

RESOLUTION NO. 11-19023

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING A MASTER PLAN FOR THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF YELLOWSTONE FAMILY PARK IN  
YELLOWSTONE CLUB ESTATES SUBDIVISION

WHEREAS, the public interest requires the creation and adoption of a Master Plan for Yellowstone Family Park in the Yellowstone Club Estates Subdivision to control and limit development in accordance with the needs of the subdivision and the community, the limitations and constraints of the park site, and with improvements suited to and appropriate for the surrounding land uses; and

WHEREAS, it is in the public interest and necessary that the current and future development of the park shall conform to the adopted master plan; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BILLINGS:

1. *Master Plan.* The master plan for Yellowstone Family Park presented for adoption and attached as *Exhibit "A"* is the official Master Plan for the park;
2. *General Character of Improvements Provided for by the Plan.* The master plan describes the general character of the improvements to the park and the facilities to be located on the public parkland known as Yellowstone Family Park. The purpose of the plan is to guide development of the park and a maintenance district to provide perpetual maintenance of the subject park facilities.
3. *Changes.* Proposed improvements not part of the adopted plan shall not be installed unless a new master plan is adopted through the normal park planning process that finds that the proposed improvement is appropriate as described above and can be incorporated as part of an "amended" park master plan to be presented for adoption at that time.

PASSED, ADOPTED AND APPROVED by the City Council of the City of Billings, Montana, this 14<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2011.



CITY OF BILLINGS

By: Thomas W. Hanel  
Thomas W. Hanel, Mayor

ATTEST:

By: Cari Martin  
Cari Martin, City Clerk

# • YELLOWSTONE FAMILY PARK MASTER PLAN

PREPARED FOR



FEBRUARY 2011

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## PROCESS OVERVIEW

The Master Plan for Byron Nelson Park began in November of 2010 with the goal to provide a meaningful and open master planning process lead by the Billings Parks, Recreation and Public Lands (PRPL) that fully engaged Yellowstone Club Estates (YCE) and surrounding Community served by Byron Nelson Park. The Master Plan for Byron Nelson Park was initiated by and funded by the YCE Home Owners Association through the City of Billings Parks Recreation and Public Lands following a vote by the YCE Home Owners Association at their annual meeting that had over 100 members in attendance.

In addition to the Community, the planning team included PRPL, YCE, the YCE Home Owners Association and the YCE Park Planning Committee (PPC). Public input was provided by and solicited from the Community and ultimately drove the planning process and final Master Plan. This input was received throughout the project and was incorporated into the Master Plan.

