



VIRGINIA-HIGHLAND
CIVIC ASSOCIATION

John Howell Park

Update & Action Items

May 2024

Inspirational History

1988

MAJOR THEMES

Natural Image

Our neighborhood was built in the 1920s, in the craftsman style which uses natural materials like brick and stone and landscaping with native plants like hardwood trees, dogwoods, and azaleas. Our park should be the same.

Neighborhood Scale

Our park is small, a strip of lots where houses once stood. The land rolls gently and large-scale things won't fit. The park should be one step beyond the yards of our own houses, an extension of the places where we live.

Open to All

Our park is a city park. It should be open and easily visible from the street and sidewalk. It should not seem to be an enclave cut off and only for a few, but should invite any passerby to come and enjoy it.

The neighborhood survey we took in 1986 and the guidance of the Atlanta Parks System have blended into this plan. We hope you like it.

Children's Playground

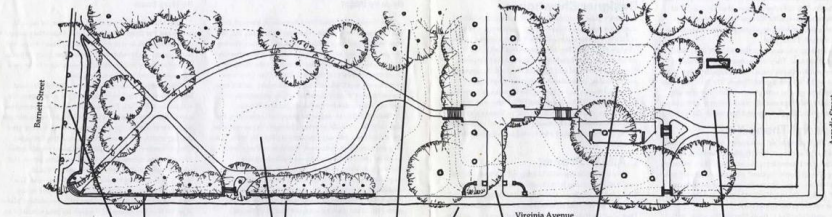
Our neighborhood has many families and a playscape was the most requested element. Facilities should be provided for toddlers, kindergartners, and elementary school-age children, and should reflect the natural image of the park.

Passive Uses

Our park is too small for large playfields like softball or soccer, or for use that would attract large crowds like a community swimming pool. Activities like jogging, picnics, kite flying, or just walking are the sorts of things that are suitable.

Maintenance

The Parks Department insists that the park be easy to maintain. Features like ponds or reflecting pools or beds of annual flowers require intensive work. Paved paths will control erosion where traffic keeps the grass from growing.



Save Big Trees at Barnett

Move the sidewalk west so that these magnificent oaks will have room for roots and not damage the sidewalks.

Rebuild Walls at Virginia

Rework and repair so that the current three walls of former houses become one element. Replace crumbling steps with safe stone stairway.

Provide Natural Village Green

Make the main area open grass for free open uses like frisbee, running, dogs, or sunbathing.

Repair Sidewalks

We hope that all of Virginia from Midtown Perimeter to the Virginia Highlands shops will become a pleasant pedestrian way.

Buffer Nearby Houses

Retain existing shade trees, adding dogwoods and evergreen shrubs to provide a background when viewed from Virginia Avenue.

Close DeLeon Street

Remove traffic through the park and link the two halves with a small plaza. Retain the existing trees.

Build Gates

How could we have a park without gates like the ones on St. Charles and St. Augustine? They are granite and wrought iron and lend a sense of prominence to the entrance to these streets.

Provide Playscape

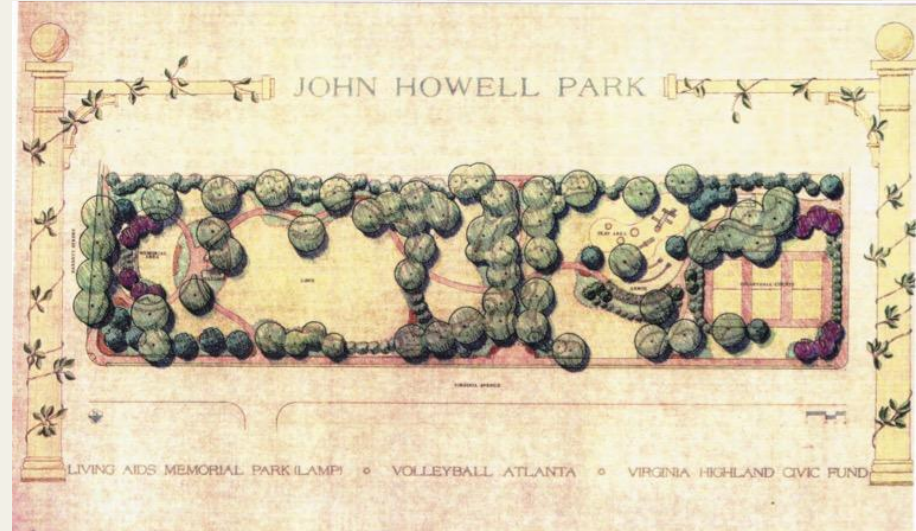
We want a nice big play area like the one at Owen Park, with timber beams and a big wood chip pit. Benches and a shade arbor will let adults enjoy it as much as the kids.

