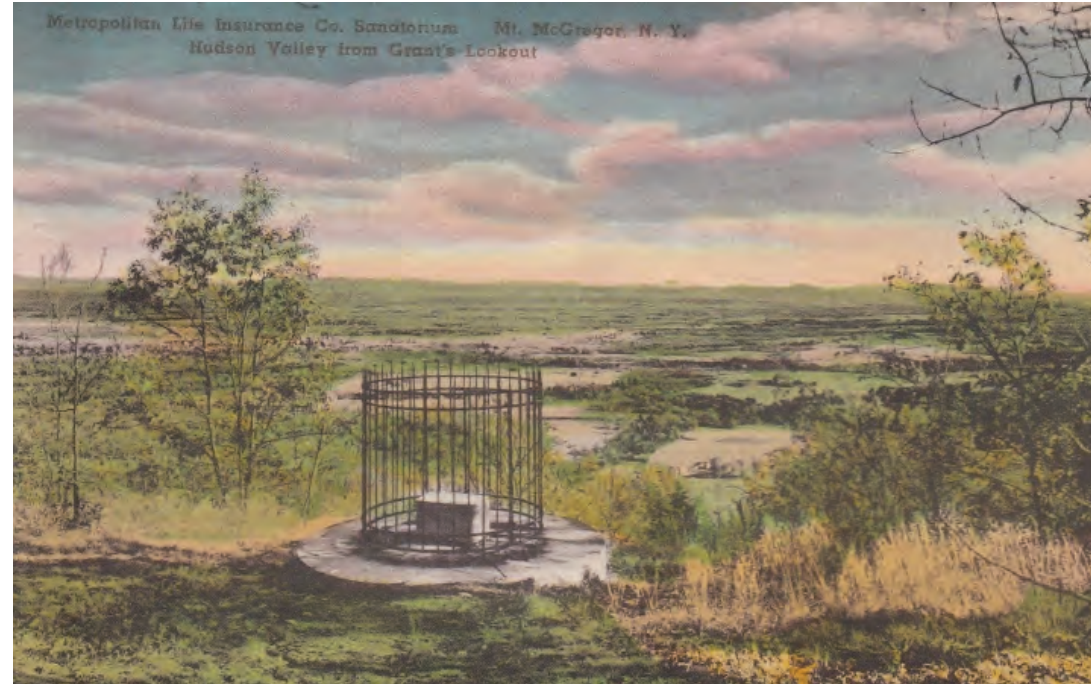
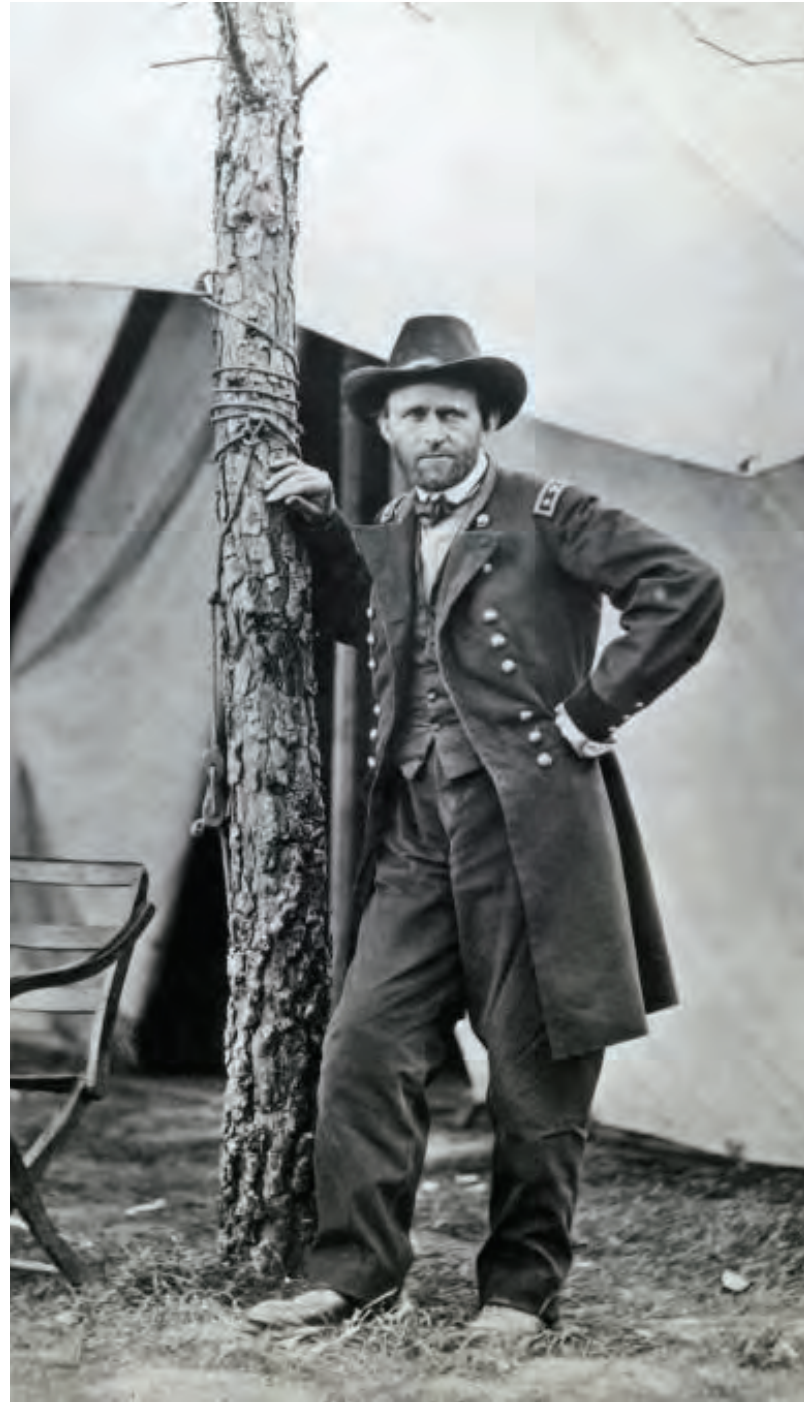


# U.S. Grant Cottage State Historic Site Strategic Development Plan 2023 Update



Prepared For:



**New York State  
Parks, Recreation and  
Historic Preservation**

NYS OPRHP  
Saratoga / Capital Region  
19 Roosevelt Drive  
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

Prepared By:



**The LA GROUP**  
Landscape Architecture & Engineering P.C.

## Strategic Development Plan Acknowledgements



### NYS OPRHP Core Team Members:

Alane Ball Chinian, Regional Director, Saratoga/Capital Region Administration  
 David Barone, Assistant Regional Director, Saratoga/Capital Region Administration  
 Brian Strasavich, Regional Parks Operations Manager, Saratoga/Capital Region Administration  
 Kurt Kress, PE, Assistant District Manager (Hudson Valley District), Capital Bureau  
 Gregory Smith, Director, Bureau of Historic Sites, Division for Historic Preservation  
 Beth Cumming, Senior Historic Site Restoration Coordinator, Division for Historic Preservation  
 William Krattinger, Project Director, State Parks Survey, Division for Historic Preservation  
 Diana Carter, Assistant Division Director, Division of Environmental Stewardship and Planning  
 Paige A. Barnum, AICP, Senior Planner, Division of Environmental Stewardship and Planning  
 Dan Lewis, Environmental Analyst, Division of Environmental Stewardship and Planning

Special thanks to Beth Merrill, Tim Welch, Steve Porto, Michael Lesser, Ben Kemp, and all the *Friends of Grant Cottage* for sharing their insight and passion for future improvements at the U.S. Grant Cottage State Historic Site and National Historic Landmark.

### Design Team:

**The LA Group, Landscape Architecture and Engineering, PC**  
 Project Leadership, Landscape Architecture, Civil Engineering, Environmental Analysis

**JMZ Architects & Planners, PC**  
 Architectural Consultation

## Abbreviations and Acronyms Used

### GOVERNMENT / SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| NYS     | New York State   |
| OPRHP   | Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation        |
| Friends | The Friends of the Ulysses S. Grant Cottage                  |
| SHPO    | New York State Historic Preservation Office                  |
| DEC     | New York State Department of Environmental Conservation      |
| USACE   | US Army Corps of Engineers                                   |
| DOCCS   | New York Department of Corrections and Community Supervision |

### REPORT TERMINOLOGY

|     |                             |
|-----|-----------------------------|
| PMR | Planning Methodology Report |
| PIM | Public Information Meeting  |
| SDP | Strategic Development Plan  |
| VC  | Visitor Center              |
| GC  | Grant Cottage               |
| PV  | Pavilion                    |

### PERMITTING / ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| SEQRA | State Environmental Quality Review Act |
| EAF   | Environmental Assessment Form          |
| CRIS  | Cultural Resource Information System   |

Top Left Image:

A modern-day view of Grant's last view memorial and viewshed of at the Eastern Overlook.

Table of Contents



The 2023 Update to the Strategic Development Plan (SDP) for Grant Cottage (Originally Dated September 2021) provides a summary of the recommendations for future site improvements to the U.S. Grant Cottage State Historic Site and National Historic Landmark. Supplemental to the 2023 Update, refer to the Planning Methodology Report (PMR, Appendix 4.4) for the detailed planning process and site analysis documentation, identification of programming needs and goals, listing of programming alternatives and preferred selections, implementation summary, and archival and capital projects list appendices.

**PREFACE**      **STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**  
**ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS USED**  
**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**SECTION 1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Project Purpose and Background ..... 4  
 1.2 Overview of the 2021 SDP and 2023 PMR ..... 6  
 1.3 Existing Conditions Summary ..... 8

**SECTION 2.0 RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS**

2.1 Overall Development Plan ..... 10  
 2.2 Visitor Center Improvements ..... 12  
 2.3 Pedestrian Connectivity Improvements ..... 12  
 2.4 Grant Cottage Improvements ..... 14  
 2.5 Satellite Parking Facility ..... 14  
 2.6 Event Pavilion ..... 16  
 2.7 Picnic Grounds Improvements ..... 18  
 2.8 Trail Improvements 1 ..... 20  
 2.9 Trail Improvements 2 ..... 20

**SECTION 3.0 PHASING AND IMPLEMENTATION**

3.1 Overall Phasing Plan ..... 22  
 3.2 Phase One Summary and Implementation ..... 24  
 3.3 Phase Two Summary and Implementation ..... 26  
 3.4 Phase Three Summary and Implementation ..... 28  
 3.5 Final Summary ..... 30  
 3.6 Implementation and Funding Sources ..... 32

**SECTION 4.0 APPENDIX – PUBLIC OUTREACH, RENDERINGS, AND REPORTS**

4.1 Public Outreach, Comments and Feedback  
 4.2 2023 SDP Supplementary Mapping (separate attachment)  
 4.3 2023 SDP Supplementary Renderings (separate attachment)  
 4.4 2023 Planning Methodology Report (PRM) (separate attachment)  
 4.5 September 2021 Strategic Development Plan Report (separate attachment)

Top Left Image:  
 A modern-day view of the historic Grant Cottage building and its wraparound porch.

1.1 Project Purpose and Background

SITE HISTORY

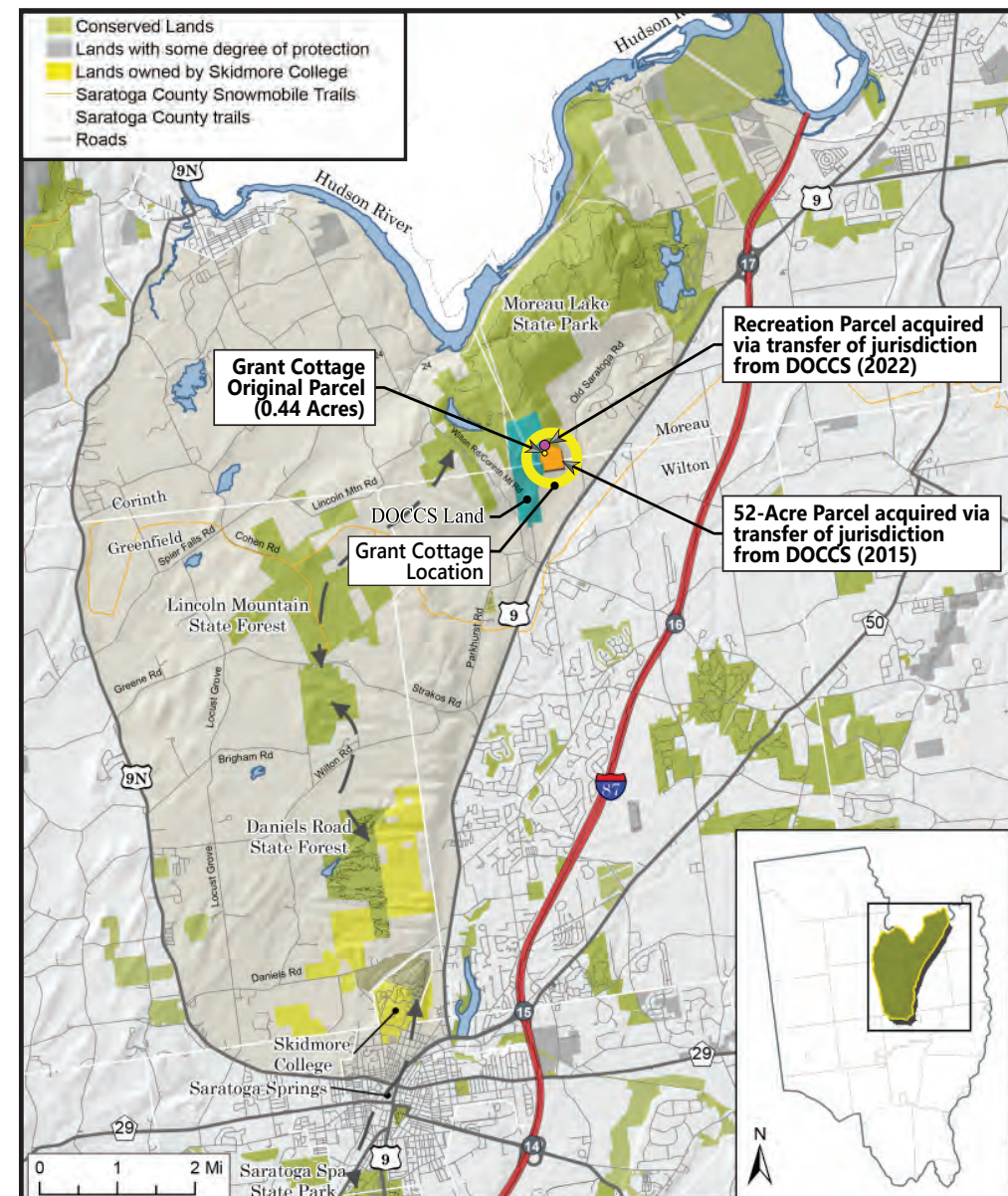
Grant Cottage State Historic Site is the final home of Ulysses S. Grant. The Historic Site was established in 1957 and is owned by New York Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP). It is operated by The Friends of the Ulysses S. Grant Cottage (the Friends). The facility has seen continuous growth and improvements through the years, resulting in an increase in the overall number of visitors with each passing season. Grant Cottage has recently gained renewed interest and increased visibility due to the re-evaluations of his life and career over the past two decades: including the biography of U.S. Grant by Ron Chernow, the Friends’ increased and improved online presence (especially through social media), and a three-part mini-series event “Grant” – presented by the History Channel which increased public awareness of his inspiring legacy. Additional national attention has been received due to the release of the first complete annotated edition of Grant’s memoirs, fully representing the great military leader’s thoughts on his life and times through the end of the Civil War.

