

# CLEVELAND METROPARKS: PARKS IN A PANDEMIC



## 2020 CHARRETTE REPORT



Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative  
Kent State University  
College of Architecture and Environmental Design



KENT STATE UNIVERSITY  
CLEVELAND  
URBAN DESIGN  
COLLABORATIVE

**COMMUNITY DESIGN CHARRETTE**  
2-5 October 2020

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BE  
COURTEOUS  
GIVE  
NOTICE  
WHEN  
PASSING



# I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Every year the Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative leads a community design charrette, bringing Kent State University Masters' students in Architecture, Urban Design, and Landscape Architecture into a real-world community to quickly generate ideas for real-world design challenges.

In 2020, however, travel to a new location was untenable due to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. Instead, guided by the sudden rise in use of local parks and public spaces during the shelter-at-home orders, the CUDC partnered with the Cleveland Metroparks to explore ideas around how park systems can be quickly retrofitted and reimaged for a wide range of uncertain futures.

The Metropark chosen for the charrette, Brookside Reservation, presented an interesting overlap of

urban and ecological systems to explore. Brookside is adjacent to two urban neighborhoods on the southwest side of Cleveland, but because of its location in Big Creek ravine and the Metroparks' stewardship questions of natural habitat and larger landscape systems loom large.

Students in the 2020 charrette focused on ideas of connectivity and access, moving across a network of parks, trails, greenways, and entry points into and out of the parks system. Ideas about temporary retrofits, seasonal programming, stormwater management, wayfinding, and public art and lighting were integrated throughout Brookside, its adjacent parks, and its boundary neighborhoods on the south side of Cleveland. Ultimately, the students generated a series of strategies to improve access and entry into a larger, more connected park and trails system, in order to provide safe spaces for gathering and distancing for all Clevelanders, now and into the unknown future.



# II. CONTEXT

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## COVID-19 AND PUBLIC SPACE

In spring 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent closures & restrictions suddenly impacted Clevelanders - and all of humanity - in ways unprecedented in our lifetimes. Stay-at-home orders were enacted for several months, only beginning to ease in late May. In the meantime, schools and daycares closed, work and education went as remote as possible, and millions of Americans lost jobs and applied for unemployment. The economic fallout from the pandemic had already been extreme, and was projected to become even more so across the next year.

With so many people out of and confined to housing which may be insufficient for daily activities, the city's public spaces became more important than ever. Local recreation and access to fresh air and landscape could not solve the crisis, but they do provide relief and community. But how can we encourage the safe use of public spaces? How does the idea of "the commons" manifest when large gatherings are discouraged and proximity to others is dangerous?

Local public spaces can relieve pressures for a seriously impacted public, becoming safe places for all. Recreation is an important component of city parks, but is not the only function of public space. Streets have been accommodating rising numbers of cyclists and pedestrians, as vehicular traffic wanes. Sidewalks are transforming into outside dining and shopping areas. Bicycle sales are at an all-time high as more urban residents choose alternate modes of transit. Parks are being delineated with 6' bubbles or safe zones to ensure social distance. And urban plazas have again become areas of gathering for political protest. How can we encourage this multiplicity of civic use when a pandemic makes gathering in public dangerous?

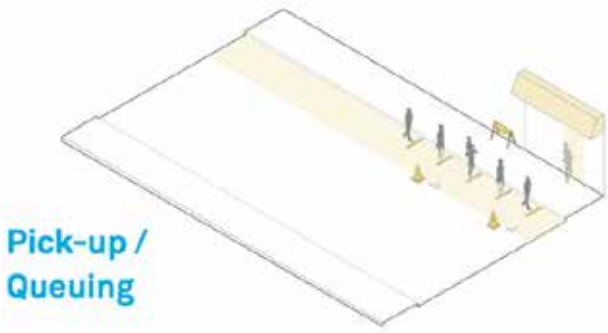
As of the time of the October 2020 charrette the future course of the pandemic was volatile and unclear: further closures seemed probable, as did additional spikes in infection. Some models suggested that until we had a globally viable vaccine we may have waves of closures and reopenings across the next year and beyond. Personal safety and hygiene had been emphasized, with individual PPE and cleaning practices at the forefront, but real spatial solutions were fewer.

The charrette team explored the following questions:

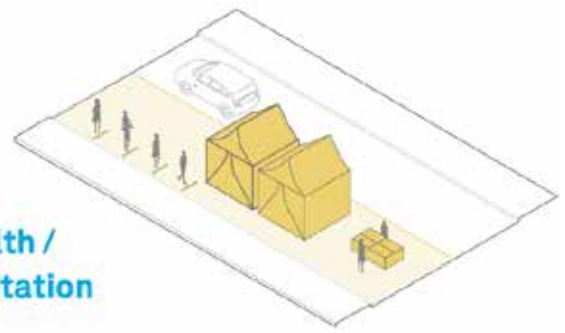
- How can we quickly retrofit public spaces to allow for a wide range of scenarios?
- How can parks encourage social interactions and invite new users, while still maintaining 6' distance?
- How can non-vehicular modes of transportation interface between parks and the city street network?
- How can parks be safe places for all city residents, especially those most in need?
- How can we use this moment of fluctuating human use to emphasize and accommodate larger ecological functions?

By focusing on a representative Metropark within the city of Cleveland and its larger neighborhood connections, the CUDC's 2020 Community Design Charrette studied Cleveland's public spaces and generated spatial & programmatic ideas to provide flexible alternatives for a wide range of futures.





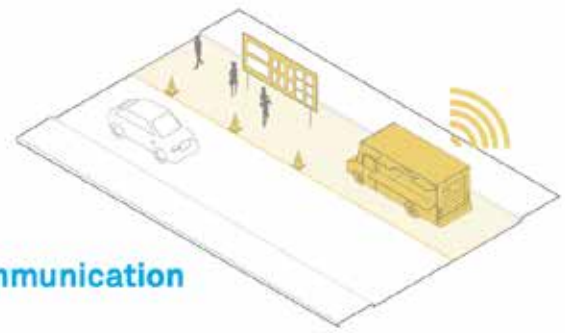
Pick-up /  
Queuing



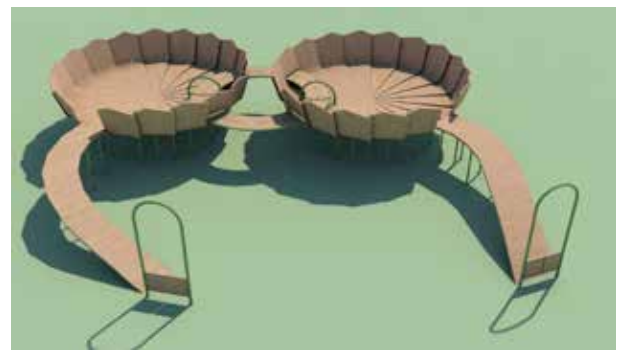
Health /  
Sanitation



Open / Play  
Streets



Communication



Case studies included NACTO's Streets for Pandemic, TOP;  
Brooklyn's Domino Park, BOTTOM LEFT; and an "infection-free  
playground" by Binder/Rimmele, BOTTOM RIGHT

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## BROOKSIDE RESERVATION

In 2019 the Trust for Public Land, through their Parks for People initiative, identified a census block in the Clark-Fulton neighborhood of Cleveland as one of 5 in the City of Cleveland with a severely low “parkscore” (*TOP RIGHT*). But just south of Clark-Fulton is the Brookside Reservation, a park adjacent to the Cleveland Zoo in the Big Creek watershed (*BOTTOM RIGHT*). Much of the park is dedicated to amenities for larger-scale sports like baseball fields, meaning during the COVID-19 pandemic that space - and its related parking lots - has largely been empty. As restrictions ease on organized sports, the space may or may not return to its former activities, necessitating flexibility.

Longer-term trails are planned to extend from the Zoo down to the Towpath Trail, but currently Brookside functions as a green island set below the surrounding neighborhood bluffs. While this separation creates a green oasis, it also limits awareness and access, especially across Denison Ave to the north, towards TPL’s study area.

**How can Brookside’s trails, sports fields, and parking lots be reimagined to allow for small- and large-scale use by a variety of people, and how can it become more accessible to its adjacent neighborhoods - particularly those currently underserved by smaller-scale parks closer to home?** Design opportunities for streetscape & trail connections, short-term & flexible uses, and ecological systems - especially flooding & stormwater management - were considered and incorporated by students.

While the charrette focused on one specific park and its local connections, many of the design ideas generated could be applicable to other parks in the Metropark and City of Cleveland park systems, in order to be truly replicable throughout the region.

### Where can parks have the biggest impact on equity?







**TOP:** Brookside has been an active recreational site in the City of Cleveland for over a century, hosting baseball games, picnics, and large neighborhood gatherings



**MIDDLE:** Rail and roadway infrastructure, topography, and the Big Creek itself are aesthetically striking but also serve to divide Brookside from its surrounding urban fabric

**BELOW:** Brookside Reservation in context



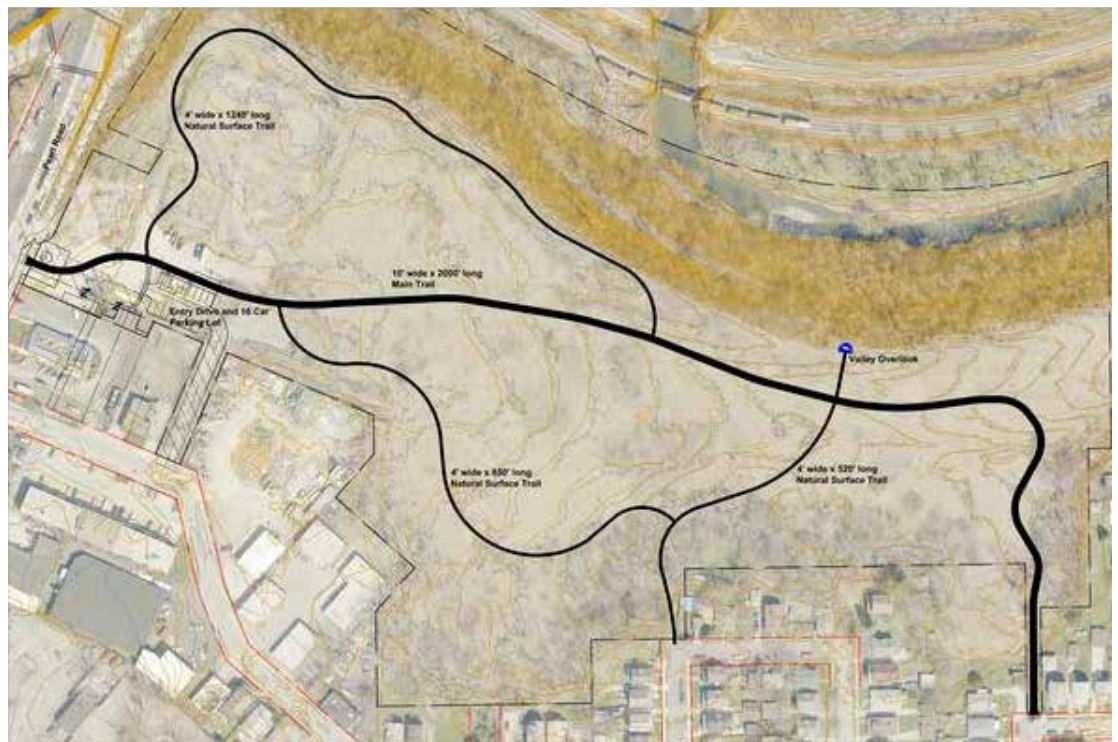


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## GREENWAYS & CONNECTIONS

Just east of Brookside Reservation and the Metroparks Zoo, a new park is slated to open to the public in Winter 2021: Brighton Park, on the former Henninger landfill property off Pearl Rd (*BELOW*). Brighton Park, redeveloped in partnership between the Western Reserve Land Conservancy and the Cleveland Metroparks, provides passive recreation and habitat and connects to Pearl Rd just across from Wildlife Way. Due to structural questions of the landfill soil, major developments are not feasible in Brighton Park, but small and light-touch installations, landscaping, additional trails, and other improvements are still possible. The 2020 Charrette explored some of these additional ideas.

Brighton Park is an important project in and of itself, but it is particularly well located to link together a larger network of greenways, trails, and parks throughout the south side of Cleveland. The maps on the opposite page illustrate how the connective trails from the Cuyahoga River Valley up the Big Creek Ravine are very close to being seamless connections. A few gaps still remain in the larger trail and greenway network, particularly linking Brighton Park to the Treadaway Creek Trail and the Towpath Trail beyond, but this park is an important node in the larger system. The 2020 Charrette examined some of those gaps and suggested strategies for stitching these pieces together into a cohesive whole.





