

FORT WORTH PUBLIC ART MASTER PLAN Lake Como Park

# COMMEMORATION PARK: A LIFE FORCE SOUL, SPIRIT, MIND, and HEART



#### **FOREWARD**

It was the summer of 2003. My husband, daughter and I were on one of our weekend drives to familiarize ourselves with our new city of residence when we happened upon a hidden gem – a beautiful lake tucked in a central city neighborhood. The sun was brightly reflecting off the water's surface while a father and son stood on the bank enjoying a day of fishing. What was this place, we wondered? We later learned it was Lake Como!

Two years later, I received a call from Harold Pitchford of the city's Parks and Community Services Department. He told me that a man named John Hudson of the Lake Como Planning Committee was inquiring about commemorating distinguished community members in Lake Como Park, pointing to the Evans & Rosedale Plaza as an example.

When we later met to discuss how Fort Worth Public Art might assist with this effort, I asked John if he would be open to having artists contemplate the entire park rather than being limited to creating one object of commemoration. His affirmative response, as well as that of the Lake Como Planning Committee, set in motion a journey of discovery with the Fort Worth Art Commission and City Council's support.

The first step was the Lake Como Park Conceptual Master Planning Workshop of July 2006. A group of talented artists were convened for an intensive 3-day workshop that included an orientation, a site visit, a community survey and a lot of creative brainstorming. Various recommendations for future park development that would honor Lake Como Park's remarkable history in the form of commemorations was the result.

Two of the workshop artists – Fort Worth-based Anitra Blayton and Mel Ziegler - teamed up to develop this master plan based upon the workshop recommendations with the addition of extensive research and numerous meeting with experts in wildlife, vegetation, water quality, and park infrastructure. The overarching theme of integrating commemoration of the community's heroes, pioneers and legends into necessary water quality and infrastructure improvements is novel and forward-thinking.

Lake Como Park is now set on a course of becoming a local and national model for parks the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The Fort Worth Public Art program stands ready to begin the exciting work of implementing this plan with the Como Community.

Martha Peters, Vice President of Public Art Arts Council of Fort Worth & Tarrant County October 2014

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Mayor Pro Tem Danny Scarth - District 4

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Jungus Jordan – District 6 W.B. Zimmerman – District 3

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Joel Burns - District 9 [Dennis Shingleton]

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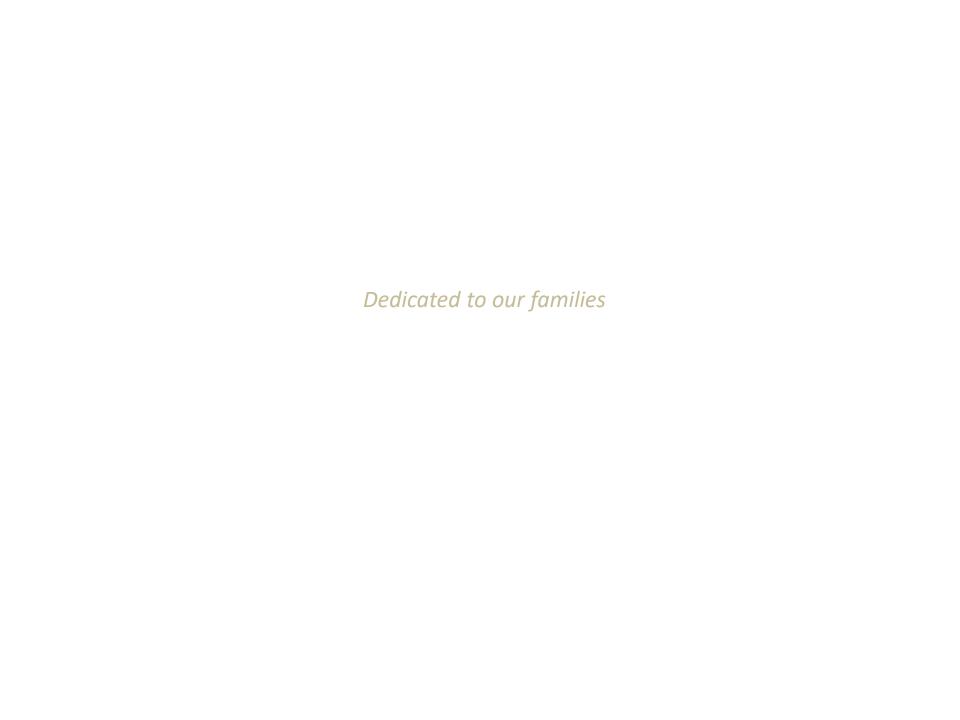
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## Letter of Acknowledgement

To the Lake Como Planning Committee,

First and foremost, we would like to thank you for opening the doors and directives of your community to the 2006 Public Art Charette. This small insightful group of artists prompted candid observations and creative, innovative solutions that are sure to exceed your expectations.

Secondly, we thank you, the Como Planning Committee, for your tenacity to see this *Lake Como Public Art Master Plan* through design and its ultimate goal. Your years of groundwork have cultivated viable copartnerships to implement a multi-faceted plan that will quantify the commemorative and environmental needs of Lake Como Park and the Como community well into the future.

The primary focus of the *Lake Como Public Art Master Plan* is to honor pioneers, legends and heroes. It protects the beauty of Lake Como and recognizes its community's heritage as a profound authority for the City of Fort Worth. Your steadfast partners of this plan include Fort Worth of Fort Worth Parks and Community Services Department and Fort Worth Nature Center and Reserve, Transportation and Public Works' Storm Water Management, Planning and Development Department's Historic Preservation, Streams and Valleys, Inc., Fort Worth ISD, and friends of the Como community. This is a partnership that will endeavor toward effective outcomes outlined in the *Lake Como Public Art Master Plan*.

Most important, we thank you for entrusting Como's history to your newest partner, "the artist". As your motto imparts, "Remembering the past with dignity and embracing the future with pride", we hope you will find this document as stunning historically as in its forward thinking ideas. We the artists cherish both the history and the future of your community as we seek to remember Como's Pioneers, Legends and Heroes and return Lake Como Park to the visual and cultural distinction it so richly deserves to be.

#### Introduction

We began this enormous undertaking with the combined observations, recommendations and vision by a unique group of artists: David Burke, Leamon Green, Sedrick Huckaby, Shelby Means and Burl Washington. Together we are all honored to be part of this historic and significant master plan project. It has been a pleasure to get to know and work with numerous citizens of the Lake Como community, as well as concerned officials and staff of the City of Fort Worth. What a treasure you all have here - a gem waiting to be polished.

It is clear to us, no matter how holistic of an approach we may have in regard to this arts master plan, we cannot address everything necessary to make the park perfect in everyway. Much more will need to be done, much more will need to be addressed. At the same time we know that the nature of a community is organic, that it changes over time with the evolving stories, memories and needs of its constituents. Similarly, we understand that there will be starts and stops along the way, but there will always be lively regenerations and lively interactions if our plan is successful. As part of this plan, we have outlined where more work, investigation and planning must be accomplished. It will be up to the citizens of the Como community and Fort Worth to carry out the vision proposed here.

More historical research also needs to be done in order to be able to acknowledge the significant contribution this community offers to the larger story of Fort Worth. It is a story waiting to be told in its fullest. Lake Como Park affords an opportunity to tell an aspect of history not necessarily through its

architecture, as often is the case, but rather, through the lives of its people and their stories. Few today can understand what it would be like to live literally "walled in" or not to be able to visit any public park they choose. Those are the big stories. Yet, there are hundreds of family stories just waiting to be told in this community. Collectively, they form a document of Fort Worth history and heritage that must not be lost.

There is an urgent, over-arching need for city-wide participation in this plan. As the park is rejuvenated and brought back to its glory, eyes of developers will turn in this direction. The eyes of the city must not turn away. This historic community needs to be protected from harsh and insensitive gentrification. The Lake Como community is sitting on potentially very valuable property given its proximity to downtown and the amazing views from the Como hills. The park will be a catalyst for this interest. It is our hope that the community and the City will work together to protect the historic and future integrity of the Lake Como area. This cannot wait. We must work together to make this happen now!

Lake Como Park is a life-force, the soul, spirit, mind, heart of Our Community

#### Philosophical approach:

In the late 1970's and early 1980's, the notion of public art was heavily criticized for its insensitivity to site and context in which it was literally placed. The term "plop art" was coined for such work. The public art revolution of the 1980's brought artists and designers together to create works that specifically addressed site.

Although this method had its merits, too often it ended on a superficial level leaving us with work that added a visual dimension by decorating a site but not much more. As public art transformed, community input begins to play a greater role but mostly in decision-making and design reviews of artistic proposals. Slowly, artists started engaging the community in the process of making the work itself. Developing a type of art work with a large constituent ownership. There are many artists now working this way. It is from this point of departure that we want to develop our plan of action for the public art and commemoration program. We, however, realize that even community artwork can be "plop art" if we do not look at the total picture. We cannot simply place art in the park or make improvements to the park with art unless we look at everything around it. Everything! So, this is truly a master plan that looks at the total picture. This is a holistic, interactive approach to making art and developing this park, this place, this community. The park, in our scenario, has no borders. It encompasses the surrounding communities.

Our initial charge was to find ways in which the community can memorialize and commemorate various individuals. We should ask, why do we find the necessity to memorialize? What do memorials do? They bring to us a collective consciousness. They help define who we are whether through a group ideology or a specific place with shared concerns. Memorials ground us. They give us a point of honor for our shared past and a point of departure for our future. Future generations may not always agree with who and what is memorialized at a particular time in history. So, we need a way to evolve. A plan of action must promote an evolution of the community's thoughts and ideologies. To accomplish this memorialization must breath life. It must be alive. It must have spirit. It cannot deaden the spirit but bring it alive!

Is it possible for a memorial to be more than a physical entity, more than a mural, bronze plaque or statue? If we carefully look at our culture we will find numerous forms by which people, places and things come to life through the memorialization process.

Songs and poetry are common ways to memorialize, as are stories and plays. With our imaginations the possibilities are endless. Today in a digital world we may even consider a phone number that gives the casual passerby historic information. We might consider a YouTube presentation of certain individuals. The Square Mile project that was recently recorded on video is now a great testament to this community. It will be memorialized forever!

We would like to suggest to the Lake Como Planning Committee to challenge the artist to investigate conversations, experiences and people most remembered. Could people be remembered in a song or a jazz composition, maybe an important event takes place as a play? How could the internet, YouTube or the smart phone help the memorialization process? Again, with our imaginations the prospects are endless. We are suggesting here that this be a general criteria for the component of commemoration, whether artistic or not.

Guiding principles for artist selection and commemorative art

#### PRINCIPLE ONE

Does the project have **SOUL:** 

The park must give back.

The soul is the core of everything. It is the "more than the sum of its parts" aspect of any being or any place. Lake Como has soul. It is a rational part of what it represents and what it is. It does, however, need to be reinvigorated. It needs respect and admiration. Soul is hard to define. Wisdom and maturity are essential components to soul. Soul is the guiding principal behind the elderly and wise members of any place or community. We can only imagine the souls of the great philosophers walking the streets of ancient Athens. The ideas and projects cannot be selfish and self-satisfied. They must allow the park to give back. To pay it forward to future generations!

In the principal of soul we ask of our artists and their projects:

- 1) Does this project create ownership for all generations old and young?
- 2) Is this project sustainable? Does it guide each generation into responsibility for its continued legacy?

#### PRINCIPLE TWO

Does the project have

#### **SPIRIT:**

The park is a living, breathing entity.

Memorialization must have breath. It must be alive. It must have spirit. It must bring this spirit to life. What a great place for this to happen. Lake Como Park is itself alive. It is a living and breathing entity. It is central to the life and identity of this community. Lake Como Park is a life-force. We must embrace and honor that notion

as if Lake Como Park was another member of the community. It is an old, wise, and thoughtful member that has much to offer in its wisdom.

Spirit is hard to capture in words but one generally knows it when it is encountered. It is ultimately an essence of something - a place or person. It gives that person, place or thing great strength and disposition. It envelopes character, temperament and personality.

In the principal of spirit we ask of our artists and their projects:

- 1) Does the project acknowledge and activate the essence of this great park and community? Does it help define character of this place?
- 2) Does this project engage the community's life-force? Does it engage the park's essence of place and respect its wisdom?
- 3) Is this project more than its own physical being? Does it have a life force of its own? Is it alive? Is it more than just a memorial?
- 4) Does this project activate and engage and is this engagement sustainable for future generations?

#### **PRINCIPLE THREE**

Is the project

#### **MINDFUL:**

The park is a "living tradition", defined by decades of dialogue and social change. ALL park elements must be thoughtful about (mindful of) that tradition in both documentation and interpretation.

The park's visitors should share in that dialogue, connecting to stories gathered and the natural environment respectfully and intelligently. Also, this master plan which has evolved over a decade will give preference to the artist(s) who is also evolving and innovative. He or she must have the ability to work with renewable resources that will be timeless and have minimal impact on the environment. While this plan clearly highlights current trends used in other parks, the artist should not conveniently showcase his or her professional body of work. The artist's project must reflect awareness and sensitivity to the goals of the current Lake Como Community Master plan. Ideally, it should also reflect the philosophical nature of the master plan design team, that is, to offer individuals of the community an opportunity to emotionally invest in the creative process, providing a lasting experience of the creative process itself.

In the principal of mind we ask of our artists and their projects:

- 1) Does this project reflect a community that is both traditional and contemporary?
- 2) Is this project emotionally intelligent; perceptive and empathetic to today's park visitor, a growing community and the landscape?

#### **PRINCIPLE FOUR**

Does the project have

#### **HEART:**

The park shall have no borders. No boundaries equals no resistance. The heart is essential to life, yet it is only a central part of a greater network, a system that is in place with the intent to sustain that life. It brings in and reaches out. In this regard, the idea of heart makes one of four perfect metaphorical frameworks from which to operate the public art program at Como Park. The park, though central, shall have no sense of borders. The park is not and should not be considered a separate entity. It is the extension of the community and vice versa. Every project, every concept, every commemoration should have implications beyond the park's limits. At the same time, it draws people in.

In the principal of heart we ask of our artists and their projects:

- 1) Is this a project that welcomes a visitor to walk the path?
- 2) Is this project an extension of the community or a neighbor's home?
- 3) Does this project serve to eliminate boundaries?

## FORT WORTH PUBLIC ART MASTER PLAN Lake Como Park

#### Mission Statement

The Lake Como Park Public Art Master Plan shall help bring the people of the Como Community's interest of commemoration together with artists who embrace a wide range of community participation in their work. We seek to outline how to develop and improve park structure while creating memorial art projects of all artistic mediums to thoughtfully and to actively acknowledge the community's designated heroes, legends and pioneers as defined by the Lake Como Planning Committee. We seek to give helpful and tangible direction and parameters for a plan of action. We not only outline this plan of action for both the park and the community, we propose a way to make it sustainable through generations to come.

This plan outlines a direct and tangible symbiotic relationship between park improvements and community well being. Our approach has been one of a holistic look at the park, as well as the community at large. No artistic project or Como improvement shall be done without the involvement and participation of the surrounding community in a hands-on, interactive way. Artists chosen for the improvement projects shall be those that are sensitive to the need for community interactions. That does not mean they simply present their ideas at community meetings. No, we are talking here of artists that seek to actively engage community in the creative process and artistic production. Artists shall engage with community leaders, community organizations, community schools and community churches to name a few possible outlets for this interaction to occur.

