



PARADISE PARK

Reignite a historic park to showcase the world's most diverse ecosystem.



WHY CARE ABOUT

Last May, the Surgeon General reported on an epidemic as harmful as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. **LONELINESS.**

His #1 recommendation?

INVEST IN SOCIAL

**PARKS, PLAZAS, MAINSTREETS, &
INFRASTRUCTURE.
MARKETS**

OTHER WHYS:

PUBLIC HEALTH / CONNECTION TO OUTDOORS

ECONOMIC VITALITY

FAMILY QUALITY OF LIFE / RECREATION

SHARED EXPERIENCES & COMMUNITY GATHERING

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP / EDUCATION



2022 LOCAL PARK ASSESSMENT

\$11 million needed just to bring parks up to baseline standards (only \$2 mill allocated from City)

City of Thomasville

Park Improvement Highlights



Systemwide Improvements



ADA accessibility assessment



Trees & landscaping



Wayfinding & entrance signage



Support features (drinking fountains, bottle fillers)



Splash pads

First Priority

Paradise Park



Gazebo restoration & concert plaza

Restrooms

Carriageway enhancement

Walking Trail

Parking Improvements



Second Priority

Cherokee Park



Parking improvements

Dog park relocation



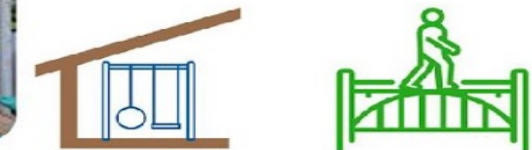
Third Priority

MacIntyre Park



Shade at playground

Trail - 8' wide paved w/ bridges



Bold - First Phase, Unbold - Later Phases

Cassidy Park



Upgrade to a community park

Picnic shelters (add/improve)

Disc golf course

Walking Trail

Parking Improvements



Northside Park



New playground

Basketball court replacement

Picnic shelter

Parking lot w/ ADA spaces and paved road

Trail - paved perimeter



Weston Park



Walking path extension

Ballfield improvements - bleachers, fencing, infield



Balfour/Varnadoe



Playground w/ shade

Tennis/pickleball improvements

Basketball Court Improvements

Parking & road upgrades

Picnic shelters (2)

Restroom improvements

Fitness area replacement

Trail - perimeter



Flipper Park



Playground replacement

Basketball court improvements

Trail - paved perimeter 8' wide



Specialty Parks with Regional Impact

Remington Park

ADA Walkways

Concrete Pads at Shelters



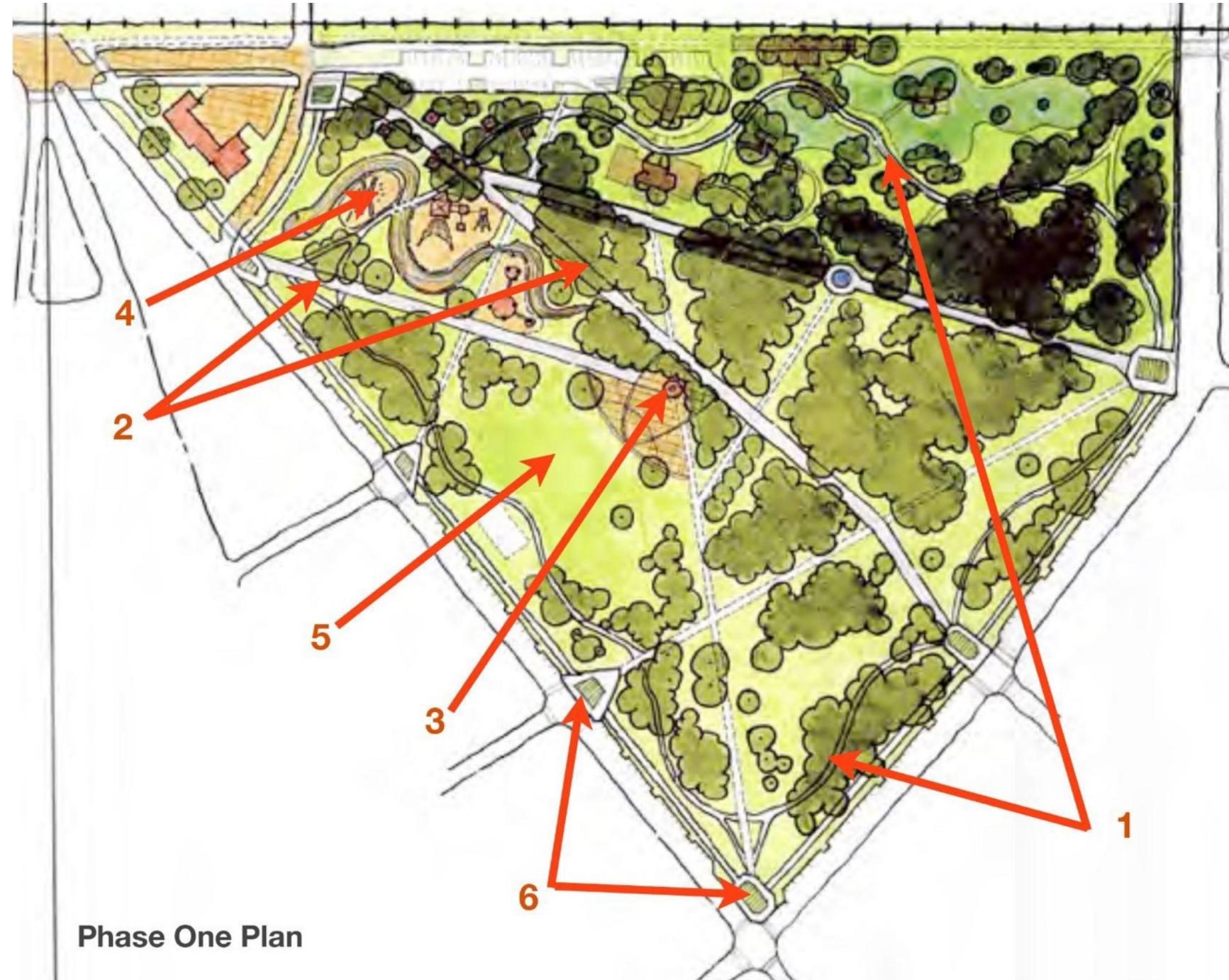
Country Oaks Golf Course



Implement Golf Course Renovation Master Plan



2018 DESIGN CHARRETTE



- 1. Walking Loop around the park
- 2. Improved carriageways
- 3. Rebuilt gazebo
- 4. Improved and consolidated playground

- 5. Flexible lawn area
- 6. Landscaped entries



Short-Term Improvements to Broad Street

2022 Park Improvement Plan



City wins Grant - \$200,000

DNR Soil & Water Conservation Grant

City Match - \$200,000

**Total Project Cost
\$400,000**

22 acre Park

\$18,000 per acre

Industry Average

\$200,000 per acre

From “*City*” Project to “*Community*”

Develop a Community Supported Master Plan

- Hire a Landscape Architect to create an exciting but practical design
- Present Master Plan to civic groups & organizations to get “buy in”.

