

# Outdoor Activity Center Visioning Plan 2011



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# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	Page 5
Executive Summary	Page 7
Design Process Summary	Page 8
Sample Community Survey	Page 10
Preliminary Design Concepts	Page 12
Vision Plan	Page 17
Project List	Page 21
Appendix	Page 25



# Acknowledgements

The Visioning program relies heavily on a dedicated Steering Committee to both inform design decisions and to guide and implement the public outreach plan. The Outdoor Activity Center is a beloved jewel in Atlanta's sprawling park system and is so successful because of the hard work and persistence of those few who serve consistently and tirelessly. Park Pride would like to recognize those who have done just that through this long and ambitious process:

**Na'Taki Osborne Jelks** serves on the board for the West Atlanta Watershed Alliance and has been a vital component of this visioning effort. Her tireless service is unrivaled in the community and she has worked miracles at the O.A.C. with the support from her community.

**Darryl Haddock** is on staff with the West Atlanta Watershed Alliance and played a key role as a liaison between Park Pride, WAWA, and the greater community. He organized the meeting space and sent the reminder e-mails at appropriate times. He helped field questions and concerns from the community and played the main role of educating participants about WAWA's needs from the Outdoor Activity's physical space and from the greater Atlanta community.

Those who committed to serving on the Steering Committee were an imperative part of the design and community outreach process that Park Pride relies so heavily upon. Our dedicated group who steered the Visioning process for the Outdoor Activity Center include:

**April Anderson**

**Duane M. Jackson**

**Kari Jackson**

**Marcus Penny**

**Arianna Sikes**

**Marshall B. Thomas**

**Louversia Wiggins**



# Executive Summary

Visioning for the Outdoor Activity Center began with the receipt of an application from West Atlanta Watershed Alliance (WAWA) in May of 2010. This project was selected for Visioning out of several that were received that same year because of the expressed need for a physical improvement plan that will support enlivened programming envisioned for the property. This programming will be administered by WAWA, which had recently agreed to assume the management and programming for the city-owned greenspace. The Outdoor Activity Center (OAC) is located at 1442 Richland Road, SW in the Westview neighborhood of Atlanta.

The Steering Committee is comprised of several committed community leaders from the surrounding neighborhood and from the WAWA board and volunteer pool. After some initial false-starts, the Committee met on the second Thursdays of each month between March and September of 2011 to discuss how to engage the wider community and to make decisions based on community input at public meetings. The committee scheduled four public meetings to be held at the Outdoor Activity Center:

- Visioning Meeting, May 14, 2011, 10:00 AM
- Design Workshop, June 11, 2011, 10:00 AM
- Preliminary Design Review, July 16, 2011, 10:00 AM
- Final Design Review and Prioritization Meeting, August 13, 2011, 10:00 AM

During the Visioning process, it was noted that the community preferred to refer to the property as a nature preserve, not a park.

The attached plan is meant to serve as a documentation of the community's agreed projects and priorities for the Outdoor Activity Center. The graphic plan illustrates concepts and is not considered to be a set of construction documents. It will take cooperation from the City, the neighbors, and the greater Atlanta community to construct all the changes in and between the parks. The West Atlanta Watershed Alliance, with the help of its volunteers, will serve an ongoing role in spearheading the changes to the property, finding funding sources, and overseeing project development. It should be noted that because of lackluster attendance at the Steering Committee meetings, the final plan was not as well vetted as Park Pride's typical Visioning plans. Having said that, Park Pride believes that the projects included in the plan do accurately reflect the community's wants and will be positively accepted by the immediate neighbors and the greater Atlanta community.

Park Pride will continue to serve as a liaison between the community and potential funding sources, including the City of Atlanta. It is expected that the entire build-out of the improvements proposed for the Outdoor Activity Center will take years, if not decades to complete. The first step, determining the best ways to improve the nature preserve is completed and another chapter in its redevelopment can begin.

# Design Process Summary

## Public Meeting Schedule

The input of the public at every point of the design process is the core of Park Pride's community design process. Keeping with that, the formation of a Steering Committee made up of community members was the first step of the process. They met monthly to develop and report on community outreach strategies as well as to review input given at public meetings.

