

THE PROJECT LIST:

- BID formation (consulting services)\$40,000
- Engineering and design250,000
- Street reconfiguration.....1,200,000
- Boardwalk development.....1,800,000
- Façade/beautification projects650,000
- Signage/gateways downtown340,000

The total cost of the downtown revitalization program is just under \$4.3 million and would be implemented over about a four-year span. Engineering and funding will take a year and construction two to three years to complete.

a. FUNDING SOURCES

The City of Stevenson, Washington (Columbia River Gorge area) used 17 different funding sources when they implemented their downtown revitalization program. Oak Harbor will most likely have a similar situation. Another consideration is the fact that downtown revitalization programs usually take between five and ten years to complete – with ongoing maintenance and upgrade work continuing after that.

We recommend that \$40,000 of general funds be used to create a business improvement district (BID), but that all other projects be funded from donations, grants, low-interest or zero interest loans, or from new sales and property taxes generated as a result of new investment downtown.

a. BID FORMATION, CONSULTING SERVICES

The first order of business is to find funding solutions within the downtown district. This is typically done through the formation of a Business Improvement District (BID). Unfortunately, a property tax will not work for Oak Harbor because the assessed value of the buildings and properties in the core district are so low. The total assessed value of buildings and properties along Pioneer Way between Midway and City Beach Drive total just \$13 million.

Therefore, alternatives need to be explored. One formula that has worked in other communities includes the following elements:

1. Create districts: One might include properties along Bayshore Drive, another district might include the properties one block behind Pioneer Way, and the primary district would include the properties along Pioneer Way. Property boundaries would need to be developed.
2. Employees per business: A second criteria would be added to the matrix and would involve the number of employees per business. A business with one to four employees might pay one amount, a business with five to ten another amount, etc.
3. Type of business: Typically, professional services gain the least from downtown revitalization efforts, while retail, entertainment and dining stand to gain the most. Business type would also be included to the matrix.

A combination of the various criteria will determine what each business would pay into the BID. Professional expertise should be brought in to assist in this determination and formation of the BID.

Because the downtown businesses stand to gain the most from the revitalization effort, they should play a ma-

ior role in coming up with a funding program, which would include grants and secondary funding sources. We've included in the Supporting Documentation a couple of case histories of downtown revitalization programs implemented in Washington. Creative thinking is the name of the game.

- Cost:** \$40,000
- Implementation:** WRC subcommittee. This is the second subcommittee for this project. It would include the two downtown business representatives, the city finance director, community development director, and a city council representative.
- Funding source:** General funds

b. ENGINEERING AND DESIGN

The WRC, working with the Project Manager, will select an architectural and engineering team to lead the effort on the streetscape, traffic flow, and façade improvement program. The project will include:

- A traffic study and research to determine best methods of increasing sales in the core district. This includes looking at closing the street to vehicle traffic, looking at one-way traffic, angle parking versus parallel parking, keeping the street a two-way street, etc.
- Streetscape design: A look at widening sidewalks, changing from concrete to stamped asphalt or a board walk, planning buffers, seating and other streetscape amenities, creating outdoor café seating areas, etc.
- Perpendicular and on-site signage recommendations, design standards. This would also include the creation of a merchant-driven design-review committee that would work with retailers on exterior displays, signage, sandwich boards, etc.
- Façade improvement design, specifications, retailer assistance, color schemes, design elements that fit the maritime theme, façade easements, etc.
- Infrastructure requirements tied to street resurfacing, placing utilities underground (a high priority), creating utility easements, and other engineering elements that need to be determined for a sustainable redevelopment effort.
- Signage: This includes the design of gateway signage, wayfinding signage in the downtown core, replacement of street signs with decorative signage.
- Parking: Parking is a major issue and needs to be included in part of the plan. This includes parking locations, space development, landscape buffers, access between parking and the “mall area.”
- Costs: The team will also need to provide detailed construction drawings and development costs along with possible funding options for construction projects. They will also need to provide a development timeline and recommendations for business activity during construction periods.

This project will require several disciplines including traffic engineers, infrastructure engineering, architecture, landscape architecture, public outreach and facilitation, and graphic design.