In 2021, the Historic Site was designated a National Historic Landmark. It has also been named the 24th New York State Literary Landmark by United for Libraries and the Empire State Center for the Book. Literary Landmark status is granted to special locations associated with the history and heritage of American Literature such as a literary figure, author, or his / her work. Ulysses S. Grant completed the second volume of his memoirs while at the Cottage, just days before his death in 1885. Grant’s memoirs, co-authored and published by noted American author and personal friend Mark Twain, remain widely considered to be amongst the finest military autobiographies ever written.

Grant Cottage State Historic Site sits at the municipal intersections of the Towns of Moreau, Wilton, and Corinth in Saratoga County. The property rests along the east and northern edges of Mount McGregor, neighboring Moreau Lake State Park, and the Palmertown Range Trail Network (including Lake Bonita, Lake Ann, and their associated trails). The site commands a spectacular view of the Hudson Valley, including the Adirondacks in the north, the Green Mountains of Vermont to the east, and the Catskills to the south.

In the early 1900’s through 1945, the Sanatorium on the Mountain at Mount McGregor served as the Cottage’s neighbor to the west. The sanatorium’s sprawling grounds included various patient, resident, and staff buildings, a church and crematorium, and a mountain top lake. From 1945 onward, the site operated as a veteran’s rest camp, before being converted into a school by New York State in 1960. In the 1970’s, the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) assumed control of the property, opening a minimum / medium security prison correctional facility at the former sanatorium site, which it operated until the prison permanently closed in 2014. The former Correctional Facility property currently remains on the marketplace for sale.

In 2015, NYS OPRHP acquired and assigned to Grant Cottage an additional 52.76 acres of surrounding property, allowing the Historic Site’s original 0.44 acre footprint to expand and develop into the facility it is known as today. Further, through a transfer of jurisdiction from DOCCS in 2022, OPRHP acquired part of the Correctional Facility – a 4.21 acre plot of land (the Recreation Parcel) that was utilized as the exercise yard for the Mount McGregor State Correctional Facility. The site has long been of interest to Grant Cottage, OPRHP, and the Friends, as it is the original location of the Cottage itself, which was later moved to make way for the construction of the Hotel Balmoral, which continued to have a close relationship to the Cottage through the 1800s, before it burned down. Today, the property size totals 57.41 acres.



THE 2021 AND 2023 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLANS

In November 2020, the Friends collaborated with The LA Group to prepare a Strategic Development Plan (SDP) for the property. The SDP (inclusive of a “Preferred Concept Plan” map) was intended to serve as a sustainable blueprint for the design, engineering, and construction of long-term improvements. The 2021 SDP focused on sitewide visitor accessibility, safety, and quality of life improvements and expansion of new programming, infrastructure, and outdoor recreation to the facility. Existing indoor programming / infrastructure / architecture and structural analysis was not included within the scope of the landscape-focused 2021 SDP.

To ensure responsible stewardship of the facility for generations to come and support the Friends in their mission to interpret and promote the story of Ulysses S. Grant, OPRHP wished to formally adopt the SDP. In order to adopt the SDP, however, OPRHP needed to complete the following steps:

- Produce a Planning Methodology Report (PMR) – a supplemental report that documents the formal planning process and analysis underlying the 2021 SDP’s recommendations (completed, March 2023).
- Host a public meeting for interested agencies, organizations, and individuals to comment on the Revised 2021 SDP (completed, May 23, 2023).
- Update the SDP to ensure the document reflects current site conditions and property boundaries; incorporates the interests and concerns of the public; and facilitates OPRHP in its mission to provide safe and enjoyable recreational and interpretive opportunities for all New York State residents and visitors and to be a responsible steward of valuable natural, historic, and cultural resources. This report concludes the 2023 Update to the Grant Cottage Strategic Development Plan, which will prove critical for future funding and implementation of proposed improvements.

Further, it should be noted that a Strategic Development Plan differs from a Master Plan in that it has a much narrower focus. The streamlined approach of this Strategic Development Plan allowed for the development of the proposed site improvements, with hopes that funding for implementation may be sought as soon as the SDP is adopted. In addition, the scope of the 23 Update to the SDP’s scope is defined by that of the 2021 SDP, therefore potential items beyond the original document’s proposed improvement projects (i.e. additional building acquisitions from DOCCS, maintenance of Mt. McGregor Road from the base of the mountain to the Historic Site, etc.) were excluded from this document’s scope of consideration.

Left Image: Site location map including parcel acquisition data from 2015 and 2022. Original map background sourced from the Palmertown Range Map, available at <https://saratogaplan.org>.

**TIMELINE OF THE GRANT COTTAGE SITE**

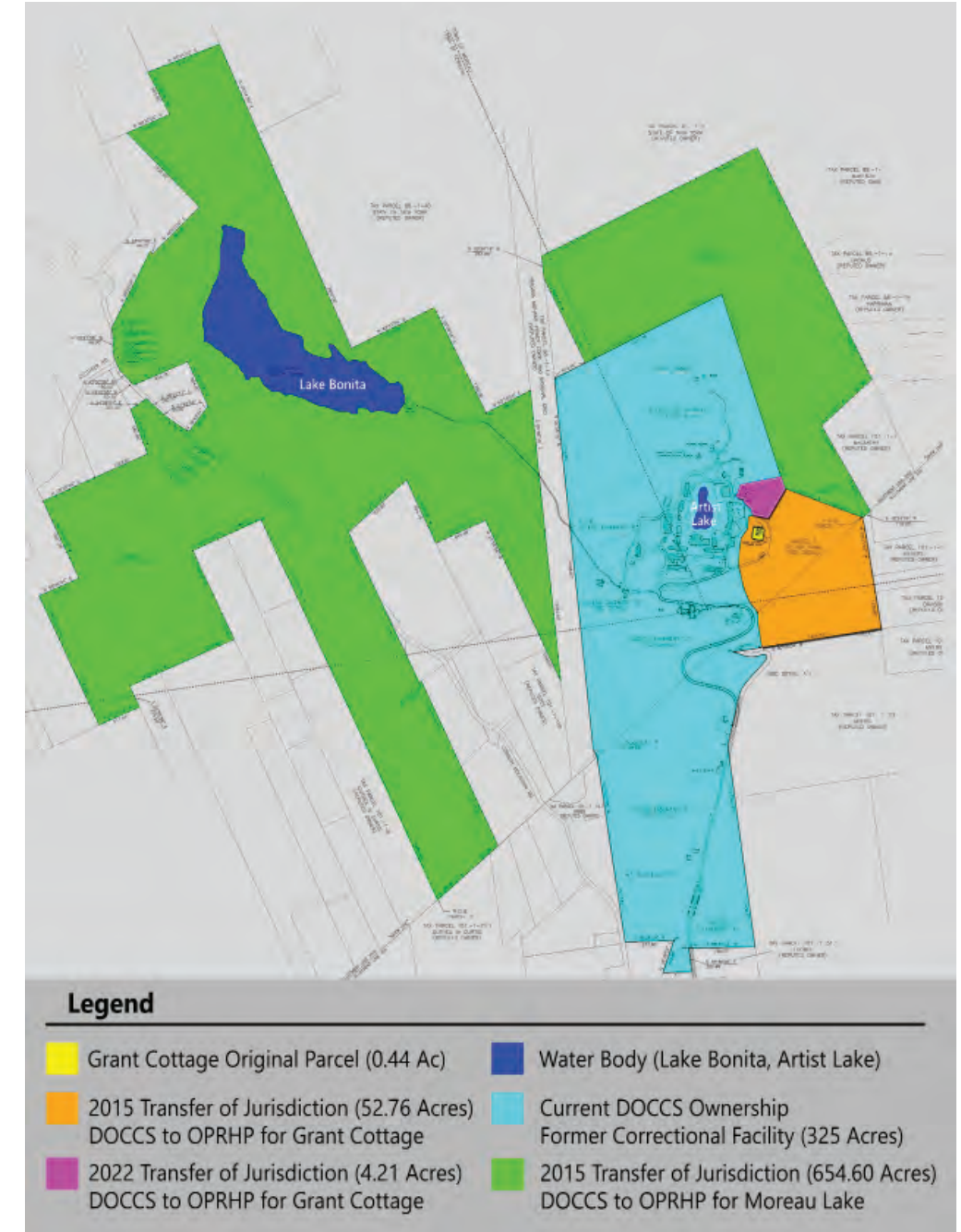
- 19thC. Duncan McGregor purchases the mountain.
- 1872: Duncan McGregor begins building on the mountain. The mountain is named after McGregor by local ministers. The Cottage is built on the present-day Recreation Parcel Site.
- 1882: The Mountain is sold to a group of investors, and a railroad to its top is built.
- 1883: The Cottage is moved to its current location to make room for a larger hotel.
- 1884: The Hotel Balmoral is built and opened. The Hotel could house 200 guests and featured electricity.



- 1885: June 16th – U.S. Grant moves into the Cottage. During his stay, he completes his book "Personal Memoirs of U.S. Grant" with the help of his family and close personal friend Mark Twain.  
July 23rd – Grant passes away.  
August 4th – A memorial service is held on Mt. McGregor; trains up the mountain are filled to capacity to bring mourners to the service.
- 1890: The Mount McGregor Memorial Association is established to take care of the cottage after Grant's Death, and the building opens as a historic site with a live-in caretaker.
- 1897: The Hotel Balmoral burns down and is not rebuilt.
- 1910: The majority of property is sold to Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, which builds and opens a tuberculosis sanitarium at the top of the mountain.
- 1945: The Sanitarium is converted into a veteran's rest camp.
- 1960: New York State takes over the veteran's camp facility and converts it to the Mount McGregor division of the Rome State School, which later becomes the Wilton State School.



- 1976: The New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision assumes control of the site and converts it to a minimum-security prison, later adding medium-security facilities.
- 1985: New York State announces its plans to permanently close the Cottage at the end of the season. Facing community pressure, the state reverses its decision, and the site remains open.
- 1989: The Friends of the Ulysses S. Grant Cottage is formed and establishes an agreement with OPRHP to operate the site and take care of the Cottage.
- 2014: The prison permanently closes.
- 2015: October 15th – OPRHP acquires approximately 707 acres of land adjacent to the Cottage's parcel through a transfer of jurisdiction from DOCCS. 52.76 acres were assigned to Grant Cottage State Historic Site, with the balance assigned to Moreau Lake State Park.
- 2021: The Friends'-led Strategic Development Plan is published in September. Recommendations include sitewide improvements, many of which are contingent upon the transference of the Recreation Parcel of the former prison site to Grant Cottage.
- 2022: March 22nd – OPRHP acquires the Recreation Parcel (4.21) acres through a transfer of jurisdiction from DOCCS, bringing the total acreage of the Historic Site up to 57.41 acres.
- 2023: The OPRHP-led Strategic Development Plan – 2023 Update is created. Once published and adopted, implementation of the recommendations within can begin in earnest.



Left Image: Historic image of the approach to the Hotel Balmoral. The hotel sat on the location of the modern-day recreation parcel.  
Middle Image: Historic image of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Sanatorium's Chapel and Infirmary on Artist Lake.  
Right Image: Parcel transference map giving visual context to the growth of the Grant Cottage Historic Site's lands through the years.

**1.2 Overview of the 2021 Strategic Development Plan and the 2023 Planning Methodology Report**

The 2021 Strategic Development Plan mapped all elements of the Historic Site, summarizing the Friends' future goals and development objectives. It collected and presented images, maps, visual simulations, and descriptions of all proposed site improvements, and it also provided phasing recommendations, cost analyses, and project implementation strategies. While extensive data was collected, inventoried, and analyzed for the 2021 SDP, the final report distilled this information into a simplified, easily digestible concise format for quick dissemination of summary findings and proposed improvements. This report aimed to help support the goals of the Historic Site while better meeting the needs and interests of visitors. The 2021 SDP established the Friends' preferred concept plan recommendations for future site improvements, which in turn helped achieve their longstanding goal of successfully transferring the former Correctional Facility Recreation Parcel to NYS OPRHP ownership.

With the goal of acquiring the Recreational Parcel for Grant Cottage's use achieved, OPRHP sought to provide an update to the 2021 SDP that would allow OPRHP to formally adopt the plan. Once adopted, the recommendations within the plan could begin seeking funding for implementation. One of the first steps in the 2023 update was to archive and formally document the inventory, analysis, and design consideration process of the Strategic Development Plan for OPRHP's review. In addition to providing an overview of the planning and analysis processes underlying the development of the 2021 SDP, the PMR also expanded the scope of the professional assessment to include existing architectural and structural infrastructure analysis, ongoing and anticipated maintenance and repair projects, and new maintenance / operational support requirements that would be anticipated with any future development.

