

# **Community Assistantship Program**

**Cotton Park Master Plan**

# **Cotton Park Master Plan**

Prepared in partnership with  
Cotton Park Restoration Committee

Prepared by  
Stephanie Valenta  
Graduate Student  
University of Minnesota  
October, 2005

CAP Report 090

May 2005

CAP is a cross-college, cross-campus University of Minnesota initiative coordinated by the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs.

Funds for this project were generously provided by CURA and the McKnight Foundation.

This is a publication of the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA), an all-University applied research and technology center at the University of Minnesota that connects faculty and students with community organizations and public institutions working on significant public policy issues in Minnesota. The content of this report is the responsibility of the author and is not necessarily endorsed by CAP, CURA or the University of Minnesota..

CAP Report 090

© 2005 by The Regents of the University of Minnesota. This publication may be reproduced in its entirety (except photographs or other materials reprinted here with permission from other sources) in print or electronic form, for noncommercial educational and nonprofit use only, provided that two copies of the resulting publication are sent to the CURA editor at the address below and that the following acknowledgment is included: "Reprinted with permission of the University of Minnesota's Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA)."

For information regarding commercial reprints or reproduction of portions of this publication, contact the CURA editor at the address below.

This publication may be available in alternate formats upon request.

Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA)  
University of Minnesota  
330 HHH Center  
301--19th Avenue South  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455

Phone: (612) 625-1551

Fax: (612) 626-0273

E-mail: [cura@umn.edu](mailto:cura@umn.edu)

Web site: <http://www.cura.umn.edu>

*The University of Minnesota is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, or sexual orientation.*

**Cotton Park Masterplan**  
Coleraine, Minnesota



Center for Urban and Regional Affairs  
University of Minnesota

---

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This project was produced by the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs at the University of Minnesota through the Community Assistantship Program (CAP). This project and document were completed by Stephanie Valenta, graduate research assistant.

This project was completed under the supervision of the Cotton Park Restoration Committee and the Center for Changing Landscapes.

The Cotton Park Restoration Committee consisted of:

Lloyd Anderson  
Cavour Johnson  
Reed Lindgren  
George Rauzi  
Jennifer Shear

This project was completed with the help and resourcefulness of the following individuals and organizations:

Sovey Citizens Committee  
Coleaine City Council and staff  
Cotton Park Restoration Committee  
Don Boese  
Itasca County, GIS and mapping  
The Center for Changing Landscapes, University of Minnesota  
The Minnesota Department of Transportation, Dan Erickson and Karl Weissenborn  
The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Bob Moore and Cindy Tomcko

---

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Project scope	4
Historic connections	6
Regional connections	8
Opportunities and constraints	10
Design concept 1	12
Design concept 2	14
Masterplan	16
Street trees	20
Emergent plants	21
Shoreline plants	22
Water management	23
Upland plants	24
Seed mix	25
Precedent photos	26

---

## PROJECT SCOPE

The Cotton Park masterplan was the result of a process that involved obtaining community feedback through forums and meetings, meeting with persons from Department of Transportation and Department of Natural Resources, and research.

From this, the following criteria were established to guide the design process and produce a masterplan:

- Draw people into the site.
- Improve existing boat landing facilities.
- Provide gathering spaces to accommodate a range of users and group sizes.
- Provide the community with an ecological and aesthetically pleasing lakeshore.
- Link Cotton Park to Coleraine and Bovey businesses, as well as Longyear Park, schools, and the Mesabi Trail.
- Provide a masterplan that can be implemented over time in phases.
- Provide a masterplan that references the local history and culture.





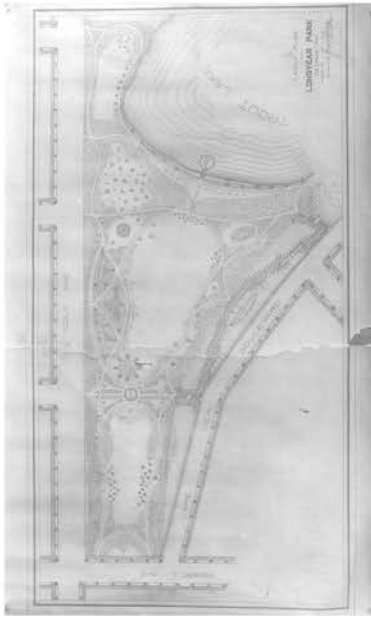
---

## HISTORIC CONNECTIONS

Cotton Park, located in Coleraine, has historically been used as a community gathering place for relaxing and retreat.

