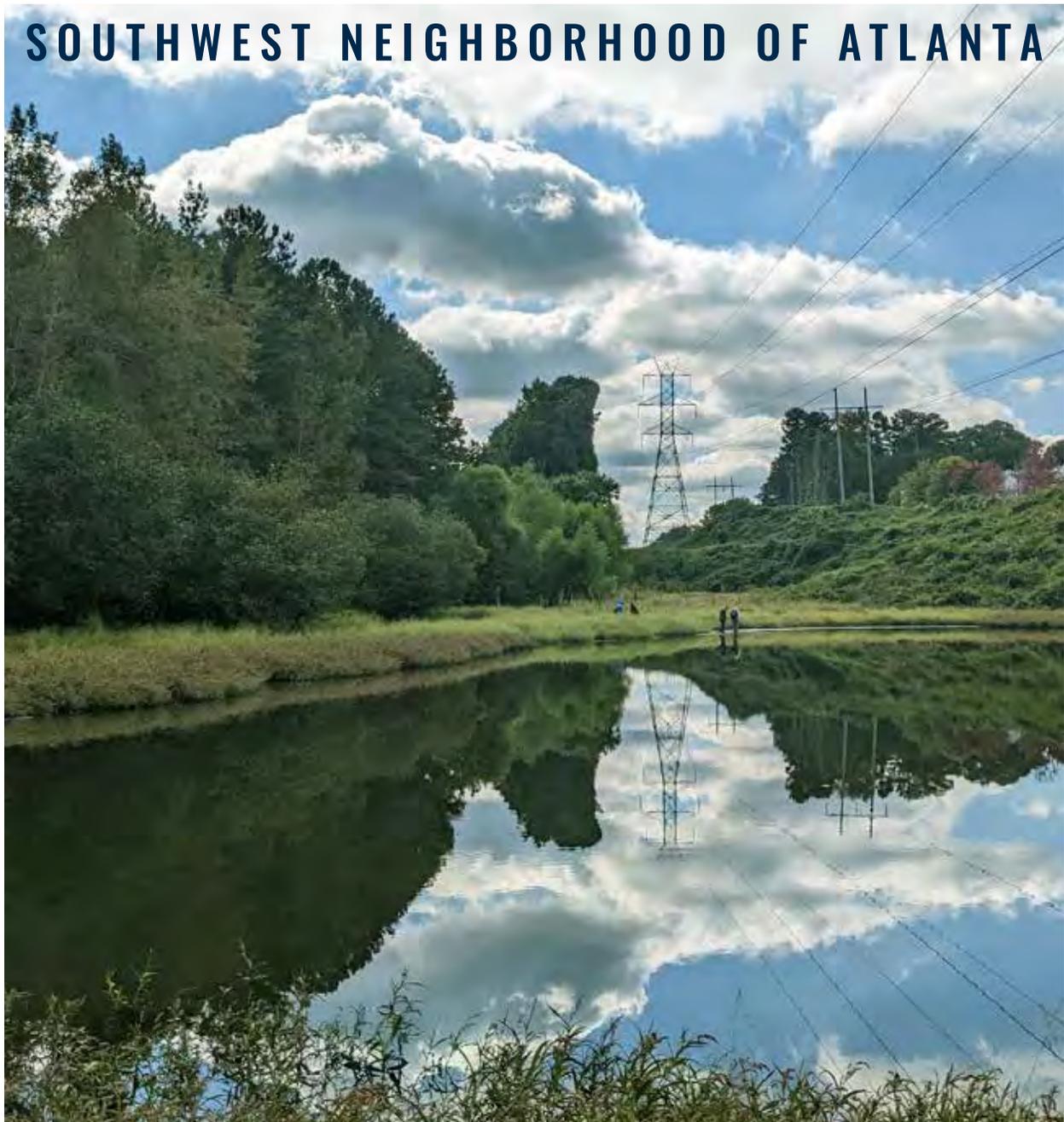




2023 Vision Plan for  
**Falling Water Park**

**SOUTHWEST NEIGHBORHOOD OF ATLANTA**



**FACILITATED AND PREPARED BY PARK PRIDE**



*Kathryn Kolb led community members and Park Pride on a nature walk through the park*

# Acknowledgements

This inclusive process to raise awareness and support for the development of Falling Water Park would not have happened without the leadership of **Ms. Renette L. Scott**. Ms. Scott is a practiced community leader and true parliamentarian who strove to make sure that all voices were heard and acknowledged throughout the process, whether they agreed with opening the park or not. She was joined on the committee by representatives from neighborhoods all around the park.

**Mr. Joshua Gray, Mr. Leonard Roberts, and Mr. Glenn Wooten** made sure residents of Cascade Parc were kept up-to-date on the visioning process and provided the steering committee meeting space each month at the Cascade Parc Clubhouse.

**Ms. Deborah Hall, Mr. Kevin Eccles, and Ms. April Jackson-Banks** played a similar role for residents north of the park, particularly along Lovell Drive where privacy and security concerns were particularly present for those who border the park. Ms. Hall also hosted the final steering committee meeting in her home, where she demonstrated her superb and gracious hosting skills. The snacks and drinks were delicious.

**Ms. Lavern Nkanang-Taylor, Mr. Charles Rogers, and Mr. Dexter Clemens** represented community voices south of the park and distributed a huge number of surveys throughout those communities. Mr. Rogers, a resident of over 40 years, also shared his expert knowledge of how the community had developed over time and brought the perspective of an enthusiastic runner and fitness devotee.

**Ms. Chinelo Arinze** leveraged her leadership roles and experience in the community, including at Cascade Springs Nature Conservancy, to bring an analytical lens to deliberations and outreach.

**Ms. Kathryn Kolb** gave generously of her time and expertise by leading the steering committee and Park Pride on a hike of the site early in the process, and **Ms. Loretta Green** proved a fearless participant as she blazed through the woods with a vigor that illustrated her commitment to lifelong fitness. Thanks to **Principal Joseph Salley** at Kimberly Elementary School and **Dr. Rodney Ray** at Therrell High School for allowing us to post survey collection boxes on their campuses and for hosting two of the public meetings on school property. **Ms. Sarah Talluri**, instructor at Therrell High also involved her students in the process.

**Atlanta City Councilmember Marci Overstreet** supported the process by attending public meetings and sending her representative, **Mr. David Lloyd Davis** to attend steering committee meetings. Mr. Davis was an energetic and creative member of the committee, who asked great questions and made sure information on visioning made it into CM Overstreet's newsletters. **Ms. Tara Bucker**, Urban Planner at the City of Atlanta Department of Parks and Recreation also attended steering committee meetings and has submitted several grant applications to support opening the park.

Lastly, we would be remiss if we did not acknowledge the efforts of **Atlanta City Councilmember Jim Maddox** whose vision for this park led to the acquisition of this property nearly 20 years ago, along with **Mr. Barney Sims**, community leader and NPU-R Chair, who was also instrumental in the purchase. We also are grateful for the deft real estate acumen of **Ms. Ellen Wickersham**, whose tireless efforts to acquire public land greatly expanded park inventory during the early part of the 21st century.

We thank you from the bottom of our hearts, Andrew White, Director of Park Visioning  
Teri Nye, Senior Designer, Park Visioning



The forest is filled with native ferns such as this *Asplenium platyneuron*, or ebony spleenwort.

# Contents

Acknowledgements	ii
Executive Summary	3
Context & History	7
Existing Conditions	15
Community Engagement	21
Preliminary Plans	32
Vision Plans	insert and 35
Projects & Budget	43
Appendices	53



*The park provides abundant wetland habitat for native plants and animals.*

In summer of 2022, the Friends of Falling Water Park applied for and were awarded a Park Pride Visioning grant to create a vision plan for a forested property in the Southwest Neighborhood, classified as a park-in-holding. A visioning process began in October 2022 and completed in May 2023. A Steering Committee of ten community members led the effort, facilitated by Park Pride. The process followed the key steps below.

## Executive Summary

### 1 Ask the Community

The Visioning team studied the existing conditions of the park and its context via a **site analysis**, a review of historical records, and informal interviews.

An online **survey** was used to document the community's needs and desires for the park. Paper versions of the survey were distributed door-to-door to households within a 10-minute walk of the park.

To provide a central location for information, community input, announcements, survey results, and the public review of concepts and plans, Park Pride designed a **website** to support the park visioning process.

### 2 Establish Guiding Principles

During the first public meeting participants engaged in live electronic polling questions to establish their primary concerns and goals for the park. Based on this feedback plus survey data, the Steering Committee established **Guiding Principles** for the parks' future (see page 5).

**Park Name:** Falling Water Park

**Acreage:** 26.3

**Year acquired:** 2004

**Address:** 0 Panther Trail SW

**Parcel number:** 14 0231 LL0342

**Property Owner:** City of Atlanta,  
Department of Parks & Recreation

**Councilmember:** Marci Overstreet  
(District 11)

NPU R

### 3 Review and Feedback of Draft Concepts

Three **public meetings** were held. The first, on February 16, 2023, was held virtually. The second meeting, on April 13, 2023, and the third on May 20, 2023, were held in-person at Therrell High School, adjacent to the park. The first meeting established the Guiding Principles. The second meeting offered two preliminary design concepts for review and comment. Polling questions during the meetings and post-meeting online surveys were used to encourage participation and feedback.

After each meeting, ideas and/or plans were displayed on the visioning website for a two-week **public comment** period.

### 4 Agree on a Final Vision Plan

Based on survey feedback, which illustrated primary community needs, and poll results, the preferred elements from each preliminary concept were incorporated into a **final plan**. This plan was then cross-checked with the Guiding Principles and reviewed by the community via a third public meeting and online survey. This document is available online at <https://parkpride.org/we-can-help/park-visioning/> and will also be archived at the Atlanta History Center.

## Vision Plan Key Features, Priorities, and Cost Estimates

The vision plan emphasizes the following key features, listed in order of priority as determined by community polling following the final public meeting in June 2023.

*\*Costs are based on 2023 pricing for guidance only. All projects subject to approval by City of Atlanta Department of Parks & Recreation.*

2023 Falling Water Park	Est. cost* (opt 1)	Est. cost* (opt 2)
Opt 1: Wood boardwalk over lake and wetlands	\$671,025	—
Opt 2: Concrete boardwalk over lake and wetlands	—	\$1,160,925
Paved trails	\$841,345	\$841,345
Unpaved trails	\$88,840	\$88,840
Parking and site security features	\$318,219	\$318,219
Restored dam & lake	\$3,510,000	\$3,510,000
Scenic overlook & bird observation areas	\$120,060	\$120,060
Exercise stations	\$28,800	\$28,800
Stone seatwall gathering area	\$63,825	\$63,825
Community garden	\$15,000	\$15,000
Nature play & picnic area	\$149,040	\$149,040
Stream study access point	\$25,019	\$25,019
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$5,831,173</b>	<b>\$6,321,073</b>

## Guiding Principles

1. Protect and enhance the forest, stream, and wetland ecosystems by facilitating environmental stewardship and educational opportunities.
2. Apply principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) to promote a safe clean space with clearly defined areas of use and delineated boundaries.
3. Provide a tranquil space for community members to improve mental and physical health near their homes.
4. Partner with nearby schools to establish a community-based volunteer network to promote positive use and closer personal connections to the park for residents.

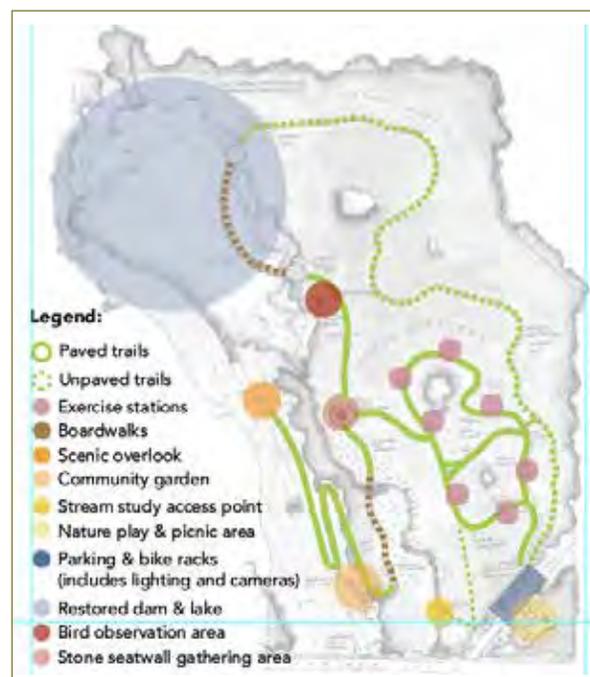


Diagram of projects within the park.

**MT. GILEAD LAKE**  
The dam that created Mt. Gilead Lake was damaged in the 1970s. This plan restores the dam to a functional condition and stabilizes water levels in the lake for scenic and recreational purposes. This plan also recommends a boardwalk to provide access over the water for walking and spending time on the water.  
A second existing dam on the property is recommended for removal to eliminate standing water in the upper woodland.

**NATURE TRAILS**  
Half a mile of soft surface trails wind their way through the forest, providing opportunities for deeper immersion in nature and providing space for activities like birding and cross-country practice for Therrell High School students. These trails connect to the lake and the larger trail network in the park.

**SCENIC OVERLOOK**  
The challenging topography in the power easement becomes an opportunity to offer scenic views of the lake and forest from an elevated vantage point.

**PAVED TRAILS & BOARDWALK**  
A half-mile of paved trails provides access through the park to the lake and across the creek to the south wetlands boardwalk.  
A circular stone gathering space provides a landmark and place of quiet respite where the trails intersect.

**COMMUNITY GARDEN**  
The power easement is the sunniest spot in the park because of the absence of trees. This makes it ideal for growing food. This plan shows a modestly-sized community garden for growing healthy food.

**SECURE ENTRANCES AND PARKING**  
Falling Water Park requires a well-marked, lit, and monitored formal entrance with park signage, rules, and security features. This plan shows two entrances: the main entrance in the gas easement, taking advantage of the cleared space. This entrance includes a 22-car parking lot. The driveway may be outfitted with a gate that opens and closes on a timer. Curbs, wheel stops, bollards, and other vehicle exclusion measures prevent motor vehicles from intruding into park beyond the parking lot. A secondary pedestrian and service entrance is located on the electrical easement.

**FITNESS CIRCUIT**  
A one-quarter mile paved fitness circuit winds through the forest with exercise stations spaced along it, providing a full-body workout experience.  
Trails can also be fitted with hand rails in places for hikers with visual impairments.

**NATURE PLAY & PICNIC**  
This design includes a small playground and picnic area focused on nature. A small creek access area provides an opportunity for students to engage in water quality testing and environmental science.  
The play equipment may incorporate themes of nature and the forest through color choices, material selection, and activities.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**2023 Vision Plan for Falling Water Park**  
SOUTHWEST NEIGHBORHOOD OF ATLANTA  
Vision Plan  
May 2023  
Facilitated by parkpride

# Southwest Atlanta



- Falling Water Park
- Atlanta Public Schools
- MARTA Bus Stop

## Context & History

Falling Water Park comprises 26.3 acres of land in the Southwest Neighborhood in the City of Atlanta, Georgia. Seated within City of Atlanta Council District 11, Neighborhood Planning Unit R, and Fulton County District 6, the property rests on the north side of Panther Trail, enjoying nearly 700 feet of road frontage along its southern edge between the intersections of Star Mist Drive and Mount Gilead Road. The property's western edge adjoins property held in common by the homeowners of the Cascade Parc community, a neighborhood of 330 homes. The park's north and east boundaries are shared by eight single-family lots, six of which front along Lovell Drive, north of the park. The other two single family lots share a common access road from Panther Trail—a private driveway extending 850 feet along the eastern property line to the residences tucked far back from the road near the park's northeast corner.

Panther Trail is a two-lane local road with a posted speed limit of 25 mph, though observations made by neighbors suggest that this limit is routinely exceeded. This is

evidenced in part by speed bumps recently installed nearby in front of the Cascade Parc neighborhood. There are bus stops near the park along Panther Trail that are served by the number 66 MARTA bus, which runs between the Hamilton E. Holmes MARTA station and the Princeton Lakes shopping center off Camp Creek Parkway. A sidewalk serves the north side of Panther Trail from its intersection with Childress Drive to the I-285 underpass, including along the park's road frontage.

The character of the neighborhood is suburban bordering on rural, mainly consisting of single-family residences on lots ranging in size from 0.25 to 2 acres. The neighborhoods around the park are neat and attractive, with homes to the south of Panther Trail mostly developed in the mid-20th century, and homes in the neighborhoods north of the park developed in the 1990s.

Cascade Parc is a higher-density development of townhomes and single-family homes on a large tract of land that



*A MARTA bus stop sits across the street from D. M. Therrell High School on Panther Trail. It is one of four public transit stops near Falling Water Park.*

is owned and maintained by the Cascade Parc Property Owners Association. It was developed in the early 2000s, replacing the previous development, Kings Ridge, after it fell into disrepair. This community is well-maintained and offers amenities including a club house and swimming pool.

Falling Water Park is classified by the City of Atlanta Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) as a "park-in-holding." This means DPR owns the land, but the park has not yet been classified or commissioned as a City of Atlanta Park. Parks-in-holding are not classified by size.

The park property includes two utility easements for Atlanta Gas Light and Georgia Power. Both easements are kept clear of trees, creating linear meadow-like conditions in an otherwise-wooded space. The Atlanta Gas Light easement is approximately 60'-wide and runs diagonally northeast-to-southwest across the southeast corner of the park. From there, it crosses the private driveway before traversing the campuses of Therrell High School and Kimberly Elementary School. The easement is marked with yellow warning bollards and signs, as is typical in gas easements. The Georgia Power easement is approximately 200'-wide and runs diagonally northwest-to-

southeast along the entire western boundary of the park. The space is dominated by large transmission lines and the pylons that support them. Because of its width, the easement receives a great deal of sunlight, creating habitat for a variety of insect and plant species, including milkweed, passionflower, goldenrod, and asters.

The park and surrounding neighborhoods are in the South Utoy Creek watershed. South Utoy Creek discharges into the Chattahoochee River, which supplies much of the drinking water to the City of Atlanta and the greater Atlanta region. This vast water system eventually joins with the Flint River before it crosses into Florida, where it becomes the Apalachicola River before emptying into the Gulf of Mexico. A small unnamed tributary of South Utoy Creek trickles through the park from south to north, where it is dammed to create Mount Gilead Lake at the northern boundary of the park. The land immediately to either side of the creek floods regularly as part of its natural cycles, resulting in rich wetlands that support a diversity of life.

Utoy Creek has become impacted over time due to urbanization of the watershed. At the time of this writing, the United States Army Corps of Engineers and the City of Atlanta



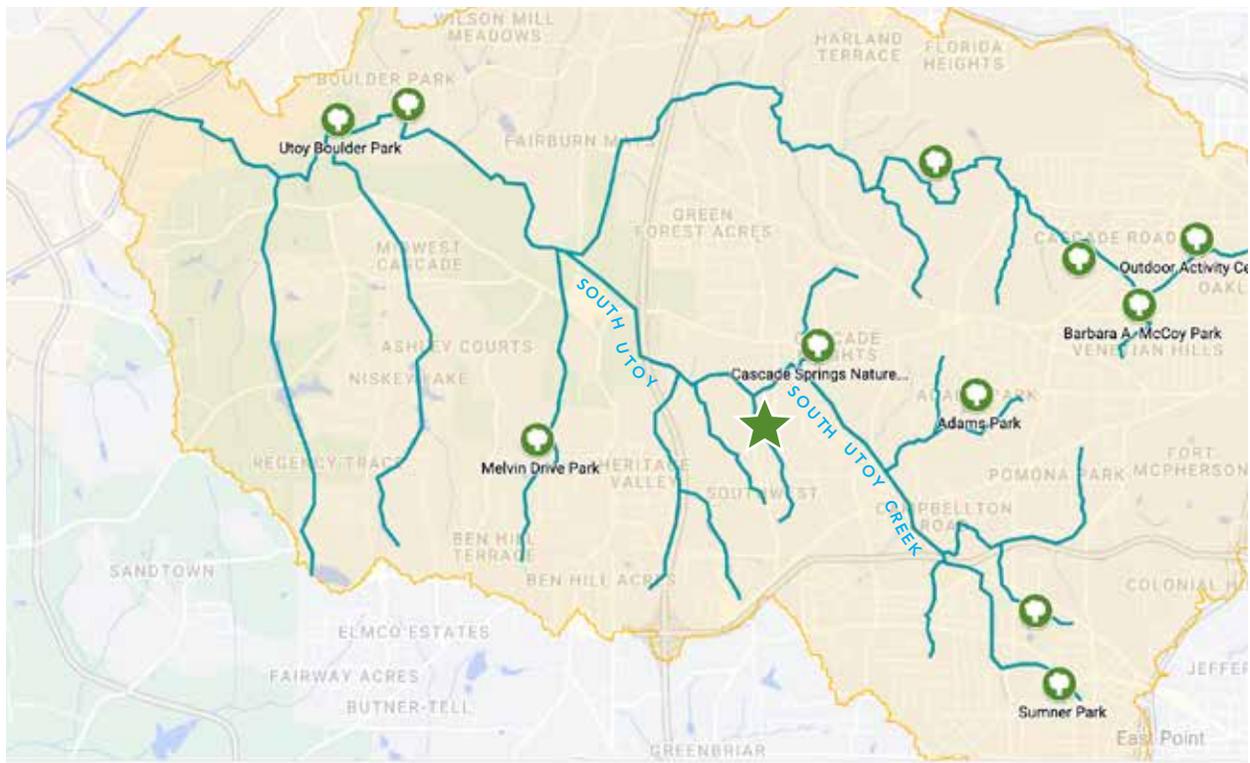
Above: The gas easement runs across the southeast corner of the park before crossing the campuses of both Therrell High School and Kimberly Elementary School. Because this easement is narrower and more shaded, it does not have as many flowering plant species as the electrical easement.



CONTEXT & HISTORY

The electrical power easement (below) runs along the western side of the park and intersects with the Cascade Parc neighborhood. It hosts a kaleidoscope of native plant species and their pollinators, some of which are shown above.





*Utoy Creek watershed with Falling Water Park marked with a star*

Department of Watershed Management are undertaking an Ecosystem Restoration Study to identify projects that may improve aquatic habitat along Utoy Creek and its tributaries.

Falling Water Park is nearly contiguous with both Lucas Oliver Kimberly Elementary School and Daniel McLaughlin Therrell High School, being separated only by the private drive running along the east property line. The gas easement cuts across both campuses and the driveway before entering the park, which hints at possible future connections between the schools and the park. Both schools were established in the late 1950s.

Southwest Neighborhood does not have any active parks within its boundaries, except for a small corner of Cascade Springs Nature Preserve along Harbin Rd SW. However, there is no direct access to the Preserve in this location. The entrance to the Preserve is located a short distance away in the Cascade Heights neighborhood along Cascade Road. There are no active parks within 1.25 miles of Falling Water Park as the crow flies,

the closest three being Cascade Springs Nature Preserve, Ben Hill Park, and Melvin Drive Park—all of which lie outside the neighborhood.

In addition to Falling Water Park, Southwest Neighborhood is home to an additional “park-in-holding” called “Campbellton Road Park” located at 2853 Campbellton Rd SW at the corner of Maxwell Dr SW. This 7.5-acre park is forested and, like its cousin Falling Water Park, currently has no access or program associated with it.

## History

Though an exhaustive study of the history of the neighborhood is beyond the scope of this park vision plan, a brief sketch is offered here to shed light on how the land has changed over time.

Prior to Hernando de Soto’s 1550 expedition through North America’s southeast region, complex societies of Indigenous Americans evolved over the course of thousands of years. Archaeological evidence suggests that humans have lived in this part of the world

since around 10,000 BCE. These societies rose and fell, traded with each other, and developed rich cultural practices and technologies that allowed them to thrive in reciprocity with the living world around them.

It is widely accepted that de Soto's expedition through the southeast was devastating to indigenous communities in two ways. First, the spread of European diseases like smallpox, measles, and chicken pox spread unchecked through the local population. Fatality rates were high among native people, who had no immunity to these diseases. This effectively depopulated large areas of the southeast, changed social structures, and redistributed the population. Second, the expedition contributed toward hostility between Europeans and Native Americans. Records suggest that conflicts between the explorers and indigenous groups were principally instigated by de Soto's forces, presaging many years of war and combat between the two societies.

As European colonization progressed, groups of Muscogee-speaking people organized into a loose confederacy for the purposes of negotiation and joint defense. For generations, Muscogee (Creek) people inhabited all the land in Atlanta as well as vast lands south and east of the Chattahoochee River. This territory was lost through a long series of territorial cessions to the United States and State of Georgia, lastly by a Muskogee leader named William McIntosh. McIntosh, whose father was a Scotch immigrant, claimed to speak for the whole tribe in negotiations, and accepted personal payments of land and currency in exchange for releasing Muscogee claims to much of what is now Georgia. McIntosh was later executed by a contingent of Muscogee for his actions, and the Muscogee people were forcibly removed to Oklahoma in 1836 during a series of events commonly known as the Trail of Tears.