The schedule of Public and Steering Committee meetings was as follows:

Thursday, November 4, 2010, 6:30 PM – Steering Committee Kick-Off Meeting  
Thursday, December 9, 2010, 6:30 PM – Second Steering Committee Meeting  
Thursday, January 13, 2011, 6:30 PM – Third Steering Committee Meeting  
Thursday, February 10, 2011, 6:30 PM – Fourth Steering Committee Meeting  
Thursday, March 10, 2011, 6:30 PM – Fifth Steering Committee Meeting  
Thursday, April 14, 2011, 6:30 PM – Sixth Steering Committee Meeting  
Thursday, May 12, 2011, 6:30 PM – Seventh Steering Committee Meeting  
Saturday, May 14, 2011, 10:00 AM – First Public Meeting: Introduction to Visioning Process  
Thursday, June 9, 2011, 6:30 PM – Eighth Steering Committee Meeting  
Saturday, June 11, 2011, 10:00 – Second Public Meeting: Design Workshop  
Thursday, July 14, 2011 – Ninth Steering Committee Meeting  
Saturday, July 16, 2011, 10:00 AM – Third Public Meeting: Preliminary Design Review  
Thursday, August 11, 2011, 6:30 PM – Tenth Steering Committee Meeting. Nobody attended  
Saturday, August 13, 2011, 10:00 AM – Fourth Public Meeting: Final Review

## Overarching Project Guidelines

At the first public meeting, community members in attendance compiled a list of goals and desires they had for their park. These were added to the list compiled from community surveys (see the survey on pages 10 and 11). Once vetted with the Steering Committee, a clear list of overarching goals was drafted to serve as the guide for decision making throughout the Visioning process.

- Restore and preserve natural habitats wherever possible
- Restore and improve natural drainage patterns from streets into and through the OAC site
- Provide better visibility and accessibility to the OAC from the surrounding neighborhoods
- Develop partnerships with like-minded organizations for technical support and co-training
- Inclusive programming for a variety of demographics
- Capitalize on numerous public education opportunities

## Project Wish List

The wish list was compiled from the surveys conducted in the neighborhood and from community members in attendance at the first public meeting. This list served as the starting point for Visioning within and around the park. As the design process proceeded and reviews from the community took place, some of the projects were dropped from the list. The initial list includes:

- Shuttle van to provide better school access for students to and from activities
- Arts program that supports souvenir sales
- Wetlands garden with catchment dam to hold back some run off
- Stream restoration
- Redirect stormwater into creek
- Drill for water to create circulatory creek bed
- Canopy walk/deck with ramp access to the decks (utilizing existing terrain to get into the canopy)
- Secondary parking/signage/info kiosk/access from Westmont Rd (take advantage of visibility)
- Ropes course and zip line that tie into the canopy walk
- Path(s) that connect the nature preserve to the BeltLine
- More structurally sound trail repairs and design
- Add more trails through out forest
- Mountain bike trails
- Handicap trail
- Reinterpretation of the historic ball park with native grasses and shredded tire ball field outline, include parking area and pavilion for events/gatherings
- Utilize former ball park area as play field
- Historical marker for field (Black Crackers and Creek Indians)
- More markers to identify species, native and invasive plants (reusable maps of marker locations could be available)
- Controlled burns to eliminate overgrowth in forest floor
- Rest areas/benches
- Composting toilets
- Acquire vacant properties along perimeter of property for use as nonprofit offices/classrooms/art studios (if structures are salvageable) or tear them down and use as secondary access/parking for preserve
- Lighting throughout preserve (solar?)
- Kudzu/invasive control
- Community gardening in other locations, expand current community garden
- Add greenhouse to garden area
- Square foot gardening, container gardening, waist high gardening
- Urban forestry laboratory
- Labyrinth
- Directional/location signage throughout preserve
- Nature-based art in woods and at entrances
- Restore deck at Grandfather Beech
- Contemporary playground near main entrance
- Pavilion(s) in preserve
- Blind spot(s) for nature viewing
- Historic war fort on hill
- Emergency kiosks
- Bollards at entrances rather than fences/gates
- Electric gate at main entrance

**West Atlanta Watershed Alliance and Park Pride** are developing a Master Plan for the **Outdoor Activity Center (OAC)**. To develop this Master Plan, we need your input.

Please complete the survey below and mail back this card.

