



Feaster + Pittman Parks Re-Design Project

Community Outreach and Conceptual Design Process Report

August 2019

THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND

RUTGERS
CUES — Center for Urban Environmental Sustainability

Compiled August 2019

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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PROJECT PARTNERS

°i s report was prepared by the Trust for Public Land in partnership with the Rutgers University Department of Landscape Architecture, the Rutgers Center for Urban Environmental Sustainability (CUES), and Matrix New World Engineering. ° e Trust for Public Land creates parks and protects land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generation to come. Rutgers University has the threefold mission of: providing for the instructional needs of New Jersey's citizens through its undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education programs; conducting cutting-edge research that contributes to the medical, environmental, social, and cultural well-being of the State, as well as aiding the economy and the state's businesses and industries; and performing public service in support of the needs of the citizens of the state and its local, county, and state governments. Matrix New World provides full-service landscape architectural and engineering services and expertise that adds long-term value to a wide diversity of public projects.

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CHAPTER 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following recommendations of the 2017 New Brunswick Parks Action Plan, the City of New Brunswick partnered with the Trust for Public Land (TPL) and the Rutgers University Center for Urban Environmental Sustainability (CUES) to re-design Feaster and Pittman Parks. ° e parks are located in the Second Ward between Commercial Avenue and °r oop Avenue, separated by Handy Street. At present, there is no clear visual or physical connection between the adjacent parks, and community members mentioned during 2017 outreach that safety concerns at Feaster Park limit their use of the facilities.

In late summer of 2018, TPL and CUES began conducting interviews with key City departments, local community organizations, and school leaders about the parks as the ÿrst phase of an in-depth public outreach campaign. In September, an initial community workshop at the Paul Robeson Community School for the Arts sought preliminary feedback from neighborhood residents as to what they liked about the parks, what needed to be changed, and what they desired in a new park design. At a subsequent workshop, community members were invited to work in groups to create new park layouts using design element templates. Park user surveys in English and Spanish were distributed at these workshops, as well as via community organizations, such as Unity Square and the Civic League.

Paul Robeson Community School for the Arts (Paul Robeson School) is located on the south border of Feaster Park. As such, Paul Robeson School is a heavy user of Feaster Park with recess and some classes held in the park. °i s direct tie to Feaster Park led TPL and CUES to engage the school community in the Feaster and Pittman Parks Re-Design project in multiple ways. TPL and CUES listened to students, parents, teachers, and school district administration to understand their wants, needs, opportunities and concerns for the parks. °i s information was shared through in-person meetings, attendance at Back to School Night, surveys, and student art visioning workshops.

In addition, forty students representing four nearby schools within a 10-minute walk of these parks (including Paul Robeson School) were invited to explore what it means to play and to prepare their own group park designs using design element templates.

In parallel to the initial outreach e˜orts, the CUES team conducted assessments at Feaster and Pittman Parks using the System for Observing Play and Recreation in Communities (SOPARC) protocol to better understand characteristics of park users (age and gender) and how they utilize the parks. ° ese assessments indicated that: the majority of park users are adult males; the parks are not heavily utilized throughout the day; and the majority of activities recorded were sedentary. Community members of all ages generally indicated that they do not visit the parks as o˝en or as long as they would like because they have safety concerns (violence, alcohol/substance abuse, etc.), there are not enough interesting activities, and/or there are not su˙cien t supportive facilities (particularly restrooms and shaded seating). Many community members did not know the location of Pittman Park or were not aware that it was a park.

Utilizing the information gathered from public outreach, the CUES design team prepared multiple design options with additional desired features, which were reviewed at meetings of the Steering Committee and members of City departments, as well as at a third Community Workshop.

A single conceptual plan (described in Chapter 7) that synthesizes preferred park elements and provides engaging recreational experiences for all members of the neighborhood was presented at a fourth Community Workshop in early February 2019. ° e plan recommends alterations to existing grading and circulation at Feaster Park for improved access and visibility for safety. It also balances a mix of active and passive recreation opportunities, spaces suitable for social gatherings, and introduction of aesthetic enhancements that impart a unique identity. Per the community's overall feeling that Pittman Park, a former cemetery, should remain passive with as little disturbance to the ground as possible out of respect for the dead buried below, the new conceptual plan suggests the addition of seating and aesthetic enhancements to promote quiet enjoyment of the space, as well as educational signage.

Community members present at the February Community Workshop responded favorably to the plan. Additional focus groups are scheduled to further reÿne speciÿc areas of the plan (e.g. school community to work on details of outdoor classroom area). Construction documents will be prepared during Spring 2019. ° e Implementation Schedule is not yet ÿnalized, but construction is anticipated to begin the Fall of 2019.

CHAPTER 2: INTRODUCTION

° e City of New Brunswick has a long history of providing parks and open space for the health and well-being of its residents. A 2011 report prepared by the Trust for Public Land (TPL) described New Brunswick as having "an impressive and comprehensive Park, Recreation, and Open Space plan" and City leadership has made numerous investments for strategic planning, enhancement, and maintenance across the parks system in recent years.[1]

° e New Brunswick Parks Action Plan (2017), prepared by TPL, Rutgers University Bloustein School of Public Planning and Public Policy, and the Rutgers University Department of Landscape Architecture, provided speciÿc recommendations for the park system and each individual park following a citywide assessment of all sixteen New Brunswick parks. Two adjacent parks, Feaster Park and Pittman Park, scored in the bottom half of the sites evaluated in the assessment. Based on Feaster Park's challenging topography, numerous opportunities for enhancing user experience, and the signiÿcant safety concerns expressed by community members during public outreach of the assessment, the Parks Action Plan recommended a complete re-design of Feaster Park in the long-term to maximize public access and enjoyment. Re-designing Feaster Park would also provide an opportunity to create a strong visual and physical connection to Pittman Park.

In response to the Parks Action Plan recommendations, the City of New Brunswick committed to re-designing Feaster and Pittman Parks. ° e Trust for Public Land and the Rutgers Center for Urban Environmental Sustainability (CUES) partnered with the City in late summer of 2018 to begin the process to develop a new conceptual plan informed by a more in-depth assessment of current park use and a robust public dialogue with local community members and City stakeholders. ° e conceptual plan will inform the completion of construction documents in the Spring of 2019.

°i s process report provides an overview of the data collected in the community outreach process and park use study, as well as the development of the new conceptual plan for Feaster and Pittman Parks.

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CHAPTER 3: BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PARKS

FEASTER PARK

Situated in New Brunswick's Second Ward along Commercial and °r oop Avenues between Comstock and Handy Streets, Feaster Park is one of the City's oldest parks, appearing on maps dated back to 1837 (Fig. 1). Even then, the distinctive pattern of crossing paths that characterizes the park's circulation today was evident. Identiÿed on historical maps as "City Park" or "Public Park" (Fig. 2), not a great deal is known about how the park was historically used, although an 1891 news article indicates that the park temporarily hosted a circus among other community uses.[1] Some sources also refer to the property as "Troop Avenue Playground."[2]

By 1940, the park had been renamed in honor of Commissioner Joseph Feaster, who served as New Brunswick Parks Commissioner from 1917-1926[3] and lived on °r oop Avenue across from the park.[4] At the time, Feaster Park was the City's second largest park (behind Buccleuch Park) and reportedly held a state record for having 400 trees in less than three acres.[5]

Recreational infrastructure and programming at Feaster Park has changed over time in response to evolving community needs and interests, with amenities like the former baseball ÿeld and amphitheater no longer in existence today. It is not clear in which year the popular summer religious revivals began being hosted at the park, but annual attendance reportedly remains high to the present.

PITTMAN PARK

Pittman Park, formerly called Pitman Cemetery, sits across Handy Street from Feaster Park and used to serve as the cemetery for the Pitman Methodist Episcopal Church, which was ÿrst organized in 1851.[6] According to the New Jersey Genealogical Magazine, the property was dedicated as the "Prospect Hill Cemetery" in 1854.[7] A newspaper article from 1900 identiÿes 26 soldiers buried at the site, including names

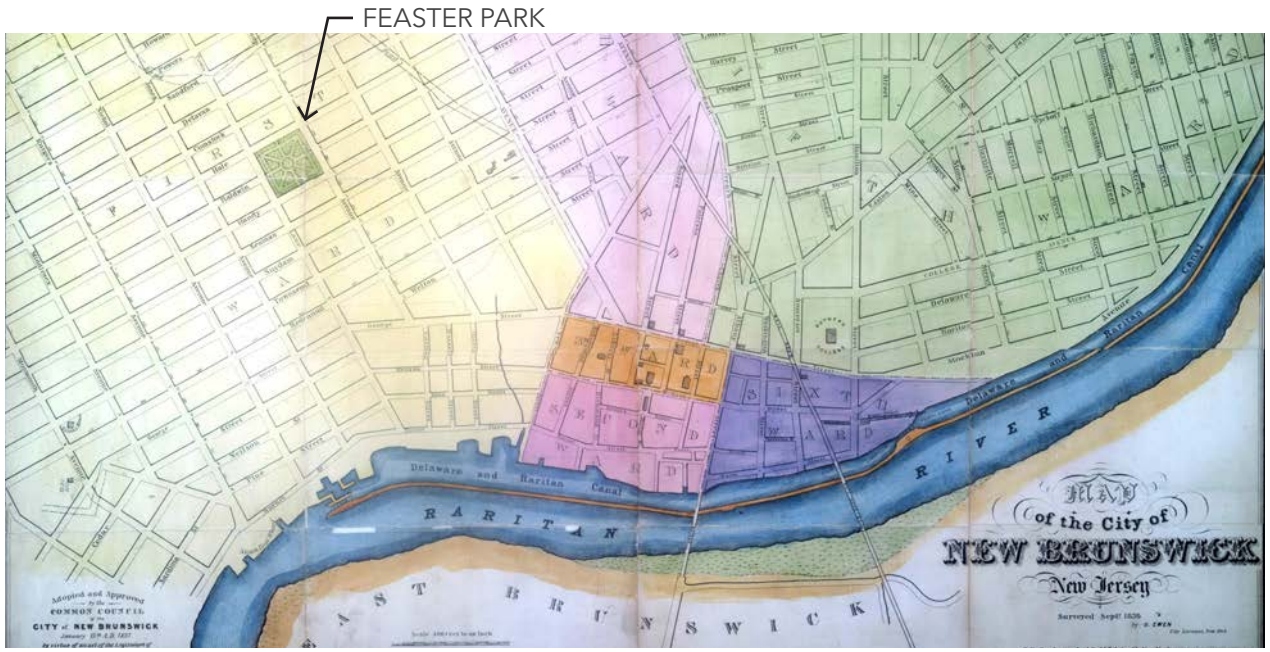

Fig. 1: Feaster Park is one of only two city parks on this 1837 map of New Brunswick (Courtesy: Daniel Ewen).