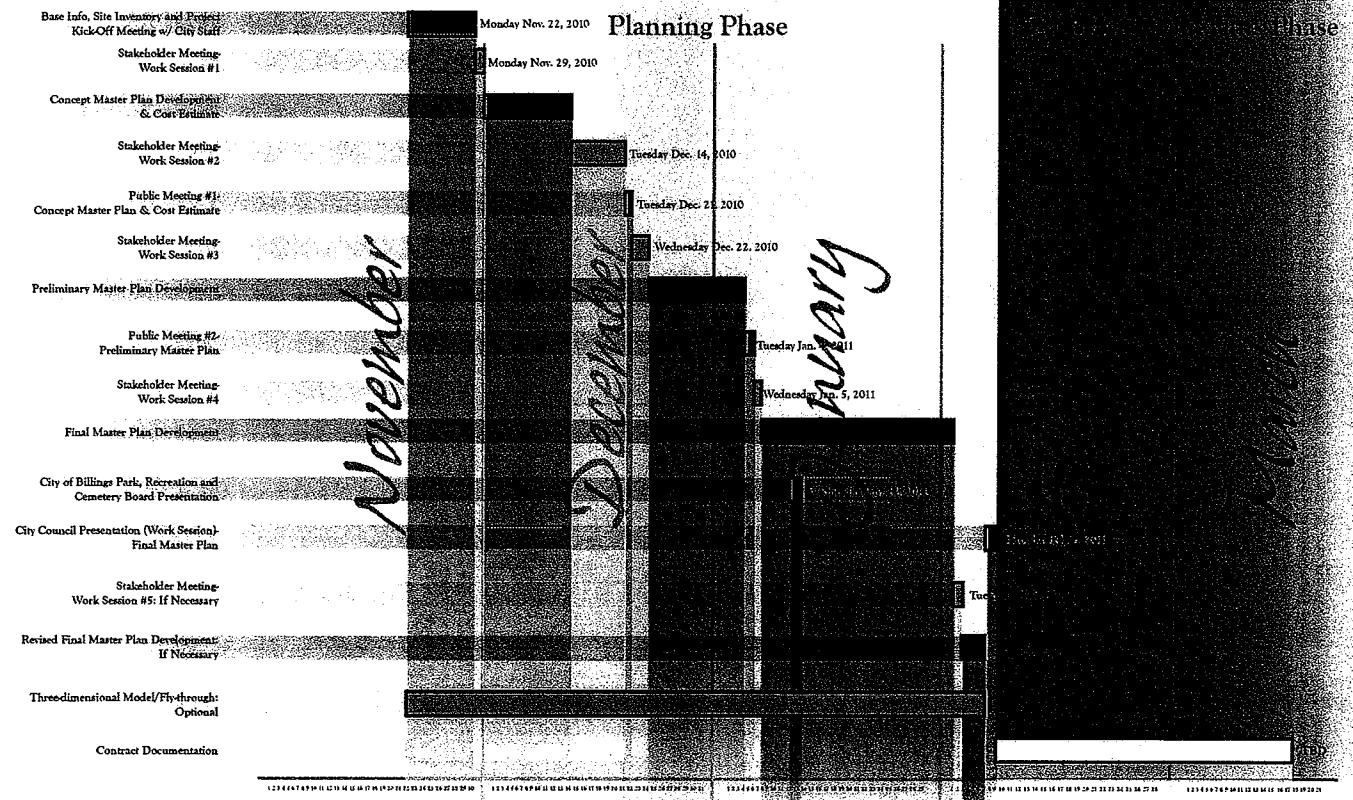
## CITY WORK SESSION 1- NOVEMBER

22<sup>ND</sup>, 2010

The project kick-off meeting with PRPL was held to identify City of Billings goals and objectives for the project as well as project schedule and key tasks necessary for a complete and successful planning process. See Table 1. Public input and a Community driven process were stressed as important drivers for the project and incorporated into the key tasks.

## STAKEHOLDER MEETING 1- NOVEMBER 29<sup>TH</sup>, 2010

The project began with a kick-off meeting with the PRPL Staff (Mr. Mike Whitaker- Parks Director and Mr. Mark Jarvis- Parks Planner) and the YCE Park Planning Committee (PPC) who was appointed by the YCE Home Owners Association to speak on their behalf. This work session identified City expectations for the park as well as neighborhood expectations and desires. It was confirmed that the Byron Nelson Park was a Neighborhood Park by City definition, which is based on the National Parks and Recreation Association (NRPA) Standards, and as such would be planned with elements and uses consistent with neighborhood parks found throughout the City of



**Table 1.** Master Plan Schedule. (Tasks and schedule from City Work Session 1 with PRPL, YCE and Land Design Inc.)

Billings. See Table 2. The following is the preliminary program discussed in this meeting:

- User Safety
- Park shelter
- Gathering space
- Basketball court
- Playground equipment with accessible surfacing
- Irrigated turf lawn for multi-use recreation
- Park and neighborhood identity/signage
- Enhanced intersection at Bobby Jones and 54<sup>th</sup> Street
- Water conservation
- Improved visibility from 54<sup>th</sup> Street
- Balance of irrigated park land and natural park land
- Consideration of operation and maintenance costs
- Sustainability

The PPC also requested that the park change its name from Byron Nelson Park to Yellowstone Family Park and this was agreed to in concept by PRPL staff with the final consideration and approval by City Council.

The Consultant was tasked with the development of two concept plans: Plan A- Traditional Park Master Plan and Plan B- Stylized Park Master Plan. Both plans were to include the key programming elements identified in the Work Session and maintain the intent of a Neighborhood Park as defined by the City of Billings and NRPA Standards.

## Neighborhood Park

5-10 Acres in size  
1/2 mile Service radius  
Walk to facility  
On Street Parking  
No Restroom Facilities  
No/Minimal Programmed Recreational Uses (non illuminated)  
Activities Smaller in Scale- (More Neighborhood oriented)

## Community Park

30-50 Acres in Size  
3 Mile Service Radius  
Drive to Park/Serves several Neighborhoods  
Lot Parking  
Restroom Facilities  
Grouped programmed Recreational Uses (illuminated)  
Activities moderate in Scale- (Intermediate Size)

## Regional Park

50+ Acres in Size  
5+ Miles Service Radius  
Drive to Park/City wide service  
Lot Parking  
Restroom Facilities  
Multiple programmed Recreational Uses (illuminated)  
Activities larger in Scale- (Greater Quantity & Broader Selection of recreational uses)

**Table 2. Park Definitions. (Programming elements based on park size and intended use level.)**

## STAKEHOLDER MEETING 2- DECEMBER 14<sup>TH</sup>, 2010

Stakeholder Meeting 2 provided a preliminary review of the two Concept Plans for City Staff and the PPC to ensure the Concept Plans were consistent with City requirements and Community expectations. Both Concept Plans were presented and comments were received by those in attendance. Comments were favorable to both plans. Comments received in this work session were then incorporated into the plans in preparation for Public Meeting #1.

## PUBLIC MEETING 1- DECEMBER 21<sup>ST</sup>, 2010

Public Meeting #1 was held at the Yellowstone Country Club and was well attended with over 40 people. An overview of the planning process was presented to ensure those in attendance had an understanding of how the project was initiated (by YCE) and the next steps in the planning and public input process as required by the City of Billings.

