



HELP THEM HELP THEMSELVES

YOUTH OPPORTUNITY CAMPAIGN 1967 FOR GREATER ATLANTA

ATLANTA YOUTH COUNCIL, 68 MITCHELL ST., S. W., ATLANTA 30303

Telephone 522-4463, Ext. 437

May 16, 1967

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (#R1)

ATLANTA TO EXPAND PLAYLOT PROGRAM FOR 1967

(First of a series of announcements on summer recreation programs)

2 p.m. Press conf.

The Neighborhood Playlot program, begun last summer by the City of Atlanta Parks and Recreation Department, will be more than doubled for summer 1967. This announcement was made today by Mayor Ivan Allen, Jr., who stated:

"We are convinced that the Playlot program was our single most successful *new* effort in providing meaningful recreation opportunity for our boys and girls last summer. The Playlots were available to large numbers of children within easy walking distance of their homes, and they offered *varied* types of recreation opportunity for ~~pre-school~~ children *(of all ages)* and ~~those in the elementary grades~~ under experienced personnel with outstanding assistance and support from youth and adults from the neighborhoods themselves."

This announcement from Mayor Allen came as the first in a series of information releases on programs to be operated by public and private agencies in the youth recreation field, with the coordination of the Youth Opportunity Campaign for 1967.

The Playlot program, begun last June *substantially* ~~partially~~ with funds from the Office of Economic Opportunity, included nine sites at the close of last summer. These were located in low-income neighborhoods, often on vacant lots which *were* leased for token rental, cleared, equipped and staffed by the Parks and Recreation Department and *neighborhood* volunteers.

An average of 750 children participated in the Playlot program each of 66 days last summer, and that number is expected to reach ^{at least} almost 2,000 ^{per day} as the program is expanded to ^{more than} ~~25~~ ¹²⁰⁰ sites for 1967. Of these ²⁶ sites, ³ ~~two~~ have buildings which will insure all-weather operation. *many changes*

many

The City has been acquiring these lots for the last several months and is nearing completion of the initial development stage. The Playlots will be equipped with water fountains, portable toilets, climbing towers, swings, slides, sand boxes, basketball goals and nets and games and athletic equipment of many types.

The Playlots will be open from _____ a.m. until _____ p.m., six days a week, from June _____ until September _____. *day light sentence* Many of the lots will be lighted *left out* and these will remain open until _____ p.m. and children encouraged to return during the evening hours and bring their parents to participate in games of interest to adults as well as children.

(Most)

All of the Playlots will be provided with sprinkler heads which transform a water hydrant into a cool shower treat for hundreds of children. Playlots are located at:

- ✓ 1. Rhodes Street between Sunset & Vine
- ✓ 2. Merritts and Bedford
- ✓ 3. Wylie and Tye
- ✓ 4. Connally St. near Richardson St.
- ✓ 5. Gilliam Park on Wade
- ✓ 6. 373 Thurmond Street
- ✓ 7. Magnolia and Maple
- ✓ 8. McDaniel at Georgia Ave.
- ✓ 9. Haygood and Crew St.
- ✓ 10. 255 Dodd Avenue (House)
- ✓ 11. Windsor near Richardson St.
- ✓ 12. Park Ave. and Lansing, S.E.
- ✓ 13. Arlington Cir., N.W.
- ✓ 14. 533 Central Ave., S.W.
- ~~15. 71 Little St. (House-Jaycees) S.E.~~
- ✓ 16. Ladd St. off Oakland, N.W.
- ✓ 17. 196 Savannah St., S.E. (House)
- ✓ 18. 141 Walnut St., N.E. (1/2 House)
- ✓ 19. Harper Park Site - Poole Creek Rd., S.E.
- ✓ 20. Daniel Stanton Park Site (Martin-Boynton, S.E.)
- ✓ 21. Perry Blvd. and Lively
- ✓ 22. Huff Rd. near Booth, N.W. *cleared*
- ✓ 23. Butler and Vernon Pl., N.E.
- ✓ 24. University & Hubbard, S.E.
- ✓ 25. Vernon and Fort, N.E.
- ✓ 26. Habershad at Perry Blvd.
- ✓ 27. Daniel between Edgewood & DeKalb Ave.

Jaycee Project - will provide leadership only

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The first four sites listed above will have portable swimming pools, donated by the Rich Foundation and valued at \$28,⁵⁰⁰ (for the four). They are steel supported, properly drained and will include showers and other necessary equipment. Supervised swimming and swimming instruction will be available from ___ a.m. until ___ p.m., ^{followed} six days a week. Tentative plans are to relocate these pools in nearby school basements during the winter months, thus providing year-round swimming opportunity in these four areas.

The cost of equipping and operating one Playlot for the summer is estimated at \$3,700. A portion of this cost will be funded by a grant assured from the Office of Economic Opportunity. The City will bear the remaining cost. At the same time, the City hopes to acquire ^{Several} (another ten-playlot) sites before the end of the summer and also introduce some innovations in its existing Playlot program. ~~These would be:~~

1. Provide noon-time snacks to hundreds of children who would otherwise do without lunch, ~~thus creating more of a day-camp experience.~~
2. Provide additional equipment which would widen the recreation programs possible - portable swimming pools, volleyball nets, etc.
3. Provide bus transportation so children in isolated small neighborhoods could be safely transported to Playlots near them.
4. Possibly open the Playlots for several hours on Sunday afternoons.
5. And most important, expand this into a permanent year-round program.

It is hoped that contributions, loan of physical facilities and volunteered time from private citizens, business firms, religious and civic organizations will enable the City to add these innovations and enrich the recreation opportunities available to thousands of young Atlantans. Interested parties are asked to contact the Youth Opportunity Campaign at 522-4463, extension 437.

As an important phase in the Youth Opportunity Campaign for 1967, a simple directory of summer learning, recreation and camping opportunities for youngsters, designed for each quadrant of the City, will be distributed through the Atlanta schools, recreation centers, private agencies and Neighborhood Centers prior to the close of school.