

Chapter 5: Analysis and Alternatives

Park Classification

OPRHP Land Classification System

OPRHP's parkland classification system, which is a component of the planning process, utilizes natural and cultural resource characteristics, land uses, levels of improvements, physical capacity and other management related data to identify appropriate classifications for lands administered by the agency. The system provides six major classification categories: Park and Land Resources, Water Access, Historic Resources, Linear Systems, Underwater Sites, and Environmental Education Facilities. Within these categories, there are 23 subcategories by which the parks and sites are classified (OPRHP 2008).

Recommended Classification

Because it is new to the State Park System, Midway State Park has no existing classification. The park fits the criteria for several classifications within the Park and Land Resources and Historic Resources categories. Within the Park and Land Resources categories the park fits in the Recreation Park classification. Within the Historic Resources category the park fits the Historic Site and Historic Park classifications. For various reasons discussed below, the recommendation is to assign the Historic Park classification to Midway State Park.

Classifications Considered

Recreation Park

Recreation parks are sites in natural surroundings. They can be in suburban or rural areas and contain a mix of natural and developed areas. Significant natural areas are not essential. In addition, these parks are designed to sustain a high level of use. Midway State Park would be a candidate for the recreation park classification. However, due to the historic nature of the resources at this park, it is felt that a classification in the Historic Resources category is more appropriate.

Historic Sites and Historic Parks

Historic sites are in urban to rural areas and have contributing landscapes, structures, and/or archeological areas of historical significance. They are typically surrounded by limited open areas. Historic parks are similar but are situated on more substantial areas of land and include other park amenities such as recreation resources. Midway State Park could fit into either of these classifications because of its historic value, resources and place in the history of Chautauqua County and western New York. However, the Historic Park classification is considered to be the more appropriate classification for Midway State Park due to the other amenities provided such as the amusement rides, the waterfront activities and picnic areas. A significant factor in the decision to recommend the Historic Park classification is the desire to continue the use of Midway State Park in its historical context as a family oriented amusement park and as an active park, providing recreational opportunities.

Resource Assessment

A description of the natural and cultural resources at Midway State Park is contained in Chapter 3 of this document. Where significant factors were found the analysis follows.

Natural Resources

Ecological Communities

Surveys for rare plant and animal species and significant natural communities were conducted by NYS Natural Heritage Program (NHP) biologists in August of 2008. No significant natural communities were found to occur within Midway State Park as most of the park is in recreational and developed uses. Small patches of woods are present at the north and south ends of the park, with a mix of species that reflects past clearing and continued disturbance. These “forested” areas lack the diversity and structure of larger and more established forests. Nonetheless, as the only semi-natural areas in the heavily developed park, it is important to maintain these areas as forest.

The picnic area and the northwest patch of woods are conspicuous for the large red oaks and other species. As is common with heavily used areas such as picnic and camp grounds, many of the trees have signs of injury or disease and may need skilled arborist care and pruning. Soil compaction is a problem as well, and reducing this impact may be beneficial to the trees (e.g. minimize driving heavier park vehicles and using lighter vehicles for mowing and maintenance). Other trees around the park may benefit from these measures as well. Future plantings should use native species (like red oak, white oak, red maple, etc.) or ornamentals that are deemed non-invasive. (Lundgren 2008)

Endangered/Threatened/Rare Species

A rare mussel, the Kidneyshell (*Ptychobranthus fasciolaris*), has been found near the shoreline of Chautauqua Lake within the park. This discovery may effect the design of any shoreline access points in order to minimize disturbance of the substrate on which the mussel lives. Since one of the main factors affecting populations of the Kidneyshell is water quality, other decisions that will affect water quality, such as permeability of pavements, quantity and quality of runoff and shoreline restoration should consider impacts to the Kidneyshell and its habitat. For more discussion on this rare mussel see the Natural Heritage Program Interim Inventory report for Midway State Park (Lundgren 2008). A more detailed mussel inventory will be conducted in 2009 to more fully determine the extent and population of this species and provide recommendations for its protection.

Water

Water quality is a critical issue for Chautauqua Lake which is impacted by development and by agriculture in its watershed. The master plan takes into account the goal of preserving and improving the water quality of Chautauqua Lake and Maple Springs Creek through minimizing impermeable surfaces, shoreline naturalization, reduction of pesticide use and increase of biofiltration for surface storm runoff.

Midway State Park’s public water supply comes from on-site wells. It is important that decisions made pertaining to factors potentially affecting ground water assure the continued safety and protection of this water supply.

Cultural Resources

Archeological/Prehistoric

A complete Phase 1A and 1B Archeological study of the park site has been conducted. Areas of pre-historic archeological sensitivity have been found within the parks boundary. These areas need to be specifically studied where the master plan indicates new construction that will involve disturbing these resources. The report indicates the need for further work where archeological resources might be permanently covered with paving such as in the new parking area.

Historic

In 2009 Midway State Park was listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places. Most of the structures at the park are considered to be contributing to this eligibility and thus fall under section 14.09 of the New York State Historic Preservation Act of 1980.

Several of the alternatives being considered affect contributing structures. Where this occurs the preferred alternative is always based on due consideration of all alternatives, weighing many factors that contribute to the best functioning of the park while placing a high priority on historic preservation. See Appendix B for section 14.09 compliance and descriptions of mitigation practices to be followed.

Recreation Resources

Midway State Park has several Recreation Resource Areas identified on the Microenvironments/Overall Park Use Diagram (Figure 8).

The existing layout of these areas has evolved over the years as the focus of the park itself has evolved. The separation of these activities is, therefore, both part of the history of the park and reflective of their nature. It is entirely appropriate that the more active area of the amusement rides is separated from the quieter picnic area. The waterfront area with its historic Hippodrome building and associated activities is also separated appropriately and represents another era in park history.

Resource Analysis and Alternatives

In the following discussion of each park resource, background material is provided for the analysis of that resource followed by a list of alternatives and the considerations used to evaluate each alternative.

