

Atlantans enjoy the new and welcoming ADA-accessible gathering space at the entrance of Cascade Springs Nature Preserve, funded in part by a \$100,000 Park Pride grant.

Photo credit: David Lloyd Davis



park views

PARKPRIDE.ORG | SUMMER 2023

reaching new heights in pursuit of our mission

Parks for All, Y'All

Park Pride launched its first-ever comprehensive campaign, *Parks for All*, in 2022, and it has been a game changer—for Atlanta's communities, for Atlanta's parks, and for Park Pride.

As we work to implement the campaign's vision, we're increasing investments in parks, making funding for park improvements more accessible, and building community capacity to steward, activate, and improve local parks. We are expanding our impact and making great parks a reality in neighborhoods across Atlanta. Since the campaign's start, we've:

- **awarded our largest grant cycle ever**—\$2.5M to 25 communities in January 2023—with 67% going toward park improvements in low-income communities (see p. 2);
- **launched a new leadership development program**, the Park Stewardship Academy, which will guide 12 community leaders to become high-impact agents of change in their communities through a series of trainings and hands-on learning experiences (see p. 4);
- **successfully advocated for the greatest increase in park maintenance funding** in decades (see p. 6).

Parks for All is centered on equity and ensuring that every community can access the benefits of great parks. We've made our programs more accessible through outreach and communication, resulting in several new community groups joining our Friends of the Park program and record numbers of people interested in making positive change in their parks.

You'll read about these achievements in the pages that follow. But this work is only possible because of supporters like you.

Parks for All is just the beginning of Atlanta's greenspace transformation! The campaign needs your support—gifts large and small will help create an Atlanta where every neighborhood has access to a quality park. We hope you will join us as we move from intention to action in making this vision a reality!



Sincerely,

Kristy Rachal
Board Chair, Park Pride

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To learn more about the *Parks for All* campaign and to contribute, visit: parkpride.org/parksforall.



Above: Community members, Park Pride, DeKalb County Commissioners, and DeKalb's Recreation, Parks & Cultural Affairs staff cut the ribbon on a new playground at DeKalb Memorial Park, funded in part by a Park Pride grant.

parks for all: scaling investments in parks

Doubling Impact for Communities

From the smallest beautification project to a full-scale park overhaul, Park Pride's Grantmaking Program awards funding to Friends of the Park groups for community-supported park improvements. Through *Parks for All*, we plan to grow our annual awards to \$2.8 million by 2024, **doubling investments** in local parks and **doubling impact** for Atlantans across the city!

In fact, we've already put campaign funds to work. The projects highlighted below are among the first to be completed through the increased investment of *Parks for All* with support from grants awarded in 2022. Additionally, in January we announced our largest slate of grants ever (opposite page), with \$2.5 million awarded to 25 communities and 67% of funds allocated to parks in low-income neighborhoods.

Playground at DeKalb Memorial Park

A new playground at DeKalb Memorial Park—funded in part through a \$50,000 grant from Park Pride—has proven to be an absolute kid magnet! This improvement was a long-time coming; for years, families in the community longed for a safe place for their kids to play in the park. In fact, an updated playground was identified by the neighborhood as a priority project through the Park Visioning process completed with Park Pride in 2019.

The Friends of DeKalb Memorial Park and neighbors love the new playground, but they're not done yet. Fundraising is now underway to add swings, a climbing dome, and play cubes to the delight of kids and parents alike!



Bridge at Lenox-Wildwood Park

Today, when you visit Lenox-Wildwood Park in Atlanta's Morningside neighborhood, you'll find a lovely trail that invites visitors to stroll, exercise, and enjoy time outside.

That's thanks to a new bridge, funded in part by a \$30,000 grant from Park Pride! The installation of the bridge has improved connectivity through the park, seamlessly linking two sections separated by a small ravine.

Community members now enjoy a well-integrated recreational area, with improved access to tennis courts and the nearby Sunken Garden Park.



2023 Grant Awards

A plaza and tiered seating area will be added to **54 Columns Art & Sculpture Park**, creating space for the community to gather and view live performances.

New playground equipment, a multipurpose court, and a shade structure over the basketball court will increase the recreational offerings at **A.D. Williams Park**.

