



Cook Park: A Collaborative Green Infrastructure Solution in Atlanta's Historic Vine City

SESWA Spring Seminar

Presented by Cory Rayburn (City of Atlanta) and Jay Wozniak (Trust for Public Land)

April 24, 2020



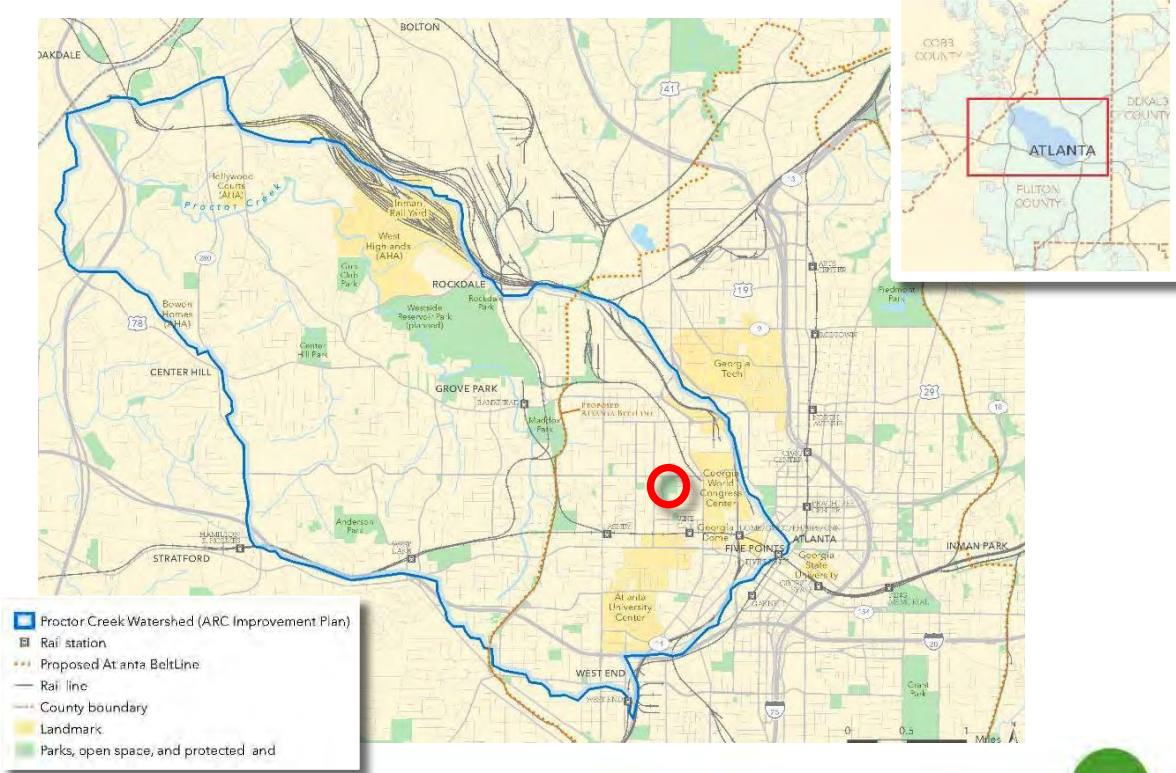
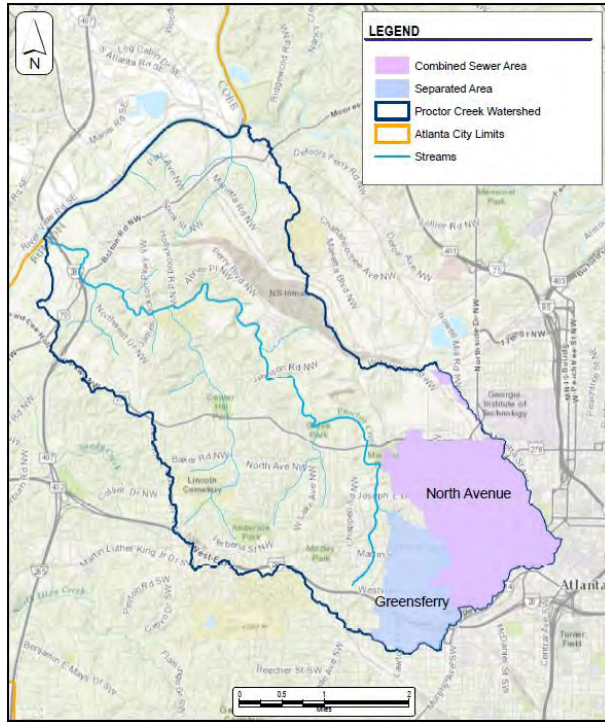


Rodney Cook, Sr. Park in Historic Vine City





Proctor Creek Watershed





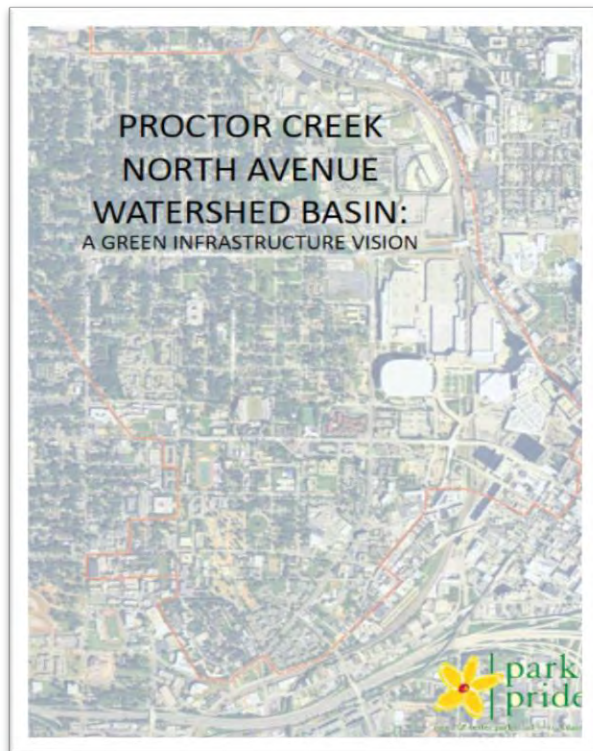
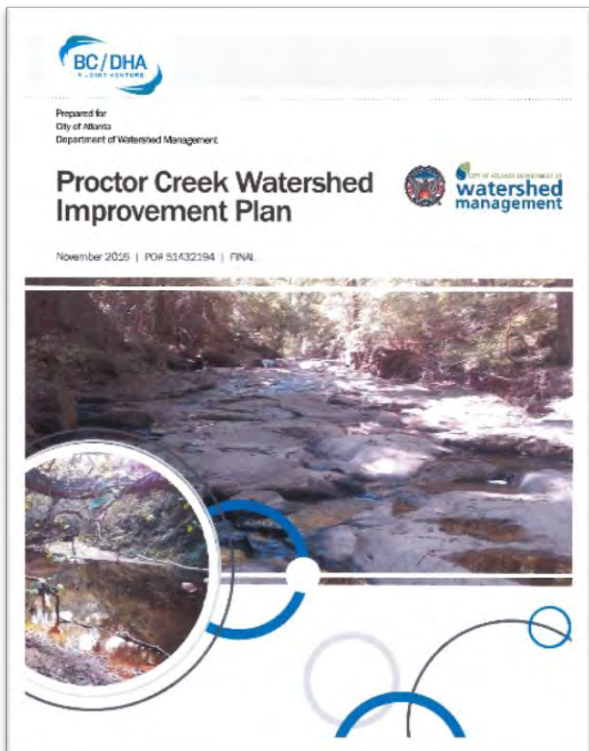
Urban Waters Federal Partnership

- Atlanta's Proctor Creek Watershed one of 19 designated Urban Waters in the US
- Connecting 35 neighborhoods
- Over \$100M investment needed to restore watershed and improve water quality
- Opportunity to introduce innovative financing approaches
- At least 27 GI and Stream Restoration project opportunities identified



