



BAINBRIDGE PARK MASTER PLAN

CITY OF FORT BRAGG | 2016

Bainbridge Park Master Plan

2016

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This project is informed by the insight and generosity of numerous members of the Fort Bragg community. The following individuals participated and contributed to the Bainbridge Park Master Plan:

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Introduction

Purpose

The Bainbridge Park Master Plan examines both existing and compatible new uses to create a balanced park that serves the nearby community while addressing the City's recreation needs. The Plan provides direction and implementation strategies to guide the development and operation of Bainbridge Park.

Guiding Principles

The Bainbridge Park Master Plan relies on the following documents for guidance:

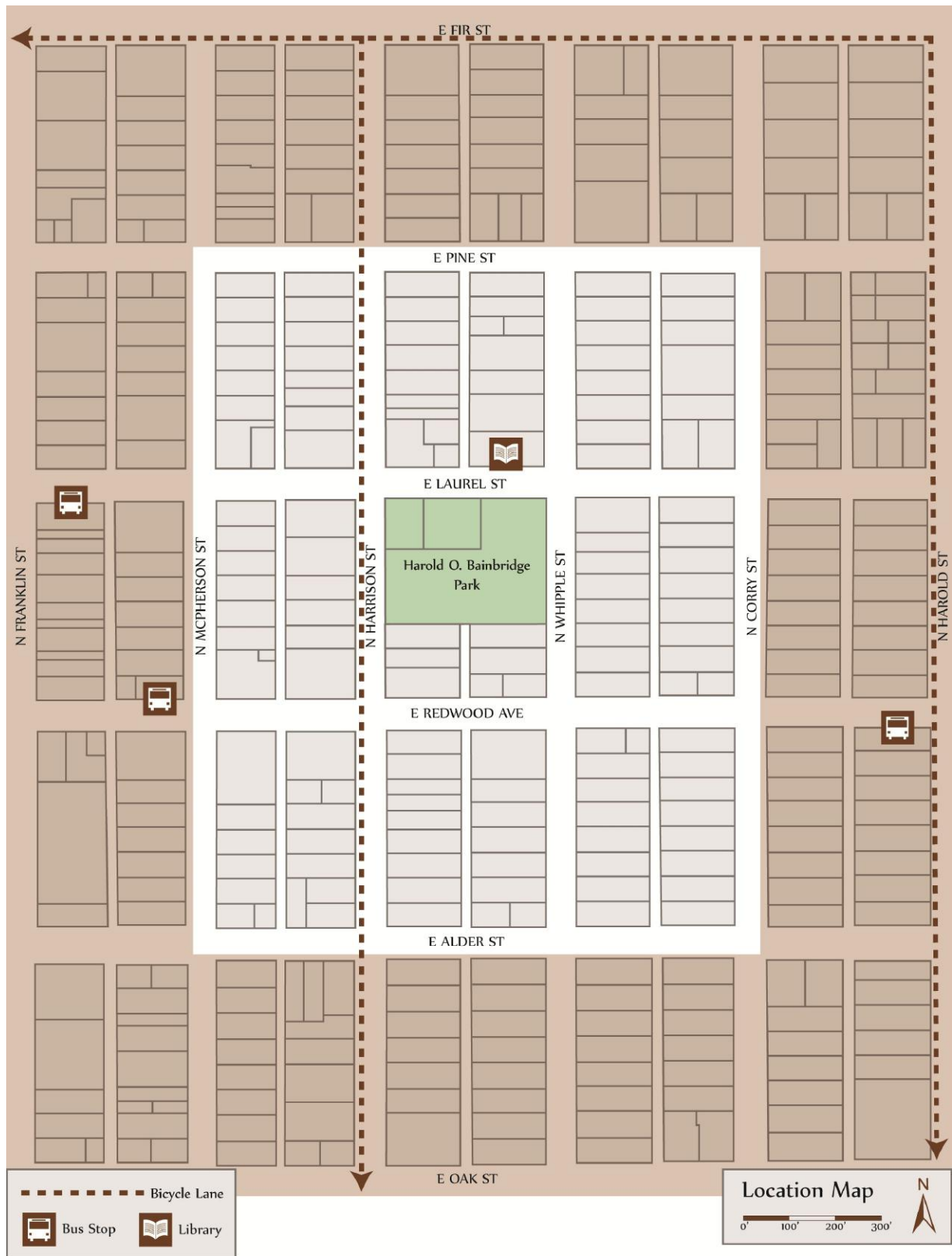
City of Fort Bragg Inland General Plan

The Inland General Plan specifically addresses open space and parks, and provides the goals, policies and programs to guide future development of City parks so that they meet the community's recreational needs. The following policies of the General Plan are applicable to the Bainbridge Park Master Plan.

