

AN UPDATE TO THE FINAL REPORT FORD PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN An Amendment to the Ford Park Master Plan



April 14, 1997
Updated April, 2012

**AN UPDATE TO THE
FINAL REPORT
FORD PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN**
An Amendment to the Ford Park Master Plan

Prepare for:
Town of Vail
Public Works Department
Community Development Department
Administration Department

Prepared by:

Braun Associates, Inc.

AECOM

Zehren Associates, Inc.

Updated
April, 2012

Introduction

The Ford Park Management Plan herein presented is to serve as an amendment to the 1985 Master Plan for Gerald R. Ford Park. The Ford Park Management Plan contains eight sections. Sections 1 - 4 introduce the plan: An executive summary, a history and time line of Ford Park, a description of the management plan process, and a statement of purpose of the management plan. Section 5 is the heart of the management plan: a set of six management goals with accompanying objectives, action steps, and policy statements to provide a framework for future management decisions. Section 6 contains illustrative, conceptual plans and written descriptions which support the various action steps. A 5-Year Capital Improvements Program for Ford Park is presented in Section 7.

In 2012 the Ford Park Management Plan was updated to reflect new ideas for improvements planned for the Park. Plans to make improvements to the Park were initiated when Vail voters approved funding by re-allocating a portion of Convention Center Funds to Ford Park. The other stakeholders in the Park are also participating in the funding of these improvements.

The 2012 update continues the overall direction for the Park established by the 1997 Management Plan and in doing so maintains the role the Park has played in the community for the past 30 years. The 2012 update makes no significant changes to the activities that currently take place in the Park. By way of example, all of the major uses in the Park – athletic fields, passive recreation, the Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater, the Alpine Gardens and tennis remain in place. There are no changes to the six major goal statements or to the related objectives, policy statements and action steps outlined in the 1997 Plan.

Refinements to the Plan resulting from the 2012 update are limited to the Illustrative Plan Component of the 1997 Management Plan. The Illustrative Plan Components are conceptual site plan diagrams of improvements suggested for the Park. Many of the park improvements identified by the 2012 Update will implement improvements first identified in the 1997 Plan. These improvements and new improvements not previously contemplated by the 1997 Plan are outlined in Section 6.

Section 1: Executive Summary

The property which is today Gerald R. Ford Park was acquired by the town in 1973 in response to public reaction against a high density residential development proposal. The 39 acre park site represented the last remaining parcel of land central to use by all residents and visitors of the Vail Community. The Vail Plan (1973) described the site as a major community park – cultural center that would satisfy the town’s growing recreational and cultural needs.

Development of the lower portion of the park was directed by the Gerald R. Ford/Donovan Park Master Plan (1985). Strong public participation led to the establishment of guidelines for the implementation of future improvements. Upper area improvements, softball fields, tennis courts, and parking areas, were constructed without the benefit of preplanning and subsequently created some barriers to the lower bench, natural areas, and Nature Center.

The Vail Village Master Plan (1990) recommended the park be considered as a site for additional skier parking to serve expansion on the eastern side of Vail Mountain. It also recommended the construction of bike/pedestrian ways along the South Frontage Road and Vail Valley Drive.

There are currently four main organizations involved in the operation of Ford Park. The Town of Vail, Vail Recreation District, Alpine Garden Foundation, and the Vail Valley Foundation all play distinct roles and manage separate portions of the park. The Town of Vail is the owner of the park and manages the community park, stream tract, and parking lot areas. The other three organizations each hold a lease or license agreement to operate their respective facilities and programs within the park.

A proposal by the Alpine Garden Foundation to construct an educational center within the garden area was a significant impetus to the creation of this document. However, several other formal and informal development expansion proposals and numerous unresolved park management issues also existed. The Ford Park Management Plan was created as a means to evaluate development proposals in order to protect and enhance the character of the park.

The 1997 Plan was a direct product of strong public participation in focus groups and public input sessions. One clear, concise message was conveyed to the town staff from the public participants: Our role is steward to the park; don’t screw it up by over development. To that end, this Plan, serving as an amendment to the 1985 Ford Park Master Plan, was intended to guide the outcome of future development and improvement proposals through the implementation of six major goals:

1. Preservation and protection
2. Reduction of vehicular intrusions

3. Reduction of conflicts between venues
4. Resolution of parking and Frontage Road access problems
5. Improvement of pedestrian circulation
6. Delineation of financial responsibilities

Designed to be a framework for future management decisions, a series of objectives, action steps and policy statements facilitate the implementation of each goal statement.

The most recent motivation for initiating improvements to Ford Park evolved from discussions of how to utilize the Town's Conference Center funding. In the Fall of 2011 Vail voters approved the re-allocation of the \$9-plus million Conference Center Funds by an 87 percent margin. As endorsed by the voters, a portion of these funds was to provide funding for improvements to Ford Park, specifically improvements to the Ford Amphitheater, the Alpine Gardens, park-wide pedestrian flow, as well as expansion of the athletic fields and restroom improvements at the Ford Park athletic complex.

As a part of the 2012 Update process the 1997 Management Plan was one of the considerations used to define improvements both necessary and appropriate for the Park. Improvements contemplated for the Park are consistent with the goals, objectives, policies and action steps of the 1997 Plan. However, some improvements were new ideas and necessitated some clarification to the Illustrative Site Plan concepts depicted in the 1997 Plan. In response to this the 2012 Update to the Ford Park Management Plan was prepared.

Ford Park Stakeholders

The Town of Vail is the land owner of Ford Park and plays an active role in the management and operation of the Park. The Town also has lease or other agreements with three other entities that manage and maintain facilities in the Park:

- The Vail Recreation District,
- The Betty Ford Alpine Gardens, and
- The Vail Valley Foundation.

Collectively the Town and the Ford Park stakeholders have been working collaboratively on the preparation of improvement plans for the Park and to varying degrees each of the stakeholders are collaborating with the Town by participating in the funding of their respective improvements

Section 2: Background of Ford Park

History

Gerald R. Ford Park has been the subject of numerous legislative and community planning actions over the last 24 years. The time line at the end of this section illustrates the relationship between the actions discussed in this section.

The Ford Park site was acquired by the Town of Vail in April of 1973 for the stated purpose of improving the quality of life in the community. This 39 acre park site represented the last remaining parcel of land central to use by all residents and visitors of the Vail community. The existing conditions plan, which follows this section, illustrates Ford Park in its current condition.

Ordinance No. 6, Series of 1973, signed April 3, 1973, (a copy of which is included in the Appendix), authorized the purchase (by condemnation) of the property known as the Antholz Ranch. The ordinance listed a variety of possible uses for the property including the following:

- for park and greenbelt purposes,
- to preserve the natural and physical character of the area to be condemned,
- for bicycle, equestrian and hiking trails,
- for children's playground,
- for performing arts and civic center,
- for a ski lift and related facilities,
- for picnic areas,
- for recreational facilities such as tennis courts, swimming pools, gymnasium, ice skating rink,
- for theater and assembly halls, convention center, public schools,
- for possible exchange or trade of condemned land, or a portion thereof, with other property which may exactly meet the needs of the town, and
- to construct and maintain water works, transportation systems, and other public utilities relating to public health, safety, and welfare.

In August of 1973, the Vail Plan was completed. This plan was designed to control the growth and development of the community and contained a chapter on the town recreation system. The Antholz Ranch property was mentioned as the only site satisfying the recreation use anticipated. In the Vail Plan the uses intended for the property were further defined. The uses listed include a place for showing and creating art, crafts, etc.; an indoor theater as well as an 800 seat outdoor amphitheater; meeting rooms and community workshops; wide outdoor terraces and natural landscapes; indoor ice arena, tennis and handball courts; children's play facilities and space for family activities; headquarters for the Annual Vail Symposium and local television; and a possible location for an ecologium (nature center). The property was described as a major community

park-cultural center. The plan called for 200 surface parking spaces and direct service from the town bus system. Major parking needs were to be accommodated in the Vail Transportation Center with various trails and bikeways connecting to the park.