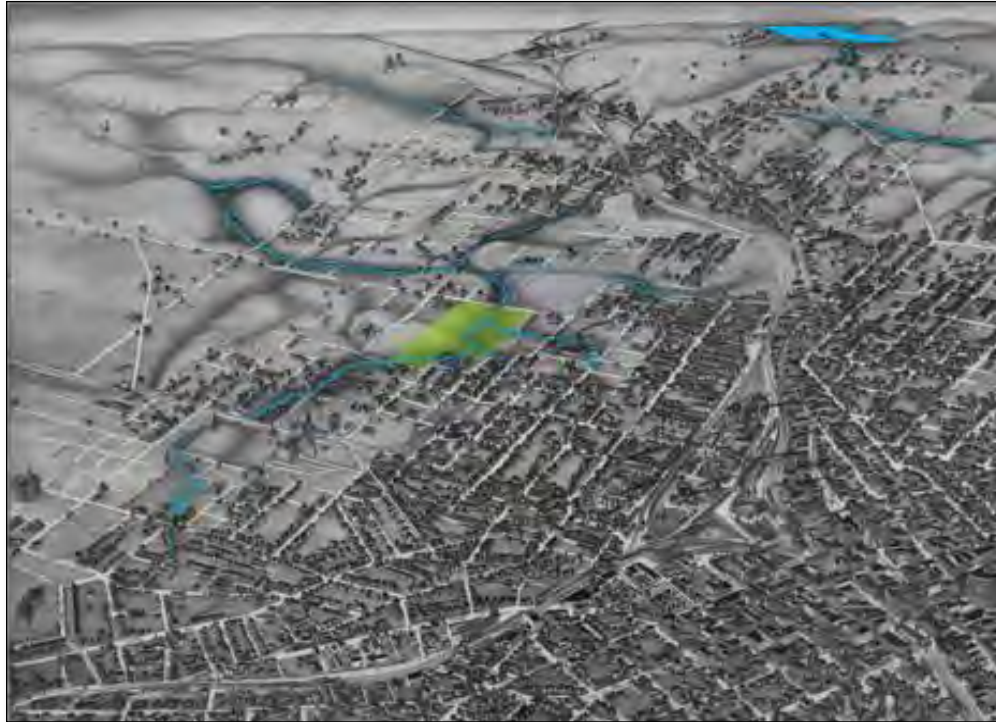


Basin-wide Planning Efforts





Historic Views

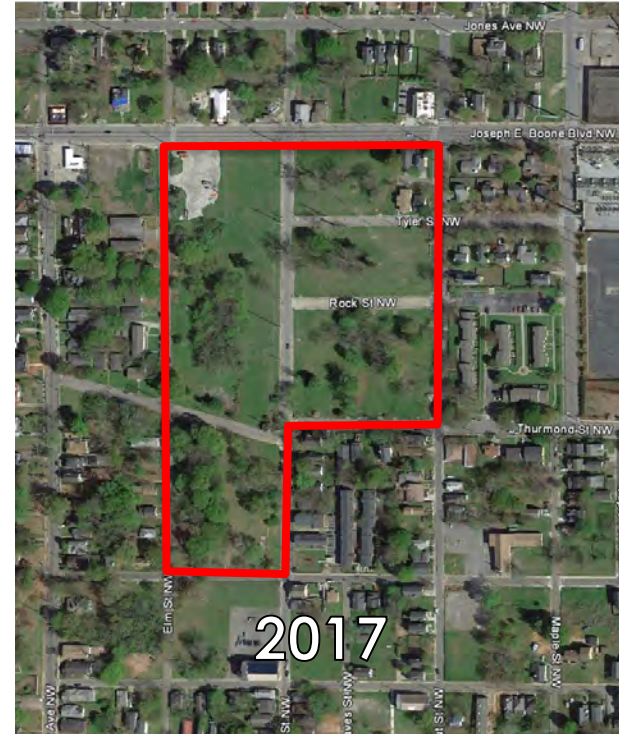


History

- 2002 storm event caused catastrophic flooding in the Vine City neighborhood
- Over 60 homes were purchased by the City as a result
- Combined sewer basin
- Opportunity for multiple partnerships to resolve flooding concerns and restore community health



Pre- and Post-Flood





The Georgia Dome, left, and the new Mercedes-Benz Stadium, right, tower over the Vine City neighborhood in Atlanta.

Kevin D. Liles for The New York Times

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/12/sports/football/atlanta-falcons-stadium-arthur-blank-neighborhood.html>

