

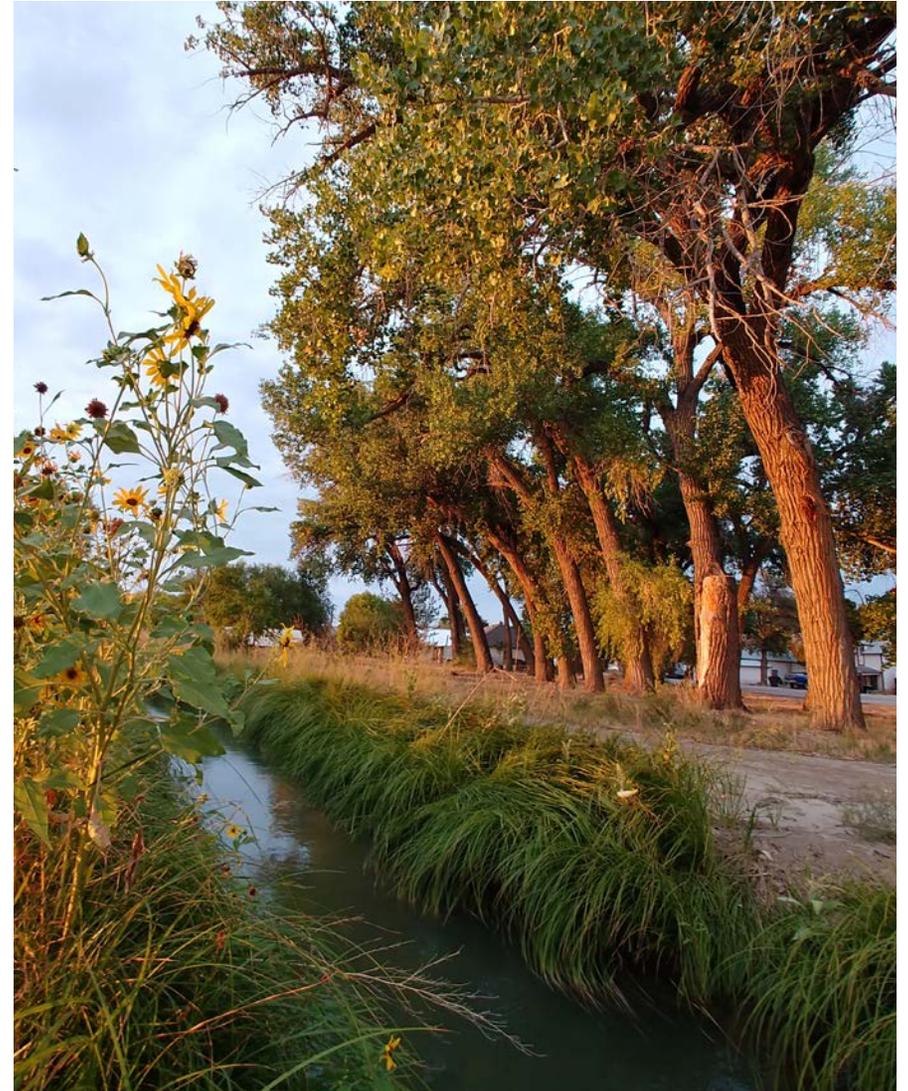
RURAL  PROUD

EPICENTER

PEARL BAKER PARK: YEAR 1

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GREEN RIVER, UTAH

- 1. Project Site for Pearl Baker Park**
- 2. Epicenter**
- 3. Green River PACT**
- 4. Book Cliff Elementary School**
- 5. Green River High School**
- 6. John Wesley Powell River History Museum**

