



2019 VISION PLAN

Needham Park





The ability to imagine potential and to recognize intrinsic value, is to have vision. Sometimes that takes fresh eyes. Two friends, new-comers to the neighborhood, noticed a small triangle of land marked by a fading entrance sign: "Needham Park." They saw potential in this space, partially mown and partially consumed by the typical bullies—kudzu, English ivy, and privet—that take over forgotten places. Although one of the friends moved on, the other put down roots and couldn't forget the little park. She asked neighbors. She asked the Parks Department. She asked her commissioner. Some people she asked reminisced about this place that now few ever notice. Others, though, did notice. "Wouldn't it be great," they dreamed—a little neighborhood park.

Kira Thigpen is the friend who saw Needham Park and imagined a place her young family and neighbors could enjoy. Kira applied for park visioning with Park Pride, making Needham Park the third park in DeKalb County to receive this grant of service.

Kira shared her earnest enthusiasm with neighbors and assembled a steering committee for the visioning process including, Jamelle Cherry, Rebecca Drake, Curtis Free, Sarah Page, Christina Rios, Joseph Thompson, and Stephen Warner. Each member pledged to represent the neighborhood's needs and wishes for the park and to stand by those decisions.

Jamelle Cherry made sure McLendon Elementary (where her son is a student) was aware of the park and the visioning process. Rebecca Drake made sure that we never went hungry, providing snacks for steering committee meetings and the public meetings. Curtis Free created the Friends of Needham Park web site, recorded detailed meeting minutes, and regularly created blog posts complete with photos of events, the park, and the community. Sarah Page delved into the archives of the DeKalb History Center to find the original McLendon

subdivision plat and information on Needham Park's namesake. Sarah also manages the Friends of Needham Park Facebook page, including event announcements. Christina Rios championed the park throughout the visioning process by responding to public concerns on social media and writing letters to county commissioners. Her letters and online posts brought truth to rumors.

Acknowledgements

Joseph Thompson and the Corinth Baptist Church opened their doors, literally, donating the use of the Church's Fellowship Hall and parking lot for all the park meetings. They also generously posted meeting announcements on the church sign and hosted a drop-box for surveys.

Stephen Warner, a long-time resident of the neighborhood, welcomed the chance to give the park attention. We thank him for managing the survey distribution, hitting the pavement to make sure everyone within a 10-minute walk of the park had an opportunity to take part in the process. Stephen also generously contributed a custom banner that welcomes volunteers to park clean-ups days.

We also want to thank Vineet Nagarkar, Project Manager with DeKalb County Recreation, Parks and Cultural Affairs for his attention to and involvement in this project. We look forward to continuing work with DRPCA as well as Commissioners Bradshaw and Gannon as this project progresses.

Everyone on the steering committee pitched in to distribute surveys, place yard signs, and otherwise spread the word to the community about the park visioning process. Their vision goes far beyond the boundaries of this small park, to imagine a great place to call home—that has a wonderful little park at its heart.

— Teri Nye, Park Designer,
and the Park Pride Visioning team



The open lawn portion of Needham Park
with its beautiful shade trees.

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Vision Plan Insert (36" x 24")





Park Name: Needham Park

Acreage: 2.62 (two parcels)

Year established: 1930

Address: 756 McLendon Drive,
Scottdale, GA 30079

Parcel number(s):

18 065 14 014 (2.25 acres)

18 065 14 017 (0.37 acres)

Property Owner: DeKalb County
Department of Recreation,
Parks & Cultural Affairs

Commissioner District: 4
(Bradshaw)

Commissioner Super District: 6
(Gannon)

Executive Summary

Needham Park was established in 1930 as part of the new J. F. McLendon Subdivision in Scottdale, Georgia. Originally the park included a bridge that crossed the small stream along McLendon Drive. Children played on the slide while their families gathered for picnics and community events. This was a place for neighbors.

Nearly 90 years later, over half of the 2.62-acre park is obscured by unmanaged overgrowth, the understory is overwhelmed by thickets of invasive exotic plants, the stream's banks are washing away due to increasing stormwater run-off, and canopy trees are toppling due to non-native vines and erosion. Meanwhile, the neighborhood is growing and, now more than ever, needs the benefits of a healthy greenspace.

In 2018, Friends of Needham Park was awarded a Park Pride Visioning grant. A steering committee of eight community members was formed to facilitate the process and represent the community. From November 2018 to July 2019, eight steering committee meetings and four public meetings were held. Public meetings were announced with yard signs throughout the neighborhood, on social media, and on the Corinth Baptist Church sign. Fifty-four people responded to the public opinion survey distributed on paper and online.

Guiding principles were established during the first public meeting based on the community's primary needs and desires for the park.

A mature white oak and other trees being overwhelmed by invasive English ivy vines.

Guiding Principles

Protect, preserve, and enhance Needham Park's tree canopy, stream system, and natural habitat

Create opportunities in Needham Park to build community

Provide for safe access to, circulation through, and community awareness of Needham Park

Create a peaceful, safe, and educational place to enjoy nature

Community members participated in a design workshop during the second public meeting. At the third public meeting, two preliminary concepts were presented for public review and comment. A public comment period on the concepts was open for two months. One hundred feedback forms were distributed throughout the neighborhood. Feedback could also be submitted online. The final public meeting offered community members the opportunity to review the Vision Plan.

The residents around Needham Park want to restore this park to the community asset that it once was. They hope to—simultaneously—bring it up to current park standards with accessible and clearly marked entrances and paths, and durable site furnishings. They hope to resolve the chronic problems causing the loss of natural habitat and trees. This community has shown, through this 8-month visioning process, their willingness to commit time and effort toward the success of this park and to continue to work for a peaceful and safe neighborhood park.

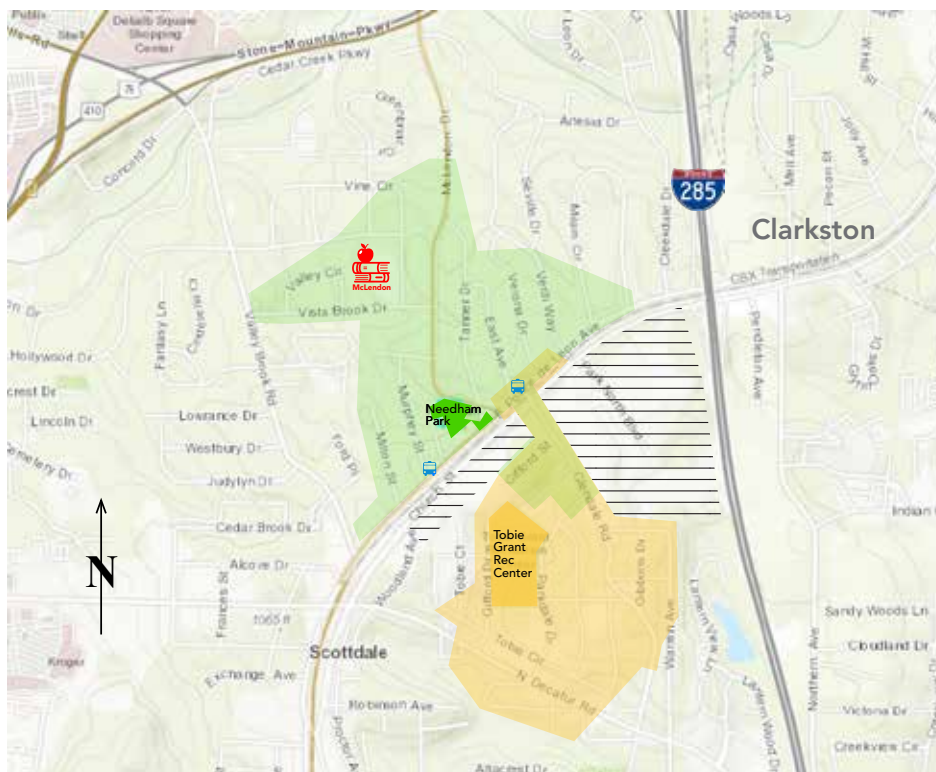
Context

History

In the early 20th century, J. F. McLendon owned a large property in what is now unincorporated DeKalb County. A sale notice in an undated historic newspaper describes McLendon's property as follows: "FIFTY-ACRE FARM—Nine miles center of Atlanta; seven daily trains stopping in front of this place; an ideal suburban home, poultry or dairy farm; one-half timbered, balance in high state cultivation; plenty of fresh water. For quick sale, \$100 per acre. J. F. McLendon, Clarkston, Ga." This proximity to the railroad and especially to a train stop was important: another historic newspaper

refers to "J. F. McLendon, of McLendon stop." Perhaps McLendon failed in his attempt to sell the farm, because a 1930 plat shows the "J. F. McLendon Subdivision" including around 160 parcels and a park at the southern edge, across Stone Mountain Highway from the Georgia Railroad tracks. The plat shows trees and a creek traversing the park.

A surveying document from 1914 shows that Dr. C. C. Needham owned the lot adjoining McLendon's property to the west. However, it is not clear whether he ever lived there or how he used the land. Needham was a dentist, who was born in Indiana and



