

# **Playground Improvements Implementation Manual**









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# Introduction

The Outdoor Activity Center (OAC) is a 26 acre urban nature preserve in southwest Atlanta. The local non-profit West Atlanta Watershed Alliance (WAWA) programs the nature preserve and its facilities focusing on ecology and conservation education, and building an appreciation for natural spaces with children and adults. The OAC boasts 2 miles of trails, a community garden, a bioponica growing system, a multi-purpose building with an aquarium and a nature themed play area.

The center has unique and aging wooden play equipment located throughout the heavily treed backyard. Due to age and weathering, certain play pieces have been removed or have been left in disrepair. It has slowly become a liability, and at the same time new code and tree recompense ordinances have made it difficult to keep the integrity of the nature play area. Yet replacing it with new standard playground would not suit the space or mission of the OAC.

In the fall of 2013, WAWA secured a Park Pride Grant to re-imagine the play area. The grant includes investing in a Visioning process with Park Pride to engage interested stakeholders in developing a new plan for OAC play area.

Design consulting firms KAIZEN Collaborative, LLC and Perez Planning + Design, LLC in a strategic partnership with playground specialist Atlanta Task Force on Play, partnered with Park Pride to collaboratively develop a new plan for the OAC play area.





Working collaboratively with WAWA, Park Pride, and community stakeholders, the Design Consultants and Playground Specialist developed a Conceptual Design for the OAC Playground. The Conceptual Design identified a series of improvements that were organized into three categories: Site Improvements, Structured Play Area Improvements, and Un-Structured Play Area Improvements. Following are descriptions of these three areas. The image on the right identifies the specific improvements proposed and the following highlight specific improvements.

### Site Improvements

Improvements related to playground access, circulation, comfort, and aesthetics.

### **Structured Play Area Improvements**

Improvements to spaces with facilities that have a specific purpose and facilitate a particular activity.

### **Un-Structured Play Area Improvements**

Improvements to spaces that allow children and visitors to use objects creatively.



### Legend

### **Site Improvements**

Gateways
 Trail Improvements
 Wooden Steps
 Enhanced Ponds
 Composting Demonstration Area Relocation
 Landscape Enhancements
 Movable Tables + Chairs
 Outdoor Classroom + Fire Pit
 Musical Wall

### **Structured Play Area Improvements**

Tree House with Slide
 Suspension Bridge
 Existing Play Structure Enhancement
 Monkey Bars
 Zip Line
 Swing
 Climbing Net
 Formal Story Time Area

### **Un-Structured Play Area**

Logs + Stumps Course
 Sand Pit or Dirt Play
 Build and Tear Down Area
 Bird's Nest



### Site Improvement Highlights

(1) Gateways

(2) Trail Improvements

⑦ Movable Tables + Chairs

(8) OutdoorClassroom + FirePit

9 Musical Wall















### Structured Play Area Improvement Highlights

(10) Tree House with  $\tilde{(1)}$  Slide Connected to existing Deck Area by new Suspension Bridge





ora/ Tree style slide by DVMG https://creativecommons.c licenses/by/3.0/

(12) Existing Play Structure Enhancement









Existing Playground



Potential Playground Improvements



### Structured Play Area Improvement Highlights

(3) Monkey Bars

(4) Zip Line

(15) Nest Swing

(16) Climbing Net









City of Vienna, Austria in 2019.65 by CAPTAIN RAJU https://creativecommons.org/ licenses/by-sa/4.0/

Playground swing 03 by Kritzolina https://creativecommons.org/ licenses/by-sa/4.0/



### **Un-Structured Play Area Improvement Highlights**

18 Logs + Stumps Course





19 Sand Pit or Dirt Play











(21) Bird's Nest



Waldkindergarten im Wald nicht erwünscht https://www.blickpunkt-sh.com/2015/04/24/ bokhorst-kreis-ploen-waldkindergarten-imwald-nicht-erwuenscht/

# Playground Improvement Guidelines 7



# **Playground Improvement Guidelines**

### **Overview**

The following guidelines have been compiled to assist WAWA in the implementation of the overall site improvements for the playground at the Outdoor Activity Center (OAC). It is important to note that each proposed improvement will require coordination with the City of Atlanta's Parks Department in order to insure that the proposed improvements are completed appropriately, safely, and in a manner that facilitates obtaining permits when necessary.

### **Community Involvement and Partnerships:**

Under the leadership of WAWA, it is recommended that each improvement to the OAC's existing playground encourage involvement from the local community and the private sector. The involvement of the private sector could consist of:

- Corporate partnerships for donations towards improvement costs and volunteers for implementation of improvements.
- Fundraising from local businesses and families to allocate towards implementation of improvements.
- Enlist volunteers from community through OAC service work/learning opportunities for implementation.

This manual is set up to guide implementation of each playground improvement. The following elements are outlined within the manual for each recommended improvement:

- **Proposed Improvement** description of the improvement and its vision in the overall site plan for the OAC.
- Action for Implementation steps needed to move forward with the improvements; contact information for manufacturers, artists, architects, etc.
- **Cost for Implementation** for long-range planning and implementation, an *estimated* cost for each improvement is provided. Note that the estimates are based on conceptual information and are subject to change as the playground improvements are implemented.

While these implementation projects are being planned and conducted, it is important for WAWA to ensure that the OAC playground structure is a safe place to play. To that end, the following provides WAWA with a preliminary checklist to use to identify potential safety hazards and for identifying a Playground Safety Inspector to be involvement during the implementation of the playground improvements.





# **Playground Improvement Guidelines**







### **Public Playground Safety Checklist**

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission website provides the below standard checklist for public playground safety. This simple checklist can help make sure the Outdoor Activity Center's playground is a safe place to play. All improvements within the Outdoor Activity Center's play area should be approved by a City of Atlanta's Parks Department and a Playground Safety Expert.

