Grassroots Green Space:
Growing Parks in Our Neighborhoods

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WYLDE CENTER
Cultivating environmental stewardship
AGENDA

• Role, Opportunities, and Challenges of Neighborhood Parks/Greenspaces

• Case Studies of Grassroots Neighborhood Greenspaces:
  – Neighborhood Resident
  – Ad-hoc Group of Residents
  – Organized Non-Profit

• Q/A
• Mini Park
• Neighborhood Park
• School-Park
• Community Park
• Large Urban Park
• Natural Resource Area
• Greenways
• Sports Complex
• Special Use Park
NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

Basic unit of a city’s park system and serves as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood.

• Facilities should be geared to those living within walking distance to the park
• Developed with both active and passive facilities
• Accommodates a variety of age and user groups including children, adult, elderly, and special populations

Source: NRPA, 1996

• Establishes a sense of place for the neighborhood
Joe Stonis Park Cape Coral, FL
Family Play Area
Moguls | Land Art
Multi-Purpose Lawn II with Iconic Movable Tables + Chairs
Sculpture | Playable Art
Old Ivy Park
Atlanta, GA
PARK BENEFITS

Social
• Improves the neighborhood
• Improves social and physical mobility
• Encourages health and fitness
• Provides relief from urban congestion, stressors
• Provides places for formal and informal social gathering, art, performances, events
• Provides opportunities for individual, group, passive and active recreation
• Facilitates shared experiences among different groups
• Attracts diverse populations
• Promotes creative and constructive social interaction

Environmental
• Uses energy, water, and resources efficiently
• Improves water quality of both surface and ground water
• Serves as a net carbon sink
• Enhances, preserves, promotes, or contributes to biological diversity
• Hardscape materials selected for longevity of service, social/cultural/historical sustainability, regional availability, low carbon footprint
• Provides opportunities to enhance environmental awareness and knowledge
• Serves as an interconnected node within larger scale ecological corridors and natural habitat

Economic
• Creates and facilitates revenue-generating opportunities for the public and/or the private sectors
• Creates meaningful and desirable employment
• Indirectly creates or sustains good, living wage jobs
• Sustains or increases property values
• Catalyzes infill development and/or the re-use of obsolete or under-used buildings or spaces
• Attracts new residents
• Attracts new businesses
• Generates increased business and tax revenues
• Optimizes operations and maintenance costs
Extended Hours + Programming:
• Hours extended until Midnight
• July 4th – September 7th
• Expanded programming

Youth Squad:
• At-risk youth, ages 17-20 hired to staff parks

Source: www.lacity.org/mayor

IMPROVE NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY
IMPROVE NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY

• 86% reduction in gang related homicides
• City’s safest summer since 1967

Source: www.lacity.org/mayor
ENCOURAGE HEALTH + FITNESS

Park Rx America (formerly DC Park Rx) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to decrease the burden of chronic disease, increase health and happiness, and foster environmental stewardship, by virtue of prescribing Nature during the routine delivery of healthcare.

We work closely with managers of publicly-accessible land and water, as well as directly with healthcare providers and their respective organizations, to "make it easy" to prescribe parks and other protected areas to their patients real-time in the clinical practice setting.

Dakota Playground
2350 33rd Street NE, Washington DC 20018

GETTING THERE:
Parking, Public: Transit: Bus
Parking: Street
Bus Route: 20A from Brookland Station, at corner of 33rd St. & Bladensburg Rd.
Train Line and Stop: None
ADA Accessible: Yes

GENERAL INFO:
Special Features/Comments: A shelter with picnic tables that have checkerboards on them and a new playground. A fitness area with pull-up bars and a couple of other small pieces of equipment.