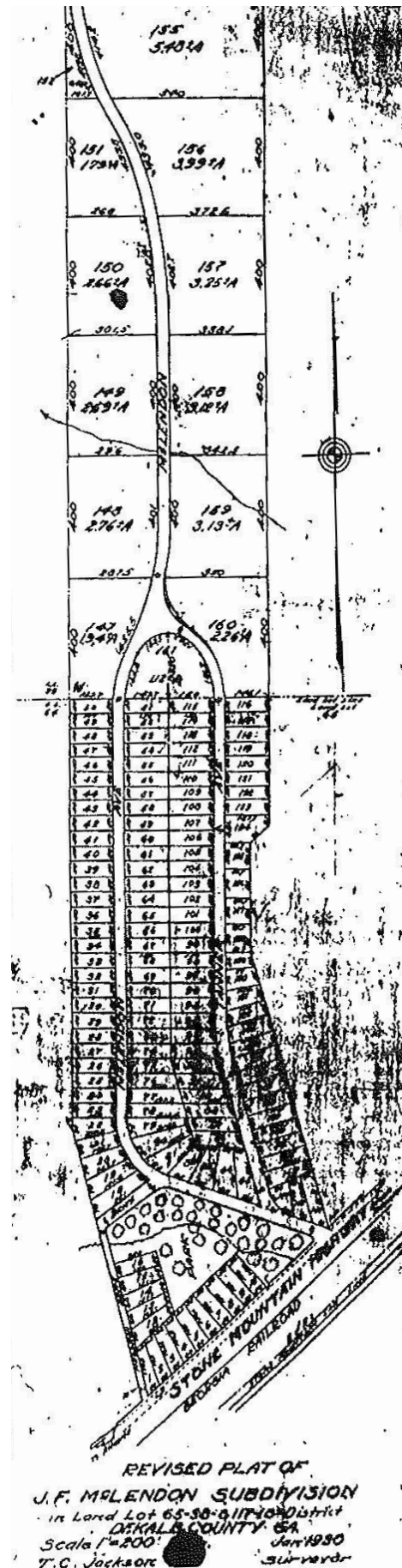
10-Minute Walk Context Map

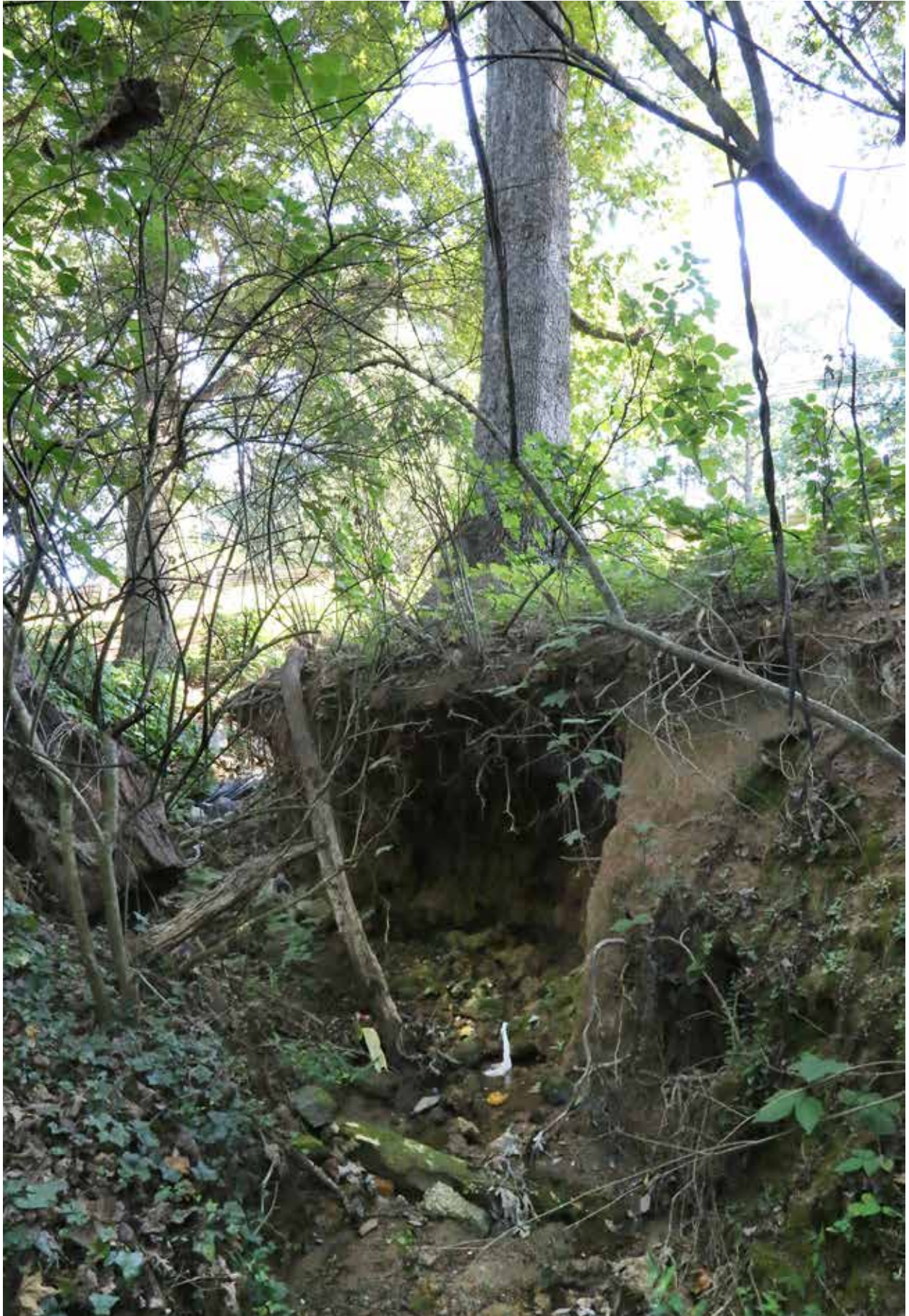
- Needham Park
- 10-min walk from Needham Park
- Industrial Zone
- Tobie Grant Park
- 10-min walk from Tobie Grant Park
- School
- MARTA Stop

1930 Revised plat of the J. F.
McLendon Subdivision

graduated from Kansas City Dental College in 1893. He then moved to Georgia and built up a practice in Atlanta, opening an office downtown, in rooms above the locally famous Jacobs' Pharmacy, which served the first Coca-Cola in 1886. Newspaper records indicate that his wife Cora Needham divorced him in 1911 for cruelty. A 1920 federal census shows that he lived in a lodging house in the city of Atlanta, and in 1922 he died of syphilis of the central nervous system, which had advanced to Charcot joints and cerebral hemorrhage. He was in his fifties at that time.

The roads through both McLendon's subdivision and Needham's property were named after the owners: Needham Road bounds the subdivision's park to the west, and McLendon Road bounds it to the northeast. Maybe because of the street name along its boundary, the park McLendon had labeled but left nameless in his 1930 plat eventually took on the name Needham Park. Residents of nearby homes have described crossing through the park and over the creek's bridge as children to run errands to a nearby store. When DeKalb County widened East Ponce de Leon Avenue and added lanes to McLendon Road in 2002, communication between the Department of Public Works and the Parks and Recreation Department explains that the project required land acquisition from Needham Park for a new right-of-way, and mentions that neighbors used the park as "a recreation area for pickup soccer games."







Opposite: Severe undercutting and root exposure of a mature white oak by stormwater. Above (left): Buckling and longitudinal splits indicate advanced damage, (right): English ivy overtaking the canopy the trees and understory.

Existing Conditions

Needham Park is a 2.62-acre park in the Scottdale neighborhood of unincorporated DeKalb County, Georgia. The park is owned and managed by the DeKalb County Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Affairs. The area is in Super District 6 (Kathie Gannon) and District 4 (Steve Bradshaw). The park sits amid residential lots, across the street from the Corinth Baptist Church, northwest of the intersection of McLendon Drive and East Ponce de Leon Ave. It fronts on McLendon Drive with an additional entrance on Needham Drive. The property is divided into two parcels, one of which fronts onto E. Ponce de Leon (historically “Stone Mountain Highway”). This part of the park became disused after the widening of E. Ponce de Leon and its intersection with McLendon Drive. Also in this area is a parcel owned by the Corinth Baptist Church—the location of the church’s Fellowship Hall.

A spring-fed (unnamed) stream flows into the park via a culvert under E. Ponce de Leon, dividing the larger parcel into two sections, as it flows toward the Chattahoochee River.

The stream travels through the church-owned parcel for a short distance before it flows back onto county-owned property. Increased development and impervious surfaces have dramatically increased flow during rain events, and a stormwater outfall from McLendon Drive is seriously eroding soils. A wooden footbridge crosses the stream at the end of Needham Drive.

Inside the park, the southwest side of the stream is wooded with mature trees, and is currently unmanaged. The northeast side also has mature trees but is laid to lawn and mown at regular intervals. Only 43% of the park is maintained and usable as a park. Fifty-seven percent is currently unmanaged, although community members are already making efforts to manage overgrowth and reclaim the park.

A planned extension of Needham Drive through to McLendon Drive was never completed, however the 40-foot right-of-way still exists along the west and northwest property lines of the park.



Streambank and soil erosion

One of the most damaging existing conditions is the soil erosion caused by excessive stormwater run-off from McLendon Drive. This drainage outfall has severe negative impacts on the canopy trees and the stream. Stormwater has cut a significant and hazardous gully through the park and undermined a mature white oak. The outfall ends in a small metal spout which accelerates and directs the full force of the water under the tree's roots. The riprap that originally lined the ground just below the outfall is undersized and has washed away. Tree roots are exposed, the banks are acutely incised and the tree has lost most limbs on the side where the undercutting is taking place (an indication of imminent failure). Downstream there is further damage to the streambanks and canopy due to the force of this run-off during storm events. Trees along the streambank have already begun to collapse as the soil erodes. Other trees, not suited to intermittent inundation, are rotting in place due to changing hydrology. This condition impacts both the park and downstream properties.

Invasive non-native plant species

Equally as damaging to the park and the native habitat that it should be providing, are the invasive plant species that have been allowed to grow unchecked for many years. This includes English ivy, privet, and multiflora rose, among others. These evergreen plants outcompete the deciduous native plants. English ivy climbs into the tree canopy, rotting the bark and adding weight and thus stress, on the branches of trees. The rampant growth of these species also prohibits management of hazardous native plants, namely poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*) and catbrier (*Smilax bona-nox*).

Top and middle left: The increasing volume and force of stormwater from McLendon and E. Ponce de Leon causing streambank erosion and tree failure
Bottom left: Removing English ivy from mature trees



Top: The entrance to Needham Park with homemade sign next to a park rules sign.
Above: The dirt path into Needham Park from McLendon Drive

Entrances and signage

There are two entrances into Needham Park, one on McLendon Drive and one on Needham Drive. Both entrances are hidden and both lack an official DeKalb County Park sign. Each entrance has a park rules sign, but there are no official signs with the park's name or hours. On McLendon Drive, pedestrians are blocked from entering the park by a guardrail that runs the entire length of the park's McLendon Drive frontage. The guardrail ends on the county right-of-way (the never-completed extension of Needham Drive to McLendon Drive) at its corner with an adjacent private property. This opening has become a de facto park entrance but is not actually on park property. This opening is on a busy and dangerous curve requiring park visitors to enter at a point where they are least protected from oncoming traffic. At this opening visitors find a narrow dirt path, looking more like a cut-through than a park entrance, leading down a slope into the grassed open area.



Above: Open areas of park do not provide any seating and the park does not have well-defined property lines
 Above, right: Late summer overgrowth of kudzu along McLendon Drive



There are no walkways into the park and no indications of the park boundaries or the county right-of-way. Some adjacent properties have fencing surrounding their lots, but many of the boundaries are left ambiguous.

