



# CITY OF ATLANTA

DEPARTMENT of PARKS

Office of General Manager

Atlanta, Georgia 30303

June 26, 1967



JACK C. DELIUS  
GENERAL MANAGER

Mr. Thomas J. Armstrong  
Acting Assistant Regional Administrator  
for Metropolitan Development  
Department of Housing and Urban  
Development  
Room 645, Peachtree-Seventh Building  
Atlanta, Georgia 30323

Dear Mr. Armstrong:

Subject: Project No. GA. OSD-32  
Application for Grant to  
Develop Open-Space Land  
Gun Club Park Site

We respectfully request that you consider a 50% grant for the second phase of development of Gun Club Park Site and waive the 12½% of acquisition cost limitation on this portion of the above project.

Gun Club is the second largest park site we have acquired under the 1963 Park Bond Program and is located adjacent to the largest public housing project in Atlanta. One thousand families and approximately five thousand people live in the Perry Homes Public Housing Project and it is absolutely essential that we complete the development of this park at the earliest possible date. At the present time, Perry Homes has only one small playground with which to provide outdoor recreation for more than 3,200 children and teenagers. The families of Perry Homes cannot afford to leave their immediate neighborhood in search of recreation as the median family income is only \$2,500 per year. Perry Homes is a part of Census Tract F-87, which has been rated sixth in juvenile delinquency among approximately 100 tracts within the city limits of Atlanta. The need for a fully developed park is clearly reflected by the evidence of discontent and the feeling of being long neglected expressed by the people of Perry Homes community. The urgent need is amplified by the expansion of the Perry Homes presently underway. An additional 140 units consisting of three, four, and five bedrooms are now under construction.



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Mr. Armstrong  
Page Two  
June 26, 1967

We have made every effort to expedite this project and we are very proud of the fact that we received the first Open-Space Land Development Grant in the United States for the first phase development of this park. However, due to the lack of funds for capital improvements, we must develop all of our parks in phases over a period of several years. If our application is cut to 12½% of the acquisition cost, it will materially affect our financial capacity for additional development. Of course, all of our projects face the same problem, but the problem is particularly acute as it relates to Gun Club Park.

As documentation in support of our request we have enclosed a census tract map of the city showing the area to be served by Gun Club Park; a cadastral map of the service area, showing generalized block-front structural conditions, blighted areas, the location of Perry Homes, and the Rockdale Urban Redevelopment Area; an analysis of the median family income for the area; an analysis of housing conditions in the area; a compilation of delinquency and crime statistics for the area to be served; a graph showing the relationship of income and crime in Atlanta; and an analysis of age groups in Perry Homes.

The boundaries of the area to be served by Gun Club Park were determined by the Planning Department of the City of Atlanta. It should be noted that the site consists of 42.9 acres and will serve as a Community Park. The service area encompasses approximately 4,147 housing units and has an estimated population of 15,800. More than 30% of the people in this service area live in the Perry Homes Public Housing Project, which contains 24% of all housing units in the service area. Of the remaining housing units, 35% are substandard structures.

We would like to point out that the analysis of median family income is based on 1961 data, which is now obsolete and does not reflect a true picture, with the exception of Perry Homes. This entire area has been undergoing transition during the past several years. The Planning Department of the City of Atlanta is conducting a survey to determine the extent of change in racial occupancy and median family income. However, current data is not available at this time. We strongly suspect that the median family income for the entire service area is considerably less than that reflected in the 1961 data. We do know that the population density has increased and will continue to increase. There are proposals for the Rockdale Urban Redevelopment Area that would provide from 1300 to 1500 units of low-income housing. The general location of the Rockdale Urban Redevelopment Area is shown on the attached cadastral map.

A very comprehensive study of the causes of juvenile delinquency and crime is embodied in the report of the Atlanta Commission on Crime and Juvenile Delinquency, Opportunity for Urban Excellence, which was published in February, 1966. This department is striving to implement the recommendations of this report, which repeatedly emphasizes the



Mr. Armstrong  
Page Three  
June 26, 1967

lack of recreation facilities in congested, low-income areas of the city, including the Gun Club area. As further documentation of our request, we quote the following excerpts from Opportunity for Urban Excellence:

"One of Atlanta's most serious problems with regard to juvenile delinquency and crime is that the most congested areas of the city have the least recreation facilities...

Children need places to play other than the streets....

The Parks Department is in serious need of great financial assistance...The present capital budget of the Parks Department should be at least doubled...Parks should be built in congested high crime areas of the city....

Open land is quickly disappearing in the heart of the city as well as elsewhere, and if moves are not made now, opportunities to establish parks in congested areas will be forever lost....

The importance of constructive play for children....can hardly be overstated. Similarly, with adults the constructive use of leisure time provides an outlet essential to sound personal adjustment. Idleness and lack of interest are known contributors to both juvenile delinquency and adult crime, and it is essential that the City of Atlanta provide reasonable facilities and appropriate supervision' for the play activities of its people. Persons interviewed by the Committee pointed repeatedly to the lack of adequate recreation facilities in many of the known poverty, high crime areas in Atlanta...

It was the conclusion of this Committee that the Parks Department is doing an extremely fine job with the facilities, personnel and money presently available to it...It is also clear, however, that this Department's problems are staggering, and the present situation is serious. The major percentage of the problems seems directly traceable to money.

As suggested by many interviewees, we found that many of the high crime, low income areas were not being adequately served....

.....adjacent to the Perry Homes Area, the Department has recently acquired the large Gun Club Park site and has allocated \$79,000 to its development. This will take care only of first stage development - roads, sewerage and playing fields, but there is a strong need now for a fully



Mr. Armstrong  
Page Four  
June 26, 1967

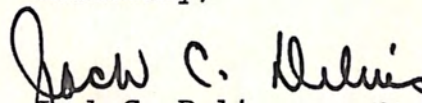
developed Park site...The needs of Perry Homes were emphasized time and time again, in particular by police officers.

We recommend that specific steps be taken by the City to increase the public recreational facilities available to the poor...."

In summary, the full and complete development of Gun Club Park will be a giant step toward correcting the many deficiencies of an older, low income, residential community of increasing population density that has been long devoid of public recreation facilities.

We sincerely appreciate the very valuable assistance and cooperation of your agency and thank you for any consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Jack C. Delius  
General Manager of  
Parks and Recreation

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