Rodney Cook Sr. Park
in Historic
Vine City

Yellow Lot

Suite Food Lounge

Georgia Aquarium
Temporarily closed

Pemberton Place

World of Coca-Cola

Centennial
Olympic Park

Hyatt Regency Atlanta

SkyView Atlanta

Georgia World
Congress Center

CNN Studio Tours

Dome-GWCC-Philips
Arena-CNN
Centre Transit

Vine City Transit

Morris Brown
College

FAIRFAX
DISTRICT

DOWNTOWN
ATLANTA

FIVE POINTS

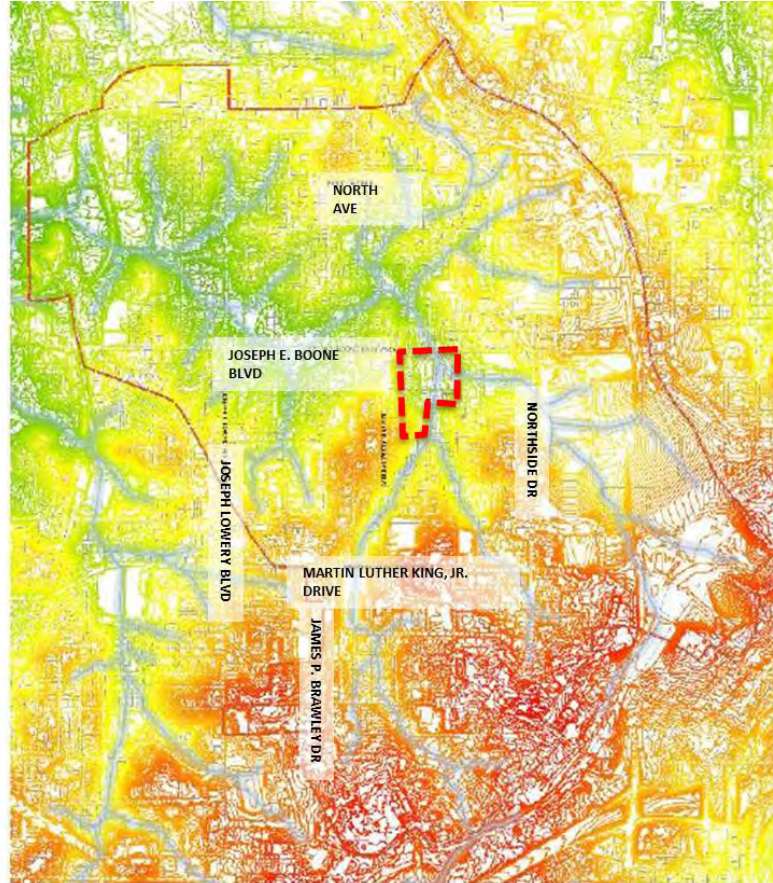
M.L.K. Jr Dr SW

Mitchell St SW

Five Points



Topography



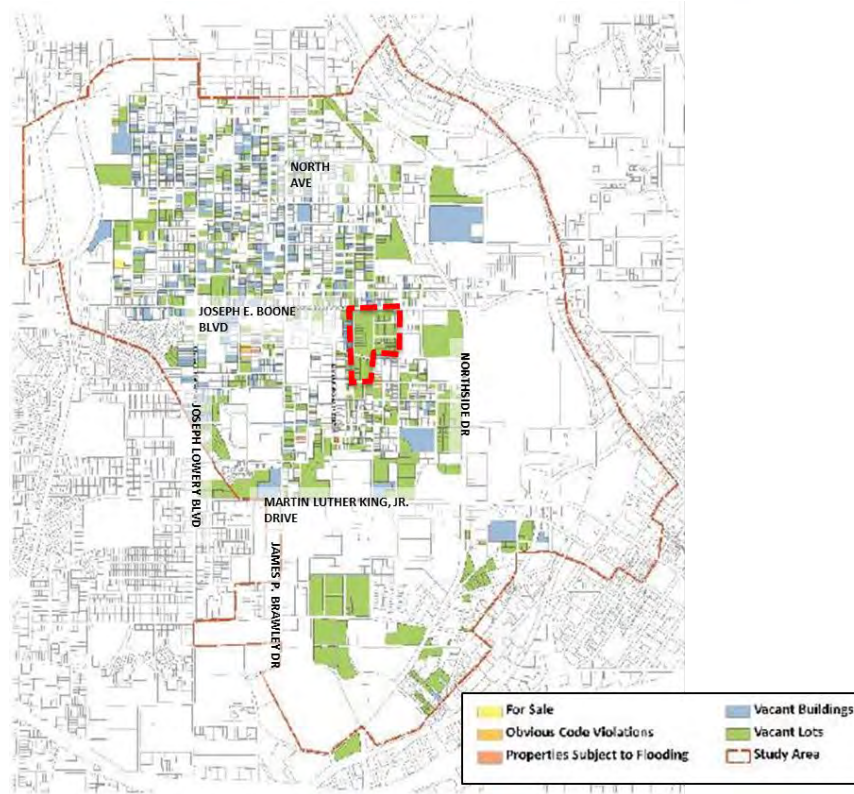


English Ave and Vine City Neighborhoods

- Steep decline in population over past 30 yrs
- Highest crime rates (twice the City of Atlanta average)
- Lowest occupancy rates
- Repeated flooding
- Fewest acres of planned greenspace
- 41% of households living below the poverty line (57% of children)
- 20% houses vacant
- 40% foreclosure rate



Property Status





Partnerships

Department of Watershed Management (DWM)

- Pond design and construction, limited combined sewer separation, green infrastructure, soil remediation
- \$27M contribution

Trust for Public Land (TPL)

- Park design and construction in coordination w/ Department of Parks and Recreation and DWM
- \$13.5M contribution

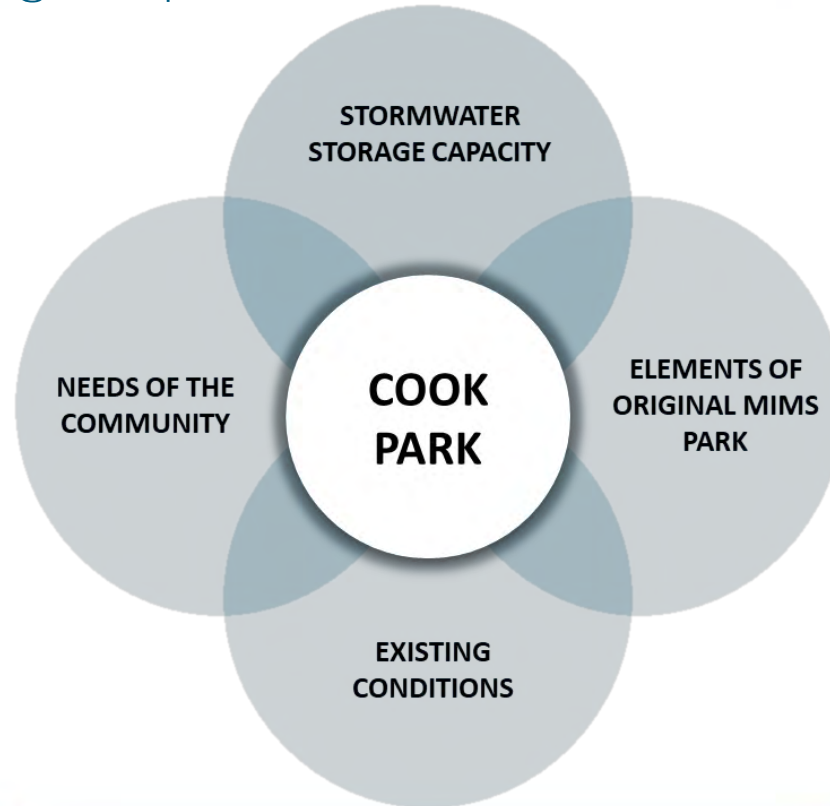
National Monuments Foundation (NMF)

- Design and construct 16 statues of historical and civil rights leaders throughout the park
- \$TBD