Natural Resource Protection Strategies/Management

Designations

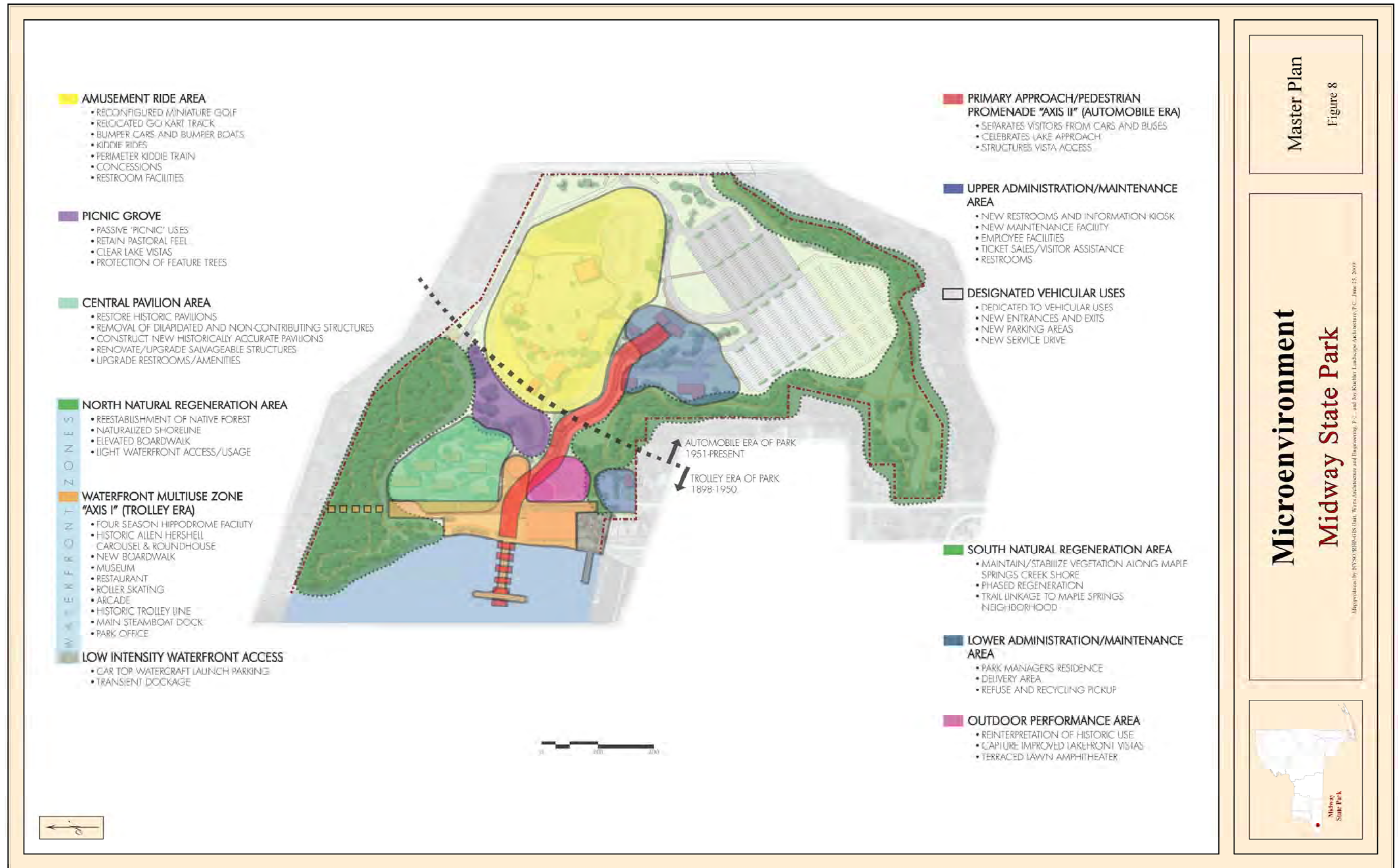
Bird Conservation Area

The designation of a Bird Conservation Areas (BCA) is part of the assessment process for a master plan.

The BCA program, signed into law in 1997, is modeled after the National Audubon Society's Important Bird Areas Program. The BCA program seeks to provide a comprehensive, ecosystem approach to conserving birds and their habitats on state lands and waters, by integrating bird conservation interests in agency planning, management and research projects. These efforts are an important component of our ongoing, collaborative approach to protecting wildlife statewide, increasing public access, and expanding educational opportunities for residents and visitors alike.

While Chautauqua Lake is listed as an Important Bird Area by the New York State Audubon Society (Audubon 2009). It is listed because of the concentrations of waterfowl that the lake supports. OPRHP does not have any off-shore habitat under its jurisdiction at this site. For non-waterfowl species, Midway is too small and lacking in natural habitat to qualify for any of the BCA criteria. Therefore no BCA is recommended to be designated at Midway State Park.

Figure 8 Microenvironment



Recreation Resource Development/Management

For the following analyses refer to the Microenvironments Map (Figure 8).

Waterfront Multiuse Zone

Swimming

Background for Analysis:

Although there has been swimming at Midway State Park in the past, swimming is currently not allowed.

Alternatives	Considerations
Alternative 1 Status Quo	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are currently no bath house facilities at this park• Water quality concerns exist at the park• Shoreline and bottom conditions not conducive for swimming• Swimming is an historic activity at this park• Swimming is available nearby at Long Point State Park
Alternative 2 Allow swimming	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Easy accessibility to swimming for Midway Park Patrons• Possible source of increased park patrons• Re-institutes historic park activity• Need to provide bathhouse facilities and lifeguards• Improvements to shoreline and lake bottom needed-could impact the rare Kidneyshell Mussel• Additional analysis of water quality and a sanitary survey would be required prior to determining if swimming was appropriate at this location• A water quality monitoring program would be needed

Preferred Alternative: 1. Status Quo

The status quo of no swimming is the most appropriate one for the park at this time even though swimming was an activity at the park in its past. Presently the water quality for swimming is questionable and the condition of the lake bottom is not conducive for swimming activities. Swimming activities and maintenance of the swimming area could also negatively impact the rare Kidneyshell Mussel. Patrons wishing to swim can be directed to the beach at nearby Long Point State Park.

Tour Boat Dock

Background for Analysis:

The current dock, installed for the season, does not adequately accommodate the larger Chautauqua Lake tour boats. This activity has been available to Midway Park patrons in the past. Part of the history of Midway Park’s popularity was its accessibility by tour boat. Park users would come from other parts of the lake, by boat, enjoy the amenities of the park and then return home by boat. A dock specifically designed for this purpose is necessary because of the configuration of the lake bottom off Midway’s shoreline. There is a large area of relatively shallow water for a considerable distance before the depth increases enough for tour boats to dock.

Alternatives	Considerations
Alternative 1 Status Quo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses current dock • Annual disturbance of lake bottom. • Does not take advantage of tour boats already on the lake • Does not respond to historic connectivity with the greater Chautauqua Lake community
Alternative 2 Install Tour Boat Friendly Dock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases park availability to patrons and connectivity to Chautauqua Lake community. • Re-establishes historic link between the park and the lake. • Establishes water link to Long Point State Park. • Disturbance to lake bottom during annual installation and removal of new piers, poles, moorings and dock supports.

Preferred Alternative: 2 Install Tour Boat Friendly Dock

Design and installation of a dock capable of accommodating tour boats is desirable in that it expands the park’s ability to attract and serve patrons in the area. This historic connection between the park and the lake is founded in the lake’s tourism attractiveness. Arrival at the park by boat is an entirely different experience and providing that experience gives the patron a further understanding of the history of the park. The dock also increases the variety of activities available at the park.