SPORTS:
Sports Facilities/Activities: Outdoor Basketball Court, Tennis Court, Open Space

AMENITIES:
General Park Amenities: Playground, Seating, Picnic Tables, Drinking Fountains
Playground Shade: Little or None
Playground Surface Type: Synthetic rubberized material

OTHER:
Open Space Activities: Have a picnic
Open Space Size: Between basketball court and football field
ENCOURAGE HEALTH + FITNESS

**National Neighborhood Park Study Findings**

- 8.8 acres, average neighborhood park size
- 20 users per hour
- 1,533 person hours per week - estimated national average park use
- Walking loops and gymnasia generate 221 hours/week

**2013 Average Annual Per Capita Expenditure**

- $73
  - Per Capita Expenditure for Parks
- $9,146
  - Per Capita Expenditure for Healthcare
IMPROVE WATER QUALITY + FLOODING

- Green infrastructure systems approach is 25% less expensive than conventional stormwater management approach.
Homes adjacent to the park (within 100 ft.) 22.3% price premium relative to homes ½ mile away

Homes within 300 ft. 15% price premium

Homes within 600 ft. 5% price premium

Insignificant after 1,300 ft

Source: Miller, 2001; Farr, 2008

INCREASES CITY REVENUES
CHALLENGED PARKS AND RECREATION BUDGETS

Budget between FY2012-2017

- City's overall budget -0.19%
- Recreation and Leisure Services Department budget -11.01%
CHALLENGED PARKS AND RECREATION BUDGETS

City Recreation and Leisure Services Department Spending Per Resident Trend Line

City Recreation and Leisure Services Department Spending Per Resident

- NRPA Benchmark - Upper Quartile
- NRPA Benchmark - Median
- NRPA Benchmark - Lower Quartile
Executive Director: Stephanie Van Parys
Website: www.wyldecenter.org
Telephone: 404-371-1920
Our Mission

To educate, cultivate greenspaces and build community in the areas we serve.
Our History

- Founded in 1997
- Create a place where youth could come to learn about the earth and ultimately themselves, to lead by example

Co-founders Sally Wylde and Louise Jackson
We Provide Urban Greenspace

Wylde Center cultivates, preserves and protects five greenspaces in four different Decatur and Atlanta neighborhoods:

- WC-Oakhurst Garden
- WC-Hawk Hollow (Kirkwood)
- WC-Sugar Creek Garden (Oakhurst)
- WC-Edgewood Community Garden
- WC-Mulberry Fields (Candler Park)

The nearly 7 acres of gardens and greenspaces are used for on-site educational programs, field trips, public and private events and are open for community use 365 days a year.
Year started: 1997 in the Oakhurst neighborhood, Decatur
Description: 1.25 acres consisting of 4 separate lots. One lot belongs to the City of Decatur, 3 lots belong to Wylde Center. Includes community plots, children’s play area, office, greenhouse, mini-farm, chickens, and community gathering spaces.
How site is used: Field trips, community events, event rentals, informal use, main office
Annual visitors: 8,000
Initial sources of income: Community grants, City of Decatur support
Current funding: Grants for special projects (irrigation system), Wylde Center general operations
Staffing: 1 site coordinator @ 20 hours per week, Greenspace Director oversight
Budget: $19,000 for staff, $2,300 for materials
Sugar Creek Garden and Herb Farm

Year started: 2010 in the Oakhurst neighborhood, Decatur
Description: 1 acre of land that belongs to the City of Decatur. At this site, we grow herbs for sale to local restaurants and to the community through a local CSA. It also features pockets of pollinator plants, medicinal herbs and community garden beds.
How site is used: herb gardens, informal use
Annual visitors: 500
Initial sources of income: Community grants, City of Decatur support
Current funding: Grants for special projects, Wylde Center general operations
Staffing: 1 site coordinator @ 20 hours per week, Greenspace Director oversight
Budget: $19,000 for staff, $1,000 for materials
Edgewood Community Learning Garden

Year started: 2009 in the Edgewood, Atlanta neighborhood; Wylde Center assumes management in 2012.

Description: 1 acre of land that belongs to the Zeist Foundation. Site has chickens, bees, play structures, and compost bins on site. Also features a new educational building.

How site is used: Field trips, community events, informal use, afterschool programming

Annual visitors: 2,000

Initial sources of income: Zeist Foundation

Current funding: Zeist Foundation

Staffing: 1 site coordinator @ 40 hours per week, Greenspace Director oversight

Budget: $37K for staff, $6,000 for materials
Hawk Hollow

**Year started**: 2012 in the Kirkwood, Atlanta neighborhood

**Description**: 1.5 acres of land that was donated to Wylde Center. Site is predominately shady and we are focused on replacing non-native plants with native plants.