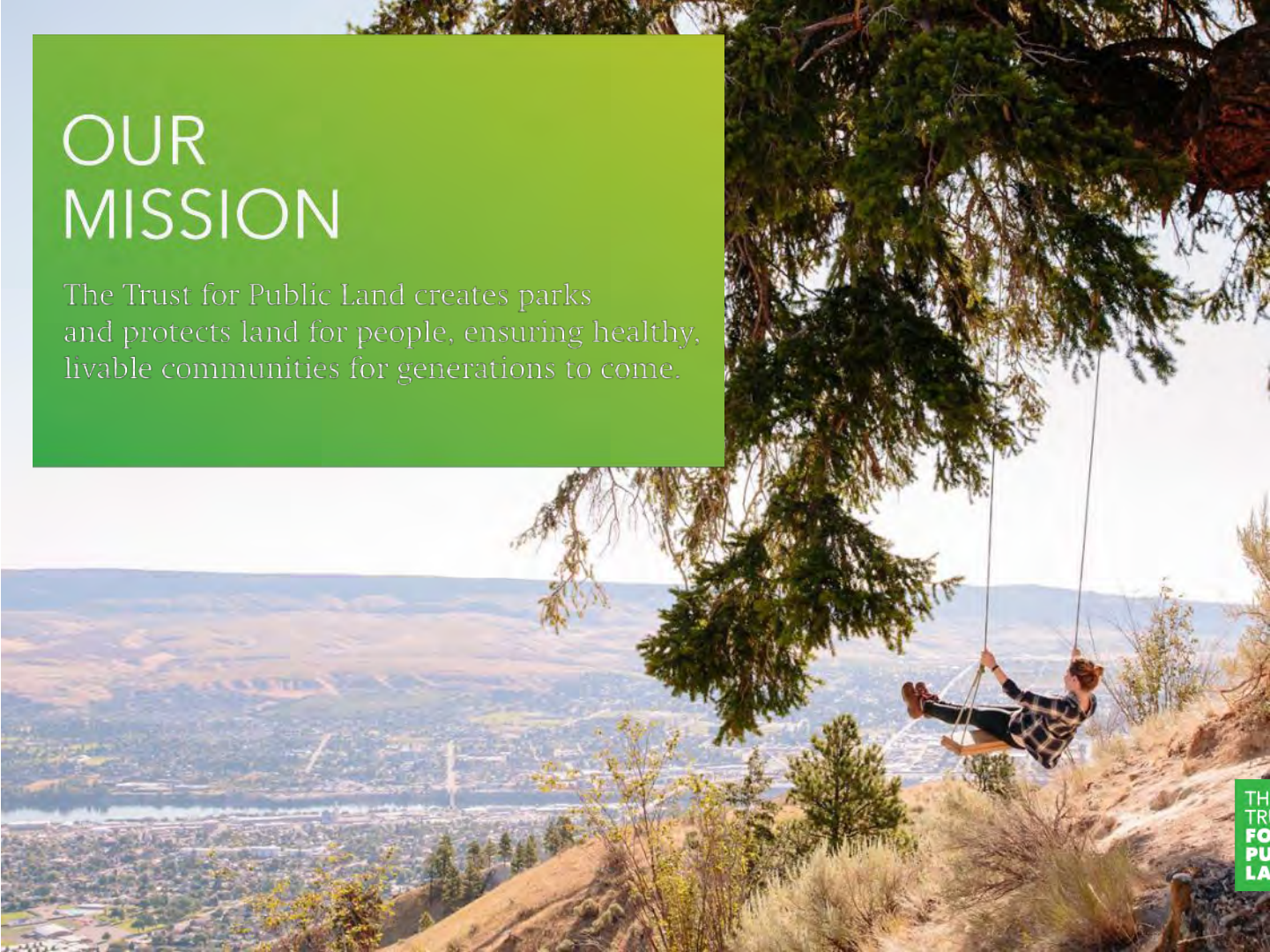


Cook Park is Being Shaped with Four Criteria in Mind



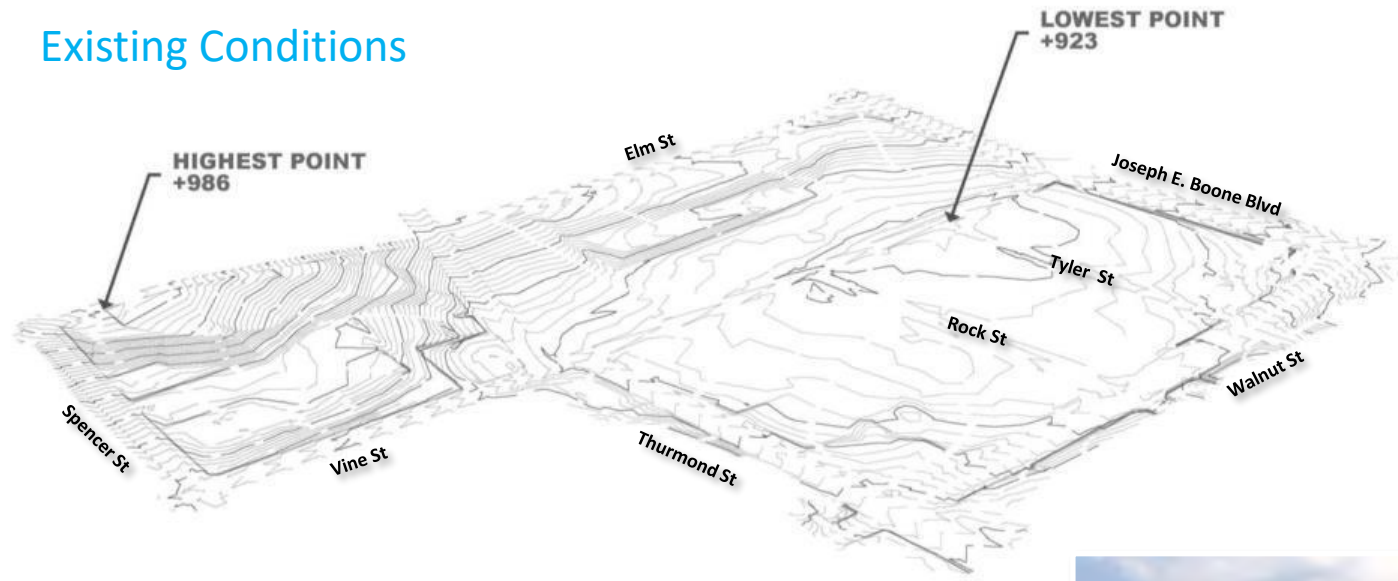
OUR MISSION

The Trust for Public Land creates parks and protects land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come.



THE
TRUST
FOR
PUBLIC
LAND

Existing Conditions



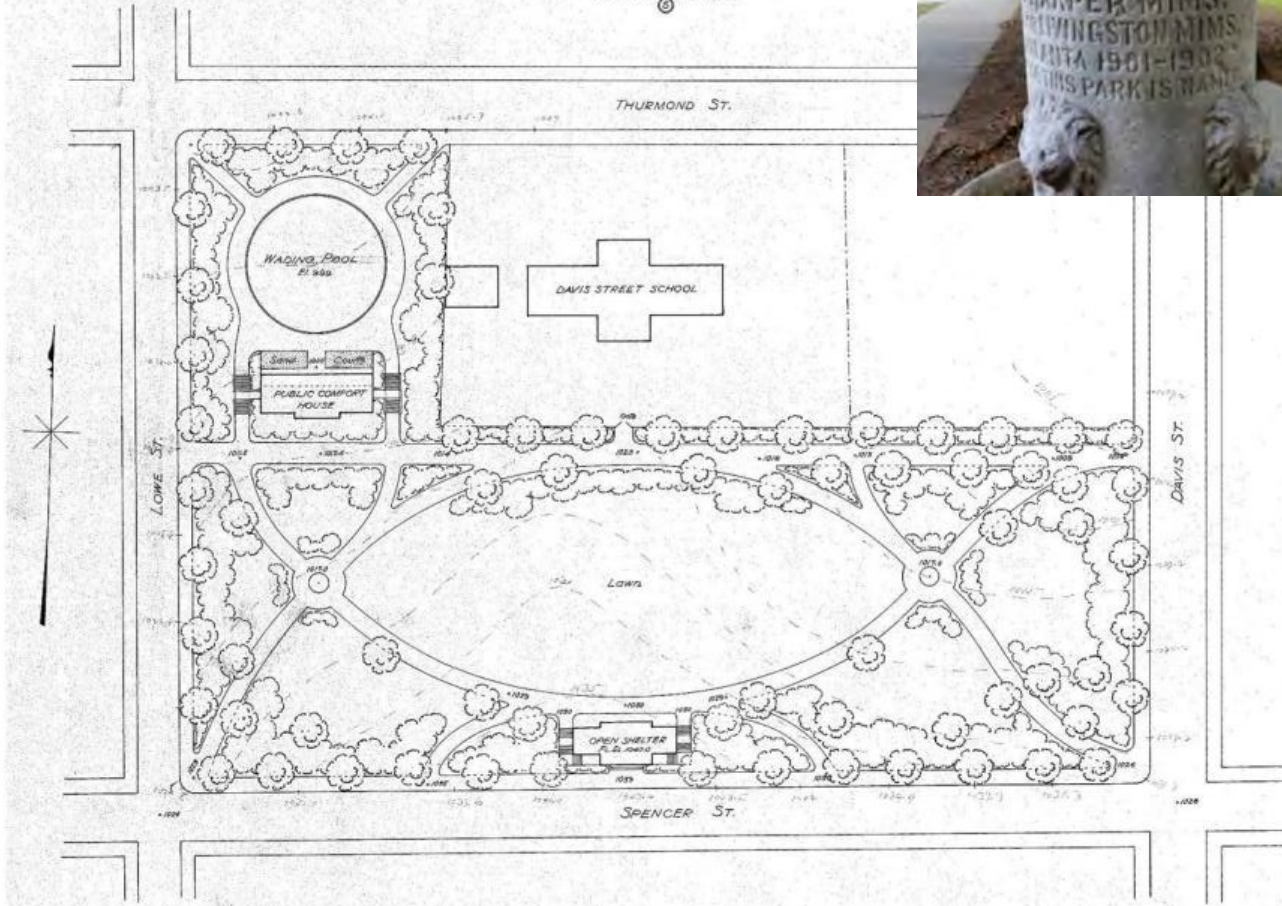
Martin Luther King Jr.'s Last Home Is Sold to the National Park Foundation



"I must say that it wasn't easy to release our home," Bernice King, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s youngest daughter, said of the house on Sunset Avenue in Atlanta where she grew up. Katie Bricker
Photography for the National Park Foundation

Original Mims Park

MIMS PARK
Atlanta Ga.
— PRELIMINARY PLAN —
SCALE
0 10 20 30 40 50
Climax & Brothers Landscape Architects
Brookline Mass. March 25, 1904



The Needs of the Community were identified & prioritized through numerous civic engagement activities

June 11, 2016 – 1st Thessalonians Baptist Church Block Party

- Event in coordination with 1st Thessalonians Baptist Church
- Recorded information from attendees through vision cards prefaced with: *“I believe, Mims Park needs...”*



1st Thessalonian Missionary Baptist Church Block Party – June 11, 2016

I believe, Mims Park needs...

a great place for kids to play
(playground, pool, grilling area)



The Trust for Public Land
creates parks and protects land
for people, ensuring healthy,
livable communities for
generations to come.

