

Centennial Park

VISION & MANAGEMENT PLAN

May 7, 2021

Holland
MICHIGAN



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Team

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1

Introduction

INTRODUCTION

First revealed in the original plat of the City of Holland as Market Square, Centennial Park received its name and inspiration for design in the 1870s as parks and public facilities around the country were created or improved in celebration of the nation's Centennial Anniversary. Executed in the popular Victorian style, with a notable North American and Dutch influence, Centennial Park has served as an important community gathering place and respite for many generations. Today it sits proudly as the central park within Downtown Holland, within our central neighborhood, and within both a National Register and locally designated historic district.

This Vision and Management Plan provides a clarity of design intent, an expectation for future maintenance and improvement, and an invitation for the continued varied and vibrant use by residents and visitors alike as a community commons.

Phil Meyer, Historic Preservation Planner, City of Holland
& Andy Knight, MKSK

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Understanding Origins & Evolution

Understanding Origins & Evolution

That Centennial Park has survived more than a century with its Victorian character largely intact would be a miracle in many towns across America. But this park's story is the story of Holland itself – an enterprising community that has created, sustained, and promoted Centennial Park as a place of beauty and civic identity. In 1876, Holland's leaders and citizens turned a weedy market field into a park. Over time, they developed the park into a flowering expression of their uniquely Dutch-American culture.

Before the Park

Before the park, before Dutch settlers, the park's 5.6acres of land were wilderness. Ottawa hunted the region's woodlands and fished the waters, but no one lived in this place. Then came the French fur traders, the English settlers, and finally the Americans establishing a new government under the Constitution in 1783. The remote purity of western Michigan appealed to the emigrating Dutch. Its proximity to water for trading and rich agricultural lands were ideal resources with which to build a thriving community. They would be free to practice their faith in a place far from cities.

Unlike most immigration waves of the 19th century, Dutch Protestants came to western Michigan in organized groups of whole families from rural communities. These "Kolonies" sought distinction, not assimilation, by maintaining Dutch language and culture as a reinforcement to religious practice, deemed especially important for newcomers. "Holland was the first colony founded by the new group of Dutch immigrants and the first space to be imagined as belonging to the Dutch," according to scholar Michael Douma. He goes on to say that Dutch Americans "became proud, loyal Americans



1875 View of Market Square



Holland's founder and creator of Market Square, the Reverend Albertus Van Raalte.



Plat Map 1866

symbolically attached to their roots in the Netherlands while constructing and maintaining another kind of imagined identity, an imagined Dutch American community."

The group, led by the Reverend Albertus C. Van Raalte, set out to create Holland as a full-service town with the amenities of home. One key service was the marketplace, and Holland's original 1847 plat map by surveyor John Dumont designated four sites as open-air markets. The block, named Market Square, was destined to play a great role in Holland's civic life and identity. The parcel was bound by Central Avenue to the east, 12th Street to the south, River Street to the west, and 10th Street to the north.

Although Van Raalte envisioned a thriving marketplace, the open lot never progressed past weeds. In 1869, the City moved a building into the northwest corner of Market Square, remodeling it for use as government offices, library, council room, firehouse, and jail. By 1871, livestock were prohibited from pasturing in the Square, and a fence was erected around the perimeter to protect the space for other public uses. That was also the year of the devastating Great Holland Fire, during which the broad expanse of Market Square was reported to have served as a havenfor rescued horses.

The original plan could hardly have been simpler **or more iconic**.

In the next few years, the people of Holland rebuilt their city while Market Square remained a weedy eyesore. In 1874, Michigan Governor John J. Bagley called upon the state's citizens to plant trees in commemoration of the nation's 1876 Centennial. In Holland, Reverend Henry Uiterwijk took up the cause with a rousing letter in the local paper. His advocacy, coupled with the Van Raalte family's gift of the parcel, influenced Mayor John Van Landegend to transform Market Square into a park.

Park Development

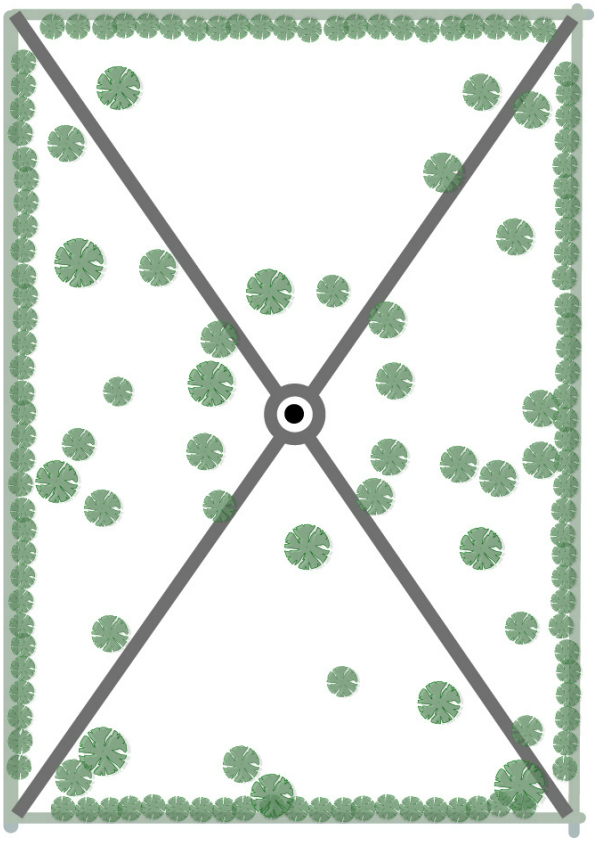
Centennial Park has experienced three periods of development during which significant changes were made. Each has valuable elements remaining in the park of today. Understanding these elements, and their context, is critical to design decisions that will be made in the future.

1876-1900 Van Landegend Period: Establishing the Park

In early 1876, the City of Holland renamed its Market Square "Centennial Park" and established a Committee on Park Improvement. Mayor Van Landegend drew up a simple plan. It proposed reducing the central knoll to a height of two feet and grading it out to a formal elliptical shape. Its precise slopes would be suitable for floral displays, such as the words "Centennial Park." The park committee's strong opposition to altering the knoll led them to resign en masse. A new committee was appointed quickly, and the Mayor's plan diagram was adopted by the City on March 8, 1876.

The original plan could hardly have been simpler, or more iconic -- and it has proven a strong framework for the evolution of Centennial Park. The layout was rational and symmetrical. Entrances at the four corners opened to diagonal paths. These converged on a low rise in the middle, centered on an enormous flagstaff. The American flag waving 130 feet overhead

1876 Period Plan



proclaimed the maturing community's allegiance to its host country. It marked the place for civic gatherings where national pride and Dutch culture comingled into a new Dutch American identity.

Looking out from the flagstaff, in all directions, stretched the triangular greenswards, randomly dotted with 26 maple trees. The far edges of the park were defined by 125 maples marching in perfectly tight formation to contain the interior public space, to shield it from the sights, sounds, and dust of the streets, and to provide shade to passersby. Many of the trees were planted by families in the community, who received an engraved metal token for each tree planted.

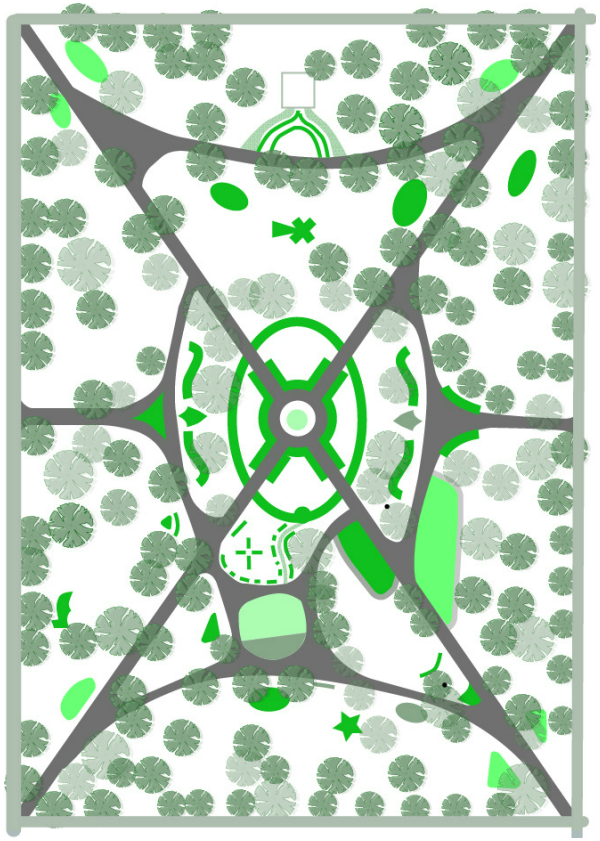
Van Landegend's classic plan defined the park as it was established in the post-Civil War era, rooted in the burgeoning national movement to create city parks. Centennial Park's fundamental structure – consisting of an intact circulation plan, central focal point, lawns, planting beds, and mature tree canopy -- all point to why Centennial Park is characterized as "an excellent example of surviving nineteenth-century park planning" in the National Register of Historic Places (Centennial District Addition).

Three years after the park's dedication, 38 more maples were planted to replace dead trees and increase shade. Many of these trees were planted by families in the community who received an engraved metal token for each tree planted. In 1882, storage tanks and a service building were constructed to provide oil for lighting. In 1886, the City moved its functions out of the park; the vacated townhouse subsequently burned. It took two years and a number of editorials and letters to persuade the City to clear away the "engine house" ruins and fill the unsightly hole. The perimeter fence was taken down that same year. During the last decade of the 19th century, the park saw a series of basic improvements. More lights were added, and oak-slat benches were installed. Wooden sidewalks were built along River Avenue and 12th Street in 1890; a cement sidewalk was constructed along 10th Street in 1899.

1901-1937 Cukierski-Kooyers Priod: Developing the Park

Centennial Park's most historically vital period began at the turn of the century, coinciding with an era of significant population growth. The town swelled from 4,000 in 1890 to 7,800 in 1900. Another 2,700 would arrive by 1910, thanks to the growing industrial base. Holland's phenomenal success created the need to upgrade civic facilities and infrastructure, including Centennial Park.

1901-1936 Period Plan



Today, when seeking guidance for future decisions about Centennial Park, designers should turn first to the Cukierski-Kooyers Period. Named for its designer of record and for its superintendent, this period gave the present-day park its form and developed it into a peak expression of Victorian design. This era began in 1901 when the City Council commissioned Wencel L. Cukierski to develop a plan for the park. Development and augmentation of the park proceeded under the supervision of John A. Kooyers. Superintendent Kooyers had been appointed in 1900 to oversee the park. He took a hands-on interest, collecting wildflowers to plant in the park, planting the first bed of 10,000 tulips,

A Landscape Gardener of Regional Significance

Born in 1869 in Poland, Wencel C. Cukierski acquired his vocation by working alongside his landscape gardener father on a 40,000-acre estate. After graduating from a two-year agricultural college, Cukierski emigrated to Grand Rapids in 1889. There he found work as a florist and attended business school. After becoming park superintendent, Cukierski carried forward the development of John Ball Park (1891 plan by Herman Haerlin, Cincinnati).

Among Cukierski's contributions to John Ball Park's expansive romantic landscape were grading a bluff into tiers that could be used for seating by concert goers and developing greenhouses to supply the vast quantities of flowers to fill the beds. However, by 1908 he was being publicly criticized for lavishing too much attention and funding on John Ball Park to the detriment of neighborhoods with no parks or playgrounds. After resigning, Cukierski continued operating his Grand Rapids Floral Company (across from John Ball Park, as was his home – both extant) and remained in private practice as a landscape designer until he died in 1926. His works included the Polish Cemetery and the Mt. Calvary cemetery in Grand Rapids Muskegon's Hackley Hospital grounds, the Cadillac, Holland, Ludington, and Muskegon State Parks; as well as private estates and resorts.



Cukierski's John Ball Park

and later developing a garden stream to "feed" the Koi Pond. Starting in 1911, Kooyers directed an ambitious project to construct the Holland Greenhouse on Central and State, where the City grew plants and flowers for Centennial Park and other parks in the system. Tropical plants were stored there in the winter, along with the Koi in a fish tank. After three decades of development, this period ended with the demolition of the original bandstand in 1937 and the advent of World War II.

The City's first choice of planner could not accept the commission, but recommended Wencel L. Cukierski for the job.

When Cukierski accepted the commission for Centennial Park in 1901, he was 32 years old and on the rise in his landscape design career. It was an age when Victorian design was giving way to the Beaux Arts/City Beautiful movement. Cukierski's plan bridges these periods, combining a crowd-pleasing taste for Victorian horticultural extravaganza with the rational circulation plan typical of the Beaux Arts. As a park superintendent and horticulturist, he also brought practical knowledge of managing park use and maintenance to his work.



Where the main gravel paths met, "Y" intersections allowed for ease of movement.

Cukierski understood that Centennial Park was to expand upon its function as Holland's premier civic space. His plan of 1902 provided an elegant framework for entering, enjoying, and moving through the park. New path entrances along the 11th Street corridor improved connectivity with Hope College to the east and the residential district to the west.

Within the park, Cukierski overlaid the existing diagonal paths with secondary interior connections. Like many landscape designers of his era, Cukierski used "Y" intersections to bring paths together. This simple triangular form eases a person's immersion in the park landscape by providing intuitive lines of movement, rather than interrupting the experience by forcing a conscious choice of left or right turns. Visitors to the park were presented with gracious corner entrances leading to the center focal point, with cross paths where needed, and arcing changes of direction. Smaller paths edged the two major flower beds. This circulation system thus sectioned the park into defined spaces with identified uses. Flower beds were liberally distributed along the paths and in the greenswards. Bold and whimsical motifs were bedded out in the Victorian style – including windmill, wooden shoe, and star – which provided moments to pause and appreciate. A wooden viewing platform was provided to give children and grownups a superior perspective on the patterns of floral artistry.

Cukierski's plan retained the central ellipse with its formally banked edges, well suited to floral displays such as the words "Centennial Park" depicted on the 1911 plan. The focal flagstaff was replaced with a striking fountain of tufa stone. The fountain's donor and builder, Teunis Ten Houten, created a graduated pinnacle 20 feet tall to resemble the stout massing of a windmill. Jewel-like jets of water sprayed from the top and sides, watering the rich tapestry of roughly 800 flowering and foliage plants set into the voids of tufa stone. Tufa reappears as an edging for the lily pond and in planter urns. This rugged

Tulip Time with viewing stand in background



bold and whimsical motifs were bedded out in the Victorian-style...provide **moments to pause and appreciate.**

volcanic stone poses a striking counterpoint to the prettily intricate floral displays, defining the Victorian sensibilities of Cukierski's design aesthetic.

Similarly the park had elaborate water and horticultural displays amid simple plain materials and functional components, like gravel. Its uniform color and lack of pattern suited the straightforward, functional nature of the pathways. But when it came to the two most intimate pathways – in the pond garden and at the restroom building – cobbles were used, along with flower covered trellises. The decorative aesthetic was further expressed in other material details and park furnishings, most notably the lacey gothic cast iron fencing that encircled the fountain pool and the pond garden.

1908 two Civil War era howitzer guns placed at northwest and southeast entrances to the park. Both howitzers were positioned behind curved stone walls, within a paved area. The installation facing 12th Street was fronted with a flower bed, but the installation facing 10th Street had none. Instead, the inner corner of the "Y" intersection (and on the northeast side as well) were given over to increased paving in response to higher levels of foot traffic from the north. This generous entry space served as a kind of grand-scale foyer to the pleasures of the park beyond. It also indicates a perimeter hierarchy in which the northwest corner can be seen as the primary entrance to the park. Located closest to City Hall and the business district, this subtle detail reinforces Centennial Park's position and importance in the civic sphere.



Two Civil War-era howitzer guns, placed in 1908

For the first two decades, John Kooyers had taken a significant role in the park's development, working with Cukierski on the plan and then directing implementation. His established standards of management survived his death in 1919 when John P. Van Bragt was named park commissioner. With the park largely completed, Van Bragt focused more on park programming and maintenance. The most consequential change of the 1920s was the proposal of Tulip Time by biology teacher Lida Rogers in 1927. Four years later, John Cappon left a bequest for the long-desired monument to Albertus Van Raalte.

1937-Present: Enhancement Period

Centennial Park's course was well-set by 1937 when a name change was unsuccessfully suggested. Even though much of the City's focus had shifted to newer and larger parks, management did not neglect Centennial Park. From the beginning the park had held a central role in Holland's identity. The advent of Tulip Time gave the park an annual spotlight on heritage and horticulture. Its position adjacent to City Hall and major cultural institutions has only deepened the park's significance over time as the community's original and irreplaceable civic space.

After Van Bragt died in 1943, Dick Smallenburg became park superintendent. (Van Bragt was honored in 1966 with the renaming of Windmill Park; Smallenburg's namesake park was dedicated in 1959.) Municipal records indicate that the park received regular, routine attention, with minor additions and alterations over the following decades. The dilapidated bandstand was demolished and sent, along with the howitzers, to a World War Two scrap drive in 1941.

Martin Luther King Jr. vigil April 5, 1968



In the 1950s, there was a perplexing case of the 800 goldfish stolen from the pond. They were inexplicably returned within a few days. A plaque to the Grand Army of the Republic was installed in 1953; a historical marker was unveiled in 1957. Further signifying the park's centrality to civic life, a memorial service was held there for Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1968.

There was windstorm damage and replacement tree planting in the mid-1960s, but the real change was in Holland's citizenry. After more than a century with a 90% Dutch heritage population, Holland saw its first significant new immigration. In the 1960s and 70s, Holland's church-sponsored resettlement programs brought immigrants from Southeast Asia and Central America.

The park was reported "restored" in 1985, but available records point to the last decade of the 20th century for significant recent changes and investments in the park. Most apparent was construction of the current gazebo in 1989. Its new location took advantage of the slope closer to the fountain ellipse to provide a bilevel configuration, giving access to restrooms on the lower level. The



Large trees over grass defined the park's essential character.

structure was given a traditional appearance to relate to the park's aesthetic. By 1992, the park's historic gravel walks had been replaced with brick in a herringbone pattern; new fencing was erected the next year.

Two major commemorative features were introduced in 1997, at the 11th Street entrances. Placed to the east was the long-awaited monument to Albertus Van Raalte, facing his Holland College. To the west, in the mirror location, the Veterans Memorial was installed. To accommodate the memorial's plan, path alignments were altered from the original "Y" design.

When a windstorm battered the tropical garden, which had been a seasonal attraction dating to the Cukierski-Kooyers Period, the parks department chose not to continue with this tradition. However, a "novel" seasonal attraction was introduced in 20185 which began to draw many new visitors to this corner of the park. As part of a larger art installation at the Herrick Library, a yellow brick path was designed to lead into the park from the intersection of 12th Street and River Avenue toward an oversized book – Frank Baum's The Wizard of Oz. The size of a small parade float, the book is an example of "mosaiculture" – the art of composing plants to create imagery.

1990 National Register Listing

Centennial Park was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1990, as part of the Holland Historic District Addition. As the registration form states of the park, "The ambience of the neighborhood has been enhanced by its mature landscaping and fully grown trees. Uniform setbacks and diligence to maintenance and repairs further add to the aesthetic fiber of this district." The registration further recognizes that the park "serves as a transition between the commercial development to the north and the residential community to the south," and states that Centennial Park is "a pivotal site within the district."

