American civic park planning, and 2) Overton Park was also the impetus for a 1971 Supreme Court decision that reshaped the way federal government projects impact historical, cultural and environmental qualities of local communities. As a result of the high court decision, Overton Park is now regarded as “One of the Ten Parks that Changed America.”

The Greensward and Old Growth Forest are nearly all that remain from the 1902 Kessler plan. The rest of the park has been transformed as a host for the Memphis Zoo, Brooks Museum, Memphis College of Art and Levitt Shell, which were not part of the original plan. Significant areas of the Old Growth Forest have been lost since the park’s inception, leaving the Greensward as the most intact historical landscape. Since 1979 things have changed. Several roads were closed. Playgrounds, picnic areas, and dog park areas have been introduced. The Greensward is being used for automobile parking.

Each of these modifications to the park can be seen as jeopardizing the integrity of the historic landscape as recognized in its historic designation. Continued misuse of the park has the potential for not only losing its status, but also losing the essential qualities that make Overton Park great.

## Prior Plans and Studies Have Not Been Implemented

In our research, several prior studies have identified a number of potential parking and traffic solutions. It appears they have never been implemented due to lack of funding, city approvals, or institutional commitment. It is clear that worthwhile solutions for solving automobile parking problems within the park are abundant. Strategies for prioritizing and implementing the solutions are missing.

Surveys and origin data indicate where park patrons are coming from to attend the park attractions that bring the most visitors. Levitt Shell attendees tend to be from Midtown and East Memphis. Families visiting the Zoo come from the central and eastern portions of Shelby County, or on free Zoo days come equally from all directions. It is clear that each venue and institution draws from different areas and demographics, making any single solution difficult to address every demand.

The Overton Park Conservancy (OPC) and Memphis Zoo provided internally-commissioned studies that identified a number of untapped potential parking resources as well as traffic flow improvements that should be considered. Coupled with on-site observations it is clear that access and parking issues are at their worst during peak park usage such as 1) simultaneous events at the various venues (MCA, Brooks, Zoo, Levitt Shell, other events), and 2) during beautiful weather days when many people are wishing to utilize the parks outdoor amenities (Zoo, Greensward, Overton Bark, Playground, Picnic areas, etc.). It is during these situations that the available parking is fully utilized and certain areas are used for overflow parking, causing a conflict in uses.

# INPUTS

## Park Partner Interviews

One-on-one interviews were conducted with the “Park Partners” (organizations that operate in the park) including City of Memphis Park Services (Golf Course), Brooks Museum of Art, Levitt Shell, Memphis College of Art, Memphis Zoo, and Overton Park Conservancy. These conversations centered on trying to understand the operational requirements of each organization, the problems each faced in terms of access, parking and traffic, and asked for any potential ideas or issues that should be considered during this process. The common themes that arose in one or more of these meetings include:

- Respect and maximize green space
- Address everyone’s needs, equally, regardless of transportation mode
- Address peak-demand times when everyone wants to use the park
- Manage traffic congestion and parking demands during simultaneous events
- Create safe and convenient access by pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders
- Consider cost-effective and multi-user solutions
- Maintain safety and emergency access
- Support the continued growth and well-being of all venues, user groups and organizations

## Focus Group Meetings

In addition to talking with the Park Partners, a day-long series of focus group meetings were held with other stakeholder groups who either are affected by park activities, conduct events there, are advocates for park users, or otherwise expressed a sense of ownership or responsibility in what happens to the park. Invitations to these meetings were extended to representatives from:

- Citizens to Preserve Overton Park/Get Off Our Lawn
- Stop Hurting Overton Park
- Park Friends
- Evergreen Historic District Association
- Hein Park Neighborhood Association



- Vollintine-Evergreen Community Association
- Tucker-Jefferson Neighborhood Association
- Lea's Woods
- Binghampton
- East End Neighborhood Association
- Lick Creek Coalition
- Sierra Club
- Midtown Action Coalition
- City of Memphis Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator
- Breakaway Running
- Memphis Center for Independent Living
- Mayor's Committee for Persons with Disabilities
- Mayor's Institute for Excellent Mobility Coordinator
- Crosstown Concourse
- Broad Avenue Arts District
- Overton Square
- Binghampton Development Corporation
- Memphis Chamber of Commerce Chairman's Circle
- Rhodes College
- Snowden School
- The Parkview
- Parkway House Condominiums
- Shelby Farms Park Conservancy, and
- The Eggleston Museum.

Over 60 individuals came and spoke with the consultant team, providing valuable insight and information. Many of the comments made echoed those of the Park Partners.

## Public Surveys

Two on-line public surveys were conducted as part of the planning process. The first garnered 2,230 responses beginning January 28th, 2016. The questions focused on park visitorship including frequency, attractions visited, length of stay, mode of travel, nearby destinations, concerns about travel choices, desired transportation improvements, and where respondents lived. The results of the survey indicated:

- Strong attendance to the Levitt Shell, Memphis Zoo, and Greensward
- Average length of stay of 2-4 hours
- Memphis Zoo, Levitt Shell, Greensward and running trails/Old Growth Forest were most frequently visited
- Private automobile was the dominant mode of transportation, followed by walking and bicycle use
- Lack of adequate automobile parking was the most important concern, followed by traffic congestion and lack of information regarding transportation choice
- More than a quarter of respondents would visit more often if given more transportation choices
- Most needed transportation improvements were more automobile parking, followed by better information and sidewalks

Three open-ended response questions were posed – yielding 4,532 written comments – regarding what elements of the park should be enhanced or preserved, what should be eliminated or transformed, and what vision the respondents had of the future of Overton Park.

- Two-thirds of respondents wanted to preserve open spaces, in particular prohibiting parking on the Greensward
- One-third wished to preserve the Old Growth Forest, while one-sixth wishing to preserve or enhance the Zoo, and lesser numbers wishing to enhance the Levitt Shell, trails, or add sidewalks and other amenities
- A smaller proportion (up to 15%) of respondents suggested eliminating or modifying the Golf Course, Zoo, Rainbow Lake or other features of the park
- One-quarter of respondents suggested preserving natural features, with 10% requesting enhancements to the Zoo; lesser numbers suggested adding a parking structure, improving transit service, adding metered parking, studying off-site parking options, making better bicycle and pedestrian

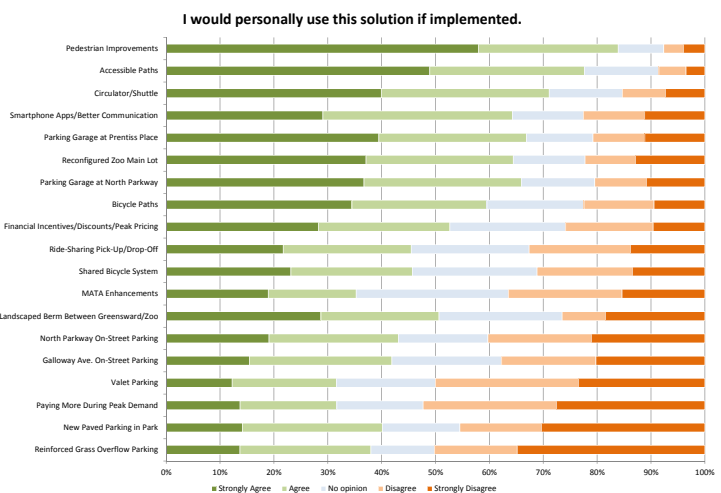
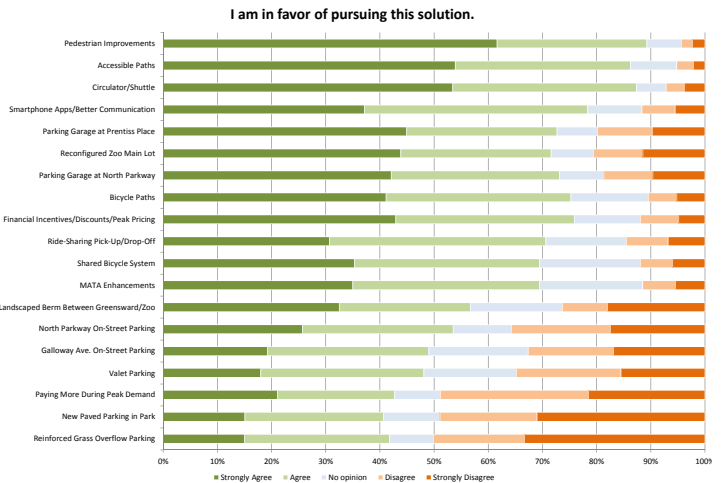
access, adding drop-off/pick-up areas for shared parking services, and making better connections to area roadways and bicycle facilities

- Most respondents wished for solutions and an end to controversy, with many requesting a solution to a Zoo self-created parking issue according to their perception.

The second public survey received 1,218 responses and 590 comments February 24-28, 2016. Twenty (20) potential technical solutions were listed, asking respondents if they were in favor of pursuing solutions, and if they would personally use them.

Among the most favored and likely to be used solutions were *Pedestrian Improvements*, *Accessible Paths*, *Circulator/Shuttle* routes, and *Smartphone App/Better Communication*, with the most desired parking resources being a *Parking Structure at Prentiss Place*, *Reconfigured Zoo Main Lot*, and a *Parking Structure on North Parkway*.

The least favored and likely to be used solutions were *Reinforced Grass Overflow Parking*, *New Paved Parking Lots*, *Valet Parking*, and *On-Street Parking along Galloway Avenue or North Parkway*.



## Public Meetings

The public was informed and engaged in two public meetings, providing valuable input into the process, as well as receiving important information about the subject matter to help foster public debate about the appropriate enhancements to the park.



The first public meeting was held on February 2nd, 2016 at Brooks Museum. Approximately 250 people participated, with unfortunately more who were unable to attend due to the auditorium reaching maximum legal capacity. At the meeting the public was presented with an overview of the planning process, historic and background information gathered by that time. Consultant reviewed the issues identified by the Park Partners, summarized the responses from the first on-line survey, and shared observations from a site tour of the park during a peak visitor day. Finally the consultants highlighted case studies of other urban parks facing similar issues, and potential guiding principles before receiving comment cards with questions, suggestions and comments. A total of 102 comments were received and several dozen questions were answered before the entire group.



