South River Forest and Public Safety Training Center
Community Task Force

SUBGROUP MEETING 1 – MAY 2&3, 2023

Table of Contents

01 Welcome & Introductions
02 Vision, Goals, and Expectations
03 Previous Plans and Recommendations
04 Visioning Exercise
05 Next Steps
Introductions

Group 1: Parks and Greenspace

George Dunsenbury, Trust for Public Land
Greta G. DeMayo, PATH Foundation
Janese Coleman, Community Member
Lewis Woodson, Community Leader & Parks Advocate
Lynette Reid, Atlanta BeltLine, Inc.
Marc Bolden, Community Member
Michael Halicki, Park Pride
Michelle Blackmon, Grant Park Conservancy
Linda DiSantis, The Nature Conservancy
Nina Cutler, Community Member
Rev. Gary Burke, Clergy
Samyukth Shenbaga, Atlanta Regional Commission
Stacy Funderburke, The Conservation Fund
Robbie Hunter, Community Member

Facilitators:
Carter Coleman, APD-Urban

City Staff:
Alvin Dodson, City of Atlanta
Keith Hicks, City of Atlanta
Aaron Weiner, City of Atlanta
Task Force Vision and Goals

Vision

The vision for the South River Forest and Public Safety Training Center Community Task Force is to contribute to the policymaking for a safe, equitable, and inclusive environment that provides comprehensive training for all public safety professionals and encourages public interaction with the site.

Goals

The goals for engagement are to:

- Create inclusive and community-driven recommendations for the surrounding green space (300 acres) and the public safety training curriculum.
- Facilitate an inclusive engagement process that incorporates the aspirations and expertise of the Atlantan community.
- Provide opportunities for fact-based education and awareness of the public safety training center and surrounding green space.
Expectations

- Engagement activities are centered around the planned development of the site
- Recommendations will be delivered to the Mayor’s Office, but all may not be implemented
- Task force members are representatives of their community of influence
- The Task Force is focused on the 300 acres surrounding the Public Safety Training Facility site
- Only selected Task Force members are to participate in the activities

Context
Rules for Engagement

Be Respectful of Others

Be Present; No Substitutions

Silence Cellphones

One Conversation at a Time

In Absence, Review Materials & Provide Comments

Subgroup Meetings

Meeting 1
Inform and Early Visioning

Meeting 2
Final Vision and Early Recommendations

Meeting 3
Recommendations

Meeting 4
Priorities

Meeting 5
Review & Vetting of Final Recommendations for all groups
03

Previous Plans and Studies

Previous Plan Timeline
Explore South River Forest–2023

**Study Goal:** Provide recommendations for the activation and preservation of the South River Forest

**Findings:**
- Purpose to operate the SRF at its highest and best use, while prioritizing the resiliency of the forest and its surrounding community
- Extensive community engagement was conducted surrounding several topic areas

**Recommendations:**
- Intergovernmental and community to determine best practices & align with recommendations
- Trail connections and defined greenspaces within the site
- Master plan and planning & zoning tools for land management

City Design Book – 2017

**Study Goal:** “Propose ways to improve and accentuate Atlanta’s authentic character in a form that could accommodate a much larger population”.

**Findings:**
- Map that illustrates the connectivity of the site in relation to other municipal and neighborhood boundaries
- Photos of areas of interest with geographical, physical, and historical assets

**Recommendations:**
- Plans for the redevelopment of the acreage
- Demonstrate intergovernmental efforts to create a connected urban park to surrounding community uses
ActivateATL – 2021

Study Goal: provides recommendations for the provision of facilities, programs, and services; parkland acquisition and development; maintenance and operations; and administration and management over the next ten years.

Findings:
- 89% supported developing new trails, facilities, lighting, sidewalks, benching, and shelters.

Recommendations:
- I.7 - Invest in natural areas in parks for the dual purpose of preserving and protecting Atlanta’s abundant tree canopy and wildlife habitat, while encouraging visitation for human respite and refuge.
- C.1 - Foster a system-wide, sustainable trail network that guides user access to parks and enables connections across the city. Improve wayfinding and connectivity between and within neighborhood parks and the regional parks and recreation system.

Phase I Environmental Site Assessment – 2021

Study Goal: Standard assessment conducted on environmentally significant land, with findings and opinions based on conditions and impediments on the site.

