



Final Report

# Swift-Cantrell Park Master Plan Update

For

City of Kennesaw, Georgia

June 2014

Google earth



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This plan was funded by the City of Kennesaw and produced by the team of Greenrock Partners, LLC and Moreland Altobelli, Inc. The team commends the City for undertaking the evaluation of such a key community element to be sure the park is performing as intended and serving the community's needs. The team also commends the people of Kennesaw for the active role they played in this process. Throughout, people were helpful, engaged and always enjoyable to work with.



## Overview/Purpose

Swift-Cantrell Park (SCP) is 42 acre park along Old Highway 41 in the northern area of Kennesaw. A master plan was developed and adopted in 2006, and the initial phase of the park was constructed. Prior to park construction, the property had been used for agricultural purposes and was one of the last remaining large undeveloped tracts of land within the city limits of Kennesaw.

In 2013, the City constructed a state-of-the-art 40,000 square foot skate park, which was much larger than envisioned in the original master plan. The master plan also called for other facilities to be added as funds became available. The City wisely decided it was time to revisit the master plan, evaluate the current uses of the park, and engage the community in meaningful conversations about the future of SCP. A consultant team (Team) was engaged, a process developed, a community steering committee created, and this report produced.

Swift-Cantrell Park is “dear to the hearts” of the citizens of Kennesaw. It has been very successful in providing people with recreational opportunities. It has a mix of structured and free-form activities, along with opportunities to adapt to unforeseen needs. For this reason, this study was not about having to “fix” SCP, but rather the goals were to:

- Evaluate and confirm where park facilities are successfully meeting community needs
- Identify unmet needs or opportunities to improve upon existing facilities
- Evaluate maintenance and durability of park features and facilities
- Learn from the community if the goals of the existing master plan are still valid, or if the additional facilities included in the plan are no longer needed or if they are needed but should be built elsewhere.
- Create an updated master plan to guide SCP for the next decade and beyond.

The process that was used to achieve these goals is described on the pages that follow, along with the recommendations of how to continue the success of SCP.





# Process

## Review the 2006 Park Master Plan

The first step in the process was to review the existing master plan from 2006 and visit the park to observe existing conditions. Most of what exists today was implemented as proposed by the master plan, including the general parking design, the central lawn, the dog park, the plaza and walking trails. The Skate Park, however, is a key exception. It was originally envisioned as a much smaller feature located in the front of the park. In fact, it is much larger and located on the west side of the park. This is a significant change and alone would necessitate a full study of the original plan, which is shown on the facing page.



Appendix A: Swift-Cantrell Master Plan



The original plan also shows several features which have not been constructed due to funding limitations, including the Arts Center, Recreation Center, and Aquatic Center. Because Swift-Cantrell has been so popular and because people have come to love the openness and flexibility of the park, it is appropriate for the update study to re-evaluate the construction of these three centers.



## **Establish Project Steering Committee**

After a review of the master plan document and a preliminary study of existing conditions, the consulting team (Team) worked with the City to establish a community Steering Committee for the study. The committee was composed of ten residents representing a broad cross-section of the community plus city staff. The committee met seven times throughout the process to discuss conditions and uses in the park, create questions for a community survey, review and discuss the meaning of the survey results, and discuss alternative actions and uses.

## **Survey Community Residents and Park Users**

Working with the Steering Committee, an online survey was created using Survey Monkey. Questions for a telephone survey were also created, and over 1000 people took the online survey. In addition, more than 500 telephone calls were made. While most of the questions were multiple-choice, many opportunities were provided for people to answer open ended questions and provide opinions and information.

## **Conduct Public Meeting**

The team conducted a town hall style public meeting at the Ben Robertson Community Center. There was a presentation about the survey process and questions and prints were on display around the room to encourage discussion and capture comments.





### **Conduct Additional On-site Evaluation**

Armed with information from the surveys and from interviews and discussions with the Steering Committee, the Team continued its work in observing SCP itself. The Team spent hours at SCP at various times, occasions and days to observe activity, to confirm (or disarm) comments from the survey, and to evaluate conditions at SCP. The Team was especially interested in understanding exactly how and by whom the park is being used, how the current facilities are holding up, and how the usage is impacting parking and traffic, especially on busy days. By synthesizing all this information, the Team was able to create a draft set of recommendations.

### **Recommendations**

The Team created a draft set of recommendations for the future of SCP and held in-depth discussions with Steering Committee Members and city staff. Based on the insightful and invaluable input from the Steering Committee, the Team refined the recommendations into this final report.



## Existing Conditions Evaluation

Swift-Cantrell Park is very popular with residents of both the City of Kennesaw and the surrounding areas. Every facility that is used heavily will suffer some wear and tear, and every natural and living environment will have successes and failures throughout its life cycles no matter what the level or cost of maintenance. SCP is no different. Although the level of attention given to the park is high and users of the park are generally respectful, there are areas that can be improved. But we cannot emphasize enough that this does not reflect badly on the park or city staff or the park users—***Swift-Cantrell Park is a major success story in every sense of the word.***

Recognizing this, we have sought to bring an objective eye to SCP to identify what can be done to make SCP even better! And the first step in this is to make a detailed study of how the park is used and how that use impacts the park and its various elements.



A Sunday afternoon at the park. Some people smoke at their cars.



Overflow parking during the Skate Park Grand Opening

### Access and Parking

The park is accessed by a single drive from Old 41. There are studies underway to signalize this intersection to improve access and safety. There are times such as special events and weekend afternoons when access is congested. On a Sunday afternoon, we observed solidly congested cars coming in and going out. Furthermore, the impact of this congestion is complicated by the walking trail that crosses the drive a short distance from the entrance. During these busy times, finding a place to park can be difficult. For special events, such as the Grand Opening of the Skate Park, the open field on the south side is used to accommodate overflow parking.



The drive and parking facilities are all in excellent condition. Paving appears as if new, striping is clean, and litter is all but non-existent. Trees in the southern parking lot and along the drive are maturing nicely and adding to the overall appeal of the park.

Just north of the entrance is the storm detention area for a major section of park. It appears to be mowed and cleaned regularly.

There is a dumpster for the park located along the parking lot/drive in the eastern section of the park. Although it is in an easily accessible location, it also impacts access to the overflow parking area. Also the enclosure is built of wood and will need regular maintenance.



Walkers crossing the entry drive can cause delays but to date does not seem to be a safety issue.



Trees beginning to mature help the parking lot landscape and provide choice locations to escape some summer sun.



Some prefer sitting on shaded asphalt to a bench in the sun.



## Plaza Area and Restrooms

Along the north side of the parking is a central plaza area with restroom buildings at each end. This area has benches and trees and was designed as a central ‘welcoming’, gathering and relaxing space. Although the plaza may not receive as much use as some of the other areas, it is used regularly and performs an important function by allowing visitors a comfortable place to sit. The plaza’s central location can provide a meeting point and also a good place to sit during events in the amphitheater.

Both restrooms are excellent facilities and are maintained in very good condition. Even on a hot summer’s afternoon, the shaded seating in the plaza area is used, while unshaded tables nearby are empty. The trees provide shade, but the location also provides breezes as it is at the top of the hill.

The plaza serves as a gathering/meeting place for groups of people, partly because the restrooms are here. Although there are no bikes in these pictures, the wear around the bike racks indicate they are used regularly. To reduce future maintenance, concrete or brick paving might be placed under and around them.



The shaded benches and tables in the plaza receive use even on a hot summer's afternoon while nearby tables remain empty.



