

Appendix 5

Atlanta BeltLine Master Plan

SUBAREA 2

Heritage Communities of South Atlanta PEOPLESTOWN PARKS MASTER PLAN

Prepared for
Atlanta BeltLine, Inc.
by Tunnell-Spangler-Walsh & Associates
with Smith Dalia Architects

Adopted by the Atlanta City Council on March 16, 2009



BeltLine
Atlanta Connected



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Honorable Mayor **Shirley Franklin**

ATLANTA CITY COUNCIL

Lisa Borders, President

Carla Smith, District 1

Kwanza Hall, District 2

Ivory Lee Young, Jr., District 3

Cleta Winslow, District 4

Natalyn Mosby Archibong, District 5

Anne Fauver, District 6

Howard Shook, District 7

Clair Muller, District 8

Felicia A. Moore, District 9

C.T. Martin, District 10

Jim Maddox, District 11

Joyce Sheperd, District 12

Cesar C. Mitchell, Post 1 at Large

Mary Norwood, Post 2 at Large

H. Lamar Willis, Post 3 at Large

ATLANTA BELTLINE, INC. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Calvin "Cal" Darden, Chair

The Honorable Shirley Franklin, Vice Chair, City of Atlanta Mayor

The Honorable Jim Maddox, Atlanta City Council District 11

Joseph A. Brown, Director of Equity/Structured Finance, Centerline Capital Group

LaChandra Butler, Atlanta Board of Education District 5

The Honorable Emma Darnell, Fulton County Board of Commissioners District 5

Clara Axam, Enterprise Community Partners, Inc.; MARTA Board of Directors

Ray Weeks, Chair of the BeltLine Partnership Board; CEO, Weeks Properties

Elizabeth "Liz" Coyle, Community Representative

SUBAREA 2 STEERING COMMITTEE

George Dusenbury, Park Pride

LaShawn M. Hoffman, NPU V

Shauna Mettee, Capitol View Manor Neighborhood

Mtamanika Youngblood, Annie E. Casey Foundation

Donna Tyler, CAMP CDC

Tiffany Thrasher, Resident

Steve Holland, Capitol View

Helen Jenkins, Pittsburgh Community Improvement Association

John Armour, Peoplestown

Rosa Harden-Green, SW Study Group Coordinator

Jared Bagby, Peoplestown

Mike Wirsching, Adair Park Neighborhood

Greg Burson, Peoplestown

Carl Towns, Pittsburgh Civic League

Chrishette Carter, Chosewood Park Neighborhood Association

Sam Sparlin, Sparlin Clinic

William Teasley, NPU V

Ruben Burney, NPU X



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ATLANTA BELTLINE INC. STAFF

James Alexander, Project Manager

Tina Arbes, Chief Operating Officer

Nathan Conable, Senior Project Manager

Rukiya S. Eaddy, Community Engagement Advocate

Terri Montague, President and CEO

E. Fred Yalouris, Director of Design

CITY OF ATLANTA STAFF

Jonathan Lewis, Senior Planner

Matthew Dickison, Senior Planner

Paul Taylor, Deputy Director of Park Design

CONSULTANT TEAM

Tunnell-Spangler-Walsh and Associates

Caleb Racicot, Principal

Jeff Owen, Community Planner

Woody Giles, Community Planner

Ryan Jenkins, Landscape Architect

Alex Nagel, Landscape Architect

Grice and Associates

John Funny, Principal

Carla Holmes, Principal

William Haynes, Senior Associate

James Cheeks, Senior Transportation Engineer

W.F. He, Senior Traffic Engineer

Dain Pallard, ITS Engineer

Smith Dalia Architects

Markham Smith, Principal

Ed Atkins, Architect

Beth Grashof, Historic Consultant

Long Engineering

Shepherd Long, Vice President

Michael VanBriggle, Associate

<u>1.0 Preface</u>	<u>1</u>
1.1 Purpose	1
1.2 BeltLine Planning Efforts	1
1.3 Master Planning Process	1
<u>2.0 Site Inventory</u>	<u>2</u>
2.1 Overview	2
2.2 Peoplestown Parks	2
2.3 Neighborhood History	2
2.4 Previous Park Plans	3
2.5 Four Corners Park	5
2.6 DL Stanton Park	8
2.7 Boynton Avenue Site	10
<u>3.0 Needs Analysis</u>	<u>11</u>
3.1 Successful Urban Parks	11
3.2 Opportunities and Constraints	11
3.3 Summary of Community Input	12
<u>4.0 Concept Development</u>	<u>13</u>
4.1 Concept Process	13
4.2 Four Corners Park Options	13
4.3 DL Stanton Park Options	16
<u>5.0 Master Plan</u>	<u>19</u>
5.1 Overview	19
5.2 Four Corners Park Master Plan	20
5.3 DL Stanton Park Master Plan	23
5.4 Connecting the Parks	25
<u>6.0 Implementation</u>	<u>28</u>
6.1 Phasing	28

1.0 Preface

1.1 Purpose

The Peoplestown Parks Master Plan is a long-term vision and strategy for enhancing DL Stanton and Four Corners parks in a manner that responds to community desires and capitalizes on proximity to the proposed BeltLine - a multi-decade effort to integrate parks, land use, and mobility along a 22-mile loop of historic railroads that ring Atlanta's core. The plan provides a framework for short and long-term park improvements, and suggests responses to adjacent existing and future land uses.

The Peoplestown Park Master Plan is one of several park planning efforts along the BeltLine. At completion, the BeltLine will connect the two parks to 45 of the city's neighborhoods and the more than 100,000 people that currently live within half a mile of the corridor. By improving existing parks and creating new ones, a seamless system of public open spaces will be created that establishes a high quality of life in Atlanta for centuries to come.

**"There are no world class cities
without world class parks."
- Leon S. Eplan**

1.2 BeltLine Planning Efforts

The Parks Master Plan has been developed concurrent with and integrated into a larger land use and transportation planning effort for BeltLine subarea 2: Heritage Communities of South Atlanta. Subarea 2 consists of the portion of the BeltLine south of Downtown Atlanta, between Hill Street and Murphy Avenue.

A key element of BeltLine area planning is creating a beneficial relationship between parks, transportation, and land use. Parks cannot be properly designed without considering access from surrounding land uses, while land uses and transportation facilities cannot achieve their highest potential without proximity to parks.



Parks can have a long-term positive impact on surrounding neighborhoods. This photo shows Brooklyn, New York's Prospect Park, which was built before the city grew around it. It continues to influence surrounding development.

As a result of these coordinated efforts, this master plan describes and plans for both internal and external factors impacting the parks. It considers surrounding existing land uses and transportation facilities, as well as potential future ones. By doing this, a parks vision is established that can meet the needs of the surrounding neighborhood both today and many years in the future.

1.3 Master Planning Process

The planning process used to develop the Peoplestown Park Master Plan involved several steps. These included a review of previous park planning efforts, an inventory and analysis of existing conditions, stakeholder and community interviews, draft concept creation and testing, and the development of final recommendations and implementation plans.

Guiding this process was a Steering Committee made up of representatives of key area organizations, as well as a Study Group made up of members of the general public. A series of meetings was held throughout the process to allow both groups review and comment opportunities.

2.0 Site Inventory

2.1 Overview

This section contains an inventory and analysis of existing conditions in the Peoplestown Parks as they existed in early 2008. These conditions have been compiled from site visits, previous plans, community comments, and existing data sources and services. They were then analyzed to understand existing conditions and provide a baseline for park improvement efforts.

2.2 Peoplestown Parks

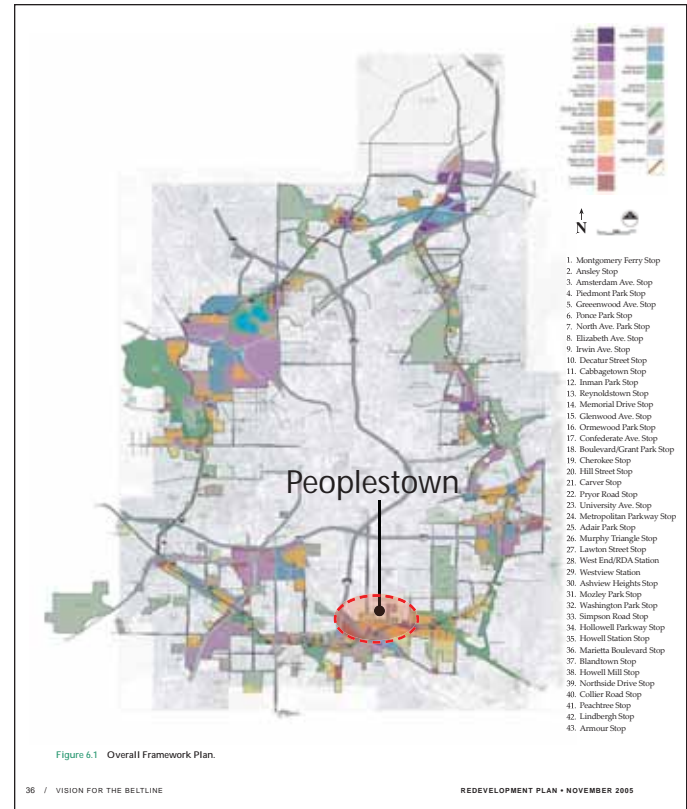
The Peoplestown Parks consist of two existing City of Atlanta Parks: DL Stanton Park and Four Corners Park. Both neighborhood parks are located at the southern end of Atlanta's Peoplestown neighborhood, where they occupy a strategic transition between the existing historic neighborhood and the redevelopment opportunities near the BeltLine. Users of both parks tend to be neighborhood residents.