A second entrance to the park is located at the end of Needham Drive, a dead-end residential street leading downhill (north) from E. Ponce de Leon. Again, the park boundaries are unclear; there is no sign indicating that there is a park or that the park extends on both sides of the stream. A small footbridge crosses the stream providing visitors with access to the north side of the park. A small clearing provides a limited turn-around area but the road and shoulders are occluded by overgrowth.

The above conditions discourage park use by obfuscating entrances and boundaries. Residents report not realizing the area is a park or that they don't know how to get to it.

Seating and gathering places

There are currently no formal seating areas, benches or otherwise, in the park. Park visitors must either sit on the ground or provide their own seating. This condition is prohibitive to anyone who does not want to sit on the ground for mobility reasons, weather, or other conditions.



Exposed tree roots block entry on Needham Drive

Accessibility

Once inside the park, access is limited to those who are able-bodied. The conditions make access difficult or impossible to people who have small children in strollers, who have walking limitations, and who are less sure-footed. There are no paths, ADA or otherwise, within the park. The portion of the park to the southeast of the stream is inaccessible because of unmanaged overgrowth and poison ivy. The northeast portion of the park is mown but several trees are covered in poison ivy—a danger to sensitive passersby and children. The bridge at the base of Needham Drive has steps on the north side and can only be reached by stepping down a slope of exposed tree roots. Walking over the roots is a tripping hazard and is damaging to the tree roots. The area experiences heavy stormwater drainage in rain events, further eroding soil from this would-be park entrance.



A continuous guard rail blocks pedestrian access along most of McLendon Drive.



Community Engagement

Park Pride's mission is to engage communities to activate the power of parks. In service of this mission, Park Pride offers visioning grants to parks in the City of Atlanta and unincorporated DeKalb County every year through a competitive application process. The vision plan includes a conceptual plan and comprehensive report for the park, produced to professional landscape design standards. The Park Pride visioning staff facilitates the public engagement process for the park awarded the visioning, and the community feedback collected informs and guides the creation of the vision plan. This plan can then be used by community groups to fundraise and advocate for desired improvements in the park. In some cases, the vision plan helps to create a completely new park.

In fall 2018, the Friends of Needham Park was awarded a park visioning grant. The group was interested in revitalizing the long-neglected park to better serve the growing neighborhood.

Steering Committee

The visioning process was led by a volunteer steering committee of neighbors, assembled by general invitation. Effort was made to include people of different ages, at different points in their lives, from young families to retirees, people with and without

children, property owners who don't live in the area, new residents and long-term residents, renters and home-owners.

Between November 2018 and June 2019 the steering committee met monthly, reviewing community input, preparing materials and vetting results. They were charged with representing their neighbors and the voices of the broader communities surrounding the park.

Park visioning kicked off on November 7th, 2018, with the first steering committee meeting, which was attended by 10 community members and representatives from Park Pride and the DeKalb County Citizen Review Committee. Attendees met in the Fellowship Hall of the Corinth Baptist Church next to the park to gain an initial understanding of the process. The park visioning scope was discussed and a project schedule was developed, centered on four public meetings. All of the steering committee and public meetings were held at this location.

During the second Steering Committee meeting, a survey was created to collect data from the community on potential park improvements. The survey was posted online, on the Friends of Needham Park blog and Facebook group, and was provided by the steering committee to anyone interested.

Survey

The survey, in both paper and digital formats, was used to capture public input. In all, there were 54 responses to the Needham Park survey, providing valuable (though not statistically significant) results that represented neighborhood interests and priorities.

Results (see opposite page) suggested that a majority of the respondents live in close enough proximity to the park that they walk. One of the primary concerns expressed was accessibility, with a majority indicating

that people don't know the park is there, or where to enter. Another primary challenge with the park, also expressed through the survey results, is the lack of places to sit. When asked how the community currently uses the park, 43% reported that they do not use the park. Close behind this number was the 41% who go to the park to relax in nature. There was a wide agreement (85%) that benches and more places to sit would make the park more inviting, while streambank restoration and clearing invasive plants and overgrowth were seen as important maintenance priorities.

Paper survey (right) was distributed to neighbors within a 10-minute walk of the park and upon request. The survey was also available online via a QR code.

Park Visioning Public Meeting Schedule

Big Ideas Meeting
Saturday, Jan 26, 11am-12pm
Fellowship Hall,
Carruth Baptist Church
1719 Alexander Dr., Summerville

Design Workshop
Saturday, Mar 2, 11am-12pm
Fellowship Hall,
Carruth Baptist Church

Preliminary Plan Review
Thursday, Apr 18, 7pm-8pm
Fellowship Hall,
Carruth Baptist Church

Final Plan Presentation
Saturday, Apr 18, 11am-12pm
Fellowship Hall,
Carruth Baptist Church

**Tear off and
save this schedule!**

For a smaller, mobile-friendly version,
scan the QR code below or
go to <https://tinyurl.com/NeedhamPark>



Survey closes on April 18, 2019

Would you donate money to improve Needham Park?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure/Depends

Would you volunteer time to improve Needham Park?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure/Depends

How do you get to Needham Park?
☐ Walk (how far?) _____ mins ☐ Bike (how far?) _____
☐ I don't go to this park (why not?) _____

Tell us about your household...
(check all that apply)
Does your household include children?
☐ Infant-5 yrs ☐ 6-12 yrs ☐ teenagers ☐ no children
☐ My household includes people with mobility challenges
☐ I have dogs that I walk (or would like to walk) in the park

Is there anything else you'd like to add that hasn't been addressed?

Contact information (this will be kept confidential)
First & Last Name _____
Email _____
☐ Yes, email me about the Needham Park Visioning
☐ No, please leave me off distribution lists



**Take part in
the Vision Process for
NEEDHAM
PARK**

facilitated by Park Pride for Friends of Needham Park

Return surveys to the dropbox on the front porch
of the Fellowship Hall, Carruth Baptist Church
or complete online at <https://tinyurl.com/NeedhamPark>
Survey closes on April 18, 2019

Why do you visit Needham Park now? (select all that apply)

- ☐ I go to relax/be in nature
- ☐ I enjoy observing birds and wildlife
- ☐ I go to play/bring my children to play
- ☐ My family/friends use the park for get-togethers
- ☐ I go to run, walk, or exercise in an outdoor space
- ☐ I go to walk my dog
- ☐ I participate in a casual sport (such as frisbee or pitching a ball, please list)
- ☐ I go to community events or gatherings
- ☐ Other (describe below)


Read the list below and select the TOP 3 challenges facing Needham Park. (select ONLY THREE)

- ☐ People don't know the park is there or where to enter
- ☐ I have mobility challenges and access is difficult
- ☐ Nowhere to sit
- ☐ Negative/illegal activities
- ☐ Lack of lights, the park feels unsafe
- ☐ Lack of play equipment or other amenities (list below)
- ☐ Litter and trash
- ☐ Soil and streambank erosion
- ☐ Irregular maintenance
- ☐ Overgrowth/invasive plants
- ☐ Other (describe below)

What is your favorite thing about Needham Park the way it is today?

Within its current footprint, what would make you more likely to visit Needham Park? (select all that apply)

- ☐ playground equipment for children
- ☐ fitness equipment for adults
- ☐ drinking fountain
- ☐ bike racks
- ☐ benches, tables and/or places to sit
- ☐ covered pavilion with seating
- ☐ arts and cultural events
- ☐ additional entry points from streets in the neighborhood
- ☐ safer access into the park along McLendon Drive
- ☐ well-maintained walking paths throughout the park
- ☐ enhanced bird habitat and places to watch birds
- ☐ natural area restoration, including streambank stabilization
- ☐ clearing overgrowth and invasive plants
- ☐ Other (describe below)



Needham Park

You are invited to take part in creating a vision plan for Needham Park!

Needham Park is a small DeKalb County Park near the corner of McLendon Drive and E. Porcose de Leon Avenue. It is just shy of 2.5 acres and divided by a small creek.

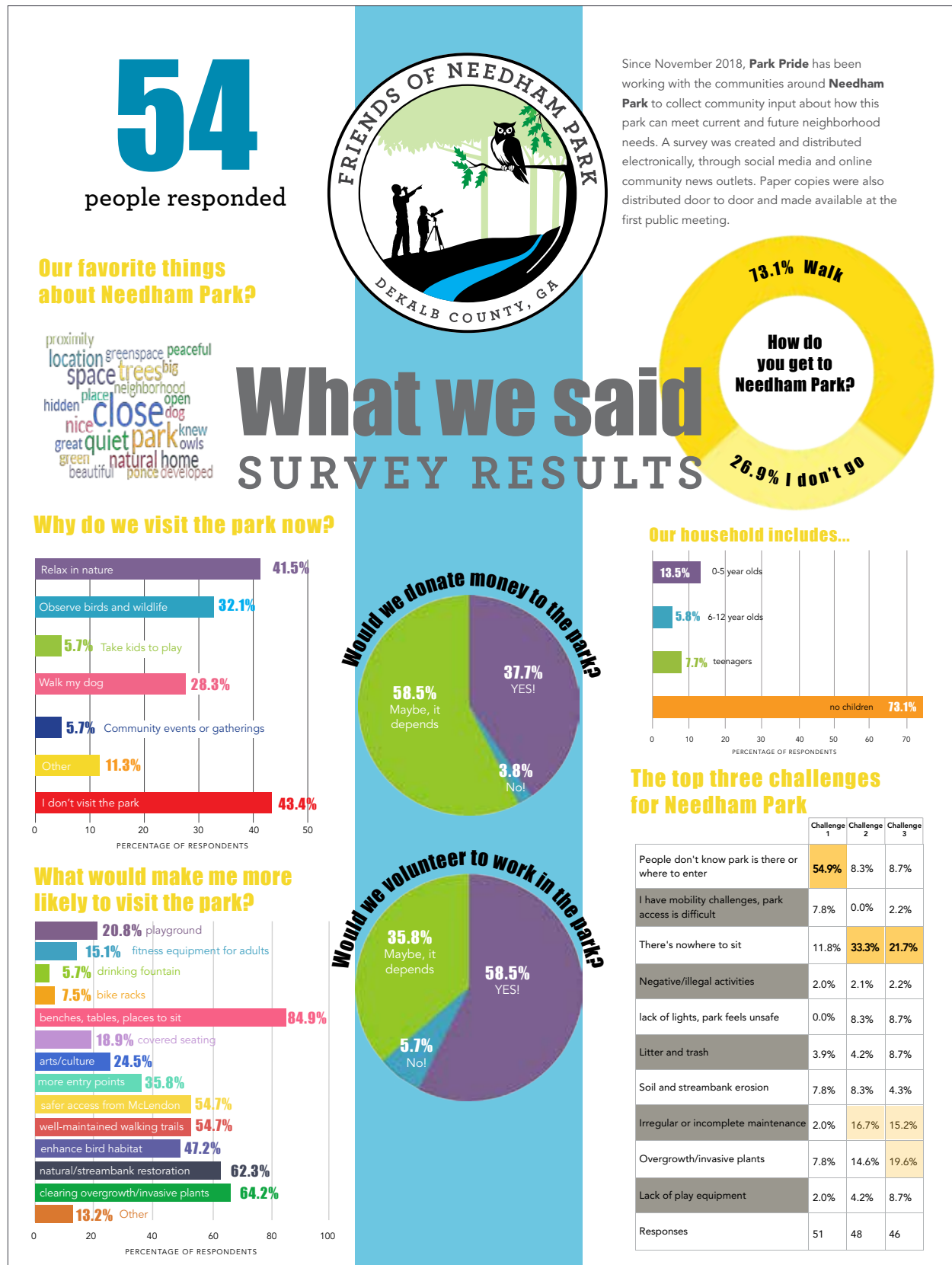
Through a grant from Park Pride, our community has the opportunity to create a plan for what this park can become. The Visioning Process will result in a conceptual plan reflecting what the community would like to see in this beautiful park. Your opinion is valued for the success of this park.