## Children's Playground

The playground is well designed with quality equipment and appears to receive almost continual use. The equipment is in good condition and serves a variety of ages and activities. There is nothing to shade the playground structures, so in the summertime it can be very hot for children and parents/grandparents. There are a few sitting areas, but at least on busy afternoons, there are more people than available places to sit. The biggest challenge with the play area is the soft surface of wood chips. Chips are certainly cost effective and meet the requirements of creating a soft landing area, but they are difficult to maintain regardless of the effort. Woodchips wash away during rainstorms, they remain wet and muddy after a storm, and they wash into grass areas. There are plans to re-grade the area to make it more level. This will reduce wash-out, but it must be done so it won't increase water retention and make the area muddy for longer periods of time.



When the weather is good, people fill the available seating and then they sit on the sidewalk. Not everyone on the seating, however, is there to watch their children which indicates there is a lack of seating in nearby areas as well.



There is no shade in the playground area, for participants or observers.



A sunny Sunday afternoon in the SCP playground is full of activity.



## Children's Playground (cont'd)



After a rain, the wood chips wash out and leave wet areas until there is enough time for it to dry out.

The chips wash out of the playground area and into the lawn area and causes maintenance problems there.



## Skate Park

The Skate Park opened late in 2013 to an overflow crowd. It is a world class facility, and people are attracted from around the region. Sod and landscaping were installed when the Skate Park was built and will take some time to become fully acclimated and achieve maturity. The skate park is lit with sports lighting on high poles that have no directional shading, so there is light bleeding into surrounding properties.



Grand Opening Day



The lights are on tall poles with no shading. People will sit on lawn or on benches facing the park.



Sunday afternoon Skaters.

## Dog Park

The dog park consists of two areas fenced with black vinyl coated chain link fencing. One area is for small dogs, and the other is for larger dogs. Each has a single entrance, and visitors must pass through two gates separated by a concrete pad to enter either park. These tight entrance areas and the areas between the fence and the path where people watch the dogs receive so much use, the areas remain worn. Each area has a water fountain for the dogs. As expected, the water fountain area becomes quite messy when use is high. Both fountains were constructed with concrete pads, but the small dog area has a larger issue of chips and dirt washing onto the pad as well as more standing water.



On a hot summer day, the limited shade is in high demand.



Dog parks are not just for dogs or dog owners—people love to watch dogs running and playing





The watering areas (and areas near them outside the fence) highlight the challenges this area faces.



High use creates high wear and tear. The large dog area has no grass, and the small dog area not much. There is subsurface drainage, but additional grading may be helpful. The areas near the entrances and where people need improvements to make these better areas to sit and stand.



## Children's Forest

This is a fenced area at the rear of the park with a grove of planted dogwood trees. It is surrounded by a split rail fence, and there is an entrance on the eastern end where it is marked by a sign announcing the entrance. Each tree has a commemorative plaque at its base with a circular bed of mulch. There are a few benches in the area, although they don't seem to be used very much. During visits to the park, there was never anyone using this area, even during the busiest times. The sign is in need of some maintenance, and there is a storm drainage structure that would be of concern if this area were actually being used by small children. This could pose a potential liability to the City.



The drainage inlet could be a concern for young children and the sign needs some maintenance.



## Picnic Shelters

There are three picnic shelters for groups just south of the Children's Forest. They are set on a field of gravel fines, and the shelters are good quality and maintained well. The gravel area is large enough to accommodate large group activity, but when large groups are not using the shelters, the gravel area seems to be out of proportion for individual or small group use. The gravel creates some minor maintenance issues as it scatters beyond the desired limits.



These girls had fun packing the gravel into a plastic bag.



## Walking Trail

There is an extensive paved walking trail that goes around the park, and it is extremely popular with individuals and families. There is a paved connection and gate at the northeast corner that connects to the English Oaks subdivision. There is also a gate at the school on the east side, which provides access to overflow parking at the school outside of school hours, but the connection is not paved. The trail is in very good condition and well maintained.



Walking the trail is definitely a family event opportunity.



Overflow parking at the school doesn't have a paved connection.



## Wellness Station

There is a small fitness/exercise equipment setup just east of the main entrance along the walking trail. It consists of five stations, 120 exercises and can accommodate up to 14 users at once. It is high quality equipment and is kept in very good condition.



## Open/Multi-use Areas

The open spaces in Swift-Cantrell are a major feature of the park. As the park is the site of an old farm, it has a nice rolling feel. Some terracing is still evident since grading was only done during construction to accommodate the main features already described. In many areas, the grass is not doing well, and there are significant patches of bare earth. Even so, the areas are used a great deal, whether for tossing a Frisbee or football, flying kites, playing pickup soccer or simply sitting in the sun on a blanket or the grass. Open spaces are critical elements of public parks because they allow for and encourage creativity in group and individual activities. These open spaces are also important because they can accommodate special community events, including concerts, movies and festivals. These open spaces are very important in defining the character of SCP.





Open areas create opportunities for a variety of activities at SCP, both organized and spontaneous.

### Landscaping and General

As mentioned earlier, many of the grass areas are in poor condition and should be improved. Not only will this improve appearance, but it will make the area more comfortable for both movie nights/special activities and the everyday use by people who like to sit or recline on a blanket on the ground. There are also places along the walking trail that should receive some fill and/or landscaping work to establish better groundcover and smoother surface. Overall maintenance activities are good, but some issues were noticed, including improper pruning of a natural buffer and lack of trash pickup along the property line with the school.





There are many areas in the park which show wear and tear, and not from a lack of maintenance. The lawn areas were not properly prepared and planted when the park was built, and some areas have simply received more use than was anticipated. Some of these areas (such as the areas around the dog park) need to be redesigned with durable surfacing.





People love the open areas at SCP and use them for a variety of activities. But the lawn is not in good shape, mainly due to lack of grade preparation when the park was built.



The storm detention area at the main entrance can become a landscape feature.



Perhaps these picnic tables could be placed at various locations.

Some pruning methods can be improved.





# Examples of Displays used at the Town Hall Meeting

## Q13 - What types of facilities would you use or activities would you participate in?



## Q22 - What activities/events would you attend? Fitness Events



## Q23 - What do you like most about SCP?



## Q22 - What activities/events would you attend? Music, Theatre & Performance



## Summary of Community Input

This report was developed after receiving input from the community in various ways:

- **Steering Committee Meetings**—the Steering Committee consisted of various city residents with firsthand knowledge and use of SCP. And this committee worked very hard! Members provided valuable information and input and were critical to developing surveys to solicit information from the community. In addition, the Steering Committee was invaluable as a sounding board as we evaluated information and preliminary recommendations.
- **Online Survey**—a survey was developed on Survey Monkey and distributed through email using lists provided by the city. A link was posted on the City’s website, and Steering Committee members distributed it to their friends and contacts. Overall, there were more than 1,000 responses, which is an excellent response for a survey of this type. City residents and non-residents were both allowed to complete the survey. One of the questions identified them as residents or not so that answers could be sorted by this criteria.
- **Telephone survey**—in conjunction with the Steering Committee, a telephone survey was developed. Based on a phone list provided by the City, only Kennesaw city residents were contacted. More than 400 calls were made with 113 interviews completed.
- **Public Town Hall Meeting**—a public meeting was conducted at which the survey results to date were discussed, options were presented, and numerous discussions held with both small groups and individual residents. Feedback from residents took the form of written comments, oral comments and e-mail.

- Numerous conversations were held with City Staff about the history of the park, comments and input from elected officials and funding issues. There were also discussions about programming, operations and specific issues related to SCP. Their input was critical to the development of recommendations as it helped to clarify comments from the public and personal observations.

- **Community Meeting** - a brief presentation was made at the English Oaks annual community meeting where additional information was gathered.