With just over a quarter-mile of primarily undeveloped land separating them, their proximity offers an opportunity to plan for both parks in a unified manner.

2.3 Neighborhood History

DL Stanton and Four Corners Parks are key focal points of the Peoplestown neighborhood - a historic in-town Atlanta community located one mile south of Downtown. It lies south of I-20, east of I-75/85, and north of the BeltLine.

The diverse neighborhood grew up around a Victorian-era trolley that ran along Capitol Avenue (now Hank Aaron Drive). It was built primarily as housing for lower, middle, and upper income residents. Wealthier families were concentrated along the major paved, tree-lined streets, while poorer ones lived in dwellings at the rear of the lots accessed via alleys. The neighborhood was originally largely white, but there were segregated African American communities within it. These were



This effort builds on the vision of the 2005 Atlanta BeltLine Redevelopment Plan and is produced in conjunction with current BeltLine planning efforts



The Peoplestown neighborhood includes both Four Corners Park and DL Stanton Park, both within the BeltLine Tax Allocation District redevelopment area (shaded in orange)

characterized by smaller lots and houses, unpaved roads and a lack of utilities until around 1930.

Like many Atlanta neighborhoods, Peoplestown has changed over the years. As wealthier residents moved north, they were replaced by a substantial Jewish community, and then a predominately African American one. Peoplestown is significant as the only neighborhood along the Beltline to have had a substantial Jewish community, including Sephardic and Ashkenazi Jews (from Germany and Eastern Europe). It contained a cultural market, Kosher stores, and several synagogues.

Over time, the residents of Peoplestown have become an active, outspoken group devoted to strengthening their community by offering more amenities and by developing their strong neighborhood character. The residents are led by community leaders who are actively engaged and informed, and who are successfully working together toward a common vision of improving and expanding the parks in their community.

2.4 Previous Park Plans

This plan builds upon the work of Friends of Peoplestown Parks (FoPP). In 2006, FoPP was selected by Park Pride to develop a vision and strategy which improved the parks and connected Four Corners and DL Stanton Parks.

Over 80 residents and supporters participated in 7 public meetings, starting in January 2007, to develop the Vision which was completed in the summer of 2007. The Vision improves upon current park amenities and facilities and connects the two parks. The Vision was created to be implemented over a 25 year period with near term goals focusing on expansion and improvements of the current parks and long term goals focused on connecting the parks and placing amenities in the expansion area. The Beltline has utilized the community's Vision as the vision for the Peoplestown Parks Master Plan included in the Sub-Area 2 Master Plan.

From the beginning, the community insisted on incorporating environmentally friendly elements and development principles into the future vision



The urban form of the Peoplestown Neighborhood shows a street grid that has allowed development and change to happen over time



Four Corners Park offers both active and passive uses



Recent land was acquired to expand Four Corners Park to the southwest at Weyman Avenue and Crew Street

of the park, consistent with the City of Atlanta's commitment to have all new facilities meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver certification standards. The LEED program has been successful in promoting green building principles, and is a widely recognized and nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high performance green buildings. The program is sponsored by the U.S. Green Building Council and is currently making strides in accrediting neighborhoods and communities as well as individual buildings.

FoPP adopted five goals for the future design and development of the park and its facilities:

- Sustainable design and reduced environmental impact
- Energy and water efficiency, including greywater recycling

- Use of recycled materials in construction whenever possible
- Use of modern technology and construction approaches
- Use of renewable energy technologies
- Continued FoPP involvement in design and development

The resultant plan incorporated these goals into the following vision elements:

- Connecting the two parks by acquiring land south of Boynton Avenue for park expansion that could encourage passive recreation
- Creating a LEED certified aquatic and recreation center
- Establishing new tennis courts, a ball field, and play areas



The recently completed Peopletown Parks Vision illustrates the community's Vision and full park expansion possibilities

- Connecting the parks to the BeltLine

The conceptual master plan below shows these and other components.

2.5 Four Corners Park

Four Corners Park is a neighborhood park bounded by Hank Aaron Drive, Weyman Avenue, Crew Street, and Haygood Avenue. It lies just north of the BeltLine's intersection with University Avenue, Ridge Avenue, Hank Aaron Drive, and McDonough Boulevard. The park is a small, vibrant facility where neighbors gather in the community center, frequent the basketball courts, and meet under the small pavilion for picnics.

The 3.4 acre park was recently expanded along its southern border. These new acquisitions have allowed the park to begin to fill the block and also suggest possibilities for the entire block.

Rick McDevitt Youth Center

Four Corners Park is home to the Rick McDevitt Youth Center. The center is housed in a formerly abandoned building and park that was prone to illegal activity before it was renovated at the urging of Rick McDevitt and Columbus Ward, founders of Atlanta Help Our Youth and Community Care, Inc.

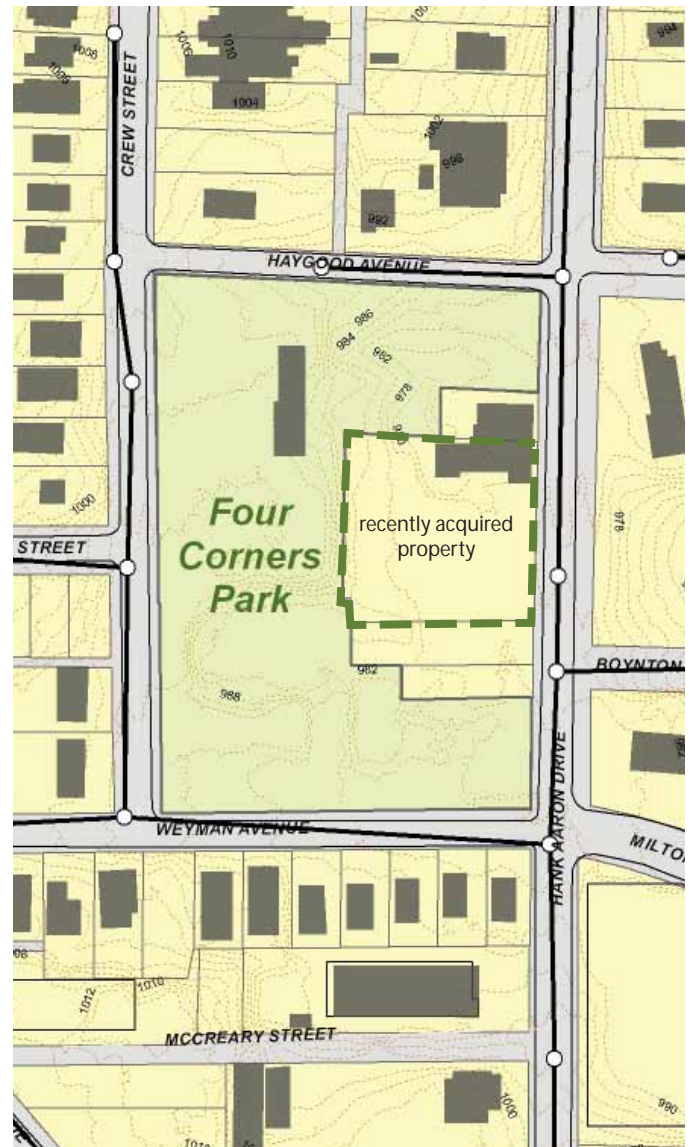
Today the youth center has become a successful example of collaboration between the City of Atlanta and the community, which obtains support from donors and partner organizations. Its use stands as a symbol of community pride. Until the construction of a new recreation center in Stanton Park, the McDevitt Center is the only public space for community and youth activity in the neighborhood.

Park Context

The park's layout is typical of urban parks in Atlanta. It is fronted by streets and sidewalks on most sides, which allows adjacent homes to keep an eye on activity in the park and to define the street. This visibility promotes safety and helps the park feel like a truly public space. With the exception of Hank Aaron Drive, traffic on bordering streets is slow.



Main entrance to Four Corners Park at the northwest corner of the block, facing the Community Center and Playground



Graphic showing contours (brown lines) and utilities (black lines) around Four Corners Park

Adjacent land uses include single-family and multifamily housing to the north, west, and south. To the east are two single-family homes, a church, and vacant land. A large apartment complex lies across Hank Aaron Drive.