Develop Strategic Partnerships

- Funding Partner - Williams Family Foundation
- Historic Preservation Partner - Landmarks
- Ecological / Restoration Partner - Tall Timbers
- Education Partner - Thomasville City Schools & SRTC

Develop a Steering Committee

- Engaged & Willing to work
- Young families who can build support
- Industry experience & Historic Perspective



PARADISE PARK

MORE THAN A NEIGHBORHOOD

Paradise Park is uniquely positioned to be a
PARK
REGIONAL DESTINATION PARK
because of 3 main factors:

LOCATION

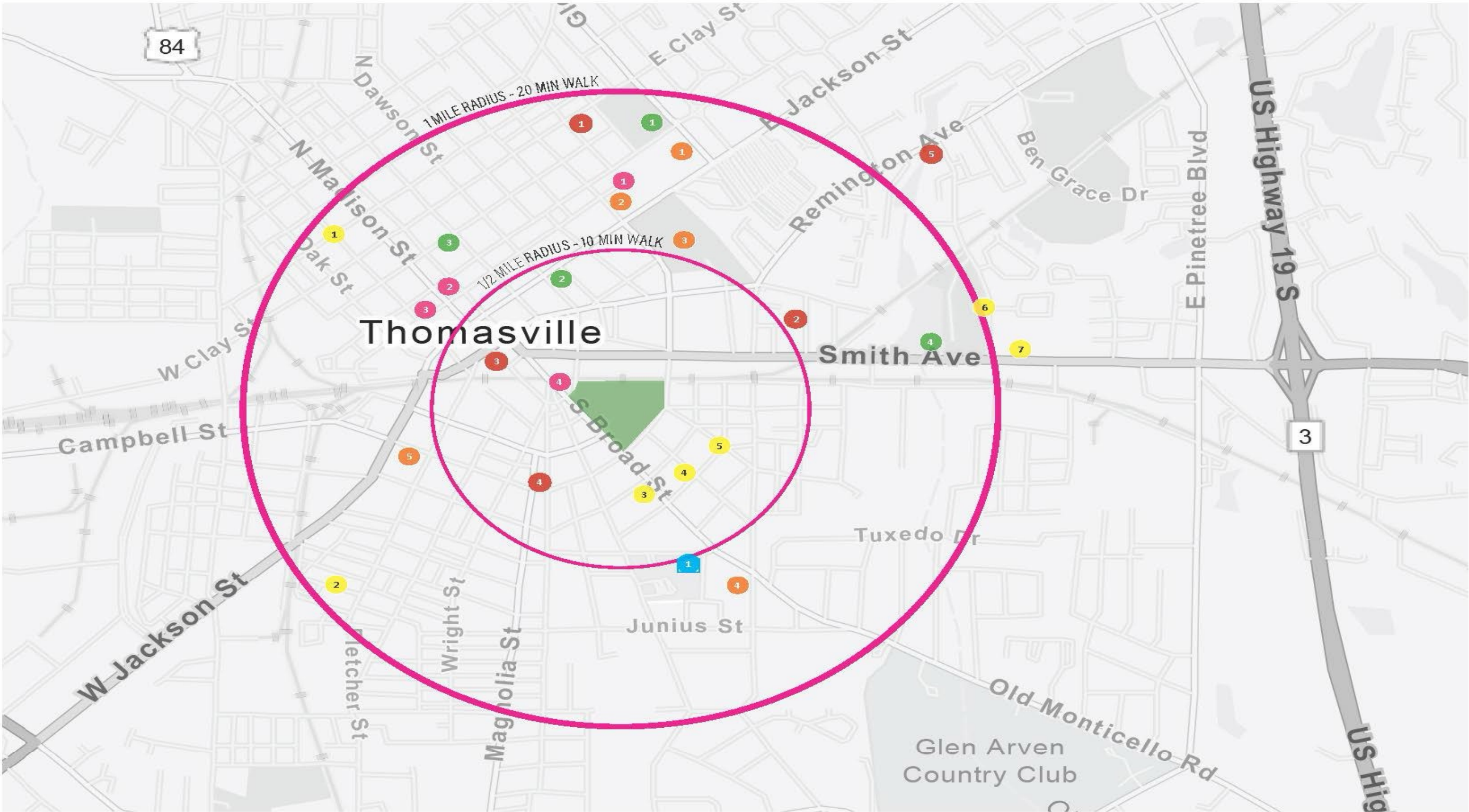
HISTORY

ECONOMIC IMPACT

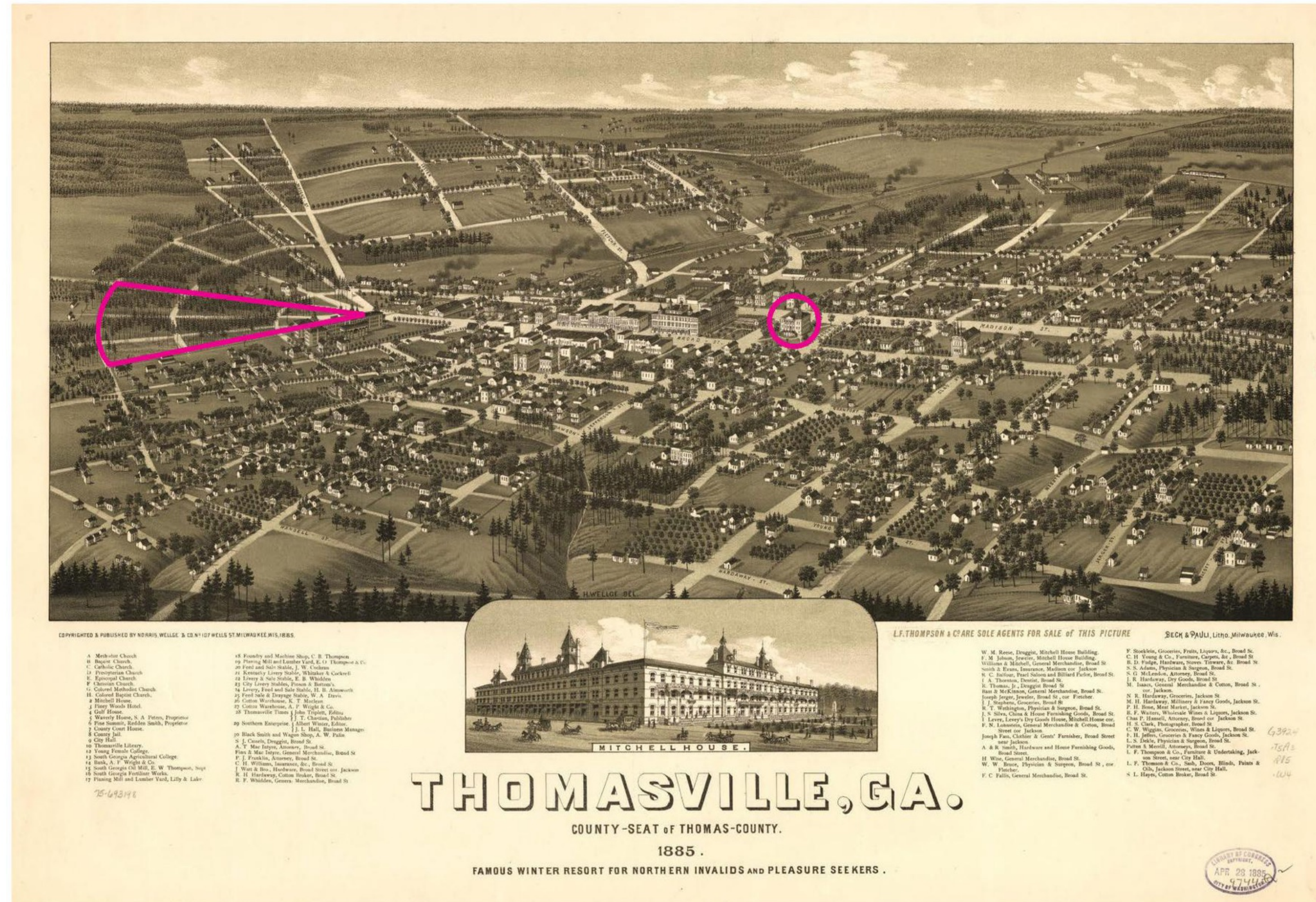
LOCATION

Location
CITY CONTEXT - WALKING CIRCLES

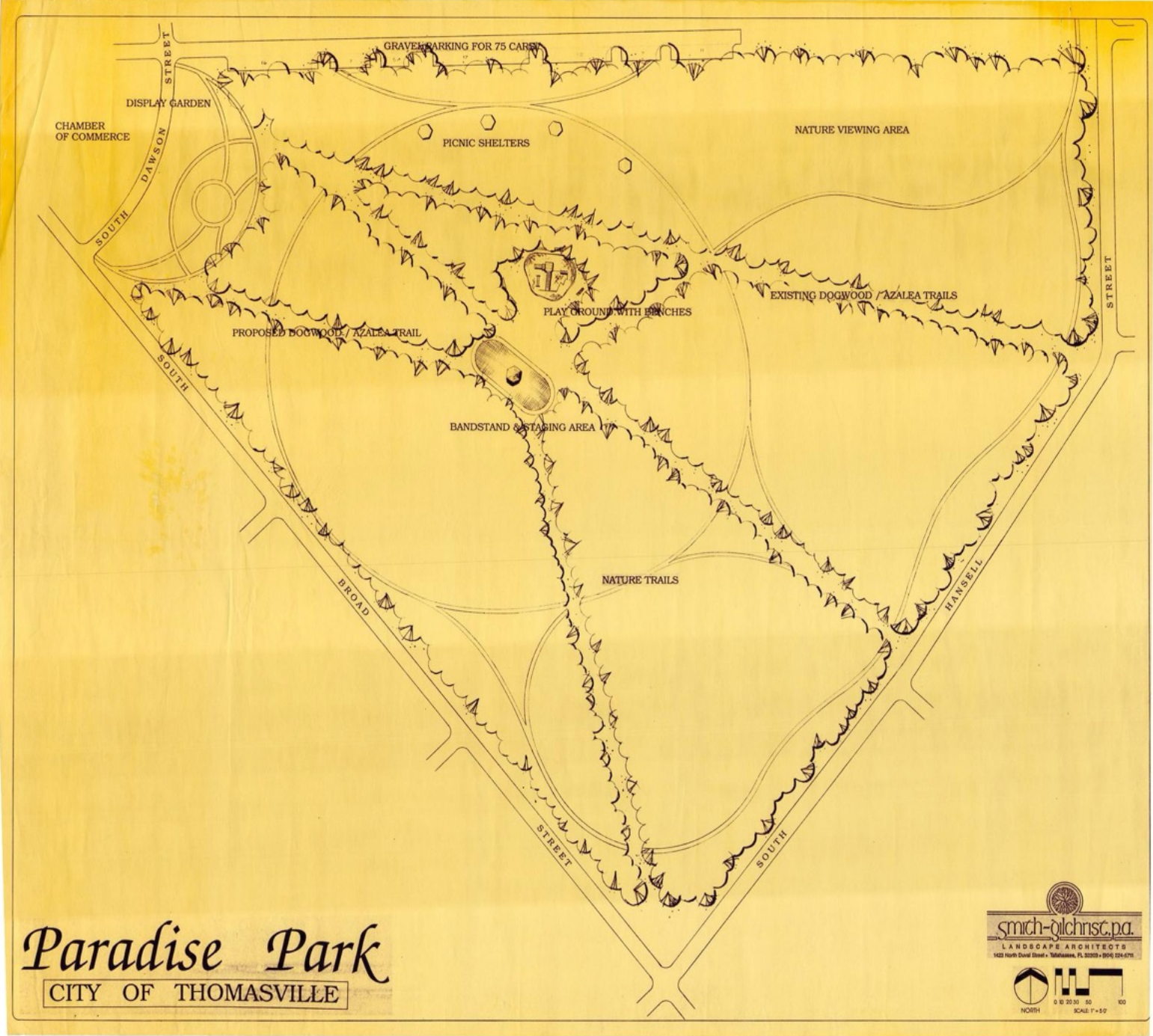
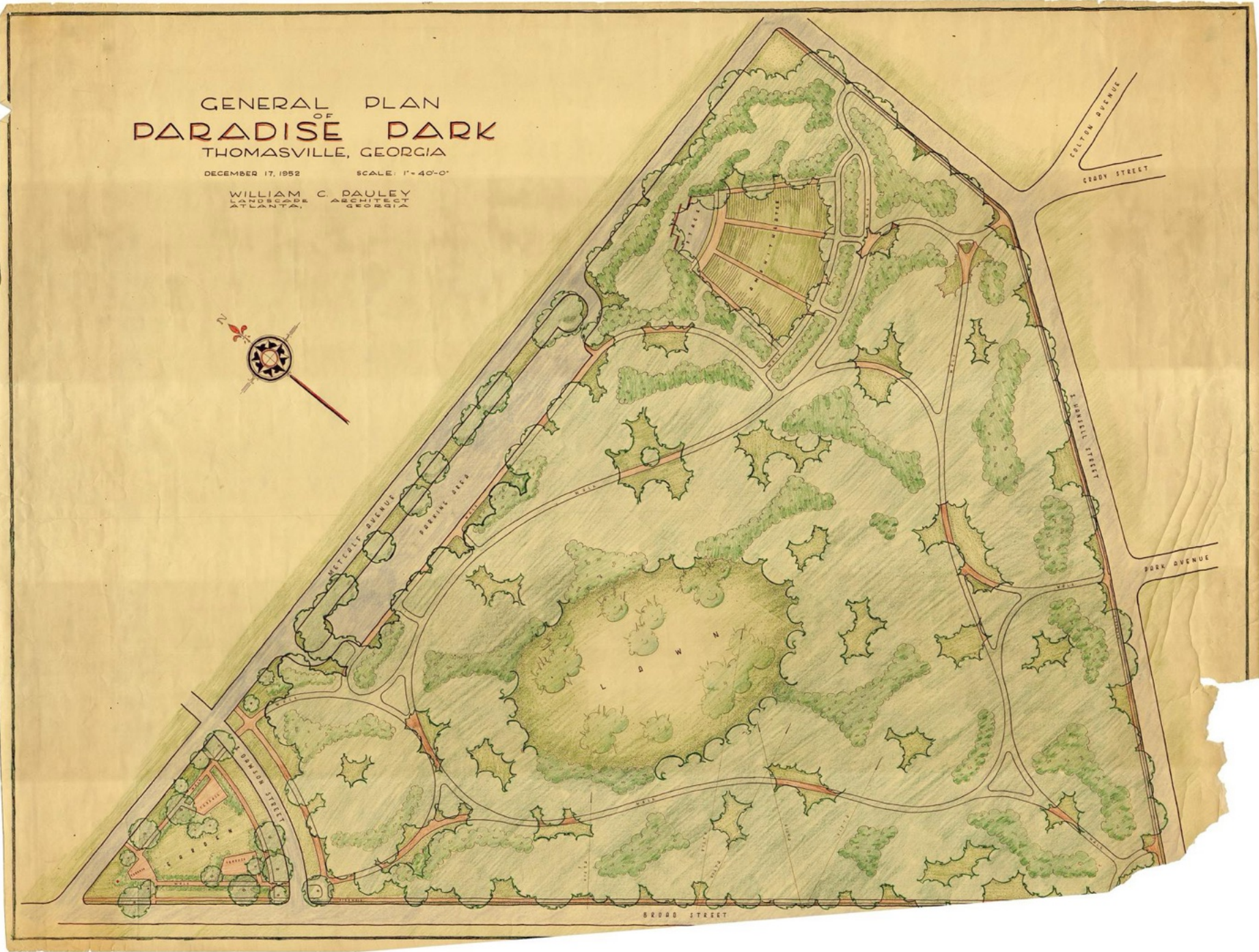
- SCHOOLS**
 - 1 Macintyre Park Middle School
 - 2 Scott Elementary School
 - 3 Thomasville Highschool
 - 4 Jerger Elementary School
 - 5 Harper Elementary School
- CIVIC / CULTURAL**
 - 1 Thomasville Center for the Arts
 - 2 Courthouse
 - 3 Public Library
 - 4 Chamber of Commerce
- PARKS & RECREATION**
 - 1 Macintyre Park
 - 2 YMCA
 - 3 Big Oak
 - 4 Cherokee Lake Park
- MEDICAL**
 - 1 Archbold Medical Center
- SENIOR LIVING**
 - 1 Scott Senior Center
 - 2 Azeala Way
 - 3 Camelia Gardens of Life Care
 - 4 Legacy Village at Plantation Manor
 - 5 Mission of Hope
 - 6 Southern Pines
 - 7 The Residence at Oak Grove
- DAYCARE**
 - 1 Bright Star Childcare
 - 2 Hands On Learning Academy
 - 3 St. Thomas Day School
 - 4 Smart Start Learning
 - 5 Thomas County Headstart Center