Secretary of the Interior's Standards

As compact as it is, Centennial Park has several distinct landscape units, each with its own qualities and character. (*Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes, 1996*)

Related functions and features that shape a distinct space are designated as landscape units. Centennial Park's Victorian origins are seen in its pathways, formal flower beds, exotic tufa fountain, and Koi Pond. We may explore these characteristics by looking at:

Spatial organization and land patterns – including views and visual relationships

Topography – the shape of the land

Vegetation – all types of plantings and vegetative cover

Circulation – drives, parking, paths, trails, and steps

Water elements and drainage – swales, subsurface drainage structure, fountains, and pools

Park use structures – buildings, other built elements

Site furnishings and objects – sculpture, benches, and other small-scale elements

Unique landscape units for Centennial Park include the following:

1. **Park Perimeter**
2. **Fountain Oval –** windmill inspired fountain of tufa stone
3. **Koi Pond and Garden**
4. **Bandstand and Services**
5. **Greensward and Planting Beds**

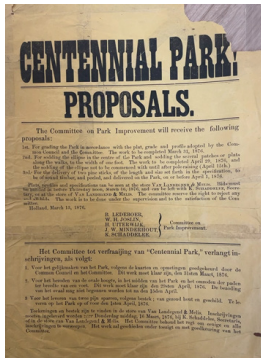


Albertus C. Van Raalte Monument

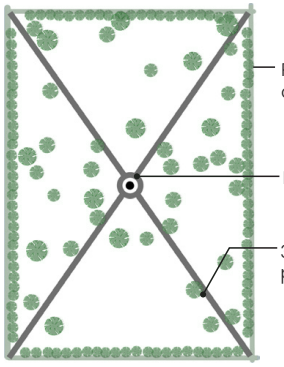
Timeline

1847
Market Square laid out on land given by family of Reverend Albertus C. Van Raalte.

1871
Market Square sheltered livestock during Great Holland Fire.


CENTENNIAL PARK.
PROPOSALS.
The Committee on Park Improvement will receive the following proposals:

1876
Establishment Period Plan





1890
Wooden sidewalks were built along River Avenue and 12th Street. More lights were added, and oak-slat benches were installed.

1899
Sidewalk constructed on 10th Street.

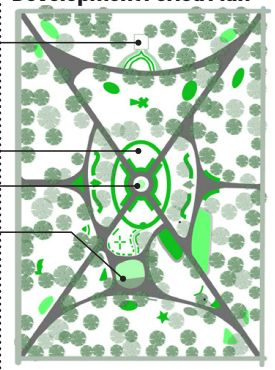
1901
City Council commissions W. L. Cukierski to develop a park plan.

1902
Teunis Van Houten donated the tufa stone fountain designed by Johannes Van Lente.

Koi pond built with tufa stone edging.

1907
Squirrel cage built to attract children.

1907- 1936
Development Period Plan



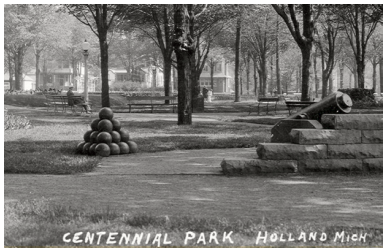
1907
Bandstand erected.

1911
City Greenhouse construction begins.

1920
Lighted Christmas tree tradition began.

1850 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920

Two Civil War era howitzer guns were placed in 1908 and donated for wartime scrap metal in 1942.



1931
John Cappon's bequest for the long-desired monument to Albertus van Raalte.

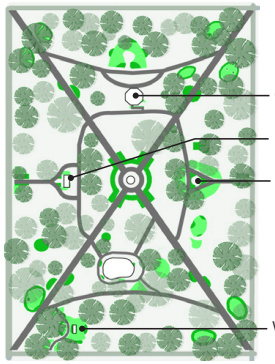
1937
Bandstand demolished.

1964
Windstorm damage and replacement tree planting.

1982
Queen Beatrix Wilhelmina Armgard of the Netherlands and her husband Claus von Amsberg visit Holland.



1937–Present
Enhancement Period Plan



1989
Gazebo constructed east of original bandstand.

2018
Wizard of Oz mosaicscape and yellow brick path installed.

1930 1940 1950 1960 1970 1980 1990 2000 2010 2020

1927
Biology teacher Lida Rogers invented Tulip Time festival.



1959
New lighting installed.

1968
Martin Luther King Jr. vigil held in park.



1985
Park was reported restored.

1992
Unit pavers replace gravel walks.

1997
Van Raalte monument and Veteran's Memorial installed. Western "Y" path reconfigured to accommodate memorial.

3

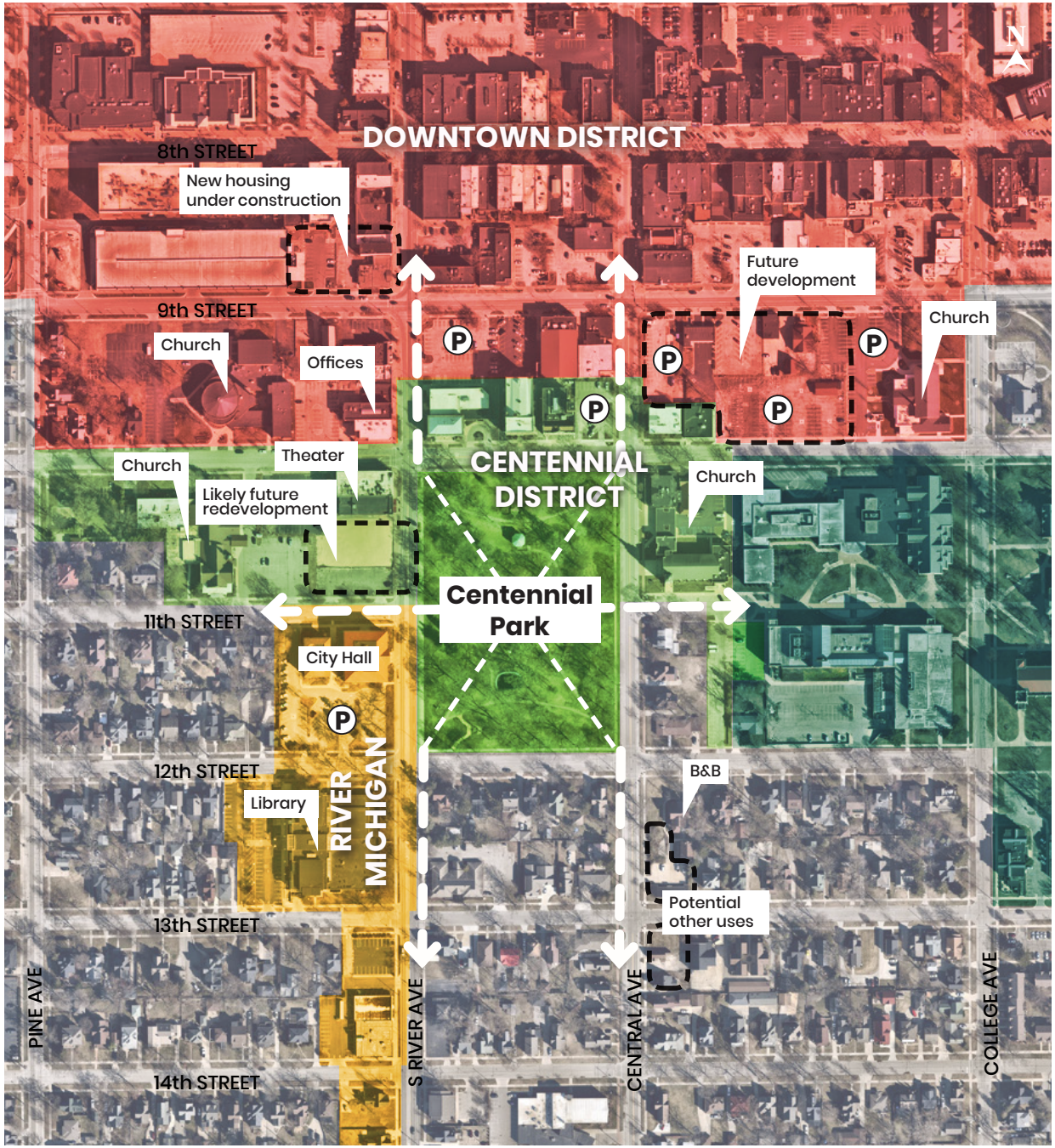
Site Inventory & Analysis

Local Context

Centennial Park is viewed by the community as a valuable and significant open space in downtown Holland. Its Victorian and Dutch influences have been embraced by the local residents and visitors that engage park throughout the seasons.

It is a 5.6 acre park located at 10th Street and River Avenue in the heart of Downtown Holland. The map to the right shows a 5-minute walk to the park in yellow, and a 10-minute walk in brown. This walkability is a result of the park's prime central location and its connectivity to other parks, residential neighborhoods, Hope College, and the Downtown District. This location makes Centennial Park as asset for both Holland residents and tourists alike.





Immediate Site Context

The park is overlooked by distinguished architecture of civic importance, and is uniquely positioned between several city districts. To the north lies the Downtown District with various retail, mixed use, and dining destinations. To the southwest is the River Avenue District with Holland's City Hall and the Herrick District Library. The Holland Museum is across from the north end of the park, and Hope College lies to the east. The park itself Is within the Holland Historic District and serves several residential neighborhoods.

Existing Site Parking

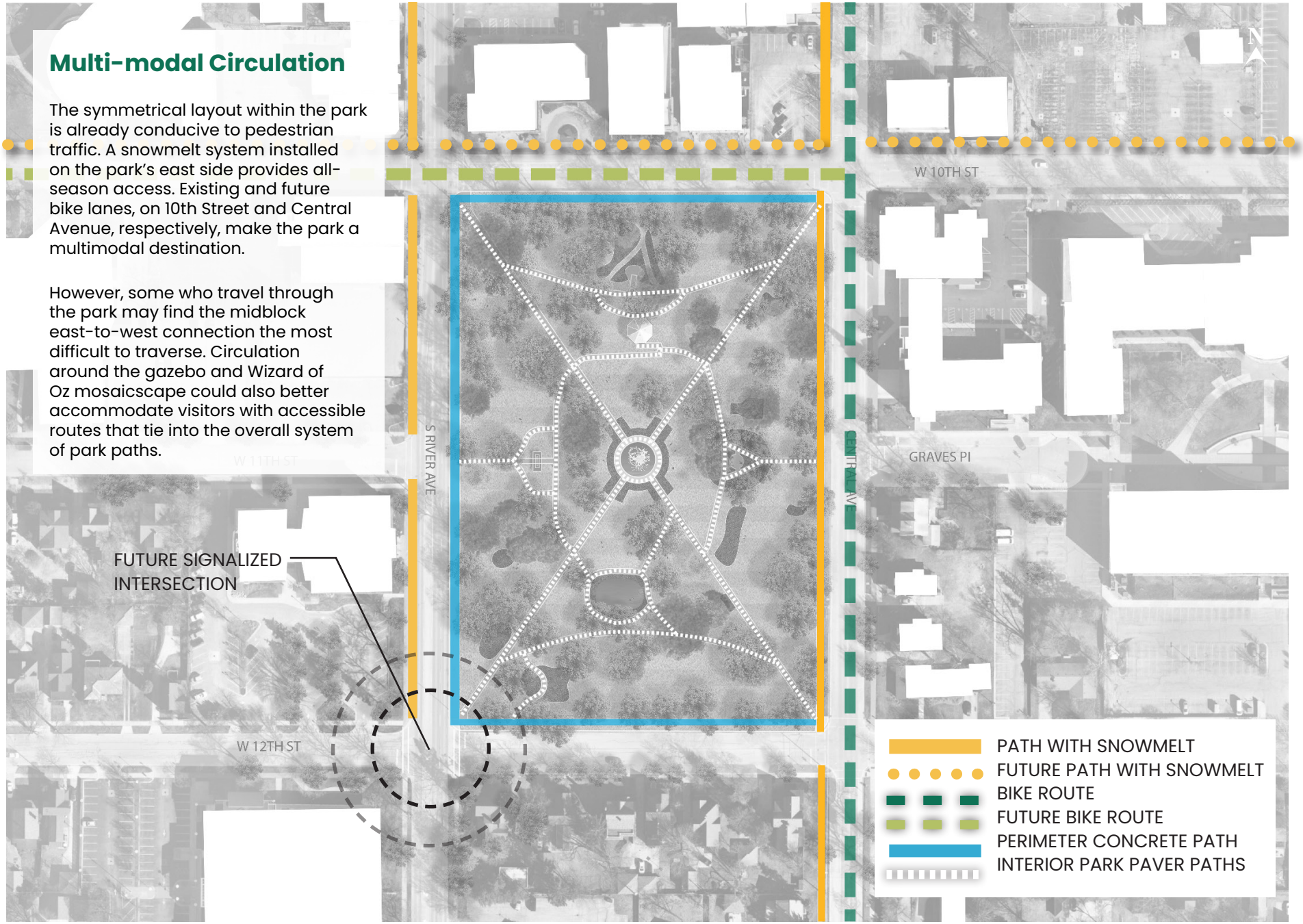
Current parking demands are met through on-street parking and adjacent surface lots. The highest demand for parking arises during festivals such as Tulip Time and Art in the Park where visitors mainly park on street and walk to Centennial Park. The current assessment is that existing parking is sufficient and there is no need for additional parking at this time.



Multi-modal Circulation

The symmetrical layout within the park is already conducive to pedestrian traffic. A snowmelt system installed on the park's east side provides all-season access. Existing and future bike lanes, on 10th Street and Central Avenue, respectively, make the park a multimodal destination.

However, some who travel through the park may find the midblock east-to-west connection the most difficult to traverse. Circulation around the gazebo and Wizard of Oz mosaicscape could also better accommodate visitors with accessible routes that tie into the overall system of park paths.



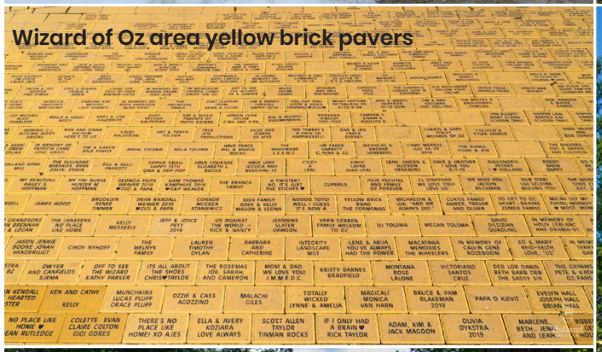
Existing Materials

Once surfaced all in gravel, the park's walks now consist of three different types of unit pavers as well as concrete. A snowmelt system keeps the Central Avenue perimeter sidewalk in service in winter. Although unit pavers create visual patterns that are not consistent with the park's original aesthetics,* pavers are the City's standard for all snowmelt installations for ease of maintenance.

*Uniform gravel paths sweeping through the park's smooth lawns did not compete visually with elaborate planting beds and ornamental details.


Concrete sidewalk


Central Avenue perimeter sidewalk with snowmelt


Wizard of Oz area yellow brick pavers


Various park paving materials


Pavers at Tufa Fountain

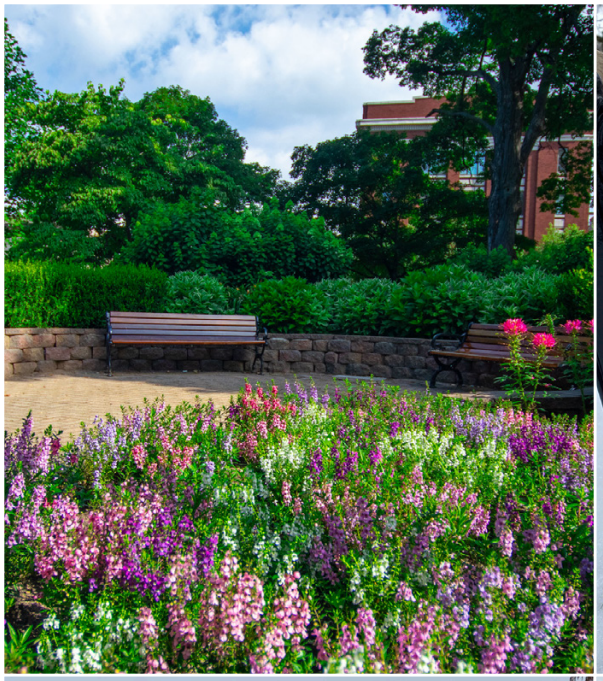
Existing Site Furnishings

Many of Centennial Park's current furnishings are in need of being refreshed for aesthetic or functional purposes. Fencing around the fountain and Koi pond is too visible and off-putting. Gazebo elements and restrooms need updating. Other options for site furniture should be explored to accommodate modern day uses of the park.

Existing Standards

Parks & recreation standard benches:
Game Time - Series 2100 Victor Stanley - Model C-10

The City of Holland's standard for pedestrian lights is followed by the Department of Parks & Recreation. All pedestrian lights are LED fixtures. Lighting should be modified with a "dark sky" cap on the acorn luminaire to concentrate light downward.



