

Old North Durham Park 305 W. Geer St.

Planning for the Future
Development of the Park

*Planificando el futuro
del Old North Durham Park*





Factors in creating a park plan:

1. Neighborhood input through meetings and staff observations of use
2. Professional recommendations on different kinds of parks
3. Physical opportunities and constraints of a particular site
4. Budget for development



I. Neighborhood input

- A long history of meetings with different community groups about this park, over several years
- A long list of desired uses
- A variety of observed uses, from soccer to recess games to community events to Frisbee-tossing



2. National Recreation and Park Association on a “neighborhood park”

- Pedestrian access
- 5 – 10 acres
- Some innate aesthetic qualities
- Something unique to the area of the particular park
- Balance of active and passive uses
- Active facilities built for use in an informal and unstructured manner, like informal playfields and court games
- Passive facilities can include internal trails, picnic/sitting areas, and open space

...and NRPA concludes

- “As a general rule, active recreational facilities should consume roughly 50% of the park’s acreage. The remaining 50% should be used for passive activities, reserve, ornamentation, and conservation as appropriate. Developing an appealing park atmosphere should be considered an important design element.”

Examples of Neighborhood Parks

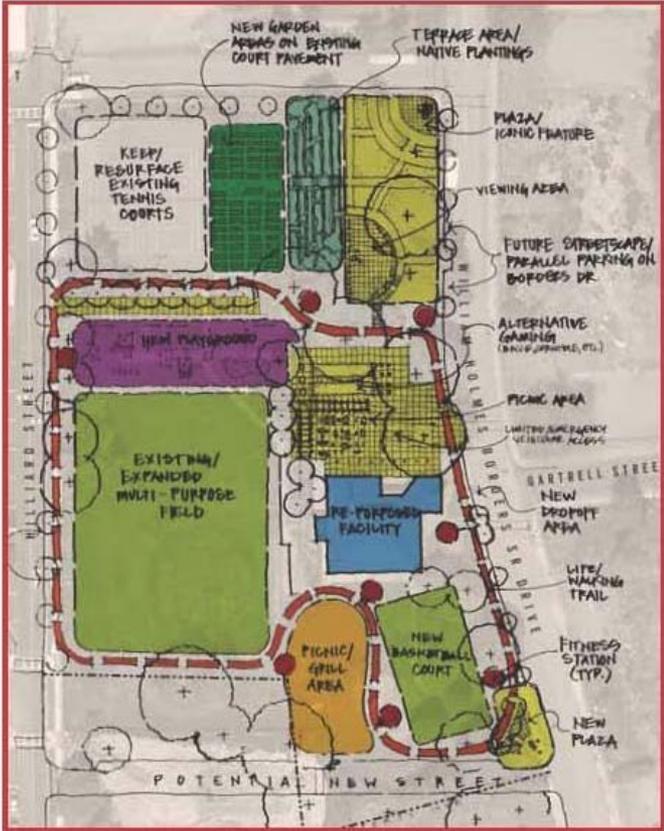


2.86 acres in California



4.0 acres in Utah

3.3 acres in Georgia



3.8 acres in Louisiana



And another take on neighborhood parks from different source:

- Rethinking Urban Parks: Public Space and Cultural Diversity
- Neighborhood parks are the meeting places of public life in cities
- Polarization in America of cultures and classes threatens many public spaces, including parks
- Accommodating the ways that different cultural groups use a public site is essential to making good decisions

Uses of a park's physical space

- Twenty-two parks in Durham fit the standards of a “neighborhood park” – others are smaller mini-parks or larger community parks (the City has 68 parks in all)
- At 3.5 acres, Old North Durham Park is on the small end of the neighborhood park scale; others of that size include Oval Drive Park (3.4 acres) and Unity Village Park (3.7 acres)



OVAL DRIVE PARK

3.4 acres

On-street parking only

Facilities include picnic shelter, tennis courts, basketball half court, playground, walking trail, natural amphitheater, and informal ball field

Facilities make up about 55% of the park's area



UNITY VILLAGE PARK

3.7 acres

On-street parking only

Facilities include a picnic shelter, two basketball courts, a playground, a restroom, and a walking trail.

The center of the park is an open grassy field for informal uses.

Facilities make up about 45% of the park's area.



