

## **Iris Grant Application**

Warriors' Path State Park is seeking an IRIS grant to fund design, plant materials, installation, and maintenance of plantings in the area of the soon to be constructed Boundless Playground . The Boundless playground project is still in the design phase and the landscape design will be based on the final design.

### ***Purpose***

#### Providing a Universally Accessible Play Area

Northeast Tennessee region does not currently have a fully integrated, universally accessible play area for children of all abilities. In fact this will be the first Boundless Playground in the state. The need for such facilities is well documented. The 2000 Census reports 9.1% of the population between 5 and 20 years of age are disabled. It is also important to note that parents and other caregivers such as grandparents are more likely to take their children to areas that meet their needs. With 22.7% of adults between 21 and 64 reporting disabilities this new area will allow them an opportunity to spend time with their children inclusive of their needs for access.

The new play facility will also create programming opportunities for community organizations that serve children with special needs. Many of the elementary school teachers in the area already take their classes to Warriors Path for special social, outdoor, science activities; however, the current playground arrangement at Warriors Path Park discourages inclusion of students with special needs into these activities. Upon its completion, the new play area at Warriors Path will provide area public schools and Special Education teachers fully integrated, accessible playgrounds and equipment for community outings and for community-based therapy. This new, inclusive play area will increase the programming options offered by the Park which will be of great benefit to the park resources, to park visitors, and to the community.

#### Creating Opportunities for Future Influence

Although this project will benefit children with physical, developmental and/or sensory disabilities the most, it will also serve as a model for upgrading other playground areas in the region.

## ***Function of Plantings***

### **Habitat Enhancement, Erosion Control and Restoration**

This area of the park has been heavily impacted by foot traffic, and the former disc golf course. Much of area is seriously eroded, and all of it is impoverished in plant species diversity. Landscaping with native wildflowers and grasses helps return the area to a healthy ecosystem. Diverse varieties of birds, butterflies and mammals, are attracted to the native plants, thus enhancing the biodiversity of the area. The native plants increase our connection to nature, help educate our neighbors, and provide a beautiful, peaceful place to relax.

Our plantings will be carefully planned to protect this area from erosion and add the needed diversity. This reduces the demand for non-renewable resources and improves the water and air quality. We will plant to include tree, shrub and herbaceous species and because they are native they:

- *Do not require long term fertilizers. .*
- *Require no pesticides*
- *Require less water than lawns.*

### **Reduction of Mowed Area**

Much of this 9,840 square foot area is short mowed grass, and has been kept mowed simply due to the tradition of mowing. We will plan for species that will provide natural groundcover and lessen the direct and indirect impact of mowing.

### **Interpretive Planting**

There is an old saying that:

*" People will only conserve what they love; they will only love what they understand; and they will only understand what they are taught."*

We anticipate the playground will draw a large number of visitors to the park. . Natural landscapes are an invitation to appreciate plant diversity, seasonal flowering cycles, sustainability of native landscapes, and wildlife habitat, all of which are absent in conventional landscapes. This familiarity can strengthen community support for habitat preservation and restoration, environmental protection, and open space acquisition.

The use of native plants will provide an educational opportunity for the community. This will also be an excellent addition to park interpretive efforts. Visitors will learn about the horticultural history of the region and how the use of native plants provides food and shelter for birds, butterflies and other desirable wildlife. These opportunities provide positive examples of public land management and increase the awareness and understanding of the public about the community, which they reside

A few carefully worded signs will interpret the need for native planting, the value of habitat enhancement and also the source of funding.

Once plantings are established, we plan to further their interpretive potential through publications and audiovisual presentations. This will allow us to “spread the word” as to the need for and the value of native plantings to a wide audience. We would share these materials both with park visitors and with off-site groups that may never see the actual plantings, but still need to know how important and useful native plantings can be.

### **Aesthetic Enhancement**

- ***Native plants provide shelter and food for wildlife.*** Native plants attract a variety of birds, butterflies, and other wildlife by providing diverse habitats and food sources.
- ***Native plants promote biodiversity and stewardship of our natural heritage.*** Native plants are a part of our natural heritage. Natural landscaping is an opportunity to reestablish diverse native plants, thereby inviting the birds and butterflies back home.

## *Estimated Budget*

### *Installation and Maintenance*

#### **Equipment (Hand Tools / Heavy Equipment): \$6,950.00**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b><u>Hand tools</u></b>   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Folding Pruning Saws</li> <li>• Pole Saws</li> <li>• Heavy Duty pruning shears</li> <li>• Branch loppers</li> <li>• Hedge Shears</li> <li>• Tree Planting Bars</li> <li>• Shovels</li> <li>• Rakes</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trowels</li> <li>• Wheel Barrel</li> <li>• 16 volt Cordless Drill</li> <li>• Cordless Skill Saw</li> <li>• Saw Blades</li> <li>• Drill Bitts</li> <li>• Extra Batteries for Cordless equip.</li> </ul> |
| <b><u>Heavy equipment</u></b>  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Backhoe Rental – 80 hrs. \$1,400</li> <li>• Operator – 80 hrs \$2,000</li> <li>• Fuel - \$300</li> <li>• Taxes - \$118</li> </ul>   |   |