The Needham Park steering committee and Park Pride will be hosting a series of public meetings to collect ideas and get input from neighbors. Mark your calendar for the public meeting dates listed on the other side of this survey.

Please plan to attend one or all of the public meetings to help envision the future of Needham Park. See our website to learn more or follow us on Facebook to receive updates.

[friendsofneedhampark.org](https://www.friendsofneedhampark.org)

Find us on Facebook: [@friendsofneedhampark](https://www.facebook.com/friendsofneedhampark)



The survey was open from January 9, 2019 until April 18, 2019. Ongoing results were displayed as an infographic during the public meetings. The version above reflects the data on April 18.

Events

The Friends of Needham Park group organized several events during the visioning process, to get a jump start on caring for the park and creating a community gathering space.

Easter Egg Hunt

On April 20, 2019, bunny ears were spotted in the park. This, along with the sound of excited children—on the hunt for 230 cleverly hidden eggs and possible treats—were all sure signs that community building is happening in Needham Park. Neighbors, including friends from Corinth Baptist Church, organized the Easter Egg Hunt, served up warm morning drinks and managed to hide all those eggs throughout the park. The event was fun for all!

An easter egg hunt in the park!



Park Clean-up Days

Multiple park clean-up days have already been organized, including one on January 21, 2019, in celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and a second on March 20, 2019. Friends of Needham Park member, Stephen Warner, created a banner to draw attention to the event.

January was a great time of year to get in the creek and clear trash and debris that has been accumulating for many years. Neighbors cleared mountains of trash that day, including tires, plastic and glass containers, and even an entire grocery cart! Clean-ups like this go a long way in reducing the breeding grounds for mosquitoes and improving the habitat for all wildlife.

March 20 was prime time to manage emerging invasive exotic plants. A tough crew of neighbors worked on the south side of the stream with handtools, gloves, and masks—braving the pollen as well as emerging poison ivy to remove mountains of privet from the groundlayer and English ivy from the trunks of over 20 mature canopy trees.







Public Meetings

The visioning process typically includes four public meetings, giving the community multiple opportunities to provide input—from the initial ideas through to conceptual plans. The meetings were announced with yard signs throughout the neighborhood, on social media—including the Friends of Needham Park’s Facebook page and website, with flyers, and on the Corinth Baptist Church sign.

Each public meeting moves the visioning process along in stages: the first public meeting is a brainstorming session where ‘Big Ideas’ about the park are established. Participants decide what kind of park they need and want, and what functions are most important for the park to fulfill. Based on the feedback gathered in this meeting plus survey data, a set of guiding principles is created. All future designs and elements must support these principles in order to

be included in the final plan. The second public meeting is organized as a design workshop. This is when ideas begin to take physical form. Participants are encouraged to draw and experiment with scale-shapes on base maps, while the visioning team offers realistic expectations about what is possible based on the park’s size and fiscal budgets. The second meeting concludes with a consensus on the general ideas. Then the visioning team goes back to the drawing boards to come up with two draft concepts. These concepts are first reviewed by the steering committee, then presented for review at the third public meeting. Finally, armed with input from the community and Steering Committee, Park Pride’s visioning team develops a final conceptual Vision Plan. This plan is presented for review at the fourth public meeting. The community prioritizes projects to create a step-wise plan for achieving the Vision Plan’s goals.



Public Meeting 1

The first public meeting was held on Saturday, January 26, 2019. After a brief presentation outlining Park Pride’s visioning process, the existing site conditions, and the park’s history, community members divided into focus groups and then reconvened to share ideas and formulate goals and guiding principles for the future park.

There were approximately 19 residents in attendance and Steering Committee members led small group sessions in which initial ideas and dreams for the quadrant were collected. Historical exhibits and maps were presented to provide context for how the area has evolved over the years.

Key points emerged from the group sessions: the leading concerns expressed were to protect, preserve, and enhance the tree canopy, stream system, and natural habitat. Many attendees expressed a desire to provide safe access to, circulation through, and community awareness of the park. Finally, another widespread agreement was to create opportunities in the park to build community, as well as to create a peaceful, safe, and educational place to enjoy nature.



Public Meeting 2

For the second public meeting, the community gathered on Saturday, March 2, 2019, once again at the Corinth Baptist Church. During the second meeting attendees were provided with aerial maps, including property lines, the stream buffers, and topography marked. The preliminary survey results were also shared with the group. To guide participants in a workshop format, attendees were divided into breakout groups to write, sketch, or otherwise represent their designs, ideas and dreams for the park. One of the most consistent ideas represented in the sketches was a trail network throughout the park, and a desire to preserve the forested area on the north side of the stream. People also felt strongly about improving entrances and restoring the stream. Groups also emphasized better accessibility for people with mobility issues, including those with strollers and young children.



Steering Committee Members answer questions and record thoughts and ideas from community members.



Guiding Principles



Protect, preserve, and enhance Needham Park’s tree canopy, stream system, and natural habitat



Create opportunities in Needham Park to build community

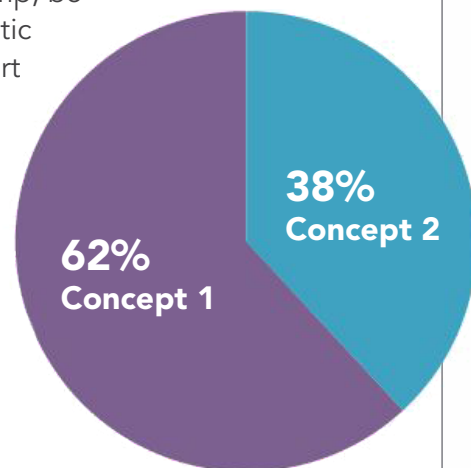
Provide safe access to, circulation through, and community awareness of Needham Park



Create a peaceful, safe, and educational place to enjoy nature

Public Meeting 3

At the third public meeting, held Thursday, April 18th, the two draft concept plans were displayed along with additional exhibits showing existing conditions, reference images from other parks, community comments, and the results of the initial survey. There were 9 community members in attendance plus a project manager from the DeKalb County Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Affairs (DRPCA). The Steering Committee answered questions and explained the visioning process to new participants and reviewed the features of each concept. Feedback forms were provided for both concepts, allowing attendees to review and make comments on each design. Public input was compiled and reviewed by the Steering Committee at the next steering committee meeting and the comments were used to shape the final conceptual plan. Overall, there was a strong desire that any additions or alterations, including the ramp, be natural in aesthetic character, support and protect native flora and fauna, and accentuate the feeling of being in nature.



See Concept 2 on opposite side

FEEDBACK: CONCEPT 1

OVERALL PREFERENCE: **Concept 1**

Check the features you prefer, see alternatives on opposite side; write in comments

Concept 1

- ☐ New entrance into park from McLendon, with ADA-compliant ramp, providing access to park, lower bridge, and picnic area in woodland
- ☐ Platform and boardwalk ramp over wet area at end of existing bridge, providing a gathering spot, seating, and ADA-compliant path to McLendon Drive
- ☐ On-street parking spaces on Needham Drive
- ☐ Single soft-surface loop trail through woodland side of park
- ☐ Crosswalk at new entrance on McLendon, with rapid-flash beacons
- ☐ Erosion repair at McLendon stormwater outfall: divert outfall in pipe to downstream location, install energy dissipator and boulders; evaluate white oak during process
- ☐ Backfill current outfall erosion gully to allow for walking path to cross this area

Included in both

- ☐ Benches, swing benches, and picnic tables throughout park providing a variety of places to sit
- ☐ Learning Circle in woodland for community gatherings and field trips from McLendon ES
- ☐ Streambank stabilization + erosion control
- ☐ Restoration and enhancement of native habitat through invasive plant removal
- ☐ Planting new future canopy trees throughout to maintain forest canopy
- ☐ Upgrade/extend existing bridge to provide safer access and protect streambank/tree roots
- ☐ Improved access via ADA-compliant parking space and turn-around (both permeable paving) at base of Needham Drive
- ☐ Improved drainage and clearing of overgrowth on Needham Drive, to provide safe access & visibility
- ☐ New bridge and soft-surface walking trails through woodland for improved circulation in park
- ☐ ADA-compliant + permeable surfaces on trails in meadow and woodlands to improve access
- ☐ Shift guardrail to street side of sidewalk on McLendon curve for safer pedestrian access
- ☐ New park signs at McLendon and Needham Drive entrances to improve awareness of the park

Name _____ Email _____

Comments _____

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Features of Concept 1

- New entrance into park from McLendon, with ADA-compliant ramp, providing access to park, improved bridge, and picnic area in woodland
- Platform and boardwalk ramp over wet area at end of existing bridge (elevated), providing a gathering spot, seating, and ADA-compliant path to McLendon Drive
- On-street parking spaces on Needham Drive*
- Single soft-surface loop trail through woodland side of park
- Crosswalk at new entrance on McLendon, with rapid-flash beacons (*homeowner preference for crosswalk at Tanner)
- Erosion repair at McLendon stormwater outfall: divert outfall in pipe to downstream location, install energy dissipator and boulders; evaluate white oak during process*
- Backfill current outfall erosion gully to allow for walking path to cross this area