ORCHARD PARK

7.4 acres

On-street parking only

Facilities include picnic shelter, playground, walking trails, water fountain, a maze, and a gazebo structure

Recent additions are four raised-bed community gardens; an open grassy area is the main feature of the southern part of the site

Facilities make up about 40% of the park's area

As a contrast, here's an example of a community park:



C. M. HERNDON PARK

25 acres

75 off-street parking spaces

Facilities include restroom and concession building, 2 soccer fields, 2 ball fields, 1 turf practice field, and a playground

About 85% of the park is developed as programmed active use facilities

Comparing neighborhood parks

- Common features include:
 - Picnic shelter
 - Walking trail
 - Open grassed play area
 - Playground
 - No parking lot – walk-in access
 - Open space / facilities in a roughly 50/50 match
- Features unique to a specific neighborhood include:
 - 2 full basketball courts (Unity Village)
 - Amphitheater (Oval Drive)
 - Historic structures and community garden (Orchard)

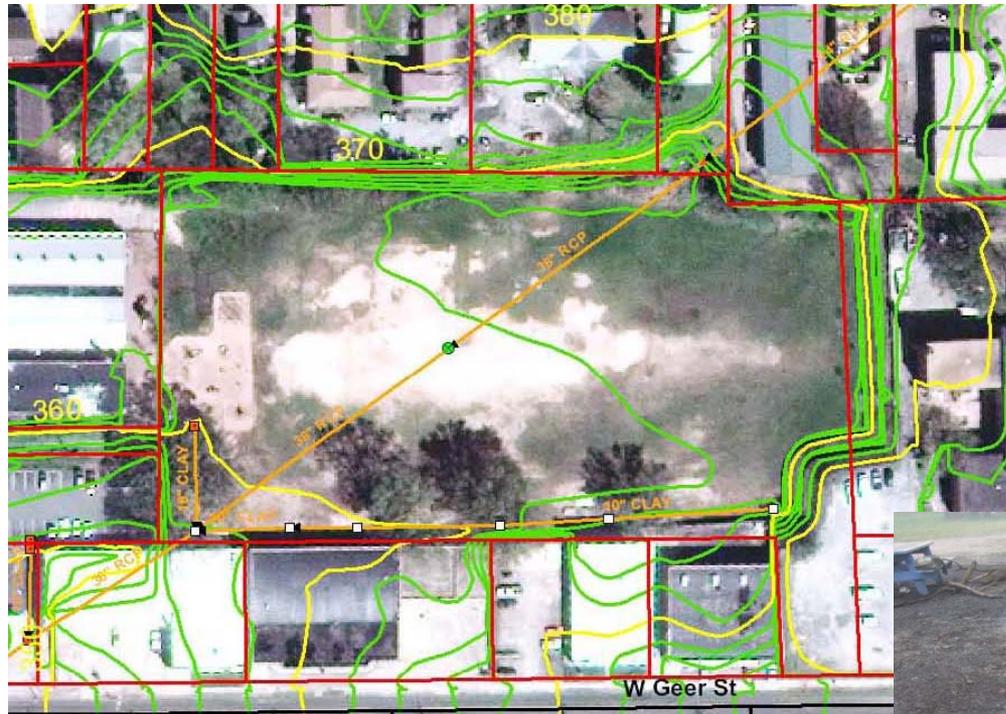
Old North Durham Park (3.5 acres)



3. The physical space of OND Park

- Constraints
 - 3.5 acres is a small neighborhood park
 - Storm water issues
 - Walk-in access limited
 - On-street parking not close
 - Surrounded by developed spaces
 - Older trees not in good health
- Opportunities
 - All of site is usable
 - Storm water repairs projected soon
 - Lots of people able to walk to site
 - Involved neighbors
 - Other amenities in proximity