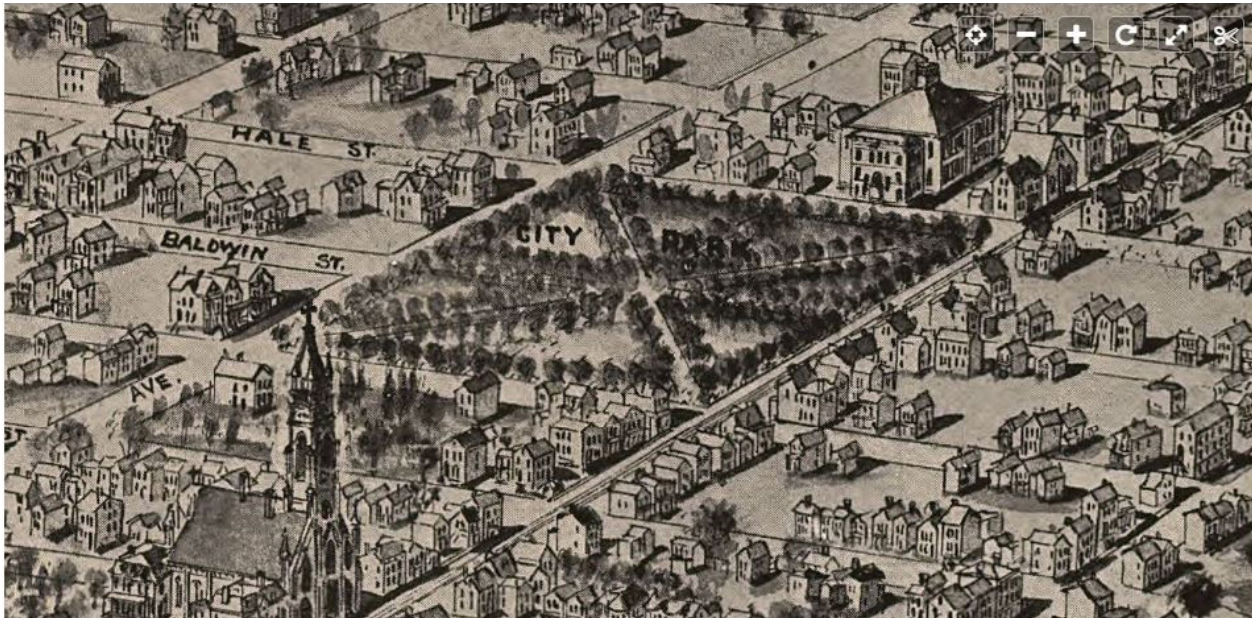

Fig. 2: Feaster Park (called City Park) and Pitman Cemetery in 1910 (Courtesy: Library of Congress).

of some of the 14 known Civil War veterans buried at Pitman.[8,9]

At the time of a 1927 article, the cemetery was apparently "abandoned" and "in a deplorable state."[10] For this reason, Commissioner Feaster reportedly proposed moving the bodies to another place of rest, selling the property and using the proceeds of the sale to help pay for the conversion of another abandoned cemetery in the First Ward into a much-needed playground for children.[11]

Eventually, the Pitman property was slated for development, but in 1976, following discovery of bodies still buried on site, the City announced that the cemetery would become part of the New Brunswick parks system as Pitman Memorial Park. Most of the headstones had been damaged or already removed. A Rutgers Livingston College urban design class prepared a conceptual park plan which included: a central oval, sidewalks, benches, a wrought iron fence surrounding the 30 remaining headstones in one corner of the park, and thirty shade trees.[12] Although the park design has changed since that time, some remnant headstones still remain on site at the base of a majestic specimen tree at the heart of the park.

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Fig.2
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CHAPTER 4: THE PARKS TODAY

Today, a mix of small commercial and residential properties and community organizations make up the neighborhood surrounding Feaster and Pittman Parks (Fig. 1).

DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographic maps prepared by the Trust for Public Land in the 2017 Parks Action Plan indicate that the neighborhood population density within a three block radius of the parks ranges from Moderate (30-43 people/acre) to High (62-81 people/acre). Within that same radius, the number of low-income households (the low 75% of New Brunswick's median household income) also varies from Moderate (99-150 households) to High (220-305 households).

Additionally, a wide mix of ages are represented in the three block radius, with generally High numbers of children (ages 0-9) and adults (ages 20-64) and Moderate numbers of youth (ages 10-19) and seniors (ages 65+). Most park users observed during the Rutgers design team's site visits in 2017 and 2018 were part of the neighborhood's sizable Hispanic and Black communities.

Fig. 1: Small commercial and residential properties and community organizations make up the neighborhood surrounding Feaster and Pittman Parks (Courtesy: CUES).

Fig. 2: Feaster Park (outlined in green) and Pittman Park (outlined in blue) in relation to their surrounding context (Courtesy CUES).

GENERAL EXISTING PARK CONDITIONS - FEASTER PARK

Feaster Park (5.04 acres) is surrounded by the Paul Robeson Community School for the Arts, Commercial Avenue, Handy Street, and °r oop Avenue (Fig. 2). Paved paths connect corner to corner in both directions while another path bisects the park from southeast to northeast, creating triangles of lawn dotted with shade trees. ° e park includes two full-court basketball courts (one partially fenced), a playground with a large play equipment, six children's swings and one tot swing, a ÿtness station with twelve pieces (Fig. 3), a Feaster monument, and a community garden.

Construction on the Paul Robeson Community School for the Arts expansion (in progress during the 2017 park evaluation) was completed prior to the start of the current Parks Re-design project. Construction on a new church facility across Commercial Ave between Baldwin and Handy Streets has commenced. Existing conditions in Feaster Park are fairly consistent with those documented in the 2017 Parks Action Plan. Generally:

Fig. 3: Working out at Feaster Park's fitness station (Courtesy: CUES).

Fig. 4: Path within Feaster park that supports pedestrian and bicycle access (Courtesy: CUES).

Accessibility – the park's open perimeter, multiple designated entrances (several of which conform to ADA standards), and network of paths and sidewalks support convenient pedestrian and bicycle access (Fig. 4). ° e community garden is the only gated area of the park that restricts public access. Security fencing and gates along the school addition do not impede public use of the park. However, this fencing cuts o˜ access from the front of the school and from Comstock Street. Some onstreet parking is available to visitors on most days, although the majority of park users appear to walk to or bike to the park. Adding bike parking facilities close to main activity areas could potentially encourage more cyclists to linger in the park, rather than ride through it. Some activity areas, like the playground, and much of the seating is not universally accessible (Fig. 5).

Active Recreation Amenities – In spite of extensive cracking on the basketball courts (Fig. 6) and broken ÿtness equipment instructional signage (Fig. 7), visitors are frequently seen utilizing these areas. ° e Parks Department has removed gra˙ ti from the playground and replaced the shattered

Fig. 5: Much of the seating is not universally accessible (Courtesy: CUES).

Fig. 6: Extensive cracking on basketball courts (Courtesy: CUES)

Fig. 7: Broken fitness equipment instructional signage (Courtesy: CUES).

Fig. 9: Bleachers by the basketball courts (Courtesy: CUES).

play dome. Wells under the swings speak to their popularity. Flowering vegetation around the perimeter of the community garden and brightly painted potting shed (Fig. 8) provided welcome color to the predominantly green park. Visitors sometimes play sports (i.e. soccer) informally on the lawn areas, however tree trunks, slope of the land, and the crossing pattern of paths are limiting for this activity.

Supportive Facilities – Bleachers by the basketball courts (Fig. 9), six benches in lawn areas and the playground, and handful of picnic benches see frequent use. Given the number of visitors in the park, additional seating in shaded, accessible areas would seem advisable to optimize park use by all community members. The park has several lawn areas and trees in varying stages of maturity that add green to the urban landscape. The park does not have restrooms.

Maintenance – The City's Parks Department routinely performs basic park maintenance such as mowing lawns and emptying garbage receptacles. Nevertheless, certain maintenance issues contribute to a worn, somewhat distressed appearance. Evidence of vandalism and graffiti are present (including on the Feaster Monument). The retaining wall around the playground has failed, with sand and wood chips washing down into an adjacent path (Fig. 10). Erosion is apparent in other parts of the park as well. Small litter (beer bottle caps,

Fig. 8: Garden potting shed (Courtesy: CUES)

Fig. 10: Sand and wood chips washing down into an adjacent path (Courtesy: CUES).

cigarette butts, plastic bits, water bottles, etc.) is scattered throughout the park, but does not appear to accumulate signiÿcantly.

Safety – Although most of the park is visible from the street along Throop Avenue, the slope of the land creates a hill on the southeastern half of Handy Street and along Commercial Avenue (Fig. 11). This hill impedes police drive-by surveillance and pedestrian views into the park, contributing heavily to community safety concerns expressed during the 2017 outreach. The hill also obstructs physical access between Feaster and Pittman Park. The City installed solar lighting in recent years for safety, although the park is only "open" from dawn to dusk.

Aesthetics – Although the property has clearly designated entrances (with signage or Feaster monument), the park lacks a compelling identity, diversity of color, or rich visual interest. Security fencing around the school creates a narrow "dead zone" behind the basketball courts (Fig. 12), and an uninspiring concrete area between the basketball courts and the school gym (Fig. 13). ° e worn appearance of benches and other infrastructure, combined with evident gra˙ ti and erosion issues lends the park a tired, somewhat distressed overall character.

Fig. 12: Security fencing around the school creates a narrow "dead zone" behind the basketball courts (Courtesy: CUES).

Fig. 11: The slope of the land impedes visibility into the park on the southeastern half of Handy Street and along Commercial Avenue (Courtesy: CUES).

Fig. 13 : Concrete area between the basketball courts and the school gym (Courtesy: CUES).

GENERAL EXISTING CONDITIONS - PITTMAN PARK

Pittman Park is a 0.91-acre pocket park tucked between Handy Street and Seaman Street, bounded by residential properties on the northeast edge and by a car wash and additional residential properties on the southeast. ° e park is raised several feet above sidewalk grade, supported by retaining walls planted with weeping cherry trees (Prunus sp.) and boxwood shrubs (Buxus sp.) along both streets (Fig. 14). ° e current design features a large specimen tree at the center (Fig. 15), surrounded by a ring of recumbent historic grave markers (Fig. 16). ° ese markers were moved from their original location and do not signify grave sites. Paths radiate from the center of the park to connect with the streets, creating distinct lawn areas, which are dotted with deciduous trees (Fig. 17). Existing conditions in Pittman Park are also mostly consistent with those documented in the 2017 Parks Action Plan. Generally:

Fig. 14: Retaining walls planted with weeping cherry trees and boxwood shrubs along both streets (Courtesy: CUES).

Accessibility – Four entrances provide simple access to Pittman Park from Handy Street and Seaman Street, although only one (on Seaman) is ramped for ADA compliance. Paths are in good condition. ° e hill on the Feaster Park side of Handy Street prevents users from ˆowing easily between the two parks (Fig. 18). Nevertheless, the park serves as a cut-through from Seaman Street to Handy Street. Bike parking is not provided.

Active Recreation Amenities – °i s park does not support active recreation although children try to practice soccer on the lawn.

Fig. 15: Large specimen tree at the center of Pittman Park (Courtesy: CUES).

Fig. 16: Historic grave markers at Pittman Park (Courtesy: CUES).

Fig. 17: Lawn areas at Pittman Park (Courtesy: CUES).

Fig. 18: A hill on the Feaster Park side of Handy Street creates a physical and visual barrier between the two parks (Courtesy: CUES).

Fig. 19: Visibility into Pittman Park from Handy Street (Courtesy: CUES).

Fig. 20: Clear visibility into the park from Seaman Street (Courtesy: CUES).

Supportive Facilities – In 2018, the parks department added a temporary picnic table to the park, which had previously not supported any seating. Visitors reportedly use the picnic table for games (e.g. checkers). Local residents can often be seen sitting on the retaining walls that border the streets for chatting or reading the newspaper.

Maintenance – The Parks Department conducts routine maintenance on the property and only minor graffiti is observable. The retaining walls appear sound, while the lawns and other vegetation vary in health.

Safety – The higher elevation obstruct some of the view into the park from Handy Street during summer months, but visibility of the entire park increases after ascending a few steps (Fig. 19). The open layout allows for informal surveillance by surrounding residences and passing pedestrians (Fig. 20). The City added solar powered lights to the park in recent years for safety.

Aesthetics – Flowering trees and the small elevation above the street impart a tranquil atmosphere to Pittman Park, particularly during the spring blooming season. The specimen tree at the center provides a pleasing focal point, although additional plantings for color, visual interest, and park identity could enhance the user experience.

