

2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

camp bear creek







TABLE OF CONTENTS


FOREWORD

PART I: THE GAME PLAN

- Process
- Purpose + Clarity
- Why Do We Exist?
- Our Core Values
- Strategic Lenses
- Forward Priorities
- What's Next?

PART II: BACKGROUND

- Diamonds
- Coal
- Roadblocks
- Strategic Lenses

A photograph of a forest during autumn. The trees have vibrant orange, yellow, and red leaves. The ground is covered in fallen leaves. The text is centered over the image in a large, white, sans-serif font.

**Camp is a spiritual
greenhouse. It's organic
and cultivates the
ground for the future of
the Church.**

- Rev. Julie Schuett (First Presbyterian Church near Ely, Iowa) -

Foreword

Dear Friends in Christ,

Camp Bear Creek has been a wonderful place for people of all ages to enjoy and experience over the past 63 years. Our rich history and traditions have connected individuals, families, and churches for generations.

More than ever before, children and youth need a camp experience where they unplug, play, make close friendships, and grow in their faith in a natural setting. They participate in deep conversations about life while sitting around the campfire or looking up at the stars while lying in Deer Meadow. They see deer and other wildlife at camp while walking to archery or kayaking. They learn a new skill and receive praise and affirmation from their counselor, an individual who was a camper just years before. This experience builds confidence in young people and helps them see themselves as children of God.

We have an exciting and ambitious plan that will chart the course for the camp for the next 25 years and beyond. This plan will broaden our programs, services, and facilities so we can grow and meet the needs of future generations while remaining true to our core values.

Thank you for your continued interest, participation, and support of the Camp Bear Creek ministry.

Grace and peace,
Kevin Cullum
Executive Director

MASTER PLAN AND STRATEGIC PLAN TASK FORCE

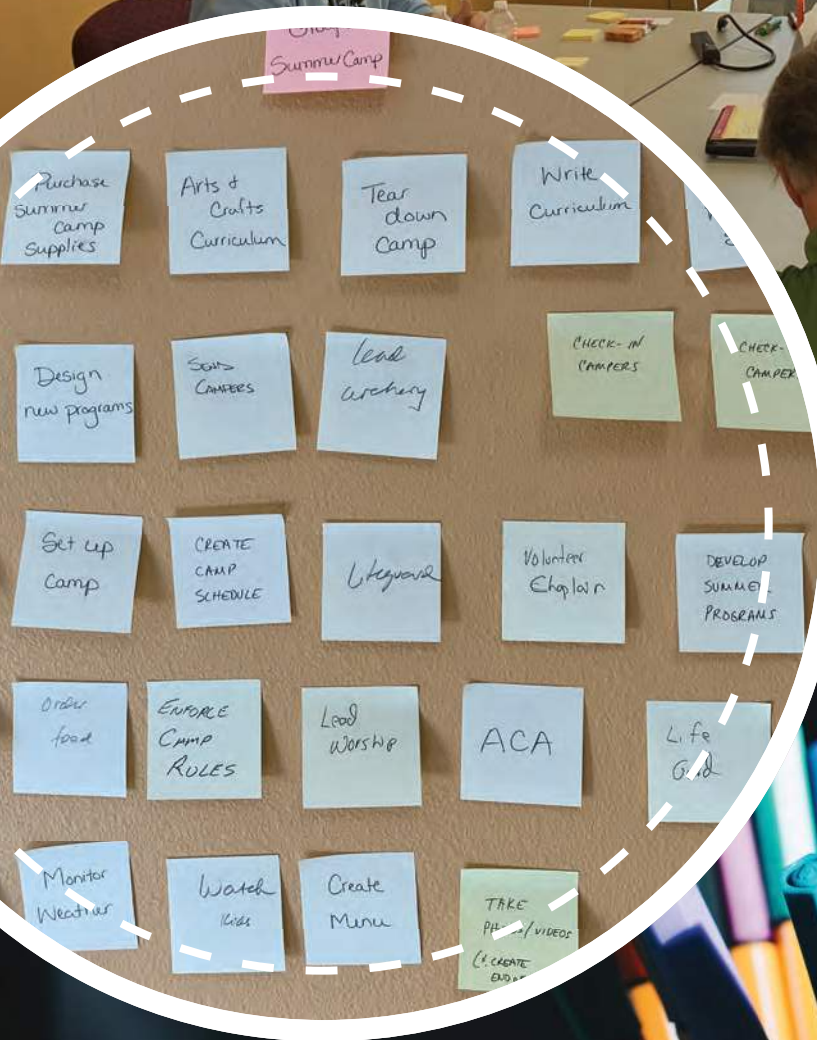
Kevin Cullum - Executive Director
Stacie Hoppman - Camp Director
Laura Frey Law - Task Force and former Board of Trustees Member
Mike Saskowski - Task Force and Board of Trustees Member
Monte Engelkemier - Task Force Member
Sally Brause - Task Force Member
Rev. Troy Winder - Task Force and former Board of Trustee Member





