

**Urban Ecology Framework  
Public Meeting #1 Summary  
72 Marietta St.  
Tuesday, May 22, 2018**

The public was given an overview of the project and the purpose of the public meeting. This was followed by an overview of the project scope, tasks and deliverables. A brief summary was provided about the data analysis process, including the ecological context of how national, regional and local impacts influence existing conditions. Following the methodology presentation, the attendees were asked to participate in a series of interactive exercises.

**Story of Place Activity**

Attendees were divided into small groups and were presented several questions of stories and opinions around the ecological development and future of the City. Each group discussed all questions and documented the responses. At the completion of the exercise, each group was asked to provide their response to one question and share their responses with the other groups. Following are some of the responses:

1. What makes Atlanta unique today from an ecological perspective?
  - 49% canopy cover, network of streams and creeks, and unique reptiles and amphibians
2. How did we get here?
  - Railroad industry influenced development and the establishment of a street network, brick and granite industry influenced commerce, racism and social justice informed settlement patterns and neighborhood fragmentation.
3. What current trends and patterns are you seeing?
  - Population growth, greater disconnection between people and ecology.
4. What is challenging about Atlanta's urban ecology? And the trends shaping tomorrow?  
What threatens Atlanta's ecological uniqueness?
  - Increased population and expectation of larger homes, density, favoring developers versus preserving ecology, which would influence storm water and health, lack of knowledge of ecological web.

**Vision and Goals Activities**

Following a presentation of the origin of the Vision and Goals, attendees were asked to provide comments about the Vision and then participate in the three vision and goal exercises. Following are some of the comments attendees made about the Vision Statement:

1. Need to understand the impact of surrounding areas to any growth or positive positioning by this process. (economic/people/transit)
2. Where is equity included in this vision? People and communication.
3. Regarding the word "function" – Is this enough? Maybe "thriving"
4. "...unique ecological character, both verdant and vibrant." This is not clear nor specific and why is this different from any other initiative?
5. ...greenspace – add to include 1) Functional, 2) People and 3) communication.
6. ...public – add people and communication.

7. Regarding the word “respects” – Similar to above what does respect mean? Do we need to be more aggressive or deliberate like “protects” or maybe there are different verbs for each noun? i.e. expand forest resources, protect watersheds, etc.
8. Replace “strategically guides the projected increase” with “addresses”
9. Replace “respects” with “enhances”
10. Regarding the word “livability” – What does it mean and encompass? I think this may be the place to get at integration of people and nature in particular the fact of our private ownership of natural resources in our green neighborhoods. It’s our development patterns overlaid upon a Piedmont landscape of forests and streams.
11. ...density – add and diversity. Include people and communication.
12. ...strategically – add and equitably
13. ...needs – add in urban agriculture activities
14. ...greenspace – add people, wildlife...
15. Encourages community ownership and stewardship to make preservation/conservation part of ATL culture for now and beyond (for the future).

An Updated Vision Statement based on Public Comments:

A city Atlanta is grounded in its unique ecological character and strong communities of native functional ecological systems and, both verdant and vibrant accessible greenspace, both verdant and vibrant. It is likewise grounded in a strong sense of community and culture bound in many ways to our natural resources. and functional ecological systems.

A This urban ecology framework will that strategically guide and equitably address the projected increase in Atlanta’s population density and diversity such that development urban expansion respects, protects and expands our native forest resources, waterways and waterbodies sheds, soils, people and wildlife, urban agriculture and public greenspace, promoting resilience, transportation needs, livability and connectivity through increased ownership and stewardship.