**How site is used**: Field trips, community events, informal use, Hobbit Houses

**Annual visitors**: 2,000

**Initial sources of income**: Donated, General Operations

**Current funding**: Grants for special projects, general operations

**Staffing**: 1 site coordinator @ 10 hours per week, Greenspace Director oversight

**Budget**: $10.5K for staff, $11,000 for capital improvements
Year started: 1999 in the Candler Park, Atlanta neighborhood; Wylde Center assumes management in 2016

Description: 2 acres of land that belongs to two neighbors. Site has chickens, goats, children’s play area, community garden.

How site is used: Field trips, community events, informal use

Annual visitors: 3,000

Initial sources of income: Community fundraising

Current funding: Community fundraising, General Operating

Staffing: 1 site coordinator @ 5 hours per week, Greenspace Director oversight

Budget: $7K for site coordinator, $4,000 for materials
ORMEWOOD PARK(S): HOME-GROWN GREEN SPACES

Allison Stewart-Harris, AICP
KaBOOM!

play matters for all kids

Ignite

Yeah, if you could buy something from Tea Collection before Sunday

That’d be great

Ormewood Community Playground added an event.
February 18, 2014

You need a Date Night? You got it. $30 for one child. $20 for each additional sibling. As always, you can make a larger donation if you wish. 😊

You drop off the kids, we provide the grown-ups, pizza and entertainment. For five. Whole. Hours. ... See More

Parents Night Out Fundraiser
FEB 22
Sat 5 PM - 1071 Delaware Avenue SE, Atlanta, ... ★ Interested
2 people went

CommunityKids
SILENT AUCTION
November 25 - December 9
“It’s really a life line.”
FAITH AND FELLOWSHIP

Ormewood Park Presbyterian Church Closes
A Church Grows in Ormewood

By: Jennifer Holmes

Nearly a year after the former Ormewood Park Presbyterian Church shut its doors with 15 remaining members, there are signs of new life at the historic sanctuary on Delaware Avenue. Ormewood Park residents, surrounding neighbors, families of the Ormewood School, and fans of the well-loved Ormewood Dog Yard gathered on multiple occasions throughout the spring and summer of 2016 in potluck-style community meetings to discuss the fate of that 1971 Delaware Avenue property after the closing of the church, which is owned by the Presbyterian Church USA.

The voice and vision of the people came in an uncertain time: to keep this geographical Ormewood Park center as a neighborhood community gathering place that prioritizes nearby residents while offering refreshing and creative new ways for neighbors to engage with one another and, in some, with their faith. For the vision of community needed for a new church plant has been saved.

Through the late summer, fall, and winter, a group of 12 Ormewood Park residents, including Jenelle, area residents of all backgrounds met to dream and discuss how a new church could look in our neighborhood. With some guidance from the Greater Atlanta Presbytery, they drafted and published an ad

This groundwork culminated on March 15, as Jenelle Holmes accepted the call as the first organizing pastor of this new “Ormewood Church.” Formerly on staff at Trinity Presbyterian Church in North Atlanta, and with degrees from Emory University and LaGrange College School of Theology, Jenelle grew up running amok in the neighborhood.

For information about how to be a part of Ormewood Church, please visit www.ormwood.org/ormwood.

EXPERIMENT #3

WORSHIP

SUNDAY, AUGUST 13 @ 11AM
IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL

ORMEWOOD CHURCH

404.222.0456
(SEIS) DE MAYO

LIVE MUSIC FOR KIDS & ADULTS. FOOD. BYOB. YARD GAMES.

Nacho Bar $4. Bring your own beverages.
The Grove of Ormewood Church
“beans amid the bungalows”
LET SUMMER LINGER!
Come out to Red's Farm to play backyard summer games with all of your friends

WHEN?
Wednesday & Friday Nights
August 9th, 11th, 16th, 18th
From 6:30pm - 8pm

WHERE?
Red's Farm: 1050 Mercer Street, Atlanta, GA 30316
(park on Woodland & walk to the farm)

WHAT GAMES?
Kickball, wiffle ball, capture the flag... etc.

ALL KIDS WELCOME!
Kids 1st grade and older can come without an adult
Kids 5 and younger must bring a parent to the party

Parents and kids come on out on the last night,
August 18th, for a Backyard BBQ!