This information and process was chronicled within the Planning Methodology Report (PMR, refer to Appendix 4.4). Submitted in March of 2023, the PMR includes extensive information regarding the planning and design process behind the creation of the Strategic Development Plan, including:

- Identification of Research Methods Used
- Inventory of Data and Background Materials Collected and Analyzed
- Site Inventory and Analysis Summary
- Natural Resource and Environmental Evaluation Summary
- Identification of Programming Needs and Goals, including:
  - Cultural Resources
  - Interpretation and Education
  - Recreation
  - Environmental Stewardship
  - Facilities, Operations, and Infrastructure
- Anticipated Environmental Impacts and Mitigation
- Conditions Warranting Supplemental Review
- Public Outreach

In addition to the analytical and design-oriented information, the PMR included an appendix consisting of background mapping archives, onsite photo inventory archives, the full environmental report archive (produced by The LA Group), and a comprehensive proposed capital project and site/facility maintenance matrix. As the site inventory and analysis and original site programming studies are extensively covered in the PMR and 2021 SDP, which are included as appendices / attachments to the 2023 Update, this information is not wholly reproduced within the final 2023 SDP report. Rather, the remaining sections of this report will focus on the proposed recommendations for the site improvements at Grant Cottage and their phasing and implementation, including planning-level estimates of probable construction costs for each major project area.



**Map 1.2: 2021 Strategic Development Plan Preferred Overall Development Concept Plan**

Preferred Overall Development Concept Plan from the 2021 Strategic Development Plan. The 2021 SDP organized site improvements into four categories: the Visitor Center Improvements, Core Circulation Improvements, Grant Cottage Parking Facility, and Event Facility. The plan helped achieve the transference of the Recreation Parcel to OPRHP ownership. Refer to Appendix 4.5 (September 2021 Strategic Development Plan Report) for additional information and full sized mapping.

### 1.3 Existing Conditions Summary

During the inventory and analysis and identification of programming needs and goals phases of the design process, six existing areas were identified for the categorization of improvements:

1. The Visitor Center  
Existing building and arrival experience improvements, including the need for porch replacement, an improved entry plaza, sanitary system upgrades to service the building, expansion of the parking facility, vehicular traffic calming in front of the building and parking facility, and patron safety / road crossing improvements.
2. Grant Cottage  
Existing arrival experience and building access improvements, including accessibility improvements to the Cottage's front porch, road realignment and parking relocation to restore the cultural landscape of the building's approach, reduction of pavement in front of the Cottage, and expansion of Parking facilities servicing the Cottage.
3. Recreation Parcel  
New programming, parking, and infrastructure expansion improvements, including redevelopment of the parcel to include a new Event Pavilion to serve expanded programming needs; expanded satellite parking to alleviate existing site-wide parking limitations; and new pedestrian circulation, utilities, and stormwater management as needed.
4. The Eastern Overlook and its Trail Network  
Accessibility improvements and interpretation expansion, including accessibility improvements to both the north and south trail segments, removal of the central trail and restoration of the woodland, eastern overlook interpretive destination node, and a new interpretive trail following the former train corridor to a new interpretive destination node at the train shed remnant site.
5. Visitor Center to Grant Cottage Connectivity  
Pedestrian accessibility and connectivity improvements, including a dedicated pedestrian roadside route along the entry drive (Mt. McGregor Road) to provide safety improvements, and an trail-accessible route between the Visitor Center and Grant Cottage.
6. Picnic Grounds  
Passive recreation and pedestrian connectivity improvements, including improved picnic grounds, a new overlook deck to capture northerly views, and circulation improvements.

A longstanding operational concern of OPRHP and the *Friends* is the extremely limited onsite parking. Currently, there are 7 paved stalls serving the Visitor Center, and 6 paved stalls serving the Cottage. The 13 total paved parking spaces (including 1 dedicated accessible space for the Cottage) do not provide adequate parking for the average daily operations of the historic site. Presently, site operations relies on roadside and lawn parking, as well as informal use of the adjacent correctional facility parking lot (uphill) and a nearby pull-off area downhill on Mt. McGregor Road. In addition, there is no formal bus parking or loading zones onsite, and bus traffic has difficulty navigating the narrow turn(s) of the circulation loop in front of the Cottage.

Refer to Appendix 4.4, the 2023 Planning Methodology Report, for additional, detailed information regarding existing site conditions, inventory and analysis, and environmental evaluation.





**Map 1.3: Existing Conditions Summary Plan with Parking Totals**

The plan above highlights the lack of dedicated, paved parking onsite for patrons and staff/employees alike. Parcel boundaries, on-site destinations, and key features such as Grant Cottage, the Visitor Center, the Eastern Overlook and Trail Network, Picnic Grounds, and Recreation Parcel and more are also highlighted. Refer to Appendix 4.2 for 2023 SDP Supplementary Mapping (Updated Existing Conditions and Proposed Plans).

## SECTION 2.0 - RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS

### 2.1 Overall Development Plan

The Grant Cottage Strategic Development Plan 2023 Update proposes sitewide improvements organized into eight key projects:

#### 1. Visitor Center Improvements

Including parking facility expansion to 11 total stalls (9 standard spaces, 2 accessible reserved, plus 1 access aisle), vehicular traffic calming and patron safety improvements, a new building entry plaza and gathering node, replacement of its porch, and a new wastewater treatment and disposal system.

#### 2. Grant Cottage Improvements

Including an expanded parking facility to 10 total stalls (2 accessible reserved plus 1 access aisle on the Cottage-side of the circle; 6 standard spaces, 2 accessible reserved, plus 1 access aisle on the Pavilion-side of the circle), road realignment and vehicular circulation improvements (new traffic circle), and building and porch entry and accessibility improvements.

#### 3. Satellite Parking Facility

New parking facility featuring 49 total stalls (47 standard spaces, 2 accessible reserved, plus 1 access aisle) to support the Cottage and future Event Pavilion. In addition to the expanded parking, the facility will feature solar-based light fixtures, landscape enhancements, and green infrastructure / stormwater management.

#### 4. Event Pavilion

A new open air event venue sized for 100 – 150 person events, featuring an overlook deck and expandable overflow outdoor open space for larger events. The building will include two restrooms and a small storage room. A roof-mounted solar-based electric system will service the building's lighting and power load needs, and new well and wastewater treatment / disposal systems will be required for its use.

#### 5. Picnic Grounds Improvements

Improved passive recreation and picnic areas, a picnic overlook deck, and circulation improvements connecting the Eastern Overlook Trail network to the Event Pavilion and parking facilities.

#### 6. Pedestrian Connectivity Improvements

Including a dedicated pedestrian roadside route along the entry drive and conversion of the former carriage road into a pedestrian-only access route. A new, wheelchair-accessible trail route connects the Visitor Center to Grant Cottage and features a relocated and improved caretaker / memorial garden area.

#### 7. Trail Improvements 1

Accessibility improvements to the southern segment of the Eastern Overlook Trail Network creates a wheelchair-accessible route from the Visitor Center parking facility to the overlook and culminates in a new interpretive destination node at the overlook.

#### 8. Trail Improvements 2

Accessibility improvements to the northern segment of the Eastern Overlook Trail Network creates a series of new step systems to alleviate the steep slopes of the existing north segment, and a new train shed interpretive trail and destination node expands the site's interpretive programming.

Between the expanded and new parking facilities, total proposed onsite parking at the Historic Site is increased to 70 spaces: a gain of 57 stalls over existing conditions (or a 540% increase in dedicated parking). Similar to existing overflow, additional informal parking can still occur along the roadside or in overflow lawn areas as needed. Bus loading and unloading for the Cottage and the Pavilion can occur within the traffic circle, and staging for the buses will remain at the downhill pull-off area on Mt. McGregor Road.



Above Image:

Bird's eye view rendering of the Overall Development Plan, including the select Grant Cottage Improvements, Satellite Parking Facility, Event Pavilion, and Picnic Grounds Improvements.



**Map 2.1: Overall Development Plan**

Highlighting the recommended improvement projects of the 2023 Update to the Strategic Development Plan: Visitor Center Improvements, Grant Cottage Improvements, Satellite Parking Facility, Event Pavilion, Picnic Grounds Improvements, Pedestrian Connectivity Improvements, and Trail Improvements 1 and 2. Refer to Appendix 4.2 for 2023 SDP Supplementary Mapping (Updated Existing Conditions and Proposed Plans).

**SECTION 2.0 - RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS**

**2.2 Visitor Center Improvements**

The improvements around the Visitor Center include two main project areas: the building entry and the parking facility and its associated vehicular circulation. Improvements at the building entry include an expansion to the entry plaza, which provide a new patron gathering space which could feature furnishings including gateway signage, bench seating, bike racks, and a bike repair station. A slight realignment and expansion of the entry drive eastward provides recommended safety improvements for patrons at the building’s entry. Additional improvements to the entry include the full replacement of the aging porch with new deck and railing system.

The project’s parking and traffic improvements feature an expansion of the parking facility to 11 total spaces (including 2 dedicated accessible reserved), a new walkway with orientation signage, and the installation of a new speed table for vehicular traffic calming and to alleviate concerns regarding patron safety as they cross from the trails and parking facility to the Visitor Center. The new parking total for the Visitor Center is an approximate 160% increase in spaces compared to the existing 7 spaces allotted at the current VC Parking Facility. Earthwork to add fill will be required for the parking expansion, and a retaining wall may be recommended along the walkways’ eastern and southern ends. Solar-based lighting at the parking facility is recommended.

Lastly, a new sanitary system with leach field located east of the parking facility is recommended to be included within the project scope.

Planning Level Opinion of Probable Construction Costs

| Div. #          | Description                  | Subtotal         |
|-----------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| 01              | General Requirements         | \$28,750         |
| 02              | Existing Conditions          | \$37,700         |
| 03              | Concrete                     | \$28,600         |
| 04              | Masonry                      | \$87,100         |
| 05              | Metals                       | \$13,100         |
| 10              | Specialties                  | \$75,400         |
| 12              | Furnishings                  | \$46,600         |
| 26              | Electrical                   | \$19,000         |
| 31              | Earthwork                    | \$53,200         |
| 32              | Exterior Improvements        | \$135,150        |
| 33              | Utilities                    | \$21,450         |
| <b>Subtotal</b> |                              | <b>\$546,050</b> |
|                 | Design Contingency (10%)     | \$54,605         |
|                 | Subcontractor Mark-Up (5%)   | \$30,045         |
|                 | Escalation (5%)              | \$31,630         |
|                 | General Conditions (10%)     | \$66,220         |
|                 | Overhead and Profit (5%)     | \$109,260        |
|                 | Field Order Allowance (4.5%) | \$37,690         |

**Visitor Center Improvements**

Construction Cost (Including Gen. Requirements, Overhead and Profit) **\$875,500**

**2.3 Pedestrian Connectivity Improvements**

While improvements to the sitewide accessibility of the Historic Site have been a longstanding goal of OPRHP and the Friends, the site’s location on the mountainside brings significant challenges to achieving this goal due to the rugged terrain of the steeply sloped setting. The Pedestrian Connectivity Improvements project creates the first wheelchair-accessible trail route connecting the Visitor Center to Grant Cottage via a trail corridor that extends from the VC Parking Facility northward before crossing the entry drive and continuing east along a former maintenance road corridor south of the Cottage. The relocation of the caretaker/memorial garden is proposed along the southwestern corner of the new pedestrian route, and will include the relocated memorial plaque, new bench seating, landscape garden plantings and additional screen plantings to block out the recently installed solar array system located downhill from the Visitor Center. The new accessible pedestrian connection meets the running slope and resting intervals required by outdoor accessibility guidelines of the United States Access Board.

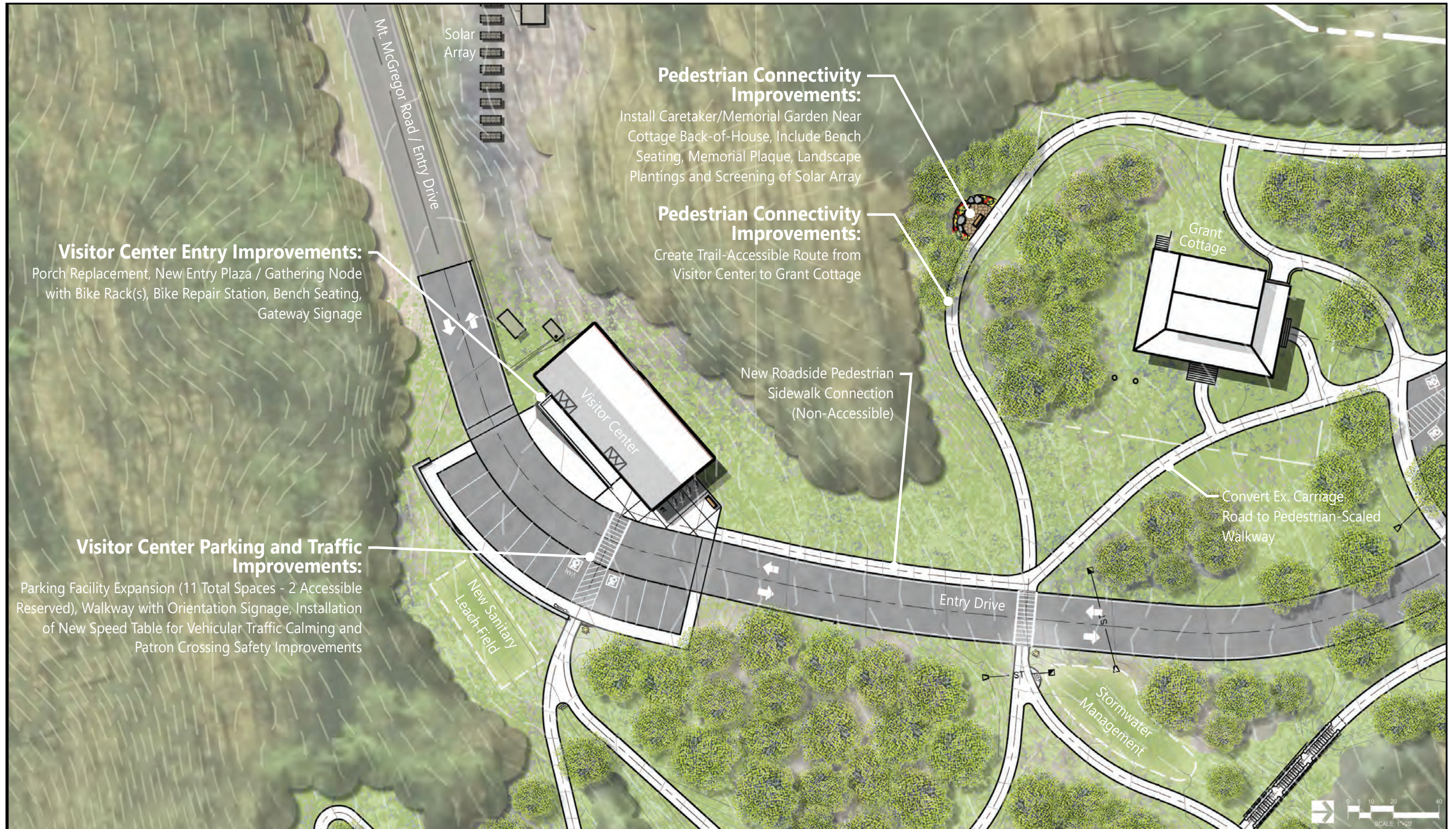
In addition to the new accessible route, a new roadside pedestrian sidewalk connection is proposed along the western side of the entry drive, leading uphill from the Visitor Center and providing quicker access along the steeply sloped entry drive. The sidewalk connection terminates at the road crossing for the new accessible route, directly connecting to the front of the Cottage via the existing carriage road, which is proposed to be reduced in width to convert the driveway into a pedestrian-scaled walkway. The pavement reduction will also benefit the Cottage by expanding the green space directly in front of the building.