* public preference for this option

Features included in BOTH Preliminary Concepts 1 and 2

- Benches, swing benches, and picnic tables throughout park providing a variety of places to sit
- Learning Circle in woodland for community gatherings and field trips from McLendon ES
- Streambank stabilization and erosion control
- Restoration and enhancement of native habitat through invasive plant removal
- Planting new future canopy trees throughout to maintain forest canopy
- Upgrade/extend existing bridge to provide safer access and protect streambank/tree roots
- Improved access via ADA-compliant parking space and turn-around (with permeable paving) at base of Needham Drive
- Improved drainage and clearing of overgrowth on Needham Drive, to provide safe access and visibility
- New bridge and soft-surface walking trails through woodland for improved circulation in park
- ADA-compliant and permeable surfaces on trails in meadow and woodlands to improve access
- Shift guardrail to street side of sidewalk on McLendon curve for safer pedestrian access
- New park signs at McLendon and Needham Drive entrances to improve awareness of the park



See Concept 1 on opposite side

FEEDBACK: CONCEPT 2

QUICK RESPONSE

Check the features you prefer, see alternatives on opposite side, write-in comments

Concept 2

- ☐ New entrance into park from McLendon, with stairs, providing access to park, lower bridge, and picnic platform in woodland
- ☐ Permeable gathering area with ramp to existing bridge (preventing compaction/erosion)
- ☐ Provide an ADA-compliant path to add'l gathering circle on north side of stream
- ☐ No on-street parking spaces on Needham Drive
- ☐ Primary and secondary soft-surface loop trails through woodland side of park
- ☐ Crosswalk on McLendon at Tanner, with rapid-flash beacons
- ☐ Erosion repair at McLendon stormwater outfall: in current location, install energy dissipator and boulders; back-fill existing outfall erosion gully; evaluate white oak during process

Included in both

- ☐ Benches, swing benches, and picnic tables throughout park providing a variety of places to sit
- ☐ Learning Circle in woodland for community gatherings and field trips from McLendon ES
- ☐ Streambank stabilization + erosion control
- ☐ Restoration and enhancement of native habitat through invasive plant removal
- ☐ Planting new future canopy trees throughout to maintain forest canopy
- ☐ Upgrade/extend existing bridge to provide safer access and protect streambank/tree roots
- ☐ Improved access via ADA-compliant parking space and turn-around (with permeable paving) at base of Needham Drive
- ☐ Improved drainage and clearing of overgrowth on Needham Drive, to provide safe access & visibility
- ☐ New bridge and soft-surface walking trails through woodland for improved circulation in park
- ☐ ADA-compliant + permeable surfaces on trails in meadow and woodlands to improve access
- ☐ Shift guardrail to street side of sidewalk on McLendon curve for safer pedestrian access
- ☐ New park signs at McLendon and Needham Drive entrances to improve awareness of the park

Features

Name _____

Comments _____

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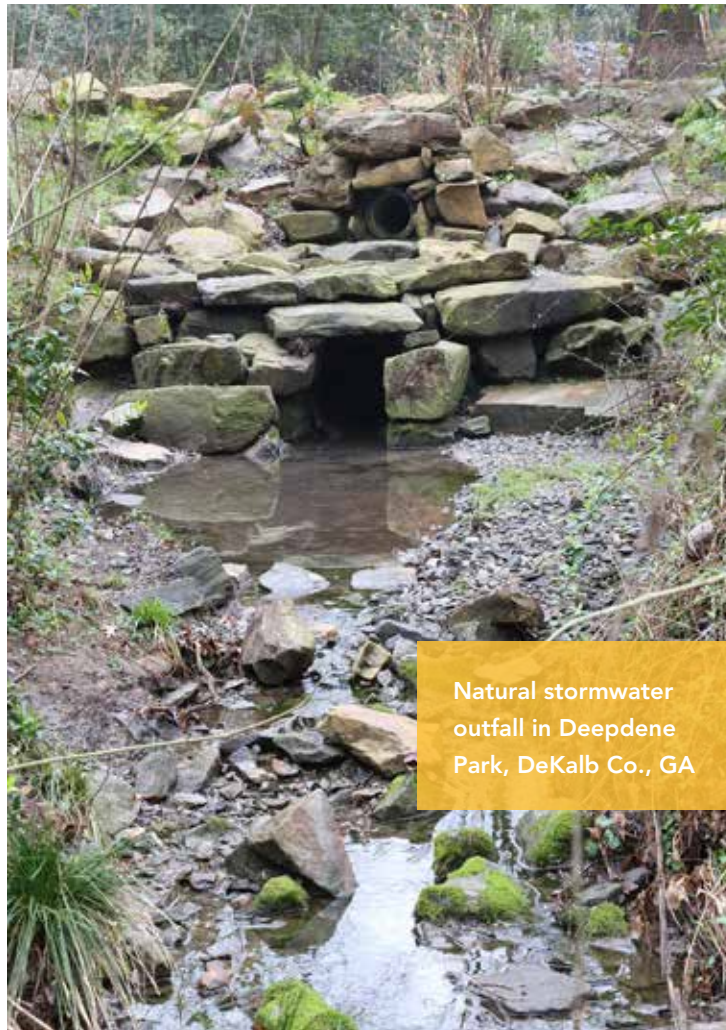


Features of Concept 2

- New entrance into park from McLendon, with stairs, providing access to park, lower bridge, and picnic platform in woodland
- Permeable gathering area with ramp to existing bridge (preventing compaction/erosion)
- Provide an ADA-compliant path to additional gathering circle on north side of stream
- No on-street parking spaces on Needham Drive
- Primary and secondary soft-surface loop trails through woodland side of park*
- Crosswalk on McLendon at Tanner, with rapid-flash beacons
- Erosion repair at McLendon stormwater outfall: in current location, install energy dissipator and boulders; back-fill existing outfall erosion gully; evaluate white oak during process

* public preference for this option

“Good access from McLendon is key...”



Natural stormwater outfall in Deepdene Park, DeKalb Co., GA

“I think the first priority should be creek restoration as this will be the largest impact for the entire park and natural habitat.”



Public Meeting 4

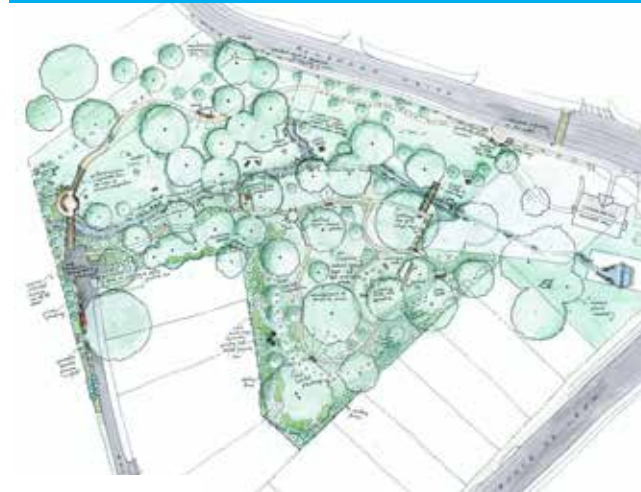
The final Vision Plan was presented on Saturday, June 15, 2019 at the fourth public meeting, again held at Corinth Baptist Church. Approximately 20 people attended to review and give feedback on the plan, including a representative from DeKalb County Superdistrict 6 Commissioner Kathie Gannon's office, and a representative from DRPCA. Feedback forms were again provided along with a prioritization exercise through which projects could be ranked in order of importance to each participant.

Adjustments made on the final Vision Plan

The final Vision Plan incorporated the adjustments requested in the concept review stages via feedback forms (see pages 20-21).

- New entrance into park from McLendon, with a gently sloping walkway that follows the existing topography as much as possible to minimize disturbance and provide a more natural, unobtrusive entrance into the park—which is accessible to all.
- Parallel parking on Needham Drive and one dedicated wheelchair accessible parking space at this entrance
- Two-part trail system that can be implemented in phases as funding allows. Phase 1 would include an accessible path from McLendon across the footbridge, on to an accessible picnic table/creek overlook, continuing onto a minimally impactful (soft) footpath through the woodland
- Phase 2 would add a second footbridge creating a full loop through the woodland and back to the McLendon entrance

FEEDBACK: VISION PLAN



Comments

Use this sheet to share your comments and concerns, likes and dislikes. What did we miss?

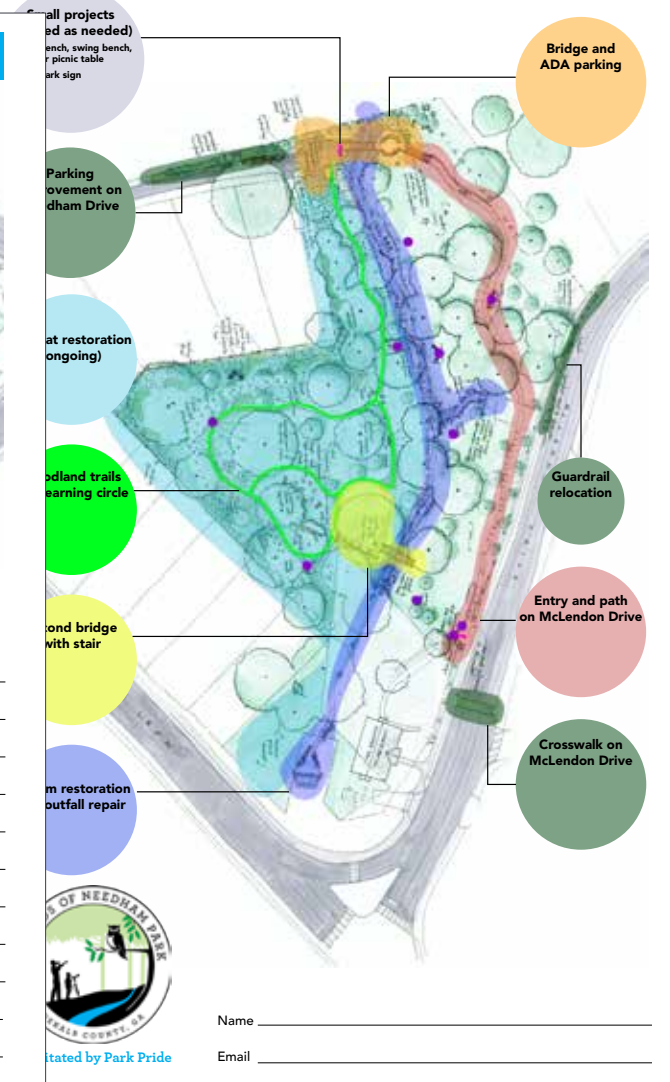


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Name _____
Email _____

FEEDBACK: VISION PLAN

Number your priority projects 1 (highest) through 10 (lowest).