- **Swift-Cantrell Park Foundation**—draft recommendations were presented to the Foundation Board to gain their input.

The information gained from the public input process led to the creation of preliminary recommendations. Following detailed

discussions with the Steering Committee and city staff, the final recommendations on the following pages were prepared.



## Recommendations

Throughout this process, it has been clear that Swift-Cantrell Park has a tremendous level of support within the community. SCP has been a very successful investment by the City as evidenced by the great numbers of people who use the park on a year round basis as well as by the overwhelmingly positive comments that were expressed during this process. Many people stated they did not want anything added to the park, that it was just fine. Even those who wanted other features gave positive reviews of the park and how it makes them feel about the City of Kennesaw. If anything, SCP has been a victim of its own success, with the greatest concerns being how much it is used and how difficult it can be to find parking. Much time was spent by the Steering Committee debating how to address these issues, and there are recommendations contained herein. More than anything, though, the City must incorporate the needs of a growing population in its future plans. Although SCP is located on 'the last large tract of land' within the city limits, the City should consider a strategy for acquiring additional land in the future to create a 'sister' to SCP and build upon this incredible success story.

## Access and Parking

Based on comments and observations, additional parking is recommended. The plan at right shows how to add a row of parking to the right of the traffic circle, which should provide in excess of 25 additional parking spaces. The cost of these spaces should be relatively low since the drive is already in place, and the impact on the park should be limited. This parking area should be designed and installed in a manner that provides access for overflow parking to the east. An additional 25+ parking spaces can be installed facing this new row of parking across the drive aisle. The drive aisle would need to be re-directed slightly to accommodate these spaces, but this could be easily accomplished. In the illustration below right it shows this additional parking configuration.



During the process there was some discussion about using parking fees as a means to raise money for the park and also manage overcrowding. Options were presented and discussed about having park memberships, charging non-residents to park and other options. None of these options were adopted due to the difficulty of implementation and/or an increase in potential liability issues for the City. Currently overflow parking is located at the elementary school which some people now use, and it may be necessary in the future to find other



options for additional access and parking. As long as the school is used as overflow, it would also be good to explore ways to provide a paved access connecting the parking so it will be fully accessible and reduce maintenance.

The primary concern expressed was that residents might be limited or discouraged from using SCP because of a lack of parking spaces. In the Steering Committee there was support for designating a number of parking spaces for use by residents only. Although this could pose some enforcement difficulties, it is believed that this is an important gesture and would be worth trying. It is recommended that spaces to the right of the traffic circle be designated with signage and symbols painted on the pavement.

The trash dumpster should be located to a less visible location (one is suggested at right) and have a more permanent enclosure constructed.



Current dumpster & proposed location

### Plaza Area and Restrooms

This area functions well, but could be expanded and would benefit from some additional landscaping in the green areas shown at right. Since it is primarily a welcome area and used for sitting, the addition of shrubs and flowering trees will greatly improve the experience. Even on hot afternoons, people use the area because of the shaded seating as well as the breezes that come off the amphitheater lawn. Later in this report are recommendations to build a splash pad here which will increase use significantly. The sitting terrace at right also refers to improvements recommended for the amphitheater.



At left: potential plaza expansion and new landscaping



At right above: new landscaping between plaza and parking



At right below: Sitting terrace area is currently level



## Children's Playground

The playground area is very successful, and we make the following recommendations for improvements:

- The surface under and around the play equipment should be changed to improve appearance, reduce maintenance and maintain safety. Options include:



- After re-grading to slow run-off, replace the wood chips with rubber nuggets. Do not use nuggets made from old tires as these can be problematic. Nuggets come in many colors and must be used in an adequate depth to maintain child safety
- Install a poured solid rubber surface. Though more expensive than nuggets, the poured surface is the best option.



Rubber nuggets

Poured rubber surfaces can be installed with attractive designs, they provide a high level of safety, they do not wash away, and they require little if any maintenance. The image at right is an example of a playground with such a poured surface. Because of the summer heat, these surfaces must include reflective material to limit heat absorption.



An example of a poured rubber surface

- Artificial turf—as illustrated at right, artificial turf can also be utilized under play equipment. This turf is durable and it can be used to create patterns and designs. It does also get hot in summer and is the most expensive option. If turf is used, it will be necessary to install material under it (such as poured rubber) to provide the fall protection necessary for play structures.

- There is a real need for additional shade in the playground area, both for children playing and adults/family watching.

- Shade structures should be installed to shade the playground equipment because Kennesaw gets so very hot in the summer. The heat can be too much for children on the equipment during the hottest months. There are many flexible and sturdy materials that can work for this purpose.



Examples of artificial turf surface



- Add seating for parents to watch their children, at least some of which is shaded. Shading can be integral to the seating, a separate structure or landscaping.
- If rubber nuggets are used, or if the poured surface is designed to allow planting beds, trees can be planted to create shade in the playground area.



Two examples of shade structures. There are many varieties to choose from.



This edge of the playground would benefit from shade trees.

The most effective areas will be along the edge of the parking lot since this is the southwest edge of the playground. In just a few years these can provide significant shade for sitting areas and will grow to shade much of the area.

- Install fencing and landscaping to better separate the playground and the skate park. There

was strong support for in the community that there needs to be greater separation between the playground and the skate park due to language and other issues. (The team did not personally observe this during visits,

however. Parks staff have worked hard to manage the situation, and the comments from the community may have been based on earlier experiences. Even so, the park would benefit from improved separation between the uses.)



Upper image: Shade trees would help cool the playground areas

Lower Image: Landscaping and fencing can buffer and enhance skate park.



## Skate Park

The skate park is a first class facility and because it is new there is nothing to add to the park itself. It would be beneficial to add more places to sit and to improve the separation between it and the children's playground.

There are two types of seating needed:

- People sit on the grass and the tables at the playground when available seating is occupied. Generally they often seem to sit in groups to socialize, so new seating should include tables and seating groups.
- There are spectators at the park, but very little seating. Some benches should be provided for spectators

People expressed concern about the lack of separation between the skate park and the children's playground. There is a handrail, but this is more to keep people a safe distance from the skating and is often used by skaters to sit on. A new fence and landscaping should be installed for the purpose of providing better separation.



While some will sit in the sun, others choose shaded pavement. More options for shaded seating should be added.



The skate park attracts many observers, even on hot summer afternoons. In addition to benches and tables, it may be advisable to add a small shaded bleacher in the area shown.

directed system that hangs smaller lights directly over the facilities

The skate park is lit very well, and perhaps a little too well for surrounding residents and uses. This is not a high priority as there does not seem to be a strong level of annoyance, but it is recommended that a study be completed in the future to know what choices are out there to address the situation should it come up. Options for reducing the light level and 'overspray' (light bleeding onto surrounding properties) should be studied. These could include:

- Reducing the number of lights on when there are not formal events
- Installing directional louvers/shades on the lights to direct light towards the facility
- Install a more



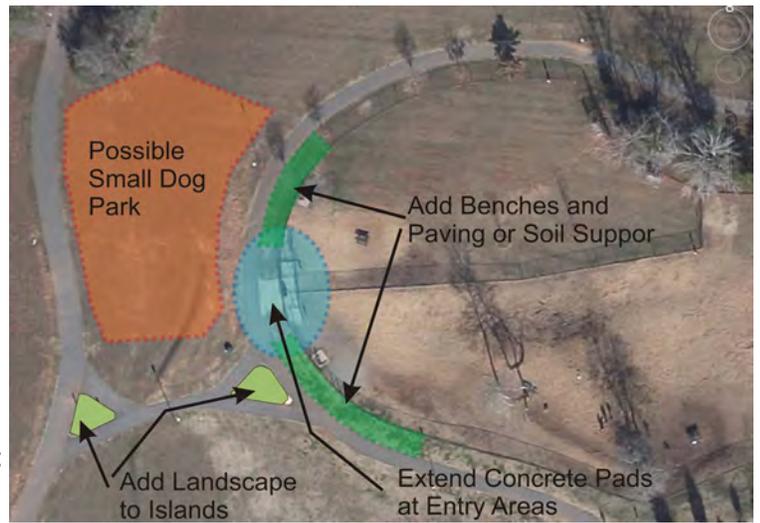
One example of directional shades that might be added to the lights.