- 1. Make sure surfaces around playground equipment have at least 12 inches of wood chips, mulch, sand or pea gravel, or mats made of safety-tested rubber or rubber-like materials.
- 2. Check that protective surfacing extends at least 6 feet in all directions from play equipment. For swings, be sure surfacing extends, in back and front, twice the height of the suspending bar.
- 3. Make sure play structures more than 30 inches high are spaced at least 9 feet apart.
- 4. Check for dangerous hardware like open "S" hooks or protruding bolt ends.
- 5. Make sure spaces that could trap children, such as openings in guardrails or between ladder rungs, measure less than 3.5 inches or more than 9 inches.
- 6. Check for sharp points or edges in equipment.
- 7. Look out for tripping hazards like exposed concrete footings, tree stumps, and rocks.
- 8. Make sure elevated surfaces, like platforms and ramps, have guardrails to prevent falls.
- 9. Check playgrounds regularly to see that equipment and surfacing are in good condition.

10. Carefully supervise children on playgrounds to make sure they're safe.

### Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI) Certification

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is dedicated to promoting children's right to play in a safe and challenging play environment. It is NRPA's goal to train and certify at least one person from every community across the United States to be a Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI). The CPSI program offers the most comprehensive and up-to-date training on playground safety as well as provides certification for playground safety inspectors. To find a consultant in the Atlanta area, go to the CPSI registry online at *www.nrpa.org/CPSI\_registry*.

### **Existing Play Structure Enhancement**

No child in the community could imagine the play area at the Outdoor Activity Center without its current play structure. For this reason, care should be taken to maintain and renovate the existing structure and its foundation. If during the maintenance and renovation of the structure it is determined that the structure or any of its elements do not meet safety code, the WAWA board should carefully consider what options would be required for the structure to be brought up to code. The below suggestions for improvements reflect the strongest feedback received during the visioning process which was to preserve the existing play structure.

**Proposed Improvement**: The main play structure exhibits signs of age and weathering after years of use and enjoyment. It is recommended that the existing elements be refurbished and renovated to promote a high level of safety and improve the aesthetics of the existing play structure, which is a key element of the OAC's identity. Recommendations for the maintenance and renovation of the main structure include:

- The decking and railing caps should be replaced with TREX composite boards wherever possible. This material will provide more longevity than pressure treated wood, will weather more gracefully, and will still blend with the natural setting.
- The railings need to be inspected to insure they meet safety codes for height and spacing. Any alterations to the railings need to meet design codes.
- The tire tunnel should be examined for safety and structural stability.
- Stand alone platforms, which do not currently connect to the existing play structure, are prime areas for relocation, retrofitting or removal to make space for newer components such as the zip-line, swings, or additional monkey bars.
- A structural engineer should be consulted to determine whether it is feasible to open the area beneath the top deck of the play structure. This would improve circulation and provide an ideal location for a number of smaller components.

Action for Implementation: The following pages illustrate some ideas for potential improvements to the existing play structure identified during the visioning of the playground and especially during the Children's Workshop. These proposed improvements would have to be studied further by a structural engineer to ascertain the overall stability and integrity of the existing play structure. In addition, a playground consultant should visit the site to give a professional opinion on what items in the implementation improvement manual are feasible. With the existing structure being wood, it would be a possibility to

consult with a local craftsman to custom the structures renovation under the supervision of a playground safety expert. Below are specialists who might be consulted for the maintenance and renovation of the play structure:

**Structural Engineer** - Stability Engineering, 431 West Ponce de Leon Av., Suite 4, Decatur, GA 30030 (404) 377-9316

Carpenter - Atlanta Technical College www.atlantatech.edu or www.angieslist.com

**Certified Playground Expert** - CPSI registry online at *www.nrpa.org/CPSI\_registry* 

**Cost of Implementation**: Structural Engineering Consultant will be approximately \$150 per hour. If necessary, the cost of renovations/refurbishing can range from \$5,000 to \$25,000.



Existing Conditions of the Outdoor Activity Center Play Structure



Existing Play Structure

The OAC's existing wooden playground is the most popular play feature in the park. However, due to its age and natural materials, the playground is beginning to show signs of disrepair. While completing repairs, WAWA should also consider expanding and enhancing the play structure. The image on the right illustrates some potential improvements identified by neighborhood children that regularly use the playground. WAWA would have to hire a playground consultant and carpenter to determine the feasibility of these proposed improvements.

### Increase height of deck

Children expressed a desire to have a variety of deck heights that they could climb to or crawl under. Specifically, they would like to see the height of the deck increased to allow them to enter the deck without crawling.



Potential Play Structure Improvement

### Create more openings

Children expressed a desire to see more permeable spaces that would allow light to enter dark spaces and would create new nooks and crannies to climb and crawl into.

The items that follow should ideally be incorporated into the existing play structure. If this isn't possible due to regulations or manufacturer standards, they should be located in such a way that they are integrated into the overall balance of the structured play area.

### Slide

**Proposed Improvement**: The existing metal slide is well used and liked by neighborhood children. It is recommended that an additional slide be incorporated into the renovation of the existing play structure or the new tree house A slide that compliments the existing natural look of the playground should be considered.

Action for Implementation: In the initial site visit, the playground manufacturer can determine the structural quality of the existing slide and provide suggestions for addition or replacement in addition to installing any new components themselves. Possible manufacturers:

Detailed Play PRO PO Box 638 Manahawkin, NJ 08050 (877) 548-3100 | www.detailedplaypro.com

### Landscape Structures Inc.

601 7th Street South Delano, MN 55328 USA 888-752-9574 | www.playlsi.com

Cost of Implementation: Estimated range of \$500.00 to \$2,000.00 for new slide equipment.