Existing Infrastructure

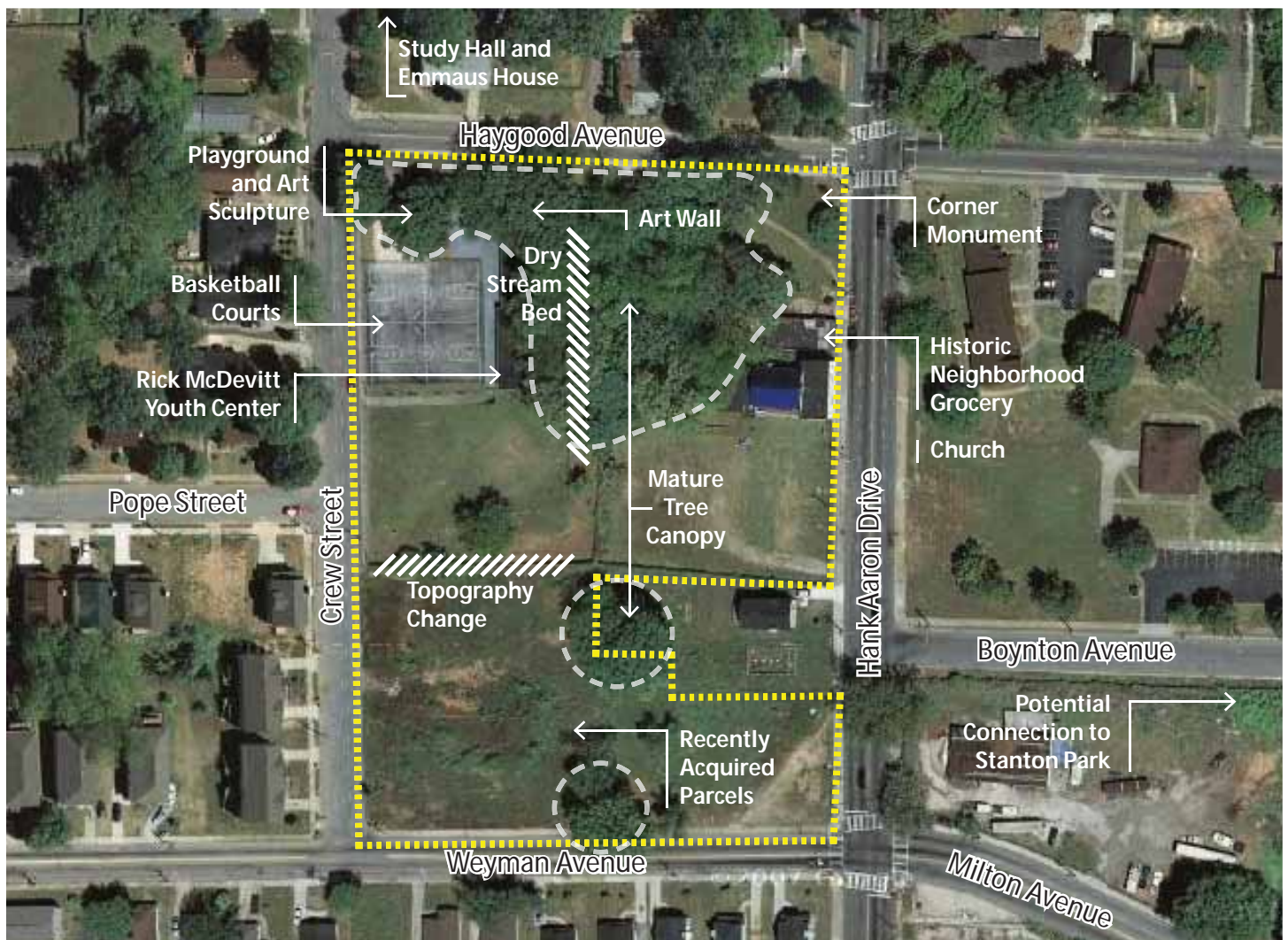
Four Corners Park's bounding streets contain sewer and water facilities. Fortunately, the park does not appear to include easements in its boundaries.

Existing Natural Factors

Four Corners Park is mostly level, with a few key exceptions. Its flat west side provides an ideal site for a playground, basketball courts, and a small grassy area south of the youth center. The steepest part of the park is behind the youth center, where the land falls to a vegetated property line. Another



Several areas of existing vegetation are found in Four Corners Park



Four Corners Park overview, showing park boundaries in yellow, existing amenities, and nearby points of interest

steep area lies at its south end, where holes mark the location of demolished buildings.

The park has both wooded and open areas. Large, mature trees grow along its northern side and are ideal candidates for preservation. The newly acquired properties to the south have sporadic vegetation. There are no streams or floodplains in the park.

Existing Public Art

The park features two public art displays as well as an art wall along the northern portion of the Rick McDevitt Youth Center. The northern art wall has significant community meaning and could be retained and creatively incorporated into a new design.

Existing Facilities

As a small neighborhood park, the facilities in Four Corners Park are limited. In addition to the youth center, the park houses two basketball courts and a picnic area. These facilities serve the needs of the community and young residents. However, the recently acquired southern area presents an opportunity to provide further amenities.

In the Peopletown Parks Vision, the community identified elements to be added to the park. Among them are tennis courts, improved basketball courts, formal lawn gathering areas, an improved playground, an expanded picnic area, and public art.

Safety is also a concern for residents. In light of a troubled past of drug activity, litter, dysfunctional basketball courts, and graffiti covered walls, visibility and safety for the park's users are of primary concern. Design and placement of the amenities focused on accessibility, existing infrastructure, safety, and visibility.



Existing art mural on the north wall of the Rick McDevitt Youth Center



Existing sculptural artwork and playground in the northern portion of the park



Good parks can provide both open space and programmed spaces, such as basketball courts and playgrounds

2.6 DL Stanton Park

DL Stanton Park is a 7.6-acre neighborhood park located mid-block at the corner of Boynton Avenue and Martin Street. Today the park remains a largely under-utilized barren field adjacent to the proposed BeltLine. It has a less than glamorous past as an informal waste disposal site.

Park Context

DL Stanton Park was developed on a reclaimed former dumping ground when the area was a no-man's land between Peoplestown and the rail corridor now known as the BeltLine.

Given this history, the park does not have a strong relationship to adjacent properties. It is largely hidden in the end of the block, with only a small amount of frontage on Martin Street. Surrounding homes back up to it with walls and fences, which precludes any possible security benefits associated with good visibility into the park.

Adjacent land uses include single-family homes to the north and east, vacant land to the west, and the BeltLine to the south. These are a challenge today, but some may provide opportunities for redevelopment that capitalizes on the park.

Existing Infrastructure

DL Stanton Park is impacted by a sewer line running east-west in its north end. To ensure that the City's Department of Watershed Management can access this line for potential maintenance, no buildings or other major permanent structures can be built on top of it. However, facilities such as walking paths, landscaping, and parking are permitted. In fact, the existing playground ring sits atop the line.

Existing Natural Factors

As noted earlier, DL Stanton Park is a grassy area with a small amount of vegetation at its edges. Trees are found only along the perimeter, abutting fences and defining residential back yards.

There are steep changes in topography along the southern edge of the property, as the vegetated banks rise to meet the BeltLine tracks.



The current entrance to the park is less than ideal, requiring a long path to reach the interior playground



Graphic showing contours (brown lines) and utilities (black lines) around DL Stanton Park

There are no streams or floodplains in or near the park. However, water has a tendency to gather in a low lying area in the northeastern part of the site.

Although the park was once an illegal dump, most of the soil has been remediated. However, contaminated soil may still exist underneath the demolished recreation center.

Existing Public Art

There is no public art in DL Stanton Park. However, the BeltLine subarea 2 master planning effort has

identified an opportunity to create new public art at the park's entry to the BeltLine.

Existing Facilities

DL Stanton Park currently lacks any facilities other than a playground. In the recent past, an oversized play ring was installed in the middle of the site, along with supporting infrastructure below. The ring physically dominates the site, but is located far from the entrance to the park. As such, there is poor visibility to it from public streets.

Recent playground improvements have been completed, replacing damaged equipment with new equipment in the existing playground ring. The old recreation center stood vacant and was recently demolished.



Recent playground improvements at Stanton Park include new equipment in the original central location

identified an opportunity to connect DL Stanton and Four Corners Parks by acquiring an approximately 10 acre tract between the two, along Boynton Avenue.

2.7 Boynton Avenue Site

As noted earlier, the Peoplestown Parks Vision

The expansion area identified in the Vision is a



DL Stanton Park overview map, showing park boundaries in yellow, existing amenities, and the BeltLine

partially treed site with significant topographic change. It is divided into higher and lower terraces, with the former following the BeltLine and the latter along Boynton Avenue.

This topography naturally breaks the site into two separate zones. Depending on future funding or development activity, the topography suggests that it may be easy to develop one or both of the zones into parks or development sites. If developed, the site's depth would allow for a linear park to be provided along the south side of Boynton Avenue.



The abandoned recreation center has recently been demolished



Graphic showing the community suggested park expansion area

3.0 Needs Analysis

3.1 Successful Urban Parks

Successful urban parks share the common features of accessibility, visibility, and management. Together, these features activate a park and directly improve safety in and around it.

- **Accessibility:** An ideal park is fronted on all or most sides by streets. These encourage access from multiple points and offer routes in and out of the park. The park entrance should also be welcoming to attract responsible users.
- **Visibility:** Streets and buildings around a park increase visibility into and out of the park, effectively promoting safety through design.
- **Management:** Credible park management ensures long term use and maintenance, promoting a healthy and attractive atmosphere. Management can also deter loiterers.

These are important to consider in planning for the Peoplestown Parks because of their urban setting.

3.2 Opportunities and Constraints

The inventory provides the basis for the analysis of opportunities and issues that drive the conceptual master plan design. This section analyzes those elements to determine park needs.

Opportunities

- Very little of DL Stanton Park has been utilized, providing a blank slate of opportunity.
- The parks are adjacent to the BeltLine, providing direct future access to a large, multi-use trail.
- The surrounding neighborhood faces potential growth, providing potential weekday and weekend park users.
- Several schools are located near the parks and represent potential users.
- The relatively flat terrain of DL Stanton Park allows it to accommodate large fields and multi-use spaces.