The second public meeting was held on February 18th, 2016 at First Baptist Broad Church, which drew approximately 350 attendees in a larger venue than the first meeting. The presentation began with a review of four critical framework issues that emerged during the research phase of the planning process: City code enforcement; the “duty of care” requirement; impact to the National Historic property; and work conducted prior to this planning process. An overview of potential design solutions focused around five modes of transportation:

- Pedestrian
- Bicycle
- Transit
- Circulator, and
- Automobile



This was followed by recommendations for implementation centered around:

- Communication strategies
- Development of improved transportation facilities
- Funding/financing, and
- Stewardship and management





The group then divided into four discussion areas where the public could share their comments and engage in dialogue with the planners about the particulars of each recommendation – asking questions and making comments and suggestions. Robust conversation was had plus 42 written comments were received. The feedback received at both meetings has been invaluable and influenced/modified the recommendations contained in this report.

## Guiding Principles

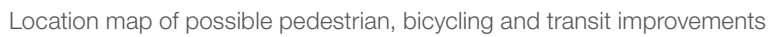
The use of Guiding Principles is a method to enable decision-makers and the public to ensure that as each potential enhancement to Overton Park meets the desires and objectives of the community as much as possible. We propose these Guiding Principles be referenced when considering the selection, prioritization, funding, timing, design, implementation and management of any enhancement to Overton Park as it relates to public access to and use of portions of Overton Park by patrons no matter which mode of transportation they choose to use. Proper use of these principles will help build support for and focus discussion about potential enhancements, and the effects of those enhancements on the Park Partners operations, visitor's experiences, impacts on neighbors, and effectiveness in providing solutions to the parking and traffic woes the park faces.

1. Overton Park should be accessible by all users, regardless of ability or mode of transportation
2. Activities in Overton Park should not cause disruption to other activities, create poor visitor experiences, or negatively impact neighbors, especially during peak usage events
3. Man-made resources in Overton Park (e.g. shared parking, communications, management) should be used efficiently or shared to maximize their usefulness/utilization
4. During peak usage events the natural resources of Overton Park should remain intact to the greatest extent possible with the goal of minimal (e.g. overflow parking) or no impact (Old Growth Forest)
5. Multiple cost-effective and effective solutions to parking and traffic problems should be implemented as quickly as possible to address current issues, with the aim of implementing solutions that work for the long-term
6. Safety, security, accessibility and attractiveness should be addressed when making any enhancements in Overton Park
7. As a public park connecting people to nature, Overton Park should allow the public maximum access to nature and greenspace

## MASTER PLAN MAPS

Illustrating many of the possible solutions outlined above are maps and other graphics. Included here are two maps that show the location of the various pedestrian, bicycle and transit improvements, as well as locations where potential parking could be found in the park.

Additional maps and graphics are provided separately, attached.





## POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

The solutions of this report are grouped in five categories of improvements: Communications, Management, Pedestrian Improvements, Bicycle Improvements, and Vehicle Improvements. It is not expected that any one of the solutions will fulfill the needs of Overton Park users; there is no “silver bullet” solution. A multi-pronged approach, however, will begin to relieve parking on the Greensward, address congestion during peak events, enhance safety and security, improve the visitor’s experience, and allow more citizens to visit Overton Park without harming the park. We believe that thoughtfully combining multiple solutions with the proper financial, political and institutional support will satisfy the desires of the entire community.

### Communications

#### 1. Unified Web Site Message

Unified messaging  
regarding parking, travel  
and transportation

*Responsibility: Park Tenants  
& City of Memphis*

*Cost: Low \$*

- » Update Overton Park tenant web sites with a unified message regarding available parking, travel and transportation options to/within Overton Park.

Even though all of the venues at Overton Park have web sites, the Zoo website is the only one that provides any information regarding how to get to the park, and that information is only about transit and circulator access. None of the web sites provide information on routes to access the park or where parking can be found once you have reached the park. All of the Park tenants’ web sites should provide consistent information regarding how to access the park and locations that are likely to have available parking. The exact content of this message will depend upon the solutions that are implemented, but could contain directions for how to get to Overton Park by each mode of travel (transit, pedestrian, bicycle, auto), locations for parking, and links to sites that provide real time parking information.

This unified travel and transportation message should emphasize the range of travel options available to the public, including walking, bicycling, transit and automobile travel and encourage ALL Park users to think of their impact to the environment when traveling to the Park. Park users should be encouraged to walk, bike, car pool, use transit and/or use Uber or taxi service to travel to the Park. The City may wish to task the Overton Park Conservancy with the development of a unified travel and transportation message that can be displayed on all Park tenant web pages. The message must be updated and kept current relative to the activities in the Park each week.



## 2. Car Parking App

- » Implement a car parking app specifically for Overton Park for days when heavy park use is anticipated or for special events.

Similar apps are used by urban parks, performing arts venues and urban zoos across the nation and in Downtown Memphis. A Car Parking App would enable Park patrons to reserve auto spaces at specific parking lots and areas throughout the Park (including the Zoo and Brooks Museum). A credit card can be used to secure a parking space prior to arrival at the Park. The cost of the app is minimal. Some companies provide the app for free. The majority of the cost is in the implementation of the system and is related to how the number and location of available parking spaces is updated and maintained. The process for counting occupied and open parking spaces and disseminating that information real time will depend on the type of parking, as described below.

### *Formal Parking Areas*

For the formal parking areas (parking lots, striped or marked parking areas), the location and availability of parking can be easily maintained using existing technology. The information can be collected and maintained manually, but it is very labor intensive and subject to error. However, the technology exists that will allow accurate counts of occupied and available parking spaces and that can be provided to Park customers by way of web sites and apps. The information can be segregated by location and can help to direct Park customers to the most direct routes to get to the available parking locations.

### *Informal Parking Areas*

Informal parking areas are those areas where parking is allowed but is not controlled, such as on-street parking in areas without marked or metered spaces. The locations for this type of parking can be identified and made available to the Park customers on maps and web sites. However, maintaining occupancy data for this parking on a daily or hourly basis can be very labor intensive, and may not have much value on most days. However, for special events or for days when heavy usage of the Park is expected, there is benefit to maintaining this information. The Park tenants that are conducting the special events should be responsible for providing the personnel to obtain this information and convey it to the Park customers both with staff “on the street” and through web sites and apps. It is recommended that an organized process be developed for the various levels of Park events that will result in a more orderly filling of available on-street parking spaces and that will reduce the amount of vehicles circling through the Park looking for available parking.

### **Car Parking App**

*Responsibility: City of Memphis, Park Tenants & OPC*

*Cost: Moderate \$\$*

### *Design and implementation of App*

There are numerous companies that provide parking apps. Some apps are custom developed for fees that reflect the level of complexity of the data. Some of these companies will also implement the technology to maintain the parking occupancy data. Other apps are available for no charge to implement and maintain, but rely upon the parking provider to supply the information on the location, number of spaces, and occupancy. If a parking app is selected for implementation, it is recommended that the Park tenants be provided information on the various services available and that all of the Park tenants use the same app provider to make use of this information easier for the Park customers.

### **3. Overton Park Visitor Information App**

#### **Park activities App**

*Responsibility: OPC*

*Cost: Low \$*

- » Develop an “Overton Park App” to serve as the central location for information about activities, events, parking, and access to the Park. Develop an event response plan. Cost: Low

The Overton Park Conservancy currently maintains a calendar of events on its web site that is dependent on the Park tenants providing information about their events. It appears that the information does not provide a thorough understanding of all of the activities going on at the Park. Further, there is little information provided about the magnitude of the events, access or where to park. This information could be enhanced by providing more information regarding park events, providing maps of the park, providing suggestions for the different modes of transportation to the Park (bike, walk, transit, auto) and by providing a link to the Car Parking app as described in the previous section.

Create an event response team consisting of representatives of each of the Park tenants that will utilize the information collected for the Overton Park app and other event information to establish the level of response needed for each Park event. It is expected there could be three levels of response:

- *Normal Operations* – business as usual with no special events or large number of patrons expected
- *Action Level One* – Typical nice day with a high level of Park patrons expected, but no special events
- *Action Level Two* – Multiple events or large special events on the same day

For each response level, each of the Park tenants would have responsibilities, such as providing staff to direct or control traffic internal to the Park, parking assistance, trash removal, emergency vehicle access, etc. This team should meet regularly, as needed to make sure all events are planned for and responded to appropriately. Post event meetings should be held to assess the response and to identify areas for improvement.

## Incentives and Management

### 4. Incentives System

- » Incorporate various incentive programs to encourage or reward visitors for using alternative transportation or taking advantage of off-peak demand time periods.

An incentive system could be used by the Park tenants to provide some reduction in parking demand during high use periods or for special events. The following are some examples listed in order of lowest to highest impact:

- *Cyclists* – provide reduced admissions fees to customers that arrive at the park by bicycle
- *Transit* – provide a reduction in admission fees for users that arrive at Park venues by transit or circulators
- *Transit* – provide reduced transit fares for customers that are OPC, Zoo, Brooks members or that hold tickets to events at one of the Park venues
- *Uber or Taxi* – provide reduced admissions fees for customers that arrive by Uber or taxi.
- *Carpooling* – provide reduced parking fees for customers arriving in vehicles carrying four or more passengers
- *Peak Demand Parking Pricing* – use variable parking pricing models to encourage utilization of secondary parking areas. For events with high parking demand, the most desired parking areas would be priced the highest while more remote parking would be available at a reduced cost or for free.
- *Off-Peak Admissions* – provide reduced admission fees or free parking for customers using venues during non-peak periods. This would be similar to how Shelby Farms manages the Starry Nights crowds by offering reduced admissions fees for the days that typically have fewer customers. It would reduce the peak loading and spread the parking demand and congestion over a longer time period.
- *Timed Tickets* – Similar to how ticketing was handled for the Wonders Exhibits, timed tickets set an admission time for the customer for the busiest days. The customer is allowed entry within a set time (such as 60 minutes) of the time on their ticket. This allows the Park tenant to have more control over when the customers arrive and allows the available parking to be managed. Discounts can also be offered for customers that are admitted during the lower demand periods.

#### Financial incentives

*Responsibility: Park Tenants*

*Cost: Low to Moderate \$-\$\$*

## 5. Management Programs

### Management

*Responsibility: OPC*

*Cost: Low \$*

- » Institute a Park Ambassadors program to proactively assist visitors with parking, directions, safety and comfort.

