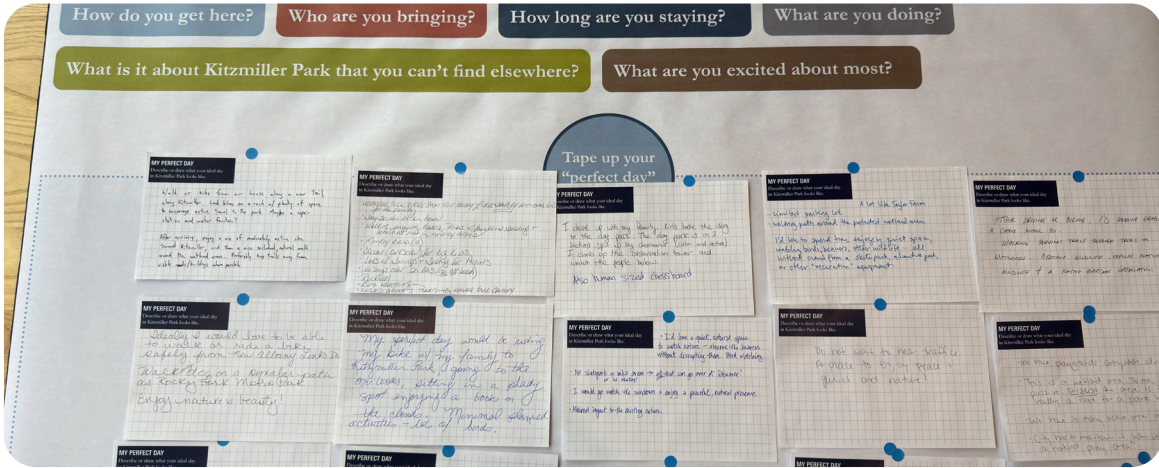
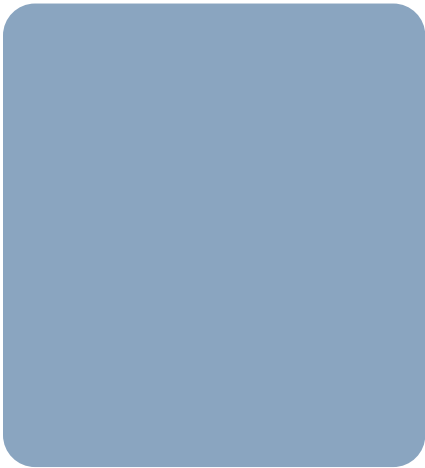
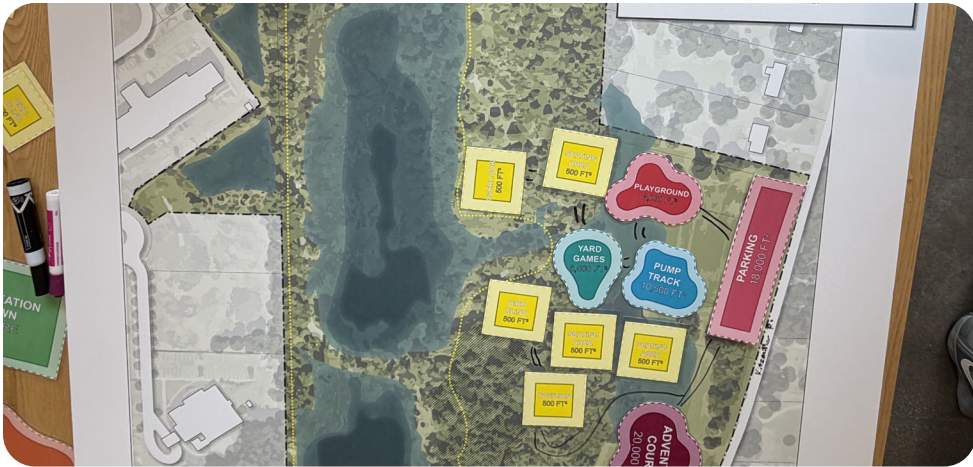




ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

KITZMILLER WETLAND PARK

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ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

Overview

The following summary is an overview of the combined engagement results gathered during the public open house and through Social Pinpoint’s online survey and interactive map. During the open house, residents explored initial programming considerations for the park, reviewed the existing natural features of the site, and provided input on the potential programming and character of the park. Throughout the evening, participants created unique park designs, wrote stories describing their perfect day at the park, and rated different types of park experiences. Following the event, an online survey was created to model the same questions and activities presented at the open house.

Public Open House

Date and Location:
Brick House Blue: Waters Edge
Monday, May 11, 2026
4-6 p.m.

