Parks Need Your Vote.

As Atlanta grows, our access to quality parks will be at risk if proactive steps to protect greenspaces are not taken. This November, Atlantans will take to the polls to vote for the city's next mayor. Cast your vote for a leader who believes in the power of parks!

In July, Park Pride and several partner organizations hosted the Mayoral Forum on Greenspace where 10 mayoral candidates shared their views on the future of Atlanta’s parks, trees, trails, and watersheds.

Here are the most significant take-aways:

• Across the board, mayoral candidates recognize the need for more parks and increased funding for park maintenance and improvements.

• Ensuring that projects and developments related to greenspace are equitable, affordable and inclusive is a high priority for all candidates.

• All candidates understand the significance of our iconic tree canopy and are in favor of strengthening protections for trees.

• All support the purchase of more property for greenspace.

• Atlanta City Design project will likely persist under our next mayor.

What can you do?

You can view a complete video of the Mayoral Forum on Greenspace to hear directly from the candidates on these issues at bit.ly/greenmayorvideo.

Candidates also provided written responses to a series of greenspace policy questions. They are posted on Park Pride’s website: bit.ly/greenmayors.

We encourage you to read each response to the policy questions. Determine which candidate presents the strongest platform for greenspace and vote.

Then, join Park Pride in holding our next mayor accountable for the promises made to the greenspace community!

Sign up to receive park advocacy news in your inbox each month: bit.ly/parkpridenews.
Wear your plaid, wrangle your friends, and put your park passion to work at Park Pride’s fall-and-plaid-themed volunteer experience! Team up to raise funds for Park Pride and transform Historic Fourth Ward Park in a matter of hours. “Out-plaid” your friends, compete to win prizes, and celebrate the difference you make!

To Participate:
Visit parkpride.org/plaid ASAP to learn how to set up your personal fundraising page and invite folks to join your team.

To Donate:
Visit plaidpalooza.causevox.com to give to the cause or find an individual or team to support.

I’m Volunteering to Bring Great Parks to Life!

Mary Liz Harms,
Plaid Palooza Planning Committee

Atlanta has amazing parks all over the city that bring the community together in unique ways. Through my recent engagement with Park Pride, I’ve learned that great parks don’t come together overnight. It takes a community to plan, clean, fund, and build these greenspaces that we often take for granted.

I witnessed this effort first-hand when my dad and neighbors came together to build Little Nancy Creek Park—located in North Buckhead in what was an abandoned flood zone overgrown with privet—with the support of Park Pride and the City of Atlanta. A group of volunteers created a ‘Friends of the Park’ group and participated in the Park Visioning Program to establish a conceptual master plan for the park.

Several years, volunteer days, and Park Pride grants later, Little Nancy Creek Park is the center of the neighborhood with a playground, garden, gazebo, trails, picnic tables, bridges and more. There are several parks across Atlanta with similar stories. Vine City Park in Vine City, Springbrook Park in DeKalb County, and Jennie Drake Park in Collier Heights are just a few examples.

However, there is still so much work to be done in parks across the city, which is why I’m leading a fundraising and volunteer team for Plaid Palooza on November 4th.

At Plaid Palooza, I will work with 200 volunteers at Historic Fourth Ward Park on projects that will complete part of the park’s master plan. Meanwhile, the funds my team raises will benefit Park Pride programs that make it possible for neighbors to bring great parks to life in their communities.

Park Pride has shown me that when you gather a strong team of motivated Atlantans, big change can happen.

Will you join me to raise funds for Park Pride and make a transformative difference in parks across our city?

#GetYourPlaidOn

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#GetYourPlaidOn
ayanna williams: celebrating 10 years at Park Pride!

October marks an important milestone: 10 years since Ayanna Williams, the Director of Community Building, joined the Park Pride staff!

It would be impossible to overstate Ayanna’s accomplishments with Park Pride. With a degree in social work and considerable community organizing experience, Ayanna made an impact from her first day.

She expanded Park Pride’s “Friend Raising” efforts and created our signature Friends of the Park Program, which has grown to over 100 groups engaged in improving parks and strengthening communities across Atlanta and DeKalb. Working side-by-side with these Friends groups, she offers supportive guidance as they identify their priorities and helps them achieve their park goals.

Ayanna has a gift for working with people. Through the years, she has earned the respect and admiration of a broad range of communities, City and County officials, colleagues at peer organizations and above all the Park Pride team.

Congratulations, Ayanna, on an amazing 10 years!

Celebrate Ayanna’s contributions to the parks community with a gift to Park Pride in her honor on Georgia Gives Day, November 16! Visit bit.ly/parkprideggd.

Learn more about the Friends of the Park Program: parkpride.org/friends.

How Small Actions Make a BIG Difference in Parks!

