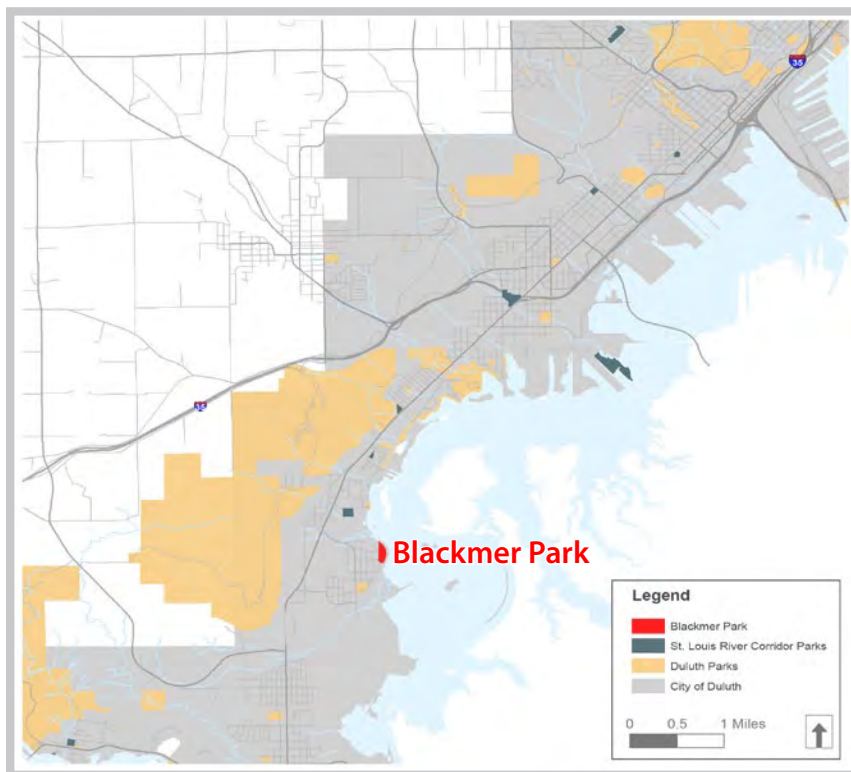




BLACKMER PARK

Summary and Overview

Blackmer Park is a 10-acre park in the Morgan Park neighborhood. The park is heavily used for youth soccer and softball games. Much of the park is wooded and the entire eastern edge of the park is adjacent to the St. Louis River with panoramic views through the trees. There is the potential for the future Western Waterfront Trail to travel along the river side of the park and connect to natural corridors that exist to the north and south. Today the Lake Superior & Mississippi rail line exists along the river's edge and hosts a historical train route tour on the weekends.