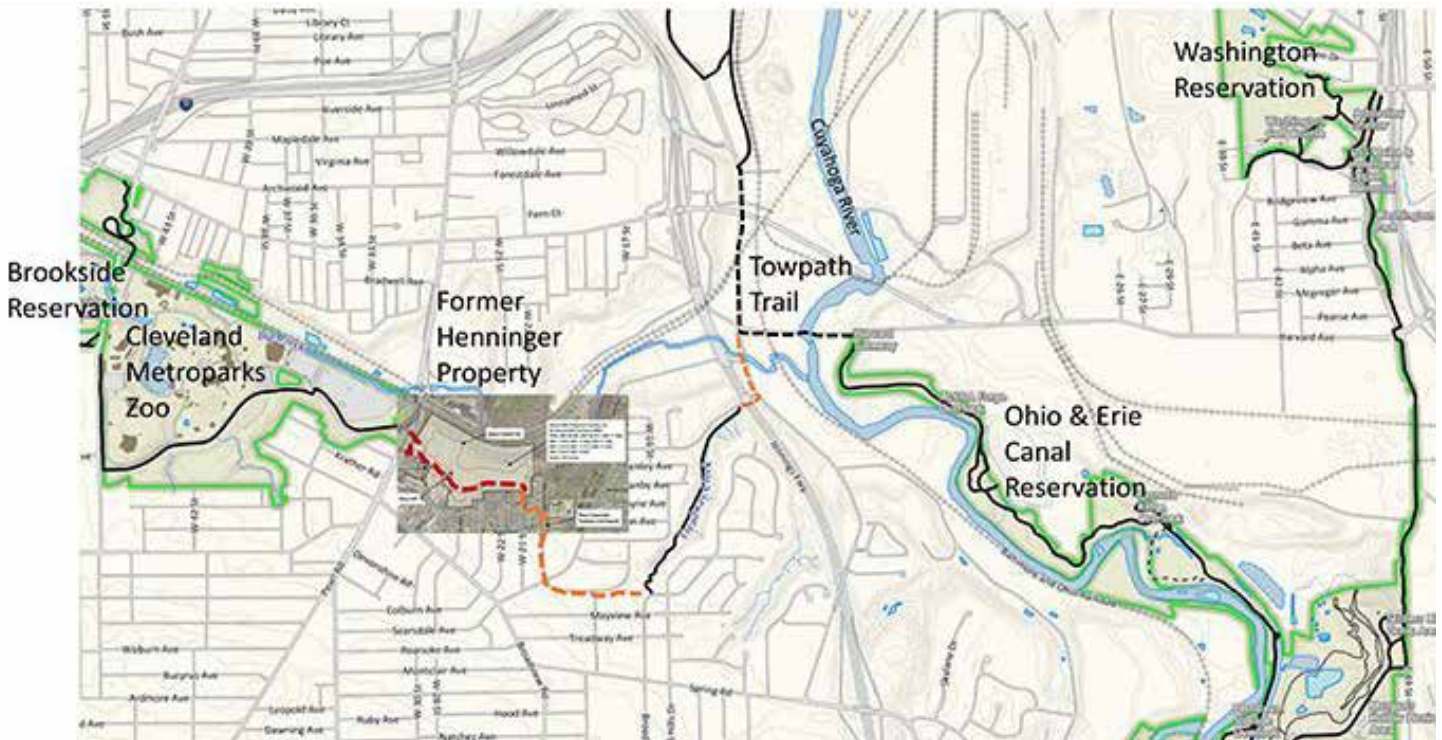
# CUYAHOGA GREENWAYS: Framework Plan

- Greenway Framework
- Goals & Process
- Route Evaluation
- Implementation
- Attraction Map



### Vision Statement

Cuyahoga Greenways is an interconnected system of greenways and urban trails that be in with public transportation and parks to offer recreational opportunities and options for getting around the county, elevating the health of the community and the individuals who call it home.



# CHARRETTE PROCESS

## WHAT IS A CHARRETTE?

The word charrette refers to any accelerated collaborative session in which a group of designers drafts a solution to a design problem. Charrettes serve as a way of quickly generating design solutions while integrating ideas from a diverse group of people.

The 2020 Charrette had to engage community stakeholders in small socially distanced groups and via Zoom / Facebook Live events in order to maintain public safety. Digital engagement tools like a website, Facebook posts, and open Zoom forums served to replace more traditional public meetings. The Charrette schedule is below:

## SCHEDULE

### FRIDAY, OCT. 2, 2020

- 10:00-11:30am Site Tour of Brookside & Brighton Parks / Connections
- 12-1:30pm **STAKEHOLDER MEETING - ZOOM**
- 2:00-10:00pm Team Work Session / Develop Preliminary Site Concepts

### SATURDAY, OCT. 3, 2020

- 9am-4pm Team Work Session
- 4:00-6:00pm **WORK IN PROGRESS REVIEW - ZOOM**
- 6:00-11:00pm Work Session: Begin Draft Presentation

### SUNDAY, OCT. 4, 2020

- 8am-3:00pm Work Session / Finalize Stakeholder Presentation
- 3:00-4:30pm Presentation Run-Through
- 5:00pm **STUDENT WORK DUE TO CUDC STAFF**

### MONDAY, OCT. 5 2020

- 7:00pm **FINAL PRESENTATION OF URBAN DESIGN PROPOSALS**  
*Livestreamed, Facebook*



## CHARRETTE GOALS:

The 2020 Charrette, in the context of an unprecedented global pandemic, asked how parks and open spaces can quickly respond to community needs. With so many out of meaningful work, confined to housing which may be insufficient for daily work/life, the city's public spaces are more important than ever. But how can we use those public spaces safely when interacting with "the public" is highly risky?

In an uncertain future, how can public spaces be (re)designed to be flexible and accessible, while still maintaining necessary social distance?

A promotional poster for the Kent State University Student Design Charrette. The top half shows a photograph of a park area with a white stone bridge and a winding path. A diamond-shaped road sign with a winding arrow is visible. Below the photo is a dark green banner with white and yellow text. The text reads: "OCT 2-5: You're Invited to Participate! How has COVID-19 changed what you need from YOUR local park? Kent State University Student Design Charrette October 2-5, 2020". At the bottom right of the poster is a graphic of a sign that says "PLEASE HELP US TO KEEP OUR PARKS OPEN DO YOUR PART STAY 6 FEET APART" with illustrations of people standing apart.

**OCT 2-5:**  
You're Invited to Participate!

How has COVID-19 changed what you need from YOUR local park?

Kent State University Student Design Charrette  
October 2-5, 2020

Graduate students in Architecture, Urban Design, & Landscape Architecture will be working this weekend on design ideas for Brookside Reservation & its surrounding neighborhoods. Throughout the weekend workshop we'll have opportunities for the Brookside Community to weigh in.

Visit <http://www.brookside2020.org/> for details, or call/email us with your thoughts!

FINAL LIVESTREAMED PRESENTATION: Monday, Oct 5th, 7pm via Facebook Live

<http://www.brookside2020.org/>

Phone: 216-357-3434  
Email: [cudc@kent.edu](mailto:cudc@kent.edu)  
Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/KSUCUDC/>  
Twitter: @KSUCUDC  
Instagram: @KSUCUDC

#Brookside2020

KENT STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
Cleveland Urban  
Design Collaborative

CAED  
college of architecture &  
environmental design

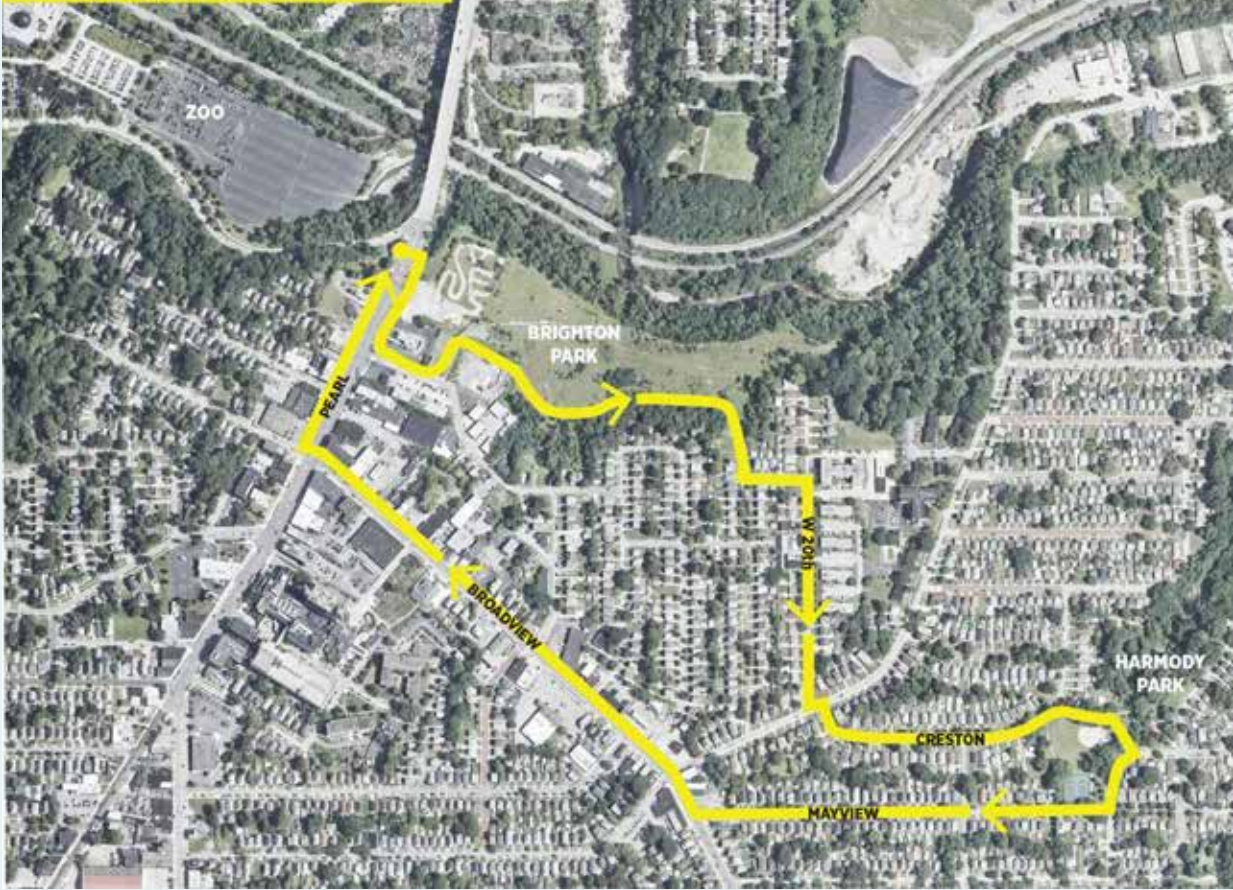




**ROUTE 1: Brookside / Big Creek**



**ROUTE 2: Brighton Park / OB**







Kent State students touring the parks and trails in person



# URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

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**FLEXIBILITY:** Create a toolkit of design ideas that can be deployed and reconfigured for a variety of futures