Hippodrome

Background for Analysis:

The Hippodrome is a contributing historic structure at Midway State Park. Some changes have been made to the building over the years and functions have changed. The second floor remains a roller skating rink and large open space with an open air vista that is a spectacular asset to the park. The first floor is occupied by a gift shop, museum, concessions, maintenance areas and rest rooms. Restorations and upgrades to the building are underway. The original clerestory/monitor was lost in a storm and has never been replaced. A new floor plan for the first floor is being developed. The structural evaluation of the building has been completed and has found the structure to be insufficient for loading on the second floor according to present day codes.

Alternatives	Considerations
Alternative 1 Status Quo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bats roosting in ceiling • Original clerestory is missing • Building is contributing structure to National Register listing • Building is not structurally sufficient to carry loads for intended uses on second floor • Building does not conform to present day egress standards • Several alterations to the outside of the building have impacted the historic aspect of the structure. • Inefficient use of available space on first floor • No alternative area for arcade game activity.
Alternative 2 Rehabilitate Hippodrome, in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, to accommodate skating and special events on the second floor. Other renovations, such as restoration of the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re use of an existing structure is more sustainable than building a new structure. • Structural improvements will bring the building into modern code compliance as well as enable use of the second floor for skating and

Alternatives	Considerations
clerestory, revisions to the first floor plan, exterior, accessibility and egress can be completed at the same time.	special events. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Restoration of the clerestory and appropriate rehabilitation to the building exterior will bring it closer to its historic appearance and eliminate use by bats• Renovations will bring the building into compliance with ADA and egress requirements.• Revised floor plan on the first floor will accommodate services and activities, such as the arcade games and extend the season which they can be used.• Improved maintenance facilities and use of space on the first floor.• Loss of use of portions of the building during construction

Preferred Alternative: 2 Rehabilitate Hippodrome

This is the preferred option as it offers the most flexibility in using this important structure while maintaining and improving its historic integrity. The planned improvements will improve the structural integrity of the building and bring it into code compliance for egress and ADA, making it available for special events and roller skating on the second floor. This option also allows the arcade activity to move to the Hippodrome thereby extending the useful season and better protecting the games. An improved floor plan for the first floor will also make better use of space and organize the functions contained therein.

Existing Park Office Building

Background for Analysis:

The park office building is listed as a contributing structure in the National Register listing. The structure is inadequate for the function it serves. A reason for the purchase of the park by OPRHP is to increase the public access to the lake shore. The building inhibits that access, increases congestion around the lake shore area and blocks scenic views.

Alternatives		Considerations
Alternative 1	Status Quo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate space for park office functions • Location not ideal for park office • Blocks public access to waterfront • Blocks views to lake • Building is sinking into the ground causing structural problems • Overhaul of utilities needed • Building is heated with a space heater • No rest room facilities • Building is a contributing structure in the National Register listing
Alternative 2	Remove	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building is sinking into the ground causing structural problems • Creates opportunity for new park recreational uses • Reduces congestion in historic axis • Opens space for public access to the lake • Opens views to the lake • Building is a contributing structure in the National Register listing

Preferred Alternative: 2 Remove

This alternative allows for improvements to open space and lake access. The existing building is inadequate for the park purpose served and this function will utilize space or relocate to the redesigned first floor of the Hippodrome. The building is sinking into the ground causing structural damage. There is no heat other than a space heater, no rest room facilities and utilities are not up to code. Removal of this building will ease congestion and improve public access to the lake shore. Adaptive re-use of this existing park structure does not fit in with centralizing park patron services such as a museum and gift shop at the Hippodrome. Moving the building to another location was not deemed feasible due to the building’s condition.

Outdoor Performance Area

Arcade Building and Activity

Background for Analysis:

Although a contributing historic building, the Arcade Building is in very poor condition, needing to be “propped up” during the winter in order to bear up under the snow loads. The building also has numerous additions, temporary repairs and changes to its exterior that impacted its historic integrity. The activity within the building is a valuable asset to the character and attraction of the park. The arcade games are very popular and some hold historic significance as objects in their own right.

Alternatives	Considerations
Alternative 1 Status Quo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building is a contributing structure in the National Register listing • Building is in very poor condition and requires structural analysis • Building requires frequent maintenance and staff time • Arcade games are important assets to the park both as attractions, activities and historic objects in their own right. Games are at risk being housed in the current Arcade building • Building closed in winter • Location of building blocks views of lake vistas, circulation and flow of patrons • Historic appearance/materials have been compromised

Alternatives	Considerations
Alternative 2 New Arcade Building in new location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New building can be designed specifically for year round arcade use. • New location will free vistas to Chautauqua Lake and of the Hippodrome and Carousel. • Designed to meet current code and sustainability standards • Does not reduce impermeable surfaces • Site limits choices of new locations • New building must meet historic context concerns
Alternative 3 Remove Arcade Building/Move games to Hippodrome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal will improve site design, views of the lake and patron safety and flow inside the park • Enhanced view of Hippodrome and Carousel • Safe storage and utility of the arcade games in the Hippodrome building is achievable within the current re-programming of that building • Re-use of the existing Hippodrome space is more sustainable • A new arcade room in the Hippodrome will be better able to accommodate the activity in a pleasing environment • Winter use of the arcade games is possible in the Hippodrome, extending the season for this activity • Reduction of impermeable surfaces (roof area of Arcade) helps mitigate stormwater runoff concerns • Removal of Arcade Building will affect a structure contributing to the National Historic Register listing • Concentrates existing uses in one structure

Preferred Alternative: 3 – Remove arcade building/move games to Hippodrome

This option will improve safety at the park and provide a location for the arcade games that will extend the season and increase the level of use of this activity. Additionally, removal of the building will open up the center of the park and provide better views of the Hippodrome, Carousel, and views to the vistas across Chautauqua Lake. Adaptive re-use of the Hippodrome is sustainable.

Low Intensity Waterfront Access

Car Top Boat Launch/Transient Small Craft Dock

Background for Analysis:

Although canoeing and kayaking are popular activities on Chautauqua Lake there is currently no facility specifically provided for launching this type of boat at Midway State Park. Vehicular access to the shore does not exist and this type of craft must be carried from parking areas to the shore along with equipment and supplies.

Small craft are common on Chautauqua Lake and are an important form of recreation. Currently small transient boats are accommodated with free day use dockage and access to the park.