1.) Have you ever visited the Outdoor Activity Center?  
 Yes  No (if no, skip to question 3)

2.) What was the purpose of your visit to the Outdoor Activity Center?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

3.) How often do you visit green spaces such as parks, gardens, and outdoor recreational places?  
 Weekly  Monthly  Occasionally  Never

4.) How important are environmental issues and environmental education to you?  
 Very Important  Important  Somewhat Important  Not Important

5.) What programs would you like to see in the OAC?  
 Survival Skills  Team Building Exercises  
 Bird Watching  Exercise/Fitness  
 Mommy & Me  Orienteering/Geo-Caching  
 Hiking/Tours  Camping  
 Day Camp/After School  Stress Reduction Program  
 Community Meetings/Events  Education about Plants/Trees  
 Education about Animals  Community Gardening  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

6.) For what age group(s) would you want the above programs?

Toddler  Child  Young Adult  Adult  Senior

7.) What is the best way to contact you? Check a box below and please provide the appropriate information.

US Mail  email  phone  mailbox  flyer  other

Thank you for your participation !!

# Outdoor Activity Center Meeting Schedule

- **Public Meeting I**  
May 14: Visioning Meeting  
10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Outdoor Activity Center  
Light Refreshments Provided
- **Public Meeting II**  
June 11: Design Workshop  
10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Outdoor Activity Center  
Light Refreshments Provided
- **Public Meeting III**  
July 16: Design Review  
10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Outdoor Activity Center  
Light Refreshments Provided
- **Public Meeting IV**  
August 13: Final Prioritization  
10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Outdoor Activity Center  
Light Refreshments Provided
- **Monthly Steering Committee Meetings**  
At Outdoor Activity Center, 6p.m. on: March 10, April 14, May 12, June 9, July 14, August 11, September 8, October 13, November 10

*If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them!*  
 -- Henry David Thoreau

Mail this to Park Pride. Keep this for your calendar.



**Park Pride Updates**  
[www.parkpride.org](http://www.parkpride.org)

**Park Pride Contact**  
 Walt Ray, RLA  
 Director of Park Visioning  
[walt@parkpride.org](mailto:walt@parkpride.org)  
 (404) 432 - 9320

**Updates**  
[www.wawaonline.org](http://www.wawaonline.org)

**Visit**  
 Outdoor Activity Center  
 1442 Richland Road, Atlanta, GA, 30310  
 Hours: 10AM to 4PM  
 Mon. - Fri.

**Contact:**  
 Darryl Haddock  
[info.wawaonline@gmail.com](mailto:info.wawaonline@gmail.com)  
 (404) 752-5385

# Outdoor Activity Center and Park Pride

The **Outdoor Activity Center** is a twenty-two acre nature preserve at 1442 Richland Rd. SW, Atlanta, GA 30310. The natural characteristics and treasures on the site make it a unique and valuable space for learning about natural systems and the creatures that inhabit them. Recently the West Atlanta Watershed Alliance agreed to take on the responsibility of managing and programming this special property.

Although many improvements are desired, much work needs to happen before it becomes a 'world-class nature center'. So, the **West Atlanta Watershed Alliance** has kicked-off a 10 month process to envision improvements to this park. What should the greenspace become? How accessible to the public should it be? What does the space look like in the future?

The **Outdoor Activity Center** was selected to participate in **Park Pride's** Park Visioning Program and receive master planning assistance for the nature preserve. Walt Ray, Director of Park Visioning for Park Pride, will guide area residents through a series of Public Meetings as advertised in this flyer. These meetings are open to all interested residents. During this collaborative process, residents are invited to examine the existing conditions of the park and determine what park uses may serve the community better.

The simple questions presented in this survey can begin to generate a master plan that will be used as a guide for future construction and fundraising efforts, as well as for steering the development of

the **Outdoor Activity Center** for years. To see other park master plans and learn more about Park Pride, visit: [www.parkpride.org/get-involved/community-programs/park-visioning](http://www.parkpride.org/get-involved/community-programs/park-visioning). To learn more about West Atlanta Watershed Alliance, visit: [www.waonline.org](http://www.waonline.org).

## Stay connected

To add yourself to the e-mail list for the park, e-mail: Darryl Haddock at [darrylhaddock@bellsouth.net](mailto:darrylhaddock@bellsouth.net). Darryl is the Director of Environmental Education for the West Atlanta Watershed Alliance and he would love to hear from you.