### **Nest Swing**

**Proposed Improvement:** Swings were a popular item requested by the neighborhood children. An atypical, circular swing design with unique web netting will add flavor and variety to the structured play area. It is recommended that the swing be incorporated into the existing play structure, but it can also function as a stand alone component.

**Action for Implementation**: Consult a structural engineer and playground specialist during the design process regarding inclusion of the Nest Swing into the play structure. A certified manufacturer who produces swings designed for public use should be contacted. Possible manufacturers:

InCord - Huck Nets USA 226 Upton Rd. 06415 Colchester (860) 537.1414 | Email: info@hucknet.com

KOMPAN Inc. 930 Broadway Tacoma, Washington 98402 (800) 426.9788 | Email: contact@KOMPAN.com

**Cost of Implementation**: Estimated range of \$500.00 to \$2,000.00 for swing equipment.









### **Zip Line**

**Proposed Improvement**: A safe, low-speed zip line structure connecting the Structured and Unstructured play areas will encourage exploration and imagination within the OAC playground. Locating the zip line where the tire tunnel currently sits would be ideal. This distinguished component will contribute towards making the space distinct and memorable.

Action for Implementation: Contact multiple manufacturers who are experienced with playground implementation to get direction concerning exact placement and safety as well as a range of costs and designs. Possible manufacturers:

### Playworld Systems, Inc.

1000 Buffalo Road Lewisburg, PA 17837-9795 USA 1+ (800) 233.8404 (570) 522.9800 | Email: info@PlayworldSystems.com

### Landscape Structures Inc.

601 7th Street South Delano, MN 55328 USA (888) 438.6574

**Cost of Implementation**: Between \$10,000.00 and \$25,000.00 for zip line equipment.





### **Monkey Bars**

**Proposed Improvement**: Evaluation of the existing monkey bar set is recommended to determine safety and structural integrity. If refurbishment or redesign is necessary, a new set can be designed which complements the overall aesthetic of the OAC play area. Additional monkey bars should also be considered throughout the playground to connect platforms and other isolated areas of the existing play structure. Refer to the Site Improvement Plan in the appendix for suggested additional locations for consideration.

Action for Implementation: A structural engineer should be hired to ascertain the overall stability and integrity of the monkey bar set. In the case that renovation is recommended, a structural engineer and playground specialist or manufacturer may be consulted to determine the design/placement.

**Cost of Implementation**: Between \$750.00 and \$1,500.00 for manufactured monkey bar set.



### **Tree House**

**Proposed Improvement:** The old tree house recently removed by the OAC was one of the most popular play components within the OAC playground. Throughout the various public input workshops, adults and neighborhood children alike requested that a new tree house be built in the playground. Ideally, a new tree house would be integrated into the existing trees and would minimize tree removal. The addition of a tree house will provide children with a new source of imagination while becoming one of the main focal points of the OAC playground. A local designer can provide plans for a tree house that complements the existing features (most notably the play structure) and stands alone as an integral part of the site's identity.

Action for Implementation: The tree house should be located on axis with the entrance gateway, visible from the parking lot. It should be designed and built by a local architect, craftsman, and playground specialist that have past experience. Contact a local designer or architect with experience building tree houses in similar conditions. Care should be taken during this process to consult a qualified designer who can use natural materials and minimize tree disturbance. Possible architect or artists:

**Architect** - Houser Walker Architecture, 1819 Peachtree Rd. NE, Suite 102, Atlanta, GA U.S. 30309 (404) 633.4264 | *www.houserwalker.com* 

Artist Group - Wonder Root, 982 Memorial Dr Se, Atlanta, GA 30316 (404) 254-5955 | www. wonderroot.org

Artist Resource - City of Atlanta Office of Cultural Affairs | www.ocaatlanta.com

**Cost of Implementation:** While the final costs of the tree house will be based on various factors including size, design complexity, height, location within the site, etc., it is anticipated that costs could range from \$50,000.00 to \$100,000.00.







### **Climbing Net**

**Proposed Improvement**: A climbing net is recommended as an enhancement for the existing play structure. Adding the component between two of the existing wooden platforms would provide additional connectivity through the structured play area.

Action for Implementation: A structural engineer should be hired to ascertain the overall stability and integrity of the existing platforms. A playground specialist or manufacturer may be consulted to determine the design/placement of the climbing net. Possible manufacturers:

InCord 226 Upton Road Colchester, CT 06415 (800) 596-1066 www.incord.com

**Cost of Implementation**: Between \$3,000.00 and \$5,000.00 for materials and installation.

### Formal Story Time Area

**Proposed Improvement**: A majestic Beach Tree awaits the enjoyment of the children towards the back of the OAC play area. The area around the tree is recommended as a formal story time area as the trail improvements lead children into the proposed curved benches approximately 4' long which would circle around the tree.

Action for Implementation: Manufacturers of various wooden bench styles should be contacted to receive product samples. It is recommended for the benches to not have a back and to be spaced approximately 18" apart. The benches would be permenantly installed with in-ground mounting of the legs. This could also be a component that a local carpenter could custom for the OAC.

**Cost for Implementation:** Approximately \$10,000.00 to \$15,000.00 for materials and installation.







Outdoor classroom, Crane Park geograph.org.uk - 2871284 by Marathon https://creativecommons.org/ licenses/by-sa/2.0/

### Hollowed Log Tunnels

**Proposed Improvement**: Allowing children to play on and around wooden logs, a common condition found on the OAC site, was identified early in the conceptual design process as highly desirable activity. Allowing a child to play through the center of a wooden or man-made log is an additional experience for children and can be met by the use of a manufactured hollowed log tunnel. These tunnels would be used in conjunction with the log stepping stones and balance beams to create a continuous, linear play feature through the structured and unstructured play areas. Hollowed log tunnels could be located on each side of the intersections of the slate chips pathways as shown on the Site Improvement plans within the appendix.

