

THE MCCOYS CREEK RESTORATION PLAN

The restoration plan aims to reduce flooding, restore ecosystem health, expand recreational opportunities along the creek, and connect creek-side neighborhoods to the water. The project proposes to use natural channel design to transform McCoys creek from an environmental concern into a community asset, building a functional ecosystem that can adapt and sustain itself over time. In all images, the purple line depicts the alignment of the proposed Emerald Trail.



FINDINGS

- Stream Restoration can make a significant difference in reducing flood hazards
- King Street bridge needs to be replaced and raised as planned
- Stockton Street bridge needs to be replaced and lengthened to span a wider cross section
- McCoys Creek Boulevard upstream of Stockton cannot be brought to code for flood plain level of service; recommendation to close this segment remains
- The bottleneck at the CSX rail crossing bridge cannot be improved by addressing it as a stand-alone item; rail bridge will remain as is
- McCoys Creek Boulevard can remain in place from Claude Street to Goodwin Street to allow passage under the railroad, but may need to be closed during certain rainfall events
- Large floods are sensitive to the conditions at the Times-Union property near the outfall. The design results in substantial flood reductions upstream to Stockton Street, up to two feet



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RECREATION PLAN



We engaged the community surrounding the creek to help us prioritize the recreation and amenities to be included in the design. What we heard from the residents and community stakeholders:

- Multiple fishing opportunities along the creek
- Picnic/Grilling
- Habitat
- Seating and shade
- Public restrooms
- Outdoor learning space
- Fitness stations
- Active recreation – basketball, tennis
- Community gardens
- Playgrounds for all ages
- Pollinator gardens