**CONTINUITY:** Link the parks into a larger system, including filling “the gaps” as needed





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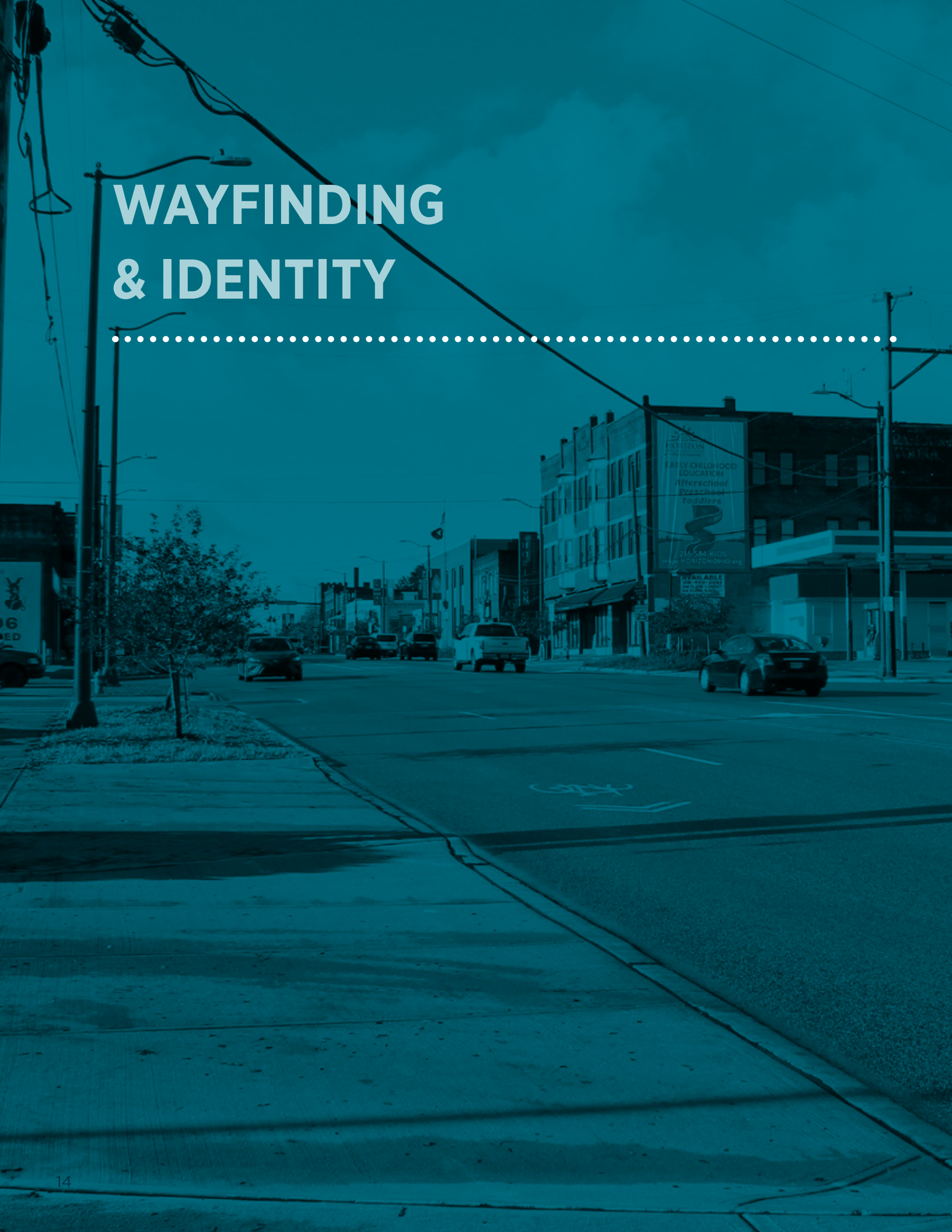
**GREENING:** Extend the Parks into their neighborhoods & incorporate ecological best practices

**ACCESSIBILITY:** Create unique points of access, inviting exploration from a wide range of users

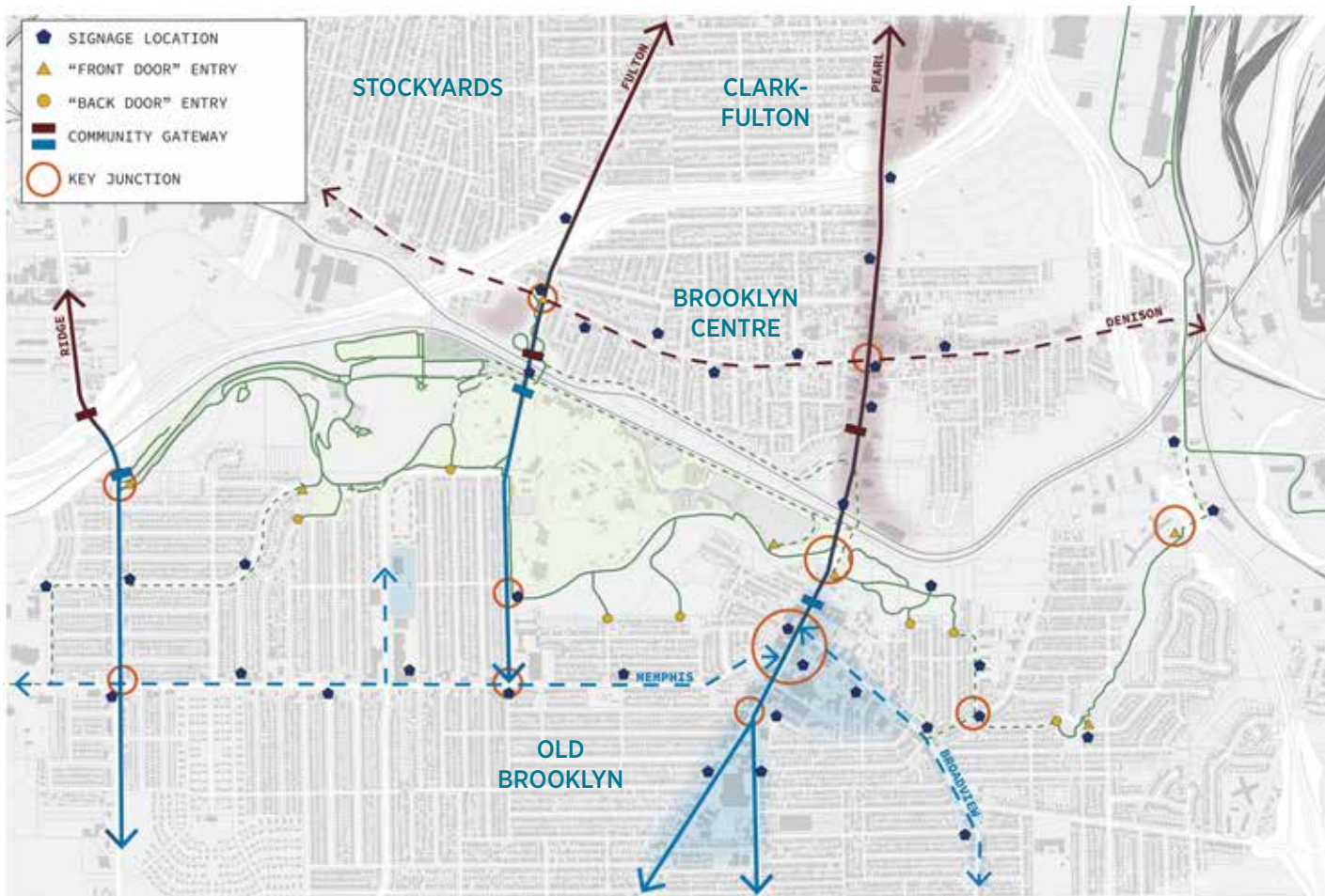


# WAYFINDING & IDENTITY

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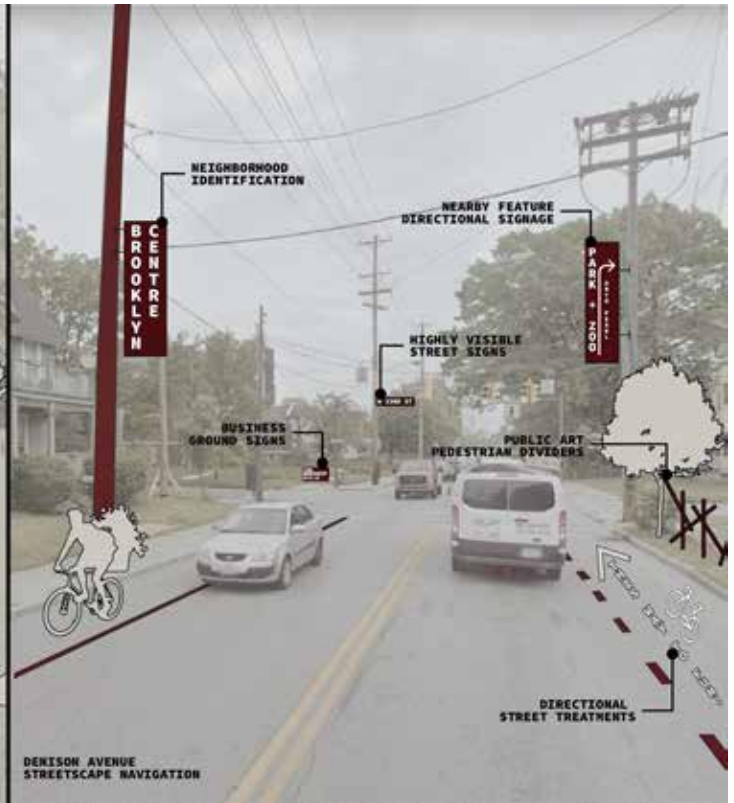
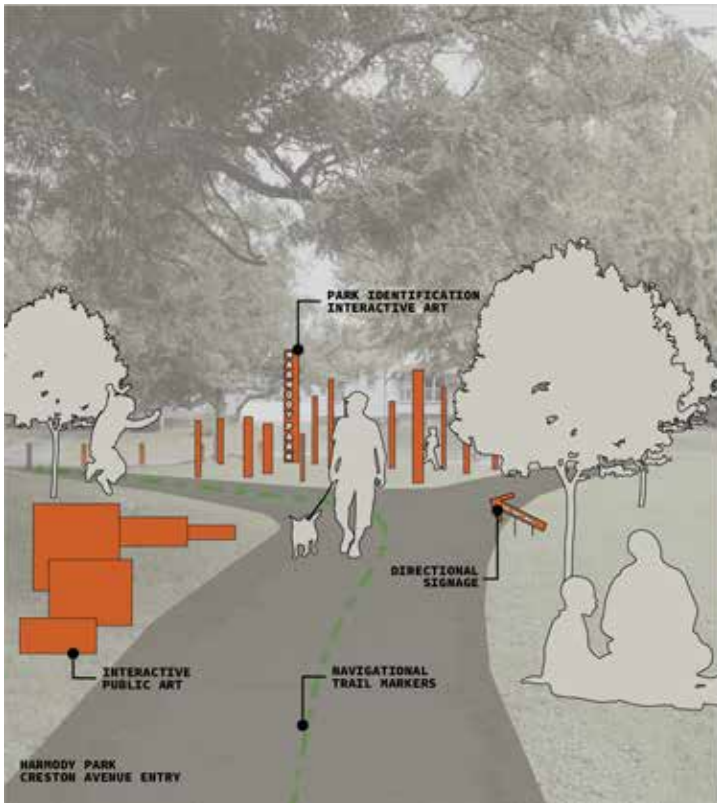
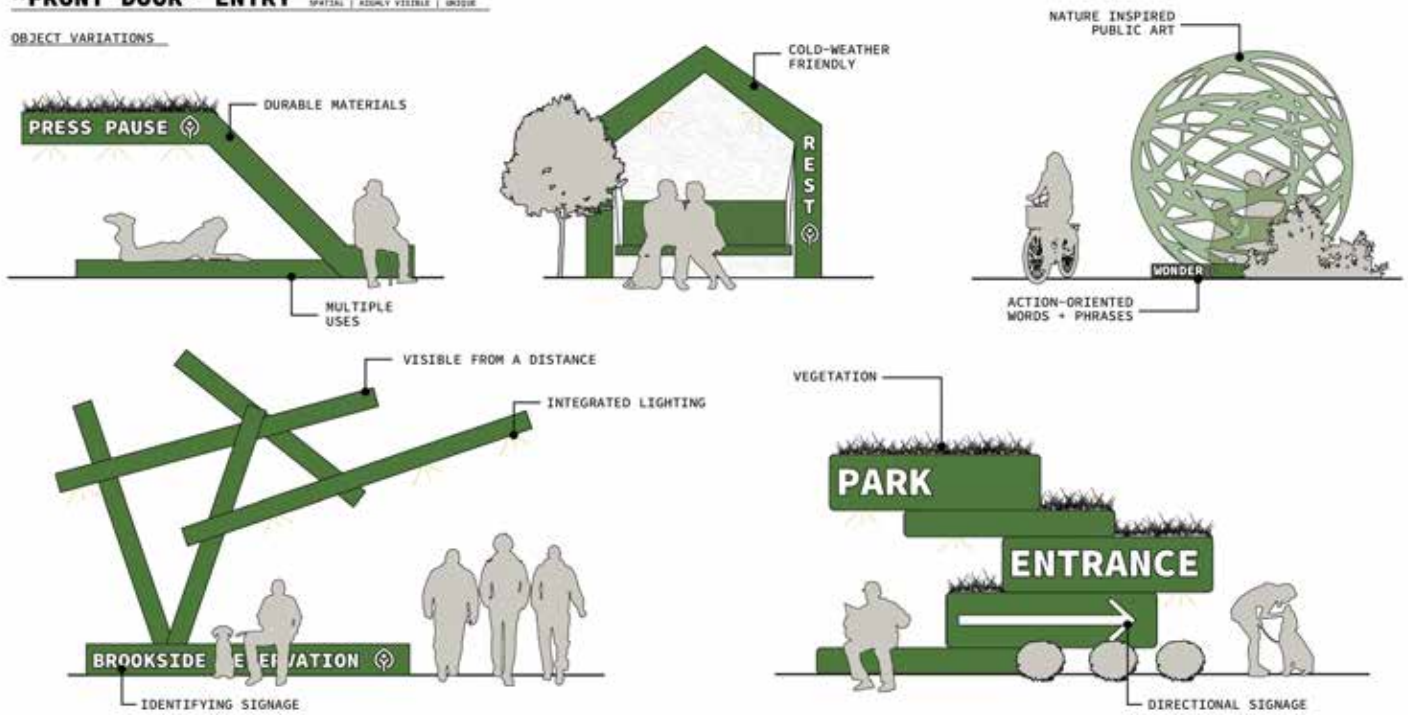
### IMPROVING ACCESS AND AWARENESS

The parks and trails network studied and developed across the course of the charrette weekend does not exist in a vacuum; as part of Cleveland’s urban fabric, it can provide essential recreation and public space, but only if residents know what’s there. Neighborhoods like Brooklyn Centre, Clark-Fulton, and Stockyards to the north and Old Brooklyn to the south need a systematic strategy of wayfinding to ensure that adjacent residents know exactly how and where to access their nearby public spaces.

