



Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska  
**Parks & Recreation Department**

632 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 630  
P.O. Box 196650  
Anchorage, AK 99519  
**Tel** 907-343-4355

**URL** [www.muni.org/departments/parks](http://www.muni.org/departments/parks)



## MEMORANDUM

**Date:** Dec. 13, 2018

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**To:** Parks & Recreation Commission

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**Cc:** Joshua Durand, Parks Superintendent

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**From:** Maeve Nevins-Lavtar, Senior Park Planner

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**Project:** **PRC 18-27:** Folker Park 2019 Improvements

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### INTRODUCTION

Folker Park is a 2.02 acre neighborhood park located in the University Area neighborhood. Folker Park is sited in the north east corner of the intersection of East 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and Folker Street. Property to the west is the Providence Horizon House residential assisted-living home with approximately 80 elderly residents. Property to the north is an undeveloped site and is owned by the Anchorage Community Mental Health Services, Inc. Property to the east and south is residential, with a mixture of single and high-density housing units. The park serves as a transition area or buffer between the UMED District offices and the residential districts.

East 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue is considered a local street, with heavy traffic from Tudor and Lake Otis Blvd. Folker Street and E. 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue are stripped paved roads, with no existing cross-walks or sidewalks in the vicinity. Off-street parking is allowed in the right-of-way along the western boundary of Folker Park off of Folker Street and along the southern boundary along E. 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. There is a school bus stop located on the South side of the intersection at Folker St. and E. 42<sup>nd</sup> Ave.

### HISTORY AND PURPOSE

Park acquisition began in 1983 and the purchase of this parkland was completed in 1984. In 1990, a log cabin was removed by the city from the property. In 1996, the University Area Community Council worked with the Parks and Recreation Department to develop a concept site plan and priorities list. Today, Folker Park is a rich urban forested park consisting of a diverse mixture of deciduous and evergreen trees, native shrubs and ground cover. The park's amenities include picnic tables, benches, bike racks, and a curvilinear 5-foot wide paved path along the south boundary and an inner forested two-foot wide soft-surface trail. The park also includes a seasonal "Adopt-A-Garden" raised planter bed on the southwest corner of the property.

In recent years, the park has seen an increase in negative activity. With the limited visibility due to the overgrowth of the forest and understory, lack of lighting and over-grown heavily-rooted trails, the park has become a welcome host for the homeless. Transient circulation has worn a north-south connector path through the forest floor from the south to the northern undeveloped lot. Drug deals and other illicit criminal behavior has been reported to the Anchorage Police Department. In 2015, the neighborhood worked with the Parks and Recreation Department to remove much of the dead understory and improve visibility into the park. While the clearing activities improved sightlines, it also called attention to the lack of up-keep for the amenities, particularly the lack of ADA-access along the soft-surface inner loop trails.

In the fall of 2016, the Parks and Recreation Department initiated the Folker Site Plan Update. This update was intended to address issues and provide a 5-10-year vision for the management, maintenance and development of the park. Through the planning process, this plan identifies the communities current and future needs, address issues and concerns, and establishes a framework for future development in the park.

## PLANNING AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Anchorage Parks and Recreation staff worked with a stakeholder advisory group in 2016/2017 to ensure that future upgrades met the desires and expectations of the community. A preferred alternative plan was designed, and the final site plan was unanimously approved by the University Community Council on April 10, 2017. On May 11, 2017 the Park & Recreation Commission also unanimously approved the Resolution 2017-10 in favor of the final site plan.

The 2019 improvement plan identified priorities as they relate to the available budget and were presented and approved at the 65% construction document phase, with no objection at the Oct. 3, 2018 University Area Community Council. The advisory group as well as the Alaska Reflexology Association continue to be engaged as the project develops. Staff anticipates at least one volunteer event to support the project in summer 2019.

### Link to UACC Meeting Minutes (Oct. 2, 2018):

[file:///C:/Users/crmvn/Downloads/UACC%20Minutes%202018-10%20\(Oct\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/crmvn/Downloads/UACC%20Minutes%202018-10%20(Oct).pdf)

### Project Website:

<https://www.muni.org/Departments/parks/Pages/FolkerParkSitePlan.aspx>

### Link to Site Plan Descriptions:

[https://www.muni.org/Departments/parks/Documents/ProjectDetails\\_%20Timeline-Folker.pdf](https://www.muni.org/Departments/parks/Documents/ProjectDetails_%20Timeline-Folker.pdf)

## Implementation Plan

- Year 1-2: Fundraising; survey, engineering/landscape architecture designs
- Year 2-4: construction
- Year 5-10: monitor, on-going maintenance

## FUNDING

Over the last year and a half, fundraising has occurred. Below is the current available budget for Phase 1 implementation. A project design team has since been established and the park is now scheduled for Phase 1 construction to start in spring 2019.

