



CITY OF ATLANTA

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NEWS RELEASE

CITY HALL ATLANTA, GA. 30303

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Special News Release

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For Immediate Release

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Atlanta to Expand Playlot Program for 1967

(First of a Series of Announcements on Summer Recreation Programs)

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 children of all ages 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 and financed substantially 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 2,000 per day as the program is expanded to more than 25 sites during the summer of 1967. Of some 26 sites that have already been selected, three have buildings which will insure all-weather operation.

The City has been locating these lots during the last several months and is nearing completion of the initial development of most of the Playlots. The amount and type of equipment on each site will vary according to the size of the lot, but equipment will include 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 10 a. m. until dark, six days a week, from June 1st through Labor Day, September 4th. With the advent of Daylight Savings Time, recreation programs can be continuous until 9 or 9:30 p. m. during the summer and children will be encouraged to return during the evening hours and bring their parents to participate in games of interest to adults as well as children.

Most 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 already developed or have been planned at the following locations:

1. Rhodes Street between Sunset and Vine
2. Merritts and Bedford
3. Wylie and Tye
4. Connally Street near Richardson Street
5. Gilliam Park on Wade Avenue
6. 373 Thurmond Street
7. Magnolia and Maple
8. McDaniel at Georgia Avenue
9. Haygood and Crew Street
10. 255 Dodd Avenue (Indoor Facilities)
11. Windsor near Richardson Street
12. Park Avenue and Lansing, S. E.
13. Arlington Circle, N. W.
14. 533 Central Avenue, S. W.
15. Ladd Street off Oakland, N. W.
16. 196 Savannah Street, S. E. (Indoor Facilities)
17. 141 Walnut Street, N. E. (Indoor Facilities)
18. Harper Park Site - Poole Creek Road, S. E.
19. Daniel Stanton Park Site (Martin-Boynton, S. E.)
20. Perry Boulevard and Lively
21. Huff Road near Booth, N. W.
22. Butler and Vernon Place, N. E.
23. University and Hubbard, S. E.
24. Vernon and Fort, N. E.
25. Habershal at Perry Boulevard
26. Daniel between Edgewood and DeKalb Avenue

The first four sites above will have portable swimming pools, made possible by a \$28,500 donation from the Rich Foundation. The pools are steel supported, filtered, properly drained and will include showers and other necessary equipment. Supervised swimming and swimming instruction will be available seven days a week, from 10 a.m. until 7 p.m. on weekdays and from 1 p.m. until 7 p.m. on Sundays. Tentative plans are to relocate these pools in school basements during the winter months, thus providing the schools with an opportunity for year-round swimming instruction.

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 additional Playlot sites before the end of the summer and also introduce some innovations into the existing Playlot 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 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.