

*Master Plan*

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***Public Open Space Properties  
Surrounding Coes Pond***

*F a l l 2 0 0 5*



Coes Beach and Bathhouse



Columbus Park Shoreline



Former Knights of Columbus



Columbus Park Shoreline



Former Coes Knife Property

# *Master Plan*

## *Public Open Space Properties Surrounding Coes Pond*

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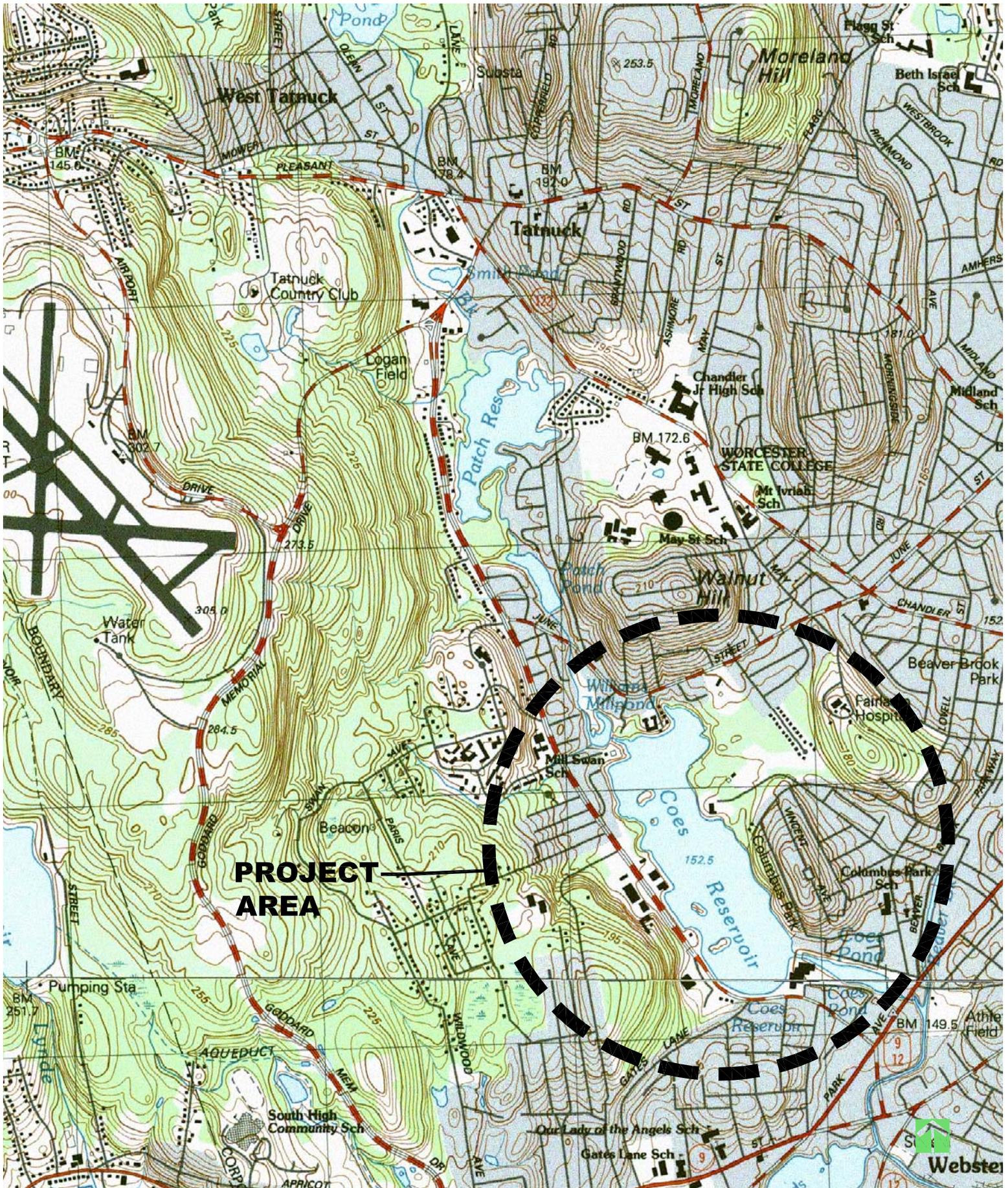


Figure 1 - USGS Locus Map

## Acknowledgements

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We gratefully recognize the residents of the City of Worcester, especially those residing within the neighborhoods surrounding Coes Pond, whose attendance in such great numbers at the community meetings was truly inspiring. The hopes and needs that they expressed form the basis of the recommendations to improve the wonderful open space properties that are located adjacent to the southern and eastern edges of Coes Pond.

We also wish to thank the Tatnuck Brook Watershed Association, members of the Worcester City Council, Worcester Statehouse Delegation, Worcester City Manager's Office, Worcester Department of Public Works and Parks, Worcester Housing Authority other committed public and private servants that contributed in so many ways to this Master Plan. A note of thanks also to the Mill Street Elks Lodge members, for the generous use of their facilities for each of the public hearings.



*View across Coes Reservoir toward Columbus Park and the New City Parcel (former Fenton Parcel)*

## Introduction

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During late summer 2004, the City of Worcester Department of Public Works and Parks engaged Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc. and began a collaboration with community stakeholders to develop this comprehensive Master Plan for the Public Open Space Properties Surrounding Coes Pond.

During the first half of 2005, representatives of the Public Works and Parks Department and Weston & Sampson developed conceptual and final master plans, which were generated in response to the needs and desires of residents, mostly from the surrounding neighborhoods, as expressed at a series of public informational meetings.

The final DRAFT Master Plan, presented to Worcester Community during a June 16, 2005 public hearing, reflects the desire of nearly all participants to enhance the properties extensive natural features and develop the sites mainly for passive recreational opportunities with some active recreational facilities and limited vehicular access. This report represents the culmination of the master planning process. The document contains narrative and graphic depictions of the Master Plan with relevant sections dedicated to identifying the full extent of potential improvements, potential phasing scenarios and implementation strategies. The general theme was to include improvements that provide opportunities for creating scenic and pleasurable connections between properties, new and enhanced passive recreation opportunities, limited active recreation opportunities and environmental stewardship and education.

