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MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Brent Walker, Parks and Recreation Manager
Date: May 12, 2014
Subject: **Brook Run Park Tree Canopy Obstacle Course**

ITEM DESCRIPTION

Discussion of a contract with Treetop Quest to design, install, and operate a tree canopy obstacle course within Brook Run Park.

BACKGROUND

In June 2011, the Mayor and Council adopted a Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan to clearly enunciate our needs in terms of parks and recreation as well as prioritize and plan for future investments into our park spaces.

One critical need identified in the Parks Master Plan is to provide additional recreational opportunities for middle- and high-school aged children. Existing amenities, such as the Brook Run Skate Park, and a few of the future amenities such as the basketball courts at Pernoshal Park (the future 5 acre park at the intersection of North Shallowford and Pernoshal Court) directly cater to this group. However, this key demographic is currently underserved by our existing amenities.

DISCUSSION

In March, the city was approached by Treetop Quest. Treetop Quest is an Atlanta-based company specializing in obstacle courses within established tree canopies. Treetop Quest has a facility at the Environmental Heritage Center in Buford, Georgia and is interested in installing and operating a tree canopy obstacle course at Brook Run Park.

As a tree canopy obstacle course would likely be a popular recreational opportunity for middle- and high-school aged children, staff further explored the potential recreational opportunity. Following the purchasing policy, we released a Request for Qualifications in an attempt to identify other firms that provide this amenity.

Although only Treetop Quest responded to our request, their proposal may still be a good fit for our needs. Key features include:

1. Addressing Specific Need – As mentioned earlier, the Parks Master Plan identified a critical need for the addition of recreational opportunities for middle- and high-school aged children. Based on the client base of Treetop Quest's other installation, this recreational opportunity is likely to be a success with this key demographic.
2. Public-Private Partnership – Similar to the arrangement the city negotiated with Woody's Halfpipe Skate Shop at the Brook Run Skate Park, Treetop Quest would operate at no cost to the city and share generated revenue (from admission fees to participants) with the city.
3. Activation of Parkland – the proposed obstacle course would be situated in the roughly four acres to the west of the vacant dormitory building. The city would



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ensure the exact course maintains adequate buffers to protect residential property bordering this part of the park while rejuvenating an underutilized part of our parkland.

4. Environmentally Sensitive Application – The obstacle course itself is designed with the assistance of certified arborists and installed with wedges and pre-fabricated platforms which are affixed to the canopy without nails, screws, or any drilling into the trees themselves.

Treetop Quest and its parent company Altiplano has installed and operated treetop obstacle courses around the world for the past 10 years and has offered a safe and enjoyable recreational amenity to thousands of participants.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Staff recommends moving forward with a contract with Treetop Quest for the implementation of a tree canopy obstacle course in Brook Run Park.

SW#

EXPLORE
your wild side

Treetop Quest

ADVENTURE PARK

Treetop Obstacle Course
Design, Construction & Operation





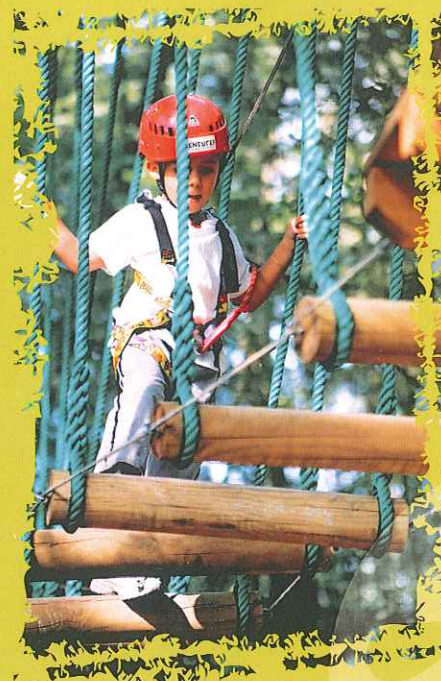
Who we are

Treetop Quest is an Atlanta based company specializing in the management of outdoor sports. For over 10 years, we have been operating Treetop obstacle course around the world.

We provide support at each stage of the implementation process of an eco-friendly treetop obstacle course: design, construction and operation. Much more than just an elevated acrobatic course, we can develop a full concept for leisure activities.

The participants jump from tree to tree using different types of obstacles, with courses accessible to children from 4 years old and above.

At Treetop Quest we are passionate about environment, and committed to helping outdoor enthusiasts explore and learn about the world around them. Our goal is to provide a common place for oneself, the community and the great outdoors to learn from one another and to exist as one.



Assets

Experience: Treetop Quest has been designing, building and managing treetop obstacle courses in the world for more than 10 years.

Safety: Treetop Quest builds its parks in compliance with the European (EN 15567-1/2) and the ACCT standards (Association for Challenge Course Technology).

Environment: Treetop Quest builds all courses in respect of environmental protection. We strive to leave as small of a footprint as we possibly can on the land.