Attendance:

- 58 adults
- 5 children

Social Pinpoint

Survey Results

- May 13 - June 7, 2026
- 159 Responses

Interactive Map

- May 13 - June 7, 2026
- 47 Contributions

Key Findings

Residents envision Kitzmiller Park as a passive, nature-first destination.

Across visual preferences, the design activity, and open-ended responses, the community sees the site’s natural features as the defining feature of the park.

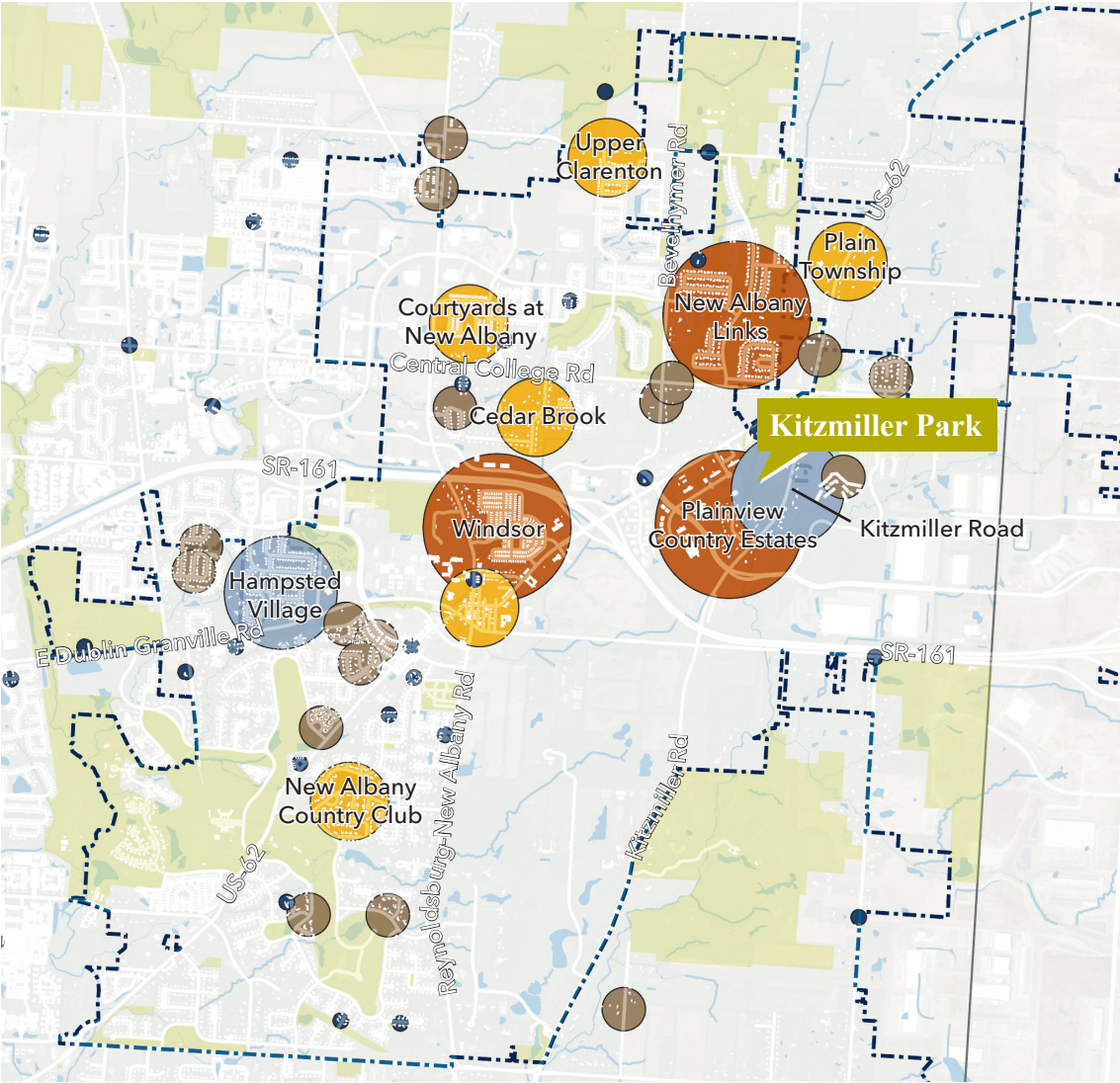
Trails, playgrounds, and gathering spaces are the top programming priorities. Walking trails were the most frequently cited activity preferred by residents, followed by playground access for all ages, and shaded/sheltered picnic areas where residents can enjoy lunch with family and friends.

Walking and biking access is a high priority, and remains a gap to address. Residents would ideally prefer to safely walk or bike to the park. However, Kitzmiller Road lacks pedestrian infrastructure, like a leisure trail or sidewalk. Respondents also emphasized surrounding intersection and crossing improvements along key roadways surrounding the park.