Ideally, urban parks of all sizes are surrounded by streets and buildings that face into them
(Photo courtesy of Alex S. MacLean)

- The DL Stanton Park playground and Rick McDevitt Youth Center demonstrate strong community support for their facilities.
- DL Stanton Park can have a pedestrian and emergency entrance at its northeast corner in order to increase safety and visibility into the park.
- Increased public art could benefit both parks.
- Vacant and marginal lands by both parks could be acquired to expand the parks or be redeveloped into park-supportive uses.
- Topography in DL Stanton Park allows buildings to tuck into the hill and offer rooftop gardens.

Constraints

- Both parks have seen incidents of crime and suspicious activity.
- DL Stanton Park has only one entrance from Boynton Avenue and Martin Street, creating a disconnect between the neighborhood and the old recreation center.

3.3 Summary of Community Input

Community members guided the planning process and ensured that neighborhood needs were reflected in it. Major summary points include:

- There is strong desire to build a new recreation center, anticipated to be between 20,000 and

30,000 square feet.

- A baseball field is desired in DL Stanton Park. Funding is currently in place for construction in 2009.
- A linear greenway to connect the two parks along the south side of Boynton Avenue is a desirable option if larger park expansion is not immediately feasible. However, if additional right of way is needed to accommodate the greenway, it would be dependent on future acquisition and development.
- A walking trail is needed within DL Stanton Park. This could connect to the future BeltLine trail.
- Basketball courts are suggested to be relocated to the southeast corner of Four Corners Park for increased visibility along Hank Aaron Drive.
- The William McDevitt Youth Center could be replaced by a new improved recreation center.
- Flexible park spaces are preferred to more specific programmed elements.
- The community would like park improvements to focus on environmental excellence, including striving for LEED certification.
- An aquatic center is also desired, but due to the anticipated cost of \$15 to \$20 million dollars, it is not in the City's funding plans and would need to be funded through other means. The community would bear the responsibility for obtaining resources for construction and operation.



DL Stanton Park will soon house a community-supported baseball field



The community would like to see gardens provided if the community supported park expansion is acquired



Flexible spaces that can serve a variety of uses are desired

4.0 Concept Development

4.1 Concept Process

A range of concepts was developed to assist designers and the community in understanding potential park elements and their physical needs. These concepts were also important in gaining feedback and determining which elements to include in the Master Plan.

Summaries of the various options are presented below. The comments from the most preferred option for each park were carried forward for refinement in the Master Plan phase.

4.2 Four Corners Park Options

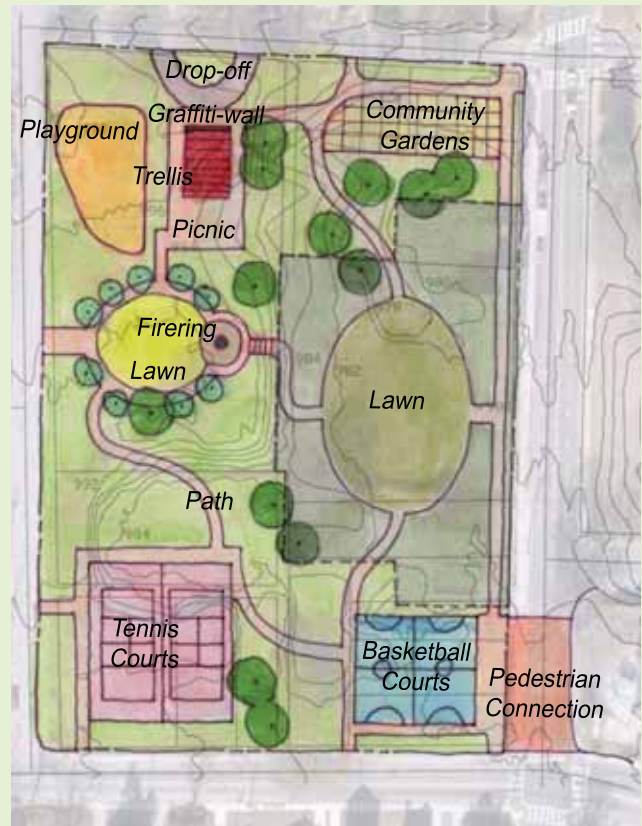
Three options were developed for Four Corners Park. Based on public feedback, Option B was the most preferred option, and also the most closely aligned with the previous park visioning effort.



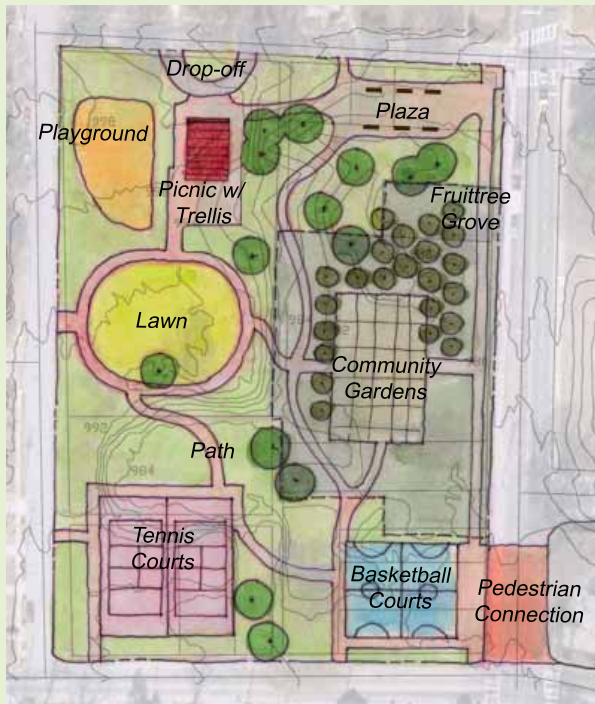
Community members discuss park planning at a community open house

Four Corners Park Option A

- A wall/trellis/picnic area integrates the graffiti art wall with active uses.
- The playground stays in its current location.
- Basketball courts move to the southeast for visibility.
- Tennis courts are a new amenity.
- A fire ring serves as a community gathering place.
- Community gardens include a corner sculpture.
- A lawn is shown in the potential expansion area.

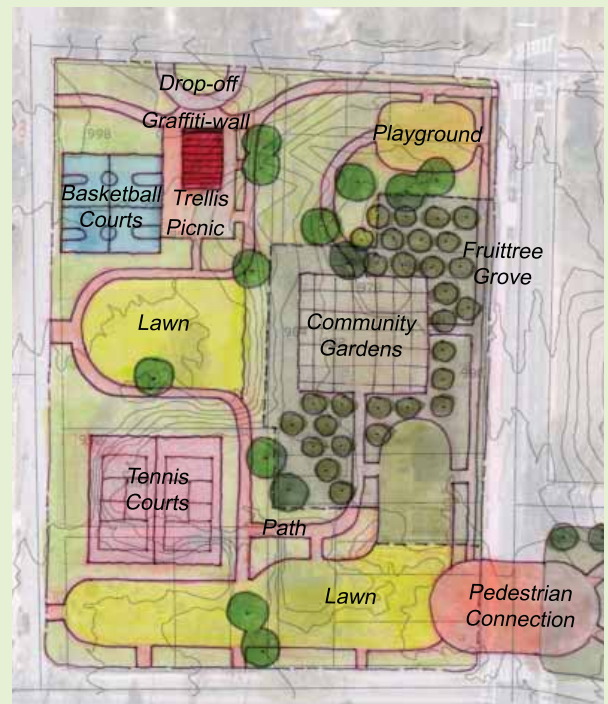


Four Corners Park Option B



- A plaza incorporates a corner sculpture.
- A picnic area with trellis incorporates the graffiti art wall.
- The playground remains in its current location.
- Basketball courts are moved to the southeast corner for visibility.
- Tennis courts are added.
- A lawn area serves as a community gathering place.
- Community gardens are shown in the park expansion area.
- A fruit tree grove is also included in the park expansion area.

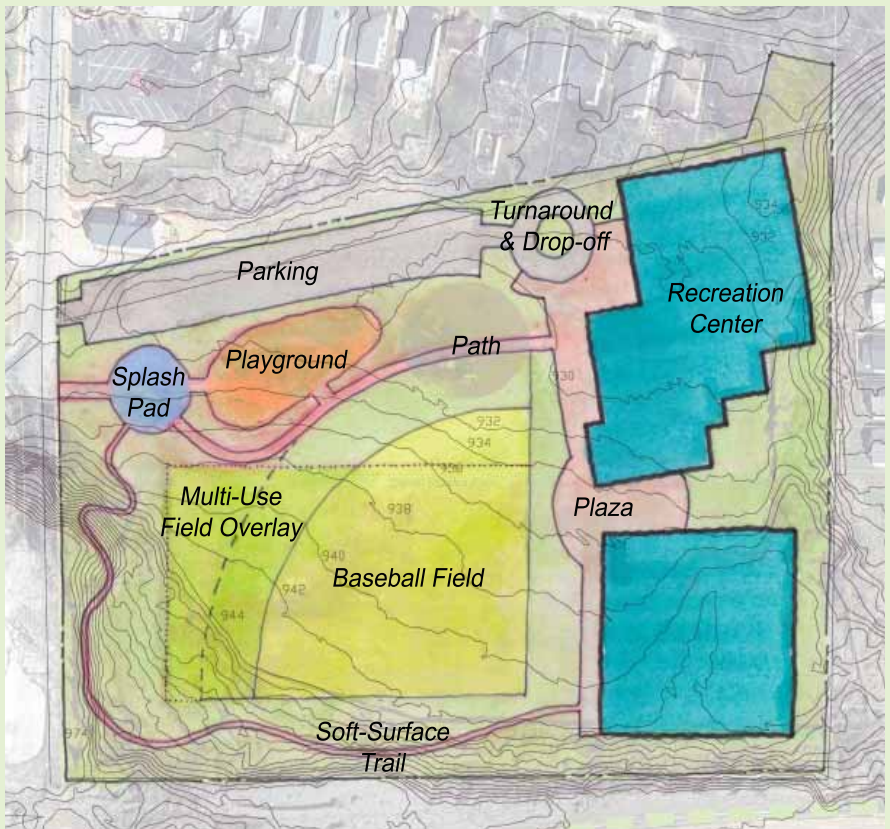
Four Corners Park Option C



- A wall/trellis/picnic area integrates the graffiti art wall with active uses.
- A playground incorporates a corner sculpture in the northeast.
- Basketball courts remain in their current location.
- Tennis courts are added as a new amenity.
- A formal lawn serves as a gathering place.
- Community gardens are located in the park expansion area.
- A fruit tree grove is also included in the park expansion area.
- Parking is located along the southern edge of Boynton Avenue.