A context map showing the relationship between Yellowstone Family Park and its fit into the City of Billings Parks System as well as the adjacent trails on the Heritage Trail network was presented. See Figure 1.

Work by PRPL to determine the service area of Yellowstone Family Park was also presented. This work revealed a service area of 381 homes/properties within the service district for Yellowstone Family Park.



**Figure 1.** Context map presentation board. (Map showing Yellowstone Family/Byron Nelson Park and its adjacency to surrounding trails and parks.)

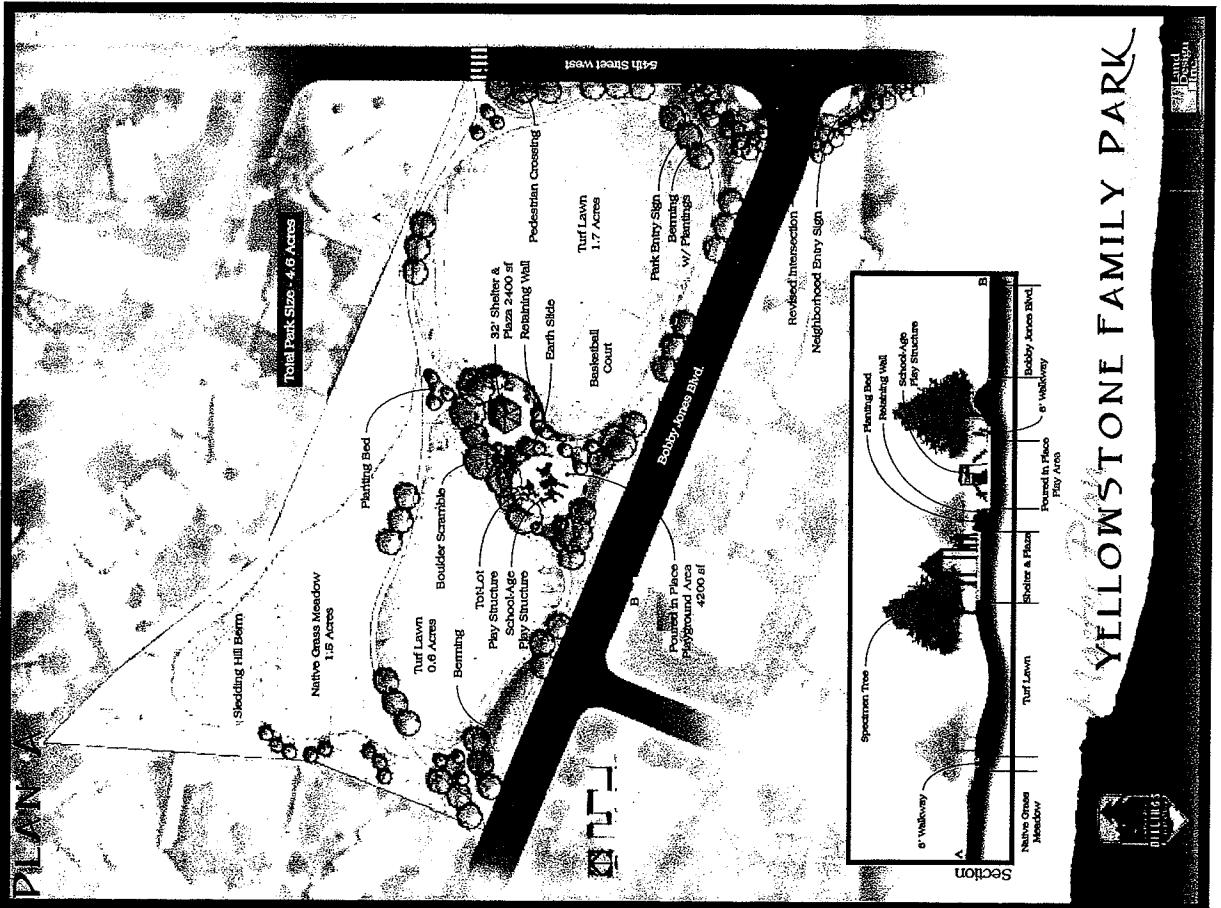
important dates in the planning process including key dates where additional public input would be accepted.

The intent of the Public Meeting was to hear comments, concerns and ideas the Community might have related to the park master plan and incorporate these comments, to the extent possible, into the plan. The venue of the meeting allowed spoken comment during and following the presentation. Additionally, written comment sheets were offered to all in attendance with those comments directed to PRPL.