PART I: THE GAME PLAN

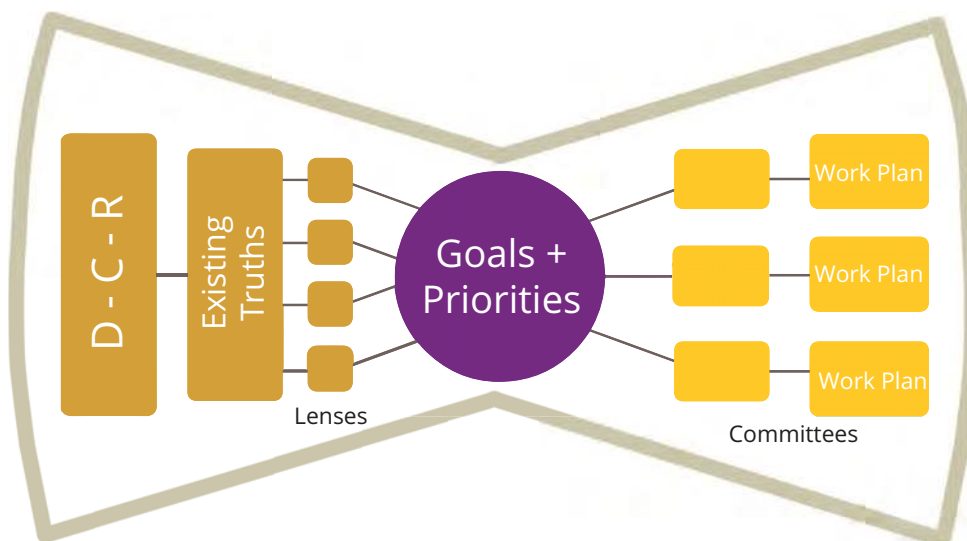




Process

On November 6, 2021, the Camp Bear Creek Task Force participated in a strategic planning workshop. During this workshop, participants discussed the camp's mission and vision and solidified core values. They identified what the Camp has been doing well, where there was room for improvement, and things that stand in the way of continued improvement. The Task Force explored key factors that could make their master planning and its implementation succeed or fail. Additionally, the team identified the strategic lenses or filters through which various people, particularly staff see and understands the operation of the camp. Distilling that information, the group identified a list of preliminary short and long-term action items that would move that vision forward and prioritizing their top three for each particular staff.

Following this workshop, the design team hosted stakeholder interviews with 11 separate groups consisting of past and present campers and staff, church leaders, board members and other key stakeholders to gain an understanding of stakeholder priorities and values. Additionally, online engagement including comments, ideas and visual facility and activity preferencing for the camp were available to a broader camp community to gain an understanding of their desires, goals and priorities. In a follow up Task Force meeting, the stakeholder and camp community online engagement comments and result were reviewed and as a result the draft action items at the previous meeting were re-evaluated and refined.