Storm Water repairs in Spring 2012



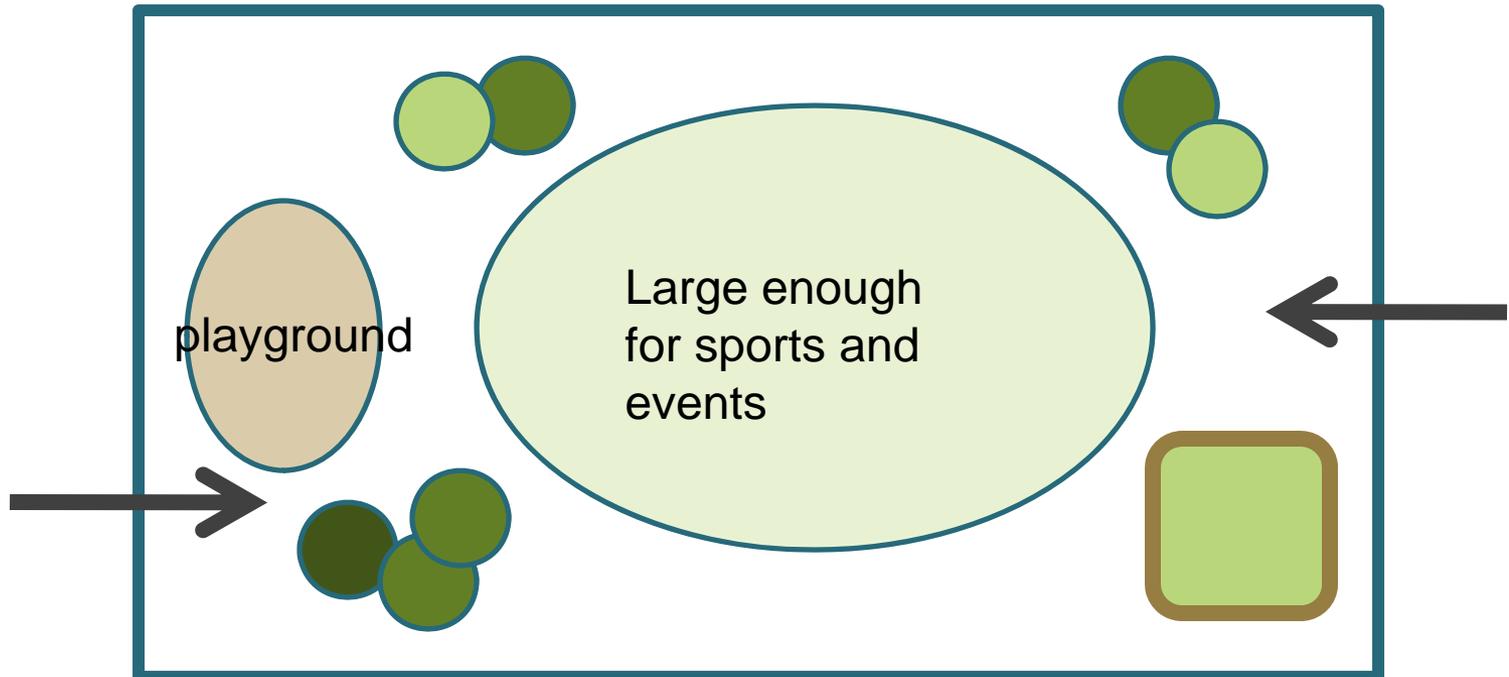
4. Budget:

with \$100,000, we probably can...

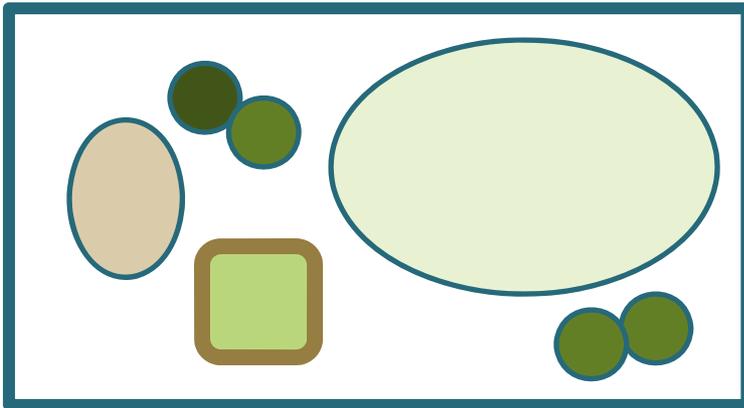
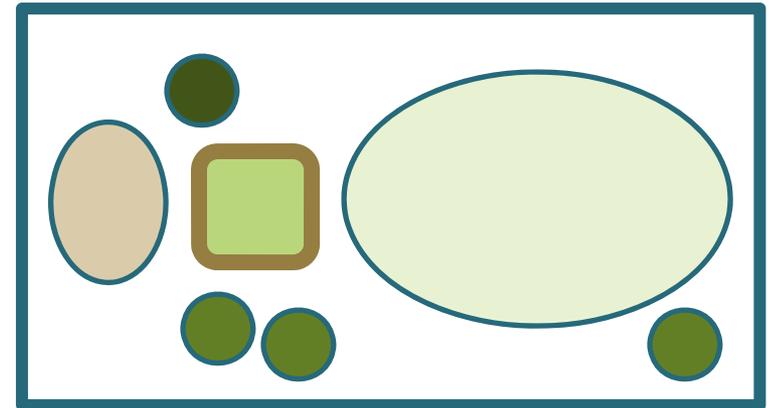
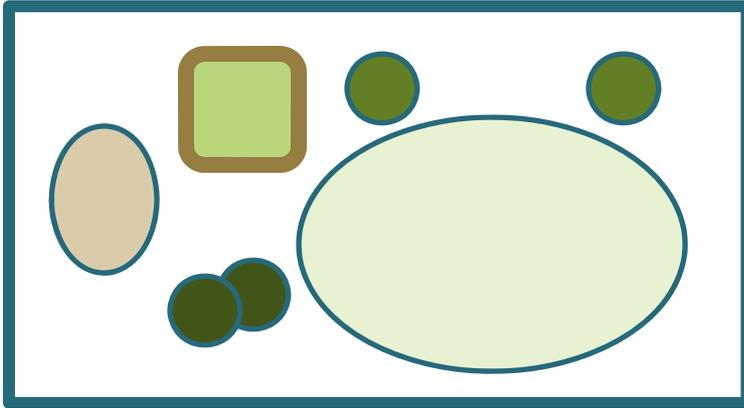
Improve the central playing field

Improve pedestrian access

Replant to replace trees lost to age and drainage repairs



Exact layout will depend on location of new storm water drainage lines:



What about the field?