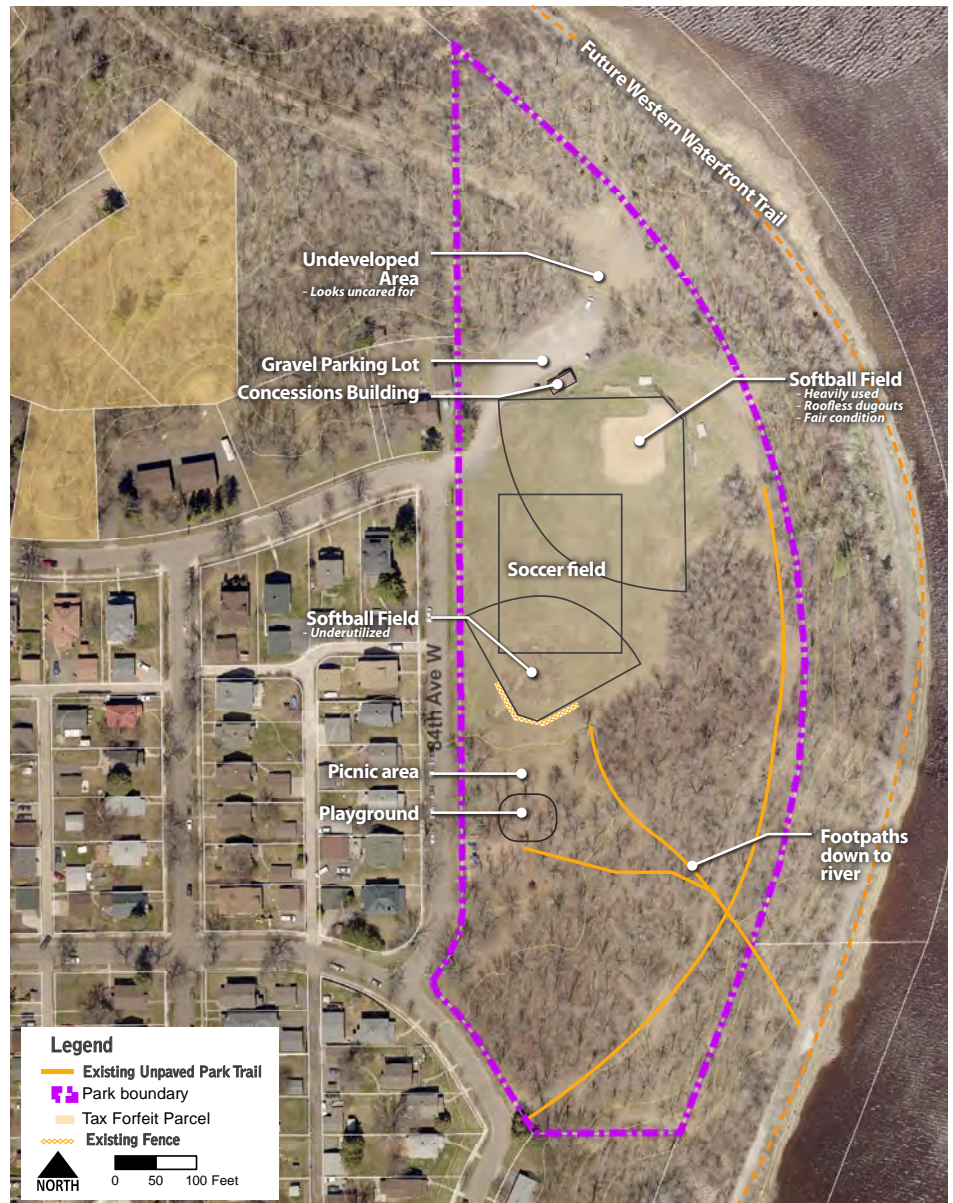
BLACKMER PARK LOCATION MAP

STRENGTHS/ OPPORTUNITIES:

- » Park is well-used and loved by neighbors – there is an opportunity to spruce it up and make minor improvements to improve functionality
- » Softball field is in fair condition, but could use minor improvements, including addition of ag-lime on the infield and new dugouts with rooves
- » Wooded area is a nice asset to the park – invasive tree thinning could benefit the existing native trees, new trees could be planted near playground
- » Playground is in a pleasant setting with natural shade trees – opportunity to replant trees that have died in past years

ISSUES:

- » Parking is unorganized and unregulated – gravel parking lot needs improvements
- » Undeveloped, open space north of the gravel parking lot is an eye sore
- » Access to the river is limited and informal/unsafe
- » Some erosion exists along footpaths that lead down to the river
- » Lack of permanent restroom and drinking water