Action for Implementation: A local craftsman and volunteers might be considered for constructing and creating these elements from downed trees. Also, several manufacturers are available to provide this play feature. It is recommended that the selected hollowed log tunnel have a height and width in the range of 24"-30" and a length of 5'-6'. The tunnel should have a natural appearance that blends with the existing setting at the OAC, and be constructed of a durable composite or GRFC concrete material.

**Cost for Implementation**: \$2,500.00 to \$5,000.00 for a hollowed log tunnel. The Site Improvement Plan allocated 10 hollowed log tunnels. The cost for implementation of the hollowed log tunnels is estimated at \$48,000.00, including labor and materials.

### **Log Stepping Stones**

**Proposed Improvement**: In addition to the hollowed log tunnels, log stepping stones are proposed to offer another themed play feature that challenges children's abilities and imaginations. These stepping stones would be located along with the hollowed log tunnels and log balance beams to create the linear play feature through the structured and unstructured play areas as shown on the Site Improvement Plan within the appendix.

Action for Implementation: A local craftsman and volunteers might be considered for constructing and creating these elements from downed trees. Also, several manufacturers are available to provide this play feature. It is recommended that the selected log stepping stones have heights in the range of 4"-20" and diameters of 14"-18" to provide variety and challenge. The stepping stones should have a natural appearance that blends with the existing setting at the OAC, and be constructed of a durable composite or GRFC concrete material.

**Cost for Implementation**: \$1,000.00 to \$1,800.00 for a log stepping stone. The Site Improvement Plan allocated 35 log stepping stones. The cost for implementation of the log stepping stones is estimated at \$49,000.00 for materials, including labor and materials. This component assumes some portion of the labor to be volunteer forces.



### Log Balance Beams

**Proposed Improvement**: In addition to the hollowed log tunnels, log balance beams are proposed to offer another themed play feature that challenges children's abilities and imaginations. These balance beams would be integrated with the hollowed log tunnels and log stepping stones to create the proposed linear play feature through the structured and unstructured play areas.

**Action for Implementation**: Several manufacturers are available to provide this play feature. It is recommended that the selected log balance beams have a height in the range of 12", width of 24", and a length of 6'. The balance beams should have a natural appearance that blends with the existing setting at the OAC, and be constructed of a durable composite or GRFC concrete material.

**Cost for Implementation**: \$1,500.00 to \$3,000.00 for a log balance beam. The Site Improvement Plan allocated 12 log balance beams. The cost for implementation of the log balance beams is estimated at \$32,000.00 including labor and materials.

Manufacturers contact information for hollowed log tunnels, log stepping stones, and log balance beams are:

BYO Recreation, Inc. 405 Golfway West Drive, Suite #302 Saint Augustine, FL 32095 800-853-5316 www.byoplayground.com Cre8play 5121 Winnetka Ave North, Suite 108 New Hope, MN 55428 612-670-8195 www.cre8play.com Landscape Structures Inc. 601 7th Street South Delano, MN 55328 USA 888-752-9574 www.playlsi.com





### **Bird's Nest**

**Proposed Improvement**: Creating a play space and environmental art piece through the construction of a large, human-scaled replica of a bird's nest was identified early on in the design process with much enthusiasm. This creation will provide children with many opportunities to exercise their imaginations while also providing a space for quiet time as well as group gatherings.

**Action for Implementation**: The bird's nest should be constructed by a local craftsman or artist with experience in building this type of feature. Possible craftsmen:

**J.D. Koth** 404-934-1741 | jdkoth1@gmail.com

Patrick Dougherty stickwork@earthlink.net | branchwork@earthlink.net

Cost for Implementation: \$5,000.00-\$50,000.00, depending on design chosen.



### Interpretive Educational Signage

**Proposed Improvement**: Replacing the existing signs at the OAC with new City of Atlanta Parks and Recreation Department's standard sign will provide a fresh new look to the way visitors are guided through and taught about the OAC's plants and wildlife programs and other features and amenities. New educational interpretive signage should meet existing sign standards for achieving a consistent look and blending the signage material with the natural setting of the wooded site.

**Action for Implementation**: Contact the City of Atlanta's Parks Department for coordination of the sign layout, installation, and overall approval.

**Cost for Implementation**: Cost is dependent upon final quantity. Estimated cost based on the amount of signage currently at the OAC and similar to example imagery may range between \$1,500.00 - \$2,500.00.



### Sand Pit or Dirt Play

**Proposed Improvement:** It is widely know that children enjoy digging and playing in natural materials such as sand or dirt. During the public input process of this project, providing an opportunity for unstructured play with either dirt or sand was mentioned multiple times. The area proposed for the sand pit or dirt play is shown on the Site Improvement Plan located in the appendix. This area would allow children to be hands-on with natural materials and utilize either sticks or shovels for digging.

**Actions for Implementation:** This component can be implemented by WAWA with volunteers. The area should be delineated by the log stepping stones and log balance beams. Either natural materials such as sticks or man-made materials such as plastic shovels and buckets can be placed inside the stepping stones. The ground should be exposed so that the children can dig into the dirt or lined for sand to be placed within the stepping stones.

**Cost for Implementation:** With volunteer labor, the cost would be between \$100.00 and \$500.00 for materials.

### **Build and Tear Down Area**

**Proposed Improvement:** The unstructured play area proposed should have an area for children to utility materials to 'build' and to 'tear down'. This area will allow for open creativity and can utilize many of the existing natural materials already located in the OAC play area such as sticks, trees, leaves, rocks, stumps, etc.