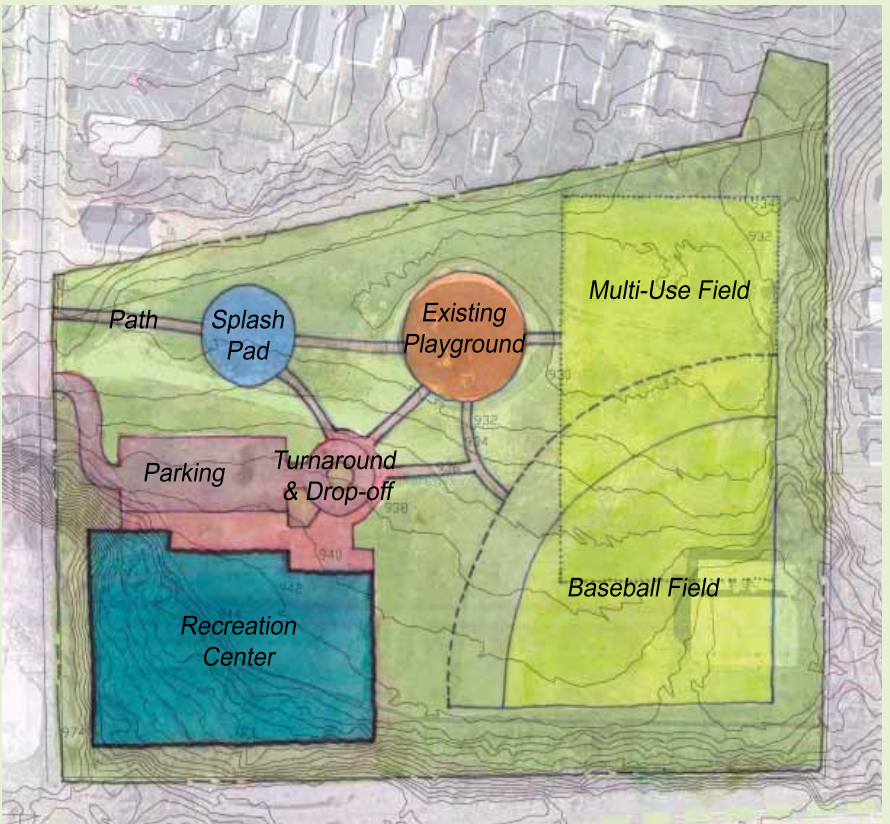
DL Stanton Park Option A

- A baseball field is oriented to the northwest and would require minimal grading.
- A multi-use field is overlaid on the baseball field in order to save space.
- A new recreation center is the focal point from Boynton Avenue and an aquatic center is located where the recreation center now sits.
- A splash pad and playground are located near the entry for ease of use.
- Parking is located inside the park, but is kept at the northern edge. It includes a turnaround and drop-off area.



DL Stanton Park Option B

- A baseball field is oriented to the northwest and would require minimal grading.
- A multi-use field is the focal point from Boynton Avenue, and a new Recreation Center is shown built into the hillside in southwest corner.
- A splash pad and playground are located beyond the baseball trajectory.
- Parking is located inside the park, but is kept at the western edge and includes a turnaround and drop-off area.



4.3 DL Stanton Park Options

Three options were also developed for DL Stanton Park. In each concept the playground was shown oversized, allowing ample room to accommodate earthwork and land sculpting.

The Steering Committee preferred Option B because it tucked the Recreation Center into the southwest hillside and allowed the eastern portion of the park to be used for field sports. This arrangement also allows for the active, programmed space to be located closest to the park entrance, with more open areas located in the eastern portion of the park.

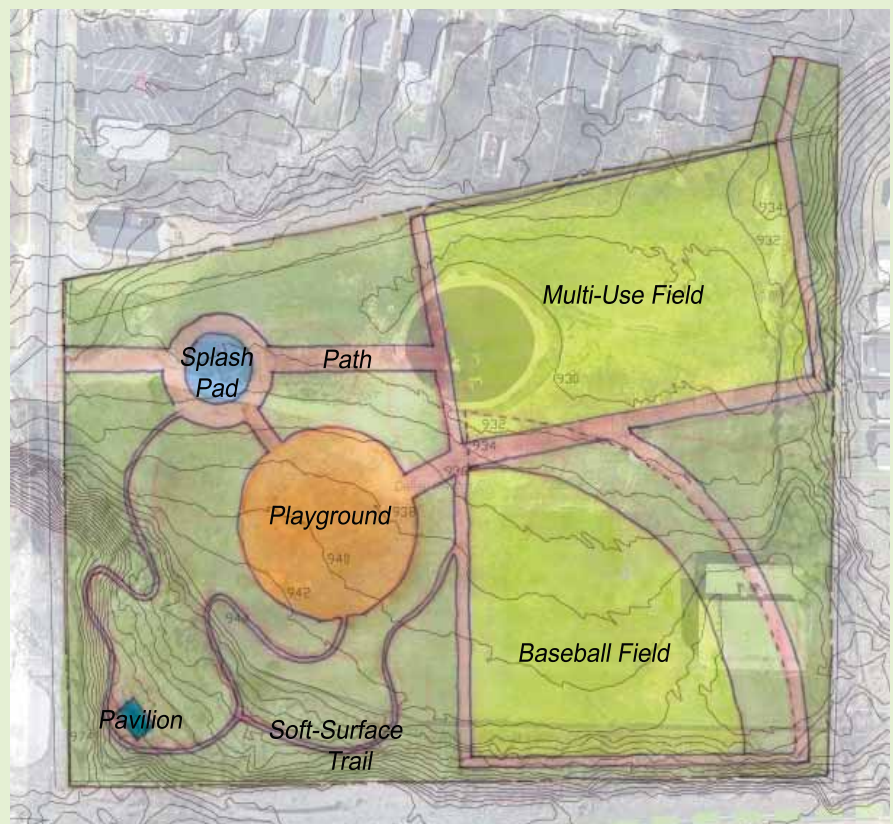


DL Stanton Park awaits a new master plan in order to showcase many new amenities for the community

DL Stanton Park Option C

- A baseball field is oriented to the northeast (this is ideal), but grading is required.
- A multi-use field is the focal point from Boynton Avenue.
- The splash pad and playground arrangement allows ample room for earthwork and interaction.
- A soft-surface trail meanders and encourages exploration into all areas of the park.

Note: In this concept, the Recreation Center is located on future park expansion land, allowing the current park area to be used largely for greenspace.





5.0 Master Plan

5.1 Overview

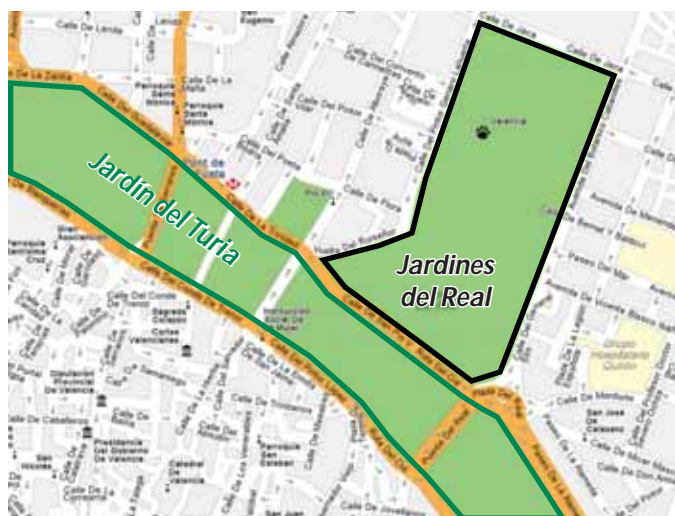
This master plan is intended to guide the long term development of Peoplestown Parks and to be a catalyst for related projects such as street connections, multi-use trails, and nearby land use planning. The foldout on the previous page illustrates what amenities could be developed and phased into the development of the parks over time. The guidelines and overall principles illustrated within this master plan should be followed to ensure a cohesive, comprehensive result.

The Peoplestown Parks Master Plan creates an improved community park directly adjoining the BeltLine by linking two existing neighborhood parks with a new linear park and multi-use trail. This combined park system creates a model for how adjacent parks can be integrated into the BeltLine corridor. It also serves as a an example for the City of Atlanta by realizing a successful community planning process and locating new and improved recreational amenities in deserving neighborhoods. Environmental responsibility and leadership are fundamental to the new master plan, through site design and location as well as building construction.