Carved out from the original street layout of the city, this 18 acre cone shaped park sat directly across downtown from Thomasville's Courthouse. Its focal point touched the edge of downtown and opened its arms out to the beautiful longleaf pine savannah beyond.

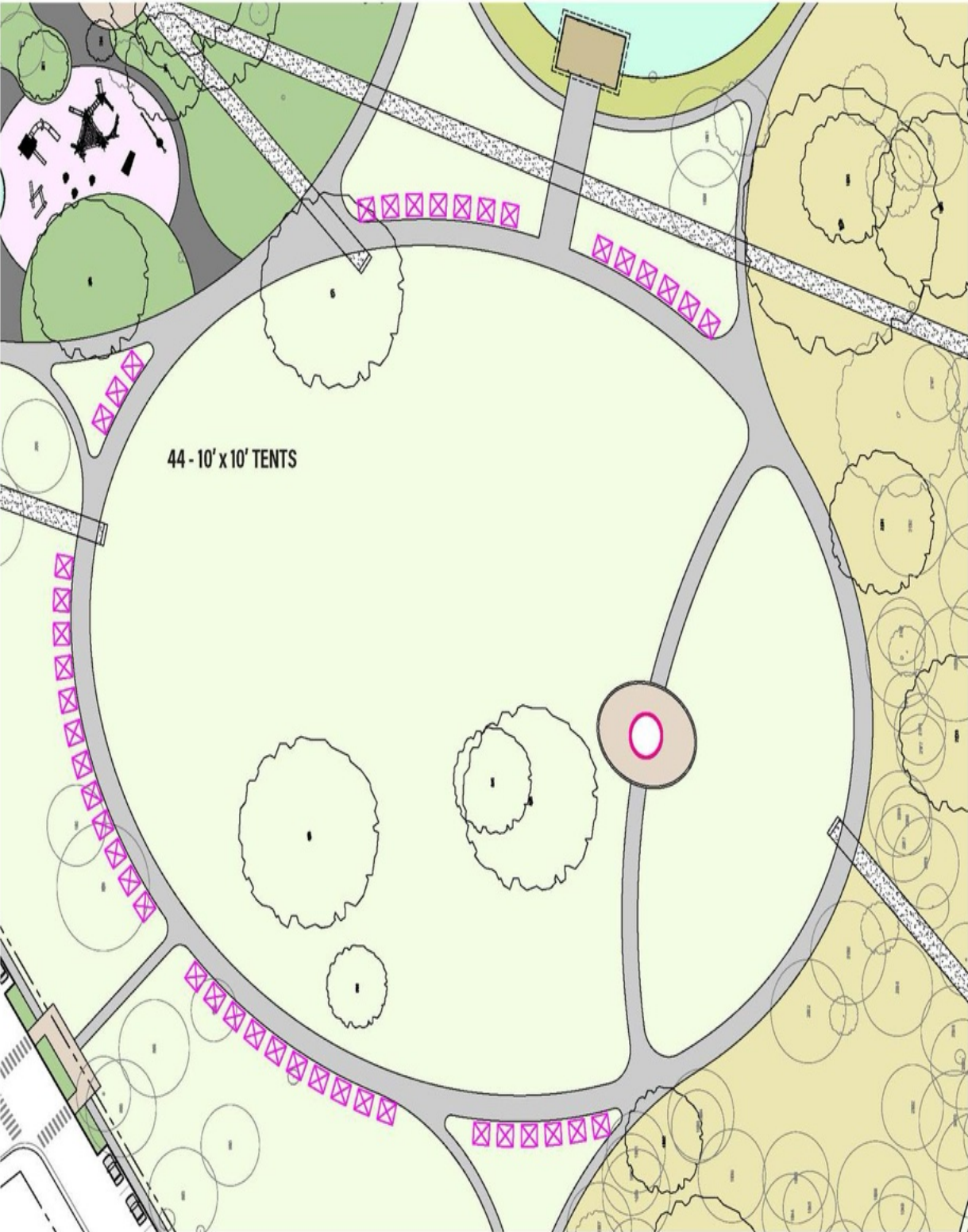


HISTORIC DESIGNS



LARGE OVAL LAWN