Benches and picnic tables will enhance the playground area at **Ardmore Park**.

Bessie Branham Park will benefit from improvements to the entrance at Kirkwood Rd with new pathways and landscaping; the playground will also be resurfaced.

Native plants and soil health improvements will restore the habitat near the **Confluence Trail Bridge**.

Dean Rusk Park will benefit from a variety of park amenities, including benches, trash cans, picnic tables, fitness equipment, and a grill.

A new entrance will be created at **English Park**, in addition to a walking trail around the existing multipurpose field.

Several new amenities will enhance visitors' enjoyment of **Flat Shoals Park**, including a shade structure over a picnic area and tennis court bleachers.

The Loomis Street entrance at **Grant Park** will be refreshed with a plaza and seating for picnics and gatherings.

A multi-user "friendship swing" will be installed at **Iverson Park**, and erosion will be addressed by extending an existing retention wall to help keep soil in place.

Knight Park will increase its offerings with a reading nook.

A "History Trail" will be created at **Maddox Park**, with fitness equipment lining a path and signage that highlights local leaders.

Mozley Park will benefit from additional seating throughout the park, including bleachers at the open field and benches near the playground and dog park.

Park visitors will soon be able to enjoy fitness equipment at **N.H. Scott Park**.



This beautiful pavilion at Dean Rusk Park in Atlanta was built with funding through Park Pride's Grantmaking Program.

Oakland Cemetery's new visitor center will receive fresh landscaping.

Pickleball courts, a volleyball court, and improvements to an Olympic monument are in store for **Phoenix Park II**.

A new mural on the exterior of the **Pittman Park** recreation center will highlight local leaders.

Pathways and a pavilion will be installed at **Riverwalk Park**, the first City of Atlanta park to connect residents to the Chattahoochee River.

Shade structures will be installed at **Rodney Cook Sr. Park** over the fitness equipment and at the playground.

A gazebo at **Shoal Creek I** will provide shade to the portable restroom.

Tanyard Creek Park will benefit from a new playground, benches, and picnic tables.

A "kid zone" with nature play elements, signage for learning about the environment and nature, and a garden with fruit trees are all in store for the **Atlanta Urban Food Forest at Browns Mill Park**.

A pavilion, pathways, educational signage, and seating are in the works for The Hill at **Waterworks Park**.

A beautiful mural will be painted on the surface of the basketball court at **West End Park**.

Visitors to **Whetstone Greenspace** will enjoy beautiful views of the wetlands from a new trail.



"The shade structures funded by our grant will have a great impact on visitors' health, safety, and enjoyment of the park."

~ Carrie Salvary, Chair of the Alliance for the Activation of Cook Park



Learn more about Park Pride's Grantmaking Program: parkpride.org/grants.

parks for all: strengthening park community groups

Park Stewardship Academy: Empowering Local Leaders

The Park Stewardship Academy—or PSA, for short—is Park Pride's newest program for Friends of the Park groups. Growing out of the *Parks for All* campaign, PSA will equip neighborhood residents to become high-impact park advocates.

PSA is unique among Park Pride's programs. Whereas the Park Visioning and Grantmaking Programs help Friends of the Park groups make *physical* improvements in parks, PSA empowers participants with resources, education, and training to plan exciting events and volunteer projects that engage neighbors in positive activity.

In short, the Park Stewardship Academy adds tools to the toolbox to create a well-loved greenspace that is vibrant, safe, and the heart of community!

Announcing the First Class of PSA!

After a competitive application process, we're proud to announce the first class of the Park Stewardship Academy! These community leaders hail from a cross-section of Atlanta neighborhoods and were selected for their outstanding commitment to community, passion for activating local parks, and belief that every Atlantan deserves access to a *great* park. Join us in wishing these local leaders well on their park stewardship journey!

City of Atlanta

- Taryn Arbeiter - Chosewood Park
- Chinelo Arinze- Cascade Springs Nature Preserve
- Micah Coleman - Lenox-Wildwood Park
- Coreen Dent - Empire & Harper Parks
- Ursula Kendall - Deerwood Park
- Mary Kilgo - Tanyard Creek Park
- Joanna Powell - Lillian Cooper Shepherd Park
- Carrie Salvary - Rodney Cook, Sr. Park
- Donna Stephens - English Park

DeKalb County

- Luis Indacochea - Glen Emerald Park
- Barbara Mobley - Shoal Creek Park III
- Gwendolyn Stegall - Hairston Park

"I hope to...create an environment where everyone is invited to participate in and love the park."