- Policy OS-9.3: Recreational Facilities: Provide recreational facilities to meet the needs of all Fort Bragg citizens, especially children and teenagers.
- Program OS-9.3.1: Consider teen recreation needs when planning new or redesigned parks.
- Policy OS-9.4: Playground Facilities: Add or upgrade playground facilities at existing neighborhood parks.
- Program OS-9.4.1: Provide additional playground facilities and basketball courts at appropriate locations within neighborhoods.
- Goal OS-10: Develop park and recreation facilities with the coordination of other agencies and the public.
- Policy OS-10.4 Public Participation: Actively solicit public participation in the selection, design, and facilities planning for existing and future park sites.

City of Fort Bragg Inland Land Use and Development Code

The Inland Land Use and Development Code (ILUDC) maps Bainbridge Park in the Parks and Recreation zoning district, and limits allowable uses to recreational uses, the structures needed to support those uses, and facility and site maintenance. All of the uses and improvements proposed in the Bainbridge Park Master Plan are permitted uses consistent with the zoning district. Development of new structures will require Design Review to ensure consistency with the Citywide Design Guidelines.



Bainbridge Park Today

Site Description

The partially developed two-acre Harold O. Bainbridge Park is located in the north half of town, surrounded by a residential neighborhood with medium to very-high density residential development. The west half of the park is a large, undeveloped grassy lawn. Trees border the lawn along the west and north boundaries of the park. This half of the park is the least used and has the most potential for improvements and new facilities. See the **Existing Facilities Map** on the following page for more detail.

The eastern half of Bainbridge Park contains the Wiggly Giggly Playground, two tennis courts and a reduced size full-court basketball court. Public restrooms sit in the center of these uses, and are accessible from the east through the playground and from the west by the basketball court. A maintenance shed, which houses maintenance equipment and provides access to the utilities that serve the park, sits near the southern border of the park, west of the basketball court.

Veteran's Memorial Hall sits on the north end of the park, west of the playground. The building and surrounding area is Mendocino County property, and is not a subject of this Master Plan.