At one time, Cotton Park was home to a large boathouse that held dances that were attended by people throughout the range. Even when there was not a dance going on at the boathouse, there was boating and swimming that occurred on Trout Lake.

Coleraine was designed as a community for the mining companies, and because of this the community had amenities that included a Carnegie library and a large formal park, known as Longyear Park. Many of these buildings and amenities are still intact in Coleraine, and the other reminders of the mining history of the area can still be seen throughout the landscape.



---

## REGIONAL CONNECTIONS

Cotton Park is located in Coleraine, but is centrally located between the downtowns of both Coleraine and Bovey. With the construction of Highway 168 occurring in the near future, it will be increasingly important to create a green connection between Bovey and Coleraine. Cotton Park in Coleraine and land in Bovey could potentially be used to better connect the community.

In addition to linking Bovey and Coleraine, there is a need to connect Coleraine and Bovey to the region. One of the ways that this can be done is through the Mesabi Trail, which brings hundreds of people through the area via bicycles and motorized vehicles. While the trail goes around the two business areas, a loop could be used to connect downtown Coleraine, Longyear Park, Cotton Park, and downtown Bovey.

Cotton Park is also ecologically connected to the region through waterways. The open channel that runs through the east side of the park is the primary outlet for the Canistota pit, which is of interest to the area because of its history, recreation uses, and ecological significance.