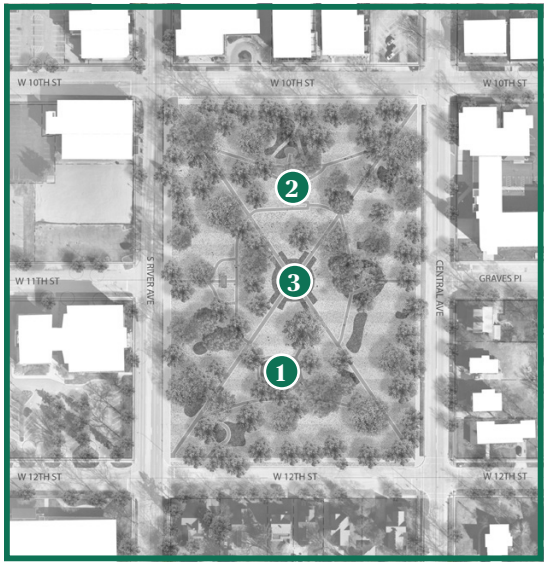






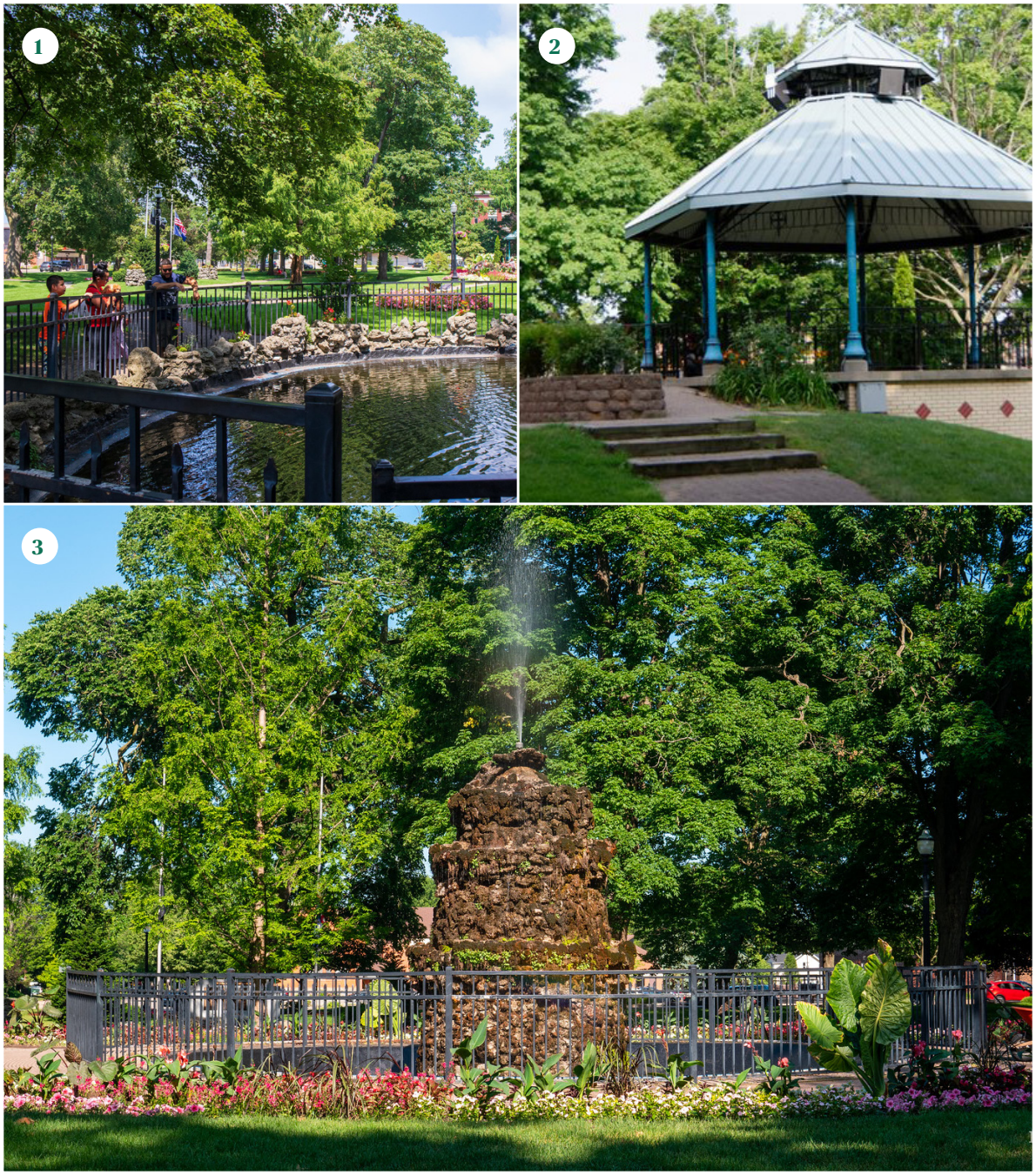
Site Features

Centennial Park has three substantial features- the Koi Pond to the south, the Tufa Fountain at the core, and the Gazebo to the north. Generally, each of these are at various stages of repair and would require individual assessment and study.



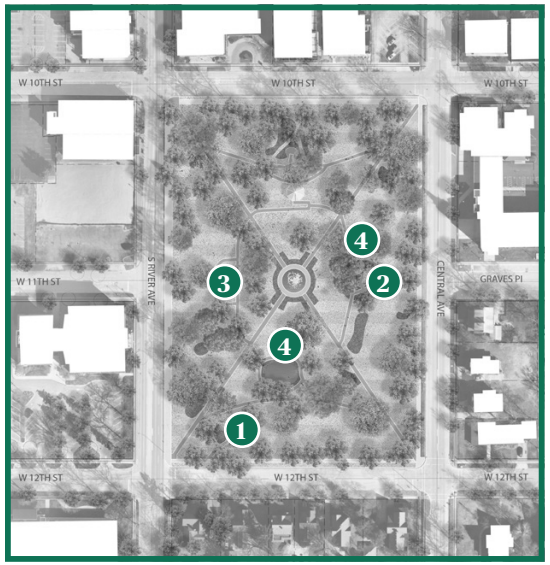
LEGEND

1. Koi Pond
2. Gazebo
3. Fountain



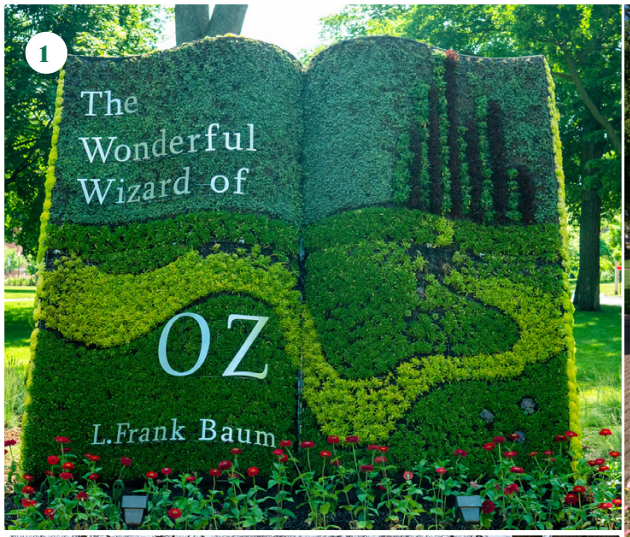
Memorials, Art, & Structures

Other features, such as the Veteran's Memorial, Van Raalte monument, and Wizard of Oz Mosaicscape command a presence in the park. The most recent addition, the Wizard of Oz book, articulates its own space off the park's southern perimeter path. The historical "Y" path to the west was replaced by the Veteran's Memorial design. The Van Raalte statue occupies the center of the "Y" path to the east. Trellis structures mark a garden space near the Koi Pond.



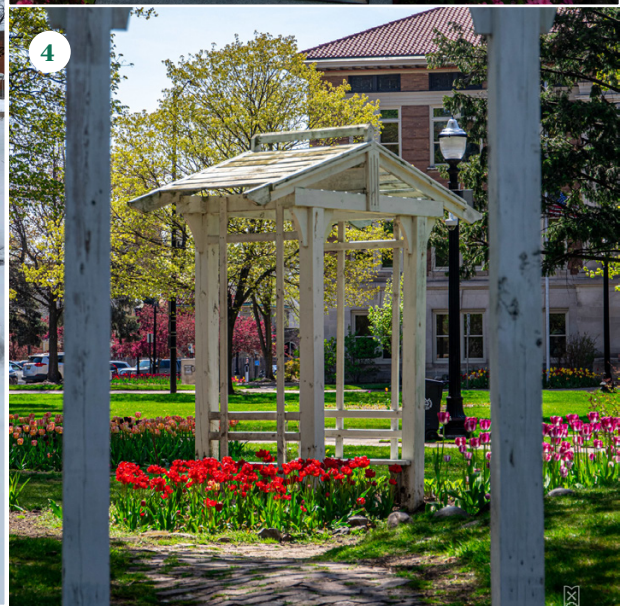
LEGEND

1. Wizard Of Oz Book
2. Van Raalte Memorial monument
3. Veteran's Memorial
4. Trellises



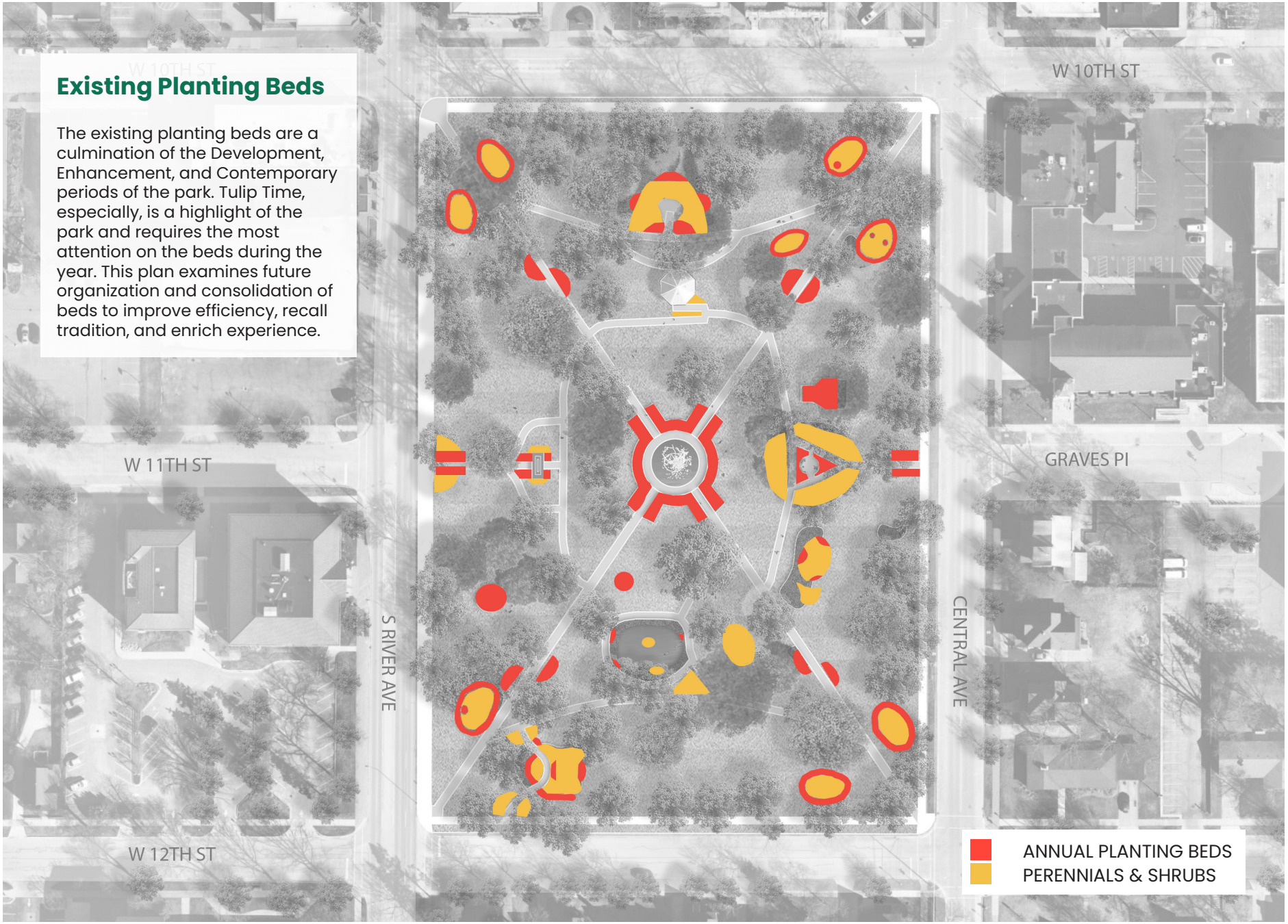






Existing Planting Beds

The existing planting beds are a culmination of the Development, Enhancement, and Contemporary periods of the park. Tulip Time, especially, is a highlight of the park and requires the most attention on the beds during the year. This plan examines future organization and consolidation of beds to improve efficiency, recall tradition, and enrich experience.



Tree Inventory

Centennial Park started as a call for citizens to plant trees in the current park footprint. Large existing canopy trees are one of the park's most valued assets and appreciated by all visitors.

It is recommended to identify all trees 36" caliper and larger as Heritage trees. These trees should receive special treatment and inspections from the City arborist and Parks & Recreation Department. All future park development and improvements adjacent to the Heritage trees should be minimally invasive to the existing root systems. These trees should receive annual inspections and targeted treatments to extend their lives. Successor trees should be planted in close proximity.

Overall Tree Canopy

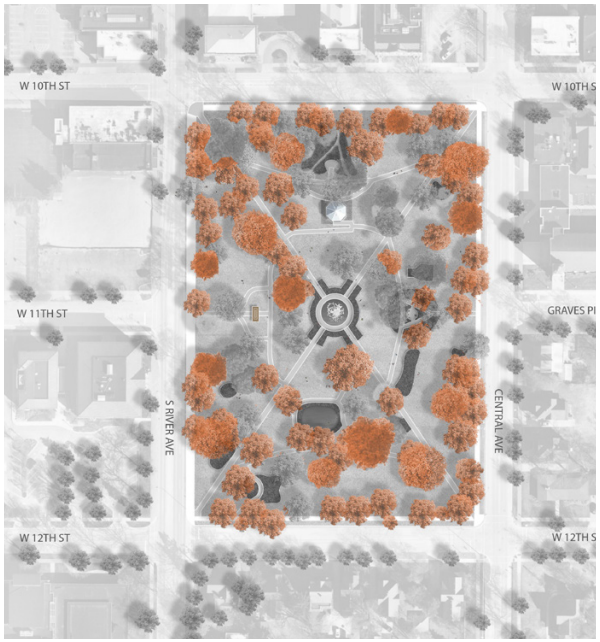


Existing Shade Trees



- *Acer x freemanii* Freeman maple
- *Acer nigrum* Black maple
- *Acer rubrum* Red maple
- *Acer saacharum* Sugar maple
- *Acer platanoides* Norway maple
- *Fagus sylvatica* European beech
- *Ginkgo biloba* Ginkgo
- *Gleditsia triacanthos* Honey locust
- *Liriodendron tulipifera* Tulip tree
- *Magnolia x soulangeana* Chinese magnolia
- *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* Dawn redwood
- *Platanus occidentalis* American sycamore
- *Quercus alba* White oak
- *Ulmus americana* American elm

Existing Maple Trees



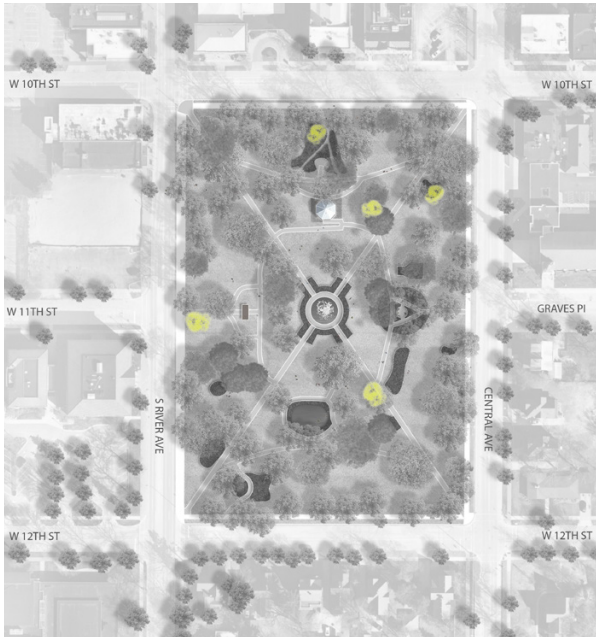
- *Acer x freemanii* Freeman maple
- *Acer nigrum* Black maple
- *Acer rubrum* Red maple
- *Acer saacharum* Sugar maple
- *Acer platanoides* Norway maple

Existing Evergreen Trees



- *Abies balsamea* Balsam fir
- *Pseudotsuga menziesii* Douglas fir
- *Picea abies* Norway spruce
- *Picea pungens* Colorado Blue spruce
- *Thuja occidentalis* Northern white cedar

Existing Ornamental Trees



- *Cercis canadensis* Eastern redbud
- *Cornus florida* Flowering dogwood
- *Malus floribunda* Japanese flowering crabapple
- *Prunus serrulata* Japanese flowering cherry



4

Stakeholder & Public Feedback

How we engaged

In order to gather as much community feedback as possible this planning process included the elements listed below. Though this process was challenged by a global pandemic preventing in-person engagement, the planning team continued to engage residents and stakeholders via alternate online methods.

- **An online survey** customized by respondents' stated residence, garnered 1,800 responses from residents and visitors.
- **Stakeholder sessions** The team identified important stakeholders and organized 5 virtual meetings to gather feedback.

  Stakeholder Groups:

  - Parks and Recreation Staff.
  - Parks Commissioners
  - Holland Historical Trust/Museum, Holland Area Arts Council, Public Art Committee, Herrick Library.
  - Tulip Time, American Legion Band, City Manager, Asst. City Manager, Convention and Visitor's Bureau.
  - Historic District Commission & Neighborhoods around the park

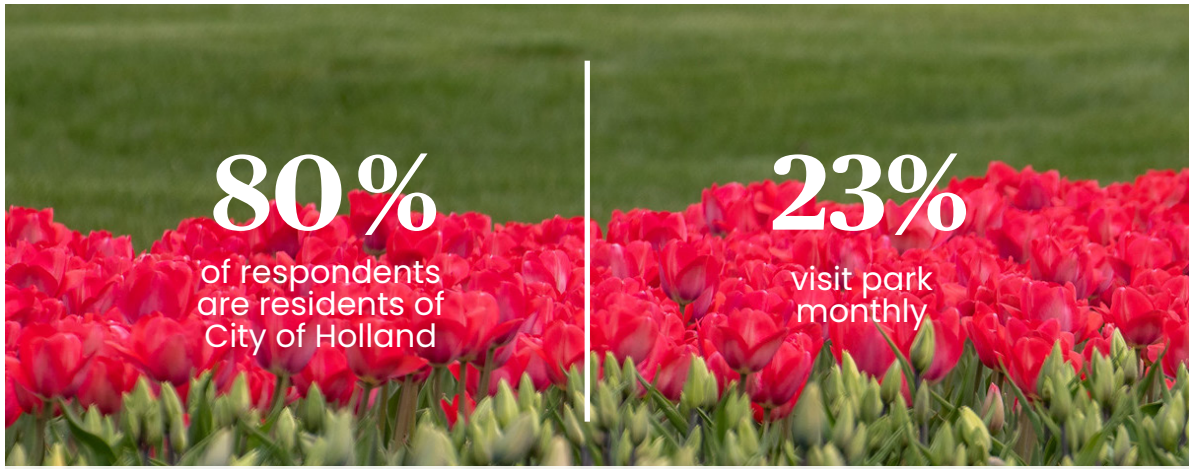


Online survey

An online survey collected nearly 2,000 individual responses. While most were Holland residents, responses revealed that interest in Centennial Park is also regional.

While the park was noticably favored for its features at Tulip Time, just as many participants in the survey noted everyday interactions were also important to them.

> “Ensure it is a place people can go to relax in the fresh air.”



“Why do you typically visit Centennial Park?”

- 26% Walking paths
- 26% Seasonal flowers
- 21% Passing by or through
- 16% Events/concerts
- 11% Lunch/picnic

1,800
Online survey responses

“More places for people to sit and relax. Keep the park well kept and clean, free of weeds. ensure it is a place people can go to relax in the fresh air.”

“Feature local artists work seasonally”

“Less clutter in the park and not too packed. Park benches to enjoy.”

Public Feedback - Strengths

Survey and stakeholder meetings revealed similar observations about the Park. These informed the plan and guidelines for future improvements. Existing plantings and walkability emerged as the Park's main strengths.

- The Victorian character is immersive; you can sit, take respite, enjoy the surroundings.
- "Centennial is the city's flagship Park."
- Park serves as a current gathering space for small groups such as Bible study and preschool classes, potential for fitness classes or reading series associated with library.
- The Park highlights Holland's Victorian and Dutch history though horticulture.
- Essential features of Centennial Park to preserve: walkability, flowers and horticulture, tree canopy, history, holidays and festivals.



Public Feedback - Opportunities

Survey results and stakeholder meetings also reflected on current needs and desires for the park. There was broad interest in year-round accessibility and programming. The park's main features -- Koi Pond, Tufa Fountain, and Gazebo -- were highlighted for renovation.

- Tufa fountain needs to be repaired or rebuilt. The stone is falling apart, liner is leaking, and mechanical equipment needs upgraded.
- Parks & recreation Department would like a year-round Koi pond that does not need to be drained every year and that Koi fish can over-winter in.
- Parks & recreation would prefer to consolidate 48 existing planting beds throughout the park in areas that are more visible and have more impact on overall park.
- Existing Gazebo restrooms need to be updated. There is a need for future restroom expansion
- Potential for Centennial Park to have 4 season interest.
- Request for more informal seating spaces and site furnishings.
- Request for a children's play space or garden area.
- River Avenue sidewalk can be dangerous due to heavy traffic. Study solutions for safer circulation.
- More snowmelt throughout the park and perimeter walks.





