

RAILROAD PARK – INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE THEMES

1. Sign #19 (West End Pool)

RECIRCULATION

2. Sign # 20 (Ecological Hillside)

HABITATION

3. Sign #21 (Lake / Stream)

COLLECTION

4. Sign #22 (Wetland)

FILTRATION

5. Sign # 23 (East City Overlook)

OBSERVATION

VERBIAGE

1. RECIRCULATION

What appears as the end of the water's journey throughout the site is actually a new beginning. Early drawings of Birmingham show this site was a low point in the city which collected water and supported wetland marshes. As the Railroad Reservation developed, this area was reshaped to support the city's industrial development. The new park design restores many aspects of the original hydrology. The water collected by the lake and stream is recirculated from this point to move again through the park in a regenerated cycle. **Sponsored by: Wachovia Foundation**

2. HABITATION

Rarely in the heart of a city do you find a hillside planted with native grasses and wildflowers. The ecological abundance of such a meadow provides food and shelter for a variety of urban wildlife. What you may not know is that native vegetation used here, such as *Panicum virgatum* - Switchgrass, is considered one of the emerging renewable resources being used for biomass energy production. **Sponsored by: Alabama Power Company**

3. COLLECTION

Waste not, want not. Stormwater throughout the park is captured and stored within the lake and stream system. This resource not only provides irrigation for the planted areas throughout the park, but also allows for various visual aesthetics such as the ponds, streams and rain curtain falling into the north lake. Unlike traditional methods, the park system allows the opportunity for rainfall to percolate back into the earth and recharge our water resources. **Sponsored by: Hugh Kaul Foundation**

4. FILTRATION

Long has nature adapted and created ways to cleanse and purify itself. Integration of these types of systems into man-made environments has proven very effective on removing pollutants from rainfall and runoff. By planting native vegetation, encouraging wildlife, and injecting movement into this stormwater collection system, the park creates a new urban stream system and renews the purification mechanisms of a natural environment. **Sponsored by: Coca-Cola Bottling Company United, Inc.**

5. OBSERVATION

From this unique vantage point comes an opportunity to observe the changes that have shaped our city and this site; as well as to experience directly one of the most influential factors in those changes, the railroad. The transition of this site from a once undisturbed environment to an active part of the industrial era and back to a green space in the core of the city is inspirational. The park itself is a tribute to the natural resources and the railroad that helped the city to grow and prosper, while encouraging innovative, forward-thinking for our future. **Sponsored by Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham**

1. ILLUMINATION

Explore your senses. As the sun goes down, the atmosphere of the park shifts. The rain curtain takes on new life as backlighting catches the sheet of water and transforms it into a gradual shifting wall of color. This dramatic display can be viewed throughout the park and beyond. Low energy use lighting was selected to illuminate the pathways for evening strolls and events. The subtle lighting throughout the park excites different senses, such as the sound of water or the aroma of rosemary and other plants. Here, the end of the day signals a change in pace and a chance for new experiences.

Sponsored by Stern Agee