BLACKMER PARK SITE INVENTORY

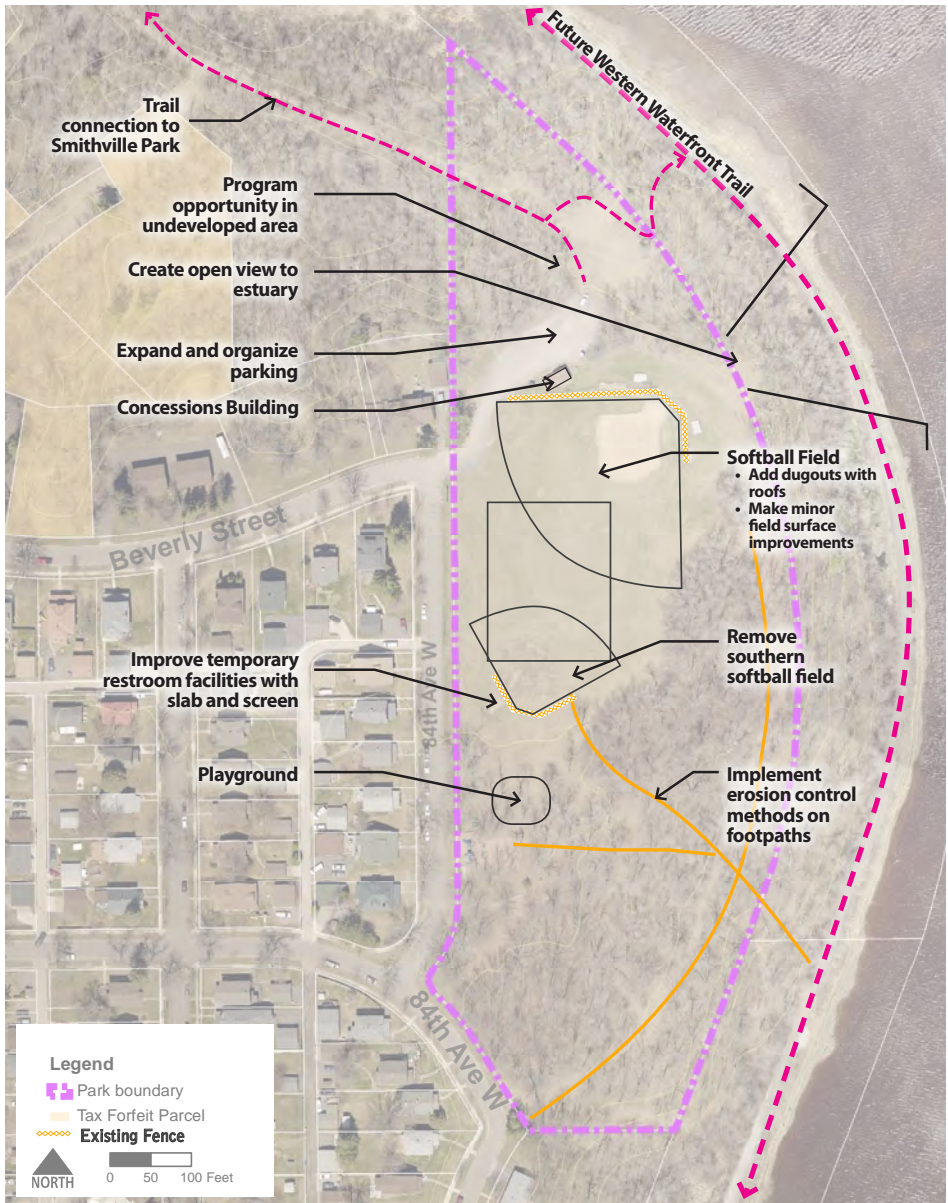
Existing Conditions

Blackmer Park contains one well-used softball field with a small concessions building and gravel parking lot. In the fall, soccer fields are set up overlapping the outfield. The soccer and softball associations work well together managing the seasons and usage of the fields. A small playground exists south of the athletic fields surrounded by large oaks and maples. Several footpaths lead down the slope through the woods to the river's edge.

Needs Assessment/Input Summary

At the stakeholder and community meetings, a desire was expressed for every park in the corridor to have basic amenities, including a bench, a picnic table, and a grill, which do exist in Blackmer Park. Maintaining and updating these basic amenities is desired. Wayfinding and directional signage to each park, within each park, and to nearby trails are also desired as a way to promote the parks.

Some basic infrastructure and facility improvements are needed in Blackmer



BLACKMER PARK SITE ANALYSIS

Park. There is a desire to maintain restroom facilities at the park, either with a structure to house a temporary porta-potty or with the addition of a permanent restroom building. The current parking lot is gravel and unmarked – there is a desire to pave the lot and add barriers between the park and parking lot to prevent cars from parking on the grass. Athletic field improvements are desired, such as grading the fields, updating surfaces, and providing dugouts on the softball field.

Area residents access the river today using informal footpaths through the woods. Some of these paths are in need of erosion control improvements, accessible steps to traverse steep areas, and formalized river viewing locations. There is a desire from park neighbors to provide a safe crossing of the rail line to a new dock on the river for fishing, wildlife viewing, and kayak/canoe launching. Neighbors also welcome a future trail connection to Smithville Park. Park users like the large oaks, maples, and basswood that surround the playground/picnic area and – they would like more of these trees planted to provide future growth when older trees die. Management of the entire forested area is desired.



The existing playground has new equipment



The softball field at Blackmer is heavily used



Soft surface trails connect visitors to the river



The existing rail corridor on the banks of the St. Louis River



FIGURE 2.7 BLACKMER PARK MINI-MASTER PLAN

Concept Plan & Recommendations

The concept plan for Blackmer Park addresses athletic field improvements, river access, and natural resources in the park. Priorities include maintaining and enhancing the good functionality of the park today and formalizing some of the informal features in the park.