- Cost:** \$250,000
- Implementation:** City and WRC subcommittee
- Funding source:** Grant matching funds with BID revenues. To be determined by city staff and brought to the council for consideration.

c. STREET RECONFIGURATION

In order to make downtown Oak Harbor's Harborside Shops a showcase retail district, the street, streetscape,

and sidewalks will need to be redeveloped. Trees are already uprooting the sidewalks, sidewalks are too narrow in places, and so on. At this point, we do not have specifics of what would all be entailed on exact costs, but did include \$1.2 million in the budget as a starting point. Past experience has helped us an initial “guesstimate” on the cost.

Cost: Approximately \$1,200,000
Implementation: City of Oak Harbor
Funding sources: Various including grants, BID funds, other city funding sources to be determined and brought to the council for consideration and adoption.

d. BOARDWALK DEVELOPMENT

We recommend that the sidewalks be removed and replaced with a boardwalk, made up of Trex – a recycled material that simulates wood, but with an incredible reduction in maintenance and a much longer life than actual wood. The boardwalk may also provide an easily accessible corridor for underground utilities. The boardwalk would create a true themed element to downtown embracing the maritime theme while creating a true sense of place for downtown.

This section of Pioneer Way would become a major attraction and a core-spending area (destination retail area) for both locals and visitors alike.

Cost: Approximately \$1.8 million (this includes placement of utilities underground)
Implementation: City and WRC subcommittee
Funding source: To be determined

e. FACADE IMPROVEMENTS, BEAUTIFICATION PROJECTS

Curb appeal is vitally important to any destination retail district. The streetscape is half the puzzle, but the actual retail district (buildings and merchant mix) are the difference between success and failure.

This project includes the possibility of creating a façade easement program for building improvements (visual), and includes seasonal landscaping and annual color, hanging baskets, fixtures and furnishings along the streetscape, new street trees, planters and potted plants, streetscape art, etc.

Cost: \$650,000
Implementation: WRC and downtown merchants association
Funding source: BID revenues

f. GATEWAYS AND SIGNAGE

All of the signage and gateways along the Harborside Shops will be custom designed and fabricated to showcase the maritime theme. This includes street signs, directional signage, gateways at each end of the district, lighting and other signage elements.

Cost: \$340,000
Implementation: City working with the WRC, downtown merchant association
Funding source: To be determined

g. DOWNTOWN PROPERTY OWNERS & MERCHANTS

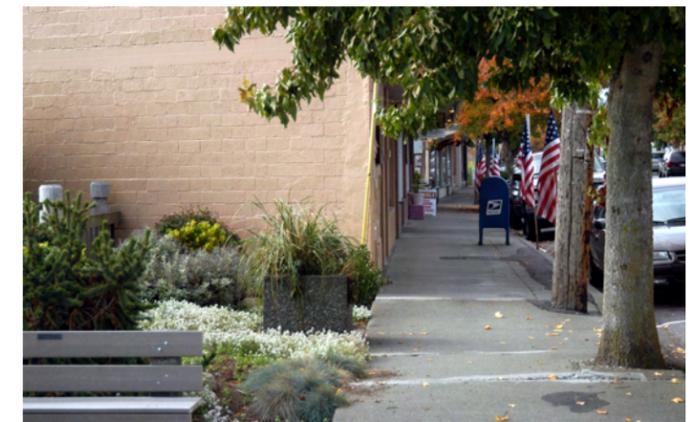
Success of any downtown redevelopment effort relies heavily on a commitment by the merchants, and the property owners, who must also invest in the program. The downtown merchants association will play an active role in this program, but their primary role will be towards marketing and retail merchant mix. They will have two positions on the WRC and will make up the primary voice on the subcommittee assigned to the downtown revitalization effort.

We recommend that a special zoning district be created for this section of Pioneer Way and that the types of businesses be specified. For instance, at street level shops might be either retail or dining-oriented. But even further, you can identify them to “visitor retail” as opposed to “neighborhood retail.” Secondly, you might promote upper level lodging or offices. Having professional services downtown is excellent and brings additional business and employees into the downtown core, increasing investment and retail sales and services.

This effort needs to come from the downtown business community, who will come to the city for implementation or changes to zoning ordinances.



Downtown has tremendous potential to be a showcase pedestrian-friendly shopping and entertainment district with wider sidewalks, angle-parking, enhanced beautification, and facade improvements - all with a maritime/nautical theme. Placing overhead wires underground should be a major consideration.



Elements of the downtown revitalization program include widening sidewalks, creating a merchant-driven signage and exterior display review committee, enhanced beautification program, facade improvements, and addressing the retail mix, parking and other issues.

