



Contact: Rachel Maher  
Tel. 404-546-7969  
Email: Rachel@parkpride.org  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **PARK PRIDE RETURNS TO BROOKHAVEN**

Local nonprofit to support community-led park improvement efforts

Atlanta – April 25, 2018 – [Park Pride](#), the Atlanta-based nonprofit that engages communities to activate the power of parks, announced that the City of Brookhaven has signed a new contract allowing the organization to resume park improvement activities that were placed on hold when Brookhaven incorporated in 2012.

Prior to Brookhaven’s incorporation, Park Pride had been a presence in the community and the community’s parks, providing support and resources to Friends of the Park groups and organizing volunteer park clean-ups. “Members of Brookhaven’s Friends of the Park groups are extremely dedicated to their parks,” recalls Ayanna Williams, Park Pride’s Director of Community Building and manager of the [Friends of the Park Program](#). “There was, and there still exists today, a deep understanding of and appreciation for the benefits that well cared for parks and greenspaces bring to communities.”

In the intervening six years since a formal relationship existed between the City of Brookhaven and Park Pride, Brookhaven’s passionate park community have not wavered in their commitment to advocating for great parks for their families and neighborhoods. Members of the Friends of the Park groups, using Park Pride’s advocacy initiatives as a model, banded together to form the [Parks & Recreation Coalition \(PARC\) of Brookhaven](#) to serve as a united voice for parks in their city. In addition to playing a coordination role between all the Friends groups, PARC also laid the ground work for Park Pride to develop a relationship with the City of Brookhaven.

“I am thrilled that Brookhaven has re-engaged with Park Pride. Civic engagement and community partnerships like this are key to making Brookhaven’s parks the best they can be,” said Brookhaven Councilmember Linley Jones, whose district includes two of Brookhaven’s most prolific parks, Murphey Candler Park and Blackburn Park.

In early April, a contractual agreement cemented an official relationship between Park Pride and the City of Brookhaven. As outlined in the contract, Park Pride will expand the footprint of its Friends of the Park Program, opening the door for Friends of Brookhaven parks to access a variety of tools and resources that will support their community-led park improvement efforts, including capacity-building workshops, the Park Play Library, and the [Fiscal Partners Program](#). The Fiscal Partners Program is an invaluable service offered by which Park Pride serves as a fiscal sponsor to receive grants and donations on behalf of Friends groups for the improvement of parks and greenspace.

“Becoming a Fiscal Partner with Park Pride is a vital service for Friends of the Park groups,” stated Williams, “allowing them to focus 100% on the most important tasks of making great parks, which include park programming, physical improvements, making connections with neighbors and businesses, and raising money for their park. Park Pride handles all the back-office administration associated with accepting donations and filing taxes, solving a real headache for folks who just want to volunteer their time to help their park.”

Park Pride will also bring the [Volunteer Program](#) to City of Brookhaven Parks, coordinating and leading large park projects for corporate, student, and civic groups that are eager to give back to their communities through enhancing

local greenspace. In 2017, Park Pride coordinated over 23,000 volunteer hours in parks and on trails in the City of Atlanta and DeKalb County with the help of over 7,200 volunteers.

"Having Park Pride return to our community is like a reunion of familiar friends," said Sue Binkert, Chair of PARC. "PARC's members and the City will benefit from having Park Pride's expertise to leverage community efforts, thereby advancing and enhancing the quality and function of Brookhaven's parks."

"We're thrilled to have been invited back to Brookhaven and have the opportunity to engage with and serve the parks and neighbors of this community," stated Michael Halicki, Park Pride's Executive Director. "Our team is ready to dive into this work, and we know that there is an equally eager constituent of greenspace enthusiasts prepared to make positive changes happen for parks. We're looking forward to the growth of this partnership with the City of Brookhaven and all the communities and neighbors of Brookhaven who love their parks."

Any community members who are interested in connecting with an existing Friends of the Park group or starting a new Friends of the Park group are encouraged to contact Ayanna Williams, Park Pride's Director of Community Building, at [ayanna@parkpride.org](mailto:ayanna@parkpride.org) or 404-546-7963.

**About Park Pride:**

Park Pride is the Atlanta-based nonprofit that engages communities to activate the power of parks. Working with over 100 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 public about the benefits of parks, and annually hosts the Parks and Greenspace Conference. Learn more about Park Pride at <http://parkpride.org/>.

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