Rejuvenation and bringing the park back to life are our key goals. Emphasizing the use of the park by the surrounding community is paramount to success of this plan. Central to this rejuvenation is the family and family activities. We must create a magnet—a place people and families will be drawn to, a destination park for all kinds of reasons and activities. Bringing families to the park will bring back its spirit. It will bring back its life!

Through this process of rejuvenation we must be careful to preserve the park's natural gems. Years of neglect or, at best, passive interest, has ultimately helped this park. Wildlife and natural plant life is now abundant and coexist within the existing ecosystem of the park. Of particular interest is the area south of the Lake Como dam. This park has become a center city treasure for natural ecosystems that are now actively in place. We must respect these systems as we strive for the presence of more people and activity.

In acknowledging the memorial process now set in motion by the planning committee, we realize that experience is key. Our goal is to create interactive memorials to the great people of this community. It is our way of activating the park, of bringing back to life those who played a role in the community. Life through experience is key to activating this park! Artists and art of all media— songs, stories, artworks, poetry, etc.—shall be the catalysts for this to occur.

This approach will create interaction, participation and engagement. The park will breathe life.

It is our ultimate goal for this document to have a lasting impact well into the future. Sustainability for Lake Como and the surrounding communities is paramount.

### **Executive Summary and Scope**

The intent of the Lake Como Public Art Master Plan is to provide artists with unique opportunities to work within a historical community in Fort Worth, Texas, over an extended period of 25 - 30 years. The Como community and artists will partner to revitalize Lake Como Park as a high-functioning commemorative Cultural Park and Urban Wetlands that will provide cultural and educational enrichment.

More than two decades ago, a committee of Como citizens passionate to see their park survive, co-authored an expression for their community,

"Remembering the past with dignity and embracing the future with pride."

With that inspiration, the Lake Como Planning Committee began honoring their Pioneers, Legends and Heroes. In 2006, this forward-thinking committee began working with Fort Worth Public Art.

Together they co-authored a philosophical approach for future development that will address this Como Community's desire to define the following **SCOPE**:

- **To develop a plan** from the point of view of community ownership and participation
- To integrate pragmatic and physical improvements with that of commemoration
- To create a park that welcomes an educational system for cultural history and community pride
- To showcase the identity of the Como Community through various opportunities to commemorate the designated heroes, legends and pioneers, as defined by the Como Community Planning Committee
- To expand compatible park activities
- To restore and enhance a natural environment and create an example of park responsibility

As these options shape the *Lake Como Public Art Master Plan, "The Soul, Spirit, Mind and Heart"* become the guiding principles on which the recommendations are based. This document outlines the construct, philosophical approach and a methodology whereby community leaders, artists and municipal entities may exchange ideas with which to create well into the future.

Any visual, literary, video or sound and performance artists, must have experience partnering with the community to function within a collaborative, consensus-based approach. The artists must also be willing to participate in an active network that is working towards ecological integrity---thereby leading the oldest watershed community in Fort Worth in a discourse about sustainable solutions.

To summarize, the primary park improvements, as determined by the needs of the Lake Como Planning Committee, are the following specific **KEY MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS:** 

- Provide full access around and through the entire park perimeter;
   Design a generous, continuous trail and feeder trails (to include one land bridge and one boardwalk)
- Identify various opportunities for commemoration
- Restore confidence in safety
- Improve environmental quality that includes removing constituents? and introducing aquatic plants
- Build a new amphitheater and plaza
- Restore the existing pavilion
- **Design** a pedestrian bridge
- Establish a forum with business owners in the commercial district of the north quadrant on initiatives and mitigation
- Establish an educational component
- Establish standards and protocol for ecological management

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# Lake Como Planning Committee 34 Annual Community Awards Banquet



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## Chapter One

# Community Always Community; The History of the Master Plan Project

"Remembering the Past with Dignity, Embracing the Future with Pride"

"Awards presented as pioneers, legends and heroes are recognition of individuals or groups whose accomplishments, acts, deeds or feats were beneficial to the beginning and enhancement of Lake Como and what they did for others. More significant, the legacy of their accomplishments must not be lost to future generations.

Is it possible that many Como youth don't realize the dedication and sacrifices that were made for its beginning, and ongoing? In the beginning, many businesses and neighborhoods were closed to black people. So the individuals who settled the Como Community responded by creating their own community with churches, schools, barber shops, transportation services and a hotel. Como meant many things to those who lived, worked and ministered here. Though, segregated, Como was a vital community whose citizens learned the virtue of commitment and the "power of ideals".

Members of the Lake Como Planning
Committee are dedicated to impacting future
generations by evoking through art the knowledge of
the history and legacy of Lake Como. Honoring those
who created the history is an initiative to preserve the
history and legacy. In addition, the plan is to
commemorate their accomplishments and
contributions as part of the Como Park Improvement
Project.

The recognition and commemorative effort was initiated by two of the organizers of Lake Como Planning Committee, Malinda Mobley and David Burke. Under their leadership, on July 4, 1991, a dedication ceremony was held in the Lake Como Park where a brass plaque was permanently placed commemorating two men who lived in Como and lost their lives in battle in Viet Nam. Since then, we have officially recognized 14 individuals who contributions were considered as pioneering.

Through collaborative efforts with Fort Worth Parks and Community Services and Fort Worth Public Art Council, we hope to commemorate past and future honorees."

> John E. Hudson, Chairman Lake Como Planning Committee, 2008

## Chapter Two

THE HISTORY:
THE LAKE COMO COMMUNITY
IN FORT WORTH, TEXAS

by Gayle W. Hanson

"To remember Lake Como is to remember the sounds of a million frogs croaking before midnight in the streams and ponds, the melodious warbling of a mockingbird in the light of a full moon, the first distant rooster crowing at 3 a.m. and minutes later a nearby response, until the dawn was filled with a raucous chorus celebrating a new day; Ben Littlefield's mules braying at sunup, the whistle of the Sunshine Special heading for El Paso in the afternoon, and Momma Cannon in the backyard singing "Amazing Grace." These sounds made Lake Como and the surrounding countryside, in early times, a truly unique and special place to live."

Charles Cannon, Como Resident

The Como neighborhood, also known as the Lake Como community, is located on the west side of Fort Worth. The neighborhood is a historically African-American neighborhood established between 1905 and 1906. The land which is now the Lake Como community is a part of historic Chamberlin Arlington Heights which was developed as a residential area with a lake resort in the late 1880s.



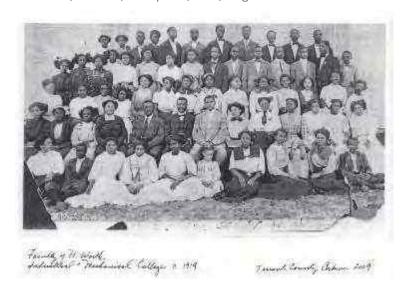
Lake Como was built in 1890 to provide water for an electric power plant to furnish electricity for the Arlington Heights development for the people whom the H. B. Chamberlin hoped would build homes in the area. The Lake was also a fishing and hunting resort. The lake was considered to be the show place of Fort Worth.

Districtions

There was a board walk, dance pavilion, boat house, roller coaster, shooting gallery, a fun house, etc. A streetcar line ran to the north side of the lake to bring pleasure seekers to the resort.

The black community of Arlington Heights, known as the Como community, began about 1905 or 1906. Some of the first families of Como were the Curtis Bowles, Browns, the S. C. Crooks who owned the first dairy in Como, the Tippens, Lavois, Jesse Howards, Eva Jones, Joe Sweeneys, Eugene Bakers, Ben Littlefields,

Claude Hendersons, Etta Wilsons, and Elijah Whites. A Bohemian family lived at 5420 Wellesley Avenue, which is the oldest house in that block. A number of white families also lived in the community. Some of the early families in 1920s were the Bowers, Cannons, Crawfords, Ferrells, Hemphills, Hills, Angus Wood.



Feeling the need for a college, a group of Baptist ministers combined their ideas and started the old Industrial and Mechanical College on the land that was south of Humbert Street in the 5300 block to the 5500 block extending south to Helmick. A small Negro college was begun, and an all-level school for the children was held in one of the college buildings until the county built a school some years later. The leaders and prominent ministers connected with the college were Rev. L. M. Johnson, the father of Professor L. M. Johnson, retired principal of I. M. Terrell High School, Rev. Lacy K. Williams, Mr. Boone, and a Rev. Scott who lived in the community with his family.

In the fall of 1914, the few families that lived in the Lake Como community felt an urgent need for a school. As a result, a teacher was employed. Mrs. Lucinda Baker taught for two years in a small wood frame, one-room schoolhouse. The first school had an enrollment of eleven pupils. Mrs. Ruby G. Crawford Jones was one of first students. Due to a decrease in enrollment, the school closed after two years. The school opened again in 1917, and Mrs. Tennessee Smith was the teacher. In 1918, Mrs. Pearl Walker Connor was called as head teacher.

The Zion Baptist Church was established in 1919 in the chapel of the old Industrial and Mechanical College at 5400 Humber Avenue in the Lake Como community. The early organizers were Elijah and Ida White, Eugene Baker, Elizabeth Lewis, Fannie Sweeney, Leola Sweeney Hall, Minnie Ola Sweeney Nealy, Viola Sweeney Richardson, Victor Obrian and about six children. Reverend Frank Ford, Rev. Craft, and Rev. Redmond served as pastor for a short time.

After World War I, the community began to grow, and more people moved into the community. There was even more a need for a larger and better school building.

Mr. R. N. Riddles was the County Superintendent at this time, and a school building with two rooms was built on the southeast corner of Faron and Bonnell Streets (5535 Bonnell Avenue). Mrs. Gertrude Wilkerson-Starnes was the head teacher, and Mrs. Geneva Carrington was her assistant. Later Mrs. Jessie Raleigh and Mrs. Ruth A. Greenwood joined the staff. Mrs. M. L. Patterson came to the school as a teacher in 1931.

Men in the community helped supply coal for heating and maintained the building and grounds. The building was heated with

coke brought from the Stove Foundry by a patron of the school, Mr. F. W. Isler. Water was hauled in barrels from the college well and later from a well located on the east side of the lake. Mr. John Atkins was employed as school custodian in 1933. The community continued to grow and teachers were added.

In 1922, Fort Worth began to grow due to the oil boom. The city annexed Arlington Heights and Lake Como. Later, Arlington Heights would be subdivided into the communities of Westover Hills, Ridglea and Rivercrest. During the Great Depression in the 1930s, there were approximately 180 families living in the Lake Como community and approximately 15 servants were living in private homes in the Arlington Heights community.

In 1935, the school outgrew its building space. Land was purchased and the school was moved to Horne Street. The school campus bordered on Horne Street on the east, Libbey Street on the south, Holloran on the west, and Goodman on the north. J. Martin Jacquet was hired as school principal in 1936. Jacquet served as principal for ten years. Oscar M. Williams succeeded him in 1946. The present Como Elementary School was built in 1950. Wilbur H. Byrd succeeded Mr. Williams as principal in 1967 until the school closed in 1971.

In 1959, the school had an administrative staff of a principal, twenty-six teachers, a visiting teacher, a school nurse, a secretary, a custodial staff of five, and an enrollment of 585 students. Como High School closed in 1971, during the aftermath of integration. The Como School began with eleven pupils in a one-teacher schoolhouse grew to have two campuses with approximately 2,000 students.

"When I was in high school, I asked my mother if I could go to Trimble Tech High. I felt that learning to be with Whites would offer me a better chance of success."

- Gayle Hanson, Historian



Today, Como Elementary is still in operation, and Como High School is now the Como Montessori School.

In 1940 William H. Wilburn, Sr. and his wife, Travis, began publishing the neighborhood newspaper, the *Como Weekly*. On November 30, 1940, more than 500 copies of the mimeographed 20-page newspaper in magazine form were distributed free by the editor and his 4-year old son, William H. Jr.

After World War II, more families purchased homes in the community. There was also a GI Training School located on Bonnell Street to train veterans skills to help them transition back into the workforce.

The Lake Como Community Center was officially opened on June 28, 1948. "The Center provided supervised recreation for young people, clubs for boys and girls, a health clinic and library. Features planned include a free employment service, a kindergarten and day nursery, a boy's workshop and playground. The Community Center was headed by W. H. Wilburn. The Center was located at 5201 Wellesley."

In August 1948, Lake Como Park received more playground facilities when the Park and Recreation Departments completed conversion of a privately owned tract of land into a park just east of the Lake Como Dam.

In 1950 Amon Carter, Sr., acquired 70 acres of the property, including the lake. "Carter gave the property to the City of Fort Worth on October 29, 1951, stipulating that the property was to be 'developed and used as a Negro park.' Today, a modern pavilion stands in place of the original pavilion, overlooking a 10.1-acre lake. The dam to the south is the same, but the lake is smaller and initially extended north of where it is today. Silt, low water, and trees have claimed half of the original lake. The current picnic area overlooks the original entry to the boardwalk. The pavilion on the lake is the setting for community get-togethers (i.e., Juneteenth, July 4th, etc.)

On July 4, 1951, "Negro War Vets to Parade for Lake Como Day" read the headline (add name of publication). "The first Lake Como Day, complete with free barbecue will be held Wednesday afternoon for residents in the area and guests. The barbecue will be part of an all-day 12<sup>th</sup> Annual State Encampment beginning with a

parade at 9 a.m., under the sponsorship of the John Davis Post No. 2 Colored War Veterans of America. The parade will start on Merrick and move north to Rosedale and south on Horne to Bonnell. C. W. Haley, post founder recounted "The barbecue, with 850 pounds of meat to be served, was held near the Community Center at 5201 Wellesley, and sponsored by the Como Civic League. Harry Hale presided at the encampment with Mrs. V. A. Davison in charge of the Ladies auxiliary."



Lake Como Day 4th of July parade, 2014

In giving the land to the City, Carter stated that 65 of the 70 acres would be developed as park area, with the 15 to 20 acres remaining to be sold as residential property. Proceeds from the sales were to go to the Park Board for development of the park. Carter also assisted the City with fencing and landscaping the area to make it an

attractive civic development. A trail was constructed along the south side of the 86.5—acre tract from the dam to the southwest edge of the lake. Other improvements included the clearing of underbrush and a general cleanup of the lake shore to make it usable for fishing.

"Sewer Project Ok'd for Lake Como Area. The new sewer line will serve 67 houses and 120 building sites in the Arlington Chamberlin Heights Addition, in the 4400-4500 blocks of Prevost and the 5300-5800 blocks between Farnsworth and Humbert."

---Fort Worth Star-Telegram, May 22, 1952

"Como Request Arouses Talk of Voting Machine. A request for the creation of a new voting precinct in the Lake Como area precipitated a discussion among county commissioners...the county's need for voting machines."

---Fort Worth Star-Telegram, August 14, 1952

"Lake Como Now Has Boys Club. Lake Como residents have organized the Lake Como Club for boys from 8 to 17 years old. Officers elected at the organizational meeting are: K. J. Tucker, President' W. D. Jones, Secretary; and Bennie Houston, director of general activities."