~ Ursula Kendall,
Friends of Deerwood Park

Learn more about the Park Stewardship Academy:
parkpride.org/psa.

Eli Dickerson and PSA participant, Ursula Kendall, at Deerwood Park.

Meet Park Pride's Dir. of Education



Eli Dickerson
Director of Education

Hello Atlanta park community!

As a new member of the Park Pride staff, I can't wait to get to know you and support your goals for an engaged community with your neighborhood park at the core.

I've been active in Atlanta's environmental movement for 18 years. From afar, I've admired Park Pride's dedication to elevating community voices in the design and stewardship of parks. Now, I'm thrilled to join the team as the Director of Education!

This is a new position, responsible for leading a critical component of the *Parks for All* campaign to strengthen community groups and create new park advocates through the Park Stewardship Academy.

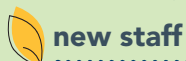
Additionally, I look forward to creating learning opportunities for everyone—Friends of the Park group members, supporters, funders, and elected officials—that elevate our understanding of the importance of parks and increase the community's ability to lead park improvement efforts.

I can't wait to contribute to Park Pride's other educational staples, as well, including the Parks & Greenspace Conference, Roundtable Series, and workshops for Friends of the Park groups. I also plan to get outside the classroom and create opportunities for us to meet and learn outdoors in our parks.

Thank you for welcoming me to the team. I hope to meet you in a park soon!



Park Pride is Growing!



new staff

Join us in welcoming these new faces to the Park Pride team!



Ornela Gjoni
Park Visioning
Summer Intern



Caleb Harris
Community Services
Summer Intern



Vanessa Miot
Community Services
Associate



Joanna Patterson
Volunteer Associate



Nadya Pramaputri
Park Visioning
Summer Intern



Shannon Roudebush
Sponsorship & Annual
Fund Manager



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Our heartfelt thanks to board members who've recently completed their terms—we appreciate your years of service, dedication to Atlanta's communities, and passion for Park Pride's mission.



Luis Avila
Cox Enterprises



David Brabham
Georgia-Pacific



Lee Harrop
Westside Future Fund



Tanya Hairston-Whitner
The Home Depot

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Join this list of supporters! Reach out to Ariane Delong,
Development Director: ariane@parkpride.org or (404) 301-8871.



volunteer program

Digging In for the Greener Good

Local businesses and corporations support Park Pride's mission year-round, making a big impact on Atlanta's local parks. Corporate groups can tap into team building opportunities such as custom, private volunteer projects to address urgent park needs while supercharging employee engagement.

Many corporate partners have recently dug in for the greener good across the city! Shoutout to a long-time supporter, Georgia Power, and a new supporter, The Clorox Company, for giving back to local communities and parks.

Georgia Power at McDaniel Branch Wetlands



Georgia Power volunteers dove right in, removing trash from the wetlands.



Volunteering with Park Pride is a great way to enjoy fresh air and time outside!

The Clorox Company at Reverend James Orange Park



Newly planted garden beds at the park's entrance create a warm welcome for all visitors.



The dugout received a makeover with a fresh coat of paint on the benches.

parks for all Building Capacity



Michael Halicki
Park Pride's Executive Director

Throughout this newsletter, you've read stories about the *Parks for All* campaign and the growing impact of our work across the city. The implementation of this growth, however, requires the concurrent growth of Park Pride to deliver more positive outcomes.

That is why a portion of the *Parks for All* campaign is focused on making significant investments into our team. We're supporting internal bench strength, adding new positions to provide individualized coaching to Friends groups, and preparing tomorrow's leaders through internships.

We are building Park Pride's capacity to meet the moment, and the effort is paying off! For example, we rallied advocates to speak up for a higher standard for our parks. As a result, Atlanta City Council recently adopted legislation dedicating close to \$11 million more dollars, annually, to the maintenance of our parks, trails and recreation centers. A huge win!