Upkeep of fences and buildings along the outer edges of Pittman varies, pulling down the appearance somewhat (Fig. 21). Absence of dedicated seating gives the impression that this quiet park is intended for pass through only, rather than a place to linger and enjoy.

Fig. 21: Adjacent broken fences and discolored buildings detract from the overall park appearance (Courtesy: CUES).

SYSTEM FOR OBSERVING PLAY AND ACTIVE RECREATION IN COMMUNITIES (SOPARC)

To better understand current park use at Feaster and Pittman Parks, two Rutgers landscape architecture students collected data using the SOPARC protocol between September 4-15, 2018. SOPARC, a validated direct observation tool used by TPL, provides an assessment of park users' physical activity levels, gender, activity types, and estimated age. It also provides information on individual park activity areas, such as level of accessibility, usability, supervision, and organization (McKenzie et al., 2006).

In addition, more detailed information about the site's current conditions was collected using questions adapted from the Community Park Audit Tool, a reliable tool designed to evaluate parks for their potential to promote physical activity (Kaczynski et al., 2012).

Following training by TPL in SOPARC, the data collectors divided the park into 29 small, observable target areas (Figure 22), each characterized by a particular type of space: sidewalks, paths, grass, playground, community garden, or basketball. ° e data collectors conducted visual sweeps of the target areas three times per day on four days (12 observation periods total), including weekends days.

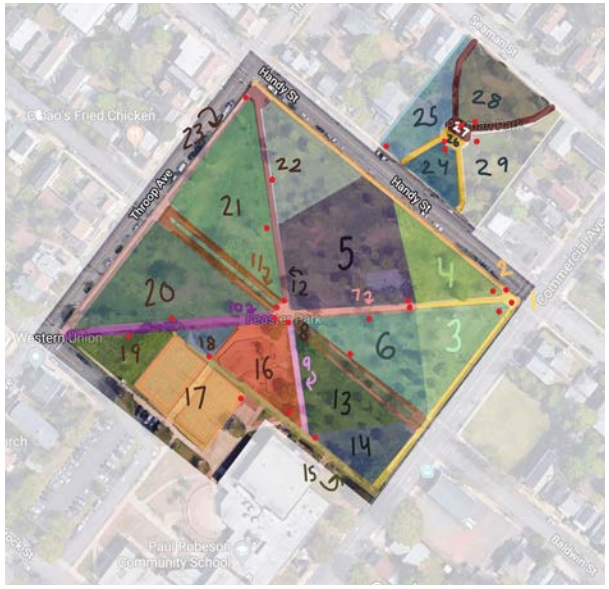


Fig. 22: SOPARC target areas (Courtesy: CUES)

Observation times took place during three di˜ erent time periods on each day: early (8:00-11:30 am), mid-day (11:30-3:00pm), and late (3:00-6:00pm). Weather varied over the course of the observation week from warm and cool weather. Only one day was reported as rainy.

Overall, the data collectors observed a total of 211 park users in Feaster and Pittman Parks (186 in Feaster, 25 in Pittman). Number of visitors varied by day, time of day, and target area.

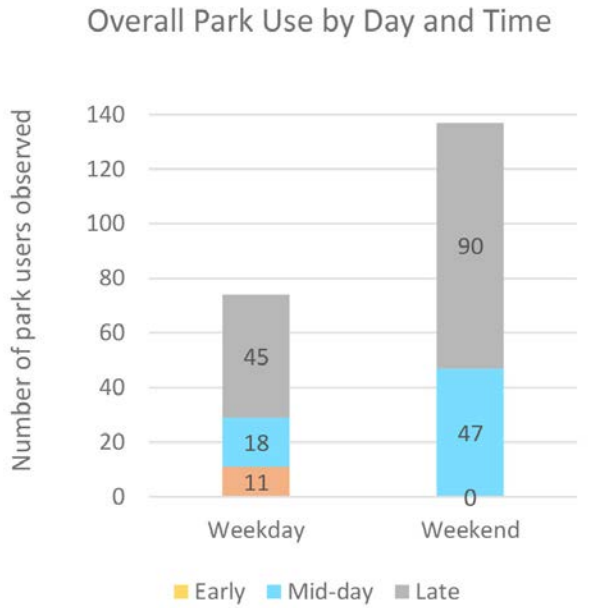


Fig. 23: More users visited the parks on weekend days and in the late afternoon (Courtesy: Trust for Public Land).

Overall, higher levels of use were observed on the two weekend days (approximately equivalent to 23 park users per hour, compared to 12 on weekdays), with late a˝ ernoon seeing the highest visitation, followed by mid-day (Fig. 23).

Four signiÿcant opportunities emerged from the data:

1) Opportunity to encourage more use of the park throughout the day in all park areas

° e highest number of visitors were observed in grass areas (37%), basketball courts (33%), and playground (14%) (Fig. 24). However, many of the areas were empty during a signiÿcant portion of the visits: grass, path, and sidewalk areas were empty during 85% of total observations; the playground was empty during 58% of total observations, and the basketball courts were empty during 33% of the total observations.

Day of the week impacted vacancy frequency and number of users in activity areas. For example, the playground was only empty during 50% of weekend observations (rain during part of one weekend day may have deterred some potential park visitors) versus 67% during weekday observations. ° e total number of playground users during weekend observations was more than double the number of users during weekday observations. ° e basketball courts were vacant during 50% of weekend observations versus 17% of weekday observations, but the total number of basketball court visitors during weekend observations more than doubled compared to the number on weekday counts.

2) Opportunity to address a significant age imbalance in park users

Overall, the vast majority of park users in both parks were adults (73% in Feaster, 80% in Pittman) followed by children (17% in Feaster, 12% in Pittman) (Fig. 25). Teens comprised 10% of Feaster Park users, and seniors made up 8% of Pittman Park users. Children generally were spotted at the playground or grass areas, teens mostly at the basketball courts, and adults primarily at the grass and basketball courts (Fig. 26).

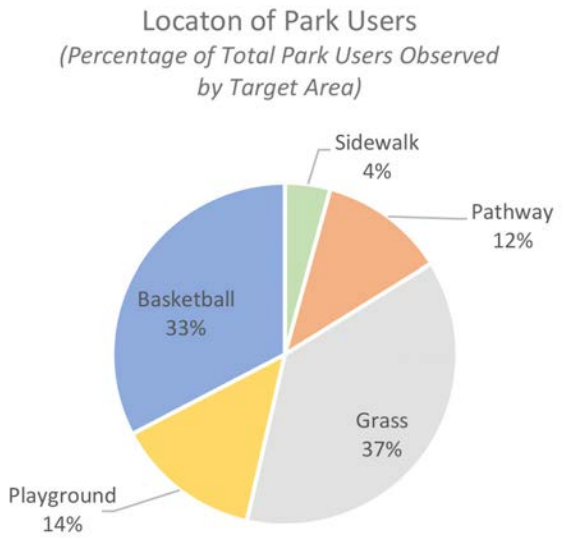
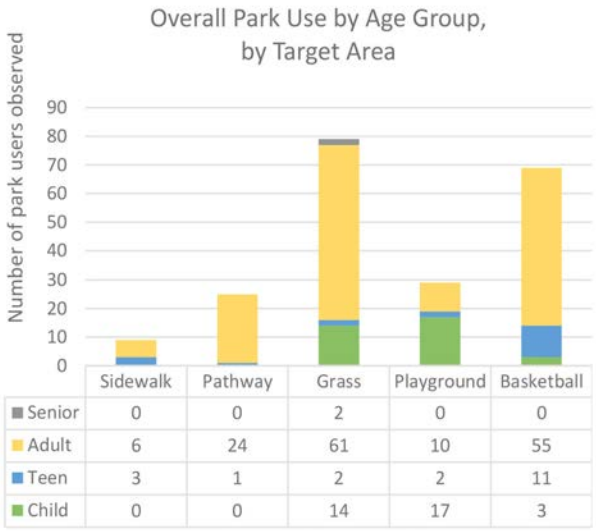


Fig. 24: The highest number of visitors were observed in grass areas, the basketball courts, and the playground (Courtesy: Trust for Public Land).



	Sidewalk	Pathway	Grass	Playground	Basketball
Senior	0	0	2	0	0
Adult	6	24	61	10	55
Teen	3	1	2	2	11
Child	0	0	14	17	3

Fig. 25: By far, the most park users in both parks were adults (Courtesy: Trust for Public Land).

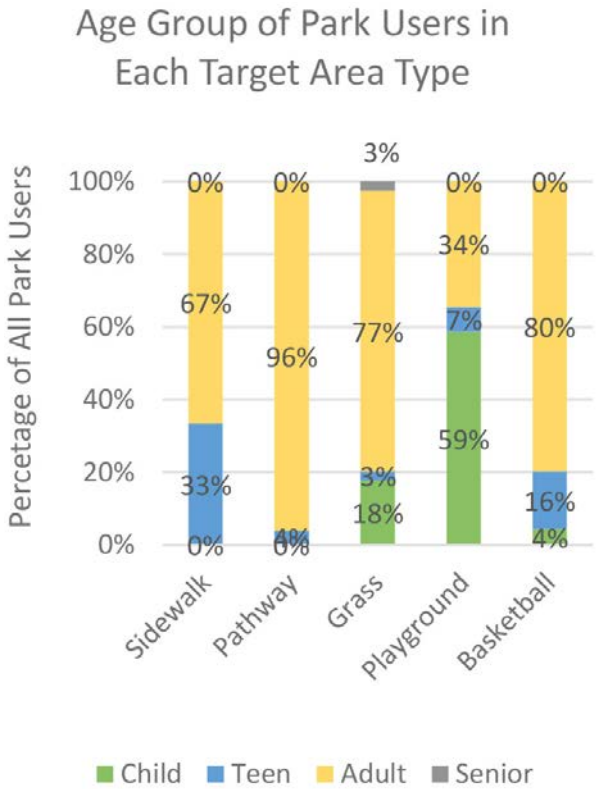


Fig. 26: Children were usually observed at the playground or grassy areas. Teens were usually observed on sidewalks and the basketball courts, while adults were found throughout the park (Courtesy: Trust for Public Land).

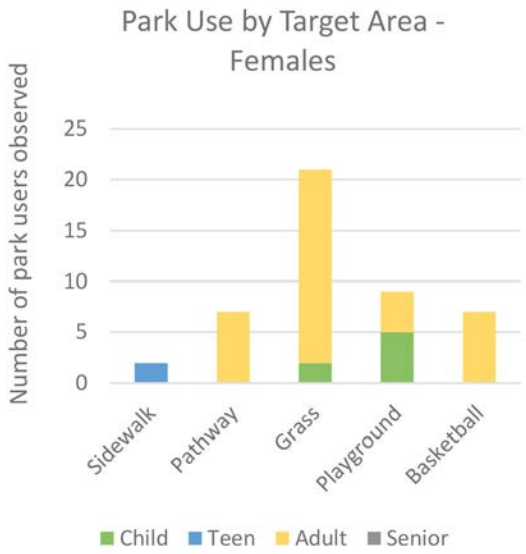


Fig. 27: Women were observed throughout the parks, especially in grass areas (Courtesy: Trust for Public Land).

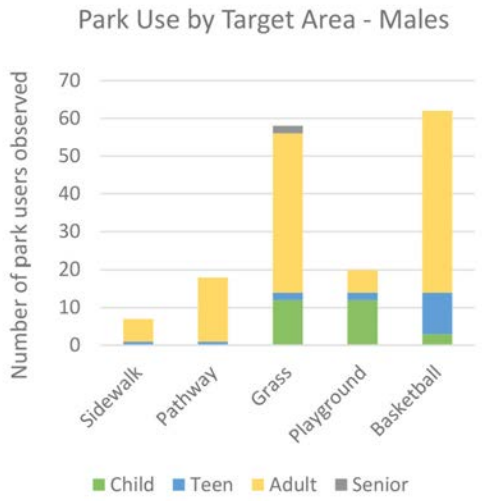


Fig. 28: Highest numbers of males were located at the basketball courts and grass areas (Courtesy: Trust for Public Land).