You might think that making a significant impact to your park and community requires an equally large personal commitment of time and energy. However, in as little time as it takes to make a phone call or plan a fun outing for your friends and family, you can make your park a better place.

Here are three small actions you can take to benefit your park in a big way:

1. **Downed trees are a common issue in parks. They’re unsightly and can block walking or biking paths.** Hanging tree limbs can fall and cause serious injury. Please report downed trees, hanging limbs or other safety concerns to Parks Customer Service:
   - City of Atlanta – 404.546.6813
   - DeKalb County – 404.371.2711

2. **Enjoying a picnic or cookout in a park increases the positive activity taking place in your park and encourages more positive activities from your neighbors.** The more active your park, the less time and space is available for negative activity, giving an overall boost to park safety.

   **Want to take it a step further?** Partner with the Friends of the Park group to plan a Halloween parade or a potluck dinner and invite all in your community to take part in the fun! Contact Park Reservations to reserve space or pavilions at your park:
   - City of Atlanta – 404.546.6757
   - DeKalb County – 404.371.2902

3. **Often, addressing issues or initiating positive change in your park simply requires getting the attention of your community leadership.** Invite elected officials and neighborhood leaders to your park for a walk, hike or stroll. It can be a great opportunity to see the current park conditions and discuss priorities.

With contagious enthusiasm, Community Building summer intern, Angela Jiang, worked with Friends of the Park groups to document park maintenance issues and connect groups to needed resources. Pictured here with Ruby Mitchell of Friends of Lillian Cooper Shepherd Park.

Not sure if your neighborhood park has a Friends of the Park group, or are you interested in starting one? Contact Ayanna Williams, Director of Community Building: ayanna@parkpride.org or 404.546.7963.
Observe Signs of the Season in Atlanta's Parks

Teri Nye,
Park Pride’s Park Visioning Coordinator and resident botanist

Fall is a time generally associated with winding down. However, if you’ve been to any of the five fledgling pollinator gardens in Atlanta’s parks*, you might have noticed a surprising amount of gearing up. Pollinators and other animals know that fall is no time to lounge around. Winter is coming! Pantries must be stocked and bodies fortified—for a long journey southward for those that migrate, or for wintering in place for our resident species.

Educational signs created by Park Pride—like the one pictured above—offer insight into the lives and life-cycles of the pollinators that improve Atlanta’s biodiversity, ecological health and sustainability.

I encourage you to visit Atlanta’s new pollinator gardens this fall. When you do, take a moment to read these signs and observe all the activity around you. Birds are gathering nutritious seeds from dried flowerheads. Caterpillars are gobbling up every last leafy green, getting ready to pupate.

Look carefully for the chrysalides of butterflies and the cocoons of moths before doing any fall cleanup. These pupal stages can look deceptively like dead leaves! Bees are still busy gathering nectar and protein-rich pollen. Take note of the fall-flowering plants that are important sources of nectar and pollen late in the year—goldenrod and black-eyed-Susan are going strong and asters often flower until the first frost.

These little pockets of nature in our parks are amazing places for us to learn… and enjoy! My hope is that by better understanding the vital role of pollinators in our urban environment, you will be inspired to plant a pollinator garden in your own yard, or support Park Pride programs that help birds, bees and butterflies to thrive.

*Park Pride and the Atlanta Botanical Garden installed five new pollinator gardens in City of Atlanta parks thanks to a generous Building Communities Network Grant from The Home Depot Foundation. You’ll find the gardens at the Blue Heron Nature Preserve, Four Corners Park, Gilliam Park, Grove Park, and Welch Street Park. More at bit.ly/parkpollinators.
Parks: The Key to Atlantans’ Happiness

Andrew White,
Park Pride’s Director of Park Visioning

Parks are for everyone! It may sound like an obvious statement, but too often beautiful parks are seen as a perk of living in an affluent neighborhood.

Park Pride believes that all people, regardless of economic status, deserve to have access to the well-documented health and wellness benefits associated with living near a park or greenspace. What’s more, we know that great parks—parks that are active and loved by neighbors—make people happy and communities strong.

Support great parks across Atlanta for a happier and stronger city: parkpride.org/donate

However, The Trust for Public Land’s ParkScore indicates that just 66% of Atlantans live within a 10-minute walk of a greenspace (bit.ly/atlparkscore). Park Pride is working with the City, local communities, and partners to increase that percentage.

One historically “under-parked” community is the English Avenue neighborhood on Atlanta’s Westside. In fact, there were no parks at all in English Avenue until 2014 with the opening of Lindsay Street Park. Park Pride’s Park Visioning team worked with community members for months to create a plan for a park that could be embraced by those living in the area. With this plan as a guide, Lindsay Street Park was built thanks to the leadership of The Conservation Fund with support from Park Pride, the City of Atlanta, and 30 other organizations.