Concept Plan
RENOVATED HISTORIC BANDSHELL & OVAL GREEN



Paradise Park



ROSE FESTIVAL



ROSE FESTIVAL



ART IN THE PARK



ART IN THE PARK



23 January 2024







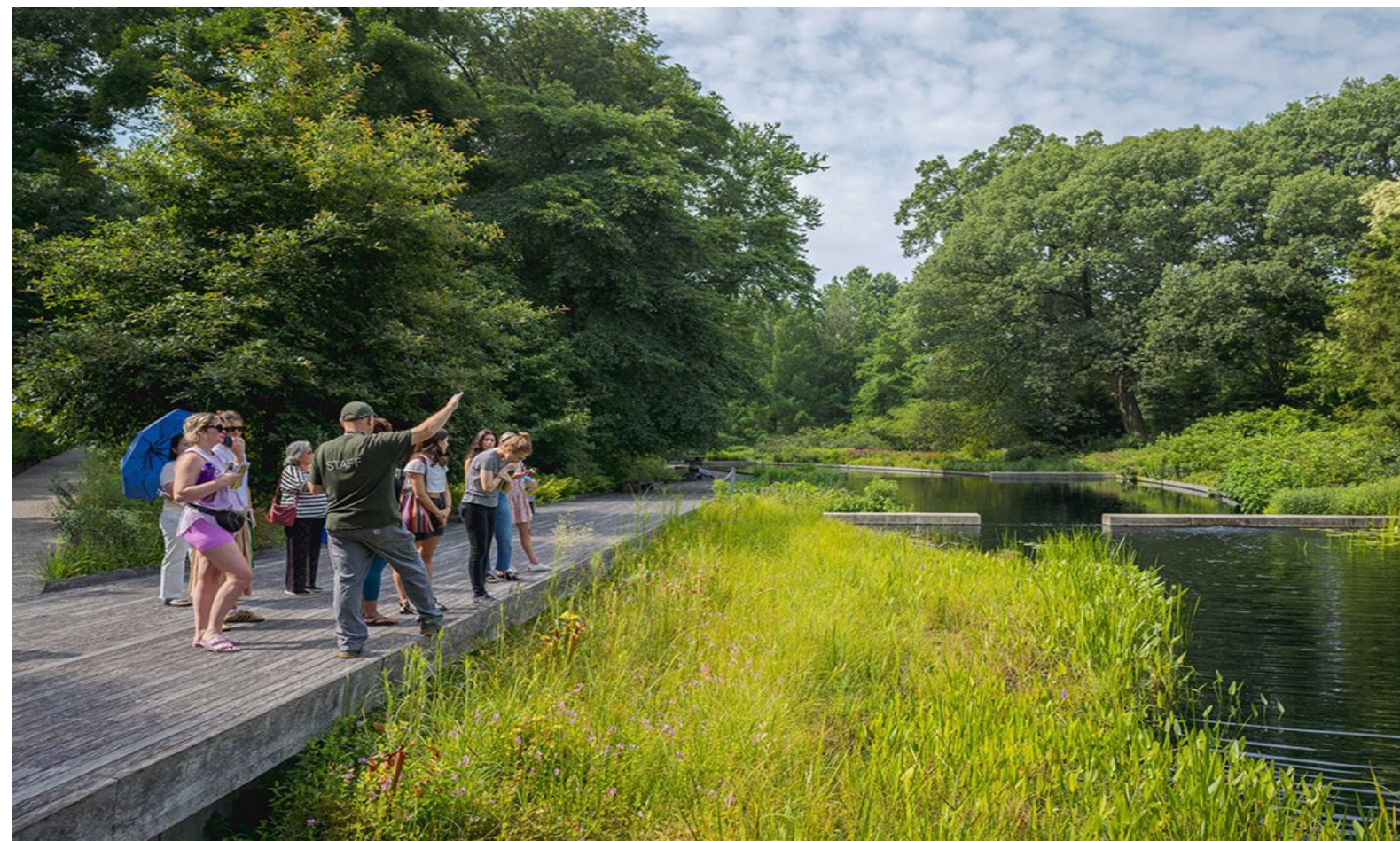
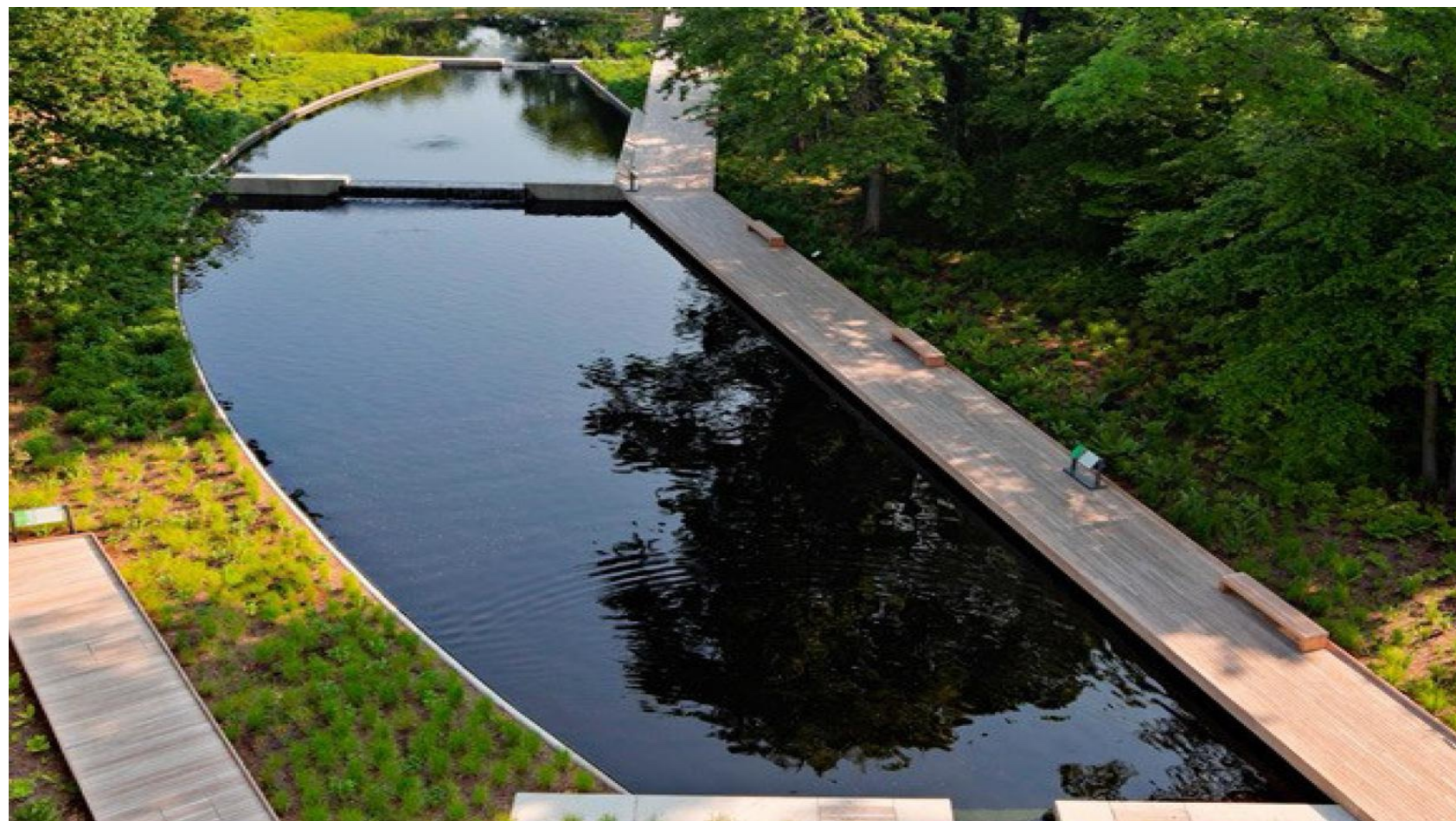
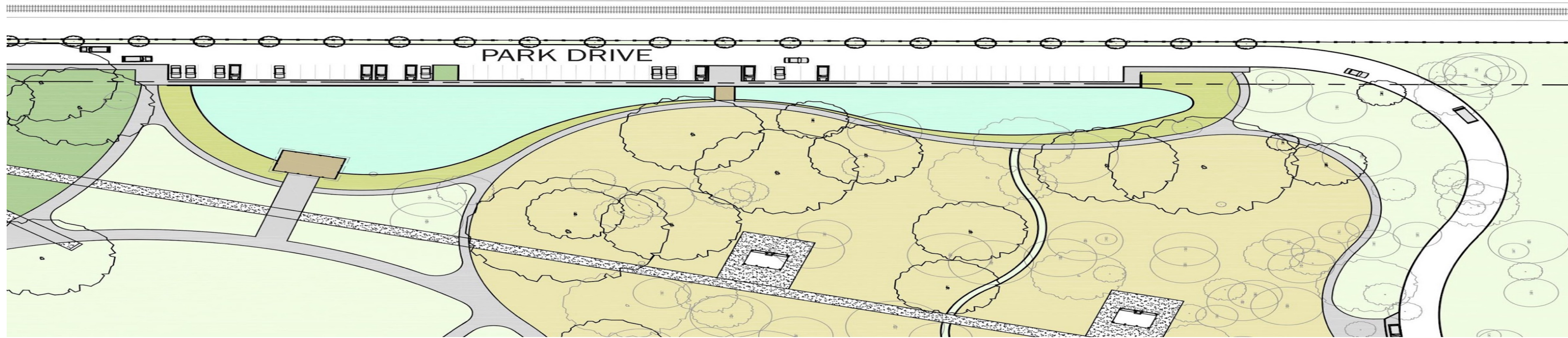
DESTINATION - NATURE BASED PLAYGROUND