Complete Volleyball Area

Volleyball is an intensive use but just small enough to work in this park. Permanent restrooms are needed and steel fences. The neighborhood volleyball league will do this part.

DESIGN DETAILS

1991





The Process



Timeline

Kickoff & Fundraising

Anurag Sahu & Jack White write a letter to the community kicking off a fundraising campaign for a major renovation of JHP.

2022

2021

Design and Development

Frawley and Associates takes the concepts and priorities of the community to craft a detailed design including tree impact, stormwater planning, equipment details.

2024

2023

Concept Planning

Extensive discussion in parks committee around key conceptual areas, development of priorities, conduct community surveys both formally and informally to define and refine broad concepts.

Engineering

Design/Construction committee works with City of Atlanta, Frawley & Associates, Flippo and more on construction and engineering documents.

Vendor Solicitation and Bid Process

Secure a contractor for oversight and construction of the project.

2025

Fundraising

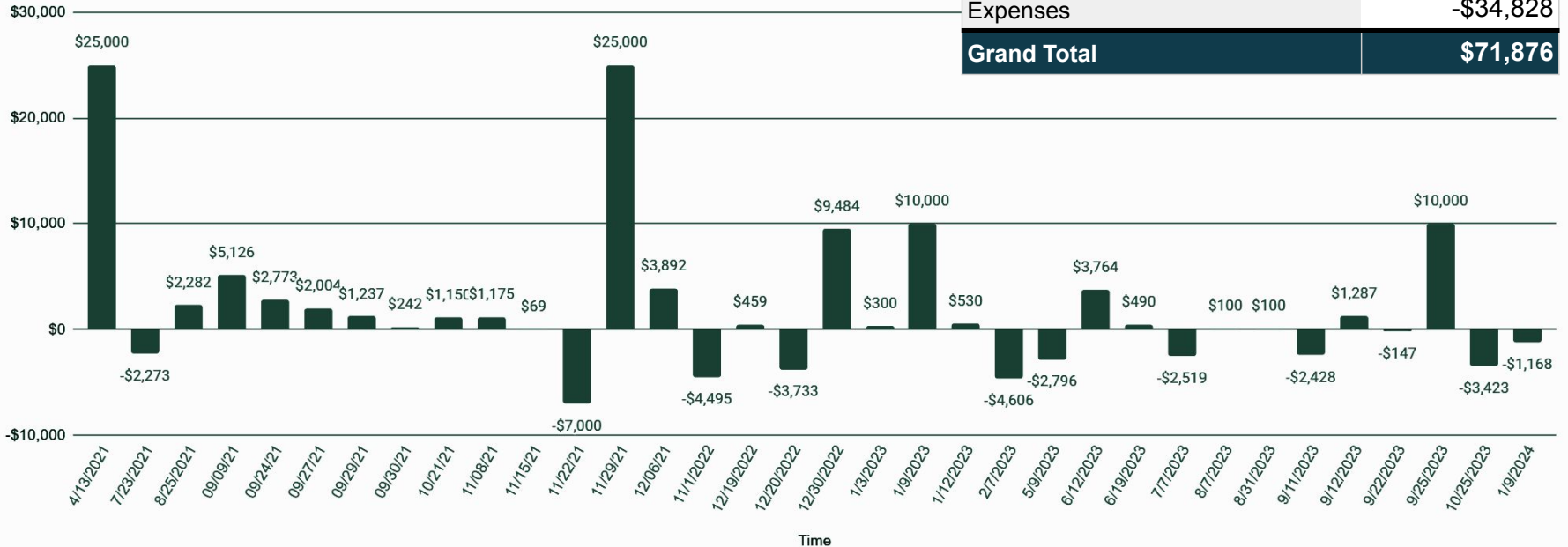
Launch a second and larger round of fundraising to secure funds for the construction of the project.