If you don't have e-mail, write to O.A.C., 1442 Richland Rd. SW, Atlanta, GA, 30310 and ask to be notified of future meetings. Please include your name, address and phone number.

Address all other questions and comments to:  
Walt Ray, RLA  
Director of Park Visioning  
Park Pride  
233 Peachtree Street  
Suite 1600, Atlanta, GA 30303  
or email: [walt@parkpride.org](mailto:walt@parkpride.org)

Keep this for your calendar.  
Mail this to Park Pride.

place  
stamp  
here

To,  
WALT RAY



233 PEACHTREE STREET  
SUITE 1600  
ATLANTA, GA 30303

fold along this line



Additional Notes

# Preliminary Design Concepts

After the wish list was compiled and prioritized, a second Public Meeting was held. During this meeting, community members in attendance were divided into three groups, given maps of the park and surrounding land, and asked to use the wish list to draw out where they felt the desired amenities and programs should be located. The illustrated maps are included in the appendix. Park Pride designers used these drawings to generate three different design concepts for Chosewood Park.

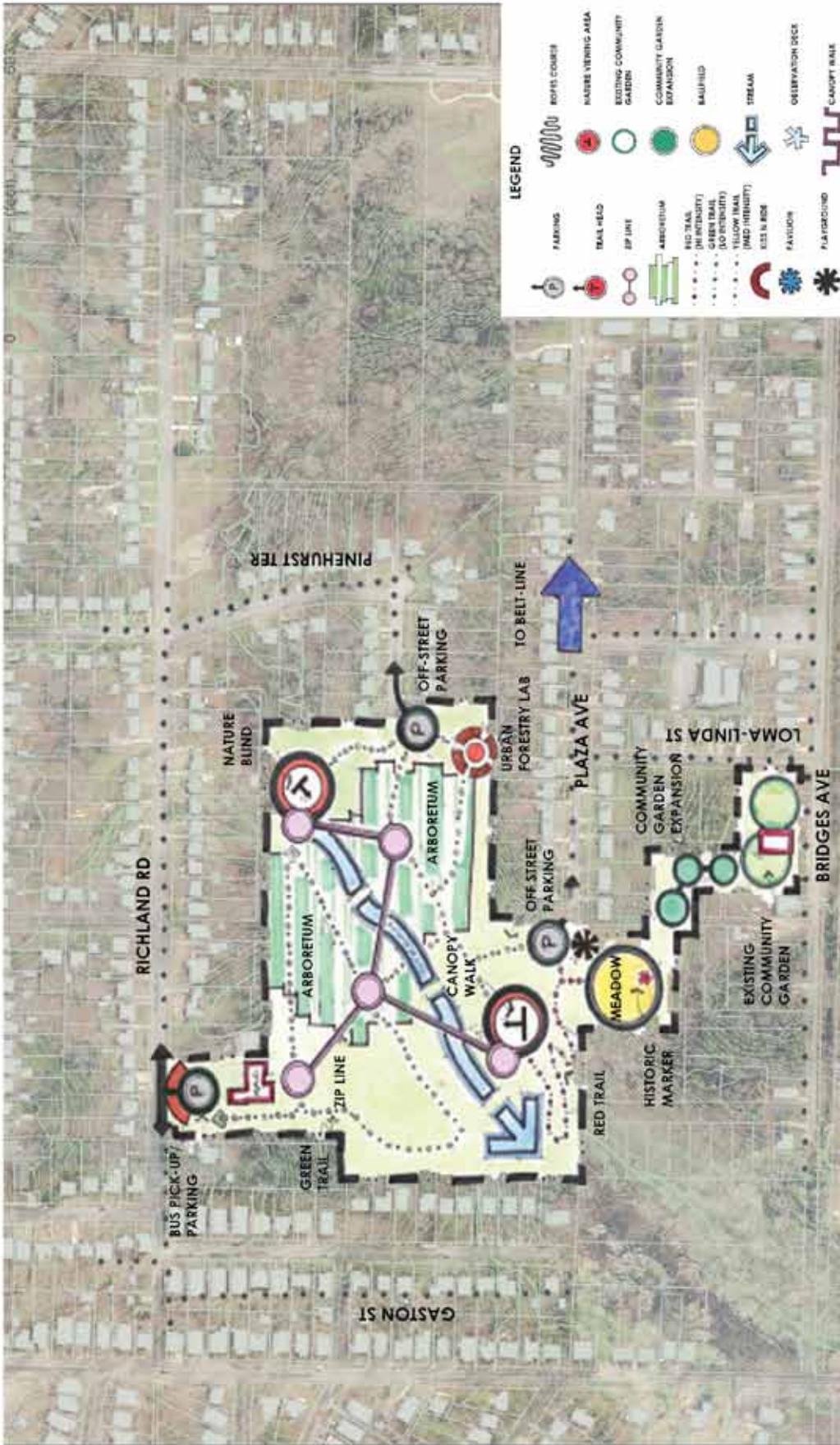
At the third Public Meeting, these concepts were presented. The community was then asked to review the concepts and to comment on which aspects of each they liked and disliked. During the course of public discussion and debate, some additions to the wish list were made while others were eliminated.