## Dog Park

The City is already planning further study on how to improve the drainage in the large dog area, but it is unlikely grass will ever grow because the park is so well used.

- Once the drainage is improved, experiment with mulching materials to see which ones work best in these conditions.
- Give additional study to the configuration of the parks. Some ideas that were discussed included:
  - Reducing the size of the small dog park to increase the large dog area, which might allow some grass
  - Create a new small dog park across the walking trail to the northeast between the two trails, and use the existing small dog area to expand the large dog area or for medium size dogs.
- Add new seating areas inside the fence and around for owners, and add new seating all around the dog parks for owners and others. Add shade trees, especially near seating and along south and western fences.
- Improve the area between the walking trail and the dog park fences. These areas get a lot of wear based on their appearance and may require additional paving.
- Expand the amount of concrete at the entrances to the dog parks, both outside and inside. These areas get the most traffic and need to be improved.
- Improve the area around the water fountains. Improve drainage to keep water from creating a muddy area around the pad, and also improve grading to keep mulch and dirt off the concrete.



Create viewing areas with benches and paving.



This is a good setup for the watering area. Have drains under the gravel



Existing watering setup.



## Children's Forest

In a park that is so busy, it seems unusual to have an area like this not designed to attract more activity. The Children's Forest is a very nice place for relaxation and contemplation, but it needs more points of access and also more seating opportunities. Create additional openings in the fence. Place additional benches and small tables for board games, sketching or reading. Increasing the diversity in the area with native trees and other plantings to create more of an arboretum or garden aspect. Add wire mesh around the drainage structure to make it safer for small children. Place additional signage noting this as an area of refuge and relaxation may also attract more people to spend time here and repair the existing sign.



Fence in the drain inlet; repair sign



## Seating, Picnicking and Lighting

There was strong interest in creating additional opportunities for these elements:

- Seating—additional seating should be installed throughout the park along the walking trail. More seating is needed around the skate park and also around the playground. Some of this seating should have integrated shading and some of the seating should be done in groups to allow conversation. Also place additional benches in and around the dog parks. Seating should be placed near activity areas and also provide opportunities to be away from the activity.



- Place picnic tables in key locations to allow single families or small groups to picnic without being in one of the larger shelters. Smaller shelters may also be considered. This increases picnic opportunities beyond the large group shelters.

- Additional lighting should be placed in the park, especially along the walking trail. The lighting must be in keeping with overall design of SCP.



- Lighting at the skate park should be evaluated to see directional shades can be installed or the lighting otherwise modified to reduce off-site spillage.

## Walking Trail

The walking trail is well used and maintained. The only improvements needed are landscape maintenance items described below, and seating and lighting mentioned above.



## Wellness Station

Although the Wellness Station is well used, it does not yet seem to be at capacity and no additional maintenance is needed at this time.



## Landscaping

The following landscape improvements are recommended at SCP:

- Create an overall landscape plan for SCP. People expressed strong connection to the multi-use, casual character of the park. Also, walking is perhaps the most popular activity at the park. By developing an comprehensive planting design, the work can be phased as money is available, individuals can donate to specific areas, and new plantings will all be done as related to the overall park. Plantings should be designed to create interest with minimal maintenance. Plants should be selected for their character, color, adaptability to site conditions and low maintenance.
- Replace the rail fence that used to be along Old 41. It can be located to fit around the trees.
- Lawn areas—as discussed earlier, many of the lawn areas are not in good condition. There are dirt spots, grass is not healthy, and, based on old photos, these conditions appear to be deteriorating. Although the high usage of the park plays a part in the poor condition of the grass, the biggest problem seems to be the poor soil conditions. When the park was originally constructed, earthwork was mostly limited to improvements such as parking, playground and other features, and it is still possible to see evidence of terracing from farming operations. The lawn areas need to be re-graded, loosened, and have soil amendments added before planting with an appropriate turf variety. Irrigation should also be considered, especially in higher use areas. For the area where there will be overflow parking, it may be advisable to select a turf that will take heavier traffic and to create



Replace the rail fence along Old 41 and add trees.



additional soil support such as using structural soil or sub-surface grids. If parking on the lawn is limited, the grass should be able to survive, although it will require additional maintenance. Measures such as aeration, re-seeding, irrigation and fertilizer supplements should be considered.

- Shade Trees—there is a need for additional shade in SCP which trees can provide. Additionally trees can bring greater definition to the open spaces which will add to the value of these spaces. Ironically, using trees to better define open spaces can actually make them feel larger and more personal. Care must be taken that trees are not planted to interfere with kite flying, overflow parking or other activities. Refer to plan on facing page for suggested areas for additional shade trees.
- Ornamental Trees—'Layering' of trees is important to giving added dimensions to the landscape. SCP would benefit from adding more ornamentals like dogwood, redbud, flowering cherry, hollies and others to the landscape to complement the shade trees. These trees will also create seasonal color and attract more wildlife.
- Shrubbery - should be added in key locations to create visual separation between skate park and playground, between parking lots and open spaces and etc. Shrubs must be selected for ease of maintenance, safety, lack of allergens, color, texture, and size.
- Ground covers—Plantings and mulch can bring definition to lawn areas and also reduce maintenance requirements.
- Storm Detention Area—because it is located at the entrance, the goal should be to make this into a visual feature. Plants that tolerate wet soils can be used to create



Smyrna's Taylor Brawner Park is an example of how a lush lawn area can enhance the park experience.