I anticipate many more such wins as we continue to grow our team, develop our expertise, and invest in relationships with communities, partners, and government officials to make *Parks for All* a reality.

It's an exciting moment for Park Pride and for the parks and communities we support—thank you for being part of our success!

Sign up to receive the Park Views e-newsletter: parkpride.org/sign-up-form/.



Want to plan a custom volunteer day for your corporate group?
Contact Shannon Roudebush to coordinate: shannon@parkpride.org.



A Vision for Atlanta's Parks

Numerous studies show that an excellent park system improves quality of life by promoting health, reducing crime, restoring the environment, maintaining habitats, and strengthening social ties. Park Pride's visioning process plays a critical role in achieving this vision for every neighborhood in Atlanta.

When communities come together to reimagine their neighborhood park (or to dream big for the future of an undeveloped one), they establish the building blocks of a thriving and well-loved public space with the potential to become the heart of the community.

Park visioning is a community-led process, guided by Park Pride's landscape architects, that builds consensus amongst neighbors for what they want to see in their greenspace, whether that be walking trails, a pavilion, pollinator garden, dog park, or exercise stations. The conceptual park plan that results from extensive and inclusive community engagement is, therefore, *truly* a reflection of the community.



Learn more about Park Visioning:
parkpride.org/visioning.

Park Visioning in 2023

Park Visioning is underway with the neighborhoods of Peoplestown and Southeast Atlanta to create plans for Four Corners Park and Falling Water Park, respectively. Communities and parks that participate in this program are selected through a competitive application process; both Atlanta parks were selected because of their potential to play a multifunctional role in their neighborhood.

The selection process for parks to receive visioning services in unincorporated DeKalb County has begun. Stay tuned for the announcement in the coming weeks!



Teri Nye, Sr. Park Designer, and Andrew White, Dir. of Park Visioning, facilitate a community meeting for the Falling Water Park visioning process.

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for the greener good

Mission

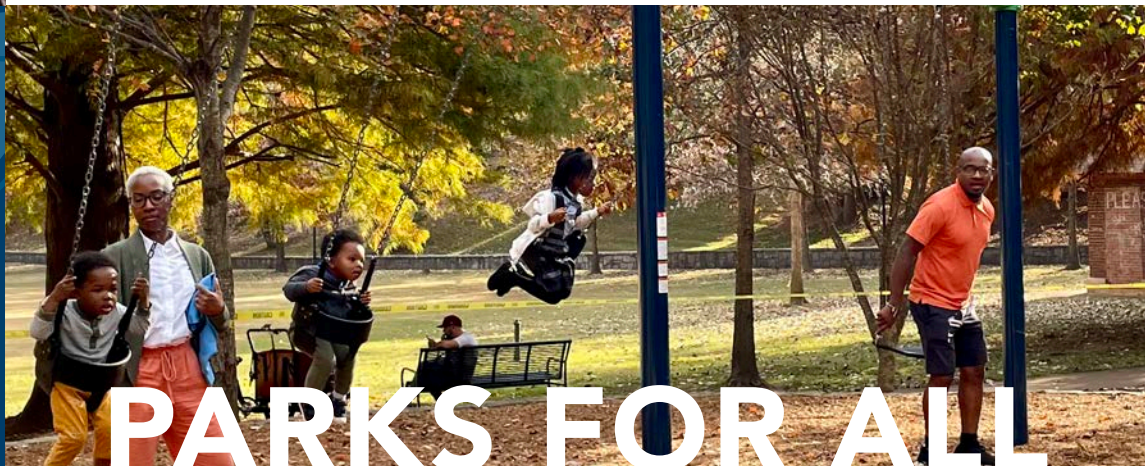
To engage communities to activate the power of parks.

Park Views Online

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Parks bring health, social, and environmental benefits that revitalize and sustain communities. Parks are vital, yet there are many Atlantans who don't have a park in their neighborhood and many more who don't have a quality park near home.

Parks for All, Park Pride's first-ever comprehensive campaign, is working to change this by: increasing investments in parks, training future park leaders, and investing in our proven programs and services, such as park design, advocacy and volunteer coordination.

With your contribution, you'll help make *Parks for All* a reality.

Make your gift today: parkpride.org/parksforall