Implementation of the improvements outlined in this Master Plan will require significant effort. The Funding Opportunities section of the report identifies potential granting agencies, non-profit entities and other sources of capital dollars or in-kind services that might help with refurbishment of various parcels and facilities.

***It is important to note that a “Master Plan” is typically general and that recommendations are not “cast in stone”. It is fully intended and anticipated that as particular projects are implemented the actual scope of improvements will follow the recommendations contained in this report, but will be refined in order to meet actual field conditions.***



*Local residents enjoy park amenities along the edges of Coes Reservoir.*

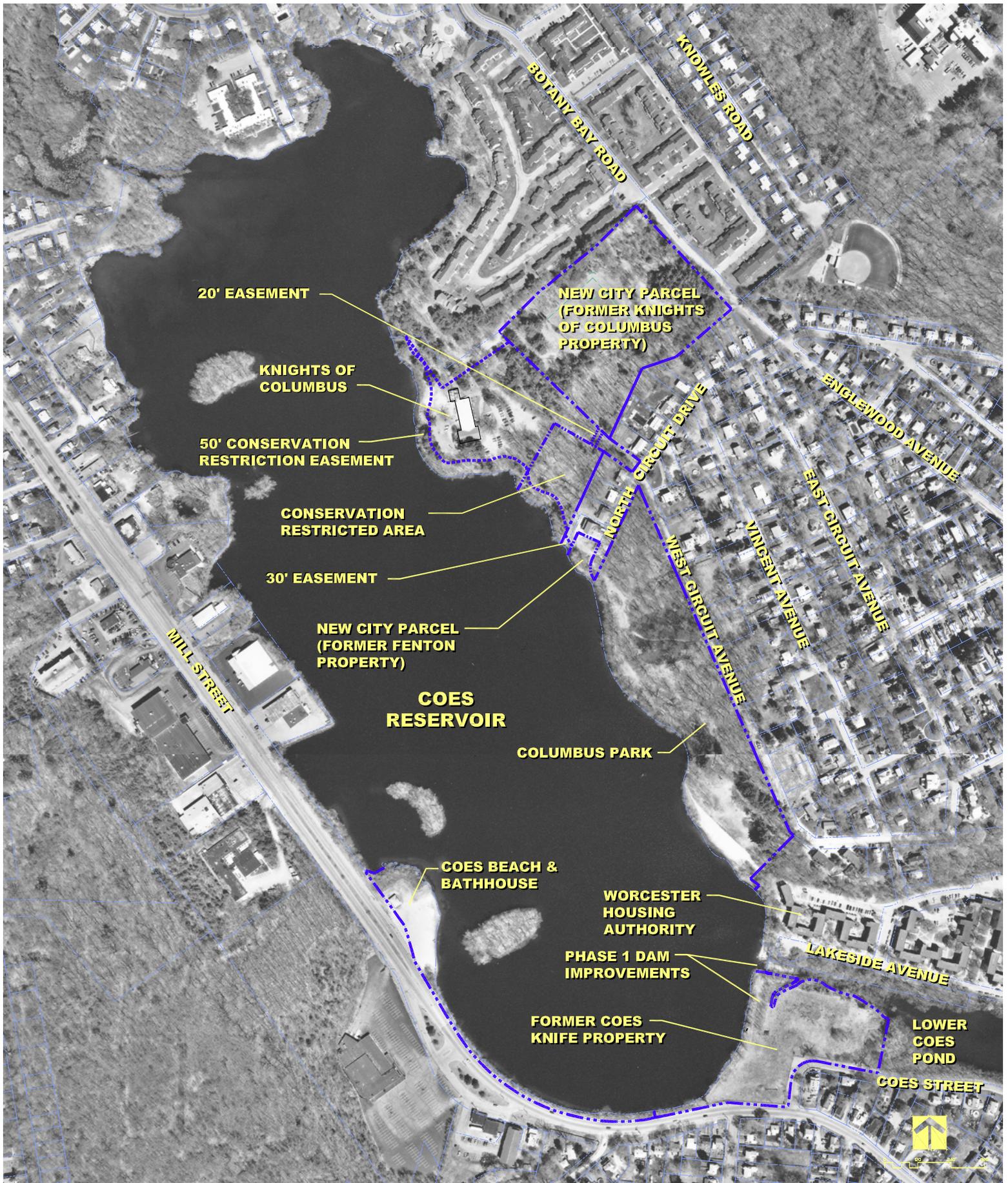


Figure 2 - Aerial Photograph - Public Open Space Properties Surrounding Coes Pond

## Background

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The Master Plan focuses on a series of public open space properties that form the southern and eastern edges of Coes Reservoir, or as better known within the Community - Coes Pond. Although most official geographic and topographic maps identify this 90-acre water body as Coes Reservoir, for the purposes of this Master Planning document, the commonly used reference of Coes Pond will be used.

The properties that have been considered as part of this study include the following:

Open Space Properties	Size in Acres (*)
Coes Beach and Bathhouse	1.87
Coes Knife Dam	4.37
Columbus Park	8.80
New City Parcel (Former Fenton Parcel)	1.50
New City Parcel (Former Knights of Columbus)	4.25

*(\*) All areas estimated from City Assessor and GIS Mapping Sources*

The recent acquisition of both the Knights of Columbus Property and Fenton Property, funded partially through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Division of Conservation Services Self Help Program, was the real impetus for this study. In recreation planning and design circles, the concept of uniting a series of open space properties through the creation of logical connections and links has gained great momentum, especially as the need to find recreation outlets within an urban context has become so paramount to the health and well being of a community. This creates unique opportunities for walking, hiking, jogging, biking and pursuing along a scenic corridor without intrusions from the busy urban environment surrounding.

At Coes Pond, by making use of the five public open space properties, a separate property containing a Conservation Restriction, three additional easements of variable widths and the pond edge adjacent to the Worcester Housing Authority property at Lakeside Avenue, it becomes possible to link and connect from the Coes Beach Bathhouse at Mill Street to the new city parcel at the former Knights of Columbus property, a distance of more than a mile.