---Fort Worth Star-Telegram, December 8, 1953

In 1956, I. P. Anderson was president of the Fort Worth Urban League. He presented a letter dated May 31, 1956 to the Urban League which stated several church groups and organizations in the Lake Como requested that the Urban League discuss the possibility of Lake Como be considered for urban renewal. The Lake Como Community

Organization requested that the Urban League appeal to the Mayor and other interested committees requesting Lake Como be designated a critical area. The following proposed improvements were asked to be addressed: grading, storm sewers, street paving, concrete curbs and gutters, walks, concrete drives, sanitary sewer, water, gas pipe extensions, electric, telephone, street lighting, school grounds, recreational areas, park and recreational improvements.

"Groundbreaking for Pool at Lake Como Set Monday. The formal groundbreaking ceremony was conducted on May 14, 1957 at 10:30 a.m. Attendees were city officials and recreation board members. Ceremonies were held northwest of the shelter house at the Como Park site. Contractors had 80 days to complete the pool project."

---Fort Worth Star-Telegram, May 10, 1957

#### "Lake Como Pool to be Opened If Weather Ok."

---Fort Worth Star-Telegram, September 7, 1957

In 1958-59, the citizens of the Como community were looking at urban renewal for the community in the form of a community recreational center, a new elementary school with playground area and room for building expansion. The urban renewal was defeated when submitted to a city-wide referendum in 1959.

The new 16-man Fire Hall located at 5937 Geddes Avenue was dedicated in 1964 to provide better fire protection in the Como and Ridglea areas. In addition, Como had several community organizations: The Civic League, the Center Organization and the Betterment Council. These groups held regular monthly meetings.

In 1973, a social study was done in regard to the Como community. Eighty percent of the business in Como were locally owned and operated. Most of the businesses were eating establishments. Of the 53 businesses, 14 were bars or café/restaurants, 9 were beauty or barber shops, and 6 were small grocery stores. Other businesses included three liquor stores, two mortuaries, and three music/record shops. There were also furniture and salvage stores, a shoe shine parlor, a cleaners and laundry. There was one professional dentist living in the community. There was a very small number of businesses that brought revenue into the community from outside of the community. These included one contractor, two landscaping services, one beauty/barber supply house and a local newspaper which managed to survive on outside advertising.

One of the most popular of these was the nightspot revived in the late 70s by blues musician Robert Ealey. Ealey wanted to establish a place where local musicians could learn from one another and showcase their talent. This hangout became known as the New Bluebird Night Club and was located on the corner of Horne and Wellesley, in the Como neighborhood. The building still stands there today.

The Lake Como Community has come a long way since the development of the lake and its early community. The community has weathered the Great Depression, World War II, the Civil Rights era, integration, environmental impact and restoration of the lake, economic highs and lows of a struggling and transitioning community, and through it all, there is a close knit, strong, and enduring love for the community as there was in the early 1900s.

#### THE HISTORY: LAKE COMO

During the 1880s, the west side of Fort Worth was prairie and ranch land as far as the eye could see. In 1890 the railroad boom transformed Fort Worth into a major livestock shipping center causing speculators, such as Attorney Robert McCart and Chicago financier Tom Hurley to buy large tracts of land on the west side of Fort Worth.

Englishman and Denver real estate developer, Humphrey Barker (H.B.) Chamberlin and his brother, Alfred W. Chamberlin were struck by the beauty of the countryside and purchased a portion of the property for \$20,030. The Chamberlins mapped and platted the tract of highland which was one mile from the city.

In March 1889, H. B. Chamberlin built a dam to impound water from a tributary of the Clear Fork of the Trinity River, creating a manmade lake. The lake was named Lake Como after the fashionable waterfront north of Milan in Lombardy, Italy, one of the most beautiful lakes in Europe. The lake provided electricity and water to the people whom the Chamberlins hoped would build homes in the area.

To encourage people to buy lots, H. B. Chamberlin in 1891 had architects Sanguinett and Staats build a grand two-story pavilion on the lake, creating a 160-acre resort in the middle of an untamed wilderness. Lake Como was a popular playground with brightly colored row boats for rent, roller coaster and other rides. By May 1891, events at Lake Como were in full swing. On May 4th rowers competed for a purse of \$50, rowing "the full distance of the lake, one-half mile."

In 1893, the Silver Panic caused bank, railroad and company failures, including the Chamberlin's American Land and Investment Company. When the company failed, Lake Como was sold and development around the lake came to a halt, although

the lake continued to provide entertainment and recreation for Fort Worth's wealthy families. The original pavilion burned in 1894, and a new pavilion designed by Louis Weinmann was built in 1906.

After disposing of his Fort Worth and San Antonio interests, Chamberlin moved to London. On May 17, 1897, he suffered a heart attack while riding a bicycle on the streets of London during a dense fog and was run over by a car.



Lake Como Amusement Co. Stock Certificate

Formed in March 1905, the Arlington Heights Traction
Company announced a plan to enlarge the pavilion and enhance
the recreational facilities there. The beautiful pavilion extended
over the lake, with twin towers in front and a domed entrance.
The boathouse was beneath the pavilion, with a summer theater
and ballroom on the first floor. The second and third stories
housed a restaurant, parlors and other facilities. The entire
building was encircled in galleries and could be enclosed for winter
functions.

A bridge stretched from the pavilion to the east side of the lake with a covered area in the center for socializing. Next to the pavilion was a roller coaster nearly as tall as the two-story building. There were boat rentals, a boardwalk, and picnic grounds. The bathhouse accommodated hundreds. In addition to the natural beauty of the lake and park, there were water carnivals, a boat decorating contest with a dance afterwards and other events.

In 1906 the Arlington Heights Traction Company was plagued with financial problems and sold out to the Citizens Railway and Light Company. The 1907 Stock Market Crash and competition from other local power companies put Citizens Railway into jeopardy. On July 1, 1911, Citizens' properties were sold. Lake Como and the nearby land were at an all-time low. Investors lost confidence in the area as Fort Worth's growth continued to the north and south.

There was a Balloon Race — "Mlle. Aerida; Aviator Wilson," held on the lake property in 1913. In 1914, The Fort Worth Amusement Company leased Lake Como and opened the park for the summer, with "free moving pictures shows and dancing in an attempt to overcome the automobile, and the popularity of the new Lake Worth entertainment center and motion pictures, which eventually lead to the decline of Lake Como.

The lake's last glory days were during World War I, when the Chamberlins' acreage was chosen as the site for Camp Bowie, a military training camp built in 1917. The nearby streetcar line, railroad spurs and the free use of the 2,000 acres were great



incentives for establishing the camp on the still undeveloped real estate. The camp's hospital and maneuvering grounds were to the east of the lake, and servicemen walked over to enjoy some recreation while preparing to go to France.

In 1922, the City of Fort Worth annexed Arlington Heights and Lake Como. Even after the annexation into the city, Lake Como continued to decline, and by the mid-to-late 1930s, the beautiful buildings were in ruins. The Lake Como Power Plant and boathouse disappeared in 1928.

During World War II, the park lay in waste. The park became over grown due to neglect. According to Charles Cannon, "the area around the lake was fenced off with barbed wire for many years, and the citizens of Lake Como were forbidden to trespass on the property. A few privileged whites were permitted to fish in the lake. The only time Lake Como residents got any fish from the lake was after severe spring thunderstorm runoffs caused the water to overflow the spillway at its southeast end. Large fish would escape in the overflow and be stranded in shallow pools below the dam. John Ramsay and a few others would wade into the pools and muddy up the water to such a degree that the fish were distressed, they surfaced, and were easily caught."

"When I was a young girl during the 1940s there was nothing but the lake. It was overgrown and there was a whole lot of brush and stuff around it."

---Maggie Burke Mooney

On September 23, 1949, three Arlington Heights ladies, Mrs. M. R. Sanguinett, Mrs. S. D. Mattison, and Mrs. Lily Burgess Hovencamp appeared before the Parks Board with petitions for the restoration of Lake Como Park.

In 1950, Amon Carter, Sr., acquired 70 acres of the land on the west side of the lake, including the lake, and on July 4, 1951, the first Annual Lake Como Day was celebrated. Carter gave the property to the City of Fort Worth on October 29, 1952, stipulating that the property was to be developed and used as a "Negro" park.

The first Lake Como Day was held on July 4, 1951, complete with free barbecue for the residents and their guests. The parade route started at Merrick and moved north on Rosedale Street and south on Horne to Bonnell Street.

The groundbreaking ceremony for a pool at Lake Como was conducted on May 14, 1957 at 10:30 a.m. Attendees were city officials and recreation board members. Ceremonies were held northwest of the shelter house at the Como Park site. Contractors had 80 days to complete the pool project.

The sixth annual Lake Como Day which was observed on July 4, 1957, was sponsored by the Como Community Center Organization. Festivities began 10 a.m. with a parade, which ended at the Como Park. Prizes were awarded for best decorated cars and floats. Other events included a fishing rodeo for boys, selection of Miss Como, and a baseball game.

## Chapter *Three*

# The ARTIST'S CHARETTE: OBSERVATIONS AND SOLUTIONS OF INFRASTRUCTURAL CONCERNS

The timeline of the master plan began with the 2006 Conceptual Master Planning Workshop; a charette whose purpose was to assist the Parks and Community Services Department (PACS) in its master planning efforts for Lake Como Park. This artist team provided observations, approaches and options for future development that will address the Como Community's desire to commemorate important people and events in Lake Como Park's history and to enhance the park's usage.

Among the diverse artists gathered were David Burke and Shelby Means both of whom have documented Lake Como for years, Burl Washington – a Fort Worth artist nationally known for his Buffalo Soldier Series, esteemed artist Sedrick Huckaby, Houston based artist Leamon Green, Mel Ziegler, public Art pioneer and educator and public artist and then Fort Worth Art Commissioner, Anitra Blayton. The orientation by the Fort Worth Public Art staff and the Lake Como Planning Committee members gave the artists a background of the Community's history and activities. Discussion centered around Lake





Como points of concern while PACS presented a map of Lake Como Park. As the workshop continued, the priorities became quite clear:

- 1. **To remember** and document the endeavors of Amon G. Carter, Erma Grant, Conway Haley, Wilba Alaman, Wilma Philpot, Viola Pitts, Sopora Hicks, William "Doc" Wilburn Sr, and Reverend G. Washington Burton and the many pathfinders who stand on their shoulders.
- 2. **To showcase** the annual July Fourth Parade and Como Day Celebration which continues the tradition of the first African American parade in Texas of 1951. The historical parade that always concludes at the Park's Shelter and fishing dock was a major catalyst for a master plan and commemoration.

It was on this weekend, the artists were able to tour the entire park and witness first hand the Como Celebration Day, Community Leaders and Como advocates, Como family members who travel from across the country, artisans, food vendors, and family activities.

It was decided the members of the charette would circulate around the park during the event and ask participants the following:

How are you connected to Lake Como?
What do you think about the park?
Do you have any documentation?
What are your fondest memories?
What would you like to see happen?





At the conclusion of the 3-day charette, *critical observations* were established upon which *SOLUTIONS* of the master plan are based.



 Floatables and trash heaviest after the rain at Lake Como

 Improve native landscaping along shoreline





 Need to overcome the perception the park is not safe





 Compatible activities need better connecting trail and better line of sight to address safety concerns



 Overgrown buffer areas hide the lake from view



 Amenities such as natural seating/amphitheater, game tables and shelter are limited

 Add permanent shelter on the pier



 Improve access to the ramp

- Only the west side of the lake is equipped for main events
- The east side is under utilized







- The dam divides north Lake Como Park and south Lake Como Park
- North side is neglected and inaccessible



# Nathanial Howard and Johnny Andrews Memorial Plaque

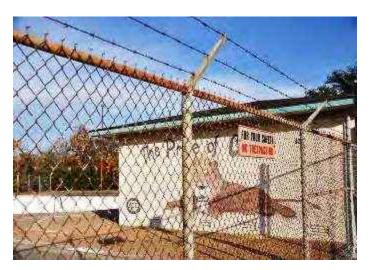
- No interactive visual memory
- Plaques and statues are often over-looked



# Donor Plaque at the Lake Como Swimming Pool

- •Integrate commemorations with nature
- Must be able to add elements over time









- Key recreational areas feel abandoned
- Restoration is overdue
- New accessible bathroom facilities are a must

- The lake divides Lake Como into east and west
- Lake Como is a jewel and is under utilized; limited boating and fishing. Where are the park visitors?





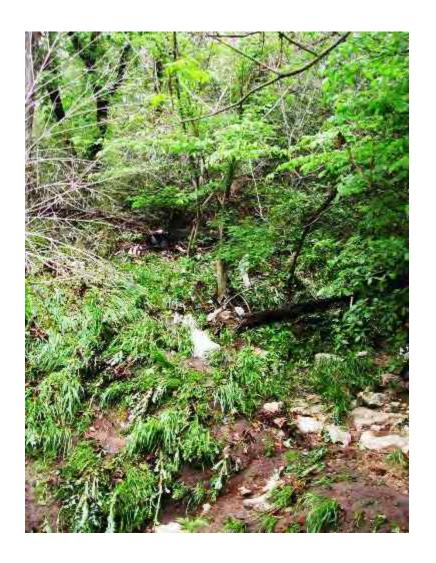
The east side of the park is not inviting

• South Lake Como Park is not clearly accessible with no connection to the lake or to Collett Park





Topography is challenging



The Artist Charette recommended that **Commemoration**, **Sustainability and Confluence** will be the focus of all logical solutions of the *Lake Como Public Art Master Plan*.

- Engage community to provide year-round, maintenance and trash pickup
- Commission environmental artists to partner with community leaders, teachers and the City's Storm Water Management staff.

- Expand and enhance
   walkway on the very busy
   Merrick Street Bridge by
   removing guard rails and
   chain link.
- One of the high points of the park that can not only provide a scenic view but also the opportunity to incorporate a timeline that COMMEMORATES Pioneers, Legends and Heroes.



#### **Nobel Woods Park Boardwalk**



- Connect the park land with contiguous trails and boardwalks that unifies the nature preserve as well as compatible park activities
- Unify the park with a major circular trail enhanced by rain gardens - "memory gardens" for walkers, joggers, and cyclists



- Consider options for existing pavilion:
  - Restore and improve existing pavilion
  - > Park Museum temporary or permanent exhibitions
- Build new updated Restrooms
- Commission a light artist to design solar illumination for nighttime safety





 Request the City of Fort Worth to acquire land to create more access and expanded park activity opportunities on edges



Vacant lot at Hervie and
Locke Streets adjacent to
North Lake Como Park, east
of Como.

5200 block of Lovell at 5250 block o Curzon Street

These lots interrupt Como parkland property impeding a badly needed continuous park trail.