5

Goals & Objectives

Holland
MICHIGAN

25-YEAR VISION

When the people of Holland celebrate the city's 200th birthday in 2047, they will come to Centennial Park to remember and to look forward. Here is the beautiful heart of Holland's thriving civic/cultural district, where stately trees and splendid horticultural displays, welcoming pathways, fountain, pond, and public art together form a treasured landscape. Being there creates a personal sense of belonging to place, and an awareness of one's place in time. Excellent management and care ensure the park fulfills its benefits to the individual, the community, and the environment. Centennial Park is a wellspring of meaning and joy that continues to shape and reflect the identity of all Hollanders.

Project Goals

Animate:

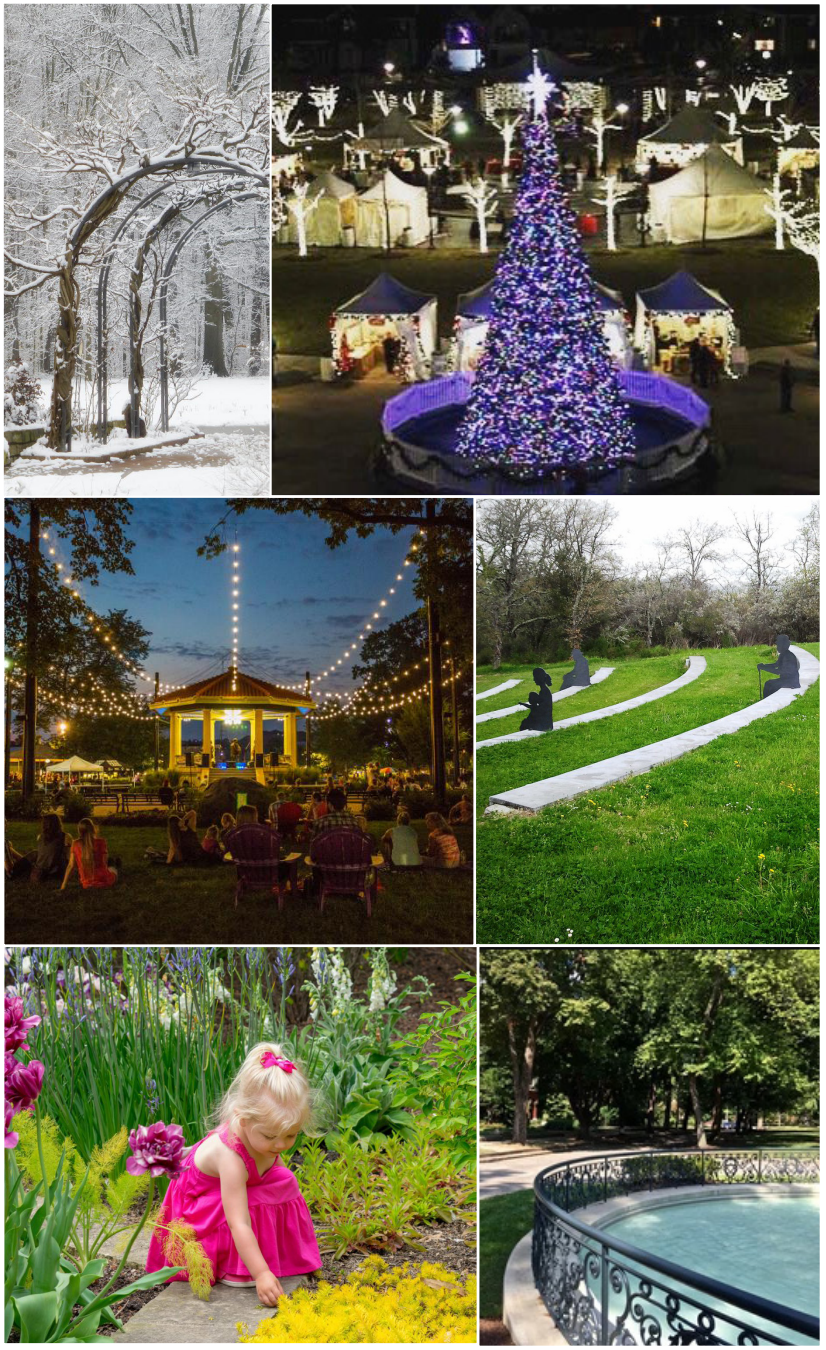
- Programmatic flexibility to provide for concerts, festivals and individual use.
- Provide for four season usage in the park.
- Promote the use and decoration of the Park for holidays.
- Provide opportunities for additional seating both integrated and moveable.
- Promote Centennial Park as a cultural destination to both residents and tourists.

Educate:

- Honor the Victorian and Dutch history in Centennial Park.
- Promote education of horticulture, landscaping, Netherlands flower culture.

Preserve:

- Promote historic preservation.
- Promote historical restoration.



6

Design Guidelines

Project Description

Centennial Park, once known as Market Square in the original plat of the City, is located at 250 Central Avenue, between River and Central Avenues and 10th and 12th Streets. It contains approximately 243,936 square feet (5.6 acres) and fulfills a variety of active and passive roles in the City of Holland. This Park serves as a community public open space for a variety of events and community functions: a focal point for Tulip Time festivities, Art in the Park gatherings, as well as a beloved open space in the heart of downtown Holland.

The "study area" for this project includes the Park and an area surrounding the Park approximately half a block in all directions. This provided a clear context for understanding the park. Opportunities associated with park planning could be explored, while assuring that improvements within and adjacent to the park will support the Park Vision and the Centennial Park zone.

Centennial Park and some surrounding properties fall within the 1989 Holland Historic District Addition made to the original Holland Historic District (1986). The Park is part of a National Register District as well as a local historic district where certain actions are reviewable by the City's Historic District Commission. This report is intended to serve as a playbook for the interpretation and treatment of this cultural landscape in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. It will guide park managers through assessing contemporary needs and evolving uses.Centennial Park is viewed by the community as a valuable and significant open space in downtown Holland. Its Victorian and Dutch influences have been embraced by the local residents and visitors who enjoy the park throughout the seasons. It is a park that not only celebrates its unique history and setting, but also promotes health and wellness for the residents of Holland, provides a civic setting for voices to be heard, and is a component of the overall ecological framework for downtown Holland.

This Management Plan supports Holland's vision of a world-class urban park that fosters community interaction and helps develop a sustainable city -- environmentally, socially, and culturally.

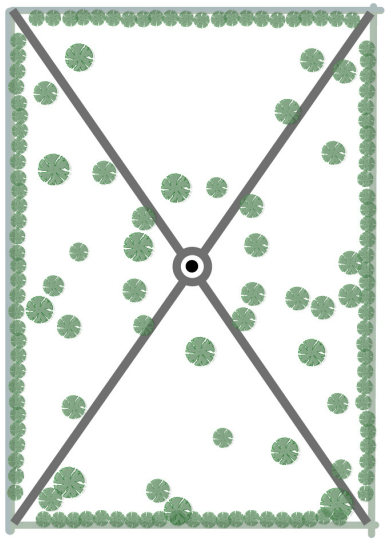
The recommendations within this report establish a comprehensive series of physical improvements in support of ecology, history, programs and events, activities, and behaviors that echo the goals and objective developed by the planning and design consultants, stakeholders, and the community.The well-planned design and management of Centennial Park will provide a downtown public park where spending an hour or a day provides many opportunities for individuals and groups for discovery and recreation. All its spaces will contribute to a sustainable park honoring the legacy of the past and welcoming the future community of Holland.This renewed consciousness about urban parks and open space and its impact on the health and wellness experience will help re-establish Centennial Park as a dynamic and powerful signature park for the City of Holland.

> "A **world-class urban park,** fostering **community interaction** and the development of a **sustainable Holland: Socially, Environmentally, and Culturally.**"

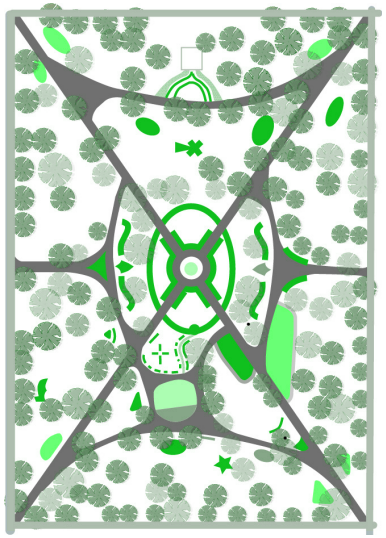
Proposed Plan



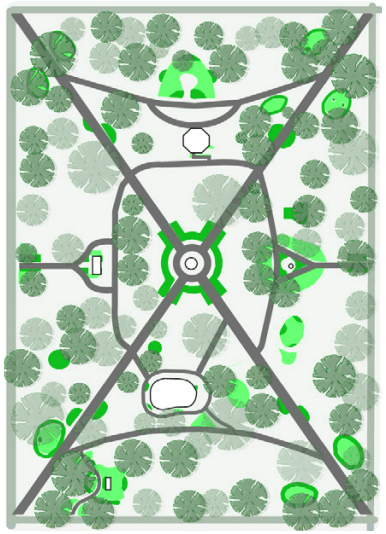
Plan Progression



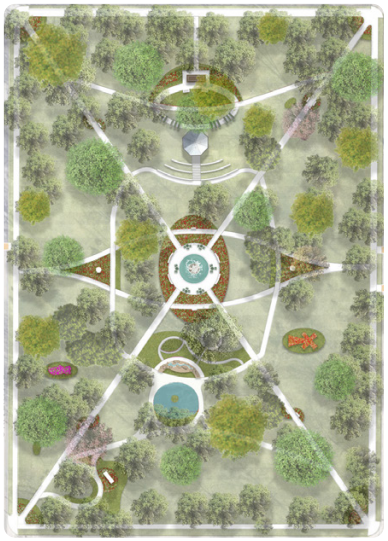
1876 Establishment Period Plan



1907- 1936 Development Period Plan



1936-Present Enhancement Period Plan



Proposed Plan

Treatment Guidelines For Historic Preservation

Upon its founding after Holland's first 25 years, Centennial Park represented a new awareness that the old world's market square was not needed or useful. Instead, town leaders used the occasion of the nation's centennial to redefine the public space as a pleasure park and venue for civic life. In the 20th century, the park became a floral expression of a uniquely Dutch-American culture even as it helped to create that selfsame identity. This 21st century park plan presents a significant opportunity to recapture, refine, and add to the qualities and features that make this place uniquely Centennial Park. This can be accomplished by learning the language of landscape preservation and how it applies.

Historic Periods

Understanding how Centennial Park evolved over time can provide the foundation for its treatment in the future and preserve its design integrity as a cultural landscape. Three stages in the park's existence represent the eras of establishment, development, and enhancement that are woven together in the park of today. These "Periods of Significance" have been defined through the process of research and site analysis. Design intent discerned from available records help us understand the essential elements and features that must be retained into the future to ensure the park's historic integrity.



In summary, these are:

Establishment. The Van Landegend Period gave the park its essential footprint with crossing diagonal paths, raised ellipse, and center focal point. The vegetative character was simply large trees over grass -- the formal perimeter maples contrasting with the interior triangular greenswards graced with more natural-appearing, informally scattered trees.

Development. From the Cukierski-Kooyers Period comes the fulfillment of functions that a proper city park of that era should provide. It is characterized by sensible additions to the circulation system, a bandstand and restrooms, the tufa fountain, urns and lily pond, garden beds and trellis structures, and lighting and site furnishings. Horticultural art became a signature motif and attraction, especially the Victorian practice of bedding-out ornamental flowers in shapes and patterns and, of course, Tulip Time. This is the primary Period of Significance for purposes of guiding future decisions about Centennial Park.

Enhancement. The post-World War II period construction of the gazebo/restrooms in a new site was the major improvement of this era. Elements of commemoration were added, including the Van Raalte monument, the Veterans Memorial, and the Wizard of Oz book. While these are valued, some aspects of siting and design could contribute more to the unity and appeal of Centennial Park.



Reminiscent of a windmill's form, the Tufa Fountain was a vertical garden. Each spring, hundreds of plants were tucked into cavities in the porous stone, including moss, ferns, blue lobelia, pansies, trailing vinca, ivy, coleus, begonia, and fuchsia. Streams of water jetted from the fountain's three levels, creating an airy contrast to the massive form.



Landscape Units

Another way of viewing the historic park landscape is by defining its distinct spaces, its "Landscape Units," that are shaped by related functions and features. As compact as it is, Centennial Park can be seen in terms of these units, each with its own qualities and character.

The characteristics of each unit can be understood from the perspectives of:

• **Circulation** -- walks, paths, and steps;

• **Furnishings and objects** – sculpture, benches, small-scale elements;

• **Spatial organization, ground patterns, visual relationships;**

• **Structures;**

• **Topography;**

• **Vegetation;** and

• **Water elements and drainage.**

Whenever considering park improvements, the project scope should be developed within the larger context of the Landscape Unit. This approach will help to avoid piecemeal changes that do not contribute to the whole cloth, and as a result, can undermine the park's integrity as a historic designed landscape. Centennial Park's circulation plan defines the units rather neatly. Further study and landscape management practices may lead to refinements or subsets of these units.

Projected Centennial Park Landscape Units

1. **Park Perimeter** – Trees/Sidewalks/ Entrances
2. **Fountain Ellipse** – Tufa Fountain/Plaza
3. **North Quadrant** – Gazebo/Restrooms, Veteran's Memorial
4. **South Quadrant** – Koi Pond, Stream Garden
5. **East and West Quadrants** – Greensward & Planting Beds, Van Raalte Statue

Treatment Recommendations

Historic integrity is a prime factor in determining the appropriate treatments. Like many cultural landscapes that are largely intact, Centennial Park's treatments must be faithful to The Secretary of the Interior's Standards with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes (1996). The Standards define four possible ways to treat historic cultural landscapes:

Preservation applies measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of a historic property, with a focus on repairs and maintenance.

Restoration accurately depicts the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared during a specific time period.

Rehabilitation provides for a compatible use through alterations and additions while preserving features that convey historic, cultural, or architectural values.

Reconstruction replicates a non-surviving site or feature through new construction.

Preservation and Rehabilitation are the primary treatments appropriate to Centennial Park's rich design history and intact landscape. To be successful with this approach, the park's importance as a historic park has to be appreciated by its managers and the general public. Its succession of designers and shapers and their contributions must be acknowledged, as the park adjusts to another century of service.

General Historic Design Guidelines

Integrity

- Consider any proposed new uses or features in view of the park's integrity; if justified, accommodate them so as not to violate historic design intent.
- Where the placement of features and furnishings has not necessarily respected the design integrity of Centennial Park, remove them or weave them together with other park features as part of a complete Landscape Unit.

Views

- Maintain internal and external views that support civic and aesthetic experience. This includes views to and from neighboring institutions, as well as interior views that orient visitors and lead them to explore the park further.
- It is important to keep the east and west quadrants as largely open greensward, both sunny and shady, where views are unimpeded but accented with sculptures and fountain lining up along the 11th Street cross-axis.
- In contrast, structures and garden spaces should be arrayed along the North-South axis, but with no additional blockage of sightlines.

Trees

- Replace missing perimeter trees with a genetically diverse species list that provides similar form, texture, color, etc. as the original maple monoculture, while improving resiliency to pests and disease.
- Apply the same approach in the park interior but edit the planting plan to provide areas of sunshine as well as shade.

Circulation

- Maintain a clear hierarchy of pathways, expressed in width, detailing, and materials.
- Employ "Y" and radiused intersections.
- Perimeter sidewalks should remain concrete unless a snowmelt system is installed, in which case unit pavers should be used. Interior paths should be surfaced with unit pavers. Reserve the use of gravel or mulch walking surfaces to small-scale garden areas.

Textural Contrast: At the scale of the entire park, highlight contrast between the elaborate water/horticultural displays and the simple planes of grass. In developing smaller, garden-like spaces, use more detail and ornamentation that can be enjoyed by people lingering in the park.

Continue to provide bedding-out in the Victorian style, including Dutch motifs. In addition to bulbs and annuals, enrich the garden's palette and ecological contribution with perennials and native plants. Make clear which plants are historically appropriate to the park (using period species) and which are contemporary or trial species.

Include mixed shrubbery beds in the park where screening is needed.

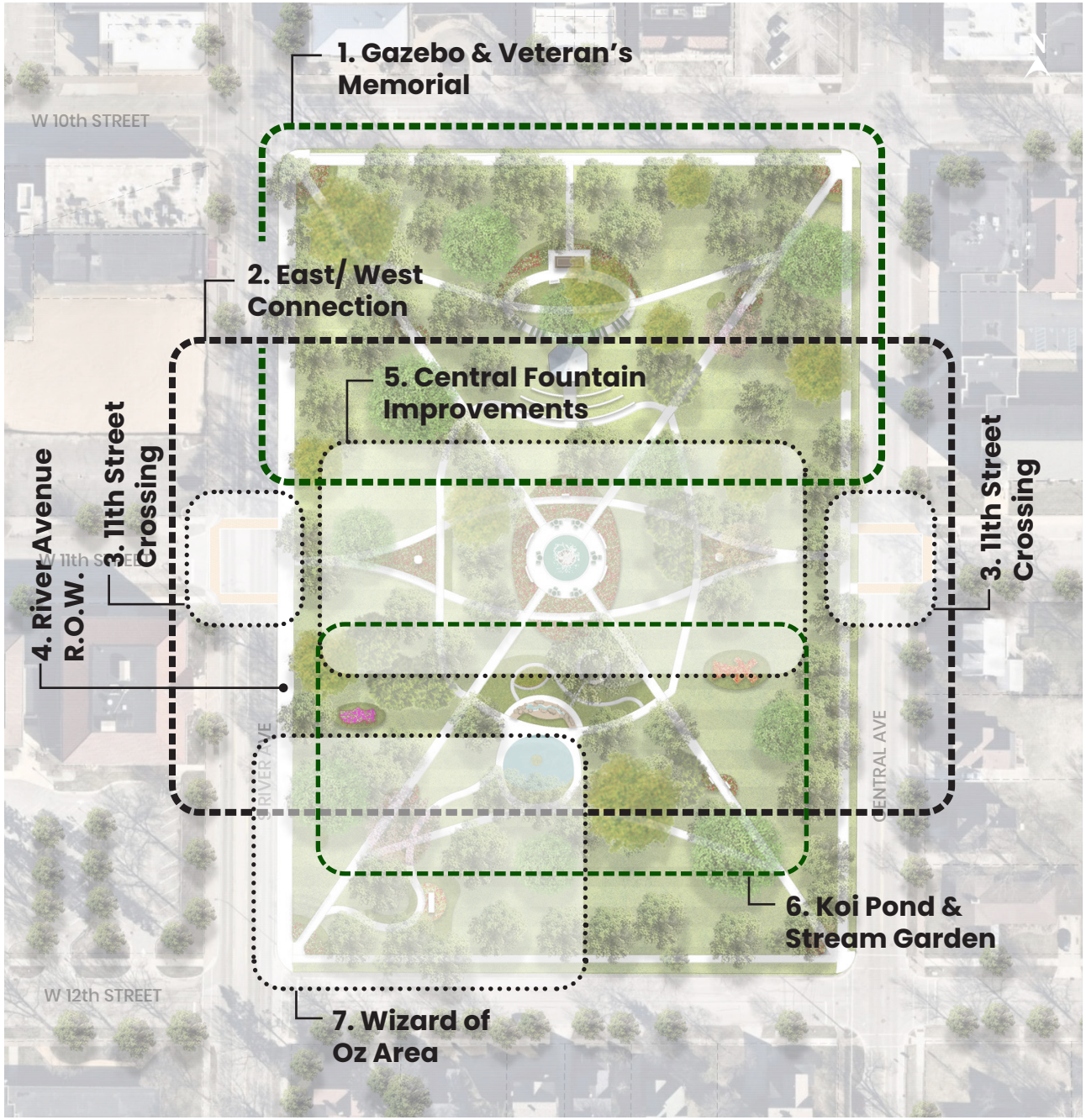
Existing and new structures should be made compatible with the general Victorian aesthetic of Centennial Park in form, color, and detail.