FORESTRY
MANAGEMENT

2015

2015

2015

Purpose

A Camp Bear Creek Strategic and Master Plan Task Force was created to assist in the development of a Strategic plan that would provide the camp a framework to confirm its values and to strengthen the camp, its future, and effectiveness for the camp community.

Clarity

The purpose of this strategic planning process is to create clarity among the Task Force and other decision makers, regarding the priorities for Camp Bear Creek for the next 25 years.





PART I: THE GAME PLAN

Why Do We Exist?


We serve Christ by providing a place of sanctuary and inspiration.

How Do We Do This?

We do this by:

- Loving God. Loving others. Loving ourselves.
- Sharing our natural environment of caves, bluffs, creek, forest and wildlife.
- Offering unique program and worship spaces
- Building relationships and community
- Being responsible stewards.



A photograph of a forest with trees in autumn foliage, featuring a green lawn in the foreground and a car parked in the distance.

"Connecting with the outdoors, especially places and moments of particular beauty, inspire worship and wonder, and draw us into the heart of God. "

- Stacie Hoppman (Camp Director) -

Our Core Values

Core values are those values that define you as an individual or organization. They are what make you who you are. While aspirational values may change over time, core values should not. They are the values that you are willing to struggle for and to maintain at all costs.

Grow Your Faith

Be Authentic

Live in the Moment

Connect with Nature

Pursue Excellence

A hand holding a magnifying glass over a dirt path in a field. The background is a warm, orange-toned image of a hand holding a magnifying glass. The lens of the magnifying glass is focused on a dirt path that winds through a field of tall grass. The path leads towards a small tree in the distance under a hazy sky. The overall tone is warm and contemplative.

Strategic Lenses

For successful long-term sustainability, viability and growth, critical decisions that Camp Bear Creek leaders make should consider all the following categories or “Strategic Lenses” of governance.



Building and Grounds

The Camp's beautiful outdoor environment, building facilities and infrastructure all require ongoing attention and planned investment to keep up with current needs and minimize failures in service due to deferred maintenance.



Marketing

A healthy Camp attendance requires outreach to the church community and general public. Providing an informative and dynamic branding and message encourages Camp participation which strengthens the camp community and facilitates visitor's walk with Christ.



Human Resources

Providing quality services and programs requires personnel that are appropriately skilled and Christian community minded. As the community grows and services expand, so too must the staff to manage that growth.



Operations/Business Management

Maintaining all staffing resources, capital assets, and operations and maintenance services, for long-term success requires thoughtful investment of the Camp's funds. Thus, honest and accurate budgeting is imperative and interrelated across all strategic lenses. In every decision, leaders must consider the Camp's long-term plans and the effects of today's actions on tomorrow's goals.



Guest Groups and Summer Camp

Serving visitors as Christ loved and served the Church is the heart of the Camp Bear Creek's mission. Planning efforts, and resource allocation should effectively support the organizational needs, programming, and facilities required to serve camp guests and to provide them a place of sanctuary and rest.



Short Term Priorities - (2023 - 2028)

Prioritizing action items in a succinct manner provides clarity for leadership and staff alike and facilitates decision making, implementation and progress. The Camp Bear Creek and Strategic & Master Planning Task Force has outlined the following short and long-term priorities through their Strategic Planning Workshop.

While there are many important things that will need attention in the coming months and years, Camp Leadership has committed to focusing on the following action items.

New Camp Name

Update the Camp name from Camp Wyoming to Camp Bear Creek for clarity and fresh branding.

Master Plan Implementation Strategy

Create a site plan that reflects vision & priorities and provides a planning framework for the next 25 years.

- Develop a staffing plan commensurate with the requirements of the Master Site Plan
- Develop a Funding Plan to raise the capital resources needed to implement the Master Plan

Climbing Tower, Zip Lines and High Ropes Course

Install adventure amenities that have been in the planning and fundraising stages for the past several years.