Planning Level Opinion of Probable Construction Costs

| Div. #          | Description                  | Subtotal         |
|-----------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| 01              | General Requirements         | \$16,750         |
| 02              | Existing Conditions          | \$5,700          |
| 03              | Concrete                     | \$0              |
| 04              | Masonry                      | \$0              |
| 05              | Metals                       | \$0              |
| 10              | Specialties                  | \$1,750          |
| 12              | Furnishings                  | \$1,600          |
| 26              | Electrical                   | \$9,500          |
| 31              | Earthwork                    | \$79,300         |
| 32              | Exterior Improvements        | \$64,000         |
| 33              | Utilities                    | \$5,000          |
| <b>Subtotal</b> |                              | <b>\$183,600</b> |
|                 | Design Contingency (10%)     | \$18,360         |
|                 | Subcontractor Mark-Up (5%)   | \$10,100         |
|                 | Escalation (5%)              | \$10,600         |
|                 | General Conditions (10%)     | \$22,260         |
|                 | Overhead and Profit (5%)     | \$36,750         |
|                 | Field Order Allowance (4.5%) | \$12,630         |

**Pedestrian Connectivity Improvements**

Construction Cost (Including Gen. Requirements, Overhead and Profit) **\$294,300**



**Map 2.2 / 2.3: Visitor Center Improvements and Pedestrian Connectivity Improvements Plan Enlargement**

Highlighting the 2023 Update to the Strategic Development Plan's Visitor Center Entry Improvements, Visitor Center Parking and Traffic Improvements, and the Pedestrian Connectivity Improvements between the Visitor Center and Grant Cottage. Refer to Appendix 4.2 for 2023 SDP Supplementary Mapping (Updated Existing Conditions and Proposed Plans).

**SECTION 2.0 - RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS**

**2.4 Grant Cottage Improvements**

The improvements around Grant Cottage include the realignment of the entry drive and introduction of a one-way traffic circle, which simultaneously pulls vehicular traffic and parking away from the historic structure of the Cottage, expands the total parking potentially serving the Cottage, and provides opportunities for bus loading. Parking around the circle includes 2 accessible reserved spaces adjacent to the Cottage and an additional 8 spaces (6 standard, 2 accessible reserved) on the north side of the traffic circle that can serve either the Cottage or the Picnic Grounds and future Event Pavilion areas.

In addition to pulling the road further away from the Cottage, the traffic circle introduces a large amount of green space north of the Cottage, and upgraded green infrastructure / stormwater management and treatment areas can be introduced in the green spaces and along the entry road. In an effort to reduce the footprint of disturbance and maintain the majority of the mature tree stand northwest of the Cottage, a retaining wall is proposed along the southwest corner of the traffic circle. The wall could be located further off the edge of pavement to provide additional overflow parking capacity in the lawn area of the circle, or eliminated for value engineering if necessary. Solar-based lighting at the parking areas in the traffic circle, as well as along the realigned entry drive is recommended.

A new accessible route from the traffic circle’s southern parking area to the Cottage porch is included in the project scope, as are additional connections to the stepped access points to the porch’s north and east sides.

Planning Level Opinion of Probable Construction Costs

| Div. #   | Description                  | Subtotal         |
|--|------------------------------|------------------|
| 01   | General Requirements         | \$28,750         |
| 02   | Existing Conditions          | \$39,900         |
| 03   | Concrete                     | \$13,500         |
| 04   | Masonry                      | \$3,400          |
| 05   | Metals                       | \$2,600          |
| 10   | Specialties                  | \$16,500         |
| 12   | Furnishings                  | \$20,600         |
| 26   | Electrical                   | \$47,500         |
| 31   | Earthwork                    | \$138,150        |
| 32   | Exterior Improvements        | \$214,250        |
| 33   | Utilities                    | \$11,700         |
| <b>Subtotal</b>  |                              | <b>\$536,850</b> |
|  | Design Contingency (10%)     | \$53,685         |
|  | Subcontractor Mark-Up (5%)   | \$29,525         |
|  | Escalation (5%)              | \$31,000         |
|  | General Conditions (10%)     | \$65,100         |
|  | Overhead and Profit (5%)     | \$107,440        |
|  | Field Order Allowance (4.5%) | \$37,100         |
| <b>Grant Cottage Improvements</b>                                    |                              | <b>\$860,700</b> |
| Construction Cost (Including Gen. Requirements, Overhead and Profit) |                              | <b>\$860,700</b> |

**2.5 Satellite Parking Facility**

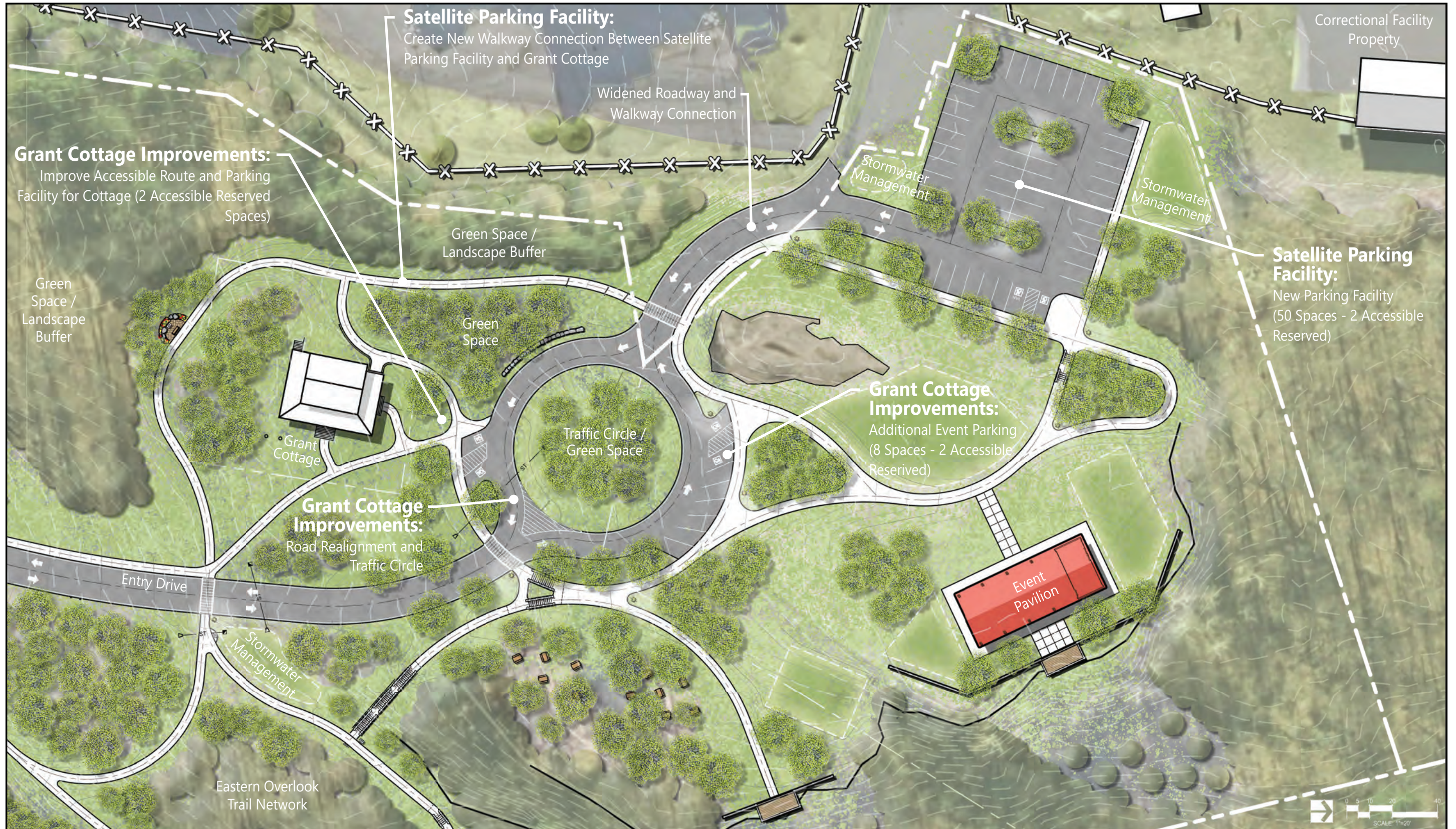
Installation of the Satellite Parking Facility will vastly improve the parking limitations of the Historic Site. The parking facility is proposed to be located at the flat, western half of the Recreation Parcel. The new facility will increase the total parking capacity at Grant Cottage with an additional fifty spaces. It will feature planted islands and stormwater treatment areas as needed. In addition, the facility will maintain a large swath of green space east of the facility to serve as potential overflow parking for an additional twenty to thirty vehicles.

A pedestrian walkway connection is proposed to provide a direct route from the Cottage’s north porch to the new parking facility. Solar-based lighting is recommended throughout the parking facility, as well as along the roadside walkway connection back towards the Cottage. The northeast corner of the parking facility’s pedestrian walkway will further connect to the Event Pavilion once its construction is implemented.

The northwestern end of the entry drive (uphill of the new traffic circle) is proposed to be widened to allow for safer two-way traffic connecting the new traffic circle to the new Satellite Parking Facility as well as the former correctional facility property. As part of the agreement which led to the transference of the Recreation Parcel from DOCCS and OPRHP, vehicular access to the former correctional facility property must be maintained.

Planning Level Opinion of Probable Construction Costs

| Div. #   | Description                  | Subtotal         |
|--|------------------------------|------------------|
| 01   | General Requirements         | \$16,750         |
| 02   | Existing Conditions          | \$72,570         |
| 03   | Concrete                     | \$0              |
| 04   | Masonry                      | \$0              |
| 05   | Metals                       | \$0              |
| 10   | Specialties                  | \$6,500          |
| 12   | Furnishings                  | \$6,530          |
| 26   | Electrical                   | \$57,000         |
| 31   | Earthwork                    | \$97,760         |
| 32   | Exterior Improvements        | \$149,850        |
| 33   | Utilities                    | \$38,690         |
| <b>Subtotal</b>  |                              | <b>\$445,650</b> |
|  | Design Contingency (10%)     | \$44,565         |
|  | Subcontractor Mark-Up (5%)   | \$24,510         |
|  | Escalation (5%)              | \$25,735         |
|  | General Conditions (10%)     | \$54,050         |
|  | Overhead and Profit (5%)     | \$89,170         |
|  | Field Order Allowance (4.5%) | \$30,720         |
| <b>Satellite Parking Facility</b>                                    |                              | <b>\$714,400</b> |
| Construction Cost (Including Gen. Requirements, Overhead and Profit) |                              | <b>\$714,400</b> |



**Map 2.4 / 2.5: Grant Cottage Improvements and Satellite Parking Facility Plan Enlargement**

Highlighting the 2023 Update to the Strategic Development Plan's Improvements to Grant Cottage's Entry and Porch Access, Parking and Road Realignment, and the new Satellite Parking Facility. Refer to Appendix 4.2 for 2023 SDP Supplementary Mapping (Updated Existing Conditions and Proposed Plans).

**SECTION 2.0 - RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS**

**2.6 Event Pavilion**

The Event Pavilion will be constructed at the northeastern corner of the Recreation Parcel, near where the Hotel Balmoral once stood. The flexible event space will greatly expand programming opportunities for Grant Cottage by providing additional space for community groups, special event rentals, and more. Sized to accommodate 100 people seated at tables for conferences, wedding ceremonies, and corporate retreats, or up to 150 people seated without tables for lectures or performances. Larger events will remain feasible with 360-degree overflow open lawn space adjacent to the pavilion. For day-to-day operations, placement of picnic tables under the pavilion will allow for an upgraded picnic experience at the Historic Site.

A hardscape patio leads out the eastern side of the pavilion, connecting to a large overlook deck. Selective clearing adjacent to the deck / down the mountain slope will open up and frame views north towards Lake George and east ward towards Vermont.

The lack of utility access at the top of the mountain is a major impediment to most development onsite. The Pavilion is proposed to utilize roof-top solar panels and battery storage to serve the building's power load requirements. A generator may still be required depending on the power requirements for certain special events. The Pavilion will include two restrooms and a small storage room for tables, chairs, and audio-visual equipment. A dedicated well and septic system will be provided to serve the restrooms, and should hot water be a requirement, a solar thermal hot water unit could be included in the installation to provide on-demand hot water.