Construction

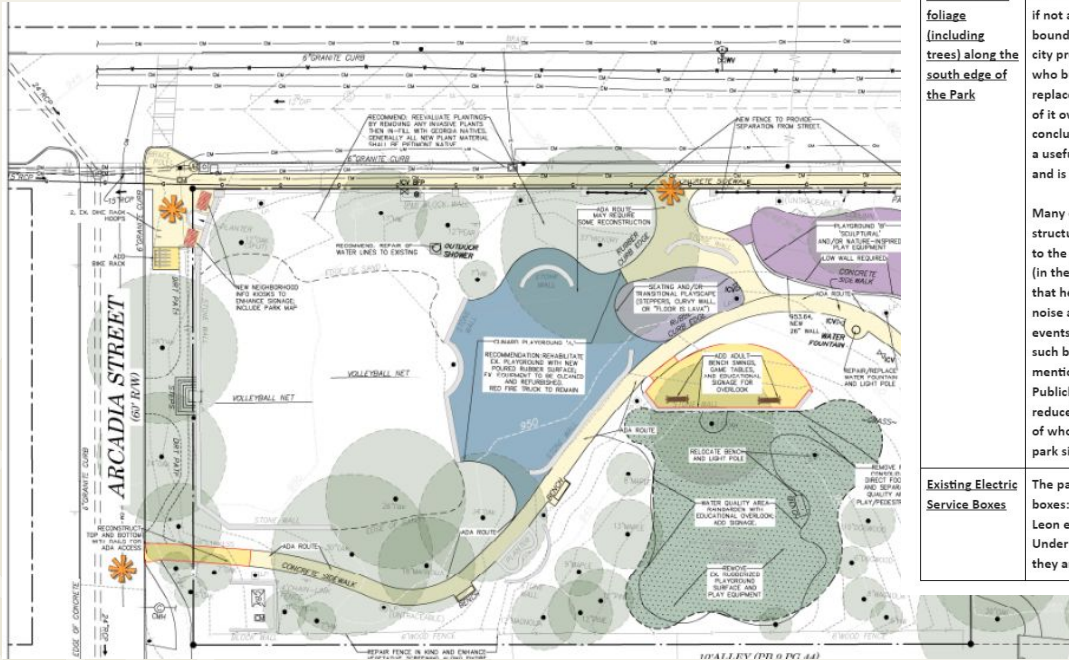
Oversee construction and manage the scope.

Timeline - Financials

	Transactions
Donations	\$36,704
Donations - Glancy Foundation	\$70,000
Expenses	-\$34,828
Grand Total	\$71,876



Glimpse into Concept Planning



John Howell Park - A Summary of Decision Areas and Recommendations

A Conceptual & Historic Summary from the VHCA Parks Committee:

Johnson Bazzel, David Brandenberger, Mike Lewis, Jess Liddick, Jim Long, Jack White

Summary of Conceptual Modifications

Area of Interest	Details	Frawley & Associates	VHCA Parks Decision
East Half (Higher level than the rest of the park)			
The fence and foliage (including trees) along the south edge of the Park	According to the city project who built it over a useful and is w		
	Many of the structures in the park (in the past that help noise an events, such as the barrier) Publicly reduce a of whom park sign		
Existing Electric Service Boxes	The park has several service boxes: o Leon en! Under o they are		