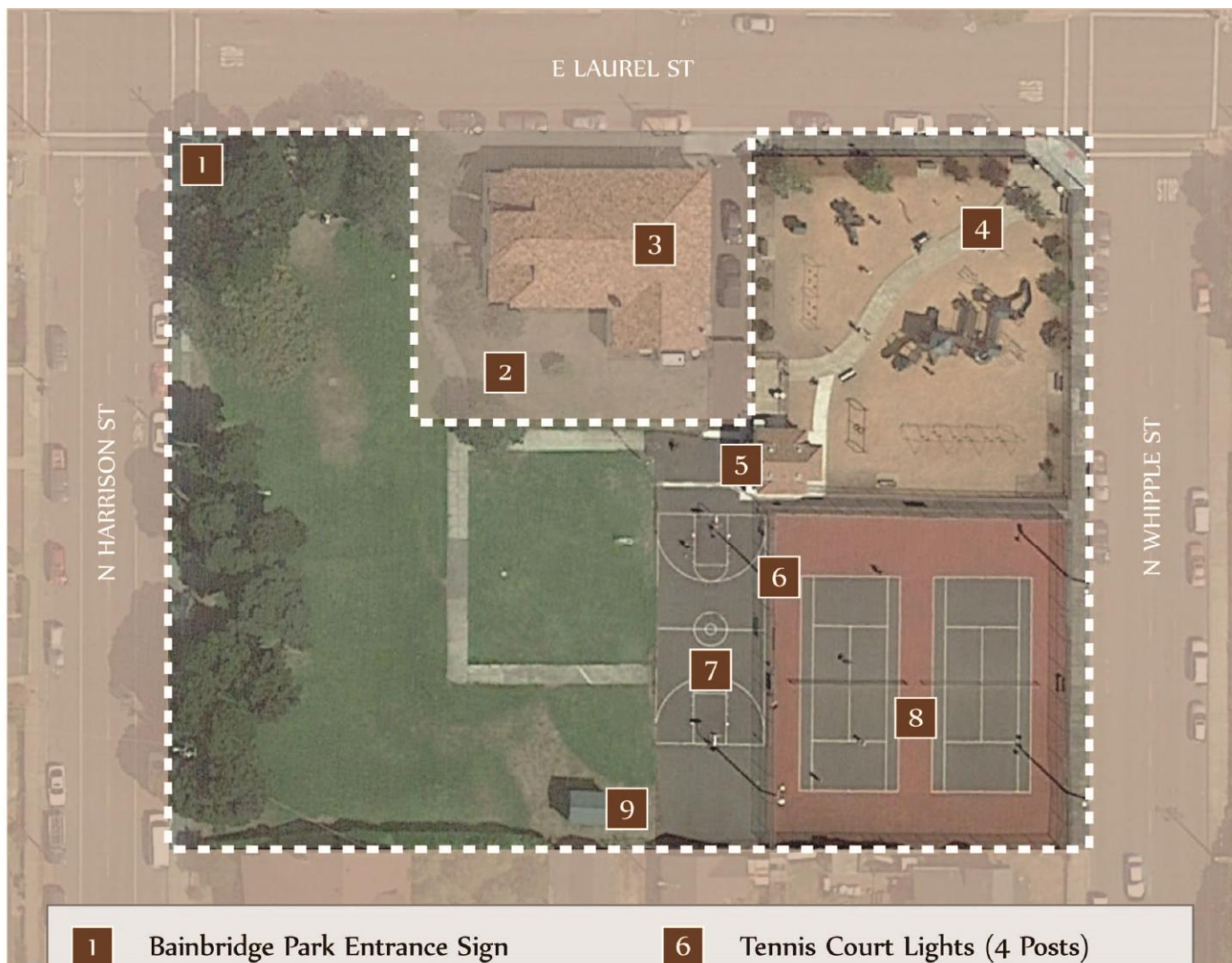
History

The Bainbridge Park property formerly housed the City Grammar School, constructed in 1889. The City Grammar School included four classrooms and a library, and was used as a school until 1923 when it became the location for City Hall.¹

Bainbridge Park is named for Harold O. Bainbridge, former mayor and city councilman for the City of Fort Bragg spanning twenty years. Mr. Bainbridge was born in Usal and the son of a millwright. Prominent in City politics, Mr. Bainbridge promoted the inclusion of Highway 1 and Highway 20 into the State Highway System. Mr. Bainbridge operated the Fort Bragg Market, then located at 362 North Franklin Street until 1953.²

¹ "City Grammar School," Fort Bragg – Mendocino Coast Historical Society, http://www.fortbragghistory.org/index_files/PhotoCityGrammar.htm.

² Holmer, "Glance at the Past," *Fort Bragg Advocate*, October 18, 2012.



- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 Bainbridge Park Entrance Sign | 6 Tennis Court Lights (4 Posts) |
| 2 Mendocino County Property Boundary | 7 Basketball Court |
| 3 Veterans Hall (Historic Building) | 8 Tennis Courts |
| 4 Wiggly Giggly Playground | 9 Utility and Maintenance Shed |
| 5 Public Restrooms | |

Existing Facilities Map

0' 20' 40' 60'



Collaboration

Community Development Department (CDD) staff sought initial input from various City staff regarding maintenance and security issues at Bainbridge Park.

Public Works

CDD staff met with Public Works staff to discuss funded and pending maintenance projects scheduled for the park. In the summer of 2016, Public Works made the following improvements to the park:

1. Reduced the wattage and height of the existing lights above the tennis courts to limit the amount of light pollution.
2. Installed more lights on existing poles west of the tennis courts to light the basketball court.
3. Replaced the picnic tables that were removed from the park due to deterioration and vandalism. The new picnic tables were placed on concrete slabs to reduce wear and protect against soggy ground underneath. The location of these new picnic tables was determined by preliminary drafts of this the Bainbridge Park Master Plan.

In terms of maintenance, the adult restroom facilities are the biggest ongoing maintenance challenge in the park, as the doors are regularly vandalized and the interiors are subject to a variety abuses. New facilities could help alleviate some of these challenges by contributing to the active use of the park.

Fort Bragg Police Department

CDD staff worked with Fort Bragg Police Sergeant Kendl to examine existing and ongoing policing issues at Bainbridge Park, such as transients and use of the park for illegal purposes. The Bainbridge Park Master Plan addresses policing issues for each proposed park improvement. Sergeant Kendl's primary recommendation is to install fencing with two gated entrances for the western and northern boundaries of the park to limit the options for quick ingress and egress, thereby making the park a less desirable destination for troublemakers.