**Planning Level Opinion of Probable Construction Costs**

| Div. #                              | Description           | Subtotal           |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 01                                  | General Requirements  | \$16,750           |
| 02                                  | Existing Conditions   | \$5,000            |
| 03                                  | Concrete              | \$81,000           |
| 04                                  | Masonry               | \$3,380            |
| 05                                  | Metals                | \$2,620            |
| 10                                  | Specialties           | \$835,300          |
| 12                                  | Furnishings           | \$51,600           |
| 26                                  | Electrical            | \$32,500           |
| 31                                  | Earthwork             | \$140,950          |
| 32                                  | Exterior Improvements | \$121,850          |
| 33                                  | Utilities             | \$30,700           |
| <b>Subtotal</b>                     |                       | <b>\$1,321,650</b> |
| <b>Design Contingency (10%)</b>     |                       | <b>\$132,165</b>   |
| <b>Subcontractor Mark-Up (5%)</b>   |                       | <b>\$72,690</b>    |
| <b>Escalation (5%)</b>              |                       | <b>\$76,325</b>    |
| <b>General Conditions (10%)</b>     |                       | <b>\$160,280</b>   |
| <b>Overhead and Profit (5%)</b>     |                       | <b>\$264,470</b>   |
| <b>Field Order Allowance (4.5%)</b> |                       | <b>\$91,220</b>    |

|   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| <b>Event Pavilion</b>   |                    |
| <b>Construction Cost (Including Gen. Requirements, Overhead and Profit)</b> | <b>\$2,118,800</b> |

The overall design of the Event Pavilion remains unchanged from the 2021 SDP: it reflects the historic and cultural identity of the site and surrounding area. Architectural details from the train platform that originally served the hotel are incorporated into the Pavilion, including log-wrapped columns, red metal roof, and the wood branch infill of the roof trusses and barrier railings of the Pavilion Overlook Deck. The original design of the Event Pavilion is by JMZ Architects: refer to Appendix 4.5, September 2021 SDP Report, for additional information, including Event Pavilion building configuration summaries.

Development of the Event Pavilion will include new accessible walkway connections between the Pavilion and the Satellite Parking Facility and the traffic circle, and will include a stepped connection for direct access. Across the walkway, a vast expanse of open space could be kept as natural meadow to reduce mowing maintenance, maintained as trimmed lawn for open programming and festival grounds, or could be further developed in future phases into outdoor interpretive educational / recreational space.

**Building Design Summary\***

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Event Space:   | 100 People (Seated at Tables)<br>150 People (Seated, Lecture-Style) |
| Approx. Building Area:                                 | 2,930 SF (Occupied Space, not incl. Restrooms, Storage)             |
| Approx. Sanitary Treatment Area:                       | 5,175 SF (69' x 75')  |
| Type of Building:                                      | Open-Air Pavilion   |
| Plumbing Fixtures:                                     | 5 Water Closets<br>2 Lavatories<br>1 Drinking Fountain              |
| Building Systems:                                      | HVAC - No<br>Fire Protection - At NYS OPRHP Discretion              |
| Min. Required Parking:<br>(Based on 150-Person Events) | 36 Standard<br>2 Accessible Reserved                                |

\*Based on Building Configuration/Orientation Options, JMZ Architects.



Above Image: Perspective rendering of the accessible approach to the new Event Pavilion from the Satellite Parking Facility.





Above Image:  
Perspective rendering of the southern end of the Event Pavilion, highlighting the natural, wood branch infill of the roof truss and the Adirondack-style log-wrapped structural columns.



Above Images: Point of view renderings showcasing the event layout options for the Pavilion: daily use / picnic tables (top), 100-person table layout (middle), and 150-person lecture layout (bottom).

### 2.7 Picnic Grounds Improvements

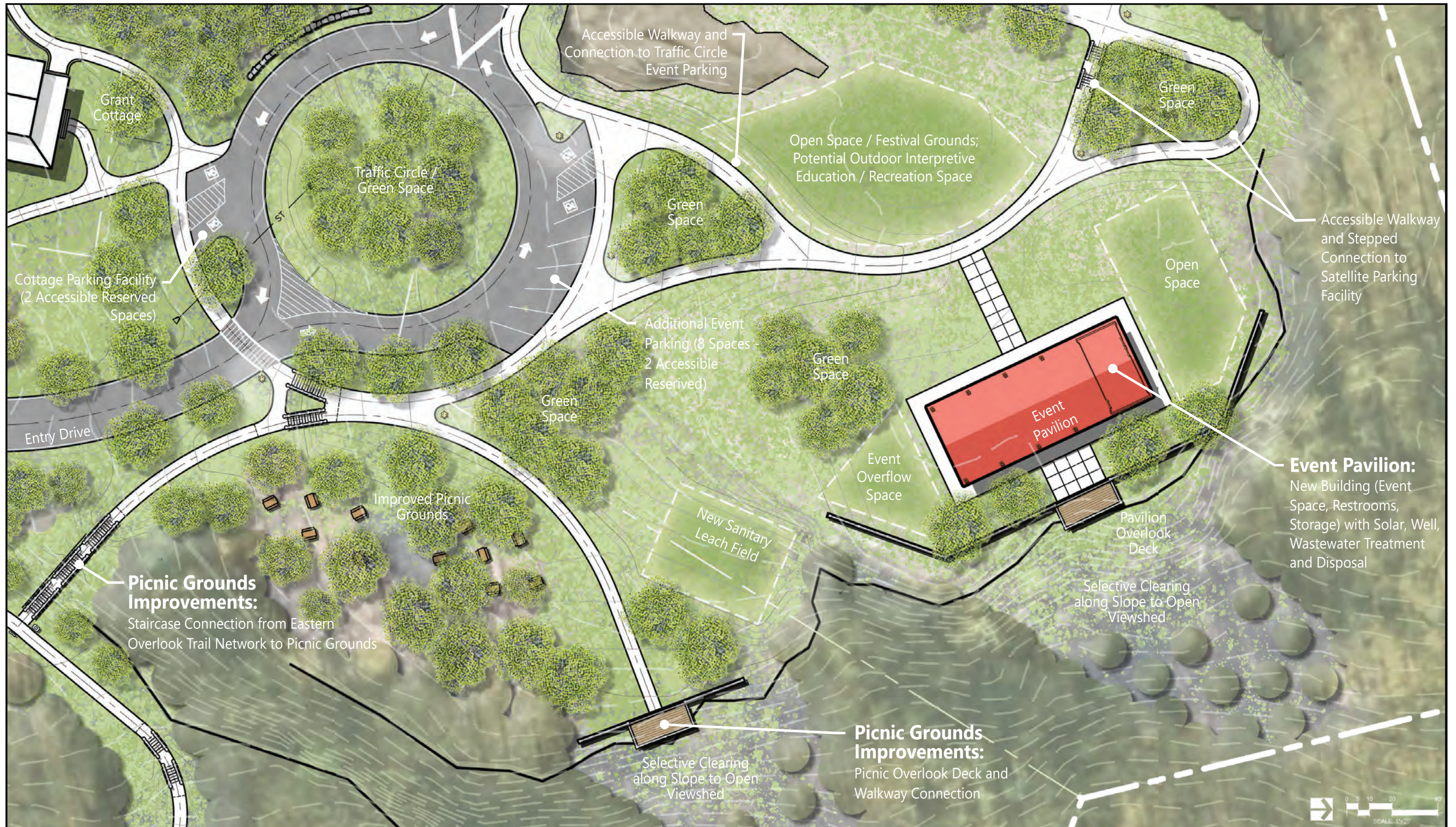
The Picnic Grounds improvements will include upgrades to the passive recreation and picnic areas. Supplemental tree plantings may be considered to increase shade for summer picnicking, and introduction of accessible crushed stone picnic pads may also be proposed to further expand on the site’s accessibility goals. New table furnishings, grills, and hot coal bin(s) may be also be considered for future improvements.

Included in the project scope is the development of a secondary northern overlook deck. Offering a similar vantage as the Event Pavilion’s deck, the Picnic Overlook Deck will allow day-use patrons to experience the vista during times that the Pavilion space is occupied with an event. Selective tree clearing will be required on the slope adjacent to the deck to frame and open views to Lake George and the Green Mountains of Vermont.

Additional pedestrian circulation connections provide additional access between the newly developed destinations at the Historic Site, including a new staircase connection between the Eastern Overlook Trail Network and the Picnic Grounds, and connections from these locations to the traffic circle and the Event Pavilion.

#### Planning Level Opinion of Probable Construction Costs

| Div. #  | Description           | Subtotal         |
|---|-----------------------|------------------|
| 01  | General Requirements  | \$16,750         |
| 02  | Existing Conditions   | \$5,900          |
| 03  | Concrete              | \$75,600         |
| 04  | Masonry               | \$13,500         |
| 05  | Metals                | \$10,500         |
| 10  | Specialties           | \$58,550         |
| 12  | Furnishings           | \$57,050         |
| 26  | Electrical            | \$0              |
| 31  | Earthwork             | \$59,550         |
| 32  | Exterior Improvements | \$34,650         |
| 33  | Utilities             | \$5,000          |
| <b>Subtotal</b>   |                       | <b>\$337,050</b> |
| Design Contingency (10%)  |                       | \$33,705         |
| Subcontractor Mark-Up (5%)  |                       | \$18,540         |
| Escalation (5%)   |                       | \$19,465         |
| General Conditions (10%)  |                       | \$40,900         |
| Overhead and Profit (5%)  |                       | \$67,450         |
| Field Order Allowance (4.5%)  |                       | \$23,290         |
| <b>Picnic Grounds Improvements</b>  |                       | <b>\$540,400</b> |
| <b>Construction Cost (Including Gen. Requirements, Overhead and Profit)</b> |                       | <b>\$540,400</b> |



**Map 2.6 / 2.7: Event Pavilion and Picnic Grounds Improvements**

Highlighting the 2023 Update to the Strategic Development Plan's new Event Pavilion and its associated circulation improvements, as well as the Picnic Grounds Improvements, including staircase connection and new overlook deck. Refer to Appendix 4.2 for 2023 SDP Supplementary Mapping (Updated Existing Conditions and Proposed Plans).

**SECTION 2.0 - RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS**

**2.8 Trail Improvements 1**

The first Trail Improvements project focuses on establishing a wheelchair-accessible trail route from the Visitor Center’s parking facility to the Eastern Overlook. To accomplish this route, the trail corridor will require realignment and regrading of portions of the southern-most segment of the Eastern Overlook Trail Network. In addition to the new trail route, project scope includes the installation of a new interpretive destination node at the Eastern Overlook. The node is proposed to include a paved plaza space with bench seating, a wall overlook barrier (potentially stone boulders or a stone-veneer retaining wall, depending on budget and earthwork requirements), low profile interpretive signage, and additional mounted binoculars. All elements within the new plaza space would be designed to be universally accessible.

In addition to the upgraded trail and new destination node, the project scope would include the removal of the Eastern Overlook Trail Network’s central asphalt trail segment. Following its removal, this area would receive restoration plantings to return it to a natural woodland setting.

Funding for the design and engineering of the Trail Improvements 1 project has been secured by the Friends and will begin fall of 2023, with anticipation of 2024 construction.

Planning Level Opinion of Probable Construction Costs

| Div. #   | Description                  | Subtotal         |
|--|------------------------------|------------------|
| 01   | General Requirements         | \$16,750         |
| 02   | Existing Conditions          | \$7,900          |
| 03   | Concrete                     | \$14,000         |
| 04   | Masonry                      | \$67,000         |
| 05   | Metals                       | \$6,500          |
| 10   | Specialties                  | \$5,250          |
| 12   | Furnishings                  | \$8,000          |
| 26   | Electrical                   | \$8,750          |
| 31   | Earthwork                    | \$95,400         |
| 32   | Exterior Improvements        | \$107,700        |
| 33   | Utilities                    | \$10,400         |
| <b>Subtotal</b>  |                              | <b>\$347,650</b> |
|  | Design Contingency (10%)     | \$34,765         |
|  | Subcontractor Mark-Up (5%)   | \$19,120         |
|  | Escalation (5%)              | \$20,075         |
|  | General Conditions (10%)     | \$42,160         |
|  | Overhead and Profit (5%)     | \$69,550         |
|  | Field Order Allowance (4.5%) | \$23,980         |
| <b>Trail Improvements 1</b>  |                              |                  |
| Construction Cost (Including Gen. Requirements, Overhead and Profit) |                              | <b>\$557,300</b> |

**2.9 Trail Improvements 2**

The second Trail Improvements project provides accessibility improvements to the northern segment of the Eastern Overlook Trail Network. Currently the steepest terrain of the trail network, the northern segment currently consists of bare earth with extensive erosion and stormwater management issues. In order to minimize the footprint of disturbance, introducing a series of step systems to manage the terrain is recommended in lieu of the extensive trail re-alignment that would be required to achieve a wheel-chair accessible route. The step systems would meet code, providing handrails and landings in each instance. Stormwater can be better managed via installation of swales and drainage inlets as required. The western, uphill portion of the northern segment will connect to the new improvements installed as part of the Pedestrian Connectivity Improvements (see section 2.3) as well as the new staircase connection for the Picnic Grounds Improvements (see section 2.7).

Project scope this sequence includes the introduction of a new interpretive trail along the historic train path. The new trail segment leads from the Visitor Center parking facility to the Train Shed remnant site. The trail will be fully wheel-chair accessible, and will terminate a new interpretive destination node at the remnant site. Similar to the plaza space created at the Eastern Overlook, the Train Shed interpretive node can include a paved plaza space with bench seating, a rustic pedestrian barrier to define the space, and low-profile interpretive signage that relays the history of the old railway line that terminated at the top of the mountain, and the shed that housed the train overnight.