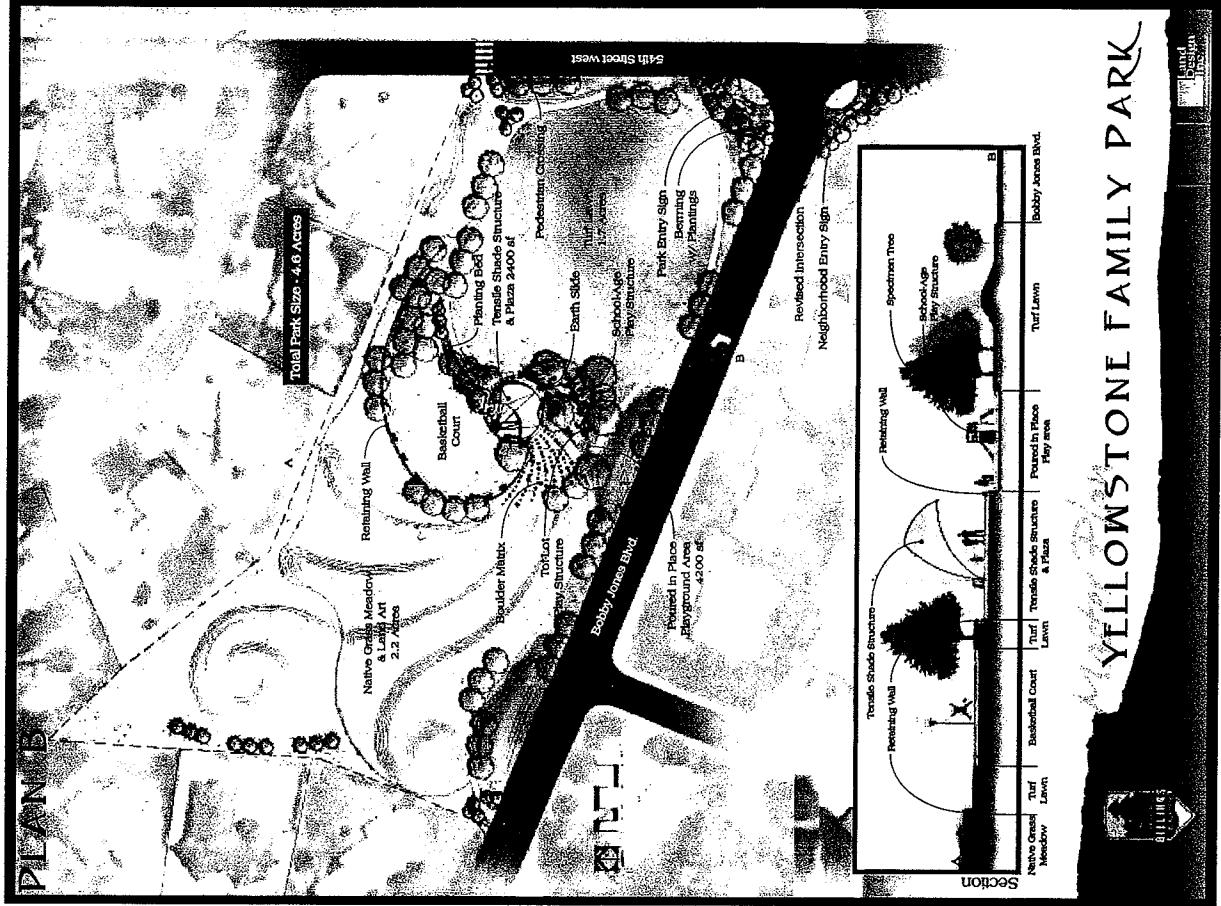
### **Plan A- Traditional Park Master Plan**

Plan A features a built up central plaza on which the rustic style park shelter is placed. See Figure 2. This sets up the shelter as the focal point of the design. It also creates an elevated terrace from which parents can supervise the play of their children on the surrounding active use areas. The design also features a revised intersection at Bobby Jones and 54<sup>th</sup> Street West which eliminates an existing right hand turn lane and lane divider in order to calm traffic and create a gateway entry feature for both the neighborhood and the park.

Gateway entry signs are envisioned as a part of the reworking of the intersection in order to provide identification for the park and the neighborhood. A large area of Plan A is dedicated to irrigated turf. Of the 4.6 acres, 3.1 are irrigated turf and planting beds, or enough turf area for 3 youth soccer fields. The remaining 1.5 acres are native grass meadow (non-irrigated). The inclusion of native dryland grasses represents a significant shift in thought from the traditional expectation of an irrigated turf park. The rationale behind the inclusion of dryland grasses in the design is to reduce operations and maintenance costs by keeping more intense park uses off of difficult to develop slopes. The prominent feature in the native grass meadow area is an embellished sledding hill in the north corner of the park. Neighborhood children already use this section of park as a sledding hill despite the relatively insufficient slopes that are present in the area. By enhancing the existing topography the design improves the sledding experience and encourages greater year round use of the park. The park also features perimeter berming and vegetative screening to separate the active play uses. This



**Figure 2.** Plan A presentation board (Plan A is characterized as the “Traditional Plan”)



**Figure 3.** Plan B presentation board (Plan B is characterized as the “Stylized Plan”)

berming and screening is a critical to ensure a user safety by providing physical separation from vehicles. A pedestrian crossing on 54<sup>th</sup> street as well as hard and soft surface trails ensure ease of pedestrian use while providing walking/jogging loops.