Documentation, in the form of plans, mapping, and studies for most of the properties is quite limited, especially given that two of the five properties are just newly acquired. As a result, we have made use of the City's GIS mapping to develop all of the conceptual drawings associated with this Master Plan. In regard to the former Coes Knife property, significant data is available in the form of plans, studies, compiled environmental data and permitting, especially in regard to the reconstruction of the Coes Pond Dam and associated site soil remediation work scheduled to begin during the fall of 2005. ***The Coes Knife Park & Trail Center Master Plan*** prepared in 1998 by the Halverson Company was also reviewed and updated in regard to scope of potential improvements for the Coes Knife property.

## Basic Goals and Objectives

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At the beginning of the process, the Department of Public Works and Parks articulated several simple and straightforward goals for the Master Plan as follows:

- Engage the community in an organized and thought provoking dialogue in order to develop a series of concepts for the enhancement of the open space properties surrounding Coes Pond.
- Consider ways to create a well connected series of open space properties along the edges of Coes Pond that provide safe and attractive passive and active recreational opportunities that meet both neighborhood and City-wide interests and needs.
- Provide universal, barrier-free access to as much of the properties and pond as environmentally practical and provide access to all of the sites primary facilities. Provide acceptable opportunities for water-based activities (including swimming, fishing, canoeing and kayaking, wildlife observation and related pursuits).
- Propose amenities that are durable, long lasting, maintained with limited resources, and economically feasible and that may be undertaken through a combination of capital improvement funds and in-kind/volunteer services and donations.
- Develop a plan that recognizes that the open space properties and related easements and linkages are important recreational outlet for residents of the neighborhood and the City and that is sensitive to site ecology and wildlife habitat, neighborhood needs, security, environmental constraints and historical interpretations.

## Community Participation

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In order to develop a master plan that met the recreational needs of the surrounding neighborhoods and Worcester residents at large, the Department of Public Works and Parks and Weston & Sampson conducted a series of meetings, both formal and informal, to present ideas and receive community input. Over the course of four months, the Department of Public Works and Parks and Weston & Sampson representatives met with residential and institutional abutters, as well as other interested parties to present concept plans for the property, receive comments, and address concerns. Following is a listing of the five major public forums that were held. Each meeting attracted between 50 and 100 community members.

<b>Schedule of Meetings for Public Input</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Meeting Purpose / Participants</b>
March 3, 2005	Elks Lodge 233 Mill Street	Public Meeting to receive preliminary input and identify community needs and objectives
April 11, 2005	Elks Lodge 233 Mill Street	Public Meeting to review initial concepts for refurbishment of public open space properties
April 23, 2005	Knights of Columbus	Tatnuck Brook Watershed Association members and community members discussed water quality issues and other matters
June 2, 2005	Elks Lodge 233 Mill Street	Public Meeting to present refined concepts and confirm community needs and desires
June 16, 2005	Elks Lodge 233 Mill Street	Public Meeting to present Final DRAFT Master Plan

## Existing Conditions

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During the early stages of the project, representatives of Weston & Sampson gathered available mapping and reports to support the master planning efforts. The City provided GIS mapping for the properties and aerial photography was obtained for the development of all conceptual master plans and drawings. In regard to the former Coes Knife Property, a 1998 ***Coes Knife Park & Trail Center Master Plan*** prepared by the Halverson Company provided valuable insight, especially in regard to historical context. Weston & Sampson is also responsible for the development of contract documents related to the dam reconstruction project at the former Coes Knife Property. A considerable amount of plan information and soils and environmental data became available as part of that process.

WSE representatives also undertook a considerable amount of field reconnaissance work to observe how the properties are used, better understand all of the physical characteristics of the lands and the corresponding conditions of the natural and man-made features of each property. The following is a summary of our findings.

## Topography

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The topography (terrain) varies significantly from one property to the next and even within the confines of a single property. For instance, within Columbus Park, the elevation at the top of the slope adjacent to West Circuit Avenue is 195 feet above sea level, while the elevation of Coes Pond is 150 feet above sea level. This represents a rather dramatic change in elevation of approximately 45 feet within a very short distance. Following is a summary of the basic topographical characteristics:

The ***Coes Beach and Bathhouse Property*** is gradually pitched from Mill Street toward the edge of Coes Pond. The narrow strip of land along Mill Street that links the Beach in a southeasterly direction to the former Coes Knife Property is excessively steep and subject to erosion with changes in elevation of greater than 10 feet over very short distances.

The former ***Coes Knife Property*** possesses approximately 30 feet of elevation change from the highest point at the top of the dam adjacent to the pond to the lowest points located to the east near the much smaller, Lower Coes Pond. Steep slopes form both the west (Coes Pond) and east (Lower Coes Pond) sides of the dam. Earlier master planning efforts called for the eastern slopes to be considered for sledding during winter months. Topography should not provide much of an impediment to development, although a way to link both the lower and upper tiers of the property will require careful consideration in order to provide for maximum accessibility.

**Columbus Park** is a narrow, rectangular-shaped strip of land running generally north - south that possesses very dramatic topographic change. The steep slopes cause the property to be prone to erosion during major storm events, especially toward the upper slopes located along West Circuit Avenue, where recent development of single family house lots along this private road appear to have exasperated storm water management issues and created washouts within the Park. Erosion seems to be “snowballing” in limited areas where the slopes are unstable and vegetative cover has been lost. Excessively steep slopes throughout the majority of this parcel limit development opportunities and create challenges and obstacles for access to and from the site. The “Hillside” beach area is the only generally flat area and is located within the far southwest corner of the parcel. The City previously staffed the beach with lifeguards, but the remote location, lack of communications infrastructure and difficult access issues has caused this program to be discontinued.



*Steep slopes at Columbus Park extend from West Circuit Avenue (a private road) to the edge of Coes Reservoir.*

The former **Fenton Property** is a small, undeveloped parcel covered by open lawn and woodlands. The site slopes moderately from the east near the end of North Circuit Avenue to the west at the edge of the Coes Pond.