Alternatives	Considerations
Alternative 1 Status Quo (No Car Top Boat Launch, small craft dock)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No new disturbance to lake bottom • No provision for popular recreational activity at Midway State Park • Boat launch exists at Long Point State Park • Limited public access to lake
Alternative 2 Provide Car Top Boat Launch at North End of Park and keep small craft dock at south end of park.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides improved public access to lake • Disturbance of Kidneyshell Mussel possible • Need parking spaces near launch area • In wet soil area • In shoreline restoration area • No new small craft dock needed

Alternatives		Considerations
Alternative 3	Provide Car Top Boat Launch with expanded transient small craft dock at South End of Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides improved public access to lake • Within high use area • Parking available nearby for car top boat users • Outside of shoreline restoration area • Two activities can be combined in one development • Possibility of disturbance to Kidneyshell Mussel

Preferred Alternative: 3 Provide Car Top Boat Launch and transient small craft dock at South End of Park

The status quo was not deemed appropriate given the popularity of boating, canoeing and kayaking. Providing car top boat launching and transient dockage will increase public access to the lake which is one of the prime functions that Midway State Park performs. Public waterfront recreation opportunities on Chautauqua Lake are limited. The choice of putting this resource at the south end of the park is preferred because it is more easily accessible to vehicular traffic and less sensitive to shoreline disturbance than the north end. The site plan includes a parking area for loading/unloading water craft in this area and an enhanced small craft dock.

Ice House

Background for Analysis:

The building known as the Ice House is listed as a contributing structure in the National Register listing. This building currently has no major park purpose. The name “Ice House” is just a general usage term, it does not identify this structure as ever serving that type of function in the past. It may have been used as an on-site manager’s residence. A reason for the purchase of the park by OPRHP is to increase the public access to the lake shore. The intent of the site plan is to create more open space around the Hippodrome, opening up the public access and views. The Ice House building inhibits that access, increases congestion around the lake shore area, blocks scenic views and is considered to be too close to the Hippodrome. Black mold has been found in this building and it does not meet current code standards. Although this building is a contributing structure in the National Register listing its historic appearance/materials has been compromised.

Alternatives		Considerations
Alternative 1	Status Quo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic appearance/materials have been compromised • Serves minimal park function

Alternatives		Considerations
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is not up to code for residential use • Black mold is present in the building • Blocks public access to the lake shore and open space • Blocks views of the lake • Renovation of structure needed
Alternative 2	Remove	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opens public access to waterfront • Reduces congestion at waterfront for park activities • Opens up views of the lake • Building is a contributing structure in the National Register listing
Alternative 3	Re-use for new park function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive renovation needed to bring the building up to modern codes • Congestion at waterfront • Limits open space • Historic appearance of the building has been compromised through use of modern materials in previous renovation • Black mold present in the building • Blocks public access to lake shore • Blocks lake views

Preferred Alternative: 2 Remove

Removal of this building will improve the functioning of the park. The site plan calls for open space around the Hippodrome building to allow park patrons to enjoy both the building and the lake shore. Additionally, because of the presence of Black mold, non-compliance with current building codes and the compromising of its historic appearance/materials removal is warranted.

Residence

Background for Analysis:

The building known as the Residence is listed as a contributing structure in the National Register listing. This building currently performs no park function other than as a break area for park staff and an occasional meeting space. The building may have been the park owner’s residence at one time. A reason for the purchase of the park by OPRHP was to increase public access to the water. A goal of the plan is to open the shoreline, provide better water access and create more open space around the hippodrome. The Residence building has severe mold problems as well as roof, plumbing and structural problems and does not meet current building codes. In addition the buildings’ historic materials and appearance have been compromised over the years.

Alternatives		Considerations
Alternative 1	Status Quo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serves minimal park function • Inhibits new park site plan open space and small craft alternatives • Building has mold and structural problems • Building not up to current building codes • Occupies critical shoreline area • Blocks views of lake • Renovation and restoration of structure needed • The historic materials/appearance have been compromised
Alternative 2	Remove	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates more open space and lake access • Building has mold and structural problems • Building not up to current building codes • Allows development of car top boat launch • Opens views to the lake • Elimination of a structure that has minimal function for park operation • Building is a contributing structure in the National Register listing
Alternative 3	Re-use for new park function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inhibits new park plan open space and public access to water front. • Extensive renovation will be needed to bring the building up to current building codes • Mold and structural problems

Alternatives	Considerations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could be used for community center/meeting space

Preferred Alternative: 2 Remove
 Removal of this building will improve the functioning of the park. The plan calls for improved public access to the shoreline and water, open space around the Hippodrome building to allow park patrons to enjoy both the building and the lake shore. This will also allow the construction of a car top boat launch and transient dock which will improve public access to Chautauqua Lake. The building has mold, structural, roof and plumbing problems and is not up to current building codes. In addition, the historic materials and appearance of this building have been altered.

Lower Operations/Maintenance Area

New Park Manager’s Residence

Background for Analysis
 There is currently no on-site park manager’s residence. Because of this lack of 24 hour on-site staff presence, some vandalism has occurred in the park. It is expected that an official permanent on-site presence would reduce or eliminate this type of unwanted activity. Additionally, there is currently no staff to react to safety or other emergency situations which may occur during off hours.

Alternatives	Considerations
Alternative 1 Status Quo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient on site security when park is closed • Increased vulnerability to vandalism • Slow reaction to safety and emergency events
Alternative 2 Convert existing park structure to new park manager’s residence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No suitable building (see discussion on other structures) either in location, floor plan, size or compatibility with new recreation resources • Re-use of existing structure is sustainable • Improved site safety and security with on-site manager

<p>Alternative 3 Build new park manager’s residence in Lower Operations/Maintenance Area just inside Chautauqua Avenue park entrance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compatible location with new recreation resources • Suitability for residential use • Improved site security and safety with on-site manager
<p>Alternative 4 Build new park manager’s residence in Upper Operations/Maintenance Area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compatible location with new recreation resources • May not be suitable location for residence due to high level of maintenance activities • Close to public parking • Improved site security and safety with on site manager

Preferred Alternative: 3 Build new park manager’s residence in Lower Operations/Maintenance Area

This alternative affords the most flexibility in offering a suitable residence for the park manager, improving site security and safety, compatibility with adjacent land uses and compatibility with recreation resources at the park.

Central Pavilion Area

Shelter #6

Background for Analysis

Pavilion #6 is farther west than the other pavilions, at the bottom of a steep slope and nearly at the lake level. This shelter accommodates the largest groups. This is a steel shelter and is larger than most groups need. It also is directly in the view of lake vistas from the pavilion area. (Figure 9)

Alternatives	Considerations
<p>Alternative 1 Status Quo</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shelter is too big for current location and most groups • Views of the lake are blocked • Accessibility is limited • Design is not compatible with historic location in park • Popular shelter for larger groups
<p>Alternative 2 Remove Shelter</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better views to lake

Alternatives	Considerations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opens space for other uses by the lake • Reduces picnic opportunities available for large groups
<p>Alternative 3 Renovate Existing Shelter</p> <p>Existing shelter can be renovated to fit better with the historic character of the park. It can also be divided into smaller shelters for smaller groups, allowing temporary re-connection for large groups and meet ADA guidelines.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement of lake views • Creates several smaller shelters that can be rented to small groups • Addresses accessibility issues • Retains shelter space for large groups
<p>Alternative 4 Remove existing shelter and build several new shelters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruption of shelter use during construction • New shelters can be built according to historically accurate design • Eliminates shelter for large groups