Mims Park

The Trust for Public Land is honored to be collaborating with The City of Atlanta, the National Monument Foundation, and your community in the creation of a 16-acre neighborhood park in your neighborhood. More information cometh!

The Needs of the Community were refined through numerous civic engagement activities

June 25, 2016 – Cook Park ‘Play Day’

- Event organized by TPL and attended by 19 other organizations working on the Westside
- Purpose of event was to:
 - 1) Refine the activities residents would like to see in the new park and
 - 2) Introduce the services and organizations that exist on the Westside



The Needs of the Community were refined through numerous civic engagement activities

February 11, 2017 – Higher Ground Empowerment Center

- Event facilitated by The Trust for Public Land and Dept of Watershed Management
- Presentations by CM Young, City, TPL, & NMF of Boone Blvd and Cook Park
- Additional information shared and feedback received at breakout tables





**Rodney Cook, Sr. Park in Historic Vine City
CONCEPT PLAN**

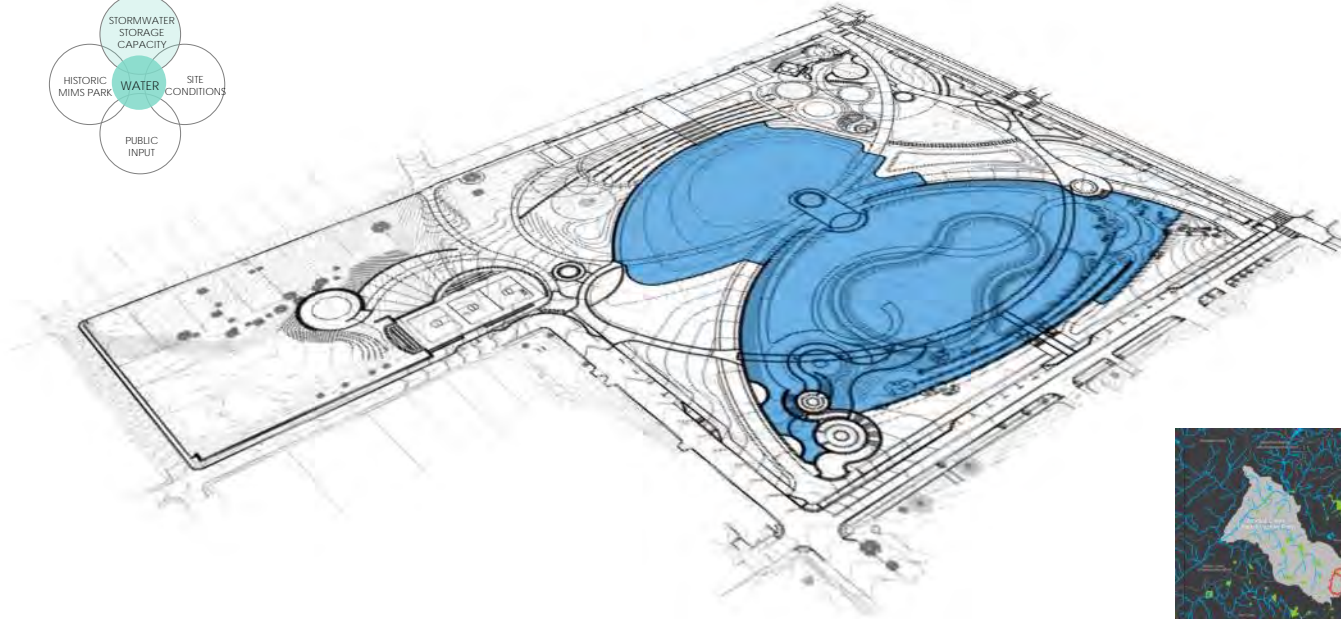
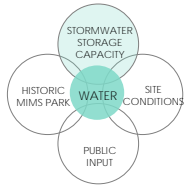








Stormwater Storage Capacity



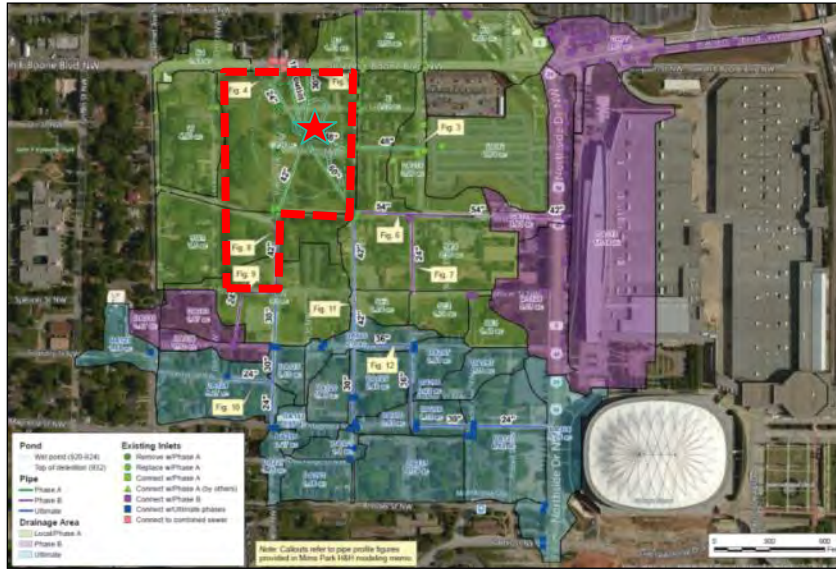
Stormwater (9+ million gallons maximum) is conveyed to the park's pond and raingardens and stored - this alleviates flooding and reduces combined sewer overflows into Proctor Creek.



Proctor Creek Watershed
(Project drainage basin highlighted red)



