

# **4 PUBLIC SPACES**





# PLAN ELEMENT: Public Spaces 4

## INTRODUCTION

Public spaces can define a community through its design, activities and programming. Many public spaces, such as parks and trail systems, can increase the quality of life for residents, be a catalyst for further economic development, and become a destination for families and visitors. The Public Space element focuses on parks, recreation and outdoor spaces. In addition, it identifies gateways into downtown. This layer of the Master Plan begins to define the physical elements or spaces that will be a large attraction in the East End.

## PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

This element focuses on three large parks adjacent to Clear Creek. Much of this area is within the floodplain or wooded areas. The park system would include ample open space for public gatherings, festivals, entertainment and public art. Programming activities for each park can be found in Chapter 7, Programming. The following describes the general purpose of each park.

### Festival Park

Festival Park on the north edge of the East End is currently open space that almost entirely sits within the floodplain. The majority of this area is also publicly or semi-publicly owned. The focus of this park is for entertainment and youth sports.

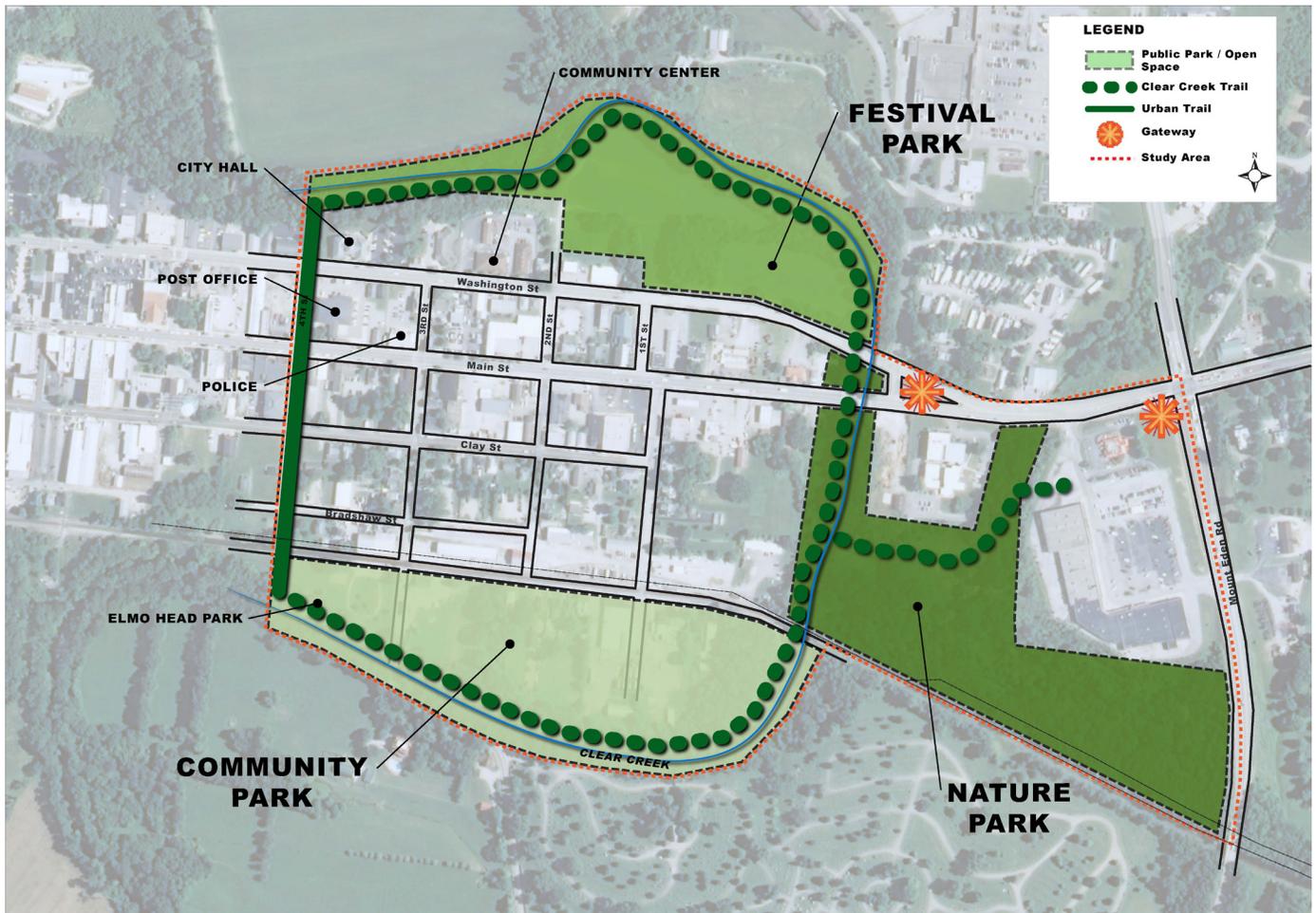
### Nature Park

The park located to the east of Clear Creek is currently a natural wooded area. The focus of this park would not change its current state and likely remain undeveloped, containing only soft surface trails. The Nature Park would also present opportunities for educational interpretative learning for the local



*Example of earthen amphitheater proposed for Festival Park*

Figure 4-1: Public Spaces Plan Element Map



school system or youth organizations.

### Community Park

The park to the south, Community Park, is oriented to more formal, structured or programmed activities and would considerably expand Elmo Head Park to the east. This park requires the most acquisition of occupied land from various property owners. Potential brownfield sites also exist at the abandoned gas station and the industrial uses. Due to the requirements and significant costs associated with brownfield redevelopment, this land would be best suited for parkland programmed for open space development.



