

“Building Environments for People”

Willow Island Master Plan

Alliant Energy Center, Madison, WI

9 February 2009

Richard R. Fayram - Landscape Architect

6614 Piping Rock Rd.,

Madison, WI

53711

608.438.2614

rfayram@charter.net



Willow Island - Gateway to Madison

Alliant Energy Center and Willow Island serves as a gateway to the City of Madison and the Capitol. Its rich diversity of programming from events like the World Dairy Expo and the Dane County Fair and many others serve to bring agriculture and its heritage in Wisconsin to Madison. No open space venue in our community better reflects this heritage and history.

Surrounded by lagoons, Willow Island also reflects Madison's natural heritage of lakes surrounding the community. Its location on John Nolen Drive, a primary community and downtown entrance, gives it a unique presence and visibility in the community.

Willow Island is 7.70 acres in size. The island is part of a 29 acre natural space along John Nolen Drive and part of Alliant Energy Centers 164 acre campus. The island has an event capacity of about 20,000 people per event on the island itself. It has an immediate natural area around the island of about 29 acres. As a service core that links existing parking at Alliant Energy Center with space available in surrounding parks it is capable of supporting much larger events than this. These parks include Quann Park, Olin - Turville Park, Goodman Park and Franklin Park. ESPN's Great Outdoor Games was an example of this type of large scale event. Regional festival music events similar to Summerfest in Milwaukee are a likely outcome when the proper infrastructure is in place.

Alliant Energy Center has 5,800 paved parking spaces available on site to support events. Adding additional parking available in Quann Park, expands capacity to 9,000 to 10,000 parking spaces.

Its proximity to the Beltline and John Nolan Drive make it convenient to access. Parking available on site linked to access to surrounding parks make this a truly unique venue in the community.



Willow Island - Existing Conditions

In the last decade efforts have been made to utilize Willow Island as an outdoor event-gathering venue. Typical events include The World's Largest Brat Fest, Komen Race for the Cure, Dog Fest, Great Lakes Car Show, JJO Band Camp Concert, Madison Roots Festival, SoCo Music Experience, Kids Fishing Day and Viva Mexico Festival.

The Island has been available for events in an "as is" condition. The scale and frequency of events are now beyond what turf alone is capable of supporting on an ongoing basis.

The island's former use as a landfill poses specific problems. The cap is composed of construction fill with no topsoil. The lack of irrigation makes it difficult to recover damaged areas. As its' scheduling and use have increased, the turf has receded in recent years. It's former use as a land fill and intensive food service at events dictate that impermeable surfaces be used for paving. Crushed stone or other granular materials increase water absorption by the landfill and are difficult to maintain in a sanitary condition under current and anticipated use patterns.

In 2008 a "Willow Island Users Group" was formed. The purpose of this group was to create a Willow Island Master Plan. A major goal of this group is to outline, prioritize and implement infrastructure improvements that will attract additional event promoters to utilize this outstanding venue.

The user group is comprised of : Alliant Energy Center, Brat Fest Inc., Madison Festivals Inc., Midwest Family Broadcasting, Frank Productions and Richard Fayram, Landscape Architect.