Preferred Alternative: 3 Renovate Existing Shelter

This alternative allows for greatest flexibility in the use of Shelter 6. The renovated shelter will be more in conformance with historic shelter designs, ADA guidelines and will allow for either several small groups or a large group rental. The views to the lake will still be partially blocked but this will be less than the present configuration due to the split configuration.(Figure 10)

Shelters #1-5 and #7-8

Background for Analysis

This area, east of the Picnic Grove and above shelter #6, contains the remainder of the picnic shelters. The picnic shelters are available for reservation but may be used by others if no reservations have been made. The current configuration of these shelters is illustrated in Figure 9. This configuration is crowded and inhibits pedestrian circulation. This area also abuts the carousel, further crowding the area on high volume days. The individual shelters vary greatly in building date and condition, ranging from Shelter 1, the oldest and in the poorest shape to numbers 7 and 8 which are the newest. The shelters also vary considerably in style and materials. Shelter 1 was the original structure in this area and was identified as the “Dance Hall” at one time and “Refreshment Stand” at others. It includes an attached building which may have been a schoolhouse and moved to its present location. Two of the shelters existing when the park was acquired by OPRHP were destroyed by tree fall in the summer of 2008. All of the shelters are very popular and cannot accommodate all the reservations that are requested in the summer season.

Alternatives	Considerations
<p>Alternative 1 Status Quo</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shelters crowded together

- Shelters 7 and 8 too close to Carousel
- Little space between picnic area and carousel
- Not enough shelters to meet demand
- Some shelters in poor condition
- No disruption to structures or landscape
- No tree loss if no shelters are moved/built

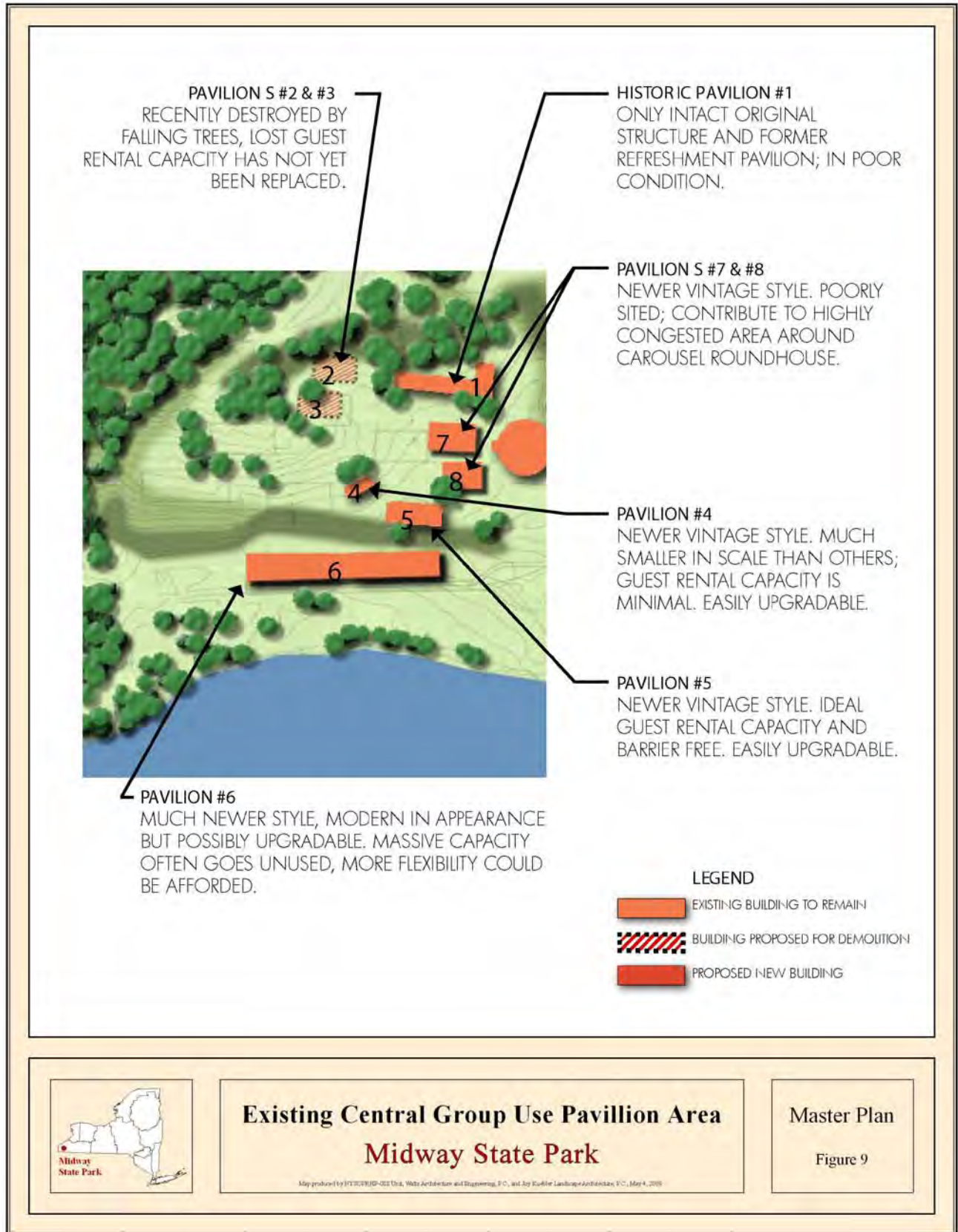
Alternative 2 Re arrange to spread shelters apart, preserve and restore existing shelters, replace destroyed shelters and build one new shelter.

- Shelter 1 – Restore
 - Shelters 2 and 3 were destroyed by falling trees - Replace
 - Shelter 4 and 5 – Upgrade and renovate
 - Demolish Shelters 7 and 8 and replace in new locations to create open space for carousel
 - Build new Shelter 9.
- Less crowding and more privacy for shelter users
 - Disruption of existing landscape to create space for new shelters
 - Better circulation between picnic area and carousel
 - Opens views
 - Restore to more historically accurate structures
 - Need for utilities/water at new shelters
 - Some tree loss where new shelters would be built

Preferred Alternative: 2 – Rearrange existing shelters and build new shelters

Alternative 2 is preferred because it offers the best use of the existing shelters combined with increasing the availability of shelter space for user groups. This alternative will improve the circulation around the shelters, provide better privacy for user groups, as well as allowing improved access to the carousel. This alternative also increases shelter availability to park patrons. The return to a more historically accurate shelter design will improve the environment of the park as will the renovated “Dance Hall/Refreshment Stand” and accompanying shelter. (Figure 10)