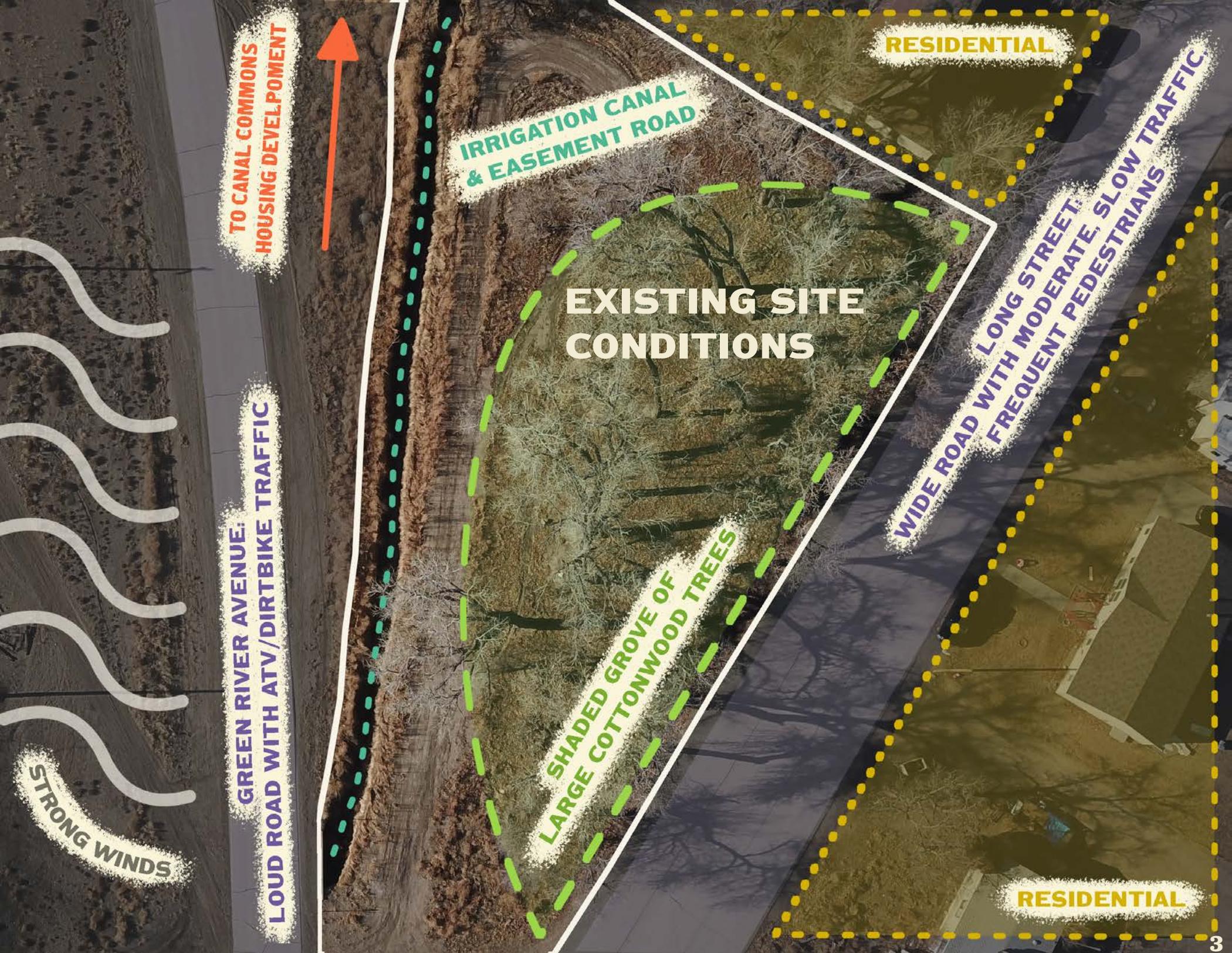
THE PROJECT SITE

In late 2019, a 4-acre parcel of land was donated to Epicenter by the City of Green River, specifically for the construction of Epicenter's Canal Commons housing development. A triangular portion of the land, separated from the rest of the property by the town's irrigation canal and home to a large grove of cottonwood trees, was designated by our team to become the site for a new neighborhood park.



TOP: Aerial view of full Canal Commons site from the NW.

BOTTOM: Aerial view of Pearl Baker Park site.