Between 1805 and 1833, land taken from the Muscogee and Cherokee peoples was

redistributed to European colonists through a series of eight land lotteries. The land where Falling Water Park now lies was allotted as part of the 1821 land lottery, in Land Lot 231/District 14, which was then part of the newly-established Henry County. In 1822, the park (then rural land) became part of DeKalb County, which was formed from portions of Fayette, Newton, Henry, and Gwinnett counties. In 1853, DeKalb County was split into east and west halves, with the west half becoming Fulton County, within which Falling Water Park resides today.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century development of the land in and around Falling Water Park is revealed through a series of aerial photographs taken from 1938 to 2021. In 1938, the land appears almost completely undeveloped, apart from some cleared land and agricultural fields. The gas easement is also clearly visible in this photograph, cutting across roads and through forested land. Some of the roads we recognize today can be seen as well, including Mt. Gilead Road, Panther Trail, McMurray Drive, and Childress Drive.

By 1955 the dam that created Mt. Gilead Lake had been constructed, and the power easement had been cleared. The park is dominated by what was, at that time, a 7.5-acre lake with two smaller ponds on its east side. The trees have also largely been cleared from the land. Although it is not clear what the land use was, the size of the lake and absence of agricultural fields suggest a recreational or scenic use, perhaps to attract housing development. Alternatively, the lake could have been built as a flood control measure. Park Pride was unsuccessful in answering this question, so we are left to wonder.

In 1959, the photography shows the development of both Kimberly Elementary and Therrell High School with some residential development starting along Childress Drive and south of Mt. Gilead Road. Twelve years later, the development

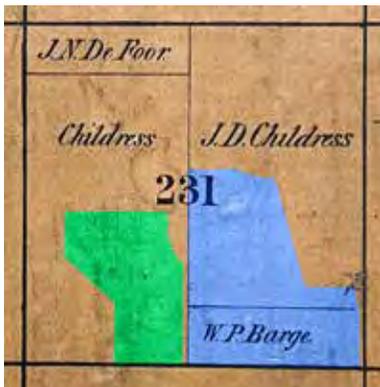


The Woodland Indians (1000 BCE - 900 CE) were one of the first cultures to establish settlements in the southeast<sup>2</sup>

12,000 BCE

The Mississippian (900 –1200 CE) and Lamar (1300 – 1650 CE) cultures built networks of towns along the Southeast’s rivers. Ultimately falling to disease, the surviving Lamar descendents became today’s Muscogee Nation.<sup>3</sup>

The Lamar people are thought to have migrated from the Ocmulgee River to the Chattahoochee in **1650**.<sup>5</sup>



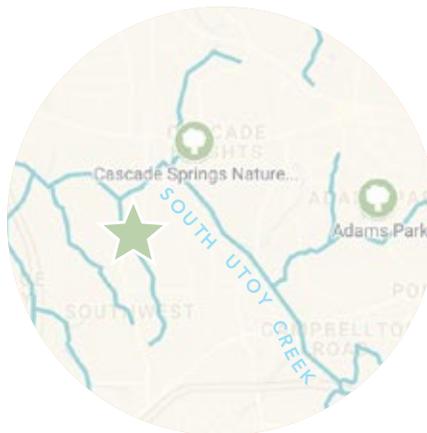
**1805-1833 LAND LOTTERIES**

The land where Falling Water Park now lies was taken from the Muscogee and allotted to white settlers as part of the **1821** land lottery. Although we did not find the name of the person who drew Land Lot 231 of District 14 in 1821, it was common for the 202.5-acre lots to be subdivided and sold. The landowners shown (left) are from 1892.<sup>5</sup>

**1853 FULTON COUNTY ESTABLISHED**  
*from part of DeKalb County*

1861 - 1865  
CIVIL WAR

The green area above represents the current-day location of Falling Water Park; the blue area indicates property now owned by the Atlanta Public Schools



Around **1955**, a dam was built on a tributary of South Utoy Creek, forming Mt. Gilead Lake.



Atlanta City Councilmember, Jim Maddox (1934-2023), encouraged the City to purchase and preserve Falling Water Park. In **2004**, the 26-acre site was purchased by Invest Atlanta with funding from the Georgia Community Greenspace Program and transferred to the Department of Parks & Recreation.

**COVID-19 PANDEMIC**



1. <https://www.nps.gov/ocmu/learn/historyculture/paleo-indian-culture.htm>
2. <https://www.nps.gov/ocmu/learn/historyculture/woodland-culture.htm>
3. <https://www.nps.gov/ocmu/learn/historyculture/lamar-culture.htm>
4. <https://www.nps.gov/ocmu/learn/historyculture/the-muscogee-nation.htm>
5. <http://npshistory.com/publications/chat/clr-sope-creek.pdf>

1500

1800

1850

1900

1940

1980

2010

2020

2021

2022

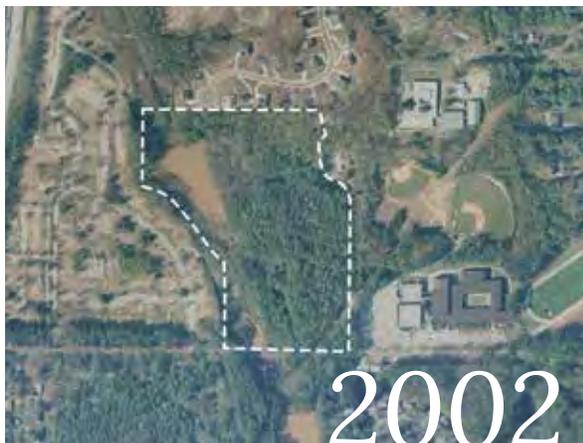
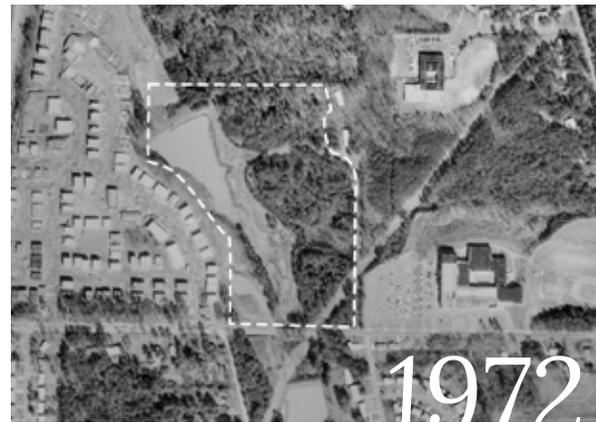
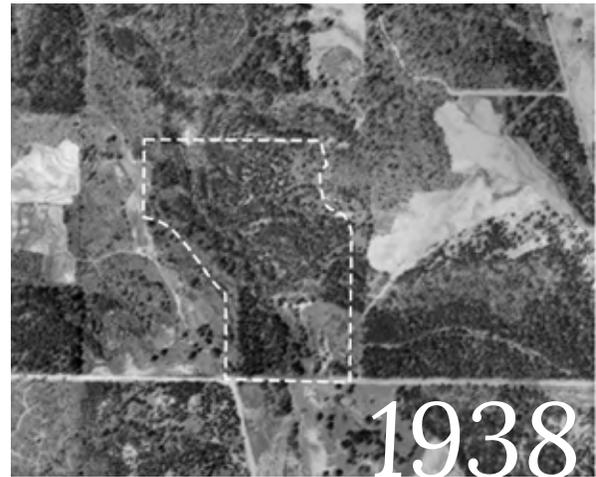
2022

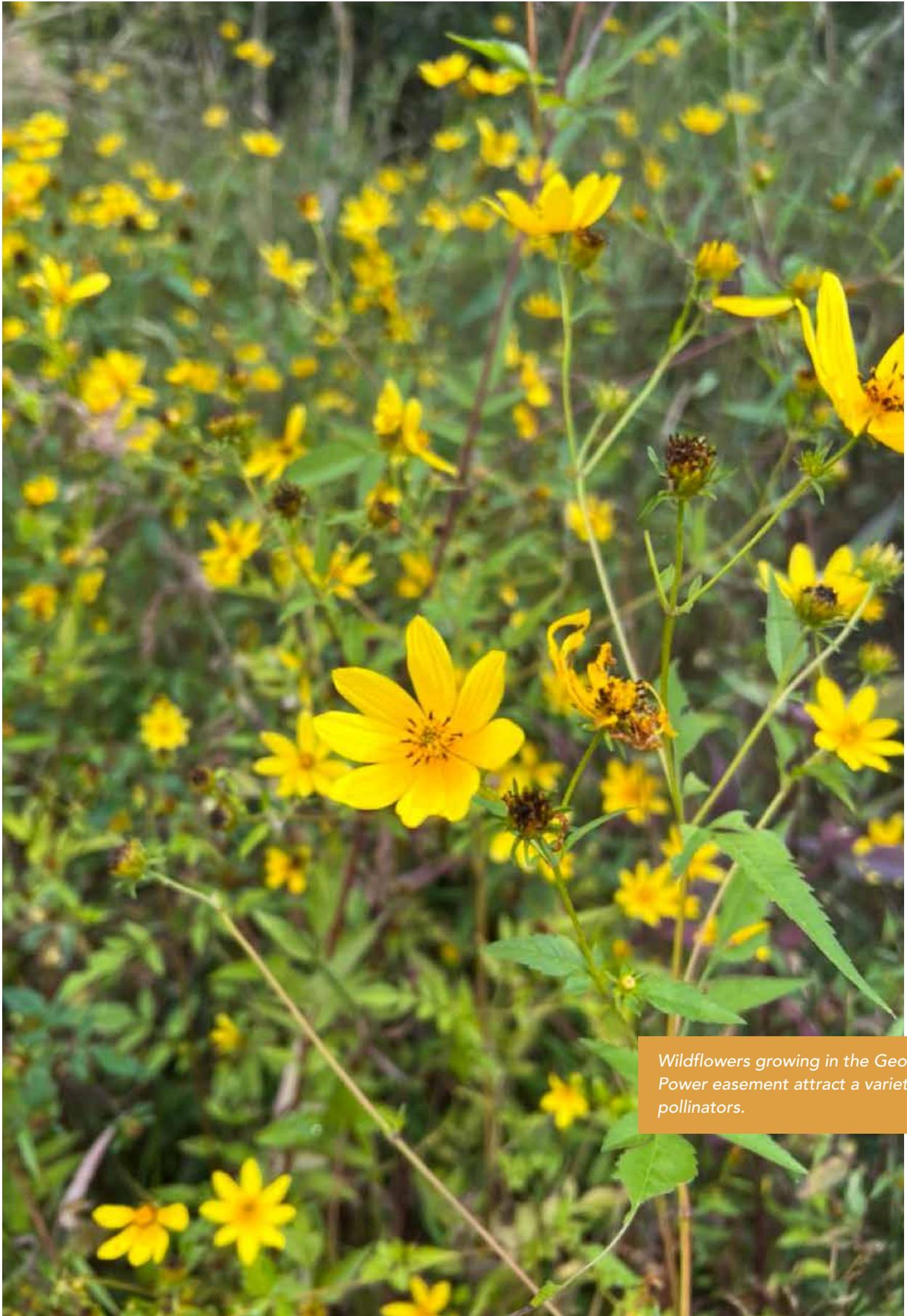
of the Kings Ridge neighborhood in 1972 caused large changes in the hydrology of the area. It was during this time that the dam for Mt. Gilead Lake breached, causing the lake to shrink drastically to less than half its original size. Since that time, the dam has never been repaired, and the lake has continued to shrink year over year to its present size of about 1.3 acres.

Neighborhoods north of the park were developed in the late 1990s and early 2000s, including the redevelopment and rebranding of Kings Ridge to Cascade Parc. Through it all, Falling Water Park has remained untouched by development, resulting in a beautiful natural refuge in the center of a diverse and growing community.

The value of the forest was recognized in 2004 by then-councilmember Jim Maddox, who lobbied for state money to purchase the land to be preserved in perpetuity as public greenspace. Funding for acquisition came from the Georgia Community Greenspace Program, which was passed into law under

Governor Roy Barnes in 2000. Under the law, greenspace was defined as “permanently protected land and water, including agricultural and forestry land,” and was intended to be used for protection of water quality, reduction of soil erosion, protection of habitat, preservation of scenery, and informal recreation like hiking, birding, and fishing. The name “Falling Water” comes from the company that sold the land to the City in 2004, Falling Water, Inc.





*Wildflowers growing in the Georgia Power easement attract a variety of pollinators.*

## Existing Conditions

Falling Water Park can be characterized as gently rolling forested land in an intermediate phase of succession. Succession is a continual process of transition that landscapes naturally undergo as the mix of species and habitat changes over time. The process of succession results in the establishment of a “climax” community of plants and animals that represents a mature landscape that remains in place until the next disturbance occurs (such as fires or human activity), which brings the landscape back to an earlier phase of succession. In the Piedmont region of Georgia, the climax community is called an oak-hickory forest, which consists mainly of nut-producing, shade-tolerant trees. Any landscape that is not an oak-hickory forest in Atlanta is in a stage of succession that is moving toward that climax condition.

A site investigation in October of 2022 revealed the forest to be transitioning from a pine forest into an oak-hickory forest, with early hardwood species such as sweetgum and poplar, along with oaks and hickory, finding purchase in the dominant stands of pine. This finding is consistent with aerial photography that revealed the land was largely cleared in the mid-20th century around the time the lake was established. This makes the forest about 60-70 years old.

The utility easements on site are mown regularly, keeping them free of trees and shrubs for easy maintenance access and protecting transmission lines from falling trees. This protective practice also creates meadows with mixes of grasses, vines,

and wildflowers. These meadows become habitat and a food source for pollinators such as native bees and butterflies. The utility thoroughfares also open views into and through the park, which, coupled with the changes in topography, afford striking vistas, especially in the power easement.

An unnamed minor tributary of South Utoy Creek also flows northward through the park after passing underneath Panther Trail. This narrow stream winds through the landscape before being interrupted by an earthen dam, which retains the water forming Mt. Gilead Lake. The dam itself is a damaged feature of the land, having been breached 50 years ago. At that time, the water level in the lake fell dramatically, and it has continued to gradually shrink as the constant forces of erosion eat away at the dam on one end, while deposits of sediment accumulate at the other. The lake will continue to shrink until it is gone unless the dam is restored.

The remains of the former lakebed, through which the stream now flows, is relatively flat, creating a dynamic wetland and floodplain that hosts a surprising variety of life, including mammals, amphibians, reptiles, and birds. The character of this wetland changes as it moves from the forest to the cleared utility corridor, becoming almost marsh-like in its plant composition with tall grasses and legible edge conditions where Alder trees and other wet-loving tree species dominate.

Mt. Gilead Lake today rests entirely within the power easement, which means its shores and the wetlands around the lake

are regularly mown back by the utility and kept clear of trees. The lake itself is home to a population of fish, including largemouth bass and sunfish, and it is an important source of water for wildlife in and around the park. Mt. Gilead Lake has an unnamed twin lake that was built south of Panther Trail at about the same time in the mid-20th century. This lake is not inside the park and is privately owned but clearly visible from the road. This lake's dam is still intact, creating a sequence of two man-made water bodies sourced from the same tributary stream. It is mentioned here because neighbors access and use both lakes for recreational fishing.

A second dam remains extant on site in its northeast quadrant. This smaller dam served to separate a smaller portion of Mt. Gilead Lake from the main part for an unknown purpose, possibly as a sediment forebay. This dam remains in place and retains a small area of standing water that is filled with surface runoff from storm events or underground spring. Although the dam itself is intact, the spillway on its south end shows signs of significant erosion.

The park is traversed by remnants of several old farm roads, which have withstood the forces of succession and remain clearly visible in the landscape. Each utility corridor has one of these roads, and there are others in forested areas as well. One of these roadbeds branches westward from the private driveway along the eastern border about 730' north of its intersection with Panther Trail. The land along this old roadbed has unfortunately been used as an unlawful dumping ground (below) during its history. Commercial and construction waste, such as tires, toilets, shower stalls, siding, and carpets mingle with beer cans, plastic bottles, food wrappers, and other micro trash in this location. Illegal dumping does not appear to be active in the interior of the park, with vegetation growing over much of the debris. However, the waste in this location is a hazard that warrants attention. It is worth noting here that another area of illicit dumping in the power easement was cleaned up by the Department of Parks and Recreation during the visioning process.

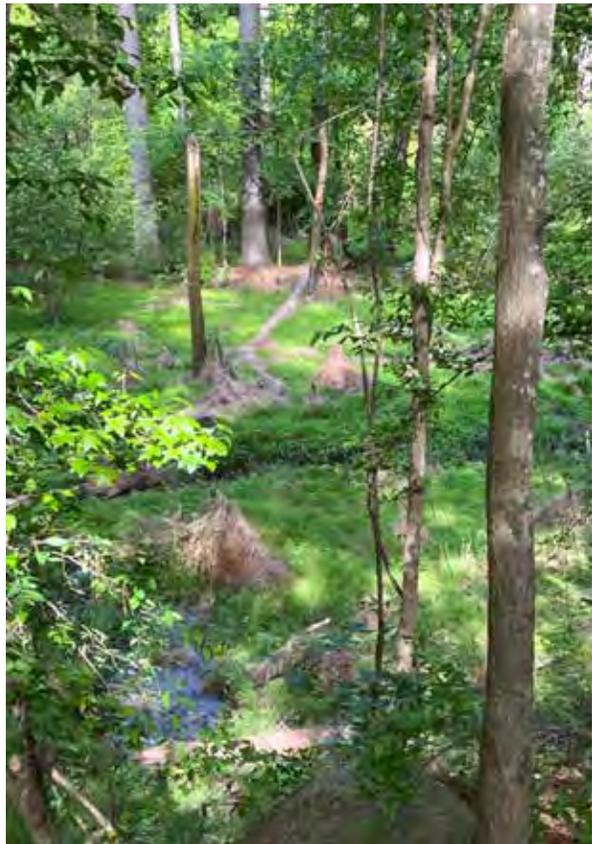
*Illegal dumping within the park*



Overall, the site offers a variety of different landscapes and habitats, creating a mixture of experiences and views that is unique in the city. It is beautiful and rich in ecological diversity, making it a worthy place to preserve and make accessible to the community so that all may appreciate its gifts.



*Above left: A smaller dam captures stormwater runoff within the park. Above: A tributary to South Utoy Creek flows through Falling Water Park northward from Panther Trail. Below: Swamp-like conditions along the course of the stream in the lowest parts of the park. Below left: Young trees fill in gaps on dry slopes.*





Comon Buckeye butterfly,  
*Junonia coenia*



Mountain mint,  
*Pycnanthemum sp.*



Hearts-a-bustin'  
*Euonymus americanus*



Plains tickseed  
*Coreopsis tinctoria*



Skipper on blue mist flower,  
*Ageratum houstonianum*



Gulf Fritillary on tickseed  
(*Coreopsis sp.*)



Eastern Tiger Swallowtail  
on Common thistle

## OPEN FIELDS

The western side of the park hosts a kaleidoscope of native plant species and their pollinators.

The wooded parts of the park are home to a wide variety of ferns, spring ephemerals, shrubs, and trees

## WOODLANDS



Christmas Fern  
*Polystichum acrostichoides*



Netted chain-fern  
*Woodwardia areolata*



Lady Fern  
*Athyrium asplenoides*



Ebony spleenwort  
*Asplenium platyneuron*



Sensitive fern  
*Onoclea sensibilis*



Southern Jack-in-the-pulpit  
*Arisaema quinatum*



*Community members gathered at the D. H. Therrell High School cafeteria for the second public meeting for park visioning.*

# Community Engagement

Park Pride’s mission is to engage communities to activate the power of parks. In service of this mission, Park Pride offers visioning grants to parks in the City of Atlanta and unincorporated DeKalb County through a competitive application process.

The visioning staff at Park Pride facilitates a public engagement process for the park awarded the visioning, while community feedback informs and guides the creation of the vision plan. The plan balances community input with applicable laws and regulations and accepted best practices to arrive at a realistic park plan and comprehensive report for the park, produced to professional design standards. This plan is intended to be used by community groups to raise funds and advocate for desired improvements in the park.

In the summer of 2022, the Southwest Canopy Overlook Neighborhood Advocates (SWCONA)—acting as the Friends of Falling Water Park—was awarded park visioning. These members formed the steering committee for the visioning process.

## Steering Committee

The steering committee assembled for this visioning process included people who have been a vital part of the Southwest community for many years. They saw the need for a public park in their neighborhood where residents could enjoy nature and the area’s natural features. Ms. Renette L. Scott, Vice President of SWCONA, and Joshua Gray, representing residents of Cascade Parc, submitted the initial application for park visioning in June, 2022. For the effort they assembled a team ready to take this long-anticipated park off the waiting list and open it to the community. The steering committee included new and longtime residents of the Cascade Parc community, and residents adjoining and near the park on all sides. The committee met monthly from October 2022 through May 2023 in the community hall at Cascade Parc. While not directly serving on the steering committee, the administration, faculty, and students of both Kimberly Elementary School and D.H. Therrell High School were also involved in the planning process.

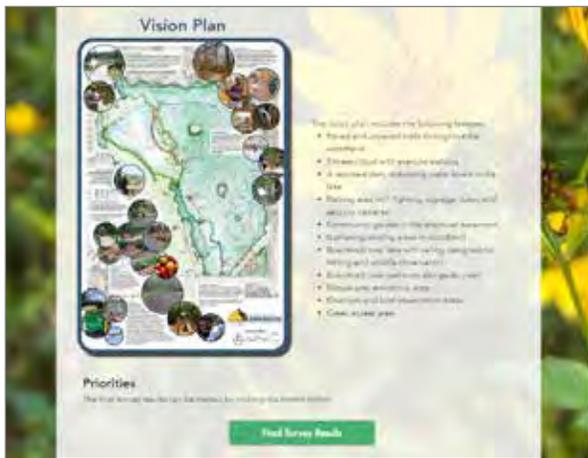
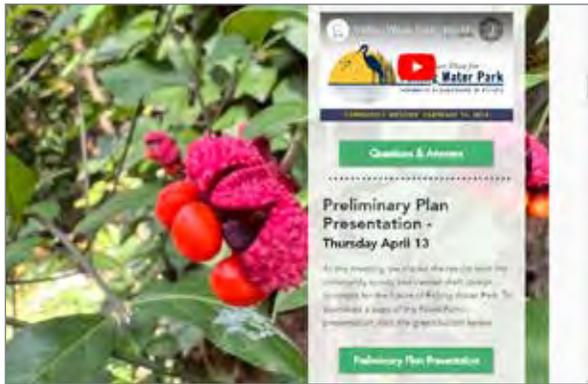
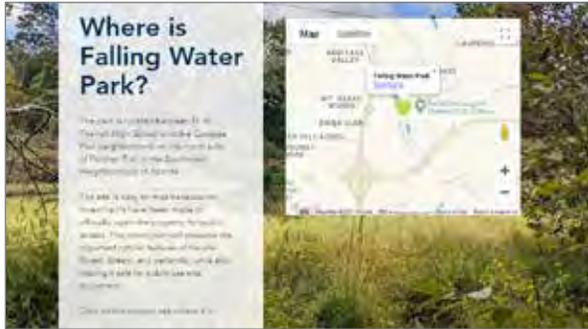


2023 Vision Plan for  
**Falling Water Park**

SOUTHWEST NEIGHBORHOOD OF ATLANTA

## Vision Branding and Website

To clearly identify the public materials and events related to the visioning process, Park Pride created a system of consistent visual graphics, including a website that hosted progress updates, inventory and analysis information, history, links to surveys, meeting recordings, and survey data.



All materials used for the park visioning process have a consistent design for easier recognition. Above: screenshots from the visioning website. Left: flyers, yard signs, and social media announcements

HAVE YOUR SAY! PLAN YOUR PARK!

**2023 Vision Plan for  
Falling Water Park**  
SOUTHWEST NEIGHBORHOOD OF ATLANTA

Scan\* the QR code to go to the **Falling Water Park** visioning website

From there, you can:

- Take the **Park Visioning Survey** and let us know what YOU want the park to be
- **Join the online public meeting on Feb 16** via Zoom where you can chat with neighbors and participate in live polls
- Find out more about the park and its history

\* Point your phone's camera at this code and click the link

Encourage **EVERYONE** to take the survey! Kids too!

Survey open until March 10

**PUBLIC MEETING SCHEDULE**

Thursday, Feb 16, 6:30pm – 7:30pm  
Join online at [parkvisioning.wixsite.com/fallingwaterpark](https://parkvisioning.wixsite.com/fallingwaterpark)

Thursday, Mar 16, 6:30pm – 7:30pm  
in person at Therrell High School cafeteria

Saturday, Apr 29, 10:30pm – 11:30pm  
in person, to be determined (TBD)

[parkvisioning.wixsite.com/fallingwaterpark](https://parkvisioning.wixsite.com/fallingwaterpark)

2023 Vision Plan for

**Public meeting to plan your park!**

**Falling Water Park**

SOUTHWEST NEIGHBORHOOD OF ATLANTA

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Place:** \_\_\_\_\_

Scan to learn more!