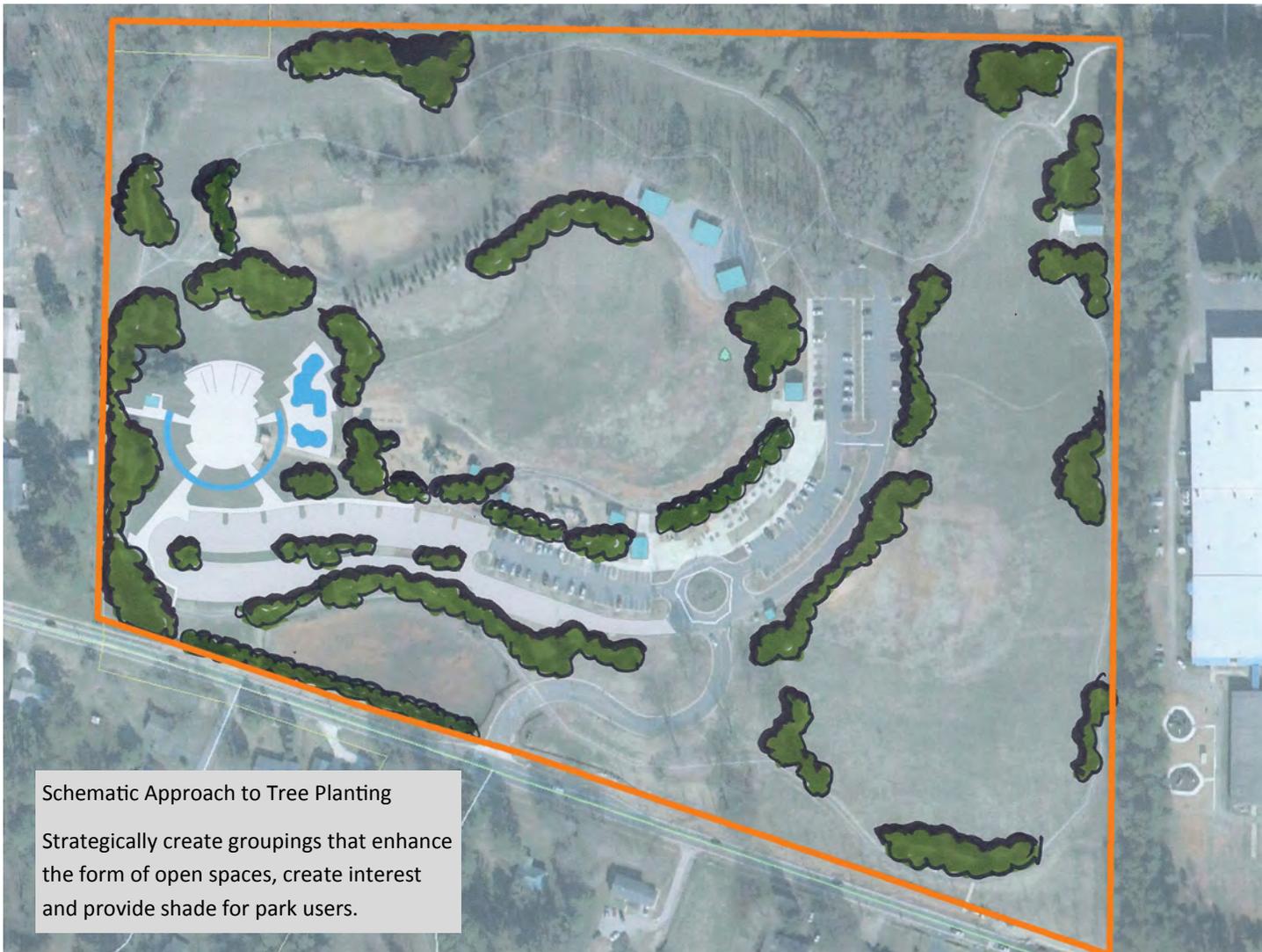
Besides providing shade, trees are important to the landscape of the lawn areas. (Piedmont Park)



Flowering trees and shrubs can provide exciting seasonal color and there are many plants available that do not require significant maintenance. Since the walking trail is one of the most used features in the park, enhancing the trail with flowering trees and shrubs will enhance the park experience for a large number of park users.



a specialized environment that can also become a teaching tool, perhaps with a viewing deck to observe plants and wildlife. This is not envisioned as a water feature, only one that utilizes its purpose to detain stormwater.



### Amphitheater

This lawn area is one that especially needs to be improved in order to support the movies, small musical events, and festivals that the community strongly supports in SCP. The slope can be leveled and adjusted to better accommodate movies and events. Improving the quality of the lawn will be a big attraction for people



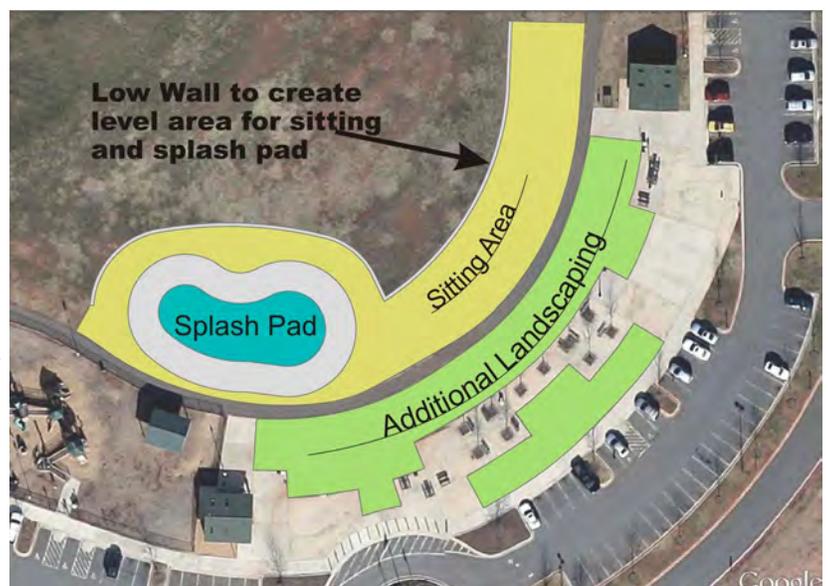
sitting on blankets or directly on the grass. At the upper end near the plaza there should be a level area that is more accessible for people with mobility issues. The plaza can be extended, or it can simply be a grass terrace area. We note that building a small pavilion was considered but rejected in favor of directing large events away from SCP and to downtown.

## **Aquatics and Splash Pad/Activity Fountain**

**Aquatics Center** - although the original master plan included an aquatics center, the general consensus is that the aquatic center should not be located in SCP. **Public commentary included a fair amount of support for an aquatics facility; however, this study does not recommend that such a facility be built in SCP.** Below are factors and information that warrant further consideration of an Aquatics Facility:

- Aquatics Facilities are very expensive to build and maintain. Although there was support expressed for an aquatics facility, information regarding the costs and what it would mean to the budget and taxes of the City were not provided on the survey or in discussions with the community. We recommend that because of the level of commentary, the City undertake a separate, more detailed study to determine if there is enough support for a facility. Even so, maintaining such a facility will be a burden for the City, so it may also consider exploring the possibility of partnering with Cobb County, or providing justification for the County to build one closer to the city limits.
- In the event of strong support and justification for building such an Aquatics Center, it should not be in SCP. There was strong support for maintaining the open quality of the park and justifiable concerns about the strains the facility would place on existing activities, traffic and parking were raised.

**Splash Pad/Activity Fountain** - there was a very high degree of support for building a splash pad or activity fountain at SCP. Splash pads and activity fountains are much, much less to build and maintain than aquatics centers, and experience in other parks has shown these water features to be highly popular. There are many examples of these as successful community elements that attract children because they can cool off in the hot summer days. These features can be sculptural elements or designed as



playgrounds. See the examples below:



Regardless of the style of the feature planned, we recommend that it be constructed near the playground, the restrooms, and plaza as shown in the plan on the facing plan. The design should be designed in conjunction with expanding the plaza and landscaping to create a visually and functionally unified area and include ample seating areas. Spray pads and fountains attract observers - not just family members. People love to watch water flow and the activity it will draw and create.



## Events and Activities

There is broad support for continuing and expanding events and activities at SCP, including:

- Food Trucks—these have become popular events in many communities when held regularly as they present a reason for people to come to the park, hang out and see friends on an informal basis. People often say these events add measurably to a sense of community. Food trucks can also be used as an economical alternative to building and operating concession stands. For example, weekend afternoons when the park is crowded could be a good opportunity for some food trucks to serve the people. Study should be given to creating ‘food truck parking.’ Instead of simply having them pull into the parking lots, these spaces would be designed to accommodate both the trucks and the patrons.
- Movies - are very popular in the park. Improvements to the amphitheater, especially to the quality of the lawn, are directed at improving the experience.
- Music Events – there is support for more music events, but only if kept smaller. The consensus is that downtown is the more appropriate place for major music events, which is why there was not support for a band shell or pavilion in SCP.
- Smoke Free Park - make the park smoke free it is really the only way to effectively regulate smoking at the park. The City has already has this under consideration.
- Staff Visibility – be sure to have a visible presence at the park of City/Park staff and/or volunteers, especially during busy times. The use of brightly colored vests, hats or other distinctive and visible elements should make park representatives easy to spot and identify.



