



CANDLER PARK

CONSERVANCY

Candler Park: Atlanta's Natural Place to Play

Annual Membership Meeting:
Park Conservancy in a Time of COVID-19

Agenda

- Conservancy Overview
- Vision Plan
- Major Projects
 - Amy Erwin Memorial Garden
 - The Active Lawn
- Pandemic Planning/Impacts
- Golf Open Access Experiment
- Committee Reports
- Questions

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Lasting Legacy

Candler Park was created in 1922 after Asa Candler donated 55 acres to the City of Atlanta. Nearly 100 years later, the park remains the heartbeat of the surrounding neighborhood, serving soccer players, golfers, bird watchers, and festival-goers from 8 surrounding neighborhoods and throughout metro Atlanta.

Creation of Candler Park Conservancy

Stemming from a master planning process of Candler Park Neighborhood Organization, Candler Park Conservancy (CPC) was established in 2015 as a membership-based and volunteer run nonprofit with a mission to transform Candler Park into a sustainable urban ecosystem that creates an ideal balance between recreational activities and natural habitat.

CPC works in partnership with City of Atlanta, Candler Park Neighborhood Organization, and other organizations and individuals who value the balance between our natural and recreational environments.

CPC is guided by 3 principles:

- Open, democratic decision-making;
- A commitment to enhancing the park's wildlife, natural areas, and environmental sustainability; and
- Open access to the park for all Atlantans in all their diversity.



The Long Game:

Candler Park Conservancy's

20-year Vision

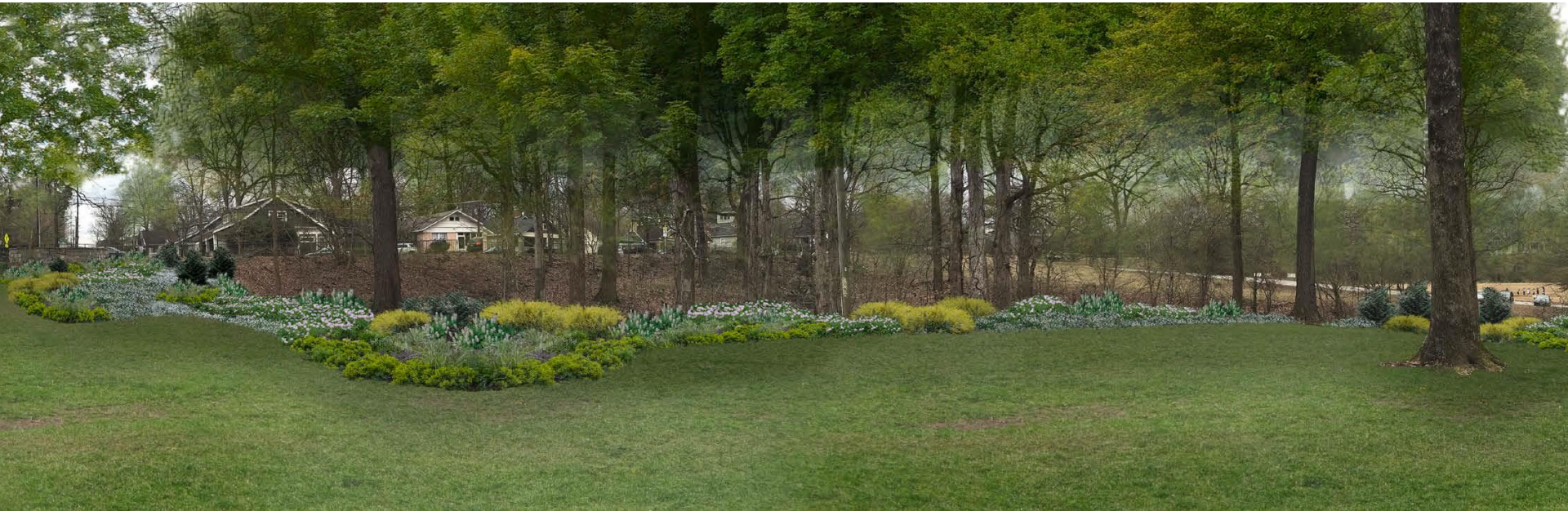
Over the past five years, CPC has led a master planning process that synthesized community engagement and visioning workshops into a strategic sustainability framework, brought to life by the talented designers at Perkins & Will. The result is a holistic, forward-thinking Vision Plan that will revitalize Candler Park into a crown jewel park on the east side of Atlanta.