Information Technology

The Information Technology Department identified ways to improve the security system:

1. The cameras cannot visualize the area directly in front of Veteran's Memorial Hall or the area behind the maintenance shed.
2. The security cameras previously recorded to a system within Veteran's Memorial Hall, which could only be reviewed after a problem occurs to identify troublemakers after the fact. In summer of 2016, Information Technology installed a wireless system to transmit security video footage from the park to City Hall and the Police Department. This should make the footage more easily accessible and help the Police Department when dealing with crime in the park

Community Participation

The park planning processes invited citizen input and included well-attended public meetings and a community workshop held at Veteran's Memorial Hall in Bainbridge Park. The planning process brought together City residents, neighbors, park goers, and City of Fort Bragg staff to develop and create consensus with regard to physical improvements, management issues and park improvement and rehabilitation priorities for Bainbridge Park.

The City invited the public to the following opportunities to provide input for the Bainbridge Park Master Plan:

1. Community Development Committee (October 27, 2015)
2. Bainbridge Park Community Workshop (November 17, 2015)
3. Special City Council Meeting (December 16, 2015)
4. City Council Meeting (February 22, 2016)

Community Development Committee (October 27, 2015)

During the Community Development Committee (CDC) meeting, staff provided a summary of the project and the plans for a Community Workshop to the Committee. The CDC, staff and the attending public discussed past and ongoing maintenance issues at Bainbridge Park, including the previous removal of vegetation and picnic tables, and the planned alteration to the tennis court lights.

Community Workshop (November 17, 2015)

The community workshop gave the public an opportunity to inform the planning process and prioritize and locate potential improvements.

1. The workshop began with a brief walking tour of Bainbridge Park.
2. The walking tour was followed by a presentation of poster boards illustrating the existing facilities, and participants provided additional comments and input about existing facilities.
3. Staff then presented colorful poster boards that illustrated a number of potential improvements for the park. Workshop participants discussed pros and cons of the various potential improvements.
4. After this general discussion, the seated format of the workshop broke up and each participant was given six green dots and six red dots to prioritize their favorite and least favorite potential park improvements by placing them on the poster boards.
5. Staff tallied the dots to determine the highest priority improvements and conveyed this information to the participants.
6. Workshop participants then worked in five small groups of three to seven people to create park layouts using the most popular improvements and scaled cut-out representations of each improvement.
7. The workshop concluded with a presentation by each small group of their layout and the rationale for the layout that they created.

Over thirty citizens attended the public workshop, in addition to City staff and Councilmembers. Included among the participants was a strong turnout by the petanque- and tennis-playing communities.

The workshop provided opportunity for participants to develop a vision for Bainbridge Park and potential improvements. There was clear consensus among the workshop participants that park improvements should include new petanque courts and a covered structure (or pavilion) at the park. Other very popular ideas include improving the tennis and basketball courts and adding public art. Workshop participants were strongly opposed to developing a community garden or a public plaza. The table below shows the tally for the improvement ideas (from highest to lowest priority) from the workshop.

Bainbridge Park Community Workshop Preference Results

	Potential Amenity	Votes in Favor	Votes Opposed
Most Favorable	Petanque Courts	20	0
	Covered Structure (Pavilion)	26	5
	Public Art	26	12
	Improve Tennis Courts	32	2
Favorable	Landscaping	17	9
	Grills	11	0
	Improve Basketball Court	10	0
Not Favorable	Batting Cage	1	8
	Golf or Putt-Putt	0	11
Least Favorable	Community Garden	0	32
	Plaza or Square	3	19
	Allow Soccer on Tennis Courts	0	32
Most Debated	Fencing	22	17



Although not listed in the table above, workshop participants were in favor of adding benches and picnic tables. These improvements received limited votes because it was understood that these improvements were already ordered and would be available prior to the completion of the Master Plan.

Two general themes emerged from the five plans created at the community workshop. **Workshop Theme 1** placed the pavilion at the northwest corner of Bainbridge Park, with more space for active recreation uses (petanque, volleyball, etc.) along the southeastern portion of the open space. Three of

the five workshop groups preferred this general layout. Each of these three groups had open space south of the covered structure to serve as seating when the pavilion is utilized as a stage. An open space buffer or vegetation would shield the residences immediately to the south from park uses.



Workshop Theme 2 placed the covered structure immediately west of the basketball court in the area presently surrounded by sidewalk. This layout protects a good deal of Bainbridge Park's existing open space, while placing a more limited amount of active recreation facilities on the southern end of the park.

Special City Council Meeting (December 16, 2015)

Following the Community Workshop, staff analyzed the public recommendations for presentation at the December 16, 2015 Special City Council meeting. A handful of citizens attended the meeting and provided additional input to help frame the Bainbridge Park Master Plan. At the meeting, City Council reviewed the results of the Community Workshop and the recommendations from City staff. City Council preferred the park layout reflected in **Workshop Theme 1**, placing the covered structure at the northwest corner of the park.