**Community members learn more about the Biogarden and Aquaponics.**



**Before a Community Visioning meeting, participants took a look at the butterfly garden.**



OUTDOOR ACTIVITY CENTER  
 1442 Richland Road Southwest  
 Atlanta, GA 30310-3246

# OAC CONCEPT 1

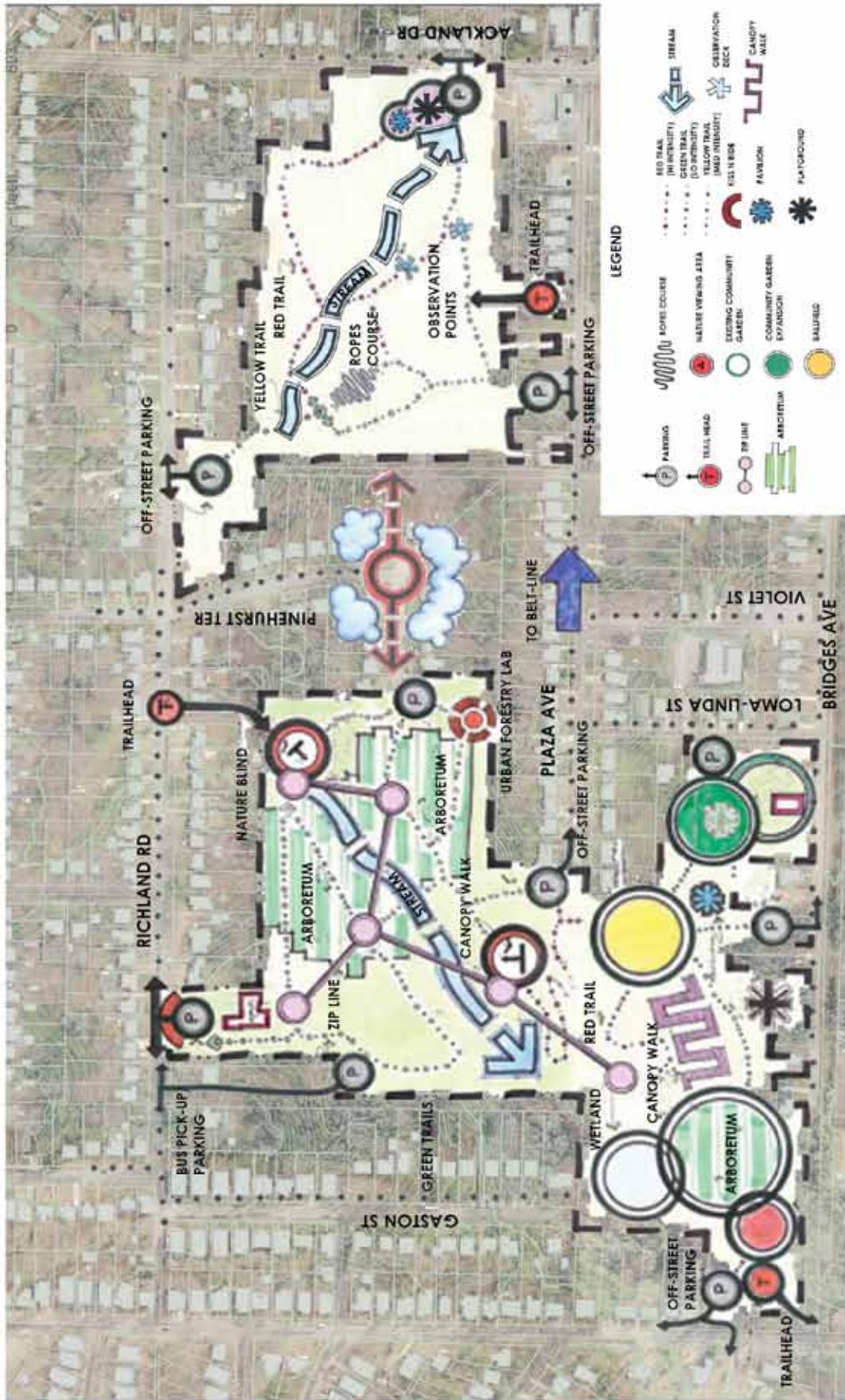




**OUTDOOR ACTIVITY CENTER**  
 1442 Richland Road Southwest  
 Atlanta, GA 30310-3246

## OAC CONCEPT 2





**LEGEND**



**OAC CONCEPT 3**

**OUTDOOR ACTIVITY CENTER**  
 1442 Richland Road Southwest  
 Atlanta, GA 30310-3246





# Vision Plan

Park Pride used the community's feedback from the third Public Meeting to form the Vision Plan. This plan is a combination and refinement of parts of all three concepts. It illustrates the relative size, shape and location of features that the community desires to see implemented in its park. Descriptions of projects are found in the project list, which follows the illustrations.

It should be noted that this Visioning Plan is just that, a Vision. It should not be used for construction, rather it should be used to guide the community in determining which projects to focus on in the near future.

It is anticipated that it will take years or even decades to implement the projects identified in the community's Vision Plan. At this time, there is no dedicated funding to implement these projects. The community will have to facilitate fund raising. Having this completed, community-supported plan will be a strong tool toward this effort.



**For the Design Workshop, community members gathered around maps of the neighborhood and drew out their ideas.**



**Community members talk about their ideas after the Design Workshop.**







## Outdoor Activity Center Project List

Key	Item	Priority Level	Cost	Description	Volunteer Opportunity	Possible Funding Source