[parkvisioning.wixsite.com/fallingwaterpark](https://parkvisioning.wixsite.com/fallingwaterpark)

JOIN US AND HAVE YOUR SAY!

2023 Vision Plan for

**Falling Water Park**

SOUTHWEST NEIGHBORHOOD OF ATLANTA

**PUBLIC MEETING (1st of 3)**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 6:30 PM – 7:30 PM**

Join **ONLINE** at [parkvisioning.wixsite.com/fallingwaterpark](https://parkvisioning.wixsite.com/fallingwaterpark)



**2023 Vision Plan for  
Falling Water Park**  
SOUTHWEST NEIGHBORHOOD OF ATLANTA

**INTRODUCTION**  
In 2004, the City of Atlanta purchased land for a new park along Panther Trail, called Falling Water Park. Since that time, no investments have been made to open the park for public access. Park Pride is now engaged in partnership with City of Atlanta and a steering committee of neighbors to create a "Vision Plan" for the park. To get started we'd like to learn how this park could best serve the community and what you hope it will offer you and your family through this survey. **Each person in your household can complete the survey once!**

**TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY ONLINE**



SCAN the QR code to the left. If you prefer to complete this paper survey, it can be returned to drop boxes located near the front entrances of Kimberly Elementary or Therrell High School

We encourage you to visit our website by scanning this QR code with your phone or by visiting the link below. There you can also learn about and register for our **first public meeting on February 16**  
[parkvisioning.wixsite.com/fallingwaterpark](http://parkvisioning.wixsite.com/fallingwaterpark)

Prior to receiving this survey, did you know that Falling Water Park is an inactive city-owned greenspace in this neighborhood?  
 Yes  No

Are you in favor of opening and activating the park for public use?  
 Yes  No  Unsure

How do you hope this park might benefit you and/or the community? (see location on map at right)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**What most concerns you about this park, if anything?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Since the forest will be preserved, new features should co-exist with nature. What would you most like to see at Falling Water Park? (Pick up to seven)

<input type="checkbox"/> Paved trails	<input type="checkbox"/> Unpaved trails
<input type="checkbox"/> Bird watching	<input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle racks
<input type="checkbox"/> Fishing pier	<input type="checkbox"/> Nature play area
<input type="checkbox"/> Small parking area	<input type="checkbox"/> Edible landscaping
<input type="checkbox"/> Community garden	<input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor learning area
<input type="checkbox"/> Seating/Trash cans	<input type="checkbox"/> Art/sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> Boulder climbing	<input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor fitness
<input type="checkbox"/> Picnic shelter/tables	<input type="checkbox"/> Educational signs
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	

## Community Survey

A survey, produced in paper and digital format (paper version, left) was used to capture public input. Paper surveys were distributed to households within the Southwest neighborhoods that fell within a 10-minute walking distance of the park. In pairs and as individual, steering committee members took responsibility for door to door survey distribution throughout the neighborhood. In addition, coroplast H-stake signs with QR codes along with drop boxes for completed surveys were placed at Kimberly Elementary and D.H. Therrell High school. In all, there were 119 responses to the community survey. Twenty students from Kimberly Elementary School also completed a survey designed specifically for kids. The community survey was open from January 18 - March 10, 2023.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**What is most likely to make you and your family feel safe and welcomed in this park? (check all that apply)**

<input type="checkbox"/> Lighting	<input type="checkbox"/> Marked entrances/rules
<input type="checkbox"/> Regular police patrol	<input type="checkbox"/> Clear views into and out of the park
<input type="checkbox"/> Enforced hours of operation	<input type="checkbox"/> Camera surveillance
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Activities for all ages

**Is there anything else important to know or consider regarding Falling Water Park?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**How often do you currently visit parks?**

Often (daily/weekly)  
 Occasionally (monthly)  
 Seldom (less than four times per year)  
 Rarely (once per year or less)

**How would you get to this park? (check the one you would use most)**

Walk  
 Bike/scooter/skateboard  
 Bus and walk/bike  
 Drive or ride with someone

**Why do you currently visit parks? (check all that apply)**

<input type="checkbox"/> Exercise outdoors	<input type="checkbox"/> Cycling
<input type="checkbox"/> Nature/Fresh air	<input type="checkbox"/> Socialize with friends
<input type="checkbox"/> Walk my dog(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Recreation/Sports
<input type="checkbox"/> I rarely visit parks	<input type="checkbox"/> Take children to play
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	

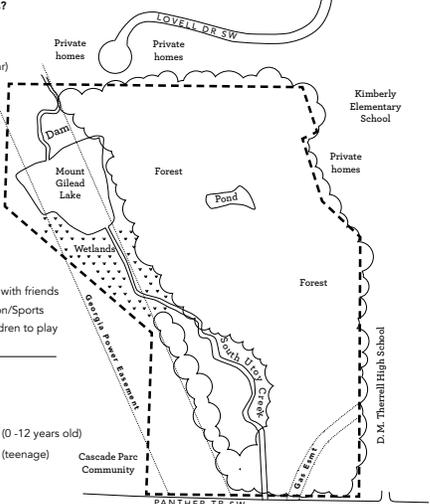
**How would you describe yourself? (check all that apply)**

Adult (no children)  
 Adult with children or grandchildren (0 -12 years old)  
 Adult with children or grandchildren (teenage)  
 Dog owner  
 Person with mobility challenges  
 Senior  
 Teenager  
 Young person (12 years or less)

**To receive e-mail notifications about the visioning process, kindly provide your name and e-mail below. Please print clearly!**

First \_\_\_\_\_ Last \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_



Please use the map space above to **DRAW** your best ideas for Falling Water Park. Pretend you are flying above. What would be in your park? This is a great way for kids to get involved in planning too!



Paper surveys (left) were distributed door-to-door by steering committee members in the neighborhoods around the park (above)

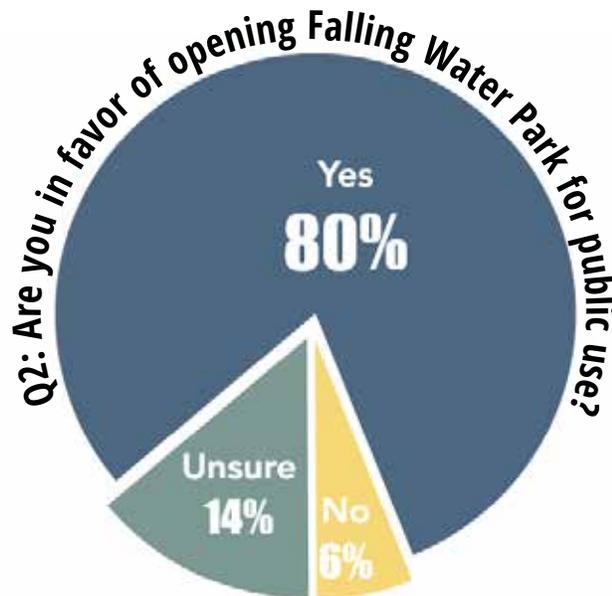
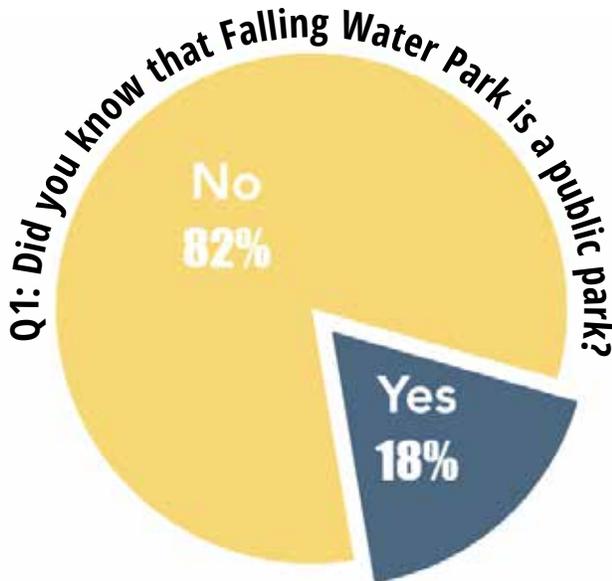
COMMUNITY OPINION SURVEY RESULTS

# Falling Water Park

# 119

PEOPLE RESPONDED

All responses can be found in the Appendix



### Q3: How do you hope this park might benefit you and/or the community?

“I hope for it to bring **unity** to the **community**. It creates a space to get out and get to know one another. Increase the **value of our property** and create a **better standard** for how we treat our community (ie illegal dumping, littering, gun violence, etc), **eliminate the crime rate**.”

– Community member

“**Recreational space** that’s convenient to the neighborhood, good for **families** and folks that just want to enjoy some **fresh air** or **exercise** in a nice environment.”

– Community member

“Offer **green space**, with **walking trails**. A place you can visit that’s **quiet**, a place to enjoy **God’s creation**.”

– Community member

“I am hopeful this park will ignite a stronger **sense of community** and more **walkability** in our neighborhood.”

– Community member

“Southwest deserves the public landscape to be updated like it has been in the new Upper Westside of ATL, Buckhead and Decatur. As a resident of this city for the last 23 years and now a Mom to a toddler and 2 dogs I hate having to pack up my car and transport my family to another area just to enjoy **open green spaces** and **exercise** in a beautiful park.”

– Community member

### Q4: What most concerns you about this park, if anything?

“I hope that **dumping** is deterred in the area with the development of the park. Also hope to ensure that **outreach** is done intentionally and in an **inclusive** manner.”

– Community member

“Now it is not generally **accessible** and used for **dumping**. Concerns when open would be **safety**..some **lighting**, closed after hours to discourage **criminal activity**. Also keeping it free of **trash** Also accessibility...for the elderly”

– Community member

“**Safety**. How would this space be **monitored**?”

– Community member

“I’m concerned about how the space will be **monitored for safety**. I’m concerned that the already existing **crime** in the area will bleed over into the park, making it **unsafe**.”

– Community member

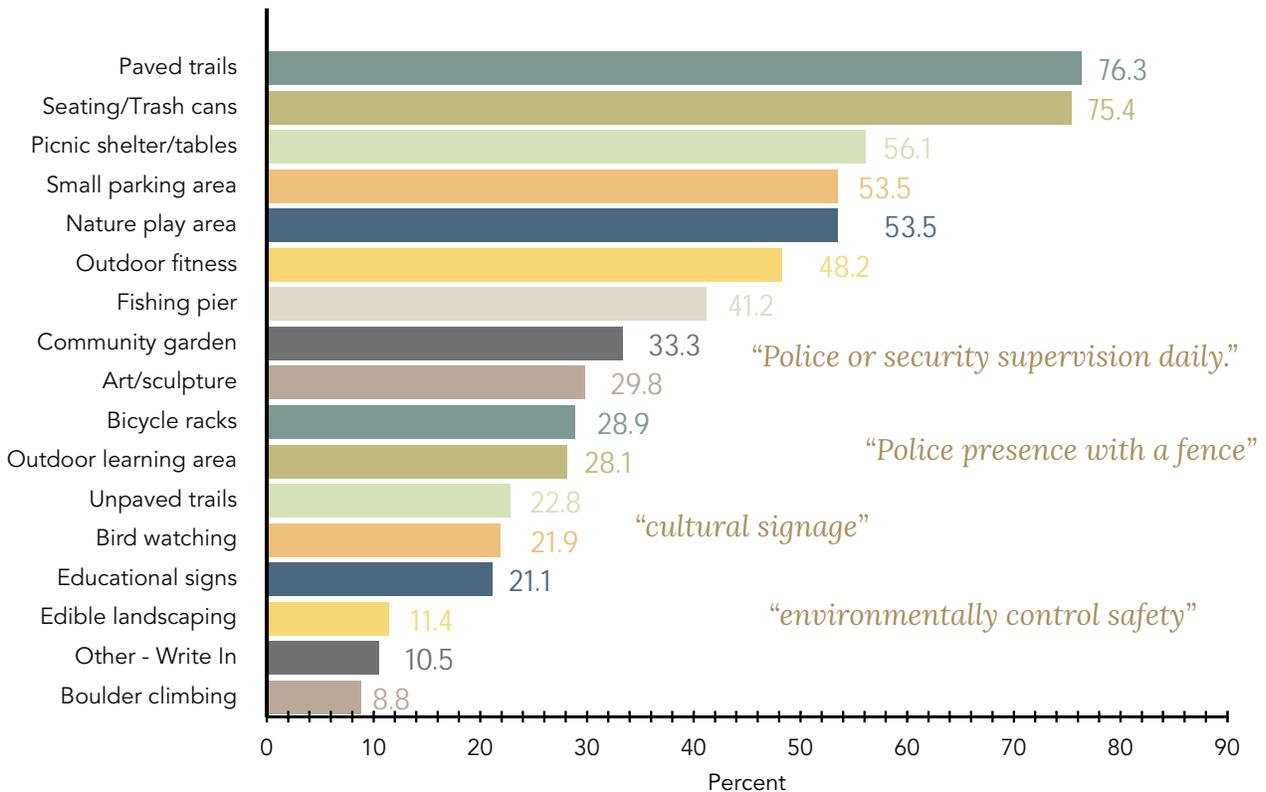
“That it be **kept clean**, free of any **criminal** behavior and that visitors **respect the private land** in the neighboring subdivisions.”

– Community member

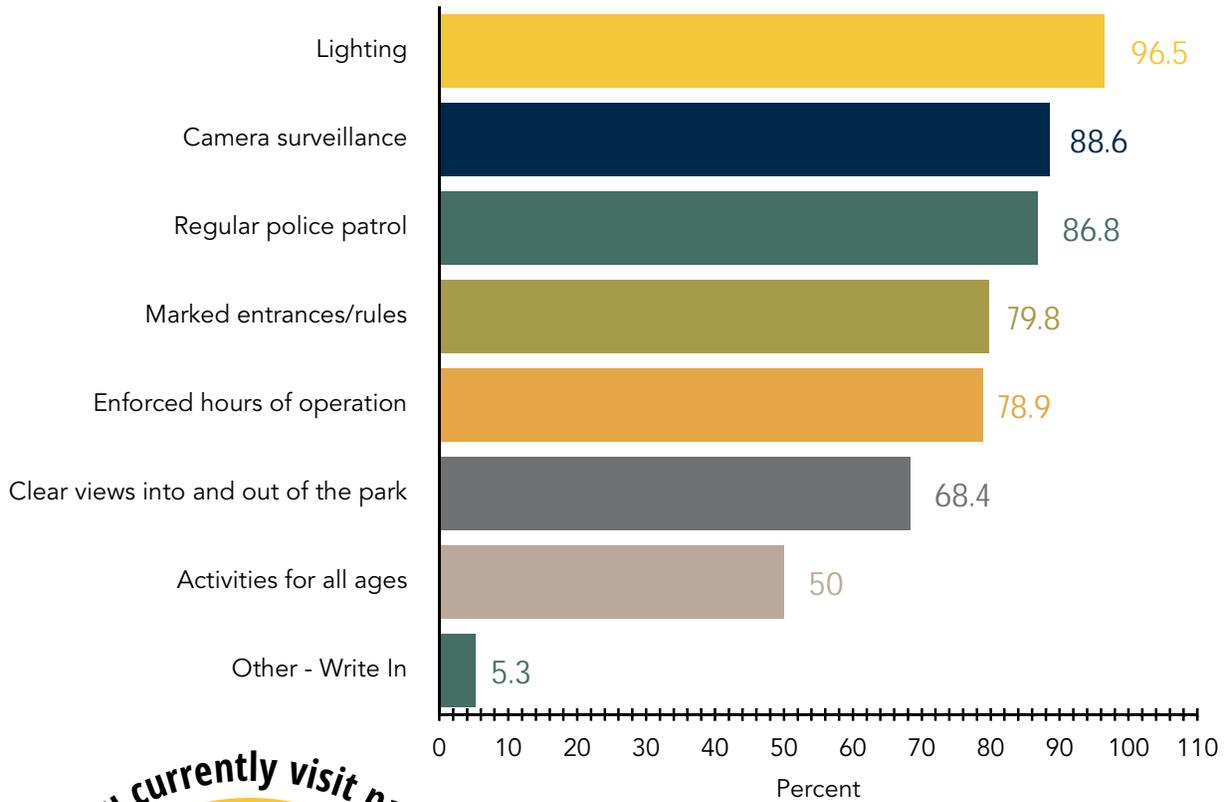
“The **safety** of everyone. Proper **lighting** and **security** to prevent any illegal activities or **criminal** occurrences.”

– Community member

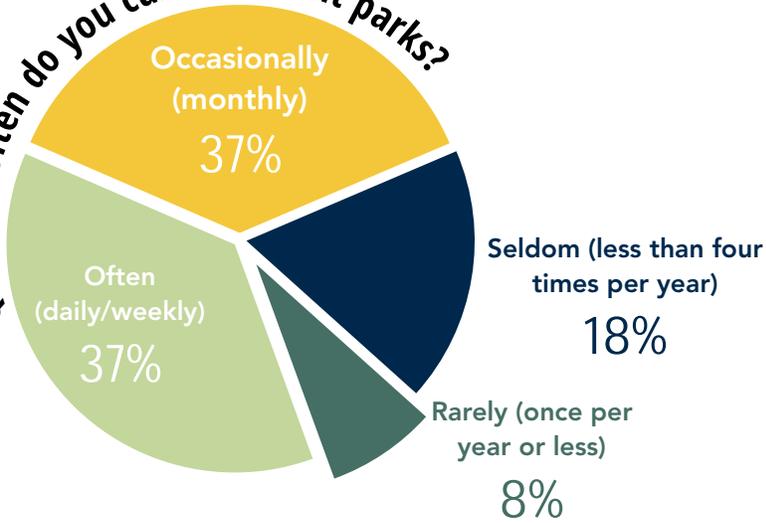
### Q5: What would you most like to see at Falling Water Park?



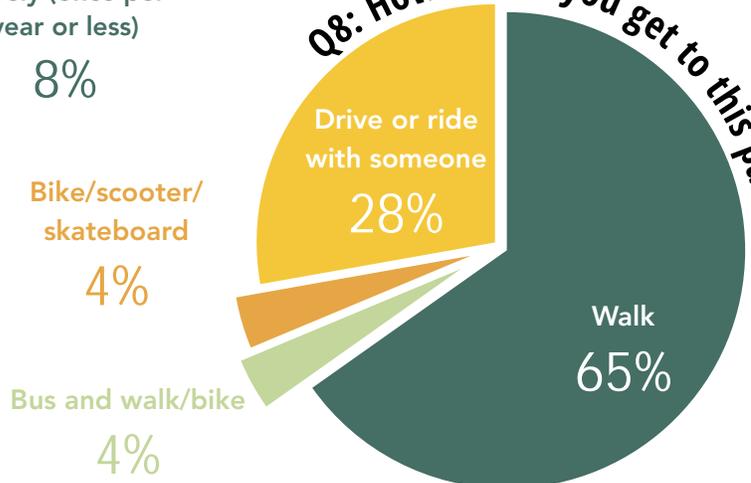
### Q6: What is most likely make you and your family feel safe and welcomed in this park?



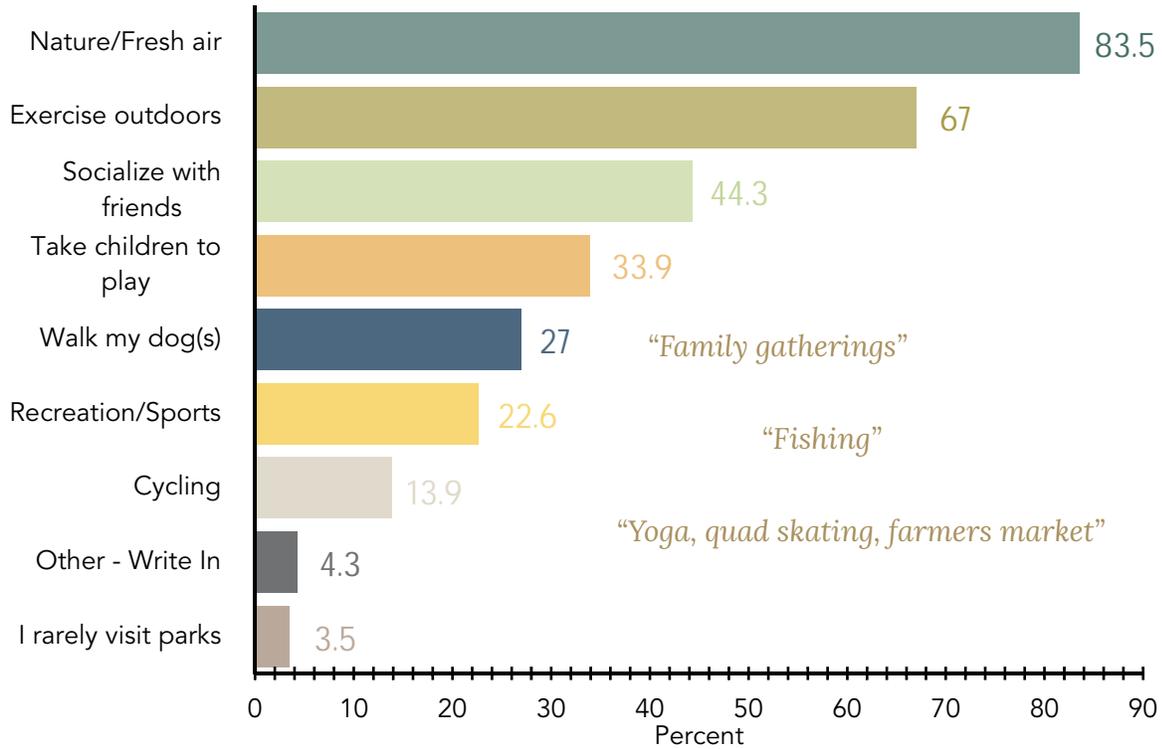
### Q7: How often do you currently visit parks?



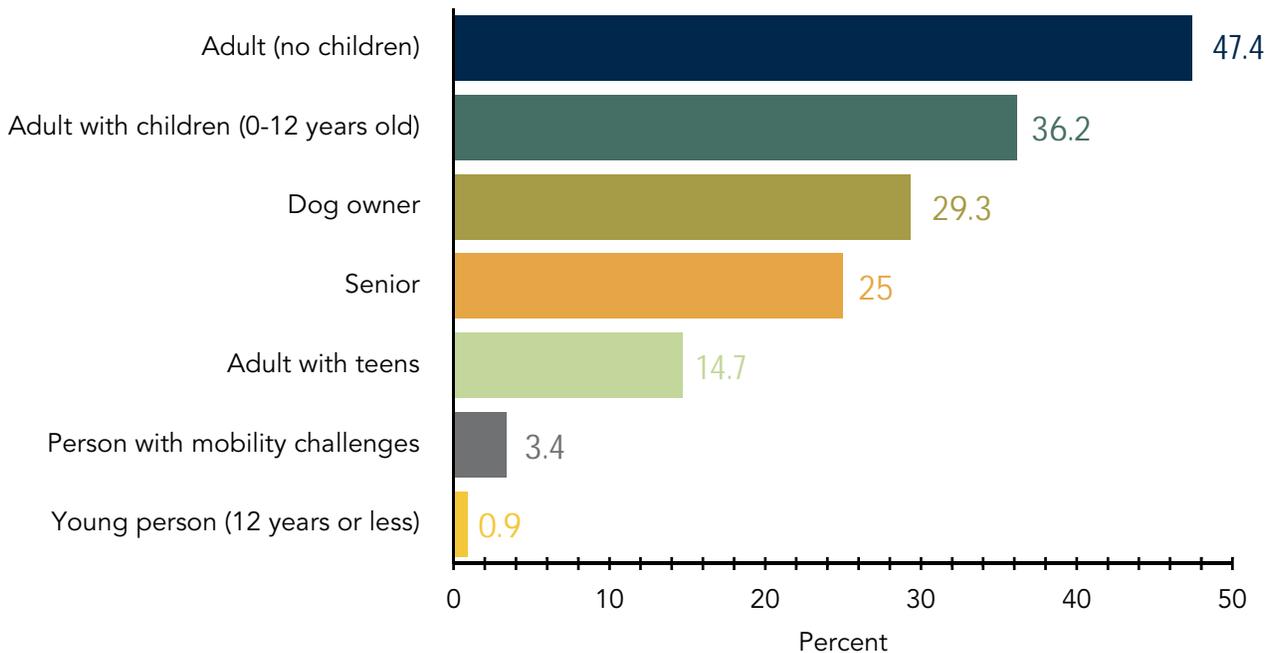
### Q8: How would you get to this park?



### Q9: Why do you currently visit parks?



### Q10: How would you describe yourself?



## Q11: Is there anything else important to know or consider regarding Falling Water Park?

“There is a big **need and desire for a park** in the southwest neighborhood. I’m hopeful we can make this happen!”

– Community member

“I want to make sure that the **neighboring homes** are not subject to invasion of privacy or increased wildlife presence.”

– Community member

“Keep it **natural**”

– Community member

“Please consider adding **sidewalks** on Mt. Gilead”

– Community member

“I do not want the park open to the public”

– Community member

“I would like to **volunteer** to be on this project as a neighborhood or community resident!.”

