



DeKalb County Government

Manuel J. Maloof Center
1300 Commerce Drive
Decatur, Georgia 30030

Agenda Item

File ID: 2022-1157

Substitute

4/12/2022

Public Hearing: YES NO

Department: Board of Commissioner - District 7

SUBJECT:

Commission District(s): District 7

A Resolution of the Governing Authority of DeKalb County, Georgia, to Adopt a Comprehensive Trails Master Plan by 2023 and to Appropriate \$400,000 for the Development of the Trails Master Plan

Information Contact: Commissioner Lorraine Cochran-Johnson

Phone Number: 404-371-2899

PURPOSE:

To adopt a resolution requesting that the governing authority adopt a comprehensive trails master plan by 2023 and to appropriate \$400,000 for the development of the trails master plan.

NEED/IMPACT:

An update to the trails master plan is needed to create a comprehensive trail system throughout DeKalb County to protect the natural environment and resources that incorporates existing trails, adds new trails and access points, and connects to the North Fork Peachtree Creek Trail, South Peachtree Creek Path Trail, Peachtree Creek Greenway, Arabia Mountain Path, the Atlanta Beltline and other major trailways and provides a framework for short-term and long-term maintenance and management.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Appropriation not to exceed \$400,000 from the tourism product development CIP Account 104027.89110.541401.01.601643 for the development of the Trails Master Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

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

RESOLUTION

**A RESOLUTION OF THE GOVERNING AUTHORITY OF DEKALB COUNTY,
GEORGIA, TO ADOPT A COMPREHENSIVE TRAILS MASTER PLAN BY 2023**

WHEREAS, trails and greenspace are considered to be of the utmost importance for enhancing the quality of life for DeKalb County citizens to improve health, promote clean air, protect the environment, provide an alternative transportation system, stimulate economic development and create a renewed sense of community; and

WHEREAS, a comprehensive trail system creates opportunities for healthy recreation and outdoor activities and exercise that promotes healthy lifestyles; and

WHEREAS, trails provide safe transportation networks for pedestrians and bicyclists and function as viable corridors to avoid congested streets and highways through greenways on foot or by non-motorized means thereby promoting walkable communities; and

WHEREAS, trails are a valuable community asset which connect destinations for DeKalb County residents and visitors that promotes tourism and draws them to neighboring communities, stimulating local businesses, the economy, and economic development; and

WHEREAS, linear greenways preserve corridors of trees and natural landscapes, connect fragmented habitats and wetlands, and conserve plant and animal species, allowing DeKalb County citizens to experience nature with little environmental impact; and

WHEREAS, DeKalb County is one of ten counties in the Metro-Atlanta region, the fourth most populated county in the state, and has experienced significant growth over the last twenty years: and

WHEREAS, greenspace is disappearing in DeKalb County as 80% of land has undergone development, resulting in unprecedented sprawl and in-fill development where ample greenspace and critical environment areas must be preserved; and

WHEREAS, the effect of urbanization increases annual streamflow, flooding and run-off during a storm event and increases in impervious surfaces affecting DeKalb County's water quality, causes stressors on stream ecosystems, increases concentrations of contaminants, such as nitrogen, chloride, insecticides and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, and increases the loss of sensitive invertebrate species; and

WHEREAS, the Georgia Community Greenspace Program, passed into law under Governor Roy Barnes in 2000, encouraged Georgia counties to voluntarily set aside 20% of land for greenspace in response to the growing population and urbanization; and

WHEREAS, DeKalb County joined the Georgia Community Greenspace Program in November 2000, and adopted a Joint DeKalb/Municipal Greenspace Program that led to the development of the Initiative for a Green DeKalb in 2001 to implement a county-wide plan for the county's greenway system; and

WHEREAS, DeKalb County adopted the DeKalb Greenway Trails Master Plan in 2000 in partnership with the PATH Foundation that aided in the establishment of a trail system consisting of 127 miles of greenways; and

WHEREAS, DeKalb County and PATH Foundation have a master agreement to build trails resulting in over 18 miles of greenway to date; and

WHEREAS, an update to the trails master plan is needed to create a comprehensive trail system throughout the county to protect the natural environment and resources that incorporates existing trails, adds new trails and access points, and connects to the North Fork Peachtree Creek Trail, South Peachtree Creek Path Trail, Peachtree Creek Greenway, Arabia Mountain Path, the Atlanta Beltline and other major trailways and provides a framework for short-term and long-term maintenance and management; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the governing authority of DeKalb County, Georgia that DeKalb County:

1. Adopts a comprehensive trails master plan by 2023; and
2. Acquires land and open space as necessary to conserve greenspace and build a comprehensive network of trails; and
3. Incorporates public participation to create a comprehensive trails master plan that is vital to the planning process; and
4. Creates and promotes equitable and inclusive trail development throughout DeKalb County through the use of data and public engagement to identify areas in need of trails and greenways; and
5. Develop a comprehensive trails master plan that prioritizes and outlines trail development cost and work to be undertaken throughout the county and establishes firm timelines for trail development.
6. Allocates \$400,000 to develop a trails master plan that will be paid for by DeKalb County. DeKalb County will establish a dedicated funding source for the development of all trails included in the trails master plan and any trails added after the trails master plan has been completed. Engagement of all local municipalities will occur throughout the process to ensure they are informed about the development of the trails master plan and aid in future planning of trails and paths in their jurisdiction.

ADOPTED by the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners, this _____ day of _____, 2022.

ROBERT PATRICK
Presiding Officer
Board of Commissioners
DeKalb County, Georgia

APPROVED by the Chief Executive Officer of DeKalb County, this _____ day of _____, 2022.

MICHAEL L. THURMOND
Chief Executive Officer
DeKalb County, Georgia

ATTEST:

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

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

VIVIANE H. ERNSTES
County Attorney
DeKalb County, Georgia