



# JAMES BAIRD STATE PARK

## Draft Master Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement

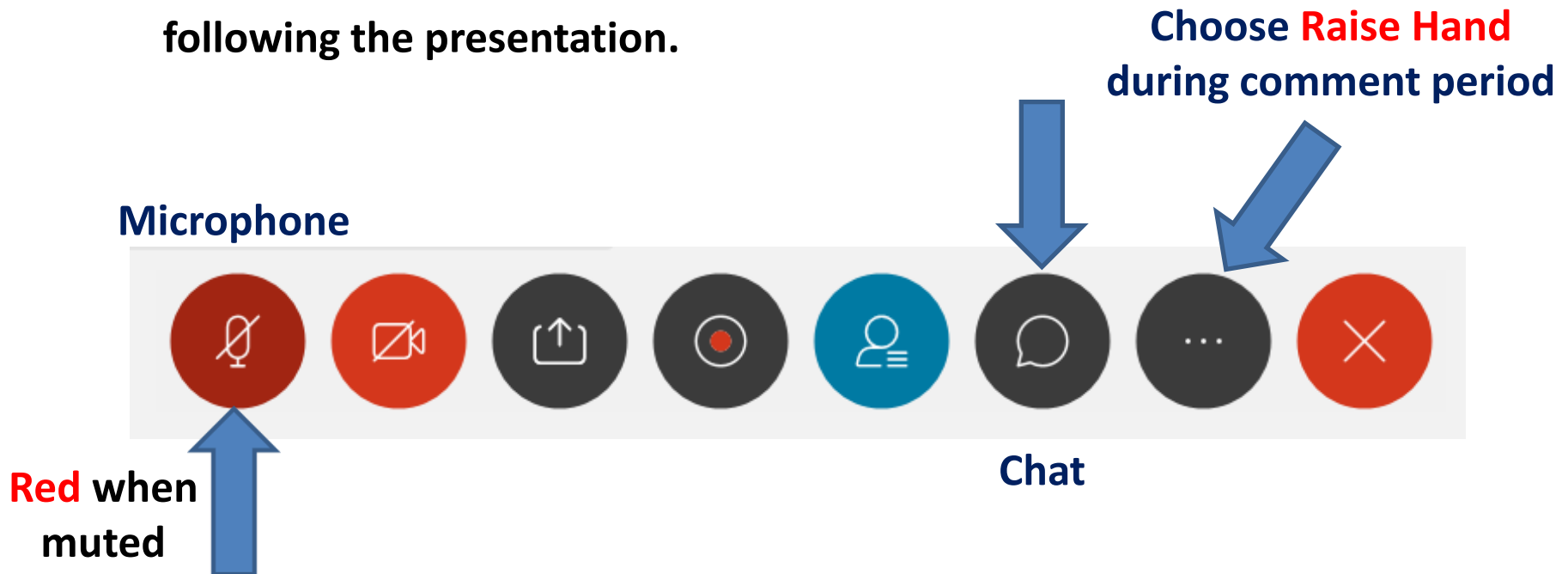
Public Meeting- January 5, 2022, 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.



# Housekeeping

The draft plan/DEIS is available on the OPRHP website at:  
<https://parks.ny.gov/inside-our-agency/master-plans.aspx>

- Your microphone will be muted automatically when you enter the meeting (see button, below left - button is red when muted).
- You may write comments in the chat box at any time (click on black button, shown below right).
- Please remain muted until the comment period following the presentation.