Twelve transformational projects will:

- Preserve key recreational amenities while opening the park to a broader range of users and protecting the natural environment.
- Integrate environmental sustainability measures throughout the park.
- Significantly enhance existing park features.
- Connect the park to surrounding parks, paths, and trails.
- Incorporate natural play throughout the park.
- Celebrate Candler Park's rich history and community character.
- Develop educational opportunities within the park.

Vision Plan





Project Spotlight: Amy Erwin Memorial Garden

In memory of former CPC board member, the CPC board raised funds to support the ideation, design, execution, and maintenance of the garden, which utilizes an undervalued portion of the park.



LOCATION PLAN



EXISTING CONDITION

AMY ERWIN MEMORIAL GARDEN | CANDLER PARK

Park Design Review
November 17, 2019



Amy Erwin Memorial Garden Project

- Designed, developed, and approved over last 12 months
- Fundraising drive was successful to fully fund the \$50K project
- Hardscaping construction is now underway
- Plant materials will be added during the upcoming 2020 fall planting season
- Ribbon cutting ceremony to follow - Date TBD



The Active Lawn

The Active Lawn will be Candler Park Conservancy's flagship project for the park's long-term, community-driven renewal.





Our Vision for Revitalization

Candler Park Conservancy's vision is to create a sustainable recreation field that allows for greater access for public gatherings, daily recreation, and community sports. Investments in the Active Lawn will install an innovative, resilient recreation field surrounded by a crushed-stone track and supported by a system of drainage and erosion control.

As one of the most visible and used features of the park, this project embodies CPC's goal to transform Candler Park into a sustainable urban ecosystem that carefully balances recreation, preservation, and interconnectivity.

A More Resilient Lawn



The current field is Candler Park's most visited area, hosting area festivals, league and "pick-up" sports, field days for local schools, and family picnics. As a result of ongoing use, the condition of the grass and field has deteriorated. Hardened, patchy surface creates sporting hazards and leaves the field vulnerable to flooding and runoff. Significant erosion occurs following rain, and sediment runoff flows into the park's stream. The field is often closed due to unplayable conditions.

Expanded Recreational Activities and Improved Access

The Lawn is the hub of park activity, and infrastructure investments will ensure that the space continues to be inviting and accessible for all of the many daily activities it hosts.

- A permeable track circling the field will serve walkers and runners of all ages, including seniors looking for a safe walking area and schools seeking greater access to physical education resources.
- With an improved pedestrian sidewalk from McClendon Drive, the Active Lawn connects users to the broader natural community with links to the Freedom Park Trail, Olmstead Linear Park, PATH, and the Atlanta BeltLine.
- Reinforced crushed stone surface, contained by concrete band, will accommodate festival staging vehicles, protecting the lawn.
- Peripheral power supply loop allows festivals, sports, and events to operate without gas or diesel generators, reducing noise and air pollution.