Findings:
- Several notable site features, waste storage, surface water bodies, and equipment remain on the site
- Some hazards presented from decay and burned buildings
- Environmentally viable for development if impairments are corrected

Recommendations:
- Soil and groundwater impairment, debris removal, and leaching mitigation need to occur
- Potential need for excavation
City of Atlanta Tree Canopy Resolution – 2023

Considerations:

• Achieve and maintain 50% average tree canopy cover within the City of Atlanta
• The Department of city planning uses this goal to guide future updates to the tree protection ordinance and other land development-related ordinances
• The Department of city planning conducts a study every five (5) years to measure the tree canopy cover within the city,
**Vision**

**What**

... is a Vision?

It is a written statement that reflects the goals and objectives of the group, lists future opportunities, and includes a description of what the project/site should look and feel like in the future.

The vision statement guides government, business, and community entities, among others, in decision-making according to the stated goals and objectives of the project/site.

**Why**

... do we need a Vision?

- It serves to frame recommendations toward a shared vision of the future
- It provides a source of inspiration and motivation for implementing plans and keeping the effort on track
- It generates consensus about the direction of the project

**How**

... do we create a Vision?

Through a visioning session in which we can:

- Create a draft vision or update a pre-existing vision for the project/site
- Obtain feedback on specific topics
- Create a framework that will guide future efforts

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**Process**

**Vision**

Describes the long-term outcomes and aspirations for the future of a project

**Goals and Objectives**

- specific, measured, and time bound targets, road map to achieve vision
- objectives are achievable, relevant and time-bound

**Recommendations**

Specific actions an organization can take based on the analysis of the current situation and the objectives set
Previous Plan Vision Statements

"The South River Forest, a proposal for an expansive, 3,500 acre network of connected greenspaces inside I-285 in SE Atlanta and SW DeKalb County, would be protected, connected, and activated as **publicly accessible greenspace providing significant environmental, social, and economic benefits for metro Atlanta’s communities.**
– Explore South River Forest Plan (2023)

"South River Park - These thousand acres will be claimed for a **massive new park**
– City Design (2017)

Task Group Areas

**Group 1: Parks & Greenspace**
Develop programming for passive and active uses of the land, while preserving its natural ecology

**Group 2: Police, Fire, and E911 Curriculum**
Provide input on the collaborative potential and direction of the public safety curriculum

**Group 3: Sustainability & Resilience**
Introduce and encourage the use of best practices with regards to infrastructure and development

**Group 4: Visioning, Memorializing, and Repurposing the former Atlanta Prison Farm Site**
Contextualize the future best use of the Atlanta Prison Farm Site given its history
**Warm up Exercise**

On Mentimeter, please respond to the following prompts:

- What are your desired outcomes for this subgroups?
- What do you hope to contribute to this project?

**Vision Word Cloud**

On Mentimeter, please respond to the following prompt:

Which words are most relevant to your vision for the South River Forest pertaining to Parks and Greenspace?

- Multigenerational
- Diversity
- Sustainability
- Vibrancy
- Equity
- Safety
- Healthy
- Economic Opportunity
- Education
- Greenspace
- Revitalization
- Community
- Development
- Resiliency
- Entrepreneurship
- Growth
- Civic
- Recreational
- Modern
- Traditional
- Respectful
- Historic Preservation
- Affordability
- Walkable
- Heritage
- Transit
- Family
- Culture
- Responsibility
- Parks
- Bikes
- Goods & Services
- Gateway
**Previous Plan Vision Statements – Parks and Greenspace**

"To make recreation and parks the heart and soul of Atlanta through a diverse, yet seamless and interconnected system of parks, recreation, and natural areas.
– Activate ATL (2021)

"South River Park - These thousand acres will be claimed for a massive new park"  
– City Design (2017)

"The South River Forest, a proposal for an expansive, 3,500 acre network of connected greenspaces inside I-285 in SE Atlanta and SW DeKalb County, would be protected, connected, and activated as publicly accessible greenspace providing significant environmental, social, and economic benefits for metro Atlanta’s communities."
– Explore South River Forest Plan (2023)
Next Steps

- Week 2 – Final Vision/Early Recommendations
- City staff presentations of best practices/current initiatives

Task Group Schedule

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parks and Greenspace</th>
<th>Police, Fire, &amp; E-911 Training Curriculum</th>
<th>Sustainability &amp; Resilience</th>
<th>Visioning, Memorializing, &amp; Repurposing Former Atlanta Prison Farm Site</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesdays 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM</td>
<td>Wednesdays 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM</td>
<td>Wednesdays 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM</td>
<td>Tuesdays 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM</td>
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Large Group Final Recommendations
Wednesday, August 2, 2023 • 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM
Communications

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For questions about media correspondence and press releases, please reach out to the City of Atlanta for assistance.

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