In January of 1977, Resolution No. 1, Series of 1977, was passed naming the property commonly known as the Antholz Ranch as Gerald R. Ford Park in appreciation of President Ford's contributions to the community. Resolution No. 1, Series of 1977 is included in the Appendix.

In August of 1985 the Gerald R. Ford Park and Donovan Park Master Plan Development Final Report was completed. The Ford Park Master Plan was adopted by Council with Resolution No. 19, Series of 1985, which is included in the Appendix. The purpose of the master plan was to guide the future development of these parks and establish guidelines for the implementation of improvements. The master planning project used a Recreation Needs Analysis Survey and involvement of the public in determining the recreation priorities of the community and the design concepts and criteria for the two park sites. The Ford Park master plan proposed a swimming pool complex, neighborhood park improvements, a skating rink on the lower bench, and the realignment of the eastern softball field. The neighborhood park open space area, playground, and access road were the only portions of the master plan actually constructed.

The first major structure to be constructed in the park, the Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater, was completed in July of 1987. The Parking and Transit Study completed in April of 1979 for the Amphitheater made five recommendations: The Village Structure should be considered the major parking facility for Ford Park, with improvements to the signs, sidewalks, and bus service being necessary; extend shuttle bus service to the soccer field; disallow Frontage Road parking; construct a vehicle turn-around and passenger unloading area at Ford Park; and do not schedule concurrent events.

Resolution No. 27, Series of 1987, was passed on November 3, 1987. Resolution 27 designated the seven acres around the Nature Center as an area to be preserved as an example of the Gore Valley's natural history. Vehicular traffic was restricted and certain policies and procedures for preservation and maintenance of the grounds and facilities were established with the resolution. A copy of resolution No. 27, Series of 1987, is included in the Appendix.

Development of the community park portion on the lower bench of Ford Park included the restroom, playground area, open turf area and picnic facilities, and the west access road. These improvements were completed in November of 1988.

In December of 1988, the Vail Metropolitan Recreation District (Now the Vail Recreation District) and the Town of Vail, requested an amendment to the 1985

Ford Park Master Plan. The two phase amendment was adopted by Council as Resolution No. 44, Series of 1988. Phase one of the amendment was to utilize the on-site tennis courts and allow the construction of four additional courts. Phase two of the amendment changed the proposed location of the Aquatic Facility to the eastern softball field. Funding of the Aquatic Facility was rejected by voters in a special election on February 6, 1989. Vail Town Council was presented with a petition to delete all reference to an aquatics center from the Ford Park Master Plan in April of 1990. No record of Council action on the petition was found. While the tennis center building is not mentioned in the Master plan amendment, the VRD did receive a Conditional Use Permit for the project on May 8, 1990.

In 2008 a new lease between the Town of Vail and the Vail Recreation District was created and included all Town owned facilities managed by the Vail Recreation District. The lease requires a 20 year Capital Maintenance Plan, reviewed annually, to detail the financial responsibilities of each party.

The Vail Village Master Plan, adopted January 16, 1990, addresses Ford Park as a specific study area. This study acknowledges the use of the park in recent years to accommodate overflow skier and local parking needs. It recommends the park be studied further as a site for additional skier parking to serve expansion of the eastern side of Vail Mountain. Action Step #5 under Goal #5 states “study the feasibility of an underground (recreation fields would remain) parking structure in Ford Park”. The Parking and Circulation Plan, within the Vail Village Master Plan, identifies the western portion of the upper bench for a potential parking beneath park, and calls for separated bike/pedestrian ways along the South Frontage Road and Vail Valley Drive.

The Vail Transportation Master Plan, completed in 1993, states, the existing Ford Park Parking area (east end of park) should be considered for a possible 2-level parking facility with the second level below existing grade. Ford Park and the athletic field parking area are also listed as two possible sites for oversized vehicles if the lot east of the Lionshead Structure becomes developed.

The 2009 Vail Transportation Master Plan Update replaced the 1993 Plan and mentions Ford Park as a possible area for increasing the Town’s parking supply, and that “potentially, 300-600 net new parking spaces could be provided at Ford Park” and suggests a roundabout be constructed east of the Vail Valley Drive intersection with the South Frontage Road to allow east bound traffic to be diverted back to the west. Currently this action occurs at the Ford Park bus stop area.

Current Park Management

There are currently four main organizations operating in Gerald R. Ford Park. The Town of Vail, Vail Recreation District, Alpine Garden Foundation, and the

Vail Valley Foundation all play distinct roles and manage separate portions of the park. The Town of Vail is the owner of the entire Gerald R. Ford Park site and manages the community park, stream tract, and parking lot areas. The other three organizations each hold a lease or license agreement to operate their respective facilities and programs within the park.

The Vail Recreation District Lease of December 21, 1993, describes the premises license as including the upper bench of Ford Park, public tennis courts, athletic fields and Nature Center, although the graphic representation of the premises was not attached to the lease agreement. The VRD offers a variety of sports leagues, camps, and tournaments to area residents and guests. The Vail Nature Center occupies the seven acres between Vail Valley Drive and Gore Creek and offers environmental education and research opportunities to residents and guests.

The Vail Valley Foundation, (VVF), a non-profit, charitable organization, manages and maintains the Ford Amphitheater and immediate grounds. The terms of the agreement between the Town and the VVF, signed December 8, 1987, and renewed in 1999; includes an endowment for ongoing repair and maintenance of the Amphitheater. The amphitheater seats up to 2,500 people and hosts approximately 60 events during the summer. Hot Summer Nights concerts, Bravo! Colorado, and the Bolshoi Ballet are some of the more popular programs held at the amphitheater.

The Vail Alpine Garden Foundation, a Colorado non-profit corporation, manages the Betty Ford Alpine Garden under a Limited License Agreement signed June 8, 1994. The original Alpine Display Garden was constructed in 1987 under a license agreement with the Town at the entrance to the amphitheater. The site for the Alpine Garden was established in the 1985 Ford Park Master Plan to act as a buffer between the amphitheater and active park areas. The second phase of the garden, the Perennial Garden, and third phase, the Meditation Garden, were constructed in 1989 and 1991 respectively. The Alpine Rock Garden was constructed in 1998 and the Children's Garden was constructed in 2002. A proposal by the Alpine Garden Foundation to construct an Educational Center with the final phase of the garden was controversial. Opposition to the expanded use of the garden and the interior of park was a significant impetus to the creation of the 1997 Management Plan. In response to that opposition, the Vail Alpine Garden Foundation modified the proposal to locate the Educational Center near the athletic field parking lot on Vail Valley Drive. This location received conceptual approval by the Council on October 15, 1996, however the project was not implemented.

The lower bench of Ford Park is managed by the Town of Vail Department of Public Works and Transportation and serves as a community park and open space facility with picnic, playground and open play areas. The lower bench is utilized several times a year for special events where large tents are often

erected to accommodate the activities. Access to the park from the Golden Peak ski base is by a public access easement through the Manor Vail property. A copy of the easement is included in the Appendix. The Town operates the upper bench parking lot as a public parking facility during the ski season. Access to the upper bench parking areas is from the State owned South Frontage Road. The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) is the agency responsible for reviewing and approving access permit applications from the State-owned Frontage Road. Currently, no access permit has been issued for the access by the CDOT. CDOT Frontage Road right-of-way covers a substantial portion of the paved parking lot.