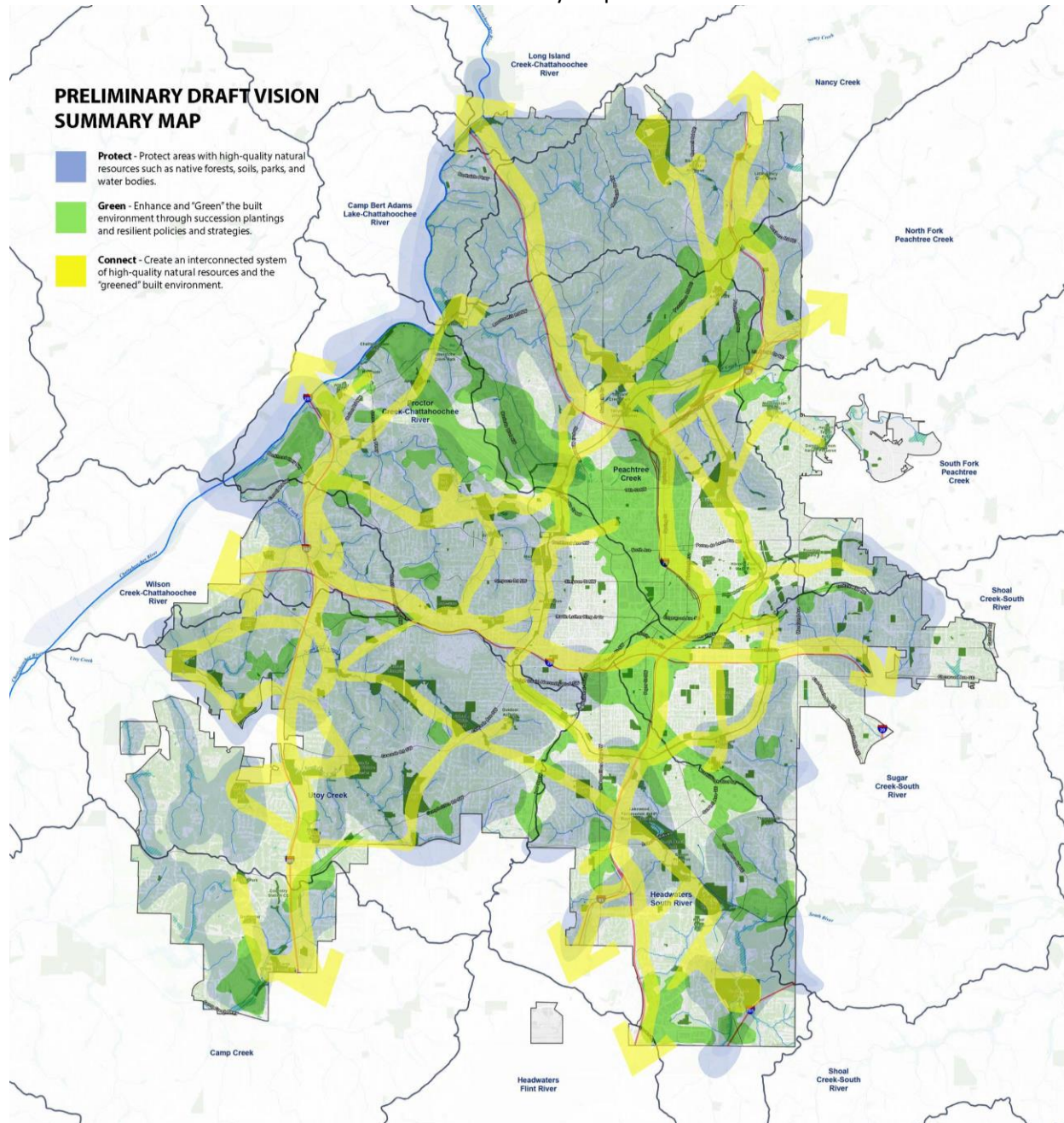
**Goals Activity** - Each attendee was given a set of the four goals as well as a blank sheet to add a goal that they felt might be missing. Then they were asked to prioritize each goal from 1 through 5. Attendees taped their priorities to one of five posted priority sheets. Following are the results from the exercise.

Goals	Priority Ranking				
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
Conservation-Habitat and Biodiversity	16	13	9	4	0
Function - Multifunctionality of Greenspace	4	12	9	14	1
Access/Greenspace Connectivity	6	6	15	10	1
Resilience	11	9	6	11	2

**Vision Activity** - Using the questions below as guidance, attendees were asked to share their vision on a City map through notes and/or drawings.

- What do Atlanta's natural systems, parks, open space, rivers & streams patterns look like in 50 years? (describe and draw on maps)
- Brainstorm possibilities for a future Atlanta immersed in ecology (as opposed to problem solving the past).
- Prepare a new Vision Statement OR provide any edits to the draft Vision statement provided on the sheets provided.

The results from this exercise is shown in the summary map below.



**Activity 3** - Attendees were asked to write their ideas on poster sheets or discuss with a facilitator the following questions:

- a. How can the public connect with Atlanta's nature and ecology?
- b. How should we fund Atlanta's future green space and ecological priorities?
- c. How can we best communicate Atlanta's ecology opportunities to the public and public officials?

The results from this exercise can be found in the pdf. file named **Public Meeting 1- Activity 3 Results.pdf**.

### **Wrap up Discussion**

At the end of the meeting, attendees were asked to participate in a general discussion on the Vision and Goals and feedback about the content of the meeting. The following input was shared:

- Some residents don't know how to hold elected officials accountable for plans that have been adopted by the City. Perhaps it may make sense to create a toolkit for residents to stay engaged and hold elected officials accountable.
- An attendee noted that he really enjoyed sharing ideas with others.
- An attendee noted that they would like to see some more brainstorming activities.
- Attendees asked to see a project schedule and next steps for the public to know what is coming and when.