Road and Maintenance Facility Improvements

Widen road from camp entrance to Deer Center. Build new maintenance facility with a separate road to it.

New Pool, Bath House and Staff Housing

Build a new pool, bath house and parking to meet the aquatic needs and expectations of camp visitors and provide new upgraded housing to accommodate staff.



Long Term Priorities - (2029 - 2049)

Housing Accommodations

Develop new Tree and Bird Unit housing with parking and a new loop road to facilitate vehicular circulation.

Dining Hall, Summer Administration Office and Health Center

Build essential new facilities at the heart of the summer camp location.

Gymnasium, Crafts Building, Ampitheater and Indoor Chapel

Provide dedicated indoor recreation, worship, event and crafting facilities for play and year-round activities.

Expanded Frog Pond

Increase the variety of outdoor aquatic activities by developing a full-sized lake.

Conference Center

Build a hotel-style conference center to facilitate larger conferences and events.





PART II: BACKGROUND



□ NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
HINS / CAUSES / TRIGGERS

5

* □ SMALL GROUP METHOD (12 KIDS)

↳ □ PROGRAMMING IS RELATIONAL

□ EXPERIENCE BASED LEARNING (BIBLE STUDY)

ATION

(RETURNING STAFF)



PART II: BACKGROUND

The following information was gathered as part of our interactive exercises during the project kick-off meeting. The honest input provided by participants during this series of brainstorm discussions provided the groundwork for the Strategic Planning Workshop meetings and is intended to provide background and help to guide the development of priorities and key initiatives for the next 25 years.

Diamonds

What are the diamonds - the best features of the camp and things we are doing very well?

- Maintaining the natural environment
- Utilizing a relational small group method
- Experienced-based learning/Bible study
- Creating a variety of new activities over the years
- Consistent camp director leadership
- Alternative worship styles
- Intergenerational camp history
- Fostering the return of summer staff for multiple years



ACTIVITIES (W)

SITE

PROBLEMS

❑ POOR TRAFFIC FLOW

❑ LACK OF DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE
↳ NOT CLEAR

Coal

List things that, with more attention/work, could become diamonds:

- Facilities
 - Aged
 - No cabin bathrooms
 - Inflexible for mixed groups
- Lack of Storage
- Accessibility
- Facilities planning
- Wayfinding and traffic flow
- Parking (quantity / location)
- Year-round camp use
- Camp name
- Facilities/Amenities - Improvements/Upgrades needed (Detailed List)
 - Kitchen
 - Health Center (Separate)
 - Program Office at Deer Center
 - Storm shelters
 - Archery range (dedicated)
 - Arts and crafts (dedicated)
 - Flexible/gender neutral showers, bathrooms and changing area
 - Outdoor Pavilion with fire ring
 - Indoor Gym space (dedicated)
 - Zero entry Pool
 - Indoor Worship space
 - Outdoor Worship space (with electrical)
 - Flat sports field
 - High Ropes course -needed
 - Loop trails (flatter)
 - Lighting
 - Lake/pond
 - Roadways
 - Cozy Spots/Views
 - Better wider roadways

What will make this project fail?

1. Short-term thinking
2. Lack of funds
3. Unclear direction and focus
4. Trying to do too many things but doing nothing well
5. Putting the burden of work on too-few people

LACK OF VISION

POOR PARTICIPATION

NOT WANTING SIGNIFICANT CHANGE

NOT BEING ABLE TO SELL THE VISION

What will make this project fail?

① Lack of follow through/sits

- * Choosing not to follow the plan - shelving it & ignoring the plan
- * Not having clear directions/goals
- * Not continuously educating new leadership (Board, Staff) on the plan



Roadblocks

What roadblocks exist or (may occur in the future) that could delay or prohibit successfully “turning coal into diamonds”?