Name _____
Email _____

Feedback forms provided to participants in the fourth public review meeting for the Needham Park Vision Plan.

- Natural play features and a place for learning and exploring in the woodland
- A gathering platform and boardwalk allowing access across the lowest area of the park's lawn. This path would also define the park's edge and allow infiltration of stormwater without compaction.

Other goals, such as invasive plant removal, habitat restoration, and erosion control remained constant throughout the visioning process and are also priorities in the final plan.

Photos to the left are example improvements in similar parks, of stream restorations, and woodland trails. Restoration should be undertaken after a complete evaluation of current impacts on the stream.

“Love to focus on accessibility first, then park improvements.”

“Love the new entrance, seating + signage on McLendon.”



Vision Plan

Key Features of the Final Vision Plan

- Stream restoration and erosion control
- Habitat restoration, protection, and enhancement
- Improved access and circulation
- Provision of seating and community gathering spots

Stream restoration and erosion control

The final Vision Plan for Needham Park recognizes that the most urgent goal is to stop the severe erosion caused by the increasing stormwater and the equally destructive impact of unmanaged invasive exotic plants. Currently over half of the park's 2.62 acres is rendered unusable by thickets of invasive plant, including English ivy (*Hedera helix*), Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*), kudzu (*Pueraria montana*), multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*), Chinese wisteria (*Wisteria sinensis*), and others. Soil erosion and invasive species are preventing the park's use as a valuable community asset.

In addition, soil erosion and invasive plant species are rapidly diminishing the ability of the greenspace and mature hardwood forest to perform valuable ecosystem functions such as natural stormwater detention and infiltration, i.e., the ability to replenish local groundwater supplies and mitigate downstream erosion and sedimentation.



Needham Park already supports a wide array of wildlife within its small boundary, including Great Horned Owls. With careful forest management practices, the park would have even greater capacity to provide food sources, shelter, nest sites, and clean water for both resident wildlife and migratory species. The benefits of a healthy ecosystem extend to humans as well, offering a place to experience, observe and learn about nature.

Step one of getting stormwater, erosion, and invasive species under control, is to gather all stakeholders. Together, this group must commit to a solution that considers the area's rapid development, and then take steps to implement this plan. Currently, the stormwater outfall on McLendon Drive causing the greatest erosion and most imminent danger, is owned and managed by the DeKalb County Department of Roads & Drainage. The stormwater outfall, installed during the Georgia Department of Transportation's improvements to McLendon Drive in 2007, is already undersized and undercutting a mature white oak that stands on land owned by the DRPCA (Needham Park). This stormwater drains immediately into an unnamed, spring-fed stream that flows through Needham Park. This stream is a tributary of the Chattahoochee River.

This plan recommends that specialists in stream restoration and methods of managing

stormwater with green infrastructure determine the least invasive, best long-term solution for stream restoration. There are numerous mature canopy trees along the streambanks but many are suffering from root exposure, soil saturation, and the weight of invasive plant species. Trees such as Tuliptrees, (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) are not suited for inundated conditions. Many directly adjacent to the stream are rotting, and some have already fallen or are leaning into other trees. Stream restoration should include replacing failing trees with wetland species. It should also slow down the velocity of the water, allowing for on-site infiltration.

Habitat restoration, protection, and enhancement

This site is ideally equipped to support local wildlife while providing a neighborhood-scale place to observe and learn about nature. In tandem with stream restoration and erosion control measures, ongoing natural habitat management will be necessary. A healthy natural habitat provides food, water, shelter and a place to raise offspring. Needham Park's existing canopy trees, native shrubs, herbaceous plants, and vines serve as food sources for a variety of birds and mammals—host plants for larvae and nectar sources for adult pollinators. These animals in turn are also food sources for predator species such as hawks and owls, as well as amphibians and reptiles.

The stream provides a water source as well as shelter and spawning areas for multiple species. The park's topography, plus the combination of a grassed lawn and woodland provide protective edges, perches, and safe hiding places for a rich range of species.

Improved access and circulation

With no official park entrance signs, many residents are not aware that Needham Park exists. Use of the park is further deterred by hard-to-locate entrances that, once found, are difficult to navigate. A guardrail runs the full length of the park along McLendon Drive, forcing pedestrians to walk unprotected between the guardrail and oncoming traffic before arriving at a makeshift entrance. Once inside the park, there are no pathways leading through the grounds and no obvious boundaries between the park and adjacent private properties. Park users are left feeling unsure where the park begins and ends. At the second entrance off Needham Drive, overgrowth makes the street feel unsafe and the path leading to the park's bridge is preceded by a treacherous slope over

exposed tree roots. The experience is confusing, even prohibitive, from all angles.

This plan recommends upgrades that will create welcoming and safe entrances into the park for all users. On the McLendon Drive side of the park, this plan recommends moving the guardrail to the street side of the sidewalk, incorporating the sidewalk into the park and placing a protective barrier between the high-traffic street and pedestrians. Additionally, a new park entrance is included on McLendon Drive, away from the street's blind curve. This entrance will be closer to available on-street parking on Tanner, and accessible via a new cross-walk with pedestrian-activated crossing signal. The entrance should include an entrance plaza with a large-scale park sign with hours, a bench or benches, trash receptacle, and Little Free Library. From this entrance an ADA-compliant on-grade ramp with railing will lead to a gradually sloping (5%) walkway into the park. The walkway will be on grade and will follow the existing contour of the park. To facilitate access for persons with mobility issues, as well as those with strollers, the path will be paved with a permeable concrete surface and planted either side with turf to prevent erosion and streamline maintenance.

This path will gradually wind on contour down into the lower park, toward the existing bridge. Before that point, it will merge into a boardwalk (PermaTrak or the like) that will gently rise over the lowest area and up onto an elevated gathering area, all ADA-accessible. The circular gathering area will incorporate seating areas and allow barrier-free access to a newly elevated bridge. The new height of the bridge will pass over existing tree roots and end on-grade at an improved Needham Drive entrance. This entrance will provide a wheelchair accessible parking space, a tight turn-around area, an additional park entrance sign, trash receptacle, and bike rack. A split-rail fence and new plantings will clearly





define the park's boundary and entrance trail into the woodland section of the park.

A trail into the woodland section of the park will be set with an ADA-accessible permeable surface (such as slate chips), leading along the newly restored streambank, to an accessible picnic area overlooking the stream. Past this point, the path will continue into the wooded area as a soft-surface but not necessarily ADA-compliant trail, forming a loop through the existing trees over natural topography.

As a later phase of this project, the plan shows a second bridge over the stream that could provide a complete loop back to the McLendon Drive entrance.

The boardwalk, elevated platform, and improved footbridge, are all proposed to be constructed from a durable concrete material such as PermaTrak, in a color and finish that would fit into the natural woodland setting and also allow rain water to pass through.

The materials selected for the park are to be highly durable and long-lasting, yet suitable for the naturalistic setting. The community voiced strong opposition to "too much concrete" throughout the visioning process and care should be taken to ensure that any concrete used allows for natural infiltration of stormwater and blends into the setting rather than blocking views or otherwise overwhelming the natural beauty of the park. In keeping with this objective, any handrails needed should be unobtrusive in style such as cable rails shown in photos 1-3 on the left.

The photos (left, from top to bottom) show multiple options and colors for long-lasting walkways, cable railings and accessible site furnishings. Photo 4 demonstrates how a walkway can be elevated over the roots of a mature canopy tree. All are concrete-based materials.



Seating and community gathering spots

In the visioning survey, 85% of respondents reported lack of seating as a primary need for the park. Additionally, one of the guiding principles established during the first public meeting, was to “create opportunities in Needham Park to build community.” By providing multiple options for seating and gathering, this plan will foster and support a place where neighbors can get to know each other and welcome visitors.

The plan calls for benches along the walkways and trails, tables throughout the park, and seatwalls, or steps that double as seating, surrounding gathering spaces. Additionally, several suspended sway benches (swing benches) are also to be placed singly or in groups at places with beautiful views. The benches should be securely anchored to the ground on a base of permeable concrete or other material that will prevent soil erosion. Seating in the park encourages those who might not otherwise come to the park, to stop and enjoy nature, read a book, or have a conversation. Seating can be implemented over time as part of larger projects, or installed as funding allows. Installation of seating near the stream should happen after stream restoration is complete.



Photos, left, top to bottom: seating options vary from community-built and rustic to long-lasting, durable steel. Purchase and installation of all furnishings should be approved by and coordinated through the DeKalb County DRPCA.



FEEDBACK: VISION PLAN

Number your priority projects 1 (highest) through 10 (lowest).

Small projects (divided as needed)

-  Bench, swing bench, or picnic table
-  Park sign

Parking improvement on Needham Drive

Habitat restoration (ongoing)

Woodland trails and learning circle

Second bridge with stair

Stream restoration and outfall repair

Bridge and ADA parking

Guardrail relocation

Entry and path on McLendon Drive

Crosswalk on McLendon Drive



Facilitated by Park Pride

Name _____

Email _____

Projects & Budget

This vision plan for Needham Park is intended to guide community-lead advocacy and development of the park in a phased approach. At the final community meeting, attendees ranked projects in order of priority (see prioritization form, facing page, and results table below) to guide fundraising efforts and order of implementation.

The budgets presented on the following pages are intended to provide a starting point for fundraising and advocacy efforts

and were compiled without the benefit of detailed design, survey, geotechnical, and other site conditions, which may change significantly the cost of any project. Park Pride makes no guarantee or warranty as to their accuracy.

It is worth noting here that Park Pride provides matching grants for community-led park improvement projects, and should be considered as a potential source of funds for community initiatives in Needham Park.