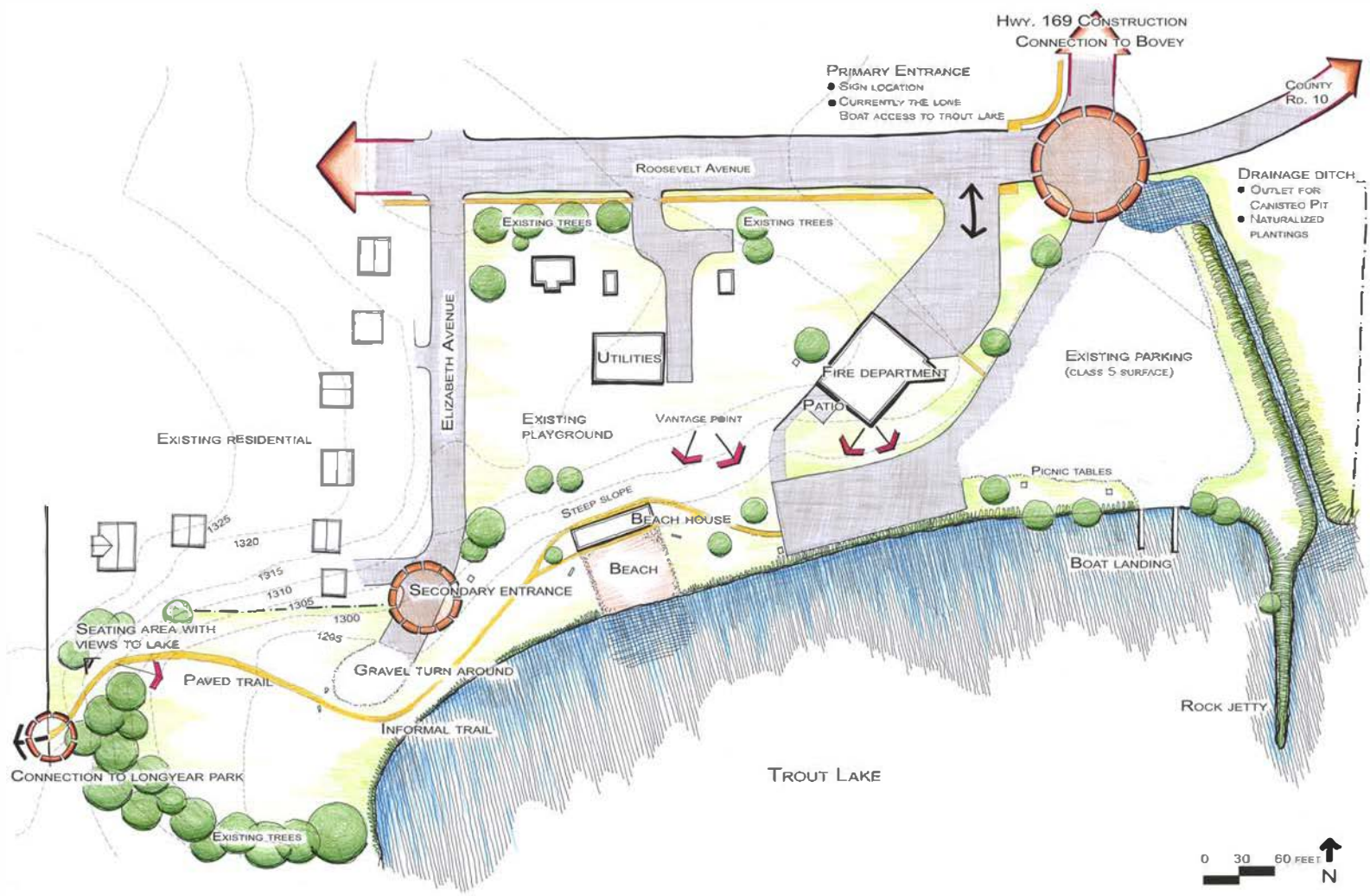
---

## Opportunities

- Central location between downtown Coleraine and Bovey.
- Lakeshore.
- Primary boat landing access to Trout Lake.
- Public beach with lifeguard.
- Historic use of Cotton Park.
- Connection to Longyear Park.
- Connection to Mesabi Trail.
- Open channel coming through site draining the Canisteo pit.

## Constraints

- Highway 169 construction and further disconnect between downtown areas.
- Slopes.
- Canisteo pit drainage.



---

## DESIGN CONCEPT 1

- Based on the geometry and formal, curvilinear design of Longyear Park.
- Maintain all structures in the park as they are.
- Increase the size of the beach.
- Improve existing boat landing and parking.
- Improve drainage by treating water in rain gardens before it enters the lake.
- Wider trails throughout park to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians.
- Smaller gathering spaces that include picnic areas and benches.
- Provide a sheltered picnic area for larger gatherings.
- Revegetate shoreline and channel.
- Increase parking.
- Provide a playground area that is visible from the beach.





---

## DESIGN CONCEPT 2

- Create an outdoor amphitheater that can be used for large gatherings or as seating for the beach.
- Increase the size of the beach.
- Restore the shoreline.
- Improve the boat landing and parking.
- Treat run-off through rain gardens and retention swales.
- Increase the number of trails going through the park.
- Improve signage so that visitors are aware of the amenities and recreation that are available in the area.
- Create a strong entrance from Elizabeth Ave.
- Increase parking.
- Place playground in area that is visible from the beach.
- Decrease the amount of mowed grass in the park.