THE PROJECT LIST:

- RV park legalities.....\$20,000
- New park development2,800,000

The RV park is another important tourism program that will generate increased spending in Oak Harbor, tapping into a higher income visitor. RV parks generate lodging tax dollars as well as rental revenues. It's anticipated that the new RV park would be a public/private partnership.

Developing the RV park is one of the first steps in the City Beach Park redevelopment effort.

a. LEGALITIES, CONTRACTS

Already budgeted earlier in the program, this allows for legal and other fees associated with reaching an agreement with the recruited RV park developer, land owner(s), and the City. The existing RV park generates positive revenues for the city and these revenues will be needed with a newly developed waterfront park.

The idea is to create a new RV park – a first class facility – in the Freund property next door, expand it to include approximately 75 to 80 spaces (if not more), with on-site amenities, extensive landscaping, etc. This “program” will require some time from legal council regarding a possible public/private partnership, possible property swap, mitigation, revenue sharing program, etc.

- Cost:** \$20,000 (already included earlier in this plan)
- Implementation:** Recruitment contractor, working with the city and WRC
- Funding source:** General funds (economic development)

b. NEW RV PARK DEVELOPMENT

We recommend the new RV park be privately developed and managed. This puts the park on the tax roles and allows the city to concentrate on the other larger projects. The RV park project must address adequate screening from the neighboring residential district, should be first class (no gravel), include landscaping and trees between each RV spot, full hookups, a picnic and play area, guest services facility (laundry, showers, restrooms, etc.), and should be a gated RV park with year round, onsite management.

- Cost:** Approximately \$2.8 million
- Implementation:** A private developer working with the City
- Funding source:** Privately developed



The project list:

- 14 park development projects\$9,735,400
 - Contracts management.....210,000*
- *over 3 years

Marketing, signage, the Event Center and downtown redevelopment are the most important projects in this entire plan because they fulfill community development initiatives, tourism development, and economic development (non tourism). These projects also create a much stronger return on investment than the park. Downtown revitalization will increase retail sales, create new jobs, and encourage investment, which translates to new tax base. The Event Center will also encourage private investment, increase retail sales, create new jobs, increase hotel stays (overnight visitors spend three times that of day visitors), increase lodging taxes, etc.

The park, on the other hand, is the most important “community development” project in this program. It is the community’s front door and one of the most beautiful locations for a community park in the Northwest. It is also one of the most underdeveloped and underutilized parks in the region. This park, alone, is the signature element in promoting quality of life, the top reason why new businesses and residents will move to Oak Harbor.

It’s important to point out that the park, while primarily a community asset, is also a powerful tourism draw although not the primary draw. The Knockabout Playground provides a major venue for families for events, conferences, and those visiting friends and family. It keeps the spending in Oak Harbor rather than in other areas of the island or Anacortes. Likewise, the Scuttlebutt Park area and Lagoon & Stage provide a venue for multi-day events produced by organizations outside the community: car shows, antique and art shows, entertainment, etc. Finally, visitors look for diversions or secondary activities. The park provides this while keeping the “money” in Oak Harbor.

It is also the project where funding is toughest to come by. Tied to the park are several other elements that are equally important – and expensive:

- The pier project
- Water transportation between the marina and downtown
- Connection of the promenade from City Beach Park to Flintstone Park
- Relocation and expansion of the RV park

a. ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING

This is a specialized type of land planning that may require hiring a different team than the one working on downtown revitalization. Public plaza, entertainment, and park design require much more emphasis on landscape architecture, graphic design (exterior exhibits, interpretive signage, environmental graphics), and visitor amenities design than on engineering and architecture – although those disciplines are very important to the project.

Visual appeal and the ability to create separation without walls will play a major role in the “Windjammer Park” development project.

A separate Request for Qualifications (RFQ) should be developed for this project and the best team possible selected to provide the final design for the park and its various elements.

Cost: \$600,000 spread over two years
Implementation: WRC
Funding source: To be determined. A mix of grants, loans and other programs

b. RELOCATION OF AIRCRAFT

The A-6 aircraft already located at the park needs to be relocated. The sooner the better. The aircraft is deteriorating quickly in the salt air, and the amount of bird droppings makes the relic more of an eyesore than an attraction. We have not determined where the plane should go, but it should be moved as soon as a suitable location has been found.