For a neighborhood that has sizable child and youth populations, there is clearly a signiÿcant opportunity to encourage more child and teen play in the park.

3) Opportunity to address significant gender imbalance in users at Feaster Park

82% of park users were male and only 18% female, and more males were observed in each target area type. Male and female visitors at Pittman Park were essentially even.

Overall, women were observed throughout the parks, but predominantly in grass areas (Fig. 27). Highest numbers of males were located at the basketball courts and grass areas (Fig. 28). °i s signiÿcant gender imbalance may also contribute to the relatively low number of children in the park. Discovering what would encourage more women to spend time in the park is a critical component promoting optimum park use by all members of the community.

4) Opportunity to encourage more active recreation for health and wellness

Overall, most activity observed in the two parks was sedentary (57%), followed by moderate (21%), and vigorous (11%) (Fig. 29). Data collectors observed 57% of all park users sitting,

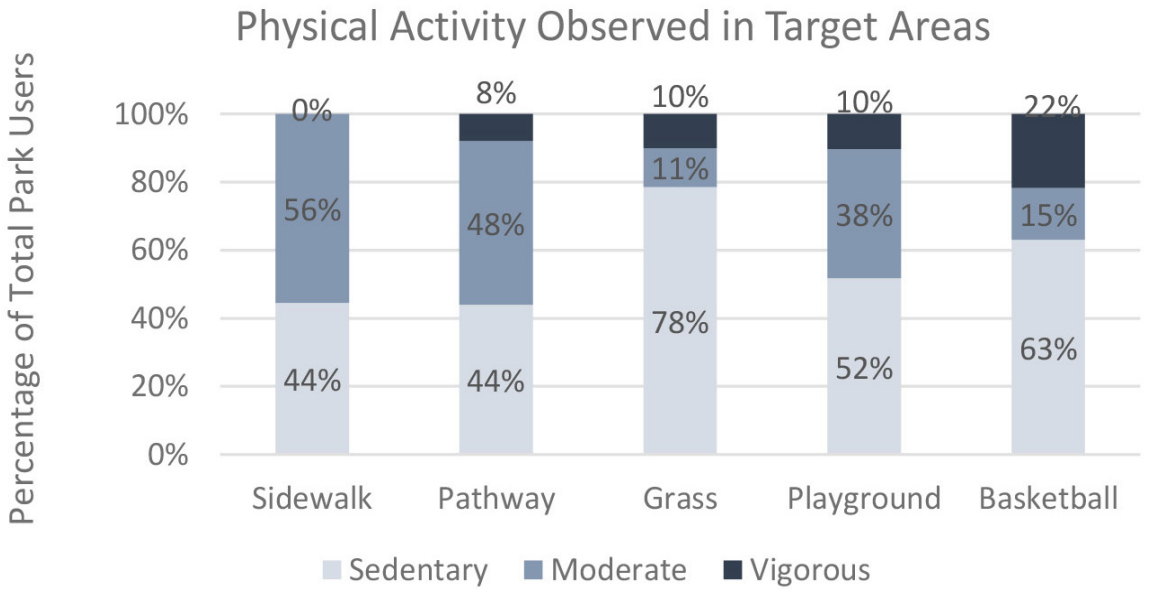


Fig. 29: Most visitors observed in the two parks were engaged in sedentary activity (Courtesy: Trust for Public Land).

16% walking, 12% participating in team sport (soccer or basketball), 5% playing, 5% standing, and the remainder running, exercising, or laying.

Men participated in more vigorous activity than women, but both genders were predominately engaged in sedentary behavior (Fig. 30-31). Finding ways to encourage more vigorous activity could potentially enhance physical ÿtness and health in the community.

For the full SOPARC report and protocol, see Appendix A.

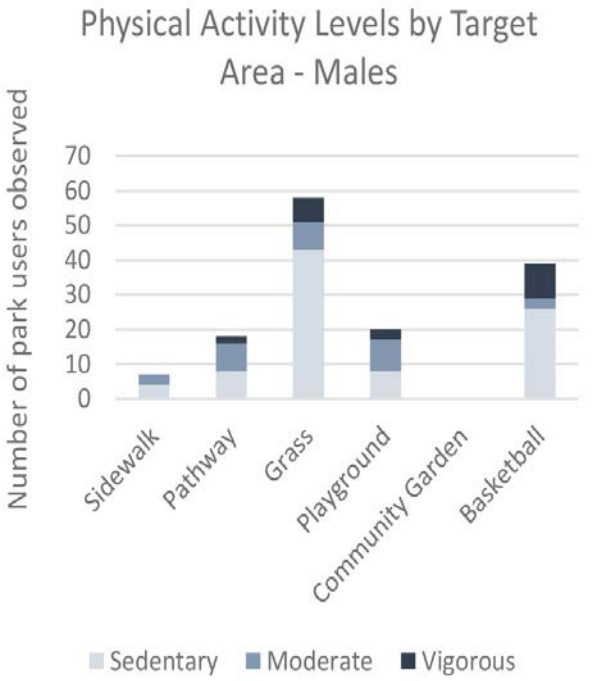


Fig. 30: Overall, men were observed participating in more vigorous activity than women, but were predominately engaged in sedentary behavior (Courtesy: Trust for Public Land).

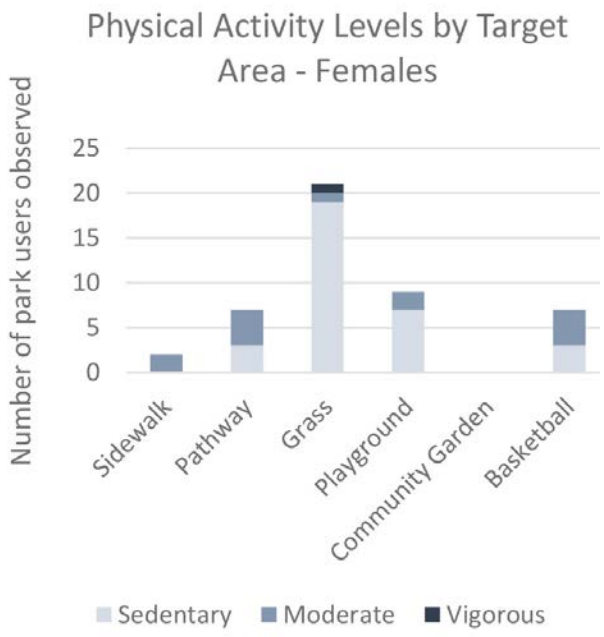


Fig. 31: Women were mostly observed participating in sedentary behavior. Very few were observed in vigorous activity (Courtesy: Trust for Public Land).

CHAPTER 5: PUBLIC OUTREACH

To ensure that the new park conceptual plan meets the diverse needs of the community, the Trust for Public Land, supported by the Rutgers design team, spearheaded a robust community outreach e˜ ort to solicit input from a wide variety of local stakeholders. ° e outreach strategy included initial outreach to community organizations and municipal departments/committees, school district outreach and two Student Workshops, four Community Workshops, two Steering Committee meetings, and one municipal department charrette.

INITIAL COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS OUTREACH

Meetings with community organizations that lead recreational programs in the parks, such as the Civic League and Unity Square, identiÿed a variety of issues that impede optimal park use and opportunities for enhancement. Conversations were held with:

- Civic League of Greater New Brunswick
- Unity Square – Administration
- Unity Square – Community Leaders
- New Brunswick Public Sculpture Committee
- Paul Robeson Cultural Center (Rutgers)
- Local Churches in the neighborhood

INITIAL MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENTS/ COMMITTEES OUTREACH

Conversations with the multiple municipal departments/committees listed below provided insight on park maintenance, programming, and other critical considerations.

- Engineering Department
- Park and Garden Commission
- Parks Department
- Social Services
- Recreation Department
- Youth and Student Services
- NB Police Department
- NB Fire Department

See Appendix H for municipal and community organization initial outreach meeting minutes.

SCHOOL DISTRICT OUTREACH AND STUDENT WORKSHOPS

Given the proximity of the two parks to four local schools and the importance of parks to child health and wellness, TPL deployed a variety of methods to gather input from students, teachers, and other members of the School District. A presentation at Back-to-School Night, meetings with faculty and sta˜ at the Paul Robeson School, and distribution of Paul Robeson School faculty/sta˜ surveys allowed members of the educational community to share how they currently use the parks to support learning and what they would need to expand educational interaction with the park.

Paul Robeson School Teacher Survey

Of the 36 Paul Robeson School teachers who completed the Teacher Survey, 72% indicated that they do not use Feaster Park for teaching and 94% do not use Pittman Park for teaching, although 94% replied that they would like to use an outdoor classroom for teaching if one were available. ° e top three reasons for not using Feaster Park for teaching included: no place to have class gather/sit/work (7 responses), safety concerns/need for security (6 responses), and didn't know they could (6 responses–especially from new teachers). ° e top two reasons for not using Pittman Park for teaching included not knowing where it is located (9 responses) and didn't know they could (6 responses–especially from new teachers).

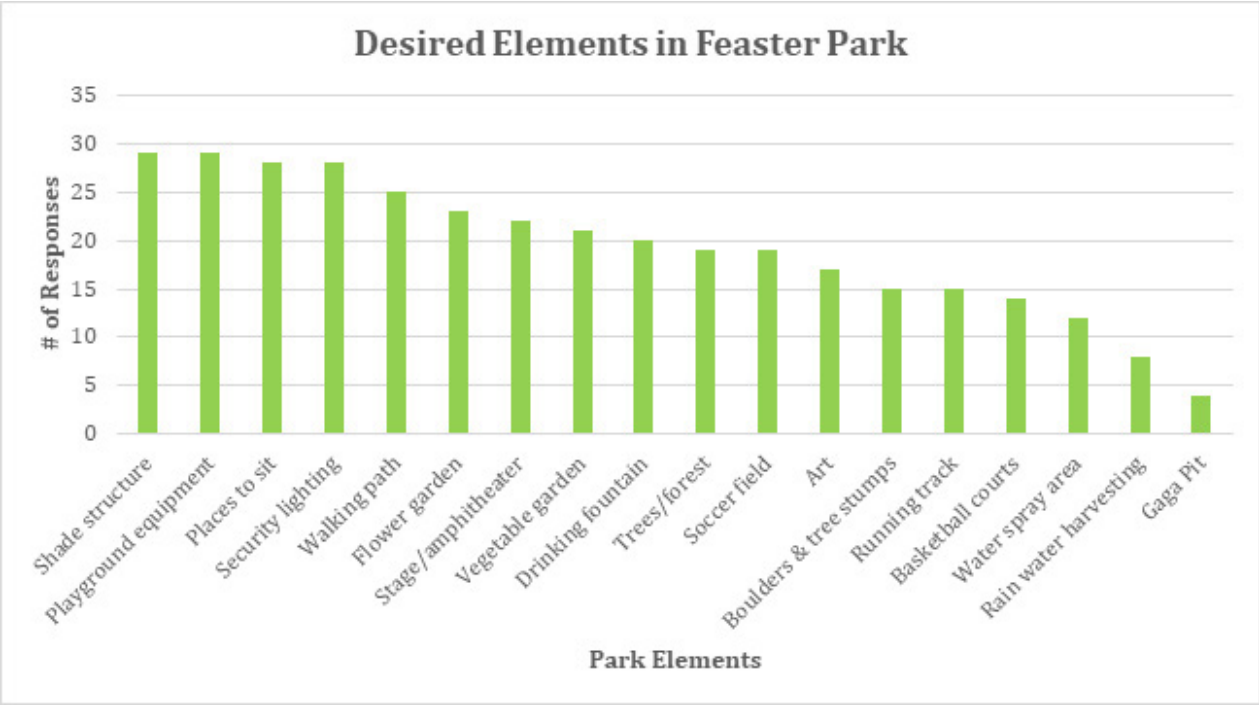


Fig. 1: More than 75% of Teacher Survey participants felt that a shade structure, playground equipment, places to sit, and security lighting should be present at Feaster Park (Courtesy: CUES).