STRONG WINDS

GREEN RIVER AVENUE:
LOUD ROAD WITH ATV/DIRTBIKE TRAFFIC

TO CANAL COMMONS
HOUSING DEVELOPMENT



IRRIGATION CANAL
& EASEMENT ROAD

EXISTING SITE
CONDITIONS

SHADED GROVE OF
LARGE COTTONWOOD TREES

RESIDENTIAL

WIDE ROAD WITH MODERATE, SLOW TRAFFIC
LONG STREET:
FREQUENT PEDESTRIANS

RESIDENTIAL

SITE PREPARATION

In the fall of 2020, our team began preparing the site to become a public park. Several of the mature cottonwood trees on site needed trimming of unhealthy growth and a few needed to come down in order to make sure the future park would be safe for our community.

When the tree work was complete, branches and large logs covered the site. Our team hosted several work days with community volunteers to remove the majority of the debris, with some large logs kept on site to be used in the creation of a playscape sculpture.

By the time winter had set in, the site was walkable again and we were ready to hone in on the design process.



TOP: Park site in November 2020 after initial tree work.

BOTTOM: Volunteers work day in early December 2020.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Epicenter believes that rather than designing “for” Green River, we should be working alongside residents to co-create a better future for our town. Additionally, creating a new public park is no small task, and from the very beginning stages of this project we knew we would need plenty of help from local volunteers.

We began recruiting a volunteer team in the fall of 2020, slowly building public trust and commitment to the project through conversations, site visits, clean-up days and design charettes.

Epicenter’s AmeriCorps members also worked with students in local classrooms and afterschool programming thanks to Epicenter’s partnership with Green River High School and Green River PACT. Alongside our team, local youth learned about the project scope, volunteerism, design, and documentation. Partnership with Green River High School also resulted in the recruitment of a student intern to work on the park project through the school’s work-study program.



TOP: Epicenter AmeriCorps member working in a classroom with Green River High School students.

BOTTOM: Volunteer work day in April 2021.

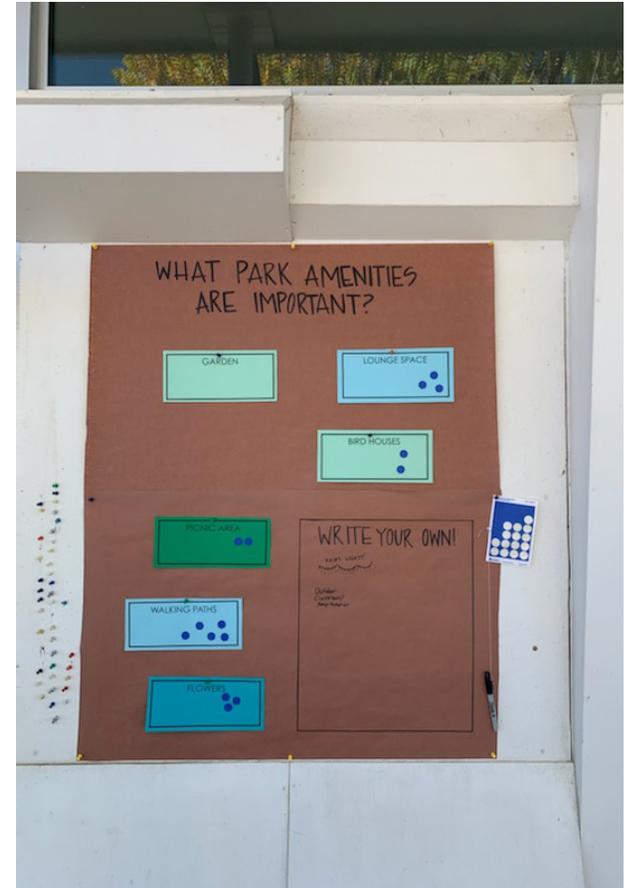
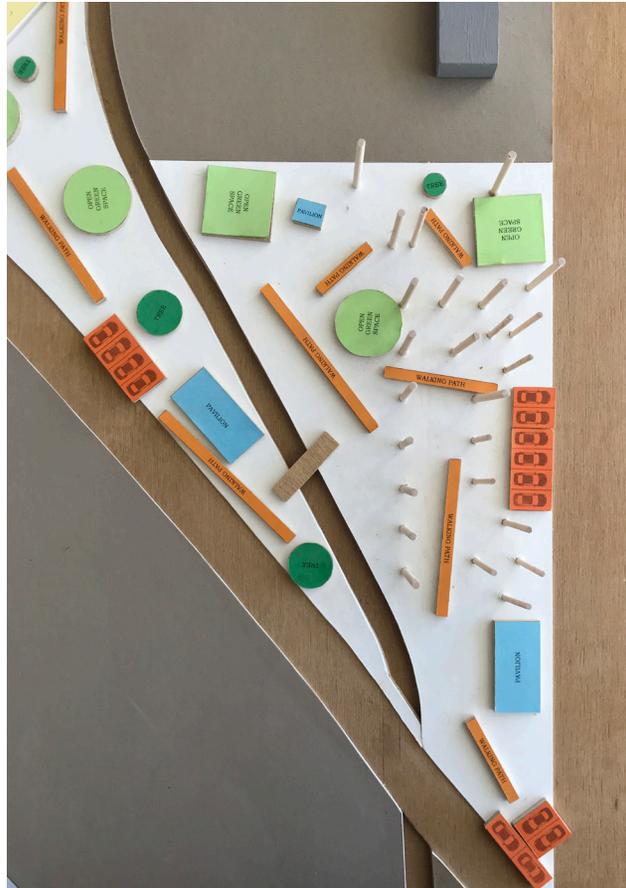
NEXT PAGE: Local youth from nearby after school program playing on site and talking about the design of the future park with Epicenter AmeriCorps member.