- Short-term thinking
- Lack of funds
- Lack of, or unclear vision
- Trying to do too many things but doing nothing well
- Putting the burden of work on too-few people
- Lack of buy-in from camp community and stakeholders
- Not wanting significant change
- Not keeping an open mindset, or listening to each other
- Lack of follow through/plan sits on a shelf
- Not continuously educating new leadership (board + staff) on the plan
- Unrealistic expectations
- Not being able to feasibly phase implementation



Building and Grounds



Strategic Lenses

The Task Force was tasked with writing out anything and everything they do on a daily basis, and activities in which the camp's staff engages. They sorted these items into common topics or themes to create the "Strategic Lenses" through which decisions should be viewed. Care should be taken to fully assess how each decision affects the various entities throughout the entire organization.

Buildings and Grounds

- General maintenance
- Building maintenance
- Pool maintenance
- Trail maintenance
- Clear snow from roads
- Mow grass
- Septic system maintenance
- Road maintenance
- Timber management
- Clean up in between camps
- Clean bathrooms
- Maintain high ropes course



Marketing



Marketing

- Raise money
- Donate money
- Process guest feedback
- Take pictures
- Post on Social Media
- Visit churches to tell about camp
- Advertise summer camps
- Design/print/mail newsletters
- Make promotional video
- Develop marketing materials
- Write/send thank you letters
- Recruit campers
- Recruit rental groups
- Update website
- Rent facilities
- Set up online registration



Human Resources



Human Resources

- Hire Staff
- Serve on camp board
- Help plan for future
- Evaluate staff
- Recruit chaplains
- Recruit volunteers
- Summer staff paperwork
- Archery certification
- Lifeguard certification
- Strategic planning
- Drive mission and vision
- Train staff
- Recruit nurses
- Donate time
- Recruit board members



Operations & Business Management



Presbytery
mgmt

Write
board
Reports

PAY
BILLS

Host
Rental groups

Create
Flyers

Write
Manuals

rent

Operations/Business Management

- Write Board reports
- Presbytery management
- Accounting/keep books
- Pay bills
- Pay employess
- Create flyers
- Write manuals
- Rent vans
- Manage cash flow
- Update personnel policies
- Design/order T-shirts
- File information