Environmentally Sustainable Design

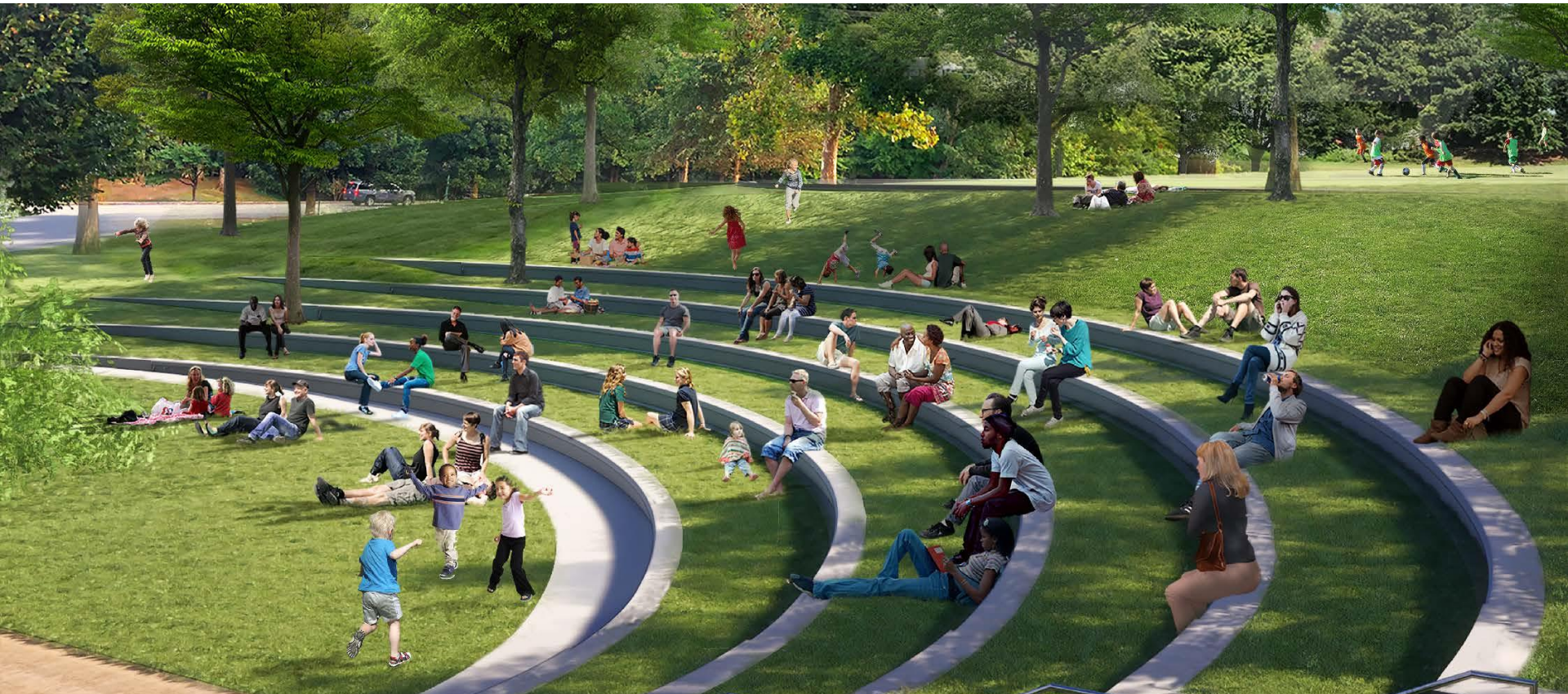
A resilient Active Lawn will not only protect the field for use now and in the future, but it will help preserve Candler Park's natural habitat for generations to come.

- **Active Lawn design incorporates stormwater management to mitigate sediment and debris runoff, thereby protecting valuable riparian corridor below.**
- **Innovative underdrain system, high-infiltration soil and turf, and vegetated channels promote and control drainage.**

Laying the Groundwork

Investments in the Active Lawn also represent the first step toward the second phase of this project: an enhanced amphitheater, one of the most popular projects in the Vision Plan.

The hillside next to the Active Lawn will be graded and shaped roughly to the form the amphitheater will take when that project is complete.



Active Lawn Budget

Construction	\$774,335
Professional Fees	\$193,000
Contingency	\$130,000
Testing and Site Work	\$42,250
TOTAL	\$1,139,585

Candler Park Conservancy was awarded a matching grant of \$250,000 from Park Pride. Now, the organization is seeking funding from multiple sources to capitalize on this momentum and bring the vision for a sustainable, engaging Active Lawn to life.

