

January 30, 2007

Mr. P. Russell Hardin
President
Robert W. Woodruff Foundation
50 Hurt Plaza, Suite 1200
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Dear Russ:

I have enjoyed our discussions regarding the Foundation's goals for Atlanta's parks and am pleased that Park Pride and its Community Grants program align with reaching these goals. The potential partnership between the Woodruff Foundation and Park Pride, on a matching grant program for Atlanta's parks, is exciting and offers amazing potential to transform our City. Just as the success of Park Pride's Community Micro Grants program may inspire support from the Woodruff Foundation, I believe that your support would inspire additional investment from others. Such broad support for both small-scale and substantial park and greenspace projects within our community will make a significant, broad impact.

On behalf of the Park Pride Board, thank you for the opportunity to submit the following grant application for your consideration.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss the grant proposal further, please contact me directly at (404) 817-6761.

Sincerely,

George Dusenbury
Executive Director

January 30, 2007

Mr. P. Russell Hardin
President
Robert W. Woodruff Foundation
50 Hurt Plaza, Suite 1200
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Dear Russ:

Park Pride, founded in 1989, is a non-profit organization that leads action for improvement of parks and greenspace in Atlanta. Park Pride's current programs provide a comprehensive structure through which communities can become part of park and greenspace enhancements through advocacy, volunteerism and small capital improvements to their parks.

Along with its Park Visioning, Adopt-a-Park and Community Micro Grant programs, park clean-up volunteer initiatives have created a mutually beneficial partnership between Park Pride and the City of Atlanta. Park Pride, as an independent nonprofit, also collaborates with the City of Atlanta by advocating for increased park funding and educating City leaders about parks, environmental and community issues.

By collaborating with a broad range of constituents—including Atlanta-area residents, community groups, other nonprofits, real estate developers and City leaders—Park Pride's efforts show a tangible difference in both the aesthetics and usability of greenspaces throughout Atlanta. The communities we serve ultimately reap the many benefits associated with parks, such as increased property values, decreased crime and improved health.

Park Pride programs and staff have steadily grown over the past few years. From 2004 to 2006, the organization increased its budget by more than 120 percent, providing a corresponding increase in its community impact. Successes each year show the organization's growth but also reflect communities' increasing interest in becoming involved with park improvements and creation of new parks.

In 2006, Park Pride

- developed conceptual master plans for five parks;
- organized more than a dozen "friends of the park" groups;
- successfully rallied park and community activists to have the Fulton County Commission reverse its decision to sell six Sandy Springs Parks to the highest bidder; and
- coordinated more than 22,000 hours of volunteer maintenance and improvements to Atlanta's parks.

Our Request

Park Pride proposes to expand its successful Community Micro Grant program to provide larger grants for park improvement projects within the City of Atlanta.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Park Pride, we request \$400,000 from the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation to expand the Community Micro Grant program in order to provide matching grants to more substantial community-initiated park improvement projects.

[A Proven Track Record](#)

Park Pride's Community Micro Grant program, complemented by the organization's Visioning program, has successfully engaged communities in making their parks, and Atlanta's park system, better.

Since the fall of 2004, Park Pride has operated the Community Micro Grant program for park improvements within the City of Atlanta. Funded by a grant from the Cecil B. Day Family Foundation, the Community Micro Grant program works with the City's Neighborhood Planning Unit (NPU) system to provide matching grants of up to \$500 for improvements to public parks and greenspace. Park Pride enlists the NPUs as a partner in identifying suitable grant recipients, which creates greater ownership in the process and ensures equitable geographic distribution of the grants. Park Pride and the City approve and distribute funds to these specific communities. Current funding levels limit the size of grants that Park Pride can provide to \$500 per year per NPU.

Park Pride can award a maximum of 24 micro grants (\$500 each) per year for park improvements to communities within the City of Atlanta. Since its inception in the fall of 2004, the program has funded dozens of projects in communities across Atlanta. Among other park improvements, grants have helped fund: a new fountain and flower bed, a new community garden, a new picnic area, renovation of a park pavilion, a new playground, an educational nature trail, numerous landscaping projects, as well as Georgia's first Life Trail® – a series of exercise stations along a walking track designed for seniors.

The Micro Grant program has been most effective in providing support to communities just beginning their park improvement efforts. The micro grants have enabled newly established "friends of the park" groups to leverage support from their communities as well as surrounding businesses. The experience of "friends of the park" groups, especially those that have participated in Park Pride's Park Visioning program, has created a demand to make larger capital improvements to their parks. The cost of these projects can range from the tens of thousands to hundreds of thousands of dollars. At present, there is limited public and foundation funding to meet this demand. While experience has shown that communities can raise several thousands of dollars for park improvements, there is a strong need for significant matching grants to help communities achieve their visions for their parks.

With a successful project under its belt, made possible through the current Micro Grant program, a community is ready to face the next challenge in its park or neighborhood—a more extensive park or greenspace improvement—often needing a coordinated funding effort to do so. Park Pride's experience in the community shows that it would be the ideal partner in helping these projects come to fruition. An expanded community grant program would pay large dividends in enhancing the quality of the park system in the city of Atlanta.