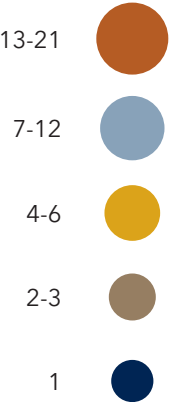
General agreement around passive and active locations, with debates around levels of activated areas. Residents agree that unencumbered areas should accommodate active park amenities. However, there is a constituency of residents who would prefer stronger levels of preservation.



Where do you live? (n=180)



Legend



Top 10 Locations	Count
New Albany Links	21
Windsor	18
Plainview Country Estates	13
Kitzmiller Road	10
Hampsted Village	8
Upper Clarenton	6
The Courtyards at New Albany	6
New Albany Country Club	5
Plain Township	5
Cedar Brook	4

Question 3 asked respondents to describe in great detail their ideal aspirations for how they would prefer using Kitzmiller Park. Their answers also included important clues about how residents would like to access the park, how they may chose to spend their time, and what kinds of amenities they may prefer. These open ended responses were organized into common themes, and responses often included multiple themes. The top 10 themes are included below. The following page includes themes grouped into subcategories, which provides a more detailed understanding of how these responses can inform design and programming decisions.

- Respondents would ideally prefer walking or biking over driving to Kitzmiller Park. Gaps in the leisure trail network along Kitzmiller Road and at key intersections surrounding the park would need to be addressed over time to provide safer pedestrian access.
- Walking trails, playground, naturalized areas, shaded areas, and picnic areas are among the notable improvements described by respondents.
- There are varying preferences for dog policies and related amenities that will require special attention to balance the needs of pet owners and other park users.



Describe your perfect day at Kitzmiller Park. (n=138)

Kitzmillier Wetland Park

"Would love to be able ride a bicycle or even walk there. Will need a safe and protected way to cross 62 and with a bike/walking path..."

Theme	Count
Walking to Kitzmiller Park	38
Biking to Kitzmiller Park	29
Driving to Kitzmiller Park	28
Running to Kitzmiller Park	2

Theme	Count
Walking to Kitzmiller Park	38
Biking to Kitzmiller Park	29
Driving to Kitzmiller Park	28
Running to Kitzmiller Park	2

Theme	Count
Spend time with their children or grandchildren	39
Bring their dogs	23
Spend time with other family members/spouse	20
Spend time with friends	8

Theme	Count
Spend time with their children or grandchildren	39
Bring their dogs	23
Spend time with other family members/spouse	20
Spend time with friends	8

Theme	Count
Exploring a variety of trails throughout the park	53
Enjoying a playground for a variety of age groups	36
Spending time in natural areas	33
Having a picnic or lunch at the park	22
Observing wildlife, including birds and other animals	19
Relax in quiet, peaceful areas	7

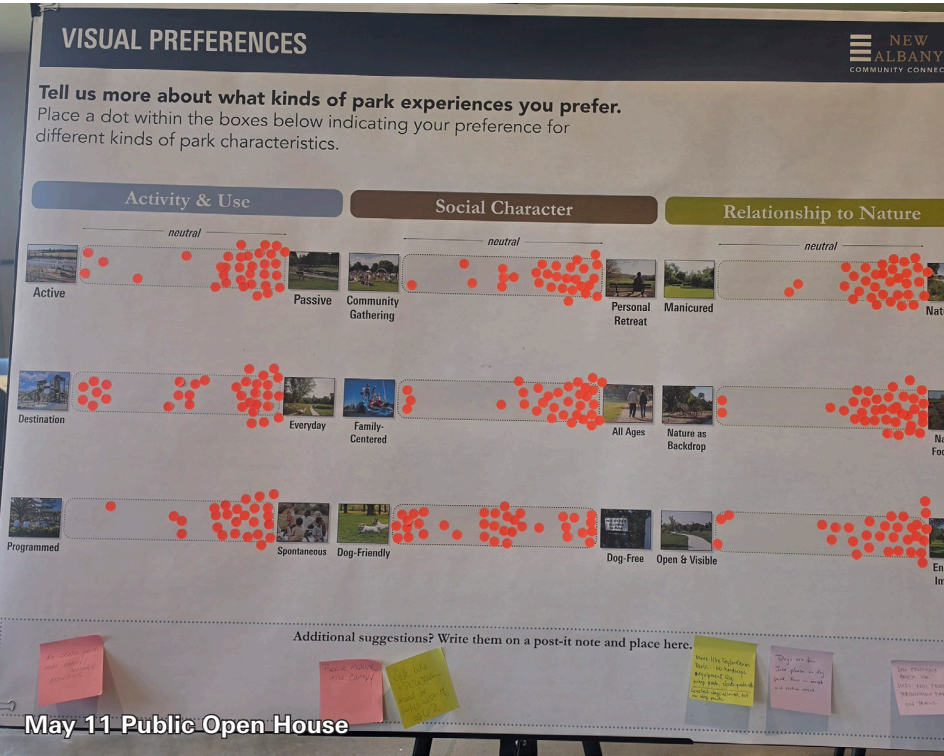
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Observing wildlife, including birds and other animals	19
Relax in quiet, peaceful areas	7