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Area of Interest	Details	Frawley & Associates Recommendation	VHCA Parks Decision
		compliance through either reset or handrails. ADA ramp required at curb.	
Existing Lower Playground			
Planter Area in the Shade between volley ball the upper and lower playgrounds	Carden, Jack, Jess and Jim surveyed that area and there was agreement that the planter is an attractive amenity and that it should be saved if possible and Carden will begin the evaluation of the types of plants that would be appropriate there.	Peter will include the planter in the plans.	Agreed to <u>keep planter</u> .
Stormwater treatment of the Lower Playground	CoA Parks requires the installation of stormwater treatment/retention in the renovation. The existing topography directs and collects flows to today's Lower Playground, a site that can accommodate them with minimal additional grading. VHCA received an NPU grant three years to address some of these costs and engaged Sherwood Engineering; their conceptual design goals include educational signage at the site and (ideally) a design that allows Inman students to do routine maintenance.	Purposing water quality area as an educational opportunity with a boardwalk or path of boulders across a planted bio-pond. Information signage will explain use of biopond and why certain plants and soils have been utilized. Alternative: Water quality area with bioplantings with no boardwalk, strictly utilitarian stormwater facility	Mike thinks it's anomalous to have a costly bridge cross an area that is only occasionally or maybe just frequently under water. None strongly disagreed with him. He proposed a painted rock garden in the lowlands as a memorial to David. M

x17 pages

Renovation Priorities

Conceptual Area		Priority
1	Rainwater issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stormwater issues are the primary driver of the renovation and must be fixed per City of Atlanta• Requires the playground to be removed
2	The Great Lawn	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revitalize into a lush lawn• Maintain the size• Do not grade it to be level; work with APS to maintain flat field access
3	New Playground	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offset lost playground equipment with new playground layout, new pieces and ground cover• Choose styles that compliment the park and serve multiple ages
4	Improve and maintain existing assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tree survey and integration of results into project design• Fix water lines to the water fountain, benches, fence posts, signs, etc• Install new surface in the Oval
5	Activation through fields, courts, etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No changes to the volleyball courts• Pickleball won't fit with the terrain given elevation changes. It also would disrupt the balance of active and passive uses in the park.