Cost: \$10,000
Implementation: City working with local volunteers
Funding source: General funds

c. RELOCATION OF BASEBALL FIELDS

There are three baseball diamonds located near the sewage treatment plant that need to be relocated to another area to make room for the Event Center and new hotel project. We have not identified a new location for the ball fields, but it would be excellent if they could be placed in proximity to other existing sports fields. Creating a critical mass of sports facilities (creating a sports complex) would create another tourism revenue source as leagues from throughout the Northwest may choose to hold tournaments in Oak Harbor. The chamber’s marketing efforts would include recruiting outside sporting events to Oak Harbor. One of the critical factors to success of such a program is keeping the various fields close together.

If, for some reason, the treatment plant cannot be relocated, then using this site for the event center and hotel will not be feasible and, in that case, relocating the fields would not become a priority. Eventually the fields should be moved, regardless, because the fencing creates an unattractive barrier to otherwise pristine views and the winds in this area make playing ball here tougher than in other locations.

Cost: \$260,000 not including land acquisition (if necessary)
Implementation: City working with the school district, other local organizations
Funding source: To be determined. Numerous grant programs are available for these types of facilities.

d. SPINNAKER LAGOON & STAGE

The lagoon and amphitheater create the centerpiece for the entire park as the primary gathering spot for both events and casual activities. The amphitheater is built above grade using berms (1) that might extend to 12 feet in elevation. This creates a natural bowl above the seating area, reducing wind impacts, and creating separation from Scuttlebutt Park (2), the primary staging area for large outdoor events.

The plan calls for a greatly enlarged lagoon (about a third larger than the existing tidal pool), development of beach areas (3), extensive landscaping, and a pathway that meanders behind the berm area of the amphitheater (4). The seating area (5) would accommodate approximately 750 people for concerts, performances, or for casual seating. The seating provides an excellent viewpoint for watching kids playing in the lagoon and provides sweeping vistas of the waterfront.

The lawn area behind the amphitheater can accommodate an additional 1,000 people (6) for major performances and activities that take place on Spinnaker Stage (7). The stage itself becomes a play platform and picnic area when not in use and could even incorporate a water feature of some sort.

The structure between the promenade and the amphitheater (8) provides dressing rooms and storage for performance props and for selling tickets. There is also a small parking area for delivery of props and equipment. A sound booth near the stage (9) houses the sound system and lighting.

Walking trails (10) wrap around Spinnaker Lagoon and provide ample access to the water, beach, picnic areas, and viewpoints. There is also a trail link from the Heritage Trail to the Spinnaker Trail (11). A plaza area can be used for arts and crafts shows, small exhibitions and reunions. The rendering on the following page shows what Spinnaker Lagoon and Stage might look like when developed.