**Actions for Implementation:** This component can be implemented by WAWA with volunteers. The Site Improvement Plan in the appendix shows the area for the Build and Tear Down activities. The log stepping stones and log balance beams will be used to lead children into the Build and Tear Down area and will define the area.

**Cost for Implementation:** With volunteer labor, the cost would be between \$100.00 and \$500.00 for materials.



### **Tree Removal**

**Proposed Improvement:** The plan strategically proposes to remove trees which impede safe and efficient circulation throughout the playground area, in addition to any that are dead, dying or hazardous (DDH). The Site Improvement Plan within the appendix suggests tree removal for implementing the overall site improvements. The total tree removal for the entire site improvement plans consists of:

- 30 total trees to be removed (2 already dead)
- 245" diameter of trees to be removed (51" of dead trees)
- 82 x 3" caliper trees could potentially be required to be replanted on the OAC property

**Actions for Implementation:** Contact the City of Atlanta Parks Arborist to confirm DDH trees. All trees determined by the Parks Arborists as DDH will reduce the overall replanting quantities.

Paul Lewkowicz, Arborist City of Atlanta Department of Parks and Recreation 233 Peachtree Street, Suite 1700 Atlanta, Georgia 30303 (404) 546-6862 plewkowicz@atlantaga.gov



It is recommended that WAWA higher a consultant familiar with the City of Atlanta's Tree Ordinance in order to provide the appropriate Tree Replacement and Tree Protection Plans required for approval of tree removal. The tree ordinance can be reviewed on the City of Atlanta website at *www.atlantaga.gov/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=1522*. Once the tree removal has been permitted through the city, WAWA should obtain 3 estimates from local tree removal contractors with experience and references at time of construction.

**Cost for Implementation:** Assuming \$300 per tree average for removal, for complete removal of 30 trees \$9,000.00 should be estimated in total. At a price of \$250 per planted tree, expect an estimated cost of \$20,500.00 for tree replanting.



### Signage Removal

**Proposed Improvement:** All existing signage in the playground area and the outdoor spaces at the OAC are old and in disrepair. Removal of the old signage and replacement is recommended in order to have consistency throughout the site and to allow for the signage to be designed to blend with the natural setting of the wooded site.

**Actions for Implementation:** This improvement is one that can be easily facilitated with volunteers. Refer to page 21 for guidance with new Interpretive Educational Signage.

Cost for Implementation: less than \$100.00 to facilitate volunteers

### **Composting Demonstration Area Relocation**

**Proposed Improvement:** The compost demonstration area has been located at the Outdoor Activity Center in its current location for many years. In order to facilitate public access to the playground and develop the proposed 'gateway' entrance from the parking lot to the playground, it is recommended for the compost demonstration area to be relocated to the area south of the hydroponics garden as shown on the Site Improvement Plan within the appendix.

**Actions for Implementation:** This improvement is one that can be easily facilitated with volunteers.

**Cost for Implementation:** less than \$100.00 to facilitate volunteers





### **Trail Improvements**

**Proposed Improvement:** Delineating the existing walking trails within the playground area is recommended to achieve a variety of benefits. These benefits include: providing playground visitors with a clear and distinguishable circulation path connecting the various spaces of the playground, providing visitors with a stable walking path, improving playground aesthetics, and framing specific spaces. It is recommended that new slate chip trails be constructed with a consistent width of 6 feet.

**Actions for Implementation:** Refer to the construction details within the appendix for materials and proper installation. Contact a local contractor with experience installing a slate chip trail such as:

Sportsfields Solutions Group P.O. Box 127 Rockmart, GA 30153 770-684-6583 www.sfsgroup.org

**Cost for Implementation:** Material costs for the slate chips will be approximately \$40-\$50 per ton. The slate chips are quarried in Georgia at:

Rockmart Slate Corporation 480 South Marble Street Rockmart, GA 30153 770-684-6583 www.rockmartslate.com **Outdoor Classroom + Fire Pit** 

**Proposed Improvement:** Various enhancements to the story time area were identified through the design process. These included the installation of a raised fire pit for the center of the outdoor classroom area and expansion of seating areas.

In addition to serving as a center piece for groups to gather around, the raised fire pit would also function as an elevated platform for group leaders to stand on while speaking to groups. The fire pit should have a cover and lock to reduce mis-use and insure safety. Additionally, a series of wooden log seats should be designed around the fire pit as illustrated in the Site Improvement plans located in the Appendix. The log seats can either be constructed by a craftsman and volunteers or purchased from manufacturers identified on page 19 under Log Stepping Stones.

**Actions for Implementation:** A manufacturer and local craftsman will be needed for the fire pit construction and installation. A craftsman and volunteers might be considered for constructing and creating the log seats. Also, several manufacturers are available to provide the log seats. These are identified on page 19 under Log Stepping Stones.

**Cost for Implementation:** Between \$5,000.00 and \$10,000.00 to purchase fire pit and construct stone.

The total square footage of trail surface within the Site Improvement Plan is 6,400 square feet. The overall trail improvements will cost approximately \$20,000.00 to \$25,000.00 for materials and labor.









### Gateways

**Proposed Improvement:** The desire to have a delineated entrance to the playground area from the parking lot was outlined early within the conceptual design phase. It is recommended that a wooden structure as shown in the image below be built at the connection of the slate chip trail with the parking lot. These gateway structures can also be constructed at the back gates leading from the playground area onto the natural trails. The gateways will provide a visual element that will invite users into the playground and onto the nature trails.