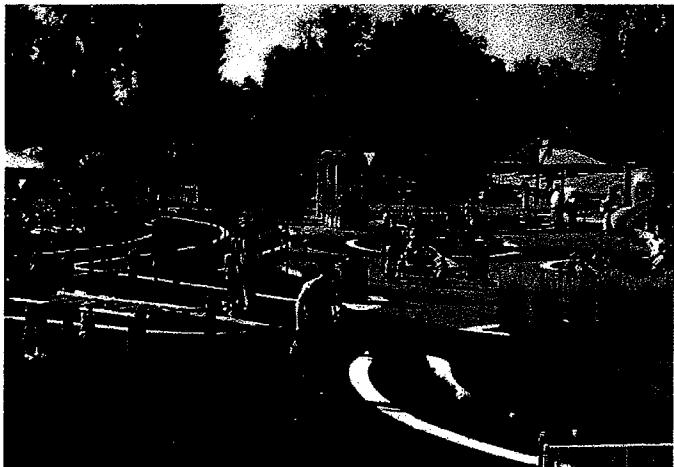
### **Plan B- Stylized Park Master Plan**

Plan B features the same elements as Plan A in a more stylized design. See Figure 3. The design features a 3-tier scheme in which terraces are graded to step down following the natural slope of the site. The design is focused around the central park shelter and plaza, which are set up to be the focal point for the design. The tiered nature of the design allows the plaza to be elevated above the surrounding active play areas providing an overlook from which parents can supervise their children, as well as making the plaza and shelter the defining element in the park. The shelter in this plan is made of a tensile fabric to further distinguish the shelter as the focal point of the design. Plan B also features the same revised gateway intersection design of Plan A, creating a gateway entry for the park and neighborhood. Plan B features a poured in place play surface which holds traditional playground elements. See Figure 4. Additionally, the plan has an irrigated turf activity lawn which is approximately 2.4 acres, or large enough for 2 youth soccer fields. The remaining 2.2 acres are left in an unirrigated native dryland grass meadow. The native meadow is included in order to reduce irrigation and maintenance costs. The major emphasis on Plan B was the incorporation of the concepts of Discovery Play and Land Art into the design. The Discovery Play concept is the idea that children are being denied the opportunity to interact with the natural

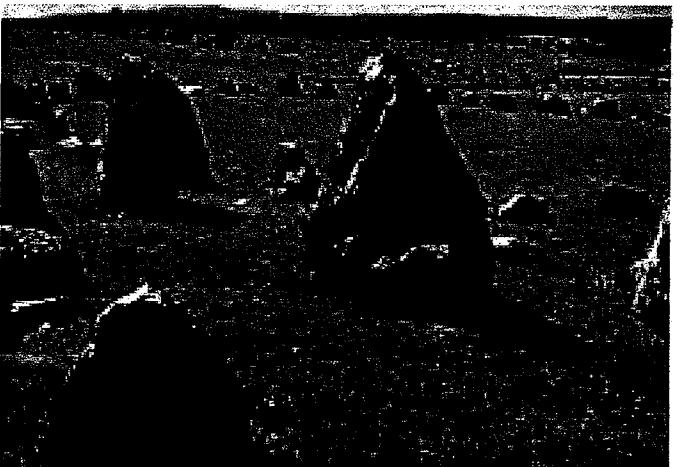
environment in an imaginative way due to the over structuring of traditional playgrounds. Land Art is a means of creating interesting natural features, structures, and landforms from natural materials, which provide an interesting focal point for people to contemplate. Plan B features sculptural berthing in the native grass meadow and can double as sledding chutes in winter. See Figure 5. The intent of the berthing is to create a unique sculptural landform that will help visitors to identify the significance of the native grass meadow and stimulate the imaginations of visiting children to play and interact with the landform. A boulder field matrix was also included in the design scheme. See Figure 6. The boulder field matrix is an area of boulders on a geometric layout which will present children and users with another unique landscape that can be used in any number of ways from hide and seek to climbing and jumping. An additional function of the matrix is to reinforce the geometry of the design as a whole and tie the berthing back into the central hub of the design. Perimeter



*Figure 5. Sculptural landform.*



*Figure 4. Poured in place play surface and traditional playground equipment.*



*Figure 6. Boulder matrix.*

berming for screening and buffering are also utilized to separate the high activity uses from the adjacent roadways providing a safe physical buffer zone. Hard and soft surface walks are also included in the design to define circulation throughout the park for the benefit of walkers and joggers.

A detailed Estimate of Costs was presented for each of the plans. Assumptions related to grades and geotechnical information was made in the development of these estimates and this was explained to those present at the meeting. The estimates were broken down into hard-costs (cost for development) and soft- costs (cost for design, creation of an SID and contingency) and then broken down into cost per household (total cost, annual cost and monthly cost). See Table 3.

The YCE also presented benefits of park development to a neighborhood based on national trends and local needs directly related to Yellowstone Family Park. This offered an interactive dialogue, neighbor to neighbor, that was peer driven and well received. See Table 4.