Many of the suggestions contained herein may require an active operational or management commitment to be able to do things such as control traffic flows, redirect visitors to available parking when certain areas are full, or enable visitors to feel safe walking after dark.

A program of staff or volunteer Park Ambassadors, similar to the Downtown Memphis Blue Suede Brigade, can actively manage traffic, parking and the visitor experience. Park Ambassadors, stationed at various locations in the park would direct visitors to available parking, monitor situations as they change, and help visitors get to their destinations safely and comfortably.



## Pedestrian Improvements

### 6. Pedestrian Improvements

- » Improve pedestrian access around the perimeter of and within Overton Park, including accessibility improvements to comply with the law.

*Poplar Avenue at Tucker Street to Brooks Museum of Art* – Current plans (Ritchie Smith Associates plan from 10/2014), call for an accessible path from Poplar Avenue to the front of the Brooks Museum. The plans also address perimeter sidewalks and bicycle connectivity along the outer edges of the park. Some intersection improvements are also proposed. Install as approved.

At present Overton Park is non-compliant with current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) codes, in accordance with federal law. Accessible paths for wheelchairs and mobility challenged persons should be installed in select areas to connect existing institutions within the park to alleviate the problem.

Install minimum 5 ft. width (max. 10 ft.) concrete sidewalks that are ADA compliant with accessible curb ramps in the following areas:

*Brooks Museum to Levitt Shell* – Add an accessible path to connect the west side of Brooks Museum to the southern side of Levitt Shell. An existing accessible path meanders from the top of the bowl at the Shell to the restrooms and stage level on the west side of the amphitheater.

*Levitt Shell to Memphis College of Art* – Extend the path at the top of the bowl at the Shell to the east and connect to the Memphis College of Art.

*Levitt Shell to Veterans Plaza* – Extend an accessible path from the restrooms at the NW corner of the Shell property, cross Veteran's Plaza Drive to the north and connect to Veteran's Plaza.

*Poplar Avenue (Main Entrance) to Memphis College of Art* – Current plans (RSA-10/2014), call for a 10 ft. multi-use trail from Cooper Street to the main entrance of Overton Park on Poplar. The proposed path extends only a short distance into the park. Extend the proposed accessible path to the north on the east side of Veteran's Plaza Drive. Connect the path to the existing Golf House. Continue the accessible path north on the east side of road to the intersection of Veteran's Plaza Drive and Old Forest Lane. Extend the path west across Veteran's Plaza Drive to connect the front of Memphis College of Art. Also extend the path to the east on the south side of Old Forest Lane to connect the existing Dog Park. Cross Old Forest Lane near the Dog Park and connect to the existing concrete

### Pedestrian Improvements

*Responsibility: City of Memphis*

*Cost: Moderate \$\$*





path at the old baseball diamond on the north. Connect the picnic pavilion and playground.

*Memphis College of Art to Veteran's Plaza* – Utilize existing sidewalks on the west side of Veteran's Plaza Drive from the entry of MCA to Veteran's Plaza for ADA accessibility. Verify for ADA compliance and make modifications as needed to bring it to compliance.



*Veteran's Plaza to Overton Park Avenue* – Connect Veteran's Plaza to Overton Park Avenue through the Formal Gardens. Verify the paths for ADA compliance, make any necessary modifications for compliance and install ramps as needed. Bring the park entry at Overton Park Avenue into compliance through a multi-use connector for bicycles and pedestrians.



*Veteran's Plaza to Memphis Zoo* – There is currently a path that leads from the north end of Veteran's Plaza to the parking lot on the south side of the Memphis Zoo. Verify for ADA compliance. Light the path with bollards or similar low height lighting to provide a safe, secure walking experience between the facilities. Establish a designated ADA compliant path from the existing path at Veteran's Plaza through the existing parking lot to the entry of the Memphis Zoo. Restripe the existing parking lot, add a tree lined and lighted path that extends along the axis of the Memphis Zoo entry and connects with the Greensward. (Consistent with previous Zoo master plans).



*Memphis Zoo to McLean Boulevard* – Establish an accessible path between the entrance of the Memphis Zoo and McLean Boulevard adjacent to the existing Prentiss Parking lot.



## Bicycling Improvements

### 7. Nearby Bicycle Improvements

- » Construct planned improvements to the bicycle network leading to Overton Park, providing alternative means to access the park.

Overton Park Avenue and Galloway Avenue have been part of the park system designated “recreational on-road trails” bicycle routes for many years, and the area around Overton Park is becoming more accommodating to bicyclists. The City of Memphis has installed new bike lanes and signage along McLean Boulevard. The Hampline, a dedicated cycle track along Broad Avenue, opened two years ago and has been a successful addition to the neighborhood. The bicycle gate at the northeast corner of Overton Park is another celebrated feature of the park. Several City-led projects are planned or underway and should be implemented.

Implement the City’s plans to install bicycle improvements along Cooper Street and North Parkway as part of their repaving program, gaining bicycle lanes and on-street parking. Continue discussions with Rhodes College concerning bicycle improvements along University Street. Complete the second half of the Hampline from Broad Avenue to Shelby Farms Greenline along Tillman Street with currently allocated funds and begin construction with anticipated for completion in 2016, improving access to Overton Park for those who want to travel to the park by bicycle.

### 8. Park Internal Bicycle Improvements

- » Provide a bicycle path through the park that minimizes safety conflicts between bicycle riders and motorists.

Existing bicycle infrastructure within the park is primarily on existing roads that were closed to automobile traffic years ago. They provide ample space for both bicycles and pedestrians through the Old Growth Forest. Outside of the closed roads, however, bicycles are forced to share roads with automobiles in the rest of the park. Create a multi-use facility through the heart of the park connecting the existing Old Growth Forest roads and trails to the bike lanes on McLean Boulevard, institutions within the park, and other proposed facilities such as Cooper Street and North Parkway. This facility includes striping, wayfinding road markings, signage, or a completely separated facility that accommodates bicycles and pedestrians.

#### Bicycle Improvements on nearby streets

*Responsibility: City of Memphis*

*Cost: Moderate \$\$*



#### Bicycle Improvements with Overton Park

*Responsibility: City of Memphis*

*Cost: Low to Moderate \$-\$*



### Bicycle Share

*Responsibility: Bike  
Share Memphis*

*Cost: Moderate \$\$*



## 9. Bike Share Program

- » Install Bike Share system points in the park to give visitors flexibility in arriving to or traversing Overton Park.

A Bike Share system for Memphis is currently in development. Include Overton Park as one of the destinations and host landscapes for a Bike Share Station. Typically, bike share stations contain a rack of rental bikes along with the payment kiosk that customers can use to rent bikes by the hour, half-day or full-day. Additionally, the bike share station(s) at Overton Park could operate independently within the park, offering patrons the opportunity to rent bikes for internal park use. Users can rent a bike, ride to another part of the park and rack the bike, use the park facilities, then rent another bike for a return trip elsewhere. Implementation of a Memphis Bike Share system is expected to take one to two years.



## Transit Improvements

### 10. Transit Improvements

- » Provide improved public transit service to Overton Park by making the public aware of the available real time transit information and by improving the most frequently used bus stops.

Overton Park is currently served by two Memphis Area Transit Authority (MATA) bus routes that run east and west adjacent to the Park – the Number 50 Route that follows Poplar Avenue and the 53 Route that follows Summer and North Parkway. The closest north-south MATA bus route is the number 32 Route that follows Hollywood from the north to Central and then follows East Parkway/ Airways into Whitehaven and the Airport area. The recently completed Midtown Alternatives Analysis study also identified a new route that would run from Central at East Parkway to Poplar at East Parkway, connecting to other routes on each end. The MATA routes on Poplar and East Parkway each have five stops that are adjacent to Overton Park. Some stops are designated by signs and some are designated with shelters.

MATA has an App (Transloc) that provides real time information on the bus routes, stop locations, bus locations and direction the bus is traveling for their entire system.

#### Bus Shelters

Along the Poplar Avenue frontage of Overton Park, there are four bus shelters. There is one on the north side opposite Cox Street, one on the north side opposite Cooper Street, one on the north side opposite Bellaire Drive (historic design), and one on the north side opposite Rembert.

Along the North Parkway frontage of Overton Park, there are two bus shelters. They are located on the north side in front of Snowden School and on the south side opposite University Street.

We were not able to get ridership information from MATA in time for this report, but from observation, it appears the most heavily used bus stop along Poplar is at Tucker Street, where there is not a shelter.

Obtain ridership data for each of the bus stops along the Overton Park frontage to determine the volume boarding at each stop. Provide bus shelters consistent with the historic character of the area and the adjacent uses for the heaviest used bus stops.

#### Transit Improvements

*Responsibility: City of Memphis and MATA*

*Cost: Moderate to High \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$*





### Circulator System

*Responsibility: OPC, MATA  
or Private Operator*

*Cost: Moderate to  
High \$\$-\$\$\$*



## 11. Circulator

- » Provide circulator bus service to Overton Park. Cost: Moderate to High

Currently, there are two privately owned circulator buses operations in the Midtown area – Memphis Hop and Ride the Roo. Memphis Hop is primarily focused on tourist traffic, picking up passengers at Downtown hotels and at Macy's Oak Court with stops at several museums, Graceland, Bass Pro, and the Memphis Zoo. Memphis Hop stops at each location every hour and 20 minutes. Ride the Roo is a circulator that runs primarily between the Cooper-Young area and Overton Square. This circulator has provided service to tenants in Overton Park, including serving the Shell for big events, providing an eight week service between Overton Square and the Park the summer of 2014, and providing employee shuttles for the Zoo during peak demand periods. Ride the Roo stops at each stop once every 30 minutes.

For a circulator to operate successfully at a venue that generates a lot of car traffic, the circulator needs a route and stop locations that avoid the congested areas as much as possible while dropping off and picking up the customer as close to the venue as possible.

For events on the south side of the Park, this could be accomplished by routing a circulator on Golf Drive and designating Golf Drive for use only by the circulator and taxi and Uber type service.

For events on the north side of the Park, and primarily for customers going to the Zoo, there is not currently a location or route that will meet this need very well. One potential option would be to have a Zoo circulator drop off on North Parkway at the entrance to the Zoo Maintenance facility. For this drop off location to be successful, a customer entrance to the Zoo would have to be provided in this area. Therefore, this location for a circulator stop is only viable if it is provided in conjunction with other improvements that will provide a customer entrance at this location. This option would have a high cost.