Because of Lindsay Street Park, local children now have a safe place to play. Neighbors enjoy the native plants and flowers that attract bees and butterflies to the rain garden. The community has a beautiful place to gather, enjoy each other’s company, meet new neighbors, and create a shared history.

Needless to say, the park has become a treasured community asset with a growing Friends of the Park group committed to making this park the heart of English Avenue.

Park Pride and our partners will continue to work with communities to build more parks that will make a real difference in improving people’s quality of life.

Boone Park West is our current park project on Atlanta’s Westside. Once complete, it will serve a dual function: providing another community greenspace while also alleviating stormwater flooding with green infrastructure integration. Our Visioning team completed the park’s conceptual master plan late in 2016. You can view the completed vision on our website: bit.ly/bpwwvision.

Park Pride believes that parks are the key to Atlantans’ happiness, and we are committed to bringing great parks to life across the city.

Because everyone deserves access to the happiness that parks provide.

Do you want to live in a happier city? Learn more about how Park Pride’s Park Visioning Program helps design parks for play, relaxation, and neighborhood cohesion: parkpride.org/visioning.
Parks and the Resilient City

“Resilience” is a word you may hear often, especially as it relates to how well cities—such as Houston, Miami, and even Atlanta—are prepared to manage stresses (such as the recent hurricanes, Harvey and Irma). Resilience is also tied strongly to the future of Atlanta’s growth and development.

City of Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed recently appointed a Chief Resilience Officer, Stephanie Stuckey, through a partnership with the 100 Resilient Cities pioneered by The Rockefeller Foundation. Chronic stresses and acute shocks vary from city to city, and the Office of Resilience is developing strategies to address the stresses and shocks specific to Atlanta such as drought/heat waves, flooding, economic inequality, aging and failing infrastructure, and more.

But where does “resilience” intersect with parks?

At Park Pride’s 17th Annual Parks & Greenspace Conference, Parks & the Resilient City, we will explore how a robust park system contributes to the overall resilience of a city. We’ll discuss ways to make our park systems more resilient in the face of growing population, economic uncertainty, and extreme weather events.

We invite you to save the conference date—March 26, 2018—and join the parks and greenspace community as we discuss these topics at length.

As the largest event of its kind in the Southeast, this conference offers educational and inspirational opportunities for everyone, whether you’re a community member, a park designer, a government official, or an urban planning student.

We hope to see you there,

Jeff Ellman
Co-Chair, Parks & Greenspace Conference Planning Committee

Carlos Perez,
Co-Chair, Parks & Greenspace Conference Planning Committee

present at the conference

Park Pride is accepting presentation and pre-conference event proposals for “Parks & the Resilient City.” Deadline to submit: November 6th at parkpride.org/conference

Topics of interest include:

Planning for Resilient Parks
How are we optimizing our existing network of parks and trails to withstand and recover from disruptive events or gradual changes? How can parks be designed to address the stresses of climate change? How do we ensure a funding stream for parks that withstands economic downturns and supports a city’s need for great parks as it grows?

Parks & Community Resilience
How can we strengthen parks’ role in creating resilient communities? As our city and region grow, how do we design welcoming parks as a part of inclusive communities?

Parks & the Resilience of the Built Environment
How can we maximize parks’ impact on reducing the urban heat island effect? In what ways can parks, greenspaces and trails help to alleviate the stresses of increased urban density? How can parks reduce the effects of flooding and drought through rain gardens, bioswales and other green infrastructure?

Parks and Ecological Resilience
How can parks support urban ecosystems that are stressed or compromised? How can we maximize the role trails play not just as transportation corridors, but also as natural corridors that support the ecology of our city?

Sponsorship opportunities are available. Contact Jane Zoellick, Development Manager, at jane@parkpride.org or 404.546.6855.
2017 Corporate Champions

Thank you, Champions, for supporting Park Pride’s operating needs, programs and events!

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thank you board members

The achievements of Park Pride would not be possible without the tremendous dedication of our Board of Directors. We’d like to extend our deepest thanks to our board members who will complete their board terms in January, 2018:

• Barbara Borczak, Treasurer
• Louisa D’Antignac
• Blake Lyons, Secretary
• Dorothy Yates Kirkley, past President
• Anita Strickler
• Ellen Wickersham

Thank you for your passion and service to Atlanta’s parks!
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**mission** | To engage communities to activate the power of parks.

**park views online** | bit.ly/parkpridenews

### park pride events & deadlines

#### October
- **7** Fall Volunteer Project
- **12** Park Pride’s Monthly Park Meeting

#### November
- **4** Plaid Palooza!
- **9** Park Pride’s Monthly Park Meeting

#### December
- **1** 2018 Park Visioning Program application deadline
- **2** Small Change Grant Workshop
- **14** Park Pride’s Monthly Park Meeting

#### January
- **11** Park Pride’s Monthly Park Meeting

Visit parkpride.org/events for more information.