Expanding on What Works

Park Pride proposes to build upon the matching grant program it currently runs by creating a second tier of grants for communities that have demonstrated the capacity to take ownership of and improve their parks. In particular, Park Pride would provide matching grants starting at \$20,000 to help fund significant capital improvements to public parks within the City of Atlanta. While the current Micro Grant program provides a dollar-for-dollar match, the new matching grant program would provide matches of up to five times the amount raised by the community. The grant selection committee, composed of Park Pride staff, Board members and community volunteers, would take into consideration the community's capacity to raise funds and demonstrated need for park creation or improvement. This program structure allows communities with fewer resources to participate and tangibly benefit. Park Pride strongly believes that requiring a match is necessary for ensuring community support for and ownership of the project. The more vested the community is in the improvement project, the more apt the residents will be to provide ongoing support.

Park Pride would manage the expanded community grants program in the same manner that it manages its Micro Grant program. Applications would be accepted on a semi-annual basis. Applicants would be required to provide documentation of the support of the appropriate community association(s) and neighborhood planning unit. The program would use current Park Pride staff, including the Director of Park Visioning and Director of Community Relations, who would lead the grant selection committee. This committee would review all applications against criteria designed to measure feasibility, appropriateness and community support. In addition, Park Pride would oversee the day-to-day operations of the new community grant program. Of the \$400,000 requested to expand the Community Micro Grant Program, \$365,000 would be re-granted. The remaining \$35,000 would fund Park Pride's management of the program, as show in the itemized budget attached with this proposal.

Park Pride understands the importance of ensuring that The Woodruff Foundation's investment is maintained and protected. By ensuring community ownership of park improvement projects, our community grant program greatly reduces the threat of vandalism to park improvements. In addition, Park Pride continues to lead the charge for an empowered citizenry advocating for better park maintenance and operation. We are confident that the end result will be a stronger Parks Department benefiting from the active engagement of Atlanta residents and park advocates.

Park Pride has been pleased to see marked improvements in park maintenance over the last several years. The Office of Parks has received a budget increase in each of the last three years, including a nearly \$3 million (ten percent) increase in 2006-2007. The Department of Parks and Recreation also has developed and implemented new standards for park maintenance. As part of this effort, the Department launched a new program to aerate, fertilize and tackle invasive plant species in 2006. In 2007, the Department will move from a 10 day to a 7 day mowing cycle. These changes have resulted in significant, visible improvements in the field. We remain committed to advocating and leading action for parks and believe the community grants program plays an important role in taking our efforts to the next level.

The Robert W. Woodruff Foundation's Role

Park Pride's proposal serves three core functions that are essential to its mission and consistent with the mission of the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation. First, the effort would empower communities by providing them tools and resources needed to improve the quality of life in their neighborhood. Second, it would beautify and otherwise improve public greenspace. Third, it would strengthen residents' sense of ownership in their communities' park or greenspace.

The Community Micro Grant program was inspired in part by the words of Edmund Burke. "Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could do only a little." As the enclosed Community Spotlight demonstrates, having done a little, residents often continue to do much more.

Your gift of \$400,000 will expand Park Pride's ability to make significant grants available to communities in the City of Atlanta, while working with those communities to be further engaged in improving their parks and our City.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have further questions, please feel free to call Guido at (404) 915-5729 or George at (404) 817-7970.

Respectfully submitted,

Guido Sacchi
Board President

George Dusenbury
Executive Director

Park Pride: Matching Grant Program Budget Projected budget for first 18 months of program	Direct Expenses	Staffing / Overhead Costs										Total
Expenses	Materials & Services	Community Relations		Visioning		Development/ Comm.		Admin		Accounting		
		hrs	\$	hrs	\$	hrs	\$	hrs	\$	hrs	\$	
Marketing & Outreach												
Develop promotional and informational materials	\$1,200					4	\$144	12	\$144			\$1,488
Printed materials	\$3,500											\$3,500
Create and maintain web page						2	\$72	16	\$192			\$264
Distribution of materials		8	\$416			2	\$72	8	\$96			\$584
Application Process												
Create application		6	\$312									\$312
Collect & analyze applications		20	\$1,040									\$1,040
Interview candidates, respond to inquiries		24	\$1,248									\$1,248
Determine required matching rate for each grant		10	\$520			2	\$72					\$592
On site evaluations		15	\$780	60	\$3,000							\$3,780
Coordinate proposals with Dept. of Parks, Rec. & Cultural Affairs		10	\$520									\$520
Award Process												
Recruit and coordinate Grant Review Committee		20	\$1,040									\$1,040
Notification of grantees		8	\$416									\$416
Distribution of awards		8	\$416									\$416
Grants amounts distributed	\$365,000											\$365,000
Due Diligence												
Review grantee reports		40	\$2,080									\$2,080
Site visits to counsel & observe implementation		12	\$624	96	\$4,800							\$5,424
Ensure compliance with grant scope		40	\$2,080									\$2,080
Verify matching funds		10	\$520							8	\$400	\$920
Final site visits				48	\$2,400							\$2,400
Administrative												
Prepare financial documents		16	\$832							16	\$800	\$1,632
Close out grants		40	\$2,080							8	\$400	\$2,480
Postage	\$300		\$0									\$300
Audit	\$2,500	8	\$416			2	\$72	4	\$48	2	\$100	\$3,136
Office supplies, misc	\$1,200		\$0									\$1,200
Prepare and submit reports to Woodruff		8	\$416			2	\$72	4	\$48	2	\$100	\$636
Total Expenses:	\$373,700	303	\$15,756	204	\$10,200	14	\$504	44	\$528	36	\$1,800	\$402,488
Revenue												
Robert W. Woodruff Foundation, Inc. (requested)												\$400,000
In-Kind Donations: Supplies, Postage, Site Visit Transportation	\$850											\$850
Undesignated Funds/Other												\$1,638
Total Revenue:	\$850	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$402,488