The former **Knights of Columbus Property** contains mostly gently sloping terrain, although some moderate slopes are located to the east side of the property. The largely open, former field areas are well suited for development of passive or active recreation facilities.

The chart included on the following page highlights topographic elevations found within certain locations of the five primary open space properties. Preliminary analysis indicates that a linear pathway connecting all properties is quite feasible, by following along a corridor where elevations range from approximately 10 - 20 feet above the elevation of Coes Pond. Under this scenario, a trail would meander toward and away from the pond edge offering a varied experience for users.

Representative Open Space Location	Elevation
Coes Pond (Reservoir)	
Coes Pond Beach	
Mill Street at former Price Chopper	
Coes Pond Spillway	
Top of Dam at former Coes Knife Property	
Columbus Park Trail	
Columbus Park Top of Slope at West Circuit Avenue	
Fenton Property	
Open Field Area at Former Knights of Columbus Property	
Top of Slope at Former KOC Property/Rear of North Circuit Avenue	

## Soils

It is believed that little of the original soil cover remains within the Coes Beach and Bathhouse, former Coes Knife, and former Knights of Columbus properties due to extensive previous developments and disturbance. Soils located below field areas and other developed areas are classified as a smoothed Urthodent complex, which is characteristic of areas formed by excavation or filling of areas for athletic fields, highway medians and landscaped areas. Typically, soils of this type consist of fine sandy loams and gravels. In places, urban soils and erosion of steep slopes have impacted the quality of vegetation, as discussed in the following section.

Soil Conservation Service data for Worcester County indicates that basic soil types are as follows:

Property	Soil Symbols / Types
Coes Beach	Ur Urban Land
Former Coes Knife	Ur Urban Land
	Wa Walpole fine sand loam
Columbus Park	HgB Hinckley sandy loam 3-8% slopes
	PaD Paxton fine sandy loam 15-25% slopes
	PaB Paxton fine sandy loam 3-8% slopes
	Ur Urban Land
Former Fenton	HgB Hinckley sandy loam 3-8% slopes
Former K of C	Ud Orthodents, smoothed
	HgB Hinckley sandy loam 3-8% slopes

Other general notes related to site development opportunities excerpted from the Worcester County Soil Conservation Service for the various open space properties include the following.

Soils at ***Coes Beach and Bathhouse*** and the former ***Coes Knife Parcel*** require sampling and analysis to determine their suitability for use.



*Urban soils are found at Coes Beach and Bathhouse and the former Coes Knife properties.*

At ***Columbus Park***, the presence of excessively steep soils has historically limited development opportunities thus making it more likely that original soil characteristics are in place. Generally, soils are good for development of wooded, passive park areas. Establishment of water-reliant plants and vegetation (like grass fields) are problematic in drought intolerant Hinkley soils. The soil survey indicates that high water tables may occur at Columbus Park locations that are near the dam and Worcester Housing Authority property.

At the former ***Knights of Columbus and Fenton Parcels***, there may be minor restrictions to the type of amenities outlined later in the Master Plan. Typically dry Hinkley soils may require irrigation to establish field areas, soils are poor for on-site septic and soils located near the park entrance at Englewood Drive and Botany Bay Road (private) may require sampling and analysis to determine characteristics and suitability for various uses.

## **Vegetation and Wildlife**

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Related to the fact that soils located at several open space properties are disturbed and urban (not naturally occurring), vegetation is also largely non-native and of poor quality, with extensive areas of exotic invasive species that thrive in the disturbed conditions that contain insufficient organic matter. At Coes Beach, large quantities of Sumac, Tree of Heaven, Poplar and Locust can be observed. This is also true at other locations that are disturbed including large extents of the former Coes Knife Property and the lower lying sections of Columbus Park.

Upland sections of Columbus Park have been left undeveloped and are heavily wooded, although even these areas are threatened by the loss of organic matter and soil that is being caused by recent residential developments along West Circuit Avenue. These woodlands are mostly characterized by naturalized stands of Oak and Hickory, which cover the park's western slope aspect. Associate plant community members found on-site include Sugar Maple, White Birch, White Pine, Black Cherry, Sassafras, and American Ash.

The infield area at the former Knights of Columbus property, and other disturbed sections of the former Coes Knife property in particular contain little organic matter and exhibit predictably poor quality noxious weed growth indicative of distressed urban settings. Restoration of distressed, previously disturbed areas, removal of exotic invasive species and planting of indigenous tree and shrub species would help restore a more natural condition that is more easily sustained, better enjoyed by park patrons and more attractive to indigenous wildlife.



*Native hardwoods (left photo) can be found throughout areas that have seen less disturbance over the years. Undesirable species such as Sumac and Ailanthus (Tree-of-Heaven) dominate the disturbed lands.*

In regard to wildlife, the undisturbed and more isolated sections of the property (Columbus Park and former Knights of Columbus property) provide an urban oasis and provide an exceptionally high quality habitat for wildlife (i.e., birds, insects, and small mammals). Opportunities abound for casual observance of the pastoral scenic quality and for academic research of ecological systems and environmental education. Canada Geese, ever present, congregate along pond edges, and create water quality issues at beachfront areas and their droppings pose a nuisance for visitors.

## Water Quality

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Water quality issues are a constant concern at Coes Pond and Lower Coes Pond. The build-up of silt and sediment in recent years has drastically reduced the depth of water within many sections of the pond, to the point that boating is difficult or impossible. Water quality is negatively impacted by the nutrients that regularly flow into the pond both overland from adjacent lands and from water bodies located in upper watershed areas. Coes Pond is part of the Tatnuck Brook Watershed. The Tatnuck Brook Watershed Association (TBWA), a non-profit entity of concerned residents, works continuously to improve water quality and related environmental characteristics within Coes Pond and other nearby water bodies through the implementation of improved storm water management practices. In a cooperative effort, the group has collaborated with Clark University to sample water within the watershed and throughout the City of Worcester. TBWA is also part of the larger Blackstone River Coalition. Additional information is available at: [www.clarku.edu/tbwa](http://www.clarku.edu/tbwa)

The Department of Public Works and Parks is working on long-term infrastructure improvements that will help to improve water quality issues at the Coes Pond and related tributaries.



