



## Legislation Text

---

File #: 150068., Version: 4

---

### Girls Place Referral to the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs (B)

**This item involves a proposal from Girls Place, Inc., for consideration of a partnership with the City of Gainesville to transform the infield of the existing track in Kiwanis Challenge Park into a multi-purpose recreational field, and place the land adjacent to Greentree Park on the Land Acquisition List. \*\*STAFF AND GIRLS PLACE PRESENTATION 15 MINUTES\*\***

Girls Place, Inc., has been a part of the youth development community since 1985 and currently serves over 600 girls ages 5-18 each year through after school programs, summer camp, and athletics. In 2014, there were over 180 girls who participated in their volleyball leagues. Participation was limited due to available space. Girls Place, Inc., Board of Directors wrote a letter, dated February 26, 2015, to the Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs (PRCA) requesting consideration of a partnership with the City of Gainesville to transform the infield of the existing track in Kiwanis Challenge Park into a multi-purpose recreational field in an effort to promote youth development and community health. If approved, Girls Place, Inc., plans to expand their gymnasium, move the multi-purpose field to the track area at Kiwanis Challenge Park and share Greentree Park's softball facility for their programs. These two parks are contiguous. They are prepared to launch a capital campaign of approximately \$5 million, if approved. This partnership would benefit all parties involved; Girls Place, Inc., Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs, and the community at large by promoting youth development and community health. As part of the PRCA Master Plan, there is a desire to form partnerships with other agencies in providing parks, recreation, and cultural affairs programming and services for the community.

On Wednesday, April 15, 2015 representatives from Girls Place, Inc., presented their letter and the scope of their project to the Public Recreation and Parks Advisory Board. The Board unanimously supports their proposal. On July 2, 2015, the City Commission referred this matter to the Recreation, Cultural Affairs and Public Works (RCAPW) Committee for further discussion.

On September 10, 2015 the RCAPW Committee heard a brief report regarding the proposal from Girls Place, Inc. to transform the infield into a multi-purpose recreational field in an effort to promote youth development and community health. The Committee approved the concept of the proposal and asked for a public meeting to be conducted. If there was no opposition then this proposal was asked to go to the City Commission for approval. A public meeting was held, one on October 21<sup>st</sup> with 100% support. On October 24<sup>th</sup>, staff received a call from a concerned citizen which led to a second public meeting on December 8<sup>th</sup>. There was both positive support as well as concerns shared at the December meeting.

Simultaneously in an unrelated matter, the Ridgeview Baptist Church parcel, which is adjacent to Greentree Park, became available for sale. By acquiring this parcel the City would add an additional 1.88 acres of open greenspace to the southeast corner of Greentree Park. The Public Works Land Rights Coordinator worked with the owners and had the property appraised. Based on this, the church is willing to accept the appraised value.

On January 14, 2016, the RCAPW Committee voted to: 1) continue to support the concept of Girls Place, Inc.

paying for the construction of a multipurpose recreation field; 2) move the proposal forward to the City Commission for review with a draft Tree Mitigation Plan; 3) recommend adding the Ridgeview Church parcel to the land acquisition list; and 4) recommend purchasing the property.

On January 20, 2016, the Public Parks and Recreation Board met and discussed the proposal to partner with Girls Place, Inc. as well as to review the acquisition of the 1.88 acres adjacent to the park. The board approved the proposal and recommended the land be added to the land acquisition list and encouraged the City Commission to acquire the property.

On January 27, 2016, staff met with neighbors at the park to identify possible locations for tree replanting. Three dry retention areas have been identified as excellent sites, two within the park and one slightly south of the park on the corner of NW 19<sup>th</sup> Street and 31<sup>st</sup> Place.

There is no fiscal impact resulting from Committee discussion of the proposal from Girls Place, Inc. The Ridgeview Church property is appraised at \$154,000 and if approved for acquisition, funds are currently available from the Greenspace and Community Improvement fund.

The City Commission: 1) approve the proposal and enter into an Agreement with Girls Place, Inc. for the construction and use of a multipurpose field on the interior of the track at Kiwanis Challenge Park, while working to save as many trees on the interior as possible; 2) PRCA staff develop a tree mitigation plan with neighborhood input; 3) add the Ridgeview Baptist Church parcel to the land acquisition list; and 4) authorize the City Manager to sign the land purchase agreement, subject to approval by the City Attorney as to form and legality, and 5) provide any other necessary direction to staff.