No nails or screws penetrate the trees.

- No puncturing the trees
- Wood wedges are used to protect the tree bark from the wire ropes

Marc Teichner (Fox 5):

"It's really, really lots of fun and pretty challenging! We did the second hardest...it was unbelievable!"

Chelsea & Macy of Georgia Force Cheerleaders:

"We came out and had a fantastic time - a BLAST! It was so much fun, it was a lot of hard work but it was all worth it. The ziplining I felt like I was flying!"

A golden opportunity!



Frequently asked questions



What are the requirements for construction a treetop obstacle course?

- Minimum of 2.5 acres of woodland. Ideal would be 5-8 acres.
- 33-100 feet high trees with a-foot long diameter.
- Minimum available spaces parking
- Sufficient space to construct a building that will serve as front office, storage room, cashier's desk, visitor information center.
- Access to running water, electricity.

How long does it take to build a treetop obstacle course?

- A 3-month construction time is needed to build a standard treetop obstacle course (5 levels/70 platforms/80 obstacles)*.

** This time-frame does not take in account authorizations from concerned authorities.*

What are the monitoring and expertise phases?

Prior to operation, a qualified inspector must determine if new adventure park installations are in compliance with safety standards. Trees must be analyzed so as to ensure that they have reached the appropriate size, are in good health and, devoid of all strength-reducing and hazardous factor. An expert must inspect both the adventure park and the trees annually.



Which contract types are conceivable?

Treetop Quest provides customized project solutions that are adaptable to your requirements.

It is possible to build and to exploit an adventure park on leased land. A partnership is conceivable so as to create and to benefit mutually from a win-win situation.

What is the impact on the trees?

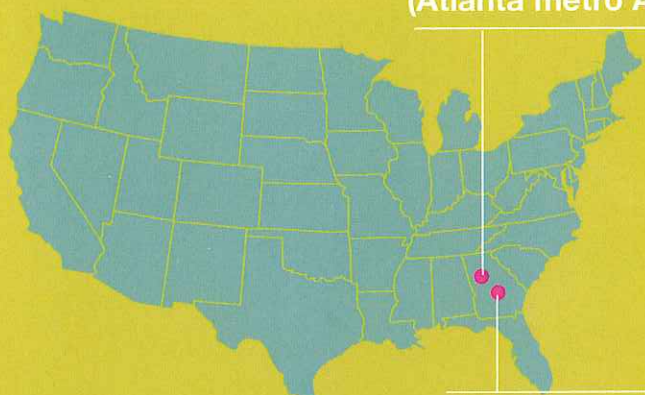
The installation of a forested adventure park is not dangerous for the trees if proper protection is administered: Platforms are held in place by being securely tightened to the tree. To protect and to relieve the trees, platforms are intermittently loosened.

Wooden wedges are used to protect the trees from the cables.



References

USA

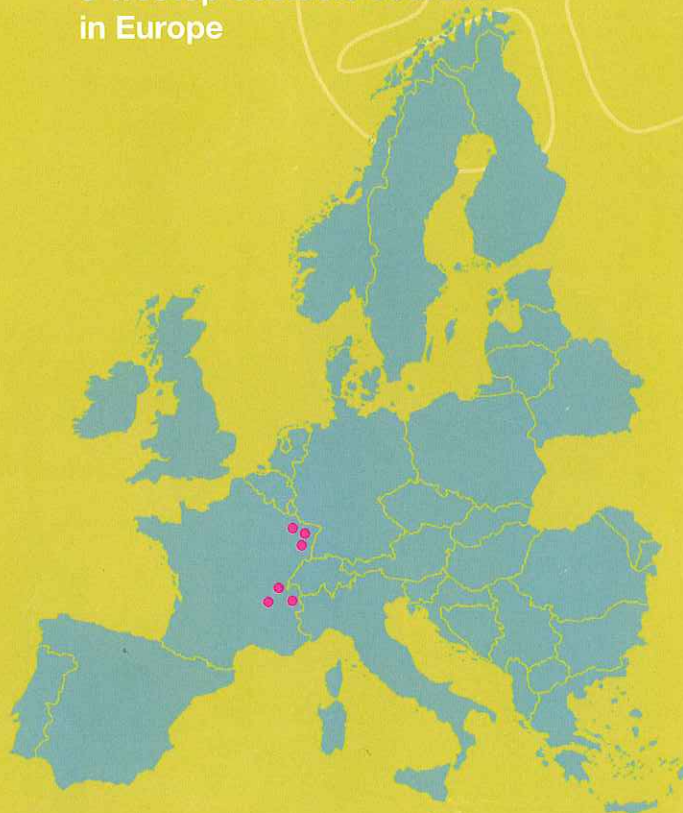


Buford - GA
(Atlanta metro Area)

Rutledge - GA

Europe

6 Treetop obstacle courses
in Europe



Treetop
Quest



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USA

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