Time Line of Ford Park Activities

April 1973	Condemnation of Antholz Ranch. Ordinance 6, 1973
August 1973	Completion of Vail Plan.
January 1977	Antholtz Ranch named Gerald R. Ford Park. Resolution 1, 1977
August 1985	Completion of Ford/Donovan Park Masterplan. Resolution 19, 1985
July 1987	Amphitheater construction complete
August 1987	Alpine Demonstration Garden complete.
November 1987	Preservation of Nature Center. Resolution 27, 1987
December 1987	Vail Valley Foundation lease signed.
November 1988	Lower Bench improvements complete.
December 1988	Masterplan amendment by VRD. Resolution 44, 1988
December 1988	Service agreement with VRD. Resolution 46, 1988
May 1989	Tennis Center receives Conditional Use Permit.
July 1989	Alpine Perennial Garden complete.
January 1990	Completion of Vail Village Masterplan.
February 1990	Aquatic Center rejected by voters in special election.

April 1990	Council petitioned to delete Aquatic Center from Masterplan.
May 1990	Tennis Center construction complete.
June 1991	Alpine Meditation Garden complete.
April 1993	Completion of Vail Transportation Master Plan.
December 1993	Vail Recreation District agreement renewed.
June 1994	Vail Alpine Garden Foundation license agreement signed.
June 1995	Town begins Ford Park Management Plan.
October 1996	Council allows Vail Alpine Garden Foundation to proceed through process with Educational Center at Soccer Field parking lot (not implemented).
April 1997	Ford Park Management Plan adopted.
1999	Lease with Vail Valley Foundation renewed.
2008	Lease with Vail Recreation District renewed.
2009	Vail Transportation Plan Update completed.
November 2011	Voters approve use of Conference Center Funding for Ford Park Improvements

Section 3: Process of Developing the Management Plan

The Ford Park Management Plan process was initiated in June of 1995 in response to several development proposals which had been formally and informally discussed and as a means to solve existing park management issues. The development proposals included an Educational Center for the Betty Ford Alpine Garden, cultural/performing arts center, expansion of the tennis facility, athletic field fencing, and a community parking structure. Park management issues included parking shortage, frontage road access, pedestrian access and circulation, access for the elderly and disabled, utilization of the lower bench, conflicts between uses within the park, conflicts with adjacent property owners, and delineation of financial responsibilities. At the time the project was authorized Council expressed concern that a new master plan for Ford Park would result in an excessive amount of new development. In response, staff noted the intention of the project was to create a management plan as a means to adequately and consistently evaluate development proposals, thus limiting development and protecting the character of the park.

Those organizations with a financial and managerial role along, with two neighborhood representatives, were identified as the Stakeholder Group and were invited to participate in the process. A third party facilitator was retained for the project in August of 1995. Staff members from the Town, Vail Recreation District and Alpine Garden participated in the facilitator selection process. Staff felt that a third-party facilitator would be beneficial to the project by offering a non-biased opinion and increasing Stakeholder participation. The Stakeholder Group was assembled in a series of meetings over the eight month period from August 1995 to April 1996. The meetings drew out issues, ideas, expansion proposals, and began formulating possible solutions.

Alternative design solutions addressing parking options, vehicular access, Frontage Road improvements, additional sports facilities and management policies, were presented to the public in an open house at the Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater on June 12, 1996. Citizens were asked to complete a self-guided presentation and opinion survey form.

The open house presentation was a turning point in the process of developing the Management Plan. Several residents were alarmed by the alternatives included in the presentation and initiated a grass-roots movement to place a referendum on any future expansion/development within the park. This strong public reaction, combined with a lack of closure with the Stakeholders Group, prompted the Town to revise the process to include more public involvement at that time. Previously, public input was being reserved for a time when alternative plans could be presented for comment. Three Focus Group meetings with selected individuals from the community were held on September 18, 1996. Stakeholder groups were invited to submit a list of questions for inclusion in the Focus Group discussions. In round table discussion, individuals were asked to

respond to a list of prepared questions regarding uses and issues associated with Ford Park. The Focus Group questions and responses are included in the Appendix. Additional public input sessions were held on October 2 and 3, 1996, which validated the focus group responses and further refined staff's understanding of the public perception and desires regarding Ford Park.

The combined results of the focus group and public input sessions along with a preliminary master plan framework were presented to the Planning and Environmental Commission on October 14, 1996, and Town Council on October 15, 1996. Both PEC and Council directed staff to proceed with drafting the plan as an amendment to the 1985 Ford Park Master Plan based on the input received and presented.

Plans to make improvements to the Park were initiated in 2011 when Vail voters approved funding by re-allocating a portion of Convention Center Funds to Ford Park. During the election schematic plans were presented that involved improvements to the athletic fields, the amphitheater, the alpine gardens, pedestrian circulation, transit and other areas of the park. Following voter approval of funding the main stakeholders in the Park began to refine improvement plans. Meetings were held with adjacent neighbors, a community open house was held and numerous public meetings were held by the Planning and Environmental Commission and the Town Council.

Section 4: Purpose of the Management Plan

This document is formatted as an amendment to the 1985 Master plan (revised) for Ford Park. While some of the physical aspects of the park have changed since the adoption of the 1985 Master plan, the essential character, concept, and function of the park have remained consistent. The 1985 Master Plan, enhanced by this amendment, remains a valid document to be used in the future planning and decision-making process for Ford Park. As with all master plans, this document will have a definite life for which it remains a useful decision-making tool. The life expectancy of this plan is approximately 10 years but should remain in effect until replaced by an updated master plan document. The Ford Park Management Plan will take precedence over the 1985 Master Plan where conflicts or discrepancies occur.

The intention of the combined documents is to guide the outcome of future development proposals within Ford Park by modifying the permitted uses (1973 acquisition legislation), recommending development guidelines, limiting the number of leaseholders within Ford Park, and designating buffer/protection zones within and adjacent to the park.

The 1985 Master Plan acknowledges some shortcomings in the overall design of the park, particularly the layout of the upper bench area and the internal pedestrian circulation system. This amendment will formulate design alternatives to these specific problem areas to correct the deficiencies that exist. This amendment will also delineate managerial, operational, and financial responsibilities between the Town and the leaseholders.

As outlined above, the 2012 update to the 1997 Management Plan furthers the overall direction for the Park established by the 1997 Plan and in doing so maintains the role the Park has played in the community for the past 30 years. Specifically, the 2012 Update suggests few significant changes to the overall level of development and activities that take place in the Park. In addition, many of the improvements identified in the 2012 Update were originally proposed in the 1997 Plan. Most importantly all improvements proposed in Section 6: Illustrative Plan Components are in keeping with the goals, objectives and policies of the Management Plan.

Section 5: Goals, Objectives, Policies and Action Steps

Goals for Ford Park are summarized in six major goal statements. Each goal statement focuses on a particular aspect of Ford Park brought up during the stakeholder and public input portions of the Management Plan process. As one might anticipate, there is a certain amount of overlap between the goal statements. The issues concerning Ford Park are complicated and convoluted as are the solutions to these issues. It is intended that the goal statements be consistent and complementary to each other and be designed to provide a framework, or direction, for the future management of Ford Park. A series of objectives following each goal statement outline specific steps that can be taken toward achieving each stated goal. Policy statements are intended to guide decision-making in achieving each of the stated objectives in reviewing development proposals and implementing capital improvement projects. Action steps are the final measure in implementing the goal statements.

Illustrative plans following the Goals, Objective, and Action Steps are included to help explain the concepts represented by those statements. The illustrations are conceptual and are not to be considered as final design solutions.

Goal #1: Preserve and protect Ford Park.

Objective 1.1: Limit future development.

Action Step 1.1.1: Draft a new ordinance to exclude those uses listed in Ordinance No.6, Series of 1973, now considered to be inappropriate, and to redefine the allowable uses within Ford Park.