Monuments and memorials must be preserved and professionally restored by skilled conservators. The Veteran's Memorial should be relocated to a larger and more contemplative space in meaningful proximity to the Holland Museum and Holland Historical Trust. Relocation will also make it possible to return its former location to its historic triangular form, while making space for a future public artwork.

A related issue to consider is whether to impose a moratorium on new locations/ proposals. In addition to a rigorous review process, specific design standards should be developed to ensure a commemorative feature/public artwork which is: non-intrusive on scenic views; integrated with functional elements; and complementary to historic features.

Water features should be restored and reconstructed to replicate their original historic forms and appearance, including plantings and fountain display. Use contemporary technologies to update mechanical systems and innovative or harmonious materials to replicate components when the original cannot be obtained.

Develop an Interpretive Program, using a variety of delivery methods, to inform and engage park visitors, building greater awareness and attachment to Centennial Park.



1. Gazebo & Veteran's Memorial

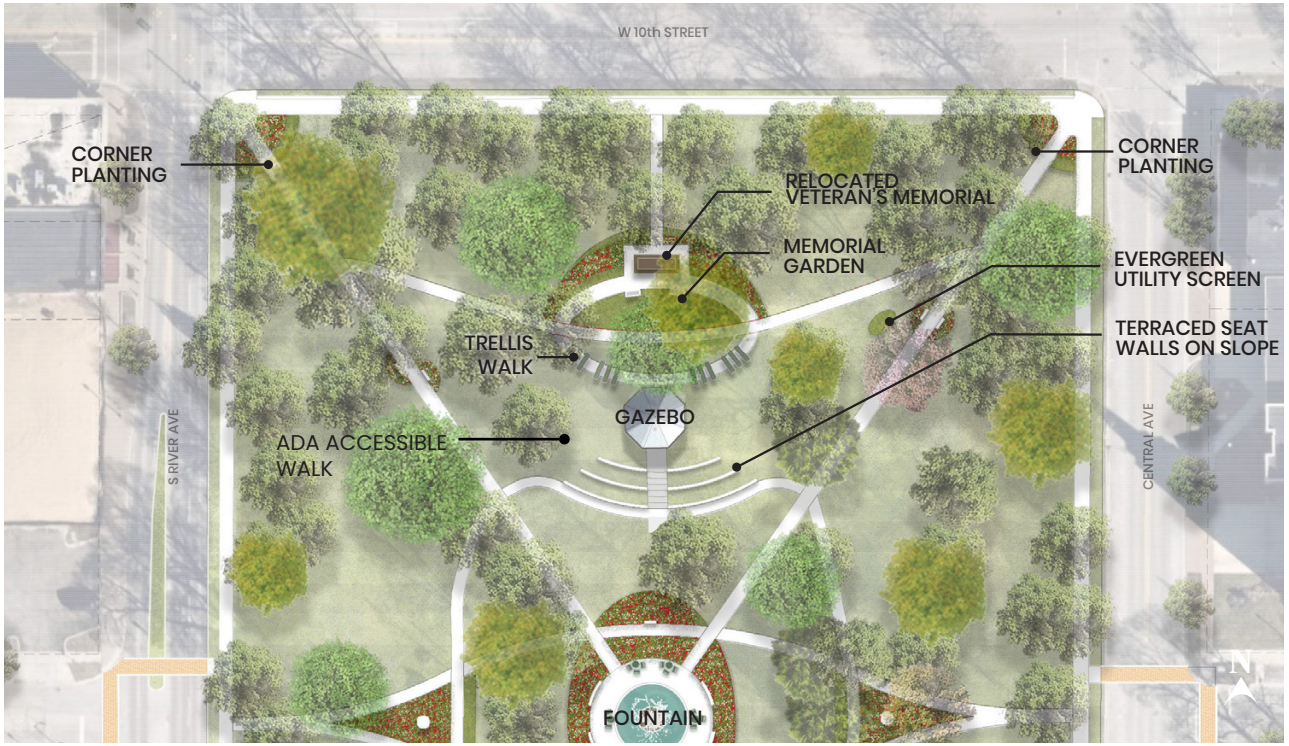
The original 1912 location for the Veterans Memorial was along the Central Avenue side of the park and consisted of a stone with the initials G.A.R. engraved on the side. A few years later a bronze plaque of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address was set into a stone and placed near the G.A.R. stone. In 1997 these stones were relocated to the River Avenue side of the park to provide space for a statue of the city's founder Dr. A. C. Van Raalte.

The relocation of the Veterans Memorial to the River Avenue side of the park included the redesign of the historic pathway system, and obstructed views of the central fountain and across the center of the park. The memorial location is also one of the busier places within Centennial Park and offers a less desirable place for solitude and reverence.

The Centennial Park Management Plan recommends relocating the Veterans Memorial to the northern end of the park, north of the existing gazebo facility. This will provide a designated space that is accessible to visitors and a space that is quieter and more reflective. This location is also adjacent to the Holland Historicla Trust and Holland Museum on 10th Street. The space surrounding the Veterans Memorial should also be designed to accommodate ceremonies and individual reflection while honoring Holland's war veterans. Proposed are seating and planting areas surrounding the memorial to provide color and four season interest.

Relocating of the Veterans Memorial also provides the opportunity to redesign the pathway system to reflect the park's original layout using the "Y" intersection that exists on the eastern side of the park near the Van Raalte statue.

The Gazebo, completed in 1989, is overdue for an update. The current layout is restrictive due to its singular entry point. This plan proposes to refinish the existing metal work and masonry walls with new paint as well as open up the south side of the Gazebo to the park, allowing more organized program. The existing ADA accessible path is restrictive to pedestrian flow and restricts overall accessibility and views to the Gazebo. The recommended design opens up this face toward the park and relocates the ADA accessible route to the west side of the Gazebo. A central stair and flanking terraced seat walls expand the usability of the area and give alternative seating options for visitors.A connecting path east and west ties back to the park. The restroom interiors also need an update, with recommended exterior doors that are complementary to the Victorian-era style.



Gazebo Capital Improvement Costs
$140,000 - 200,000

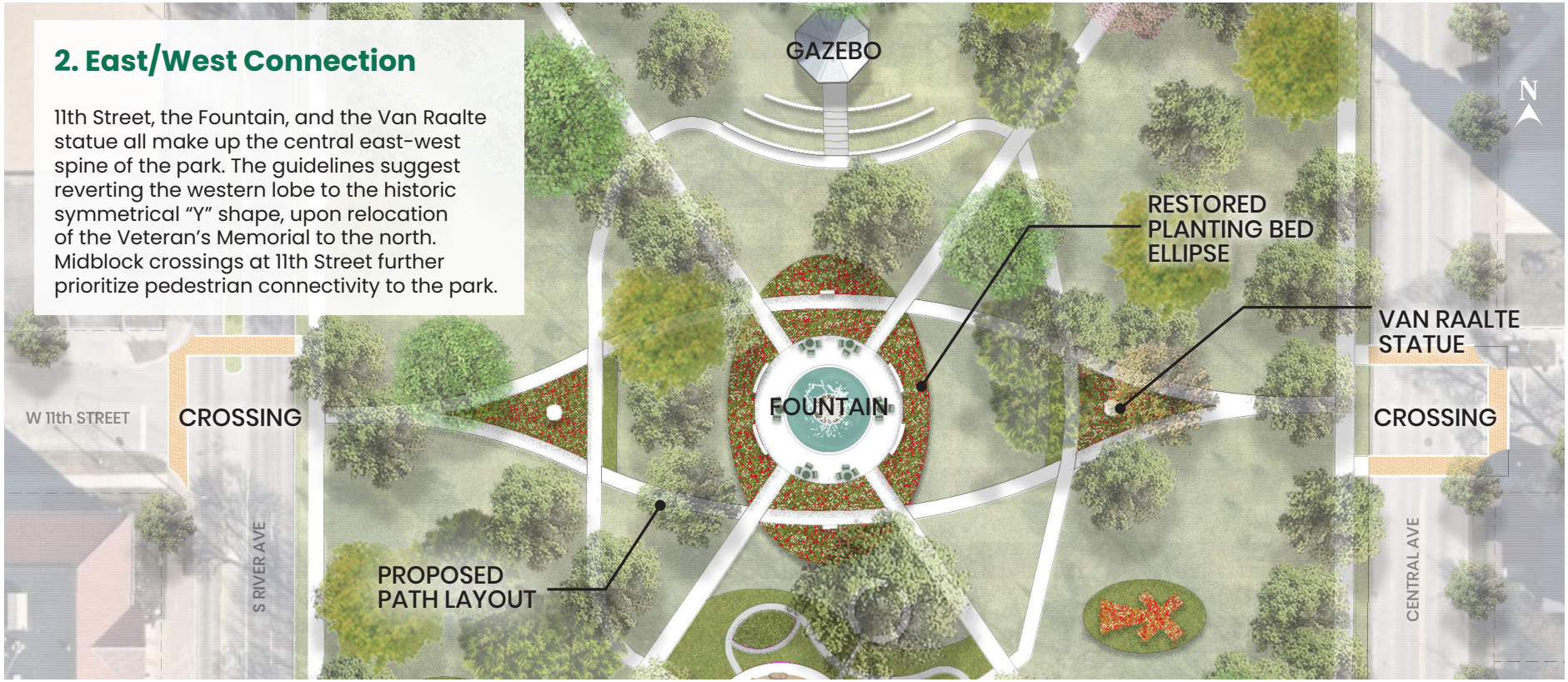
- Renovate existing Gazebo structure, ie. paint all exposed metal railing and columns color black, paint brick walls color TBD
- Install new trellis with perennial vining plants and pedestrian paths to either side of restrooms
- Install new Victorian-style drinking fountain and doors at restroom
- Open up south end toward park for event accessibility and install new centrally located stair centered on Gazebo
- Install new terraced seat walls within slope

Veteran's Memorial Capital Improvement Costs
$150,000 - 210,000

- Relocate existing Veteran's Memorial & flag poles to new location.
- Install Monument uplighting & Flag pole lighting
- Install new pedestrian pathways (no snowmelt included)
- Install (2) benches
- New plant bed installation with perennials, shrubs, and ornamental trees.

2. East/West Connection

11th Street, the Fountain, and the Van Raalte statue all make up the central east-west spine of the park. The guidelines suggest reverting the western lobe to the historic symmetrical "Y" shape, upon relocation of the Veteran's Memorial to the north. Midblock crossings at 11th Street further prioritize pedestrian connectivity to the park.



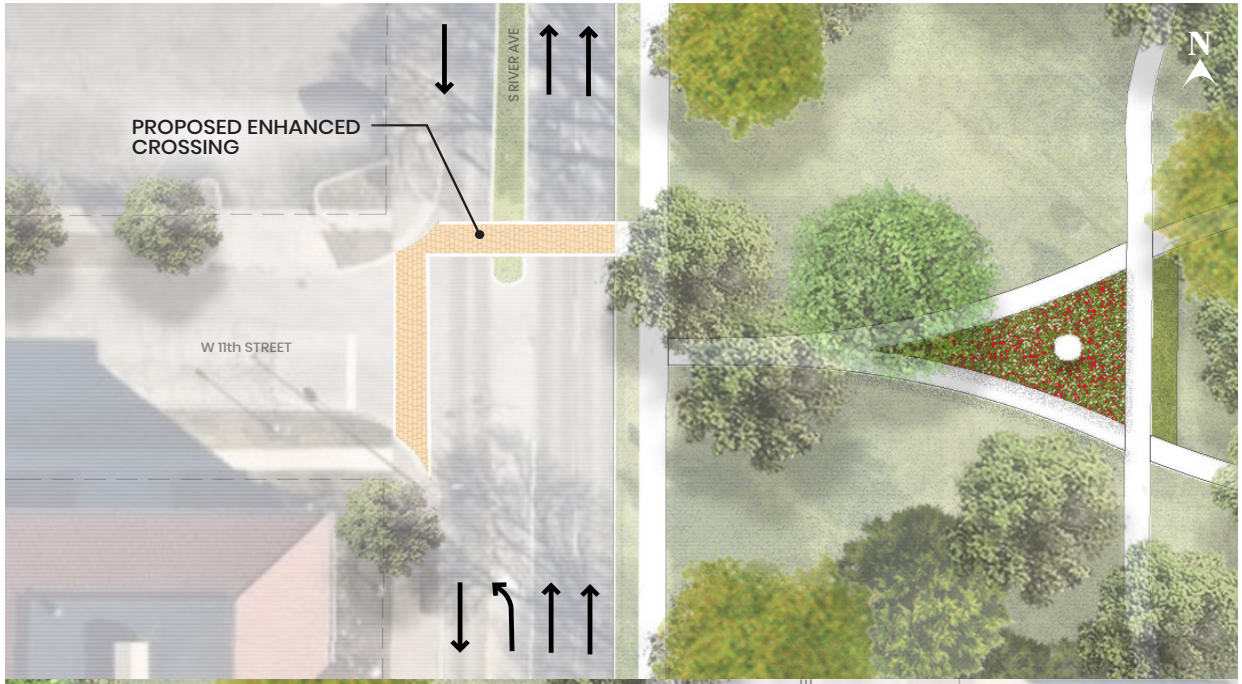
East/West Connection Capital Improvement Costs

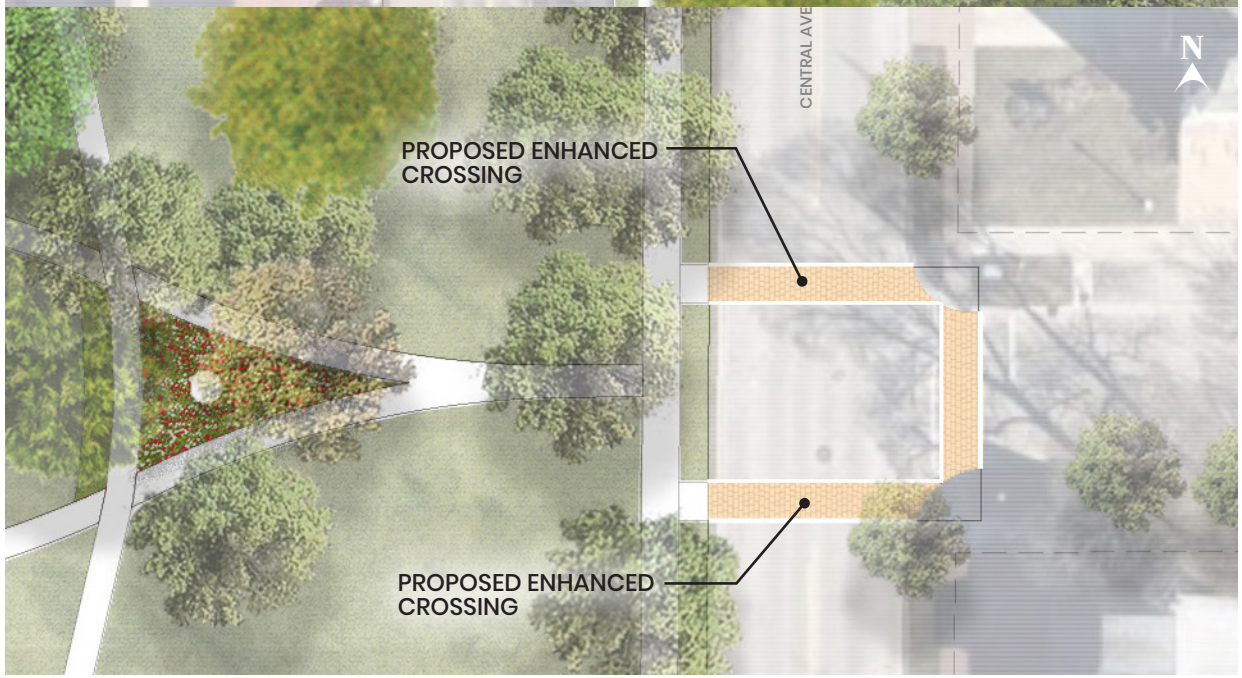
$120,000 - $150,000

- Install new concrete pedestrian pathways with snowmelt
- Install oval shaped plant beds per 1911 plan layout.
- Install new irrigation system within oval shaped beds

3. 11th Street Crossings

Perhaps just as vital as the East/West connective paths are the 11th Street midblock crossings. Highly visible, modernly designed crossings not only would create safer environments for visitors, but would visually connect the Park to the city fabric. The crossing on River Avenue would require further study, as it is the most trafficked road adjacent to the Park.





11th Street Crossings Capital Improvement Costs
$60,000 - $80,000 (per intersection)

- Install unit pavers over HD concrete base. With flush 18" depth concrete containment curb
- Necessary roadway striping
- Signage and pedestrian crossing signals
- Update existing median curbs and plantings (River Avenue only)

4. River Avenue Right-of-Way

River Avenue is the busiest street adjacent to Centennial Park. Right-of-way improvements would complement the walkability already existing within the park. A 6 foot tree lawn or landscaped area buffering the the sidewalk area from the roadway would increase pedestrian safety. Appropriately-scaled interventions allow enough space for easy and comfortable circulation. Clearly-marked crossings and accessible ramps should also be provided at 11th Street to encourage connectivity.