A moderate cost option is to provide an Overton Park circulator that serves the entire park with a route that follows Veterans Plaza Drive with stops near the Brooks Museum/ Levitt Shell and Veterans Plaza. This route would provide access to Brooks Museum, the Levitt Shell, Memphis College of Art, and the Memphis Zoo. The walk to the Zoo from Veterans Plaza is slightly shorter than the walk from the farthest edge of the existing Greensward parking area to the Zoo. This option would also avoid the cost of constructing a new entrance on the northeast side of the Zoo.

It is recommended that a circulator be operated by a private provider. This would reduce the need for any large up-front capital costs for buses and maintenance facilities. The circulator could either operate based on fees paid by the users or it could be fully or partially subsidized by funds from the Park tenants or other sources.

If it is decided to have a circulator that operates through Overton Park, it is recommended that the stop locations have distinctive shelters to clearly identify to potential users the stop locations.

Outside the Park, the other end of the circulator route should be to a location where a significant number of parking spaces are available and that is relatively close. The Overton Square parking structure or a joint use parking structure on the Rhodes College campus may be good locations.

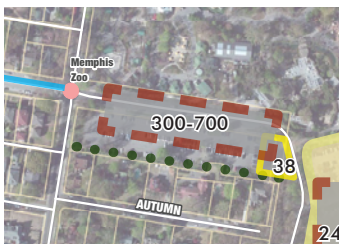
## Automobile Parking Improvements

### 12. Automobile Parking Structures

#### Structured Parking

*Responsibility: City of Memphis and/or Tenants*

*Cost: High \$\$\$*



- » Provide structured parking in key locations to increase capacity where demand is the highest, and where they can serve the most number of people.

Several options are available for structured parking in and around Overton Park. There have been several studies in the last several years exploring structured parking around the Zoo. In this section, many of these alternatives will be presented, including approximate construction costs, number of potential spaces added, and the benefits of each location. The construction costs provided are based on all levels being above ground and standard construction. If any of the levels are to be built underground or if any elements are added to minimize the visual impact of these structures, the costs will increase significantly.

**Prentiss Lot** – This is in the location of the existing surface parking lot on Prentiss Place between McLean and the Zoo entrance that has approximately 200 spaces. The number of spaces and an opinion of probable construction cost are provided below.

Description	Number of Spaces	Net Additional Spaces	Construction Cost
Two Level Structure (Ground plus one elevated level)	580	300	\$7.8 M
Three Level Structure	900	700	\$13.2 M

#### Issues and Considerations:

- Due to its location, this structure would primarily serve the Zoo, although a circulator could make this a viable parking option for Levitt Shell events.
- The adjacent property owners are likely to object to a parking structure adjacent to their property. To help mitigate that impact, the parking structure could be placed such that the north side of the structure would be adjacent to the Zoo fence and Prentiss Place could be relocated to the south side of the parking structure. In addition, screening should be provided between relocated Prentiss Place and the back of these properties.

**Zoo Maintenance Lot** – This location is in the existing Zoo Maintenance area adjacent to North Parkway. This lot currently has approximately 100 surface spaces. The number of spaces a parking structure would provide and an opinion of probable construction cost are provided below.

Description	Number of Spaces	Net Additional Spaces	Construction Cost
Two Level Structure	200	100	\$3.8 M
Three Level Structure	300	200	\$5.6 M
Modifications to Maintenance are and Entrance			\$1 M

#### Issues and Considerations:

- The space for this structure is very restricted. It would require accommodating a portion of the zoo maintenance and tram service area in the structure, in addition to the construction and staffing of a new customer entrance to the Zoo.
- The modifications to the maintenance area and providing the new entrance are expected to add at least an additional \$1M to the cost.
- This area is remote from the rest of the park and would not provide any additional benefits or parking relief for events in the other areas of the Park.

**Zoo Main Parking Lot East Side** – A previous study indicated a parking structure could be built on the eastern portion of the existing Zoo surface parking lot. This is no longer feasible since a portion of this space is now occupied by exhibit space.

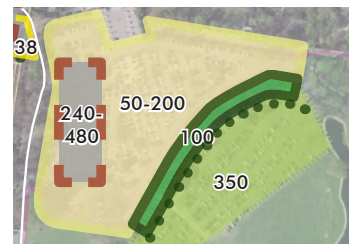
**Zoo Main Parking Lot West Side** – This location is on the west side of the existing Zoo surface parking lot. This would be an option to the plan to reconfigure the Zoo surface parking lot. The reconfigured Zoo lot would have 240 surface spaces in this same location. The number of spaces a parking structure would provide and an opinion of probable construction cost are provided below.

Description	Number of Spaces	Net Additional Spaces	Construction Cost
Two Level Structure	480	240	\$6.5 M
Three Level Structure	720	480	\$10.6 M

#### Issues and Considerations:

- This location is more central to other Park activities and could be used as parking for other events if a circulator bus were provided.
- This structure could negatively impact the view of the Zoo entrance. The design of the exterior of this structure would need to be handled carefully.

**Rhodes Campus Parking Structure** – This project location is on the east side of University Street between Snowden Avenue and Mignon Avenue. Rhodes College has an existing surface parking lot at this location. It is understood that this parking



lot is heavily used and that Rhodes College is in need of additional parking. The existing parking lot has approximately 274 parking spaces. The number of spaces a parking structure would provide and an opinion of probable construction cost are provided below.

Description	Number of Spaces	Net Additional Spaces	Construction Cost
Two Level Structure	548	274	\$7.4 M
Three Level Structure	822	548	\$12.1 M

#### Issues and Considerations:

- Park customers that parked in this structure would need to be transported to the Park since the distance from this parking area to North Parkway is more than a quarter mile and it is almost  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile to the Zoo entrance, or require an entry from North Parkway near University Street.
- This would be a good application for a circulator.

### 13. Automobile Surface Parking

#### Surface Parking Improvements

*Responsibility: City of Memphis and/or Tenants*

*Cost: Low to Moderate \$-\$\$*

- » Introduce expanded or additional parking areas, both permanent and temporary, to increase the available surface parking in the Park.

Prior parking studies have identified several new surface parking opportunities within the park. Further assessment of these options identified several that had potential for adding parking in either permanent paved spaces (parallel, angled or perpendicular), temporary fortified grass/paved spaces, and temporary grass spaces.

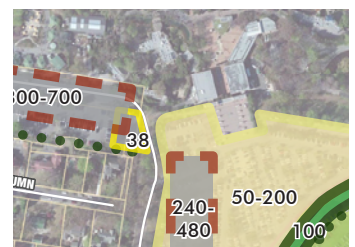
Description	Number of Spaces	Net Additional Spaces	Construction Cost
Reconfigure east side of Zoo main lot		50	\$130,000
Reconfigure west side of Zoo main lot		150	\$400,000
Bermed Zoo Lot Expansion		100	\$360,000
Prentiss Place lot expansion	175	38	\$260,000
Veterans Plaza on-street angled parking		15	\$30,000
Clocktower Drive area on-street angled parking		32	\$70,000
Overflow parking lot near MCA Clocktower		40	\$135,000
Museum Drive on-street parking	23	-23	–
Expanded parking lot at Brooks Museum		26	\$80,000



Description	Number of Spaces	Net Additional Spaces	Construction Cost
Overflow along Morrie Moss Lane		100	\$210,000
Overflow along Veterans Plaza near Levitt Shell/MCA		25	\$50,000
Overflow along Golf Drive		89	\$170,000
Overflow along Golf Clubhouse/Poplar Ave.		30	\$58,000
Playground lot expansion		16	\$35,000
Golf Clubhouse overflow/new parking lot	0	25	\$75,000
East Pavilion new/expanded lots		50	\$150,000
General Services area new development	0	200	\$600,000
General Services area new greenspace	0	60	\$180,000

**Reconfigure Zoo Main Lot** – The Memphis Zoo main parking lot currently contains approximately 632 spaces. A January 2015 City of Memphis site plan showed the potential of new additional spaces if the parking lot were reconfigured and expanded to the north and west. Recent construction at the Zoo relating to the Zambezi River exhibit prevents some of those spaces from being realized, however based upon that plan it appears that up to 52 additional spaces could be gained if the eastern half were reconfigured with relatively little disruption. Also, an additional up to 176 spaces could be gained in a more comprehensive reconfiguration with expansions westward toward Prentiss Place and south approximately 50 ft. with a relocated gatehouse and entry lane located no further south than the existing parking lot edge. These two areas of increased parking can be phased over two construction projects, yielding approximately 50 spaces in the eastern first phase and approximately 150 or more spaces (depending on the final constructed configuration) in the western second phase.

**Bermed Zoo Lot Expansion** – Between the Zoo Main Lot and the Greensward is a sloped area with an open concrete drainage swale and several trees. The Greensward is a relatively flat area suitable for recreation whereas at its northern edge, varying between 50 and 100 ft. south of the Zoo Main Lot, it slopes down and away into the drainage swale. Portions of the Zoo Main Lot is hidden from view because of the slope. If the northern edge were enhanced with a raised grassy or landscaped berm, the view of the Zoo Main Lot from the Greensward would be obscured. If the view was obscured, the Zoo Main Lot could be expanded south into the drainage swale area and gain approximately 100 spaces.





***Prentiss Place Expansion*** – The current configuration of the Prentiss Place parking lot is comprised of approximately 175 spaces, however an abandoned road or alley section and sloped area on the eastern end of the lot next to Prentiss Place could potentially yield additional spaces. Expand the parking area and improve the pathways and stormwater drainage in the area to yield an additional 38 spaces.



***Memphis College of Art*** – Add 15 permanent angled parking spaces along Veterans Plaza Drive north of MCA and 32 spaces south of MCA around the triangle of Veterans Plaza Drive, Clocktower Lane, and Museum Drive. An existing parking lot adjacent to the Memphis College of Art (MCA) would remain. Overflow parking for peak events could optionally utilize an area on the south side of the MCA building along Clocktower Lane, yielding approximately 40 or more spaces. Temporary overflow parking areas should employ a turf reinforcement geotextile system to maintain its green appearance if the area is not used for recreation.