# Welcome!

## Today's OPRHP Participants

### OPRHP Regional Staff

Linda Cooper, Regional Director  
Taconic Region

Kevin O'Brien, Park Manager  
James Baird State Park

### OPRHP Staff - Albany

Diana Carter, Assistant Division Director  
for Planning and Analysis, Albany

Nancy Stoner, Environmental Analyst  
Albany

Tana Bigelow, Park Planner  
Albany



New York State  
Parks, Recreation and  
Historic Preservation

# Today's Presentation



Master Planning Process & Content



The Park and its Resources



Draft Plan Highlights



Environmental Review



Next Steps & Timeline



Comments



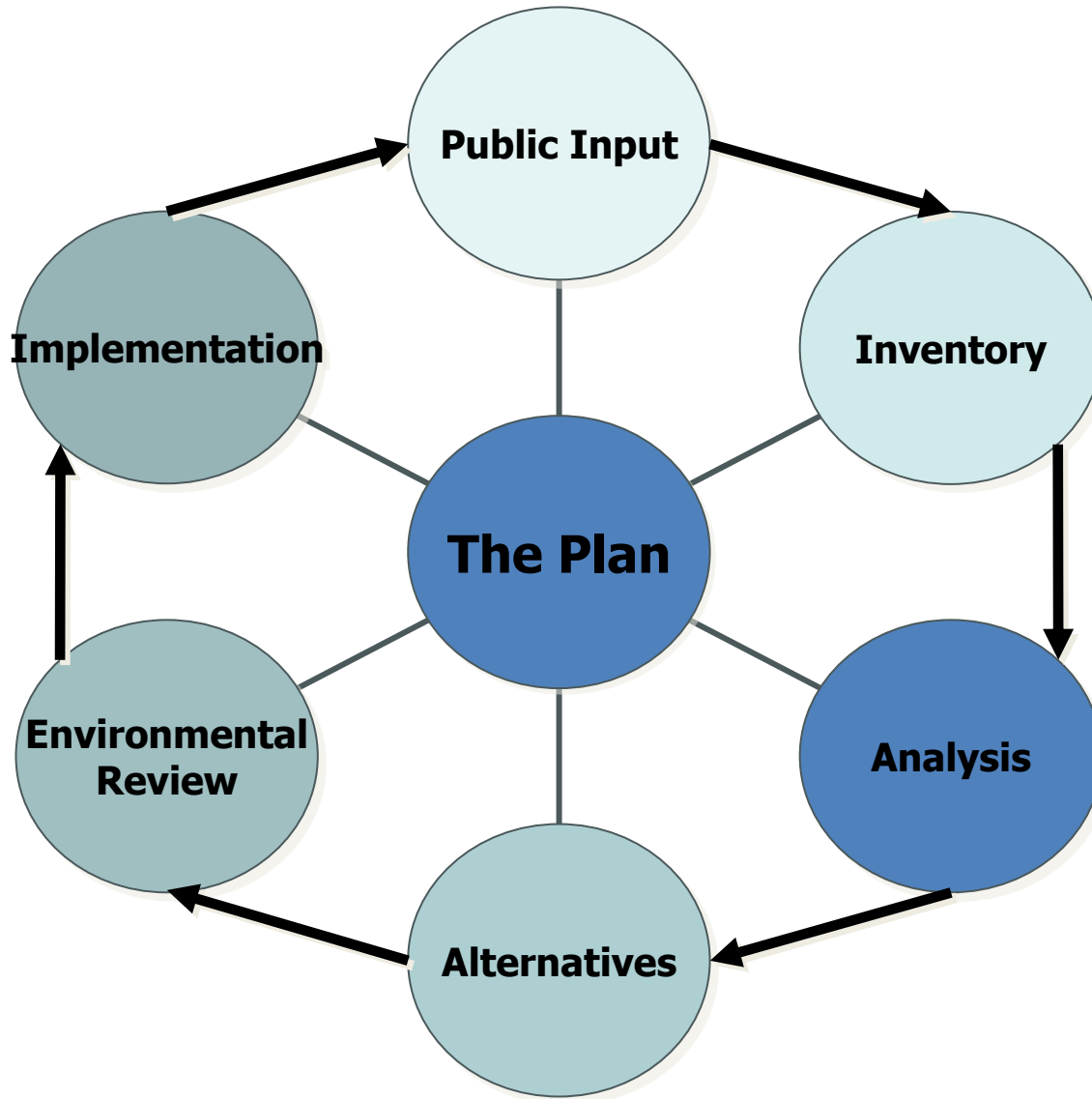
# Welcoming Remarks

Linda Cooper, Regional Director  
Taconic Region





# The Master Plan Process





# Why develop a Master Plan?

Master plans offer a detailed blueprint to revitalize a park in a thoughtful and cost-effective manner. A plan addresses:

- Cultural and Historic Resources
- Natural Resource Stewardship
- Recreational Needs
- Interpretation
- New Opportunities
- Aging Infrastructure
- Changes in Use
- Operational Issues
- New and Existing Threats





# Vision Statement

James Baird State Park will be an accessible year-round destination offering a variety of events and diverse recreational opportunities while providing a healthy natural ecosystem that protects and enhances habitat for sensitive and significant species.



# What's in a Master Plan?

A Master Plan includes several components...