A	Parking (west side)	Medium	\$80,000	Utilize the right-of-way off Richland Rd. to access new parking area that would be open to the public after O.A.C. hours. Consider gravel for permeable, low-impact option.	No	National Grants, Local Fundraisers
B	Restored Forest	High	\$2,500	Restore native natural plantings to enhance woodland area. Continue to monitor and remove invasive species. Contact the Georgia Native Plant Society to sign up for plant rescues.	Yes	Park Pride Micro-Grant, Many national grants. Georgia Native
C	Restored Stream	Medium	\$600,000	Restore stream bank with grading, splash ponds, and native riparian plantings. Study if options exist to even out flow of stream. Collect rain water from bordering streets when possible.	No	Federal - Environmental Protection Division
D	Canopy Walk	Low	\$400,000	Build canopy walk that can be used as both an educational and access amenity.	No	National Grants, Local Fundraisers
E	Additional Trails	High	\$7,000	Construct additional trails as needed for better connectivity and circulation. Consider using volunteers to spread gravel for better trail stability. See plan for specific locations.	Yes	National Grants, Local Fundraisers
F	Constructed Wetland	Medium	\$100,000	Wetland will hold and cleanse water from nearby streets and should provide more consistent water source for stream.	Partial	National Grants, Local Fundraisers
G	Nature Blind	Medium	\$5,000	Constructed shelter from which to shield viewers from being seen by fauna that they are attempting to observe.	No	National Grants, Local Fundraisers
H	Pavilion	Medium	\$50,000	Build a pavilion near the open meadow, playground and parking area that can be used for picnics and event gatherings. Include tables and 2 grills.	No	Park Pride Community Grant and Local