River Ave ROW Capital Improvement Costs

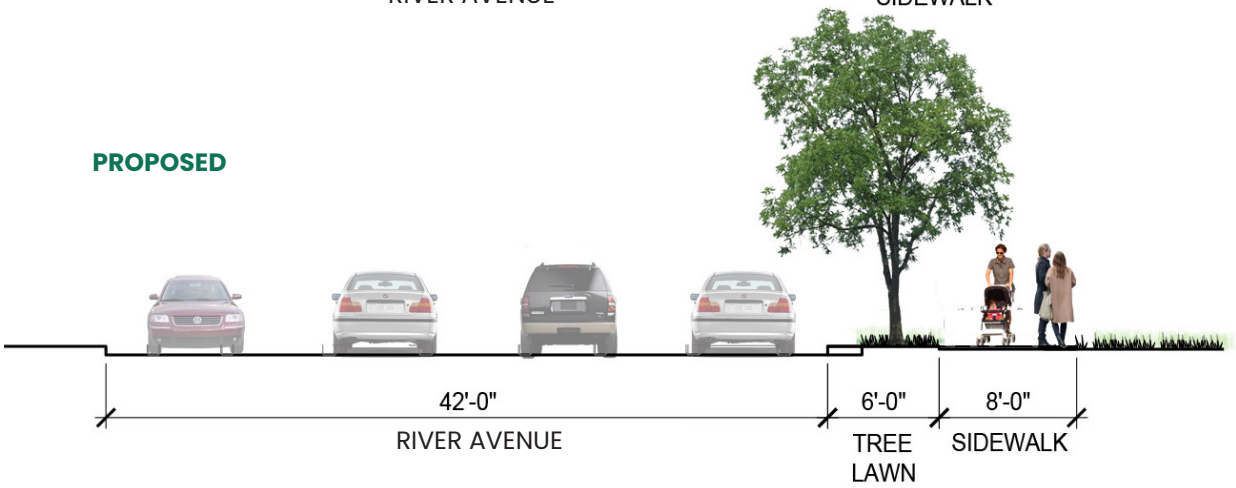
$125,000 - $175,000

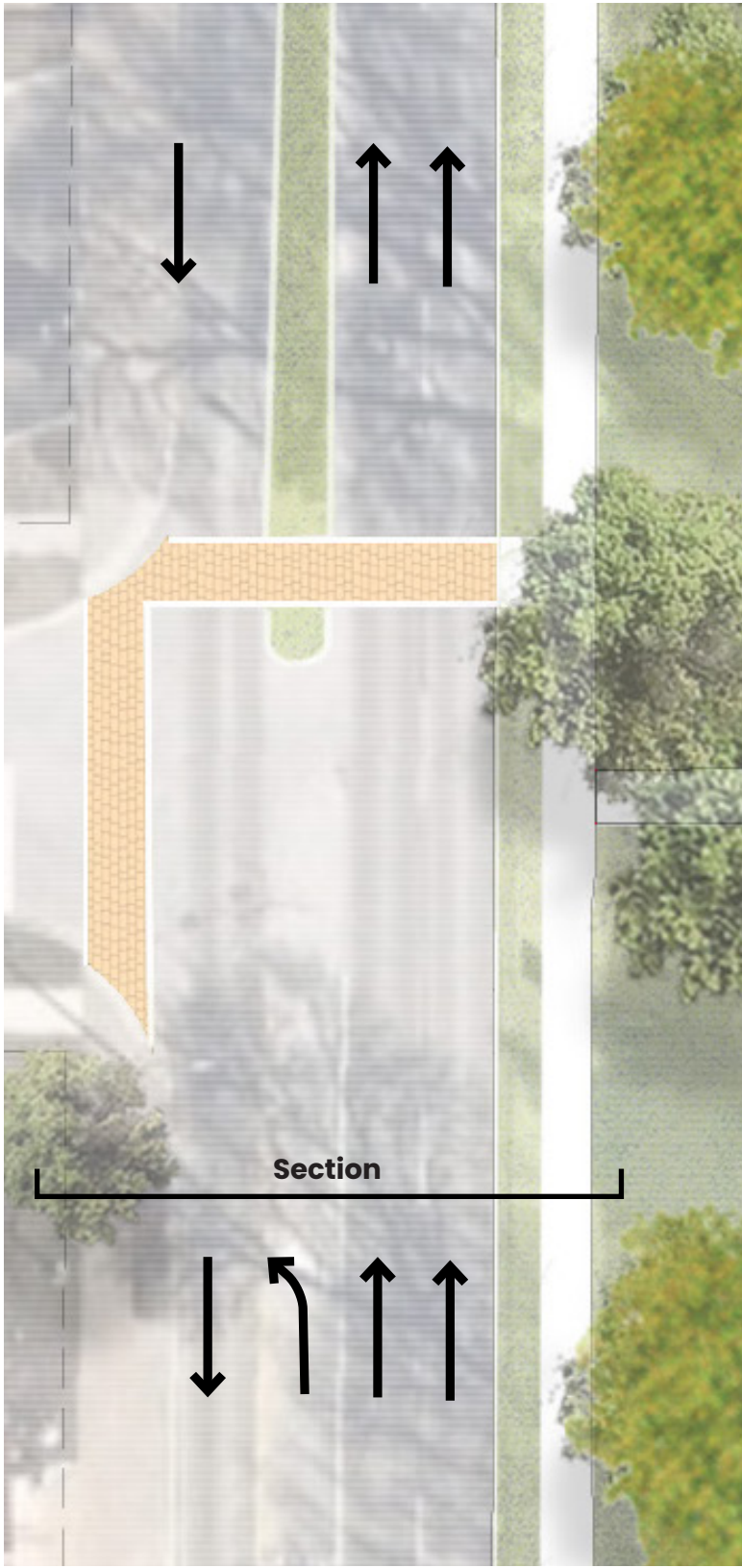
- Install new 8' wide concrete pedestrian pathways with snowmelt
- New 6' wide tree lawn with planting soils, seeded lawn & accent trees.

EXISTING



PROPOSED







5. Tufa Fountain Improvements

Donated and built in 1902 as a focal point in the center of the park, the 20-foot-tall Tufa Fountain still serves as a central gathering point within the park and provides the sound of active water spray and splash for visitors to enjoy. Improvements and alterations to the fountain over the years have included replacement of the iron fencing around the perimeter of the basin with an aluminum material fence and painting of the interior lining of the basin (light blue).

Central Fountain Capital Improvement Costs
$275,000 - $400,000

- Renovate existing Tufa Fountain with new Tufa Stone structure, new pump system and controls.
- Install new fountain basin
- Add a decorative lighting element to Fountain area
- Install containment curb with 3’ tall custom Victorian style wrought iron fence, color black.
- Increase pavement width at center circle to 12’ wide, install concrete pavement with snowmelt
- Install wood bench seating at perimeter
- Purchase moveable tables and chairs for seasonal use

Design Guidelines

While the planning and design consultant team studied several options to improve the fountain area, including a complete replacement of the fountain, it was determined through feedback from the public and stakeholders to retain the tufa fountain and provide the following improvements:

1. **Relocate the existing pumps from within the fountain to a new location.** The current placement of the fountain pumps is within the fountain structure itself and is difficult to maintain. A new location would allow for an upgrade of the pump equipment and provide easier access for future maintenance.

2. **Remove the aluminum perimeter fence** to allow for better views and access to the improve fountain area.

3. Modify depth of water basin to **provide a safer experience and reduce maintenance of the fountain area.**

4. **Widen the sidewalk area** around the fountain to allow for additional seating and circulation space .

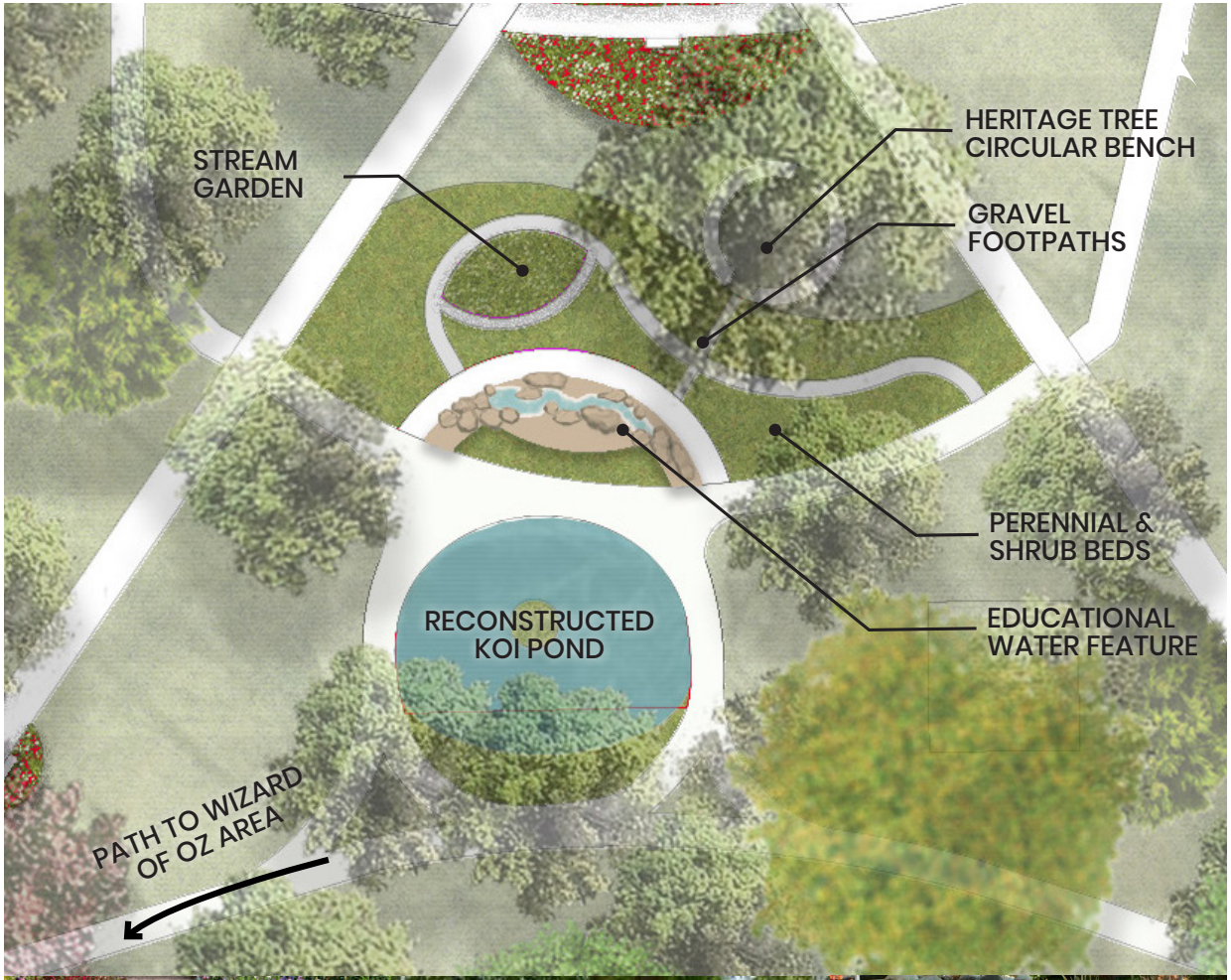




6. Koi Pond & Stream Garden

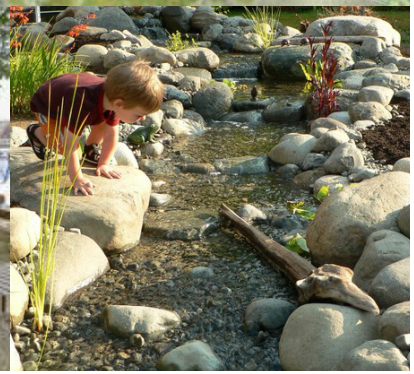
The Koi Pond is determined to need a full reconstruction. This plan recommends restoring the size and shape of the original Lily Pond, including a new fence and perennial beds.

This specific quadrant of the park is historically informal and asymmetrical. As the historic garden here once featured a "stream" to feed the pond, it is an appropriate location for a new, more freeform Stream Garden for unstructured exploration and discovery. A Stream Garden, gravel footpaths, and educational water feature make up components of the gardens.









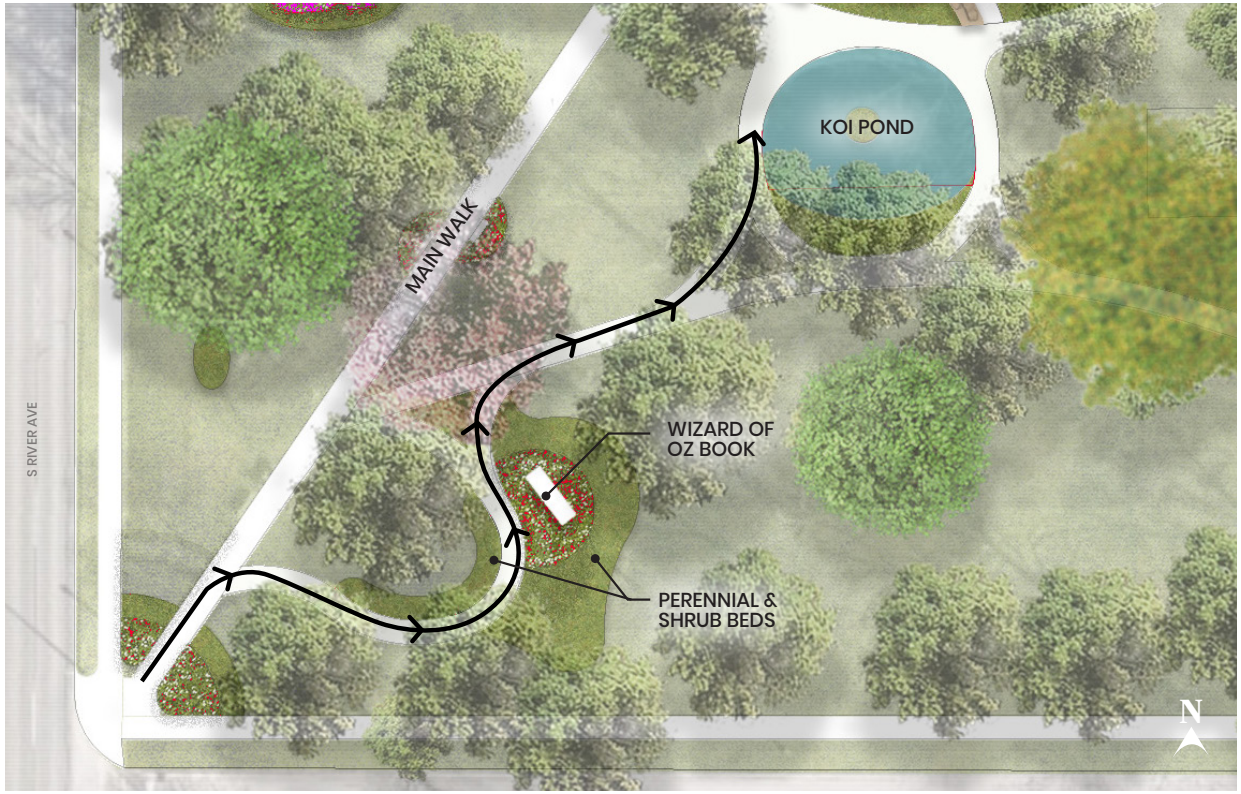
Stream Garden Capital Improvement Costs

$100,000 - $175,000

- Construct a small interactive water feature such as a streambed with native rock bottom
- Stabilized gravel garden paths & circulation
- Stream Garden and Victorian perennial plantings
- Large circular bench or alternate seating area under the existing heritage canopy tree
- Chimes or similar interactive element

Koi Pond Capital Improvement Costs: $225,000-275,000

- Rebuild existing Koi Pond to match 1911 layout plan footprint.
- Provide enough depth and suitable pond liner to overwinter Koi fish.
- Explore potential for natural filtration systems
- Replace existing Tufa Stone perimeter with new strategically placed Tufa Stone
- Install new custom Victorian style wrought iron fence, color black.
- Perennial plant bed at southern edge of Koi Pond.



7. Wizard of Oz Area Improvements

The recent addition of the Wizard of Oz book and its yellow brick path to Centennial Park has increased visitation but has not led to further discovery of the park itself. As a work of "mosaiculture," the book displays another form of the horticultural arts that characterize Centennial Park. As such, it echoes the Tufa Fountain's traditional plantings which created a lush and colorful green pillar and should be seen as a continuation of the horticultural traditions in the park.

To make these connections, the brick walk to the Oz book should venture from the main park entrance and walk at the corner of 12th Street and River Avenue. Nearby planting beds would help draw visitors into the park. Beyond the Oz book, the walk would be realigned to connect to the Koi Pond, drawing people to the park interior.

It is recommended the book will be repositioned at an angle to increase its visibility and correspond with the more informal character of this park zone. A mock up of the location and orientation is required.

During the cold season, lighting or sculptural installations should be developed to occupy the vacant book site and provide year-round interest.

Wizard of Oz Area Capital Improvement Costs: $30,000-50,000

- Path reconfiguration
- Moving of mosaicscape base
- Perennial plant beds, annual plant beds
- Salvage and reinstall donor pavers

Landscape

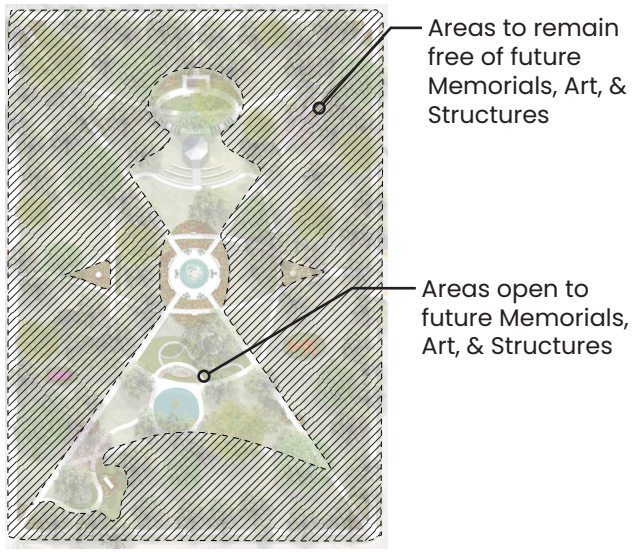
Open Space Preservation and Tree Management

Two driving issues in the park today are minimizing visual clutter and preserving open space. The strategy recommended by the guidelines is to delineate and maintain various levels of shaded canopy and sunny openings in appropriate balance within the park.

Throughout the history of Centennial Park, trees have been a defining component of the landscape. Existing trees should be maintained along with an ongoing program of replanting to maintain park character. While a clear understory reduces visual clutter, understory trees should be placed thoughtfully. These ornamental trees accentuate features and seating areas, provide human scale, and improve bird habitat. Four actions for trees are described for specific zones of the site on the following page.

It is important to maintain open lawn areas and a clear understory strategically throughout the park. These areas should remain free of future structures to preserve the park's character. The diagram below emphasizes quadrants where structures could be concentrated, based on sightlines, planting zones, distance between objects, and program.

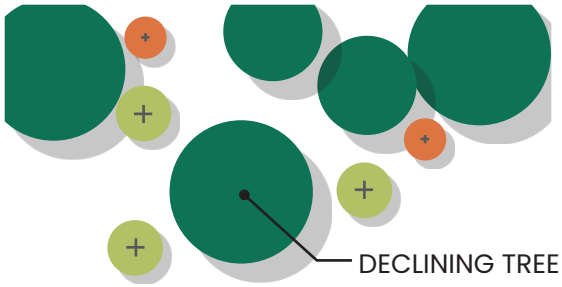
Designated zones for future structures





1. Successive tree planting

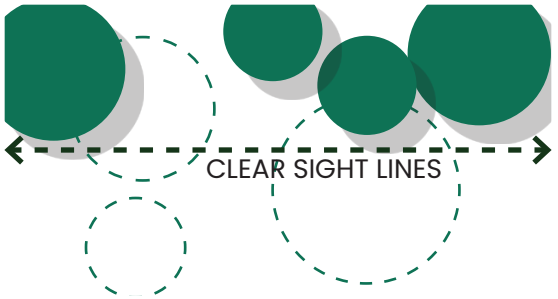
Maintaining the park's mature tree canopy requires a program for succession plantings. Selective planting of trees within the canopy zones will allow for new growth after large are removed or fallen. Special attention should be used when replacing the heritage Maple trees in order to retain their historical presence in the park.



EXISTING TREE PLANTING TO REMAIN
PREVIOUS TREE LOCATION
NEW TREE PLANTING
SPECIMEN TREE PLANTING

2. Maintain clearance for sight lines/sun

It is recommended that some open areas remain clear of canopy in the future. The East/West connection would be further reinforced by clear sight lines. Feature beds, including the corner planting beds, requiring ample sunlight, should also remain open.