Drainage Areas

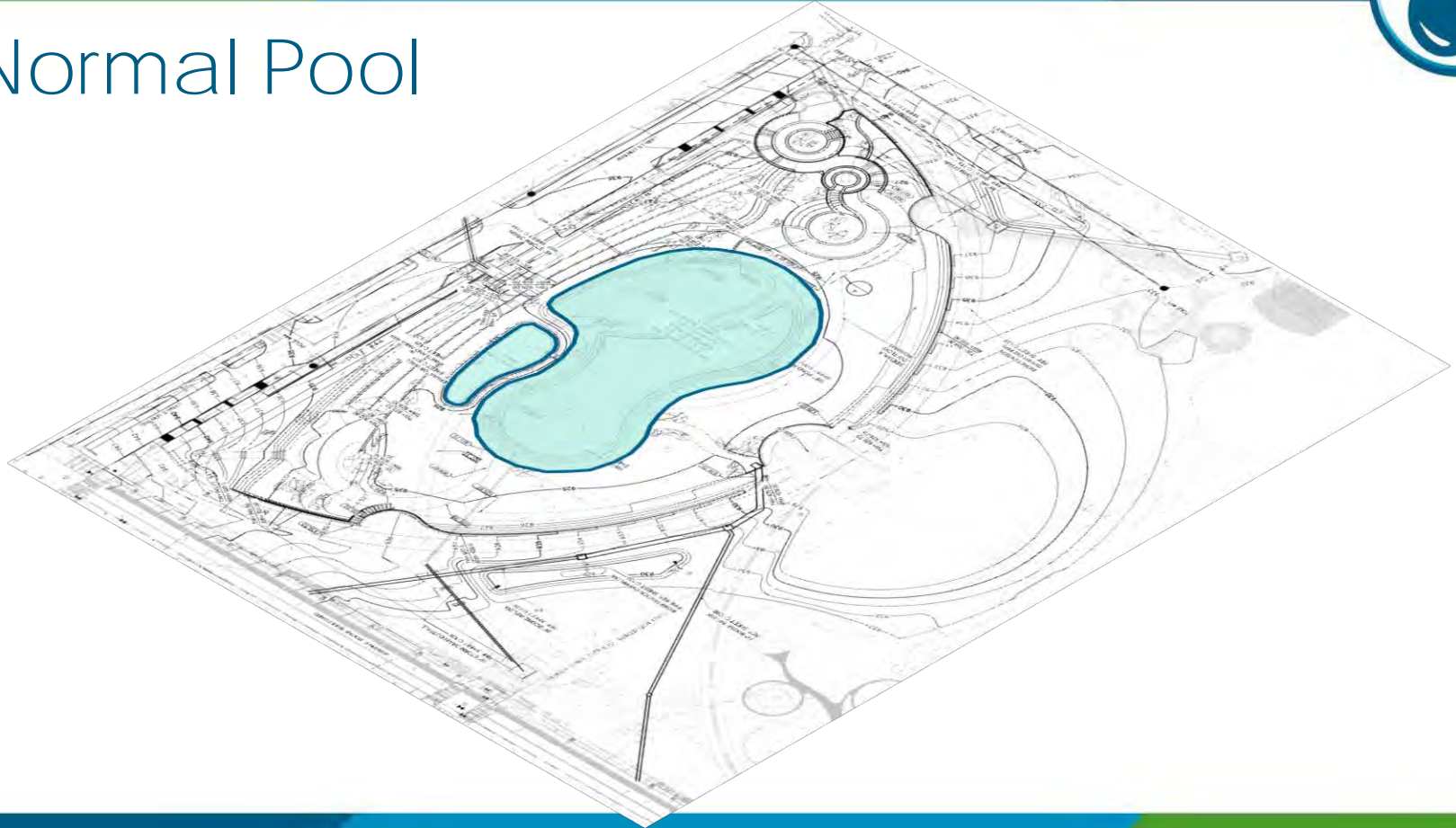


Phased Combined Sewer Separation

- Phase A (Green) 73 acres drainage
- Phase B (Purple) 36 acres drainage
- Phase C (Blue) 41 acres drainage
- Ultimate Drainage Approximately 150 acres

