

CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON PHASE I OF HISTORIC FOURTH WARD PARK

The backhoes, excavators, and dump trucks have begun working full-tilt on Phase I of the Historic Fourth Ward Park. The work will include remediation of the old



industrial site south of North Avenue at City Hall East and the construction of walkways, an amphitheater and event lawn, and numerous water features, including a two-acre stormwater detention pond.

The construction of Phase I of the park will cost approximately \$23,000,000 and is expected to be completed by mid-August of 2010. The first phase of the park will occupy a five-acre site between Morgan Street and Rankin Street and west of N. Angier Avenue.

Two more sections are planned, Phases II and III, which, when completed, will extend the park to North Avenue to the north and Ralph McGill Avenue to the south, encompassing a total of thirty-five acres. A four-acre



satellite park a quarter-mile to the southeast will include a multi-use field, a playground, restroom, and a 15,000 sq. ft. skate park.

Phase I is being funded by the City of Atlanta's Department of Watershed

Management and overseen by Atlanta Beltline, Inc., which has acquired the five-acre site as part of the overall Beltline project. The Beltline will run adjacent to the eastern edge of the park site and will connect it to Piedmont Park to the north and several existing and new parks to the south. When the park is completed, it will be managed by the City and supported by the Historic Fourth Ward Park Conservancy, a private, non-profit group.



The centerpiece of the park, the Clear Creek Basin, will serve as a storm water run-off reservoir. The storm water detention feature and the park have been designed over the past year through a unique community partnership of residents and business stakeholders, the City's Department of Watershed Management (DWM), and Atlanta Beltline, Inc. The need to provide storm water runoff in an area slated for redevelopment has allowed several departments in the City to work together, creating a solution that addresses quality of life, environmental sustainability, and economic efficiency.

"The City of Atlanta Department of Watershed Management originally thought the work in this area would cost \$40,000,000 to solve the stormwater run-off problem," says Kevin Burke, Senior Landscape Architect for Atlanta Beltline, Inc., and Project Manager . "However, when the local community proposed to solve the problem by creating a park with a pond reservoir, we found we could do so and meet the engineering requirements of the water management problem for approximately

\$23,000,000. We hope, when Phase I is completed, to return a sizable sum to the DWM coffers.”

Between now and the first week of October, 2009, work crews will concentrate on site remediation, which includes removal of the existing industrial structures and concrete surfaces, an underground diesel fuel storage tank, and an old construction dump that includes non-airborne asbestos materials. Once that work

is done, work crews will install a series of “de-watering” vertical pipes to remove the ground water so construction can proceed.



“The pond itself will actually be built below the site’s water table,” Burke says. “When completed, the pond will generate a minimum of 425 gallons a minute, even in a drought, from the submerged Clear Creek water table.” He notes that the generated water will be used to water the park’s lawns and playing fields.

“Recycling is an important part of this project,” Burke says. “During construction we will excavate some 55,000 cubic yards of soil, which will be used for meadow restoration at the new City park at Bellwood Quarry on Atlanta’s west side.” Removing existing concrete structures and asphalt parking lots and replacing them with lawns and play areas in Phases I and II will reduce the overall impervious surface area in the park by approximately fifty percent, Burke says.

Additional water features in the park will include a ten-foot waterfall to aerate and recycle the pond water and a stone water cascade that will run alongside one of the park’s walkways.

The park's outdoor theater will seat several hundred for outdoor performances. A wooded area to the west of the outdoor theater has been set aside to protect a number of old-growth trees. A wooden boardwalk will extend through the area to minimize root damage.

Phase II will include a large plaza on North Avenue, and event lawns extending from North Avenue to the Clear Creek Basin and from the basin to Ralph McGill Avenue in the south.

The planned areas will include a universal access rampway, restrooms, and multiple play areas.

Construction of Phase II is expected to be completed by end of 2010 or early 2011.



Phase III, currently in the early planning stages, will extend the park to the southeast to include an additional thirteen acres, and will include a community garden, a dog park, a general purpose lawn and walking paths. The property is currently owned by Georgia Power Company and others, Burke says. "We are in conversations with the property owners at this point. Once we come to terms and acquire the property, which likely will not happen for several years, it should take us about a year to complete the third phase of the project."

For more information about the Historic Fourth Ward Park, go to www.h4wpc.org.

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