Figure 9 Existing Central Group Use Pavilion Area



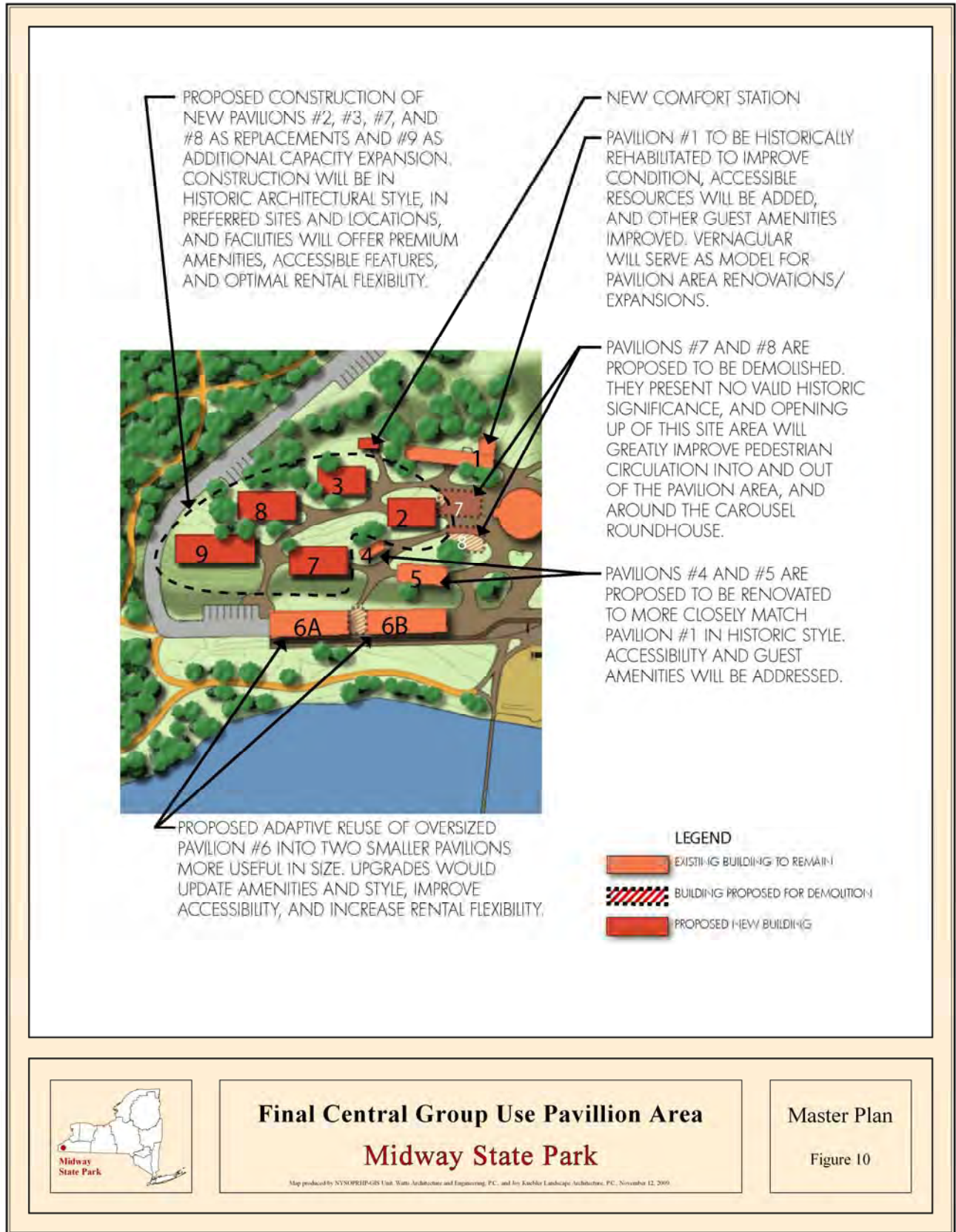
Existing Central Group Use Pavillion Area
Midway State Park

Map produced by HYDROPHOBIC Ltd, Water Architecture and Engineering, P.O., and by Kuebler Landscape Architecture, P.C., May 4, 2008

Master Plan

Figure 9

Figure 10 Final Central Group Use Pavilion Area



Picnic Grove

Background for Analysis

The Picnic Grove is located centrally in the park within one of the two semi-forested areas (see Figure 8). It abuts the current main park road and is across that road from the amusement rides area. The Grove contains picnic tables and accommodates informal unreserved picnicking on a first come first served basis. The location of this area in juxtaposition to the road and the amusement rides creates a pedestrian-vehicular conflict when crossing back and forth.

Alternatives	Considerations
Alternative 1 Status Quo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crossing the road causes pedestrian-vehicular conflicts • Well established picnic area for families • Far from rest room facilities
Alternative 2 Move Picnic Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be located to improve pedestrian circulation • Can be located closer to rest rooms • Suitable area may be better used by other park functions • Disturbance of resources at new location • Present location is the historic location.
Alternative 3 Keep location and eliminate central park road.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserves current picnic area • Limited disturbance to trees and other resources • Improves pedestrian/vehicular circulation • Picnic area still far from existing rest rooms

Picnic Grove Preferred Alternative: 3 Keep location and eliminate central park road

This alternative is preferred because the location of the picnic table area is well established and if it were not for the central park road, would be ideally located near the amusement rides. The area is very accessible to the rest of the park as well. With the elimination of the central park road and re-direction of vehicular traffic, this area is well suited to family picnics at the existing location.

Amusement Ride Area

Equipment

Background for Analysis:

The amusement rides at Midway State Park originate from the 1950's to the present day. The list of historic rides includes a Herschell kiddyland, "Dodgem" cars, Dragon roller coaster, "Tubs -o-fun", giant slide, "Tilt-a-Whirl", and others. The amusement rides are a main attraction of the park and represent an important historic resource. Families have enjoyed these rides for decades and return again with new generations. Several rides have been lost over time such as a Ferris wheel and the large "Jack Rabbit" roller coaster. The search for spare parts for maintenance and repair of these historic rides is always a challenge. The ride area abuts the main park road.

Alternatives	Considerations
Alternative 1 Status Quo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic rides function for family amusement • Important attraction for the park • Spare parts for repair and maintenance difficult to obtain • Loss of some rides previously at the park • Public desire for more rides
<p>Alternative 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep existing rides in operating condition • Add new operating rides to existing assortment as they become available • Acquire rides for repair and maintenance parts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adds more variety to ride collection and attracts more park patrons • Preserves historic rides from other sites • Possible to re-introduce rides that were previously found at the park • Builds supply of spare parts for repair and maintenance • Accommodates new rides

Preferred Alternative: 2 – Keep existing rides, add more operating rides and acquire rides for parts.

This option will help preserve Midway State Park as an operating amusement park. The addition of historic rides would be optional and, if available, will expand the attractiveness and the interpretation of amusement park history available at the park. This option also improves the park's ability to preserve and maintain the rides through the purchase of non-operational rides for spare parts. An expansion of the ride area is needed to accommodate newly acquired rides.