- This bordered property overlooks
   the park's tennis courts on the
   corner of Merrick and Como. It
   could serve as a Storm water depot,
   a Satellite station for the FWPD, an
   afterschool reading room, a Fort
   Worth Library annex, an afterschool
   program for budding artists.
- The old gas station on Lake Como Ave. and Merrick is in a key position as it can serve to welcome visitors to both the park and to the Como community. It can be restored with an EPA grant

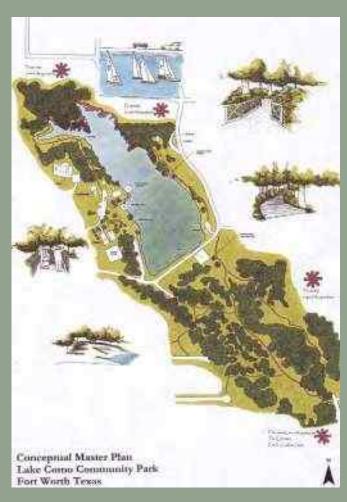




### FORT WORTH PUBLIC ART MASTER PLAN Lake Como Park Anitra Blayton and Mel Ziegler

Chapter Four

### INTERLOCKING COMMEMORATION AND INFRASTRUCTURAL IMPROVEMENTS



In 2008 community based artists, Anitra Blayton and Mel Ziegler were subsequently commissioned to collaborate with the Lake Como Planning Committee on designing several artist opportunities based upon the 2006 artist workshop's key recommendations. It is important to note the rendering to the left had been completed by PACS several years earlier.

The design team met with a community stakeholders and established a vision and philosophical approach for the park unique to the pioneers, legends and heroes of the Como community.

This chapter emphasizes how commemorations and infrastructural improvements are melded and how the recommendations help shape the phases and priorities of the plan. Many of the following images shown are primarily by environmental artists whose works are already completed or proposed for similar projects in other parks. With Lake Como's Commemoration and Sustainability at the forefront, this plan focuses on three equally important threads where opportunities for artists are illustrated.

- Best Management Practice (BMP's) and Como, the Urban Wetland
- o Como Park as a high functioning cultural site
- The Diversity of Como Park and the Community

### THE MASTER PLAN WITH INPUT, AND IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER, RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING PRIORITIES FOR LAKE COMO PARK

- Remove Trash and Improve environmental quality that includes removing constituents and introducing aquatic plants
- Identify various opportunities for commemoration
- Purchase Properties to provide full access. This priority must include trail lighting
- Restore confidence in Safety. Expand park activities
- Restore the existing pavilion and bathroom facilities, game courts
- Add new small pavilions with feeder trails for picnics
- Design a pedestrian bridge
- Build a shaded amphitheater and plaza

#### **OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS**

- The Lake Como Steering Committee should develop a Sustainability Task
  Force. This group will engage business owners in the north quadrant
  commercial watershed district on sustainability initiatives
- Establish an educational component
- Identify historical interests outside the park

Future Faculty of H. Weeth Celline 1919

Tourset County archive 2009

"My family has been going to the park for our family reunions for years. We've gone to another park in Georgia. It wasn't nearly the size of this park but it was pristine."

Dorthy DuBose
President, Neighborhood Association of Como (NAC)

### Phase One Begins with the Lake



The design team determined the phases and priorities of the infrastructural park improvements based on what will best honor the Pioneers, Legends and Heroes of Como. From a didactic point, these pathfinders not only leave their descendants a profound history, they can also serve to instruct their now and future community by maintaining the priorities of the master plan. The public works that we recommend for commemoration are located at several key locations in Lake Como Park, all of which are underscored by five revolving links.

Since 2008, the LCMP design team has worked closely with Stormwater Utility, PACS landscape architects, environmental planners and other research teams. The purpose of these meetings was to emphasize the necessity of an effective solution to trash extraction in Lake Como and to stress the importance of working with environmental artists for an aesthetic solution as well.

Our visits to Fort Worth's Botanic Gardens, the Fort Worth Nature Center at Lake Worth and the John Bunker Sands Wetland Center in Seagoville, Texas, developed strong ties on behalf of Como. During a subsequent visit to Fort Worth, the experts identified Lake Como as potentially an "Wildlife Habitat" and "Urban Wetland".

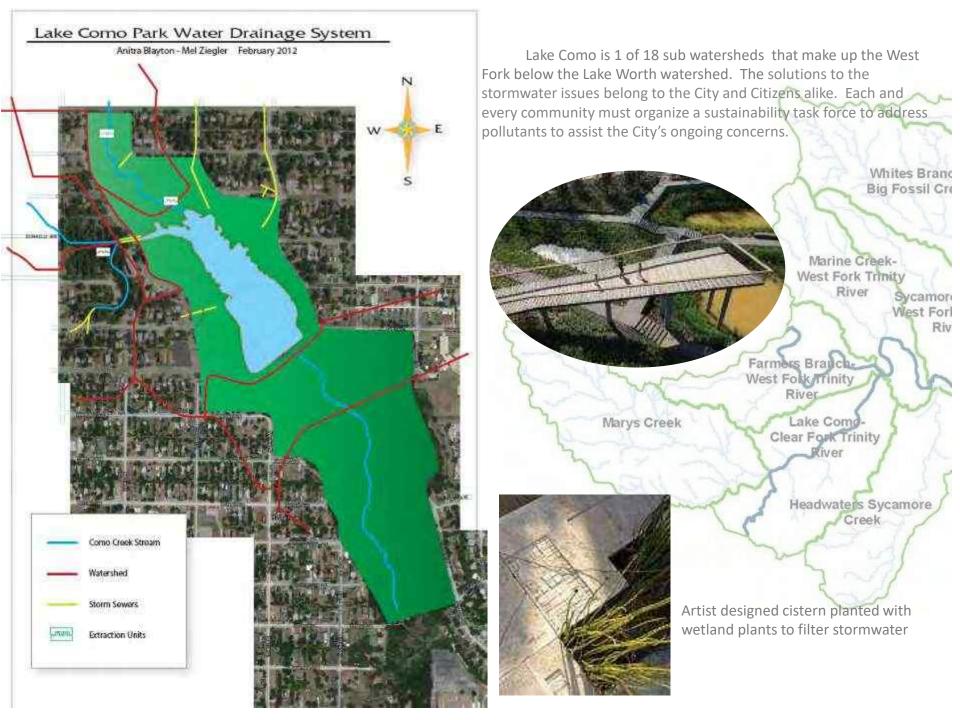


May 2011 meeting with AECOM, Fort Worth Stormwater Utilities, Fort Worth Public Art and Jim Sipes, Author of Sustainable Solutions

In June 2012, Fort Worth Storm Water Management partnered with Brown & Gay Engineers and the City of Fort Worth to conduct a Floatables and Sediment Control Pilot Study which focused on the commercial area north of Lake Como, This updated study focused on the major watersheds and the runoff of chemicals, nutrients, floatables and sediment.

<u>www.scieca.org/2012ms4/JOSEPilotStudy.pd</u> There are several locations in which water runoff brings huge amounts of trash into Lake Como particularly after a heavy rainfall. Among these are:

- ➤ The creek bed area north east of the park that tunnels under Lake Como Drive coming from Cuzon Avenue, Donnelly Avenue and Bourine Street areas
- > The creek bed area east of Lake Como Drive and behind the row of houses located south of Locke Avenue
- > The area south of the corner at Prevost Street and Hervie Avenue



# City Times was to the Rank August 2014

#### Native grasses could help slow erosion in stormwater channels

The City of Fig. Worth largest madice growing planned to survivage character only reches cityly and prijectic manifestical and arrive with the control of th



to the Miller Road Boad on, before and after severables the officer makes proceed part father when planted by incremance planteds. This hoped for entrane for this gliss program is that the spaces was be tranfy strong to the spaces of the spaces

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Asserting point is induced maximum as free and mosts: Additionally, these may be less objecting of sediment required in the destroys system. The final adder beautic is one we (as all ends, batter praces) and showers bring mound beauty to our projections.

#### Take steps to keep automotive waste out of storm drains

Approachible Appar and transformers errores a firm of possessivity becamerar or owners, for lading more out and others, and fact, it is difficult to



done from term to hop or loss payer drawn because alreasing princip days are explicion, pediment or terrors purference. The a reliable movine of repost after became they have specify recurrentwirk for heading and disposal of these waster if you do main transce and remain at hence, cover the ground ancho the values of provint solds or rapidly. Collect and after word fields or rapidly, e-climarized plants sometimes. Take fluids, informatical plants of the Commitment Collection and appears to the Commitment Collection format. Helli Bessie W., for mean-last.

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## Recycling Questions

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#### Seventh annual Art in the Garden to feature works in multiple media

As part of the Cultural District's Gallery Night, the Garden Center of the Fort Worth Botanic Garden will feature more than 75 entries of juried art for sale during the seventh annual Art in the Castelen.



John Bunkers Wetlands, Seagoville, TX



North Richland Hills, TX

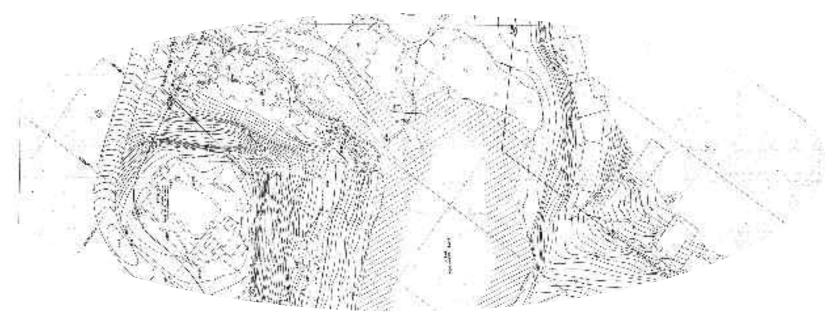
### "Lake Como is already serving as an important wildlife habitat, and has a lot of potential to be even better."



Suzanne Tuttle, Nature Center Manager Fort Worth Nature Center and Refuge

Ν

The artist chosen to work in this area is expected to make use of Fort Worth's water quality research. Our recommendation is that an environmental artist(s) continue the conversation with community stakeholders and municipal departments to develop solutions such as innovative downspouts and metal covers. Also they are encouraged to design creative trash collection extractor units that will remove debris and floatables before they enter the lake, such as connector pipe screens (CPS) inside catch basins and automatic retractable screen (ARS) at curbside inlets. Trash will need to be collected and removed from this unit on a regular basis. Determining who does this and how it is paid for is important.



### Practical Solutions Lead to Artist's Opportunities



Fort Worth BRIT



**FWNC** 



John Bunker Wetland Center

We strongly recommend community leaders and schools visit the Botanic Garden Research Institute, The Fort Worth Nature Center and John Bunker Wetland Center in Seagoville, Texas, in order to understand how to best engage the park visitor and sustain urban wetland systems and wildlife management.



Syme Hall
North Carolina State University



Children's Rain Garden Powhatan Springs Park



A 0.9 million above-ground stormwater storage tank with an art wall. Madison Valley Stormwater Project Phase II, Seattle Public Utilities



(Entrant) by Designer Dr. Micheal Siu, Public Design Lab Leader of Green-EcoGreen

Waste is not only a product of stormwater runoff Issues. People contribute as well. Trash recepticles already exist in the park however these amenities should be enhanced thereby more inviting to use.



Dog-waste receptacle in Kaldanac, Rab, Croatia

### Remove Trash and Incorporate BMPs

- Have an artist work with an engineer or landscape architect to develop an aesthetically designed trash collection extractor unit that will remove waste before it enters the lake at three catchments
- Trash will need to be removed from these units on a regular basis. Determining who does this and how it is paid for is important
- We recommend taxing local businesses up stream from Lake Como for this purpose
- Use these funds to create an endowment for the park's BMPs, best management practices

### Lake Como: An Environmental Success Story

The city's Environmental Concentration Center, better monitoring Artists and Como Community will resident education played key roles in

reducing pollution that had resulted meet routinely with Storm Water Management's outreach

team to critically identify Lake Como runoff issues. Reviewing initiatives and current credit policies help create and maintain low impact sustainable design and best maintenance practices,

(BMPs). The artist creates a form and then will work with the

community on the subject of commemoration.

city's southwest side, because the tissues of these fish contained

Jubricants, Area so Management, Inc.

nated through direct application,

high concentrations of potentially

harmful che possession Texas Com tal Quality

Tests sho several "legs ing polychk (PCBs) and dane DDT :

Degacy Do

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cordkeepof legacy city used te its ram and fiorts. the DSHS

Confluence Engineering, Cane Creek Greenway, Stream Enhancement and Stormwater Wetland, Fletcher Town Park, Fletcher, NC



stormwater BMPs is to replicate
hydrologic cycle elements that have been
lost in urban areas to meet stormwater
management objectives. Interest is
growing for using these BMPs for
retrofits and for controlling combined
sewer overflows (CSOs).





Manhole Public Art Contest, City of San Marcos and Texas State University

"By constructing small-scale, distributed stormwater management devices at designated sites, these stormwater BMPs have the capability to meet multiple stormwater management objectives, in a way that conventional approaches do not."

http://www.werf.org/liveablecommunities/toolbox/urbanbmps.htm



Planphilly Storm Water and Tree Trench Design



RDG Planning and Design, Rainwater Cistern Central College Roe Center, Pella, Iowa Photo Ryan Peterson

Our recommendation is to give preference to those who have vast experience in **sustainable solutions** and watersheds. They must have the ability to work with renewable resources that will be timeless, as well as have an emotional connection to the landscape and to the future of the community such as in this works by environmental and community based artists, Betsy Damon, Herbert Bayer and Patricia Johanson. Their works must have minimally invasive impact on the Lake Como environment. They must make reference to the importance of **Commemoration**.



Betsy Damon, "The Living Water Garden" Chengdu, Sichuan province, China, 1999



Herbert Bayer, Mill Creek Canyon Park Kent, Washington, 1982





Patricia Johanson, "Fair Park Lagoon", Dallas, TX









Daniel McCormick creates sustainable watershed sculpture that also aligns natural trails.

#### Chapter Five

#### Lake Como: Commemoration Park



Como Citizen, Mother Prescott at her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday party addresses 100 family members and friends.

Lake Como Park was originally designed in the early 19th century to be the cultural center of entertainment in Fort Worth. In the parallel world, Como's pathfinders were creating a socioeconomic community for its citizens. In both worlds, integration, technology, and other lakes lured the park visitor away from Como. The Como Citizen continued to use the park for some recreation, while other traditional activities such as Church services, teaching and neighborhood gatherings took place in traditional spaces. LAKE COMO PARK is CULTURALLY IMPORTANT and therefore should be a high functioning cultural park.

The 2006 charette (artists' workshop) met with the Lake Como Planning Committee and observed and concluded that the park should be reclaimed as a cultural place that is safe and clean.

By definition, cultural means relating to artistic or social pursuits or events considered to be valuable or enlightened. That said, as a proposed cultural site for pioneers, legends, and heroes, the public art will have naturalized layers of visual, audio, interactive and site-specific commemorative elements for

persons of all ages. Through the stories, signage, and quotes, incremental learning will not only teach about Community but also about environmental quality.



conceptual, new media, performance, and environmental artists like Cary Peppermint use solar panels to create a collaborative sonic field.

Illustrated through interpretive commemoration, Lake Como Park will be a cultural site for visual memories and literary statements that will bring comfort to many. It will be a stage for music and poetic verse that will inspire new voices; it will be a lesson in nature and wildlife for some and a quiescent peace for others. Renovated game courts will serve as an extension to the Como Community Center, and temporary projects should feature artist / neighborhood collaborations. "Commemorations might be ephemeral or permanent; the key point is that they prod collective memory in some conspicuous way."

Imagine listening to Mother Prescott's voice on a nature trail telling the history of Lake Como.