## Outdoor Activity Center Project List

I	Entrance Sign(multiple)	High	\$3,000 per	Install identification signs at key locations (see illustration) so that residents know that there is a City of Atlanta park facility in their neighborhood. Connect key locations to existing trail system with new trails to streets/signs.	No (Trail connection - yes)	Park Pride Community Grant and Local Fundraisers.
J	Parking (south side)	Medium	\$80,000	Provide permeable paving (consider crusher run) parking area that will park 10 to 20 vehicles. Include identification and orientation signage. Landscape minimally with native species.	No	Park Pride Community Grant and Local Fundraisers.
K	Playground	High	\$90,000	Construct new playground to serve those using the garden, the meadow and the new amenities or living near the Bridges Ave. side of the park.	Possibly	Many grants and funding opportunities
L	Garden Expansion and Greenhouse	Medium	\$45,000	Expand community garden to utilize all high-elevation, flat area. Build greenhouse for starter plants to extend growing season and to educate participants about growing from seed in greenhouse environment.	Expansion - Yes Grnhouse- No	Park Pride Micro-Grant, Many national grants.
M	Open Meadow	High	\$5,000	Manage existing meadow for natural conditions in suspended succession. Mow twice yearly. Plant edges of meadow with edge plants that will enhance biodiversity in both flora and fauna. Begin with cutting the existing brush to halt the natural succession process - asap.	Yes	Community Fundraisers - Issue-Specific Grants
N	Historic Marker	Low	\$3,500	Design and install marker that commemorates the historic uses of the meadow including the Black Crackers and the Native American significance. Landscape with native plants appropriate for the meadow restoration.	Partial	Park Pride Community Grant and Local Fundraisers.
O	Outdoor Forestry Lab	Medium	\$450,000	Design and build a large classroom and support spaces for educating visitors about environmental programming.	No	N/A
P	Future O.A.C. Village	Low	N/A	Purchase vacant houses as they become available. Use land between houses to provide entrances into O.A.C. property and use houses to provide temporary housing for visiting experts and artists.	Yes	Atlanta Housing Authority

## Outdoor Activity Center Project List

Q	Urban Farming	High	N/A	Purchase vacant lots and those with dilapidated houses as they become available. Remove structures and use property for urban farming, especially as it ties into sustainable programming.	Yes	Atlanta Housing Authority
R	Bush Mountain Village	High	N/A	Purchase key strategic properties as they become available. Renovate properties as necessary. Use properties to stabilize neighborhood and to offer to visiting artists, farmers, experts in sustainable lifestyles.	Yes	Atlanta Housing Authority
S	Parking (east side)	Medium	\$100,000	Provide permeable paving (consider crusher run) parking area that will park 10 to 20 vehicles. Include identification and orientation signage. Landscape minimally with native species.	Partial	N/A
T	Pond	Medium	250,000	Construct pond that will capture drainage from parking area and nearby streets. Hold water in pond to recharge groundwater and to provide slow release into stream system. Plant with bio-remediation plants that will absorb impurities.	No	Federal - Environmental Protection Division or Environmental
U	Path to Atlanta BeltLine	Medium	\$500,000	Construct PATH Foundation level path along streets to BeltLine. Sign with bike-route and with connection to BeltLine and to O.A.C.	No	Consult PATH Foundation
V	Picnic Area	Medium	\$70,000	Develop picnic area on the southeast corner of Pinehurst Te. and Richland Rd. including a pavilion, picnic tables and grills.	No	Park Pride Community Grant and Local
W	Entrance Sign (north side)	Medium	\$3,000	Install identification sign at location as indicated on illustration. Install minimal native landscaping. Consider adding lighting at least for winter evenings.	No	N/A
X	Zipline	Low	\$45,000	Consider zip line path through woods canopy. Only construct if there is a skilled, dedicated staff person to operate with groups. City of Atlanta will not support program. Special insurance will most likely be required. Will need to be locked and in-accessible when staff person is not on duty.	No	N/A

## Outdoor Activity Center Project List

Y	Renovated Playground		\$90,000	Renovate existing playground and restore to original, unique design.	Partial	N/A
Z	Bus Parking	High	\$35,000	Provide gravel/permeable pull-off in front of (outside fence) of the O.A.C. building. This pull-off should be wide enough and long enough to accommodate bus parking for tours. Provide paved pedestrian connection from bus parking to front door (HC Ramp) at O.A.C.	No	N/A
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$3,057,000</b>			

# Appendix (see disk)

- A. Steering Committee M.O.U.
- B. Survey Sample & Summary
- C. Sign-In Sheets
- D. Contact Spreadsheet
- E. 3 Design Workshop Drawings
- F. Notebook PDF
- G. Vision Plan PDF
- H. Project List Excel Spreadsheet



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