## Recommended Modifications to the 2006 Master Plan

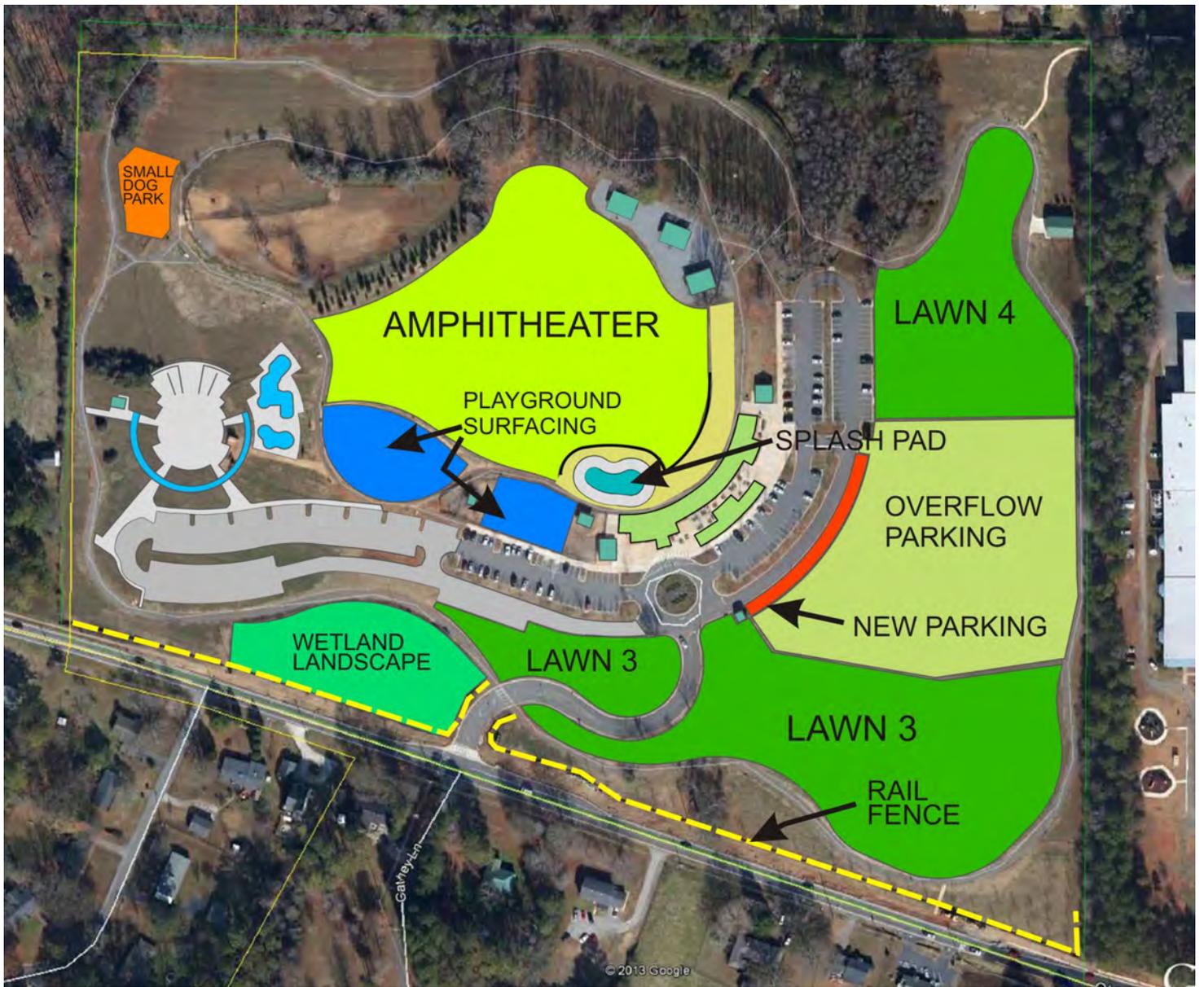
The following elements were included in the original 2006 Master Plan; however, it was decided they should not be built at SCP. When the original master plan was completed in 2006, no one had the benefit of knowing how the park would actually function in the community. Now people realize the benefit to having open space that serves many functions and provides a more ‘rural escape’ from the developed city. These recommended modifications to the original master plan include:





- Aquatic Center—The Aquatic Center should not be built at SCP. Although support was expressed for an aquatic center, the surveys conducted as part of this study were not intended to be scientific, so the nature and level of support is not clear. Additional study of support and need for an Aquatic Center is recommended before taking any action. If such a facility is to be built, it should be constructed in a location that can handle the traffic that will be necessary to support it. Ideally, it should also be grouped near other active recreational facilities to create better synergy.
- Recreation Center—Though shown on the original plan, the general consensus is that it is not appropriate for SCP. Although some commented that community needs are served by the Ben Robertson Community Center at Adams Park, the Community Center does not serve the same needs as a Recreation Center. A new recreation center would expand the range of activities available well beyond what is currently available. It would be a valuable addition to the community, but should not be located somewhere here.
- Arts Center—should not be located at SCP. This would be better served to be near other cultural and educational facilities. There was support for locating an Arts Center in the downtown area, and doing so would benefit the downtown by bringing additional activity and support businesses.
- Tennis and Basketball—although basketball was not included on the 2006 plan, both tennis and basketball were considered in this update. Locating tennis and basketball facilities at SCP is not recommended, but there is support in the community for constructing these in a more active park location. Additional study is needed to clarify how to appropriately meet the demand for these facilities.
- Pond - there were some requests for a pond at SCP, but safety concerns and do not make it practical for the rear of the park.
- Sand Volleyball - did not receive support.





## Key Plan for Cost Estimate

The above plan identifies major cost items in the table on the facing page. Items not identified above include:

- Benches, tables and lighting—these are to be located throughout the park.
- Landscaping (trees, shrubs and groundcovers) - a conceptual tree plan is shown on page 37, but a comprehensive landscape plan must be done to determine location, quantities and varieties of materials to be used. For budgeting purposes only, an estimated number of trees, shrubs and groundcovers are listed on the cost estimate table.
- As with all Master Plan Level cost estimates, the quantities and costs can vary greatly depending on final plan goals and the materials used.