Theme	Count
Exploring a variety of trails throughout the park	53
Enjoying a playground for a variety of age groups	23
Finding shady areas to rest, play, and eat	11
Availability of a shelter area or pavilion	5
Having restrooms available	4

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Having restrooms available	4

VISUAL PREFERENCES

Visual preferences are a quick way for the planning and design team to gauge high level principles and aspirations that together inform the overall design approach for the park. When combined with other feedback received, there is a clear desire for Kitzmiller Park’s design to be primarily passive and nature-focused, with more enclosed, focused pockets of amenities that serve a wide range of age groups and park users.



Key Considerations:

Public opinion strongly favors passive programming and natural spaces where users of all ages can experience the outdoors through spontaneous and intimate moments.

Active vs. Passive (n=182)



Community Gathering vs. Personal Retreat (n=174)



Manicured vs. Natural (n=177)



Destination vs. Everyday (n=172)



Family-Centered vs. All Ages (n=176)



Nature as the Backdrop vs. Focal Point (n=175)



Programmed vs. Spontaneous (n=174)



Dog-Friendly vs. Dog Free (n=146)

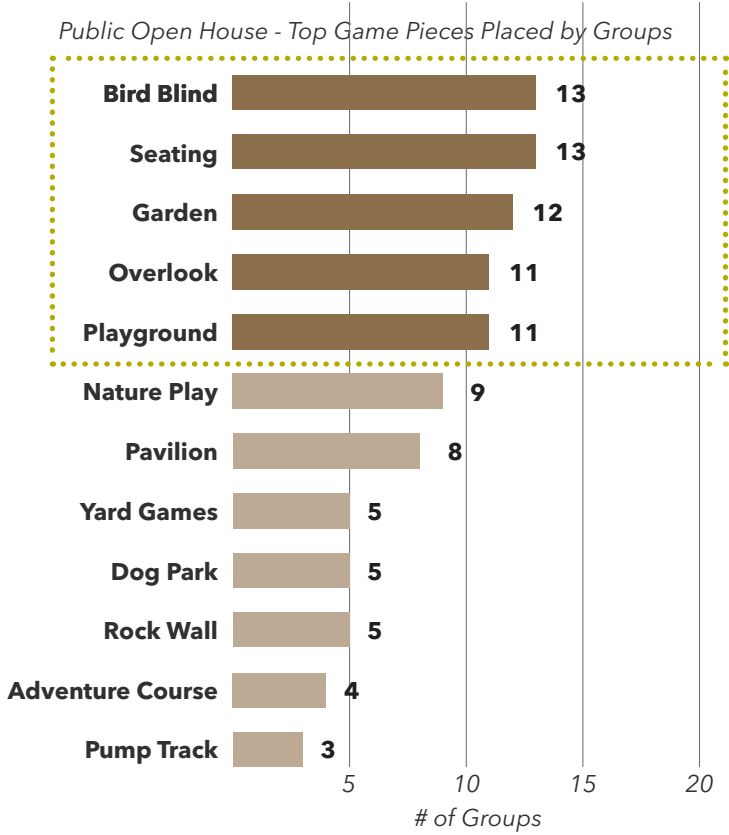


Open & Visible vs. Enclosed & Immersive (n=177)



'DESIGN YOUR PARK' ACTIVITY

The 'Design Your Park' activity provided residents a chance to participate in the design process, which involves careful consideration of site constraints and how they relate to the feasibility of certain programming or amenities. Residents were able to place and organize a wide range of game pieces that represented typical footprints for certain park amenities, such as playgrounds, nature play areas, adventure courses, and gardens. Game pieces were created to scale to help illustrate the trade-offs between balancing active and passive amenities on a site with significant environmental constraints. A total of 20 groups participated in the activity throughout the course of the open house.



Over half of the groups placed at least one of these pieces on their map.

General Points of Agreement and Discussion

Points of Agreement

Location for parking.
Most groups placed parking along the northeast side of the park.

Passive recreation areas surrounding wetlands.
General agreement around overlooks, bird blinds, pavilions, and seating within and surrounding wetland areas.

Walking trail loop(s).
Most groups hand-drew different variations of trail loops that meander throughout the park.

Location/idea of a garden.
Most groups prefer a garden within proximity to the pine forest toward the southern end of the park.