e. CELEBRATION GARDENS

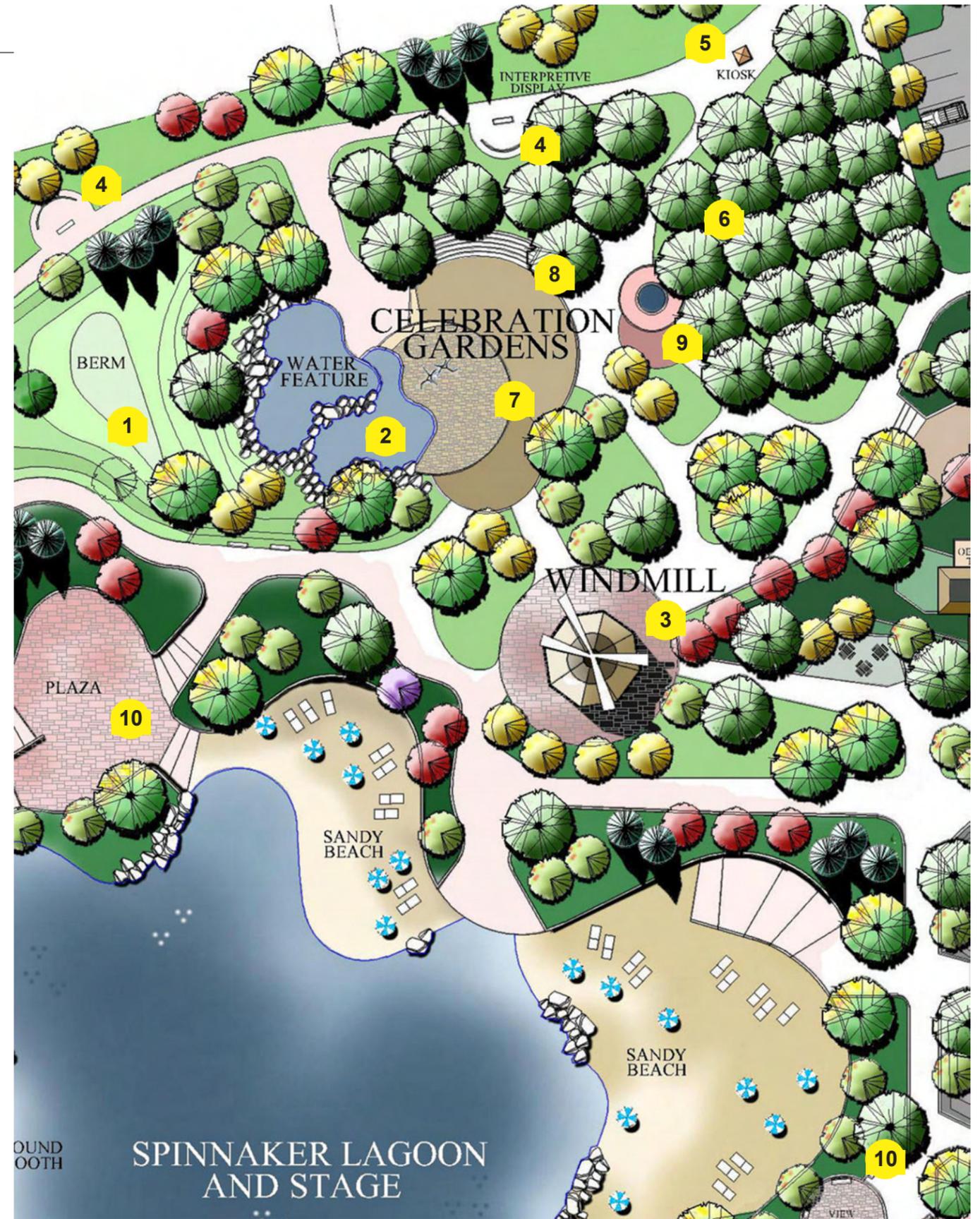
Celebration Gardens is another plaza area that could be ideal for special events, art shows, exhibitions, or even weddings. A berm would be developed (1) to provide separation and interest to the landscape, while also providing a lovely viewpoint over the gardens and water feature (2). The water feature could include fountains and would part of a recirculating water feature.

Celebration Gardens is the terminus of the Heritage Trail “celebrating” the cultural diversity of the area and Oak Harbor’s history. This is an ideal location for such an attraction with the windmill at the end of the trail (3). Along the heritage trail several interpretive displays (4) and a visitor information kiosk provide information and education for visitors coming into the park from the parking area (5).

Celebration Gardens will feature native Northwest landscapes with rock outcroppings with an abundance of plant materials native to Puget Sound and the San Juan Islands. A highlight is a grove of nearly 40 oak trees (6), celebrating Oak Harbor’s namesake.

Celebration Plaza (7) would be designed for a variety of events, providing enough space for staging and tents, performing arts, shows, and reunions or receptions. The plaza also includes step seating (8) and a fountain built into a raised planter (9).

There is easy access to Spinnaker Lagoon, restroom facilities, and to the parking areas.