– Community member



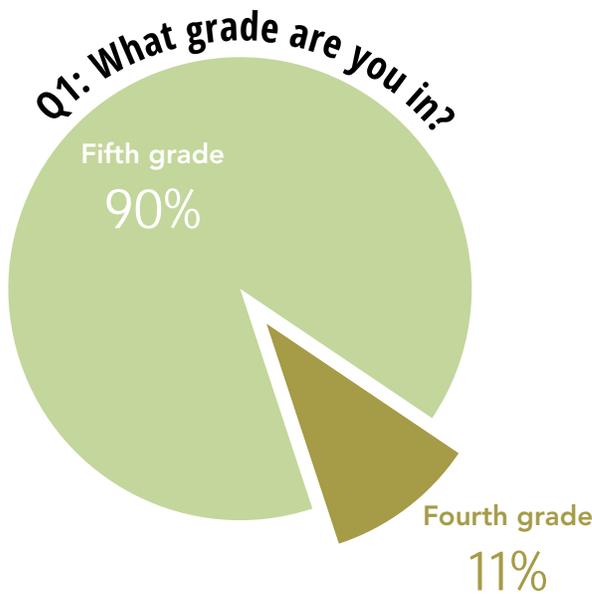
Survey collection boxes were stationed at both Kimberley Elementary and Therrell High Schools

STUDENT OPINION SURVEY RESULTS

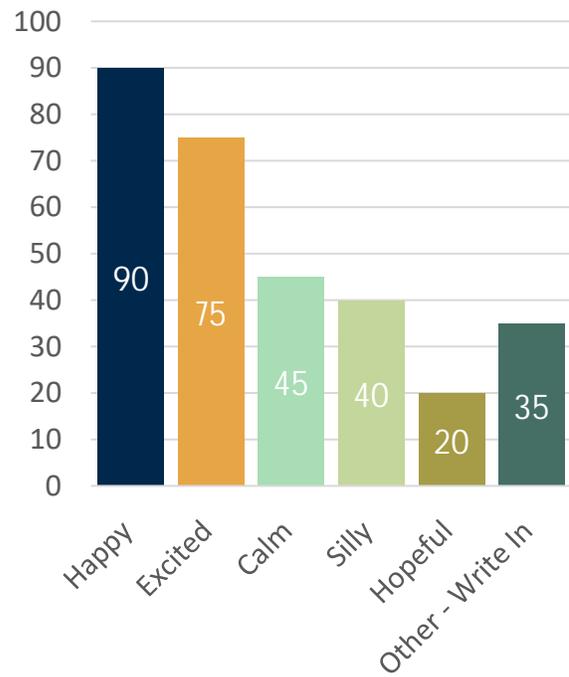
# Falling Water Park

# 20

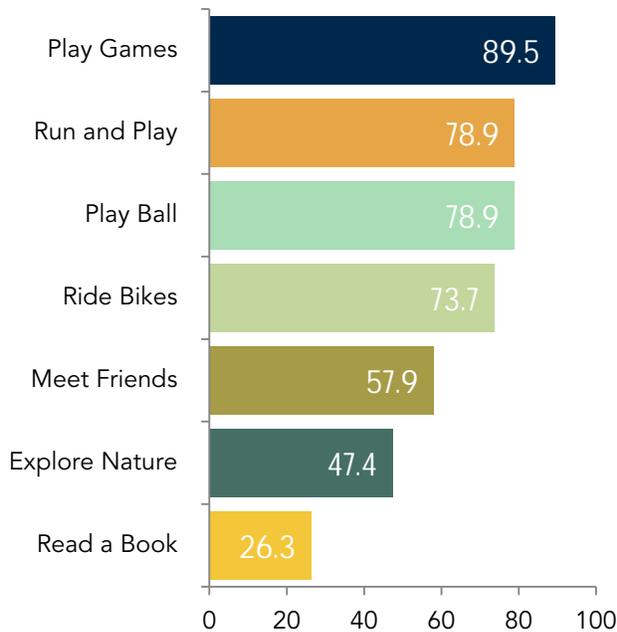
**ELEMENTARY STUDENTS RESPONDED**  
All responses can be found in the Appendix



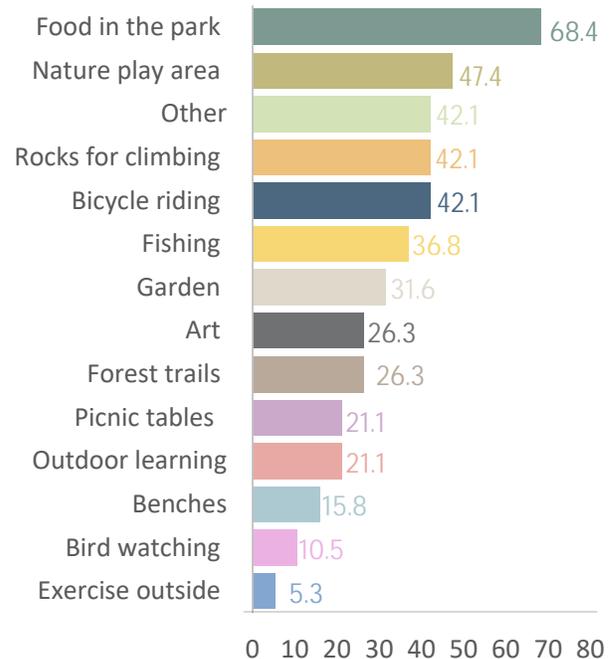
**Q3: How do you feel when you're outside?**



**Q2: What are your favorite things to do outside?**



**Q4: What would make you want to visit the park?**



## Public Engagement

Park Pride organized a series of three public meetings for the Falling Water Park visioning process. Each public meeting moved the visioning process along in stages: the first was a brainstorming session where 'Big Ideas' about the park are established. The second meeting offered two preliminary design concepts for review and comment. The third shared the finished vision plan and established community priorities for projects. All meetings were advertised via a combination of yard signage, flyering, and email. Outreach for participation was prioritized for those residents who lived within a 10-minute walk of the park.

### Public Meeting 1 - Feb 26, 2023

The first public meeting was held virtually and attracted 76 registrants. The meeting opened with an outline of the visioning process, the definition of a vision plan, and its limitations. Next, the existing site conditions and park's history were reviewed. Community members participated in online polls (opposite page) and asked questions via the chat feature, giving the steering committee and the design team a better idea of the community's needs and wishes for the series of parks. Councilmember Marci Overstreet was in attendance at this meeting, along with Tara Buckner, Urban Planner for the Department of Parks and Recreation. The meeting was recorded and published to the Falling Water visioning website, where it received over 90 views.

Feedback from this meeting, as well as the survey, led to the creation of four Guiding Principles for the park (see inset on this page). These were adopted by the steering committee to shape the recommendations made through the visioning process.



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

*Protect and enhance the forest, stream, and wetland ecosystems by facilitating environmental stewardship and educational opportunities.*

*Apply principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) to promote a safe clean space with clearly defined areas of use and delineated boundaries.*

*Provide a tranquil space for community members to improve mental and physical health near their homes.*

*Partner with nearby schools to establish a community-based volunteer network to promote positive use and closer personal connections to the park for residents.*



*The context and history of Falling Water Park were presented at the first public meeting, including a brief discussion of physiographic regions of Georgia.*



# Preliminary Concept 1

**MT. GILEAD LAKE**  
The dam that created Mt. Gilead Lake was damaged in the 1970s. This plan restores the dam to a functional condition and stabilizes water levels in the lake for scenic and recreational purposes. This plan furthermore recommends a boardwalk to provide access over the water for walking and spending time on the water.  
A second existing dam on the property is recommended for removal to eliminate standing water in the upper woodland.

**NATURE TRAILS**  
Half a mile of soft surface trails wind their way through the forest, providing opportunities for deeper immersion in nature and providing space for activities like birding and cross-country practice for Therrell High School students. These trails connect to the lake and the larger trail network in the park.

**SCENIC OVERLOOK**  
The challenging topography in the power easement becomes an opportunity to offer scenic views of the park from a high vantage point.

**PAVED TRAILS**  
A half-mile of paved trails provides access through the park to the lake and across the creek. A circular garden provides a landmark and place of quiet respite where the trails intersect.

**COMMUNITY GARDEN**  
The power easement is the sunniest spot in the park because of the absence of trees. This makes it ideal for growing food. This plan shows a modest-sized community garden near the parking lot for growing healthy food.

**PEDESTRIAN ENTRANCE**  
A park entry on Panther Trail welcomes walkers and cyclists with a small entrance plaza that leads to the trails and the park's interior.

**ENTRANCE AND PARKING**  
Falling Water Park requires a well-marked formal entrance with park signage, rules, and driveway from Panther Trail. This plan shows a parking lot with a capacity of 16 cars in the power easement, taking advantage of the cleared space and existing access drive. The driveway may be outfitted with a gate that opens and closes on a timer. Curb, wheel stops, bollards, and other vehicle exclusion measures prevent motor vehicles from intruding into park beyond the parking lot.

**2023 Vision Plan for Falling Water Park**  
SOUTHWEST NEIGHBORHOOD OF ATLANTA  
Facilitated by parkpride

Concept 1  
April 2023

# Preliminary Concept 2

**WETLANDS AND BOARDWALK**  
If nothing is done to repair the dam, Mt. Gilead Lake will continue to shrink until it reverts back to its natural state as a creek. This can also be achieved through the intentional removal of the dam. In either case, this plan shows a restored creek and wetland where the lake used to be. Wetlands are areas that tend to have saturated soils. They are rich in plant and animal life, including amphibians, birds, and small mammals.  
A boardwalk trail is shown over the wetlands to facilitate education and wildlife observation, including two bird blinds (a structure that lets you watch birds without being seen).

**NATURE TRAILS**  
One quarter mile of soft surface trails wind their way through the forest, providing opportunities for deeper immersion in nature and providing space for cross-country practice for Therrell High School students. These trails connect to the lake and the larger trail network in the park.

**FITNESS CIRCUIT**  
A one-quarter mile paved fitness circuit winds through the forest with exercise stations spaced along it, providing a full-body workout experience.

**ACTIVE ZONE**  
This design includes an active zone around the parking lot that includes a playground, small pavilion, and picnic area. A small creek access area provides an opportunity for students to engage in water quality testing and environmental science.  
The playground may incorporate themes of nature and the forest through color choices and material selection.

**ENTRANCE AND PARKING**  
Falling Water Park requires a well-marked formal entrance with park signage, rules, and driveway from Panther Trail. This plan shows a 17-car parking lot in the gas easement, taking advantage of the cleared space. The driveway may be outfitted with a gate that opens and closes on a timer. Curb, wheel stops, bollards, and other vehicle exclusion measures prevent motor vehicles from intruding into park beyond the parking lot.

**2023 Vision Plan for Falling Water Park**  
SOUTHWEST NEIGHBORHOOD OF ATLANTA  
Facilitated by parkpride

Concept 2  
April 2023

## FEATURES, CONCEPT 1

- Small parking area in existing ELECTRICAL easement with connections to Therrell High School and Cascade Parc neighborhood
- Community garden adjacent to parking area
- Gathering/seating areas
- Paved pedestrian trails from parking area with two branches: one to lake and boardwalk, and one looping through lower woodland back to pedestrian entrance at the gas easement on Panther Trail
- Dam at Mount Gilead Lake repaired and lake levels restored, fish stocked, cleaning station
- Boardwalk over lake with railing designed for fishing and wildlife observation

## FEATURES, CONCEPT 2

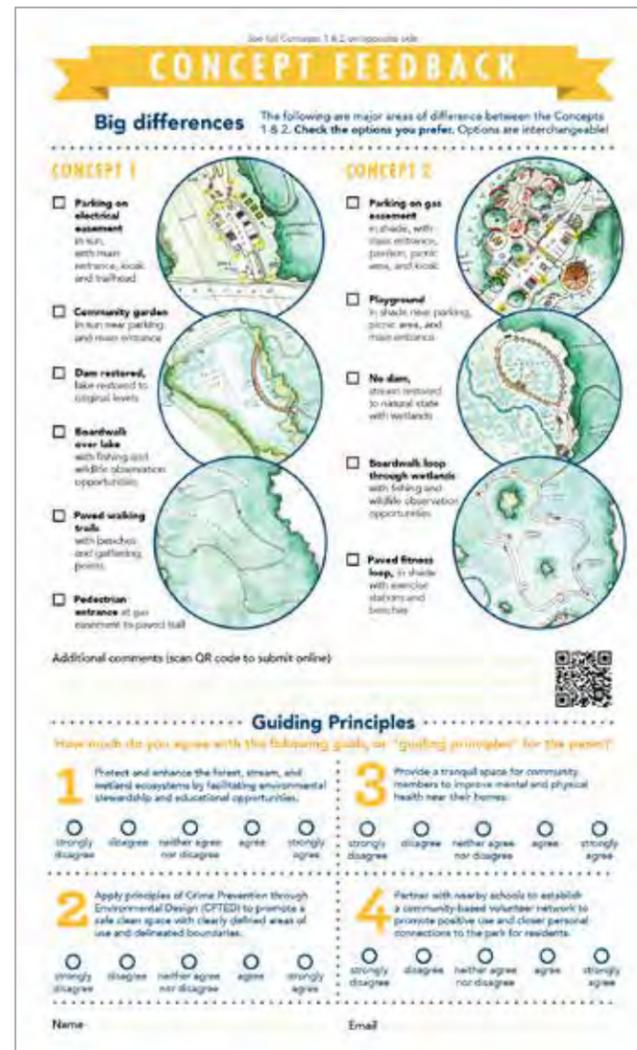
- Small parking area in existing GAS easement with sidewalk connections to Panther Trail
- Playground next to parking, designed to be shaded by existing trees.
- Pavilion opposite the playground with covered gathering space and additional larger group table/grill adjacent
- Paved walking trail begins at parking area with a fitness loop, another branch leading to the wetland loop.
- Fitness stations are dispersed along the fitness loop
- Dam at Mount Gilead Lake is deconstructed and stream restored with natural wetlands
- Boardwalk loop over wetlands with railing designed for fishing and wildlife observation
- Bird Blinds over wetland for wildlife observation
- Creek access provided near entrance for students

## BOTH CONCEPTS

- Park lot is gated for access only during operating hours; bollards/boulders restrict vehicular access on trails to maintenance only
- Parking area and pedestrian entrances include lighting, emergency call boxes, and cameras
- Trash receptacles, benches, bike racks are provided at entrances and gathering points
- Unpaved trails winding through upper woodland

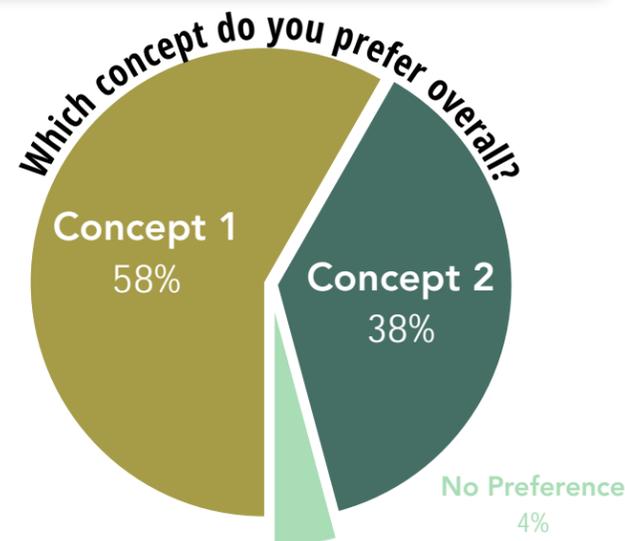
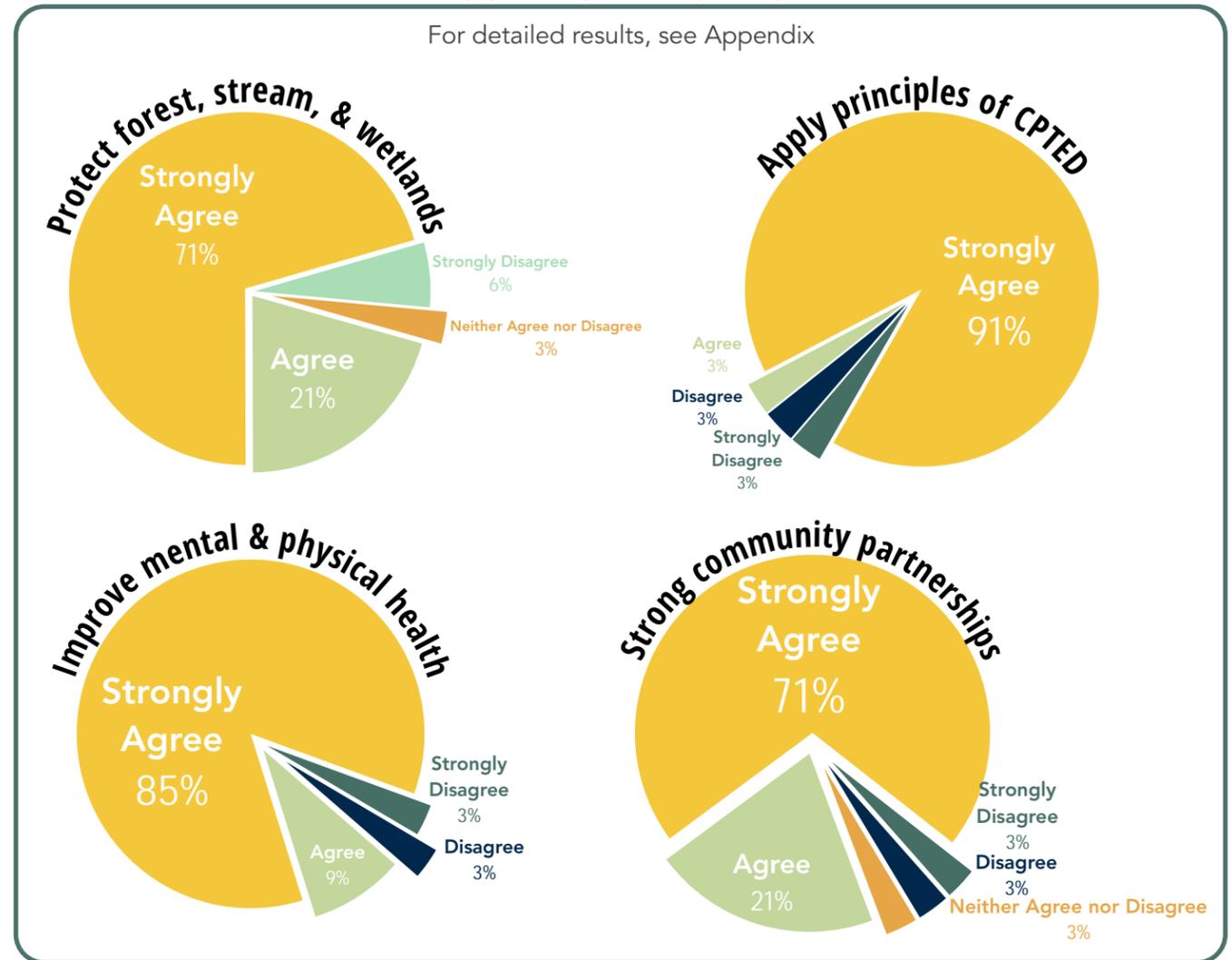
# Feedback Form & Results

Attendees of the second public meeting were asked to fill out the Concept Feedback form to indicate their preferences between the alternate plans

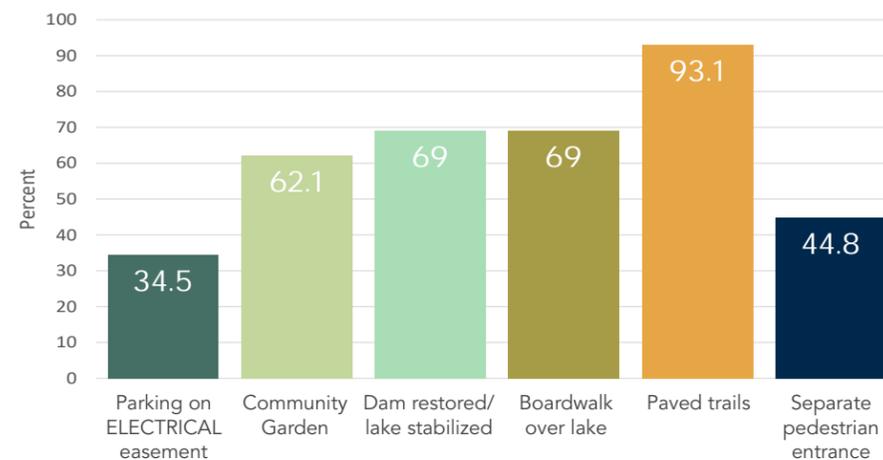


## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

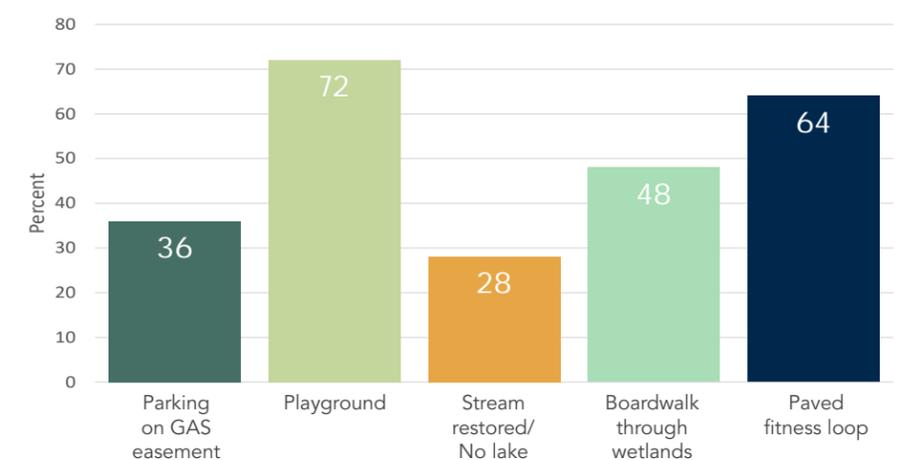
For detailed results, see Appendix



### What features do you like from Concept 1?



### What features do you like from Concept 2?



**Public Meeting 3 - May 20, 2023**

The third and final public meeting was held outdoors in the parking lot of D. M. Therrell High School. Seventeen community members attended, including Atlanta City Councilmember, Marci Overstreet. Results from the preliminary concept survey were presented on posters, along with the final vision plan. Potential project priorities were also reviewed, and attendees were asked to take a survey to document the projects they thought were most important. The plan and electronic version of the prioritization survey were also made available online. Twenty people filled out this survey, the results of which are shown below.

**Please arrange all the items in order of priority TO YOU starting at the top with the most important and moving down from there to the least important.**

Item	Overall Rank	Rank Distribution
Boardwalk over lake and wetlands	1	
Paved trails	2	
Unpaved trails	3	
Parking with lighting & cameras	4	
Restored dam & lake	5	
Scenic overlook & bird observation areas	6	
Exercise stations	7	
Stone seatwall gathering area	8	
Community garden	9	
Nature play & picnic area	10	
Stream study access point	11	

Above: Graphic showing priorities shared by participants in the project prioritization survey

Below, top: Councilmember Marci Overstreet looks over the plans with resident, Loretta Green

Below middle: The final public meeting was held outdoors so attendees could experience the park firsthand.

Below bottom: After the meeting, participants went on a walk through the park.



**Vision Plan** (see insert for larger version)





**MT. GILEAD LAKE**

The dam that created Mt. Gilead Lake was damaged in the 1970s. This plan restores the dam to a functional condition and stabilizes water levels in the lake for scenic and recreational purposes. This plan also recommends a boardwalk to provide access over the water for walking and spending time on the water.

A second existing dam on the property is recommended for removal to eliminate standing water in the upper woodland.



**NATURE TRAILS**

Half a mile of soft surface trails wind their way through the forest, providing opportunities for deeper immersion in nature and providing space for activities like birding and cross-country practice for Therrell High School students. These trails connect to the lake and the larger trail network in the park.



**FITNESS CIRCUIT**

A one-quarter mile paved fitness circuit winds through the forest with exercise stations spaced along it, providing a full-body workout experience.

Trails can also be fitted with hand rails in places for hikers with visual impairments



**SCENIC OVERLOOK**

The challenging topography in the power easement becomes an opportunity to offer scenic views of the lake and forest from an elevated vantage point.



**PAVED TRAILS & BOARDWALK**

A half-mile of paved trails provides access through the park to the lake and across the creek to the south wetlands boardwalk.

A circular stone gathering space provides a landmark and place of quiet respite where the trails intersect.



**COMMUNITY GARDEN**

The power easement is the sunniest spot in the park because of the absence of trees. This makes it ideal for growing food. This plan shows a modestly-sized community garden for growing healthy food.



**NATURE PLAY & PICNIC**

This design includes a small playground and picnic area focused on nature. A small creek access area provides an opportunity for students to engage in water quality testing and environmental science.

The play equipment may incorporate themes of nature and the forest through color choices, material selection, and activities.

