IV. RENEWAL STRATEGIES:

The plan recommends a series of strategies to upgrade and improve Willow Park. Issues and ideas were developed and reviewed in three public meetings over a period of five months with the Cherokee Triangle Association, Metro Parks, and the Louisville Olmsted Parks Conservancy, Inc. The following strategies were refined over this period so that they reflect the community’s vision and needs for Willow Park:

A. RESTROOM IMPROVEMENTS

Current thinking on the restroom improvements includes demolishing the existing restroom building to make way for a slightly larger and more efficient building that will provide enough space for four individual unisex units as well as a small storage area and another area for mechanical equipment and plumbing access. Each of the four units will be handicapped accessible and equipped with a baby changing station. High level windows will provide natural light for each of the units.

The new restroom will be built in the same style as one built a few years ago at the Baringer Hill area of Cherokee Park using stucco with brick accents instead of clapboard. The floor elevation will be raised a few inches above the existing building to alleviate the ponding and other drainage problems that occur around the existing building.

B. ACCESS & ENTRANCES

Pedestrian access to Willow Park will be improved in several ways in order to allow safe and easy access to the park, as follows:

The north intersection at Cherokee Parkway and Willow Avenue will be improved by removing the existing triangle island in order to realign the intersecting streets and provide a safer pedestrian crossing. This will allow the curb in this area to bump out a few feet regaining green space for the park and providing a safe crosswalk between Willow Park and Cherokee Park. Two east bound lanes on Cherokee Parkway would allow vehicles to travel straight, through the intersection or turn right onto Alexander Road or Willow Avenue.

The west intersection at Cherokee Parkway and Cherokee Road will be realigned to create a ninety-degree angle instead of the large wye. This will provide a more controlled intersection where cars must slow down to turn into Cherokee Road rather than sailing on through as they currently do and increase the safety of the intersection for pedestrians and vehicles. This new alignment will also provide for a controlled crosswalk, reduce the expanse of pavement and provide additional green space. It would be relatively easy to implement since it is entirely within the existing right-of-way.

The remaining crosswalks at the north and west intersections would be upgraded to stamped asphalt. This will allow both pedestrians and motorists to more easily see the crossings and therefore increase the safety of the intersections. In addition, the path across Willow Avenue in Cherokee Park will be reworked so that it does not lead people to a point where there is no crosswalk.
C. **INTERIOR CIRCULATION**

Circulation within the interior of the park will be improved greatly providing universal access to the restroom and playground as well as better overall circulation around and through the park. The proposed walkway layout will follow Olmsted design principals and help shape the different spaces in the park for a stronger, more pleasing design.

The existing sidewalk that runs along Cherokee Road from Willow Avenue to about the existing park entrance will be removed. Another sidewalk that runs from the same entrance toward the playground and park interior will be widened and smoothed slightly to become a major entrance to the playground area and the park. The raised planter and double sidewalk forming an entry at the middle of the park on Cherokee Road will be removed and replaced with a more fluid entry. An area of walkway in front of the gazebo will be enlarged to provide room for dancing during the summer concerts.

All new sidewalks will be constructed with an historic looking concrete mix that has a very small pea gravel aggregate and a darker gray color than newer concrete. Removable bollards will be placed at the entrances to allow maintenance vehicles to safely access the park but keep unauthorized vehicles out.

D. **DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS**

Drainage will be improved by installation of a new subsurface drainage system along Willow Avenue with five catch basins to collect excess water and direct it toward the existing storm sewer system along Cherokee Parkway. A separate subsurface system tied into the existing storm sewer system along Cherokee Road will provide 2 catch basins near the playground. Minor grading improvements to the ground surface will help fill low spots and direct water toward the new basins.

E. **PLAYGROUND IMPROVEMENTS**

Improvements proposed for the playground area will provide a safer, more accessible and exciting experience for the younger children in the park. To achieve this goal will require removing all of the existing structures within the fenced area except the newest and largest play piece and the existing spring raft. The play value of the remaining structure will be improved by adding a double slide on its north side. A new tot sized play structure will be installed in place of the existing swings to provide a balance of play choices and a new 2-bay swing will be installed where it does not conflict with the other play elements in the northeast corner of the play area.

To provide context with the historic neighborhood, a new wrought iron fence will be installed around the playground area with a single entrance gate located close to the existing gate. An area of rubberized surfacing will provide access into the play area and extend to the new tot piece as well as the existing structure. Several freestanding play panels will be accessible from the area of rubber surfacing. The remaining surfaces in the play area will be covered with a resilient ground rubber product.
The play area will include seven benches and one fixed picnic table to provide seating and picnic opportunities within the fenced play area. A small brick plaza area with two benches will be located across from the gate on the outside of the play area to provide a gathering area for parents while their children are playing inside.