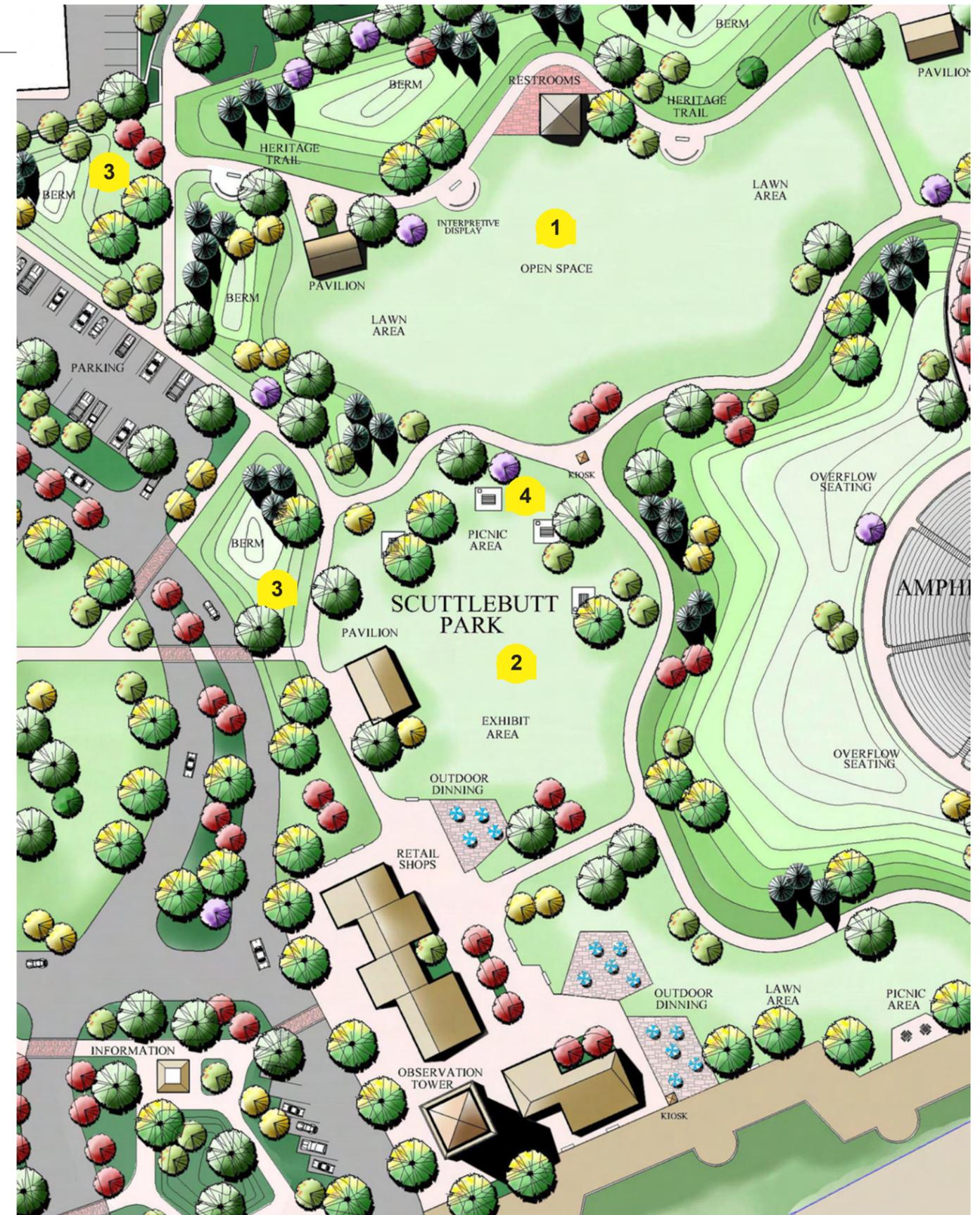


f. SCUTTLEBUTT PARK (Event area)

Scuttlebutt Park is the primary staging area for events of all kinds. These might include car club shows, art shows, carnivals, street fairs, and a variety of events. There are two primary staging areas (1 and 2), which are flat areas of which part could be developed using “grass crete” a type of structure that grass grows through so that vehicles and heavy equipment can use the area without creating ruts and without damaging the landscape.

There are several picnic areas, an abundance of landscaping and trees, and berm areas (3) to create natural buffers to the parking areas. Scuttlebutt Park actually increases the current square footage for events, exhibitions and shows. Much of the area would be built over the current RV park.

There are also a number of picnic shelters (4) in the park.



g. CONCESSION/VENDOR SHOPS

The concession area will provide an opportunity for small businesses that might rent bikes, strollers, canoes or kayaks, and sell treats, souvenirs and sundries.

The parking areas are divided with landscaped buffers and green space (1), and a visitor information kiosk is located in the “roundabout” area (2). There is a drop-off space for tour and other busses (3) along with several large-vehicle parking spots.

The plan calls for four concession shops in this location (4), seating areas for outdoor dining (5), and a restaurant or cafe (6) near the promenade.

Plans also call for a 25 foot observation tower, which will provide outstanding views of the bay and the entire park (7).

Initial plans call for the promenade to start here (8), although long-range plans call for the promenade to connect to a trail system tying to the Freund Marsh trail system, creating a contiguous trail that extends from the marina to the far side of Freund Marsh.