City Council Meeting (February, 2016)

City Council made final direction on the Bainbridge Park Master Plan, recommending the fence be the highest priority improvement, but requested that gates be removed from the Plan. Council also requested that the future pavilion should architecturally match the existing restrooms and Veteran's Memorial Hall.

Master Plan Recommendations



Focus Area: Community Gathering Space

Covered Structure/Pavilion

City Council and workshop participants expressed strong support for a new small pavilion in Bainbridge Park to provide a dry location for activities during inclement weather, a venue for markets, fairs, parties, and events, and a small stage for music or shows.

The workshop groups were given an option of a larger (30-40 person, 1,200 square feet) or smaller (15-20 person, 400 square feet) pavilion, and all five groups selected the larger structure for their plans. Three of the five groups proposed the pavilion at the northwest corner of the park. One located it at the south end of the park and the other located it in the middle of the park. At the December 16, 2015 Special City Council Meeting, City Council favored placing the structure at the northwest corner of the park for the following reasons:

1. The inside of the pavilion will be visible from Harrison and Laurel Streets to accommodate police monitoring.
2. The entire western half of the park will serve as a lawn for seating or other open space activities.
3. The close proximity to Harrison and Laurel Streets will provide easy access for loading and unloading equipment, food and party supplies for the pavilion.



Sample pavilion designs that received favorable responses from the Community Workshop and City Council meetings

The **Master Plan Park Layout** sites the pavilion at an angle in the corner of the park. This allows for a larger pavilion (shown as 48-feet by 24-feet) without encroaching onto Mendocino County property. The angle of the structure also provides space at the corner of the park for an art installation, discussed later in the Master Plan.

Electricity and water are important amenities for the pavilion to encourage various uses; however, any access to utilities would be secured and available by reservation only. Reservations will be managed by City Hall. Picnic tables will not be permanently installed inside the pavilion to allow flexibility for multiple uses. If after construction it is apparent that the primary use of the pavilion requires picnic tables, the City can evaluate placing permanent picnic tables in the pavilion at that time. Otherwise, users will need to bring or rent their own picnic tables for parties within the Pavilion.

The pavilion was the most popular recommended improvement at the community workshop. At their February 22, 2016 meeting, City Council recommended that the future pavilion architecturally match the style of the existing bathrooms and Veteran's Memorial Hall.

Picnic Tables, Grills and Benches

All five workshop site plans included picnic tables and benches distributed around the open space of the park. Many also included benches next to active uses. Four of the plans included grills in the park. Grills need to be secured overnight to prevent misuse by anyone trying to camp in the park. Picnic tables, grills and benches are proposed throughout the park, as depicted on the **Master Plan Park Layout**.

Focus Area: New Active Recreation Uses

Petanque Courts

Workshop attendees and City Council were strongly in favor of adding playing courts for petanque, a form of lawn bowling played on a hard dirt or gravel surface. There is approximately 12,500 square feet of petanque surface presently located at the C.V. Starr Center. Of those courts, approximately 10,000 square feet are scheduled for removal to accommodate the eventual construction of the proposed gymnasium at the C.V. Starr Center property.



Photos from Fort Bragg's annual Wollenberg Tournament

A single petanque court measures approximately 16 feet by 50 feet (800 square feet). The existing courts at C.V. Starr Center consist of a layer of gravel topped with crushed urchin shells. Petanque courts could also be used for other purposes besides Petanque (for example, the courts located at the C.V. Starr Center are used for the Soroptomists' Labor Day Craft Show).

The Noyo Yoyos, Fort Bragg's local petanque organization, holds the annual Wollenberg Petanque Tournament, simultaneously utilizing 14 separate petanque courts (including those courts slated for removal for potential gymnasium construction). The layouts generated at the community workshop depict petanque areas ranging from one court (16 feet by 50 feet) to three courts (60 feet by 50 feet). City Council recommended the Master Plan include space for three or four petanque courts.

The **Master Plan Park Layout** locates approximately 3,200 square feet of petanque surface west of the proposed basketball expansion. This will provide space for four separate petanque courts.

Focus Area: Improvements to Existing Features

Wiggly Giggly Playground

The playground, the most utilized facility at Bainbridge Park, is busy throughout the day. The ongoing success of the playground relies on continuing maintenance to keep the quality of the facility high. Attendees at the Community Workshop had relatively minor requests for the playground, including that the gates be strengthened, and that the latches on the gates be replaced so that they make less noise when latched. Additionally, the ground mulch composing the floor of the playground area needs regular

upkeep. The mulch must be kept level and even, and bare spots need to be filled to keep the surface safe. As the mulch decays into soil, the excess soil needs to be regularly removed and replaced with fresh mulch. At the December 16, 2015 Special City Council Meeting, City Council recommended the Master Plan include installation of a synthetic surface to replace the mulch in Wiggly Giggly Playground. This will dramatically decrease the regular maintenance required to manage the mulch, but at a very high initial investment. Upgrading the play surface to a synthetic material is considered a low priority.