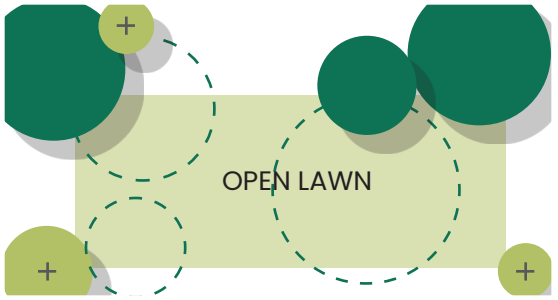


Recommended Species:

- *Acer rubrum* Red maple
- *Acer saacharum* Sugar maple
- *Platanus occidentalis* American sycamore
- *Fagus sylvatica* European beech
- *Liriodendron tulipifera* Tulip tree

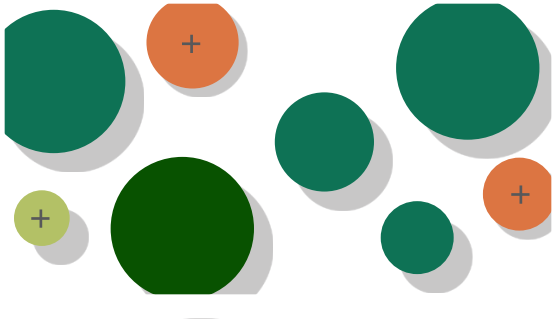
3. Strategic canopy tree planting

Openings in the tree canopy provide sunlit opportunity for activities in the park. Large, broad-branching species are desirable within lawn areas to provide varying levels of shade throughout the day.



4. Specimen planting

During the Victorian era, newly discovered tree varients were planted as single speciments to display their unique textures and colors. This zone will complement the sensory, educational, and heirloom planting beds at the Stream Garden and Koi Pond. A variety of ornamental and understory trees are also encouraged throughout the park in appropriate locations.



Recommended Additional Species:

- *Chionanthus retusus* Chinese fringe tree
- *Magnolia x soulangiana* Saucer magnolia
- *Styrax japonicus* Japanese snowbell
- *Acer griseum* Paperback maple
- *Parrotia persica* Persian ironwood

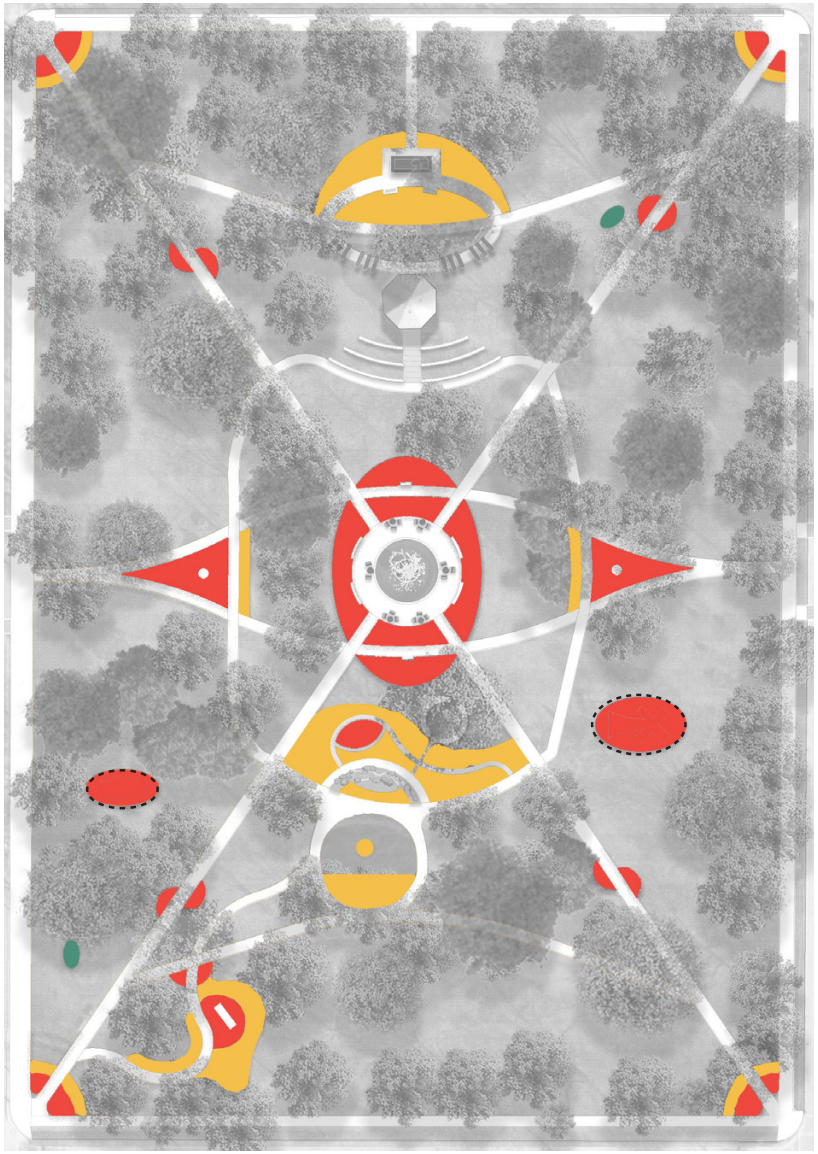
Planting beds

Centennial Park is known for its large canopy trees and well-maintained flower beds creating a lush oasis in the middle of downtown Holland. The beautifully designed tulip and annual plant beds attract local visitors and tourists of all ages through the seasons. The plant beds are a crucial part of Centennial Park's identity showcasing its Victorian and Dutch history through horticulture. Over the years, new beds have been added and others shaded out by mature trees.

The diagram to the right proposes consolidating existing beds into a more simplified overall layout, highlighting the center of the park adjacent to the fountain and sculptures. This approach will allow for ease of maintenance as well as provide areas of focus for tulip and annual displays which draw visitors to the park year after year. The proposed plan addresses both annual and perennial/shrub plant beds within the park. Keeping the annual beds to areas of sun or partial shade and perennial plant beds in a variety of different sun exposure locations.

New irrigation lines are recommended to be installed as new plant beds are established. Due to the nature of maintaining the tulip bulbs drip irrigation is not recommended. Irrigation lines should be kept to the perimeter of the plant beds and utilize varying spray heads.

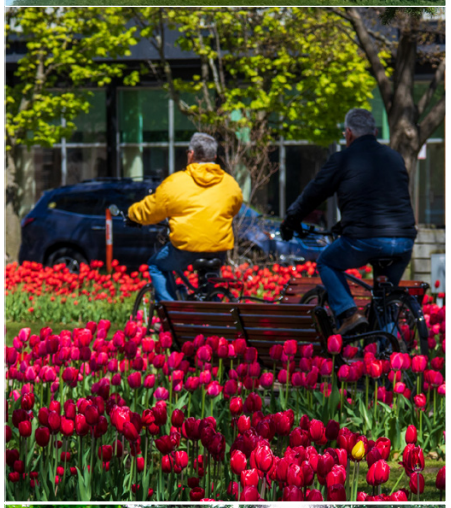
The two proposed feature planting areas will showcase the Victorian practice of "bedding out" to create figurative images or words in plant form. Historic motifs traditionally used in Centennial Park include the star, windmill, and wooden shoe.



ANNUAL PLANTING BEDS
PERENNIALS & SHRUBS
FEATURE PLANTING AREA
EVERGREEN SCREEN

Historically planted windmill bed







Paving materials

The current park contains a variety of paving materials. When paths are reconfigured or replaced over time, what materials call back most to the historical origins of the park? What materials are timeless? Which are low maintenance? Which provide the most accessibility?

Unit Paving

These guidelines recommend unit pavers for all main walks in the park. This can consist of concrete unit paver or traditional brick. These surfaces are easy to replace, long-lasting, and allow maintenance of snowmelt systems. Centennial Park historically had simple, plain materials for functional components, such as gravel whose uniform color and lack of pattern suited the straightforward, functional nature of the pathways. It is recommended that the walkways use a timeless material such as locally-sourced Belden brick. It is proposed that the unit paver color matches the City of Holland standard.

Yet it should be noted that the softly crunching sound of strolling on gravel is an enriching sensory experience. The plan suggests this use in the garden paths.

Snowmelt System

Snowmelt systems integrated into the pathway system of a park provides safe access and connectivity where dangerous ice and snow may commonly exist. It also expands the winter experience. Snowmelt systems also reduce or eliminate the need for salting, sanding, shoveling, or snow blowing which helps to lower the overall maintenance costs of the park.

Today, the only sidewalks within Centennial Park with snowmelt system exist along the Central Avenue corridor on the eastern edge of the park. Downtown Holland currently has a citywide snowmelt system that could easily accommodate the entire perimeter and multiple pathways within the Centennial Park providing a safer and more accessible park experience for all four seasons.

This Management Plan recommends further study of the overall park snowmelt system improvements. These improvements should be a high priority for the city and were supported by the public and stakeholders during the plan's outreach and feedback efforts.


Existing city standard paver


Alternative paving types and patterns


Historic paths


Gravel paths

Site Furnishings

Because the park has strong Victorian-era ties, any new site furnishings will need to blend, in some way, with the period aesthetic. This could include using furnishings with wrought-iron finishes, neutral colors, or ornate details. Although the furnishings should not look out of place, there are contemporary needs that require alternative solutions. Alternative seating choices, such as movable bistro tables and chairs, or playful elements, such as boulders and curved benches, complement park program and conversation spaces.

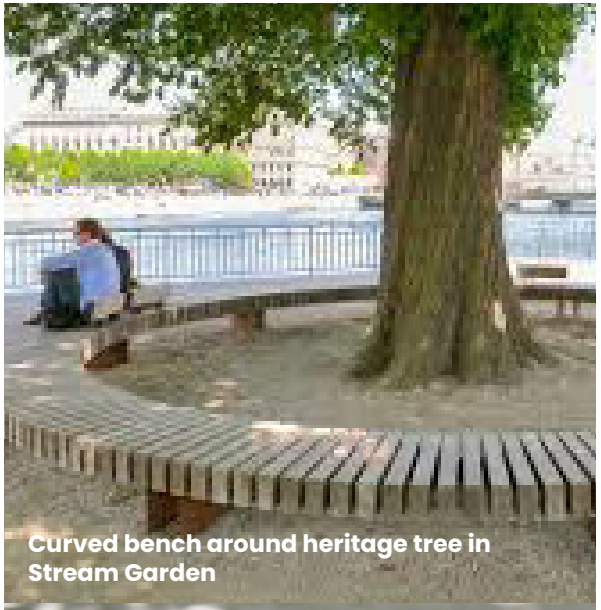
Classic benches

The public asked for more standard benches, especially in places that would support goals of universal accessibility with places to rest. Opportunities to rest also coincide with goals of universal accessibility.

Movable and alternative seating

Lunches, outdoor meetings, and other daily activities require different furnishings than a simple bench. Bistro-style tables and chairs are inexpensive, flexible, and attractive accommodations for everyday use. They can also be easily stored in the off-season or moved or removed for events.

These guidelines also suggest providing creative seating options to support the various modern-day functions of the park. The proposed concrete seat walls at the gazebo provide an amphitheater setting for outdoor classroom or performance space. The curved bench at the Stream Garden protects and highlights the heritage tree, while providing a playful place to rest.



Curved bench around heritage tree in Stream Garden



Bistro Table and Chairs

Lighting

The park's standard pedestrian light poles follow the City of Holland's Standard. All pedestrian post top poles are currently LED fixtures.

At the time of this report the City of Holland was exploring the feasibility of installing dark sky friendly cap to all poles. This report strongly recommends installing dark sky friendly caps to ensure the vitality of flora and fauna in the park as well as appeal to adjacent neighbors



7

Action Items & Management

Operations & Management

The park plan and specific treatment recommendations should be taken as the basis for all park improvements and capital projects.

In reality, many of the most important and basic elements in the park are not expensive to construct and have low ongoing maintenance costs. For example, paths, trees, grass, and seats are the simple features of Centennial Park that have endured for more than a century and generally hold the widest appeal.

However, the sustainability of the park is dependent on the careful planning and maintenance of future embellishments. Due to the higher cost of these capital improvements, it is also important to consider advocacy and funding of these facilities as part of the actionable items of this plan.

The Priority Action Table and Administrative Responsibility Table help to clarify the process for upcoming improvements in the park.

Action Items

This list of Action Items and their prioritization have been informed by public feedback, stakeholder engagement, cost estimation, and logistical consideration.

How to use this list

These priorities have been developed to create a sustainable, responsive, and timely guide for future improvements. It is important to note that the guidelines are general and flexible rather than definitive. They recognise that each step will require an individual design response. The principles upon which the guidelines have been developed should be applied to all Action Items.

Priority Action Table

Priority Ranking	Action Item	Description	Timeframe	
			Short-Term (1-5 years)	Long-term (5+ years)
1	Restore tufa fountain	Install new mechanical systems and fountain jets, refurbish or reproduce tufa stone components, bring back seasonal plantings on the fountain, reconstruct pool and Victorian railing, install lighting.	X	
2	Reconstruct Koi Pond	Updated pump system, paving/fence materials, and callibrate depth for fish occupation year-round. Reconfigure walking paths and surrounding landscape.	X	
3	Connect to funding sources.	Evaluate grants and partnerships to fund ongoing maintenance and improvements within the park.	X	
4	Snow Melt System expansion	Install along perimeter walks and main paths.	X	
5	Enhance gazebo and program space	Modify gazebo to improve appearance and audience sightlines, build seat walls on slope, enhance restroom approaches with trellises, path reconfiguration for universal access. Update restroom facilities.		X
6	Create new, dedicated space for Veterans' Memorial	Relocate monuments and flag poles to the 10th street quadrant, north of the gazebo. Includes new paths, planting beds, and site furnishings.	X	
7	Consolidation and reconfiguration of annual planting beds	Evaluating and executing removal and reconfiguration of existing. Implementation of new planting beds, as indicated in Management Plan.	X	
8	Improve pathways	Connections, surfaces, and accessibility		X
10	Produce tree management plan	Identify heritage trees and provide specialized care recommendations, develop canopy renewal and diversity strategy	X	
11	Founding of advocacy group	Establish a designated group to uphold park guiding principles, champion Master Plan, and raise funds.	X	
12	Develop Stream Garden	Construction of gravel paths, educational/sensory gardens north of Koi Pond. Interactive water feature.		X

(Continues on next page)

Management of the park landscape

Centennial Park has endured so well because people love it and because the City of Holland has taken such good care of it. A park is a living thing that must be nurtured as it grows and changes. Because Centennial Park is an important historic designed landscape, changes must be well-considered. The park plan and specific treatment recommendations should be taken as the basis for all park improvements and capital projects. Day-to-day care is equally important to major improvements. The park will do best when operations, planning, and design inform each other in an ongoing process

Trees are the essential character element of the park, yet they mature and die. This plan outlines a strategy for tree replacement to improve light conditions for flower beds, to define views, and to sustain and diversify the park's stately canopy. Adding more ornamental trees to highlight park features will improve songbird and pollinator habitat, as will mixed shrub beds and perennial plantings.

Ornamental plantings draw visitors to return time and again to see what's new. Many want to learn about plants and how to use them, and could benefit from educational programming and communications, such as a weekly "what's in bloom" update. The park's impact as a horticultural showcase is a throughline from Holland's past to its future. The Master Plan presents ways to build upon that heritage by:

- Demonstrating how layers of bulbs and perennials can create a succession of bloom through three seasons;
- Returning crevice plantings of ferns, pansies, and other annuals to the Tufa Fountain;
- Introducing tropicals such as canna lilies, elephant ears, and other Victorian favorites;
- Returning water lilies to the Koi Pond; and
- Growing flowering vines on trellises.

Turf care also can benefit from consulting the historic record. Early greenswards in designed parks were typically composed of an array of grasses, wildflowers, and forbs. This approach provides a lushly textured turf that is more resilient and adaptable to multiple conditions. Setting the mowing height at 3-4 inches will shade the roots and help conserve moisture. The City's practice of weekly mowing is well-suited to that method of turf management.

In general, the landscape should be managed toward the feeling of drama and lushness, with a wide range of textural contrasts and color. It should not be over-manicured or too precise. The Victorians came to the park for an exuberant experience, and the visitors of today and tomorrow want the same.

13	**Provide East/ West pedestrian connection**	Interior connecting paths, 11th Street intersection crossings on River Ave and Central Ave.	**X**	
14	**Marketing campaign for year-round programming**	Create marketing materials, meet with property owners/developers, and provide incentive packages.	**X**	
15	**Integrate Wizard of Oz feature**	Improve connectivity to park and create opportunities for year-round displays and programming.		**X**
16	**Create interpretive framework plan**	Design hollistic system for historical markers, educational signage, wayfinding		**X**
17	**Develop public art project for designated site**	Initiate call for entries to new sculpture on west end of park. Identify funding sources. Coordination with art committee and city for evaluation and construction process. [Veteran's Memorial relocation required]		**X**
n/a	**Greenhouse relocation***	Historic greenhouse relocation within park as shelter.		**X**

**The Greenhouse Relocation item is dependent on the City's interest in placing the structure within the park. Because there was no public feedback voicing the need for a shelter, greenhouse, or event venue within the park, it is listed here as an additive Action Item.*

Administrative Responsibility

This list describes entities most likely to spearhead or contribute to daily tasks, events, or planning of the park. It is provided as a guide to support the essential collaborations of entities.

Advocacy group

The establishment of a non-profit organization in the form of an advocacy group is strongly encouraged for the agency of Centennial Park. Having an entity singularly tied to the park will ensure the principles developed by this Vision and Management Plan are implemented. The responsibilities of this group vary, but can assist in the following areas:

- Fundraising
- Organizing volunteers
- Design, Planning, and Construction of Capital Projects
- Outreach and Marketing
- Programming
- Advocacy
- Remedial and/or Routine Maintenance

Administrative Responsibility Table

Task	Description	Guiding Entities
Park event programming	• Scheduling of events (private and public)	• Parks and Recreation
Communications and promotion	• Centennial Park branding • External promotion of park • Communications to residents • Tourism	• Advocacy Group • Holland Visitor's Bureau • Tulip Time Office • Public Shopping District • DDA
Program funding & partnership coordination	• Identifying funding opportunities • Collaborating with public and private partners	• Advocacy Group • Public Shopping District
Public art	• Programming art events • Educational material • Seasonal displays • Monuments, memorials, & historical markers	• Parks and Recreation • Public Art Committtee • Historic District Commission • Herrick Library
User behavior & hours of access, security	• Daily, seasonal, and event hours for park access • Park rules • Fountain & Koi Pond rules • Special rules for Tulip Time and Art in the Park	• Parks and Recreation • Advocacy Group • Public Safety
Maintenance	• Landscaping • Building & structure maintenance • Snow removal • Waste disposal	• Parks and Recreation
Capital Improvements	• Procedures/quality control/ master plan compliance for making significant and permanent changes/additions to the park	• Parks and Recreation • Advocacy Group • DDA • Public Shopping District
Annual event coordination	• Art in the Park • Tulip Time	• Parks and Recreation • Holland Visitor's Bureau
Greenhouse relocation*	• Creating feasibility study for future greenhouse locations	• Parks and Recreation • Historic District Commission • Advocacy Group

**The Greenhouse Relocation item is dependent on the City's interest in placing the structure within the park. Because there was no public feedback voicing the need for a shelter, greenhouse, or event venue within the park, it is listed here as an additive Action Item.*

8

Appendices

Appendices

Funding resources

Greenhouse relocation study

Historical Imagery

Sources

Acknowledgements

Funding Sources

An essential next step will be to develop a funding strategy to implement this strategic plan. When prioritizing, be guided by the knowledge that small improvements can rival massive capital projects when it comes to benefiting everyday park visitors. In general, the strategy should mirror the full scale of planned improvements, so that people and organizations at all levels in the community can take part in supporting the park. Such an investment will return a future constituency that will continue to value and protect the Centennial Park.

