



strategic plan

2019 - 2021

Adopted by the Board of Directors on February 8, 2019.

for the greener good

Summary

Two-and-a-half years into the last strategic plan, Park Pride had accomplished the major goals of the plan. The organization had grown significantly and needed a new strategy for the next 3-5 years. The plan below was developed in 2018-2019 by board and staff, guided by a strategic planning committee, and facilitated by Pam Sugarman of Sugarman Consulting. The process included:

- Defined strategic questions/hypotheses (May-Jun)
- Conducted internal program, financial and competitive/collaborative review (Jun-Aug)
- Decided core strategy at a Strategic Planning Committee retreat with input from additional board and staff and held at Trees Atlanta (Aug)
- Conducted three focus groups, one each with program participants from the Friends of Park, Visioning and Volunteer Programs (Aug)
- Discussed core strategy and strategic plans at a Board/Staff strategic planning retreat held at the MLK Natatorium (Sep)
- Developed written goals, objectives, tactics, activities drafted by staff with input from small teams of board members (Oct-Dec)
- Revisited philosophy, vision, mission, elevator speech, values to ensure fit with current direction; finalized plans; held discussion and Board vote (Jan)

The significant shifts and highlights of this plan include:

- Local neighborhood parks are as important as destination parks to a city. Although there are many other parks and greenspace organizations, Park Pride is the only one locally and one of just a handful nationally that is focused on engaging communities to improve the quality of their local parks. Through this strategic planning, Park Pride clarified the importance of this work and the organization's unique position in the field.
- The demand for Park Pride's services currently outstrips its capacity to deliver them. This new plan includes leveraging the experience, relationships, and resources Park Pride has developed over 30 years to update the model of delivering services to achieve greater impact in more parks. In addition, the organization will develop a new approach to measurement focused on the impact in each community and in each park rather than on the impact of each program.
- Park Pride envisions that the result of the work is a stronger Atlanta. In this strategic plan, Park Pride added the value "equitable" and will develop and implement a framework to ensure services are delivered across diverse geographic, racial, social and economic groups. These additions are to emphasize and ensure that quality parks are accessible to all Atlantans.
- Park Pride has credibility because of its work with communities in parks and is positioned to educate and engage others to care about and actively support parks. This plan builds on that strategy of thought leadership, information sharing, and advocacy.

- Park Pride’s core work focuses on achieving better parks. Currently, 1/3 of Atlantans don’t have access to a park within a half-mile of their home. At the same time, Atlanta is in a rapid growth phase, and greenspace is threatened. Park Pride will “capitalize on opportunities to preserve land and create new greenspaces;” in other words, where Park Pride can leverage its leadership role and partner with others to achieve more parks, it will. One such opportunity is to work with a coalition to open APS playlots as public greenspace, another is to work with Atlanta’s Departments of Parks and Recreation and of Planning and Development as partners in supporting new park creation and expansion.
- After doubling the organization’s budget over the last six years, Park Pride’s attention will shift to consolidating its growth. HR, Board Development, Finance, Development, Marketing, Operations, Technology and Facility objectives are critical parts of this plan. This organizational infrastructure is needed to achieve the strategies listed above.
- The last strategic plan called on Park Pride to explore geographic expansion where it made sense programmatically and financially. Since that plan was adopted, Park Pride has expanded to Tucker and Brookhaven, new cities created in DeKalb County where Park Pride delivered service previously. Expanding to new jurisdictions in Fulton or DeKalb County may occur again over the next three-to-five years; however, during that period Park Pride is not looking to expand outside of Fulton and DeKalb. Park Pride will revisit the question of geography in the future, after the updated model for delivering services has been developed and implemented successfully.

At a meeting on January 13, 2019, the Strategic Planning Committee recommended the concepts in the plan found on pages 3-4 below. Park Pride Board and staff discussed this draft at the Annual Board/Staff Retreat on Monday, January 28 at the Atlanta Botanical Garden. The plan was approved by a final vote taken electronically between February 1-8, 2019.

In addition to the high-level strategic plan found below, there is a longer, 25-page version that includes the tactics and activities the staff will pursue to implement the high-level plan. That version is available upon request.