Layout

Background for Analysis:

The layout of the amusement rides does not offer the most efficient use of the space allocated for them, nor does it present the safest condition. The layout also does not account for the possibility of acquiring additional rides at some point in the future. Currently the miniature golf course is more spread out than it needs to be and the go-cart track is in a location that cuts off access from the main part of the park to the planned parking facilities.

Alternatives	Considerations
Alternative 1 Status Quo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No room for ride expansion • Conflict where pedestrians cross railroad tracks • Congested • Inefficient use of park land • No room to improve pedestrian circulation around the amusement ride area
Alternative 2 Change arrangement of ride area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate area for ride expansion • Change configuration of circumferential train ride • Move go-cart track to eastern open field • Consolidate miniature golf course to more efficiently use space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adds more variety to ride collection and attracts more park patrons • Preserves historic rides from other sites • Reduces pedestrian train track crossings • Possible to re-introduce rides that were previously found at the park • Build supply of spare parts for repair and maintenance • Need to expand ride area to accommodate new rides

Preferred Alternative: 2 – Change arrangement of ride area

This option offers the most flexibility. A new area designated for expansion of the rides and more efficient use of the space allocated to the rides will improve the patron experience and offer the opportunity to preserve more historic rides. Moving the go-cart track from its present location will open a corridor that will allow pedestrian circulation from the lake shore complex to the new visitor center and parking lots. Rearranging the circumferential train ride will reduce pedestrian crossings and improve safety.

Upper Operations/Maintenance Area

Main Entrance

Background for Analysis

The main entrance to the park is from route 430. This entry road can be divided into two roads forming one-way in and one-way out driveways during heavy use times. Incoming vehicular traffic is directed down the center of the park, in between the amusement rides and the picnic grove, to parking areas in the central part of the park. There are no vehicle use fees at Midway State Park and therefore there is no contact station at the entrance. There are no way finding signs or maps of the park at the entrance. Ticket sales for the rides currently occur in a small booth that is isolated from other park functions and which requires carrying cash from sales to the park office.

Alternatives	Considerations
Alternative 1 Status Quo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No sense of arrival • Lack of initial contact between patron and park staff • Congested park entrance at route 430 • Ticket sales booth isolated, cash functions are not secure • Lack of central location for patron service such as information, directions, maps, gift sales
Alternative 2 Construct new visitor center at new parking lot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct initial contact between staff and patrons • New comprehensive park office functions • Centralize ticket sales, directions, information, gift sales • Provide space for kiosks • New comfort facilities • Loss of some open space and increase in impervious roof area
Alternative 3 Construct new comfort facility and information kiosk at new parking lot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple design to give sense of arrival at the park • Provide space for interpretive panels, park maps • Direct pedestrian flow into park • Less loss of open space

Preferred Alternative: 3 Construct new comfort facility and information kiosk at new parking lot.

The addition of a new comfort facility and information kiosk at the new parking area is preferred because of the improvement to pedestrian flow and orientation. The new information kiosk will also provide patrons with useful information about the park and its history. The status quo was not chosen because of its limitations in serving the public. Alternative 2 would provide even more centralized services but is not considered appropriate for the park at this time.

Maintenance Facility

Background for Analysis

Although Midway State Park is a small park, it has a disproportionately large amount of mechanical maintenance that must be performed and need for storage. This is due to the number of amusement park rides and attractions that must be kept in proper working order. The maintenance of these rides is paramount for the safety of the public and the park staff. The rides must be stored over the winter in a facility designated for that purpose. Neither adequate maintenance nor storage facilities currently exist at the park. Maintenance areas are spread throughout the park making consistent performance difficult. Winter storage is delegated to any open space often resulting in physical harm to either the rides or to the space they are stored in. At the moment there is no satisfactory alternative.

Inadequate storage and maintenance space also precludes some acquisition due to the uncertainty of where they can be stored or repaired.

Alternatives	Considerations
Alternative 1 Status Quo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate storage and maintenance space • Degradation of some rides due to improper storage space • Buildings not designed for storage purposes are adversely affected • Limiting acquisitions • Maintenance spread out and not as efficient as it could be • Grounds and building maintenance also must share space

Alternatives	Considerations
<p>Alternative 2 Build new maintenance and storage space specifically designed for this park specifically for ride maintenance. Vehicle maintenance can continue at Long Point State Park and buildings and grounds maintenance can have dedicated space at Midway State Park.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More efficient ride maintenance function when centralized • Proper winter storage helps preserve historic rides without adversely affecting buildings not designed for this purpose • Include staff locker room, break room and bathroom • Include machine shop for making unavailable parts • Grounds and building maintenance can have dedicated space • Opens possibility for acquisition of new rides

Preferred Alternative: 2 Build new maintenance and storage space
 The two most important considerations in this alternative are safety and service. Safety of park patrons and staff is dependant on the proper maintenance of the amusement rides and other facilities at the park. The current situation makes that very difficult. Adequate storage and centralized maintenance facilities will improve the functioning of Midway State Park. The addition of a staff locker room/break room in the new facility will replace those spaces lost if the “Residence” and “Ice House” buildings are demolished.

South and North Natural Regeneration Areas

Trails

Background for Analysis
 There are currently no designated trails at Midway State Park. Informal trails exist along the lake shoreline, along the service road at the north end of the park and along Maple Springs Creek. These trails are used opportunistically by park patrons to move from one area of the park to another.

Alternatives	Considerations
<p>Alternative 1 Status Quo</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No usage designations or guidelines, safety can be a factor • No opportunity for guided tours/education/interpretation • Not necessarily designed for barrier free use

Alternatives	Considerations
Alternative 2 Develop trails in the park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connection of patrons with the natural resources of the park as well as the amusement rides • Opportunity for interpretive panels/education programs • Designed for barrier free use wherever possible • Increased recreational opportunities for park patrons • Maintenance of trails

Preferred Alternative: 2 Develop trails in the park
 Developing trails at Midway State Park will add a significant new recreation opportunity for park patrons. The new trails can be designed to take advantage of the natural and historic resources at the park and provide interpretation and education relating to those resources. Trails along Maple Springs Creek and the Chautauqua Lake shoreline and through the middle of the park will attract school groups and nature study. Additionally, improvements to the existing informal trails will improve user safety and provide for barrier free use wherever possible.

Snowmobiles

Background for Analysis
 Currently snowmobile users may drive through Midway State Park to connect with other snowmobile trails to the north and south of the park. There is no designated snowmobile trailer parking at the park. Trails exist in the area that can easily be accessed through the park.

Alternatives	Considerations
Alternative 1 Status Quo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No designated snowmobile trailer parking • No designated snowmobile trail, only through route
Alternative 2 Provide designated snowmobile trailer parking in new hard surfaced parking area during winter months. Designate trail between parking area and Chautauqua Avenue at the south end of the park as a snowmobile trail.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases useful season for parking area • Increases recreational offerings of the park • Safety conflict with other winter users of the trail, x-country skiers, snowshoers • Connects to existing snowmobile trails outside the park • Maintenance of trail

Preferred Alternative: 2 Provide snowmobile trailer parking and trail.

