



CITY OF DOTHAN

Public Information Office

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: CYNTHIA GREEN, PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER
(334) 615-3117

DOTHAN NAMED PLAYFUL CITY USA

Dothan, Alabama has been awarded the recognition of "Playful City USA". This special recognition is given by the KaBoom organization, a national play advocacy group with mission to establish "...a great place to play within walking distance of every child in America". Dothan is one of only 31 cities in the USA who have been successful in receiving this prestigious honor as founding "playful cities".

Qualifying for this award was no easy task and required a collaborative effort of a Play Commission. Members of that Play Commission are as follows:

Keith Blackmon	Todd McDonald
Dana Cody	Kim Meeker
Chris Etheredge	Robin Rainer
David Hendrix	Anne Rumble
Libby Krietemeyer	Angie Sherrill

A citywide audit of all playgrounds had to be performed complete with pictures and detailed descriptions of play spaces. City budgets for recreation and plans for new playgrounds had to be submitted, and a "Play Action Plan" had to be developed. Of course of greatest importance was the quality and availability of "great places to play within walking distance" in Dothan. As a result, soon citizens will see colorful road signs on entrance and exit corridors to Dothan naming Dothan as a "Playful City USA".

Dothan expects to utilize the resources that KaBoom provides to conduct "Playground Builds" for new playgrounds in Dothan in the near future. Their plans help a community to organize for one day Community Build projects where the citizens help build their own playgrounds.

The KaBoom organization is supported by corporate partners like Home Depot. The City's liaison with KaBoom began when Mike West, City Manager, started a dialogue with KaBoom at a National League of Cities Meeting in 2006. He secured a scholarship tuition for a city staff member to attend KaBoom's "University of Play" seminar in New Orleans. Kim Meeker, Assistant Director of Dothan's Leisure Services department was tapped to attend this event. At this point the groundwork began to be laid for Playful City USA.

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City officials to include Dothan's Mayor Pat Thomas, Commissioner Larry Matthews, Commissioner Amos Newsome, City Manager Mike West, and Leisure Services Director Anne Rumble traveled to New Orleans this past weekend to accept this national designation from KaBoom during the 2007 National League of Cities Annual Conference.

Other founding playful cities include:

- Ankeny, Iowa
- Atlanta, Georgia
- Canton, Georgia
- Cedar City, Utah
- Chandler, Arizona
- Creedmoor, North Carolina
- East Cleveland, Ohio
- El Paso, Texas
- Gilbert, Arizona
- Greenbelt, Maryland
- Jamestown, New York
- Kenner, Louisiana
- Kerman, Louisiana
- Kingsburg, California
- Lake Charles, Louisiana
- Lake Worth, Florida
- Longview, Washington
- Mountain Grove, Missouri
- New Lenox, Illinois
- New Roads, Louisiana
- Norfolk, Virginia
- Phoenix, Arizona
- Portsmouth, Ohio
- San Francisco, California
- San Jose, California
- Shirley, Massachusetts
- Spartanburg, South Carolina
- Tucson, Arizona
- Wapello, Iowa
- Yuma, Arizona

For more information, call Dothan's Leisure Services at 334-615-3700.