

Dunwoody Parks Bond Referendums For Acquisition and Improvements

- When the City of Dunwoody was being formed, polling determined that the citizens wanted better services in 3 main areas: **police, paving** and **parks**. The police department is operating well and the transportation plan addresses paving, including sidewalks. Road paving is underway: about \$2 million will be spent in 2011; \$2.5 million is project in 2012. \$1.1 million will be spent for sidewalks next year.
- On the November 8 ballot there will be two bond referenda for addressing the area of parks.
- The **acquisition bond** will fund the purchase of additional properties to develop athletic fields, playgrounds, trails and many other needed community improvements.
- These properties will provide additional opportunities for adults and children to gather, socialize, play and exercise in a safe and healthy outdoor environment.
- The **improvement bond** allows the City to borrow the money incrementally, to implement the City's **Parks Master Plan** (approved in June).
 - The City hired Lose and Associates, an experienced national engineering, planning and parks design firm, to prepare the Parks Master Plan. Lose based the Plan on input from the citizens at meetings and through surveys.
- For example, the Parks Master Plan calls for a new education building for the **Dunwoody Nature Center**. Adjacent land will be transformed into an open lawn, playground, picnic pavilion and restroom.
- At **Brook Run**, the Parks Plan calls for more open lawns, multi-use sports fields, tennis courts, an expanded dog park and a wooded trail system, among other things.
- Additionally improvements are also defined for Windwood Hollow Park, The Donaldson Chesnut Farm and the Perimeter Center East Park.
- ***With the bond money, these improvements could be a reality within five years.***
- An example of the potential use of the acquisition bond is the property on Shallowford Road where the former Emory hospital was located. In August, the City placed a contract on this 19 acre property for \$5.5M, contingent on the acquisition bond passing. This is an extremely low contract price that was possible because of market conditions. There is room for at least 2 athletic fields at this location.
- If both bonds are issued, the projected additional property tax paid by an average house in Dunwoody (\$350,000) is \$18 a month (1.5 mils). This assumes that the City issues the full \$66M at an assumed interest rate of 4.7% for 30 years. This estimated monthly amount does not take into account savings you may receive from federal and state income tax deductions. Also if you sell your house, you no longer pay for the bonds, meaning the cost will be shared by two or more families over time.
- If you live in Dunwoody, you pay less in taxes than other DeKalb cities as well as Sandy Springs, and will continue to pay less even with both new bonds added.
- Research shows that well-designed and well-maintained natural green space enhances the intrinsic and economic values of nearby land by increasing property and resale values.
- Evidence also supports the notion that parks and green space have a positive impact on the attractiveness of communities to businesses and increases the health and overall quality of life for residents.