

CHAPTER 4: PARKS, OPEN SPACE & TRAILS

The Parks, Open Space and Trails chapter of the Eastlake Subarea proposes a number of improvements and includes amenities from the Eastlake Master Plan that have not been constructed. The parks and trails planned for the Eastlake Subarea will create recreational amenities, transportation options and a small town ambiance in the area, thus, realizing the overall goals of the Eastlake Subarea Plan. The parks, open space and trails recommendations of the Subarea Plan call for creation of adequate and useful trail connections and an increased variety of recreational amenities.

The **parks, open space and trail goals** of the Eastlake Subarea Plan are:

- 4-A:** To create an integrated park and trail system;
- 4-B:** To provide a high-quality park, trail and open space system in the Eastlake area and upgrade existing facilities where necessary;
- 4-C:** To ensure the trail system provides adequate connections to the future light rail stop;

Master Plan Accomplishments

At the time the Eastlake Master Plan was adopted by Thornton City Council in 1990, there were no public parks or recreational facilities located within Eastlake. The nearest park areas were Lake Village Park and Eastlake Park, both about a quarter mile away. The Eastlake Master Plan called for a series of park and trail improvements to provide recreational amenities to the residents of Eastlake and the surrounding area. Many of the improvements recommended in the Eastlake Master Plan have been implemented, including:



Posted at the pocket park on Third Street and Birch Avenue, this sign welcomes visitors to the Eastlake Historic Park.

- Park developed north of Birch Avenue at First Street, adjacent to the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way
- Historic Park with interpretive signage built in the area bounded by Birch Street, 3rd Street and York Street.
- Construction of trail along Union Pacific Railroad to connect to existing trail to north, from 128th Avenue south to Birch Avenue.

These parks and trail improvements have provided limited recreational opportunities to the residents and visitors of the Eastlake Subarea. However, additional improvements are warranted to meet existing and increased demand for recreational amenities in the area.

Existing Conditions

In the early days of Eastlake, many families took advantage of the nearby Eastlake Reservoirs for recreation. The Eastlake Reservoirs continue to provide passive recreational opportunities to residents of the Eastlake Subarea, and recent trail improvements allow pedestrian and bicycle access to the reservoirs from within the Subarea. Limited active recreational opportunities, such as the tot lot in the historic park on Third Street, currently exist within the Eastlake Subarea, which includes no playing fields. Some trails, such as those linking to the Eastlake Reservoirs, currently serve the Eastlake Subarea.

Policies and Recommendations

In order to offer an upgraded level of service to residents, employees and visitors to the Eastlake Subarea, additional parks, open space and trails improvements are needed. The proposed parks and trail improvements are intended to contribute to the vitality and community identity of the Eastlake Neighborhood. In addition, the recommendations for parks and trails included in this chapter seek to support planned transit improvements in the area.



Proposed Eastlake Linear Park.

Parks and Open Space

The parks and open space recommendations of the Eastlake Subarea Plan are intended to upgrade the level of service available to those who live, work and play within the Subarea.

The **recommendations for parks improvements** within the Eastlake Subarea are:

- 4-1:** Create an active park at the old shops site south of 124th Avenue, east of the railway line, with amenities such as a playground and play fields;
- 4-2:** Complete the passive open space and trail amenities at Eastlake Reservoir III;
- 4-3:** Construct a linear park along the Union Pacific Railroad;

The property upon which parks are proposed in the Eastlake Subarea is currently owned by the City. City ownership of the proposed park areas helps to remove one hurdle to implementing the parks recommendations of this plan. See *Exhibit 4.1: Existing and Proposed Parks, Open Space and Trails* for a visual depiction of proposed parks and open space improvements.)

Trails

A trail network is planned within the Eastlake Subarea to connect the Eastlake Neighborhood to retail, service and employment and to the proposed transit station. The planned trail network will serve as pedestrian and bike transportation corridor, encouraging integration among neighboring communities. The trail recommendations will allow the use of pedestrian and bicycle ways for recreation and for travel to work, shopping and home.

