

# Agenda Item

File ID: 2022-2514

Substitute

12/20/2022

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Public Hearing: YES  NO

Department: Planning and Sustainability

**SUBJECT:**

**Commission District(s): All Commission Districts**

Application of the Director of Planning & Sustainability to approve a resolution to join the One Million Trees Initiative of Trees Atlanta, a collaboration across metro Atlanta.

**Information Contact:** Andrew Baker

**Phone Number:** 404-687-7154

**PURPOSE:**

Application of the Director of Planning & Sustainability to approve a resolution to become a partner in the One Million Trees Initiative of Trees Atlanta.

**NEED/IMPACT:**

Climate change remains a serious threat to human and environmental health and well-being. The One Million Tree Initiative is an ongoing global environmental movement to increase urban forest canopy and carbon sequestration. The One Million Trees Initiative of Trees Atlanta is a collaboration of metro Atlanta cities, regional environmental nonprofit organizations, and Trees Atlanta to plant and conserve one million trees across metro Atlanta by 2030. Healthy tree canopies afford the following benefits: air quality improvement, wildlife habitat, stormwater retention and control, aesthetics, natural windbreakers, inhibit soil erosion, increase property values, shading, heating & cooling cost savings, traffic calming, and mitigation of air pollution, climate change, and urban heat island. Our shared, natural environment is part of the global biosphere, which does not acknowledge political and administrative boundaries. Thus, collective activities impart direct ramifications to our shared, natural environment. DeKalb County would be the first county government partner and have a unique opportunity to demonstrate continued, active commitment to social and environmental stewardship. DeKalb County is already conducting a significant amount of tree planting in our communities through the ReLeaf DeKalb II tree planting program with Trees Atlanta.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The Department of Planning & Sustainability will administer the program and use existing funds in the Tree Bank, which collects tree recompense funds from developers and code violators. There are sufficient funds in this account to pay for continued tree planting through ReLeaf DeKalb II and other projects in unincorporated DeKalb County.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

To approve the resolution and authorize the chief executive officer to execute all necessary documents.

**A RESOLUTION**

**A RESOLUTION BY THE GOVERNING AUTHORITY OF DEKALB COUNTY,  
GEORGIA, TO JOIN THE ONE MILLION TREES INITIATIVE, AND FOR OTHER  
PURPOSES**

**WHEREAS**, Trees Atlanta is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization and a top-rated 4-Star charity by Charity Navigator founded in 1985 whose mission is to protect and improve Atlanta's urban forest by planting, conserving, and educating; and

**WHEREAS**, Trees Atlanta also works to mitigate Atlanta's tree loss, protect its forests, and increase its tree canopy; and

**WHEREAS**, the Million Tree Initiative is a global initiative to increase urban forest canopy; and

**WHEREAS**, Trees Atlanta launched the One Million Trees Initiative at their 2020 Canopy Conference on Georgia Arbor Day with a goal to plant and conserve one million trees across metro Atlanta by 2030; and

**WHEREAS**, Trees Atlanta has, to date, partnered with ten metro Atlanta cities and nine other conservation nonprofits that work locally on environmental and sustainability issues on the One Million Trees Initiative, and DeKalb County would be the first county in metro Atlanta to join; and

**WHEREAS**, DeKalb County recognizes that healthy tree canopies afford the following benefits: air quality improvement, wildlife habitat, stormwater retention and control, aesthetics, natural windbreakers, inhibit soil erosion, increase property values, shading, heating & cooling cost savings, traffic calming, and mitigation of air pollution, climate change, and urban heat island; and

**WHEREAS**, DeKalb County will continue to address the removal of trees through development-related ordinances, through a November 2021 resolution regarding the net loss of trees on county-owned properties, and through other means and this Resolution does not abrogate previous Governing Authority action; and

**WHEREAS**, this partnership will advance Trees Atlanta's goal in the planting and conservation of one million trees across metro Atlanta by 2030; and

**WHEREAS**, DeKalb County recognizes that our shared, natural environment is part of the global biosphere, which does not acknowledge political and administrative boundaries; and

**WHEREAS**, DeKalb County recognizes our collective activities impart direct ramifications to our shared natural environment; and

**WHEREAS**, DeKalb County continues active commitment to social, economic, and environmental sustainability by working with Trees Atlanta through the ReLeaf DeKalb Tree Planting Program to ensure a greener, healthier, and more livable DeKalb County; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by DeKalb County's Governing Authority as follows:

DeKalb County commits to partnership in Trees Atlanta's One Million Trees Initiative in support of their goal to plant and conserve one million trees across metro Atlanta by 2030. DeKalb County aspires to promote the benefits and necessity of healthy tree canopies through education, outreach, and engagement with its citizens and personnel. Concerted efforts shall be made to remain abreast of opportunities for preservation of existing tree canopies through land acquisition for parks and greenspaces. DeKalb County recognizes that participation in the One Million Trees Initiative requires documented progress and shall, to the best of its abilities, strive for continued participation to enhance the health, vitality, and livability of our communities.

**ADOPTED** by the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners, this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2022.

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**ROBERT J. PATRICK**  
Presiding Officer  
Board of Commissioners  
DeKalb County, Georgia

**APPROVED** by the Chief Executive Officer of DeKalb County, this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2022.

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**MICHAEL L. THURMOND**  
Chief Executive Officer  
DeKalb County, Georgia

**ATTEST:**

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**BARBARA H. SANDERS-NORWOOD, CCC**  
Clerk to the Board of Commissioners and  
Chief Executive Officer  
DeKalb County, Georgia

APPROVED AS TO SUBSTANCE:

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ANDREW BAKER  
Director  
Planning & Sustainability

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

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VIVIANE H. ERNSTES  
County Attorney  
DeKalb County, Georgia