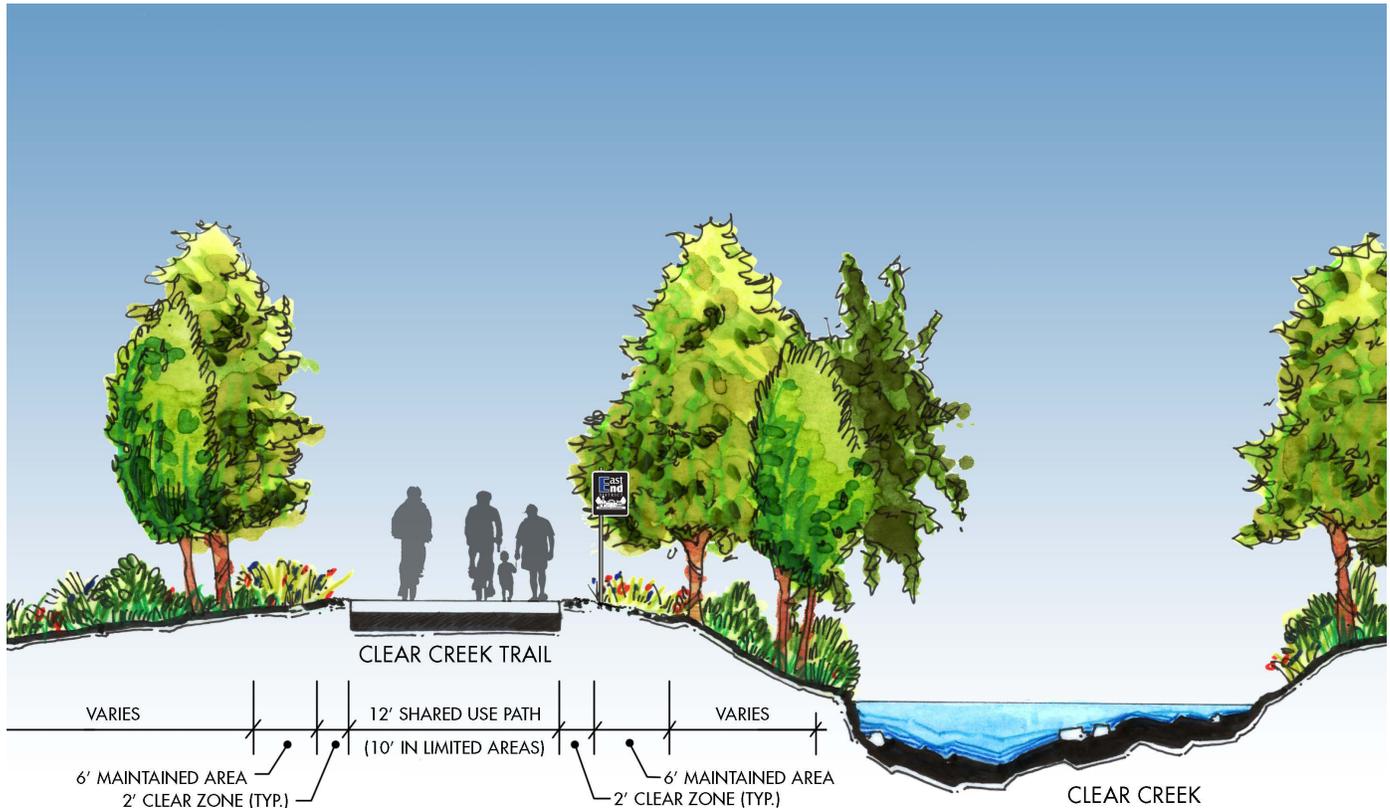
Trail similar to proposed Clear Creek Trail

## TRAILS

The Clear Creek Trail circles the entire East End as it follows the Clear Creek corridor through the study area. The trail connects north/south along a proposed urban trail on Fourth Street. The trail also connects the proposed entertainment district with the existing shopping center through the Nature Park. Figure 4-2 shows a typical cross section of the trail that consists of a 10 to 12-foot wide multi-use path with a two-foot clear zone on each side of the



Figure 4-2: Proposed Cross Section of Clear Creek Trail



trail. The clear zone is important in maintaining bicycle safety and should be free of any obstacles or signs. A six-foot landscaped area is adjacent to the clear zone that can consist of native vegetation.

In general, the proposed trail would be a minimum of 10 to 12 feet wide in order to comply with national standards and qualify for federal funding. The urban trail along Fourth Street would consist of a 10-foot sidewalk and special paving to identify it as a unique connection. Details regarding the transformation of Fourth Street into an urban trail are outlined in Chapter 5, Transportation.

## GATEWAYS

Gateways can define a community and let residents and visitors know when they have entered a specific area. By creating a gateway to the East End and the larger downtown area, the identity and character of downtown Shelbyville can be further defined. Gateway treatments can range from a simple marker to a complex design that transforms the roadway. The gateway treatment in the East End should reflect the character of the overall downtown while still allowing for a unique design that reflects the East End.

An example gateway feature is shown in Figure 4-3. In addition to acting as a visual cue or marker, the gateway area should include significant bridge enhancements, inviting to both pedestrians and vehicles. This may include



Example gateway feature with decorative banners. East End district logo may be incorporated into banners and pylon design

Figure 4-3: Example Gateway Feature



adequate pedestrian access, pavement detailing or decorative pavers, upgraded railings, and a Clear Creek viewing area. Gateway enhancements will help create an entry into downtown and the East End and support the visual character t established by improvements to the district. This illustration does not represent the final design but is intended to visually represent the character and vision for this downtown element.