Planning Level Opinion of Probable Construction Costs

| Div. #   | Description                  | Subtotal         |
|--|------------------------------|------------------|
| 01   | General Requirements         | \$16,750         |
| 02   | Existing Conditions          | \$11,550         |
| 03   | Concrete                     | \$121,500        |
| 04   | Masonry                      | \$30,380         |
| 05   | Metals                       | \$23,620         |
| 10   | Specialties                  | \$1,750          |
| 12   | Furnishings                  | \$5,400          |
| 26   | Electrical                   | \$0              |
| 31   | Earthwork                    | \$77,550         |
| 32   | Exterior Improvements        | \$35,800         |
| 33   | Utilities                    | \$5,000          |
| <b>Subtotal</b>  |                              | <b>\$329,300</b> |
|  | Design Contingency (10%)     | \$32,930         |
|  | Subcontractor Mark-Up (5%)   | \$18,110         |
|  | Escalation (5%)              | \$19,020         |
|  | General Conditions (10%)     | \$39,940         |
|  | Overhead and Profit (5%)     | \$65,900         |
|  | Field Order Allowance (4.5%) | \$22,700         |
| <b>Trail Improvements 2</b>  |                              |                  |
| Construction Cost (Including Gen. Requirements, Overhead and Profit) |                              | <b>\$527,900</b> |



**Map 2.8 / 2.9: Trail Improvements 1 and 2**

Highlighting the 2023 Update to the Strategic Development Plan's upgrades to the Eastern Overlook Trail Network, including wheelchair-accessible southern segment, improved step systems along the north segment, new interpretive destination nodes at the Eastern Overlook and Train Shed remnant site, interpretive trail along the old railway corridor, and restored central trail segment. Refer to Appendix 4.2 for 2023 SDP Supplementary Mapping (Updated Existing Conditions and Proposed Plans).

### **3.1 Overall Phasing Plan**

The 2023 Update to the SDP proposes the installation of the sitewide improvements be sequenced in three separate phases. The first phase focuses on the core improvements fundamental to the current daily operations between the Visitor Center and Grant Cottage. These improvements focus on expansion of the parking facilities serving both structures, as well as installation of the new Satellite Parking Facility, which will greatly expand total parking capacity at the Historic Site. Improvements to the southern segment of the Eastern Overlook Trail Network and at the Eastern Overlook itself are included in the first phase, as this is a premier destination at the Historic Site, and as such, funding for the design and engineering of the project has already been secured.

The second phase concentrates on expanding and improving the programming and circulation at Grant Cottage via the construction of the new Event Pavilion, which will allow the Historic Site to host larger, more advanced events with greater frequency. These events could potentially include seminars, conferences, symposiums, concerts, weddings, reenactments, fairs, and more. In addition to the Event Pavilion, this phase includes the remaining circulation improvements between the Visitor Center and Grant Cottage.

The third and final phase of the proposed plan rounds out the sitewide improvements with recreational upgrades to the picnic grounds and finalizing the trail improvements at the northern end of the Eastern Overlook Trail Network.

The Overall Phasing Plan for the future developments at the Grant Cottage Historic Site:

**Phase 1:**

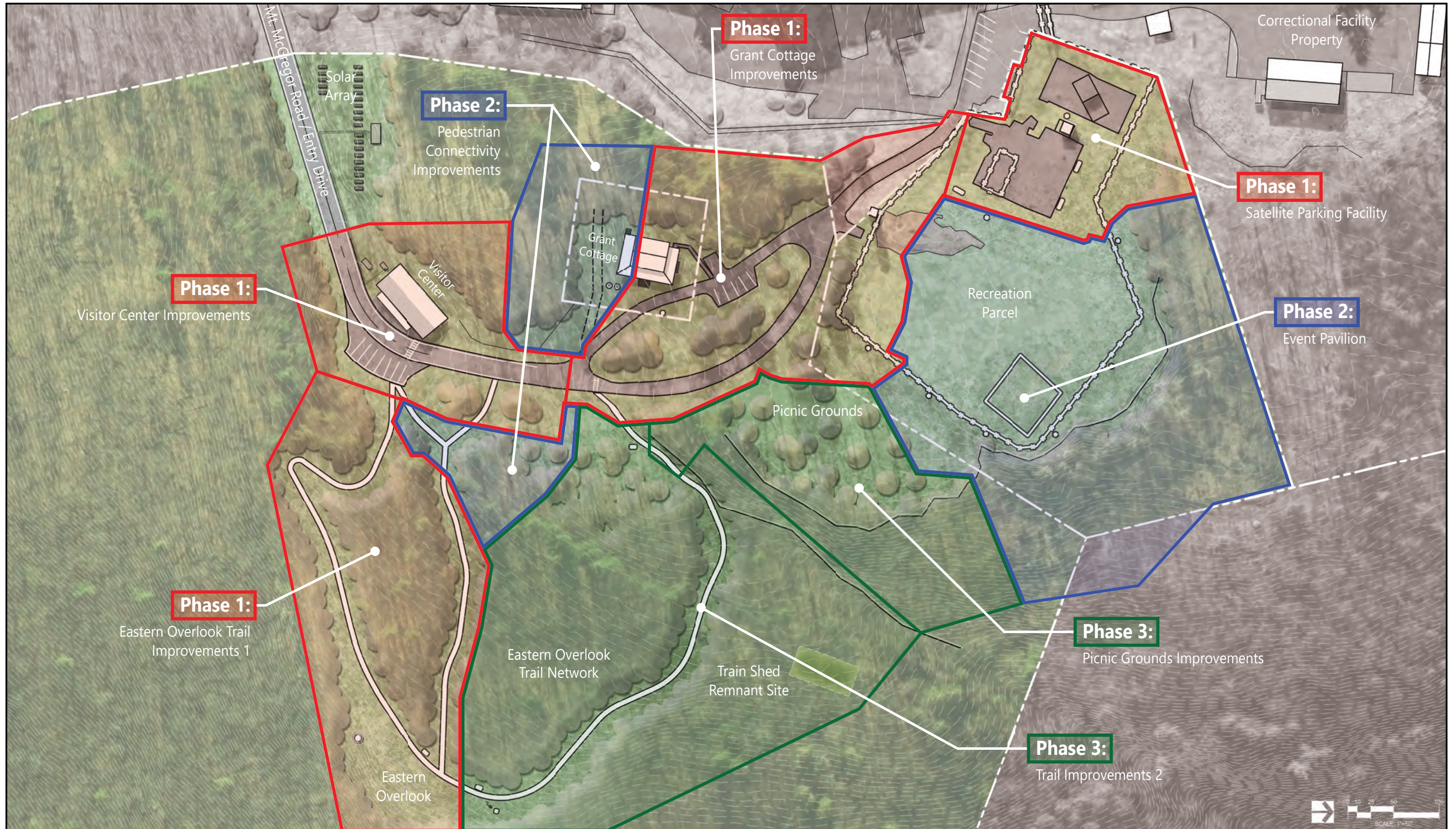
1. Eastern Overlook Trail Improvements 1
2. Visitor Center Site Improvements
3. Grant Cottage Improvements
4. Satellite Parking Facility

**Phase 2:**

1. Event Pavilion
2. Pedestrian Connectivity Improvements

**Phase 3:**

1. Picnic Grounds Improvements
2. Eastern Overlook Trail Improvements 2



**Map 3.1: Overall Phasing Plan - Existing Conditions Background**

Breaking down the 2023 Update to the Strategic Development Plan's improvements into three phases. Phase 1 includes the Visitor Center Improvements, Grant Cottage Improvements, the Satellite Parking Facility, and Trail Improvements 1. Phase 2 includes the Event Pavilion and Pedestrian Connectivity Improvements, while Phase 3 completes the development at the Historic Site with the Picnic Grounds Improvements and Trail Improvements 2.

**3.2 Phase One Summary and Implementation**

In the summer of 2023, the Friends secured grant funding to design and engineer the accessibility improvements and overlook destination improvements at the Eastern Overlook and its southernmost trail segment, kicking off the core improvements of Phase 1, which is recommended to have a 1-5 year implementation and construction timeline. In addition to the Eastern Overlook Trail Improvements 1 project, this phase focuses on core improvements between the Visitor Center and Grant Cottage. Beginning at the Visitor Center, the phase will see the expansion of its parking facility to a new 11-space lot (9 standard, 2 accessible reserved, 1 access aisle). Visitor Center Improvements also includes vehicular traffic calming and patron safety improvements via the installation of a new speed table and crosswalk area, and a new entry plaza and gathering node at the Visitor Center Entrance. The new entry plaza provides an enhanced arrival experience while also providing a safe space to gather away from the vehicular drive corridor. Rounding out the Visitor Center Improvement project scope is the replacement of the aging Visitor Center porch / front deck and the installation of a new wastewater treatment and disposal system, planned to be located across the entry drive, in the lawn area beyond the new parking facility expansion.

Phase 1 improvements at Grant Cottage include the road realignment and installation of the traffic circle with new parking facilities on the southern/cottage side (2 accessible reserved, 1 access aisle) as well as on the northern/future Event Pavilion side (6 standard, 2 accessible reserved, 1 access aisle). New walkway connections between the traffic circle’s parking facilities and the northern end of the Cottage’s porch provide enhanced, accessible circulation improvements to the site.

To best support the daily and special event functions of the Historic Site, expansion of the parking capacity is cited as the primary concern of OPRHP and the Friends. To this end, construction of the Satellite Parking Facility is a top Phase 1 priority. With an additional 49 parking spaces (47 standard, 2 accessible reserved, 1 access aisle), the capability of Grant Cottage to host larger events will be transformed with the completion of the Satellite Parking Facility. In addition to the parking lot, the project scope will include landscape enhancements and restoration, solar-based site lighting, and new stormwater management areas.

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| Phase One: Core Improvements (1-5 Years)                                       |             |
| <u>Trail Improvements 1 Project Area Construction Subtotal</u>                 | \$557,300   |
| <u>Visitor Center Improvements Project Area Construction Subtotal</u>          | \$875,500   |
| <u>Grant Cottage Improvements Project Area Construction Subtotal</u>           | \$860,700   |
| <u>Satellite Parking Facility Project Area Construction Subtotal</u>           | \$714,400   |
| <b>Phase One: Preliminary Design Phase Subtotal</b>                            |             |
| <u>Construction Cost, Including General Requirements, Overhead, and Profit</u> | \$3,007,900 |





**Map 3.2: Phase One**

Highlighting the first phase of the 2023 Update to the Strategic Development Plan: the Visitor Center Improvements, Grant Cottage Improvements, the Satellite Parking Facility, and Trail Improvements 1. Refer to Appendix 4.2 for 2023 SDP Supplementary Mapping (Updated Existing Conditions and Proposed Plans).

**3.3 Phase Two Summary and Implementation**

At the conclusion of Phase 1, the Grant Cottage Historic Site will have the upgraded infrastructure necessary to begin a greater expansion of its programming and offerings. Between the widened, safer driveways, expanded parking facilities at the Visitor Center and Grant Cottage, and new Satellite Parking Facility, the Historic Site will finally have the capacity to engage in a larger audience. Phase 2, anticipated to be implemented in the 5-10 year range, will focus on expanding the potential programming at the Historic Site, capitalizing on the new increased capacity.

The Event Pavilion project is the primary focus of Phase 2. Sized for 100-150 person events, the Event Pavilion offers open-air, flexible space that can accommodate picnic table settings for daily operations, 100-person table and chair layouts for special event rentals, weddings, or conferences, or 150-person seated layouts for lectures or performances. Events boasting larger numbers can also utilize the overflow open spaces adjacent to the pavilion. Included within the Pavilion’s construction are the attached restrooms and utility room / storage room, roof-mounted solar panels and battery storage, new well for water supply, and new septic system/leach field for the Pavilion’s use. The Pavilion’s overlook deck, its adjacent open-air plaza space, and the selective clearing to frame and open views to the north and east are also included within the project scope.

The remaining scope of Phase 2 focuses on improving pedestrian circulation throughout the Historic Site. New walkway connections between the traffic circle’s northern parking area and the Satellite Parking Facility will be included in the Event Pavilion project scope. In addition to the Pavilion project and its associated improvements, Phase 2 includes the Pedestrian Connectivity Improvements. This project scope includes the wheelchair-accessible trail route connecting the Visitor Center to Grant Cottage’s north porch. The relocation of the new caretaker/memorial garden is also included, which features new plantings, bench seating, and a relocated memorial plaque.

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| Phase Two: Expanded Programming and Improved Circulation (5-10 Years)   |             |
| Event Pavilion Project Area Construction Subtotal                       | \$2,118,800 |
| Pedestrian Connectivity Improvements Project Area Construction Subtotal | \$294,300   |
| <b>Phase Two: Preliminary Design Phase Subtotal</b>                     |             |
| Construction Cost, Including General Requirements, Overhead, and Profit | \$2,413,100 |



**Map 3.2: Phase Two**

Highlighting the second phase of the 2023 Update to the Strategic Development Plan: the Event Pavilion and Pedestrian Connectivity Improvements. Refer to Appendix 4.2 for 2023 SDP Supplementary Mapping (Updated Existing Conditions and Proposed Plans).

**3.4 Phase Three Summary and Implementation**

Phase 3, anticipated to be implemented in the 10-15 year+ range, concentrates its project scope on improving the recreational elements and offerings throughout the remaining sites at Grant Cottage, including the Picnic Grounds and the northern half off the Eastern Overlook Trail Network. The Picnic Grounds Improvements scope includes supplemental tree plantings and enhanced picnicking, a new overlook deck to the north of the grove, and walkway connections between key elements at the site. A new staircase connection between the Picnic Grove and the Eastern Overlook Trail Network and selective tree clearing to frame and open views will also be included within the project scope.

The third and final phase of the improvements at Grant Cottage concludes with the second Trail Improvements project. Focusing on the northern end of the Eastern Overlook Trail Network, the project scope includes a new, low-impact, stepped trail along the steepest grades of the trail network, as well as a new interpretive trail and destination node for the Train Shed Remnant Site along the northern limits of the trail.

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| Phase Three: Improved Recreation and Expanded Interpretation (10-15 Years +)   |             |
| <u>Picnic Grounds Improvements Project Area Construction Subtotal</u>          | \$540,400   |
| <u>Trail Improvements 2 Project Area Construction Subtotal</u>                 | \$527,900   |
| <b>Phase Three: Preliminary Design Phase Subtotal</b>                          |             |
| <u>Construction Cost, Including General Requirements, Overhead, and Profit</u> | \$1,068,300 |



**Map 3.3: Phase Three**

Highlighting the third and final phase of the 2023 Update to the Strategic Development Plan: the Picnic Grounds Improvements and Trail Improvements 2. Refer to Appendix 4.2 for 2023 SDP Supplementary Mapping (Updated Existing Conditions and Proposed Plans).

