

New garden planned for Ault Park

By Lisa Wakeland; 1:58 p.m. EST January 15, 2014



(Photo: Provided)

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It can be difficult to imagine a lush, colorful garden when right now the space is an empty patch of dirt. But planning is well underway for the new Great Lawn Garden at Ault Park.

Last year the Cincinnati Parks removed dead or dying trees and shrubs from the west end of the main lawn, below the pavilion and in between the rose garden and the adopt-a-plot gardens.

"It's a significant area of the park so we wanted to redesign it and make it a visual space that was pleasant and easy to maintain," said Jennifer Harten, east region manager for the Cincinnati Parks.

As the parks department was brainstorming ideas for the now barren space, they brought the concept to the [Ault Park Advisory Council](http://www.aultparkac.org/) (<http://www.aultparkac.org/>), a nonprofit organization of volunteers who help preserve and improve the park.

Rudy Siegel, an advisory council board member, said they're always looking for ways to enhance Ault Park and involve more people from neighborhoods around the park.

"This was a perfect opportunity to engage in a project ... we could take to the surrounding community for a fundraising effort because this is something we can all do together," he said.

VIDEO: See the space and learn more about the new Ault Park garden (<http://cin.ci/1apjLHx>)

The Ault Park Advisory Council is trying to raise \$15,000, which will be matched by the Cincinnati Parks (<http://www.cincinnati-parks.com/index.php/ault-park>), and they have about \$3,500 left to raise. Siegel said they're also hoping to recruit volunteers to plant the shrubs, trees and flowers this spring.

Much of the pre-planting work — regrading, drainage and irrigation — is finished, Harten said, and they installed a new fence on top of the curved wall to keep park visitors safe from the steep drop at the back of the new garden.

Ault Park horticulturalist Dave Roberts created the design and said he wanted to reflect some of the historical plantings in the new garden.

He incorporated flowering cherry trees, like the ones lining Observatory Avenue; holly plants, like those at the opposite end of the lawn near the stairs to the pavilion; and other shrubs and perennials found throughout the 224-acre park.

"I didn't want to sacrifice too much of the lawn because that's an integral event space ... and I wanted to keep it open to maintain the view," he said.

"It's low maintenance and will have color throughout the whole summer. I hope people enjoy the added design elements of color and texture — it's all in place there. It will be a four-season garden."

Siegel said they also enlisted the help of Joan Heiob Moyers, owner of [Garden Girl Creative](http://gardengirlcreative.com/) (<http://gardengirlcreative.com/>), who helped bring the landscape plan to life with her design.

"One of the things that's so great about [Ault Park](https://www.facebook.com/AultParkCincinnati) (<https://www.facebook.com/AultParkCincinnati>) is, I think people really feel at home here, particularly with the adopt-a-plots and now this project," Heiob Moyers said. "They really feel like this is their garden."

Plants for the Great Lawn Garden will come from local nurseries, Harten said, and they'll start planting in early spring when the ground is ready.

"It's so unusual to have that much open space to work with in a very mature park," Siegel said. "It really is a bookmark to the pavilion. I hope the community feels like they helped bring this to fruition, and it's a very specific way to get involved in Ault Park."

Details about donating to the Great Lawn Garden can be found on the [Ault Park Advisory Council website \(http://www.aultparkac.org/\)](http://www.aultparkac.org/). Another option is a one-time \$10 gift via text message. Text the word "AULT" to 80100 and reply "yes" to the confirmation text. The donation is added to your monthly cell phone bill.

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