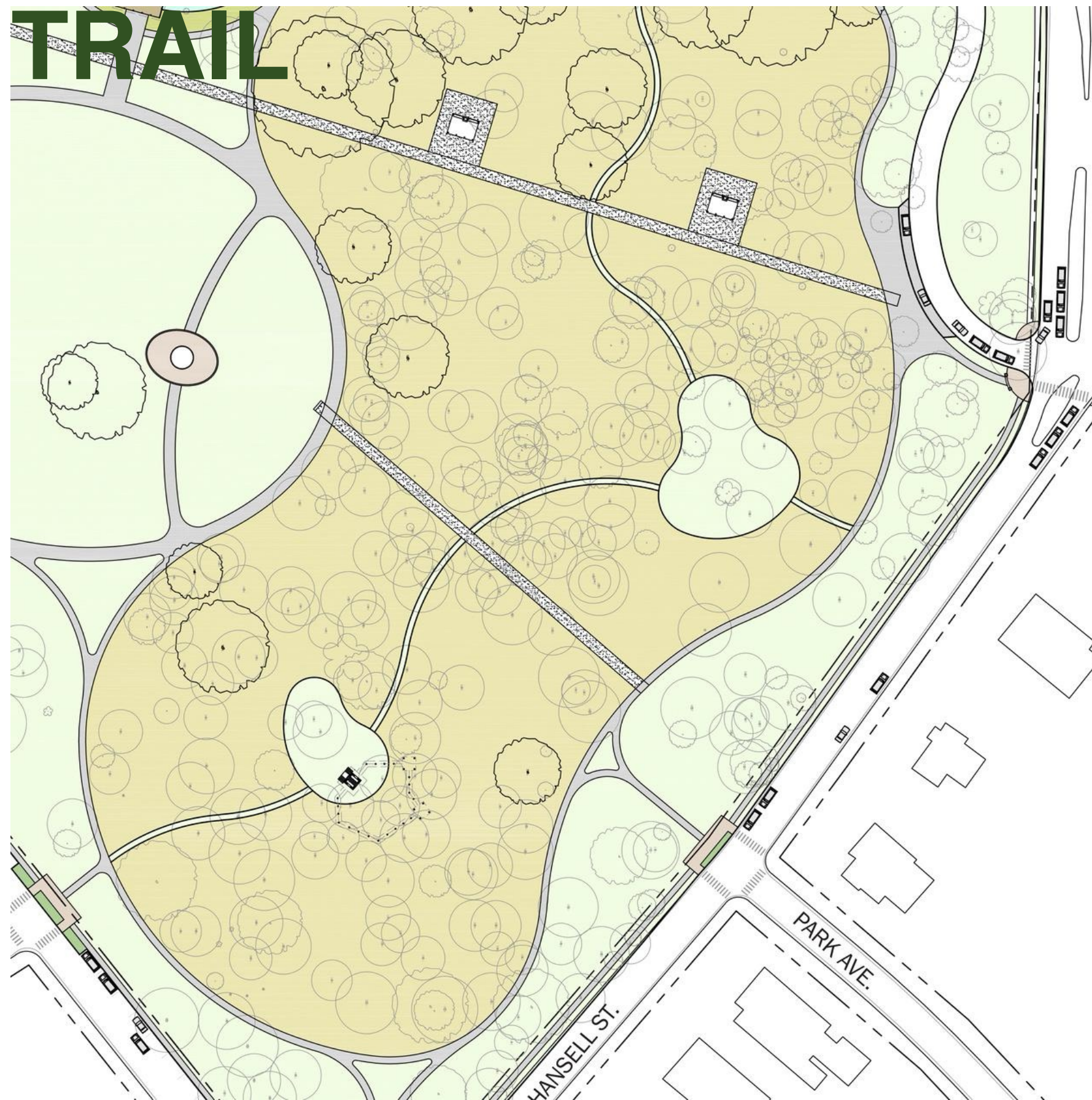
STORMWATER WETLAND







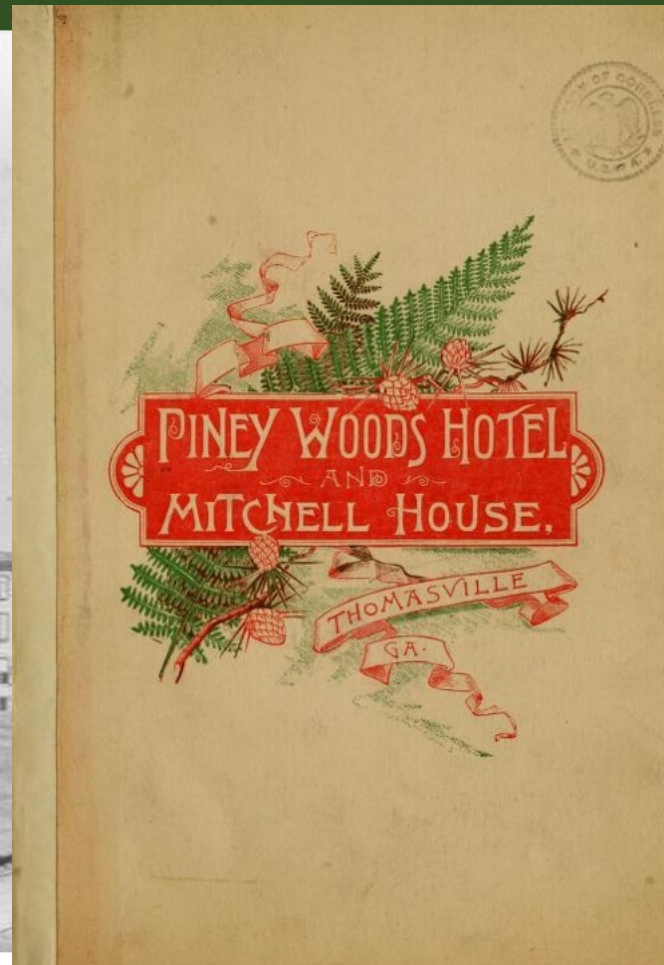
LONGLEAF PINE RESTORATION & EDUCATION



HISTORY

THOMASVILLE'S RESORT ERA

This magnificent New Hotel is destined to become the popular Southern health resort. Its superior location is in close proximity to the pine groves. **From its broad piazzas the perfumes of these grand old pine can be inhaled, while a short walk of 200 yards brings the visitor into this paradise of pine woods.** Pleasant drives and walks are laid out throughout this forest...



Arrival of the 1st train over the

Dr. C. W. Weaver “The diseases benefited or cured by a sojourn in this climate are those connected with respiration, particularly