A hierarchy of wayfinding, like the one diagrammed above, distinguishes between primary entries to the parks/trail network; “front door” entries from the adjacent neighborhoods; and smaller-scale “back door” entries. At each of these access points, a comprehensive and cohesive signage and identity strategy - fleshed out in the next few pages - indicates to residents that they’re on the right path.

**“FRONT DOOR” ENTRY** SPATIAL | VISIBLY | USABLE

OBJECT VARIATIONS



**STREETS, PARKS, SEATING, PUBLIC ART**

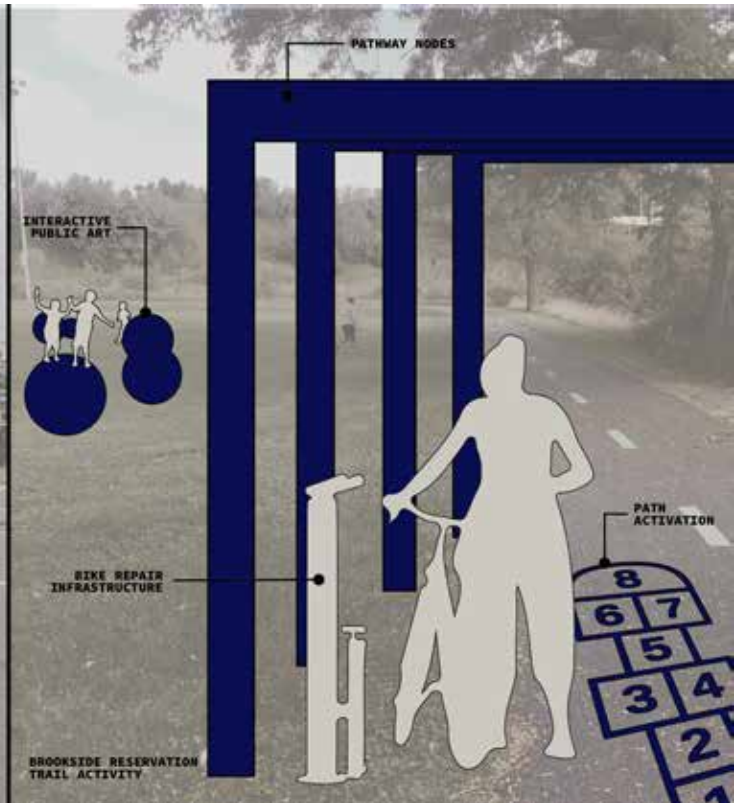
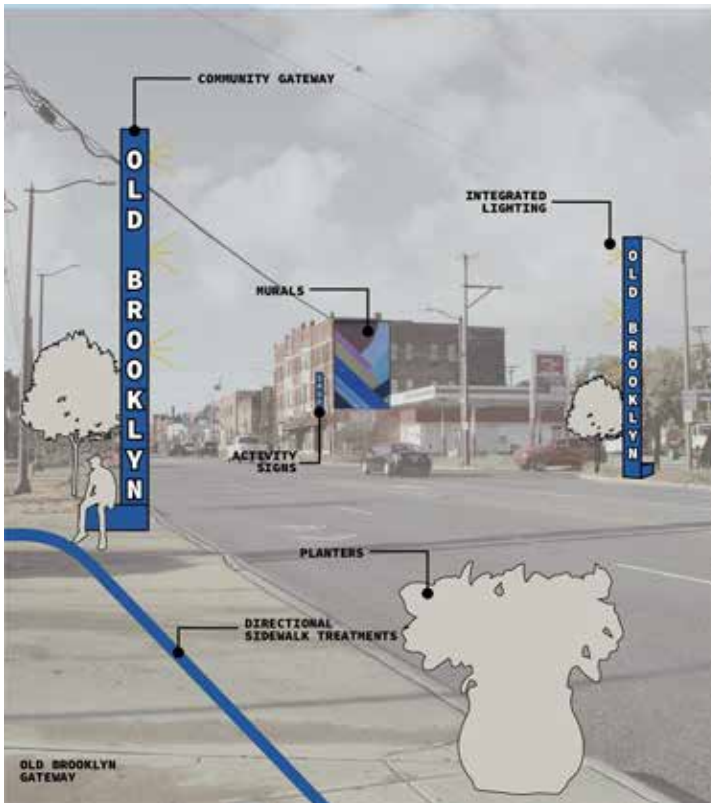
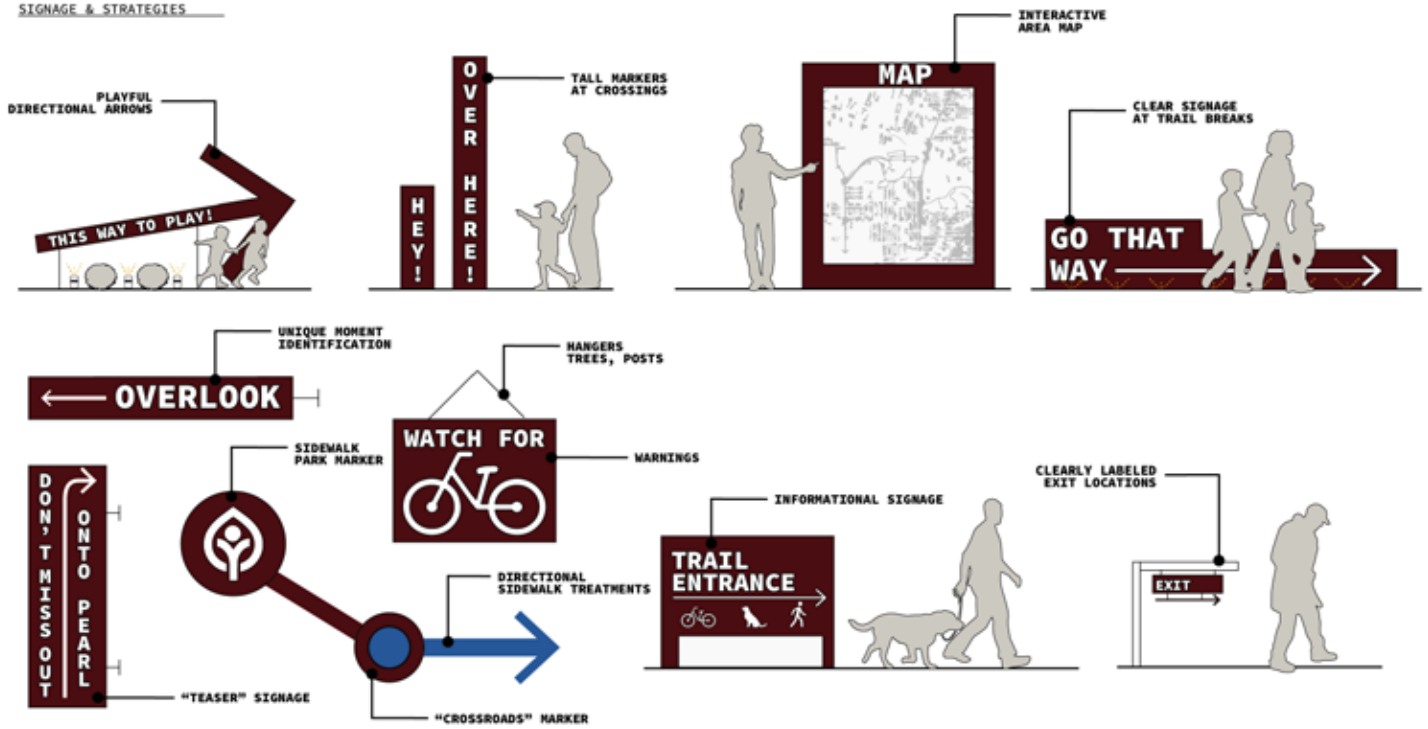
At any point along the Brookside Trail & Park network visitors should understand that they're part of a larger system, and have no problems following the pathways - even if they're also in urban neighborhoods. Banners, street striping, public art, lighting, interactive sculpture, plantings, and other elements can all be coordinated to ensure easy navigation and discovery.



# NAVIGATION + WAYFINDING

CLARIFY | EYE-CATCHING | VIBRANT | INFORMATIVE | FUN

## SIGNAGE & STRATEGIES



### PLAY ON THE METROPARKS IDENTITY

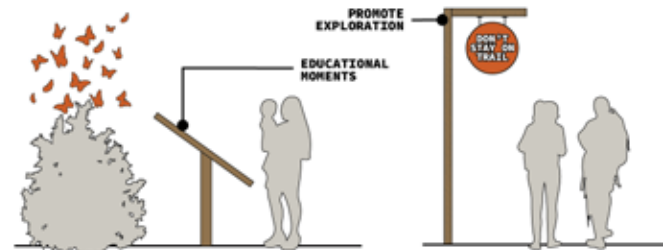
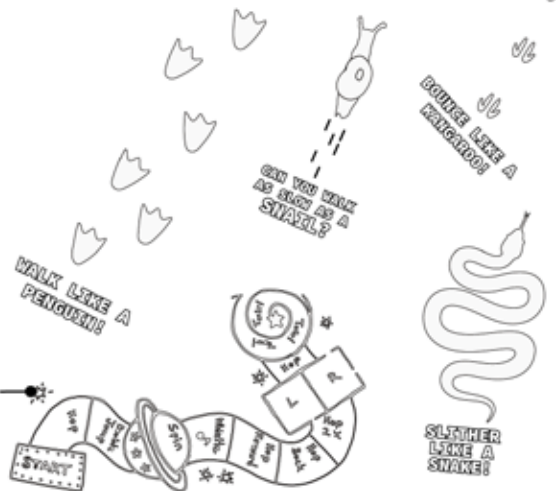
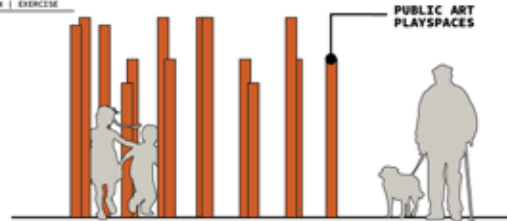
Some trail connections, signage, maps, and other components can build on the strong identity of the Metroparks brand, but also integrate them into their adjacent neighborhoods. In the example above, parks/trail signage adopts the Old Brooklyn color scheme for a gateway into the parks/trails network which crosses Pearl Rd.