F. MISCELLANEOUS PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Some of the smaller improvements and amenities that will help give Willow Park the comfort and character that the users deserve include a handicapped accessible drinking fountain near the new restroom building, eight new Olmsted standard light poles and fixtures in appropriate locations around the park, sixteen new benches, four new trash receptacles, two new bike racks and fourteen new trees.

A cobblestone curb and gutter will be installed along both sides of Willow Avenue to improve the condition and appearance of the road edge in that area. This will also help to control the illegal parking that occurs there during the art fair and concerts.

G. CHEROKEE PARKWAY & ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

Improvements to Cherokee Parkway will include replacing the deteriorated curb and gutter system with the historic limestone curb and gutter similar to what was done on the lower section of the Parkway from Willow Avenue to Grinstead Drive. New light poles and fixtures in keeping with the historic Olmsted standard will also be installed along the parkway as well as twelve new canopy trees to replace those lost over the years from storm damage and age related diseases.

Improvements to Cherokee Road where it runs along the park include adding a concrete curb and gutter in a few areas where it currently does not exist. This will improve the drainage situation along this part of the road. Another idea for this section of Cherokee Road is to identify it as a special area by patterning it with stamped asphalt. This would provide a hard surfaced area adjacent to the park that could be closed during special events and used for staging, parking, gathering and other uses.
IV. Cost Estimates and Phasing

A. Cost Estimate

The following costs for proposed improvements were derived from the recommended plan dated June 30, 2004.

The cost associated with each area includes all direct costs to the contractor such as materials, labor, shipping and taxes, as well as the indirect costs of the project such as contractor mobilization, overhead and profit, and project management, consulting fees for design development and preparation of construction documents, as well as construction administration and a contingency to buffer unknown items that will come up during the course of the project.

All costs are estimated in year 2004 dollars and do not include any increase for inflation should the project or parts of the project not be undertaken for some time in the future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grand Total</th>
<th>$ 990,000</th>
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<tr>
<td>COST SUMMARY BY AREA:</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Restroom Improvements</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Access &amp; Entrances</td>
<td>$ 65,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Interior Circulation</td>
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<td>D. Drainage Improvements</td>
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<td>E. Playground Improvements</td>
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<td>F. Miscellaneous Park Improvements</td>
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<tr>
<td>G. Cherokee Parkway &amp; Road Improvements</td>
<td>$ 364,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL COST</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The project can easily be implemented in phases as is illustrated in the cost estimate breakdown. For instance, the proposed restroom can be taken on as a separate project and does not depend upon any of the other categories being done prior to beginning its implementation.

The consulting team strongly recommends however, that Metro Parks and the Louisville Olmsted Parks Conservancy, Inc. continue the practice, as established by the 1994 Master Plan for Louisville's Olmsted Parks and Parkways, of comprehensively renovating a complete area of the project as identified here before moving on to the next area. This has been an important factor in the success of other projects completed to date in Cherokee, Iroquois, and Shawnee Parks.
B. PRIORITIES & PHASING

Priorities identified at the last public meeting strongly favored renovation of the restroom as a first step toward improving Willow Park. This phase of work could include demolition of the existing restroom building in order to build a new restroom designed to provide enough space for this popular park. Building a new restroom structure would also allow the floor elevation to be raised enough to alleviate the ponding and other drainage problems that occur around the existing building. This phase would also include putting the existing electrical service in the park underground.

Improving the street intersections and crosswalks to provide safer and better access to the park is a high priority but may take longer to implement than some of the other work recommended in the plan. This work, which includes making minor adjustments to the surrounding streets and installation of the crosswalks, is dependant upon approval by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet and Louisville Metro Public Works.

The next phase of work would include implementation of the drainage improvements along Willow Avenue, the playground and other problem areas in the park. This phase could also include implementation of the new interior walkways as well as the new drinking fountain, benches, bike racks, trash receptacles, bollards and lighting if the budget allows.

Upgrading and improving the playground area including replacing the outdated equipment, providing handicapped access to fulfill national accessibility requirements, replacing the worn fencing and installing benches and a picnic table could occur at any time.

Other improvements proposed to the surrounding streets such as, replacing and/or installing curbs, installing special paving and historic lighting will also require approval by the City and State agencies mentioned above. This work is important in the grand scheme but will probably be some of the last items completed.