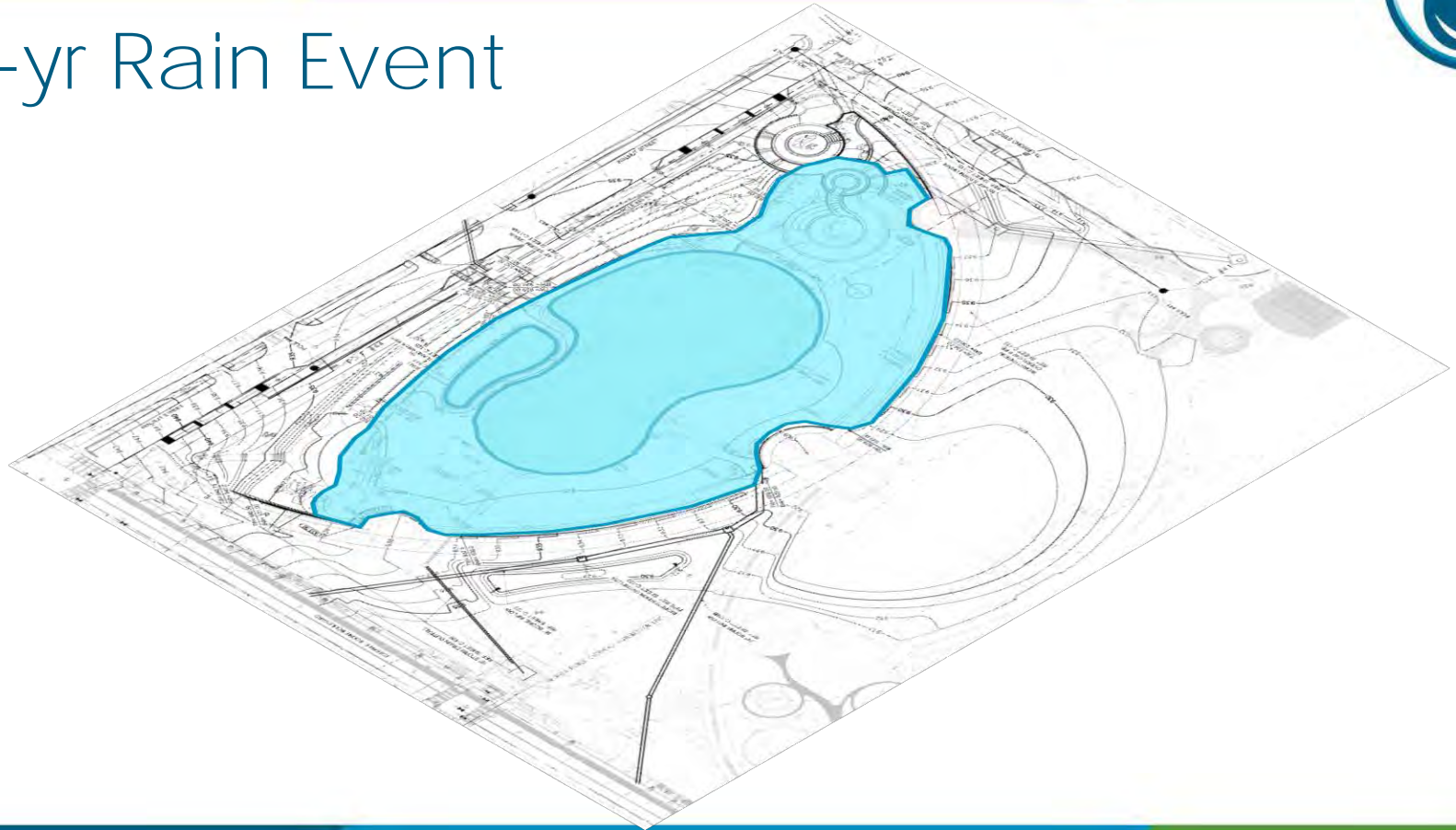


Normal Pool



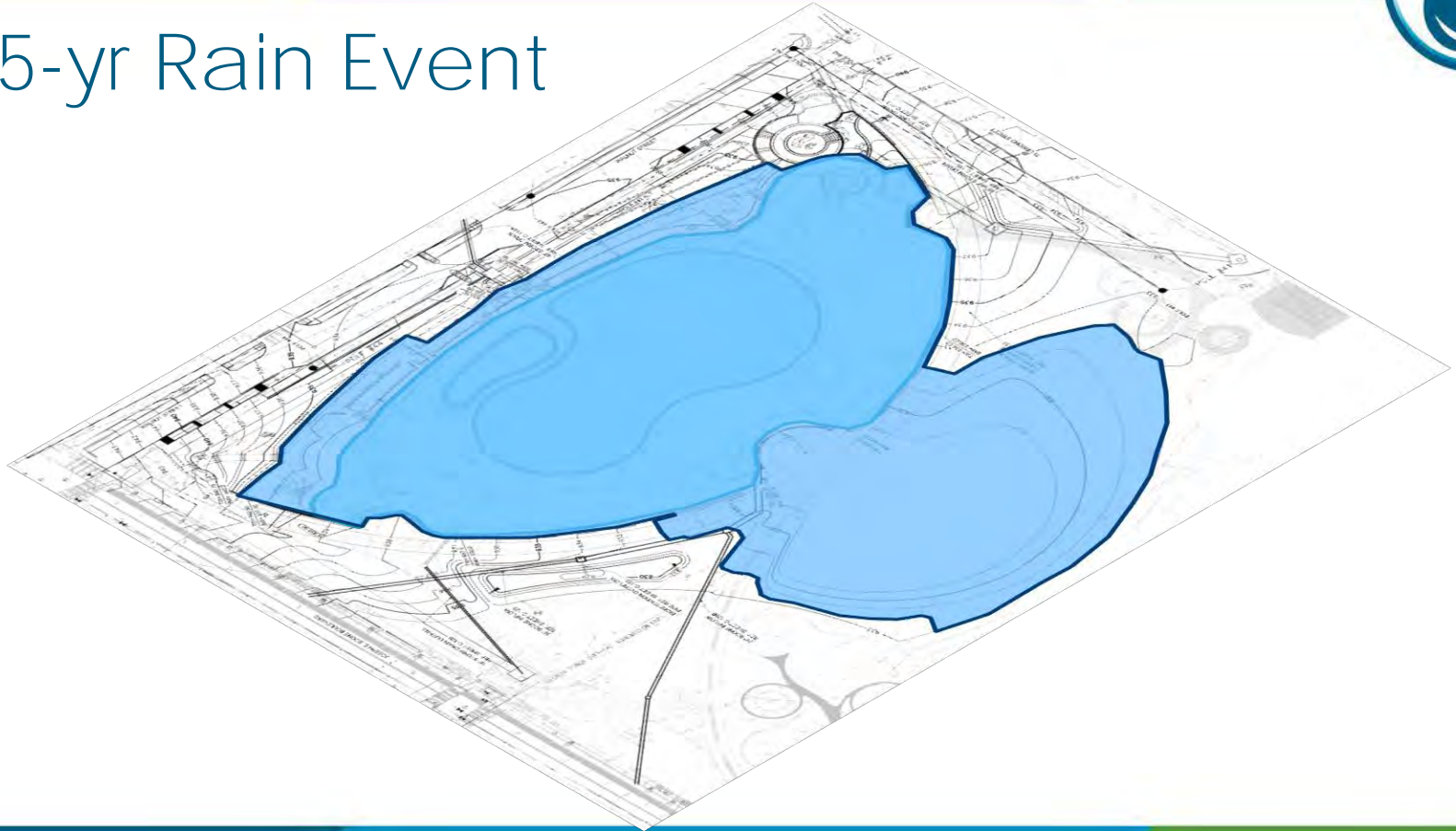


2-yr Rain Event



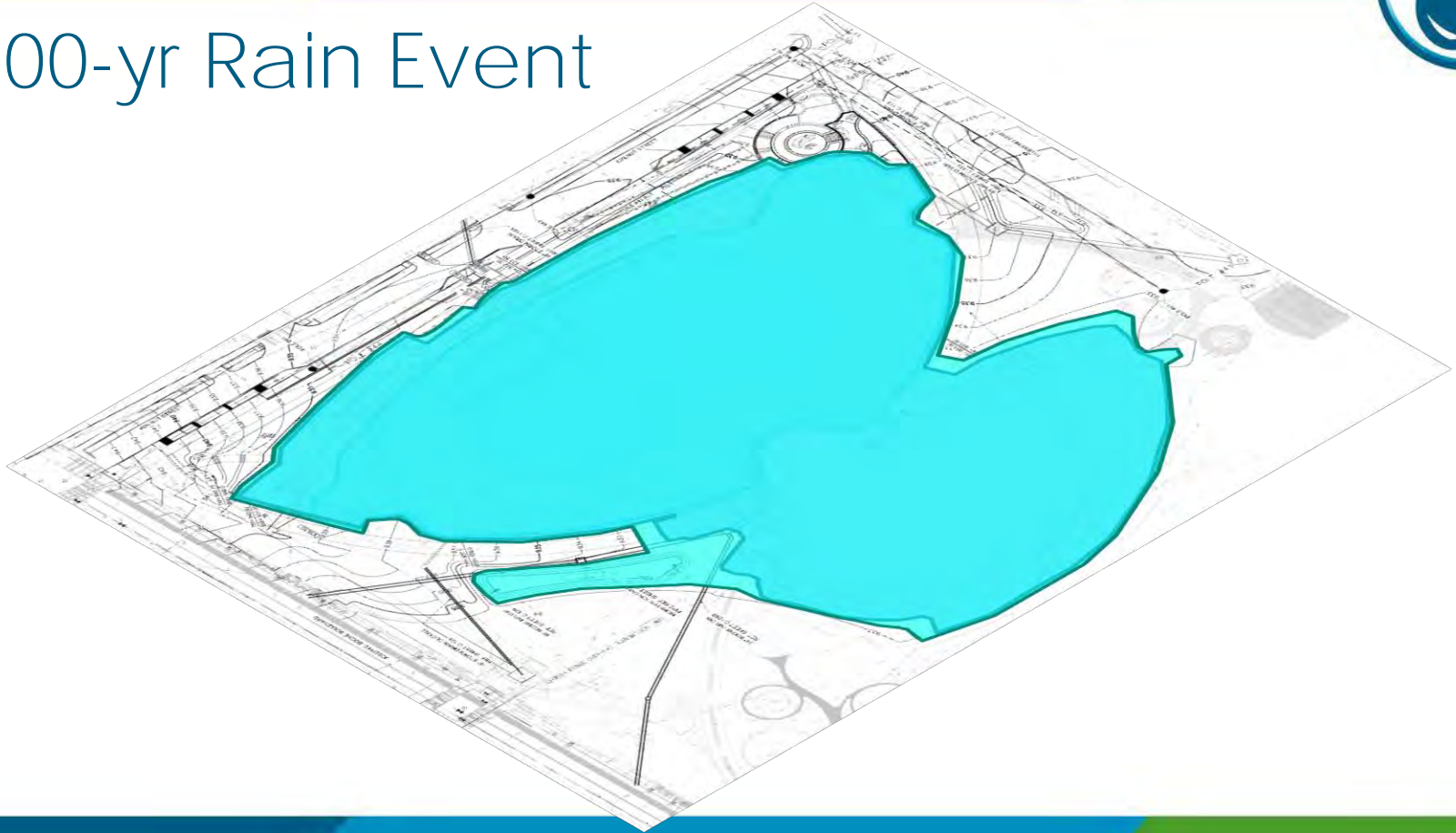


25-yr Rain Event





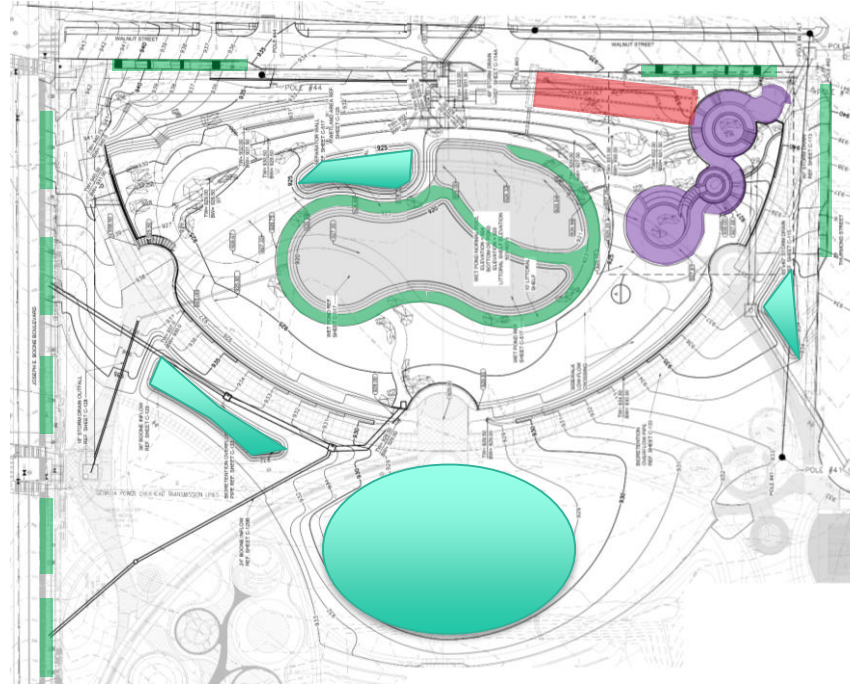
100-yr Rain Event





Innovative features

- Soil restoration
- Littoral shelf
- Created wetlands
- Bioretention
- Stormwater planters
- Rainwater harvesting cisterns
- Aerating water feature