General comments in Public Meeting 1 were favorable to the concept of developing the park. There were some in opposition to any development and some disagreed with the identified service area and the actual benefit of the park to their individual properties, but the

vast majority of people in attendance spoke in favor of the master planning process and development of the park.

Plan B- Stylized Plan was favored over Plan A in the numerous spoken comments as well as written comments received. There was favorable comment to combine elements of Plan A and Plan B into the Preliminary Master Plan. Elements such as the discovery play area, enhancing the loop trail system, including the proposed land art and the use of a rustic park shelter vs. a tensile shelter were taken and ultimately incorporated into the revised Preliminary Master Plan based on those comments received. There was also discussion related to off-site drainage issues that could be mitigated through proper grading and drainage within the park design as well as the proposed intersection redesign at Bobby Jones and 54th Street.

There was concern related to costs expressed by those in opposition to the park being developed. This was addressed by other neighbors stating that the benefit of the park to the neighborhood and individual property owners, in their opinion, outweighed the drawbacks. This was a good and meaningful discussion on cost accountability for both the development of the park and the operations and maintenance of the park.

<b>Plan A</b>			
	Costs		
	Low	High	Avg.
Earthwork & Site Prep .....	\$55,088.84	\$69,105.18	\$62,097.01
Hardscape (includes rework of street intersection and entry signs) .....	\$241,479.20	\$302,555.20	\$272,017.20
Play Equipment .....	\$91,500.00	\$116,500.00	\$104,000.00
Landscape .....	\$153,434.48	\$190,584.62	\$172,009.55
Soft Costs .....	\$194,940.91	\$217,198.40	\$206,069.65
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$736,443.43</b>	<b>\$895,943.40</b>	<b>\$816,934.41</b>
Total cost per household- 381 households over 15 years .....	\$1,932.92	\$2,351.56	\$2,142.24
Total annual cost per household- 381 households .....	\$128.86	\$156.77	\$142.82
Monthly Cost per household- 381 households .....	\$10.74	\$13.06	\$11.90

<b>Plan B</b>			
	Costs		
	Low	High	Avg.
Earthwork & Site Prep .....	\$56,310.80	\$72,688.12	\$64,499.46
Hardscape (includes rework of street intersection and entry signs) .....	\$279,126.80	\$352,757.00	\$315,941.90
Play Equipment .....	\$91,500.00	\$116,500.00	\$104,000.00
Landscape .....	\$166,283.30	\$207,980.44	\$187,131.87
Soft Costs .....	\$213,559.52	\$239,976.18	\$226,767.85
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$806,780.42</b>	<b>\$989,901.74</b>	<b>\$898,341.08</b>
Total cost per household- 381 households over 15 years .....	\$2,117.53	\$2,598.17	\$2,357.85
Total annual cost per household- 381 households .....	\$141.17	\$173.21	\$157.19
Monthly Cost per household- 381 households .....	\$11.75	\$14.43	\$13.10

**Table 3.** Park cost estimates. (Cost estimates for construction of preliminary plans A &B, as compiled by Land Design Inc.)

- Average home values increase 4-5% with the addition of neighborhood park. Current homes in YCE and Yellowstone Ridge (YR) average around \$325,000 and, based on a 4% increase, the completed park could add an additional \$12,500 to the value of the average home. This is a great return on a \$2,360 (high end) investment.
- The Yellowstone Club Estates Homeowner's Association has paid for the Park Master Plan. This is step one of two required by the city to complete the park improvements. The second step is creating an SID to fund the design and construction of improvements selected from the Master Plan.
- Construction costs and bond rates are at their lowest in years – this equals an unparalleled opportunity to maximize our investment in our neighborhood.
- If we fail to develop our park, we risk of the acreage being sold to developers. A new development would not have to comply with our subdivision regulations (see Cottonwood Subdivision on 54th St.). We would have little to no input regarding the new development.
- Neighborhood Park versus Community Park. The park will not include lights, bathrooms, or off-street parking. It is designed for our neighborhood and not the community in general.
- YCE is an aging subdivision and needs some updating. A nice sign and a welcoming park would be a great beginning to neighborhood revitalization.
- When a homeowner markets their home, the aesthetic value of a neighborhood park could improve the opportunity of a family buying at YCE or YR home over other subdivisions.

**Table 4. Pro-Park development rationale. (Reasons for park development as compiled by the YCE Homeowners Association Board.)**

There was a request by the Public to look at like parks within the City of Billings and compare their Operations and Maintenance costs with those anticipated for Yellowstone Family Park. PRPL was tasked with this effort and provided information to the Consultant for use in Public Meeting 2.

#### STAKEHOLDER MEETING 3 – DECEMBER 22<sup>ND</sup>, 2010

Stakeholder Meeting 3 provided an opportunity to discuss comments received from Public Meeting 1. Those in attendance included PRPL Staff and the PPC. Overall, review of the comments from Public Meeting 1 was positive as it related to the Plans presented. There was consensus that the Community preferred Plan B- Stylized Park to Plan A- Traditional Park.