DESIGNING A PARK

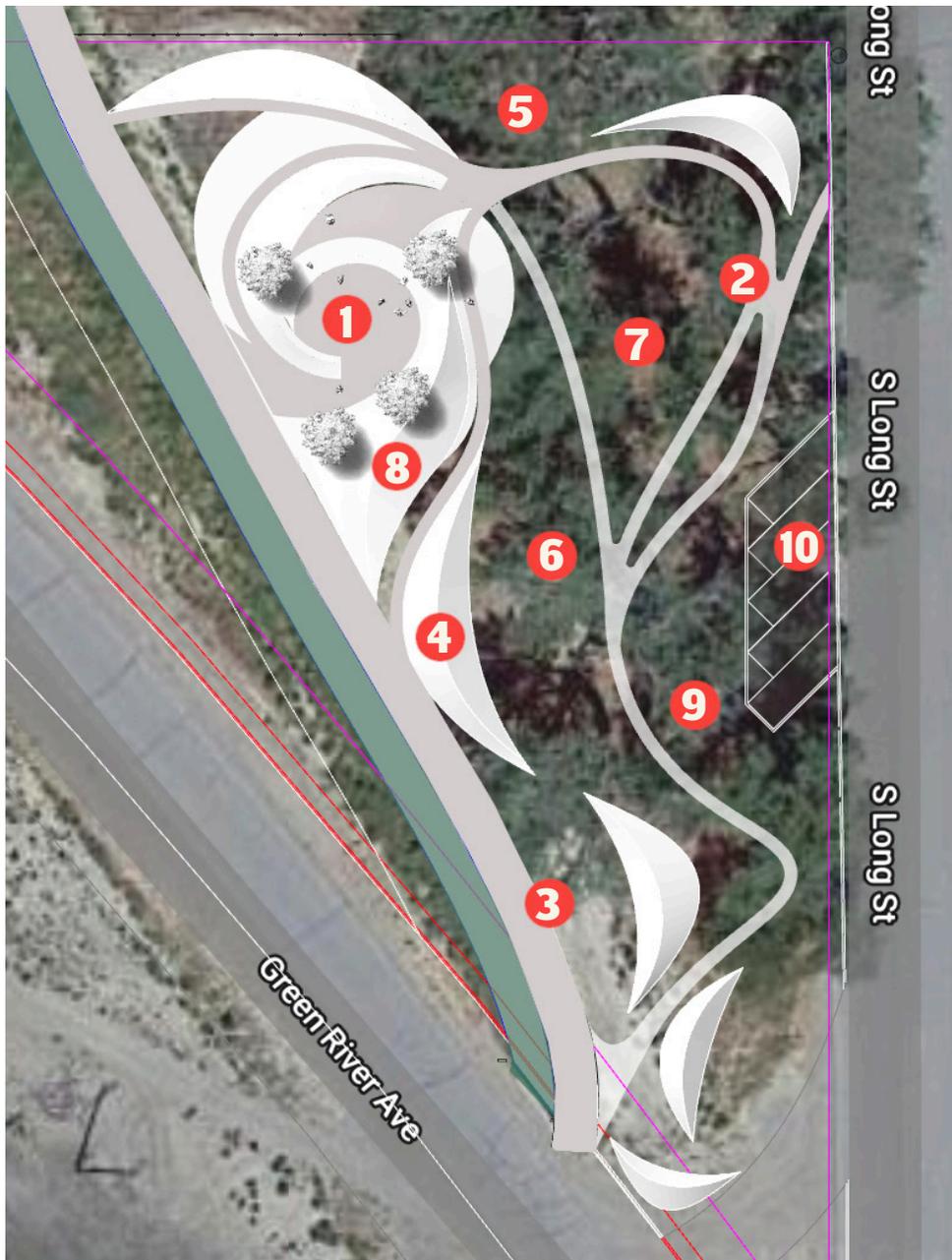
Pearl Baker Park was designed alongside Green River residents, with key design decisions directly based on research, conversations, surveys, and design workshops. Ultimately, it was decided that Pearl Baker Park should offer residents something that other outdoor spaces in town do not currently provide: quiet, meditative spaces that offer a neighborhood feel rather than catering to tourists and travelers.