<b>AVAIL. FUNDING TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$480,513</b>
MOA 2017 Bond	\$200,000
APF Challenge Grant Award	\$12,500
APF Challenge Grant Match	\$13,013
LWCF Grant	\$225,000
APF Residual Funds - Design	\$30,000

## IMPLEMENTATION OF SITE PLAN

### Theme

The Advisory Group developed the following theme for the park site plan which has been used to guide the prioritized development: *An "Intergenerational" Health and Healing Park that is ADA accessible and inclusive for all users.* Below is a chart of the priorities as identified in the site plan and the approximate construction implementation schedule (2019 Phase 1 or future). Note, this is based on 65% construction drawings and is subject to change if the funding situation changes.

<b>Folker Park Concept to Construction 2019</b>			
<b>Item #</b>	<b>Priority Item</b>	<b>Phase 1</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
1	<b>Fitness Path</b>	No	Paths were redesigned and combined.
2	<b>Healing Path</b>	Yes	
3	<b>Lighting</b>	Yes	
4	<b>Seating &amp; Picnic Benches</b>	Yes	Will repurpose existing site amenities.
5	<b>Fitness Area</b>	Yes	
6	<b>Welcoming Plaza</b>	Yes	
7	<b>Community Gardens</b>	No	Future potential on northern lot
8	<b>Water Spicket</b>	Yes	
9	<b>Crosswalk @ E 42nd &amp; Folker St.</b>	No	Request was made to Traffic Dept.
10	<b>Art Area</b>	No	Future phase as funds allow
11	<b>Playground</b>	No	Future phase as funds allow
12	<b>Musical Instruments</b>	Yes	
13	<b>Birding Area</b>	Yes	Site preserved, bird houses & interpret signs to be in future phase.
14	<b>Reflexology Path</b>	Yes	It may be phased, active fundraising & volunteers engaged.
15	<b>Bridge</b>	Yes	
16	<b>Stream of Flowers</b>	Yes	Completed in 2017, will add more plants.
17	<b>Labrynth Plaza</b>	Yes	
18	<b>Forest Seat Walk</b>	Yes	
19	<b>Maintain Existing Vegetation</b>	Yes	Spruce beetle has killed numerous trees.
20	<b>Sculptures/art in park</b>	No	Future phase as funds allow

#### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

The Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department recommends approval of the Folker Park 2019 Improvement Plan. The improvement plan was developed in coordination with an advisory group and includes extensive stakeholder and community involvement. The Department recommends that the Parks and Recreation Commission pass the proposed *Resolution 2018-20* in support of the Folker Park 2019 Improvement Plan.



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**Parks & Recreation Commission**

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**PRC RES NO. 2018-20**  
**Folker Park 2019 Improvements**

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission serves in an advisory capacity to both the Mayor and the Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission has the responsibility and duty to provide for the long term vision of our park system by ensuring that a balance of parks, natural resources, and recreation facilities provides for the health, welfare, and safety of all residents of the Anchorage Bowl; and

WHEREAS, Folker Park is a 2.02 acres neighborhood park located in the University Area with a heavily forested area including soft surface trails, picnic table, benches and an entry garden bed; and

WHEREAS, Folker Park 2017 updated Site Plan provides a 5-10 year vision that will guide future development at the park; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department partnered with the University Area Community Council stakeholders and park users to establish an advisory group to assist the Department in identifying and prioritizing desired improvements for Folker Park; and

WHEREAS, the 2019 Folker Park Improvement Plan is based on priorities as identified in the approved 2017 updated Site Plan and available funding, and

WHEREAS, the improvements proposed in the 2019 improvement plan have been vetted by the advisory group through deliberation and consensus, and have received support and approval from the University Area Community Council during their Oct. 3, 2018 meeting; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission approves the 2019 Improvement Plan submitted by the Department for Folker Park.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 13th day of December, 2018.