Actions for Implementation: The gateway should be constructed by a local craftsman or artist with experience designing and building elements from wood. Local craftsmen can be found through contacting Atlanta Technical College's carpentry program or online through *www.angieslist.com*.

**Cost for Implementation:** Approximately \$5,000.00 to \$10,000.00 per gateway.



### **Musical Wall**

**Proposed Improvement:** The existing wooden wall within the play area has been identified for repurposing for a musical element. Removal of the wooden slates and installation of chimes which could hang from the top is recommended.

**Actions for Implementation:** The chimes for the musical wall could either be of a wood material such as bamboo or of metal. A local artist and carpenter with experience building musical art pieces are recommended. WAWA can contact the City of Atlanta Office of Cultural Affairs to obtain a list of artist.

**Cost for Implementation:** Approximately \$3,000.00 to \$5,000.00.



### **Movable Tables/Chairs**

**Proposed Improvement:** To coordinate with the current programming needs of WAWA, it is recommended to improve the seating within the playground with movable tables and chairs. A central area for grouping mutiple tables and chairs is shown on the Site Improvement Plan and would need to have minor grading delineated by a small seat wall to provide a level surface for the main seating area. Additional areas for the movable tables and chairs are identified throughout the playground for parents to sit and watch their children play.

Actions for Implementation: Manufacturers of various movable styles should be contacted to receive product samples. It is recommended that the tables and chairs be foldable and stackable for ease of storage during large programmed events when space is needed for additional functions (i.e. camping). Utilizing a color such as the green or blue from the WAWA logo would allow the table and chairs to be recognized as part of the Outdoor Acitivty Center's furnishings and reduce theft.

**Cost for Implementation:** \$3,000.00 to \$5,000.00 for a table and four chairs. The Site Improvement Plan allocated seating for 116 chairs and 21 tables. The implementation of all tables and chairs within the Site Improvement Plan will cost approximately \$50,000.00.

### Seating Area Removal

**Proposed Improvement:** Removal of the existing picnic tables and benches are recommended in order to improve the playground area and circulation around the play structures. Providing site furnishings that are more functional for the WAWA programs is the desire within the Site Improvement Plan.

**Actions for Implementation:** This improvement is one that can be easily facilitated with volunteers.

Cost for Implementation: Less than \$100.00 to facilitate volunteers



Existing Picnic-Style Tables and Seating

### **Rules Signage**

**Proposed Improvement:** Install a City of Atlanta Parks rule flag sign near the entrance to the playground. This sign is designed to communicate park rules to visitors. It may be used either on its own, or in combination with identification signs for the park. All signs shall meet the City of Atlanta Parks and Recreation Department's sign standards adopted March 2014.

**Actions for Implementation:** Contact the City of Atlanta's Parks Department for coordination of the sign layout, installation and overall approval.

Cost for Implementation: Approximately \$1,500.00 per installed sign.



### Landscape Enhancements

**Proposed Improvement**: It is recommended that plant material be installed throughout the improved OAC site to frame spaces, create small quiet spaces and nooks for various uses such as quiet time and storytelling, add color to the site, and establish an identity for various spaces throughout the playground.

Action for Implementation: The landscape enhancement improvements can either be completed by a local landscape contractor or by volunteers. Refer to the construction details and plans within the addendum for plant materials and proper installation. The appendix identifies the proposed location of various general plant types including groundcovers, small shrubs/large shrubs, and ornamental trees. Rather than specifying specific plant species, the appendix references the following pages which identifies a variety of plant species for each general plant type proposed. This provides WAWA with maximum flexibility related to costs and plant availability depending on the time of planting. Below are various nurseries where these plants can be purchased.

### The Home Depot - Cascade

1032 Research Center Drive, SW Atlanta, GA 30331 (404) 691-2077

### **Georgia Wholesale Nursery**

5600 Peachtree Industrial Blvd Chamblee, GA 30341 (770) 454-3332 | www.georgiawholesalenursery.com

### **Grower's Outlet**

159 Cown Drive Loganville, GA 30052 (770) 466-0119 |*www.growersoutlet.com* 

**Cost for Implementation**: Donations of plant material can be pursued for the landscape enhancements. If donations are not identified, the estimated material cost for the landscape improvements based on the Site Improvements Plan is \$4,000.00, assuming an average price of \$35/shrub in 3 gallon size, and \$10/groundcover in 1 gallon size. It is assumed that all plant installation labor will be volunteer labor forces.

### Groundcovers

Dwarf Smilax – Smilax pumila Wild Ginger – Asarum canadense Southern Green-and-Gold – Chrysogonum virginianum var. australe Foamflower – Tiarella cordifolia var. collina Spreading Bellwort – Uvularia sessilifolia Wild Geranium – Geranium maculatum Blue Woodland Phlox – Phlox divaricate Mayapple – Phodophyllum peltatum

### Small Shrubs/Large Shrubs

Christmas Fern – Polystichum acrostichoides Dwarf Rhododendron – Rhododendron minus var. minus Coastal Leucothoe – Leucothoe axillaris Itea – Itea virginica Turk's cap – Malvaviscus arboreus var. drummondii Mapleleaf viburnum – Viburnum acerifolium Pachysandra – Pachysandra axillaris 'Windcuff' Oakleaf Hydrangea – Hydrangea quercifolia Fothergilla – Fothergilla major 'Mt. Airy'

### **Ornamental Trees**

Flowering Dogwood – Cornus florida Eastern Redbud – Cercis canadensis



### **Project Team Members and Organizations**

The following individuals and organizations were involved in the production of the *Outdoor Activity Center's Playground Improvement Implementation Manual*. They are referenced within the manual by their role on the project team as outlined below:

### West Atlanta Watershed Alliance (WAWA) = Client

Na'Taki Osborne Jelks Darryl Haddock Imran Battla

### Park Pride = Project Manager

Becky Katz, Visioning Coordinator, Park Pride Walt Ray, Director of Visioning, Park Pride Dan Kletzing, Park Pride Intern Hannah Job, Park Pride Intern Christine Hassell, Park Pride Intern Kevin Doughty, Park Pride Intern

### Perez Planning + Design and KAIZEN Collaborative = Design Consultants

Carlos Perez, RLA, Principal Greta deMayo, RLA, Principal Chris Dye, Senior Landscape Architect Tyler Haskell, Landscape Architect Intern

Atlanta Task Force on Play (ATOP) = Play Specialist Cynthia Gentry, Founding Director

### **Project Kick-off**

The project began with an initial site visit on May 15, 2014. The entire project team discussed the project's scope of work and scheduled the upcoming meetings. A field-run survey of the facility was conducted to locate all existing conditions and is located in the appendix to this manual.





### Working Group Meeting #1

Park Pride in collaboration with West Atlanta Watershed Association (WAWA), held Working Group Meeting #1 for the Outdoor Activity Center Playground project on May 28, 2014. The purpose of the meeting was to brainstorm and collect ideas from all the stakeholders present. The meeting entailed a Blue Sky Brainstorming Session led by the Park Pride Interns and a Visioning Presentation by Cynthia Gentry, ATOP.

Following is a list of elements that attendees noted they would like to see incorporated into the OAC Playground Improvements:

- Tree house
- Story time area
- A place where kids play in the dirt, dig holes, and find fossils
- Train made out of logs, colorful
- Quite space with small stool made from wood
- Zip line course.

The most popular elements on the current OAC playground were outlined as:

- Slide
- Suspension bridge
- Monkey bars
- Tree house prior to removal
- Elements for group collaboration that be built, demolished, and rebuilt for play
- Space for music and for doing concerts.
- Log walking (not too far from the ground)









### **Design Charrette**

Members of Park Pride, WAWA, and the consultant team met on June 10, 2014 to determine project goals and to charrette conceptual design ideas for the future of the playground, and to identify elements that could be included in the final design.

Outlined desires from the group were as follows:

- Design must provide activity for a range of audiences, from children to young adults.
- Emphasis should be given to children in Elementary school.
- The area must provide opportunities for service learning, mainly for high school and college students.
- Space must be organized in a way that welcomes people from the street and does not discourage use even while programs or projects are going on.

Based on the findings from Working Group Meeting #1 and the Design Charette, the Design Consultants developed a conceptual design for the OAC playground. The following page provides an overview of the proposed concept.

Working collaboratively with WAWA, Park Pride, and community stakeholders, the Design Consultants and Playground Specialist developed a Conceptual Design for the OAC Playground. The Conceptual Design identified a series of improvements that were organized into three categories: Site Preparation, Structured Play Area, and Un-Structured Play Area. Following are descriptions of these three areas and the image on the right identifies the specific improvements proposed.

### **Site Improvements**

Improvements related to playground access, circulation, comfort, and aesthetics.

Structured Play Area Improvements

Improvements to spaces with facilities that have a specific purpose and facilitate a particular activity.

### **Un-Structured Play Area Improvements**

Improvements to spaces that allow children and visitors to use objects creatively.



### Legend

### **Site Improvements**

Gateways
 Trail Improvements
 Wooden Steps
 Enhanced Ponds
 Composting Demonstration Area Relocation
 Landscape Enhancements
 Movable Tables + Chairs
 Outdoor Classroom + Fire Pit
 Musical Wall

### **Structured Play Area Improvements**

Tree House with Slide
 Suspension Bridge
 Existing Play Structure Enhancement
 Monkey Bars
 Zip Line
 Swing
 Climbing Net
 Formal Story Time Area

### **Un-Structured Play Area**

Logs + Stumps Course
 Sand Pit or Dirt Play
 Build and Tear Down Area
 Bird's Nest

### WAWA Board Meeting

The presentation to the WAWA Board on June 16, 2014 allowed the consulting team to present the goals of the project, ideas, and the overall vision outlined during the design development charrette. During this presentation, much enthusiasm and excitement was received from the WAWA Board, along with feedback on which playground components should be included or omitted from the conceptual plan. Concerns including cost, safety and maintenance were discussed.

Below are the main discussion points from the meeting and the conceptual design plan that was presented :

- Entrance/Gateway design
- Mobile Tables and Chairs
- Signage
- Plant Maintenance
- Unifying Natural Aesthetic
- Phased Construction Process
- Educational Elements
- Space for Campout
- Providing Community Jobs
- Accommodations for Children with Disabilities

### Working Group Meeting #2

Working Group Meeting #2 was held on July 1, 2014 to present the final conceptual plan and collect feedback prior to moving into design development. The main topic was the final deliverable needed for WAWA to implement the playground improvements for the Outdoor Activity Center. The group came to a consensus that the production of a 'manual' document outlining all the playground improvements would be the final deliverable. In addition, a Children's Workshop was suggested in order to get feedback on the likes/dislikes of the playground users. The Playground Improvements Implementation Manual would include:

- Overview of the project, meetings, and development of the playground improvement conceptual plan.
- Existing site conditions.
- Guidelines for the specifications of all structured and unstructured play components within the site improvement plan.
- Demolition plan
- Overall site plan improvements
- Hardscape
- Landscape
- Furnishings
- Structured Play Components
- Unstructured Play Components



### **Children's Workshop**

A Children's Workshop was held on July 31, 2014 to obtain feedback from children that regularly use the OAC playground. A total of eight children from the neighborhood, ages 4 to 17 participated in the workshop. The workshop was divided into two sessions, a blue sky visioning session and site based playground improvements session.