#### PUBLIC MEETING 2 – JANUARY 4, 2011

Public Meeting 2 was also well attended with over 40 neighbors and community members. Review of the planning process, where we have been, where we are, and where we are going was reviewed with the project schedule. The Preliminary Master Plan was then presented:

#### **Preliminary Master Plan**

The Preliminary Master Plan or preferred plan is a combination of Plan A and Plan B based on comments received from the Community.

The Preliminary Master Plan incorporates the geometry of Plan B with more active use areas programmed into the overall geometry based on comments received. See Figure 7. The plan features 3 levels of groundcover that correspond to 3 activity levels within the park. Ground treatment ranges from dryland native grass for low activity levels, partially irrigated turf for moderate activity levels, and fully irrigated turf for high activity areas. The design was adjusted based on Community input so that a larger space of high use irrigated turf was created providing open space for 3 youth soccer fields or about 2.89 acres of irrigated turf and planting beds. The design also features a larger network of both hard and soft surface walks based on input received, comprising small and large loops of approximately .1 miles and .2 miles respectively. The key pedestrian crossing at 54<sup>th</sup> street was maintained as an important connection for park users in the Yellowstone Ridge Subdivision. The grading of the park is configured to follow the natural grades of the park, once again celebrating the shelter plaza as the primary focal point for the park. The park shelter was changed from the tensile fabric structure to the more traditional rustic structure based on several comments in favor of the more traditional, rustic shelter design. See Figure 8. The gateway entry feature and revised intersection was maintained in the preliminary master plan. See Figure 9. The poured in place play surface and traditional playground equipment were reduced in size while additional