**ENGAGEMENT + ACTIVATION**

VARIOUS SCALES | FUN | PUBLIC ART | ACTIVE PARTICIPATION | EXERCISE

STRATEGIES

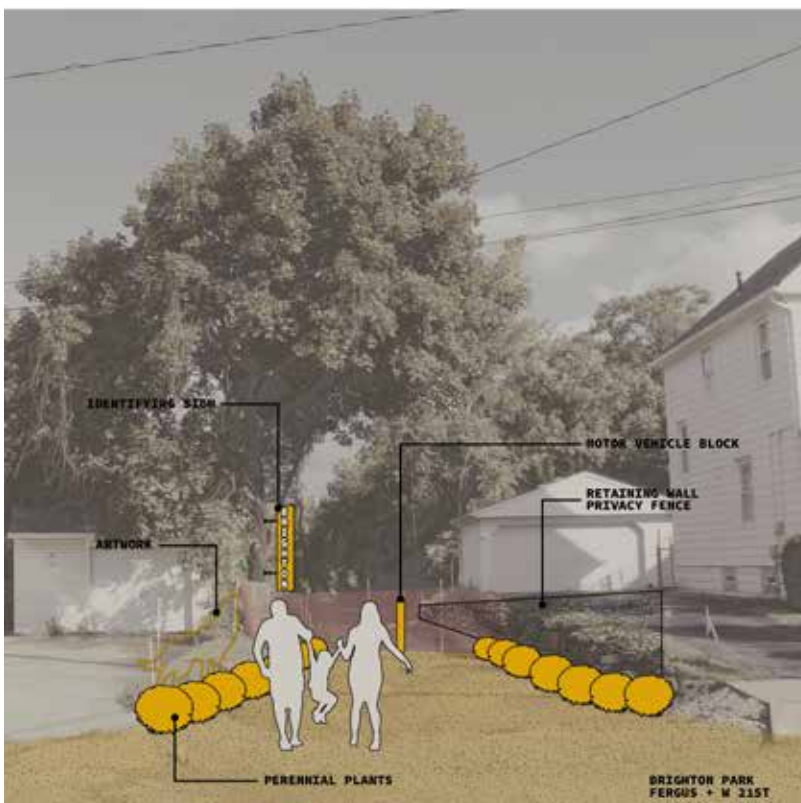
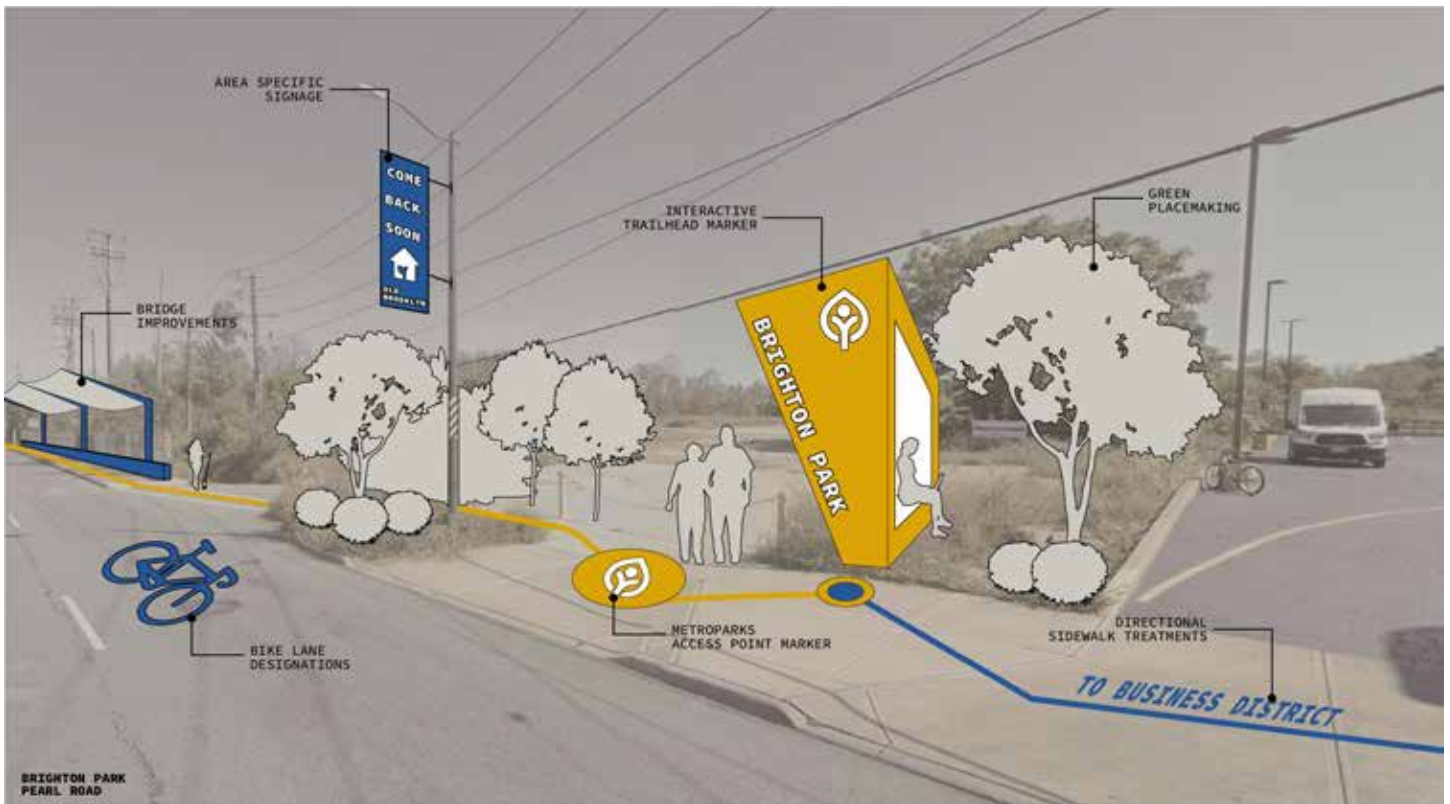


ACTIVATE THE PATHWAYS

**INTEGRATING ACTIVE PLAY**

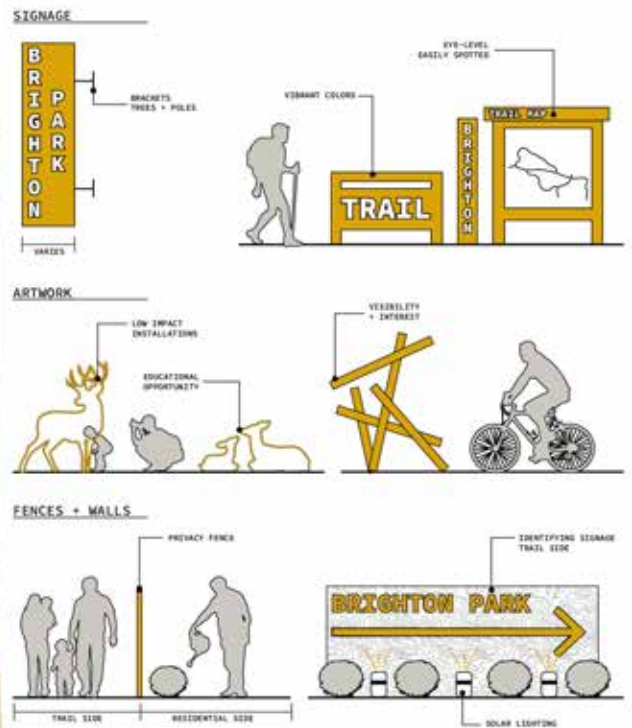
Making signage/wayfinding elements playful and engaging could draw in a wider range of audiences, as well as strengthening the “active play” brand of the more urban Cleveland Metroparks reservations.





**“BACK DOOR” ENTRY**

NON-IMPALEVE | EYE CATCHING | COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT



**GATEWAYS AND BACK DOORS**

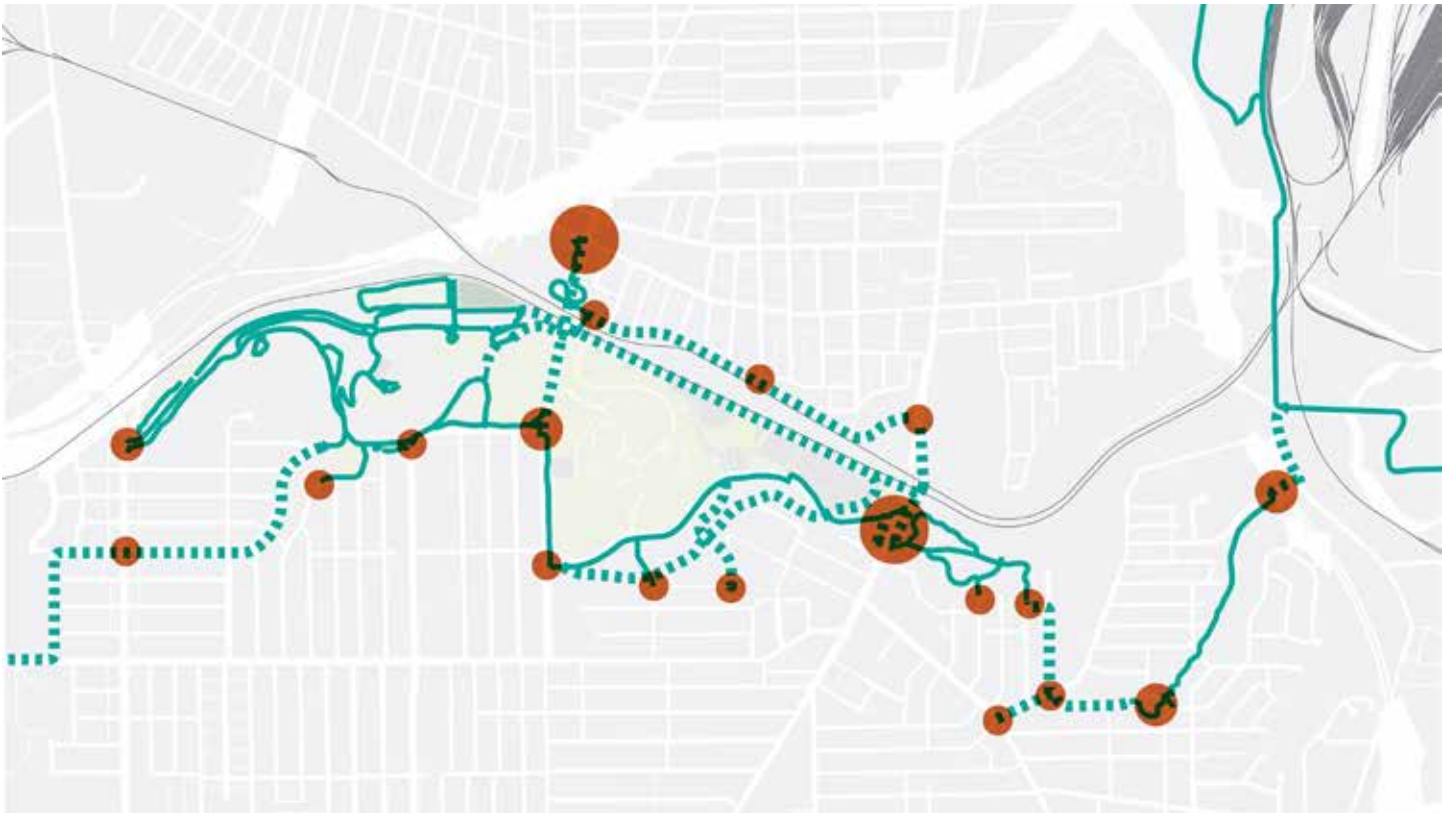
The hierarchy of access illustrated here means that a few primary gateway points - including at Pearl Rd/Brighton Park, *top* - will receive more comprehensive and larger-scale improvements, while neighborhood-scale “back door” entries (*opposite top*) need minimal additions to subtly invite neighbors to cross from their backyards to their adjacent parks.



# CONNECTING THE PARKS







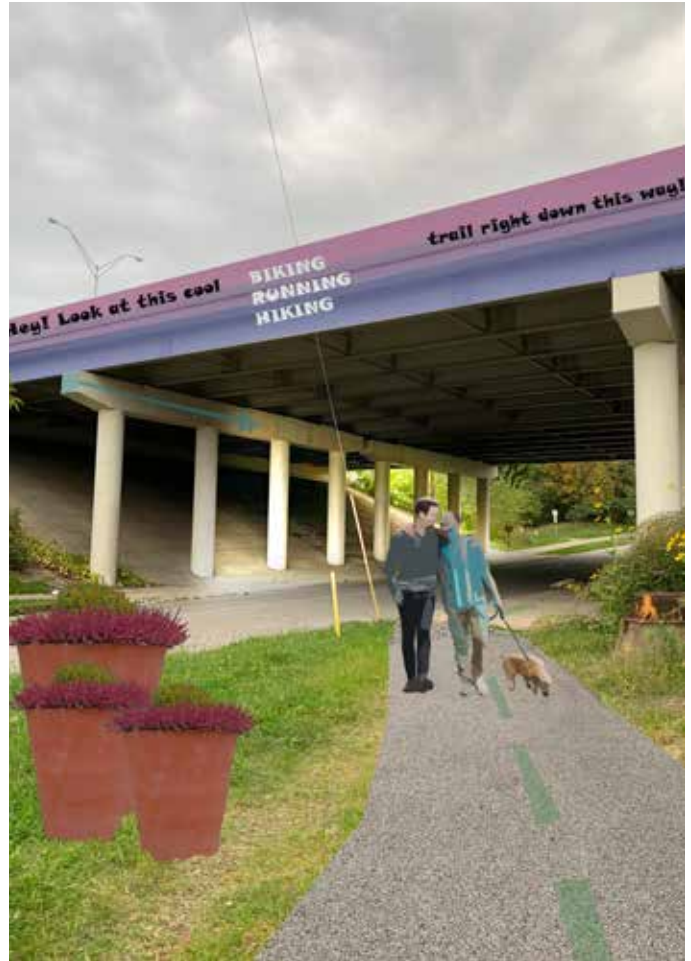
### ADDING TRAILS & STRENGTHENING ACCESS

Much of the trail and park network studied already exists, and more is planned, including a spur from the Towpath Trail to connect with the Treadaway Creek trail. However, there are other gaps in the trail network that the charrette participants explored, indicated in the dashed lines; and smaller-scale neighborhood entries or overlooks into the park system were explored.

