When the Johnson County Library Board was seeking to expand their heavily-used Blue Valley branch, the Overland Park Parks and Recreation Department also desired to implement a park at that site which could serve multiple users including the nearby elementary school, residential neighborhoods, library visitors and the larger community. Therefore, we were engaged to create a park masterplan to accommodate all users. The overall intent of the planning process was to create a “special park” including a variety of design elements tied to the library use while providing additional amenities to serve the larger community.

Connections to nearby trails, efficient parking and access, and visual connections were critical to the design. During the design process a need for an entry plaza, rentable park shelter, restroom building, performance amphitheater, pedestrian trails, shade structures, and several active play elements were identified. An opportunity to incorporate sculpture and collaborate with Friends of Overland Park Arts was also identified.

Important design concepts for the park focused on aspects of discovery, imagination and whimsy. This led to the creation of themed zones that mirrored fictional places a person might explore in a good book: peaceful prairie, adventure grove, and rocky shore. Active play
elements which accentuated the themed zones were located around a short pedestrian circulation loop, providing a condensed space for families to safely explore.

Additional Photography