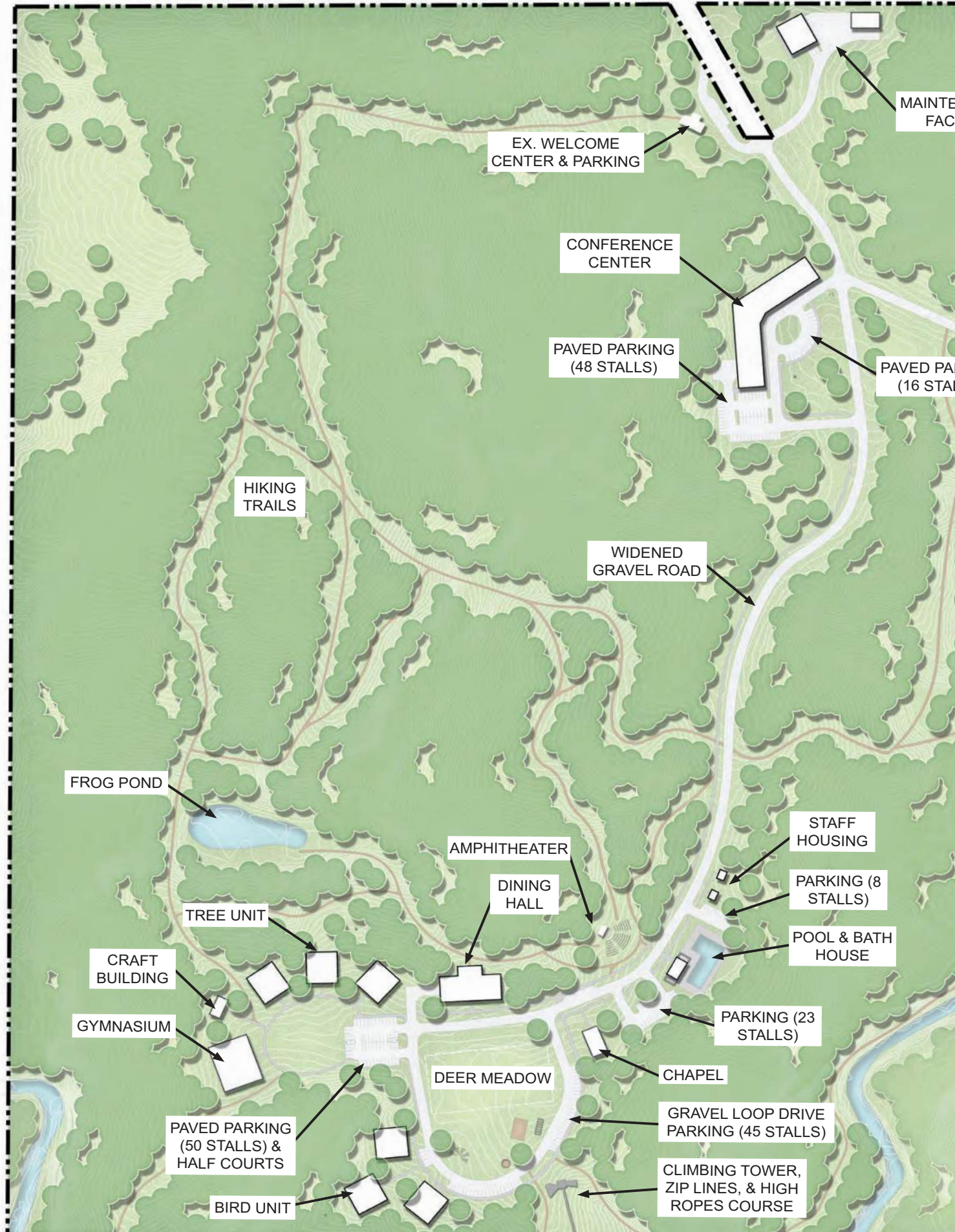


**Group &
Summer
Camp**



Groups and Summer Camp

- Make song boards
- Purchase summer camp supplies
- Arts and crafts curriculum
- Write curriculum
- Plan worship services
- Schedule off-site programs
- Design new programs
- Lead archery
- Check-in campers
- Check-out campers
- Provide resident clergy
- Set up camp
- Create camp schedule
- Lifeguard
- Volunteer Chaplain
- Entertain campers
- Order food
- Enforce camp rules
- Lead worship
- American Camp Association Accreditation
- Health care
- Monitor weather
- Watch kids
- Create menu
- Take photos/videos
- Create end of week video



CAMP BEAR CREEK MASTER PLAN

WYOMING, IOWA

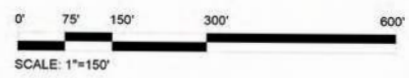
MANANCE
ILTY

AREA FOR FUTURE
DEVELOPMENT

PKING
LLS)