The following spreads illustrate how an urban explorer might venture from the Towpath Trail in the Cuyahoga Valley into this southern parks system - to Harmody Park, Brighton Park, the Metroparks Zoo,

and Brookside Reservation - and at what points in this network there may need to be stronger physical improvements in order to maintain their continuity in the system.

Additionally, improving connections from this network into its adjacent neighborhoods will be crucial. The two primary points of access requiring stronger entries are indicated above in the largest bubbles: the intersection at Fulton/Denison; and the crossing at Pearl Rd just south of the Metroparks Zoo. Other, smaller-scale entries can also help increase access, use, and awareness.

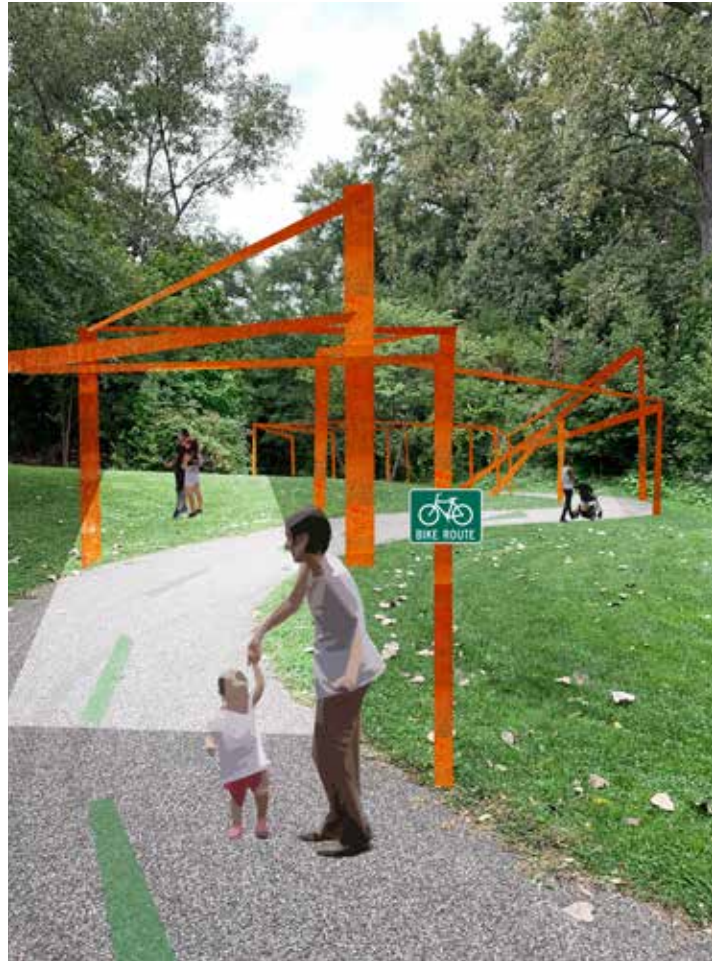


**TOWPATH TRAIL TO TREADAWAY CREEK**

The Towpath Trail connects over 100 miles of Northeast Ohio and runs just east of Old Brooklyn in the Cuyahoga River Valley. Its current linkages into Old Brooklyn, however, are unmarked and uninviting (*RIGHT*). Adding colorful art, landscaping, signage, and clear trail wayfinding (*TOP*) indicates to visitors that safe and attractive parks lie just beyond.





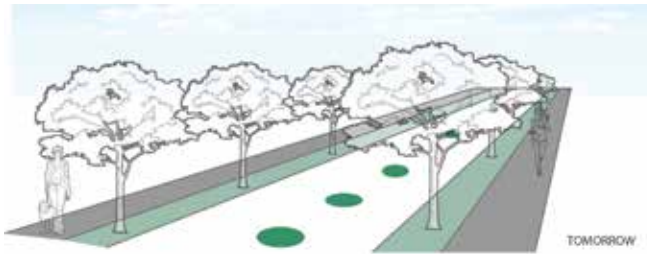


**TREADAWAY CREEK TRAIL TO HARMODY PARK**

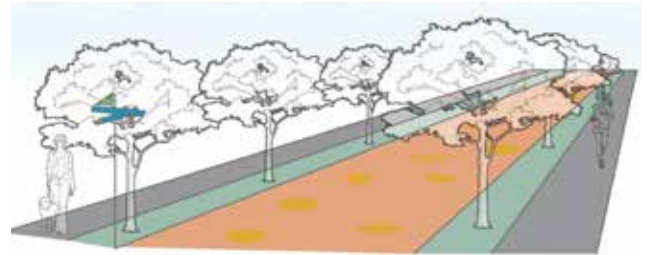
The Treadaway Creek Trail leads from the Cuyahoga Valley up into the Old Brooklyn neighborhood at Harmody Park, and is a beautiful and important connector. However, its entries - both at the Valley and Harmody Park ends - are not well-marked or inviting. Adding colorful and well-lit public art, in conjunction with wayfinding, brings visitors up from the Valley into the neighborhood.

Additionally, Harmody Park itself seems ripe for improvements, both in active and more passive recreation. Ideas for making Harmody Park feel a more seamless component of the Towpath-to-Brighton connection are at left.

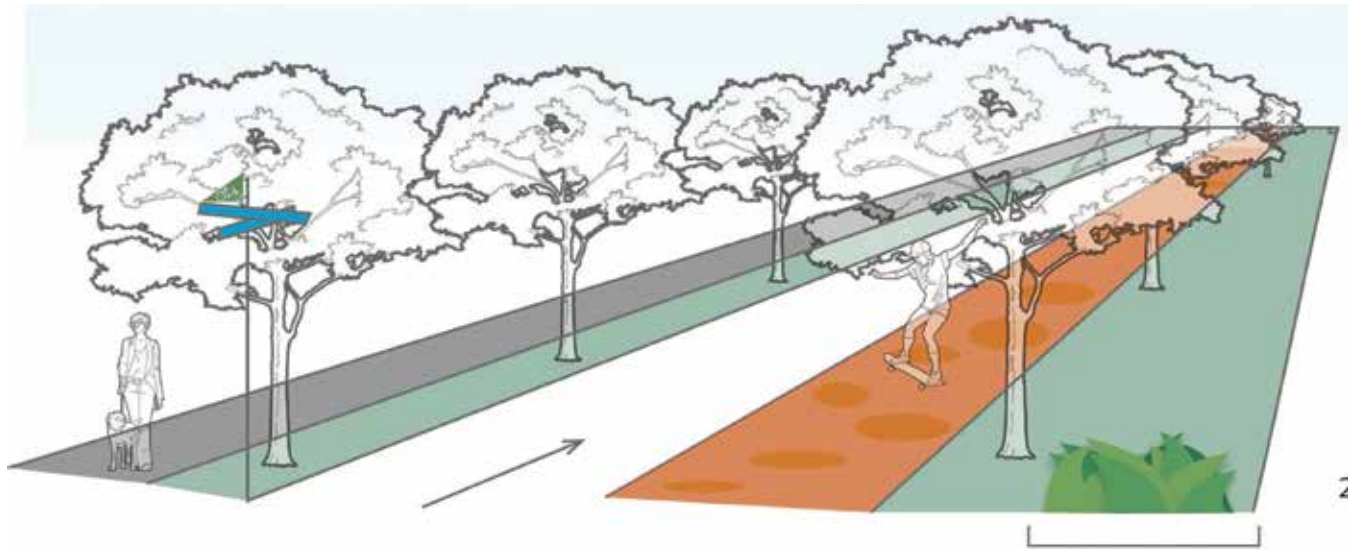




SHORT-TERM: Trail striping for bike lane



MID-TERM: Integrated on-road multiuse trail



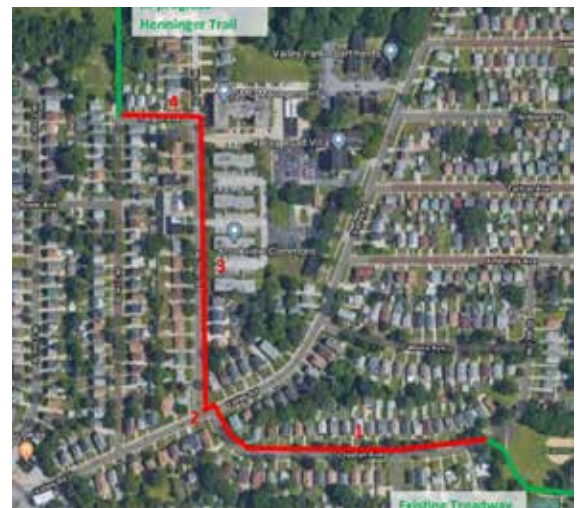
LONG-TERM: Complete & Green Street

Bioretention Planters

**HARMODY PARK TO BRIGHTON PARK:  
BIKE BOULEVARDS**

The gap in connection between Harmody Park and Brighton Park, which runs through the Old Brooklyn neighborhood (*RIGHT*), could be filled with an on-street bike boulevard / multiuse path that still allows vehicular traffic for local homeowners. The existing street is shown at lower right; an on-street bike boulevard treatment could begin with a simple striping technique that plays with the familiar and well-recognized Metroparks Trail striping (*TOP LEFT*).

in a few years, the designated streets could add in more robust multiuse paths and some colorful signage (*TOP RIGHT*). Long-term, these streets could receive a complete and green streets treatment, including stormwater capture and rain gardens, in order to signify that these new types of urban streets are also part of a larger parks network (*ABOVE*).







**BRIGHTON PARK**

As the Western Reserve Land Conservancy and Cleveland Metroparks complete initial construction on Brighton Park, a former landfill site, additional plantings, pathways, and light-touch seating and structural elements could be arranged along the pathways in clusters visible from each other. Explorers would be drawn along the pathways by the visual lure of new and unique installations, some of which could highlight natural play, pollinators, or unusual materials, like the examples shown above.





### BRIGHTON PARK TO METROPARKS ZOO

The area of Pearl Rd in Old Brooklyn adjacent to the new Brighton Park and south of Wildlife Way is the primary gateway into the south Cleveland Parks network, but the built environment here is not necessarily reflective of nearby recreational opportunities. *TOP*: New higher-density mixed-use development at this intersection can take on an explicitly Green character: green roofs, raingardens, bioswales, distinct street trees, landscaping, and other elements add to the larger story that this is where the Metroparks and the City come together.

Trail crossings can be powerful reorienting tools for visitors. Even in an urban context, some minimal but distinct graphic and crosswalk components help alert drivers and pedestrians to a new urban experience. *RIGHT*, the Indianapolis Cultural Trail, which traverses downtown, is clearly marked even when it crosses vehicular traffic, creating an alternative network to the existing street grid. Pearl Rd could receive something similar where the Trail crosses from Brighton Park to Wildlife Way.







### METROPARKS ZOO TO NEIGHBORHOODS

The Metroparks Zoo, while well-used and well-loved by the larger Cleveland region, contributes to the separation between the Brooklyn Centre and Old Brooklyn neighborhoods. The Zoo is fenced off for security reasons, and this, in addition to existing rail and water infrastructure, makes traversing the Big Creek ravine difficult. This privacy does help the Brookside/Zoo system feel set apart from its urban surroundings, but it also further divides the city.

The Pensacola Steps on the south side of Wildlife Way are a lovely existing connection to the Old Brooklyn neighborhood, but they are fairly tucked away. Expanding access and visibility across the parkway could help the Zoo feel more a part of the neighborhood (TOP).

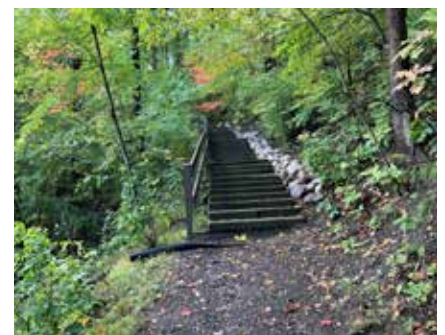
On the North side of the Zoo, in the Brooklyn Centre neighborhood, if true physical connections are not possible due to existing infrastructure, dead-end neighborhood streets could be transformed into well-lit and well-marked overlooks for residents to look down into the Zoo and observe the animals below (LEFT).