Epicenter partnered remotely with landscape architect Sophie Maguire through our artist-in-residence program, the Frontier Fellowship, to turn our team's ideas into a site plan. The plan was then presented to our park volunteers and staff for review and suggestions, and finalized based on that feedback.



ABOVE: Design workshops and activities used to gather community input for the design of Pearl Baker Park.

FINAL DESIGN



1. Amphitheater seating and outdoor classroom.

2. Pathway inspired by a section of the Green River itself, which will meander through the shaded cottonwood grove.

3. Accessible pathway along the town's historic irrigation canal.

4. Berms and swales to control water, buffer winds, and to encourage play/exploration.

5-6. Native and pollinator-friendly plant species throughout the site, with artist-designed informative signage.

7. Interactive natural material sculptures and integrated seating designed and installed by artists.

8. New trees to eventually replace aging cottonwoods.

9. Space for additional seating and shade structures to supplement the natural canopy of the cottonwoods.

10. Parking, including one accessible spot.

GROUND BREAKING

Construction on Pearl Baker Park officially began in late spring of 2020. To celebrate the long awaited groundbreaking, Epicenter gathered our volunteer team and community members for a celebration in the park with a catered meal. The event was also attended by the family and descendants of the park's namesake, Pearl Baker.

Growing up on a cattle ranch (which she ran herself in the 1930's) in the heart of Robbers Roost country, Pearl's writing helped make Butch Cassidy and the Wild Bunch icons of western lore. Her unique writing style and personal knowledge of the region made her work indispensable in the literature of the American West. At the park groundbreaking event, Pearl's family members shared stories of her vivacious personality and the exceptionally full life that she lived. They shared with us some of her original artwork and a horsehair hat band that she crafted herself- a skill that she passed on to other residents who continue the practice today. These personal stories made the event memorable and meaningful, and also reminded our team of the importance of our work.



ABOVE: First day of construction at Pearl Baker Park; Groundbreaking celebration with volunteers, community members and relatives of Pearl Baker.



BUILDING PEARL BAKER PARK: PHASE 1



Construction of the park began with scraping the outline of the paths and marking out the locations of several berms (topography features). The paths were built up with two layers of gravel, wet down and compacted in between layers. The resulting pathways are accessible while still maintaining a natural feel, and will be lined with river rocks.

