

Suwanee City Council Approves New Park Master Plan

The Suwanee City Council unanimously approved a master plan for a future city park at their September 27 meeting. Located on approximately 25-acres known locally as the DeLay Property, the site is situated behind the Suwanee library and PlayTown Suwanee on Suwanee Dam Road.

“One of the big ideas that came out of last year’s Downtown Master Plan was the expansion of Suwanee Town Center. The first step toward that vision was the development of a long-term master plan,” said Suwanee City Manager Marty Allen. “Town Center Park is programmed with events most weekends of the spring and fall, and much of the summer as well. This potential new, unstructured space would allow for more community utilization.”

The property was purchased in 2002 as an early acquisition of the community-driven comprehensive park and open space initiative. When Town Center Park was first envisioned, the population of Suwanee was approximately 9,000 people – roughly half of where it stands currently.

“The success of Town Center Park has exceeded all expectations,” said Suwanee Mayor Jimmy Burnette. “The park draws over 200,000 visitors annually to events, as well as regularly serving our 18,000 citizens. The new park will help ease the demand on the existing park and surrounding community.”

The new park design is influenced by the style and quality of Town Center Park, but is by no means a replica, and will have its own unique character, personality, and purpose. Plans call for an accentuated pedestrian connection by reworking City Hall Park into a visible, logical linkage of the two sites. The topography of the park will allow it to overlook Town Center, further enhancing the relationship of the two spaces.

The park plan features a mixture of urban and rural environments, including:

- A roughly 900-foot, elevated **signature bridge** for pedestrian and bicycle use, spanning the entire park and crossing an approximately one-acre water feature.
- An open **terrace plaza** and lawn area at the peak of the park’s elevation that will include several small-scale micro-business sites serving park patrons.
- An extension of the existing **PlayTown Suwanee** geared toward older children, expanding the age range of PlayTown Suwanee without interfering with its existing success.
- Sandpit **volleyball** courts.
- An iconic **public art** piece.

The majority of the site – roughly 15 of the wooded 25 acres along the existing Brushy Creek Greenway – would remain undisturbed.

The biggest change this area will see is the realignment of Main Street, which will shift around the park and exit onto Suwanee Dam Road at the existing traffic signal at the library entrance. This shift will allow the median break at the existing Main Street to close, greatly improving the safety and traffic flow on Suwanee Dam.

Over the last few months, the City of Suwanee has worked with a team of professionals and sought input from community members via stakeholder interviews, over 1,000 in-person and online surveys of park users, four planning workshops, two design charrettes, and a variety of other meetings and presentations.

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– Jimmy Burnette, Suwanee Mayor

“The support for expanding Town Center Park has been overwhelming,” said Burnette. “Concepts were developed and refined through this process with the needs and wants of all stakeholders in mind. The community input led to a design that maximizes the opportunities of the site and provides diverse experiences.”

The anticipated cost associated with the future park is roughly \$12-15 million as envisioned; a timetable for construction has not been established.

MASTER PLAN

