

FORT KID COMMITTEE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FORT KID DEMOLITION IMMINENT *City of Knoxville provides 60 days notice of demolition of beloved community-built playground*

The Fort Kid Committee was disheartened to receive written notice from an attorney in the City of Knoxville Law Department that the 100% demolition of the Fort Kid playground and related improvements will commence on or around April 13, 2020. We are attempting to schedule a meeting with Mayor Kincannon to discuss this and – we hope – save Fort Kid.

Fort Kid is, and has always been, a community-built playground. The historic playground was designed using the public's ideas, built with community-raised funds, and erected over five days in 1991 by 2,500 volunteers. However, the City's planned demolition has been driven by a small number of public officials and private interests, without public input or community meetings. The City uses the term "renovation," but the only definite plans or funding are for demolition of Fort Kid and the retaining wall facing the museum. If a replacement playground is eventually built, it will be on a much smaller area, missing the shade of existing trees and will be constructed of "store-bought" artificial materials. It will not be Fort Kid as currently known and loved.

In light of the news of Fort Kid's impending destruction, the Fort Kid Committee will be celebrating the playground's 29th birthday (and possibly its *last* birthday) on Saturday April 4, 2020 between 12-2pm at Fort Kid. Additional details will be announced on the Fort Kid Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/FortKid/>).

Those that are upset by Fort Kid's demolition are encouraged to call their City councilperson or call Deputy to the Mayor David Brace at 865-215-2060.

ABOUT FORT KID

Fort Kid has been a Knoxville landmark since it was built in 1991. The volunteer construction effort was the biggest in our city's history, as some 2,500 people built the 12,000-square-foot playground in five days. Situated adjacent to the Knoxville Museum of Art and World's Fair Park and bordering the Fort Sanders neighborhood, Fort Kid is a popular spot for families. The Fort Kid committee fought Fort Kid's destruction in 2014, using substantial funds and organizing 175 volunteers to make repairs and add new equipment.

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