The Design

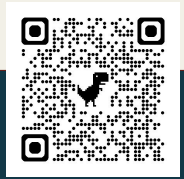
East, West, and Hill Zone



West

Hill Zone

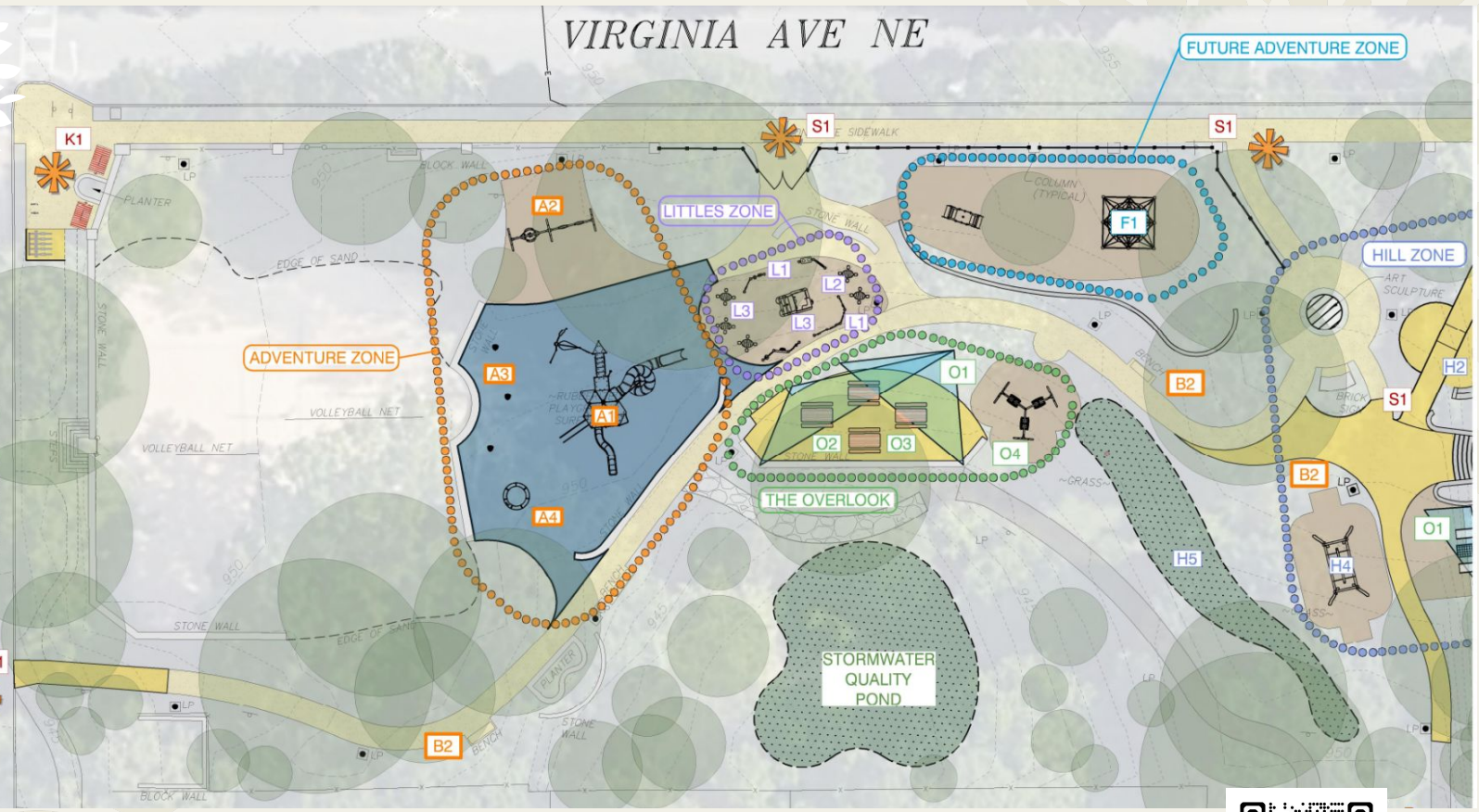
East



West

ARCADIA ST NE

VIRGINIA AVE NE



West



ADVENTURE ZONE



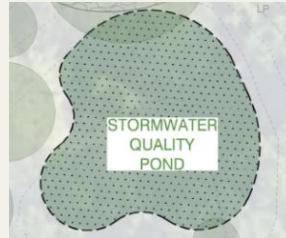
LITTLES ZONE

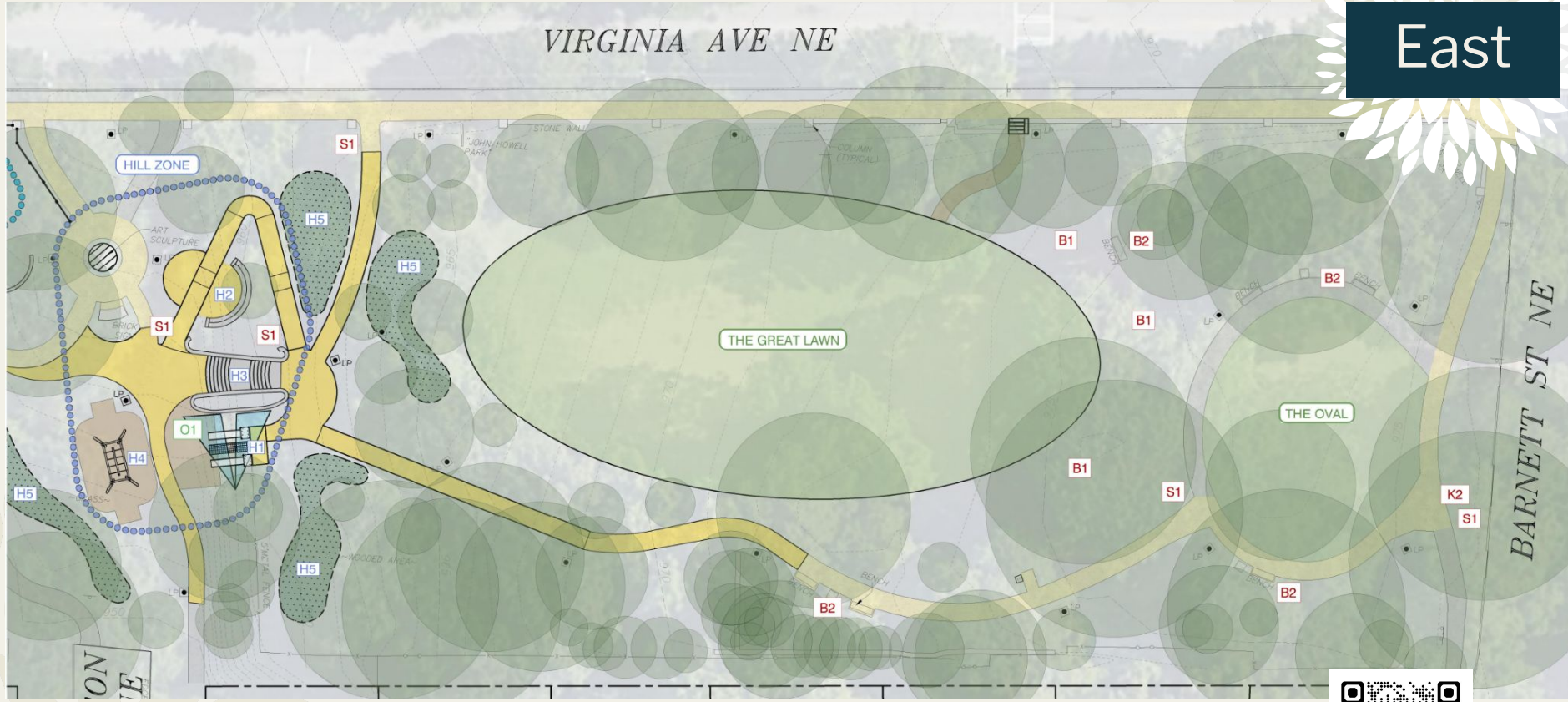


THE OVERLOOK



FUTURE ADVENTURE ZONE







SITE FURNISHINGS

THE GREAT LAWN & THE OVAL

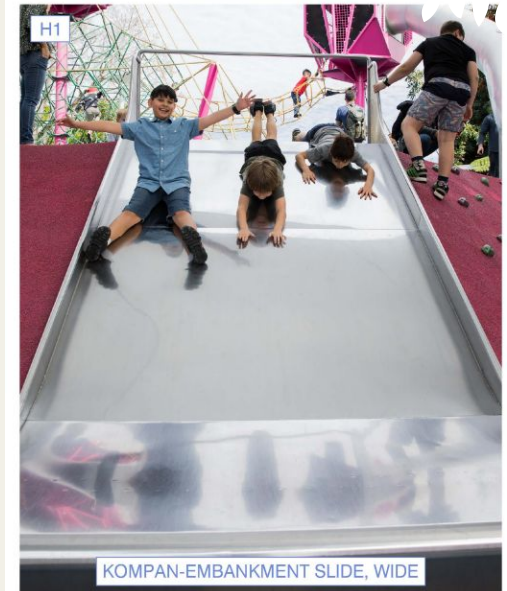
Hill Zone



Hill Zone



HILL ZONE





Budget & Next Steps



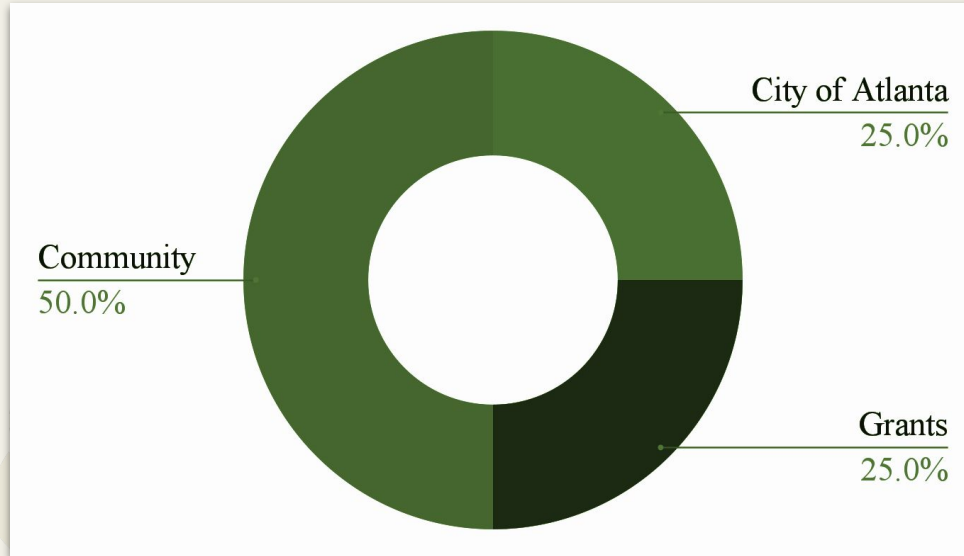
Preliminary Budget

- New Playground equipment and surfaces (~\$700k)
- Rain gardens, grading, and stormwater management (~\$300k)*