HIKING
TRAILS

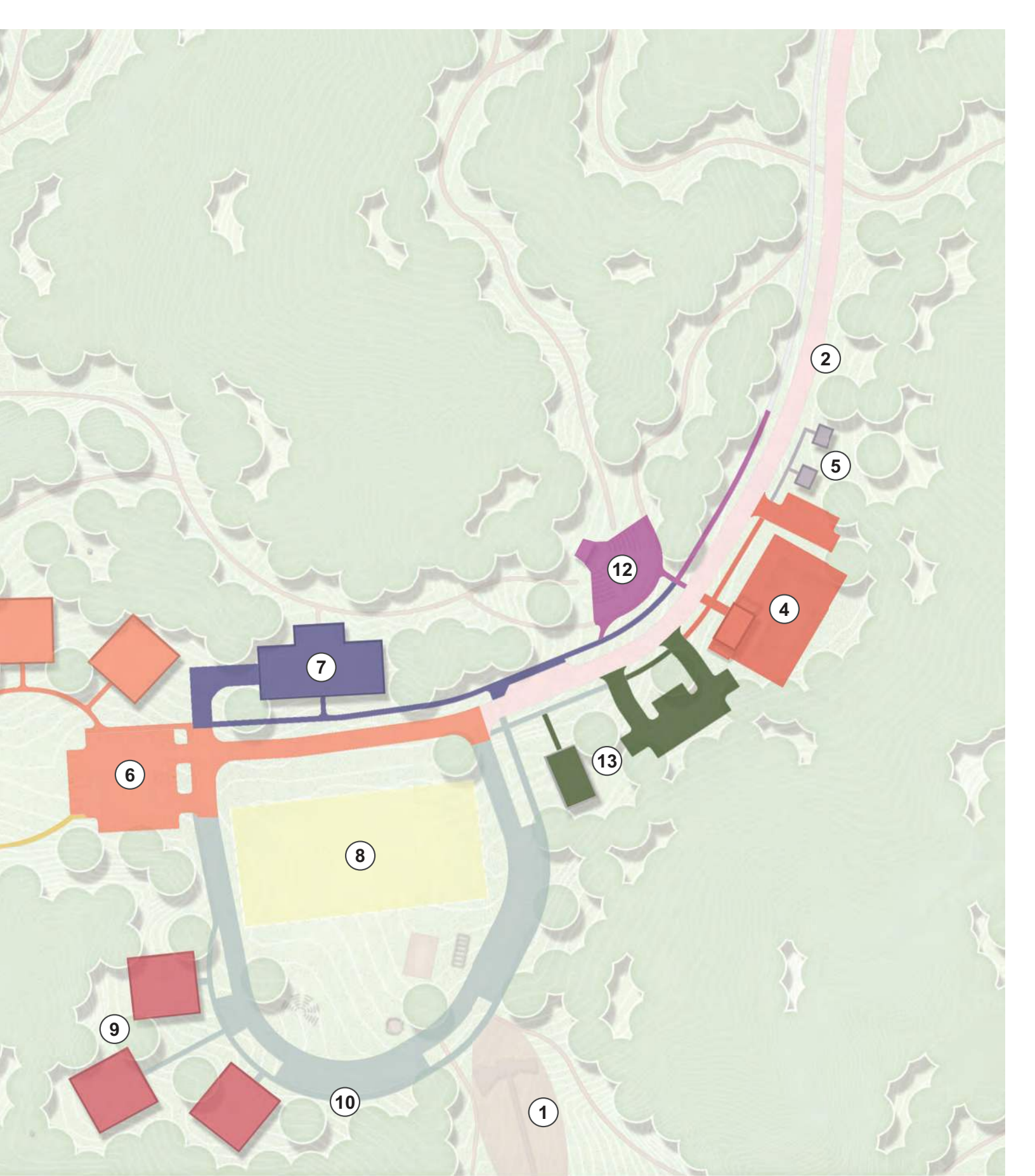
BEAR CREEK





PHASING OF NEW FACILITIES

1. Climbing Tower, Zip Lines and High Ropes Course
2. Widen Road to Deer Center
3. Maintenance Facility
4. Pool, Parking Lot and Bath House
5. Staff Housing
6. Tree Unit Housing and Parking
7. Dining Hall, Admin. Office & Health Center
8. Level / Expand Deer Meadow Playing Field
9. Bird Unit Housing
10. Connection to Create Loop Road
11. Gymnasium and Craft Building
12. Amphitheater
13. Chapel and Parking Lot
14. Enlarge Frog Pond / Build Lake
15. Conference Center
16. Future Development / TBD





BEAR  **CREEK**

Contact Information:

Camp Bear Creek
9106 42nd Avenue,
Wyoming, Iowa 53362
Phone: 563.488.3893
<https://bearcreek.camp>