Shed

The location of the existing utility shed had created issues in the park, providing individuals with a visual barrier that shields illegal activities. However, the City recently installed a chain link fence blocking access to the south side of the shed. Nearby residents report that the shed still serves as a screen for illegal activity occurring on the east side. Providing the Police Department with easier access to security footage (as discussed above) and installing perimeter fencing may help the police to alleviate these issues.

Improve Basketball Court

Four of the five workshop groups and City Council requested an expansion of the basketball court to a regulation size. Enlarging the court requires avoiding the existing water meter located a few feet west of the existing pavement edge. In order to stay clear of the water meter, the court would need to be shifted south approximately ten feet.

City Council received a letter from a citizen living at the end of the alley south of the park. The letter indicated that bouncing basketballs frequently clear the fence and hit his residence. The proposed park layout shifts the park further to the south, potentially leading to more incidents of basketballs clearing the fence. In order to resolve the existing issue and offset any new impacts of moving the basketball court, the Master Plan recommends extending the tall tennis court fence west along the southern edge of the basketball court. The fence addition should correspond with the basketball court expansion.

Improve Tennis Courts

Many local tennis players came to the workshop and they strongly opposed allowing other uses on the tennis courts, especially soccer, in order to protect the playing surface and equipment from damage. CDC staff had received requests to begin allowing soccer or pickle ball on the courts. Presently, kids and adults looking for hard surfaces that could accommodate activities other than tennis are available two blocks to the east of Bainbridge Park at Fort Bragg Middle School.

Workshop attendees recommended improvements to the tennis courts, including: replacing the nets, resurfacing the courts, and adding a hitting wall for solo playing. Four of the five workshop layouts left the tennis courts unchanged, just one recommended a hitting wall.

This plan recommends maintaining the limitation of court use to only tennis to protect the long-term quality of the courts.



Focus Area: Pathways and Beautification

Fencing

Fencing was the most controversial potential improvement for the park as it received many votes both in favor and opposed at the Community Workshop. City Council requested that the City of Fort Bragg Police Department direct fencing improvements for the Master Plan, as security and safety were the primary concerns of the citizens in attendance at the Special City Council Meeting. The Police Department recommends surrounding the park with fencing to limit options for ingress and egress, making the park less desirable for transient individuals. The Police Department's recommendation included gated entrances along the north and west boundaries of the park; however, City Council requested that the fencing exclude gates to reduce costs and avoid creating an unwelcoming feeling at the park.

Fencing the park will have the following benefits to safety and security:

1. Emphasizing the boundary of the park with a fence has the potential to increase the sense of security within the park—children inside the park are kept away and separate from vehicular and pedestrian traffic, and the west portion of the park would feel connected to the more regularly-populated east side of the park.
2. Fencing would reduce the amount of ingress and egress points for the park, which could make the park less appealing to those wishing to use the park for illegal activity.
3. Fencing can match the existing fencing around the Wiggly Giggly Playground, creating an aesthetic connection between the east and west sides of the park.



Existing fencing at Wiggly Giggly Playground.

The **Master Plan Park Layout** includes fencing along the western and northern boundaries of the park. City Council requested the fencing generally match the existing fencing at the Wiggly Giggly Playground, but could be simpler and shorter to reduce costs. City Council requested the fencing generally match the existing Wiggly Giggly fence, but recommended considering a slightly shorter height or removal of the decorative top rail to reduce costs.

An agreement (Memorandum of Understanding) between the City of Fort Bragg and Mendocino County will be required to install fencing along the northern property boundary extending all the way to the Veteran's Memorial Hall building, since Mendocino County owns the Veteran's Memorial Hall building and the nearby property. In order to establish the necessary agreement, the City will need to work with the County to establish terms for the ongoing maintenance of the fence. In preliminary conversations with Mendocino County General Services, the County is receptive to enter into such an agreement. Additionally, the City will have to agree to indemnify the County for any claims resulting from the fence. Fencing is part of Phase 1 of the Master Plan.

Public Art

Public art can take many forms, such as a sculpted bike rack or crafted bench. Individual art pieces can dress up park entrances and compliment landscaping. Both the community and City Council expressed strong support for adding public art to Bainbridge Park.