# Cost Estimate

Item	Quant.	Unit	Cost/unit	Total	Assumptions / Remarks
<b>PHASE A: SPLASH PAD AND PLAZA AREA EXPANSION</b>					
Splash Pad	1	EA	\$ 400,000.00	\$ 400,000.00	will vary depending on size and equipment
Expansion of Plaza Area	5000	SF	\$ 3.50	\$ 17,500.00	
New Landscape at Plaza Area	8000	SF	\$ 4.00	\$ 32,000.00	
Furnishings and Lighting at Plaza Area	1	EA	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	
<b>PHASE B: AMPHITHEATER LAWN AREA</b>					
Amphitheater Lawn Area	5.4	AC	\$ 21,780.00	\$ 117,612.00	\$.50/sf (grading, seeding on root zone mix)
<b>PHASE C: NEW PARKING LOT</b>					
New Parking Lot	6000	SF	\$ 5.00	\$ 30,000.00	asphalt paving concrete curb to match existing
Curb Gutter at new lot	340	LF	\$ 20.00	\$ 6,800.00	
Signage	1	EA	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	to designate resident parking
Relocate Dumpster	1	EA	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	
Parking Lot Landscaping	1	EA	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	trees, shrubs & groundcovers
<b>PHASE D: PLAYGROUND</b>					
Playground fabric shelter	5	EA	\$ 4,100.00	\$ 20,500.00	20'x40' Sportsplay shelter to contain mulch
Edging	1200	SF	\$ 3.50	\$ 4,200.00	
Playground surface	42000	SF	\$ 2.25	\$ 94,500.00	3" thick, rubberized mulch
Weed Fabric	45000	sf	\$ 0.35	\$ 15,750.00	
Shade Trees	35	EA	\$ 550.00	\$ 19,250.00	
<b>PHASE E: DOG PARK</b>					
Small Dog park fence	600	LF	\$ 12.00	\$ 7,200.00	chain link - 4' high gate, water, concrete, etc.
Small Dog park equipment	1	EA	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	
Existing Dog Park Surface	20250	SF	\$ 1.50	\$ 30,375.00	engineered wood fiber with subsurface drainage
<b>PHASE F: LANDSCAPING IMPROVEMENTS</b>					
Rail fence at ROW	1840	LF	\$ 15.00	\$ 27,600.00	wood post & rail \$1.5/sf (minor grading, seeding on reinforced areas for parking)
Overflow Parking Lawn	3.2	AC	\$ 65,340.00	\$ 209,088.00	
Lawn Area 3	3.9	AC	\$ 21,780.00	\$ 84,942.00	\$.50/sf (minor grading, seeding on root zone mix)
Lawn Area 4	1.9	AC	\$ 21,780.00	\$ 41,382.00	\$.50/sf (minor grading, seeding on root zone mix)
Shade Trees	700	EA	\$ 550.00	\$ 385,000.00	
Ornamental Trees	500	EA	\$ 250.00	\$ 125,000.00	
Shrubs and Groundcovers	3000	EA	\$ 30.00	\$ 90,000.00	
Wetland landscape	1.3	AC	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 19,500.00	plantings with bio-retention soil mix
Erosion Control	1	LS	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	
<b>PHASE G: FURNISHINGS</b>					
Picnic tables	20	EA	\$ 875.00	\$ 17,500.00	6' Recycled plastic 7'x7' Belson model SPS-APS with 10'x10' concrete pad
Shaded picnic tables	10	EA	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 45,000.00	
Benches	50	EA	\$ 800.00	\$ 40,000.00	6' w/backs steel & powder coated Victor Stanley Belson Model SPS
Shaded Benches	20	EA	\$ 2,300.00	\$ 46,000.00	
Site Lighting	20	EA	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 70,000.00	12' tall with electrical distrution
<b>Subtotal</b>				\$ 2,033,199.00	
Design @ 7%				\$ 142,323.93	
Mobilization, bonds, Profit /OH @12%				\$ 243,983.88	
Contingency @15%				\$ 304,979.85	
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>				\$ 2,724,486.66	

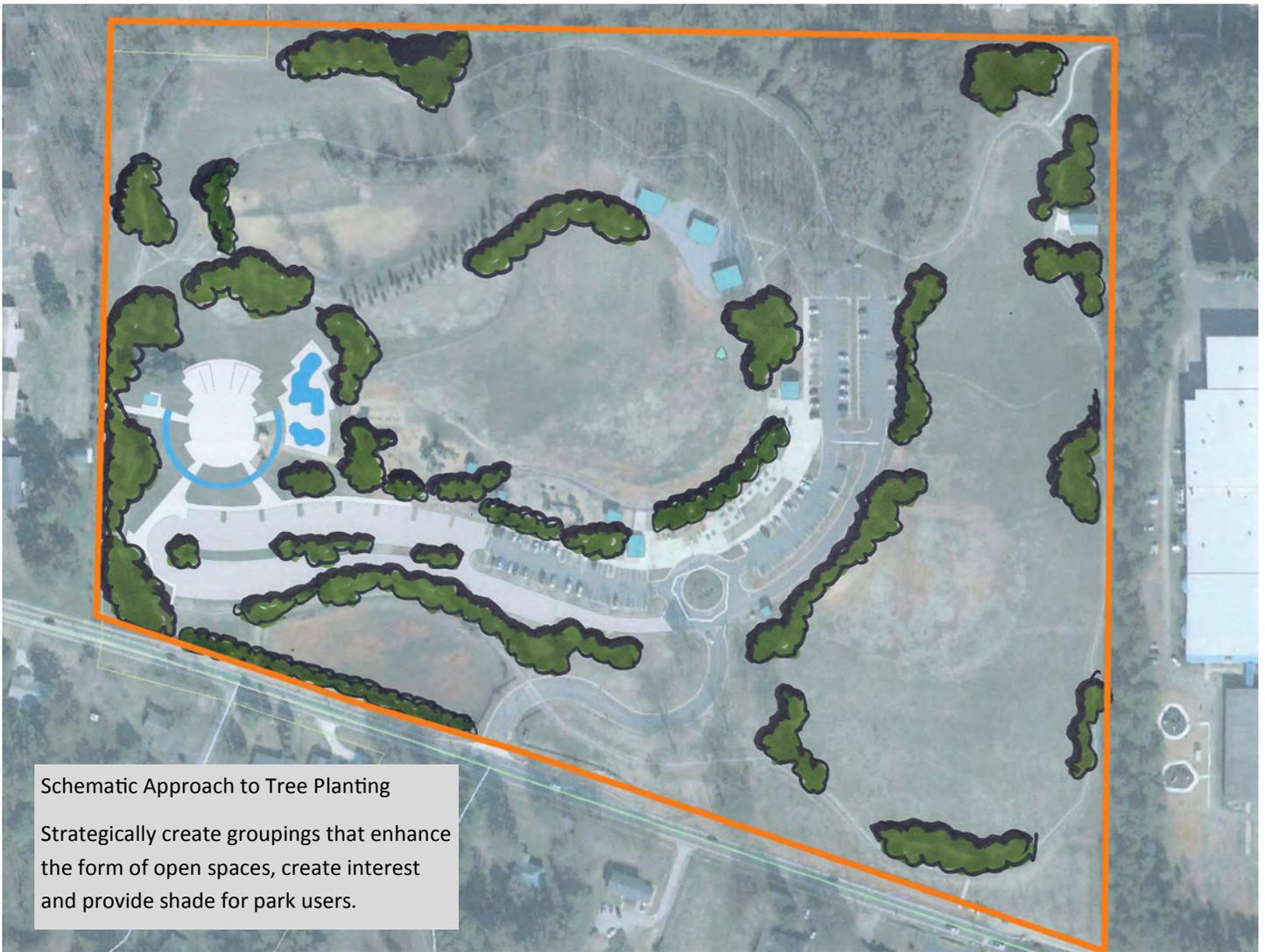
**NOTES:**

Phases need not be implemented in order

Poured in place surfacing for the playgrounds will increase cost by \$300-400,000

Artificial turf surfacing for the playgrounds will increase the cost by \$400-500,000





## Recommended Plant List

The list of plants on the following pages is provided as an initial guide for selecting plant materials to expand the landscaping of Swift-Cantrell Park. It is not an exhaustive list, but illustrates a selection based on durability, adaptability, availability and variety. The notes should be used as general suggestions only. The detailed landscape plan will make specific recommendations for types and use by locations and needs.



BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	NOTES
<b>TREES</b>		
ACER RUBRUM 'OCTOBER GLORY'	OCTOBER GLORY RED MAPLE	
LIRIODENDRON TULIPIFERA	TULIP POPLAR	Fast growing
NYSSA SYLVATICA	BLACK GUM	Red fall color; will tolerate wet
PINUS TAEDA	LOBLOLLY PINE	
PLATANUS OCCIDENTALIS	SYCAMORE	Exfoliating bark; fast growing; can be messy
QUERCUS NUTTALI	NUTTAL OAK	
QUERCUS PHELLOS	WILLOW OAK	
QUERCUS 'SHUMARDII'	SHUMARD OAK	
ULMUS AMERICANA 'PRINCETON'	PRINCETON AMERICAN ELM	Dutch elm resistant
ULMUS PARVIFOLIA 'UPMTF'	BOSQUE ELM	
ULMUS PARVIFOLIA	LACEBARK CHINESE ELM	
TAXODIUM DISTICUM	BALD CYPRESS	Will tolerate wet or dry
<b>ORNAMENTAL TREES</b>		
BETULA NIGRA 'HERITAGE'	HERITAGE RIVER BIRCH	Single and multi-stem; exfoliating bark
CERCIS CANADENSIS 'FOREST PANSY'	REDLEAF REDBUD	
CRYPTOMERIA JAPONICA 'YOSHINO'	YOSHINO JAPANESE CEDAR	
ILEX ATTENUATA SAVANNAH	SAVANNAH HOLLY	
ILEX VOMITORIA	YAUPON HOLLY	Multi-stem
ILEX VOMITORIA PENDULA	WEeping YAUPON HOLLY	Multi-stem
KOELREUTERIA PANICULATA	GOLDEN RAIN TREE	
LAGERSTROEMIA X 'BILOXI'	BILOXI CRAPE MYRTLE	Multi-stem
LAGERSTROEMIA FAUREI 'NATCHEZ'	NATCHEZ WHITE CRAPE MYRTLE	Multi-stem
LAGERSTROEMIA X 'SARA'S FAVORITE'	SARA'S FAVORITE WHITE CRAPE MYRTLE	Multi-stem
LAGERSTROEMIA FAUREI 'SIOUX'	SIOUX DARK PINK CRAPE MYRTLE	Multi-stem
LIGUSTRUM JAPPONICUM	TREE FORM LIGUSTRUM	Multi-stem
MAGNOLIA GRANDIFLORA	SOUTHERN MAGNOLIA	Full to ground
MAGNOLIA GRANDIFLORA 'LITTLE GEM'	LITTLE GEM SOUTHERN MAGNOLIA	Full to ground
MAGNOLIA VIRGINIANA 'CULLY'	CULL SWEETBAY MAGNOLIA	
PRUNUS X YEDOENSIS	YOSHINO CHERRY	



SHRUBS		
AUCUBA JAPONICA 'PICTURATA'	PICTURATA AUCUBA	Shade; variegated
AUCUBA JAPONICA 'GOLD DUST'	GOLD DUST AUCUBA	Shade; variegated
CAMELLIA JAPONICA	CAMELLIA	Semi-shade
CAMELLIA SASANQUA	SASANQUA	Semi-shade
CHIONANTHUS VIRGINICUS	GRANCY GREYBEARD	Sun or semi-shade
CORTADERIA SELLOWIANA	PAMPAS GRASS	Large grass specimen or massing
CRYPTOMERIA JAPONICA "YOSHINO"	JAPANESE CEDAR	Evergreen hedge or specimen
CUPRESSOCYPARIS LEYLANDI	LEYLAND CYPRESS	Evergreen hedge
ELAEAGNUS X 'EBBENGEI'	EBBINGE'S ELAEAGNUS	Evergreen hedge – don't shear
EUONYMUS ALATUS	BURNING BUSH	Sun
HYDRANGEA ARBORESCENS "ANNABELLE"	ANNABELLE HYDRANGEA	Shady areas
HYDRANGEA PANICULATA 'TARDIVA'	TARVIDA HYDRANGEA	Sun/partial shade
HYDRANGEA QUERCIFOLIA 'ALICE'	ALICE OAKLEAF HYDRANGEA	Sun/part shade
ILEX ATTENUATA 'SAVANNAH'	SAVANNAH HOLLY	
ILEX CORNUTA 'BURFORDII NANA'	DWARF BURFORD HOLLY	
ILEX CORNUTA CARISSA	CARISSA HOLLY	
ILEX CORNUTA ROTUNDA	DWARF CHINESE HOLLY	
ILEX VOMITORIA NANA	DWARF YAUPON HOLLY	
ILX X EMILY BRUNER	EMILY BRUNER HOLLY	Large evergreen specimen or hedge
ILEX X 'MARY NELL'	MARY NELL HOLLY	Large evergreen specimen or hedge
ILEX X 'NELLIE R. STEVENS'	NELLIE STEVENS HOLLY	Large evergreen specimen or hedge
ILEX X NEEDLEPOINT	NEEDLEPOINT HOLLY	
ILLICIAM ANISATUM	JAPANESE ANISE	Sun or part shade
ILLICIAM FLORIDANUM	FLORIDA ANISE	
ITEA VIRGINICA "HENRY'S GARNET"	HENRY'S GARNET SWEETSPIRE	Small shrub
JUNIPERUS PFITZERIANA	PFITZER JUNIPER	Evergreen massing in sun
LIGUSTRUM JAPONICUM RECURVIFOLIUM	CURLED-LEAF PRIVET	
LIGUSTRUM JAPONICUM	WAX LEAF PRIVET	
LOROPETALUM CHINENSE RUBRUM	RED LOROPETALUM	Large evergreen specimen or massing; red leaves
MAHONIA BEALEI	LEATHERLEAF MAHONIA	Shade accent



MISCANTHUS SINENSIS 'ADAGIO'	ADAGIO DWARF MAIDENGRASS	Sun; variegated grass accent or massing
MISCANTHUS SINENSIS 'GRACILLIMUS'	GRACILLIMUS MAIDENGRASS	Sun; grass accent or massing
NANDINA DOMESTICA	HEAVENLY BAMBOO	
NANDINA DOMESTICA NANA	DWARF HEAVENLY BAMBOO	
ROSA X 'KNOCKOUT'	KNOCKOUT ROSE	Sun; will bloom all summer if trimmed regularly
RAPHIOLEPIS INDICA	INDIAN HAWTHORNE	Sun and part shade
TERNSTROEMIA GYMNANTHERA 'PHYLLIS ANN'	PHYLLIS ANN CLEYERA	Sun; evergreen mass
<b>GROUNDCOVERS</b>		
ASPIDISTRA ELATIOR	CAST IRON PLANT	Shade; evergreen massing; remove dead leaves yearly
HEMEROCALLIS "HAPPY RETURNS"	HAPPY RETURNS DAY LILY	Sun; repeat bloomer
HEMEROCALLIS "STELLA D'ORO"	STELLA D'ORO DAY LILY	Sun; repeat bloomer
HOSTA X	HOSTA VARIETIES	Shade; use in mass
IRIS X	IRIS VARIETIES	Sun; use in mass as accent
IRIS PSEUDACORIS	YELLOW FLAG IRIS	Sun; likes some wet
JUNIPERUS CHINENSIS 'PARSONII'	PARSON'S JUNIPER	Evergreen groundcover; sun
JUNIPERUS CHINENSIS 'SARGENTII'	SARGENT'S JUNIPER	Evergreen groundcover; sun
LANTANA CAMARA 'MISS HUFF'	MISS HUFF LANTANA	Dies back but will return; sun
LANTANA CAMARA 'NEW GOLD'	NEW GOLD LANTANA	Dies back but will return
LIRIOPE MUSCARI 'BIG BLUE'	LILY TURF	Evergreen low groundcover; sun or shade
OPHIPOGON JAPONICUM	MONDO GRASS	Evergreen low groundcover; shade
RUDBECKIA X 'GOLDSTRUM'	GOLDSTRUM BLACKEYED SUSAN	Seasonal color perennial
ROSMARY OFFICIALIS	ROSEMARY	Sun