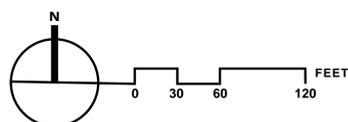
**SECURE ENTRANCES AND PARKING**

Falling Water Park requires a well-marked, lit, and monitored formal entrance with park signage, rules, and security features. This plan shows two entrances: the main entrance in the gas easement, taking advantage of the cleared space. This entrance includes a 22-car parking lot. The driveway may be outfitted with a gate that opens and closes on a timer. Curb, wheel stops, bollards, and other vehicle exclusion measures prevent motor vehicles from intruding into park beyond the parking lot. A secondary pedestrian and service entrance is located on the electrical easement.



**Vision Plan**

May 2023  
Facilitated by



**PAGE LEFT INTENTIONALLY BLANK**

# Vision Plan

Based on public opinion gathered throughout the visioning process, a final vision plan was created for Falling Water Park. The vision plan has been divided into potential projects and described below. Project priorities and approximate cost (2023) for each project is included in the Projects & Budget section. Projects can be undertaken separately, in groups, or all at once depending on funding and neighborhood need.

## Public access, parking, and site security

Among the more pressing needs at Falling Water Park is a well-marked formal entrance with park signage, rules, lighting, and a security camera. Through the visioning process, Park Pride investigated two alternate locations for a small parking lot off Panther Trail using the existing utility easements, either power or gas. Both locations offer excellent visibility from the roadway, making passive and active surveillance of the space easier. Both locations are also cleared of trees and are topographically relatively flat, minimizing tree loss and grading. Although there are advantages and disadvantages to each location, the vision plan shows a 22-car parking lot on the gas easement, which is managed by Atlanta Gas Light.



Access into the forest would be easier to achieve from the gas easement than the electrical easement due to differences in elevation. The electrical easement is perched topographically higher than most of the rest of the park and is separated by a steep slope. This elevation difference may present costly challenges when constructing accessible pathways into the park and would almost certainly result in the loss of several trees. The vision plan also recommends a small nature-themed playground and picnic area in the southeast corner of the park, taking advantage of the shade provided by the tree canopy. By locating the parking lot in the gas easement, it can serve this small community amenity, which would be unsuitable to locate in the power easement due to lack of shade and proximity to transmission lines.





*Morningside Nature Preserve provides a suitable precedent for locating a parking lot and park entrance within a utility easement.*

Advantages to locating parking in the electrical easement (managed by Georgia Power) is that it provides an existing curb cut from Panther Trail, which the gas easement lacks. Though currently gated, the existing utility access road could be repurposed as a park entrance and parking lot in coordination with Georgia Power, like the one at Morningside Nature Preserve. Additionally, though the change in topography may be challenging to traverse with an accessible trail, it may also offer opportunities to create impressive vistas and contribute to a unique entry sequence for park users. Although a parking lot on the electrical easement could not serve a nearby playground, this was not identified as a top community priority.

Parking for the park may be constructed in either utility easement, and both locations offer advantages and disadvantages. This plan opted for the gas easement in large part to reduce likely construction costs associated with traversing steep grades and to preserve the option of constructing a nearby playground that the parking lot could serve.

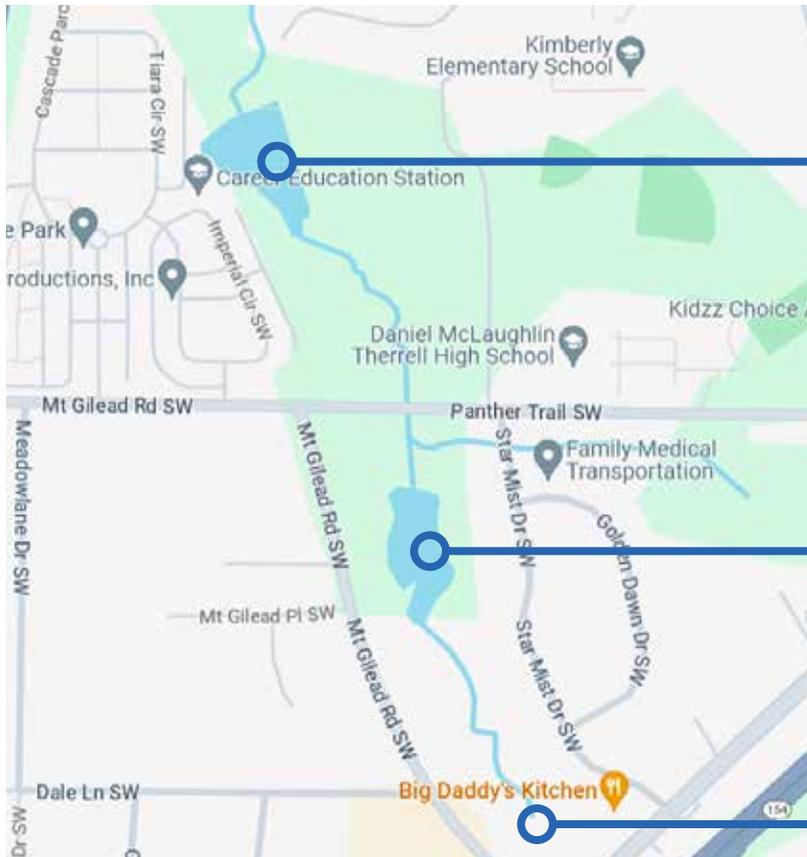
Regardless of where it's built, the parking lot is recommended to be paved with a combination of asphalt and permeable pavement to help capture and treat the first inch of rainfall. Because security was listed as a top concern among neighbors, a security camera and lighting should also be included. An automatic gate may also be considered so the parking lot closes at a pre-specified time.

In addition to parking, this plan shows a fence that clearly defines the separation between private and public land, particularly along its north and west edges, where the Cascade Parc community and homeowners along Lovell Drive expressed concerns about security and privacy. As usership of the park increases, it will be important to work with neighboring landowners to discuss options for delineating private land through fencing and signage.

## Mt. Gilead Lake

Mount Gilead Lake is among the major defining features of Falling Water Park and is currently disappearing due to erosion. Fish live in the lake, and it is a destination for a small number of local fishers who know about its beauty and bounty. This plan recognizes the recreational and ecological value of the lake and proposes redesigning and restoring the breached dam to preserve aquatic wildlife, while increasing the lake's size from 1.3 acres to 3 acres. Dam restorations are costly projects





*Mt. Gilead Lake is located less than a mile downstream from the tributary's point of origin. (Google Maps)*

**Mt. Gilead Lake**

**Unnamed "sister" lake on private property with intact dam**

**Tributary stream point of origin**

with several layers of regulation, including federal, state, and local. At the time of this writing, the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is conducting a study in partnership with the Atlanta Department of Watershed Management (DWM) for improving the aquatic ecosystem in the Utoy Creek watershed. Securing support (both logistical and financial) from the USACE could boost this project and make it more likely to succeed, though it would also slow the project down.

In the time since the dam was built in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, environmental philosophy has evolved to favor dam removal over construction, and it is unlikely that Mt. Gilead Lake would be built today given the expense and regulation involved. The lake currently supports a mini ecosystem, including a healthy wetland along its edges that is rich with native plants and wildlife like tree frogs, turtles, deer, and birds. Because this dam was built on a minor tributary less than a mile downstream from its point of

origin and with another intact dam less than half a mile upstream, this plan concludes that the recreational and scenic qualities of the lake outweigh any environmental benefit that would result from its removal.

Also worth mentioning is the second minor dam on the northeast quadrant of the property that retains a small pond, which captures surface runoff from rain events and has no apparent ecological or recreational value. This small dam is recommended for intentional breaching for liability and public health reasons.



*A second smaller dam on the property is recommended for removal for liability purposes.*



*The boardwalk over Lake Logan at Adams Park provides inspiration for a boardwalk at Falling Water Park.*

## Trails and boardwalks

The highest priority projects identified by the community include the boardwalks as well as paved and unpaved trails. These features provide access to the interior of the forest and the lake edge as well as facilitate exploration of the site. This plan recommends extending a paved trail from the park entrance to the lake so that all may enjoy this scenic amenity. This trail may be paved with asphalt or concrete, with asphalt being a more cost-effective option for initial installation with higher maintenance costs, and concrete costing more upfront, but having a longer useful life. Permeable pavement is not recommended for this context due to maintenance requirements.

This plan was inspired by the boardwalk that traverses Lake Logan in Adams Park and recommends a similar treatment here to bring park users closer to the water and to facilitate fishing and birdwatching. A boardwalk is also recommended in the wetlands that extend southward from the lake along the sides of the creek. The projected costs offered in this plan (see next chapter) provide two pricing options for the boardwalks: one for a concrete boardwalk, similar to what was installed in Adams Park, and another for a standard wooden boardwalk. As with the

paved trail, it will be necessary to balance initial construction costs with long-term maintenance considerations to determine which material would be best to use.

Additionally, a loop of unpaved trails is recommended for those who seek out a more naturalistic trail experience. These trails could facilitate practice runs by the Therrell High School cross country team as well as provide a more exploratory and challenging trail environment for park users. Depending on budget, unpaved trails may also be routed in areas where paved trails will be built later when budget allows.



*Paved trails and boardwalks were the top priorities identified by community members.*

## Scenic overlook, gathering area, stream study, and bird observation

The trail system, once in place, can lead to points of interest throughout the park. Aside from the lake itself, this plan features small moments of discovery that highlight views, ecology, and history that will enrich the park visitor's experience.

Among the more spectacular views in the park is within the power easement just south of Mt. Gilead Lake. The plan capitalizes on this vista by creating an overlook that includes seating where the park user can take in the vastness of the sky reflected in the lake and perhaps grasp inspiration or simply take a moment to breathe.

A bird blind is a feature that supports bird observation by allowing people to watch birds without the birds seeing them. This way birds can be observed engaging in their natural behavior more easily. These features may also be a draw for educational outings organized by Birds Georgia and other naturalist groups. The vision plan includes a bird blind placed near the lakeshore to maximize the potential of observing

aquatic birds and other wildlife that use the lake as a resource.

Among the reasons listed for purchasing the land for a park in 2004 was the educational value of the park and its proximity to Therrell High School and Kimberly Elementary School. Planning conversations held with students and faculty at Therrell revealed that teachers have taken their classes to the creek in the past to conduct water sampling and other ecological observations. This plan facilitates that activity by providing a stream study access point near Panther Trail, providing a small gathering space for lessons just a short walk from the school.

Lastly, the plan also includes a stone seatwall gathering area in the forest at the site of a former circular peninsula that jutted into Mt. Gilead Lake when it was at its maximum historical depth. This island is still visible in the landscape with the broken piles of a former dock extending from its outer rim

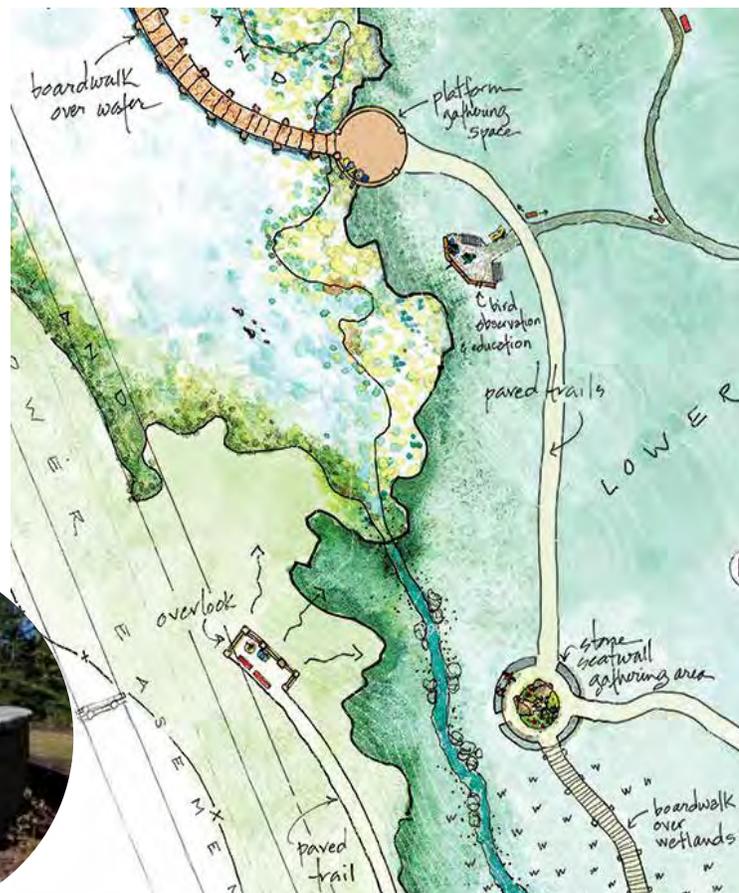


Photo above, NPS.gov image combined with photo of Falling Water Park  
 Photo right, Grant Park, photo by Park Pride

into the forest beyond. This area may serve as a junction point for the trail system, offer seating, provide signage related to the history of the site and community, and serve as a landmark for park users.

## Fitness circuit

Though falling lower on the community priority survey, the vision plan also calls for a system of workout stations spaced along a paved trail loop. This plan shows a double trail loop that comprises the fitness circuit, with both moderate and easy options to support people at different stages of their fitness journey. A total of seven pieces of outdoor workout equipment are shown, along with benches and places to rest along the way.

This circuit also may serve as an outdoor walking trail for those with visual impairment by incorporating informational Braille signs and a guide rope for trail users to follow. These supportive features (sometimes called Braille trails) provide an inclusive way to support outdoor recreation that removes barriers experienced by those with disabilities.

## Community garden

A small number of community garden plots are shown in a sunny spot in the power easement as one of a few sunny spots that also has good visibility and access from the road. It is further recommended that community gardens start small and grow as demand dictates. DPR does not maintain community gardens, relying instead on the community to govern and steward the space. It is therefore important that the community be realistic in forecasting how much maintenance they can provide before constructing a garden amenity, especially through the summer months when gardens (and gardeners) tend to wither



in the summer heat while weeds thrive. Regularly-scheduled garden clean-up days or educational programs can help spark and maintain interest over the long term.

## Nature play & picnic area

Though Falling Water Park is first and foremost a nature park, this plan also includes a small nature play area in the southeast corner of the property near the proposed parking lot on the gas easement for young people to explore and develop curiosity and affinity for the natural world.

The proposed play features would be small and made of natural materials so as not to overpower the primary purpose of the park. This area may also include a small picnic area to support parental supervision of play and eating outdoors. This area is designed to fit in and among the existing forest to the extent possible to minimize tree loss. It should also be mentioned that this feature was listed as second-to-last on the list of priorities surveyed in the community.

*Nature play areas can be small in scale and use natural materials like stone and wood to create an exploratory experience for children*



For more information about this nature playground from Bienenstock Playgrounds, go to <https://www.bienenstockplaygrounds.com/portfolio/first-creek-park-natural-playground/>



Picnic area at Dunwoody Nature Center, Georgia, photo from Atlantaareaparks.com



*Deer tracks in the sand on the shore of Mt. Gilead Lake*

# Projects & Budget

After the final public meeting, community members prioritized each project within the vision plan, via an online survey. The plan was divided into projects (right) and ranked in order of importance to the each participant personally or to the neighborhood. The poll revealed priorities as shown in the graphic on the right. Full results can be viewed in the Appendices.

The vision plan may be completed all at once or it may be divided into phases.

Projects could also be grouped. Ultimately, the construction process will be contingent upon funding. Several funding possibilities are available, including Park Pride grants, funding from the Atlanta City Council District 11 discretionary budget, the Park Improvement budget, and additional dollars identified by the community and/or other advocacy organizations. The construction of Falling Water Park will likely be completed with the support of multiple funding sources in phases.

*Community members voted on project priorities during the final public meeting or via an online survey available for two weeks after the public meeting. Twenty-five people participated. Complete results are available in Appendix D.*

## PROJECT PRIORITIES

### Falling Water Park

- 1 Boardwalks over lake & wetlands
- 2 Paved trails
- 3 Unpaved trails
- 4 Parking with lighting & cameras
- 5 Restored dam & lake
- 6 Scenic overlook & bird observation areas
- 7 Exercise stations
- 8 Stone seatwall gathering area
- 9 Community garden
- 10 Nature play & picnic area
- 11 Stream study access point

## Opinion of Probable Costs by Project (in order of priority), June 2023

The budgets presented here are intended to provide a starting point for fund raising and advocacy efforts and were compiled without the benefit of detailed design, survey, geotechnical, and other site conditions, which may change significantly the cost of any project. Park Pride makes no guarantee or warranty as to their accuracy.

### PROJECTS

#### BOARDWALK OVER LAKE AND WETLANDS

Item	Unit	Qty	Cost/Unit	Extended Cost	Notes
<b>Option One: Wooden Boardwalk</b>					
Demo/site prep	ALLOW	1	\$45,000	\$45,000	Erosion & sediment control/rough grading/tree protection
Small pre-fab bridge over creek	EA	1	\$50,000	\$50,000	Prefab bridge - 10-15' span
Wooden boardwalk along lake shore	LF	300	\$750	\$225,000	Assumed Top-Down construction and the use of helical piers at \$2,500 per pier, plus guardrail at \$200/lf and boardwalk structure & decking at \$200/lf
Wooden boardwalk over wetlands	LF	350	\$475	\$166,250	Assumed standard (from the side) construction and the use of helical piers at \$1,500 per pier, plus kickrail at \$75/lf and boardwalk structure & decking at \$200/lf
Design & Engineering	15%			\$72,938	Plan to spend 15% of total budget in design & engineering fees
Contingency	20%			\$111,838	Plan for a contingency budget of 20%
<b>OPTION ONE TOTAL</b>				<b>\$671,025</b>	<b>(INCLUDED IN GRAND TOTAL)</b>

**Option Two: Precast Concrete Boardwalk Pricing (PermaTrak), same material as boardwalk at Adams Park**

Demo/site prep	ALLOW	1	\$45,000	\$45,000	Erosion & sediment control/rough grading/tree protection
Small pre-fab bridge over creek	EA	1	\$50,000	\$50,000	Prefab bridge - 10-15' span
Concrete boardwalk over lake	LF	300	\$1,385	\$415,500	Includes the installed cost of PermaTrak's concrete boardwalk system, including PermaTrak boardwalk material, shipping, and an approximation for a local contractor's installation costs. For this estimate, I assumed an overall boardwalk width of 7'-3" which will give approximately 6'-0" between curbs or handrails. For the 300' portion that will be similar to Adams Park that will go over open water, we have assumed Top-Down construction and the use of helical piers at \$2,500 per pier.
Concrete boardwalk over wetlands	LF	350	\$945	\$330,750	Includes the installed cost of PermaTrak's concrete boardwalk system, including PermaTrak boardwalk material, shipping, and an approximation for a local contractor's installation costs. For this estimate, I assumed an overall boardwalk width of 7'-3" which will give approximately 6'-0" between curbs or handrails. For the 350' portion going over wetlands, I have assumed \$1,500 per foundation. You will likely need a deeper foundation than footers in the wet soils. I have assumed traditional construction (from the side) for the build of this boardwalk.
Design & Engineering		15%		\$126,188	Plan to spend 15% of total budget in design & engineering fees
Contingency		20%		\$193,488	Plan for a contingency budget of 20%
<b>OPTION TWO TOTAL</b>				<b>\$1,160,925</b>	<b>(NOT INCLUDED IN GRAND TOTAL)</b>

## PROJECTS &amp; BUDGET

**PAVED TRAILS**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Qty</b>	<b>Cost/Unit</b>	<b>Extended Cost</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>FITNESS TRAIL</b>					
Grading/site prep	MI	0.29	\$400,000	\$116,000	Mobilization/tree removal/grubbing/rough grading
Erosion/Sediment Control	MI	0.29	\$50,000	\$14,500	Erosion control fencing/bales/creek protection
Concrete trail, 12' width	LF	1480	\$84	\$124,320	Includes material & labor
Curb ramps	EA	1	\$700	\$700	Ramps with detectible warnings
Bollards	EA	3	\$500	\$1,500	Black round steel bollards with high visibility markings
Benches	EA	5	\$3,000	\$15,000	Victor Stanley, black, on concrete pads
Waste receptacles	EA	1	\$2,000	\$2,000	Victor Stanley, black, on concrete pads
Bicycle racks	EA	5	\$300	\$1,500	Inverted "U", black
Trail map/signage	ALLOW	1	\$7,000	\$7,000	Wayfinding kiosk at north and south entry points
Design & Engineering	18%			\$50,854	Plan to spend 18% of total budget in design & engineering fees
Contingency	20%			\$66,675	Plan for a contingency budget of 20%
<b>Fitness Trail Subtotal</b>				<b>\$400,048</b>	
<b>PAVED TRAIL FROM LAKE TO FITNESS LOOP</b>					
Grading/site prep	MI	0.10	\$400,000	\$40,000	Mobilization/tree removal/grubbing/rough grading
Erosion/Sediment Control	MI	0.10	\$50,000	\$5,000	Erosion control fencing/bales/creek protection
Concrete trail, 12' width	LF	550	\$84	\$46,200	Includes material & labor
Benches	EA	2	\$3,000	\$6,000	Victor Stanley, black, on concrete pads
Waste receptacles	EA	1	\$2,000	\$2,000	Victor Stanley, black, on concrete pads
Bicycle racks	EA	5	\$300	\$1,500	Inverted "U", black
Design & Engineering	18%			\$18,126	Plan to spend 18% of total budget in design & engineering fees
Contingency	20%			\$23,765	Plan for a contingency budget of 20%
<b>Paved Trail to Lake from Fitness Loop Subtotal</b>				<b>\$142,591</b>	

**SWITCHBACK TO POWER EASEMENT AND OVERLOOK**

Grading/site prep	MI	0.20	\$400,000	\$80,000		Mobilization/tree removal/grubbing/rough grading
Erosion/Sediment Control	MI	0.20	\$50,000	\$10,000		Erosion control fencing/bales/creek protection
Concrete trail, 12' width	LF	925	\$84	\$77,700		Includes material & labor
Retaining walls	SF	450	\$75	\$33,750		CMU wall with granite veneer & bluestone cap, assume average height of 36"
Benches	EA	2	\$3,000	\$6,000		Victor Stanley, black, on concrete pads
Waste receptacles	EA	1	\$2,000	\$2,000		Victor Stanley, black, on concrete pads
Bicycle racks	EA	5	\$300	\$1,500		Inverted "U", black
Design & Engineering	18%			\$37,971		Plan to spend 18% of total budget in design & engineering fees
Contingency	20%			\$49,784		Plan for a contingency budget of 20%

**Switchback to Power Easement and Overlook Subtotal**

**\$298,705**

**TOTAL ALL PAVED TRAILS**

**\$841,345**

**UNPAVED TRAILS**

Item	Unit	Qty	Cost/Unit	Extended Cost	Notes
Demo/site prep	ALLOW	1	\$20,000	\$20,000	Erosion & sediment control/rough grading/tree protection
Soft surface trails	LF	1820	\$7	\$12,740	Natural surface hiking trail
Benches	EA	4	\$7,500	\$30,000	Victor Stanley, black, on concrete pads
Design & Engineering	18%			\$11,293	Typically 18% of total budget in design & engineering fees
Contingency	20%			\$14,807	Plan for a contingency budget of 20%
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$88,840</b>	

## PROJECTS &amp; BUDGET

## PARKING AND SITE SECURITY

Item	Unit	Qty	Cost/Unit	Extended Cost	Notes
Grading/site prep	ALLOW	1.00	\$25,000	\$25,000	Mobilization/rough grading
Erosion/Sediment Control	ALLOW	1.00	\$15,000	\$15,000	Erosion control fencing/bales/creek protection
Crusher run auxiliary parking area	SPACE	24	\$2,000	\$48,000	New gravel parking area in gas easement, including wheel stops, and lines dividing spaces
Entrance drive	LF	105	\$150	\$15,750	Bituminous entrance drive
Gate	EA	1	\$5,000	\$5,000	Gate so parking can be opened/closed as needed
Boundary fencing	LF	1500	\$12	\$18,000	Chain link, black vinyl covered, 4' height
Bollards	EA	10	\$500	\$5,000	Black round steel bollards with high visibility markings
Benches	EA	2	\$3,000	\$6,000	Victor Stanley, black, on concrete pads
Waste receptacles	EA	2	\$2,000	\$4,000	Victor Stanley, black, on concrete pads
Bicycle racks	EA	5	\$300	\$1,500	Inverted "U" , black
Park signage	ALLOW	1	\$18,000	\$18,000	Includes standard park signage (park id, rules, etc)
Trail map/signage	ALLOW	1	\$7,000	\$7,000	
Light poles	EA	3	\$7,000	\$21,000	Wayfinding kiosk at parking lot
Security cameras	EA	1.00	\$16,300	\$16,300	Security cameras and associated monitoring. Recommend for parking lots
Other security features	ALLOW	1	\$30,000	\$30,000	Potential projects include emergency call boxes or improved visibility into the park from the perimeter
Design & Engineering	15%			\$32,633	Plan to spend 15% of total budget in design & engineering fees
Contingency	20%			\$50,037	Plan for a contingency budget of 20%

