

Agenda Item

File ID: 2025-1082

Substitute 9/30/2025

Public Hearing: YES ☒ NO ☐

Department: Planning and Sustainability

SUBJECT:

Commission District(s): Commission District 04 Super Districts 06 & 07

Application of the Director of Planning & Sustainability to amend Chapter 5: Small Area Plans of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. This application is for the adoption of the Stone Mountain Trail Master Plan and its vision, policy, and goals for future development of the planned area.

Petition No.: N-13-2025-1082 TA-25-1247701

Proposed Use: Stone Mountain Trail Master Plan.

Location: Commission District 4, Super Districts 6 & 7

Parcel No.: N/A

Information Contact: Tricia Prevost, Sr. Planner, AICP

Phone Number: 404-371-2155

PURPOSE:

Application of the Director of Planning & Sustainability for a text amendment to Chapter 5: Small Area Plans of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. This application is for the adoption of the Stone Mountain Trail Master Plan and its vision, policy, and goals for future development of the planned area.

RECOMMENDATION:

COMMUNITY COUNCIL: (Aug. 2025) Approval.

PLANNING COMMISSION: (Sept. 9, 2025) Full-Cycle Deferral.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: (September 2025) Approval_rev. 09.26.2025

PLANNING STAFF ANALYSIS: The applicant is seeking to adopt the Stone Mountain Trail Master Plan's general vision, policies, and goals to Chapter 5: Small Area Plans of the 2050 Unified Plan as guidance for future development of the planned area. This study was funded by the Atlanta Regional Commission under the Community Development Assistance Program to study the subject area and provide recommendations for economic development, affordable housing, anti-displacement strategies, mobility, and placemaking. As an important pedestrian corridor, the Stone Mountain Trail provides the opportunity to enhance the neighborhoods around it through pedestrian connectivity, infill housing options, public art, trail amenities, safety improvements and economic development. Between October 2024 and September 2025, DeKalb County, with consultants from Pond & Company, underwent an extensive planning process, including existing conditions analysis, public engagement, and developing strategies and recommendations. The public engagement efforts included a project website and survey, which received over 300 responses, two pop-up events, two open houses, and a design charette. Intercept surveys were also conducted on the trail to directly engage trail users. Additional feedback and reviews were received from a stakeholder committee, County staff, and County Commissioners. The combination of public engagement and feedback from community and County representatives ensured plan recommendations aligned with the goals and vision of the subject area. The plan includes 3 nodes with recommendations tailored to the unique conditions and goals of each area. Recommendations include intersection safety and connectivity

improvements on the trail; opportunities for mixed-use development and affordable housing; placemaking through art and furnishings; and anti-displacement strategies to protect existing residents and ensure equitable development. Adopting the Stone Mountain Trail Master Plan as an amendment to Chapter 5 Small Area Plans in DeKalb County's 2050 Unified Plan will enable the Planning & Sustainability Department – Long Range Division – to move forward with ARC and DeKalb County's shared goal of creating a strong, equitable pedestrian-oriented community along the trail corridor. Therefore, Staff recommends ***“Approval”***.

PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE: (September 9, 2025) Full-cycle deferral 8-0-0. Commissioner Murphy moved, Commissioner Cooper seconded for a full-cycle deferral to the November 2025 zoning agenda to allow the applicant to receive more input from the community and to allow the Board time to review changes in the draft that they just received prior to this meeting. Commissioner Costello was not present for this vote.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL VOTE/RECOMMENDATION: (Aug. 2025) Approval 5-0-3.

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF DEKALB COUNTY, GEORGIA TO ADOPT THE STONE MOUNTAIN TRAIL MASTER PLAN STUDY AND TO AMEND THE DEKALB COUNTY 2050 UNIFIED PLAN, CHAPTER 5, SMALL AREA PLANS, TO INCLUDE THE STUDY, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, the Stone Mountain Trail was opened in 1996 as a regional trail to connect sites of the 1996 Olympics and now serves as an important pedestrian transportation corridor in DeKalb County; and

WHEREAS, in May 2023, DeKalb County was awarded \$300,000 by the Atlanta Regional Commission under the Community Development and Assistance Program to conduct the Stone Mountain Trail Master Plan Study; and

WHEREAS, the study aimed to bring together cross-jurisdictional stakeholders, align planning goals, create affordable housing options, improve multimodal transportation options, and provide recommendations for other amenities along the trail; and

WHEREAS, between January 2025 and September 2025, a diverse array of stakeholders and community members participated in public meetings and workshops to contribute input on the goals and objectives of the study; and

WHEREAS, the DeKalb County Planning & Sustainability department and ARC recognize that the Stone Mountain Trail Master Plan Study aligns with both the 2050 Unified Plan and DeKalb County's Trails Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Stone Mountain Trail Master Plan Study is an amendment to Chapter 5: Small Area Plans of the 2050 Unified Plan, offering additional guidance for the study area; and

WHEREAS, the Stone Mountain Trail Master Plan Study includes the following elements: Community Engagement Process, Assessment of Conditions (Existing Conditions Analysis, Safety Assessment, Future Land Use & Zoning Analysis, Housing Issues & Opportunities), Trail

July 29, 2025

Corridor Visioning (Connectivity, Safety, Placemaking, Open Space & Parks, Land Use, Character & Density, Amenities), Implementation Framework (Phasing & Parking Strategy, Funding & Financing Mechanisms, Public Infrastructure Cost Estimate, Proposed Implementation Schedule); and

WHEREAS, in order to ensure plan implementation, it is recommended that the Board of Commissioners adopt the proposed Stone Mountain Trail Master Plan Study as an amendment to the 2050 Unified Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners:

- (1) hereby adopts the DeKalb Stone Mountain Trail Master Plan Study, and amends the 2050 Unified Plan, Chapter 5, Small Area Plans, to include this Plan; and the recommended policies and implementation proposals contained in the Stone Mountain Trail Master Plan Study provide specific guidelines to support the character areas of the Future Land Use Map of the 2050 Unified Plan and provide specific density/intensity guidelines.

APPROVED by the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners, this ____ day of _____, 2025.

MICHELLE LONG SPEARS
Presiding Officer
Board of Commissioners
DeKalb County, Georgia

APPROVED by the Chief Executive Officer of DeKalb County, this ____ day of _____, 2025.

July 29, 2025

LORRAINE COCHRAN-JOHNSON

Chief Executive Officer
DeKalb County, Georgia

ATTEST:

BARBARA SANDERS, CCC

Clerk to the Board of Commissioners
and Chief Executive Officer
DeKalb County, Georgia

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

APPROVED AS TO SUBSTANCE:

WILLIAM LINKOUS, III

County Attorney

JULIANA NJOKU

Director of
Planning and Sustainability