## I. The Master Plan Document:

- Introduction to the Park
- Site Description & History
- Action Items
- Implementation Priorities



# Master Plan Components

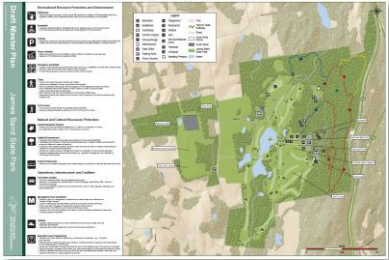
## II. The Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) includes...

- Environmental Setting
- Alternatives & Analysis
- Preferred Alternatives
- Environmental Impacts & Mitigation
- Appendices



# Master Plan Components

## III. Master Plan Map



Draft Master Plan

### Recreational Resource Protection and Enhancement



#### Bathhouse

- Retrofit the bathhouse as an events venue with facilities for caterers, ADA accessible restrooms, upgraded utilities, and a large-scale pavilion that can accommodate up to 500 guests.



#### Bandshell

- Upgrade existing bandshell: rehabilitate structure, regrade area, and remove pavement to provide discrete performance space with visual separation from parking lot.



#### Parking

- Design and construct a new day-use area parking lot that incorporates green infrastructure elements.
- Expand the golf clubhouse parking lot to accommodate anticipated demand, including overflow.



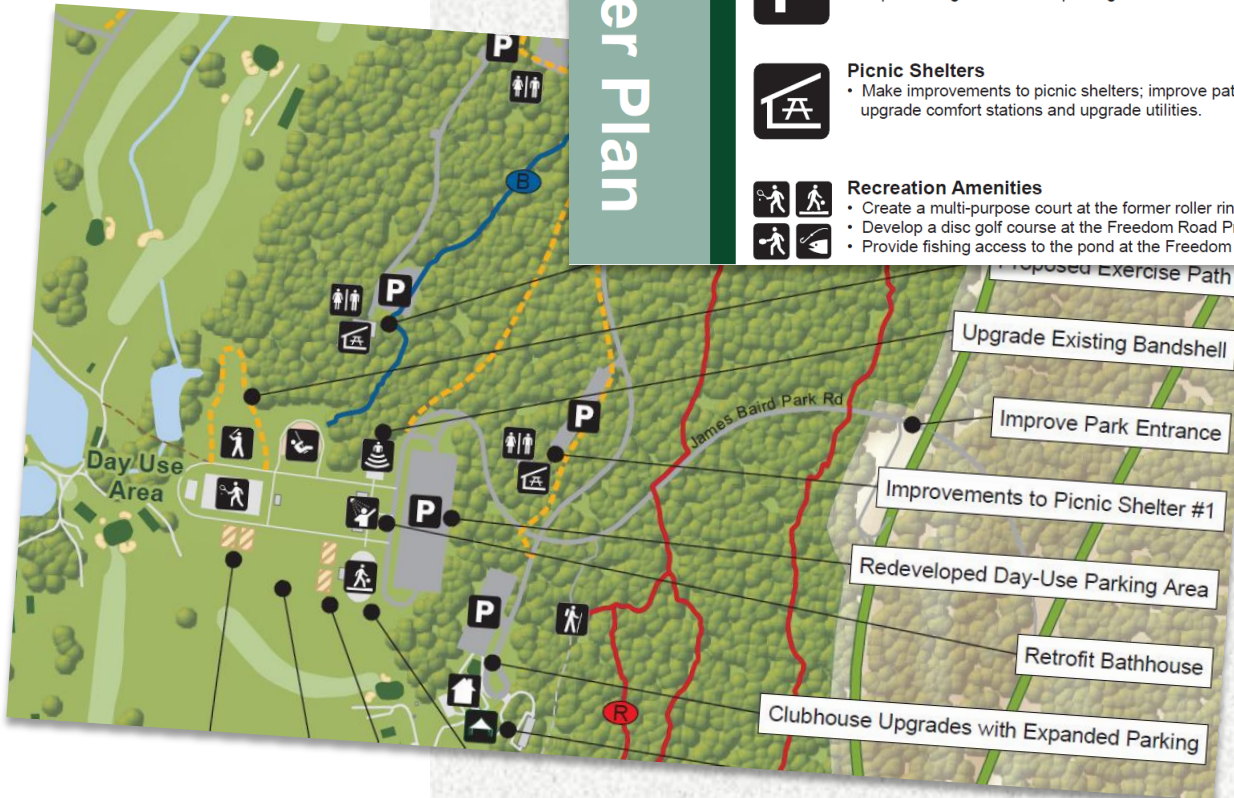
#### Picnic Shelters

- Make improvements to picnic shelters; improve path from shelters to day use area, upgrade comfort stations and upgrade utilities.