**TOTAL**  
**\$318,219**

**RESTORED DAM & LAKE**

Item	Unit	Qty	Cost/Unit	Extended Cost	Notes
Hydrologic & dam evaluation, design & engineering, dam reconstruction to create a 3-acre lake	ALLOW	1	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000	The recent (2023) dam replacement at Glen Emerald Park cost approximately \$5M to complete from beginning to end. This was a "high hazard" 8-acre lake, which is on the high end of dam replacement projects. Cost has been reduced by 30% for this estimate
Breach/remove small in dam in upper woodlands	ALLOW	1	\$10,000	\$10,000	Intentionally breach the small dam in the NE quadrant of the park
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$3,510,000</b>	

**SCENIC OVERLOOK & BIRD OBSERVATION AREAS**

Item	Unit	Qty	Cost/Unit	Extended Cost	Notes
Demo/site prep	ALLOW	1	\$25,000	\$25,000	Erosion & sediment control/rough grading/tree protection
Bird blind/observation points	EA	2	\$25,000	\$50,000	May be sized to accommodate small groups
Overlook platform	ALLOW	1	\$12,000	\$12,000	Includes a paved area with seating, waste receptacle, and guardrails
Design & Engineering	15%			\$13,050	Plan to spend 15% of total budget in design & engineering fees
Contingency	20%			\$20,010	Plan for a contingency budget of 20%
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$120,060</b>	

**EXERCISE STATIONS**

Item	Unit	Qty	Cost/Unit	Extended Cost	Notes
Fitness station equipment for full-body workout	ALLOW	1	\$20,000	\$20,000	Install high-quality steel powder-coated workout equipment along exercise circuit trail (assume seven pieces)
Installation	20%			\$4,000	Assume 20% installation costs
Contingency	20%			\$4,800	Plan for a contingency budget of 20%
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$28,800</b>	

## PROJECTS &amp; BUDGET

**STONE SEATWALL GATHERING AREA**

Item	Unit	Qty	Cost/Unit	Extended Cost	Notes
Demo/site prep	ALLOW	1	\$20,000	\$20,000	Erosion & sediment control/rough grading/tree protection on steep slope
Small paved plaza w/boulders or garden in center	EA	1	\$7,500	\$7,500	Assume concrete
Stone walls	SF	250	\$75	\$18,750	CMU wall with granite veneer & bluestone cap, assume average height of 24"
Design & Engineering	15%			\$6,938	Plan to spend 15% of total budget in design & engineering fees
Contingency	20%			\$10,638	Plan for a contingency budget of 20%
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$63,825</b>	

**COMMUNITY GARDEN**

Item	Unit	Qty	Cost/Unit	Extended Cost	Notes
Demo/site prep	ALLOW	1	\$10,000	\$10,000	Erosion & sediment control/rough grading/tree protection
Raised garden beds	EA	5	\$500	\$2,500	Beds may be built from donated materials and/or with volunteer labor
Contingency	20%			\$2,500	Plan for a contingency budget of 20%
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$15,000</b>	

**NATURE PLAY & PICNIC AREA**

Item	Unit	Qty	Cost/Unit	Extended Cost	Notes
Demo/site prep	ALLOW	1	\$20,000	\$20,000	Erosion & sediment control/rough grading/tree protection on steep slope
Site furnishings (picnic tables, trash cans)	ALLOW	1	\$10,000	\$10,000	Provide places for parents to sit comfortably
Play equipment (assume 2-3 pieces)	ALLOW	1	\$65,000	\$65,000	Nature-themed play equipment
Installation	20%			\$13,000	Assume installation of play equipment at 20% of cost
Design & Engineering	15%			\$16,200	Plan to spend 15% of total budget in design & engineering fees
Contingency	20%			\$24,840	Plan for a contingency budget of 20%
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$149,040</b>	

**STREAM STUDY ACCESS POINT**

Item	Unit	Qty	Cost/Unit	Extended Cost	Notes
Demo/site prep	ALLOW	1	\$10,000	\$10,000	Erosion & sediment control/rough grading/tree protection on steep slope
Unpaved foot trail to water edge	LF	90	\$7	\$630	Access trail to stream
Small creekside gathering space	ALLOW	1	\$7,500	\$7,500	Nature-themed play equipment
Design & Engineering	15%			\$2,720	Plan to spend 15% of total budget in design & engineering fees
Contingency	20%			\$4,170	Plan for a contingency budget of 20%
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$25,019</b>	

**GRAND TOTAL**

**\$5,831,173**



*Beauty is discovered in a tulip tree leaf during an autumn walk at Falling Water Park*

# Appendices

*Note: Any identifying information of respondents has been redacted*

**PAGE LEFT INTENTIONALLY BLANK**

# Appendix A

## COMMUNITY SURVEY & KIMBERLY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SURVEY OPENED JAN 17, 2023; CLOSED MARCH 10, 2023

*Note: Any identifying information of respondents has been redacted*

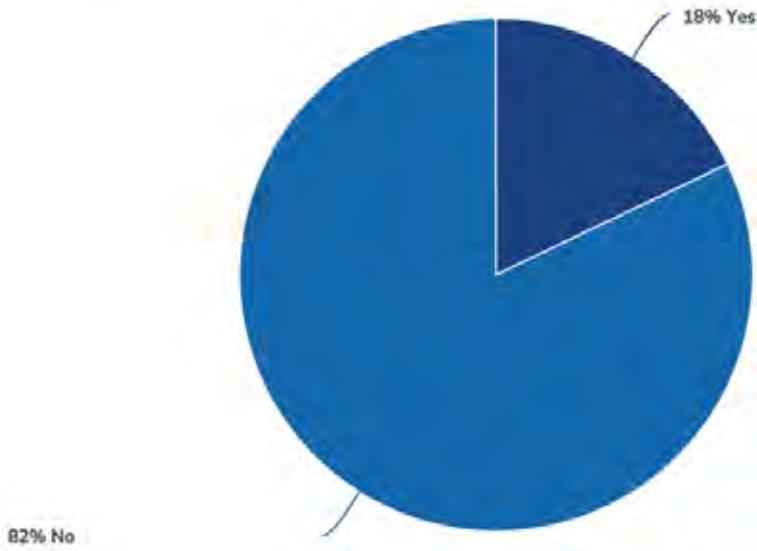
### Report for Falling Water Park - Community Survey

#### Response Counts



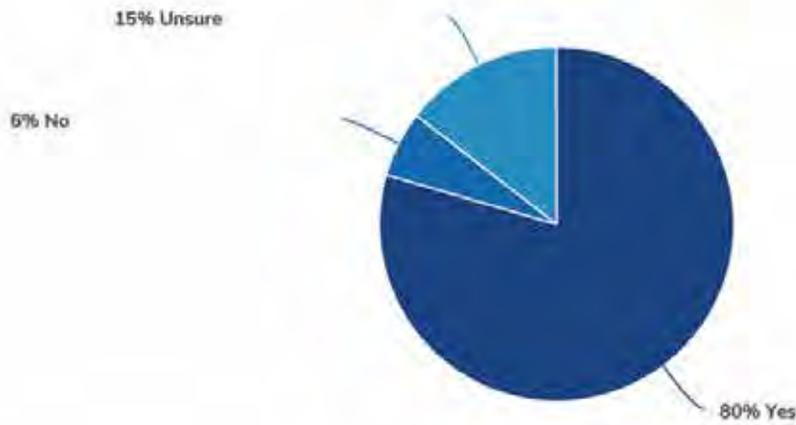
Totals: 119

1. Prior to receiving this survey, did you know that Falling Water Park is an inactive city-owned greenspace in the neighborhood?



Value	Percent	Responses
Yes	17.9%	21
No	82.1%	96
		<b>Totals: 117</b>

2. Are you in favor of opening and activating the park for public use?



Value	Percent	Responses
Yes	79.5%	93
No	6.0%	7
Unsure	14.5%	17

Totals: 117

### 3. How do you hope this park might benefit you and/or the community?

ResponseID	Response
1	The park is adjacent to my home & as a pet owner & nature enthusiast I'm thrilled attention is being given towards this awesome site for park development
2	Walking trails and areas for children to play.
4	I hope that the value of my home and community increases. I hope that by opening up this park that new businesses are able to come into the community and flourish
5	A space for our dogs to walk and play
6	Safe place to ride bikes, jog, walk, play with kids, exercise classes, senior activities, and rec leagues.
7	It would really benefit the neighborhood because there's nothing around enjoyable, there's no recreational anything.
8	A close option for enjoying nature without having to go to the beltline.
9	walking trails, dog parks, tennis courts, playgrounds
10	It will provide a place for the community, and public to visit. This area needs a park/attraction for the residents here. Opening this park will hopefully attract more buyers to the area, and keep home values up.
11	Walks with my child , relaxation
12	Provide opportunities for spending time outside, for playing, walking, biking, etc.
13	There is a dearth of safe places to walk around here because sidewalks are nearly nonexistent, so a place to walk and get exercise would be nice. Also, the area already exists, so some attention and structure would probably do it some good. Parks can absolutely be an asset.
15	Southwest deserves the public landscape to be updated like it has been in the new Upper Westside of ATL, Buckhead and Decatur. As a resident of this city for the last 23 years and now a Mom to a toddler and 2 dogs I hate having to pack up my car and transport my family to another area just to enjoy open green spaces and exercise in a beautiful park.
16	Provide SAFE play for infants - young kids.

ResponseID	Response
18	Somewhere we can take the kids to play and run around. Maybe rotating food trucks as well for a nice weekend excursion.
19	Property value Exercise Walking
20	To have a nice serene area to relax and enjoy the gift of nature.
21	A nice walking path would be wonderful and a play ground for children would be nice.
24	This would help the community become more active thus improving the quality of life. It would also serve as a place for the community to meet and greet each other.
25	Making a safe place for the children and teens in the area play. Family usage
26	Walking trails, playground space, picnic space, and a safe space for neighborhood gatherings that we can call our own.
27	I hope that the park will activate a new greenspace in a community that currently does not meet the 5-minute walkability to greenspaces metric. I also hope that educational and cultural signs can be incorporated to ensure that people understand the importance of green infrastructure and the historical significance of the community.
28	Get to know more neighbors. Become more physically active.
29	walking trails
30	I hope that the park will give the community an opportunity to preserve and gain a respect for nature. If people are able to explore and admire the outdoors, I truly believe that they will be more inclined to help preserve and protect it.
31	A safe place for families to go together and network with community members.
32	-Provide nature at our finger tips -Creating Atmospheres of Trust Community garden that can host a produce market grown in the community Dog park Water pond similar to James Cook Park Community center Nesting boxes Community history Pavilion Food forest Seating /trash/ bolder/ lush landscape Ecosystem education Gardening classes Skating Paddle boats
33	A place of refuge which is accessible to the community. Maintain wetlands, pond, tree canopy. But have walking trail. Csn be used for relaxation and exercise and communing with nature

ResponseID	Response
34	I am hopeful this park will ignite a stronger sense of community and more walkability in our neighborhood.
35	Stronger sense of community and more walkability
36	A safe place to relax, picnic and enjoy nature
37	To offer leisure activities that can stimulate and motivate learning about nature, meeting neighbors and sharing ideas.
38	Outdoor fitness and neighborhood beautification.
39	Clean, walkable green space limited to foot traffic. Include walking trails/paths and activity fields i.e. Tennis and basketball courts. Connected access for adjacent subdivision communities. There should be 24 Safety and surveillance monitoring to ensure this place does not become a place for loitering and crime infestation so close to our homes. Gated where park shares property lines with private homes.
40	My children will enjoy the park.
41	Raise Property Values,, good for work play life adventures
43	It would be a nice place to enjoy nature and relax
44	Close access/ walking distance to green space and nature walks. Eliminate dumping and littering in neighborhood. Increase property value.
46	Create a sense of community pride.
47	Provide an out door green space for the community.
48	Offer green space, with walking trails. A place you can visit thats quiet , a place to enjoy God's creation.
49	I would have somewhere to take my kids to play and socialize with other kids in the neighborhood. Hopefully there will be a swimming pool.
50	Nature education for kids - playscapes
51	No benefits I can see only more crime and people.
52	I do not want this park open to the public
54	By provididng a needed enhancement of quality of life.
55	Places to exercise and walk our pets. Also, it will Contribute to our property values.

ResponseID	Response
------------	----------

56	It will not benefit my community at all.
57	My hope is that Falling Water park will serve as a space for community members to unwind and connect with nature. Nature is good for people and there aren't many places nearby for us to connect with it.
58	I'm hoping it can provide trails to jog on and provide a space for families to gather
59	Make the community a better place.
60	Provide a peaceful, low impact, minimal
62	I'm hopeful it will provide walking trails and active space for children to play
63	I'm not sure if this benefit the community. Certain wildlife I wouldn't mind leaving the area, but what happens to the wildlife, if we begin to disturb their habitat.
65	Bike and walking trails, outdoor exercise area. Picnic area
66	Peaceful place for the community
67	Nature Reserve - Teach Courses Amphitheater - Generate Revenue Pickle Ball & Bocce Ball Court
68	Nature Reserve - Teach Courses Amphitheater - Generate Revenue Pickle Ball & Bocce Ball Court
69	I don't know.
70	Greenspan, walking trails, bird watching
71	A better safer more enjoyable place for kids to play
72	Provide a venue for family gatherings, educational opportunities and nature appreciation.
73	Nature Preserve
75	It would be nice to have a clean and safe place to be more active while enjoying nature.
78	Hopefully it will keep the kids from other neighborhoods out of Cascade Parc destroying properties

ResponseID	Response
79	Give you the opportunity to meet your other neighbors in the community.
80	As a walking trail to positively impact out communities.
81	Exercising and child playtime
82	It won't benefit me.
83	I hope that this park would be a great place to visit with my child and family.
84	Having a place to be outside be more active and enjoy being outside.
86	Recreational space that's convenient to the neighborhood, good for families and folks that just want to enjoy some fresh air or exercise in a nice environment.
87	I'm hoping that the park improves the community by inspiring a cleaner better preserved environment. I would also have that it attracts area improvements of roads and commercial zones.
88	I hope for it to bring unity to the community. It creates a space to get out and get to know one another. Increase the value of our property and create a better standard for how we treat our community (ie illegal dumping, littering, gun violence, etc), eliminate the crime rate.
90	Making the community nicer and having a place to that I can walk to from my home.
91	Bring property value up
92	Provide a SAFE place for neighborhood children to play.
94	I hope the park is connected to the beltline and will increase visibility for the communities that surround it.
96	Additional public space for the community to benefit from, families, children, pets, possibly events, etc.
98	It will give students a place to play
99	Bring life into the neighborhood, more active residents.
100	Bring life into the neighborhood, more active residents.

ResponseID	Response
101	Just a nice place for people to come to and enjoy nature. Also keeping trees up.
102	Property value
104	A clean safe space for families to enjoy each other
105	A place to walk.
107	Safe park for community, walking trails and more
108	I hope we have a place for families to go and enjoy time outside.
109	I hope I can go there to take in nature and meditate.
110	The park can be a better outlook at nature, can be used for educational purposes, exercise and community outreach purposes.
111	The park could bring more of an beautiful aspect to the community.
112	It will give the community a sacred oasis away from home but a convenient place to network
113	Walking trails like the belt line
115	Provide a place to walk among nature and sit. Learn about nature species animals and plants and the age of the trees and pair with historical events.
116	Provide more green space for my children to play
117	Property value
118	It will be a SAFE and controlled environment free of gangs and unruly disrespectful children that no one knows who they belong to

#### 4. What most concerns you about this park, if anything?

ResponseID	Response
1	The safety & design equitability. As with most areas it will need to have cameras along with well lite pathways for day & night participation. The design should be as creative with more historical context like Piedmont Park. Housing a community garden or beehive/dog park/ amphitheater space & proper design given to the pods that inspire creative flow.
2	Exposure to the electrical currents/towers. Any unknown ramifications.
4	Noise concerns Unwanted and illegal activity concerns HS kids using the park to skip and or do other things
5	Traffic in the back of the neighborhood by the lake & there have been a lot more wildlife visible lately
6	Safety and not enough police presence
7	Lighting, safety
8	Security
9	illegal activities if not managed properly
10	The closing hours, and will there be a police presence/patrol.
11	The animals ensuring it is safe
12	Potential for attracting criminal element.

**ResponseID    Response**

13	<p>Security and safety concerns. As a resident of an adjacent subdivision I am excited about a well maintained park, but also nervous about what inviting the public to a fairly tucked away area might bring. I would hate to see people with nefarious intentions finding a new area to take bad advantage of. Being so close to the high school I would worry about large amounts of kids gathering in the area, perhaps when they should not be there. I would be concerned about homeless people also taking advantage of the area. A few places around the area have had to literally be bulldozed because encampments were allowed to develop. I wouldn't want anyone sleeping, panhandling or loitering endlessly in the area. I would like to see a rigorous maintenance program put in place. It's a shame to say so, but we have an extreme litter issue in the area and I would not like to see a park overrun with trash. There would need to be many waste receptacles that would need to be emptied on a very regular basis as well as regular cleanings/litter sweeps. Lastly I would be concerned care would not be given beyond the initial investment. I have seen so many places start off nice - full of flowers and greenery - become unmaintained, overgrown messes. I would worry about consistent upkeep. Other concerns would be noise and things like parking or traffic impediments.</p>
14	<p>Increase in crime</p>
15	<p>What concerns me about this is the safety and security of the area. This is STILL ZoNE 4 and unless we increase security and clean up the area this will just be another breeding space for mor crime. A body that has been missing since last February 2022 was just found back there in the area about 3 weeks ago. Because my home backs up to this area Ive seen everything back there from tire dumping, drug exchanges, stolen AC units be tossed, etc.</p>
16	<p>Misuse by unruly teenagers.</p>
18	<p>Litter or it becoming an oasis for kids with no supervision</p>
19	<p>Upkeep and maintenance</p>
20	<p>vandalism, security and illegal dumping</p>
21	<p>The possibility of loitering.</p>
23	<p>Increase in crime to nearby private homes.</p>
24	<p>Safety. How would this space be monitored?</p>
25	<p>Making sure we have some type of gate to close and open at a set time and security</p>

ResponseID	Response
26	Hoping it will NOT provide an easily accesible path from Cascade Park, where there have been several burglaries and break-ins to Esha Court and McMurray Woods.
27	I hope that dumping is deterred in the area with the development of the park. Also hope to ensure that outreach is done intentionally and in an inclusive manner.
28	Safety
29	some developer will flatten it for apartments
30	The only concern that I would have would be if people will actually take care of the property and not destroy or trash it.
31	Traffic, wild parties, and crime.
32	Keeping it safe and clean Wildlife Lighting
33	Now it is not generally accessible and used for dumping. Concerns when open would be safety..some lighting, closed after hours to discourage criminal activity. Also keeping it free of trash Also accessibility eg for the elderly
34	The biggest concern is around the security and safety enforced.
35	NA
36	Safety. Working cameras will be needed and barriers to keep park visitors from easy access to neighboring homes.
37	That it is safe, stimulating and accessible for all ages and levels of mobility.
38	Safety ex cameras, lighting
39	1. Safety, loitering and crime. 2. sustainability / Upkeep and maintenance of the property.
40	I hope there is a fence around to protect the kids from wandering in the bushes or near the power lines
41	Crime,,, declining property values,, not being kept up,, safety,, drugs,, wrong people coming into neighborhoods,, gun use Etc
43	No sure
44	N/a

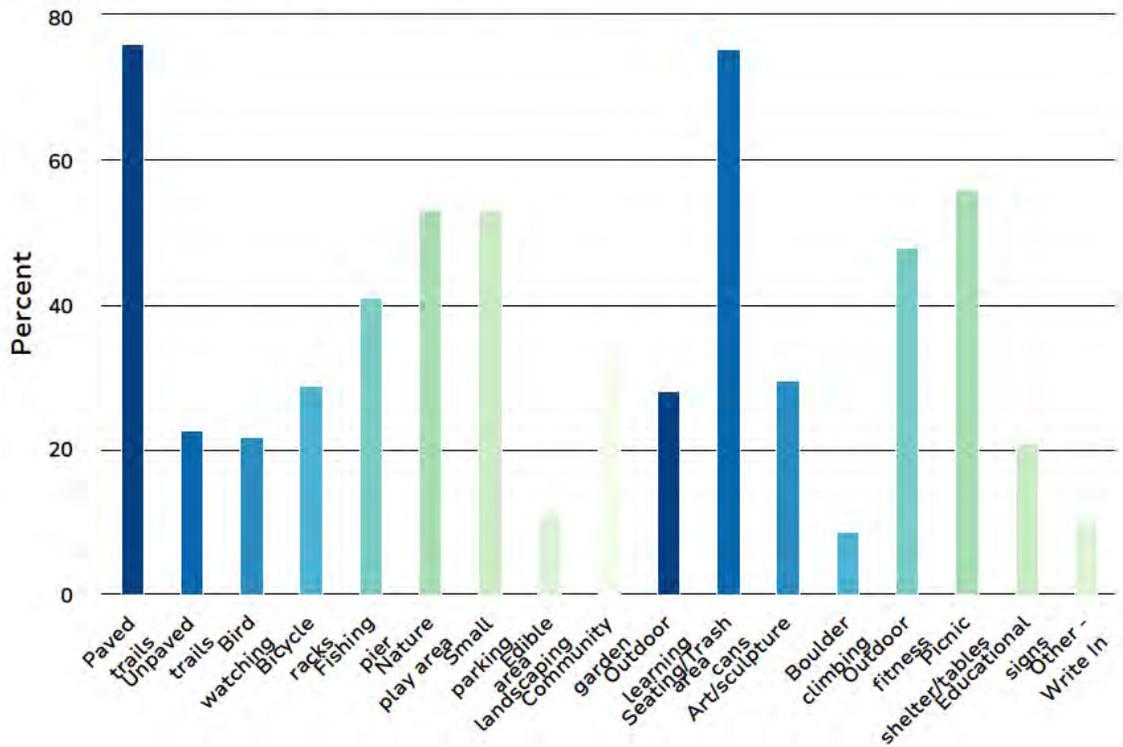
ResponseID	Response
45	Displayed wildlife. Potentially fewer trees. Maintenance of the area.
46	Assesibility
47	Maintenance
48	Crime, trash, homeless people taking up residence.
49	The safety of everyone. Proper lighting and security to prevent any illegal activities or criminal occurrences.
50	Security
51	I don't think this will help our community. We have many more things that need to be done instead of building a Falling Water Park to bring more crime that's already in our community.
52	Public access and keeping the park and neighborhood clean. There is already trash and tires being dumped there.
53	Safety Increased traffic in surrounding the neighborhoods.
54	That other funding concerns will shunt it aside, and thus it will never come to fruition.
56	I am concern about too many people hanging out for bad reasons. Too much traffic in the neighborhood!
57	I'm concerned about how the space will be monitored for safety. I'm concerned that the already existing crime in the area will bleed over into the park, making it unsafe.
58	Crime and liter/park upkeep
59	Traffic and way more people around the community.
63	Security, Funding (where will the funding come from?), Upkeep.....SECURITY From the looks of the "blueprint", I don't get a feeling of excitement to be able to walk in the area, just the opposite.
64	Also, is this a private company wanting to get this started? Most parks I visit, are kept up by the state. Why not this?
66	That it's a safe space
67	Security
68	1st Pickle Ball & Bocce Ball Courts In Atlanta Proper

ResponseID	Response
69	That it will attract an unwanted element, and possibly increase underage drug crimes.
70	Crime and illegal activities along with little or no police presence
72	Whether it will provide safe recreational activities for the community.
73	Safety for the neighborhood
74	More traffic in the area. Strangers I'm the community.
75	Safety and cleanliness is the most concerning thing. This area is already a site not only for people tossing their trash but also illegal dumping. I'd also would want to feel safe and know that measures are in place for that.
76	Safety
78	Not keeping it maintained
79	Security and street lights
80	Unsupervised children, poor lighting, and security
81	Safety
82	Crime
83	That it be kept clean, free of any criminal behavior and that visitors respect the private land in the neighboring subdivisions.
84	People parking and being in the Cascade Parc neighborhood. The street is a dead end now and has little foot traffic outside residents walking. I would hate to have people scoping out the neighborhood and cause increased criminal activity.
86	Adequate/appropriate entrance and road enhancement to accommodate additional traffic.
87	I am most concerned that the park will become a haven for trash and misuse.
88	Safety. Bringing unwanted attention to our neighborhoods. loitering, increased violence and/or crime rate. Concern with protecting the wild life
90	Lights and keeping the park maintenance up

**ResponseID Response**

91	Crime,, drugs,, unwanted guests, will bring down property values
92	People not in the neighborhood causing problems in the neighborhood. Unruly/dangerous behavior. Homeless sleep.
94	Nothing.
95	Crime
96	No concerns at the moment.
97	safety! bringing crime into the area
98	None
99	Safety, security
100	Safety, security
102	Crime and poor management
104	Safety
105	Crime
107	Access
108	Vagrants taking over the park.
109	Maybe concerned about the dangerous wild life that has been lurking in the past few years. I live at Cascade Parc and we have seen foxes and raccoons in the past couple weeks and years.
110	My main concern would be safety for people visiting the parks.
111	Unattended loitering/safety
112	Security/Safety
113	Crime increasing in the neighborhood
115	It has longevity of undeveloped compared to surrounding land
117	Safety
118	CRIME, loitering, homeless ppl gather and making the place a nuisance

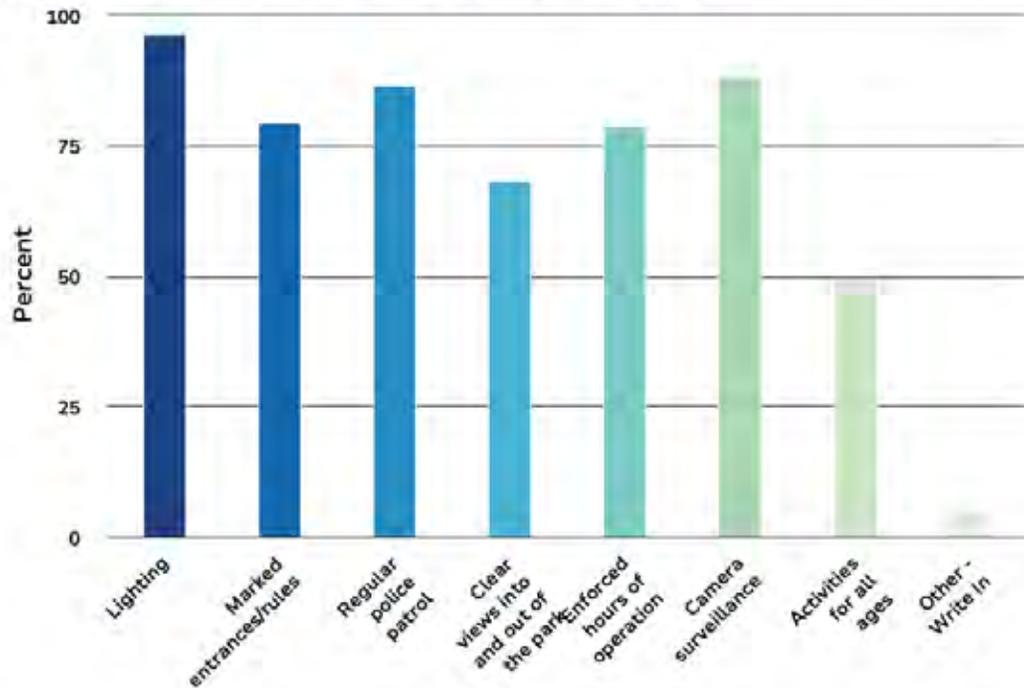
5. Since the forest will be preserved, new features should co-exist with nature. What would you most like to see at Falling Water Park? Pick up to seven.