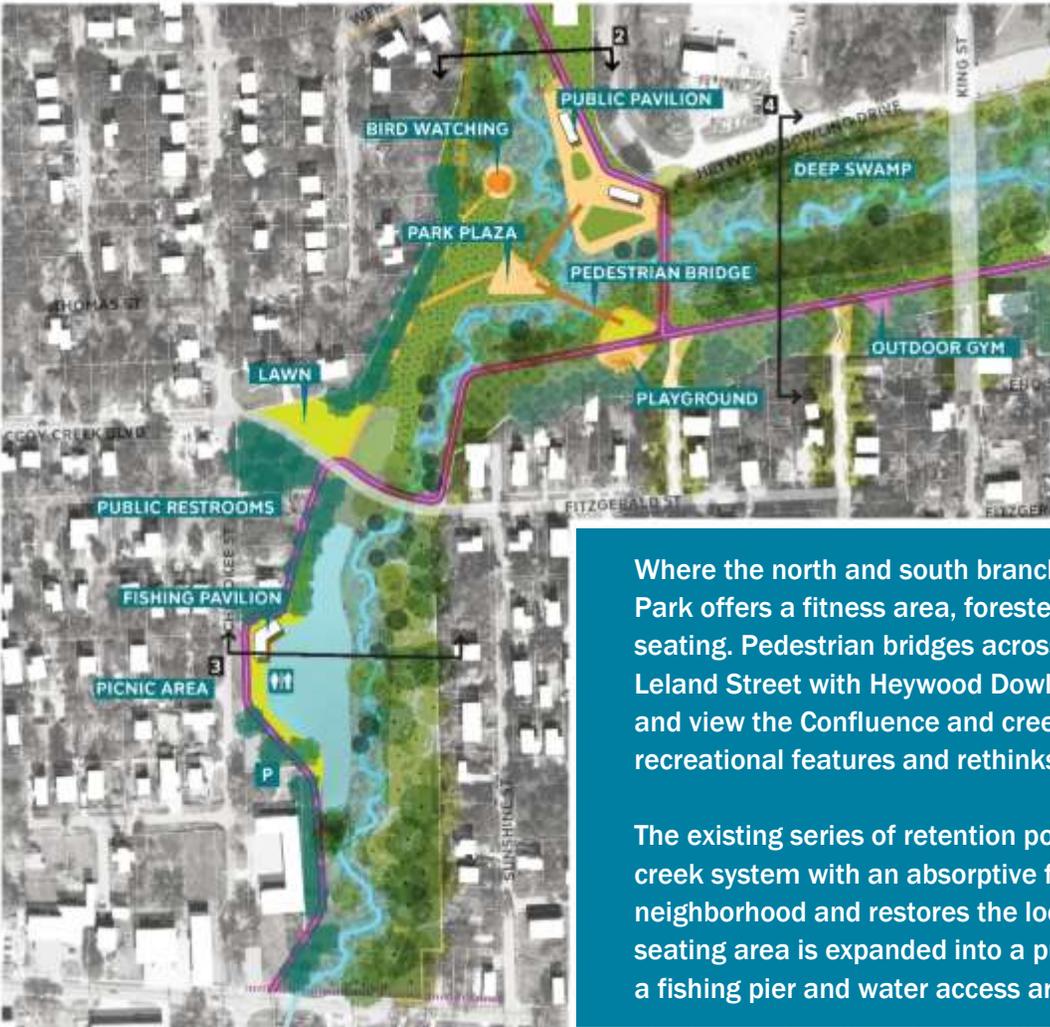


The Hollybrook Bluff is a public space that would serve the families of the Hollybrook Homes Apartments, providing safe spaces for play and gardening that are elevated above the creek.

The restored freshwater creek meanders within an expanded floodplain planted with native vegetation.

The Emerald Trail connects to this area along Hollybrook Avenue. An additional pedestrian connection is recommended extending across the creek along Webster Street, maintaining critical community circulation.





Where the north and south branch of McCoys Creek intersect, Confluence Park offers a fitness area, forested paths, overlook areas, and hammock seating. Pedestrian bridges across the creek would link Thomas Street and Leland Street with Heywood Dowling Drive, creating multiple ways to cross and view the Confluence and creek. South Branch Dock enhances existing recreational features and rethinks the area's water management strategy.

The existing series of retention ponds are transformed into a connected creek system with an absorptive floodplain that moves floodwater out of the neighborhood and restores the local riparian ecosystem. The overlook seating area is expanded into a public BBQ and picnic pavilion, connected to a fishing pier and water access area.



New access points to the Creek are provided at street-ends, including trails and overlooks at Smith Street and Nixon Street. A variety of options were studied and modeled for the alignment of the creek at McCoys Creek Boulevard, including closure and partial closure for enhanced flood protection. The closure scenario is proposed here, with a deeper floodplain, meandering creek, and recreational boardwalk eco-walk. The Emerald Trail greenway will provide bicycle and pedestrian access along the neighborhood edge. The Stockton Trail Head creates a community gathering place and plaza by the Stockton Street Bridge, a key connection between the neighborhoods to the north and south. The creek widens within this zone and is able to host a kayak launch and fishing overlook at its banks



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The Forest Ecological Park is an expanded park resource that balances active and passive recreation needs along the creek. On the south side of the creek, a large lawn overlook and field creates an open and flexible community gathering space, framing the view to the creek beyond. On the north side, an immersive ecological zone of wetland boardwalks, wildlife refuge, and forest trails introduce new experiences into the area. The creek expands here, allowing for more flood and stormwater storage. This space will have to be redesigned as the City is selling most of the land to a private developer.



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The McCoy's Creek Walk is a more urbanized section of the creek that runs from the mouth of the creek, past the Times Union building, into the Brooklyn neighborhood. Here, the Emerald Trail greenway is closer to the creek, retained by reinforced and planted edges.



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The Creek Walk gets people close to the tidal portion of the creek, and offers opportunities for intertidal terraces and get-downs to the water, especially near the future development site at the Times Union building.

At the Times Union, the creek is 'day-lit' – uncovered and open to the sky, creating space for a civic plaza and waterfront esplanade. Multiple alternatives are being considered to work in tandem with emerging development proposals in this area.



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