Policy Statement 1: The following uses that are allowed and prohibited for Ford Park shall take precedence over Section 18.36.030 of the Municipal Code concerning the General Use Zone District.

Allowed Uses

Park and greenbelt
Bicycle and hiking trails
Children's playground
Outdoor amphitheater
Botanical gardens
Environmental, educational, and historical centers
Picnic areas
Recreation and athletic facilities
Transportation systems and other public utility easements
Parking
Administrative offices

Prohibited uses

Ski lift and related facilities

Exchange or trade

Civic center, convention/conference center, public schools, gymnasium, and assembly hall

Swimming pools

Equestrian trails

Type III and IV employee housing

Policy Statement 2: New or changed facilities or uses will not be permitted to curtail existing public uses of facilities in the Park unless there is either a compelling public interest or adequate alternative facilities are available to its users. All functions in the park shall be maintained and function at a high quality level.

Action Step 1.1.2: Create and attach plan sheets which outline lease areas, referred to as Exhibit A in the Vail Recreation District lease agreement and Exhibit B in the Vail Valley Foundation lease agreement, but which were never attached.

Policy Statement 3: The existing variety of uses and facilities in the Park will be preserved. The Town will not enter into a lease agreement with any party that does not currently hold such an agreement, hereby maintaining current leaseholder status to: Vail Valley Foundation, Vail Alpine Garden Foundation, and Vail Recreation District, or their successors.

Objective 1.2: Refine criteria for evaluating future development proposals.

Action Step 1.2.1: Update the Design Criteria and Site Guidelines included in the 1985 Ford Park Master Plan by:

- a) Creating additional development guidelines for underground, low visual impact type structures, enhanced landscaping, and full and complete impact mitigation.
- b) Enforcing existing criteria and guidelines to solve and/or avoid problems associated with development projects within Ford Park.

Objective 1.3: Designate Preservation Zones within Ford Park to protect sensitive natural areas and/or buffer zones between venues areas from developmental impacts. Define allowed uses within Preservation Zone areas.

Action Step 1.3.1: Define criteria for designating Preservation Zones and their uses within Ford Park. For example, significant native vegetation, wildlife habitat, and wetlands may be criteria for designating sensitive

natural areas, while grade separations and dense landscape plantings may be criteria for designating sensitive buffer zones.

Action Step 1.3.2: Delineate Preservation Zones within Ford Park.

Policy Statement 4: All proposed development projects shall be reviewed for compliance with Design Criteria and Site Guidelines, as well as other Town regulations, and shall be additionally judged according to the recreational, educational or social benefit they bring to the community.

Policy Statement 5: Functions that do not maintain high standards of quality or that diminish the experience of park users, will not be permitted.

Policy Statement 6: The historic qualities and natural character of the Nature Center are to be maintained.

Objective 1.4: Enhance use and preservation of the Historic School House.

Action Step 1.4.1: Negotiate a contract with the Vail Alpine Garden Foundation to open the School House for public visitation and to perform preservation activities of photographs and artifacts.

Action Step 1.4.2: Make physical improvements to the school house to enhance lighting, public access and viewing areas.

Goal #2: Reduce vehicular intrusions in, and their impact on, the park.

Objective 2.1: Reduce the demand for vehicular intrusions into the park.

Action Step 2.1.1: Provide additional on-site storage facilities within the Amphitheater, Alpine Garden and Recreation District areas to reduce and control the frequency of delivery and service vehicle intrusions into the park.

Action Step 2.1.2: Improve traffic gate operations and restrictions on both the east and west access roads to eliminate unnecessary and unauthorized vehicular intrusions into the park.

Action Step 2.1.3: Construct a central trash collection facility, accessible from the South Frontage Road, to be used by all leaseholders within the park for the disposal of trash, landscape debris, and recyclables.

Policy Statement 7: Vehicular encroachment into the park will be minimized. The only vehicular uses allowed in the park are for: maintenance; delivery of

goods and materials too large or heavy to be carried by non-motorized means; access for people with disabilities limited mobility; public transportation; and emergency services.

Objective 2.2: Reduce the conflicts between vehicles and park users.

Action Step 2.2.1: Coordinate delivery schedules to reduce the frequency of delivery and service vehicle intrusions into the park during peak use time periods.

Action Step 2.2.2: Improve loading dock facilities in the Amphitheater to expedite the unloading and setup for performances and to reduce the need for large vehicle parking outside of the Amphitheater area.

Action Step 2.2.3: Improve the configuration of the east access road to allow use by large delivery vehicles, thus reducing the overall number of trips on the west access road and the need for the backing and turning of large vehicles on the lower bench of the park.

Goal #3: Reduce conflicts between all Ford Park venues.

Objective 3.1: Coordinate events on all Ford Park venues.

Action Step 3.1.1: Expand the master schedule kept by the Town Clerk to include all venues within the park.

Action Step 3.1.2: Hold preseason and monthly event/activity coordination meetings.

Action Step 3.1.3: Hold semiannual (2x per year) coordination and input meetings with the Town Administrators, leaseholder representatives, and neighborhood and adjacent property owner representatives.

Policy Statement 8: Overlapping or simultaneous events that exceed the available community parking or other park infrastructure shall be discouraged.

Policy Statement 9: No one event or type of use will be allowed to dominate the usage of the Park.

Policy Statement 10: The Park is a Town of Vail community facility and in the case of conflicting uses, functions that best serve the interests of the community will have the highest priority. In all cases, final decisions regarding the Park rest with the Vail Town Manager.

Policy Statement 11: The day-to-day management and coordination of activities in the Park will be assigned to the Park Superintendent. The Park Superintendent will coordinate as necessary with a representative of:

The Town of Vail
The Vail Valley Foundation
The Alpine Garden
The Vail Recreation District

Objective 3.2: Improve buffers between different use areas within the park.

Action Step 3.2.1: Enhance the buffer zone between the softball fields and the amphitheater and gardens by reversing the orientation of the center and east softball fields.

Action Step 3.2.2: Enhance existing and new buffer zone areas through the addition of landscape planting.

Goal #4: Resolve parking and South Frontage Road access problems.

Objective 4.1: Develop and implement a parking management plan for Ford Park.

Action Step 4.1.1: Locate a variable message sign between the main roundabout and entrance to Village Structure for the purpose of informing drivers that close-in parking at Ford Park is restricted, at a fee, or full, and parking in the VTC is free and shuttle bus service is available.

Action Step 4.1.2: Schedule shuttle bus service from top deck of the Village Structure to Ford Park Frontage Road stop for special event/high demand days. Extend in-town shuttle bus service to Ford Park Vail Valley Drive stop.

Action Step 4.1.3: Designate drop-off parking from Frontage Road using 15 spaces north of bus stop. Enforce 5 minute time limit. Drop-off lane functions as a turn around once lot is filled. Schedule attendants on-site to manage drop-off spaces and assist users in loading and unloading.

Action Step 4.1.4: Allocate close-in parking on Frontage Road and Vail Valley Drive through reserve ticket purchases or on a fee basis. Parking attendants on-site to manage entrances and exits. Establish a ticket surcharge or parking fee price schedule which will generate sufficient funds to cover attendant and shuttle bus service costs. Fee parking is to be in effect for high-parking demand days only.

Action Step 4.1.5: Construct Frontage Road sidewalk from the Village Structure and improve sign system as necessary to accommodate pedestrian traffic to Ford Park.

Policy Statement 12: Adequate parking for the needs of the park are to be provided in the park and at the Village Structure.

Objective 4.2: Improve vehicular access from the South Frontage Road and improve parking lot design to maximize the number of parking spaces, aesthetics, and safety while mitigating environmental impacts.