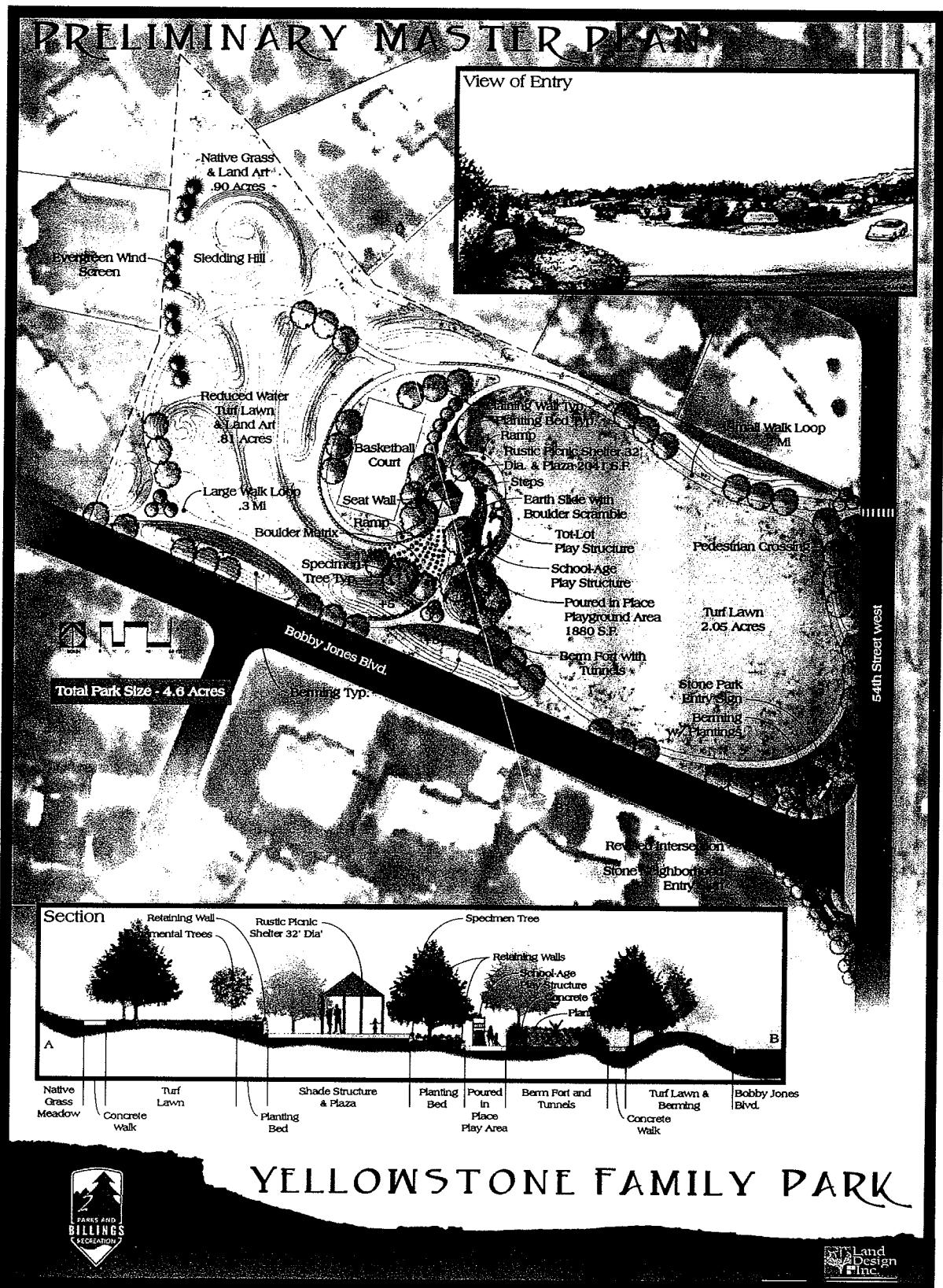


Figure 7. Preliminary Master Plan presentation board. (Preliminary Master Plan is a synthesis of public comments from previous work sessions.)

discovery play areas were expanded as the discovery play areas were favorably received by the Community. In addition to the sculptural landform and boulder matrix, a Berm Fort with boulder scrambles was also added. See Figure 10. The berm fort provides another interesting naturalistic element with which children can interact with by climbing or exploring. Overall tree counts were reduced and tree placements were revised in order to meet the expressed needs of some of the adjacent landowners to maintain their views of the Rimrocks or the Bearooths. Perimeter Berming was maintained to ensure user safety from adjacent roads.

Following the presentation of the Preliminary Master Plan the Estimate of Costs for the development of



**Figure 8.** Example of rustic park shelter.



**Figure 9.** Gateway entry perspective. (Drawing of the entry gateway and signs proposed in the Yellowstone Family Park Preliminary Master Plan.)

the plan was presented. See Table 5. Case studies were also presented to provide a comparison of the Operations and Maintenance costs for Yellowstone Family Park. The parks evaluated for the case studies were Circle 50/Country Manor Park and Rimrock West Park. See Table 5. This information was provided by PRPL.

Discussion following the presentation was favorable for the Preliminary Master Plan. Most of the comments received were primarily focused on the operation and maintenance costs. There was the suggestion to include an area for ice skating in the active use area.



**Figure 10.** Boulder scramble. (Photo of Boulder Scramble proposed as a Discovery Play element in the Preliminary Master Plan.)

## Preliminary Construction Costs

	Low	High	Avg.
Earthwork & Site Prep .....	\$63,169.40	\$81,472.02	\$72,320.71
Hardscape (includes rework of street intersection and entry signs) .....	\$373,981.53	\$449,115.03	\$411,548.28
Play Equipment .....	\$91,500.00	\$116,500.00	\$104,000.00
Landscape .....	\$190,955.78	\$237,853.26	\$214,404.52
Soft Costs .....	\$280,646.62	\$345,126.72	\$312,886.67
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$1,000,253.33</b>	<b>\$1,230,067.04</b>	<b>\$1,115,160.18</b>
<b>Total cost per household- 381 households .....</b>	<b>\$2,625.34</b>	<b>\$3,228.52</b>	<b>\$2,926.93</b>
<b>*Does not include interest</b>			
<b>Total annual cost per household- 381 households .....</b>	<b>\$75.02</b>	<b>\$915.23</b>	<b>\$105.43</b>
<b>*Does not include interest</b>			
<b>Monthly Cost per household- 381 households .....</b>	<b>\$14.59</b>	<b>\$17.94</b>	<b>\$16.26</b>
<b>*Does not include interest</b>			

## Maintenance & Operation Cost Comparisons

	Total Annual Cost	Annual Cost Per Household	Monthly Cost Per Household
Circle Fifty/Country Manor Park .....	\$16,000.00	\$58.00	\$4.88
(5 acres, 273 Households)			
Rimrock West Park .....	\$5,000.00	\$142.00	\$11.90
(10 acres, all irrigated, 245 Households)			

**Table 5. Preliminary Master Plan cost estimates. (Cost estimates for the Preliminary Master Plan as presented at the 2nd public meeting, including operation and maintenance cost case studies from similar parks, as compiled by Land Design, Inc. and PRPL.)**

There was opposition to the development of the park by some in attendance. Those who spoke in opposition had concerns regarding operation and maintenance costs and the ability to control those costs in the future and the actual service area of Yellowstone Family Park to those neighbors in YCE in the west end of the subdivision.

It was requested by one of those in attendance to take a vote by hands of those in favor and those opposed to the Preliminary Master Plan and potential development of Yellowstone Family Park. The vote was 41 in favor and 4 opposed.

## STAKEHOLDER MEETING 4 – JANUARY 5, 2011

Stakeholder Meeting 4 again included PRPL Staff and the YCE Neighbor's, and the YCE PPC. The Consultant presented the Yellowstone Family Park Master Plan and associated support materials in a Power Point presentation in anticipation of presenting the plan to the City of Billings Park, Recreation and Cemetery Board. The primary comment and revision from this meeting included how the estimated operation and maintenance costs were presented to ensure a fair and accurate estimation of these costs was illustrated. This change was incorporated in the final presentation.