"The covert irony behind the "Doc Wilburn" Como Day Parade is much more than the celebration of JULY 4, 1776, it's the celebration of citizens of this community independently thinking and doing for ourselves. Therefore, Mr. Wilburn's true intent behind the parade was to serve as a catalyst or symbol that would potentially lead to community building and community management. I know we all love Como, we all claim Como and we all represent for Como. We even have youngsters on the street with "COMO TX" tattooed on their bodies and don't even understand the significance or meaning to say "COMO TX".

What about the preservation of Como in next 15-20 years given the present state of my generation (Hip-Hop generation)? So I say to my elders it's time we start making the history of this community a living tradition. If not, it will only be spoke of in ruins while our legacy lies in decay."

Marcus Hudson
Neighborhood Planning Committee



Fort Worth's first African-American Riding Club, The Circle Five Kickoff the Fort Worth rodeo, 2014

There are arguments by several American scholars who will assert that with the needs of contemporary culture, the past is a re-construct, a mind-manipulating exercise in order to mold the present. Here the master plan reveals that truth is the primary medium. Como's past is clearly stated -----a very conspicuous and ingrained connectedness in Como's own words; it's folklore embedded in its sense of village, it's civic fight and passion for education, it's industry and architecture, "the African beat" and a staunch ally, the Fort Worth Community at large.

The Lake Como Public Art Master Plan will give preference to mature artists who will pay close attention to this connectedness as they relate to the community history and landscape. The artists will dialog with Como's youth and engage them through text and imagery. In that text and imagery, Como's youth will learn to responsibly look back in order to direct their future, to forge new contributions as important as those of the past.

Lastly and particularly on the subject of the history of American monument making, it is especially important to recognize that there are those who have re-shaped and undermined African American achievements where only the old poor south or kneeling slave is perpetuated. Como <u>is not</u> to be a forum for that artist, nor is any commemoration to be used as a forum to politicize the very thing it purports to criticize.

The Como citizens proudly recognize the history of Lake Como Park's designation as a "Negro Park". In light of Amon G. Carter's legacy as a major contributor to much of the Fort Worth, the question brought to the artist should be <a href="https://www.nemorialize.gov">how</a> to memorialize such a designation. The designation, "Negro Park" in 1951 was paramount for Como and Fort Worth. It was "on the eve" of the historic 1955 sit-ins, boycotts, marches, and the beginning of a turning point for our country. Just as the Como citizen protects the significant contributions of Community pathfinders, the artists will create works for a cultural site that embraces and sustains to insure that Lake Como history is depicted responsibly and without alteration in the 21st century and beyond.

The Lake Como Park Public Art Master Plan shall revitalize Lake Como as a 21st Century Commemorative Park and urban wetland. This plan provides approaches and options for future development that will address the Como Community's desire to commemorate important people and events in the history of Como and to enhance the park's usage. [The primary focus of this plan will be to acknowledge the community's heroes, legends and pioneers as defined by the Lake Como Planning Committee through environmental, commemorative art.] The principles herein: The Como community---- a life force----- Soul, Spirit, Mind, Heart.

To develop a 21st Century cultural park is to lure back the park visitor with what began luring them away decades ago----technology and a reluctance to integrate.

Therefore what we are proposing to the The Lake Como Planning Committee is that not all commemorations take place at the entrance of a park as a physical entity----one bronze plaque or one statue. If we carefully look at todays culture, we will find that most traditions not only speak to a broad audience but they are also simultaneously revisited through a multitude of new applications. Today we may consider a phone number that gives the casual passerby historic information, a quick response (QR) based on a cell phone scan, wi-fi and a YouTube presentation of individuals for their lifetime achievements. The principles shape the outline in the Lake Como Park Public Art Master Plan.

Lake Como Park is a life force-----integral to the community's history. It never lets us forget where we came from and gives us a point of departure for our future. Future generations may not always agree with who and what is memorialized at a particular time in history and likewise older generations may not always understand the memorials of today. This plan that spans several years presents an evolution of the community's thoughts and ideologies------it presents a stage for a cultural exchange of dialog.

### Identify Opportunities for Commemoration

Como Citizens are civically engaged. This
Community is one of Fort Worth's most
formidable leaders in getting things done.
It's historical significance is that it has
prospered quite well particularly in education
civic leadership and business.

In their quest to **COMMEMORATE**PIONEERS, LEGENDS AND HEROES, the

Como citizens will offer preference to the artist who can entice the park visitor to connect to this historical significance on a profound level and to identify with the successes of an unyielding, unified community that rises up time and time again. Every public Art in *Como Commemoration Park* that pays tribute to the history of Como will also exemplify the support by the City of Fort Worth.





Jaume Plensa, *Sho* Art Chicago, 2008

### Lake Como Park is a Commemoration Park: A Life-Force

founded upon four guiding principles, Soul, Spirit, Mind, and Heart

For selection and approval of project proposals we recommend that

#### **COMMEMORATION** is

site-specific and always, always based upon these four principles in that it continues legacy, protects Como's essence; engages and reaches out. It must symbolize community diversity and represent the words and breath of the citizens of Como.

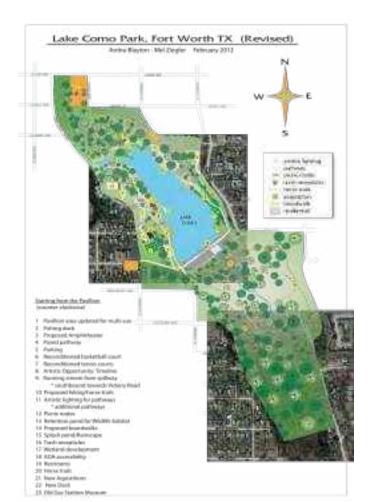


TAFB rep Edith Finley poses the idea of "hunger free zone" in Como

- It is therefore incumbent upon Como citizens to produce on-going communiqué regarding their ideas and stories in order to effectively co-author a comprehensive and tangible course of direction to achieve a two-tiered SELECTION PROCESS.
- After a call for qualifications, the artists shall be narrowed down to three
  possible participants. This process shall be done by a panel of professionals in
  the field selected by the Fort Worth Public Art Program. The three artists
  chosen shall be presented to the members of the community for final
  selection.
- We recommend that the artist)s) may choose to collaborate with a landscape architect, designers or engineers but they should be the lead in each team.

The following numbered areas denote potential opportunities for site-specific public art **COMMEMORATION** in all three phases of the master plan. Deciding who will be commemorated will be determined by the Como community. It should be clear that each and every Pioneer, Legend and Hero of Como are equally significant.

The numbered bubbles following this page show images of works that have been either completed or proposed for similar public art projects around the world.

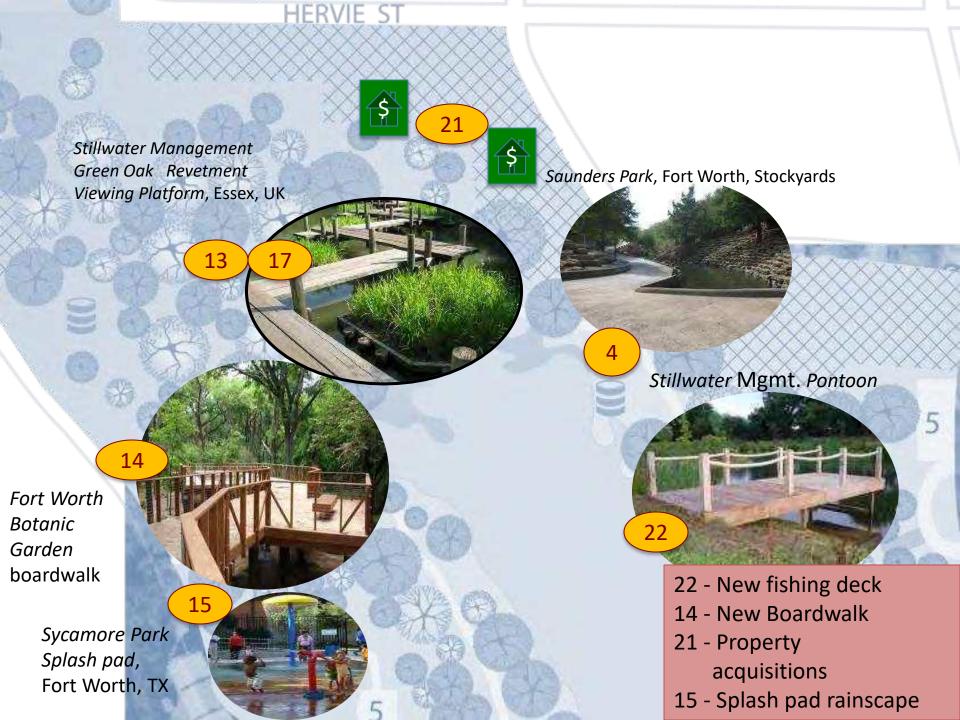


The maps show items 1 through 24 as a compilation of infrastructural improvements, amenities and site-specific **COMMEMORATIVE** opportunities.

Not all areas may involve specific commemoration but none the less should be an opportunity that references to the importance of remembering.

#### These areas are:

- 2 Canopy for existing play area
- 5 bicycle racks
- 16 Trash and dog waste repositories
- 17 Wetland development
- 18 ADA accessibility
- 19 Restrooms
- 21 New property acquisitions
- 24 The Como Bird Sanctuary







### Chapter Six

## Commemoration and Reclamation through Diversity

Expanded park activities should mimic the diversity of the community as well as the landscape ----both being informative and performative. There are numerous events taking place outside the park parameter many of which under the supervision of Community Center's Carol Brown, the NAC and Como Elementary. Among these are the Annual Spring Como Classic Car Show, Gardening events, High-Five Inspiration Program at Como Elementary, The Breast Cancer Walk, the annual ShareFest, performances by B-Sharp's Orchestra, Percussion Ensemble, and Step Group, Como After School Programs that include The Poetry Team, youth choir and talent shows, Como sponsored foreign exchange programs, and local field trips.

Currently there are only four functioning activities; basketball, occasional picnicking, jogging and the children's playground and two major events in Lake Como park; the post 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration and the Easter Egg Hunt.

Likewise the park itself is also abundant with active wildlife, 17 types of native and three non-native trees, 9 non-native shrubs and 5 native and two non-native woody vines.

Park Diversity facilitates a range of social interactions that maintain traditions of community cohesion and pride. It also defines the park visitor's personal relationship with a natural environment that is safe, uplifting and valuable to the immediate surrounding communities.

Why is Lake Como Park important to the Como citizen? Why is Lake Como Park important to Fort Worth?



B-Sharp Orchestra led by Brandon Sanders



Como After School Choir directed by staff person Nyeshi at the Como Community Center

"It's history is so rich and we know that the people settled in this area because their families worked in this area. Parents were fierce about their children having a good education. There isn't another community in this town as cohesive as Como".

Opal Lee,
Community Food Bank

The 2006 Lake Como Artist workshop and subsequent design team determined the following trends that have shaped the diversity of the public art master plan. Generally, Lake Como Park will first and foremost serve as a unique Commemorative Site illustrated through *a* variety of long term culturally based recreational elements as well as practical sustainable solutions.

These park trends established the plan's priorities reflecting the needs of the Como park visitor and the trends of the community at large.

The Park will provide the opportunity for physical activity, Good Health, achieving a host of environmental health and related public policy objectives.

- ✓ It will be a place to find a <u>Sense of Well-Being</u> and therapeutic interventions for people of all ages.
- ✓ Lake Como will provide <u>Early Youth Pedagogy</u>
- ✓ The Park will offer our children a place to play and a <u>Safe Refuge</u> for all youth.
- ✓ It will provide habitats, biodiversity and ecological integrity as a preserve of nature and critical wildlife as a <u>Sustainable Urban</u> <u>Wetland</u>
- ✓ Lake Como Park will provide a <u>Green Space</u> <u>and vegetative</u> <u>buffer</u> to construction and development
- ✓ As Lake Como improves, so will the surrounding <u>Property Value</u>.



The Como Community Garden used Good Friday to replant the garden with all variety of vegetables.



Young talent of Como, Brandon Sanders



Ashante Children's Choir from Uganda



The B-Sharp Choir

Como Park is not considered a large urban park and does not present with the same issues of a park in the immediate downtown Fort Worth area such as Heritage Park. The diverse activities designed for Como Park however connect well to the Fort Worth's central city revitalization project. The case for Como park improvement and reclamation is embedded in much of the same rationale. It serves a one-square mile established community with mom and pop commercial zoning like an Urban village. In addition this old community is immediately surrounded by Vickory, Hulen, Bryant Irvin and Camp Bowie streets, all budding commercially at an impressive pace. Many of these businesses are quite contemporary and creative, bringing with them new discussion.

The Como community is welcoming new homeowners, it is comparatively densely populated and like other ethnographic areas, this older Community is with endearing deep seated

patterns of supportive social, spiritual and political relationships. Como's identity is as solid and distinct as it is enriching for the citizens of Fort Worth! Like-wise, the Park that serves this unique community is a set stage for revitalization and diversity. It is presented in a unique 21<sup>st</sup> century way, while extending to a growing Fort Worth, an extra-ordinary historical link to the past.



Old cars mixed with the same ole message of non-violence was the order for the day at the Spring Annual Como Classic Car Show

Parks like Como are classified as Close-to-Home parklands. Como is one of 243 parks of this kind in Fort Worth and one of the oldest which is why commemoration is a main focus of the master plan. Como Park's earlier traditions which included boating, fishing, sitting and picnicking, playing board games such as checkers and chess, feeding wild ducks and listening to live entertainment. A ban on fishing was recently rescinded due to a Texas Commission Environmental Quality (TCEQ) pollution-prevention program.

Dancing was a core activity in the hay day of the Pavilion, now is a focus activity of the Lake Como Recreation Center on Horne Street. Over time other community needs broaden to include field sports such as softball and baseball, court games such as basketball and tennis and table games, dominoes, checkers, chess. Later came the swimming pool and playground. Still yet to be fully realized are performing arts, trail activities such as jogging, walking, cycling. In last two decades, rollerblading and skateboarding have become popular. West side of the park continues to be the preferred place to meet and greet after the Lake Como annual Fourth of July Parade.



Lake Como Annual Easter Egg Hunt



JoAnna Williams with her rendition of *Alabasterbox* 

The evolution of Lake Como Park revitalization can be defined by population and socio-economic trends of Como described in the narrative, History of Lake Como Community. While it is not clear to what extent these projected trends will affect the 20 acre Como Community, future trends as outlined in Focusing On the Future, Part I of the 2010 Fort Worth Comprehensive Plan reveal the following:

- ➤ 14% of the area's population will be at the age of 65 years and older
- the median age of Fort Worth's north central sector will be 33+ years of age

The factors affecting population change that stands out are 1) People are living longer; 2) Immigration has been steady for many years particularly from Mexico and other Latin American countries; 3) Fort Worth and Texas are experiencing high birth rates; and [4) Domestic migration is also continuing. Currently, minorities collectively make up the majority of Fort Worth population.