Pandemic Planning/Impacts

- **No 2020 Spring/Summer/Fall Member Events**
 - **Beaver Bash**
 - **Movie Nights**
 - **In-person Annual Members Meeting**
 - **Candler Park Fall Fest & 5K**
- **Fundraising Impact**
 - **Events are a key driver of new member recruitment & renewals**
 - **Funding sources are focused on COVID-19 or struggling with the effects**
 - **Membership management system is helping with automation**
 - **Park Pride has extended their \$750K challenge grant timeline for 1 year to 2021**
 - **Fundraising timeline for Active Lawn pushed into 2021**
- **Parks have become a vital community resource**
 - **Opportunity for recruitment and additional users**
 - **Many opportunities for safe, socially distant activities**

Golf Open Access Experiment

- The City and Parks Department have opened Candler Park to general use for 8 Mondays from July 13 - August 31
- Non-golf usage numbers surprised everyone during the 3-month shut down of the course
- Shared access to the course is a concept outlined in the Vision Plan
- Golf as an ongoing amenity is also in the Vision Plan
- Request to allow shared use was the result of substantial neighborhood feedback during the shutdown
- CPC is observing and evaluating outcomes and feedback
- City Council and Parks Department will make any determinations about this project on their own criteria

Projects Committee

- **Worked with Perkins+Will, Starr Whitehouse, and stakeholders to advance major initiatives:**
 - **Schematic designs for the Active Lawn, Amphitheater, Erwin Project**
 - **Conceptual designs the Playground**
- **Park service and maintenance projects**
 - **Multiple park clean-up events**
 - **Mulching events**
 - **Coves trail restoration and expansion**
 - **Landscaping beautification work near the pool and front entrance**
- **Small and mid-sized park enhancement and stewardship projects**
 - **Tree planting with Trees Atlanta**
 - **Golf course cleat cleaner and ball washer installation**
 - **Bird nest box installation**
 - **Erwin Memorial Garden**
 - **Invasive vegetation removal initiatives with Audubon Society**
- **Future Projects in Pandemic are TBD, but planning is underway**

Marketing/Fundraising Committee

- **2019-20 Wins**
 - **106 current members**
 - **7 current business memberships**
 - **Over 700 email contacts**
 - **Over 1K social media followers**
 - **Successfully ran Fall Fest 5K 2019 with record turnout**
 - **Movie Nights “acquired” from CPNO**

- **2020-21 Planning & Goals**
 - **Website Refresh**
 - **Enhanced social media presence to encourage park messaging**
 - **Expand membership by 50 new members**
 - **Explore grant opportunities**
 - **Look for opportunities to enable COVID-19 appropriate events or activities**

Governance Committee

- CPC's Board and governance details can be found within the
 - "Home" → "Our Conservancy" → "Bylaws & Minutes"
- The Board welcomes anyone committed to the Park to participate
- We are always looking for more Member volunteers to serve:
 - Committee Meetings (Projects, Communications, Membership)
 - Fundraising
 - Volunteer Days / Social Events
 - Board Membership
- We have a commitment to board diversity across interests, backgrounds, and geography

Finance Committee

- Raised \$50K for the Amy Erwin Memorial Garden
- Strong, event-based fundraising and annual memberships led to cash reserves of approximately \$51K
- Investing approximately \$20K to retain Coxe Curry for the Active Lawn fundraising efforts
- Projecting softer fundraising environment due to COVID-19
- Projecting a cash balance of \$24K at the end of 2020

This is an exciting, unique moment in the park's history and an important opportunity for our community. We need you to help write the next chapter for Candler Park. Together, we can realize the first step in this bold, long-term vision—and renew Atlanta's natural place to play for generations to come.

**Doug Wetzel
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Questions?