Action Step 4.2.1: Design and construct improvements to the South Frontage Road to meet CDOT requirements for obtaining a state highway access permit.

Action Step 4.2.2: Design and construct improvements to all existing parking areas that maximize the number of parking spaces; provide landscape buffering and treatment of storm water run-off.

Goal #5: Improve internal pedestrian circulation within Ford Park and the pedestrian connections between Ford Park and Vail Village.

Objective 5.1: Improve directional and informational signs to and within Ford Park.

Action Step 5.1.1: Develop a comprehensive sign plan to direct Ford Park visitors from central sites in the Vail Village and from each level of the Village Parking Structure to destinations within Ford Park.

Objective 5.2: Improve pedestrian routes to Ford Park.

Action Step 5.2.1: Design improvements to existing pedestrian routes that will correct grading, surfacing, and lighting and will provide resting and sitting areas.

Objective 5.3: Improve internal pedestrian circulation within Ford Park.

Action Step 5.3.1: Design a central pedestrian path to enhance the connection between the upper and lower bench areas of the park.

Policy Statement 14: Any uses added to Ford Park in the future shall be structured to encourage users or participants to walk or ride the bus rather than drive.

Policy Statement 15: Pedestrian access to the Park from the Vail Village should be easy and visible. The Park shall be as pedestrian-friendly as possible.

Goal #6: Delineate financial responsibilities among Ford Park leaseholders and the Town of Vail.

Objective 6.1: Formalize existing division of facility management/operation costs.

Action Step 6.1.1: Research current lease, license and use agreements for delineation of financial responsibilities.

Action Step 6.1.2: Correct inequities in utility billing procedures and distribution systems, current utility use, and payment relationships.

Policy Statement 16: All Ford Park leaseholders and the Town of Vail shall be required to share in common operating costs that benefit the whole park facility and as outlined in current lease or license agreements. These include but are not limited to, electrical charges for pedestrian path and parking lot lighting, trash removal charges, and regular parking lot and pedestrian path maintenance costs.

Objective 6.2: Create a cost-sharing agreement for Capital Improvement costs.

Action Step 6.2.1: Create a five year capital improvements program for Ford Park.

Action Step 6.2.2: Establish the benefit/cost relationship for capital projects to determine appropriate cost sharing agreements.

Policy Statement 17: Ford Park leaseholders and the Town of Vail desiring to make capital improvements within their respective lease areas shall be required to provide funding for those improvements and for subsequent modifications to those areas outside of the lease area caused by those improvements.

Policy Statement 18: Services, functions, and programs provided by Ford Park leaseholders, by bringing visitors to the community, generate sales tax revenues which contribute General Fund funding sources. Residents of the community which participate in those programs, contribute to the Real Estate Transfer Tax funding source through real estate transactions. Both of these funding sources can be utilized by the Town of Vail to pay for capital projects and improvements within Ford Park, reducing the need for contributions from the leaseholders.

Section 6: Illustrative Plan Components

This section contains site plan diagrams that illustrate conceptual plans for the Park. The Ford Park Illustrative Plan provided herein replaces site plans from the 1997 Ford Park Management Plan. This new plan reflects many of the same improvements contemplated by the 1997 Plan, but also includes a few improvements not previously contemplated. Concepts depicted on the Illustrative Plan are considered to be appropriate improvements and activities for the Park. However, all improvements are subject to further review by the Town (Conditional Use Permit, Development Plan review, DRB review) prior to being implemented. In some cases the description of improvements provided below include parameters or considerations that should be addressed during detailed design and as a part of subsequent review by the Town.

Brief descriptions of improvements depicted on the Illustrative Plan for Ford Park, and when appropriate enlargements of such improvements, are provided below. It should also be understood that the site plan depicting these improvements is done at a very general, conceptual level. This plan is intended to illustrate concepts only and improvements depicted on this Plan will be refined as designs progress. As such final designs may vary from what is depicted on this generalized plan. Prior to the implementation of any improvements in Ford Park additional design details will be provided for review by the Town as a part of the Planning Commission's review of a Development Plan (as part of a Conditional Use Process) and/ or as a part of the Design Review Board review process.

The Illustrative Plan provides a comprehensive depiction of improvements contemplated for Ford Park. This does not mean however, that only those improvements depicted on this plan may be made. Improvements not depicted on the Illustrative Plan may be proposed provided they are consistent with the overall goals for the Park and with applicable objectives, policy statements and action steps outlined in the Management Plan. It should also be understood that the improvements being depicted on the Illustrative Plan does not ensure if or when they will be implemented. In many respects the Illustrative Plan is a vision for how the Park may be developed and not a commitment to any specific improvement.

Implemented Improvements from 1997 Illustrative Plan

A number of improvements proposed by the 1997 Plan have been implemented. These improvements are listed below:

1. Reduce width of road entrance from South Frontage Road; install an automated traffic control gate.
2. Construct 12' concrete pedestrian/bike path along south edge of roadway from Vail Valley Drive to the West Access Road entrance.
3. Extend pedestrian/bike path beyond West Access Road as 10' detached pathway. Widen path between softball infields and extend beyond the Tennis Center to the proposed main park entrance.
4. A central trash enclosure is shown at the southwest corner of the parking lot.
5. Increase the deck height of the Manor Vail covered bridge by approximately 4'.
6. Widen South Frontage Road to provide 6' bike lanes on each side.

2012 Ford Park Illustrative Plan

The Ford Park Illustrative Plan is found on the following page. Subsequent pages provide descriptions of specific improvements identified on each enlargement sheet of the Illustrative Plan. These improvements are presented by “topical” category (i.e. pedestrianization), location (i.e. the lower bench area) or major user (i.e. the Amphitheater or the athletic fields).

Refer to the Illustrative Plan when reviewing these descriptions for a graphic depiction of the improvement and the surrounding context. When appropriate an enlarged section of the Illustrative Plan is provided in the context of narrative descriptions.



Preservation Zone

One of the objectives of the 1997 Plan was to:

Designate Preservation Zones within Ford Park to protect sensitive natural areas and/or buffer zones between venues areas from developmental impacts. Define allowed uses within Preservation Zone areas.

A Preservation Zone is identified on the Ford Park Illustrative Plan. This zone primarily includes the Gore Creek Corridor and the 7 acre Nature Center area located south of Gore Creek. The location of the Preservation Zone was determined based on natural features and existing improvements, the 100-year floodplain and the 50-foot waterbody setback.

Within the preservation zone it is intended that existing uses, improvements and buildings can be maintained and that no new uses, improvements or buildings inconsistent with the preservation of these areas is to occur. Low-impact improvements such as soft surface walking paths, fishing access, etc. along with utility improvements, drainage improvements, creek crossings, creek restoration projects and similar activities may be initiated within the Preservation Zone.

Fisherman access to Gore Creek, while currently not an issue (i.e. excessive use resulting in riparian area degradation), could become an issue in the future. A creek access point was considered at the east end of the Nature Center (using the bus turnaround on Vail Valley Drive as an unloading area) but was rejected as contradictory to the intended use of the Nature Center. A defined creek access point is now being considered above Ford Park in the vicinity of the Pulis Bridge.

Some improvements to the Park are contemplated adjacent to the Preservation Zone, notably the potential widening of Betty Ford Way. If the widening of this road is pursued, great care and attention to design and construction will be necessary in order to protect Gore Creek. Best management practices (BMP's) will be essential in controlling runoff, erosion, debris, etc. that could otherwise harm the creek.

Pedestrianization/Park Arrival

Ford Park has two distinct areas – the upper bench which has an athletic focus and the lower bench which has more of an arts and cultural focus. Access to the Park is provided by one of six portals, each with their own unique purpose and characteristics. These portals are identified on the Ford Park Illustrative Plan.