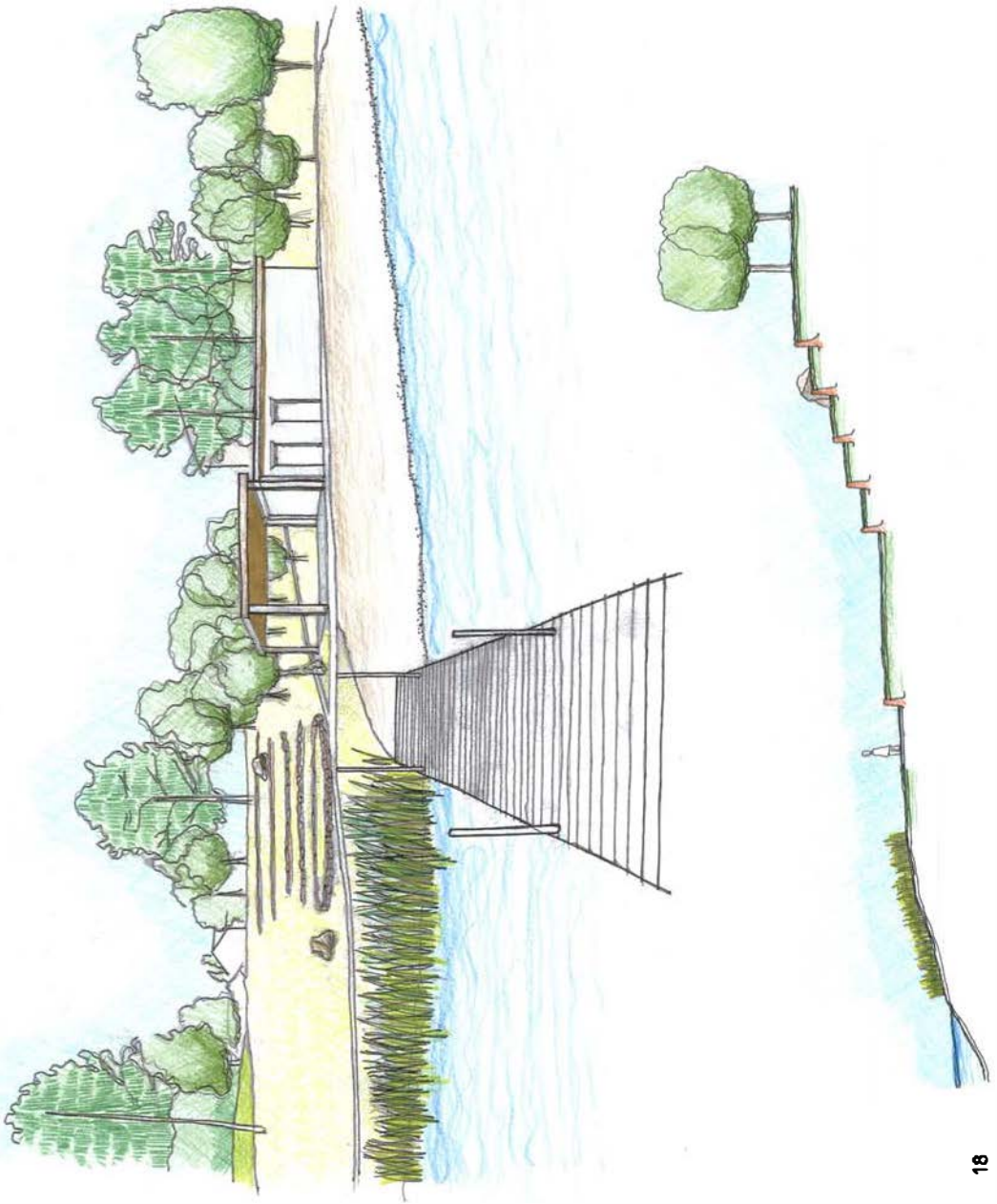


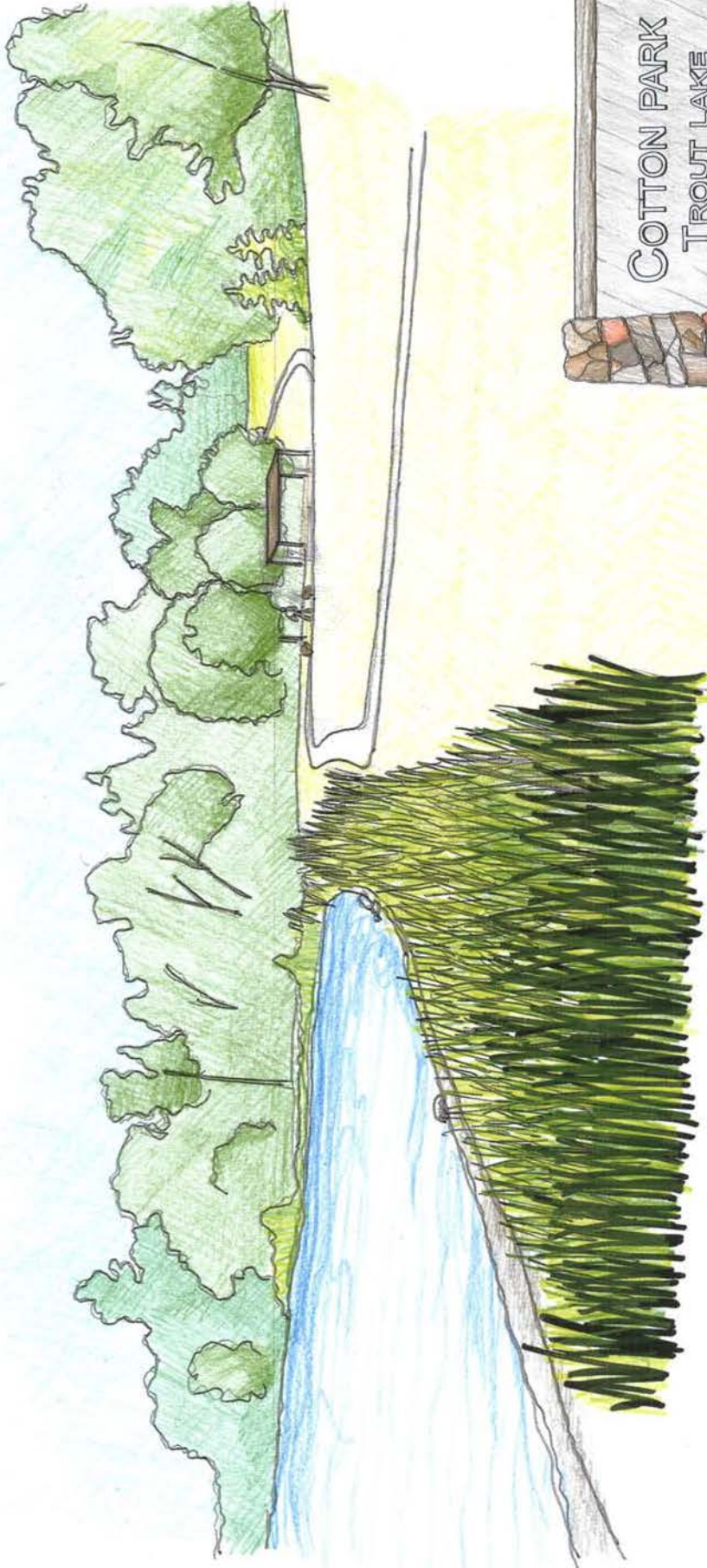
---

## MASTERPLAN

- Decrease the size of the existing boathouse.
- Create a small amphitheater space adjacent to the beach.
- Place the playground adjacent to the beach.
- Maintain open space between the fire department and the lake.
- Create a visual and green connection between the boat landing and the beach.
- Increase and improve signage to inform visitors about Cotton Park and the amenities of the area.
- Create smaller gathering spaces in the form of picnic tables and benches.
- Put a bridge over the channel to utilize east side of the park.
- Plant trees and native grasses to decrease the amount of mowed area.
- Restore and increase the shoreline vegetation.
- Provide a sheltered picnic area for larger gatherings.
- Increase parking.







**Street Trees**



- Acer saccharinum*
- Acer saccharum*
- Betula alleghaniensis*
- Fraxinus pennsylvanica*
- Pinus strobus*
- Quercus macrocarpa*
- Quercus rubra*

**Emergent**



- Acorus calamus*
- Brasenia schreberi*
- Calla palustris*
- Equisetum fluviatile*
- Nuphar variegatum*
- Nymphaea odorata*
- Sagittaria latifolia*
- Sagittaria rigida*
- Scirpus pungens*
- Sparganium chlorocarpum*
- Sparganium euycarpum*