Lake Como Breast Cancer Awareness Walk

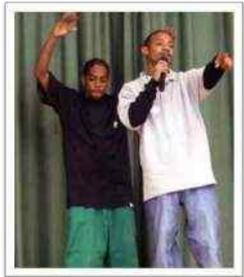
By the year 2028, Hispanics are expected to make up 38 percent of Fort Worth's population, White (Non-Hispanic) 40%, Black (Non-Hispanic) 14%, and other Races (Non Hispanic) 8% if current trends continue. Although a larger African American population is concentrated in other parts of the city, it is important to recognize that through the level of involvement of Civic leadership, Como is and always will be a principal African-American community in Fort Worth. Also while Como reaches out to neighboring Arlington Heights and Sunset Heights, it is the nature of a vibrant Como Community who will continue to support and preserve both commemoration and the community's traditions.



Prayer in the Como's neighborhood Garden

Imagine naming the park trail, The Legacy Health Trail. Just as Como community always takes care of its citizens so does Como Park. Because the park is surrounded largely by an African-American and growing Hispanic community, this close-to-home park is a vital link to developing a life-style that will fight obesity, and prevent chronic conditions that may lead to coronary disease, high blood pressure and diabetes.

Como Park was designed to enrich the lives of many unique individuals and it must be revitalized in existing locations and reclaimed in other underutilized areas. This Park provides the Como citizen and park visitor the opportunity for on-going physical activity; an activity that should be an essential part of an individual's efforts towards better health and well-being. The park is a life-enhancing and therapeutic outlet for those with disabilities and for the improvement of quality, moods, and cognitive functioning and lessening stress.



Marquis Kennedy Duo with positive inspirational lyrics



3-times Poetry Champs, Como After School Program

# The Lake Como Park Circular Trail & New Boardwalk

The introduction of a CIRCULAR TRAIL that goes completely around the lake is critical to the success of the park! It speaks to the diversity and unity of Como and surrounding communities.

- It must be done and it must be one of the first projects to be funded and completed after the water clean up is secured.
- The TRAIL will activate the space like no other amenity.
- It is an outdoor meeting arena for conversation and neighborly exchange.
- It is a place for the communities on both sides of the lake to mingle and take joint ownership of their park. Be it for walking, running or riding a bike it is the one thing that will bring people back day after day.

### Naming the trail:

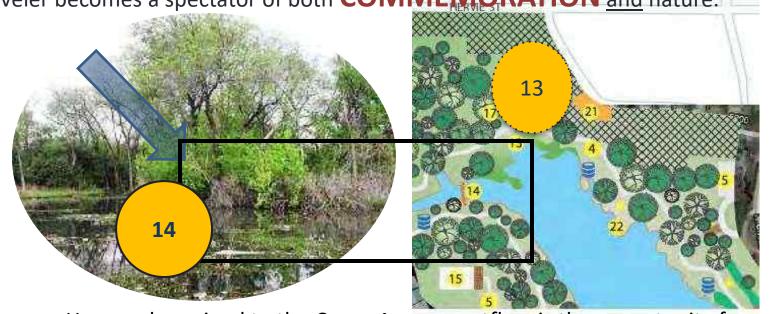
- First, the trail itself should be a naming opportunity for the purpose of **COMMEMORATION**. i.e.: the Amon Carter Trail? The choice of who gets commemorated should be decided by the Lake Como Community.
- In doing so we might suggest that the **trai** on the east side of the lake be a place to **COMMEMORATE** through surface treatment some form of historic and educational information specifically about the person named.
- This is a great artistic opportunity and will COMMEMORATE one of the most important persons in relation to the park, its history and the community.
- Streams and Valleys is a asset to Fort Worth's neighborhoods. For more than 40 years this organization has partnered with municipal entities including PACS and the Public Art Commission, <a href="http://www.streamsandvalleys.org/">http://www.streamsandvalleys.org/</a>
  The community should consider applying to S&V for secondary trails that can travel throughout the community as well as adjacent to the park's primary trails.



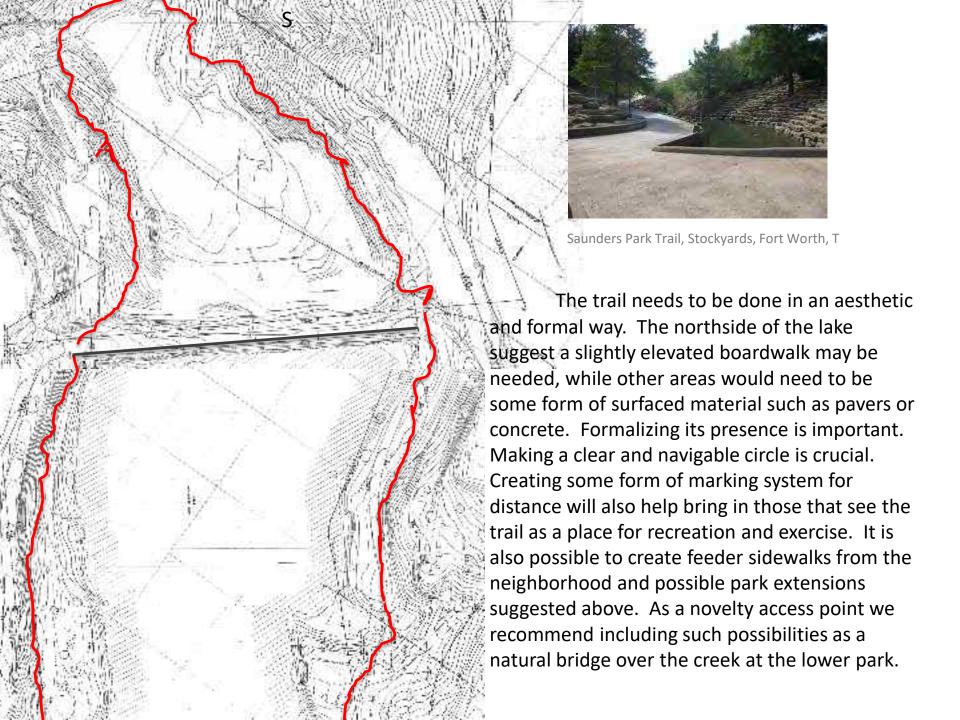
Important to the success of the **Circular trail** in Lake Como's north quadrant is a retention pond. There are two concerns:

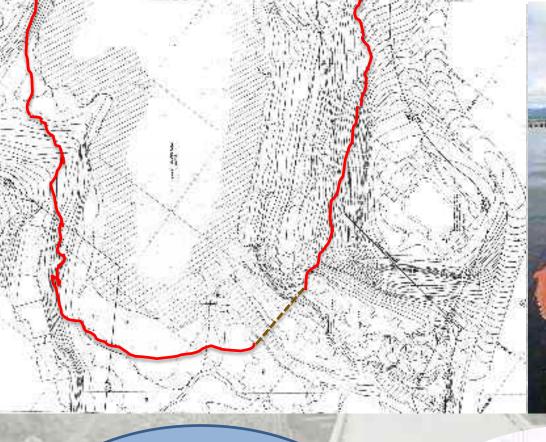
- 1. This area must be dredged to remove silt and debris.
- 2. It is a critical point of access for safe travel towards Como Avenue or as a trail connector to the west side. A boardwalk must be built here.

Noted repeatedly by PACS Director Mike Ficke, Councilman Carter Burdette, and FWNC, Suzanne Tuttle, this area is a viable wildlife habitat where the traveler becomes a spectator of both **COMMEMORATION** and nature.



Here and proximal to the Como Avenue outflow is the opportunity for an artist or architect to design a **boardwalk** made of recycled material or decomposed granite that will connect the trail and direct the traveler to picnic nodes, recreational areas and feeder trails.







Maya Lin, Fish Cleaning Table, engraved words on native besalt, 2012

Environmental Artist and Author, Herman Prigann, Water Levels, Mari Germany, 2000





Ideally the **boardwalk** artist must provide the opportunity for personal reflection. One should be able to interact as well as commemorate.

Architect and Artist, Maya Lin, Confluence Project:
Bird Blind at The Sandy River Delta, 2008
A commemoration of the cultural and ecological change resulting from the journey of Lewis and Clark



## Posted July 8, 2014

Interior secretary announces \$43 million to states for parks, outdoor recreation

Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell and Mayor Betsy Price visit with children for Camp Fort Worth at Gateway Park. This government entity is the source for the Land and Water conservation Fund, LWCF grant awards programs which has helped fund over 40,000 local conservation and outdoor recreation projects by reinvesting a small portion of revenue from offshore oil and gas development in waters owned by the American people. These activities range from trails, conservation, rehabilitation, free outdoor gyms, development and recovery, innovation, planning and acquisitions.

http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/funding.html
http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/grants/trpa/#outdoor



# Restore Confidence in Safety

# A "SAFE" urban park is defined as follows:

A dynamic place where the design, maintenance and policing of the park work together so that the general public perceives the park as a **SAFE** place, wants to go to the park regularly, and spends their optional time in the park engaged in valued activities. Crime and disorder is limited, and diverse usage of the park by different groups is tolerated. Legal activities are the dominant activities in the park. because the local community values the park, it has a sense of "ownership" of it, and there are sufficient numbers of users who act as "natural quardians" to ensure official informal social control. They also support formal interventions by park management and police when such interventions are necessary."

http://www.popcenter.org/Responces/pdfs/urban\_parks/.pdf

### FIVE WAYS:

- 1. People
- 2. Visibility
- 3. Light
- 4. Quick Response
- Diverse and Compatible Park Activities

# "Eyes in the park, bodies in the park reduce crime"

Tupac Shakur Foundation Peace Garden trail, Atlanta, GA

Lake Como Park, Fort Worth, TX

We strongly recommend carving feeder trails into the park's overgrown buffer zones to provide IMPROVED and much needed VISBILITY.

Tonda Rice, Landscape Architect
City of Fort Worth

Having **PEOPLE** in the park who live within a 10 minute walk around the entire park parameter; females, children and the elderly on a routine basis, is crucial. It creates critical

mass.



City Hall Plaza and Park, Keller, TX



# Aesthetic elements such as Park Banners, Maps, Markers, and Trail Lighting are also excellent

**Safety Devices**. These elements provide the park visitor with a park location and give the location an identity as some place unique and special.

Lighting around the lake could be considered an artistic moment for commemoration, although we suggest not going overboard. A few will suffice. Simplicity sometimes has its virtues and green technology has come quite a distance in that regard. A trail marker can be the actual light that shines by solar energy with color and Wi-Fi and by censored movement. Words carved into a simple stencil can offer interesting shadow play and also direct the visitor's footsteps day or night. These could be special artist designed lighting markers for **COMMEMORATION**.

A banner system could take place over the bridge or on the other light poles around the trail or in the locations of the picnic nodes. This system could add an attractive element and may be a way for yearly commemorations to be acknowledged as the banners could be reprinted and easily changed out year to year. Banners have always been a favorite interactive public art project in which the entire community can take part.



Comanche Lookout Park Trail Markers, George Schroeder



Light Channels
Bill FitzGibbons



Glorieta
Anne Wallace

The entire Como park is an important cultural site therefore all areas must be utilized and enjoyed. How many

## **QUICK RESPONSE**

provisions are necessary for any park? What do these phones say about the park? They say it cares about safety.



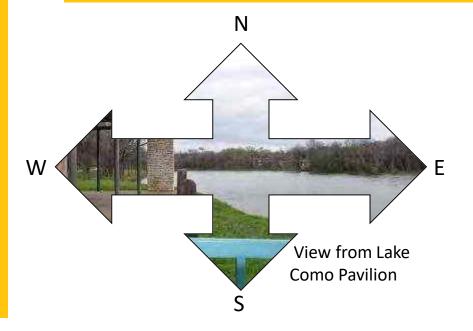


"The Towers,
manufactured by Chicago-based
Talk-a-phone, are designed to quickly
connect distressed users, with the
touch of a button, to municipal police
while automatically transmitting
their location to the dispatcher. At
the same time, a constantly lit blue
light/strobe mounted on top of the 9
½ ft. tall tower immediately starts
flashing, alerting anyone in the
surrounding area of trouble."



"Rath Security **EMERGENCY** Phones for Trails and Parks and open spaces create a positive impact on the quality of life in a community."

http://www.rathsecurity.com/coel1.html



ASSISTANCE



Many State parks in Texas are in the process of having **WIRELESS INTERNET ACCESS** added. Why not Como Park?

# EXPAND PARK DIVERSITY

◆ GARDEN THEATER

OUTDOOR FACILITY:

AMPHITHEATER,

CEREMONIAL SPACE,

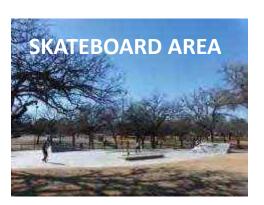
MEMORY GARDEN,

OUTDOOR CLASSROOM, AND

OUT DOOR GAME ROOM









Install new east side multi-person FISHING DOCK and or REVETMENT VIEWING PLATFORM for the disabled.

Free Membership outdoor FITNESS ZONES

#### **BICYCLE RACKS,**

Artist, Bryan Tedrick, Sonoma, CA



Create new **RAIN GARDENS** that line the **circularTRAIL** will capture runoff rain water, beautify the park, **EDUCATE**,

**COMMEMORATE** and engage the Como

Garden clubs in the communities



Elk Grove Rain Garden, Elk Grove, CA

We recommend carving a Naturalized Equestrian TRAIL into the Como Park green space south of the Weir, adjacent to the two streams and the new hiking trail. We believe all these can extend through Collette park and the entire parameter to be enjoyed by all surrounding communities of both parks.

This is also a **BIRD SANCTUARY** therefore the new **BIKING TRAIL** may extend outside the park parameter.



Ideally the artist will design engaging trail markers that provide Location and **COMMEMORATION**.

# New Garden Theater Outdoor Facility



"Remembering the past with dignity and embracing the future with pride"

The Sankofa symbol embodies this motto of the and the essence of **COMMEMORATION**. Look back and get it.

The Garden Theater Outdoor
Facility is a work in progress. Four
concerns are addressed in the
illustrative of the Amphitheater and
Plaza design.

1. The close proximity of the water will always concern parents

2.



Addressing the unsightly trash on the water's edge and beneath the fishing dock will be a major step towards the community's objective to **COMMEMORATE**.

We recommend PACS and Stormwater Utilities strongly consider placing an extraction unit beneath the fishing dock as suggested by Jim Sipes, Consultant on the Lake Como Master Plan and author of Sustainable Solutions for Water Resources.



