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17TH ANNUAL PARKS & GREENSPACE CONFERENCE SPARKS IMPORTANT CONVERSATIONS IN LIGHT OF PROJECTED POPULATION GROWTH

Conference highlights parks' contributions to urban resilience

Atlanta, GA, March 6, 2018 – [Park Pride](#), the Atlanta-based nonprofit that engages communities to activate the power of parks, is hosting the [17th Annual Parks & Greenspace Conference](#) at the Atlanta Botanical Garden on Monday, March 26th. The event is expected to draw over 450 attendees from across the Southeast and will offer a diverse array of local and national perspectives on the relationship between parks and urban resilience. [100 Resilience Cities](#), pioneered by the Rockefeller Foundation, defines urban resilience as “the capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, businesses, and systems within a city to survive, adapt, and grow no matter what kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience.”

The topic of urban resilience and how it relates to parks is a timely conversation. In 2016, Atlanta joined the 100 Resilient Cities cohort. As people across the country relocate in increasing numbers to cities and urban centers like Atlanta face unprecedented growth, parks will be vital for the success of sustainable growth. Park Pride's conference theme, *Parks & the Resilient City*, will highlight how a robust park system can help an urban environment withstand the acute crises and chronic stressors that accompany a growing population.

Through a mix of tours and lectures, speakers will approach the theme through a variety of lenses, including: government policy, education and recreation, transit and connectivity, access to food and housing, building a community's capacity for change and inclusivity, ecological diversity, and more.

The conference's list of nationally recognized speakers is impressive and includes: Otis Rolley, North American Regional Director of [100 Resilient Cities](#); Ken Leinbach, Executive Director of the [Urban Ecology Center](#) in Milwaukee; Kate Orff, Founder of landscape architecture firm, [SCAPE](#), and recipient of [MacArthur “Genius Award.”](#)

Locally recognized speakers include: Ryan Gravel, founding principal at [Sixpitch](#) and urban planner / visionary behind the Atlanta BeltLine, and Nathaniel Smith, founder and Chief Equity Officer / CEO of the [Partnership for Southern Equity](#).

The 17th Annual Parks & Greenspace Conference is comprised of sessions that will appeal to audiences of diverse backgrounds. “It's a cross-section of folks involved in promoting the importance of parks,” stated a past conference attendee. “The Parks & Greenspace Conference is a place to learn from inspiring people who are passionate about parks and what they offer to quality of life!” stated another.

Sponsor support for The Parks and Greenspace Conference has been enthusiastic, illustrating a commitment to greenspace from the following. *Presenting Sponsor:* Cox Conserves/Cox Enterprises. *Community Engagement Sponsor:* Kaiser Permanente. *Community Building Sponsor:* The Home Depot Foundation. *Venue Sponsor:* Atlanta Botanical Garden. *Gold Sponsors:* The Conservation Fund, Ed Castro Landscape, Georgia Power, HR&A, The Trust for Public Land, City of Atlanta Department of Watershed Management. *Silver Sponsors:* American Society of Landscape Architects: Georgia Chapter, Astra, Atlanta BeltLine, Inc. / Atlanta BeltLine Partnership, DTJ Design, Dominica / Gametime, Georgia-Pacific, HDR, HGOR, Jones Day, Kompan, Miracle, MKSK, City of Atlanta Department of Parks and Recreation, Perez Planning + Design, LLC, Perkins + Will, Playground Creations, Play South, Playworld Preferred, Pond & Company, RVI, Stantec, Sylvatica, USA Shade. *Supporting Sponsors:* Atlanta Regional Commission, Atlanta Downtown Improvement District / Central Atlanta Progress, Batdorf & Bronson Coffee Roasters, City of Decatur, The Coca-Cola Company, KAIZEN Collaborative, Metropolitan Atlanta Urban Watershed Institute, NewFields, Smith Dalia, Turner Foundation.

Registration for the Parks & Greenspace Conference is open. Learn more and register at parkpride.org/conference.

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About Park Pride:

Park Pride is the Atlanta-based nonprofit that engages communities to activate the power of parks. Working with 90 local Friends of the Park groups, Park Pride provides leadership and services to help communities realize their dreams for neighborhood parks that support healthy people, strong neighborhoods, vibrant business districts, a robust economy and a healthy environment. Park Pride is active in greenspace advocacy and educating both civic leaders and the general public about the benefits of parks, and annually hosts the Parks and Greenspace Conference. Learn more about Park Pride at www.parkpride.org.