We built up berms using organic material from the site combined with topsoil. Over time, the organic material and soil will settle and become rich planting zones that break up the flatness of the site. Swales and culverts have also been constructed on site to efficiently manage water runoff.

Phase 1 is also introducing seating areas on site: heavy-duty picnic tables and an artist-designed seating sculpture(s) will help park visitors to make themselves comfortable. Additionally, solar lighting fixtures and shade sails will help make the site more welcoming.

PREVIOUS PAGE: Epicenter team members, consultants and volunteers construct a berm on site.

TOP LEFT & BOTTOM RIGHT: Volunteers construct pathways at Pearl Baker Park by wetting and compacting layers of gravel.



PROJECT TIMELINE



= CURRENT PROJECT STATUS

PHASE 2

FALL 2020

- Site preparation begins: Unhealthy tree growth removed, volunteer cleanups take place to remove branches and logs.
- AmeriCorps volunteers begin working in schools and recruiting community members for the project volunteer team.
- Epicenter hosts public design workshops to gather community input for park design.

FALL 2021

- Soil on site is conditioned and turned to prepare it for planting
- Epicenter team works with landscaping consultant on planting & irrigation plans

SPRING 2021

- Site preparations finalized, Epicenter team hosts volunteer cleanup days
- Epicenter team transitions to working with landscaping consultant to create construction plan and source materials

END PHASE 1

SPRING & SUMMER 2022

- Outdoor Classroom is constructed
- Educational and informational signage is installed throughout the park
- Native shrubs, flowers, and trees are planted in the park by Epicenter team and volunteers, irrigation is installed
- Epicenter hosts ribbon cutting event for Pearl Baker Park

WINTER 2020-21

- Epicenter team collaborates with a landscape designer through our artist-in-residence program to create the final design and site plan for Pearl Baker Park based on community input.

SUMMER 2021

- Epicenter hosts groundbreaking celebration with Pearl Baker's descendants, community members and volunteers
- Park construction completed on topography and pathways
- Seating installed at the park, including picnic tables and seating sculptures
- Solar lighting fixtures and shade sails installed in the park

WINTER 2021-22

- Signage for the park is designed and fabricated
- Planting and irrigation plans are finalized, planting materials are sourced
- Team begins creating a construction plan for the outdoor classroom