Phasing & Cost Estimates

PHASE 1: SHORT-TERM

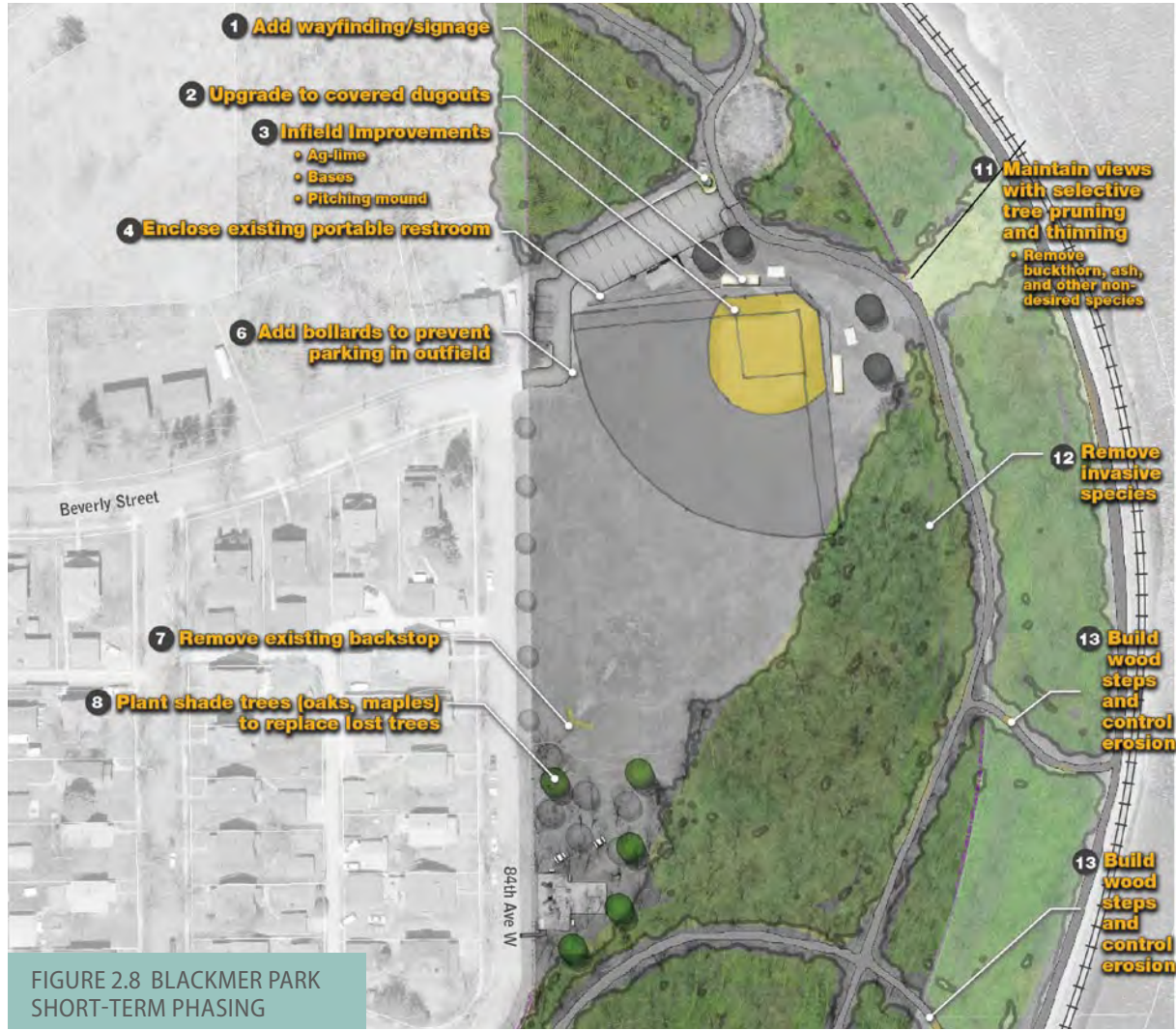


FIGURE 2.8 BLACKMER PARK SHORT-TERM PHASING

ACTION			COST
#	CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	
1	Circulation	Install New Park Wayfinding Sign	\$1,000
2	Recreation	Build New Covered Dugout	\$30,000
3	Recreation	Improve Infield	\$5,000
4	Buildings	Build New Port-a-Potty Enclosure	\$2,000
6	Infrastructure	Install New Bollards	\$2,500
7	Demolition	Remove Existing Backstop	\$500
8	Vegetation	Plant New Shade Trees	\$2,000
11	Vegetation	Prune and Thin Existing Trees to Create View	\$5,000
12	Vegetation	Remove invasive species	\$18,000
13	Circulation	Build New Wood Steps and Control Erosion	\$1,200
Total Short-Term Improvement Costs			\$67,200