#### Recreation Amenities

- Create a multi-purpose court at the former roller rink (for e.g. basketball, lacrosse wall, street hockey).
- Develop a disc golf course at the Freedom Road Property.
- Provide fishing access to the pond at the Freedom Road Property.





# Baird Today

## Natural Elements

Dutchess County  
Wetland complexes



Blanding's turtle  
(*Emydoidea blandingii*)

Invasive species





# Baird Today

## Cultural Elements

Historic  
Bathhouse



Rural  
Vistas

Historic  
Bandshell





# Baird Today

## Recreation Elements

Day Use  
Recreation

Playground



Picnic  
Area





# Baird Today

## Recreation Elements



Golf Course



Clubhouse



Driving Range





# Baird Today

## Maintenance, Operations & Infrastructure Elements



Maintenance facility



Park Buildings

Park Signage





# Park Goals

## **Natural Resource Goals**

Expand protected habitat and create new habitat for key species.

Expand invasive species management efforts at the park.

## **Cultural Resource Goals**

Identify cultural resources at the park and provide parameters for protection, preservation, rehabilitation, and re-use of both designed structures and the landscape.

## **Recreational Resource Goals**

Redevelop infrastructure and amenities in the day use area to help transform the park into a revitalized destination for events and recreation.

## **Operations/Maintenance and Infrastructure Goals**

Provide an efficient and up-to-date maintenance area, buildings, and associated infrastructure, with new and retrofitted elements.

## **Education and Outreach Goals**

Enhance education and outreach, including publicity, programming, and partnerships to encourage a diverse range of people to visit the park.