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Chair  
Parks and Recreation Commission

ATTEST:

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John Rodda, Director  
Parks & Recreation Department

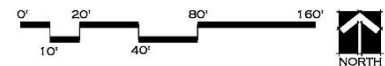


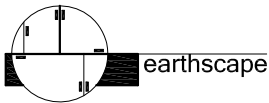
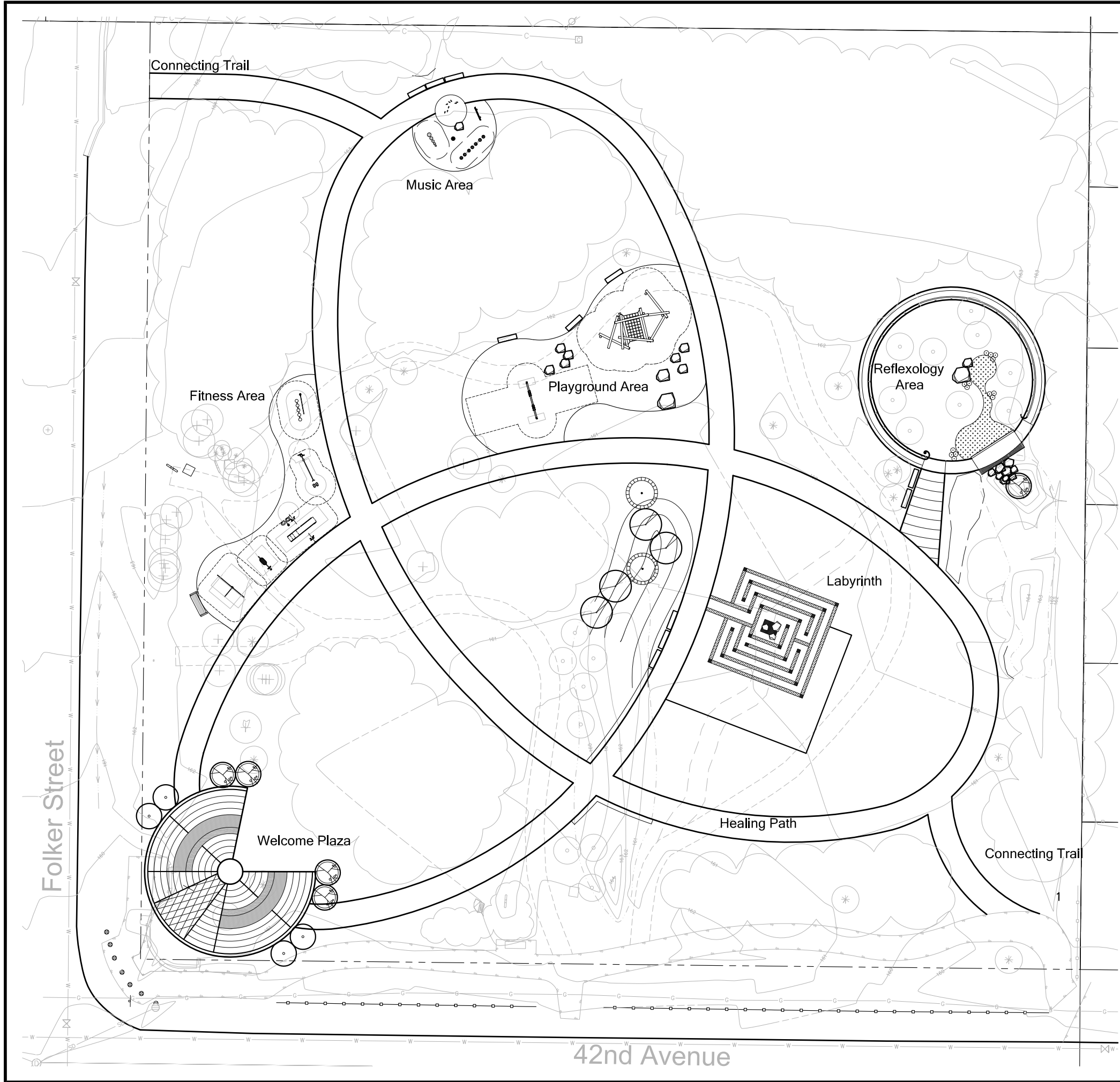


# Folker Park 2017 Site Plan Anchorage Alaska

MOA Parks Concept - "INTERGENERATIONAL" HEALING & FITNESS PARK

APRIL 3, 2017





Department of  
Parks and  
Recreation  
  
Municipality of  
Anchorage



PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

FOLKER PARK IMPROVEMENTS  
**Overall Site Plan**

SCALE	HOR. PER PLAN	DATE: 10/26/2018	GRID: SW1734	SHEET	L1 of L5
	VER. PER PLAN	STATUS: 65% PLAN SET			