Hosted by Village Church of East Atlanta (adult supervision provided).
All donations are welcome and will directly benefit Red's Farm.

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ORMEWOOD
COMMUNITY
BBQ
A FUNDRAISER BENEFITING ORMEWOOD COMMUNITY PLAYGROUND
SATURDAY, OCT. 19 • 3-6 PM
AT RED’S FARM
BBQ • LIVE MUSIC • BEVERAGES* • RAFFLE
TONS OF FAMILY FUN!

$20/PERSON
KIDS 6 & UNDER ARE FREE
*PLEASE BRING CASH FOR BEVERAGE DONATIONS & RAFFLE

Tickets can be purchased online at TheOrmewoodSchool.org
at the door the day of the event or
at The Ormewood School
for more information, 404.627.2214
"I live next to an organic farm," a neighbor says. "My friends say you must be the luckiest duck. Every time I see a developer go by and look at the land, I say, 'No, please don't.'"
1. It takes a handful of committed people
LESSONS LEARNED

2. Know your neighborhood
3. Build communities of support through social media
LESSONS LEARNED

4. Actively manage the space – make it legit.
5. Keep it simple.
6. “Beer + chicken nuggets at every meeting.”
Allison Stewart-Harris, AICP
Senior Planner, Jacobs
allison.stewart-harris@jacobs.com
Citizen Impact
& Power of Parks

Ayanna Williams
Director of Community Building,
Park Pride

September 27, 2017
Ayanna Williams, 
Director Community Building
park pride: for the greener good

mission
To engage the community to activate the power of parks.

vision
A nationally recognized network of locally inspired parks, greenspaces and trails that engages individuals, strengthens communities and transforms Atlanta.
park pride: for the greener good

who do we serve?
• All ages
• All ethnicities
• All incomes

where do we serve?
• City of Atlanta
• Unincorporated DeKalb County
• Parks of all sizes and functions

presentation focus?
• Unique Nonprofit Model
• Power of Partnerships
• Citizen Driven Projects

Distribution of Park Pride services, 2016
park pride’s philosophy: the power of parks

great parks
• increase quality of life
• strengthen communities and cities
• serve as a place for communities to gather, play or relax
• encourage physical and mental health
• are a natural refuge
• promote community engagement, safety, and revitalization
• spur economic development and benefit tourism
• make our citizens happy, our communities strong, and our cities sustainable
park pride: for the greener good

Top words used to describe Park Pride, 2015
park pride’s model

"innovation happens bottom-up."

gapingvoidart.com
park pride’s model
park pride’s model
park pride’s model
park pride’s model

a unique combination of programs and leadership

programs
- Friends of the Park
- Park Visioning
- Volunteer
- Grants
- Community Gardens
- Fiscal Partners
- Adopt-the-Atlanta BeltLine

leadership
- Parks & Greenspace Conference
- Advocacy
- Workshops
- Park Meetings
- Georgia Legacy
park pride’s model

- Friends of the Park
- Park Visioning
- Volunteer
- Grants
- Community Gardens
- Fiscal Partners
- Adopt-the-Atlanta BeltLine
programs: friends of the park

Friends of Jennie Drake Park, 2016
programs: park visioning

One day, I dream this park will be nice, clean, and kept up well!

#parkpride #HillsboroughParks
www.parkpride.org
programs: volunteering
park pride model

a unique combination of programs and leadership

**programs**
- Friends of the Park
- Park Visioning
- Volunteer
- Grants
- Community Gardens
- Fiscal Partners
- Adopt-the-Atlanta BeltLine

**leadership**
- Parks & Greenspace Conference
- Advocacy
- Workshops
- Park Meetings
- Georgia Legacy
park pride model:

leadership

Parks & Greenspace Conference
Advocacy Workshops
Park Meetings
Georgia Legacy
park pride model: Parks & Greenspace Conference

Parks & Greenspace Conference, 2017
Importance of Urban Parks Round Table, 2017
park pride model: advocacy

Park advocates at City of Atlanta budget hearing, 2015
park pride model: park meetings

getting communities involved
2005 Vine City Park Vision brought to reality.
why is park pride so effective?
why is park pride so effective?

Good steward of funds

Ranked a 4 Star Charity by Charity Navigator in 2016
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