## Shoreline

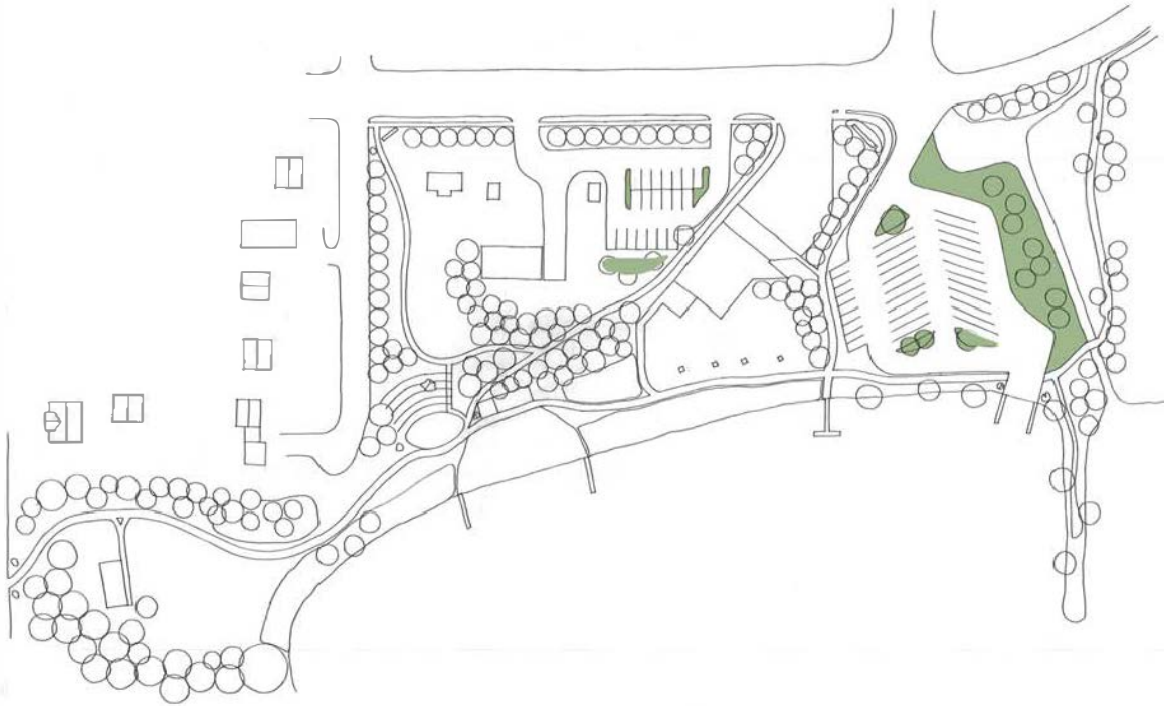


*Alisma trivale*  
*Anemone canadensis*  
*Arisaema triphyllum*  
*Aster lanceolatus*  
*Aster punctatus*  
*Aster umbellatus*  
*Betula pumila*  
*Carex aquatilis*

*Carex crinata*  
*Carex lacustris*  
*Cirsium muticum*  
*Elymus virginicus*  
*Eupatorium maculatum*  
*Gentiana andrewsii*  
*Hellanthus giganteus*  
*Hierochloa odorata*

*Ilex verticillata*  
*Juncus effusus*  
*Mentha arvensis*  
*Myrica gale*  
*Sagittaria cuneata*  
*Salix humilis*  
*Solidago canadensis*  
*Solidago gigantea*

## Water management



<i>Alisma triviale</i>	<i>Cornus sericea</i>	<i>Salix nigra</i>
<i>Allium stellatum</i>	<i>Eupatorium maculatum</i>	<i>Scirpus acutus</i>
<i>Amorpha fruticosa</i>	<i>Gentiana andrewsii</i>	<i>Scirpus validus</i>
<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>	<i>Helenium autumnale</i>	<i>Spartina pectinata</i>
<i>Anemone canadensis</i>	<i>Iris versicolor</i>	<i>Tradescantia ohiensis</i>
<i>Aronia melanocarpa</i>	<i>Juncus effusus</i>	<i>Verbena hastata</i>
<i>Artemisia ludoviciana</i>	<i>Larix laricina</i>	<i>Veronicastrum virginicum</i>
<i>Aster nove-angliae</i>	<i>Listris pycnostachys</i>	
<i>Calamagrostis canadensis</i>	<i>Physostegia virginiana</i>	
<i>Chelone glabra</i>	<i>Sagittaria latifolia</i>	