Other - Write In	Count
Dog park	2
1st Pickle Ball & Bocce Ball Courts In Atlanta Proper	1
Pickle Ball Courts & Bocce Ball Courts	1
Plant trees	1
Police or security supervision daily	1
Police presence with a fence	1
Sidewalk in leasing to the park from Campbellton Road down Mt. Gilieas as well as on both sides of Panther trail to the school.	1
a walking trail from Mc Murrsey dr to the park	1
cultural signage	1
environmentally control safety	1
Totals	11

Value	Percent	Responses
Paved trails	76.3%	87
Unpaved trails	22.8%	26
Bird watching	21.9%	25
Bicycle racks	28.9%	33
Fishing pier	41.2%	47
Nature play area	53.5%	61
Small parking area	53.5%	61
Edible landscaping	11.4%	13
Community garden	33.3%	38
Outdoor learning area	28.1%	32
Seating/Trash cans	75.4%	86
Art/sculpture	29.8%	34
Boulder climbing	8.8%	10
Outdoor fitness	48.2%	55
Picnic shelter/tables	56.1%	64
Educational signs	21.1%	24
Other - Write In	10.5%	12

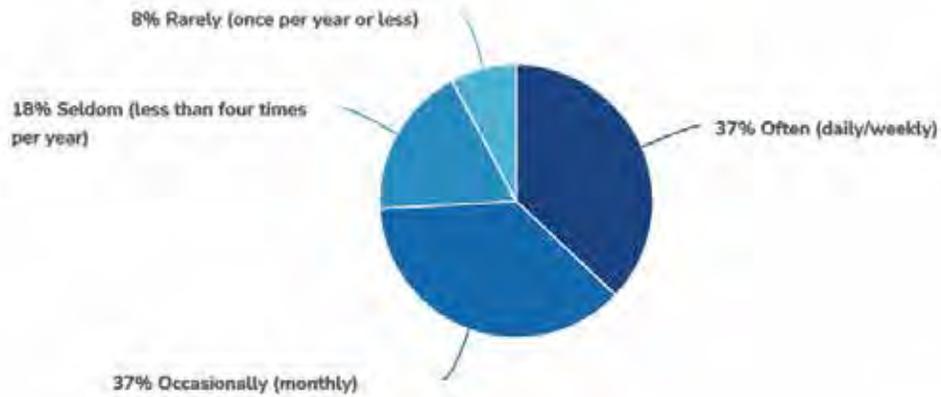
6. What is most likely make you and your family feel safe and welcomed in this park? Check all that apply.



Value	Percent	Responses
Lighting	96.5%	110
Marked entrances/rules	79.8%	91
Regular police patrol	86.8%	99
Clear views into and out of the park	68.4%	78
Enforced hours of operation	78.9%	90
Camera surveillance	88.6%	101
Activities for all ages	50.0%	57
Other - Write In	5.3%	6

<b>Other - Write In</b>	<b>Count</b>
1st Pickle Ball & Bocce Ball Courts In Atlanta Proper	1
Dog park may be enclosed or just marked area	1
Fences	1
Good property maintenance	1
Making sure the park is maintained ie..trash picked up, trash cans emptied. Working lights as well as any other maintenance items	1
Totals	5

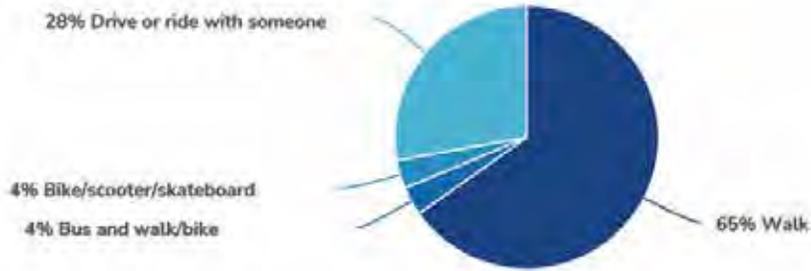
## 7. How often do you currently visit parks?



Value	Percent	Responses
Often (daily/weekly)	37.1%	43
Occasionally (monthly)	37.1%	43
Seldom (less than four times per year)	18.1%	21
Rarely (once per year or less)	7.8%	9

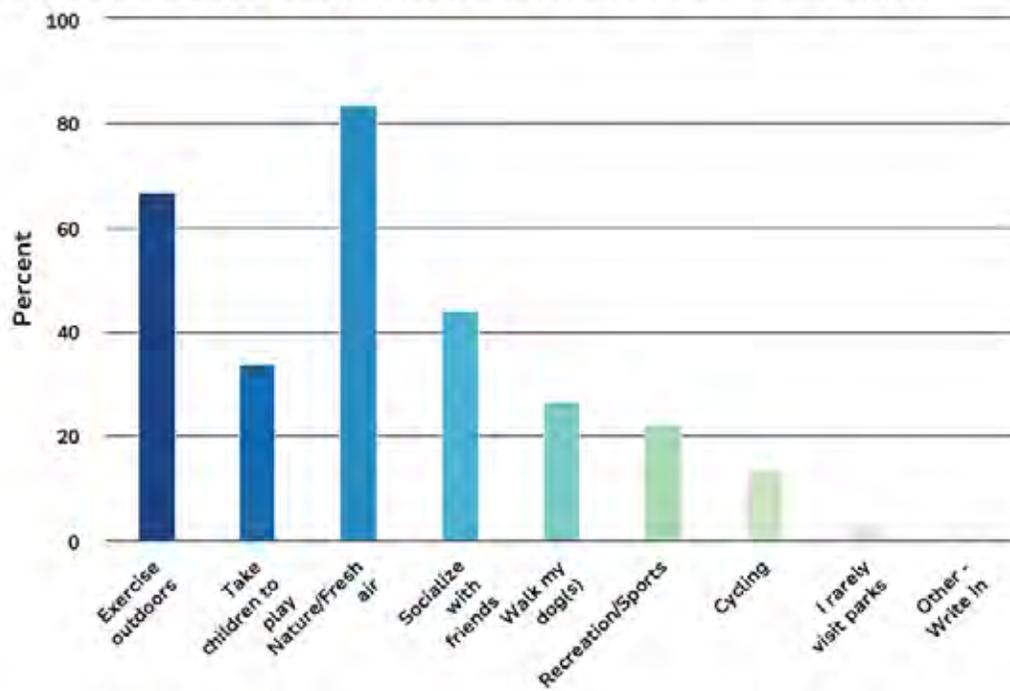
Totals: 116

8. How would you get to this park? (select the one you would use most)



Value	Percent	Responses
Walk	65.2%	75
Bus and walk/bike	3.5%	4
Bike/scooter/skateboard	3.5%	4
Drive or ride with someone	27.8%	32
<b>Totals:</b>		<b>115</b>

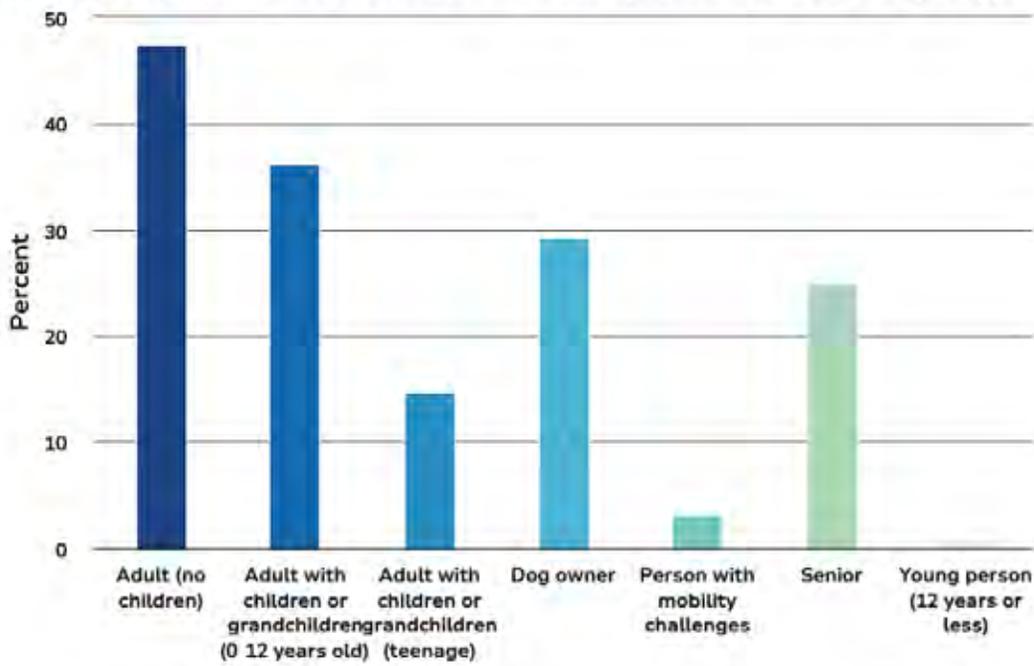
## 9. Why do you currently visit parks? Check all that apply.



Value	Percent	Responses
Exercise outdoors	67.0%	77
Take children to play	33.9%	39
Nature/Fresh air	83.5%	96
Socialize with friends	44.3%	51
Walk my dog(s)	27.0%	31
Recreation/Sports	22.6%	26
Cycling	13.9%	16
I rarely visit parks	3.5%	4
Other - Write In	4.3%	5

Other - Write In	Count
Be by the water	1
Family gatherings	1
Fishing	1
None	1
Yoga, quad skating, farmers market	1
Totals	5

### 10. How would you describe yourself? (check all that apply)



Value	Percent	Responses
Adult (no children)	47.4%	55
Adult with children or grandchildren (0-12 years old)	36.2%	42
Adult with children or grandchildren (teenage)	14.7%	17
Dog owner	29.3%	34
Person with mobility challenges	3.4%	4
Senior	25.0%	29
Young person (12 years or less)	0.9%	1

## 11. Is there anything else important to know or consider regarding Falling Water Park?

ResponseID	Response
4	How Will the park be maintained? How will we ensure that the homes surrounding the park will remain safe and unbothered.
5	No
6	Add sidewalks and more street lights on the streets leading to the park.
15	I would like to volunteer to be on this project as a neighborhood or community resident!
18	I live in cascade Parc subdivision so some sort of monitoring that residents aren't impacted if the park is used inappropriately.
25	Great Idea for the community
28	Handicap parking
30	No
32	Water features Statues
33	Dog friendly, family friendly, trash free, secure, maintain trees and water, ensure accesibility. Make it gun free. Natural areas to sit without encouraging big picnics or parties
34	There is a big need and desire for a park in the southwest neighborhood. I'm hopeful we can make this happen!
36	We do need more parks but we need funding dedicated to keeping it clean and in good repair
43	Parking options, accessibility
46	No.
47	Rules need to be enforced.
49	I would like a swimming pool and picnic areas throughout the park. Gazebos etc. When is the park expected to open?
50	Will there be entry from Lovell
51	Not at this time

ResponseID	Response
52	I do not want the park open to the public
57	Consider developing the area in a way that supports the commercial development we want to see more of in SW Atlanta. People enjoy Grant Park, Freedom park, Piedmont park etc. The elements in those parks should also be present in this park.
58	Not that I can think of at the moment. Just excited to have this coming to the community. It's needed
59	W
63	Not at this time
66	Keep it natural
67	1st Pickle Ball & Bocce Balls Courts In Atlanta Proper
68	1st Pickle Ball & Bocce Ball Courts In Atlanta Proper
70	N/A
71	Community pool anyone?
72	NA
75	With it being near 285, if people are wanting to have a quiet space with nature, it'd be nice to get a sound barrier to block out some of that highway noise.
83	It would be very nice to have a great park in this neighborhood.
84	I feel there should be a protective wall/gate that keeps people out of the Cascade Parc community since it is so close. There should be locked Community access that maybe can be key card enabled allowing us to walk there of we choose but keep others from over accessing the community. It not possible I would rather drive and park myself.
87	I want to make sure that the neighboring homes are not subject to invasion of privacy or increased wildlife presence.
88	Are you targeting people within the surrounding areas or looking to target any and all personnel
90	Please consider adding sidewalks on Mt. Gilead
99	Keeping residential areas intact

ResponseID	Response
100	Keeping residential areas intact
102	Na
105	How will it affect the Cascade Parc Subdivision.
115	Its development will entice individuals to visit park (outdoors) more



# Report for Falling Water Park - Elementary Student Survey

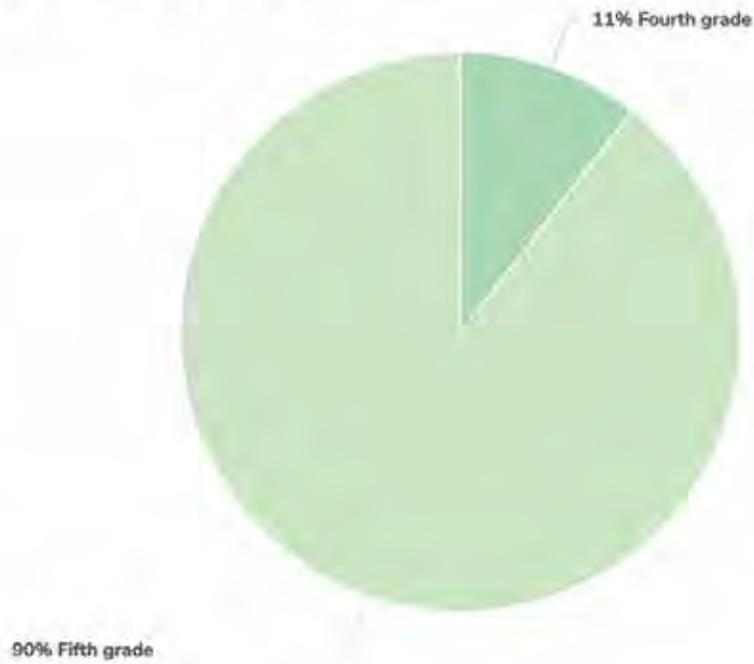
## Response Counts



## 1. Your name:

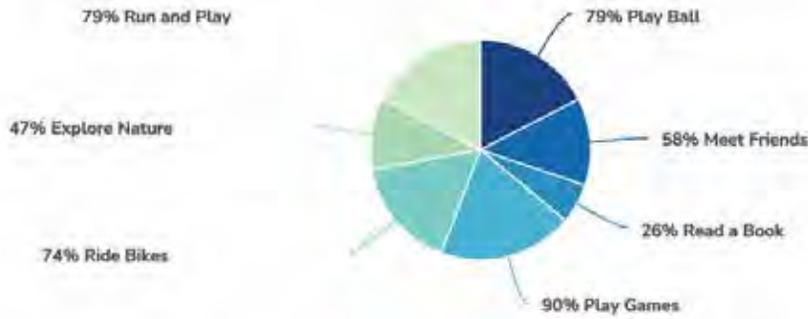
ResponseID	Response
2	Freddie
3	Nyla [REDACTED]
4	Joreese
5	skye
6	Antonio
7	Juwan [REDACTED]
8	Treyvon [REDACTED]
9	D'asia [REDACTED]
10	Faith
11	Manuel
13	Aniyah [REDACTED]
14	Kennedi [REDACTED]
15	Josiah [REDACTED]
16	Sincer [REDACTED]
17	Jasmin [REDACTED]
18	zyairre [REDACTED]
19	Jhefry
20	majic

## 2. What grade are you in?



Value	Percent	Responses
Fourth grade	10.5%	2
Fifth grade	89.5%	17
		<b>Totals: 19</b>

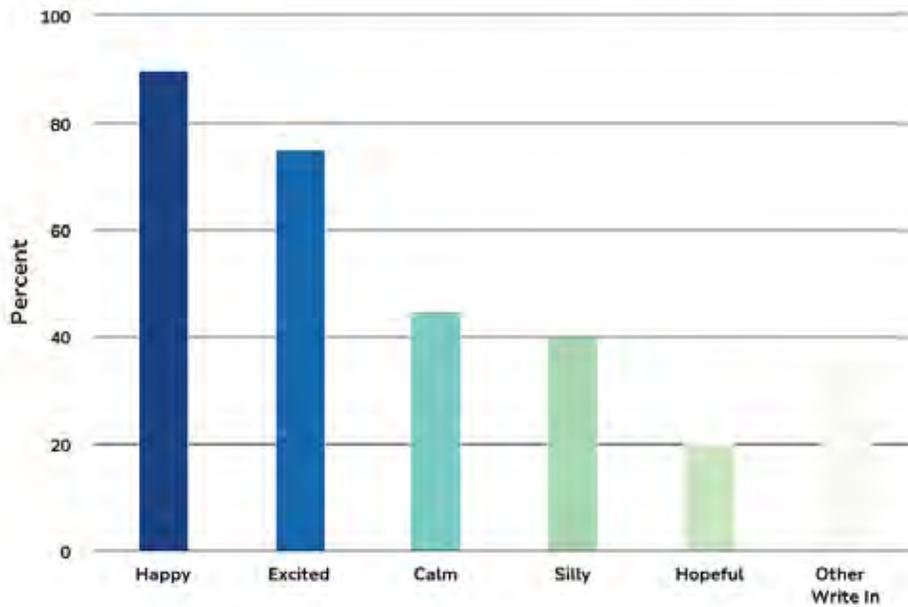
### 3. Things to Do in a Park(Select your favorites!)



APPENDIX A

Value	Percent	Responses
Play Ball	78.9%	15
Meet Friends	57.9%	11
Read a Book	26.3%	5
Play Games	89.5%	17
Ride Bikes	73.7%	14
Explore Nature	47.4%	9
Run and Play	78.9%	15

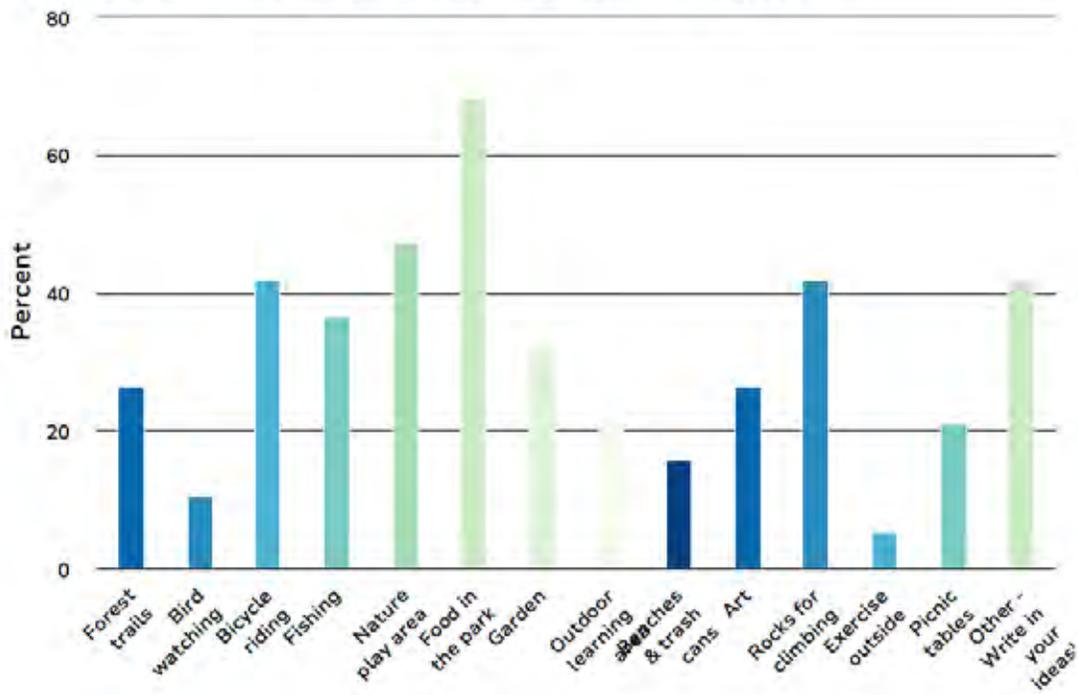
4. How do you feel when you're outdoors? You can check more than one box.