The west half of the park is currently lacking amenities for children compared to the east side of the park, where Wiggly Giggly Playground is located. In order to provide the park with public art while simultaneously drawing youth-oriented elements to the west half of the park, the **Master Plan Park Layout** includes a “storywalk” along the outer perimeter of the park. It is important that the location of storywalk pedestals do not interfere with active users of the park (frisbee, catch, etc.).



Children acting out characters of a storywalk.

A storywalk involves a set of interpretive art pieces that give children an opportunity to move and read outside, promoting literacy and wellness by combining reading with physical activity. For example, a picture book is put, page by page, onto signs and installed along a walking path. Physical activities relating to the pages can be included at various locations, and could include corresponding art pieces (such as a tunnel to crawl through or statue to climb on). Coordination and cooperation with the adjacent Fort Bragg Library is key to promote, manage and create the storywalk. Additionally, a storywalk allows the Fort Bragg Library to engage with a larger community than just those that enter the facility. The Fort Bragg

Library is enthusiastic about the development of a storywalk, and has pledged assistance in maintaining and promoting the storywalk with the assistance of the Rotary Club. The pages on the interpretive art pieces could be rotated, keeping the storywalk fresh and new. It may be possible to install additional storywalk pieces beyond the boundaries of Bainbridge Park, with a longer story reaching its conclusion at the Fort Bragg Library and the Wiggly Giggly Playground.

The community and City Council also support a new public art installation at the corner of Harrison and Laurel Streets. By orienting the pavilion at an angle in the corner, ample space is available for art and associated landscaping. The art piece would also serve as a backdrop to the pavilion. The corner art installation should correspond with the fence and pavilion construction.

The **Master Plan Park Layout** also recommends new entry signage at the proposed gates on Harrison and Laurel Streets. The new entry signage should include clear park rules, such as park hours and restrictions on alcohol and smoking, to assist the Fort Bragg Police Department in enforcing the existing park rules. The installation of entry signage should correspond with the construction of the fence.

Landscaping

The trees along the park’s Harrison Street frontage are fully mature and near the end of their lives. Most attendees at the community workshop voted strongly in favor of including landscaping improvements in the Bainbridge Park Master Plan, specifically recommending the addition of native trees. City Council recommended the removal of the aging trees along Harrison Street in conjunction with a vegetation plan replacing the existing trees with appropriate species that are drought tolerant and allow visibility beneath the canopy.

Additional, but limited, new landscaping can also compliment the entry signage at Harrison and Laurel Streets, and the proposed art installation at the Bainbridge Park’s northwest corner. Any future landscaping should be native and drought tolerant, and of growth habit such that it does not become an attractive nuisance for camping.

Implementation

Phasing

City Council reviewed the various improvements identified for the park, and prioritized their development based on need, community input and costs. Four improvement phases are described below. It is important to note that improvements do not need to occur in order of the prescribed phasing. Availability of funding or shifting community needs may inform these timelines.

Fencing Phase – Top Priority

City Council places the highest priority on fencing for the park. At the recommendation of the Police Department and with input from the community, fencing should help alleviate some of the security issues presently affecting the park. Installation of entrance signage and landscaping are included in this first phase.

The City anticipates collecting Community Development Block Grant Program Income in early 2017 to fund the Fencing Phase of Bainbridge Park improvements. Funding is expected to be approximately \$75,000.

Pavilion Phase – High Priority

The community meetings identified development of a pavilion as the most popular improvement of the Master Plan. City Council requested that a new pavilion generally match the architectural style of the existing buildings in the park, which requires a greater investment than a more rustic style structure. Installation of public art at the intersection of Harrison Street and Laurel Street is included in this phase to fill the prominent area created by the placement of the pavilion.

Activity Phase – Mid Priority

The community suggested the Master Plan include improvements to encourage active use of the park. Regular active park use would deter transients from loitering in the park. Development of the petanque courts and the storywalk would invite regular use of the park—particularly during daytime weekday hours when the park presently gets the least amount of use.