Keep most of the activity along Kitzmiller Road.
There is clear direction for where active programming is appropriate vs. passive areas.

Points of Discussion

Dog park/areas.
Residents want clear rules for pets, but varied opinions on designated pet areas.

Size of playground.
Groups split between 25,000 and 8,000 square foot playground pieces. However, survey responses indicate a general preference for playground equipment that serve a variety of age groups.

Programming vs. Naturalized.
Boards ranged from 12+ amenities to 1-3, with several emphasizing heavy preservation and naturalized areas.

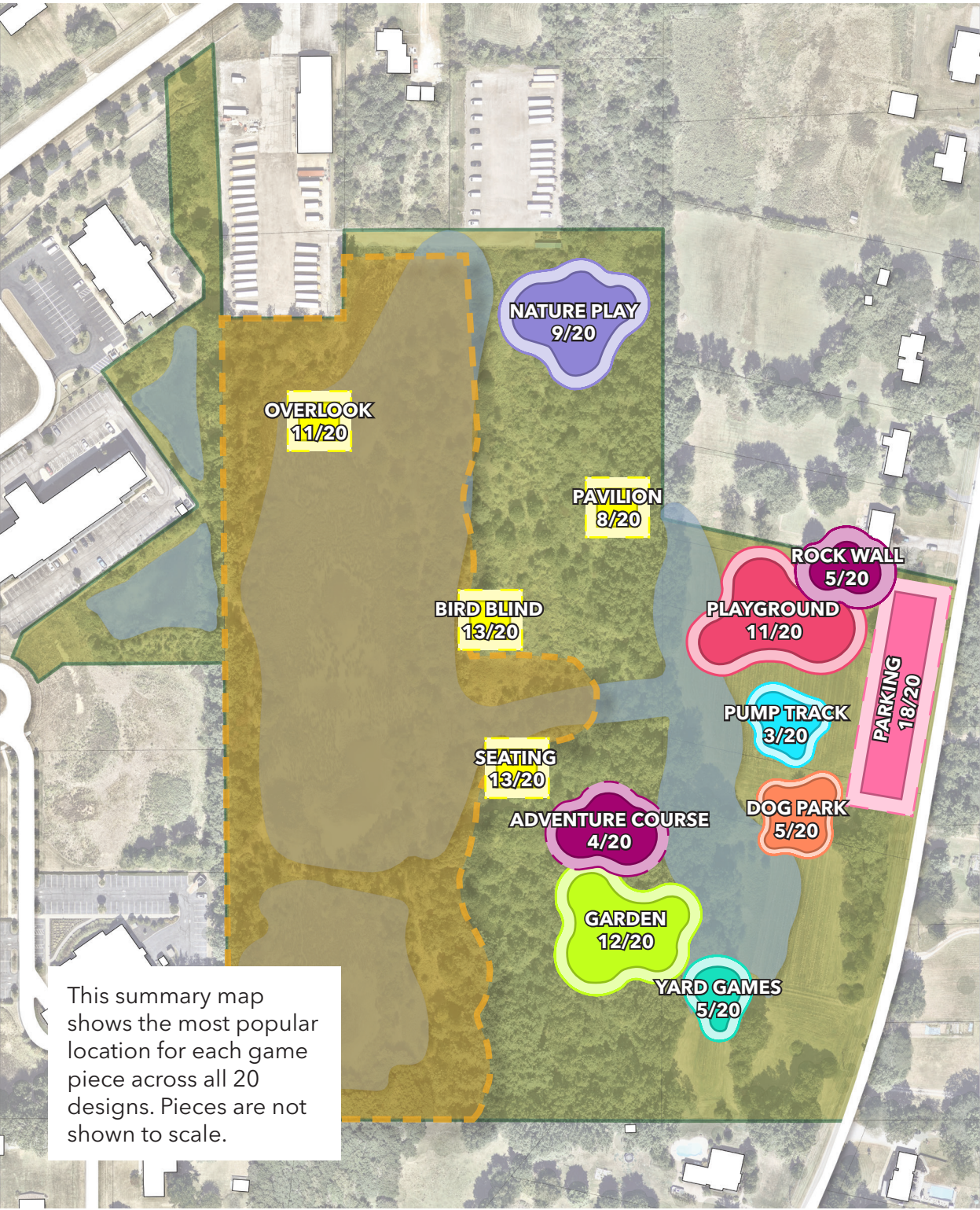
One-off ideas to acknowledge.
Pools/splash-pads, frisbee golf, recreation lawn, and traffic calming along Kitzmiller Road are notable one-off ideas/recommendations offered by residents.