*Environmental advocates work continuously to improve the water quality at the Coes Reservoir and Lower Coes Pond. Pollutants are directed to the water bodies, especially during major storm events when overflows in the sewer infrastructure occur.*

## Historical Attributes

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The area surrounding Coes Pond possesses several significant historical attributes, as indicated below in excerpts from the Halverson Company's 1998 ***“Coes Knife Park and Trail Center Master Plan”***. The former Coes Knife property is important in that mills owned and operated by Loring Coes and his brother Aury Gates Coes were constructed here in the late 1800's. The Coes brothers invented and manufactured the world famous monkey wrench and subsequently manufactured highly sophisticated and precisely engineered blades, knives and cheese cutters at this property.

In preparation for the dam reconstruction project to be undertaken during the fall of 2005, the last Coes factory to be constructed at the site (circa 1903) has been recently demolished.



Reprinted for EASA, 1978

Passing by Coes Pond and the former Coes Knife property along Mill Street is the Major Taylor Bike Trail. Named for Marshall Walter “Major” Taylor, an African-American with strong ties to Worcester, and winner of both the national and world bicycle spring racing championships in 1899.

Mill Street takes its name from the numerous mills that dotted the Tatnuck Brook in the late 1800’s and early 1900’s. The corridor was previously known as the “Speedway” as it was a wide, gravel-surfaced raceway that supported horse, sleigh, trotter and automobile races at various times during the early 1900’s.

The intention is to highlight these significant historical happenings with a high-quality series of interpretive kiosks and artifacts within the former Coes Knife property, as the site evolves from abandoned mill to public park.

## Site Utilities

Due to the nature of the properties (undeveloped, abandoned or recently acquired by the City) there are few on-site utilities, yet water, sewer, electricity, telephone, cable and related systems are nearby and below or above adjacent streets. Sewer, water and other utility systems serve the bathhouse at Coes Beach. Utility systems, such as storm drains and culverts pass through properties, including at Columbus Park where erosion has occurred surrounding an outlet that receives storm water from North Circuit Avenue. The Department of Public Works and Parks is working now to improve water quality issues at Columbus Park and throughout the City. In addition, parties responsible for the management of private roads, including West Circuit Avenue, will be held accountable for the establishment and maintenance of proper storm drainage facilities.

Properties like the former Coes Knife parcel contain remnants of utility systems of which some are destined for removal under the Phase I Dam reconstruction project.

To eliminate visual aesthetic incongruity and more fully appreciate the scenic quality and diverse natural settings, consideration should be given toward eliminating or burying any remaining or planned electrical, telephone and/or cable services below ground under future improvement programs.

## Abutters and the Neighborhood Community

The site is located with densely populated residential neighborhoods situated immediately to the south, east and north. Other notable nearby properties include Clark University, Beaver Brook Park, Lakeside Housing Development (WHA property) and Hadwen Arboretum. The Botany Bay residential community is located just to the north of the former Knights of Columbus parcel. Mixed uses, including private clubs, restaurants, shopping plazas and other commercial operations are located along the Mill Street corridor, to the west and southwest of Coes Pond.

## Access and Circulation

With no formal parking provisions for park patrons driving to the various properties, and with limited amenities for public use presently in place, opportunities for access by vehicle is limited. The high rate of travel at Mill Street and lack of parking at Coes Beach and Bathhouse makes drop-off and pick-up at this site difficult. The former Coes Knife parcel is encircled by fencing and off-limits to public use at this time. West Circuit Avenue immediately abuts Columbus Park, but since this is a private road, there are limited opportunities for establishing formal access into the park. Access to the various public open space properties, by foot or by car, is summarized below:

Open Space Properties	Vehicular Access	Pedestrian Access
Coes Beach and Bathhouse	None	Unlimited from Mill Street
Coes Knife Dam	None (i)	None (i)
Columbus Park	None (ii)	From North Circuit Avenue From Lakeside Avenue (iii) From West Circuit Avenue
New City Parcel (Former Fenton Parcel)	North Circuit Avenue	From North Circuit Avenue From Columbus Park From Various Easements
New City Parcel (Former Knights of Columbus)	North Circuit Avenue/Englewood Avenue	From Englewood Avenue From Various Easements

*(i) The property is secured and not available for public use, although long-term plans include provisions for both pedestrian and vehicle use.*

*(ii) Service access is provided through the Lakeside Housing Development.*

*(iii) Access not encouraged, long-term arrangements call for a direct connection from the Coes Knife parcel directly to Columbus Park via an elevated boardwalk to be constructed along the edge of the Coes Pond.*



*Access to Columbus Park is available from the end of North Circuit Avenue (photo at left). West Circuit Avenue is a private road (photo at right). Uncontrolled storm water runoff from West Circuit Avenue has caused erosion to occur along the upper slopes of Columbus Park.*



*Access to the former Knights of Columbus parcel will make use of the former drive. Access to Coes Beach from Mill Street is difficult at present due to a lack of amenities for drop-off and pick-up.*

# The Master Plan – Narrative Descriptions of Potential Improvements

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## General Themes for Improvement

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There is a unique opportunity to connect five open space properties that form the southwestern, southern and eastern edges of Coes Pond so that a continuous greenway corridor is established. Along this corridor will be new and enhanced opportunities for both active and passive recreation. Through the establishment of consistent signage, site furnishing selections and landscape treatments, the greenway corridor can be further unified and strengthened so that it functions as a single and easily recognizable public recreational resource.