#### **Supplies: \$26,330.00**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mulch – \$4,000</li> <li>• Border/Edging Materials</li> <li>• Landscape fabric - \$580</li> <li>• Stake flags - \$50</li> <li>• Tresslis – 2 @ 100 =\$200</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Top soil – 1,000 yards = \$5,000</li> <li>• Area Signage - \$6,000</li> <li>• Planting signage - \$5,000</li> <li>• Wild Life Observation - \$2,500</li> <li>• Concrete - \$4,000</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

**Plant Materials: \$13,100.00**

| • <b>Trees</b>  | • <b>Shrubs</b>   | • <b>Flora-Vines</b>   |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beech</li> <li>• Black Cherry</li> <li>• Blackgum</li> <li>• Canada Hemlock</li> <li>• Various Hickory</li> <li>• Kentucky coffee tree</li> <li>• Sugar Maple</li> <li>• Red Maple</li> <li>• Pin Oak</li> <li>• Chestnut Oak</li> <li>• Southern Red Oak</li> <li>• White Oak</li> <li>• PawPaw</li> <li>• Persimmon</li> <li>• Sourwood</li> <li>• Sassafrass</li> <li>• Sycamore</li> <li>• Yellow Buckeye</li> <li>• Alleghany Serviceberry</li> <li>• Redbud</li> <li>• Flowering Dogwood</li> <li>• Mountain Silverbell</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bladdernut</li> <li>• Elderberry</li> <li>• Black Haw</li> <li>• Hearts a bustin</li> <li>• American Holly</li> <li>• Mock Orange</li> <li>• Moonseed</li> <li>• Muscadine</li> <li>• Nine Bark</li> <li>• Carolina Rose</li> <li>• Serviceberry</li> <li>• Spicebush</li> <li>• Smooth sumac</li> <li>• Witch Hazel</li> <li>• Buttonbush</li> <li>• American Hazelnut</li> <li>• Southern Pinxter Azalea</li> <li>• Flowering Raspberry</li> <li>• Elderberry</li> <li>• Bladdernut</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wood Anemone</li> <li>• Thimbleweed</li> <li>• Pussytoes</li> <li>• Columbine</li> <li>• Spikenard</li> <li>• Jack in the pulpit</li> <li>• Wild Ginger</li> <li>• Swamp Milkwood</li> <li>• Butterfly Weed</li> <li>• Whoried Milkweed</li> <li>• Smooth Blue Aster</li> <li>• Late Purple Aster</li> <li>• False Goat's Beard</li> <li>• Spring Beauty</li> <li>• TN Cornflower</li> <li>• Marginal Wood Fern</li> <li>• Boneset</li> <li>• Wild geranium</li> <li>• Dwarf crested iris</li> <li>• Turk's cap lily</li> </ul> |
| <p>75 @ \$40 = \$3,000<br/>40 @ \$35 = \$1,400</p>  | <p>150 @ \$45 = \$6,750</p>   | <p>\$6,500</p>   |

**Installation: \$37,900.00**

**Design/Consultation: \$400.00.**

Landscape design for area surrounding the playground. Prepare site, plant trees, flowers and shrubbery as specified. Maintain and replace planting for 1 year from completion of job.

Site preparation - \$15,000.00

Plant Trees, Shrubbery and flowers - \$10,000.00

Management Fee - \$2,500.00

**Maintenance/Service: \$7,500.00.**

The first year's maintenance and service of area will include tree & shrub replacement. (? Mulching)

Limited Liability Insurance: \$2,500.00.

This is to cover the contract labor and volunteers.

***Project Site***

**Trail**

This fully accessible trail circles the perimeter of Boundless Playground and will include wetland and woodland habitats.

**Playground Area**

The area to be used for the playground measures 13,000 square feet. (see the attached schematic plan – draft).

**Maze**

The landscape maze will be designed to encourage engaged play. In the pathway of the MAZE children will move towards activity zones where they will encounter opportunities to build and experience height and sensory gathering activities. The play space will be barrier-free with ramps to allow all children to experience height. As they explore the maze they will see different parts of the play environment from different viewpoints.

The MAZE, together with the natural materials around it, presents repeated opportunities for all children, those with and those without disabilities, to practice with different types of sensory experiences. The area around the maze will include child friendly plant materials

that are hardy and native. A variety of features such as textured pathways, colorful barrier walls with smooth or bumpy surfaces or a trellis can add to the children's sensory discoveries. (*A schematic maze plan from another boundless facility has been included to demonstrate the possibilities.*)

### **Estimated Dates**

The tentative date for installation of the playground equipment is September 2004. This will drive the timing for all other areas of the project. Planting around the equipment areas will begin soon after this timeframe. The planting for the Landscape Maze will begin first.

### **Phases**

- The first phase will be to prepare the area for placement of the playground equipment
- Phase two completion of handicap trail
- Phase three prepare area not impacted by playground equipment
- Phase four will be to prepare the surrounding areas for planting of shrubs and trees
- Phase five will include planting of shrubs and trees
- Phase six will be planting of all other plant materials

### **Estimated Budget: \$**