



more & better parks... all over Atlanta

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EIGHT YEARS LATER, ATLANTA STILL LAST IN PARKS

Atlanta, Georgia – Park Pride released its 2008 State of Atlanta Parks, which found that the City continues to rank at the very bottom in the percent of its land dedicated to parks. The report concluded that efforts to improve Atlanta’s park system have been derailed by a lack of funding and support.

“Obviously, we are disappointed that the City has not made the financial commitment needed to move us out of last place. While Atlanta is doing a much better job managing its park system, this report shows that not enough has been done financially to support its management and growth,” said Park Pride Executive Director George Dusenbury. “Atlanta may be a ‘city among the trees,’ but that doesn’t mean we have enough places where families can picnic or children can play. We need more and better parks.”

Key findings from the report include:

- Atlanta continues to rank last among the nation’s 25 largest cities in terms of the percent of its land dedicated to parks (*according to statistics compiled by The Trust for Public Land*).
- Half of all Atlanta residents do not live within walking distance of a park
- Creating parks and a substantial greenway as part of the Atlanta BeltLine is critical to the City’s effort to expand and improve its park system.
- Park Pride documented substantial and tangible improvements in park maintenance since 2002.
- While funding for park maintenance increased each year from 2004-2007, a \$1.45 million cut in 2008 left the city well short of it’s commitment to provide \$18.8 million in funding by 2011.

Continued cuts to an already underfunded department, and one that historically has taken more than a fair share of cuts during difficult economic times, cannot continue. The State of Atlanta Parks Report concludes:

“Ultimately, the City must increase its financial commitment to park operation and maintenance, as well as the creation of new parks, if it to build and maintain a park system that meets the needs of its residents.”

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PARK PRIDE

www.parkpride.org

Park Pride, founded in 1989, is the only organization that works with communities all over Atlanta to improve their parks. In 2007, Park Pride coordinated more than 20,000 hours of volunteer work in Atlanta parks, developed new conceptual park plans for seven parks and helped start more than a dozen “Friends of the Park” groups. Park Pride is able to engage and serve the community by generating Friends of the Park groups, focusing on advocacy efforts as well as promoting participation in its Adopt-a-Park, Park Visioning, Volunteer, Fiscal Partners and Micro Grant programs. Park Pride continued to work with local organizations and community members to support the creation of the Atlanta BeltLine, which promises to create more than 1,000 acres of new parks and 33 miles of trails. The organization’s annual Parks & Greenspace Conference serves as the signature event in our work to create a world class park system in Atlanta.