Improvements are contemplated for a number of these portals, many of which originate outside the actual boundary of the Park. One improvement contemplated for each portal is to introduce a distinctive monument or identification feature to identify access to Ford Park. For example, the Gore Creek Trail provides access for people who park in the Village Parking Structure. An identification feature where the trail begins east of Vail Valley Drive could help people find their way to the Park. These features would signal the beginning of one's "entry" to Ford Park with "arrival" coming when one reaches the Park. While the design of individual identification features may vary, a common design character for all features should be used in order to create continuity and consistency in how the Park is identified.

- Manor Vail Entry at Vail Valley Drive – A pedestrian easement is in place that provides pedestrian access from Vail Valley Drive to the Covered Bridge. An identification feature should be considered at this location, the design of which would need to be coordinated with Manor Vail.
- Gore Creek Streamwalk – This tranquil trail provides park access for many who park at the Village Parking Structure. An identification feature should be installed at Vail Valley Drive. Efforts should be made to lessen the grade of this trail behind the Wren Condominiums. This could be accomplished by re-grading the trail and installing retaining walls along the existing trail that could bring the grade down from +/-15% to +/-9%. Another alternative could be to re-align the trail immediately adjacent to the Park in a manner that would contour across the hillside and eliminate the trail from "going up to only come down". Due to steep terrain and proximity to Gore Creek, this solution would require sensitive design and construction so as to minimize impacts on the creek. An alternative to a retaining wall solution could be to cantilever a portion of the trail over the steeper hillside sections.
- Frontage Road Sidewalk – This sidewalk provides direct access to the Park from the Village Parking Structure. An identification feature should be considered at the intersection of the Frontage Road and Vail Valley Drive.
- VV Drive/Soccer Field - During performances and special events buses are added to the town's system and their route is extended to the turnaround at the east end of the Soccer Field in order to serve this portal (topography and roadway width prevent the development of a bus turnaround closer to this portal). An identification feature should be considered at the intersection of the Frontage Road and Vail Valley Drive.
- Frontage Road/Transit Stop – A new transit stop will provide access to an improved pedestrian corridor that leads into the Park and to the lower bench. An identification feature, along with identification of access to the

tennis center should be considered where this corridor begins. An accessible route consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act Guidelines should be identified from the transit stop to facilities throughout the park.

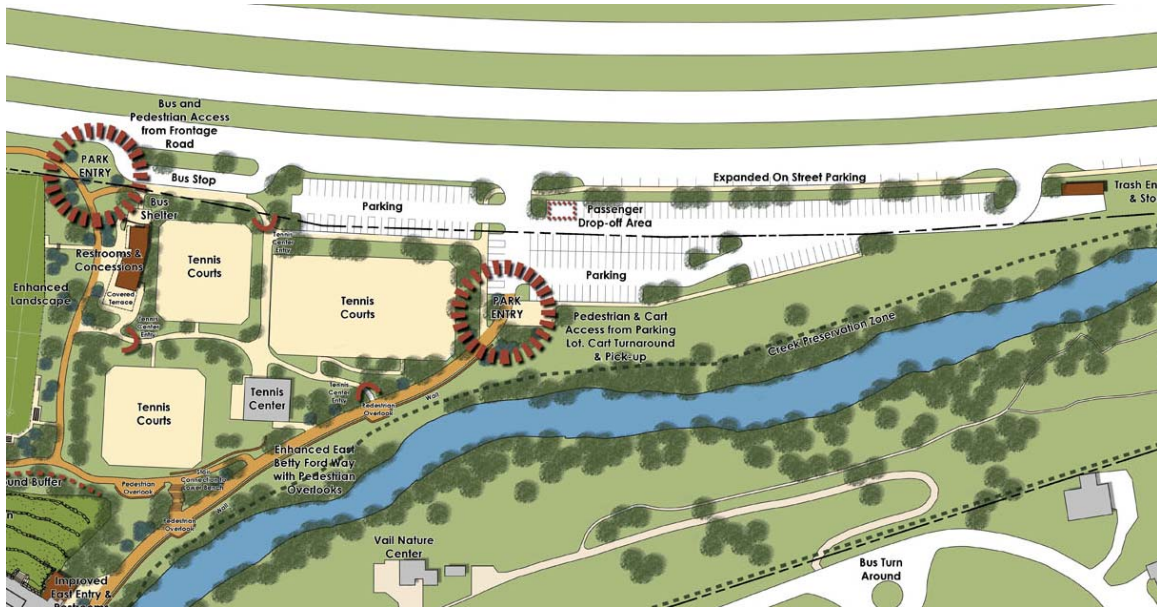
- Frontage Road/Parking Area – East Betty Ford Way is the primary access to the lower bench from the parking area. An identification feature, along with identification of access to the tennis center should be considered where this corridor begins. Other pedestrian improvements to this corridor are described below. An accessible route consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act Guidelines should be identified from the transit stop to facilities throughout the park.

Shuttle

During events at the Amphitheater, golf cart shuttles are utilized for moving people to and from the venue. The idea of creating a similar system to provide shuttle service to general park users throughout the summer months is under consideration. The purpose of this shuttle is two-fold - one is to provide the shuttles as a guest service and the other to provide alternative access into the Park for elderly or disabled guests. With regard to the later, the shuttle system could allow for the removal of accessible parking spaces at the Amphitheater and in doing so reduce car trips into the Park. Until such time as a shuttle system is implemented the accessible parking spaces at the Amphitheater should remain.

Frontage Road Entry/Parking/Transit

Existing transit and parking facilities along the Frontage Road are ill-defined and in many respects do not function well. For example, vehicle access points to parking areas are unclear and buses are not adequately segregated from private vehicles. While it is likely that more people enter the Park via pedestrian routes from the west and south, many guests do access the Park from this area via buses from the Frontage Road transit stop and from parking areas. A number of improvements are planned in order to improve both the appearance and function of this area.



Frontage Road Entry/Parking/Transit

Parking Facilities

Existing parking areas should be redesigned in order to achieve the Town Council's goal of "no net loss" of parking. Currently there are approximately 200 parking spaces in the Frontage Road area, of which 17 are disabled parking spaces. An equivalent number of spaces are reflected on the Ford Park Illustrative Plan.

Major changes to parking include the elimination of approximately 50 existing spaces in order to accommodate the expansion to athletic fields and a new transit drop-off area. New spaces can be created with the re-design of the eastern portion of the lot and by locating parking where the bus drop-off is currently located. The addition of "low impact" parking spaces along the South Frontage Road is also under consideration. This improvement will necessitate a sidewalk along the south side of the road and coordination with CDOT will be necessary in order to implement this improvement.

Access points to parking areas should be consolidated into two locations and may include turn lane improvements on the Frontage Road (subject to CDOT review).

Short term drop-off parking spaces will be established, the location of which will be determined during detailed design. Efforts should be made to locate short-term drop-off at the western end of the parking lots.

The re-design of the parking area as depicted on the Illustrative Plan will still allow for use of this area for special events and concerts. Determination of how

this area is used will be made by the Town Council and the Commission on Special Events.

Bus Stop/Drop-off

A dedicated bus stop lane separate from private vehicles will be provided. This facility is planned just west of the re-designed parking area. This location may allow for a bus shelter to be incorporated into or adjacent to the Concessions/Restroom building.

Pedestrian Improvements-Transit Stop

Currently the relationship of the transit stop and the adjacent tennis center area is not well defined nor does this area have a clear image or relationship to other facilities within the Park. For example, the arrangement and relationship of existing improvements is not clear and pedestrian routes to the Alpine Garden, the Amphitheater or lower bench recreation facilities are not intuitive. Landscape, signage and pedestrian improvements throughout this area will be implemented to improve existing conditions.

