

During the summer of 2014, forty eight people provided input for how best to improve Lake Lorna Doone Park. The conversations were facilitated by Phil Hissom of the Polis Institute using the Design Thinking process developed by the Stanford University design school. In general, the process involves discovering the intersection between Desirability, Feasibility, and Viability from those most impacted by the implementation of the design. In this case, that includes residents who live near the park, current users of the park, the City of Orlando, and Florida Citrus Sports. This phase was focused on Desirability.

- Participation from 28 West Lakes¹ residents, 12 current users of the park (non-residents), Shannon Clark from Florida Citrus Sports, Eddy Moratin from LIFT Orlando, Phil Hissom from Polis Institute, and Clarence Collins of Collins Recreation. Jody Buyas from Keep Orlando Beautiful joined other City of Orlando representatives:
 - Regina Hill – District 5 Commissioner
 - John Perrone – Parks Division Manager
 - Beth Gruber – Senior Landscape Architect
 - Denise Riccio – Senior Landscape Architect
- Met six times between 6/30 and 9/8 in the Varsity Club of the Citrus Bowl; Surveyed people in the park between 7/15 and 8/17; and Walked the park with a group of 18 on 8/25
- The following ideas and considerations are listed by category and relative importance

Most important considerations:

1. Create a fitness focused Lake Lorna Doone Park– the “design challenge”
2. Fun for families
3. Best park in the region

Current issues:

1. Obstructed views (trees need trimmed)
2. Narrow/broken up walkways/sidewalks
3. Unsupported slopes
4. Private property (Boy Scout building)
5. Exposed electrical

Ideas for new amenities:

1. Walking Trail (around lake)
2. Fountain in center of lake
3. Fishing Dock
4. Exercise Stations
5. Water Pad near playground
6. Bleachers for Basketball Court(s)

Ideas for existing amenities:

1. Rio Grande – close; make part of park
2. Courts – additional Basketball w/ bleachers; remove/decrease Tennis
3. Pavilion – expand and improve
4. Bathrooms – replace completely
5. “Rugby field” - decrease footprint; repurpose or increase use
6. Picnic tables – update
7. Landscaping – more grass; attractive
8. Playground – improve (move?)
9. Benches – more seating in general
10. Fencing – better; for improved safety

Greatest concerns:

1. Parking (current/future users of park)
2. Current use (doesn’t feel safe)
3. Park being removed for event parking
4. Accessibility (seniors, disabilities)
5. Maintenance
6. Traffic
7. Lighting

¹ Lorna Doone, Rock Lake, Lake Sunset, Clear Lake/Bunche Manor/Hollando, Spring Lake Manor, Clear Lake Cove, Sunset/Citrus

8/25: Walk the Park (See “Map 1: Design Ideas”) – Attendance 18 people

The design sessions culminated in a walk around the park on 8/25 during which ideas from the previous sessions were emplaced on a map. Anything else that was noticed and deemed to be of interest, was also annotated. There were 18 people in attendance, 16 of which provided feedback on a map. In attendance were:

- City of Orlando (4) – Commissioner Regina Hill, John Perrone, Beth Gruber, Jody Buyas
- Residents (8) – Alice Leach, Eugene Leach, Tangia Smikle, Margaret Hill, Patti, Rod Faulk, Joe and Jeanette Williams
- Friends of the Neighborhood (4) – Shannon Clark (Florida Citrus Sports), Eddy Moratin (LIFT Orlando), Clarence Collins (Collins Recreation), Phil Hissom (Polis Institute)

The following items were annotated on a map and comments were made. The numbers in parentheses represent how many maps included comments about the stated topic. This does not reflect a priority, just an indication that it was added to a given map or commented on:

1. Fishing dock (8) – consider dock on apartments side of Lake for immediate access by residents
2. Restrooms (8) – replace old restrooms by the existing basketball court; add one on the west side
3. Rio Grande Ave (7) – close the road and use space for the park
4. Handicap access (6) –insufficient; should add to pavilion and to new trail, dock, bleachers
5. Fountain (6) – fountain in the middle of the Lake
6. View obstructed by vegetation (5)
7. Walking Trail (5) – consider including an elevated section that goes out into Lake
8. Roots breaking asphalt (4)
9. Narrow walkways (4)
10. Picnic tables (4) – more, newer
11. Lights (4) – more lighting
12. Basketball Courts (4) – add another with bleachers
13. Playground (3) – move, improve
14. Better garbage can distribution (3)
15. Tennis Court (3) – move, remove, reduce
16. Exercise stations (3) – locations
17. More seating/benches (2)
18. Drinking fountains (2)
19. Splash pad – near playground
20. Exposed electrical
21. Unsupported slopes
22. Old signs
23. Nice oak trees

8/11/14 – How do we best enhance the ideas that have emerged and test them out?

The idea that this could be the best park in the region captured the group’s imagination and brought additional clarity to the challenge statement which became:

“To create a fitness focused Lake Lorna Doone Park that’s the nicest park in the region.”

The purpose of this session was to select the best way to test this out? Three ideas were discussed. The group decided to implement the first two – walking the park and sharing photos of other parks (Crays Roost; Lake Underhill; Parramore Heritage).