There are several basic themes for improving the public lands surrounding Coes Pond as summarized below:

- Continue all efforts to improve water quality management throughout the project area and surrounding watershed.
- Provide new and improved opportunities to access the public properties (by foot or by car) and develop all desired links between the various properties.
- Provide limited parking of a scale and style that is compatible with the generally low-intensity recreational uses that will occur within the individual parcels and along the larger greenway corridor.
- Develop an attractive, maintainable and safe series of passive and active recreational amenities that provide opportunities for enjoyment by residents of all ages, backgrounds and abilities.
- Provide improved opportunities to access and enjoy Coes Pond and the banks of Coes Pond while protecting its inherently delicate ecosystem.
- Provide area-wide interpretive features that present the unique historical and environmental qualities of Coes Pond (and surrounding lands) in order to help facilitate public education and awareness.

## Specific Site Improvements

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The narratives that follow describe the basic scope of improvements to be undertaken within specific open space properties and along the greenway corridor that links the various parcels together. It is important to note that the range of improvements has been endorsed by the Community as part of the public meeting process that generated extensive participation and comment. The narratives are intended to support the plans referenced below that graphically depict the scope of improvements. Figures 3 – 7 are included at the back of this report section.

Figure 3 – Public Open Space Properties Surrounding Coes Pond

Figure 4 – Coes Beach and Bathhouse Property

Figure 5 – Former Coes Knife Property

Figure 6 – Columbus Park

Figure 7 – New City Parcels (former Knights of Columbus and Fenton Parcels)

### **Figure 3 - Public Open Space Properties Surrounding Coes Pond**

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This diagram identifies all of the public open space properties surrounding Coes Pond and the full range of potential improvements to be undertaken as funds become available. Figure 3 also identifies links through easements and conservation-restricted lands that would establish a continuous greenway from Coes Beach and Bathhouse to the new City Parcel at the former Knights of Columbus parcel. These links are in the form of the proposed boardwalk along the edge of Coes Pond (adjacent to the Worcester Housing Authority off of Lakeside Avenue) and additional surface paths along Mill Street and across various easements.

### **Figure 4 - Coes Beach and Bathhouse Property**

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The Master Plan for this property indicates a series of improvements aimed at making the facility more accessible and convenient for users as summarized below:

- Development of new park entrance drive from Mill Street, limited parking spaces to include at least one ADA compliant space, and drop-off area to facilitate the safe arrival and departure from the property for all patrons.
- Interpretive features (signage and kiosks) that present the sites recreational offerings, unique environmental attributes and includes information on linkages to other nearby public open space properties and to the Major Taylor Bikeway, which follows Mill Street.
- New canoe and kayak boat launch and new accessible path to the edge of the water at the beach.
- Beach refurbishment to include replenished sand surfaces, removal of unsuitable materials and removal of invasive plant species.
- Refurbished bathhouse building that provides ADA compliance and improved facilities for staff and users.
- New site furnishings (signage, fencing, benches, bike racks, trash receptacles...) and plantings to increase shade and improve overall function and appearance of the property.
- Optional boardwalk overlook with seating for fishing and wildlife observation.
- Improved pedestrian links to the Mill Street sidewalk and the former Coes Knife parcel located to the southeast.

### **Figure 5 - Former Coes Knife Property**

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The Master Plan for this property identifies the establishment of a new park within the confines of the former Coes Knife factory. Work on the actual park can proceed following the completion of initial construction efforts involving reconstruction of the earthen dam that forms the edge of the property at Coes Pond and removal/remediation of contaminated soils found to the east of the former factory location. The dam project is scheduled to be undertaken during the fall of 2005, with soil remediation work to follow.

The range of potential improvements is similar to those initially outlined in the 1998 ***“Coes Knife Park & Trail Center Master Plan”*** prepared by The Halverson Company, and includes the following provisions:

- Vehicular entrance and small parking area with access from Coes Street.
- Interpretive features (signage and kiosks) that present the sites recreational offerings, unique historical and environmental attributes and includes information on linkages to other nearby public open space properties and to the Major Taylor Bikeway, which follows Mill Street.
- Meandering pathways that link to the dam and provide additional future links to Coes Beach and Bathhouse via Mill Street and to Columbus Park via a new boardwalk to be constructed at the edge of the pond adjacent to the Worcester Housing Authority property.
- New scenic overlook and pavilion at the top of the dam, with commanding views out to both Coes Pond and Lower Coes Pond.
- New children’s play area with ADA compliant equipment and features.
- New site furnishings (signage, fencing, benches, bike racks, trash receptacles...) and plantings to increase shade and improve overall function and appearance of the property.
- Removal of invasive plant species and replacement with native, indigenous species.

## **Figure 6 - Columbus Park**

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The Master Plan indicates a series of improvements that enhance Columbus Park as a largely undeveloped, scenic, natural resource with limited facilities as summarized below:

- Establishment of a single pedestrian corridor that runs the length of the property with links to open space properties located to the north and south.
- New parking area with six spaces total, including two ADA compliant, at the end of North Circuit Avenue and new maintenance gate to provide improved access to the property.
- Optional boardwalk overlook with seating for fishing and wildlife observation.
- Installation of a wetlands replication area along Coes Pond to compensate for loss of small wetlands area at the former Coes Knife factory.
- Retain small swimming/beachfront area for continued informal use by the neighborhood. Beach area to be unstaffed.
- Limited site furnishings (signage, fencing, benches)
- Removal of invasive plant species and replacement with native, indigenous species.

## **Figure 7 – New City Parcels (Former Knights of Columbus/Fenton Parcels)**

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The Master Plan calls for the creation of a new small-scale neighborhood playground at this location with both passive and active recreational facilities that include the following:

- Vehicular entrance and small parking area accessible from North Circuit Drive and Englewood Avenue.
- Interpretive features (signage and kiosks) that present the sites recreational offerings and includes information on linkages to other nearby public open space properties.
- Multi-use field for informal and formal uses.
- New children’s play area with ADA compliant equipment and features.
- Basketball court.
- Meandering pathways that link to the other open space properties and to Columbus Park.
- New site furnishings (signage, fencing, benches, bike racks, trash receptacles...) and plantings to increase shade and improve overall function and appearance of the property.
- Retain and reinforce existing woodland buffers with additional native plantings, especially along property lines that are shared with residential abutters.