**3.5 Final Summary**

The Grant Cottage Strategic Development Plan 2023 Update proposes sitewide improvements organized into eight projects under three implementation phases:

Phase 1: Core Improvements (1-5 years)

1. Trail Improvements 1  
Accessibility improvements to the southern segment of the Eastern Overlook Trail Network creates a wheelchair-accessible route from the Visitor Center parking facility to the overlook and culminates in a new interpretive destination node at the overlook.
2. Visitor Center Improvements  
Including parking facility expansion, vehicular traffic calming and patron safety improvements, a new building entry plaza and gathering node, replacement of its porch, and a new wastewater treatment and disposal system.
3. Grant Cottage Improvements  
Including an expanded parking facility, road realignment and vehicular circulation improvements, and building and porch entry and accessibility improvements.
4. Satellite Parking Facility  
New parking facility with stormwater management.

Phase 2: Expanded Programming and Improved Circulation (5-10 years)

1. Event Pavilion  
A new open air event venue sized for 100 – 150 person events, featuring an overlook deck and expandable overflow outdoor open space for larger events. The building will include two restrooms and a small storage room. A roof-mounted solar-based electric system will service the building’s lighting and power load needs, and new well and wastewater treatment / disposal systems will be required for its use.
2. Pedestrian Connectivity Improvements  
Including a dedicated pedestrian roadside route along the entry drive and conversion of the former carriage road into a pedestrian-only access route. A new, wheelchair-accessible trail route connects the Visitor Center to Grant Cottage and features a relocated and improved caretaker / memorial garden area.

Phase 3: Improved Recreation and Expanded Interpretation (10-15 years+)

1. Picnic Ground Improvements  
Improved passive recreation and picnic areas, a picnic overlook deck, and circulation improvements connecting the Eastern Overlook Trail network to the Event Pavilion and parking facilities.
2. Trail Improvements 2  
Accessibility improvements to the northern segment of the Eastern Overlook Trail Network creates a series of new step systems to alleviate the steep slopes of the existing north segment, and a new train shed interpretive trail and destination node expands the site’s interpretive programming.

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Phase One: Core Improvements (1-5 Years)                       |           |
| Trail Improvements 1 Project Area Construction Subtotal        | \$557,300 |
| Visitor Center Improvements Project Area Construction Subtotal | \$875,500 |
| Grant Cottage Improvements Project Area Construction Subtotal  | \$860,700 |
| Satellite Parking Facility Project Area Construction Subtotal  | \$714,400 |

|  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| <b>Phase One: Preliminary Design Phase Subtotal</b>                            |                    |
| <u>Construction Cost, Including General Requirements, Overhead, and Profit</u> | <u>\$3,007,900</u> |

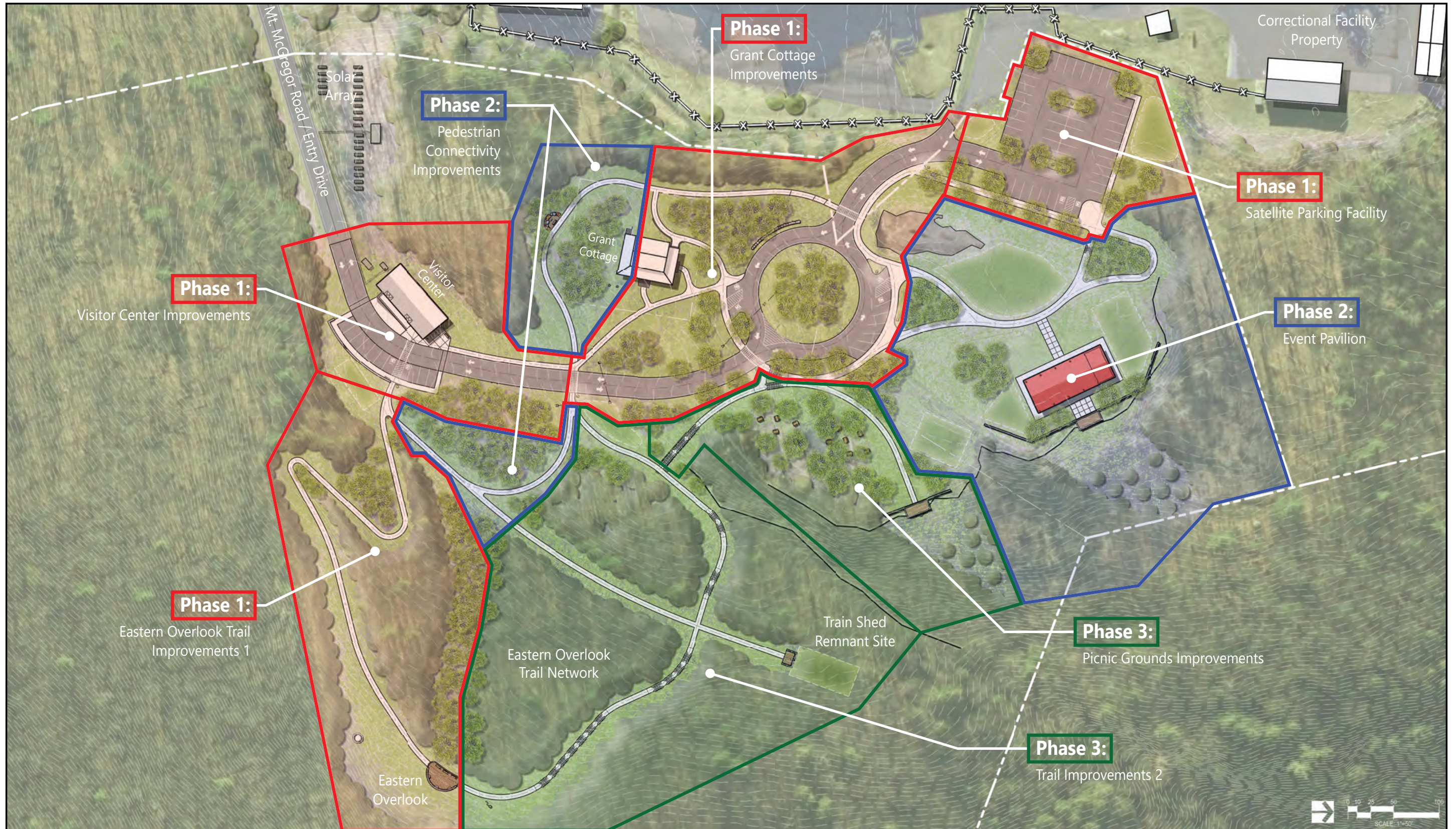
|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| Phase Two: Expanded Programming and Improved Circulation (5-10 Years)   |             |
| Event Pavilion Project Area Construction Subtotal                       | \$2,118,800 |
| Pedestrian Connectivity Improvements Project Area Construction Subtotal | \$294,300   |

|  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| <b>Phase Two: Preliminary Design Phase Subtotal</b>                            |                    |
| <u>Construction Cost, Including General Requirements, Overhead, and Profit</u> | <u>\$2,413,100</u> |

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Phase Three: Improved Recreation and Expanded Interpretation (10-15 Years +) |           |
| Picnic Grounds Improvements Project Area Construction Subtotal               | \$540,400 |
| Trail Improvements 2 Project Area Construction Subtotal                      | \$527,900 |

|  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| <b>Phase Three: Preliminary Design Phase Subtotal</b>                          |                    |
| <u>Construction Cost, Including General Requirements, Overhead, and Profit</u> | <u>\$1,068,300</u> |

|  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| <b>Strategic Development Plan - 2023 Update: Preliminary Design Total Project Cost</b> |                    |
| <u>Construction Cost, Including General Requirements, Overhead, and Profit</u>         | <u>\$6,489,300</u> |



**Map 3.5: Overall Phasing Plan**

Breaking down the 2023 Update to the Strategic Development Plan’s improvements into three phases. Phase 1 includes the Visitor Center Improvements, Grant Cottage Improvements, the Satellite Parking Facility, and Trail Improvements 1. Phase 2 includes the Event Pavilion and Pedestrian Connectivity Improvements, while Phase 3 completes the development at the Historic Site with the Picnic Grounds Improvements and Trail Improvements 2.

**3.6 Implementation and Funding Sources**

Following the completion of the 2023 Update to the Strategic Development Plan (SDP), it is anticipated that OPRHP will formally adopt the SDP, ensuring responsible stewardship of the facility for generations to come. In addition to the agency’s adoption of the SDP, the project will be submitted for environmental review and compliancy with the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). This submission will include a Part 1 EAF and Declaration of Impacts and submission of ‘Consultation Project’ documentation to the Cultural Resource Information System (CRIS) for State Historic Preservation Office review. The review will cover all aspects of the projects as listed in this 2023 Update report. The Planning Methodology Report (see Appendix 4.4) includes additional secondary maintenance and building improvement projects, such as slate roof repairs, exterior woodwork, chimney repair, basement water infiltration remediation, window and foundation repair, etc. These secondary items will not be included in the initial environmental review and will need to receive their own, future reviews when appropriate.

With the initiation of the design and engineering of the Trail Improvements 1 project, Phase 1 implementation has begun. Due to the limited grant funding available for the project, site survey is limited to the project limits of the southern segment of the Eastern Overlook Trail Network only. It is recommended that full site survey of the entire Historic Site be obtained in the next sequence of Phase 1, to ensure that all projects developed will be approached with the long-term goals of accessibility and safety in mind, as well as the expectation for each implemented improvement to be fully functional in both existing/interim condition as well as final build-out condition.

There are three primary funding sources to consider for future project implementation:

1. Direct requests through the annual budgeting of NYS OPRHP
2. Requests through the NYS OPRHP Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) Grant Program for Parks, Preservation and Heritage through the annual Consolidated Funding Applications (CFA)
3. The Parks & Trails New York’s Partnership Program

Smaller grant programs may be considered to help support smaller facets of a project, such as assisting in paying for a portion of a project’s site amenities or furnishings, or for smaller sized projects broken out of the larger sequence, such as the relocation of the caretaker/memorial garden:

1. Hudson River Valley Greenway’s Conservancy Trails Grant Program
2. Hudson River Valley Greenway’s Communities Grant Program
3. NYS Council on the Art’s Conservation Treatment Grant Program
4. Preservation League of New York’s Preserve NY Grant Program
5. The Charles R. Wood Foundation
6. The Glens Falls Foundation



Above Image:  
Bird’s eye view rendering of the Overall Development Plan, zoomed in to highlight the Event Pavilion and its overlook deck..





**Map 3.6: Overall Development Plan (Annotated)**

Highlighting (with additional project descriptors) the recommended improvement projects of the 2023 Update to the Strategic Development Plan: Visitor Center Improvements, Grant Cottage Improvements, Satellite Parking Facility, Event Pavilion, Picnic Grounds Improvements, Pedestrian Connectivity Improvements, and Trail Improvements 1 and 2. Refer to Appendix 4.2 for 2023 SDP Supplementary Mapping (Updated Existing Conditions and Proposed Plans).

**Appendix**  
**Public Outreach, Comments and Feedback**

4.1 Public Outreach, Comments and Feedback

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING COMMENT SUMMARY

To seek input on future development at Grant Cottage State Historic Site, the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation conducted a public information meeting on the proposed Strategic Development Plan for the facility. This meeting was held on the evening of Tuesday, May 23, 2023, in the Gideon-Putnam Room of the Saratoga-Capital Regional Administration. To accommodate those unable to attend the information meeting in-person, the event had a virtual attendance option. The public was invited to speak and make comments at the meeting. Written comments were also accepted after the meeting by e-mail and by postal mail through Wednesday, June 7, 2023.

This document is a summary of the comments received at the meeting, as well as written comments received before the end of the public comment period. Comments were welcomed after this cut-off date with no guarantee that they would be included in this summary document. These “late” comments will, however, receive equal consideration during the planning process as will the comments in this summary.

Comments are classified by subject area. Similar comments were consolidated, and all comments were edited to include the substantive portions. The subject areas are presented in alphabetical order with no indication of any prioritization.

General Clarification Notes:

1. The SDP is *not* a Master Plan.
2. The 2023 Update to the SDP’s scope is defined by that of the 2021 SDP, excluding any items beyond the original document’s proposed improvement projects (i.e. additional building acquisitions from DOCCS, maintenance of Mt. McGregor Road from the base of the mountain to the Historic Site, etc.).

Accessibility

1. The site would benefit from a people-mover. This vehicle would help during larger events to move people around the site given the difficult grades of the area.  
(OPRHP notes this comment is beyond the scope of the SDP, but an operating procedure may be considered to alleviate parking concerns.)

Acquisition and Future Development

1. I am curious if there is the possibility to acquire land in the future from the former Correction Facility as to allow for further expansion of facilities.
2. I am concerned with the potential development of the former Correctional Facility site and how that may impact the Historic Site and its new recreational areas.
3. If buildings at the former Correctional Facility were to be acquired for Grant Cottage to utilize as museum/visitor center/presentation space, or as a joint project shared space by the Friends of Grant Cottage and New York State Parks, then the proposed pavilion could be significantly downsized.  
(OPRHP notes these comments are beyond scope of SDP and what is foreseeable, and note that it would be best to understand resolution of DOCCS property before the *Friends* proceed with any action here. Cannot plan or make decisions until the DOCCS property settled)

Caretaker Commemoration

1. I want to be sure the site continues to protect and preserve the caretaker memorial space in its entirety.  
(OPRHP notes this comment is resolved: the garden elements are being relocated, not removed.)

General

1. The project team has done a masterful job over the years of coming up with a very comprehensive plan.
2. We’re very supportive of all of the items in the plan; the only concern we really have is parking.
3. Tell people to visit and experience the Cottage.

Guard Shack

1. Consider what utility could be made of the guard shack property by Parks or by the Friends as part of controlling access to the entire site.  
(OPRHP notes this comment is beyond the scope of the SDP.)