Pedestrian Improvements-East Betty Ford Way

East Betty Ford Way is a major pedestrian route from parking facilities to the Amphitheater. While this corridor provides excellent views to Gore Creek and the Gore Range, the trail itself is in need of improvement. Portions of the trail are very steep and present challenges for some park users. The trail is also very narrow, particularly during periods of peak usage. This problem is compounded during Amphitheater events when golf cart shuttles share the trail with pedestrians. This trail should be widened and efforts made to lessen the grade of the trail. Widening of the trail (12' to 13' maximum) will alleviate golf cart - pedestrian conflicts, enable a shuttle system to be implemented at a future date, and allow increased use by delivery vehicles thus reducing delivery vehicle – pedestrian conflicts to the west. Pedestrian overlooks to Gore Creek along this route should be considered, both for aesthetic purposes and to provide pedestrians a safe location to stand at times shuttles (or trucks) may be using this route.

Athletic Fields Concessions/Restroom Building

A new concessions/restroom building is contemplated at the east end of the athletic fields. The building may also include a small satellite office for the Recreation District (for use during events and tournaments). This facility, along with the existing tennis center will “anchor” this area of the Park.

Athletic Fields

The size and shape of existing athletic fields is inefficient. The following improvements are planned to provide more usable fields:

Field Expansion

Removal of the existing restroom/concession building and the westernmost surface parking lot will allow for increased field area that will accommodate three full-sized softball fields or two full-sized soccer/lacrosse fields. This is a major improvement to the Park in terms of the type of events that could be hosted. A retaining wall at the southwest corner of the fields will be necessary. It is anticipated that at the tallest point will be approximately 12' and will taper back to existing grade at either end. Various wall systems and designs will be studied. This field improvement will also include new fencing around most of the fields and improvements to spectator areas. The introduction of additional landscaping on the south side of the fields should be done to provide both shade and screening.

West Field Restroom/Storage Building

A new restroom and park storage building is suggested at the west end of the fields. The small storage component for the Recreation District and the Alpine Garden will minimize the number of vehicle trips into the Park. This building replaces an existing storage building and will clean up existing unsecured maintenance and storage areas currently scattered throughout the park. Given the prominent location of this building at the west entry to the Park, it will be critical that users of the storage facility keep all vehicles and stored material enclosed. Restrooms will serve users of the fields and pedestrians entering/exiting the Park from the west. The building should be low-profile and have a "grounded" appearance in the landscape.



Athletic Fields/Concession Building

Lower Bench

The following improvements are contemplated for the Lower Bench area of the park:

Playground Restrooms

Restrooms at the playground are poorly sited, undersized and present an uncomfortable relationship to the rest of the Park. In the near future these restrooms will be in need of renovation and at such time consideration should be given to re-locating them to a more discrete location. One alternative is to bench the restrooms into the hill below the athletic fields. This location could allow these facilities to be accessible to users of the fields. If this solution is pursued consideration should be given to creating a stronger connection between the playground and the adjacent playfield.

Ford Family Tribute

The design intent and objective for the Ford Tribute is to announce the arrival to Ford Park in an iconic manner that celebrates the life and influence of the Ford family on our community. Envisioned as a unique landscape feature comprised of a combination of plants, stone, art and other natural materials, the Tribute will be located in the vicinity of the Manor Vail Bridge at the intersection with Betty Ford Way. The goal is to help solidify the Ford's legacy for posterity, and to do so in a manner that is contextual to the natural environment, the Betty Ford Alpine Garden, the Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater, and the overall context of Ford Park. The Tribute is not envisioned as a building or structure, but rather a series of elements that help create a very special sense of place as the beginning of the enhanced park experience along Betty Ford Way, between Manor Vail and the Social Courtyard at the amphitheater.

Betty Ford Way

Betty Ford Way provides a major pedestrian access route into the Park, both from Vail Village/Village Parking Structure and from the Park's upper bench parking lot and transit stop. The section of Betty Ford Way between the Covered Bridge and the Amphitheater entry is envisioned to be a "feature area". This pedestrian corridor will be treated with a higher level of design, surface materials, lighting, seating, etc.

Enhancements to Betty Ford Way will improve a park visitor's experience to and through the lower bench of the park. The existing path will be widened from approximately 10 feet to between 11 and 13 feet to accommodate the multiple user types that visit the park in peak use times (e.g. pedestrians, bicyclists, skateboarders and roller-skaters) and reduce conflicts when golf cart shuttles share the trail with pedestrians. The asphalt pavement along Betty Ford Way should be replaced with finer textured, higher quality pavements such as colored concrete, or stone or concrete pavers. Seating areas with benches at select locations along the path, and lighting fixtures to match new architectural features in the park will better unify the image and character of the entire Park.

Landscaping adjacent to Betty Ford Way should be enhanced with additional shrubs and wildflowers to provide more interest and color along the route, and new wayfinding signage installed. The portion of the path between the Manor Vail Bridge and the Amphitheater entrance is the portion of the path that receives the highest level of use. It should be of the same character as the rest of Betty Ford Way, but receive a higher level of finish on the path surface, and the landscaping should include more floral displays, which will be designed to be complementary to the Betty Ford Alpine Gardens landscape.

Nature Trail

Improvements to the informal nature trail along Gore Creek are envisioned.



Lower Bench

Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater

Host to approximately 60 events each year, the Amphitheater is one of, if not the main activity generator in the Park. A number of improvements are planned for this facility.

Social Courtyard

Expansion of the existing plaza at the entry to the Amphitheater is intended to provide a more gracious and more functional entry to the venue. The design

intent and objective for the new “social courtyard” is to create a multi-use outdoor space of that serves as the primary arrival for the Amphitheater as well as a pre-convene and post-function space during scheduled events.

The social courtyard will also serve as a new programmable space within the lower bench of Ford Park for smaller gatherings and events. Use of the space will be available by various groups and stakeholders such as the Betty Ford Alpine Gardens or the Art in Public Places, and the common park user, during times when the amphitheater is not in operation and when there are no scheduled events taking place.

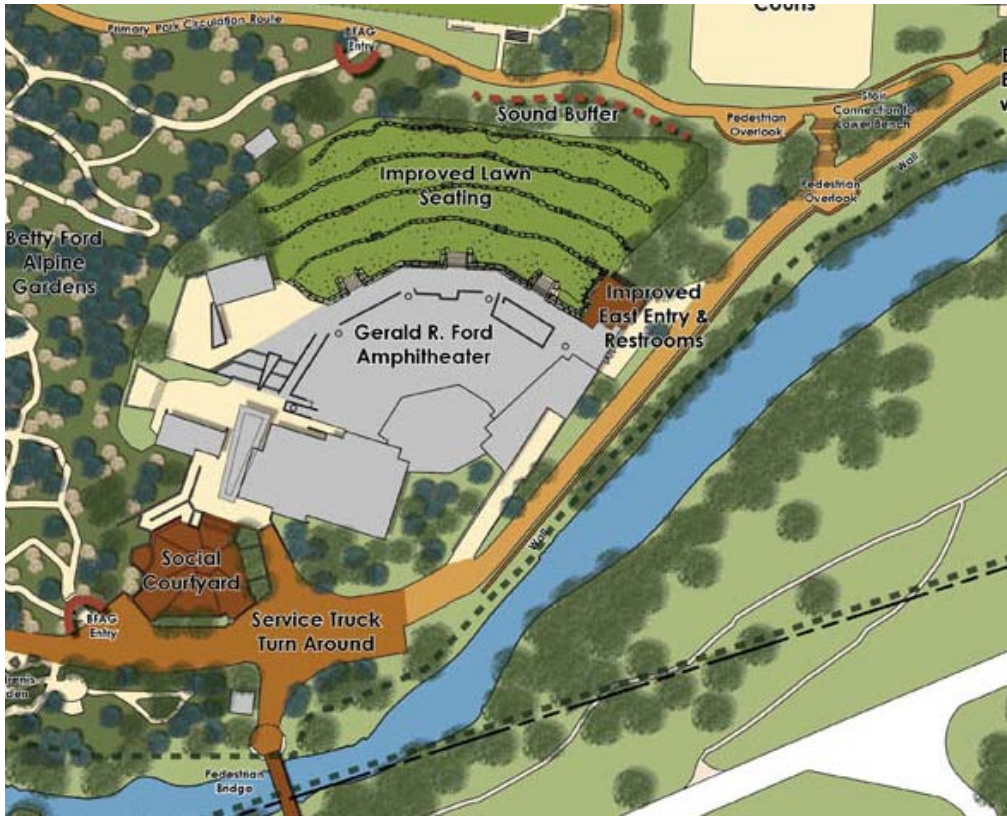
The space is envisioned to be richly landscaped, and have a high level of design and attention to detail. Two new gates are planned to serve as ticket control and baggage check, and a perimeter landscape barrier combining plants and a decorative artistic fence will be designed to provide security for the venue. Portions of the social courtyard are envisioned to be covered by a roof feature to shelter patrons from rain during inclement weather and provide shade during sunny days. In this case consideration should be given to the relationship of this structure to surrounding improvements and to how important viewsheds can be maintained.