A program field, with Bermuda grass and irrigation is closed 3 – 4 months a year and doesn't allow for events



A commons area seeded with fescue typically burns in full sun and dies down with heavy use



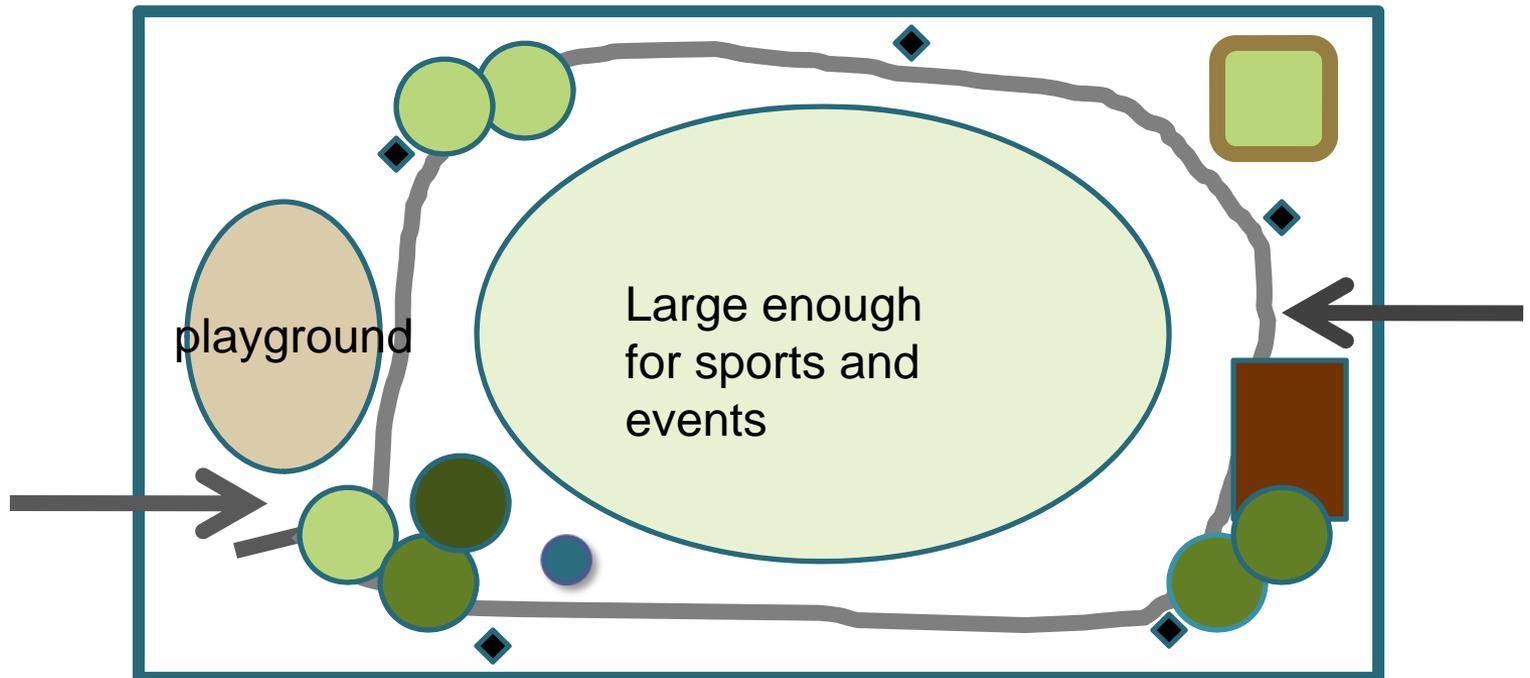
A multiple use site, with Bermuda grass and field treatments, is left open and maintained for a rotation of uses

OND as a neighborhood park

- Common features with other neighborhood parks include:
 - Playground
 - Open grassed area
 - Landscaping
 - On-street parking only
- Features unique to this specific park include:
 - Open area is a central field with Bermuda grass for community events and informal athletics
 - Replacement trees can be nut or fruit varieties, possibly community gardens

With a PARTF grant (and an approved site plan) we can...

- Choose from among additional features, like a walking track, a water fountain, pedestrian lighting, or a picnic shelter



Old North Durham Park

A park with a good mix of amenities to serve a variety of users, of all ages, wanting different things from their neighborhood park but everyone wanting to play and enjoy life