Parking and Circulation

1. With only one additional parking slip being added in proximity to the Visitor Center we feel that we’re spending a tremendous amount of money and not getting a lot for it in terms of the parking.  
(OPRHP notes this comment’s parking count is erroneous, and that parking will be limited by existing conditions (i.e. slope/terrain drop off, presence of bedrock outcroppings); final parking layout cannot be determined until the project is implemented and the area fully surveyed.)
2. We believe some fill can be added around the Visitor Center in order to create an additional row of parking.  
(OPRHP notes additional study and review are required (survey, wetland, engineering, environmental review.)
3. While it is great to have an accessible path from the Visitor Center to the Cottage, we are worried people will leave their cars at the Visitor Center. We don’t want people to leave their cars near the Visitor Center because of the limited parking.
4. We are concerned with the alignment of parking spaces by the Cottage. While not everybody requires a handicapped space, the distance that people have to walk from a parking spot on the traffic circle to the Cottage is of concern because our visitors are typically part of the elderly demographic.
5. We are concerned that parking may be inadequate if there are new trailheads to Moreau Lake State Park.
6. I feel the Plan neglects, or does not really understand, the flow of people going through the site, and that the plan does not successfully bring people to and from the revenue stream point.
7. I feel that more parking spaces can be added on the traffic circle in proximity to the Cottage.

8. I am concerned with arrival sequencing. I think people playing “musical cars” at the site would hurt the visitation experience.

Pavilion

1. I believe the use of the future Pavilion and the educational programs offered there will be the number one way more people become aware of the Historic Site.
2. I am concerned as to whether or not the parking lot near the Pavilion can support the structure’s capacity.  
(OPRHP notes comment 2 encapsulates all parking concerns. Further, it should be noted that the minimum requirements for a 150-person entertainment/recreational event utilizes a 4:1 ratio (seats : parking spaces), meaning the minimum total spaces required would be 37.5 (36 standard, 2 accessible reserved), which the Satellite Parking Facility exceeds.)

Roadways

1. This issue may be outside the scope of the Plan, but we are concerned about the safety, lack of clarity on the ownership, and maintenance of Mt. McGregor Road as it comes up to the gate to the Historic Site.  
(OPRHP notes this comment is beyond the scope of the SDP.)

Security

1. There may be issues with the security of the Cottage if trails connect Moreau Lake State Park to the Historic Site.  
(OPRHP notes this comment is beyond the scope of the SDP.)

Visitor Center

1. The Visitor Center is the major revenue stream for the Historic Site and I am concerned that the plan does not appear to discuss the pattern of how people are going to go to the Visitor Center before and after their tour.
2. We should be thinking about the possibility that the site will need a bigger Visitor Center in the future.  
(OPRHP notes these comments are beyond the scope of the SDP.)

In addition to the preceding public comments, two letters from the Friends of Grant Cottage Board of Trustees were received. The first, dated May 21, 2023, presents and summarizes the Friends’ continued concerns of the site’s parking capacity. The second, dated June 5, 2023, presents the request to study the feasibility of acquiring additional buildings from the former correctional facility property (currently owned/operated by DOCCS). Regarding parking capacity, the designs presented in the 2023 Update will be further explored and reiterated upon once implementation begins, as any further revisions will require full survey of the site to prove useful. Regarding the feasibility of potentially acquiring additional buildings, this may be explored further at a later time, but it remains outside the scope of the 2023 Update, whose scope has been defined by that of the 2021 original SDP.



**The Friends of Ulysses S. Grant Cottage**

PO Box 2294, Wilton, New York 12831  
 (518) 584-4353  
[www.GrantCottage.org](http://www.GrantCottage.org)

May 21, 2023

Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation  
 Alane Ball Chinian, Regional Director Saratoga/Capital District  
[alane.ballchinian@parks.ny.gov](mailto:alane.ballchinian@parks.ny.gov)

Re: Public Meeting on Master Site Plan

The Board of Trustees has reviewed the updated Master Site Plan prepared by the L.A. Group. For the most part we are supportive of the revised plan, although the order of priority for some of the projects may need to be reviewed before implementation.

There is, however, one area of great concern which we intend to comment upon at the public meeting on May 16. That is the changes made to the parking arrangements, primarily the limited parking now anticipated opposite the Visitors' Center ("the VC") and near the Cottage itself, as well as the distance between the primary parking for Cottage tour participants and the Cottage.

While we appreciate the desire to maintain the historic nature of the site and to not overwhelm the area adjacent to the Cottage with parked cars, we find the new plan problematic.

We also have concerns regarding the reduction in the auxiliary parking area in the Ballfield property from 100 to 50 cars, especially if the site should be opened at some time in the future to hiking paths connected to the Moreau Lake State Park system.

More specifically, we currently have 7 paved parking spaces opposite the VC, plus 3 more on the grass adjacent. At the Cottage we have 1 designated handicapped space, 5 paved spaces opposite and at least 5 more on the grass above the Cottage adjacent to the road. This number of spaces is barely adequate during busier visitor hours and inadequate when programs are being held.

The original plan significantly increased the parking opposite to the VC, and added a few spaces adjacent to the Cottage. The revised plan would provide 11 spaces opposite the VC (only one more than available now), 2 handicapped spaces adjacent to the Cottage and 8 additional spaces across the newly created circle. These 8 spaces would involve a 415 foot walk to the Cottage (along the designated ADA footpath, slightly shorter if you walk around the circle). The demographics of the Cottage visitor profile include many elderly visitors who would find the longer walk to the Cottage challenging.

We suggest that the new Site Plan be revisited to provide more parking in both locations and provide a main parking area closer to the Cottage. We also suggest that the plans for the auxiliary parking area on the ballfield property be reviewed, taking into account future plans for opening up hiking paths.

We appreciate the opportunity to present our comments and look forward to the future development of the Cottage site. Please see the attachment for more details on the traffic pattern

Respectfully yours,

Tim Welch, President (on behalf of the Board of Trustees)

CC: [lisa.poley@parks.ny.gov](mailto:lisa.poley@parks.ny.gov)  
[mpanich@thelagroup.com](mailto:mpanich@thelagroup.com)

• **Addendum: Grant Cottage Traffic Pattern**

In order to plan for pedestrian and vehicle movement, you must take into account how the site has been working for the past few years:

As vehicles arrive on site, signage directs all guests to park in the VC parking lot and check into the VC. Not all guests check in, some wander around themselves and go to the overlook, read the interpretive panels, have a picnic, or walk up to the cottage, all while parked in the VC lot. Guests with a scheduled tour or looking to go on one will also park there, and come into the VC to check in, shop, experience the exhibits and watch the introductory video. All this time they are also parked in the same lot.

Tour guests are told twice (once in person by staff and again at the end of the video) that once the video is over they should go back in their cars, drive up the hill, and park near the cottage. That movement helps to free up spaces for new people checking in, and makes room for visitors coming back down the hill after their tour to complete their experience by entering the gift shop or going to the overlook (again taking up space in the VC lot).

Additionally, many times, when there are no spaces available in the VC lot, people just drive by, then pass the cottage, and leave. Similarly, when leaving their guided tour, if there are no spaces available in the lower lot, they simply drive off site, without stopping in the gift shop (which they are encouraged to do by offering a free souvenir) or, they drive by the VC lot and go up to the cottage lot where they are disgruntled when told they have to check in back down at the VC

A large number of our demographic is not willing or able to walk up that hill. If they remain in the VC lot they are taking up vital spots that need to be open for other guests. The VC staff get questions all day from visitors about whether they have to walk to the cottage.

The primary issue, however, is not their ability to climb the hill, as that difficulty could be alleviated with proper trail access and/or the acquisition of a golf cart. The most important piece is that we can't accommodate sufficient cars in the VC lot for people touring the cottage!

June 5, 2023

Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation  
 Alane Ball Chinian  
 Regional Director Saratoga/ Capital District

Re: Friends of Grant Cottage response to call for public comments

On May 31, 2023, the majority of the Board of Trustees toured the site to gain a further understanding of the options facing Parks and Rec, as well as the Friends, in selecting a plan for further development of the Mc Gregor site.

**History:**

In 2020, Parks and Trails awarded the Friends a grant to undertake a strategic plan study on the future development of the Grant Cottage site. The Site committee of the Friends collaborated extensively with many representatives of Park and Rec and the LA group in formulating the plan. It should be stated that the "ball field" property was not at that time in possession of Parks and Rec. It had been an intrinsic component to the Grant Cottage story of 1885. Therefore, two alternative plans were put forward, one for all the development on the then existing Grant Cottage site and a second for what would be desirable if the Balmoral property were to come into the possession of NYS Parks and Rec. This has become known as the 2021 Strategic Development Plan as it was finalized in that year. Fortuitously Parks and Rec came into possession of that site in 2022. That has allowed for further planning based on the 2021 study.

Throughout the study the main focus of the Friends group has been to achieve a building which would allow a presentation to 100 to 125 people and accommodate parking for such a group. This needed to be accomplished in a manner which attended to the unique historical and ecological value of the Cottage on the site. Both the 2021 strategic plan and what is now identified as the 2023 plan have accomplished the majority of our goals.

Thus, we stand committed to proceeding expeditiously on the 2023 plan if some additional parking can be worked into the plan near the pavilion.

Current situation:

Much has changed since 2021. We all experienced Covid together and kept operating. We screened visitors at the guard shack during that time. The barb wire has been removed. Parks has increased its site and ownership.

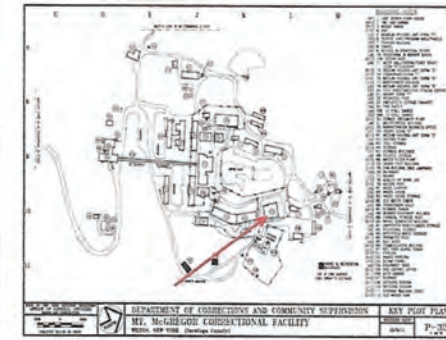
However, before commencing the implementation of the 2023 plan, we would like to explore Parks' vision for the site and what role the Friends can play in creation of that vision if it involves utilization of our neighboring buildings, currently owned by the State of New York and OGS. Obviously we have much ignorance on the interior condition of the buildings. OGS and Parks may have some of this data on file. We have primarily the building locations to the Cottage and

access from those buildings to the Grant Cottage site. If one of these buildings were to be developed either for Grant Cottage utilization as museum/visitor center/ presentation space, or as a joint project shared space by the Friends and Parks, then the pavilion of the 2023 plan would be significantly downsized. We remain very cognizant of the need to keep maintenance costs for Parks from any development to a minimum.

The buildings we looked at from the outside include:

The gymnasium ..... Has many assets including the relatively recent construction, plenty of space for presentations, and is nearly contiguous to our new parking lot. It would keep the site concentrated in one area. It should allow for shared use with Parks.

**Building # 075 – Gym**

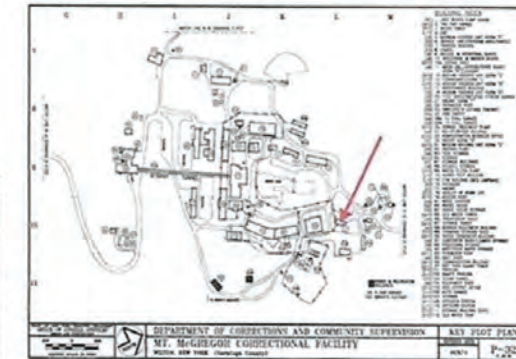


**Size:** 13,617 Gross square feet 1 floor with no basement.

**Uses:** Gymnasium - Recreation

The physician's home ..... It is close to the gym and in the same area, but would need a lot of architectural guidance if it were to be considered.

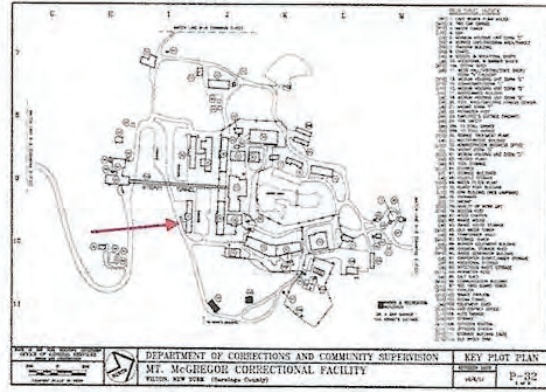
**Building # 004 – Career Apparel** *(Physician in Charge Residence)*



**Size:** 6,729 Gross square feet, 3 floors with basement.

Building 17 ..... One of the historic Metropolitan buildings across the road from our solar panels. It would control access to the site and a land path could be developed to the Cottage from the area behind the theater. It has a lot of space. The grading on the parking would be an issue.

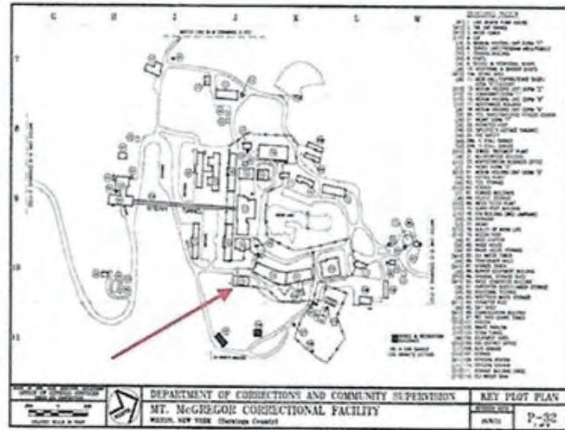
**Building # 017 – Maintenance Bldg.**



**Size:** 16,798 Gross square feet, 1 floor, with basement.

**Uses:** Maintenance shops

**Building # 014 – Commissary / Dorm L (Theater)**



**Size:** 25,938 Gross square feet 3 floors with basement

The building known variously as 14 or 21 but better known as the Theater to one of us (JMM) who attended 4-H meetings in it in the 1950's. Assets include being close to the Cottage and there is already a path nearby to the Cottage. Plenty of space but may be expensive to rehabilitate.

Of course, none of these may be suitable or available. It depends very much on the vision that Parks has for the site.

Finally, we would want to consider what utilization should be made of the guard shack property by Parks or by the Friends as part of controlling access to the entire site.

We look forward to a discussion of our shared future together as we bring to our citizens the story of Ulysses S. Grant.

Sincerely,

Tim Welch  
President,  
Friends of Grant Cottage.