### VERTICAL CONNECTIONS

One of the primary barriers to connecting into and out of Brookside Reservation is the steep natural topography around the Big Creek Ravine. A few vertical connections do already exist in and around the Park: the Pensacola Steps, from the Old Brooklyn neighborhood north to Wildlife Way (*RIGHT*); and an in-park WPA-era staircase and overlook (*BOTTOM RIGHT*). Using these vertical connections as inspiration, additional overlooks, ramps, bridges, and staircases could connect at key points along the southern bluff, as shown in the map below. Though accessibility can be a challenge with staircases, broadening the palette of vertical connections can make the full range of Parks activities available to more visitors. *OPPOSITE*, the Tetsuo Kondo Pathway in Kadiog Park served as inspiration for a similar catwalk installation on the Brookside Bluffs.







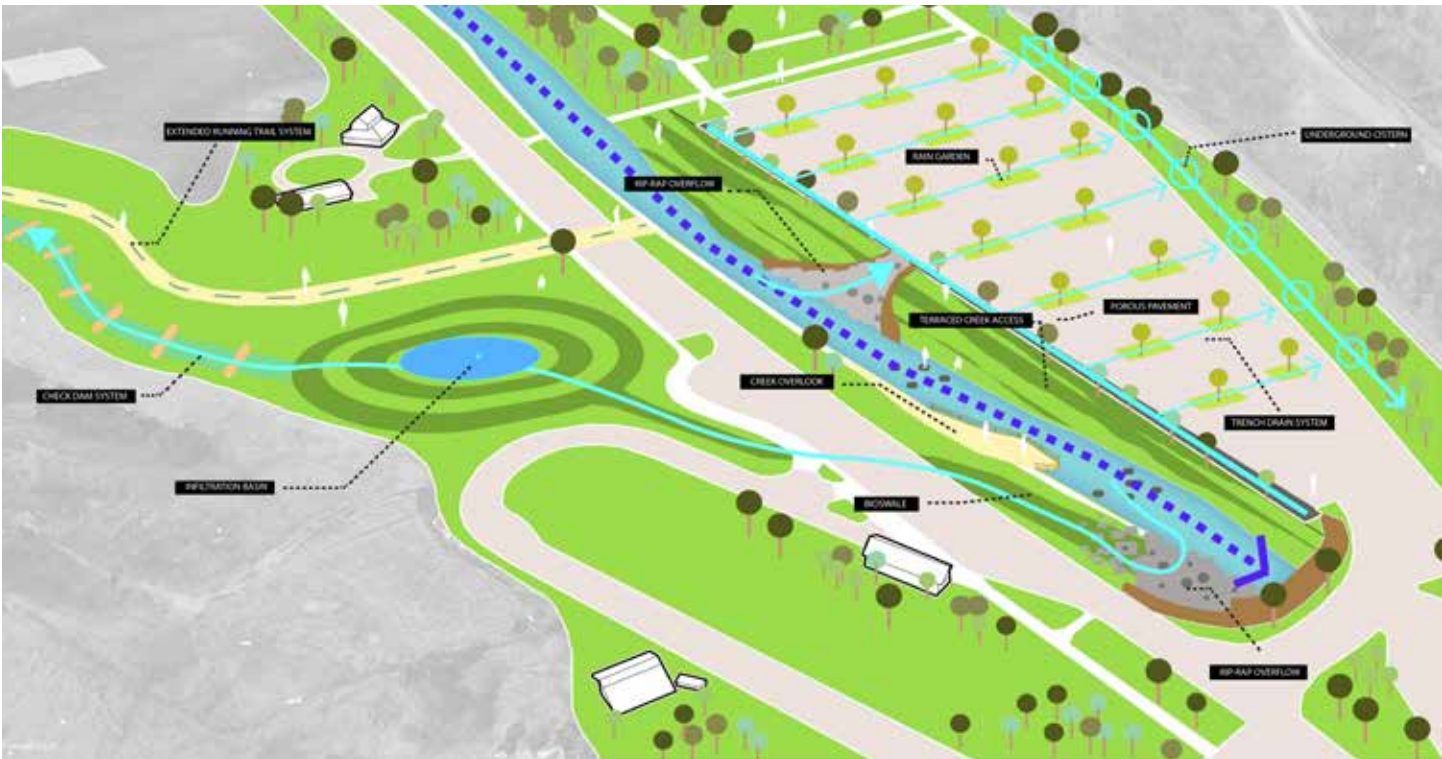




### LIGHTING ART

Along the trail network and at key points in the parks, integrating lighting art throughout creates a cohesive sense of place and attracts neighbors to keep exploring. TOP, linear sculptural elements might light up whenever passers-by touch them, encouraging interaction. BELOW, examples of lighting art that highlight landscape and trail elements in urban places.





**STORMWATER MANAGEMENT**

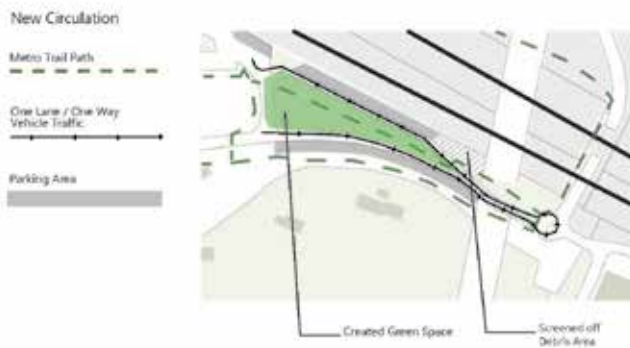
Big Creek, which flows through Brookside Reservation, is known to occasionally flood. The parking lots adjacent to Big Creek are currently slated to receive green infrastructure retrofits, but the entirety of the broad floodplain area of Brookside could also become a showcase for a variety of stormwater management techniques. Some of the ideas shown above include terracing the banks and building overlooks into the Creek to highlight public access to the water itself, and adding a large circular infiltration basin in the open field between the baseball field and the zoo shuttle area.





### RAILROAD BRIDGE IMPROVEMENTS

The north side of Brookside Reservation is currently only accessible to the Brooklyn Centre neighborhood under a railroad bridge by the back service area of the Metroparks Zoo. Park visitors might not even realize that the bridge, quite a beautiful structure, is there and open to the public. Creating a series of zoo-themed art and lighting installations along this “back door” from Brookside north to the Denison/ Fulton intersection would lead visitors on a more cohesive and welcoming path from the valley floor below the dividing infrastructure and into the neighborhood beyond.







### BROOKSIDE STADIUM

The historic Brookside Stadium on the southwest intersection of Fulton/Denison, in the Brooklyn Centre neighborhood, is a natural bowl that can act as an amphitheatre. Currently the space, a baseball field, is underutilized and routinely holds standing water in its field.



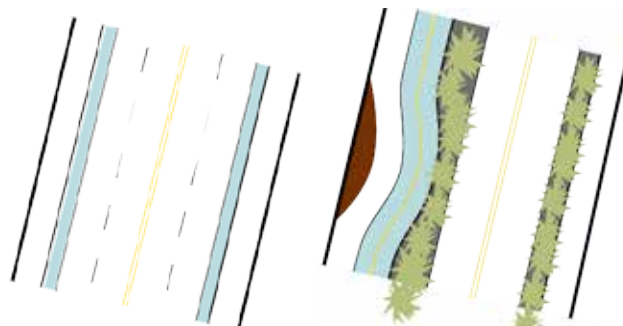
Terracing shown above and at left, built into the natural hillside, creates a more formal series of spaces for recreation and entertainment. In the long term a canopy amphitheatre structure could shelter performances and seasonal activities like ice skating. At the top of the terraced area, a larger hardscaped plaza hosts pop-up events, food trucks, festivals, and other high-visibility activities that invite neighbors down the hill to the park below.





### BROOKSIDE TO BROOKLYN CENTRE

The Fulton Bridge, which spans across Brookside and connects the Old Brooklyn neighborhood to Brooklyn Centre and Clark-Fulton, is an essential link from the Parks network to the larger city. However, the sidewalks that currently serve pedestrians, along the bridge itself and particularly at the intersections north and south of the bridge (Fulton/Denison and Fulton Parkway/Park Dr), are narrow and treacherous next to higher-speed traffic. As the parks are connected via a cohesive trail network to each other and to the Towpath beyond, safe and inviting pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure is crucial. The drawings shown here illustrate retrofits that include landscape buffers, clear crosswalks, paving treatments, lighting, and clear signalization to emphasize safety for all modes of transit.

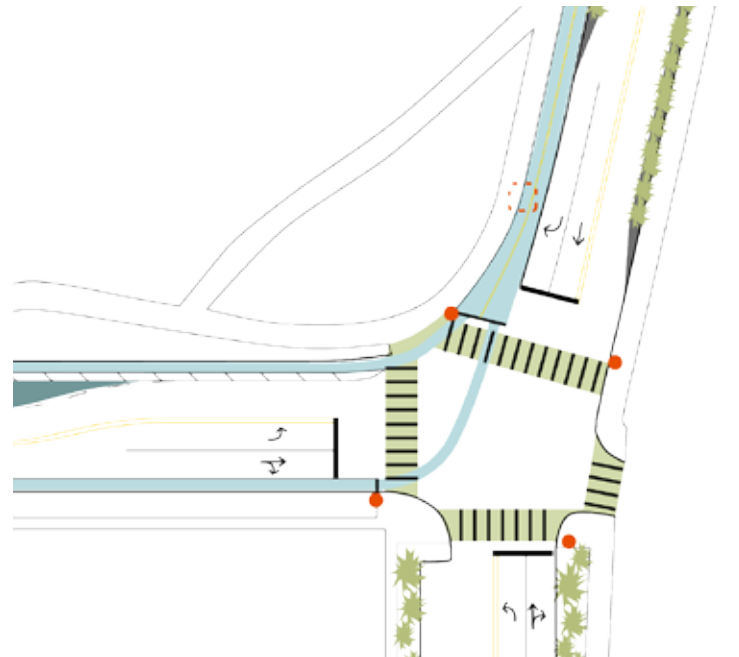
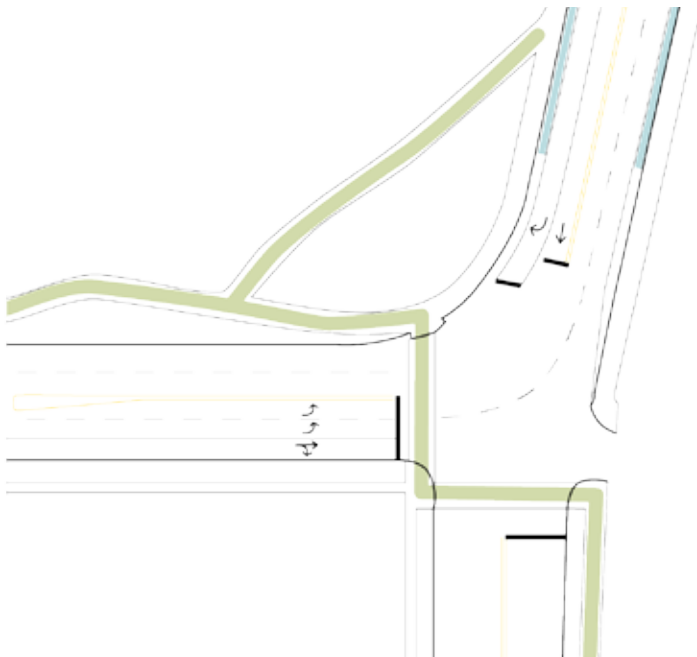
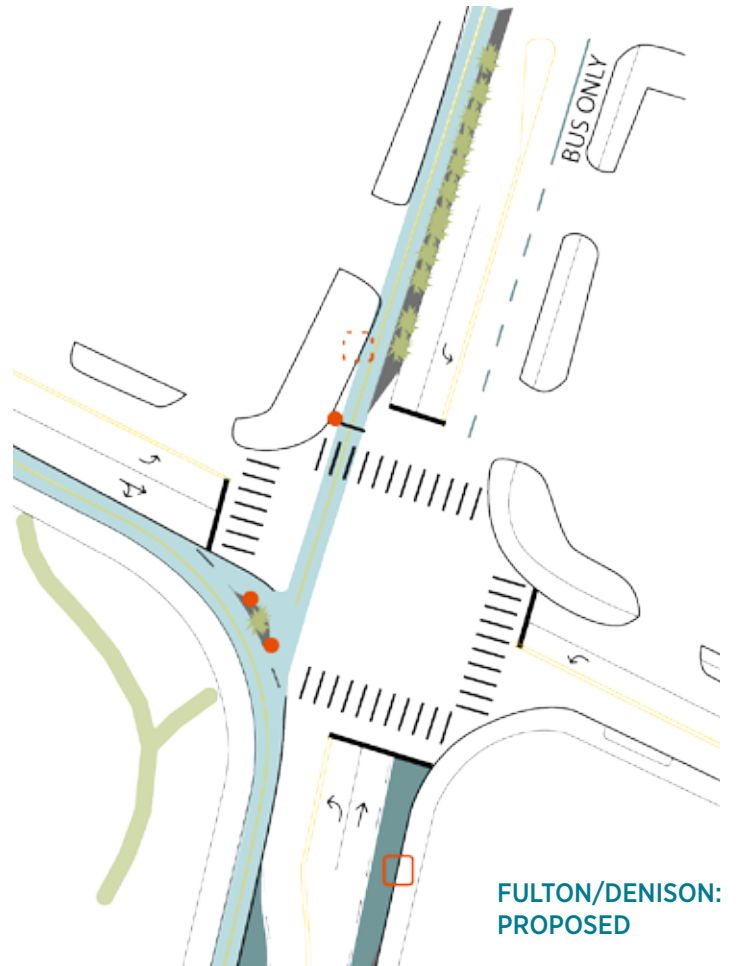
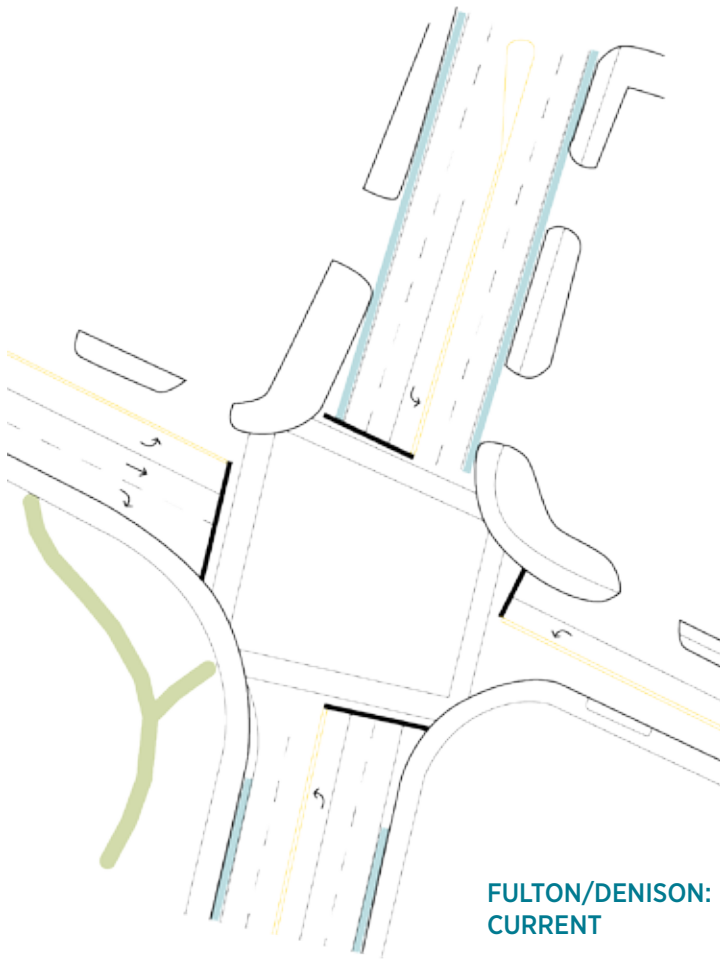