This proactive master plan will help define boundaries for new growth that occurs adjacent to the BeltLine and preserve needed park space for all to enjoy. Community support for a park system is crucial to its success and development, and maintains safety and security through active participation. The Peoplestown community has actively participated through the planning and design processes, and the resulting plan is one that the community can be proud of and enjoy for generations to come.



Playgrounds play an important role in the Master Plan



In Valencia Spain the *Jardines del Real* enhance the *Jardín del Turia* - a linear park similar to the Beltline vision; the Peoplestown Parks could do the same (courtesy multimap.com)



This aerial shows the relationship between the *Jardines del Real* (top right) and the *Jardín del Turia* (bottom); both are models for Atlanta (courtesy multimap.com)

5.2 Four Corners Park Master Plan

The improved Four Corners Park incorporates elements originating from public input received during the planning process. It builds upon the park's role as a community gathering space by offering better defined areas for gathering, active uses, and passive uses. The design preserves the existing tree canopy in the north-central portion of the site, as well as a specimen tree in the south-central part of the site. Formal and informal planting areas are introduced.

Park Elements and Amenities

Key elements of the park design include those described below. A small portion of the larger multi-use field and the gazebo/entry feature are located on private rather than city land. These areas would be part of the long-term implementation plan.

Materials throughout the park should be chosen with low maintenance in mind. Concrete paths, standard City of Atlanta park furnishings and fixtures, and native plantings are encouraged. Where present, walls should match the existing granite common in most Atlanta parks.

- **Unified Site Grading.** Because the park was once made up of smaller lots, it contains grade changes corresponding to them. These prevent the park from functioning as a single space, and will be removed by regrading in key areas.
- **Public Art Areas.** Currently there are sculptures in the playground at the northwest corner of the park and in the plaza at the northeast corner. These pieces are preserved and enhanced by introducing artwork sites at the two southern corners as well. This activates all corners of the park and defines its edges. It also improves aesthetics and promotes safety.
- **Expanded Playground Area.** The current playground and equipment is preserved and reconfigured. Creative earthwork and berms for natural, interactive play are added, along with a sandbox, slide, and a water feature.
- **William McDevitt Youth Center.** Prior to the potential construction of a new recreation center

in Stanton Park, the McDevitt Center building currently provides one of the few spaces for youth activity in the neighborhood. With the proposed addition of a state-of-the-art center in Stanton Park, the continuous maintenance of the existing Youth Center will no longer remain ideal from a public cost perspective.

However, it may be possible to obtain city support to retain and convert the building to a community center. The community first would need to raise outside capital and maintenance funds. They would then need to identify a stable entity capable of running the center. Both would need to be secured by the time the Youth Center is scheduled for removal.

- **Restored Woodland.** The area of existing hardwood trees in the north-central area of the park is preserved and restored by removing invasive species and introducing walking paths.
- **Multi-Use Fields.** A small lawn provides an entrance to the park from Crew Street. It serves as a gathering space and, because it is adjacent to the playground, can also be used for play. To the east, a larger lawn is reached by a series of steps or terraces from the smaller multi-use field. It provides a larger area for more significant active uses, such as organized sports.
- **Tennis Courts.** The introduction of tennis courts to the park offers a new amenity to the Peoplestown neighborhood. These are located at the southwestern corner of the park. The courts are framed by an entrance at Crew Street and Weyman Avenue, with a small plaza for viewing artwork or watching tennis matches.
- **Relocation of Basketball Courts.** The new location of the basketball courts is at the southeastern corner of the park. This relocation increases visibility and ensures that active "eyes on the street" and car traffic along Hank Aaron Drive can informally supervise recreational activities at the basketball courts.
- **Gazebo and Entry Feature.** The entrance to the park from Hank Aaron Drive and the proposed Boynton Avenue multi-use trail is highlighted by a row of benches and tree plantings that



Four Corners Park Master Plan

terminate on a new gazebo.

Although outside of the park property, it is also recommended that the abutting sidewalks be widened to incorporate a minimum 2-foot landscape strip adjacent to the street.

Potential Park Expansion Area

Due to the small size of Four Corners Park and the two small parcels of privately-held land remaining on the block, any long-term park planning effort should contemplate inclusion of these properties into the park. They are too small for viable development and would create a superior park experience if incorporated into the whole.

Potential options for the expansion areas include in the master plan are:

- ***Expanded Gazebo and Entry Plaza.*** The southern private property along Hank Aaron Drive could be the site of the main entrance into the park from Boynton Avenue
- ***Expanded Multi-Use Field.*** The multi-use field that constitutes most of the eastern half of the park could be expanded and more cohesively linked with the wooded area if the northern property along Hank Aaron Drive were acquired.

Given the positives and negatives of any expansion alternative, they will need to be carefully considered if and when future lands are acquired.

5.3 DL Stanton Park Master Plan

The master plan for DL Stanton Park calls for leaving behind the site's less-than-ideal past to create an engaging amenity that meets the needs of adjacent neighborhoods and capitalizes on adjacency to the BeltLine. The plan proposes to enhance the park with a variety of new active and passive spaces including a future recreation center. Materials throughout should focus on low maintenance, as discussed above for Four Corners Park.

Key elements of the plan include:

- **Stanton Recreation Center.** As part of the park's long-term development, a new recreation center is envisioned nestled into the hill in the southwest corner of the park. The new center would incorporate best practices in environmental stewardship and sustainability, as requested and envisioned by the Friends of Peoplestown Park. It could boast an external green roof and strive for LEED certification. With an internal space of 20,000 to 30,000 square feet (depending on funding availability and refinement of the building's program), the new recreation center would be sized to accommodate various community venues, potentially including youth activities currently housed in the McDevitt Center.

Given current financial challenges to staffing and operating existing community centers around the city, a new recreation center is a long-term development opportunity. In the near term, the grading and creation of a multi-use field in the southwest corner of the park can prepare the site for a future recreation center.

- **Parking.** A significant amount of on-street parking is available immediately adjacent to the park, and more parallel spaces will be constructed as a part of the Boynton Avenue Linear Park. To further support the proposed Recreation Center, a small pervious parking area to its west is proposed.

The parking lot's location does not separate the street from the park, which is able to extend all the way to Martin Street. This makes green space



Greenroofs offer interactive public space and enhance environmental sustainability

visible from the street and directly accessible for pedestrians without the need to cross any internal streets or parking lots. It also allows a continuous pedestrian flow between sidewalk and park and to integrate the green space with the neighborhood.

- **Baseball Field.** A new baseball field is located in the southeast corner of the park, with northwest orientation. The field's size accommodate Little League play and contains space for dugouts, bleachers, and a concessions, restroom, and storage building. The slope of this area and the adjacent lawn is relatively flat and requires only modest grading.

Due to topographic constraints in the southwest corner of the park and the future recreation center, as well as the existing playground in the northern part of the park, the southeast corner is the best location for the baseball field. Its northwest orientation is most appropriate to allow the best use of the multi-use fields.

- **Lawn/Multi-Use Fields.** Beyond the outfield and north of the proposed Recreation Center, multi-use fields provide flexible space for sports such as football, frisbee, and soccer. The shared field arrangement makes efficient use of park space and maximizes usable space for field sports as well as other more passive uses.
- **Walking/Multi-use Trails.** Walking and multi-use trails connect all major features of the park,

creating a network for internal park users and those passing through it. There are four points of connection to adjacent pedestrian systems, including the BeltLine, Martin Street, the Boynton Avenue connection to Four Corners Park, and Haygood Avenue.

Trails are constructed of concrete and situated to avoid intersecting with vehicular traffic, avoid potential conflicts, and create an enjoyable pedestrian experience. The main pedestrian entryway to the park is at Martin Street via an entry plaza and generous pedestrian boulevard. The greenway from Four Corners Park extends into Stanton Park and skirts the recreation center as it makes its way up the steep grade along the southern edge of the park to connect to the BeltLine.

- **Playground Area.** The existing playground equipment is incorporated into the master plan design, preserving the hard work of community volunteers and the generous contributions of corporate partners. There is space for placement of additional equipment that could even enhance this park feature.
- **Playground gazebo.** The existing playground space is enhanced by a new gazebo structure that lends parents and guardians a shaded place to oversee the activities on the playground. This structure also serves as a focal point from the main park entrance along the extension of Boynton Avenue into the park.

- **Natural Play Area.** Children are increasingly separated from nature, which some refer to as “nature-deficit disorder.” Especially in cities, access to natural areas that are safe for play is limited. The natural play area will provide an opportunity for children to interact with natural features in a playful way. Materials and forms are chosen to be safe and engaging for children. They include turf mounds of variable heights, low-branching trees, sand, rocks, and native plants. This area will complement the playground and splash pad to provide a range of attractive play opportunities for children.
- **Entry Plaza.** A welcoming and flexible plaza space is located near the entrance to the park to serve as a pedestrian gateway to the natural



Water features in parks can be a great generator of activity



The existing Kaboom! playground is incorporated into the DL Stanton Park master plan



The pedestrian way recommended from the natural play area to the recreation center will give priority to pedestrians



DL Stanton Park Master Plan

play and picnic area as well as a gathering place. Its location at the end of Boynton Avenue enhances the park's visibility and symbolically connects it to a similar facility planned at Four Corners Park.