Willow Island Master Plan

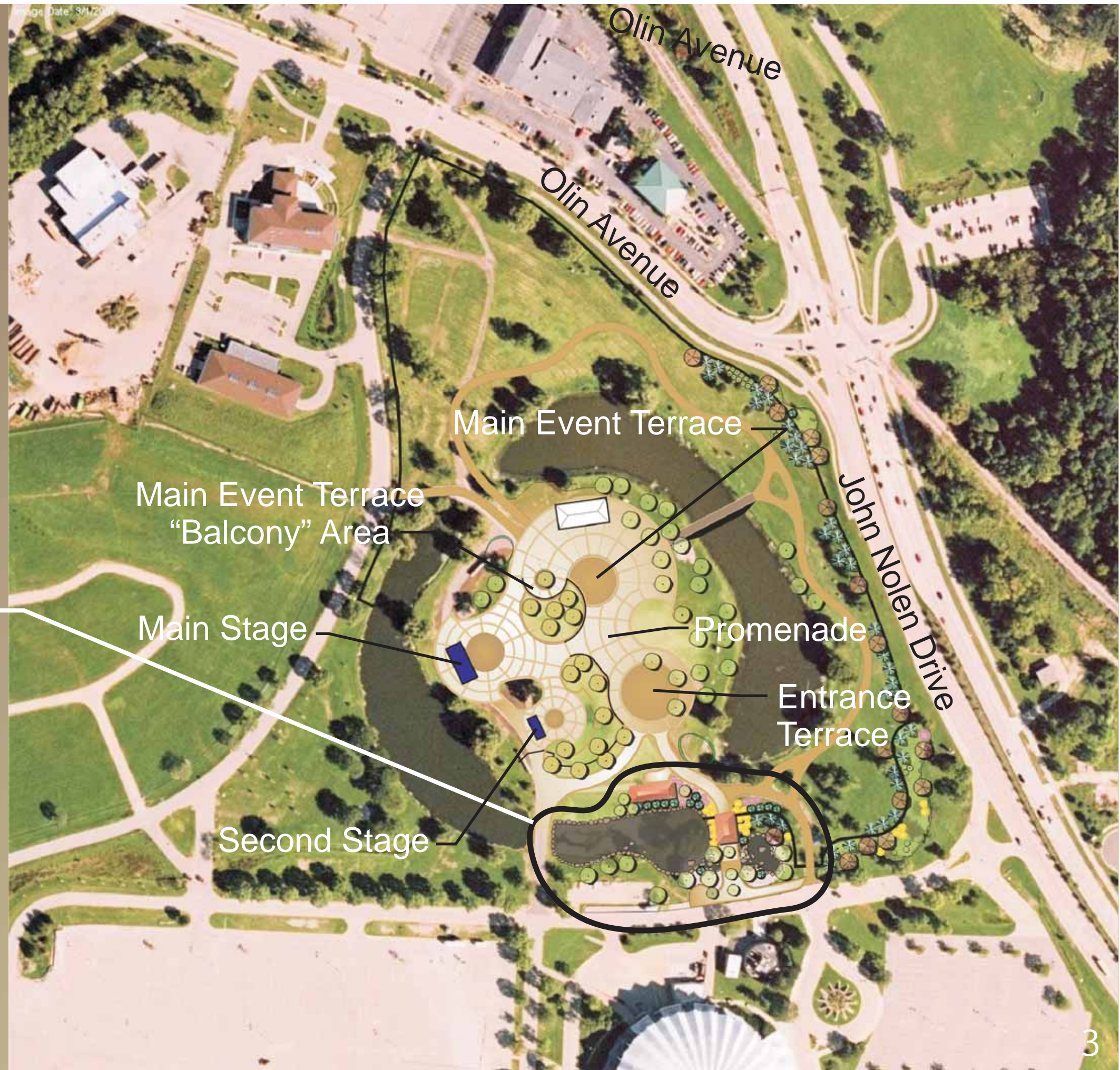
The plan focuses on improvements needed over the short term to reach a level of development capable of supporting events on a long term basis.

First priority improvements are to the island itself necessary for event support. Mass grading, water, electricity, pavement, fencing, topsoil, sod and landscaping have been identified as current needs.

Second priority improvements are perimeter fencing, the lagoon bridge, path and landscaping along the John Nolen Drive street frontage. These greatly expand event capacity and improve access to passive recreational space beyond the island itself.

Entrance Concept

Use of the island has grown very rapidly in recent years. It can be anticipated that development of the island will lead to a new level of events where a more formal entrance is required. A key issue to accomplishing this is the feasibility of relocating storage facilities for the Veteran's Memorial Coliseum in future facility development plans. Should that be possible, a more formal public entrance and associated restroom facilities are possible. Lagoon expansion and a water feature would extend the island theme to the main entrance itself.



Primary Improvements

The curvilinear design theme for Willow Island is derived from an old fashioned 3 ring circus. This theme has been a unique part of the history of Alliant Energy Center. Overall it is designed to support the free flow of people from activity to activity and still preserve turf areas for more passive activities.

The Entrance Terrace brings people into the island event space. This space and the promenade is intended to serve smaller events or combined with the Major Event Terrace for larger events. This space is linked through a broad promenade to the Main Event Terrace. This area is designed to be a large community event space capable of supporting a diversity of activities. Service access and parking to the north allow for convenient restocking during events without disrupting other activities.

The entertainment stage core consists of a large stage area linked to a smaller stage area. These are tightly linked together to facilitate the flow of the crowd between them as performance events occur. This layout allows events to be set up that vary greatly in size and scope. They are each oriented on axis that parallel each other as the best orientation for sound control in the broader community.

All of these spaces are linked together by broad walkways to allow for a free flow of traffic but limit use of grass areas for this purpose.

“Madison’s & Dane County's New Front Porch”

The activities that the community conducts at Willow Island support a wide range of charitable - fund raising, community and entertainment events. The lead activity for the island has been “Brat Fest” which provides activities and entertainment for the whole family. In 2008, Brat Fest raised funds for more than 60 Madison area non-profit groups.



Willow Island Data Summary

Event Space	Square Feet	Acres
Main Event Terrace (190' radius)	50,050.78	1.15
Promenade (92' width)	10,693.80	0.25
Entrance Terrace (170' diameter circle)	22,484.18	0.52
Total Event Space	83,228.76	1.92
Performance Space		
Main Stage – Paved Surface	36,585.14	0.84
Turf Area	29,375.39	0.67
Second Stage – Paved Surface	11,708.31	0.27
Turf Area	18,222.43	0.41
Total Performance Space	95,891.27	2.19
Walks and Service		
Service and Access	15,338.71	0.35
Entrance Walks	19,993.34	0.46
Island Total Summary		
Total Paved Area	166,854.29	3.82
Total Remaining Open Space	168,952.65	3.88
Gross Island Area	335,806.94	7.70

