

Date	Feb 4, 2026
Project Name	City Brooks Park and the Lakes Vision Plan
Meeting Purpose	Special Committee Meeting
Attendees	Angela Harms, Maurice Velasquez, Josh Brooks, Zach Chrisco, Stephanie Buglione, Lan Yang, Mark Goodson, Blake Rambo, Terri Dreyer Mike Polito, Carl Stages, Cricket Gordon, Rob Stuart, Zach Corbin, Christina Melton, Chris Meyer, Jason Andreasen, Mike Raby, Randy Alvarez, Janet Simmons

Minutes

University Lakes Governance Discussion:

- Sasaki presented a project recap, including the overall project structure, timeline, current project status, and upcoming engagement milestones. The team then reviewed the University Lakes Governance and O+M Plan, including the project scope, business plan workflow, existing ownership and maintenance responsibilities, key gaps, and peer governance case study takeaways. Sasaki introduced three potential governance approaches—multiple entities coordinated through a CEA, two entities split between University Lakes and City-Brooks Park, and a single entity managing the broader system—and framed the discussion around jurisdictional boundaries, funding, maintenance, implementation, philanthropy, design consistency, and capital project delivery. The presentation also covered existing and future O&M considerations, ongoing and potential capital projects, preliminary cost categories, existing and future funding sources, and proposed evaluation criteria for prioritizing projects.
- Discussion: Committee members generally agreed that the current governance and maintenance model needs to evolve, but emphasized the need to be clear about what is being governed—land, operations, maintenance, capital delivery, funding, programming, or some combination of these. A single unified entity was discussed as a strong long-term “north star,” especially if the project is aiming for excellence and a bold philanthropic vision, but participants also noted the need to be realistic about the steps required to get there. There was interest in focusing further on the second and third governance options, while recognizing that there may be important hybrid approaches between the three models presented. Key concerns included how a unified model would cover operations and maintenance costs without consuming revenue, and how golf course maintenance would fit within a broader governance structure. For capital project prioritization, participants strongly emphasized social potential and safety, including early “proof point” projects that demonstrate public benefit. Ecological potential and water education were also viewed as important, but several participants noted that the project has already prioritized ecological goals and should now give greater weight to social impact, public use, and bringing Baton Rouge communities together.

Wampold Beach Concept Design:

- Sasaki presented the Wampold Beach Concept Design scope, which builds on the previous University Lakes master plan to create a more implementable concept for Wampold Park. The

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presentation summarized the 2021 engagement findings and prior concept design, then reviewed updated post-dredge conditions and their implications for programming, stabilization, cost, and long-term maintenance. Sasaki discussed key opportunities and constraints related to circulation, water access, stormwater quality, ecological restoration, active destination programming, and potential revenue generation, including concessions, rentals, sponsorships, event uses, and philanthropy.

City-Brooks Park Master Plan:

- Sasaki presented the City-Brooks Park Master Plan overview, positioning the 154-acre park as a potential regional “central park” for Baton Rouge due to its scale, location near downtown and LSU, relationship to University Lakes, and existing civic amenities. The team shared inventory and analysis findings organized around connectivity, history and culture, environment, and program, highlighting challenges such as fragmented circulation, disconnected park areas, uneven investment, ecological underperformance, limited programmable space, and the need to honor the park’s layered history. Sasaki then introduced draft core values and guiding principles—resilient and rooted, dynamic and connected, embracing heritage and culture, and welcoming and safe—as a foundation for future concept development.
- Discussion around City-Brooks Park focused on the park’s existing assets, major connectivity challenges, and opportunities to make the park feel more unified, accessible, and civic in character. Participants noted that the park is already widely used, especially around the perimeter for exercise, and that its scenic experience is a major community asset. They also highlighted the importance of Knock Knock Children’s Museum attendance data, the growth in City Park Golf Course rounds since 2018, and the potential for golf to remain a revenue source for future operations. Connectivity emerged as a major concern, especially at the railroad/Dalrymple intersection, where pedestrians, cyclists, vehicles, and golf carts are forced through a narrow and uncomfortable area. Participants emphasized that Dalrymple Drive should feel more “of the park”—slower, safer, and more integrated into the park experience—and noted that night events create difficult crossing conditions when visitors park across Dalrymple. There was also interest in exploring larger moves to reconnect City-Brooks Park to the lake, including the role of East Lakeshore Drive, Lorri Burgess Road, and the future greenway. Participants also identified the park’s multigenerational use—tennis, playgrounds, Knock Knock, and other family-oriented activities—as a major strength, while questioning whether the existing splash pad location is the best long-term fit.
- Participants responded positively to the early organizing ideas, especially the loop and spine concepts, which felt natural as ways to structure movement through the park. East-west connectivity was identified as one of the most challenging and important issues, particularly the need to better connect Knock Knock Children’s Museum with the Baton Rouge Gallery and other destinations. Participants also emphasized that this physical connection should be tied to the history and culture of the site, including the park’s civil rights history and community memory. The Baton Rouge Gallery’s previous work related to the swim-in was noted as a potential reference point, and participants encouraged the team to engage voices from people who grew up around the park to help shape how the east-west connection can become both a physical improvement and a meaningful cultural narrative.

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