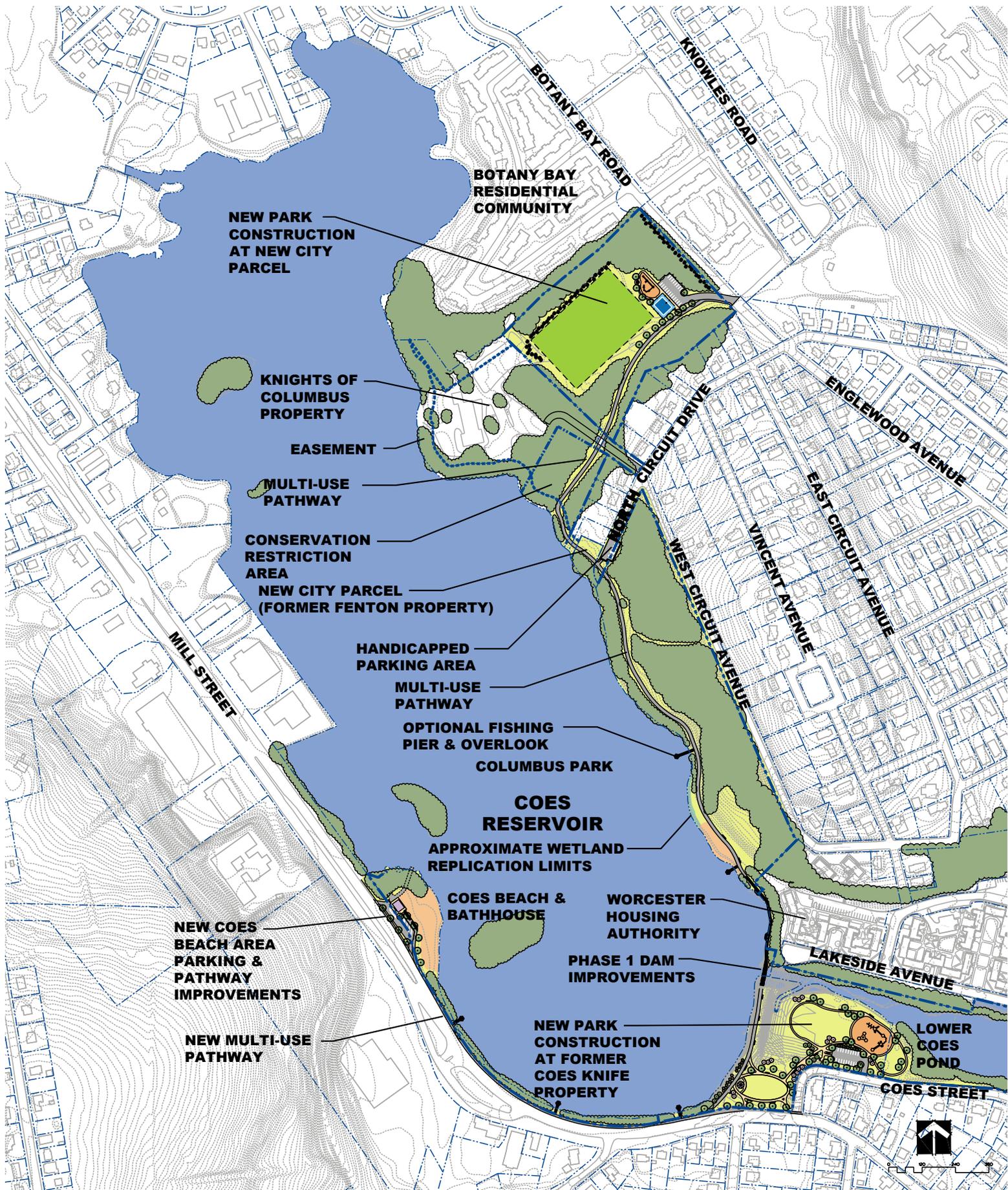


Figure 3 - Master Plan - Public Open Space Properties Surrounding Coes Pond.