When asked, as teachers, what elements they would like to see at Feaster Park, more than 75% of the participants desired a shade structure, playground equipment, places to sit, and security lighting (Fig. 1). More than 50% of respondents wanted a walking path, ˆower garden, stage amphitheater, vegetable garden, drinking fountain, trees/forest, or a soccer ÿeld.

Although only 25 respondents ranked these desired elements, shade structure, places to sit, ˆower garden, security lighting, and vegetable garden had the most responses in the top ÿve ranks (Fig. 2).

When asked what they would like in an outdoor classroom, the top three requests were seating (23 responses), a writing surface/board (11 responses), and gardens/ˆowers (11 responses).

For speciÿc identifying features of an outdoor classroom, more than 75% of respondents wanted a gate and perimeter fence, gathering areas for a full class, and individual or group seating. ° ese features also ranked in the top two ranks most frequently (Fig. 3).

For speciÿc teaching tools in an outdoor classroom, more than 75% respondents requested work surfaces, which received highest number of responses in the top two ranks along with scientiÿc tools and writing surface (Fig. 4).

A full summary of the Teacher Survey responses, the survey master, and teacher meeting minutes can be found in Appendix B.

Desired Element	Highest				Lower	
	Rank 10	Rank 9	Rank 8	Rank 7	Rank 6	Total
Places to sit	5	2	2	3	1	13
Playground equipment	4	2	1	1		8
Stage/amphitheatre	4	2		1		7
Shade structure	3	8	1	2		14
Security lighitng	2		2	3	4	11
Trees/forest	2	2	1	2		7
Basketball courts	1			2		3
Drinking fountain	1	1	3		1	6
Soccer field	1		2		2	5
Vegetable garden	1		3	3	3	10
Art		2	2	1	1	6
Boulder/tree stump			1		1	2
Flower garden		3	3	3	4	13
Gaga pit					2	2
Rainwater harvesting				1	2	3
Running track						0
Walking path		1	1	1	2	5
Water spray		1	2	1		4

Fig. 2: Park elements that had the most responses in the top five ranks included: shade structure, places to sit, flower garden, security lighting, and vegetable garden (Courtesy: Trust for Public Land).

Desired Identifying Feature	Highest				Lowest
	Rank 5	Rank 4	Rank 3	Rank 2	Rank 1
Gate/perimeter fence	7	2	1	3	4
Gathering	6	4	3	1	2
Lab area	2	2	2	1	
Individual and Small Group	2	6	6	2	
Urban Meadow	1	3	1	2	6
Pathway	1	1	2	3	3
Armature	1		1	3	2
Landscape forms		2	3	3	2
Sample woodland			1	2	1

Fig. 3: Outdoor classroom features that ranked in the top 2 ranks most frequently: Gate/perimeter fence, gathering area, and individual/group seating (Courtesy: Trust for Public Land).

Desired Teaching Tool	Highest				Lowest
	Rank 5	Rank 4	Rank 3	Rank 2	Rank 1
Work surface	7	5	3	3	2
Scientific tools	6	2		3	2
Planting bed	2	2	2	5	1
Natural materials	2		6	2	6
Animal habitat	1	3	1	2	4
Signage	1		2	4	2
Writing surface	1	6	2	1	1
Water source		2	4	1	2

Fig. 4: Outdoor teaching tools that received the most votes in the top two ranks: work surfaces, scientific tools, writing surface (Courtesy: Trust for Public Land).

Student Workshops

Two Student Workshops allowed students to actively participate in the design process, providing insights from children's perspectives, and encouraged them to feel greater ownership of the parks (Fig. 5).

° e ÿrst Student Workshop brought together forty students and four teachers from four local elementary schools—ten students and a teacher each from Paul Robeson Community School for the Arts, Livingston Elementary School, Lord Stirling Community School, and Redshaw Elementary School. ° ese schools were selected because they are within a 10-minute walk of Feaster and Pittman Parks. A″er a brief overview of the Re-Design project and view of key aspects of preparing parks designs, students participated in activities that solicited input on play preferences (Fig. 6) and then prepared as groups a new design for Feaster and Pittman Parks using scaled template pieces (Fig. 7).

Overall, student suggestions were fairly consistent with recommendations expressed at the Community Workshops:

- Address safety concerns (monitoring to dissuade negative behaviors, provide safe crossing at Handy Street, etc.)

- Provide more fun sports/active recreational facilities (especially soccer and splash pad) at Feaster Park

Fig. 5: Students creating new designs for Feaster and Pittman Parks using templates (Courtesy: CUES).

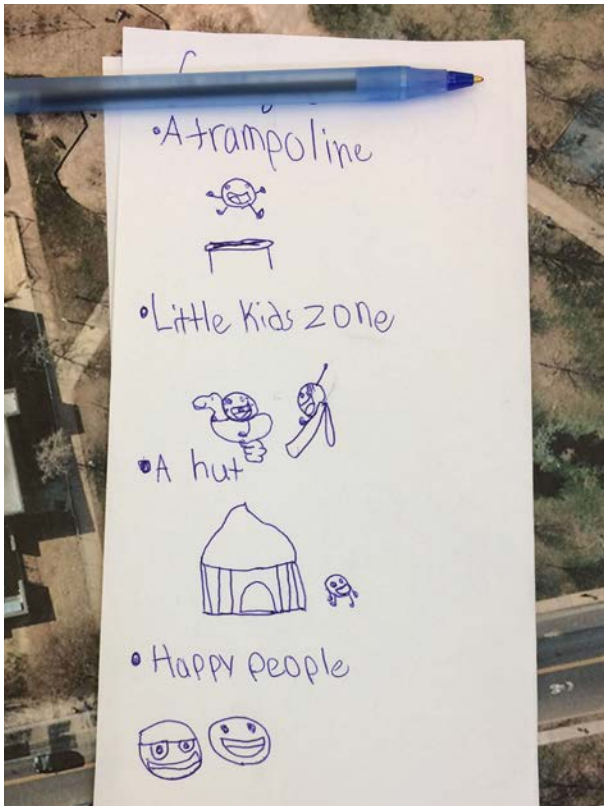


Fig. 6: One student's play preferences (Courtesy: CUES).

Fig. 7: The parks redesigned by one student group (Courtesy: CUES).

- O˜er more conveniently placed supportive facilities (bathrooms, water fountains, shaded seating, food vendors, accessibility for mobility-challenged) for visitor comfort and inclusion (seniors, disabled, etc.)

- Provide more interest at Pittman Park. In this case, student groups tended to design Pittman with more active recreation than adults at the Community Workshops did (e.g. jump rope, performance space, community gardens) and did not necessarily consider showing respect for those buried onsite as precluding recreational enjoyment of the park.

See Appendix C for student designs, more speciÿcs of student input, workshop presentation slides and program.

A second workshop for Paul Robeson School students focused on park visioning and opportunities to infuse art into the park aesthetic. In coming months, students, teachers and school sta˜ will participate in focus groups to discuss relevant design details of the conceptual plan in Chapter 7 to inform preparation of construction documents.

PARK USER SURVEYS

° e Trust for Public Land developed separate park user surveys for Feaster and Pittman Parks in English and Spanish to understand how o″en community members use the parks, preferred activities, issues that limit use, and desired enhancements. ° ese surveys were provided at Back to School Night, distributed by community organizations, and were made available at the ÿrst three Community Workshops.

A total of 18 surveys were completed (12 in English, 6 in Spanish) with 13 related to Feaster Park and 5 to Pittman Park. Most respondents did not indicate gender, age, race/ethnicity, or whether they lived in the neighborhood and how long. Nevertheless, those who did respond to these questions usually were adults (ages 35-51) or children (ages 11-12), female, Hispanic, and residents of more than 10 years (others living/working in the area for 1-10 years).

Overall, most survey participants indicated that they use Feaster Park multiple times per week (many of whom use it daily), usually on weekdays, and walk to it. °i s does not fully align with SOPARC observations, which indicated higher park visitation on weekends. ° e

divergence in park use patterns may stem from the pool of survey participants, most of whom were committed enough to the parks that they attended one or more community workshops; some were also members of the Feaster Park community garden. ° us, they may represent a subset of the community atypical in terms of how o″en on on which days they visit the park.

Most survey participants indicated that they value their time outdoors, appreciate a number of the park's existing features (trees/garden/grass, sports, playground), and feel that the park contributes to social cohesion. ° ey chieˆy use the park at present for sitting/relaxing, meeting with friends, and playing soccer or bringing children. Most have participated in programmed recreation at Feaster Park. Most report exercising primarily at a park several times per week, although many of them use other neighborhood parks in addition to Feaster Park to meet their recreational needs (e.g. go to Recreation Park for water play).

However, participants o″en cited safety concerns related to undesirable behaviors (alcohol consumption, substance abuse, violence) as limiting their enjoyment of the park. Recommended park improvements include resolving safety concerns, addressing litter and other maintenance concerns, providing a wider array of amenities (such as soccer ÿeld and splash pad), and adding more safety features (additional lighting, tra˙c c alming).

Given the small number of surveys competed for Pittman Park, trends for this park were a bit less apparent than for Feaster Park. Overall, survey participants indicated that they use Pittman Park across the whole spectrum from daily to never, usually on weekdays or weekend a″ernoons, and get there by walking. ° ey value their time outdoors to varying degrees, and use the park chieˆy for sitting/relaxing or meeting with friends. Most exercise primarily at a park (some four times per week), although many of them use other local parks in addition to Pittman Park to meet their recreational needs since Pittman Park does not support their desired facilities/equipment. Unlike the Feaster Park surveys, most survey respondents have not participated in programmed recreation at Pittman Park, nor do they feel that the park contributes to social cohesion.

Participants indicated that safety concerns related to undesirable behaviors (smoking, violence) limit their enjoyment of the park. Recommended park improvements include resolving safety concerns (including adding additional lighting), addressing litter, and providing a wider array of amenities such as more seating, ˆowers, games for children, and soccer.

Participants in both surveys tended to express some appreciation for the neighborhood and a fair percentage were willing to participate in park stewardship events/programs.

Copies of the Park User Surveys and response summaries are located in Appendix D.

COMMUNITY DESIGN WORKSHOPS #1 & #2

Four Community Workshops were held from September 2018 to February 2019 to provide a platform for local residents to express current

Fig. 8: Neighborhood residents placed yellow dots on their favorite locations in the parks at the first Community Workshop (Courtesy: CUES).

Fig. 9: Community members wrote down the types of activities they wanted the new park designs to support (Courtesy: CUES).

Fig. 10: Residents explained issues in the parks that they would like resolved and what they would like to see in the new designs (Courtesy: CUES).

Fig. 11: Community members collaborate on their own design for the parks using templates at the second Community Workshop (Courtesy: CUES).

Fig. 12: Residents explained issues in the parks that they would like resolved and what they would like to see in the new designs (Courtesy: CUES).

challenges in the Feaster and Pittman Parks and discuss their vision for the new park designs. Community members were invited to participate in the Workshops through word-of-mouth, ˆyers distributed in person at community centers (Civic League, Unity Square, Paul Robeson School), and City social media. Overall, the majority of Community Workshop attendees were members of the Hispanic community, with a small core of attendees who tended to show up at each meeting (several of whom were active members of the Feaster Park community garden).