- Other ideas:
- Separate dog walking path (n=1)
 - Shelter (n=1)
 - 3-way stop and traffic calming along Kitzmiller Road (n=1)
 - Pool (n=1)
 - Obstacle course (n=1)
 - Monkey bars (n=1)
 - Recreation lawn (n=1)

Key Considerations:

Public opinion favors scaled-back, passive program elements to highlight the site's natural character.

Public Open House - Design Your Park Activity Summary Map



SOCIAL PINPOINT INTERACTIVE MAP

The online interactive map generated additional feedback to supplement the Design Your Park activity from the public open house. The social map received a total of 47 contributions between May to June of 2026.

Interactive Map Markers Ranked

Marker	Count
Pavilion	8
Bird Blind	5
Nature Play	4
Adventure Course	4
Playground	3
Dog Park	2
Seating Area	2
Overlook	2
Native Garden	2
Rock Wall	2
Recreation Lawn	1
Yard Games	1
Pump Track	1
Parking	1
Other	9

Top Upvoted Markers

The interactive map allowed residents to upvote markers placed by other participants, indicating their support for other ideas. Refer to the map on the right to see where the top markers were placed.

1. Bird Blind (4 Upvotes)

"I have walked the park site and I think it could offer good opportunities for viewing birds. The wetlands provide great habitat for birds and other wildlife."

2. Other (4 Upvotes)

"Sidewalk connecting the park to the existing sidewalk on (Smith's Mill). Many people and kids in bikes that live on (Kitzmiller Road) and in the Plainview community walk on (Kitzmiller Road) to access the sidewalk on (Smith's Mill) now. A sidewalk would give a safer option for accessing (Smith's Mill) but also the new park"

3. Native Gardens (3 Upvotes)

"We need more native gardens."

4. Native Gardens (3 Upvotes)

"The site contains many invasive species which should be removed where possible. I would love to see native plants and trees replacing the removed invasives. This is a great way to support wildlife and improve the biodiversity of the park."

Other Markers:

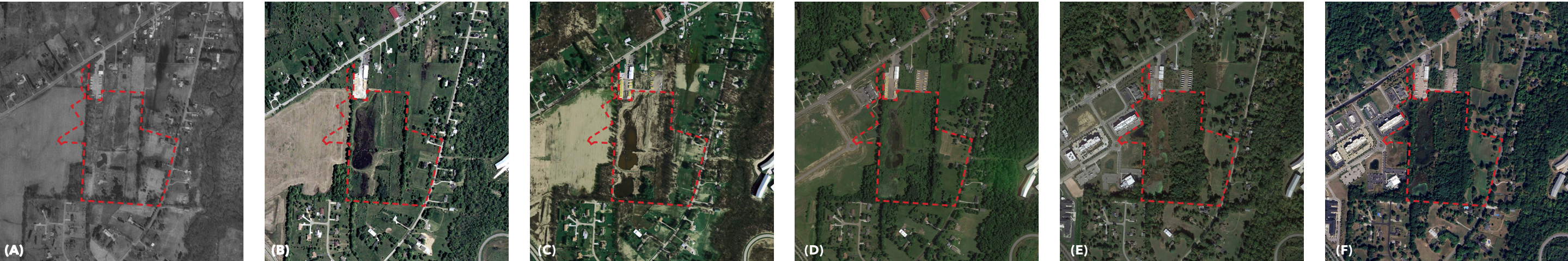
- Extend the bike path on Kitzmiller North to Central College Rd
- Would prefer no entrance straight into Plainview. Would prefer sidewalk along Kitzmiller into park entrance
- Walking trail
- Sidewalk connecting the park to the existing sidewalk on Smith's Mill
- Paved/gravel loop path around park for enjoying the nature, exercise, biking etc.
- Easy access to the park from Plainview Country Estates
- All season swimming amenities
- Kayaking Port
- Dirt Biking Course

Social Pinpoint - Design Your Park Activity Summary Map



HISTORICAL + ECOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

Satellite Imagery - (A) 1995; (B) 2002; (C) 2007; (D) 2010; (E) 2019; (F) 2024



Overview

Formerly farmland, the site became a mitigation wetland in the early 2000s as part of the construction of the Abercrombie & Fitch campus. Remnants of the original site can be seen today, with the fence lines and field geometries echoing through the established tree lines and spatial breakdown within the boundaries. A significant portion of the vegetation on site is invasive or immature. Exceptions include a white pine stand and mature hardwood mix canopy trees along former fence line. Invasive species proliferation contributes to an understanding that this is an ecologically diverse and stable ecosystem. The reality is that site was mostly bare 15 years ago and has since filled in with invasive species.



Key Considerations:

Present native plant diversity and condition is very poor and requires comprehensive removal and maintenance.