***Adjacent to Brooks Museum*** – Museum Drive between the Memphis Brooks Museum of Art and the Levitt Shell currently accommodates 23 parking spaces, however the road is narrow and must be kept open for fire safety access to the Museum. During peak events the area becomes clogged with vehicles and pedestrians, particularly patrons of the Levitt Shell, which makes it difficult to access. Cordon off this area during events with removable bollards, pave with decorative pavers, and eliminate 23 parking spaces during those periods. Deploying removable bollards would allow the area to continue to be accessible by emergency or service vehicles while preventing congestion in the area, and utilizing decorative paving would enhance the attractiveness of the area to visitors. Add overflow parking spaces to the east side of the existing Brooks Museum parking lot, yielding an additional 26 spaces, either permanently with a paved surface or temporarily utilizing a turf reinforcement geotextile system.



***Overflow Along Interior Roadways*** – Temporary overflow parking could be gained along several interior roadways of the park if they could be constructed in a manner that minimized the conflict between parked vehicles and paths for bicyclists and pedestrians, and did not cause damage to the grass or curbs. Accommodating temporary overflow parking along the sides of these roads would allow for congestion relief and easier two-way traffic flows, plus the potential additional spaces if vehicles were angled or perpendicularly parked instead of parallel along the roadways. Utilizing a turf reinforced geotextile system may allow for gains of approximately 100 spaces along Morrie Moss Lane between Veterans Plaza Drive and the Zoo, 25 spaces along Veterans Plaza Drive north of Levitt Shell and MCA, 89 spaces along Golf Drive, and 30 spaces along Veterans Plaza Drive between the Golf Clubhouse and Poplar Avenue.



Utilization of these areas could increase even in its current configuration if better pedestrian paths were provided, or if an internal shuttle system were employed allowing areas such as Golf Drive to be convenient parking locations for visitors going to venues further north in the park.

**New Lot at Playground** – Add parking at the Playground and Overton Bark areas south of the Greensward for an additional 16 permanent parking spaces located north of the 2nd Hole Golf Tee.

**Golf Clubhouse** – Add permanent paved or temporary reinforced geotextile overflow parking south of the Golf Clubhouse between Golf Drive and the Lick Creek culvert north of the 7th Hole Green, yielding up to 25 additional spaces.

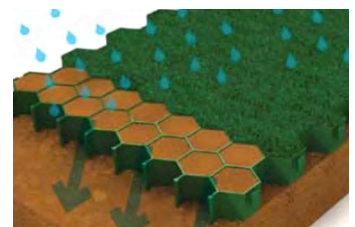
**East Pavilion** – The East Pavilion picnic areas and playground see significant usage at certain times of the day or year, and its location on the east side of the Old Growth Forest area prevents it from being able to utilize parking resources elsewhere in the park. Add up to 50 additional parking spaces in several small lots.

**General Services Area** – Presently the General Services area in the southeast corner of the park is being considered for conversion to cultural and park amenities if the City relocates the General Services facility to another location. When improvements are planned, the City, park tenants, and partner organizations should work together to coordinate the site design and access plans, and facilitate connections to other park destinations to help provide parking resources.

One proposal calls for the Eggleston Museum be located on the area north of the entry drive off of East Parkway. Such a facility should provide adequate parking for its own activities and could provide additional parking for a circulator, bike share or similar park-wide system. The proposal also designates the southern portion of the area become a grassy recreation area which will require parking, and could be utilized for overflow parking in certain situations (i.e., running events in the Old Growth Forest). The Museum might provide 200 or more spaces while up to 60 permanent spaces could serve the recreation area, with additional overflow parking as needed.

### Adjacent On-Street Parking

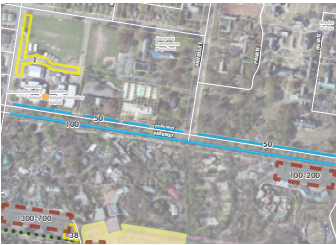
Restripe North Parkway to add bicycle lanes and parallel on-street parking spaces, yielding approximately 100 new spaces on each side (north and south) of the street, resulting in 200 total spaces immediately adjacent to the park on the north side of the Zoo. Utilization of this parking would be aided by pedestrian improvements, the circulator, and/or a pedestrian-only entry gate to the Zoo along North Parkway near University Street.





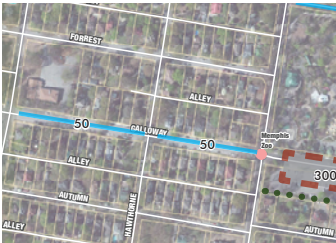


Provide new on-street parking along Galloway Avenue between McLean Street and Evergreen Street, yielding approximately 100 new spaces. Galloway Avenue, an excessively wide road because it once had trolley tracks running down it towards the Park, can accommodate up to 100 angled parking spaces in the middle of the road. These spaces could be used in overflow situations in addition to the parallel parking spaces already available but not often used. Utilization of this parking would be aided by pedestrian improvements, the circulator, landscaping, striping, or active management by Park Ambassadors to assist drivers in parking without negatively affecting neighbors.



### Off Site Solutions – Surface Parking

Further study is needed to evaluate the potential of several off-site locations that were identified by stakeholders or the public for potential surface parking that would be connected to the park either by pedestrian connections or transit/circulators. These included those already described (Snowden School, Rhodes College) for potential parking structures, but also underutilized properties surrounding the park on Summer Avenue, East Parkway or Poplar Avenue. The viability of each of these options depend heavily on having convenient, safe and frequent connections to the destinations in the park, and because of their highly visible locations could potentially be undesirable or unattractive uses that negatively impact the neighborhoods around the park. While these are offered as options they should only be considered in conjunction with other improvements/systems and should be temporary solutions and not be permitted to be permanent parking areas.



### Employee Parking

Manage employee parking for all of the Park tenants to make the Park's internal parking spaces available to Park patrons as much as possible. With the addition of on-street parking on North Parkway, other options will be available for employee and volunteer parking. Adopt employee parking policies for all Park tenants, perhaps similar to how the Zoo directs employees and visitors to the maintenance area or General Services lot on days when large crowds are expected, whereas on low-attendance days employees are allowed to park in more convenient locations if they don't interfere with visitors.



## 14. Roadway Design and Flow – City

- » Ease traffic congestion and driver confusion by limiting two-way traffic flow or using overflow parking along existing roads.

Traffic flow concerns have been identified by numerous stakeholders. The Park's roads were originally designed for horse and buggy (26 ft. wide so they could turn around) and so are a few feet too narrow for easy two-way automobile traffic flow, particularly when cars park on both sides of the road. At locations throughout the park congestion occurs when cars are parallel parked on both sides of the narrow roads. Also, confusion occurs at a wide Y-shaped intersection at Old Forest Drive and Veterans Plaza Drive. Old Forest Drive at Overton Park and the Playground becomes congested when all available parking spaces are full yet drivers continue to try to enter the area. Turning around is not possible and so parallel parking inhibits traffic from flowing through the area.

To relieve congestion during peak events two options should be considered, either overflow parking adjacent to the roads on one or both sides, or restricting flow to one-way. One-way traffic proceeding clockwise around Veterans Drive Plaza between Prentiss Place and Clocktower Drive would relieve issues north and east of Levitt Shell and MCA. Continuing one-way flow around a widened Clocktower Drive and Museum Drive to Veterans Plaza Drive would alleviate some congestion east of MCA and Brooks Museum.

At the intersection of Old Forest Drive and Veterans Plaza, a traffic circle or island would help alleviate congestion in this area and permit drivers to turn around without causing issues.

As mentioned previously, close Museum Drive between the Brooks Museum entry drive and Clocktower Drive to through-traffic during events. Use removable bollards to prohibit parking but maintain emergency vehicle access to those venues.

### Roadway Design and Flow

*Responsibility: City of Memphis*

*Cost: Low to Moderate \$-\$\$*



# RECOMMENDED SCENARIO

## *Automobile Parking Solution for Overton Park*

Provide additional automobile parking within Overton Park and reduce the demand for parking utilizing a phased approach with the goal of drawing down and eventually eliminating automobile parking on the Greensward and relieving parking issues elsewhere in the Park. Estimates on the number of overflow parking spaces used on the Greensward range from 350 to 600. The demand for parking at Levitt Shell events exceeds the available parking in the park. The Brooks Museum, Memphis College of Art, and other special events create parking and circulation demands that currently cannot be met. A goal of this report is to identify solutions to accommodate delivery of Park patrons and customers to the Park venues. The following recommended scenario provides a two phased solution that can begin during 2016 and address the majority of the issues by the end of 2018.

### PHASE 1: (2016)

#### Phase 1

*350 new spaces, estimated  
100 to 150 diverted parking*

*Improve information sharing*

*Institute parking policies*

*Improve pedestrian access*

*Improve bicycling access*

*Fund public transit/  
circulator programs*

*Develop event response plan*

*Introduce incentives  
for taking alternative  
transportation*

*Cost: \$290,000 plus  
\$50,000/intersection  
improvement*

Recommendation	Solution Section Reference	Cost
Implement technical solutions: Web site messages, parking app, Overton Park app, Incentives	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	\$10,000-30,000
Implement on street parking along North Parkway – 200 spaces gained	13	\$422,000 (already funded)
Implement on street parking in center of Galloway – 100 spaces gained	13	\$130,000
Reconfigure Zoo Main Parking Lot (as proposed by City of Memphis) – 50 spaces gained	13	\$130,000
Develop policy that any future expansion of Zoo, Levitt Shell, Brooks Museum, Memphis College of Arts or any other Overton Park venue MUST provide a plan to the City to address additional automobile parking required for the expansion.		
Make pedestrian improvements to intersections as defined within the report	5	\$50,000/ intersection
Complete the bicycle improvements along Cooper Street and North Parkway	6	\$380,000 (already funded)
Seek grant opportunities to fund public transit or circulator program	10, 11	



Implement an event response plan to provide varying levels of response depending on the anticipated Park activity level	3, 5	
Secure commitments from Park Tenants to implement the response plan solutions, such as providing traffic control, directing patrons to available parking, etc	3, 5	
Implement incentive programs such as timed ticket, reduced priced tickets, etc.	4	

**PHASE 2: (2017)**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Solution Section Reference</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Complete reconfiguration of Zoo Main Parking Lot – 150 spaces gained (does not include any further encroachment into Greensward)	13	\$400,000
Complete additional surface auto parking throughout Overton Park – 300 spaces gained	13	\$600,000
Complete design and engineering of Prentiss Place parking structure	12	\$750,000
Implement transit and Circulator plan (contract for Circulator providers, build new shelters and implement Transit/Circulator routes)	10, 11	\$25,000/week (5 days/week)