The designation of a portion of a new parking lot for snowmobile trailer parking and a new trail for connection to existing snowmobile trails outside the park will increase the recreational opportunities for snowmobilers in this area. This new park function will enlarge the park patron population at very little cost or work for the park staff. “Rules of the Road” to reduce user conflicts will need to be established and well signed at trail heads.

Parking Area

Parking

Background for Analysis

The park currently has on-site parking for 260 automobiles. This parking capacity is not adequate for the number of park patrons at peak volume. The number of spaces is augmented through a lease agreement with the Viking Club for the use of an open field that can accommodate 640 additional vehicles. Busses and amusement ride area employees are required to use this area. This field has areas of Red Hook Silt Loam which is somewhat poorly drained with a depth to water table of 6 to 18 inches and is susceptible to deep rutting when wet. The field is adjacent to the park and is available when not being used by the club for their own activities. The field is not paved and the parking conditions are affected by rain.

Additionally, parking is currently spread throughout the park with one lot centrally located along the central park road and another at the southern terminus of the road. Vehicles also park in front of the Arcade building and by the park office. There are no striped spaces or designated areas.

Alternatives	Considerations
Alternative 1 Status Quo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate parking during peak volumes • Leasing additional parking space • Open field parking not ideal in inclement weather • Some soils in Viking Club field are not ideal for parking vehicles when wet • Safety issues in traffic circulation through park • Expansion limited by area available • Bus and truck parking inadequate • Adversely affects stormwater runoff and water quality because of hard surface paving and no detention of runoff.

Alternatives	Considerations
<p>Alternative 2 Construct new parking area at entrance to park along route 430 with three levels of development.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Permanent hard surface parking for 300 vehicles. 2. Secondary parking with porous paving for 300 additional vehicles 3. Tertiary parking for peak volumes with reinforced grass paving for 300 additional vehicles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of new parking area • Can be configured to meet park needs at low and peak volumes • Improves safety of park by eliminating vehicular traffic from park center • Use of porous paving and vegetated detention/retention devices reduces stormwater runoff and improves water quality • Hard surface parking can act as staging area for snowmobiles in winter • Provides parking and circulation for busses bringing groups to the park. • Would permanently cover archeological resources

Preferred alternative: 2 Construct new parking area

This alternative provides the park with the number of parking spaces needed for park patrons and improves park safety. It also provides for improved bus and truck circulation and parking. The three levels of development reduce the initial cost of constructing the parking lot as well as reducing impacts to water quality through stormwater runoff. Permanent covering of archeological resources will need to be mitigated through further archeological work as recommended in the phase 1B report (Dean 2008).

Parkwide Service Facilities

Comfort Stations

Background for Analysis

There is currently only one public comfort station (e.g. bathroom facility) at Midway State Park. This is a newly renovated restroom in the Hippodrome Building. The park rents portable toilets at peak times but these are inadequate as permanent solutions as they lack hand-washing facilities and are prone to become unsightly and emit a bad odor. Patrons using the picnic areas or the amusement rides must walk to the Hippodrome to use the comfort facilities. This is often not a satisfactory solution especially when small children are involved. There are no hand washing facilities or rest room facilities at the picnic pavilions.

Alternatives

Considerations

Alternatives	Considerations
<p>Alternative 1 Status Quo</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate number of rest room facilities for park of this size • Portable toilets do not include hand washing or baby changing facilities • No facilities at critical locations
<p>Alternative 2 Maintain existing comfort station at Hippodrome and build new comfort stations at various locations in the park such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One at Central Pavilion Area • One at Amusement Ride Area • One at the new entry • One for park staff at the breakroom/locker room <p>Use alternative sewage options wherever possible (IE Composting toilets)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement of park patron experience • Improved safety and sanitary conditions • Increased maintenance • Alternative sewage options will reduce sanitary sewage flow and water usage

Preferred Alternative: 2 Build new comfort stations

Lack of adequate comfort stations was mentioned at the public hearing. Comfort stations are an essential service that the park should provide for its patrons. The construction of new comfort stations and rest rooms are an important part of the improvements to the park. These facilities will be placed at critical locations such as picnic pavilions, contact stations, staff breakrooms and in areas of gathering such as the amusement ride area. Using alternative sewage options such as composting toilets will reduce the amount of new infrastructure needed and be more sustainable.

Master Plan Alternatives

Status Quo

At the time of its sale to OPRHP, Midway State Park had been run as a private park since its start in the early 1900's and has long been a Chautauqua County feature and a beloved recreation site for families. But the requirements of a privately run facility and those of a state park are different. This is especially apparent in the responsibility that the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) has to the people of the State of New York in the health and safety of patrons as well as in historic preservation and fiscal sustainability.

The existing park layout has evolved informally on an "as needed" basis over the years. The buildings, games, roads, parking and structures appear to have been located according to the need of the moment. This arrangement resulted in an inefficient layout that does not take advantage of the topography, nor does it provide the optimum situation for user safety in many cases. A large portion of the site has never been utilized for park functions and other portions of the site have been over used. The major issue is the mix of pedestrian and vehicular traffic resulting from the main park road going through the middle of the park.

Considerations

- Several buildings need to be upgraded or removed and others are awaiting needed repairs.
- Comfort facilities are inadequate for a park of this size
- Existing circulation patterns result in vehicular-pedestrian conflicts
- Maintenance facilities are inadequate
- Lakeshore habitat has been impacted from previous uses and needs restoration
- Lakeshore is not ideal for public use
- The picnic areas need renovation and restoration
- Picnic facilities need to be upgraded and expanded to meet actual patron needs
- Water and electric service need to be modernized
- Impacts to water quality in the lake need to be addressed.
- Sustainability issues need to be addressed
- No park manager residence on site

The status quo of the park does not address many of the visions and goals established in this plan for Midway State Park

Preferred Alternative:

The preferred alternative considers the historic, cultural, natural and recreational resources of the park. At the same time the new plan responds to the needs and safety of park patrons, protection of natural resources and principles of sustainability.

This alternative improves safety and circulation, improves water access, protects both cultural and natural resources, enhances recreation opportunities and improves the overall functioning of the park. The pedestrian/vehicular conflicts are minimized by keeping vehicles out of the center of the park. A large new parking lot is planned at the open field and a new multipurpose building acts as the pedestrian entrance to the main part of the park. In addition this plan takes advantage of existing landscape features which enhance the views within and outside the park. Some changes to the layout of the rides and buildings will be necessary but the overall improvements to safety and park usability outweigh other considerations.

Each preferred element in the master plan was analyzed for its suitability in meeting the goals established for the park. A detailed description of the Master Plan is given in Chapter 6.