PHASE 2: LONG-TERM

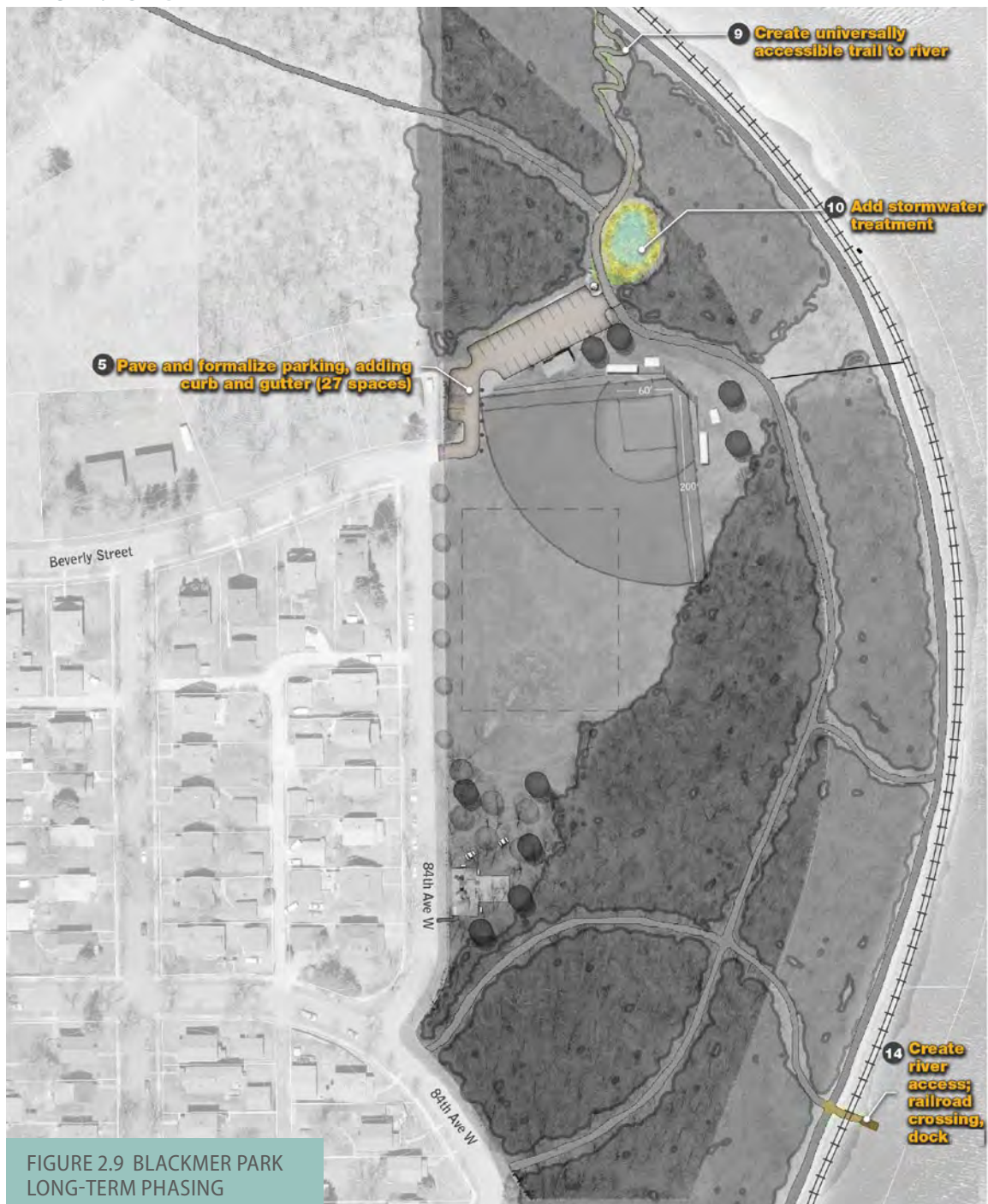


FIGURE 2.9 BLACKMER PARK LONG-TERM PHASING

ACTION			COST
#	CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	
5	Circulation	Build New Paved Parking Lot	\$94,500
9	Circulation	Build New 6' Gravel Trail	\$5,000
10	Stormwater	Install New Raingarden	\$67,500
14	Recreation	Build New Fishing Dock	\$50,000
Total Long-Term Improvement Costs			\$217,000
Total Short-Term Improvement Costs			\$67,200
Total Improvement Costs			\$284,200