catarrhal, bronchial and asthmatic affections and cases of pulmonary consumption . . .much benefit has been received in cases of gout and rheumatism.”

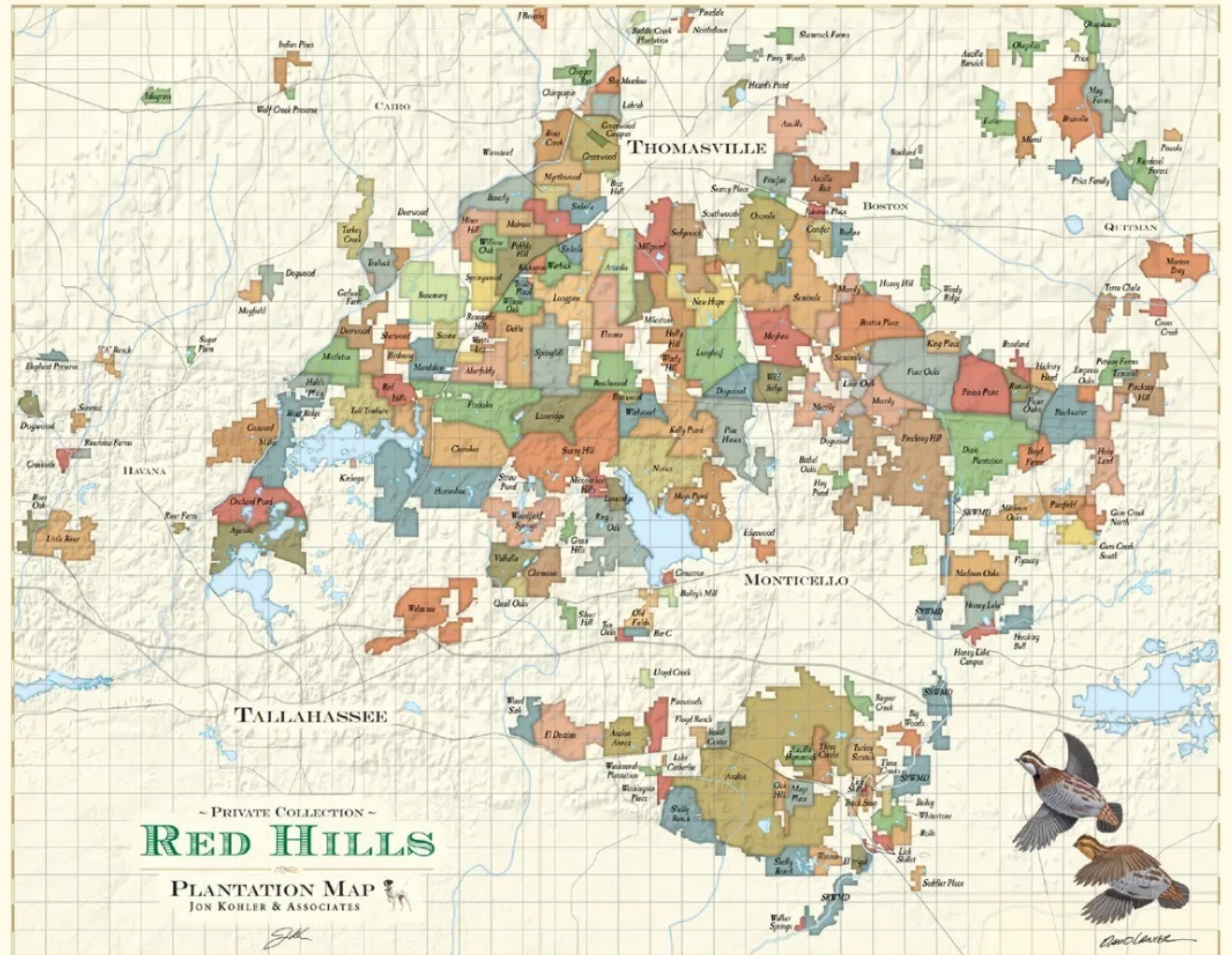
Nature Based Recreation



REGIONAL IMPACT

The Red Hills Region is home to over 200,000 acres of native longleaf pine forest, one of the largest privately owned forests in the United States. The economic impact of these privately protected forests is around \$200 million and employs over 1,700 people in the region.

Yet for a vast majority of residents and visitors, this ecosystem remains unseen and unknown.



REGIONAL IMPACT



High concentration of longleaf pine forests

Thomas County GA burns more property than anywhere else in the country.