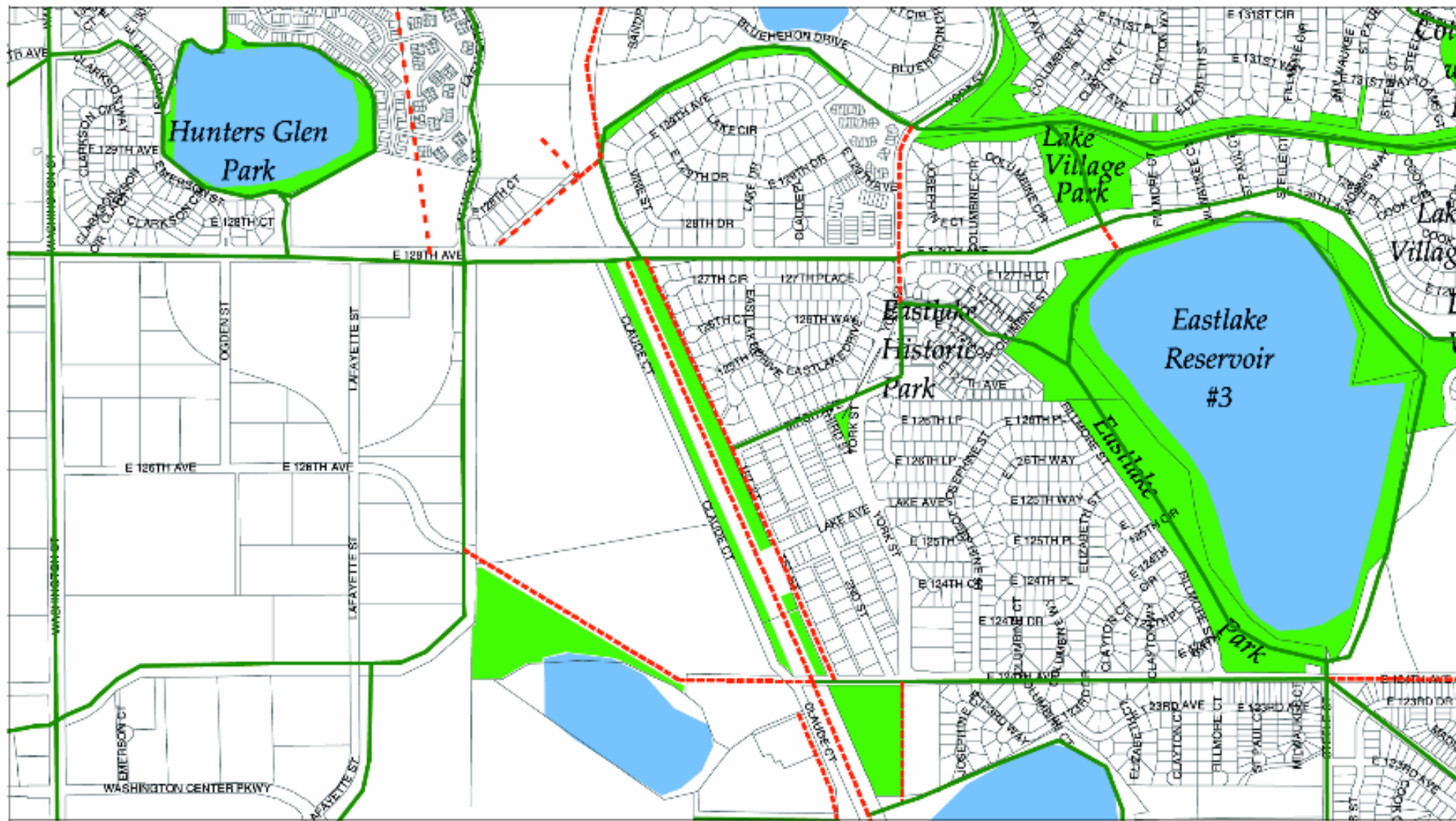
The **trail linkages recommended** for the Eastlake Subarea are:

- 4-4:** Install a trail west of the Union Pacific Railroad, extending from 128th Avenue south across 124th Avenue to the Glen Eagle Apartments. This trail will be located on City-owned property in the railroad right-of-way and will link Eastlake to the Signal Ditch and Brantner Gulch Trails;
- 4-5:** Build a trail or sidewalk on the south side of the 126th/124th Avenue extension, linking Eastlake with the Signal Ditch and Farmers Highline Canal Trails;
- 4-7:** Construct a trail from York Street and 124th Avenue extending south to Eastlake Reservoir II;
- 4-8:** Establish an at-grade or grade-separated crossing of the Union Pacific Railway line at the proposed Eastlake Transit Station. The construction of this improvement is expected to be built as part of the proposed rail-based transit project;

(For a graphic depiction of proposed trail improvements in the Eastlake Subarea Plan, see *Exhibit 4.1: Existing and Proposed Parks, Open Space and Trails*.) Through the trail improvements proposed above, many connections will be created between existing recreational areas, trails and business areas. Linkages will be created and maintained between the Eastlake Neighborhood and the three Eastlake Reservoirs, the proposed Brantner Gulch/Eastlake Reservoir II trail (1/4 mile to the south), the existing Signal Creek trail (1/4 mile to the north), the Lee Lateral Trail located north of 128th Avenue, proposed trails in Northglenn, the Thorncreek Crossing Shopping Center and other business and commercial uses in the Subarea. Along with serving recreational needs, the proposed trail improvements will contribute to quality of life for Eastlake residents, will help to serve the planned transit stop and will attract additional business interest to Eastlake.

Potential Amendments

The City of Thornton is in the process of updating the Thornton Parks and Open Space Master Plan. The Master Plan may change parks, open space and trails plans in the Eastlake Subarea. When the updated Parks and Open Space Master Plan is adopted by the Thornton City Council, it will replace and supercede plans of the Eastlake Subarea Plan.



March 4, 2003

1 inch equals 882 feet

Trails

- Existing
- Proposed
- Lake
- Park



City of Thornton

Existing and Proposed Parks, Open Space and Trails

Exhibit 4.1

Eastlake Subarea Plan 2003