1. Walk around the lake with FCS and City

- a. ID current trees
- b. Map with possible stations
- c. Include innovative ideas
- d. We’ve included extended plans
- e. Teams of two
- f. Organize with city, FCS, group
- g. Everyone has a map and pen
- h. List of field uses with city

2. Research with pictures of other parks (like Crays Roost)

- a. Document history and concerns about Rio; make a case to close the road
- b. Document with pictures – other parks
- c. Get info from city
- d. Camera and transportation
- e. List of Fitness Parks (Orange and Seminole)

3. Test usage of a couple of fitness equipment pieces - IT WAS DECIDED THAT THIS RESEARCH METHOD WAS NOT A FEASIBLE TEST AT THIS TIME

- a. Gets used as evidenced by timer
- b. May need to fence it off to see if it actually works
- a. Contact parks and rec; find out what they have; get approval; figure it out (Rodney Williams)
- b. Think through; timed walk?

7/28/14 – Update the Design Challenge and Vote on Leading Ideas

The draft challenge statement from the previous session was considered in light of stated hopes for the park in order to find a *single* focus that would galvanize the design and ultimately make the park a distinctive place.

The ideas of making the park “fitness focused” and building a walking trail around the lake became the rallying themes for this updated challenge statement:

“Create a fitness focused Lake Lorna Doone Park with walking trails, exercise equipment, courts (basketball & tennis), and other amenities.”

Other considerations:

- Safety
- Regional park with a neighborhood feel
- Boundaries: Nashville to Tampa; Central to Church
- Enjoyed by families, residents of the immediate community, and everyone else

HOW MIGHT WE...

How might we make the park more usable – capacity, amenities? (32)

- Fitness equipment/courts (7)
- Fishing dock (7)
- Better bathrooms (6)
- Distinct sections based on uses (4)
- Programmed events (3)
- Stage (3)
- More open grass (2)

How might we make the park more attractive? (30)

- Fitness trail and sidewalks (8)
- Fountain (5)
- Water pad (4)
- Garbage cans (4)
- Plant trees (3)
- Benches (3)
- Design with families in mind (2)
- Gazebos (1)
- Grills (1)
- Restore beach (1)

How might we make the park safer? (25)

- greater police presence (6)
- park ranger dawn to dusk (5)
- good landscaping (5)
- fencing (4)
- post hours of operation (2)
- night shift (2)
- neighborhood watch (1)

How might we better plan/publicize use of the park? (18)

- Newsletter to neighbors (8)
- Radio announcements (6)
- Restaurants (4)

7/14/14 – Develop a draft challenge

statement. Central to the design thinking process is developing a “challenge statement” that focuses the effort. In this session, the group placed the Hopes and Concerns from the previous week into categories and then selected the *one* category that was the most important set of challenges to address.

DRAFT CHALLENGE STATEMENT:

“Create a neighborhood park around Lake Lorna Doone that is enjoyed by all.”

1. Safety and Compassion – this was deemed to be the most important category of concerns. The perception that the park was unsafe was keeping many residents from utilizing the park. There were a couple of people who did not live in the neighborhood but who regularly used the park. The discussion that ensued led to the consensus that the group as a whole wanted the park to be enjoyed by all.

- Improve lighting
- Lack of incentives for people who use it now to go elsewhere (pushback on this comment)
- What about the wildlife?
- Safety
- Homeless not just run off – but where will services go (a lot in neighborhood already)
- Those that use it feel like they own it
- Not enough police presence
- Roads not wide enough
- Parking for park use only
- Parking for stadium
- Appropriate signage

2. Research & Planning – this category was deemed important but it was believed that it would have to be addressed no matter what was planned.

- Pulling together the history
- Plan space well for use
- Finding the right voices to bridge differences
- Keeping it clean
- Who is using the park?
- Permits for food; vendors
- Buy-in for dog park; legal issues?
- Approval and design for a flash pad
- Status of fish in Lake; cleanliness
- Builder for dock
- Walking trails & sidewalks
- Beautification
- National spotlight
- History, including name
- Beautification
- National spotlight

3. Funding – this category of concerns, like #2 above, would have to be addressed no matter what?

- Seating
- Bathrooms
- Fountain
- Benches
- Gazebo
- Sponsorships
- Funds and approval for signs

6/30/14 – What are your hopes and concerns for Lake Lorna Doone Park? And What do we need to know moving forward?

This was initial session in which the Hopes and Concerns for Lake Lorna Doone Park were discussed. An overview of the Design Thinking process was provided and a timeline in which a plan or set of ideas were to be developed was discussed.

It was clear throughout the meeting that the park had historical significance and that people wanted to see it become a more attractive and inviting place to spend time with better amenities.

Concerns

- Insufficient parking
- Inadequate lighting
- Why this park?
- Homeless population
- Shootings/drugs
- Park will be done away with (can't stop it)
- Security/crime prevention
- City won't do what they said
- Safety (esp. on Rio Grande)
- Total curb appeal – beautification, paving, landscaping

Hopes

- Beautiful fountain
- More seating
- Amphitheater
- Welcome sign to Lake Lorna Doone
- Clean it up (drug infested)
- Use it
- Clean the water
- Keep the history (used to be swimming, picnics, church baptisms, fishing)
- Community/family friendly
- Track or trail around the lake (healthy, nice)
- More amenities (paddle boats, benches, gazebo)
- Opportunities for homeless
- Food concession
- Radio stations
- Fishing dock
- Brand new bathrooms
- Show some love – those are our kids

Need to Know

- How can we address the issues/crime?
- Who is really using the park?
- Can we build sufficient parking?
- Funding process w/ foundations (details); sustainability
- Is there a way to work with the owner of the Boy Scout building?
- What's the history of name – Lorna Doone?
- What's the history of the Lake? (including good times and bad)
- How clean is the Lake; what needs to be done?
- Learn more about why sports announcer Keith Jackson used to say – "From the beautiful shores of Lake Lorna Doone"