Analysis

Wetland expansion and invasive species encroachment contribute to this site’s ‘D’ ranking, or one with poor ecological health. Former open areas of the site that were cleared during construction are now overtaken by invasive species like callery pear and honeysuckle, whose rapid and productive growth can deceive users into believing that this site is full of healthy and diverse flora. Concentrated invasive removal and a robust management plan will be vital to the improvement and maintenance of this property. EMH&T describes the existing conditions of the site as “very poor” and recommends actionable improvement strategies in the attached memo “Kitzmilller Park Existing Conditions”.

Rating system for existing ecological conditions

Natureserve’s Plant Communities of the Midwest Classification in an Ecological Context (2001)

Rank	Condition	Description
A	Excellent	Existed for decades, no non-native species, no human intervention
B	Good	Adverse human intervention, minimal non-native species, lower diversity
C	Fair	Significant human intervention, non-native species are common, noticeably lower diversity
D	Poor	Dramatically altered by human intervention, one or more vegetation layer is dominated by non-native species, very low diversity

WILD CONDITION
(NOT IN OHIO)



HIGHLY
URBAN AND
DEGRADED

Parks Planning Timeline

The City began purchasing property along Kitzmiller in 2006 with the long-term goal of protecting sensitive areas and dedicating portions of the site as future parkland. Since then, the City continued to expand its parks network throughout the community, notably including Rose Run, Taylor Farm, and many neighborhood parks and playgrounds. In 2021, the Parks Framework Plan set new milestones and goals for park connectivity across the City, identifying Kitzmiller Park as a critical investment to fill a gap in walkable parks access for neighborhoods north of SR-161. That plan also explored ideas for programming and amenities at Kitzmiller Park at a conceptual level. However, as active recreation amenities continue to be built or planned elsewhere, like at Bevelhymer Park and the future New Albany Athletic Campus, this process called for a new round of engagement to take stock of the community’s aspirations for the park. In addition, new site surveys revealed more substantial wetland areas than previously studied, which impact the feasibility of certain programming elements that were previously contemplated for the site.



The city acquires additional parkland along Kitzmiller.

2006

Sport courts were also previously contemplated at Kitzmiller Park, but the City has over time provided or planned for courts elsewhere.



PICKLEBALL COURTS

2021

New Albany Parks Framework Plan completed. This includes a concept for Kitzmiller Park.



Taylor Farm Park opens, including playgrounds, wetland restoration, and trails.



City constructs a pickleball complex at Bevelhymer Park with 16 tournament-ready courts.

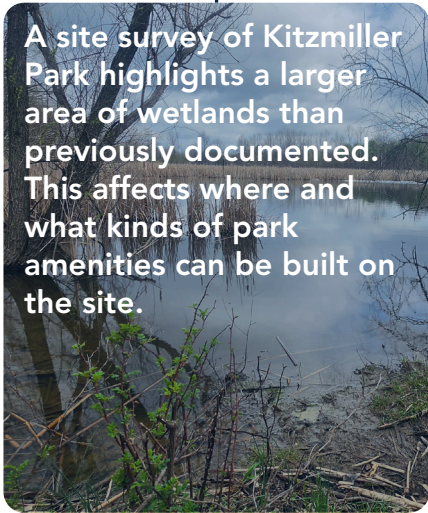
2023



The City acquires the 49-acre former Discover site. Plans for the site include athletic facilities as well as active and passive recreation for the broader community.

2025

A site survey of Kitzmiller Park highlights a larger area of wetlands than previously documented. This affects where and what kinds of park amenities can be built on the site.

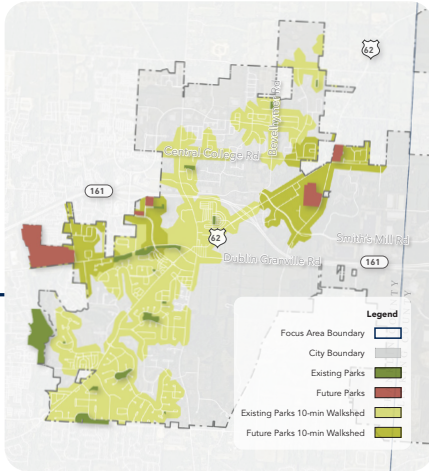


Key Considerations:

Developing the Kitzmiller parcel increases the amount of residents with walkable access to a public park.

Constructing sports courts at other sites reframes the programmatic demands of the Kitzmiller parcel.

In 2021, the Parks Framework Plan identified gaps in parks access across the City. Kitzmiller Park plays a key role in filling a parks gap north of SR-161.



KEY DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS



Greener Corridors, Stronger Connections

By including Kitzmiller Park in the larger framework of parks in New Albany, the city would reaffirm its commitment to accessible public space for an increasing amount of New Albany residents. In support of the findings associated with the Triangle Plan, the city has the potential to connect residents east of US-62 with the larger green corridor.