° e ÿrst Workshop held at Paul Robeson School attracted approximately 20 attendees. Although many of the children opted not to participate. Community members were introduced to the project and invited to interact with information boards regarding: their favorite places in the parks (Fig. 8), what they do/do not like about the parks, what they want both parks to look/feel like in the future, and what activities they would like the new park design to support (Fig. 9). A group wrap-up discussion helped to clarify issues and desires in detail (Fig. 10).

° e second Workshop hosted at nearby Unity Square attracted approximately 25 participants, including many children. A″er small group exercises and discussions about how children of di˜erent ages and interests might want to play in the park, participants worked in small groups using a bu˜et of park element templates to create new park designs (Fig. 11 & 12).

Overall, most public feedback indicated that participants do use the parks periodically during the week, but not as o″en or as long as they would like. Safety concerns stemming from undesirable behaviors in the park noted previously, not enough lighting (especially at the playground), and poor visibility into the park were a chief limiting factor. Not enough interesting activities, limited and unsightly seating, lack of restrooms, and litter were also cited as main issues that limit park enjoyment.

Favorite places in Feaster Park tended to be activity areas (playground, basketball courts, ÿtness station, community garden) and shady places to sit under trees, while at Pittman Park the central tree area received two votes.

Community members expressed a vision for a safe, welcoming, exciting Feaster Park with a mix of engaging experiences. Desired enhancements generally boiled down to additional sports infrastructure, social spaces, sensory rich play areas for children, and an array of supportive

Fig. 13: Summary of desired Feaster Park enhancements that community members expressed during community outreach (Courtesy: CUES).

facilities (Fig. 13). Once community members realized that Pittman Park was a former cemetery with bodies still buried onsite, most indicated that the site should remain passive, tranquil space with minimal disturbance out of respect for the dead. Suggested enhancements usually included colorful plantings, shaded seating, interpretive signage, gardening (to relieve stress), and a perimeter fence along the neighboring residences to provide enclosure and reduce impromptu soccer practice by children. See Appendix E for notes from all Community Workshops as well as activity worksheets from the second Community Workshop.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING #1

° e Trust for Public Land invited members of key City Departments and local community groups to participate in the project Steering Committee to help prioritize design elements and build consensus on design direction. Although most individuals had been approached separately earlier in the outreach process, having them together yielded fruitful discussion on points on which diverse opinions had been expressed.

At the ÿrst Steering Committee meeting, all members were briefed on project progress and the CUES design team presented three conceptual design options developed using all public input collected to date (see Appendix F for design options and meeting minutes). Using feedback on preferred design elements and layout, the CUES team synthesized two of the options into one and presented it along with the third option at the third Community Workshop.

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP #3

Approximately eight community members attended the third Community Workshop and reviewed the two conceptual design options. Participants identiÿed their preferred elements in each of the options for synthesis into a ÿnal design. Although there was some diversity of opinion expressed, participants reached an overall consensus on which elements were more most important or not important, as well as a preferred general layout/circulation. See Appendix E for design options and Workshop notes.

CITY DEPARTMENTS CHARRETTE

Since a number of key members of City Department were not available to attend the Steering Committee meeting or third Community Workshop, TPL and CUES presented all the conceptual designs again and received feedback. Attendees expressed a diversity of opinions as to which elements should be included and where, but by meeting's end, participants produced a rough layout of park program for further reÿnement (Fig. 15) and developed consensus on key points (Fig. 14). °i s new concept option laid

City Departments Design Charrette

Main Consensus Points

- Spread activity areas out throughout park
- Provide two full basketball courts side by side with seating
- Centralize maintenance building & restrooms as much as possible
- Group fitness equipment in one area
- On-site parking is not needed
- Provide performance area closer to center of park
- Speed table / traffic calming across Handy Street is needed
- Materials need to be durable (weather and salting)

Main Consensus Points (cont.)

- Fencing is required to keep balls from going into the street (maintenance issues)
- Provide an area to accommodate large festivals and revivals

School-park relationship

- Locate outdoor classroom and play areas in close proximity to the school
- Splash pad should be convenient to the playground areas but not so close as to be problematic for school staff
- Provide a circular walking path as requested by the community without a walkway directly adjacent to the school

Fig. 14: Main concensus points from the City Design Charrette (Courtesy: CUES).

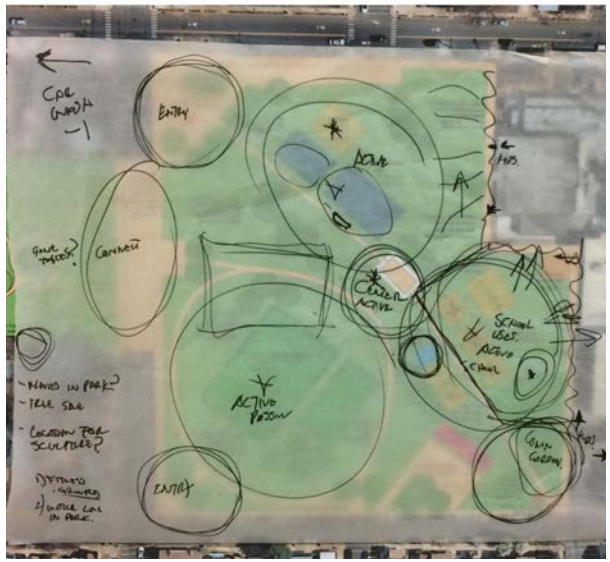


Fig. 15: Park program developed in City Design Charrette (Courtesy: CUES).

the foundations for the design concept presented at the second Steering Committee Meeting.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING #2

Given the number of di˜ ering opinions expressed and design iterations produced, the chief aim of the second Steering Committee meeting was to receive a˙r mation that the design elements, overall layout, and circulation proposed in the new design concept prepared by CUES was acceptable so it could be ˆes hed out in detail for the December 20 deadline. A 3-D ˆyby video was also prepared to give attendees a better sense of the relationship between di˜erent spaces. ° e Committee provided positive feedback on the design, as well discussed a number of questions related to implementation or issues that needed further discussion (New Brunswick Public Sculpture Committee's plan for the Paul Robeson sculpture, school use of parks vs. public use of parks, materials, etc.).

Subsequently, the Trust for Public Land, CUES, and Bill Reimer of Matrix New World (responsible for construction drawings) further reÿned this plan in a charrette to accommodate critical construction considerations. CUES prepared rendered versions of this reÿned plan for presentation to public at the fourth and ÿnal Community Workshop.

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP #4

A single conceptual design informed by all of the community input received to date was unveiled at the fourth Community Workshop (see Chapter 7). °i s workshop provided community members the opportunity to o˜er additional comments before further reÿnement by speciÿc interest focus groups (e.g. Community Garden members further reÿne community garden area) and subsequent preparation of construction drawings. °i s community event attracted the most participants: approximately 30, many of whom were children. Feedback on the design was positive, with only a handful of questions/ suggestions regarding project timing, mature tree retention, park monitoring/maintenance, and child safety. TPL then distributed the conceptual plan to its network of stakeholders and Unity Square displayed presentation boards with the plan (in both English and Spanish) and other illustrative graphics prepared by CUES for community members to review further.

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CHAPTER 6: DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

° e concept design development of Feaster and Pittman Parks is based on the synthesis of the area site analysis and the program developed through community outreach and engagement. ° e goal of the concept plan is to provide a comprehensive representation of the ideas and desires expressed by the community and provide a starting point for design development and eventually, construction of the park.

ANALYSIS

° e area site analysis examined existing conditions in and around the site. ° e team reviewed historic documentation, land use and zoning plans, demographic data, topography and sun/shade patterns (Fig. 1). ° e team also observed use patterns in the park (see SOPARC in Chapter 4). ° e site analysis revealed the need to address safety and security concerns through improved sight lines into the park and provide an active and welcoming park for all in the diverse neighborhood (Fig. 2-3).

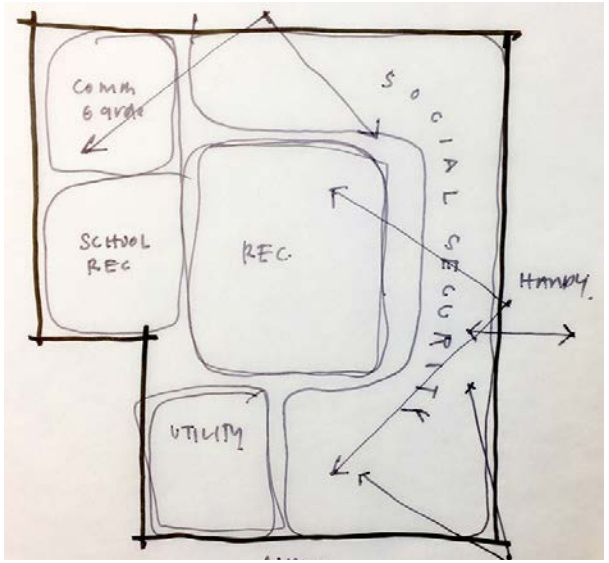

Fig. 3: Early program diagram (Courtesy: CUES).

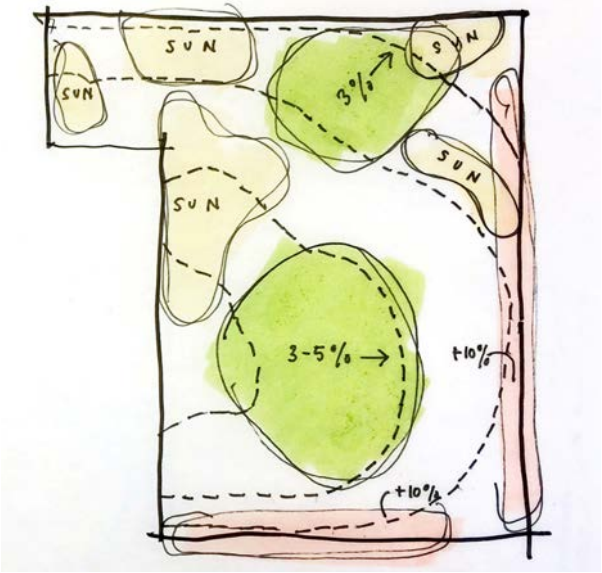

Fig. 1: Sun/shade/slope diagram (Courtesy: CUES).

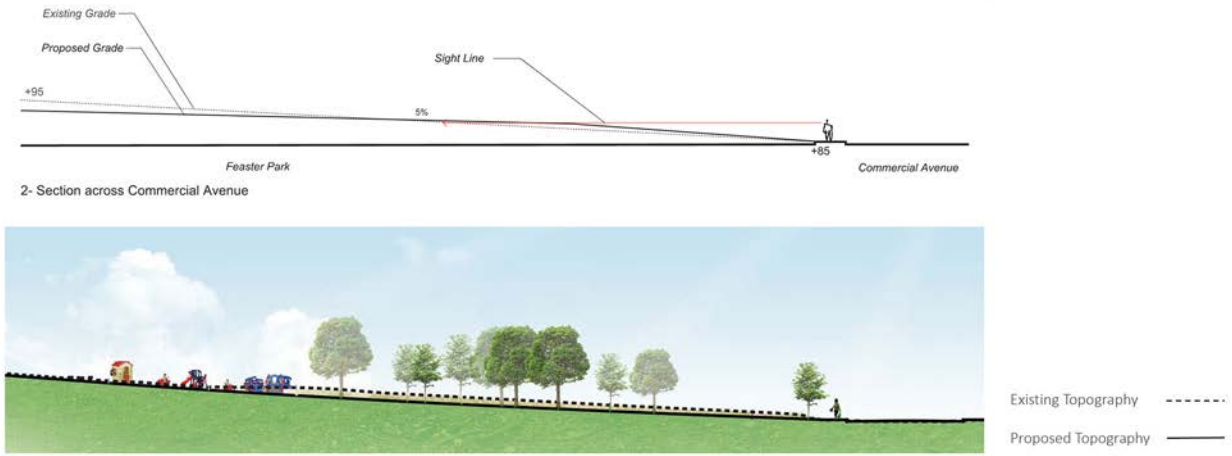

Fig. 2: Grading explorations to open sight lines into Feaster Park for increased security (Courtesy: CUES).