- **Splash Pad.** This formal linear plaza is bordered by the walking trail and serves as an interactive play area during non-drought periods, or as additional active space adjacent to the playground when the fountains are inactive.

5.4 Connecting the Parks

A key recommendation of the Park Pride Master Plan

for Peoplestown Parks was to connect DL Stanton and Four Corners Parks by acquiring approximately 10 acres between the two for a park expansion. This effort envisioned a variety of uses for this area, including an aquatic center.

The long-term acquisition of this strip of land remains an important element of the community's Vision.

Boynton Avenue Linear Park

The spirit of connecting DL Stanton Park and Four Corners Park is central to the master plan. However, because of limited funds, the plan recommends

connecting them by a more modest means in the short-term that do not restrict the long-term vision. To achieve this, a streetscape/linear park is recommended along Boynton Avenue.

Elements of the Boynton Avenue linear park include:

- Fourteen small bulbouts on the north side of Boynton Avenue planted with street trees to create a green streetscape and cool parked cars.
- Relocated curbs and 5 larger bulbouts along the south side of Boynton Avenue.
- Street trees within a new 5 foot wide tree zone on the avenue's south side.
- New on-street parallel parking for cars.
- Highly-visible crosswalks.
- A 15 foot wide multi-use trail on the south side (10-15 feet would be located outside the right-of-way on private land via easement or zoning condition).
- A 5 foot landscaping strip adjacent to the trail (outside the right-of-way; also achievable via easement or zoning condition).

Except as noted, this concept can be accomplished in the existing right-of-way, which varies from 45 to 55 feet.

As a transportation project, this project can also be funded from the city's Capital Improvement Program rather than park-related funding.

Potential Future Park Expansion

The proposed streetscape could be the first component of a larger park along Boynton Avenue. All proposed elements except the trail can be accommodated in the existing right-of-way, yet future park space could be expanded even further, particularly if the neighborhood-desired aquatic center is to become a reality.

The City of Atlanta and the community should continue to explore open space acquisition south of Boynton Avenue, which could be achieved by



View along Boynton Avenue looking towards Stanton Park



Proposed Boynton Avenue Streetscape



The proposed streetscape could resemble the Westside Trail adjacent to Washington Park in Atlanta

the following means:

- **Outside Funding Sources:** Friends of Peopletown Park should continue to explore funding sources for future park expansion, including options for acquiring the approximately 10-acre site as well as more incremental solutions.
- **Zoning-Required Open Space:** City of Atlanta zoning requires many residential developments to provide usable open space and non-residential developments to provide public space. If land south of Boynton Avenue cannot be purchased for park space, it is highly recommended that private developers provide a minimum 30 foot wide (as measured from the existing right-of-way) linear park adjacent to said trail as part of meeting their on-site public and open space requirements. Said space should be fronted by active uses and buildings. Depending on the projects specifics, a greater amount may also be achievable.

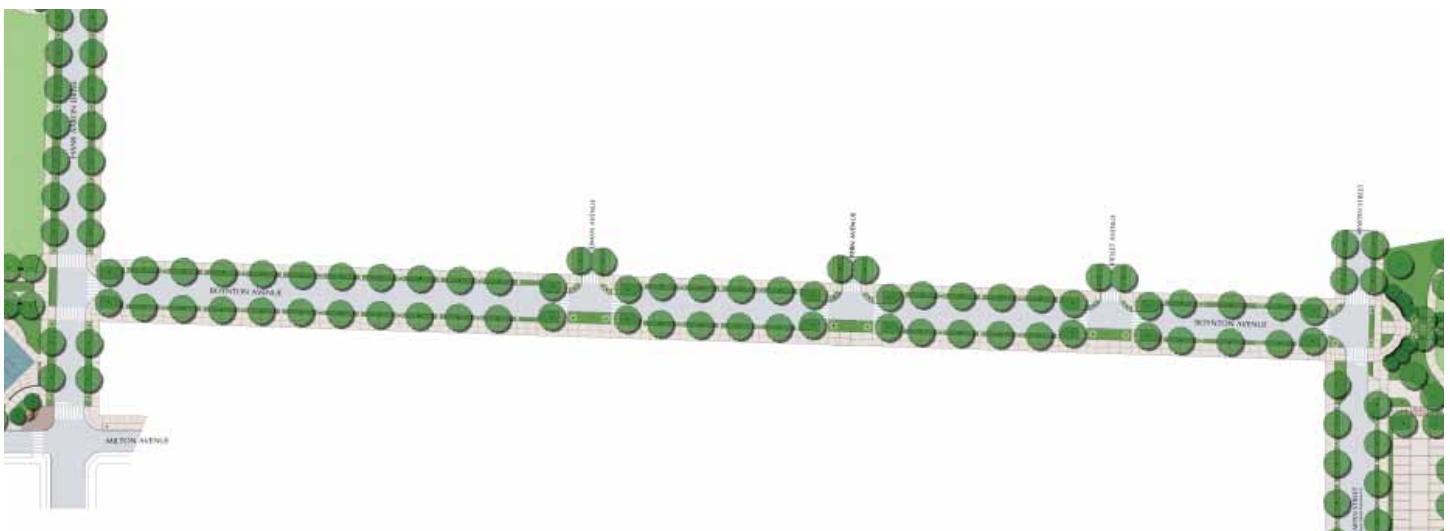
Both options will require diligence on the part of community residents and the City of Atlanta. Outside funding would require grant writing and outreach for donations, while the zoning option would require carefully written conditions negotiated with the a developer through the rezoning review process. It will not be an easy effort, but diligence is necessary in times of high land costs and limited public funds.



It may be possible for private development to provide a linear park along the proposed Boynton Avenue streetscape



Any new linear park, no matter how small, must be fronted by buildings that engage it with stoops, porches, or storefronts



The linear park streetscape connects Four Corners Park to Stanton Park along the southern edge of Boynton Avenue

6.0 Implementation

6.1 Phasing

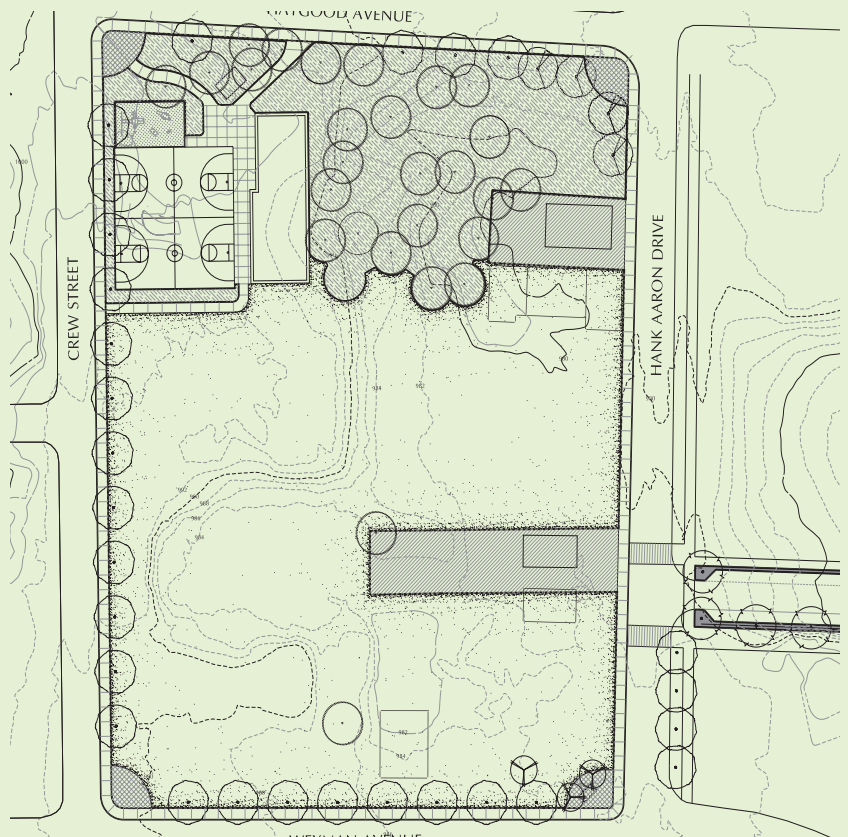
The Master Plan described here is a vision for upgrading and expanding Peoplestown parks to better serve the needs of current and future users. To achieve this vision, recommended improvements in each park have been divided into phases to guide the transformation of the parks as funding is available.

The following pages summarize each project and lay out their proposed phasing.