Ticketing/Restrooms/Seating

A number of improvements are planned to the operations and interior of the Amphitheater. These include expanded ticket windows, remodeling of existing restrooms and new restrooms at the east entry to the Amphitheater. Re-contouring of the lawn seating area is also planned, the primary purpose of which is to lessen the existing grade of the lawn area.

Noise Mitigation

The relationship between the Amphitheater and the athletic fields at times creates conflicts, specifically with noise. I-70 traffic also creates problems for the Amphitheater. Noise mitigation studies have been completed and to date no definitive decisions have been made regarding possible noise mitigation measures. Space between the Amphitheater and the fields has been defined in order to accommodate potential measures that may be pursued in the future (walls, berms, landscaping, etc.).



Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater

Betty Ford Alpine Gardens

The Alpine Gardens are a major summer attraction and the following improvements are contemplated for this facility:

North Entry

A more formally defined entry to the Gardens from the upper bench, along with improved pedestrian corridors are planned.

Garden Expansion Area

Expansion to the gardens is planned along Gore Creek, in an area east of the old school house.

BFAG Education Center

Located proximate to the Gardens on the lower bench, the Education Center is envisioned to house administrative offices, a greenhouse and a multi-use space for a variety of functions. The building is planned to be two levels (one story with a lower walkout level) with a building footprint of approximately 1500 SF.

The BFAG building is envisioned to be west of the old school house. The location is preferred for two reasons – to preserve the Children’s Garden (located

just east of the old school, and to not “crowd” the entry to the Amphitheater. Site design of the building should give consideration to the following:

- The building should be “low profile” and not dominate the immediate area.
- The design of the building should be sensitive to its close proximity to the old school house and should create unified compound of structures.
- While the old school house and the Education Center will be two separate buildings, landscape features, patios, etc. should be used to “link” the two buildings,
- Consideration should be given to creating a new entry to the gardens that is adjacent to the new building,
- The specimen spruce tree should be maintained,
- The degree to which the building extends to the west should be minimized in order to maintain the existing open space and views to Gore Creek from Betty Ford Way.

The location of this building is appropriate given its proximity and relationship to the Gardens. However, measures will need to be implemented that will minimize vehicle trips to the building and how winter access is provided.



Betty Ford Alpine Gardens

Art in Public Places (AIPP)

AIPP has an active program in Ford Park. The organization has placed permanent art within the Park, the most recent being the Jesús Moroles sculpture. AAIP also uses a portion of the Lower Bench for temporary/summer exhibition space. AAIP has the opportunity to utilize other areas of the park which may be appropriate for art installations. However, any installation (temporary or permanent) will be evaluated with respect to how it minimizes impacts on other existing facilities and uses in the Park.

Service and Delivery

The following initiatives are contemplated to improve the efficiency of and minimize the impacts from service and delivery functions within the Park

Central Trash Enclosure

A new central trash enclosure (to replace an existing building) is planned at the eastern corner of the parking lot. This is intended to be a fully enclosed building which contains either a trash dumpster or compactor unit. All leaseholders would utilize this central enclosure to dispose of trash generated at their respective facilities. One of the underlying goals of this approach is to not have trash truck traffic within the Park.

Amphitheater Deliveries

Amphitheater operations necessitate a significant number of deliveries, including on average 8-12 large semi-trucks each year (typically delivering for performances) and frequent truck deliveries from food, beer and other vendors. During the peak summer season deliveries from these vendors can be as much as two to four per day. These deliveries currently access the Amphitheater via West Betty Ford Way and create a very negative impact on the rest of the Park, particularly the highly pedestrianized lower bench area. One of the six goals for Ford Park is to “reduce vehicular intrusions into the park” and in response to this a number of alternatives are under consideration that could dramatically reduce the impact of these delivery vehicles.

Consideration has been given to “management solutions”. For example, truck deliveries could be limited to specific times (i.e. early morning) of day to avoid vehicle/pedestrian conflicts. Given the constraints Vail already imposes on deliveries in the Vail Village area, it is assumed that further confining delivery times to Ford Park would be impractical on trucks and drivers. Another idea would be to have trucks deliver to the parking lots then off-load deliveries to smaller vehicles. While this may be viable for some deliveries, it may not be viable for liquor/beer deliveries due to state laws.

The reconstruction of East Betty Ford Way such that all or some delivery vehicles could utilize this corridor (in lieu of entering the Park from the west) would greatly reduce vehicle/pedestrian conflicts. In order to do so the eastern portion of Betty Ford Way would need be reconstructed to widen the path platform and to reduce steep portions of the path. As noted above, these improvements are already planned in order to improve pedestrian use of this corridor. In conjunction with these improvements to the path, the re-design of the new Social Courtyard/Amphitheater entry could be done to accommodate truck turning movements such that trucks could enter from the east, turn around and then exit to the east.

While in concept these improvements would address a major goal for the Park in reducing vehicle trips and minimizing pedestrian impacts, there are a number of other factors to consider. For example, the cost of these physical improvements must be considered relative to the benefits (reduction of vehicular trips) and other design implications such as how designing the amphitheater entry to accommodate truck turning movements might affect the qualitative aspects of the entry and how the need for retaining walls and the width/alignment of East Betty Ford Way will affect this pedestrian corridor. These and other considerations will be addressed during the detailed design of these improvements.

An existing sewer line servicing the tennis center needs to be replaced in the East Betty Ford Way corridor and as such this pedestrian corridor will be reconstructed to some degree. At a minimum it is anticipated that the path will be enhanced to address the pedestrian improvements described above. The degree to which improvements can be done to accommodate all or some truck traffic will be determined following more detailed design with further evaluation of the proposal during the Development Plan review process.

Access Road Management

The gate-controlled entrance to East Betty Ford Way is intended to limit vehicle access to the Lower Bench. This gate/traffic control system is also utilized on the west end of Betty Ford Way and should continue.

Vail Nature Center

The Vail Nature Center is located on the south banks of Gore Creek at the southern end of Ford Park. The Nature Center is intended to be a natural preserve and includes self-guided trails with a small interpretive center that provides environmental and educational programs. Resolution #27 of 1987 documents the Town's intentions for how the Nature Center is to be managed.

No changes are contemplated for this area.



Vail Nature Center