PROGRAMMING

° e project program is developed around a series of interviews, design workshops and surveys (see Chapter 5 Community Input). ° e goal of the programming process was to provide a large and diverse forum where city o˙ci als, community stakeholders and residents could present, discuss and consolidate their ideas and desires on what elements and services the park should provide.

Discussions around what elements are preferred on the site (such as playgrounds, basketball courts, multipurpose ÿelds, outdoor classrooms, and ÿtness areas) were then reviewed in light of the site analysis to determine which elements were feasible and, if so, the most appropriate locations for their placement.

Taking inspiration from the multi-faceted talents of Paul Robeson and the diverse interests voiced by community members, park program throughout the design process emphasized a balance of elements that promote artistic expression, social gathering, healthy activity, and exploration and learning (Fig. 4).

Fig. 4: Final park program and design elements drew inspiration forom Paul Robeson's legacy as a groundbreaking artist, activist, athlete, and scholar (Courtesy: CUES).

Fig. 5: Community members discussing optimal placement of desired park elements (Courtesy: CUES).

PROCESS/METHODS

° e initial community workshops provided a wide variety of desired elements: soccer and baseball ÿelds, tennis, basketball and volleyball courts to mention a few. All elements were reviewed through a series of plans assembled by the community (Fig. 5). ° e plans were then evaluated based on size, topographic requirements, circulation and maintenance.

° ese initial plans were revised into three park plan options presented at the ÿrst Steering Committee meeting for review (Fig. 6-8). ° e options contained similar programs elements and varied on element location, circulation and main focus. One plan centered around the green space, another around the playgrounds and another on a strong connection to Pittman Park.

° e design team paired these three options down to the two options presented to community members and City department charrette participants for additional comment (Fig. 9). °i s iterative process helped community stakeholders to articulate which elements they considered most critical (e.g. restrooms) and those that were not a priority given space limitations (e.g. vehicular parking). It also provided a platform for stakeholders with di˜ering priorities/opinions to work together to reach consensus.

Fig. 6-8: New design options for Feaster and Pittman Parks marked with feedback from the first Steering Committee meeting (Courtesy: CUES).

Fig. 9: Members of City departments discussing which elements to include in the new park designs and where those elements should be located (Courtesy: CUES).

° e design team then presented a programmatic concept to the Steering Committee that synthesized these points of consensus, to conÿrm appropriate overall layout, as well as the appropriate number and types of elements (Fig. 10).

Additional reÿnement (Fig. 11) yielded the ÿnal concept plan detailed in Chapter 7, which represents the program that best synthesizes community input and sound landscape architectural principles:

At Feaster Park, a variety of favorite active recreation facilities, comfortable gathering areas with supportive facilities, engaging children's play/educational areas near the school, an expanded community garden, visibility into the park, circulation conducive to strolling, and a stronger visual and physical connection to a respectful and passive enhancement of Pittman Park.

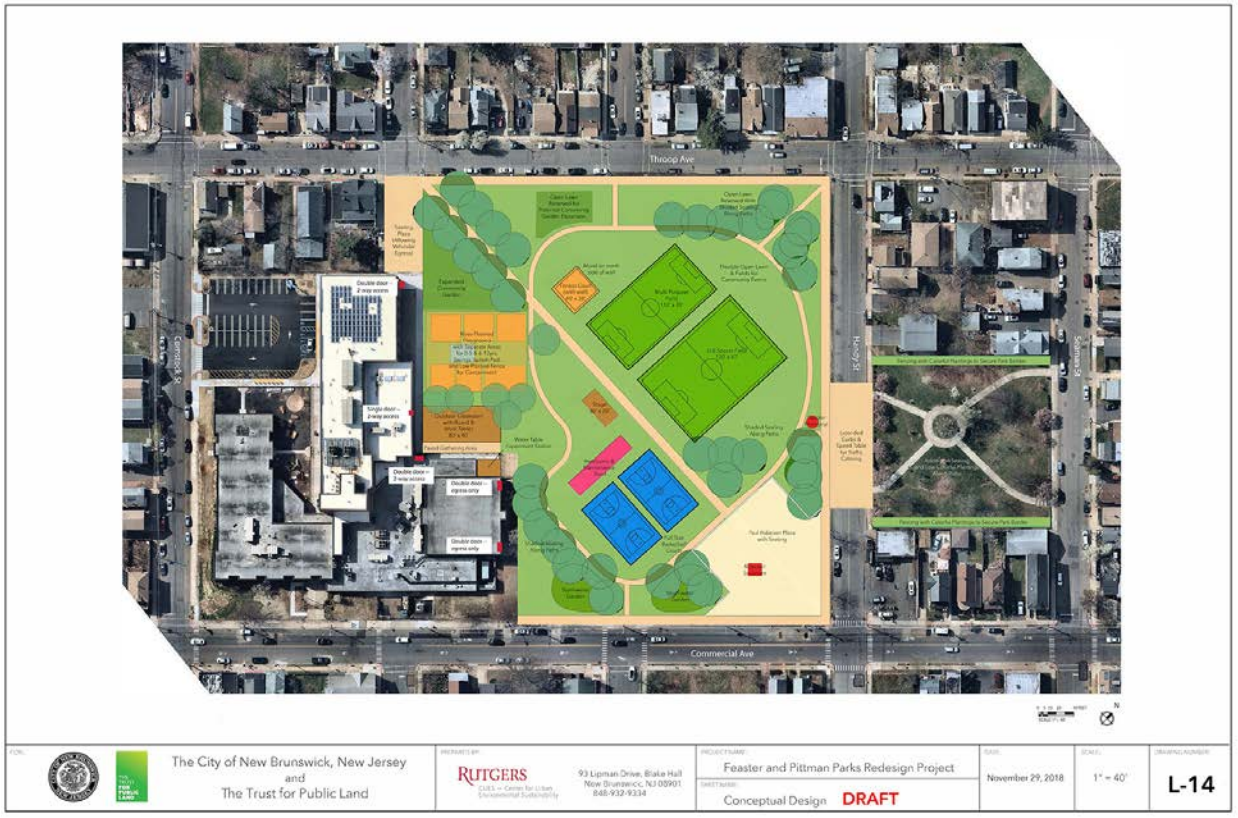

Fig. 10: Programmatic concept presented at the second Steering Committee meeting (Courtesy: CUES).

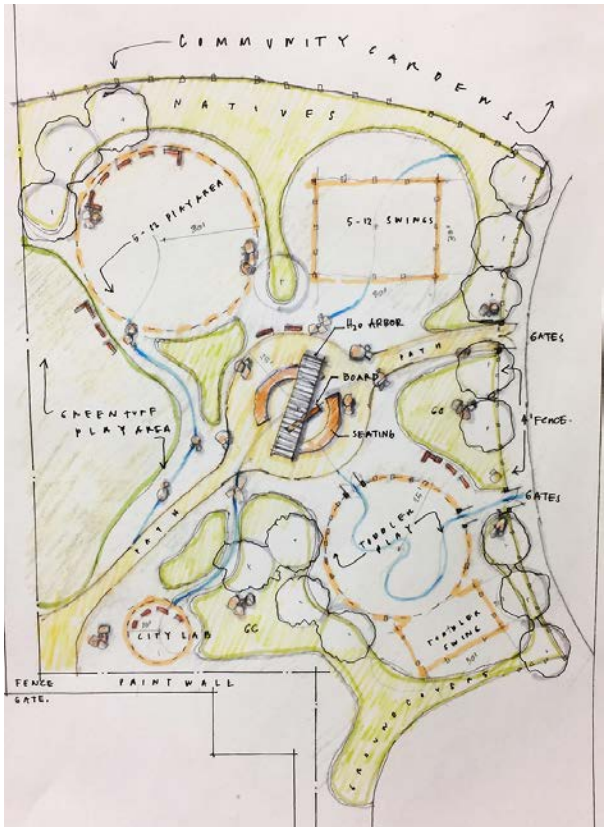

Fig. 11: Refined child play area (Courtesy: CUES).

CHAPTER 7: FINAL CONCEPTUAL DESIGN

° e ÿnal conceptual design presented to community members on Feb 9, 2019, retains the balance of active and passive elements explored in earlier options (Fig. 1), featuring an array of engaging spaces and experiences (Fig. 2 on next page) developed to appeal to all members of the community and support a broad spectrum of uses.

In this way, the parks together become a uniÿed, inviting community asset that emphasizes local culture and identity, and enhances the physical, social, and economic health of the neighborhood.

FEASTER PARK

At Feaster Park, the ˆexible, pedestrian-oriented design organizes main activity areas around a central Strolling Path from which short paths branch o˜ to connect to multiple historic entrances (Fig. 3).

Fig. 1: The final conceptual design located a variety of active and passive recreation opportunities at Feaster Park, while providing some passive use enhancements at Pittman Park (Courtesy: CUES).

Fig. 3: Short paths radiating off of a central strolling path provide a very flexible, pedestrian-oriented circulation plan in the final conceptual design (Courtesy: CUES).

Fig. 2: The final conceptual design presented at the last Community Workshop (Courtesy: CUES).

Adjusted grading allows for a new entrance across from Pittman Park (Fig. 4), which retains its former circulation pattern in keeping with community consensus to minimize disturbance of the burial grounds.

A raised speed table with crosswalk and curb bump-outs on Handy Street will calm tra˙c and facilitate safe pedestrian passage between the two parks without impeding emergency vehicles on this key route.

THE HEART OF THE PARK

° e heart of the park within the circular Strolling Path features:

Multi-Purpose Great Lawn – a ˆexible open space suitable as a U8 practice ÿeld or large community events, such as movies in the park, festivals, or school ÿeld day (Fig. 5)

Game Tables Nook (Fig. 6)

Combined Restrooms, Drinking Fountain, and Maintenance Station facility, conveniently placed to maximize ease of use by park visitors as well as facilitate park surveillance by maintenance sta˜

Shaded picnic groves

Fig. 4: Adjusted grading opens up visual and physical access between the two parks (Courtesy: CUES).

Fig. 5: The multi-purpose Great Lawn would be suitable for a range of uses, such as soccer (Courtesy: CUES).

Fig. 6: A Game Tables Nook would provide fun socialization opportunities for a range of ages (Courtesy: Kenilworth Chess Club).

Fig. 7: Splash pad (Courtesy: Cincinnati Parent).

Fig. 8: Amphitheater (Courtesy: Swarthmore College).

Fig. 9: Corten uprights (Courtesy: Matrix New World).

Splash pad with three water elements (Fig. 7)

Amphitheater (Fig. 8). Terraced seating with integrated trees for shade leads down to an outdoor venue for performances, small pop-up events and community gatherings. Proposed custom corten steel uprights (Fig. 9) provide a unique, artistic focal point at the northern corner entrance and can serve as supports for anchoring performance sets or seasonal banners at the amphitheater.

Strolling Path with a comfortable walking surface and frequently placed benches in shade to accommodate seniors and provide areas for visitors to read and rest (Fig. 10). Periodic plaques or signage that celebrate portions of the Paul Robeson legacy.

Fig. 10: Seating for rest or reading (Courtesy: Pixabay).

EAST SIDE (COMMERCIAL AVE.)