Program Changes and Recent Development

The construction of sports courts at Bevelhymer Park and improvements at the Athletics Campus has shifted the needs of community and site, re-framing the programmatic demand of the Kitzmiller parcel. Based on the National Recreation and Parks Association, New Albany meets or exceeds the expected levels of service for its community recreation facilities, either through new or planned construction for basketball, pickleball, skate parks, and playgrounds.



Visual Preferences

Public engagement results overwhelmingly favor passive, natural spaces. Responses suggest a place for all ages where nature is the focal point, bursting through at spontaneous and intimate moments throughout a visit to the park.



Passive Program - Ecology Centered

Public engagement results favor scaled-back intervention and preserving the natural character of the site. The 'Design Your Own Park' exercise saw community members deploy programs with smaller footprints, more naturalized character, and less overall active programming compared to the design from 2021. Participants wish to preserve the immersive serenity of the site, rather than active recreation.



Baseline Improvements

Despite an initial perception of Kitzmiller being an ecologically diverse site, the ecological quality of the site has been severely degraded. Invasive honeysuckle and callery pear dominate large areas of the site, while cattails swallow up the wetland mitigation waters. A comprehensive and invasives management plan is required for this site to function as an immersive ecological park with more impactful environmental value.



Easement Limitations

A significant portion of the site is encumbered by an OEPA deed restriction, protecting the constructed mitigation wetlands. These restrictions limit the type of construction allowed within its boundaries, favoring more passive, low-impact design decisions. While restrictive, this aligns with public response to the preferred program elements on-site.

MEMO

Date: July 21, 2026
To: MKSK
From: Rob Milligan, EMH&T
Subject: Kitzmiller Park Existing Conditions

The approximately 28-acre Kitzmiller Park property is located west of Kitzmiller Road, south of the Plain Local Schools bus garage, east of the Forest Drive office park, and north of single-family residential lots off Plainview Drive and Kitzmiller Road.

Site History

Based upon a review of historic aerial photographs, the entire property was intensely farmed for grain row crops from at least 1938 (earliest available photograph) to the late 1950s. The southwestern nine acres of the property became a pasture starting in the late 1950s and remained as such until it was converted to a wetland mitigation site around 2000. The northern portion of the site continued to be farmed for grain to the early 1970s, when it was converted to residential estate lots. The eastern portion of the site off Kitzmiller Road transitioned from farm to estate lot residential in the early 1960s. It should be noted that the 1938 photograph shows only four (4) trees on the entire property. The 2000 aerial photograph is a good representation of the quantity of native hardwood trees on the property. This photograph shows a native forested fence row at the western edge of the Kitzmiller estate lots (red polygon). This is the only substantial portion of the property containing native hardwood trees other than the landscape trees in the estate lots.

2000 Aerial Photograph



2026 Site Conditions



Area 1

This area exhibits sporadic coverage of native, good quality trees (the trees were landscape trees within the former estate lots) combined with an extensive amount of invasive trees and shrubs.

Area 2

The eastern $\frac{1}{4}$ of this area (the estate lot fence row described above) contains a canopy of mature native trees; however, the remaining portion of the area is approximately 80% invasive shrubs and trees and 20% native saplings.

Area 3

This area is located to the east and west of the mitigation wetlands. Most of this area is an old field that was never planted with native trees – it now contains a dense stand of twenty- to thirty-year-old mostly invasive trees and shrubs. There are very few native trees within this area.

Mitigation Wetland

There are two maintenance issues associated with the two wetland mitigation cells. The first is that beavers have damaged the two outlet control structures and they are no longer functional. As a result, water levels in the mitigation cells are substantially higher than design criteria. The inside of the chambers are filled with debris, the inlet pipes appear to be plugged with debris and silt, and a pile of debris is on top of the structures blocking the emergency inlet (see photographs below).



The second maintenance issue is that the wetland contains an extensive coverage of cattails. This is likely influenced by the beavers and elevated water levels. We estimate approximately 5 acres of cattails exist within the wetlands.

In summary, the existing conditions of the site related to native plant diversity and condition is very poor. The site is on a trajectory of being a low quality and unattractive forest with a very high percentage of invasive trees and shrubs, and a wetland with high water levels and a monoculture of invasive cattails. These conditions can be remedied with four layers of intensive management:

1. Relocate beavers and keep them off the property. Manage the two mitigation wetland outlet control structures to restore water levels to their design elevation per the original engineering plan. Monitor the structures quarterly to ensure proper function.
2. Remove invasive trees, shrubs, and cattails from the property.
3. Create a planting plan to restore native trees, shrubs, seed, and wetland plants through direct installation.
4. Manage the property for invasive species during the native plant establishment period.