Value	Percent	Responses
Happy	90.0%	18
Excited	75.0%	15
Calm	45.0%	9
Silly	40.0%	8
Hopeful	20.0%	4
Other - Write In	35.0%	7

Other - Write In	Count
HAPPY	1
Hyper	1
cool	1
excited	1
happy	1
ok	1
safe	1
Totals	7

5. Now think about the nature park. What would make you want to visit the park? You can check up to five boxes.



**Other - Write in your ideas!**

**Count**

hop scotch	1
Have football games	1
Swings	1
basket ball hoops	1
food in the park	1
swings , Slides , dancing area	1
there to be scoor	1
video games	1
Totals	8

Value	Percent	Responses
Forest trails	26.3%	5
Bird watching	10.5%	2
Bicycle riding	42.1%	8
Fishing	36.8%	7
Nature play area	47.4%	9
Food in the park	68.4%	13
Garden	31.6%	6
Outdoor learning area	21.1%	4
Benches & trash cans	15.8%	3
Art	26.3%	5
Rocks for climbing	42.1%	8
Exercise outside	5.3%	1
Picnic tables	21.1%	4
Other - Write in your ideas!	42.1%	8

PAGE LEFT INTENTIONALLY BLANK









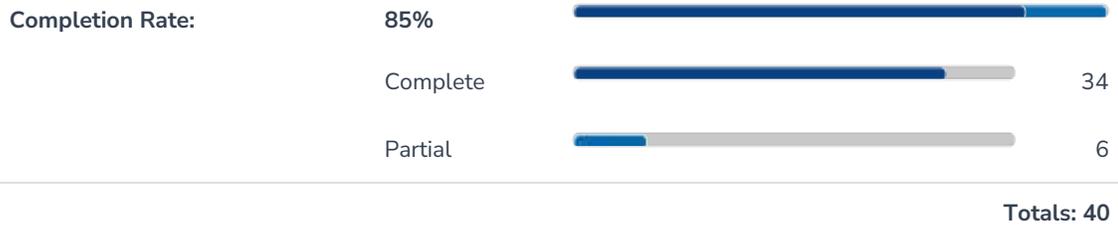
# Appendix C

## PREFERENCE SURVEY OF PRELIMINARY CONCEPTS COLLECTED DURING PUBLIC MEETING 2, APRIL 13, 2023 AND ONLINE FROM APRIL 13 - MAY 8, 2023

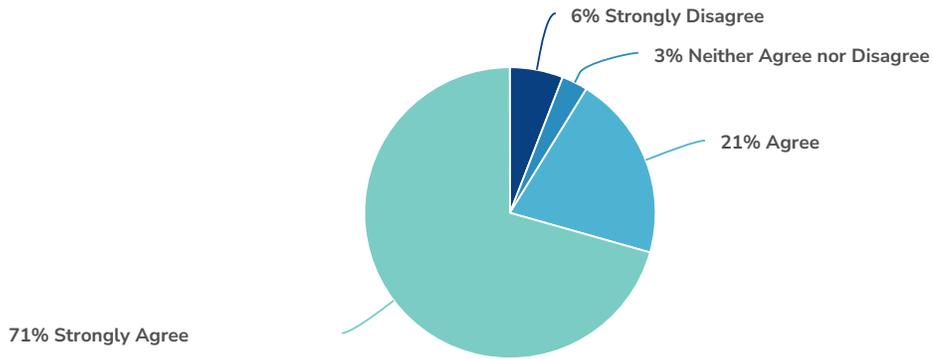
*Note: Any identifying information of respondents has been redacted*

### Report for Preliminary Concepts Feedback Survey

#### Response Counts



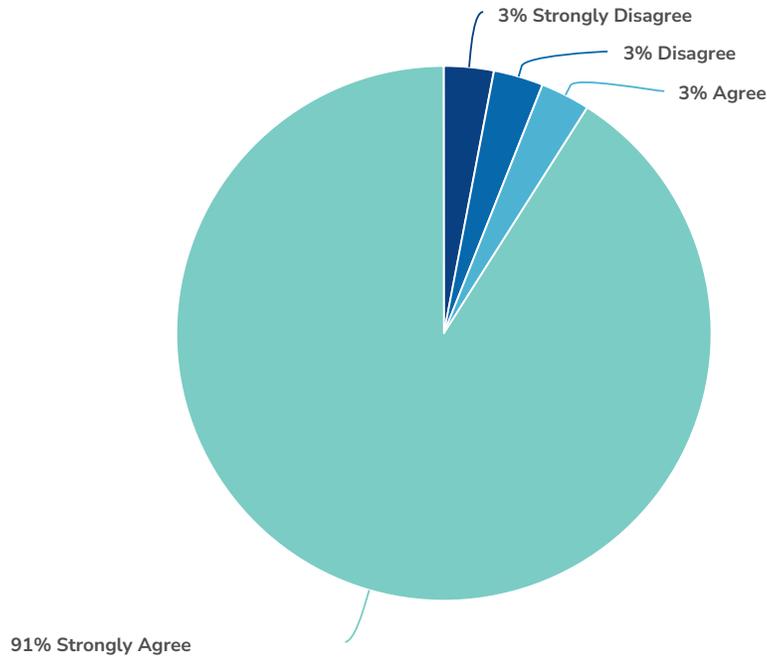
2. Protect and enhance the forest, stream, and wetland ecosystems by facilitating environmental stewardship and educational opportunities.



Value	Percent	Responses
Strongly Disagree	5.9%	2
Neither Agree nor Disagree	2.9%	1
Agree	20.6%	7
Strongly Agree	70.6%	24

Totals: 34

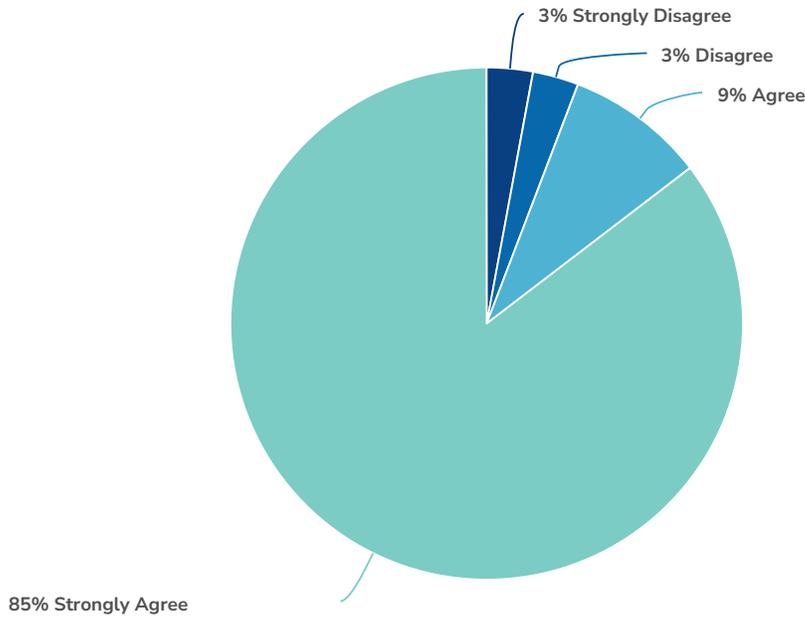
3. Apply principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) to promote a safe clean space with clearly defined areas of use and delineated boundaries.



Value	Percent	Responses
Strongly Disagree	3.0%	1
Disagree	3.0%	1
Agree	3.0%	1
Strongly Agree	90.9%	30

Totals: 33

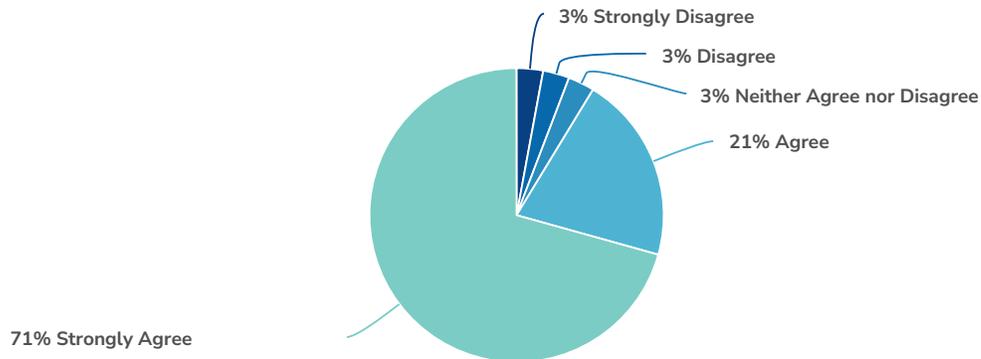
4. Provide a tranquil space for community members to improve mental and physical health near their homes.



Value	Percent	Responses
Strongly Disagree	2.9% 	1
Disagree	2.9% 	1
Agree	8.8% 	3
Strongly Agree	85.3% 	29

Totals: 34

5. Partner with nearby schools to establish a community-based volunteer network to promote positive use and closer personal connections to the park for residents



Value	Percent	Responses
Strongly Disagree	2.9%	1
Disagree	2.9%	1
Neither Agree nor Disagree	2.9%	1
Agree	20.6%	7
Strongly Agree	70.6%	24

Totals: 34

6. Please note any changes to the guiding principles you would like to make below.

ResponseID	Response
------------	----------

3	No changes.
---	-------------

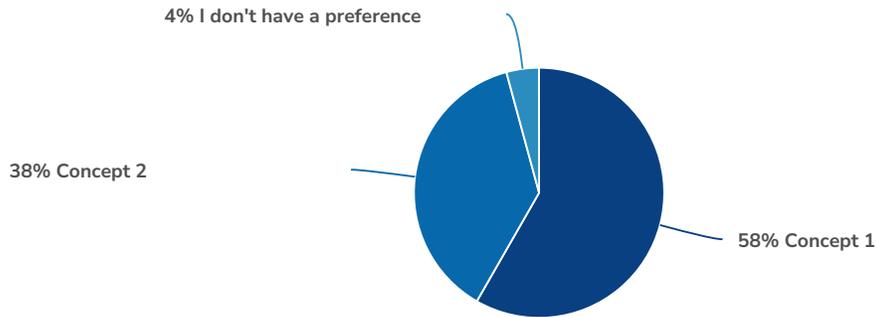
4	No changes. Ignore first survey response. I hit a button that submitted the first survey in error.
---	--

14	I agree completely. #5 partly address this but I would like to see students and nature groups actively involved in using park e.g Boy Scouts earning badges for certain activities. Also part of volunteer focus should be on cleanliness, reducing trash etc
----	---

21	None
----	------

38	I would include businesses, churches, social organizations, fraternities, sororities, veterans, environmentalists and environmental organizations in this network of community based volunteers
----	---

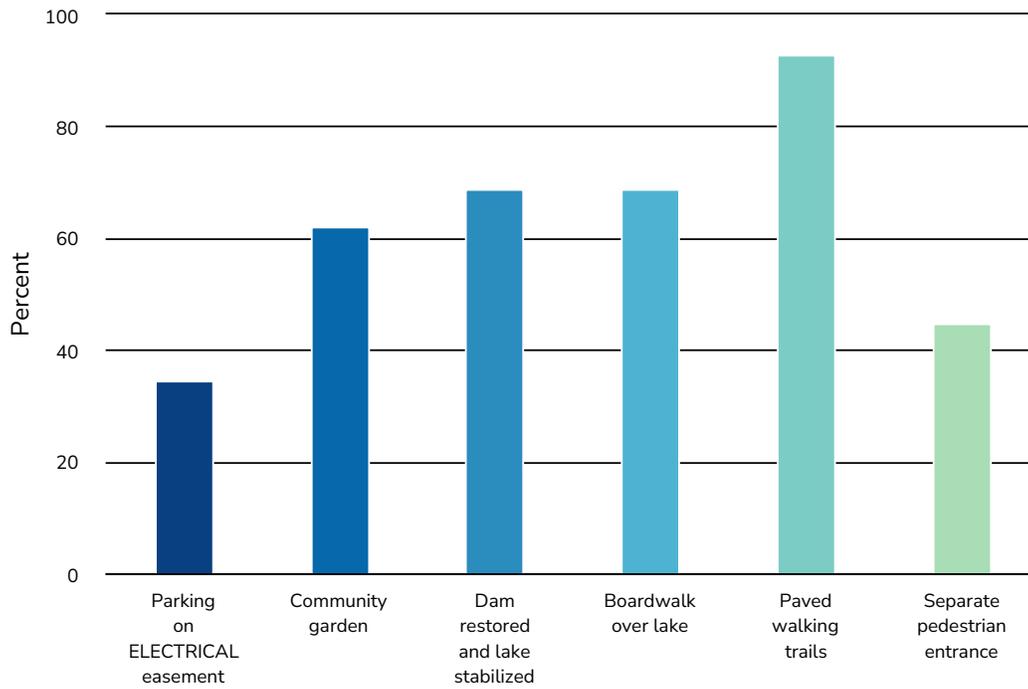
### 7. Which plan do you prefer overall?



Value	Percent	Responses
Concept 1	58.3%	14
Concept 2	37.5%	9
I don't have a preference	4.2%	1

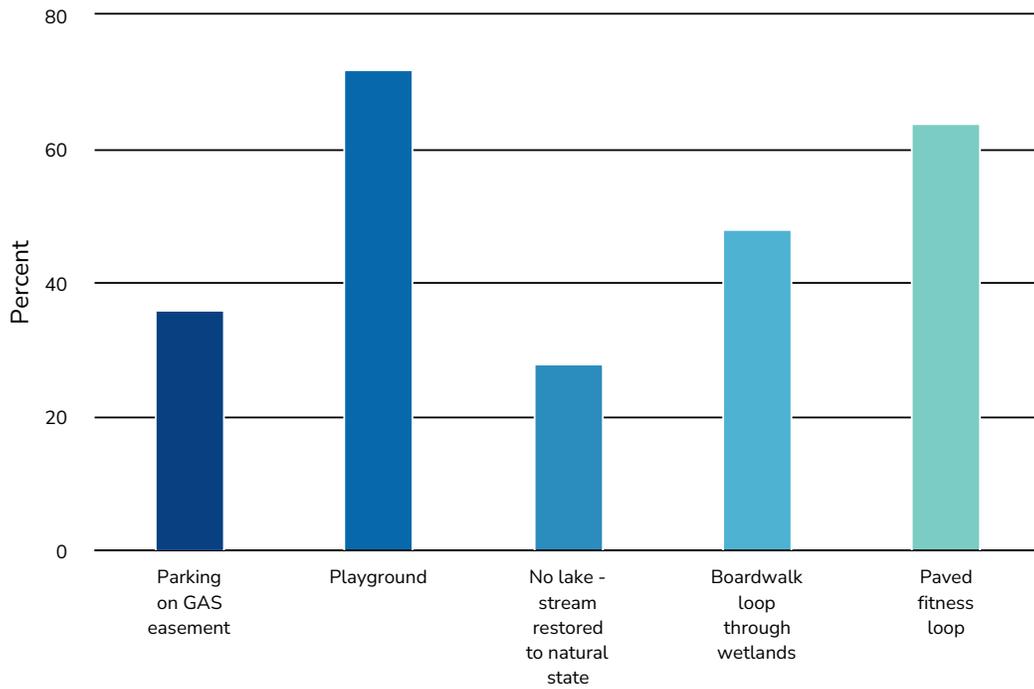
Totals: 24

### 8. Select the elements you prefer from Concept 1



Value	Percent	Responses
Parking on ELECTRICAL easement	34.5%	10
Community garden	62.1%	18
Dam restored and lake stabilized	69.0%	20
Boardwalk over lake	69.0%	20
Paved walking trails	93.1%	27
Separate pedestrian entrance	44.8%	13

### 9. Select the elements you prefer from Concept 2



Value	Percent	Responses
Parking on GAS easement	36.0%	9
Playground	72.0%	18
No lake - stream restored to natural state	28.0%	7
Boardwalk loop through wetlands	48.0%	12
Paved fitness loop	64.0%	16

## 10. Share additional thoughts and comments here.

### ResponseID Response

ResponseID	Response
6	The dam restoration is going to be very important to the Cascade Parc Community, as there are areas of residential homes that flood and I am afraid that by keeping a wetland, those individuals will suffer the consequences of continuous water build up within their homes. I also love the idea of having a playground for our children, one that is up to date and well maintained
7	I think the lake is going to be very vital in our area to hold and maintain the water overflow that we have within the Cascade Parc community. I also believe that it will help with the beautification project overall and showcase a lot more opportunities not only for visitors but for the wildlife. I also think the park is very vital. Young kids may not have much concern in nature but they do if there is a slide involved
12	security, security, security!!!!
14	I think Concept 1 captures more of the core concepts listed earlier. It maintains the wild natural concept while allowing folks to interact and enjoy nature. Concept 2 with playground etc lose some natural aspects and makes it more like a city park. I see this is an accessible nature reserve almost. The wildlife I love in Concept 2 can be incorporated in to Concept 1: native birds,, small mammals etc
21	None
23	I love the park option & birdwatching for the kids and nature lovers but prefer the lake. There are areas that flood in cascade, and having wetlands would further increase that.
24	I have selected option 1 with a playground added. A restroom will be needed as well.
25	Restroom facility (compost or plumbing) will be necessary
30	I am also interested in a dog park
31	putting women & men bathrooms
32	My street is mainly retired homeowners and anything that will help us be comfortable traveling to & from. need restrooms
34	very excited about this concept
36	Please add restrooms. There is water retention in front of the wall on Tiara Circle. Add an entrance near wall.
37	No picnic tables. Benches for sitting will be nice for those who need to rest or sit and chat with neighbors.
38	A playground but scaled down from the norm. Playground equipment should be in line with the environment and low maintenance.

# Appendix D

## ONLINE OPINION SURVEY, PRIORITIES FOR THE VISION PLAN OPEN MAY 20 (PUBLIC MEETING 3) THROUGH JUNE 20, 2023

*Note: Any identifying information of respondents has been redacted*

### Report for Falling Water Park Vision - Community Priorities

#### Response Counts

Completion Rate:	100%	
Complete		 20

Totals: 20

1. The vision plan includes all of the elements shown above and listed below. Please arrange all the items in order of priority TO YOU starting at the top with the most important and moving down from there to the least important.

Item	Overall Rank	Rank Distribution	Score	No. of Rankings
Boardwalk over lake and wetlands	1		133	16
Paved trails	2		123	15
Unpaved trails	3		119	16
Parking and bike racks (includes security features like lighting & cameras)	4		103	15
Restored dam & lake	5		96	15
Scenic overlook & bird observation areas	6		91	15
Exercise stations	7		87	15
Stone seatwall gathering area	8		84	16
Community garden	9		77	16
Nature play & picnic area	10		76	16
Stream study access point	11		46	15

Lowest Rank      Highest Rank

2. Is there anything you would like to add? Feel free to expand on your priorities above, or tell us about something we didn't ask about.

ResponseID	Response
1	Water feature Water fall Smooth trails for quad skating Fruit trees, flowering plants and trees Walking paths around water
3	The community is growing vastly with young children I would love a play area for my children as well as other neighborhood children.
4	In previous surveys several folks mentioned bathroom. Any consideration. I go to places like Cascade Park Preserve without a bathroom and I am fine, but wondered for older folk. Dog park or dog friendly trails? Picnic area might attract trash
5	Easy access to fish in the waters
6	Security should be the top priority.
7	I pray that some cameras will be hidden while some are visible. This will enhance safety and help to eliminate vandalism. Are bikes allowed on the paved trail(s)? I would like to see tag readers also. Solar lights Cameras networked with those near schools. neighborhood and the community No camping period. Tamper proof markings( Our kids have a tendency to take down street signs, turn them in the wrong direction, etc. NO DOGS! CAN THIS BE MONITORED, I SEE THIS AS A PROBLEM. MAYBE A SIGN UP WITH DIRECTIONS TO THE NEAREST DOG PARK.
8	Dam and lake restoration was not listed above. I am thinking before the boardwalks can be done, attention must be given to dam and lake including lake meeting standards for stocking lake with fish per State Department of Natural Resources. Sign with park name must be secured also. Which of the eleven could cost effective by doing at the same time?
9	N/A
13	water features. water fall. smooth trails for quad, seating, fruit trees, plants, flowering trees, walking paths around water, makers & growers market, community weekly programs, activities, networking, basketball court, education, restrooms with access, historic references
15	picnic tables and bbq pit
19	general security and safety measures are an important consideration in my perception
20	1 and 2 are equally important. Need a switchback trail to the meadow/power line cut. Parking lot should be in the gas line right of way area. Doesn't need to be big. Could there be overflow parking at Therrell? A few benches should be placed along the trails.

PAGE LEFT INTENTIONALLY BLANK

# Appendix E

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE ACQUISITION OF FALLING WATER PARK

PAGE LEFT INTENTIONALLY BLANK

January 7, 2004

Ms. Jeanine Goddard  
Falling Water Inc.  
[REDACTED]  
Norcross, GA 30092

RE: Panther Trail, Atlanta, GA Property Parcel ID 14-0231-LL-034-2

Dear Ms. Goddard:

Thank you for taking time this week to discuss the potential acquisition of your approximately 26.3 acres along Panther Trail. As we discussed, the City of Atlanta is committed to the preservation of trees and greenspace for the overall quality of life of its citizens. Your property has been identified by our Department of Planning, Development & Neighborhood Conservation as a potential parcel for such preservation.

Given the undeveloped nature of your property, it may qualify for funding under the current Governor's Greenspace Program. We have a deadline for securing suitable properties, so time is of the essence.

Once you have had an opportunity to review the possibility of selling your property, we would appreciate knowing your asking price. Since you have been a long-term owner of the property, there may be ways in which you could receive certain tax benefits from the sale, depending on how the transaction is structured. We frequently work with non-profit land trust organizations that can implement this type of real estate transaction and tailor it to your specific financial requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of this opportunity. We hope that you will be interested in working with us to help improve the quality of life for the greater Atlanta area. Please give me a call at 404-614-8293 and I will be happy to arrange a meeting with the appropriate City of Atlanta representatives. I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Sincerely,

Ellen H. Wickersham

Parks and Greenspace

Cc: Beverley Dockeray-Ojo, Director Bureau of Planning  
Terrilyn Rolle, Greenspace Coordinator, Department of Planning, Development and  
Neighborhood Conservation  
Dianne Harnell Cohen, Commissioner Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs  
Ron Keller, Director of Neighborhood Development, Atlanta Development  
Authority

## ATLANTA PARKS NEWS FLASH

June 17, 2004

### *26.3 BEAUTIFUL WOODED ACRES ON PANTHER TRAIL ACQUIRED TODAY!*

The City of Atlanta closed today on 26.3 acres of beautiful wooded parkland along Panther Trail in southwest Atlanta. The property is situated next to Therell High School and Kimberley Elementary School, creating a perfect location for nature walks and environmental education programs. A natural lake will offer a peaceful setting for gatherings and picnics for the many new residents moving to the neighborhood and the future Kings Ridge development adjacent to the park.

Councilmember Jim Maddox says this project will “assist in decreasing the deficit of park land in an area of the city that is currently underserved.” President of the Neighborhood Planning Unit R, Mr. Barney Simms, is delighted with this acquisition. “Providing public access to such a natural treasure will serve our community well.”

The transaction was facilitated through the work of The Conservation Fund, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation of parks and greenspace. The Conservation Fund negotiated the acquisition at a price below the current market value, saving valuable funds for other greenspace acquisitions.

Spending over \$3 million of Georgia Greenspace Funds in 2004, the City of Atlanta will acquire approximately 150 acres of greenspace to be added to park’s inventory. Parks acquired using these funds will be preserved in perpetuity and dedicated to passive recreation activities such as hiking, walking and picnicking.

Georgia Community Greenspace Program - New Georgia Encyclopedia

<https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/geography-environment/g...>

## New Georgia ENCYCLOPEDIA



View on NGE

### Georgia Community Greenspace Program

The Georgia Community Greenspace Program, passed into law under Governor **Roy Barnes** in 2000, encouraged rapidly developing counties to voluntarily set aside 20 percent of their land as “greenspace.” Although funding for the program ceased in 2004, the Georgia Community Greenspace program was revolutionary because it codified the concept of greenspace, acknowledged the detrimental aspects of **urbanization**, and emphasized the responsibilities of local governments to preserve land as a means of maintaining quality of life.

Greenspace was defined under this law as “permanently protected land and water, including agricultural and forestry land,” meaning that development incompatible with greenspace functions on the preserved land was not permitted. Greenspace functions as delineated by the program included protection of water quality for rivers, streams, and **lakes**; flood protection; wetlands protection; reduction of **soil erosion**; protection of corridors and habitat for native plants and animals; preservation of scenery; protection of archaeological and historic resources; and informal recreation, such as fishing, hiking, and birding.

The Community Greenspace Program was developed in response to growing population pressures around the state during the 1990s. The greenspace concept is essentially an urban one, distinguishing land that is built-over from land supporting plants or water. Organizations such as Trees Atlanta, the **Georgia Conservancy**, and the **Atlanta Regional Commission** amplified the impact of the program by providing planning and training efforts for greenspace acquisition and preservation.

The local, urban orientation of the Georgia Community Greenspace program evolved against a broader background of land conservation within the state. State and federal governments began purchasing land in Georgia during the 1920s for the establishment of **state parks** and national parks, wildlife refuges, and management preserves. By the 1970s land-conservation efforts had accelerated through the work of the Nature Conservancy, the Trust for Public Land, and many smaller land trusts working within the state. In addition, land was preserved through the Heritage Trust, Preservation 2000, and RiverCare2000. These programs, along with the Community Greenspace Program, preserved more than 300,000 acres of land in Georgia from 1974 to 2003, usually through outright purchase of land.

The Georgia legislature allocated \$90 million (\$30 million per year) from 2001 through 2003 for the acquisition of county greenspace. The funds, held in a trust, were available to fast-growing local governments that could

Georgia Community Greenspace Program - New Georgia Encyclopedia

<https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/geography-environment/g...>

demonstrate a commitment to preserving 20 percent of county land as greenspace and could produce acceptable greenspace plans. Not all governments were able to acquire land, however, and some monies were returned to the state. The program was not funded in 2004 because of decreases in **state revenues**.

In December 2003 Governor **Sonny Perdue** signed an executive order establishing an advisory council for the Georgia Land Conservation Partnership, which was charged with developing Georgia's first comprehensive conservation plan. The advisory council issued its report in August 2004, and in April 2005 Perdue signed into law the Georgia Land Conservation Act.

The new law created a trust fund and a loan fund, both administered by the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority, a state agency established in 1985 to provide financing for a variety of environmental improvement and infrastructure projects. The Georgia Greenspace Commission (which was responsible for reviewing and approving greenspace programs for the Community Greenspace Program) was reconstituted as the Georgia Land Conservation Council. The Georgia Land Conservation program is open to all local governments rather than just rapidly developing ones, with competition among local entities for funding based on the demonstrated ability to purchase and protect greenspace.

**Author**  
Leslie Edwards, Atlanta

Originally published Jan 21, 2005  
Last edited Oct 2, 2014

---

## Further Reading

- Connie P. Gray et al., *Greenspace: Evaluating, Restoring, and Managing Natural Areas in the Atlanta Vicinity* (Atlanta: Trees Atlanta and The Georgia Forestry Commission, 2004).

*This document and materials created for this park visioning process are available online at <https://parkpride.org/we-can-help/park-visioning/>*

*These materials are also be archived at the Kenan Research Center, Atlanta History Center. Appointments can be made to view the materials at 404.814.4040 or by emailing [reference@atlantahistorycenter.com](mailto:reference@atlantahistorycenter.com).*



P. O. Box 4936  
Atlanta, GA 30302  
[parkpride.org](http://parkpride.org)