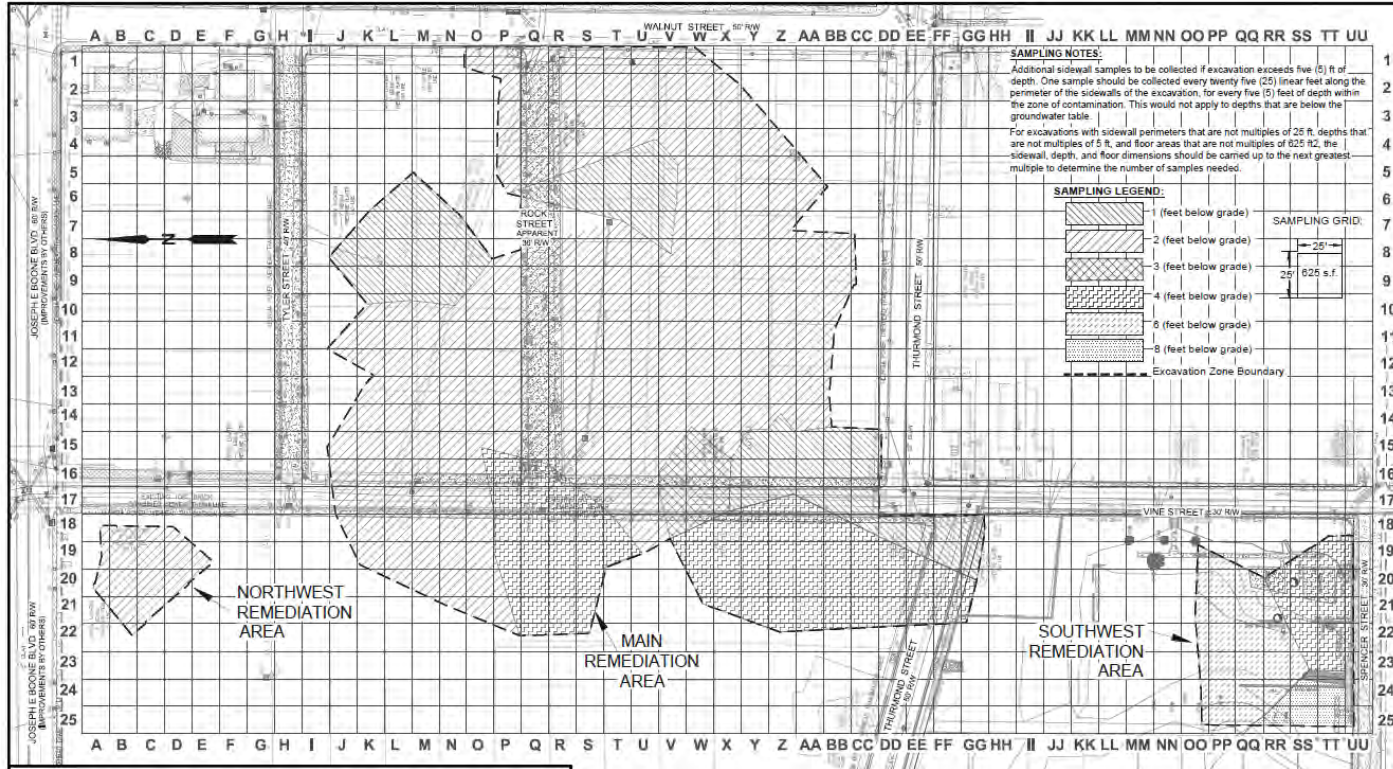


Notable Challenges - DWM

- Property Acquisitions
- Rain/Drought/Rain
- Lead Impacted Soils
- GA Power Transmission Lines
- Combined Sewer Trunk lines

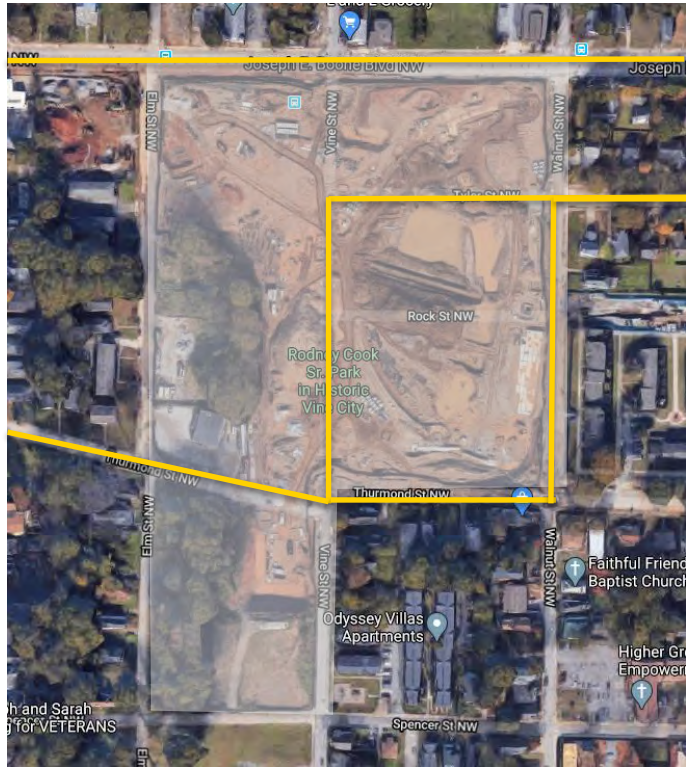


Soil Remediation





GA Power Transmission Lines





Combined Sewer Trunk Lines







Mineral Springs/Beckwith Junction Box





Mineral Springs/Beckwith Junction Box





Pond Construction





Pond Construction





Aerating Fountains





Aerating Fountains





Cook Park
April 2, 2019



Cook Park
April 2, 2019



Cook Park – Restroom building / retaining walls near splash pad
October 1, 2019



Cook Park
October 2018





Cook Park
January 9, 2020



Cook Park

Walls Are Meant for Climbing Workshop – January 18, 2019



Cook Park
December 6, 2019



Cook Park
Georgia Power Volunteers at MLK, Jr. Day of Service





Westside
Future Fund

Westside Future Fund is a nonprofit formed by Atlanta's public, private and philanthropic partners who believe in the future of Atlanta's Westside and are committed to helping Historic Westside neighborhoods revitalize and develop into a community Dr. King would be proud to call home.



RENTAL HOUSING: Westside Future Fund offers new and renovated quality rentals to fit different household sizes and budget. [Learn more.](#)



HOMEOWNERSHIP: Westside Future Fund is developing beautiful single-family homes for purchase. [Learn More.](#)



ANTI-DISPLACEMENT TAX FUND FOR LEGACY HOMEOWNERS: Westside Future Fund is committed to helping qualified legacy homeowners gain relief from increases in their existing property taxes through the philanthropy-supported Anti-Displacement Tax Fund (ADTF). [Learn more.](#)



FINANCING SUPPORT: For those who qualify, we offer financing support, including financial coaching and down payment assistance. [Learn More.](#)



In Summary...

- Collaborative projects that utilize Green Infrastructure to address historic flooding in urban neighborhoods are possible, practical, and can spur neighborhood revitalization
- Green Infrastructure can provide Triple-Bottom Line benefits
- Developing partnerships is vital
- Engaging the community early and often is key