# Plan Highlights

## Protecting the Park's Wildlife and Key Habitat



**Look for opportunities to enhance, protect and expand wetlands areas and streambanks**



**Provide more pollinator habitat at the park**

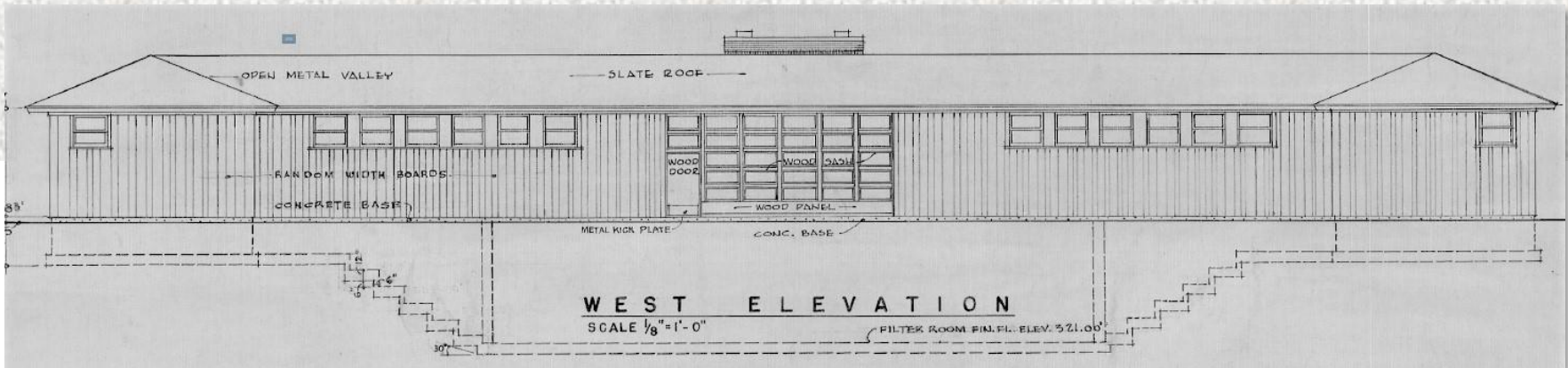


**Expand and improve habitat for Turtles of Conservation Concern**

# Plan Highlights

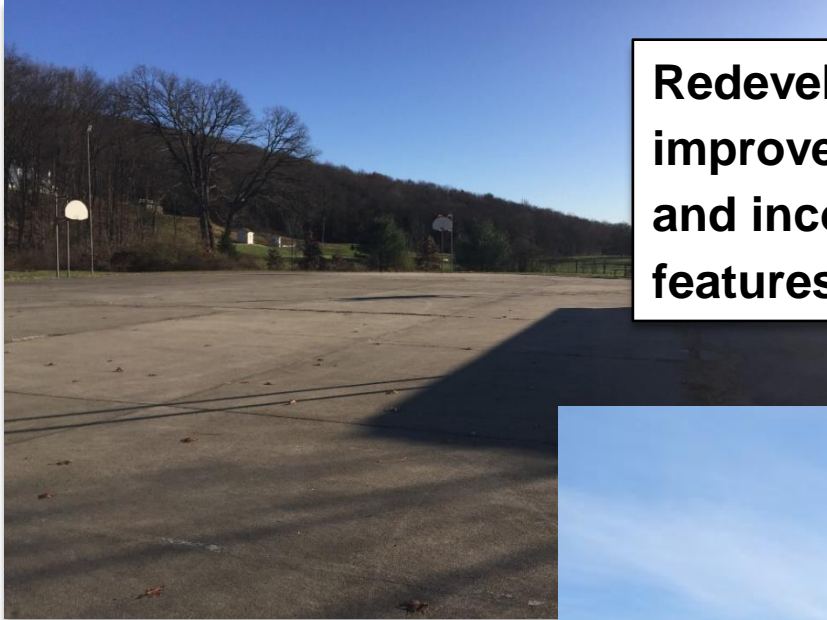
## Protecting and Enhancing the Park's Cultural Resources

**Develop an interpretation program that tells the story of the parks' establishment and the significance of its design**



# Plan Highlights

## Day Use Area Upgrades



**Redevelop the day-use area parking lot to improve circulation, reduce impervious surface, and incorporate environmentally friendly features**