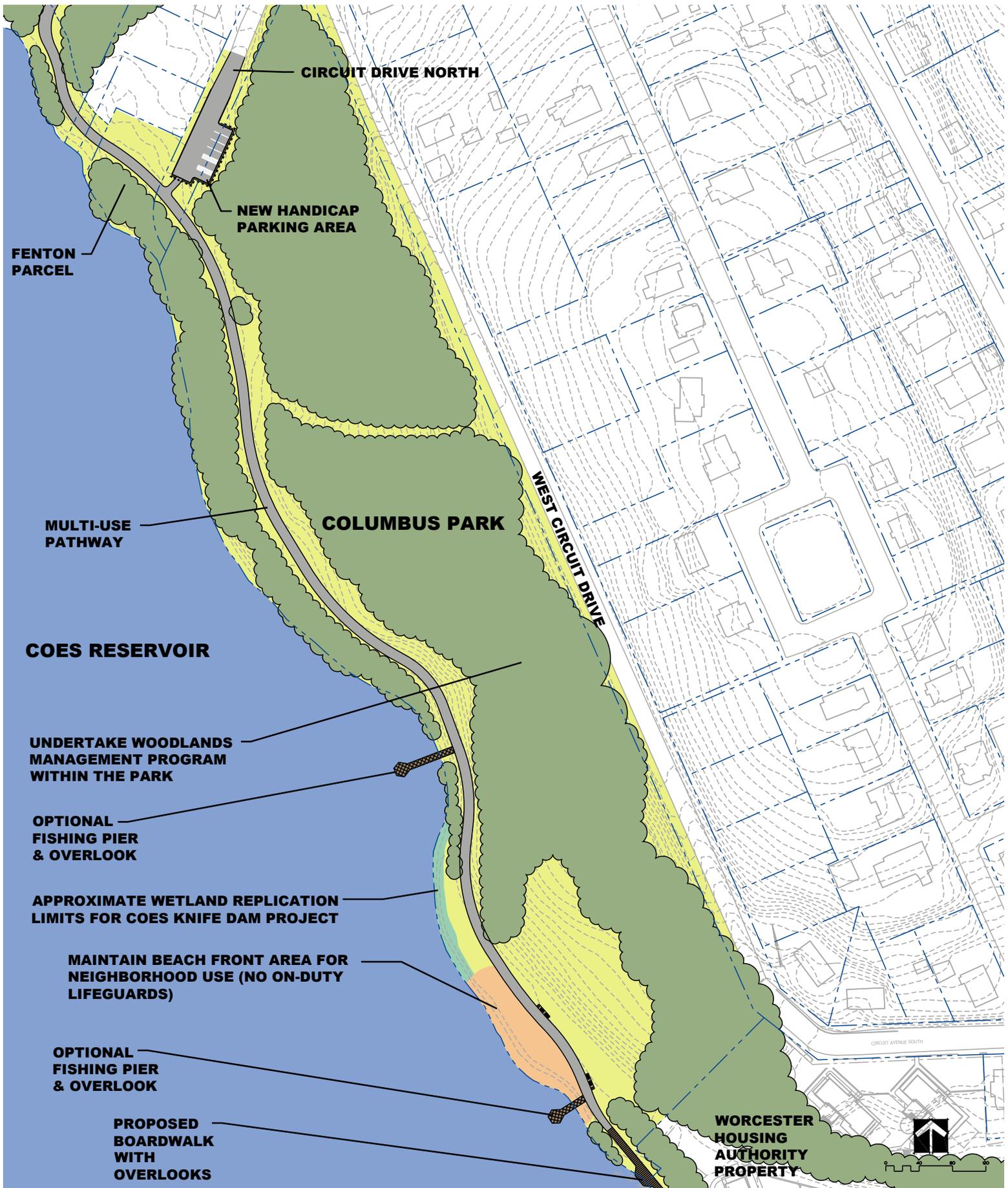


Figure 6 - Master Plan - Columbus Park.

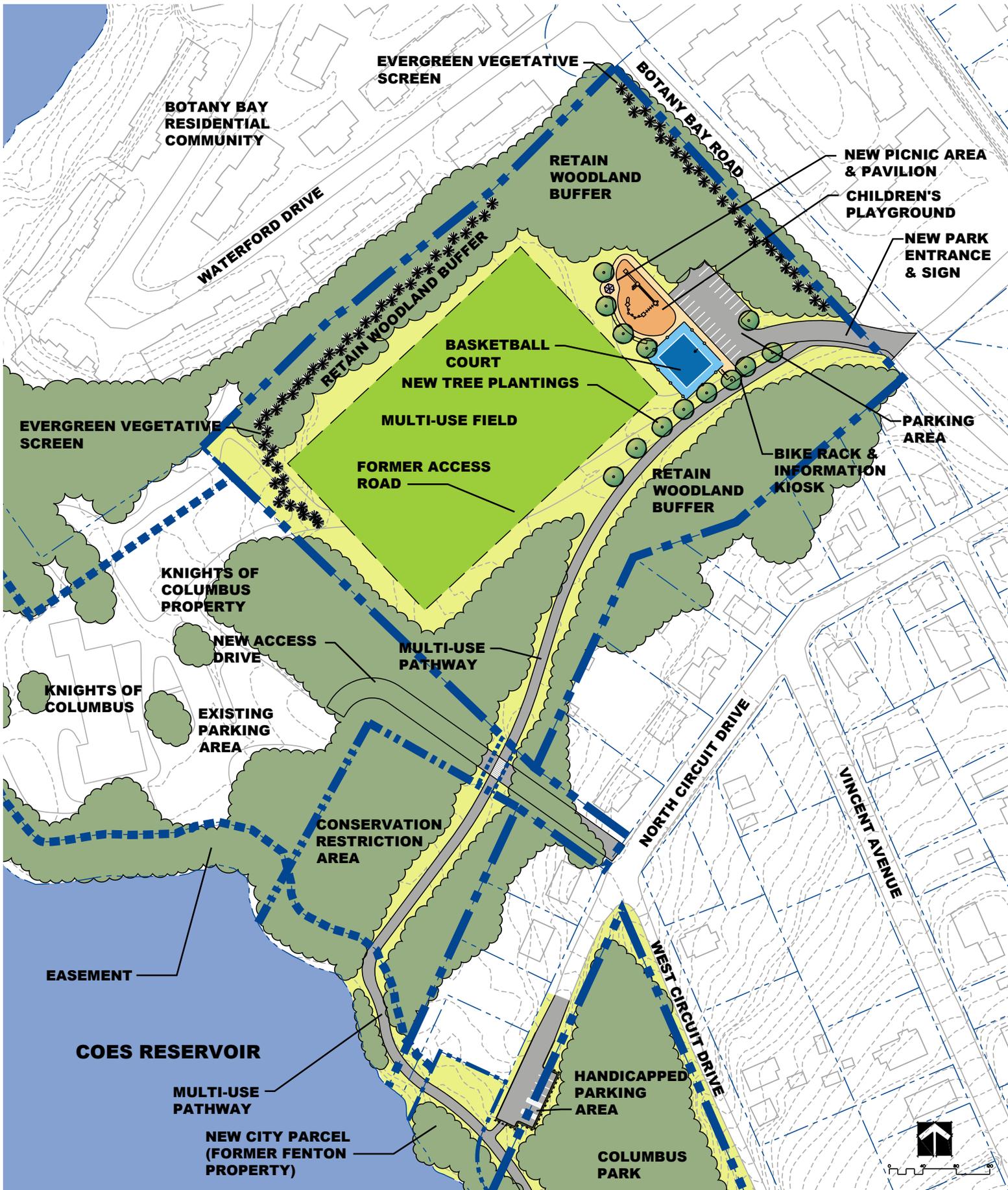


Figure 7 - Master Plan - New City Parcels (former Knights of Columbus and Fenton Parcels).

Master Plan Approved by  
**Worcester Parks  
Commission**

October 27, 2005

Master Plan Approved by  
**Worcester City Council**

October 30, 2006

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**Weston & Sampson**  
ENGINEERS, INC.