## Upland

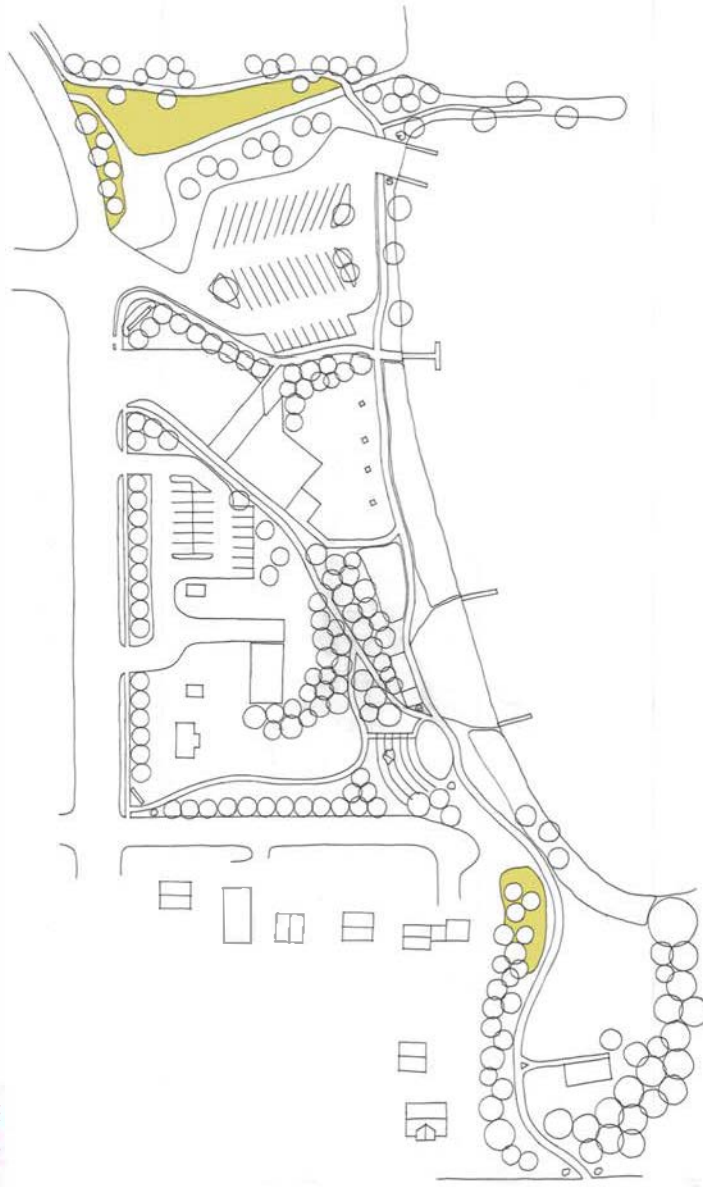


*Allium stellatum*  
*Andropogon gerardii*  
*Aquilegia canadense*  
*Arisaema triphyllum*  
*Aster macrophyllus*  
*Aster umbellatus*  
*Betula papyrifera*  
*Cornus alternifolia*

*Cornus sericea*  
*Corylus americana*  
*Elymus virginicus*  
*Eupatorium maculatum*  
*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*  
*Helianthus giganteus*  
*Larix laricina*  
*Ostrya virginiana*

*Parthenocissus vitacea*  
*Pinus strobus*  
*Populus balsamifera*  
*Populus grandidentata*  
*Populus tremuloides*  
*Quercus rubra*  
*Salix humilis*  
*Salidago canadensis*

Seed mix



Use the same seed mix in these areas that is used by the Department of Transportation to do the medians and roadsides. This could also be used in other areas in Coleraine and Bovey to start to visually link the entire community.

**PRECEDENT PHOTOS**