**FULTON BRIDGE:  
CURRENT**

**FULTON BRIDGE:  
PROPOSED**







# FOUR-SEASON USES IN BROOKSIDE

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### WINTER IN A PANDEMIC

As a Great Lakes city, Cleveland has cold and variable winters. Accordingly the Cleveland Metroparks are programmed and accessible throughout the year. However, considering all four seasons in potential uses and access is even more critically important during a health crisis that keeps residents from gyms, rec centers, and other interior social spaces. Brookside, Brighton, and their larger greenways are hugely important winter amenities for local Clevelanders in need of outdoor access and fresh air, even in freezing temperatures.

Participants in the 2020 charrette explored ideas about smaller-scale and incremental infrastructure for all four seasons, including warming huts, pop-up booths, and festival amenities. Additionally, winter-friendly sports like sledding, ice skating, and skiing - perhaps already conducted on-site informally - could garner wider institutional support and tie into other citywide events like Brite Winter. These recreational opportunities are illustrated on the following spread in the sites where they best layer onto Brookside/Brighton Parks' existing conditions.



### MARKETS & SLEDDING

**TOP:** A holiday pop-up market with local crafters is highlighted with lighting in the landscaping, activating one of the larger parking lots in Brookside. Warming huts could be distributed throughout the parks/greenway network to allow winter explorers to fight the chill.

**RIGHT:** The Brookside Stadium hillside is already used informally for sledding by Brooklyn Centre neighbors; adding lighting, a sled rental, and some other light improvements encourages further winter fun.





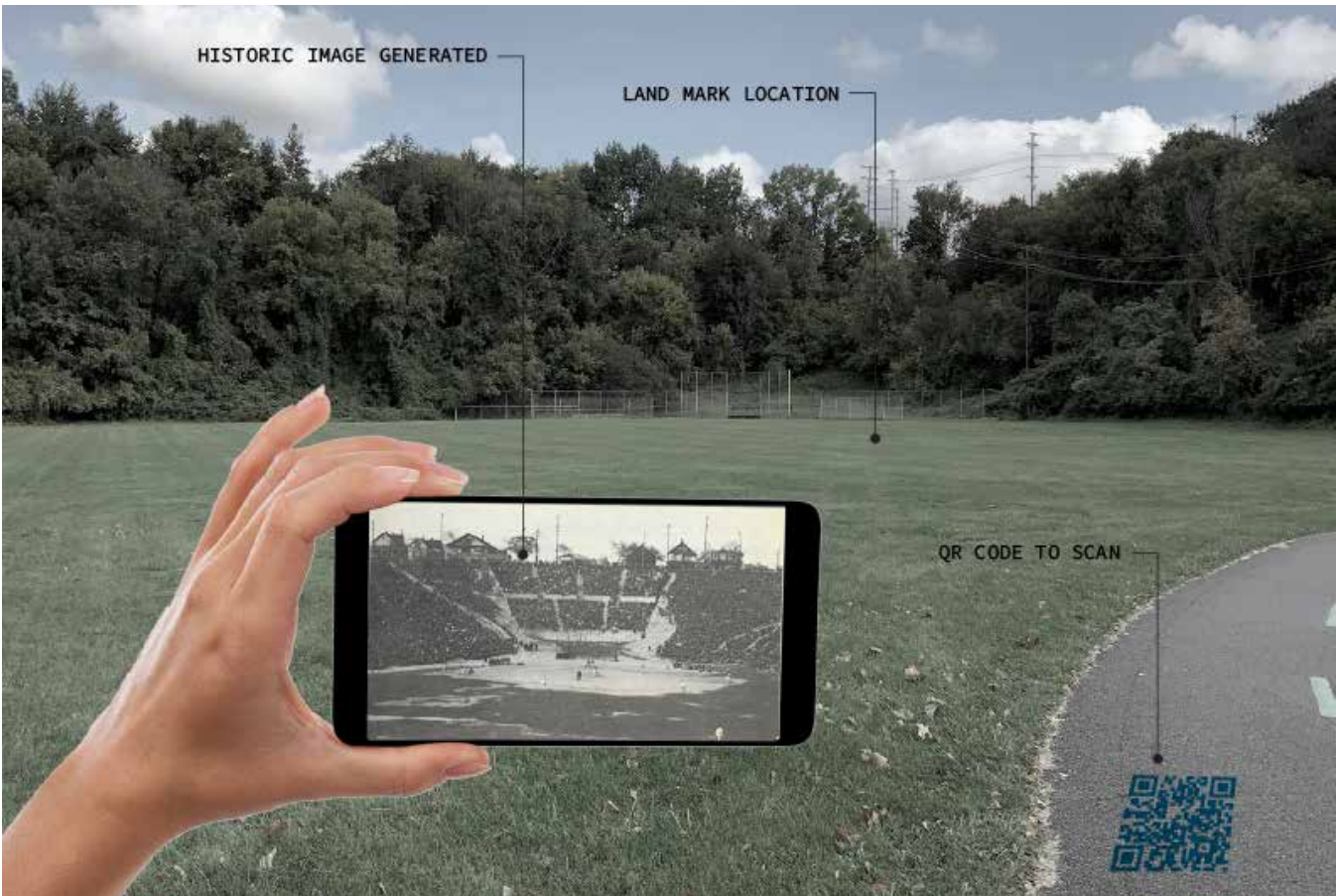


### FESTIVALS & FREEZEWAYS

**TOP:** In cold temperatures Brookside’s northern running track could transform into a Freezeaway for ice skating, lined with benches equipped with heating elements, a pop-up cocoa stand, and festive lighting.

**LEFT:** The intersection at Fulton/Denison in the Brooklyn Centre neighborhood lacks a strong inviting presence, despite being a major entry into Brookside. Adding a small performance structure for music or theater productions signals to curious neighbors that Brookside is open to the public even in deep winter. This outpost could tie into larger citywide festivals like Brite Winter.





**ONGOING ENGAGEMENT**

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted every aspect of Clevelanders' lives, including in-person engagement. However, it also encouraged alternative methods for engaging with the public - whether solo or in small groups, analog or digital, or other.

**TOP:** As one of the oldest parks in Cleveland, Brookside has a lot of history to tell. QR codes installed in sites of historical interest could link to corresponding images and information for visitors to access with their smartphones.

**LEFT:** Throughout the pandemic and beyond, in-place engagement tools like a text message-based system installed at the parks would help understand fluctuating community needs in order to respond in real time.



# PROGRAMMING IDEAS FOR BRIGHTON PARK

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## WINTER

Winter programming will help residents stay active and engage with their neighbors during Cleveland's coldest and darkest months. Programming ideas to draw people to Brighton Park include:

- Winter solstice celebration at Brighton Park with lighting installations, pop-up events, and warming huts along main walkways.
- The Brighton Park overlook offers a four-season view. Park visitors could be encouraged to build snowman along the overlook making the park feel more 'inhabited' in the winter months







## SPRING

Spring is an ideal time for people to experience the park as the weather gets warmer. Spring events could include:

- Spring Spin at Brighton Park - partner with Spin (or other electric scooter company) to offer the free use of scooters through the park.
- Take your Park to Work Day - Flexible work stations, with basic office amenities like wi-fi and power outlets, could be added to Brighton Park along the Pearl Road frontage. This could also provide students in the neighborhood with a fun and safe place to do their homework
- Arbor Day Tree Plant-a-Thon - Adding native tree seedlings to Brighton Park could become an annual tradition.
- A total solar eclipse will occur in Cleveland on April 8, 2024. People from all over the country will come to the city for this experience, so it's not too soon to begin planning for eclipse viewing in the Metroparks..



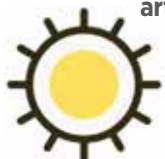




## SUMMER

Summer is the season of peak park usage. Summer programs could include:

- Even public spaces that comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act can sometimes have barriers that limit access for older residents and people with disabilities. Maximum Accessible Housing of Ohio (MAHO) organizes scavenger hunts that teach people how to recognize and barriers commonly found in public spaces. An accessibility scavenger hunt in Brighton Park might identify ways to make the park even more inclusive.
- Bats help control mosquitos and are an important part of the urban ecosystem. Bat Box Workshops will expand habitat areas and may help people overcome their fear of bats.
- Brighton Park was built on a landfill site. Archeology workshops could help people learn about what lies underground, perhaps by seeding areas of the park where the soil is clean with interesting, landfill-related artifacts.







### AUTUMN

As the leaves begin to turn, Fall color will be beautiful in Brighton Park. This is a good time to remind people that the park is open year round and offers ways to stay active and healthy in the cold, dark months ahead.

- A design/build competition for temporary shelters could help enliven the park and extend the park seasoning.
- Warm Hands/Cold Noses socially distanced dog walks could be organized to provide a fun and safe way to socialize with neighbors. A coffee/hot cocoa cart would make the event more fun and comfortable as the weather gets colder.
- Thanksgiving Turkey Trot & Family Walk would promote physical activity and park enjoyment.





**SUPPORTED BY:**

Cleveland Metroparks



Old Brooklyn Community Development Corporation



Big Creek Connects



Western Reserve Land Conservancy



The Mastriana Endowment/  
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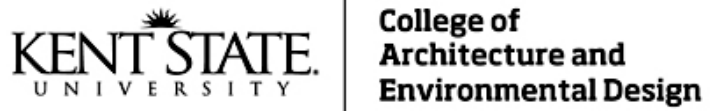
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## **2020 METROPARKS CHARRETTE**

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**Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative**

Kent State University

College of Architecture and Environmental Design