

61A - Beech Haven Park: Planning and Implementation

Original Project Total Cost: \$ 13,684,000

Total Operating Cost: \$ 179,000

Alternate Project Total Cost: \$ 6,084,000

Alternate Total Operating Cost: No change

Project Description: Thank you for the opportunity to present our SPLOST proposal for Beech Haven Park, as well as for your enthusiasm and feedback for the project. We were thrilled to see that you share our excitement for the ways this project ensures equitable access to parks for our Westside ACC neighbors, preserves the incredible historic architecture on the site, celebrates the often under-told history of our African American artisans and master craftsmen, and offers a unique, nature immersive experience within walking distance of Athens youth, low to moderate income families, Oglethorpe Elementary, and local seniors. Best of all, your support would allow for all of this to take place on property that ACC already owns.

Many of you shared that you want to see this park become a reality, but that you are overwhelmed with an unbelievable amount of worthy projects. Please consider the attached alternate proposal that we think is a compromising step to provide viable access to Beech Haven for Athens citizens for minimal budget.

To reach that number, we have decided to postpone (and continue to seek alternate funding sources for) several desirable but ultimately not mission-critical features. The features eliminated would be, one of three parking lots, and one of three restrooms. Some of your feedback included an emphasis on the importance of the park pavilion with community grills, so we've made sure to keep those as a key feature. The bridge, while important, is something we feel can be accomplished by a future phase or alternate arrangements with the Greenway River Commission.

With these concessions, we feel that Beech Haven Park should now represent the best of all worlds. This is a park the Westside of Athens - an our entire community - can access and enjoy. It will be an historic site of national important that celebrates local African American architectural achievement. It continues investment in property Athens-Clarke County already owns. Best of all, Athens can now enjoy this park for half our original estimate.

Thank you for the feedback that led us to this destination. We look forward to walking the grounds of Beech Haven Park together soon.