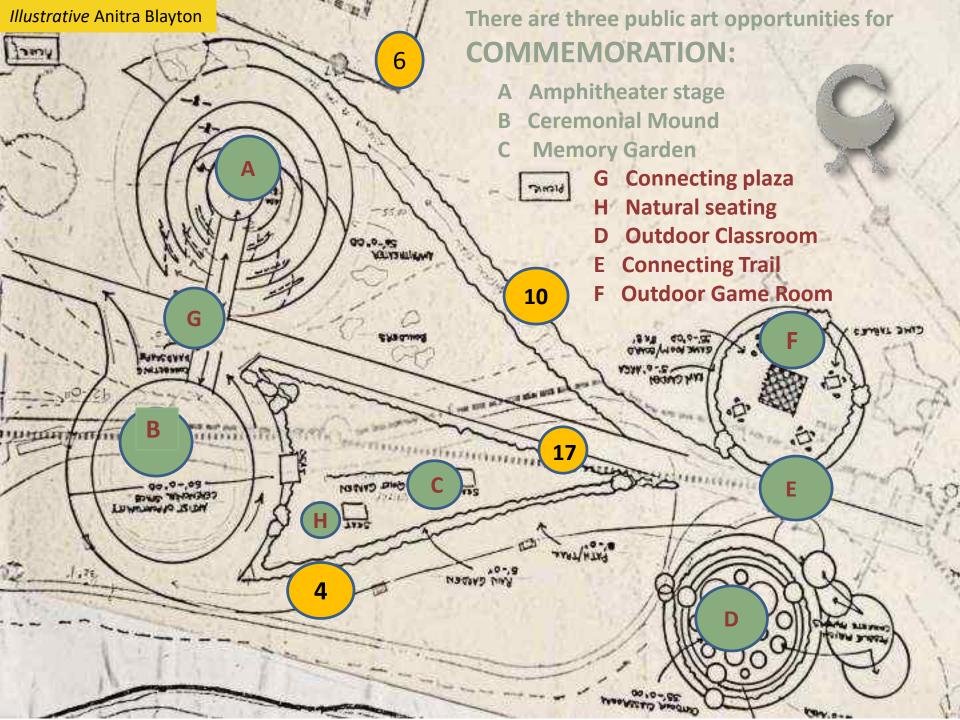
**5.** The existing culverts hinder walking, running and basic flow

4.

The lack of shade during summer months is defeating the purpose of an outdoor communal space. It limits programs and events.



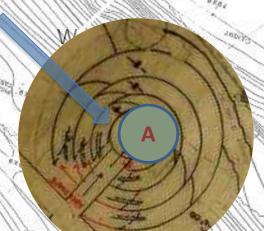
Como's B-Sharp Orchestra



W

An amphitheater having a generous 20' diameter stage delineated by light for safety. While the entire plaza is patterned as the Sankofa Symbol, we recommend an artist be commissioned to create a design for center stage.





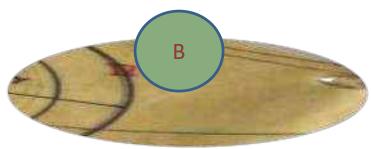
The stage is surrounded by four well-lit circular rows of fabricated material called Redi-rock, a fairly low cost durable material that span a total of 55'.0" linear feet.

Nestled into the landscape, the 55' diameter space pays tribute to Como's mid-century modern pavilion and accommodates approximately 275 adults.

A "Ceremonial Grassy Mound", an Artist Opportunity, is a high place and large in diameter. It is connected by wide path and plaza. The path and plaza will be paved as it is part of the parks circular trail and the plaza can be composed of pervious pavers consistent with the amphitheater. A commissioned artist(s) will be asked to consider the space as a platform for COMMEMORATION, site specificity, ceremony, text and or light.







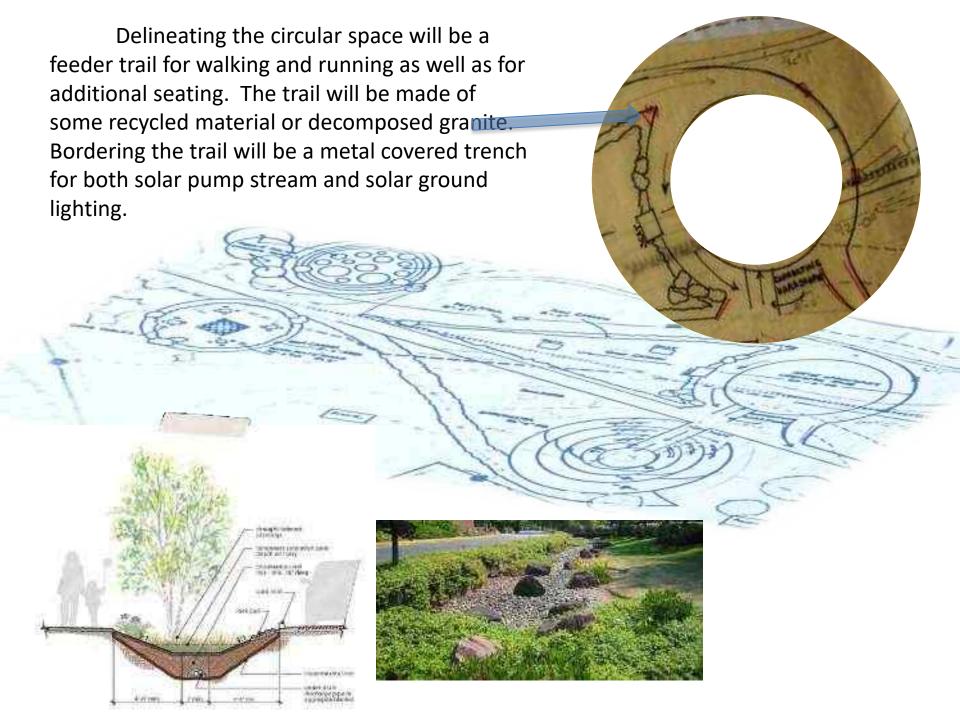
Nelson Mandela Monument, Marco Cianfanelli

Carving Out Time, Maya, Lin

The artist who is recommended for the ceremonial space must take into consideration the range of sight. A ceremonial mound is meant to be a high place. The chosen location is between the amphitheater and the lake. The audience in the stage area should still be able to enjoy the full landscape of the park's water and the performers should be inspired by it. Because the west side plaza is located in full view of the east side, no activity should interfere with either view. Spectators on the east side will also be able to not only hear the performances in the amphitheater but they should also view the performance as they picnic or just perch along the circular trail.



View from the plaza site on Como park's west side looking east





#### Court of NC Outdoor Classroom

# Bring the park back to life through art, education and family activities:

Rejuvenation and bringing the park back to life are our key goals.

Emphasizing the use of the park by teaming up with the surrounding communities and the community at large is paramount to success of this plan.

Central to this rejuvenation is the family and youth activities. We must create a magnet—a place all generations will be drawn to---- a new, culturally diverse, purposeful destination.

- Bringing families to the park will bring back its spirit. It will bring back its life!
- It will help create future ownership/sustainability.

#### Ideas for A Memory Garden:

- Garden seating using context and text
- A meditation labyrinth



Reclamation Garden,
Winifred Lutz, Artist
Legacy Trail Public Art Master Plan
By Stacy Levy



# Restore and Improve Existing Shelter and The Fishing Dock Build New Facilities

The early history of the park's success was centered around an extraordinary, jaw-dropping structure----The Lake Como Pavilion. Later the park's success was centered around parties and dancing at the pavilion rebuilt in the 50's. The design team recognizes at the onset of this plan that this onestructure park must change. it is critical to the revival of Lake Como Park, the plan de-emphasize only one feature of the park as "the main" component and instead emphasize a high functioning park whereby multiple features can be enjoyed by each and every park visitor.





That said, the structure now known as Lake Como Shelter represents nostalgia and yes even a place that generates stronger feelings than the pavilion built long ago. As a meeting place for teens and adults alike, weekly jazz concerts and dances, the shelter will never be what it once was but with smart and aesthetic renovations that take it's historical imprint into consideration and with creative programming, it will become a place of reflection and community.

Once renovated, the Lake Como shelter will define itself however we are asking Parks and Community Services to first make the following structural improvements:



First Option - To improve visibility, we recommend removing two-thirds of 3 walls in order to improve visibility and to allow more natural light inside the shelter. The remaining 1/3 wall will become a useful countertop. During an event the visitor can communicate more easily with the vendor(s) using the space.



1. Second option - Enclose the entire structure to create a museum or visitor's center for permanent or temporary exhibitions featuring Pioneers, Legends or Heroes. This could be a lecture hall for a "Storytelling" series, a revered art form in the African American Community. Perhaps plant a rooftop garden to help insulate the structure.

7 To better showcase the shelter and connect it to the fishing dock, we recommend

 extending the walkway all around the shelter connecting the fishing pier side of the shelter and adding a new fishing pier from the fishing dock to the water's edge for better circular flow.

Consider a new custom rail to help unify the total aesthetic. This may be an
opportunity for COMMEMORATION. A marker should be added to the railing of
the fishing dock as it is a great lookout point and one of the most beloved places of
the park.

If a permanent roof for the dock is considered, it should for certain pay tribute to the mid-century modern shelter.

3

Completely remove the bathroom facilities and relocate its position



Older park restrooms everywhere have similar issues such as illegal activities all hours of the night, urine odor, and basic poor configuration. Ideally facilities should be well lit and positioned so that one is able to see and be seen from any view of the facility. It should be within ear range of other park activities and it should be maintained regularly.



Ideally the Lake Como shelter and facilities should still connect architecturally even though they are separate structures. OPTION: The Portland Loo is a free to the Public and accessible around the Clock every day of the year. Portland Loos give the community clean, safe environmentally-friendly restroom facilities.

The loo offers personal privacy and public access. Top horizontal louvers and bottom angled louvers create a well-ventilated interior with Complete visual privacy.

All artists live for the opportunity to create focal points the "visual weight"-----something that will prompt conversation, and most importantly something extraordinarily memorable. There are three potential places which could be extraordinary for public art **COMMEMORATION**:

1.



2.



We will recommend artist(s) who are forward thinking with knowledge of social interaction, experience in museum collections, temporary displays, educational spaces and lighting in interior and exterior spaces. This project may include:

- an interior feature wall
- an exterior feature wall
- Creative interior and exterior solar illumination also used for nighttime safety.
- The drinking fountain either in terms of existing plumbing or actual purpose.





The success of these projects will depend on the artist's energetic pursuit of Como's authentic cultural heritage, past, current and evolving with the objective of creating a compelling, interactive, innovative space. We are looking for artist(s) who have knowledge and experience with:

Kinetic works Living Walls

QR Designs Light streaming

Capability Projections

Creative solar Sound

Lighting



*Windswept,* A wind-driven kinetic façade by Charles Sowers

# You are here



Dan Karran geo and web developer creates maps using a google app



Language of the Birds, Solar illumination by Brian Goggin with Dorka Keehn, 2009

The wall behind the Lake Como Shelter is a focal point that welcomes the visitor traveling southbound on the circular trail. For an ideal focal aesthetic, we will consider that an eco-artist construct a "structural" biowall. Because of its open northern exposure and proximity to the lake, an ecowall may perform well for several years and make for perfect conversation about innovative stormwater control. It may also be determined that this project qualifies for a grant based on the Innovative Storm Water **Infrastructure Act of 2013**. This act requires the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to provide competitive grants to eligible higher education institutions and research institutions to establish and maintain between three and five centers of excellence for innovative stormwater control infrastructure. Defines "innovative stormwater control infrastructure" to mean any stormwater management technique that: (1) uses natural systems or engineered systems that mimic natural processes to infiltrate, evapotranspire, or capture stormwater; and (2) preserves, enhances, or mimics natural hydrology to protect or restore water quality.

https://beta.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/house-bill/3449



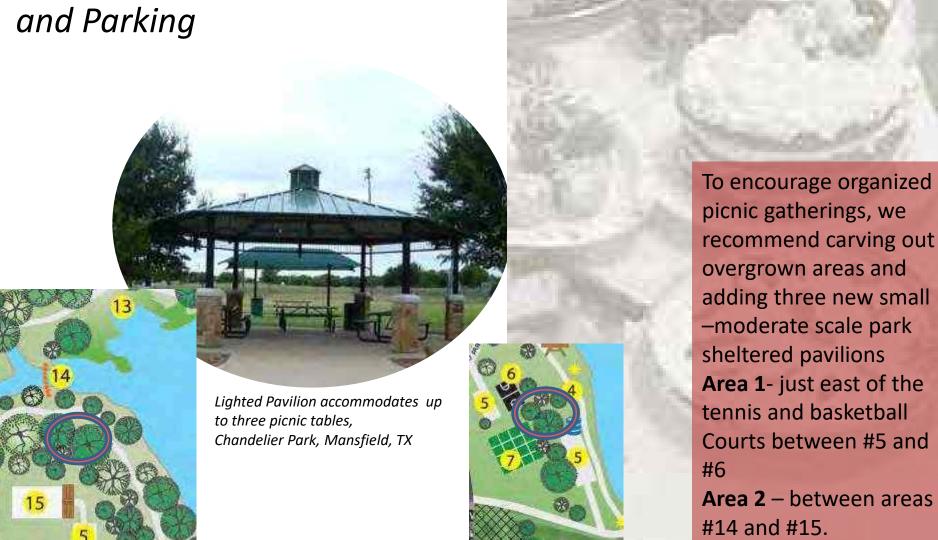




Stuckeman School College of Art and Architecture, Penn State University, PA

# **Amenities**

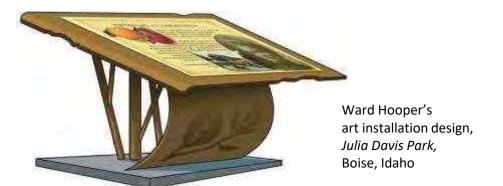
Add Three Small Pavilions
Enhance Picnic Nodes with Feeder Trails
and Parking





These small spaces can be subtle with perhaps rooftops that resemble those of the neighborhood.

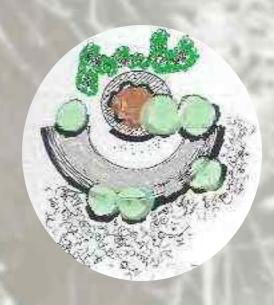
Text can be integrated into the smaller pavilions either as a dedication commemoration or an educational fun fact about the wildlife.



Area 3 – If or when purchased, the area north in green space.







We are recommending that updating picnic areas and nearby parking be a project for Parks and Community Services.

Our vision is to privatize existing picnic areas. They are already located in open spaces with full view of the lake. Also they are proximal to parking. Therefore we recommend making them into more personal nodes. The ground surrounding the concrete pads can be slightly modified so picnic elements appear nestled into a private garden landscape giving the picnickers a feeling of being safe and cradled by Como's memories.

A way to designate trails is to use Decomposed Granite also known as GD. it is granitic rock that has weathered to the point

that it readily fractures into smaller pieces or chunks of weak rock. It varies in color and transitions well into adjacent landscapes and sidewalks. In the case of a high functioning park GD is both compact and stable and ideal as a pathway for runners and walkers.