Report for Needham Park Vision Plan Project Priorities

Item	Overall Rank	Rank Distribution	Score	How many people participated in this question
Stream restoration and outfall repair	1		118	14
Entry and path on McLendon Drive	2		102	13
Habitat restoration (ongoing)	3		87	14
Bridge and ADA parking	4		86	14
Crosswalk on McLendon Drive	5		83	14
Woodland trails and learning circle	6		71	13
Second bridge with stair	7		60	13
Guardrail relocation	8		52	12
Parking improvement on Needham Drive	9		43	13
Small projects (divided as needed): bench, swing bench, picnic table, or park sign	10		42	10

Lowest Rank Highest Rank

2019 Table of Probable Costs by Project (in order of priority)

STREAM RESTORATION AND OUTFALL REPAIR					
Item	Unit	Qty	Cost/Unit	Extended Cost	Notes
Restoration Assessment	ALLOW	1	\$10,000.00	\$10,000	Initial assessment by engineering firm specializing in stream restoration to determine scope of restoration activities
Stream Restoration	LF	680	\$341.00	\$231,880	Restoration assessment will give a more accurate estimate of how much restoration will cost
Design & Engineering	Percent	20%		\$48,376	Expect to pay between 15-20% of projected project costs
Contingency (15%)	Percent	15%		\$36,282	
TOTAL				\$326,538	
ENTRY PLAZA AND PATH FROM MCLENDON DRIVE					
24" height stone wall at entrance	SF	160	\$111.00	\$17,760	Including excavation, concrete footing and stone 3' below grade. Price is exposed face area
Grading	ALLOW	1	\$20,000.00	\$20,000	
Concrete paved plaza	SF	190	\$15.00	\$2,850	
Trash receptacle	EA	1	\$1,415.00	\$1,415	Victor Stanley, black
Little Free Library (LFL)	EA	1	\$400.00	\$400	Includes installation cost and LFL registry fee
Park Sign	EA	1	\$3,620.00	\$3,620	Coordinate signage design with DRPCA
Bench	EA	2	\$1,861.00	\$3,722	Victor Stanley, black (mounted into concrete plaza)
Remove vehicular guardrail	LF	30	\$10.00	\$300	To be coordinated with appropriate transportation authority
Vehicular guardrail flared terminal ends	EA	2	\$75.00	\$150	To be coordinated with appropriate transportation authority
ADA-accessible path	LF	420	\$30.75	\$12,915	Assume 5' width concrete sidewalk
ADA Railing	LF	33	\$99.00	\$3,267	Steel pipe railing, 3 rail, galvanized 1-1/4" dia.
Design & Engineering	Percent	20%		\$13,280	Expect to pay between 15-20% of projected project costs
Contingency (15%)	Percent	15%		\$9,960	
TOTAL				\$89,639	

HABITAT RESTORATION (ONGOING)

Item	Unit	Qty	Cost/Unit	Extended Cost	Notes
Invasives Removal	AC	1.5	\$5,000.00	\$7,500	Volunteer labor can maintain invasive control, but initial effort is best done by professional. Important: chemical control is not desirable, prohibited in stream buffer
Mulch	ALLOW	1	\$1,500.00	\$1,500	Potential donation
Selective thinning of understory	ALLOW	1	\$3,000.00	\$3,000	Possible volunteer labor with arborist supervision
Nectar/fruit producing native plants	ALLOW	1	\$5,000.00	\$5,000	Plants selected to invite birds, small mammals, and insects
Design & Engineering	Percent	20%		\$3,400	Expect to pay between 15-20% of projected project costs
Contingency (15%)	Percent	15%		\$2,550	
TOTAL				\$22,950	

BRIDGE AND ADA PARKING

Item	Unit	Qty	Cost/Unit	Extended Cost	Notes
Asphalt parking lot	SPACE	4	\$1,600.00	\$6,400	Includes striping/ADA signage
Grading/site prep	ALLOW	1	\$12,500.00	\$12,500	
Permatrak boardwalk	SF	612	\$60.00	\$36,720	Installation cost depends on site conditions/customizations
Replace pedestrian bridge	LF	30	\$2,000.00	\$60,000	Prefab pedestrian bridge
Railing along edge of gathering area	LF	50	\$55.00	\$2,750	Timber hand railing
Split Rail Fence	LF	13	\$25.00	\$325	
Granite Curb	LF	60	\$36.00	\$2,160	6" curb around parking area
Culvert under parking lot	LF	66	\$20.00	\$1,320	Corrugated metal pipe under parking lot to convey drainage along Needham Road to stream
Streambank stabilization/drainage outfall	ALLOW	1	\$5,000.00	\$5,000	
Trash Receptacle	EA	1	\$1,415.00	\$1,415	Victor Stanley, black
Vehicle Bollards	EA	4	\$2,500.00	\$10,000	
Design & Engineering	Percent	20%		\$27,718	Expect to pay between 15-20% of projected project costs
Contingency (15%)	Percent	15%		\$20,789	
TOTAL				\$187,097	

PROJECTS & BUDGET

CROSSWALK ON MCLENDON DRIVE

(To be coordinated with the appropriate transportation authority)

Item	Unit	Qty	Cost/Unit	Extended Cost	Notes
Thermoplastic striping for crosswalk	LF	132	\$2.44	\$322	
Crosswalk signage	EA	2	\$500.00	\$1,000	
ADA ramps	EA	2	\$2,500.00	\$5,000	
Design & Engineering	Percent	20%		\$1,264	Expect to pay between 15-20% of projected project costs
Contingency (15%)	Percent	15%		\$948	

TOTAL \$8,535

WOODLAND TRAILS AND LEARNING CIRCLE

Item	Unit	Qty	Cost/Unit	Extended Cost	Notes
Trail construction	LF	720	\$6.75	\$4,860	Soft surface single-track compacted soft-surface trail
Grading	ALLOW	1	\$3,500.00	\$3,500	
Clearing and grubbing	AC	0.25	\$3,500.00	\$875	
ADA-compliant trail bed	SF	1000	\$2.00	\$2,000	ADA trail from parking area to first picnic table
ADA-compliant picnic area	EA	1	\$5,500.00	\$5,500	Includes stone aggregate pad to create level surface in timber frame with one waste receptacle and one accessible picnic table
Learning Circle Benches	EA	5	\$800.00	\$4,000	Constructed of wood or stone
Climbing log and tree stump seats	ALLOW	1	\$1,500.00	\$500	Possible labor cost of moving and cutting
Design & Engineering	Percent	20%		\$4,247	Expect to pay between 15-20% of projected project costs
Contingency (15%)	Percent	15%		\$3,185	

TOTAL \$28,667

SECOND BRIDGE WITH STAIR

Item	Unit	Qty	Cost/Unit	Extended Cost	Notes
New pedestrian bridge	LF	30	\$2,000.00	\$60,000	Precast concrete piers. Cost includes engineering design, materials, delivery, and installation
Timber Stairs	ALLOW	1	\$5,000.00	\$5,000	6' w timber or natural stone steps, bridge to woodland trail
Steel Hand Railing	LF	35	\$99.00	\$3,465	
Design & Engineering	Percent	20%		\$13,693	Expect to pay between 15-20% of projected project costs
Contingency (15%)	Percent	15%		\$10,270	
TOTAL				\$92,428	

GUARDRAIL RELOCATION (To be coordinated with the appropriate transportation authority)

Item	Unit	Qty	Cost/Unit	Extended Cost	Notes
Remove/reset vehicular guardrail	LF	120	\$32.00	\$3,840	
Vehicular guardrail flared terminal ends	EA	4	\$75.00	\$300	
Park Sign	EA	1	\$3,620.00	\$3,620	Coordinate signage design with DRPCA
Removable vehicle bollards	EA	2	\$2,500.00	\$5,000	Maintenance access
Design & Engineering	Percent	20%		\$2,552	Expect to pay between 15-20% of projected project costs
Contingency (15%)	Percent	15%		\$1,914	
TOTAL				\$17,226	

PARKING IMPROVEMENT ON NEEDHAM DRIVE

Item	Unit	Qty	Cost/Unit	Extended Cost	Notes
On-street parallel parking spaces with permeable pavers	ALLOW	3	\$3,000.00	\$9,000	To infiltrate stormwater and reduce erosion
Vegetation Clean-Up/Invasives Removal	ALLOW	1	\$5,000.00	\$1,000	
Design & Engineering	Percent	20%		\$2,000	Expect to pay between 15-20% of projected project costs
Contingency (15%)	Percent	15%		\$1,500	
TOTAL				\$13,500	

PROJECTS & BUDGET

SMALL PROJECTS (DIVIDED AS NEEDED): BENCH, SWING BENCH, PICNIC TABLE, OR PARK SIGN (This project can be divided into multiple projects as budget allows; each piece of site furniture should be installed on a pad to prevent erosion and to stabilization site)					
Item	Unit	Qty	Cost/Unit	Extended Cost	Notes
Swing Benches	EA	3	\$5,000.00	\$15,000	Includes freight shipping and installation on a concrete or crushed stone pad
Benches	EA	4	\$3,600	\$14,400	Includes freight shipping and installation on a concrete or crushed stone pad
Picnic table	EA	1	\$2,000.00	\$2,000	Includes freight shipping and installation on a concrete or crushed stone pad
Design & Engineering	Percent	20%		\$5,389	Expect to pay between 15-20% of projected project costs
Contingency (15%)	Percent	15%		\$4,042	
TOTAL				\$40,831	
GRAND TOTAL				\$827,410	

Appendix A

Native Plants Observed

Native trees observed in Needham Park

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Carya</i> sp.	hickory
<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>	sweetgum
<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	tuliptree
<i>Morus alba</i>	mulberry, white
<i>Morus rubra</i>	mulberry, red
<i>Pinus taeda</i>	loblolly pine
<i>Quercus alba</i>	white oak
<i>Quercus falcata</i>	southern red oak
<i>Quercus nigra</i>	water oak
<i>Quercus stellata</i>	post oak
<i>Ulmus</i> sp.	Elm

A tree survey by a certified arborist is recommended before beginning restoration or path installation, to evaluate the health of existing trees.

Native vines observed in Needham Park

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>	Virginia creeper
* <i>Rubus</i> sp.	blackberry (thorns)
* <i>Smilax</i> sp.	catbrier (thorns)
* <i>Toxicodendron radicans</i>	poison ivy (poisonous)
<i>Vitis rotundifolia</i>	muscadine grape

Many of the native plant species that are able to survive in the midst of invasive exotic plants are aggressive, woody, and sometimes thorny or poisonous themselves. All of the above produce an abundance of important fruits for wildlife.

*Plants with thorns or poisonous attributes, however, will need to be carefully managed and kept away from pathways and seating areas. Poison ivy should be removed from tree trunks in the open lawn.