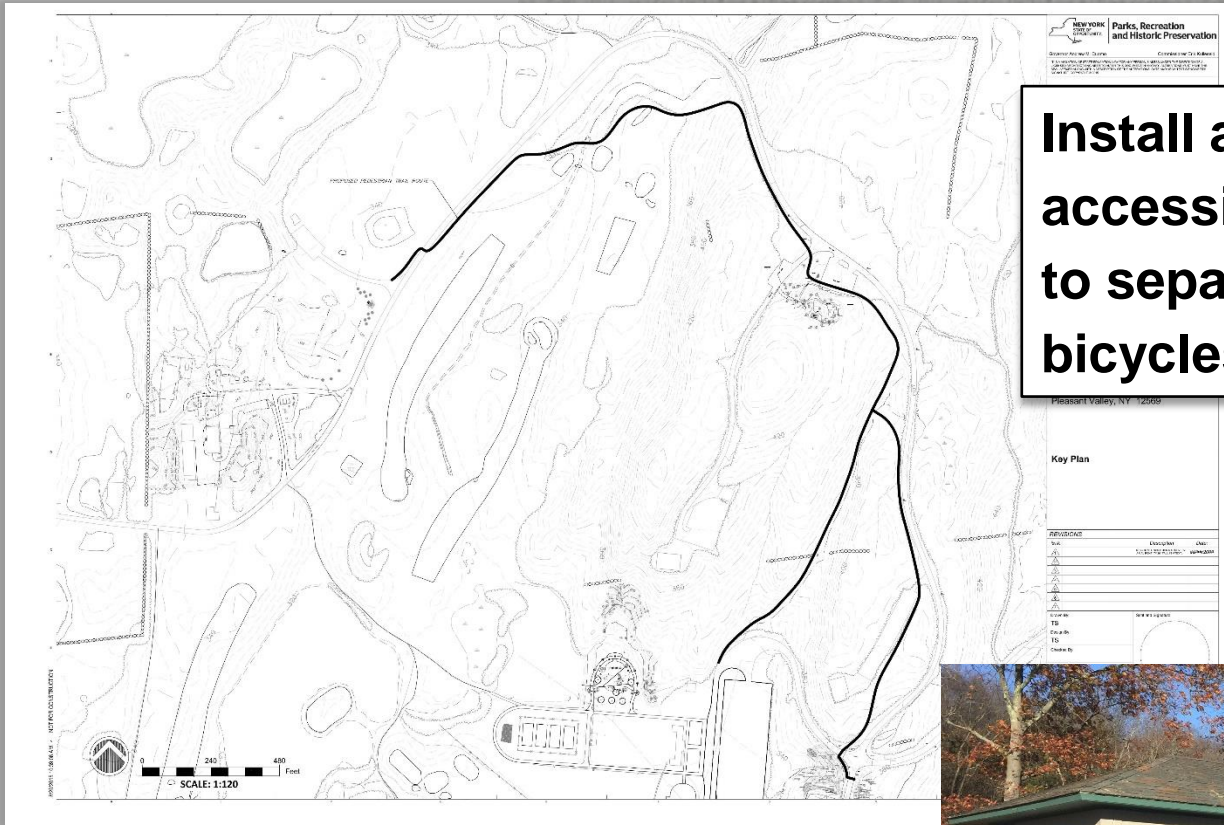


**Provide an accessible walking path near the playground with seating and shade structures**



# Plan Highlights

## Recreation



**Install a park-wide, accessible, multi-use path to separate pedestrians and bicycles from roadways**

**Retrofit the historic bathhouse to accommodate larger events**



# Plan Highlights

## Actions for Recreation



**Designate four-season use of selected trails with groomed trails for cross-country skiing**

**Install a disc golf course**



# Plan Highlights

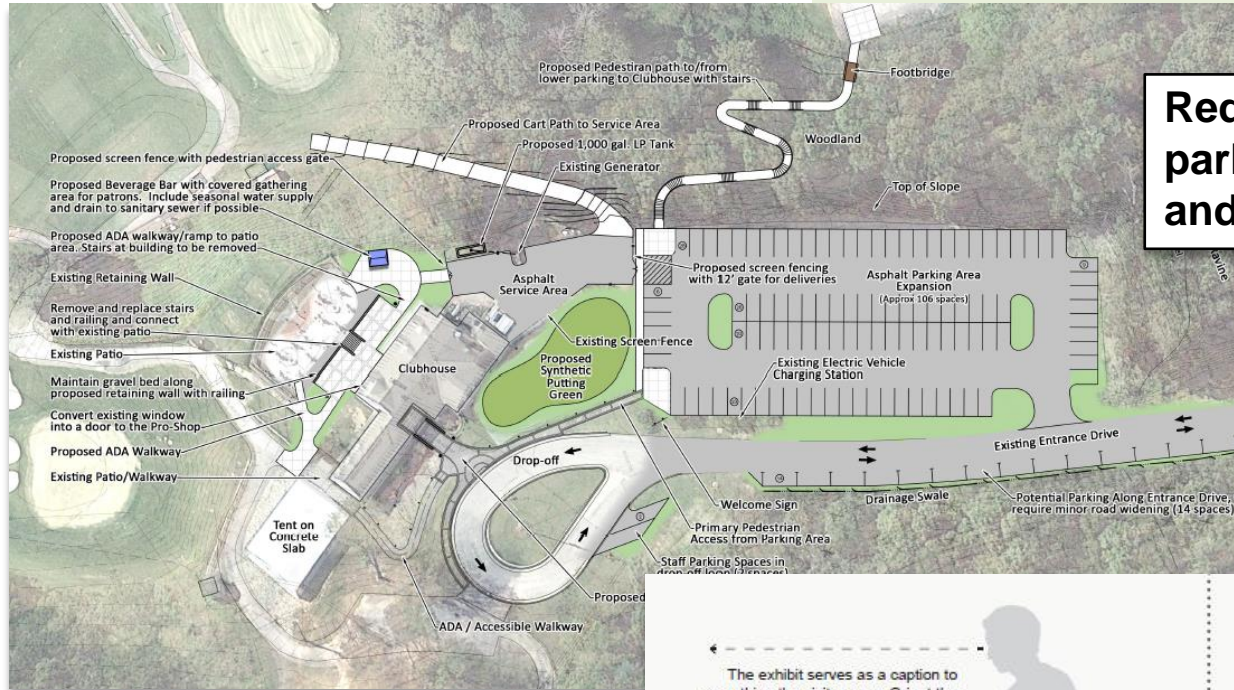
## Actions for Recreation

**Provide fishing access to the pond  
at the Freedom Road area**



# Plan Highlights

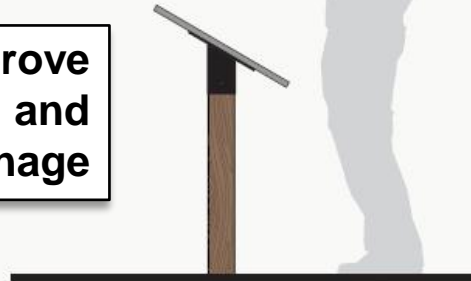
## Improvements to Operations & Infrastructure