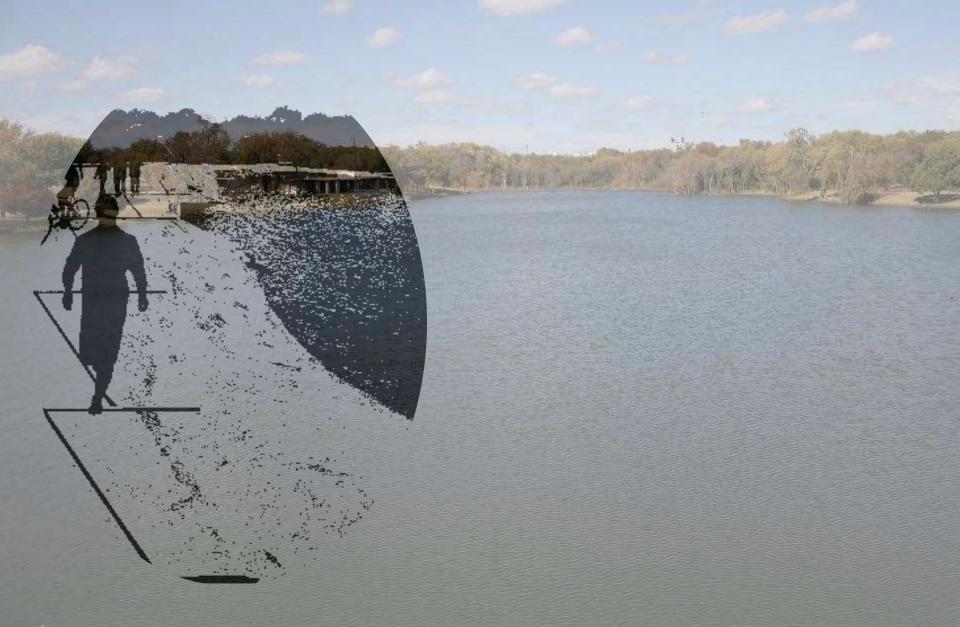




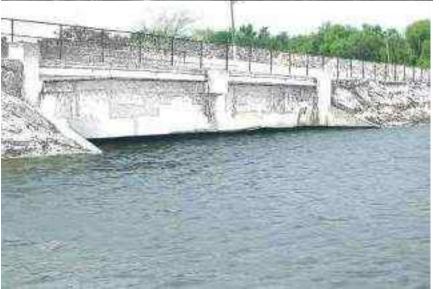


Structurally cycling trails using permeable pavers are a sustainable amenity that require very little maintenance and programing. It will program itself.

# The Pedestrian Bridge/Weir Project



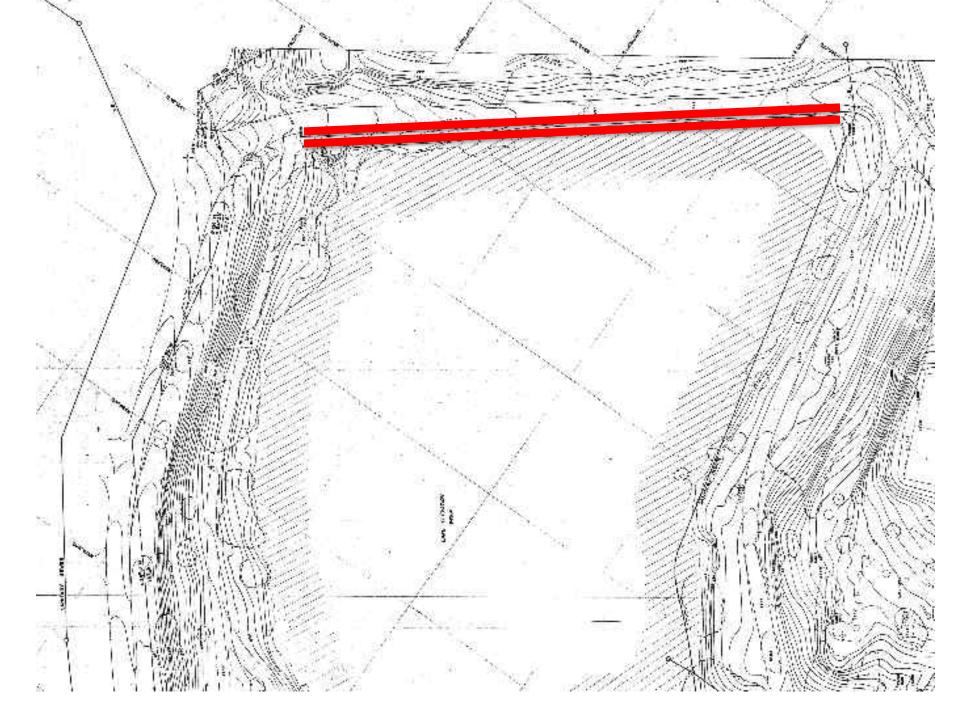




The roadway over the dam on Merrick Street is problematic but is a highly significant portion of the trail.

The current sidewalks are too narrow and traffic is too fast for nearby foot traffic. This whole bridge/road area needs to be considered in a variety of ways. The sidewalks need to be widened three feet. There may even be a possibility with innovative and creative solutions to move foot traffic onto the lake with some form of floating unit or some form of cantilever.

At this specific place, we recommend creating a time line chronicling the park's history and creation. It is a major artistic moment both in design and educational components.



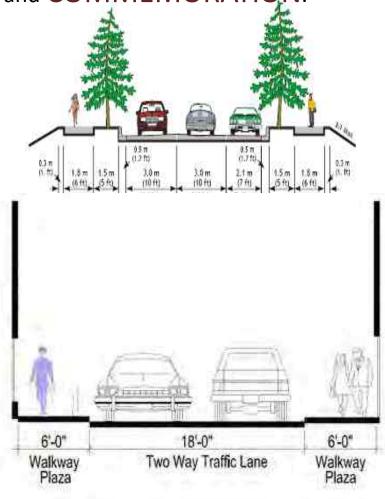
#### Options:

Deciduous shade trees, separate traffic spaced 40ft, seating areas, pavement design, lighting, and many other factors should be considered in locations where pedestrian travel is accommodated and encouraged.

Federal Highway Administration University
Course on Bicycle and Pedestrian
Transportation: Lesson 9, July 2006



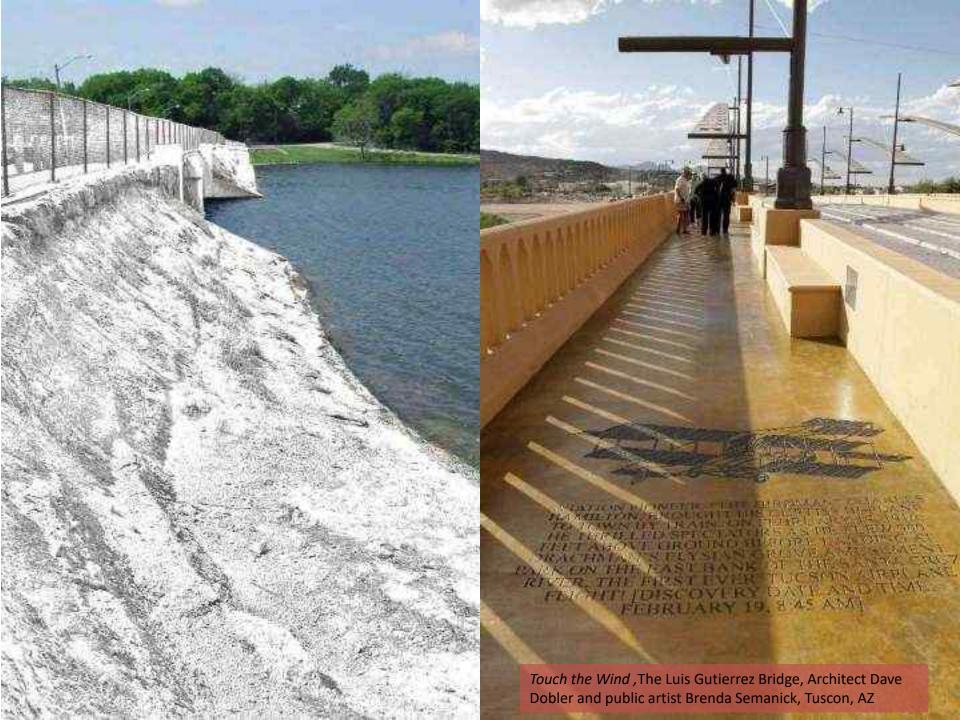
This is a high dollar item that will help anchor the trail, park, community and act as a key to information, history and COMMEMORATION.



We are asking everyone to consider the importance of this project. It is a key element that generously gives the visitor a view of the entire lake and is sure to be a stopping place as out-of-towners tour Fort Worth's historical sites. The concern about developing a segregated but shared space is clear: How do we slow down vehicular traffic significantly on a very busy street----one that has come to be a convenient and confortable thruway that flows both eastward and westward? At the very least, a road hump or speed table? Additionally If we invite the pedestrian to slow down and look at the public art and incredible view, we must consider options that will make for a safe and enjoyable experience.

It will be up the artist to not only design the **COMMEMORATION** for this project but he or she must also have considerable history in pedestrian bridge design and budget. This artist will collaborate with Community leaders, Parks and Community Services and the City Utilities to design the best solution for all.

The whole area needs to be treated as one whole both consistent with the trail itself yet unique as a special information and identity nod. Resurfacing the whole area, much like a pedestrian mall with brick or pavers to indicate foot traffic, not road traffic is an essential demarcation..







High Trestle Trail Bridge, RDG Landscape Architect, Urban Design, Lighting Design, Engineering and Multi-media



The community has already expressed that materials other than chain link will be considered in the design of the pedestrian bridge. Chain link is less valued, can be easily vandalized and subsequently unsafe.

## Considering Access To and From the Park with Possible Park Additions:

- On the east side of the park at the west end of Curzon Avenue there exist three small apartment houses.
- Purchasing these lots is almost essential to the completion of the trail around the lake.
- This is also a very important access point into the park.
- Our recommendation is to create a rental unit for a small business offering coffee and sandwiches by the lake with possible canoe rental.
- This could also be a location where an observation/fishing pier on the east side could happen.
- The other apartments could house Como "Park-keepers". People, in exchange for rent who would be willing to help the parks department look after the park, They would be knowledgeable about the park's history and should be excellent story tellers willing to engage people along the trail.





These recommended purchases and park extensions are meant to address the access problem from all points of the park. The less people need to travel whether it is to stroll, ride bike, jog etc. the more family enjoyment of the park will occur. The more people that come to the park the more we create ownership from all communities surrounding the park. Creating better access all around the park is important for not only making it a safer place to be but it will help make it feel safe. We need to get people into the park and the less resistance for local residents.

With these additional purchases PACS should create a series of feeder trails extended out into the community and back to the park tying into the main trail.

Each one of these feeder trails could be named for someone the community wants to commemorate. This is a nice way to speak of the pathfinders of the community leading to the main trail which will also be named. The metaphor is wonderful!



Quanah Parker Park trail, Fort Worth



WNC

- 1) Buy one or two lots on the north side from the lake that extends to Hervie Street. Here would be an excellent place to add additional access. Clearing some of the thick brush with a sensitivity toward wildlife habitat and developing a walkway that connects with the main park trail from Hervie Street would help make this area more accessible and safer. Two lots would allow for a small parking area.
- 2) Buy the now empty lot south of Locke Avenue and directly east of Hervie Street. This lot at the time of this publication was for sale. This lot adds the possibility for picnic areas and or the possibility of family play areas like a playground. There is nothing of the sort close by. Extending the park here gives broader community ownership of the park. A feeder trail from this location leading to the main trail is recommended and parkin could also be considered here as well.



3) Purchase several lots east of Lake Como Drive in the vicinity of Cuzon Avenue, Donelly Avenue and Bourine Street. Many of these lots are now empty, overgrown and full of trash. Some of these lots also remain in a flood prone area. Purchasing these lots, cleaning them up, adding picnic nodes and a feeder trail would again go a long way to adding to Lake Como Park and add an aesthetic dimension to the community.



4) With consideration of the need to have housing and fill in construction there may be some community interest in developing and extending the park at the west end of Wellsley, Fletcher and Bonnell Streets. By purchasing one or two lots at this location it makes the park more a part of the southern end of the community. Play grounds and picnic areas would work well in this location. The winter provides wonderful views from here.

If nothing else, at the least access points leading into the southern trail should be considered. A feeder trail along the park's edge leading to the main circular trail is highly recommended.

- 5) Currently there is a large field on eastside just past the park south of Diaz Avenue and west of Penticost Street. This is perhaps one of the only possible place for ball fields without disturbing the eco systems in the southern park area. Currently, this empty land is for sale. It is about seven acres. It would make an excellent site for soccer and baseball fields.
- 6) PRIORITY PURCHASE: On the east side of the park at the west end of Curzon Avenue there exist three small apartment houses

Purchasing these lots is almost essential to the completion of the trail around the lake. This is also a very important access point into the park. Our recommendation is to create a rental unit for a small business offering coffee an sandwiches by the lake with possible canoe rental. This could also be a location where an observation/fishing pier on the east side could happen. The other apartments could house Como "Park-keepers". People, in exchange for rent wh would be willing to help the parks department look after the park, They would knowledgeable about the park's history and should be excellent story tellers wil to engage people along the trail.

# Ecosystem information and the Educational Component





- Adding an artist designed educational component about the ecosystem of the lake and park wildlife in the upper park should become an added component of the trail itself.
- We suggest this take place on the northern end of the park. Much of the diverse ecology is imbedded in the complex eco system created by the fallen trees and grasses growing here.
- A creative approach that engages children and adults is needed. Careful consideration of sustainability needs to be addressed here as well.
- Dedicated educational components should become part of the southern park, below the damn.
- This could be one and the same commission with similar forms of markers or two separate artist given the different time for completion.

 Participating in a "Conservation Connect" Youth Outdoor Skills Program to better utilize the Lake Como Park Outdoor Classroom. The purpose is to enhance education and outreach in order to engage the public as partners in conservation Fish and Game Wildlife

http://nctc.fws.gov/courses/programs/youth-outdoor-skills/

- The AT&T grant, "AT&T Aspire" can produce Lake Como Park Internships through
  Fort Worth ISD in partnership with Parks and Community Services
   https://giving.att.com/loi\_guidelines.aspx?tid=1
- Utilizing the proximity of historical Como Churches,
   Sacred Places may consider funding an artistic,
   commemorative, ceremonial space in The Lake Como Garden Theater Outdoor Facility.

http://www.sacredplaces.org/#sthash.RdN36aG2.dpbs

Garden of Reflection and Remembrance is a granite labyrinth, Two sustainable fountains, and green spaces outside Memorial Chapel, University of Maryland, VA



### Anitra Blayton

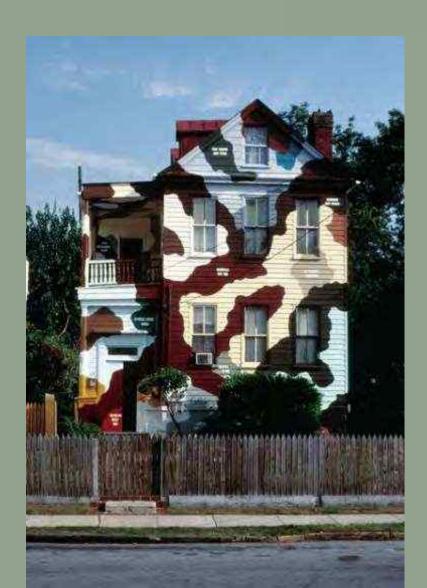




Anitra Blayton is associate professor of art at Tarrant County College, Northeast Campus. Blayton has served on the Alameda County Art Commission, Oakland, CA and, more recently, the Fort Worth Art Commission. Her installations are site-based and participatory in nature. Anitra Blayton has completed several public art projects in the DFW area, including Standing Ovation at DFW International Airport, Terminal D.

### Mel Ziegler





Mel Ziegler is chairman of the studio art department at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN. Ziegler served on the University of Texas-Austin faculty 1997 – 2007 and was a member of the City of Austin Arts Commission from 2000 to 2006. Ziegler is well-known for his community-based public art projects he did in collaboration with the late Kate Ericson, which are chronicled in a new book entitled America Starts Here.