The City's Role

The partnership approach starts with a frank look at capacities within City government and in the private sector. Of course, the City of Holland funds improvements directly through its annual operating and capital budgets. Streets and public walks, lighting, forestry, horticulture, and grounds maintenance are routinely funded items. The City has a successful track record in securing state government grants for park improvements.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is the greatest source of state-level funding. Primary grant programs with potential to contribute to Centennial Park are:

- **Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program** (Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund). Grants from $300,000 to $1 million. Contact Grants Management Staff, 517-284-7268.
- **Community Forestry grants** address urban needs. Grants range from $500 to $20,000. Contact Forest Resources Division, 517-284-5900.
- **Recreation Passport Grant Program**. Grants range from $7,500-$150,000. Contact Western Region, 517-284-5923.

Another potential source is the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. Its Michigan Strategic Fund (MSF) will support structural renovations and redevelopment of historic preservation sites in traditional downtowns and high-impact corridors. MSF can support 25% of the eligible investment.

Staff in the Department of Parks and Recreation work collectively to secure funding from national non-profits, including the Arbor Day Foundation and the National Recreation and Parks Association. However, there is no city staff dedicated to fundraising for capital projects and capacity to pursue private dollars is limited.

Need for a Partner

Fortunately, Holland is a community with a tradition of giving generously to civic needs. The park planning process identified a clear need for a non-profit partner to organize private sector philanthropic support for park initiatives. In a scenario that is common nationwide, the City and the non-profit would work in tandem to develop and execute a funding plan. With mutually-agreed-upon priorities, both parties could then pursue parallel and complementary paths to achieve a total fundraising goal. Ideally, the partner would begin with a focus on Centennial Park but would support other heritage parks as well. In the long term, this will avoid proliferation of site-specific non-profit groups that could pose competitive and administrative complications.

One approach is to explore whether an existing partner could create a new program area concentrating on park support. Holland in Bloom, for example, raised money for the Oz book. Or a new non-profit group could be formed. In either case, the partner's work would focus on foundation, corporate, and individual giving, at local, regional, and national levels. It could also involve interest groups with an affinity for certain projects or programs as contributing partners. In-kind giving should always be valued highly and can include materials, volunteer labor, equipment, program delivery, and so on.

Specific capital campaigns can be organized for the larger construction projects, such as the Tufa Fountain or Lily Pond, and would typically be led by the non-profit partner. A critical part of this approach is for the non-profit partner to identify opportunities for donor recognition that are pre-approved by the City. No formal historic name should be replaced. Whether by plaque or engraving, sign or brick, donor recognition should be limited and unobtrusive in the park; it should blend in with, and be subordinate to, the scene. The most successful approach is usually an integrated one, such as an engraved threshold stone or an embedded bronze plaque.

Sources of funding to explore include:

National Organizations

NRPA Great Urban Parks Campaign Grant

The Garden Club of America

Local Foundations and Potential Partners

Holland Zeeland Community Foundation

Holland Museum

Herrick District Library

Hope College

Holland Garden Club

Holland Horticulture Club

Neighborhood Associations

Revenue-Generating Activities

Even though Centennial Park is small, it is appreciated as a boutique venue among Holland's many public parks. A schedule of

permitting fees by the City, rental revenue from weddings, festivals, and prestigious juried art fairs can help offset operational costs or support a project initiative. A percentage of sales revenue from events could also be directed to the City or non-profit partner for designated park restoration and improvements. It must be noted that creating a revenue stream will require additional operational capacity, including staff to manage the permitting process, as well as event support staff for evening and weekend events.

Additional Fundraising and Marketing Resources

www.Candid.org – a merger of the Foundation Center and Guidestar. Provides training, research on corporate/foundation grant programs. Extensive database.

Chronicle of Philanthropy, www.philanthropy.com.

NRPA Crowdfunding Toolkit

Nonprofit Times

Greenhouse Relocation Study

Following the completion of the new City Growhouse in January 2020, the City compiled a report in February 2020 examining the future of Holland's original City Greenhouses. Several sites were examined for relocation and restoration. The study concluded that Centennial Park, Window on the Waterfront, and the Civic Center were among the most promising of City-owned locations.

Because Centennial Park is located in the Historic District, the historic structure being relocated within the park seemed like a natural choice. While many ideas were explored on how the growhouse may be reused, this plan process deduced the following:

- The 27 ft. by 27 ft. tropical greenhouse section of the structure is the most ideal configuration to fit within the park.
- The structure would be best utillized for daily shelter and/or rentable event space.

This plan also examined best practices regarding either the partial or full greenhouse reuse as an asset in future development plans within the Historic District or other neighboring districts.

Existing Greenhouse







Historical Significance

"The greenhouse grew, from 1911 to 2019, all of the summer annuals from seed, including the flowers for the parks, [Eighth] Street, city-owned parking lots and the cemetery, as well as providing replacement tulip plantings for eight miles of Tulip Lanes. In the winter, the tropical plants in Centennial Park were brought into the greenhouse along with the koi from the lily pond. Inside the house a Ponderosa lemon tree, rooted in the soil of the house floor, grew fruit as big as grapefruit."

-From City Greenhouse Local Designation 1999

This is the longest continuously operating municipal greenhouse in the State. The Holland City Greenhouse is unique in structure in the State of Michigan and possibly in the Midwest. This greenhouse symbolizes the self-sufficiency, thrift, and responsibility typical of Holland. The Victorian centerpiece structure is as beautiful as it is historically significant.



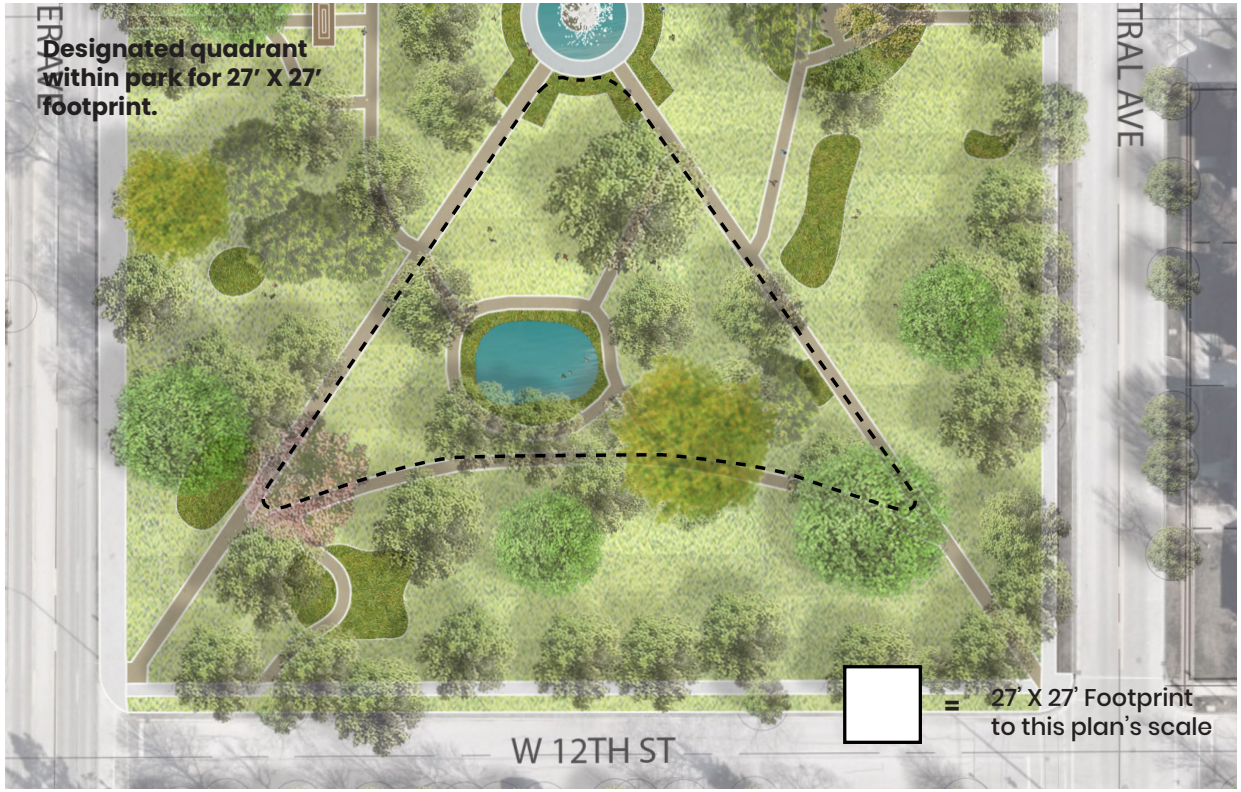


Adaptive Reuse: Proposed Placement within Park

The first scenario examines the 27 ft. by 27 ft. central section of the greenhouse located in the internal south quadrant of the park. The most ornate portion of the tropical greenhouse would be representative of the beloved iconic Hollond building. It is desirable in this zone for the following reasons:

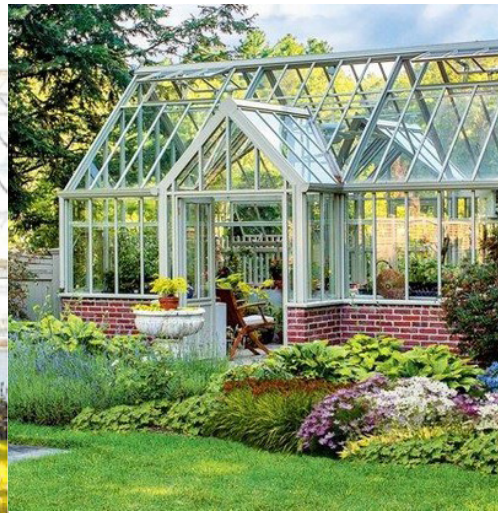
- Centrally located within park, buffered from adjacent residences on 12th Street
- A standalone area adequately spaced from the Gazebo, Wizard of Oz Mosaicscape, Fountain, Van Raalte statue, or relocated Veteran's Memorial spaces.
- Would be complementary to Koi Pond and proposed Stream Garden for family outings, events, and photos.

The greenhouse, in this position, serves the park's need for four-season, programming, and everyday use. The square footprint is also a multifaceted structure- attractive from all approaches.









Historic Preservation

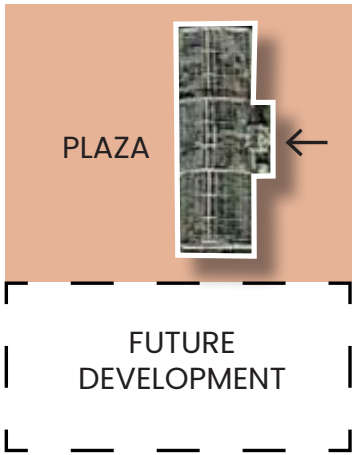
The highest and best use is to preserve the historical significance and full footprint of the greenhouse.

If there is a determination that the 27 by 27 footprint does not fit within the park, then alternate sites need to be considered. Potential sites could be adjacent to Centennial Park or other locations within the city. Further coordination with property owners and City staff is required if this option is preferred.

The second scenario would position the greenhouse as an asset for future development outside park boundaries or use by the City.

The structure could serve a variety of program, year-round. The private development may utilize the piece as event shelter, pop-up space, or outdoor dining. This possibility would need to be explored further if the placement within the park is not preferred.

Example layout

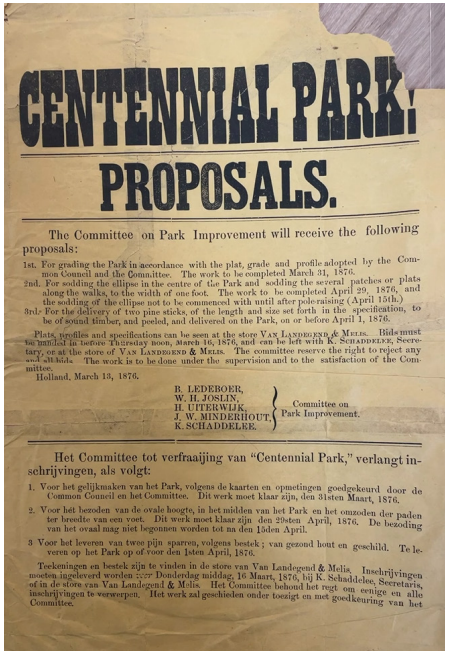


Full footprint with restaurant/retail future development

Best practice examples



Historical Imagery



CENTENNIAL PARK.

PROPOSALS.

The Committee on Park Improvement will receive the following proposals:

1st. For grading the Park in accordance with the plat, grade and profile adopted by the Common Council and the Committee. The work to be completed March 31, 1876.

2nd. For sodding the ellipse in the centre of the Park and sodding the several patches or plats along the walks, to the width of one foot. The work to be completed April 29, 1876, and the sodding of the ellipse not to be commenced with until after pole-raising (April 15th.)

3rd. For the delivery of two pine sticks, of the length and size set forth in the specification, to be of sound timber, and peeled, and delivered on the Park, on or before April 1, 1876.

Plats, profiles and specifications can be seen at the store VAN LANDEGEND & MELIS. Bids must be mailed in before Thursday noon, March 16, 1876, and can be left with K. SCHADDELEE, Secretary, or at the store of VAN LANDEGEND & MELIS. The committee reserve the right to reject any and all bids. The work is to be done under the supervision and to the satisfaction of the Committee.

Holland, March 13, 1876.

B. LEDEBOER,
W. H. JOSLIN,
H. UITERWIJK,
J. W. MINDERHOUT,
K. SCHADDELEE.
} Committee on Park Improvement.

Het Committee tot verfraaijing van "Centennial Park," verlangt inschrijvingen, als volgt:

1. Voor het gelijkmaken van het Park, volgens de kaarten en opmetingen goedgekeurd door de Common Counsil en het Committee. Dit werk moet klaar zijn, den 31sten Maart, 1876.

2. Voor het bezoden van de ovale hoogte, in het midden van het Park en het omzoden der paden ter breedte van een voet. Dit work moet klaar zijn den 29sten April, 1876. De bezoding van het ovaal mag niet begonnen worden tot na den 15den April.

3 Voor het leveren van twee pijn sparren, volgens bestek; van gezond hout en geschild. Te leveren op het Park op of voor den 1sten April, 1876.

Teekeningen en bestek zijn te vinden in de store van Van Landegend & Melis. Inschrijvingen moeten ingeleverd worden op Donderdag middag, 16 Maart, 1876, bij K. Schaddelee, Secretaris, of in de store van Van Landegend & Melis. Het Committee behoud het regt om eenige en alle inschrijvingen te verwerpen. Het werk zal geschieden onder toezigt en met goedkeuring van het Committee.

Call for proposals for the park



An intricate tapestry of moss, ferns, trailing and flowering plants was planted into the tufa stone's natural cavities and carved holes.



Intersections were emphasized by large planting beds, helping to frame and beautify the enlarged social spaces where paths cross.





Skilled park workers were an essential part of everyday experience in the park. This view shows the spatial relationship between pond, gardens, and fountain.



Pictorial planting beds have been a constant element in the park's character, with historic examples including a windmill, wooden shoe, and star.





By 1927, the Koi Pond was spangled with water lilies and a tiny island. Ivy and flowering annuals were planted into the tufa stone edging. The garden setting was extended with the addition of pergolas and footbridges along the little brook that supplied the pond.



From a distance, delicate sprays of water contrasted with the stolid tufa stone



Colorized postcards were interpretive versions of black and white originals. This one attempted to show a wide variety of foliage colors and textures.



The only feature in the park placed off-center and asymmetrically, the Koi Pond gave the park a less formal feature with great appeal to children.



Centennial Park's serene winter beauty.

Chronology

CHRONOLOGY of CENTENNIAL PARK'S DEVELOPMENT

Holland, Michigan

Year	Item
1847	Market Square laid out on land given by family of Reverend Albertus C. Van Raalte
1869	Townhouse moved into park for government functions
ca. 1870	Fence constructed to exclude livestock
1871	Market Square sheltered livestock during Great Holland Fire
1874	Gov. John J. Bagley asks Michigan citizens to plant trees for nation's Centennial
	Rev.H. Uiterwijk advocated tree planting in Holland
1876	Centennial Park named and developed to plan by Mayor John Van Landegend Committee on Park Improvement established Park graded and sodded Citizens planted trees, receiving medallions Flagstaff installed
1880	Repairs to "Liberty Pole"
1882	Oil storage tanks installed and building constructed for lighting
1887	Burnt ruins of engine house cleared
1888	New sidewalks laid along east side
1889	Memorial to Van Raalte proposed
1890	"Eyesore" remnant building demolished after fire Wooden sidewalks built along west and south sides
1894	Lights added
1896	Benches installed
1900	John A. Kooyers appointed Supervisor
1901	New plan by Wencel L. Cukierski adopted by City Council Park Commissioner H. Doesburg assisted Kooyers with collecting and planting Eleventh Street entrance walks built
1902	New park ordinance 8/1/1902 Tufa Fountain donated and constructed by Teunis Ten Houten Koi Pond built with tufa stone edging Tufa planters installed
	Lights and iron fencing installed
1903	Greenhouse built to store plants from park Goldfish added to pond
1904	Underground restrooms/tool storage constructed 10,000 tulip bulbs planted Eight foot walk laid on east side of park
1907	Bandstand erected "Art fence" installed
1908	Civil War howitzers (2) donated by Congressman G. Diekema
1911	City greenhouse built
1912	Civil War G.A.R. memorial stone installed
1913	Squirrel cage built to attract children Black walnut tree from Mt. Vernon given by Daughters of the American Revolution (D.A.R.)
1914	Bedding out features American Flag Trees are lit, funded by D.A.R.
1919	Upon Kooyers's death, John P. Van Bragt appointed park commissioner
1920	Christmas Tree tradition begins
1921	Motorized mowing began
1922	Van Raalte memorial proposed again Squirrel cage removed
1927	Park improved Tulip Time proposed by teacher Lida Rogers
1928	Park reported "in good shape" and "colorful"
1930	American Legion Band concerts moved to Kollen Park
1931	Van Raalte monument funded by bequest of John Cappon
1937	Name change unsuccessfully suggested Bandstand demolished
1942	Howitzers donated to wartime scrap metal drive Park fixed for Tulip Time
1943	Upon Van Bragt's death, Dick Smallenburg appointed park superintendent
1945	Park reported "fixed up"

1952	800 goldfish stolen but returned
1953	Grand Army of the Republic plaque installed
1957	Historical marker unveiled
1959	New lights installed
1961	Park repaired
1964	Windstorm damage
1965	Trees planted Large elm removed Weeds cleaned from fountain
1968	Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Service
1982	Queen Beatrix and Prince Claus of the Netherlands visit the park
1989	New gazebo erected east of original bandstand
1992	Gravel walks redone in brick
1993	Woven wire fencing replaced with cast-iron
1997	Van Raalte monument and Memorial to War Veterans installed during Holland's sesquicentennial
2018	Oz book installed as part of public art project at library

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