Four Corners Park - Phase 1:

Clean-Up, Grading, and Planting

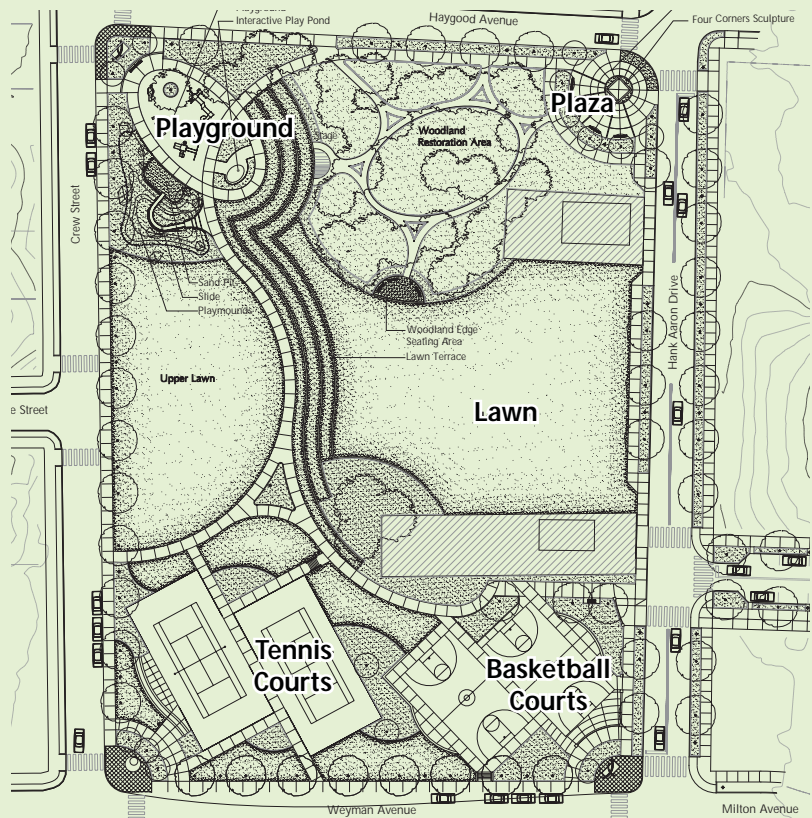
- Site grading to remove old basement holes, retaining walls, etc.
- Remove back-filled soil around existing trees to restore original grade
- Clean up stream bed/drainage area
- Keep basketball courts and McDevitt Youth Center in current location
- Plant new perimeter trees



Four Corners Park - Phase 2:

Tennis Courts, Playground, and Lawns

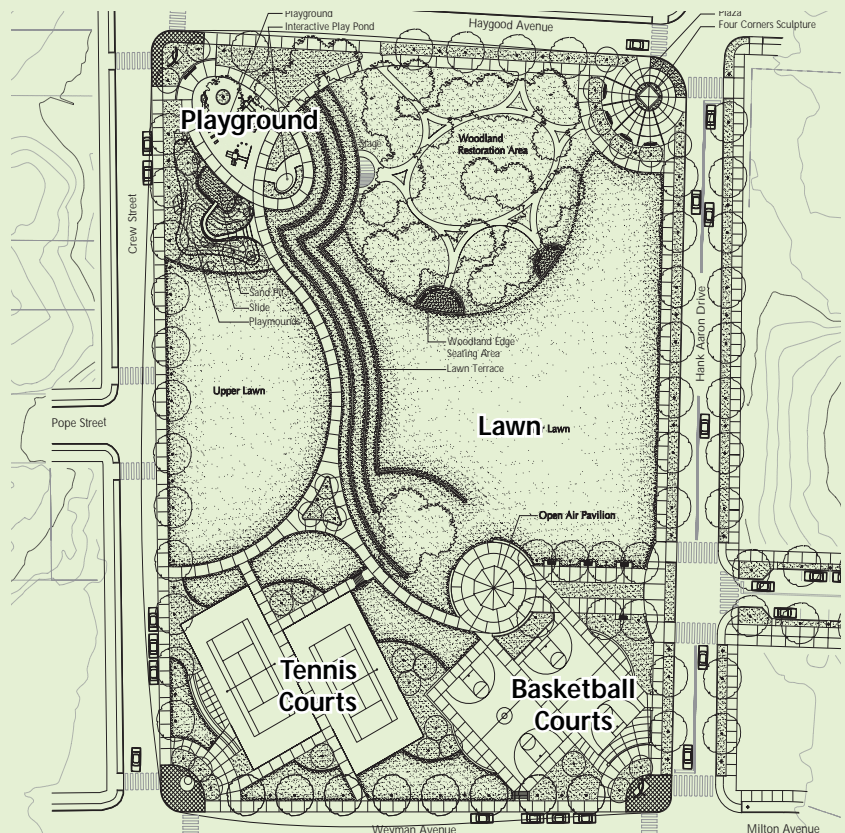
- Add art opportunities to all corners of the park
- Move existing industrial artifact along Crew Street to southwest corner.
- After the construction of the recreation center in DL Stanton Park, examine feasibility of adaptive reuse of the McDevitt Center using community generated funds.
- Construct new tennis courts in the southwest corner of the park to offer a new amenity for the neighborhood
- Expand existing playground



Four Corners Park - Phase 3:

Expansion Area*

- Gazebo, entry plaza, and connection to Boynton Avenue multi-use trail
- Multi-use field expansion to connect with wooded area

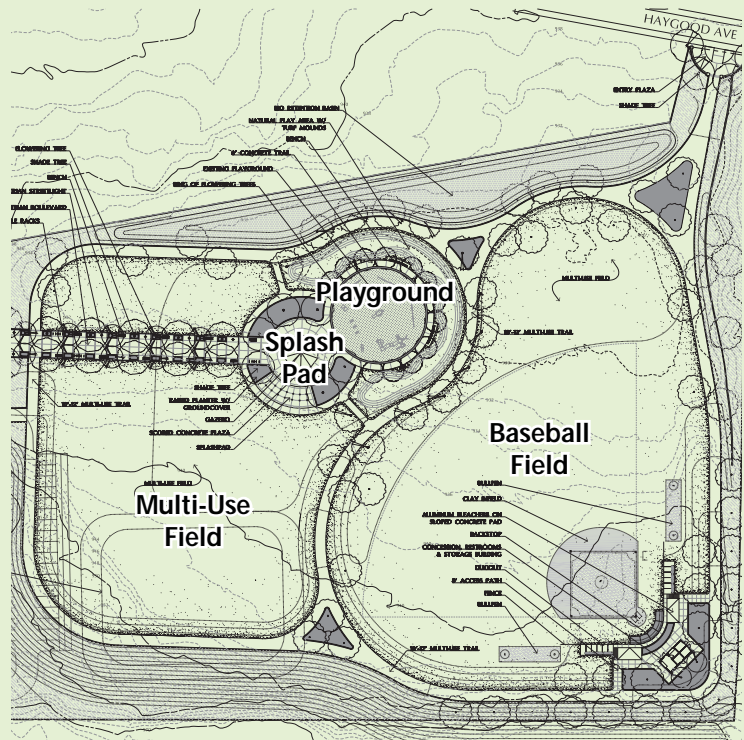


*Requires additional land acquisition.

Stanton Park - Phase 1:

Fields, Playground, Entry, and Trails

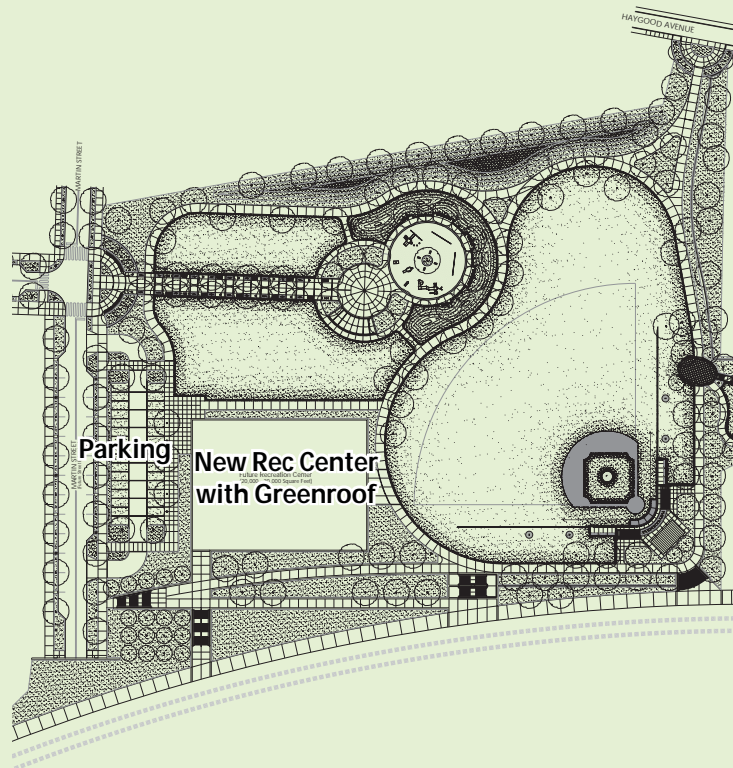
- Retain the existing playground equipment and enhance it with the provision of a natural play area and splash pad
- Construct a gazebo adjacent to the playground to allow adults to supervise play and to provide a terminus to the pedestrian boulevard and Boynton Avenue
- Provide a new baseball field with aluminum stands and a dugout
- Create two multi-use fields
- Remove existing recreation center building
- Implement soft-surface trails, plantings, and bike racks to complete the phase



Stanton Park - Phase 2:

Recreation Center, Parking, & Trail Connection

- The main element of this phase will be a new environmentally-friendly recreation center, adjacent to the BeltLine and accessed by a new entrance at Martin Drive/Boynton Avenue
- A parking area with bioswales will accent the greenroof and new interior trees
- A trail connection to the BeltLine multi-use trail will be included with the construction of the Recreation Center
- A potential eastern connection to Grant Way
- New concession stands, restrooms, and a storage area for the baseball field



Boynton Avenue Streetscape:

- The improved streetscape and multi-use trail will serve as a critical link between Four Corners and Stanton Park
- All proposed elements of the Boynton Avenue Streetscape, except the multi-use trail, can be accommodated within the existing right-of-way. An additional 20' of right-of-way is needed for the multi-use trail
- In the future, a possible expansion area could extend southward