**Phase 2***450 new spaces**Design parking structure**Implement circulator system**Cost: \$1.75M plus \$25,000/week*

Following the first two phases of improvements, conduct an assessment to determine where parking and access issues remain and devise a strategy for additional improvements. If significant parking demand issues remain then the following more intensive solutions may be required:

**PHASE 3: (2018)**

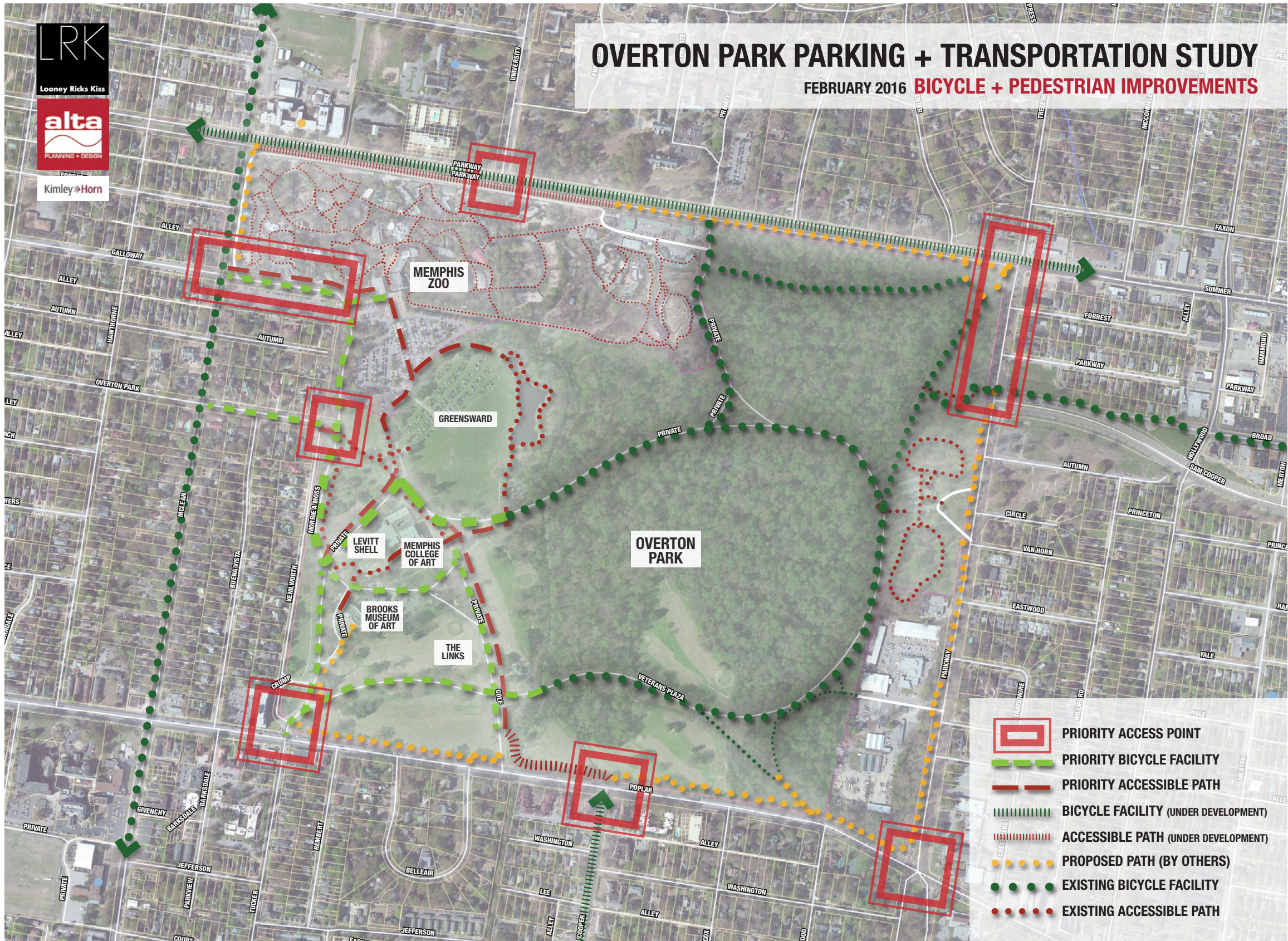
<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Solution Section Reference</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Build Prentiss Place parking structure (if needed) – Minimum 300 spaces gained	12	\$7.8M

**Phase 3***300 new spaces**Cost: \$7.8M***PHASE 4: (2019 AND BEYOND)**

Conduct assessment to determine remaining parking and access issues and develop a strategy for resolving the issues. Implement additional parking, if needed, in other areas of Overton Park should future development plans define opportunity. Continue to monitor and manage parking, access, and response plans.