PHASE 1

NEXT STEPS: PHASE 2

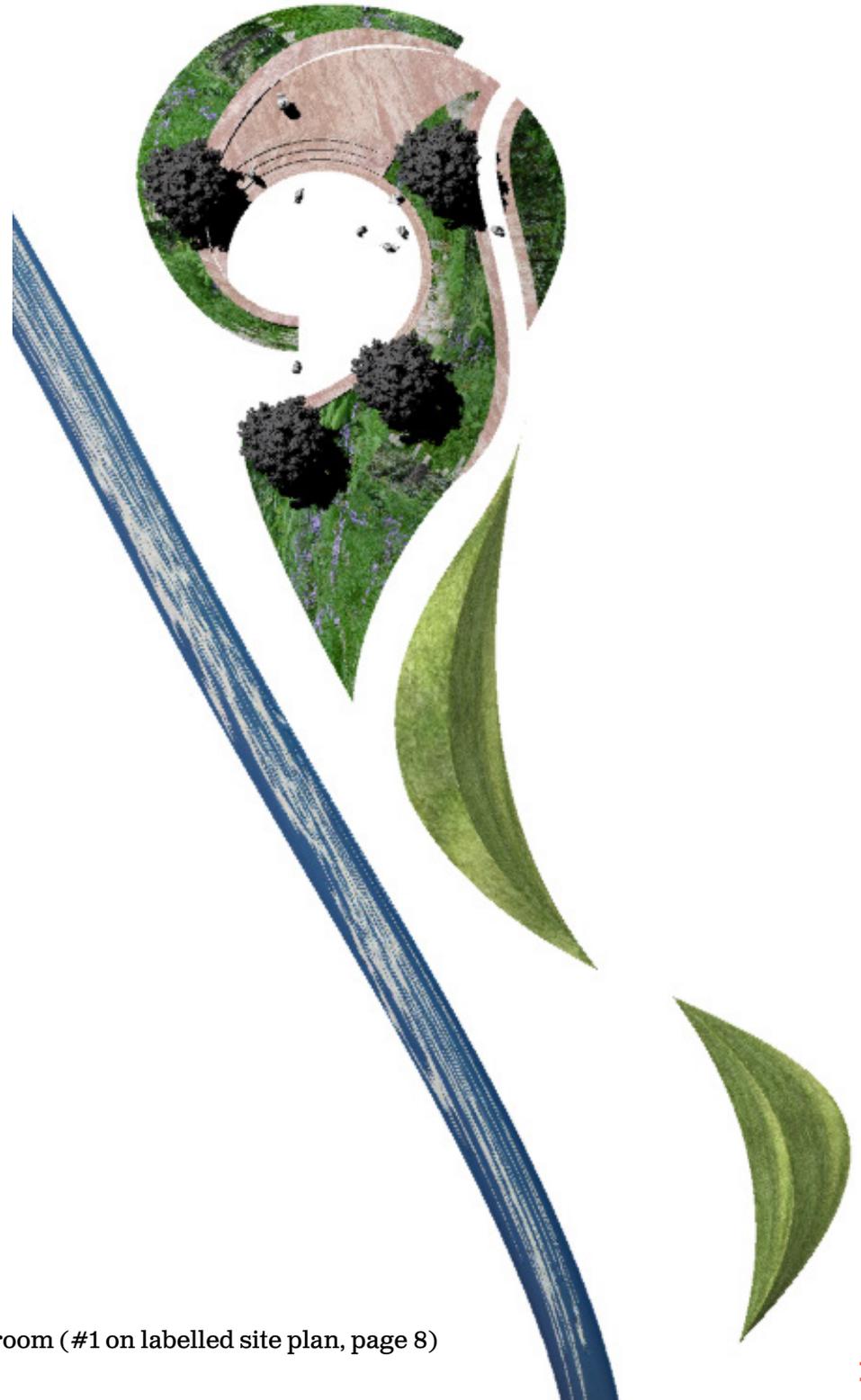
OUTDOOR CLASSROOM: Pearl Baker Park's outdoor classroom has been designed with flexibility and ease of use in mind. Its circular design lends itself to group gatherings, and will allow students and instructors to shift position with the angle of the bright desert sun. The gathering area will be made of rammed earth and use gradual shifts in topography to create a comfortable space.

SIGNAGE: Alongside the physical classroom space, educational signage will be installed throughout the park and give students and community members and opportunity to learn about native plant species, local history, geology, and other topics.

PLANTING: Epicenter team members and volunteers will work with local experts to plant native and pollinator-friendly species in the park to create a welcoming natural environment. We will also focus on planting saplings to eventually replace the mature cottonwood trees currently providing shade on the site.

IRRIGATION: Although we are focused on water-wise landscaping in our high desert environment, some irrigation will be required until plantings are established. Water will be pumped from the town's irrigation canal that runs directly through the park site. The irrigation setup will be complimented by swales, a retention zone and other water management techniques that have been incorporated into the park design.

RIGHT: Aerial rendering of the design for Pearl Baker Park's outdoor classroom (#1 on labelled site plan, page 8)



PHASE 3 & BEYOND

Once Pearl Baker Park is complete, construction should be wrapping up on the Canal Commons housing development itself. The third phase of this project will focus on extending the materiality and design elements used in Pearl Baker Park to create a shared neighborhood greenspace central to the new Canal Commons housing. Ideally, a footbridge will also be constructed over the irrigation canal that separates Pearl Baker Park from the future housing, creating a connection point between our “pocket neighborhood” and the larger community.

Additionally, Phase 3 will potentially incorporate updates for more permanent lighting fixtures, adding a restroom, improving accessibility, and more.



ABOVE: Aerial rendering of the Canal Commons housing development and central greenspace.



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frontierfellowship.org