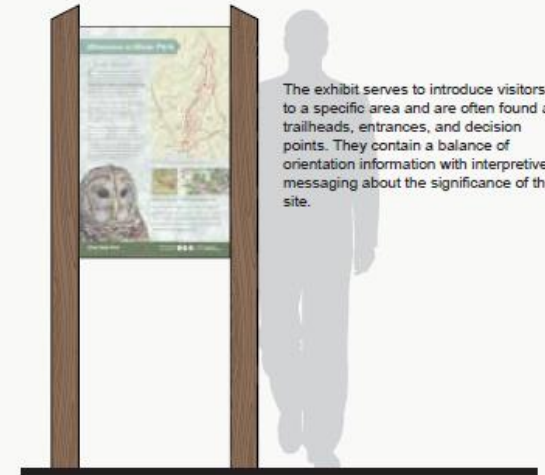
**Redevelop the golf clubhouse parking lot for better circulation and overflow events**

**Develop a parkwide plan to improve signage, wayfinding, circulation, and interpretative signage**

The exhibit serves as a caption to something the visitor sees. Orient the panel so that the message relates directly to what the visitor is looking at.



The exhibit serves to introduce visitors to a specific area and are often found at trailheads, entrances, and decision points. They contain a balance of orientation information with interpretive messaging about the significance of the site.





# Plan Highlights

## Improving the Park's Operations & Infrastructure



**Plan and implement traffic calming measures at the park.**



**Improve the park's entrance with clear signage and plantings to provide a more defined arrival experience.**



# Plan Highlights

## Improving the Park's Operations & Infrastructure



**Redevelop and update the park's maintenance area.**



**Upgrade the park's electric infrastructure to provide reliable service for current needs and planned park development.**

# Environmental Review



State Environmental  
Quality Review Act  
(SEQR)



# Environmental Impacts & Mitigation

Protecting the park's resources:

- Natural resources
- Scenic, cultural, historic, and archaeological elements
- Proposed actions will be reviewed for consistency with the Master Plan/EIS.



# Environmental Impacts & Mitigation

- Some physical change to the land where new recreation facilities will be developed
- To reduce new disturbance, new facilities are generally located in the core area of the park that is already developed and will result in minimal new land disturbance
- Majority of the park will remain in its current condition
- Minimize impervious surfaces and use green design as feasible

# Next Steps

**Public Notice of  
Draft Plan Completion,  
Public Meeting Date, and  
Start of Comment Period**



Dec. 15, 2021

**End of Comment Period  
for Draft\_MP/DEIS**



January 21, 2022

**Statement of Findings/  
Agency Action  
Master Plan/EIS Adopted**



April 2022  
(Min. 10 days following NOC)

January 5, 2022



**Draft Master  
Plan/EIS  
Public Meeting**

March 2022



**Notice of Completion  
(NOC)  
FEIS published;  
Final MP/FEIS distributed**



# Implementation

What happens once the plan is adopted?

- **Implementation is determined by:**
  - Availability of Funding
  - Availability of Staff
  - Need to balance investments throughout OPRHP system
- **Additional review processes for specific projects may be required:**
  - SEQR
  - Section 14.09 (historic preservation considerations)
  - Design review -- specific projects

**The master plan provides a blueprint for capital improvements and operational enhancements to the Park for the next ten to fifteen years.**

# How to Provide Input on the Plan



**Make a comment today (verbal or via Chat Box)**



**Send an email by January 21, 2022 to:**

[JamesBaird.plan@parks.ny.gov](mailto:JamesBaird.plan@parks.ny.gov)



**Send written comments (postmarked by January 21, 2022) to:**

Tana Bigelow, Park Planner  
OPRHP

625 Broadway, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Albany, NY 12238



**View copies of the Draft Master plan/DEIS at:**

<https://parks.ny.gov/inside-our-agency/master-plans.aspx>



**A recording of this meeting will be available on the OPRHP website.**

**ALL ideas/ suggestions are welcome!**