◦ e eastern portion of the park includes:

A terraced ***Paul Robeson Memorial Plaza***, which activates the corner of Handy Street and Commercial Avenue (soon to become Paul Robeson Boulevard), opening up views into the park at this key entrance (Fig. 11). ◦ e lower terrace provides a prominent location for the Robeson Memorial Sculpture, which helps draw passersby into the park, while a double-sided seat wall on the upper terrace is etched with Paul Robeson's famous words: "As an artist, I come to sing, but as a citizen, I will always speak for peace, and no one can silence me in this." Designed for ˆexi ble use, the plaza can host pop-up art exhibits, farmer's markets, or be ÿtted with movable chairs and tables for leisure. Final form and positioning of the Robeson sculpture will be coordinated to align with the Sculpture Committee's evolving vision.

Fitness court with multiple apparatus to support healthy exercise (Fig. 12)

Terraced ***Chill Hill***, a grassy hill with protruding boulders that o˜ ers park visitors a place to read, chat, or watch activity on Commercial Ave.

Two ***full-court basketball courts*** (Fig. 13) with permanent seating, a seasonal shade structure, and room to add removable bleachers for tournaments and other community programs.

BEFORE

AFTER

Fig. 11: Terraced Paul Robeson Plaza with proposed Paul Robeson monument (Courtesy: CUES).

Fig. 13: The new design concept relocates the popular basketball courts closer to the school gym and provides opportunities for more shaded seating for specator comfort (Courtesy: Mohammad Kheirkhah).

CHILDREN'S PLAY ZONE

West of the basketball courts and adjacent to the Paul Robeson School lie the sensory-rich, river themed children's play areas, designed to support outdoor education, exploration, and recreation for ages up to 12 years. Key features include:

Outdoor Classroom at the center of the play zone ÿtted with writing surface and circular boulder slab seating, suitable as a ˆexi ble outdoor venue for class or group community activities. Overhead, the ***H2O Shade Pavilion*** (Fig. 14) creates a central focal point in the playground area while enhancing the comfort

Fig. 12: Fitness court with multiple apparatus to support healthy exercise by the whole community (Courtesy: Cooper Hewitt).

Fig. 14: A shade pavilion with water catchment system would provide comfort for outdoor lessons while providing opportunities for youth to explore hydrology (Courtesy: Brian Wancho).

and functionality of the outdoor classroom. ° e pavilion roof captures and channels rainwater down to apparent catchment areas, inviting students to investigate hydrologic principles. ° e roof also provides an option for potentially supporting solar panels if desired.

Playground for ages 6-12 years with 4-bay swing set and a unique play element. °i s play structure imparts whimsy while providing appropriate challenge, stimulation, and imaginative play for its intended age group. Paul Robeson School art students will vote on what form this structure and the one in the 0-5 year area take – anything from a river otter to a paint tube (Fig. 15)!

Playground for ages 0-5 years with 2-bay swing set, play element (Fig. 16), and low fence for containment.

Rubber play surfaces add color, comfort, and universal access to play areas

River Rock Path (Fig. 17), which infuses an artistic quality to the playground, providing a conversation starter about the key role that the Raritan River played in shaping New Brunswick history, Paul Robeson's contributions to the world beyond his signature "Ol Man River," or even mathematical principles related to patterns.

Discovery Lab adjacent to school gym. Fitted with slab seating, a wall-hung sink, and blackboard, this space can accommodate small school groups exploring art and science or children needing a quiet break from more energetic playground areas.

Sensory Garden adjacent to the Discovery Lab. Enjoyable to the casual observer as well as full of educational potential, this garden introduces students to a range of textures, colors, and scents found in nature.

Play Lawn for games and stretching, and scattered Play Boulders as natural materials for climbing and peeking around.

Native plants garden provides an attractive bu˜er between the playground and community garden activities while enhancing habitat quality and science exploration (Fig. 18).

Low 4-foot high fence around the play areas provides containment for safety purposes. Shaded seating allows caretakers to supervise and socialize comfortably. ° e school board may be open to discussion regarding whether existing high security fencing around school entrances can be adapted or removed to

Fig. 15: Play equipment can reflect the unique identity of the park as well as provide recreational fun (Courtesy: Earthscape).

Fig. 16: A designated play area for very young children provides appropriate challenge and easier monitoring for parents (Courtesy: Earthscape).

Fig. 17: Creative paving not only adds aesthetic interest to the children's play areas, but also can support educational lessons (Courtesy: gardeningliving.org).

facilitate easier ˆo w of students to/from the play zone and encourage a more visually hospitable environment.

WESTERN BORDER (THROOP AVE.)

Feaster Park's western border along °r oop Avenue maintains an open perimeter for ease of access and visual permeability for safety, while incorporating some key areas of interest:

Community Art Plaza (Fig. 19). °i s pocket plaza transforms the Hale Street remnant into a key social anchor along °r oop Street where community members and local artists can create temporary art displays that rotate on a regular basis. Flexible seating and trees in planters allow vehicular egress from Paul Robeson School as needed, with a key gate ensuring that this is a pedestrian priority gathering space.

Terraced Community Garden with room for expansion (Fig. 20). ***Ripple Planting Beds*** (Fig. 21) provide community gardeners with space to produce their crops while subtly referencing the park's river theme.

Pollinator Garden and planting beds add multi-seasonal visual interest and enhance habitat with low, colorful plants (Fig. 22).

Feaster Memorial Plaza – Located at the terminus of the Baldwin Street park entrance, this plaza provides a prominent situation in which to celebrate the legacy of past Park Commissioner Joseph Feaster while remaining close to the monument's historic location.

Fig. 20: Community gardening (Courtesy: Pixabay).

Fig. 21: Ripple beds (Courtesy: Matrix New World).

Fig. 18: Native plants add beauty, support education, and enhance urban habitat quality (Courtesy: Chattanooga Area Pollinator Partnership).

Fig. 19: Temporary art would help enliven a pocket park at the Hale Street remnant and celebrate local identity (Courtesy: Santa Barbara Sacred Spaces).

Fig. 22: Pollinator friendly garden (Courtesy: Pixabay).

Fig. 23: Rain gardens and other green infrastructure interventions will be deployed where appropriate to manage stormwater responsibly (Courtesy: Raingardens.org).

ADDITIONAL AMENITIES

Rain gardens (Fig. 23) along Handy Street help to manage stormwater onsite, as well as beautify the park, enhance habitat value for local species, and introduce community members to environmental stewardship principles. Additional stormwater management green infrastructure will be incorporated into grading plans where appropriate.

Where possible, existing healthy ***trees*** will be protected (or moved to new locations within the City) in order to retain their ecological and aesthetic functions (Fig. 24).

Appropriate ***safety lighting*** and ***waste receptacles*** will be deployed strategically along paths and at main activity areas to maximize e˜ectiveness, as will ***abundant and varied seating*** to encourage regular use by local residents.

Bike parking infrastructure will be installed near key activity areas to encourage healthy transportation to the park.

Grading plans and ***materials selection*** for paths will encourage comfortable and accessible experiences for pedestrians and cyclists.

PITTMAN PARK

Proposed Pittman Park enhancements encourage quiet re^e ction, reading and passive enjoyment of the former cemetery with minimal disturbance to the ground.

Remembrance panels located between the central tree and the Handy Street entrances add color while sharing the stories of the site and those buried there to visitors as they pass by.

Benches distributed throughout the park with pleasant views of the ^o wering cherry trees

Fig. 24: Bird's eye view of the park (Courtesy: CUES).

in spring encourage visitors to stop and enjoy quiet moments in the park rather than simply passing through (Fig. 25).

Low, colorful plantings around the existing center circular path utilize species that attract songbirds and pollinators (Fig. 26), infusing ever-changing visual and auditory interest to the tranquil setting.

Low, 4-foot high fences with colorful foundation plantings along the eastern and western borders provide a sense of privacy without impeding casual surveillance from the streets.

Opportunities to incorporate ***temporary art*** that enhances the quiet, meditative ambiance of the park should be explored.

See Appendix G for Spanish version of Final Concept Plan with chapter translation.

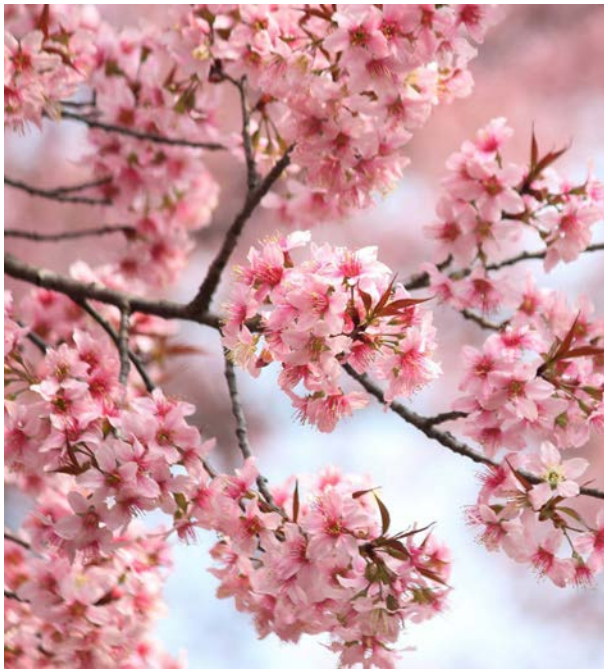

Fig. 25: Cherry blossoms (Courtesy: India International Cherry Blossom Festival-2017).

Fig. 26: Colorful plants (Courtesy: Gardenerdirect.com).

IMAGE SOURCES

Fig. 6: Kenilworth Chess Club. *The Kenilworthian* blog. Retrieved from http://www.kenilworthchessclub.org/kenilworthian/2006/07/chess-tourist-in-new-york-city.html on May 2, 2019.

Fig. 7: Cincinnati Parent. Cincinnati Splay Park Guide webpage. Retrieved from https://cincinnatiparent.com/cincinnati-splash-park-guide/ on September 2, 2019.

Fig. 8: Swarthmore College. Scott Outdoor Amphitheater. *The Cultural Landscape Foundation* website. Retrieved from https://tclf.org/landscapes/scott-outdoor-amphitheater on August 28, 2019.

Fig. 12: Cooper Hewitt National Design Awards. National Fitness Campaign Fitness Court. Website. Retrieved from http://ndagallery.cooperhewitt.org/gallery/7966825/National-Fitness-Campaign-Fitness-Court on May 2, 2019.

Fig. 13: Kheirkhah, Mohammad. Basketball Players. *214 B* blog. Retrieved from https://214b.wordpress.com/2010/03/31/basketball-players/ on September 2, 2019.

Fig. 14: Wancho, Brian. Aztec Pavilion in Downtown El Paso – Architectural Photography. Website. Retrieved from https://www.brianwanchophotography.com/blog/2013/06/aztec-pavilion-downtown-el-paso-architectural-photography/ on September 2, 2019.

Fig. 17: Gardeningliving.org. Pinterest board. Retrieved from http://gardeningliving.org/category/gardening-path/page/4/ on August 28, 2019.

Fig. 18: Chattanooga Area Pollinator Partnership. Retrieved from https://chapollinator.org/native-plants/native-plant-bloom-season/ on May 2, 2019.

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CHAPTER 8: NEXT STEPS

° e Trust for Public Land will coordinate additional reÿnement of details for speciÿc park areas in the Conceptual Plan with focus groups as follows:

- ° e Paul Robeson Plaza: New Brunswick Public Sculpture Committee
- Outdoor classroom and play areas: Paul Robeson School teachers and students
- Community garden: Unity Square community gardeners

° e Trust for Public Land will also meet with City Departments to discuss appropriate materials and other technical issues prior to implementation.

Matrix New World will prepare construction documents in Spring of 2019. ° e City of New Brunswick will put the project out for bid, anticipated Summer 2019.

Construction is tentatively scheduled to commence in Fall 2019, with completion of the project anticipated twelve months later.