- Great Lawn restoration and Barnett Oval revitalization (~\$250k)
- Hardscapes - steps, brick sidewalks, ADA ramps, fencing and more (~\$250k)
- New plantings and existing tree management (~\$100k)
- Professional services (~\$50k)

Preliminary Cost Estimate: \$1.5-\$1.75M

**Civil engineering design from Flippo needed for greater confidence on this estimate.*

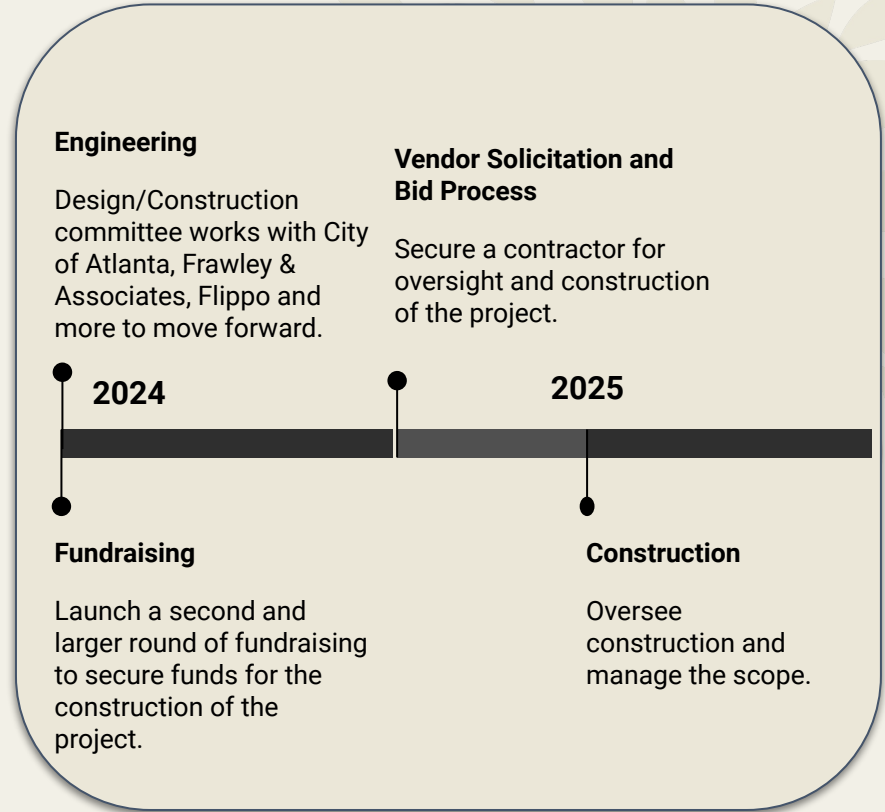
Proposed Sources



- **\$800k - Community Fundraising**
 - Include donations from corporations, small businesses, families, individuals, and more.
- **\$400k - City of Atlanta**
 - TSPLOST3 funding
 - Parks and Recreation
- **\$400k - Grants**
 - Park Pride: Match \$1 for every \$2 raised locally

Next Steps

- **VHCA Board to Approve Civil Engineering Proposal**
 - Follow Up meeting to be held with City Park Design conditional and contingent on this approval
- **Formalize Committee for JHP Project Design/Construction**
 - Committee will take next steps on tree survey, meeting with City Park Design, coordinate with Flippo, Frawley & Associates to move the project tactically forward
- **Formalize Committee for JHP Fundraising**
 - Committee will make and execute plan to move project financially forward and raise \$1.6M+
- **Ongoing Board support**





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