Ethan Swope/AP photo

One of the Costliest in US History
Palisades Fire 2025



NATIONAL IMPACT

Largest Fire in TX History
Smokehouse Creek Fire 2024



One of the Deadliest in US History Maui Fire 2023

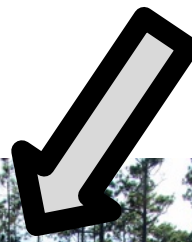
NATIONAL IMPACT



Honey Prairie Complex Fire
Georgia, 2011
>300,000 ac



Florida "Summer of Fire"
Florida, 1998
>500,000 ac



- ~38,000 total groundcover plants will be planted
- 36 different native species

Outreach



Outreach





Sidebar

Several trees killed by Hurricane Helene and 3 trees in way of sidewalk cut up into logs. 6 died from Ips beetles post drought
Send to mill to cut into specialty boards





Church of the Good Shepard (circa 1894)



First Missionary Baptist Church (circa 1900)



**Added stump samples to
dendrochronological database**

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The site plan for Victoria Park features a central green area with a 'REFURBISHED PLAYGROUND' and a 'NEW PLAYGROUND' to the right. The park is bordered by 'HUTCHWAY' to the north, 'S. BROAD ST.' to the west, and 'VICTORIA PLACE' to the south. A 'CSX RAILROAD' runs along the top. The plan also shows 'WALKWAYS', 'BENCHES', and 'TREES' throughout the site.

DNR Soil & Water Conservation Grant

City Investment - \$1,000,000

Tall Timbers - \$25,000

Williams FF - \$30,000

Total Phase I Budget:

\$1,500,000

City's Scope



Construction of Central Lawn & Oval Walkway & Carriageways



Construction of Central Lawn & Oval Walkway (completed)



Construction of Central Lawn & Oval Walkway (completed)

Landmark's Scope



Renovation of Historic Bandstand

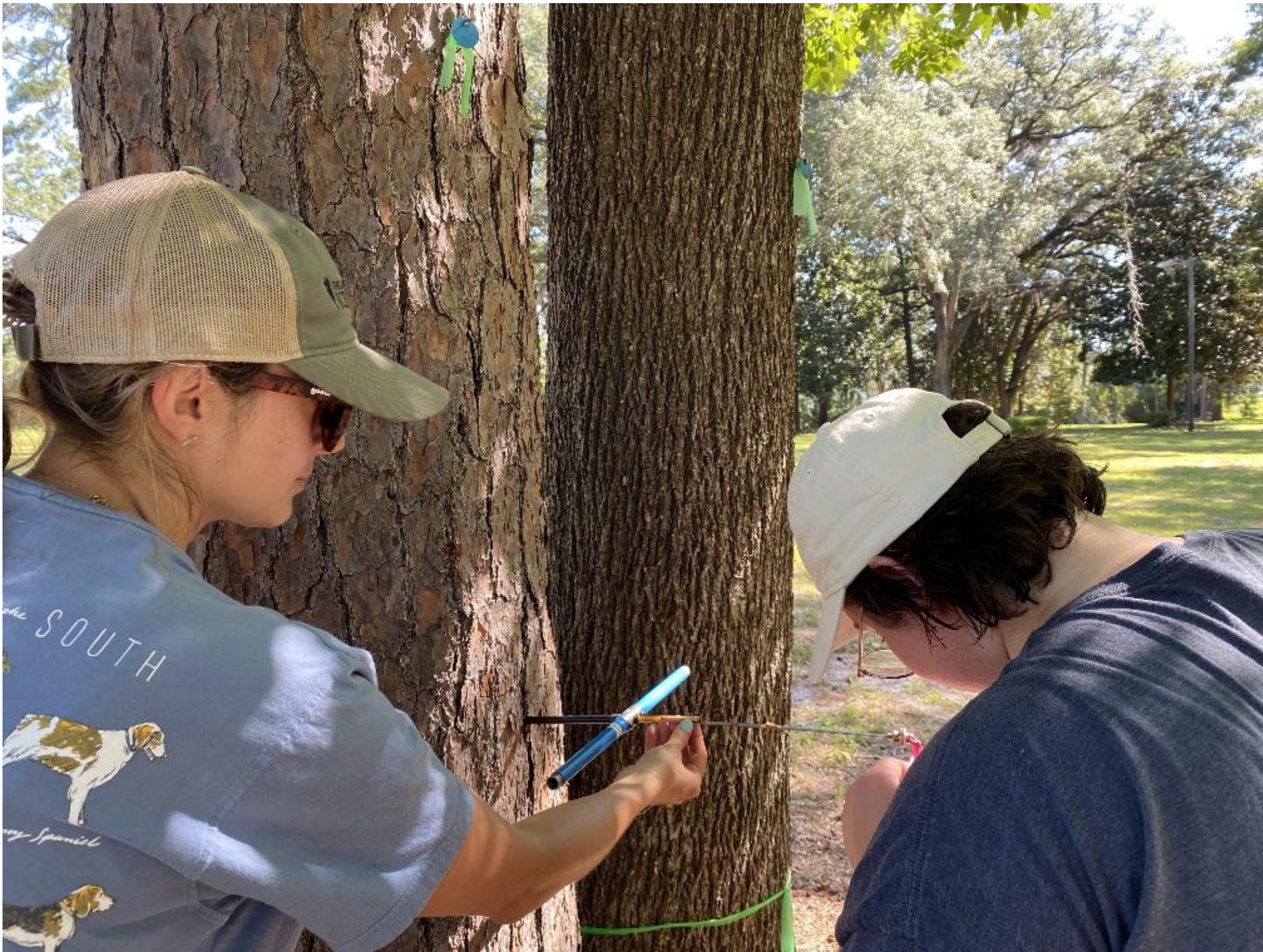


Restore Historic Carriageways & Bandstand (completed)

Tall Timbers Scope



Longleaf Pine Ecosystem Restoration



To Date

Sampled 18 longleaf pine
Average age 154 years old
Oldest tree 1812
Youngest longleaf was 1932













As I remember it, **Thomasville was a wonderful place to be a child.** It was a small community. You knew just about everybody and everybody knew you... We had wildlife all around, including some quail...

There was a park out front called **Paradise Park**, just across the street from our house... **It was heavily wooded with longleaf pine and had an open understory.** You could see from one end of the park to the other... And I remember vividly there was still wiregrass out there...

It would be an interesting ecological experiment to start putting a fire regime through it...

You might just see some of the former vegetation come back.

LEON NEEL, ART OF MANAGING LONGLEAF

Phase I Ribbon Cutting Celebration





PHASE II - 2026

PROJECT SCOPE - \$4.5 MILLION

Source: \$3 million (Grant), **\$1.5 million (50% Private Donor Match)**

► Phase II Design and Construction Documents

► Playground and Restrooms

► Entry Plaza, Access Road, and Additional Parking

► Outdoor Classroom Pavilions & Educational Kiosks

► Stormwater Wetland, Riparian Buffer, and Boardwalk

GRANT

Full Timbers
PARTNERS

City School System

Tourism Authority

GRANT

Chamber of Commerce
SUPPORTERS

Williams Parker Foundation

The Jones Center at Ichauway

QUESTIONS?