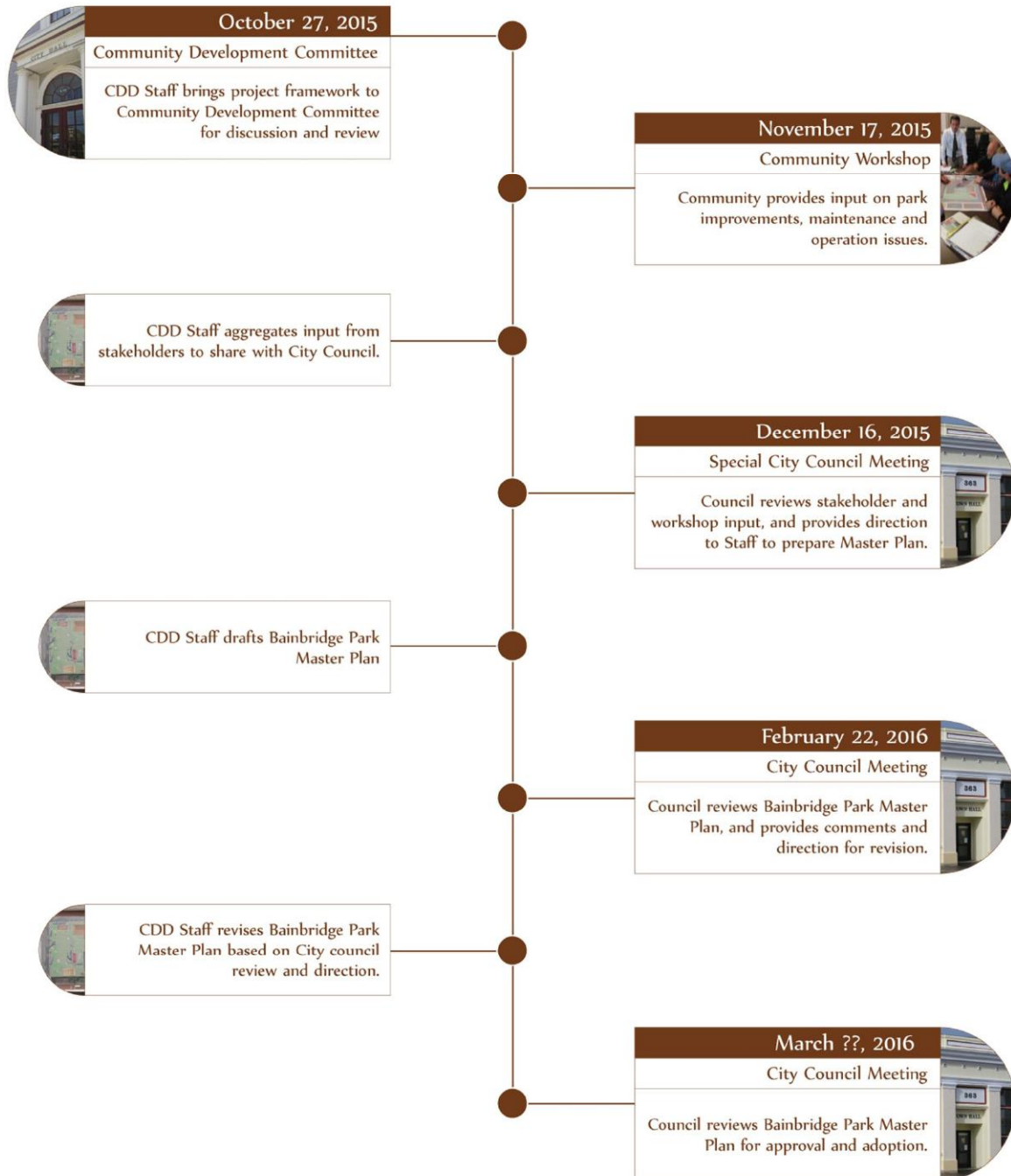
Maintenance Phase – Low Priority

The community and City Council identified the need to update or modify existing facilities of the park, including expansion of the basketball court, replacement of trees that are near the end of their lifespans, and resurfacing the playground to decrease maintenance costs. However, there is no imminent need to undertake these improvements, and have been identified as low priorities.

Bainbridge Park Improvement Summary and Priorities

	Park Improvement	Size or Quantity	Approx. Cost
Fencing Phase Top Priority	Perimeter Fencing	350 linear ft.	\$30k to \$50k
	Entrance Signage	2 signs	\$5,000+
	Landscaping	Associated with signs and fence	\$5,000+
Pavilion Phase High Priority	Pavilion	24 ft. x 48 ft.	\$50,000+
	Corner Art	1 piece	\$5,000 to \$10,000
Activity Phase Mid Priority	Petanque Courts	4 courts	\$15,000
	Storywalk	Storywalk with interactive art	\$500 (temporary) \$10,000 (with art)
Maintenance Phase Low Priority	Expand Basketball Court	1,400 square ft.	\$30,000
	Tree Replacement	Remove 9 trees, plant 10 trees	\$20,000
	Resurface Playground	15,000 square ft.	\$175,000+

Bainbridge Park Master Plan Process



Bainbridge Park Community Workshop Draft Layout Exercise