**Phase 4***Evaluate successes and pursue additional solutions if needed*



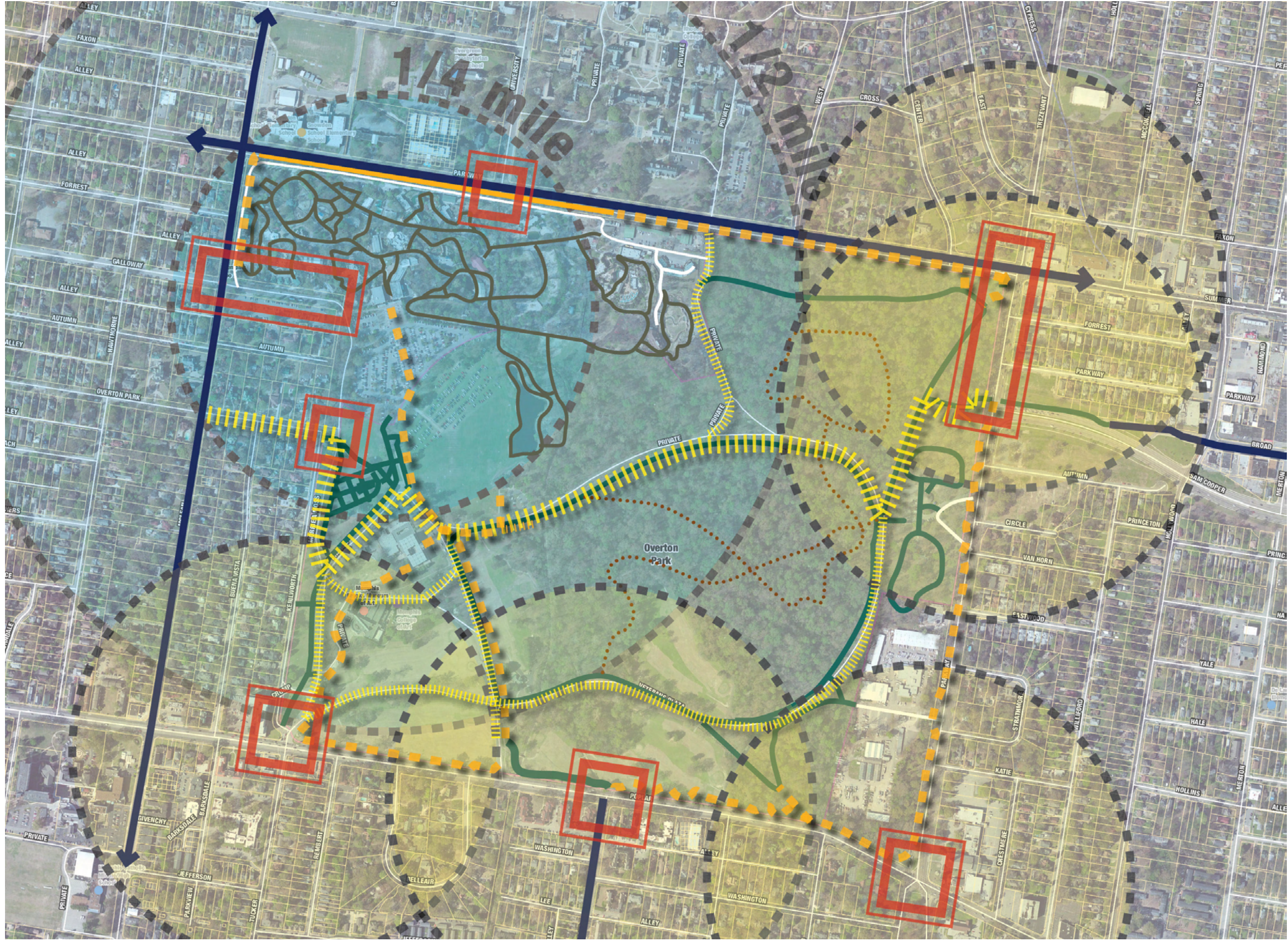


**PARKING AND ROAD IMPROVEMENTS**









**LEGEND**

Intersection Improvements

Dedicated Bike Lanes

Existing Sidewalks & Multi-Use Paths

Existing Trails

New or Improved Sidewalks

Overton Park Bike Routes

1/4 Mile Radius

0

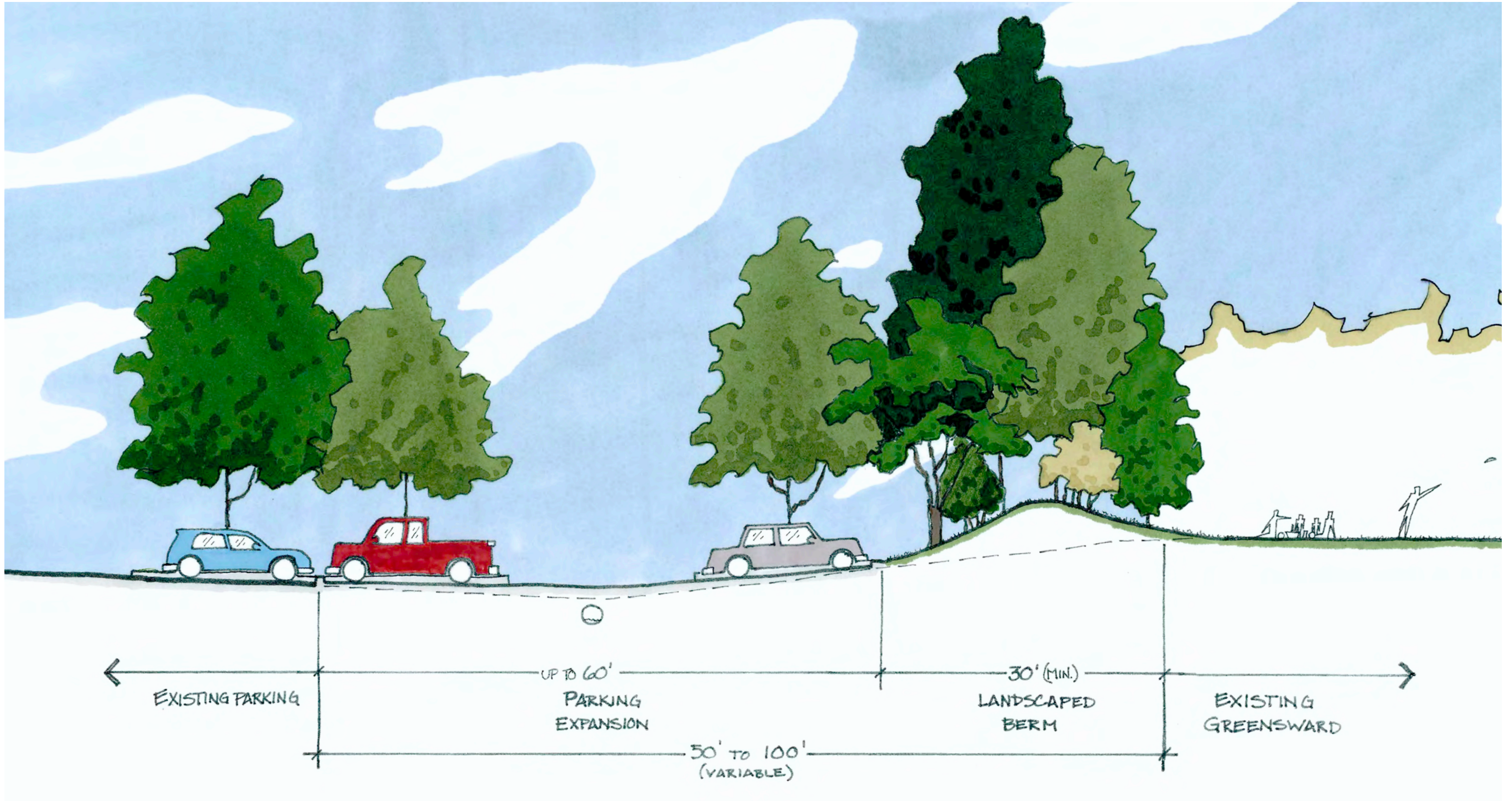
333'

BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS

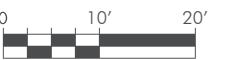
OVERTON PARK

Memphis, Tennessee  
March 30, 2016





**GREENSWARD BERM SCREENING PARKING**







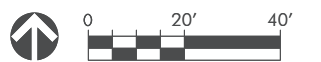
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**McLEAN AT GALLOWAY – PROPOSED**







**McLEAN AT GALLOWAY – EXISTING**









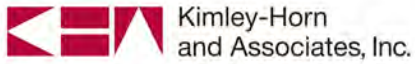
**McLEAN AT OVERTON PARK – EXISTING**







MCLEAN AT OVERTON PARK – PROPOSED



OVERTON PARK

Memphis, Tennessee  
March 30, 2016





**McLEAN AT OVERTON PARK – EXISTING**



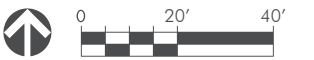


**McLEAN AT OVERTON PARK – PROPOSED**





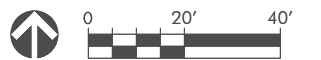
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**POPLAR AT TUCKER – PROPOSED**







POPLAR AT TUCKER – EXISTING



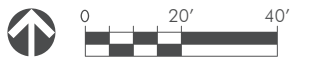


**POPLAR AT TUCKER – PROPOSED**





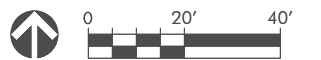
POPLAR AT COOPER – EXISTING







POPLAR AT COOPER – PROPOSED







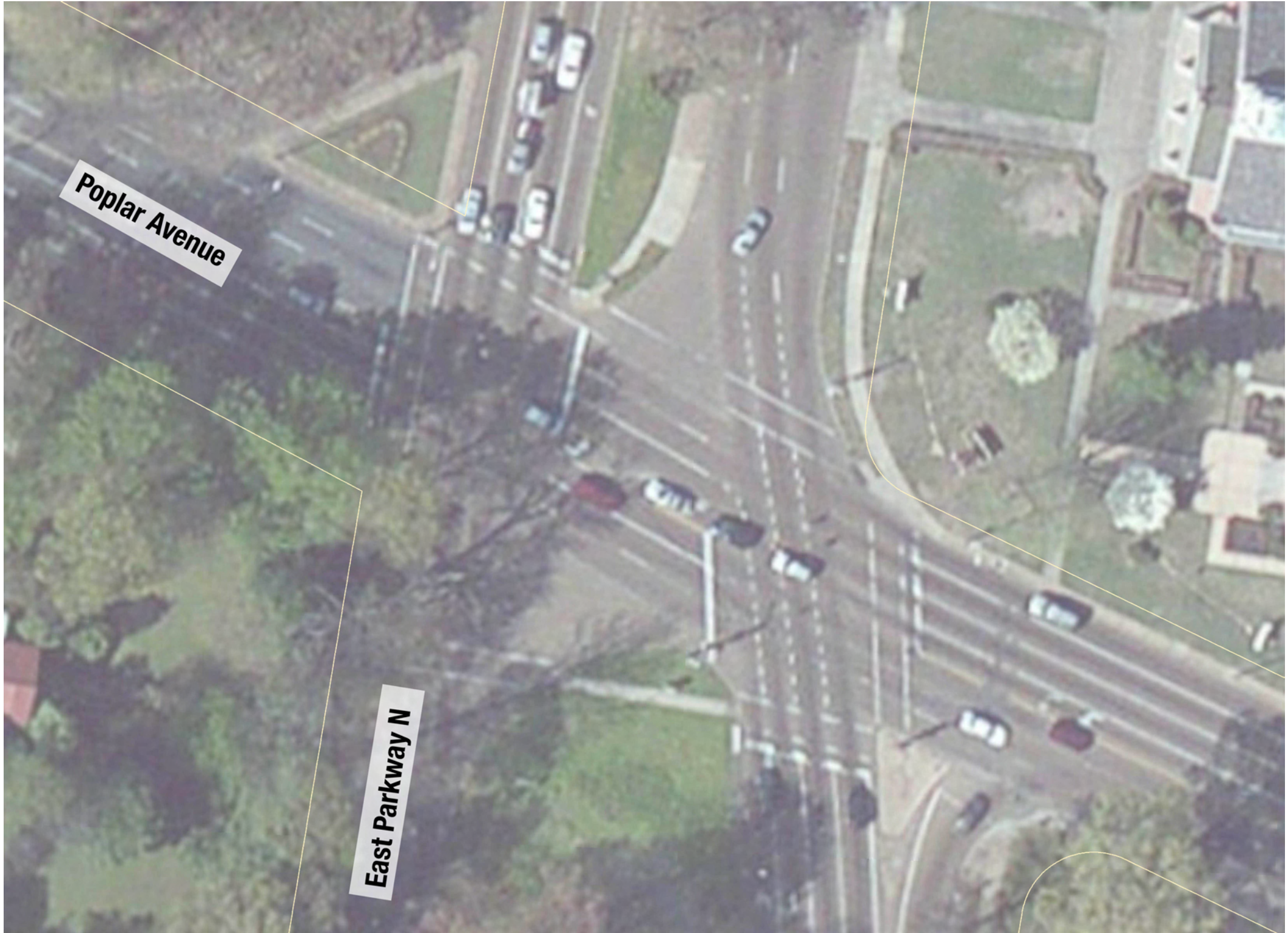
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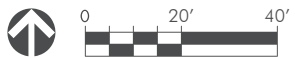