Native, but hazardous, poison ivy on an oak in Needham Park's lawn

Appendix B

Recommended Plant List

Recommended evergreen trees and shrubs for screening

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Ilex glabra</i>	inkberry holly (shrub)
<i>Ilex opaca</i>	American holly (tree)
<i>Ilex vomitoria</i>	yaupon holly (tree)
<i>Juniperus virginiana</i> ¹	eastern redcedar (tree)
<i>Leucothoe fontanesiana</i>	highland dog-hobble (shrub)
<i>Morella cerifera</i>	wax myrtle (shrub/tree)
<i>Pinus strobus</i> ¹	white pine (tree)
<i>Prunus caroliniana</i> ²	Carolina cherry laurel (shrub/tree)

Recommended understory/groundcover plants for woodlands

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Asarum canadense</i>	wild ginger
<i>Carex pennsylvanica</i>	Pennsylvania sedge
<i>Carex plantaginea</i>	seersucker sedge
<i>Chrysogonum virginianum</i>	green-and-gold
<i>Geranium maculatum</i>	wild geranium, crane's-bill
<i>Hexastylis</i> spp.	little brown jugs, heartleaf, wild ginger
<i>Iris cristata</i> ³	dwarf crested iris
<i>Mertensia virginica</i> ³	Virginia bluebells (photo 1, facing page)
<i>Pachysandra procumbens</i>	Allegheny spurge
<i>Phlox divaricata</i> ³	woodland phlox
<i>Podophyllum peltatum</i>	mayapple
<i>Polystichum acrostichoides</i>	Christmas fern
<i>Stylophorum diphyllum</i>	celandine poppy
<i>Tiarella cordifolia</i>	foamflower
<i>Trillium</i> spp. ³	trillium

Recommended plants for streambanks and wet areas (not exhaustive)

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Asclepias perennis</i>	aquatic milkweed (photo 2, below)
<i>Eutrochium purpureum</i> or <i>E. fistulosum</i>	joe-pye weed, purple node or hollow-stem
<i>Helianthus angustifolius</i>	swamp sunflower
<i>Leucothoe fontanesiana</i>	doghobble, mountain
<i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>	cardinal flower (photo 1, below)
<i>Vernonia noveboracensis</i> or <i>V. lettermannii</i>	ironweed, New York or threadleaf

Recommended plants for wildlife (not exhaustive)

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Callicarpa americana</i>	American beautyberry (photo 3, below)
<i>Ilex verticillata</i> and <i>I. opaca</i>	winterberry and American hollies
<i>Solidago</i> spp.	goldenrods
<i>Viburnum</i> spp.	viburnums



Photos 1 and 2 by Chris Evans, University of Illinois, Bugwood.org; photo 3 by Eric Hunt, 2012 Commons.Wikimedia.org

Notes

This appendix provides a list of *some* of the native plants that could be installed in place of non-native and invasive species. It does not inventory valuable native plants that are already on the site. Efforts should be made to manage and retain these plants including: pawpaw, muscadine, etc. A few native plant species will need to be removed or managed for public safety reasons including poison ivy and smilax or “catbrier.”

¹ Typically require full/part sun, should be planted in canopy gaps or areas that will receive six or more hours of sun per day

² Can be pruned as a hedge but requires ongoing pruning to maintain as a hedge

³ Spring ephemeral (plant flowers before canopy trees leaf out and shade groundlayer), foliage may persist

Appendix C

Invasive Exotic Plants

Many of the most destructive invasive plant species are introduced by homeowners and municipalities who want an easy groundcover, erosion control, or “low maintenance” planting solution. Plants categorized as invasive exotics are typically evergreen and characterized by high production of fruit and/or spreading roots. Invasive plants displace native plant species by shading them out or aggressively taking over their resources (mineral nutrients, sunlight, and water). Invasive vines, especially evergreen varieties, kill trees by covering tree trunks and branches, putting extra weight and stress on the trees, and rotting the bark. A mature hardwood tree can be killed by vines like English ivy in only two to three years.

Invasive exotic plants displace the food sources of native animals. Many animals, including insects, depend on specific native plants as host plants, and can not simply eat another plant. Non-native plants encourage the colonization of non-native animals. Evergreen blankets of groundlayer plants also provide a moist, protected habitat that extends the number of months that mosquitoes can thrive.

Forests in the Piedmont region typically have an open leaf-covered understory, that is brown in the fall and winter. Fallen leaves decompose through the winter returning nutrients to the trees and rebuilding soils. Invasive exotic plant infestations disrupt this balance and create situations requiring constant and costly maintenance.

Priority invasive exotic plants to eradicate (observed on the site)

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	PHOTO #
<i>Achyranthes japonica</i>	Japanese chaff flower	1
<i>Phyllostachys</i> spp.	bamboo	2
<i>Dioscorea</i> spp.	air potato vine, Chinese yam	3
<i>Elaeagnus pungens</i> and other spp.	thorny olive/autumn olive	4
<i>Euonymous fortunei</i>	wintercreeper, creeping euonymous	5
<i>Hedera helix</i>	English ivy	6
<i>Ligustrum sinense</i>	Chinese privet	7
<i>Liriope spicata</i>	Monkey grass	8
<i>Lonicera japonica</i>	Japanese honeysuckle	9
<i>Lonicera maackii</i>	amur honeysuckle	10
<i>Microstegium</i> spp.	stiltgrass	11
<i>Pueraria montana</i>	kudzu	12
<i>Rosa multiflora</i>	multiflora rose	13
<i>Wisteria sinensis</i>	Chinese wisteria	14

Invasive exotic plants to avoid (do not plant)

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Ajuga reptans</i>	ajuga
<i>Liriope maculatus</i>	monkey grass
<i>Liriope spicata</i>	creeping lilyturf
<i>Pachysandra terminalis</i>	pachysandra, Japanese
<i>Vinca minor</i>	vinca or periwinkle



Photo Credits:

3, 5, 6 (leaf forms), 7 (leaf/flower), 9 (flower/fruit), 10, 11, 13 - Chris Evans, University of Illinois, Bugwood.org

2, 12, 14 (fruit/leaf) - James H. Miller, USDA Forest Service; Bugwood.org

4 - James H. Miller & Ted Bodner, Southern Weed Science Society, Bugwood.org



233 Peachtree St NE
Suite 1600
Atlanta, GA 30303

parkpride.org
404-546-7965

Create opportunities in Needham Park to build community



Provide safe access to, circulation through, and community awareness of Needham Park



PLACES TO SIT AND ENJOY NATURE AND NEIGHBORS: BENCHES, SWING BENCHES, TABLES

ENERGY DISSIPATOR TO PREVENT SOIL EROSION AND TREE LOSS

Clearly identified entrance with safe paths that are accessible for all

Measures to slow traffic and ensure safe crossings

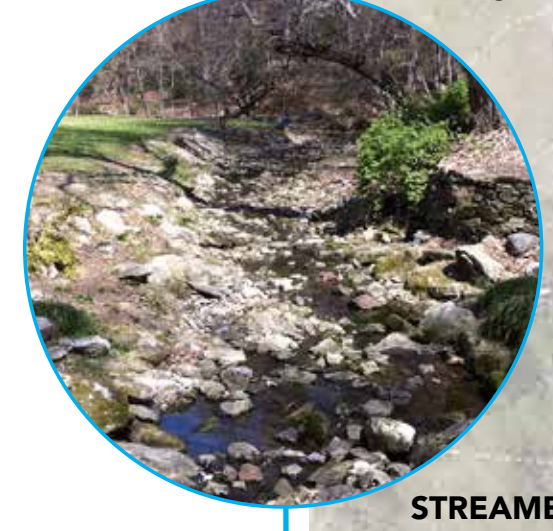


ACCESSIBLE PATHS AND ENTRANCES

Park entrance sign & rules



HABITAT RESTORATION AND INVASIVE PLANT REMOVAL



STREAMBANK RESTORATION

Protect, preserve, and enhance Needham Park's tree canopy, stream system and natural habitat



ON-STREET PARKING WITH PERMEABLE PAVERS TO INFILTRATE STORMWATER AND REDUCE EROSION



RUSTIC BENCHES IN WOODLAND



WALKING TRAILS THROUGH WILDLIFE HABITAT

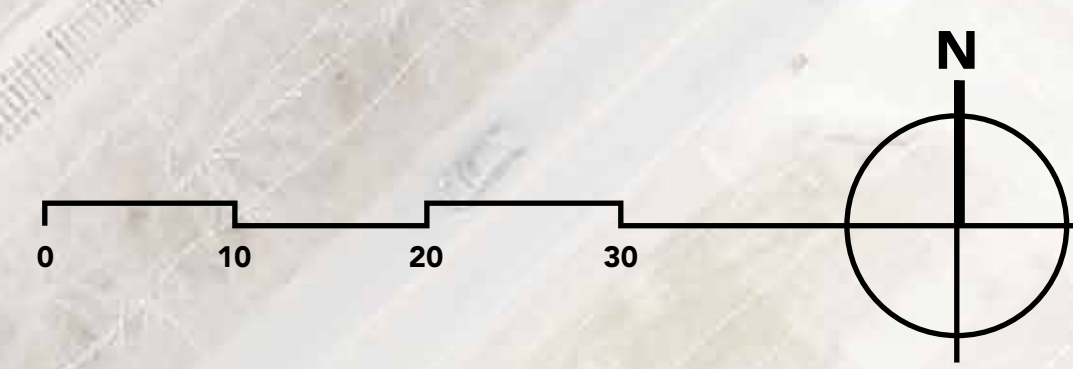


WOODLAND LEARNING CIRCLE WITH CLIMBING LOG

Create a peaceful, safe, and educational place to enjoy nature



SOFT-SURFACE WOODLAND TRAILS PLANNED ON NATURAL CONTOURS FOR MINIMAL IMPACT



VISION PLAN FEATURES

- New entrance into park on McLendon Drive, with low impact ADA-compliant walkway, providing safe welcoming access to the meadow area, the bridge, and woodland trails
- Habitat restoration, removal of invasive species and poison ivy, protection of existing canopy trees. New plantings of native understory, shrubs, and trees
- Stream restoration to lessen soil erosion and slow stormwater
- Outfall repair on McLendon Drive, install energy dissipator and boulders, regrade and stabilize banks; evaluate white oak during process
- Enhance the connection between the woodland and meadow areas of the park by replacing the existing bridge with a more durable material, raised to meet the grade of the parking area and connect to the north side with a platform and ADA-compliant boardwalk over wet area at end of existing bridge to prevent compaction and erosion
- On-street parking on Needham Drive; permeable pavers and improved drainage channel to better control stormwater from E. Ponce de Leon Avenue
- Soft-surface loop trail through woodland side of park, with smaller footpath connections
- Crosswalk to park across McLendon Drive, with rapid-flash beacons to slow traffic
- Implementation to happen over time as a series of projects as shown in the project diagram

NEEDHAM PARK 2019 Vision Plan