Philosophy, Mission, and Vision

Philosophy	Park Pride believes in the power of parks. Great parks have the power to increase our quality of life and strengthen the fabric of our cities. They are welcoming places for members of the community to gather, play, relax, and connect with nature, encouraging mental and physical health. Great parks promote community engagement, safety, and revitalization. They generate economic benefits and enhance the ecological health of our neighborhoods. Great parks make our people happy, our communities strong, and our cities resilient.
Mission	Park Pride engages communities to activate the power of parks.
Vision	Park Pride envisions Atlanta strengthened by and united through great parks, trails and greenspaces that meet the needs and reflect the unique character of all communities.

Tagline

Tagline	For the Greener Good
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Values

Community-Based	Place-based experience and the wisdom of people who live, work and play here are at the center of our efforts. It grounds the work we do.
Equitable	Everyone deserves access to great parks, trails, and greenspace. We distribute our efforts and resources because all communities should be able to enjoy the benefits of great local parks and a great park system.
Inclusive	People of all backgrounds have important voices that should be heard. Efforts to engage communities in their parks are open to all. We demonstrate respect through active listening and an openness to other perspectives.
Collaborative	Government, nonprofit, business, philanthropic and community partners are central to our success and help us achieve a greater impact.
Trustworthy	We value the resources entrusted to us and demonstrate the highest ethical and professional standards.

Overview

Priorities/Outcomes/Goals		Objectives	
Great Parks	Park Pride deepens and expands engagement with communities so more neighborhoods have great parks	FoP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Strengthen and add structure to FOP network so that groups can form mutually beneficial relationships b. Formalize a framework and structure for FOP education that builds capacity and increases access to FOP resources c. Develop FOP leaders to improve effectiveness of program encourage community engagement and ensure all voices in community are heard
		Vis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. Maintain and strengthen core visioning services provided through service agreements with government entities e. Accelerate successful implementation of completed vision plans
		Vol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> f. Find efficiencies in volunteer program management to increase staff capacity g. Volunteer and Development Departments collaborate to improve volunteer-to-donor “pipeline” h. Empower FOP groups to engage and host more volunteers in their parks
		Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Increase scope of grantmaking program while focusing on equitable distribution of funds; continue investments in broad portfolio of medium-size projects plus make 1-2 large investments (\$250-\$500k)
		All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> j. Develop and implement a measurement system that captures Park Pride’s outputs, outcomes and impact k. Develop and implement systematic approach to achieve our goal of serving diverse geographic, racial, social, & economic groups
Engaged Community	Build a larger, more effective movement of people who actively support parks		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Educate funders, elected officials, business leaders, community champions, community members that great cities have great destination parks and great local parks b. Engage and also challenge partners in the State of Georgia, Atlanta region, City of Atlanta, DeKalb County, and smaller cities as a partner to achieve better quality parks that are well-maintained, safe, and meet the community’s needs c. Grow and increase impact of the base of parks champions, those who care about issues affected by parks, and a broad coalition of like-minded advocates (parks, trees, trails and watersheds) d. Be a repository and role model for next and best practices in our services
More Parks	Capitalize on opportunities to preserve land and create new greenspaces		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Secure dedicated funding from public and private sources for acquisition of parks, greenspaces and natural areas b. Collaborate with partners to secure funding and provide access to APS playlots and other available greenspaces c. Play role when best suited as park builder -- finish Kathryn Johnston Park, Mattie Freeland Park, and others as identified
Strong Park Pride	Build organizational infrastructure so Park Pride can achieve its vision, mission and goals		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Support the Park Pride staff through: effective management of human resources, empowerment of staff to optimize their potential, and a work environment that fosters diversity, equity and inclusion, and values individual and organizational effectiveness b. Optimize Park Pride’s Board of Directors through recruitment, engagement, training, & succession planning c. Maintain and strengthen financial policies, tools and resources to ensure excellent fiscal management and oversight d. Execute plans to fund the financial needs of the organization, ensuring future growth, stability, and long-term financial sustainability e. Invest in facilities and technology needed to achieve organizational goals f. Communicate to advance objectives and increase organizational awareness