**POPLAR AT COOPER – PROPOSED**

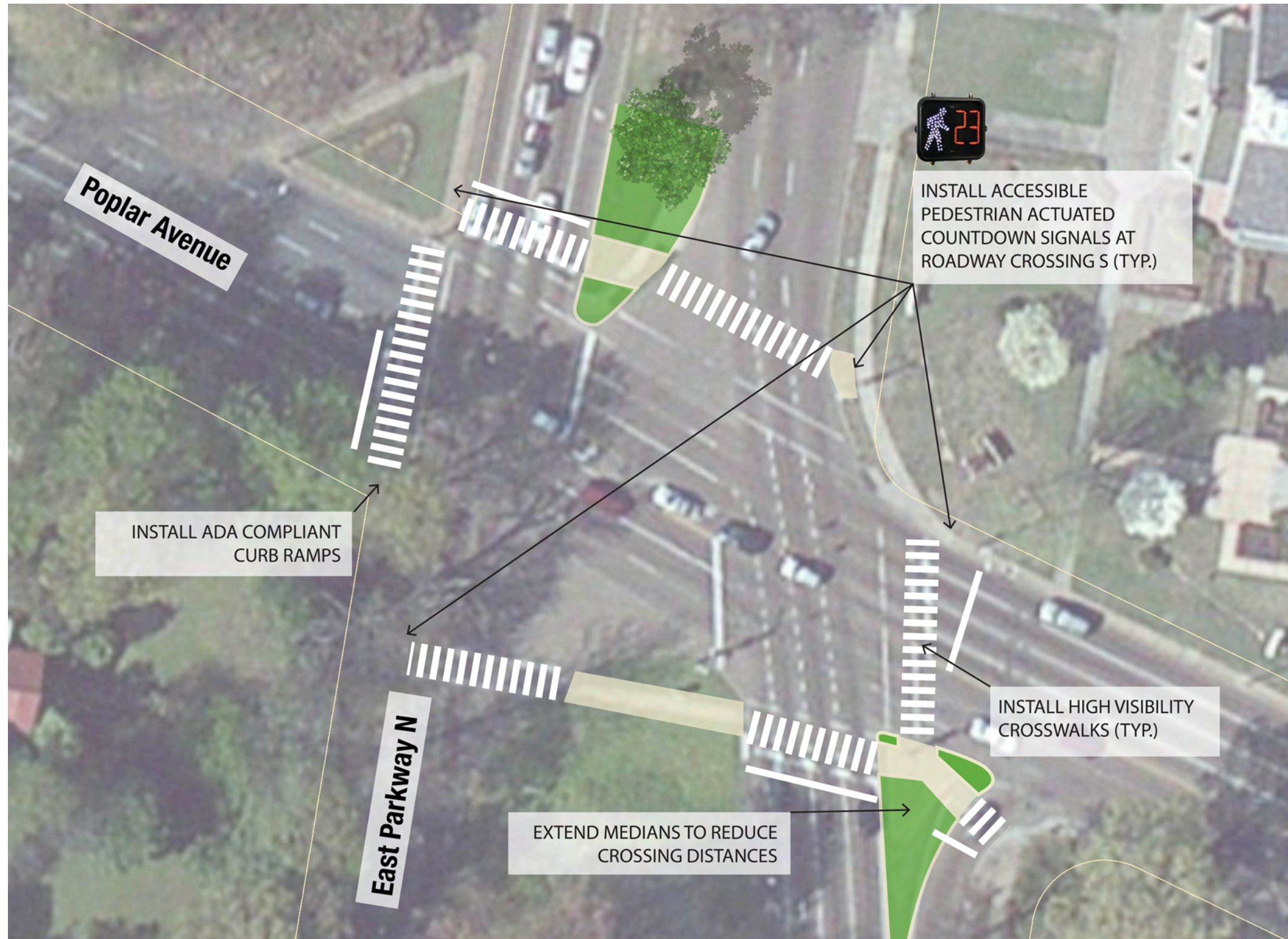




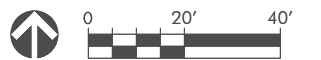
**POPLAR AT EAST PARKWAY – EXISTING**







**POPLAR AT EAST PARKWAY – PROPOSED**







**POPLAR AT EAST PARKWAY – EXISTING**





**POPLAR AT EAST PARKWAY – PROPOSED**

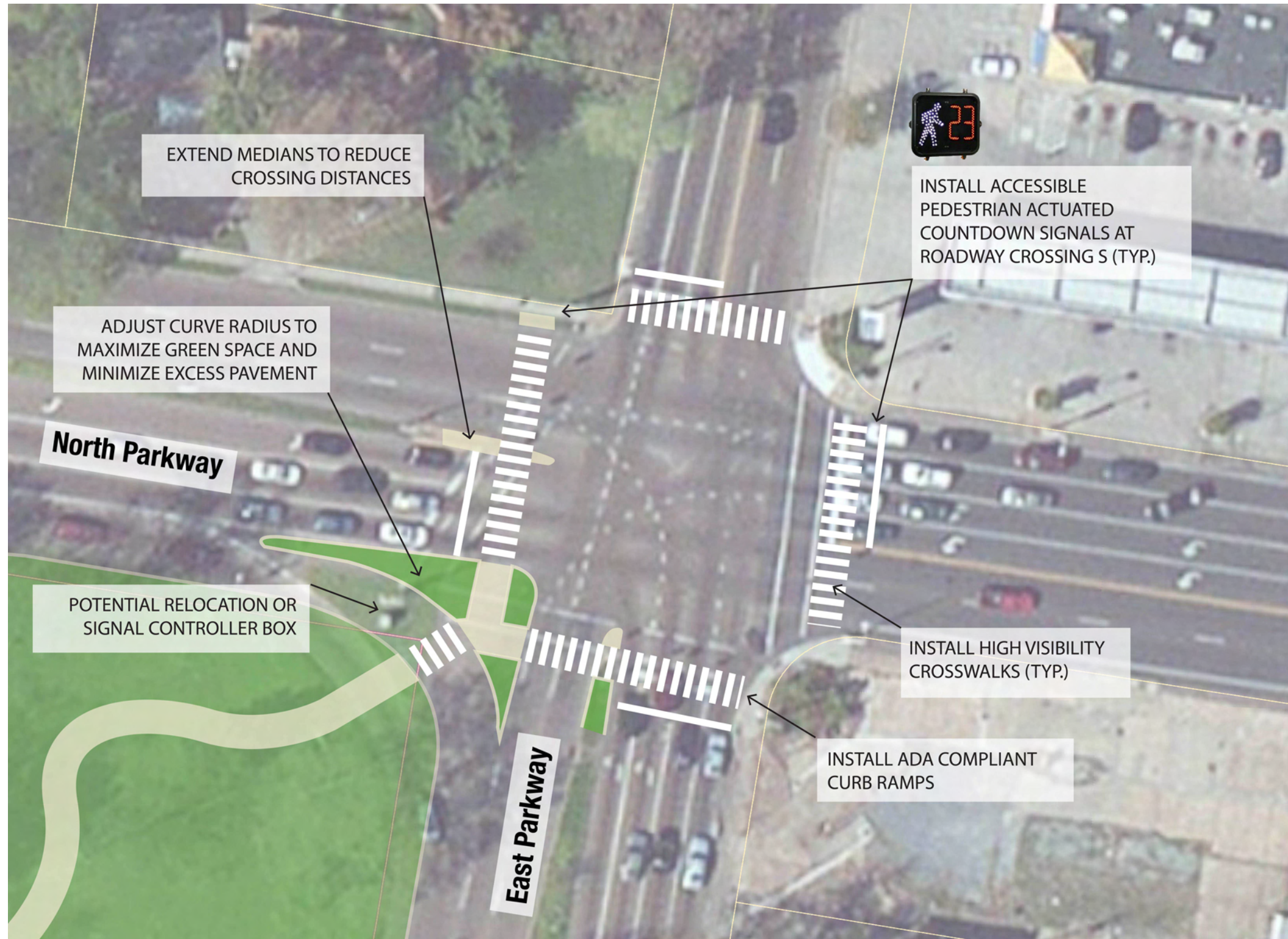




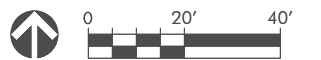
**NORTH PARKWAY AT EAST PARKWAY – EXISTING**







**NORTH PARKWAY AT EAST PARKWAY – PROPOSED**







**NORTH PARKWAY AT EAST PARKWAY – EXISTING**





**NORTH PARKWAY AT EAST PARKWAY – PROPOSED**





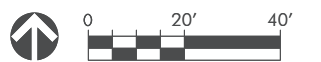
**NORTH PARKWAY AT UNIVERSITY – EXISTING**







**NORTH PARKWAY AT UNIVERSITY – PROPOSED**







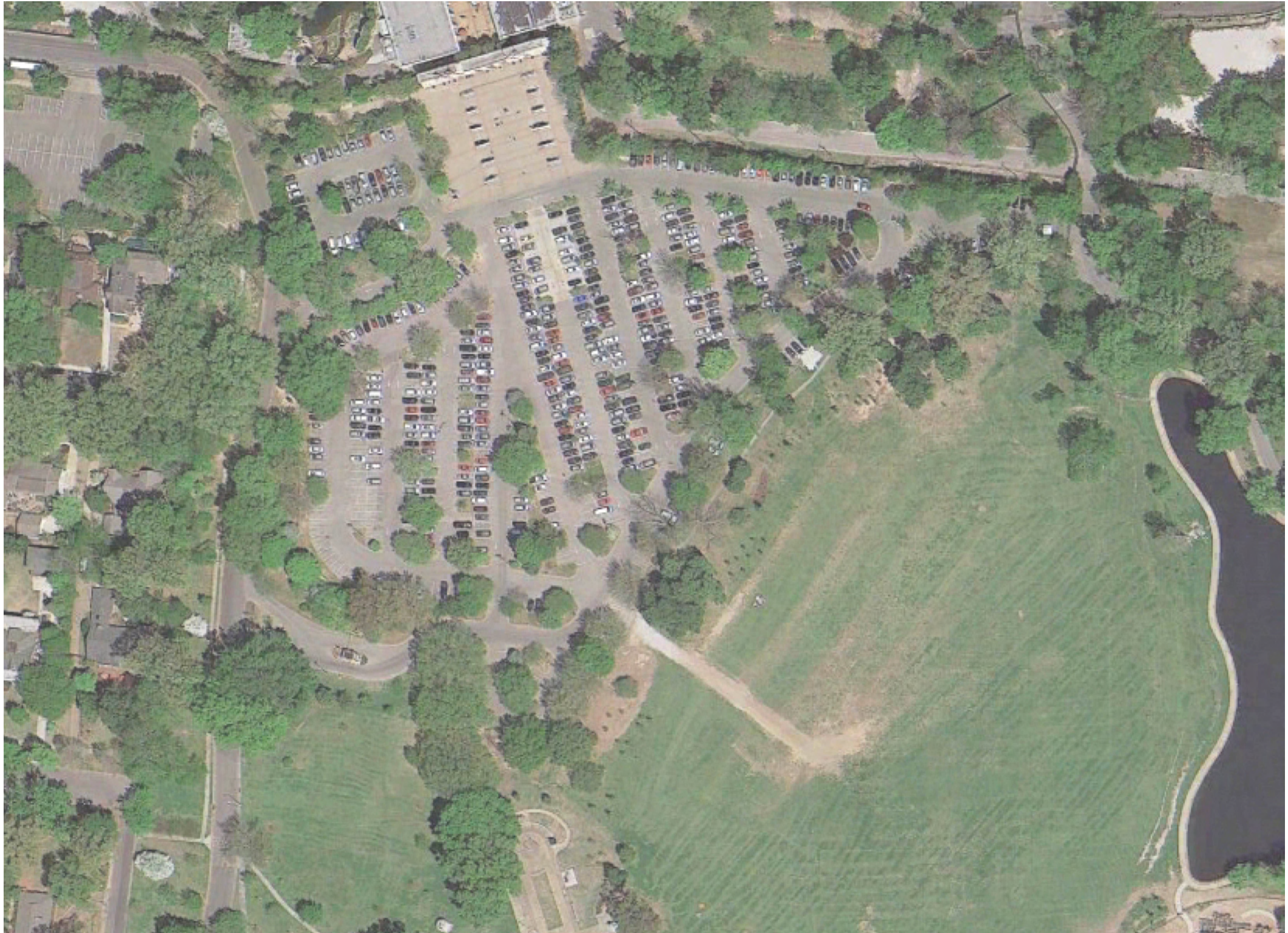
**NORTH PARKWAY AT UNIVERSITY – EXISTING**





**NORTH PARKWAY AT UNIVERSITY – PROPOSED**





**Zoo PARKING – EXISTING**







**ZOO PARKING – PROPOSED**