The blue sky visioning session asked the children to think of their favorite play activity and draw it. Below are a few of the drawings that the children developed. Specific play activities that children identified included swimming, playing basketball, and landscaping.

The second session asked the children what specific improvements they would like to see on the OAC playground structure. The children identified the following improvements:

- Add more monkey bars that connect the various parts of the playground together and would allow children to navigate through the playground without touching the ground Add aviance bath for information and for children.
- Add swings, both for infants and for children
- Add a spider web net for children to climb on
- Modify the wooden deck area and make it wider with certain pieces taller for children to be able to walk under and climb onto without having to crawl all the time

The children also noted that the playground piece with tires was the least used playground piece. They would prefer to see monkey bars versus the tires. Page 18 contains a sketch illustrating potential improvements to the existing playground structure based on comments received from the children. These improvements would have to be studied further by a structural engineer and playground specialist.













Appendix

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# **OUTDOOR ACTIVITY CENTER** - PLAYGROUND IMPROVEMENTS -1442 RICHLAND ROAD SW, ATLANTA, GA 30310



VICINITY MAP N.T.S.



# PREPARED FOR: WEST ATLANTA WATERSHED ALLIANCE & PARK PRIDE

**INDEX OF SHEETS** 

COVER SHEET

**TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY** 

**TREE SURVEY** 

**DM-01 - SITE PREPARATION** 

- **DM-02 SITE PREPARATION**
- **SP-01 SITE IMPROVEMENTS** PLAN
- **SP-02 SITE IMPROVEMENTS** PLAN

FOR

ISSUE

/2014

**CD-01 - IMPLEMENTATION** DETAILS

# **PLANS PREPARED BY:**

KAIZENCOLLABORATIVE 1668 Belle Isle Circle | Atlanta, GA 30329 | 404.626.351

Perez Planning + Design, LLC 253 14TH Street, NE | Suite 9 | Atlanta, GA 30309-3667 P. 404.416.0114

\*\*\*THESE DRAWINGS ARE PROVIDED FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY, AND ARE NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION



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### PROPERTY SUMMARY

LOCATION MAP Westview Cemetery merald Ave SW Lucile Ave SW Stokes Ave SW Oak St SW S Gordon St SW Westwood Ave SW Rogers Ave SW N Olympian Way SW AutoZone (@) Allegheny St SW Beecher St SW Beecher St SW Westhaven Dr.SM Westboro Dr SW John A. White Park John A. White Golf Course PROJECT Ladd St SW SITE Bridges Ave SW Almont Dr SW Lanvale Dr SW Lynford Dr SW NOT TO SCALE

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### GENERAL NOTES

1. THE FIELD SURVEY WAS PERFORMED BETWEEN MAY 5, 2014 AND MAY 14, 2014. 2. HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL CONTROL WAS ESTABLISHED WITH A TOPCON HIPER+ GPS RECEIVER UTILIZING NETWORK RTK CORRECTION METHODS; GROUND MEASUREMENTS WERE OBTAINED USING A TOPCON GPT-8003A TOTAL STATION.

3. TOPOGRAPHY AND ELEVATIONS SHOWN HEREON ARE BASED ON NAVD88 DATUM.

4. BEARING BASIS IS NAD83, STATE PLANE COORDINATE SYSTEM, GEORGIA WEST ZONE..

5. THE SUBJECT PROPERTY LIES WITHIN ZONE "X", DEFINED AS "AREAS DETERMINED TO BE OUTSIDE THE 0.2% ANNUAL CHANCE FLOODPLAIN", ACCORDING TO F.E.M.A. MAP NUMBER 13121C0356F, EFFECTIVE DATE SEPTEMBER 18, 2013.

6. UNDERGROUND UTILITY INFORMATION SHOWN HEREON IS BASED ON VISIBLE ABOVE-GROUND APPURTENANCES. NO CERTIFICATION IS MADE REGARDING THE ACCURACY, THOROUGHNESS OR PRESENCE OF UNDERGROUND UTILITY STRUCTURES AND INFORMATION SHOWN HEREON. THE GEORGIA ONE CALL SYSTEM MUST BE CALLED PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF ANY AND ALL EARTH DISTURBING ACTIVITIES.

7. APPROXIMATE PROPERTY LINES SHOWN HEREON ARE FOR REFERENCE ONLY BASED ON TAX RECORDS. NO BOUNDARY SURVEY WAS PERFORMED, AND NO DEEDS OR PLAT RECORDS WERE FOUND PERTAINING TO THE SUBJECT PROPERTY. EASEMENTS AND/OR RESTRICTIONS MAY EXIST THAT COULD BE FOUND (IF ANY) BY A TITLE COMPANY.



**GRAPHIC SCALE IN FEET** 15 30 120 60 1" = 30'



6/3/2014

# TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY OUTDOOR ACTIVITY CENTER

1442 RICHLAND STREET LAND LOT 138 - 14TH DISTRICT CITY OF ATLANTA, FULTON COUNTY, GEORGIA



of **2** 



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LECRAW ENGINEERING, INC. 4320 SUWANEE DAM ROAD SUITE 1400 SUWANEE, GA 30024 PHONE - 678 546 8100 FAX - 770 441 0298 WWW.LECRAWENGINEERING.COM LSF 001160

05/15/2014

PARK PRIDE 233 PEACHTREE STREET NE, SUITE 1600 ATLANTA, GA 30303

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PROPERTY SUMMARY	



JWA

OUTDOOR ACTIVITY CENTER 1442 RICHLAND STREET LAND LOT 138 - 14TH DISTRICT CITY OF ATLANTA, FULTON COUNTY, GEORGIA





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SP-01

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