

SUMMARY

CITY OF MOUNTAIN PARK CITIZEN SURVEY

JANUARY 2011

OUR SHARED PROPERTY

How should we use our public spaces?

Encourage rentals Festivals, concerts. Fund raisers, community events, cook-outs. - 11
No change- 9
Green space, trails wildlife sanctuary, sustainable - 8
Dances at Civic Bldg, socializing & fitness, education & volunteerism - 3
Resident only"- 2

Are there any changes you would like to see to the green?

Maintenance

Replace sweet gum trees, Trim invasive plants, Remove the Bradford Pears - 5
Poop clean up - 4
Increased maintenance - 3
Professional landscape architect advice

Facilities

Improve exterior around Civic Bldg. - 8
More tables and benches - 3
Bathrooms available - 3
Cooking stands/grilles - 2
Add soccer goal to one side - 2
Provide below-grade, concrete bases for volleyball nets, badminton nets, soccer nets
Guard rail at lake along road
Boat ramp for canoes and kayaks , add fishing dock
Vita health fitness track or path

to the pool?

General renovation

New pool house, bathrooms and decking, replace missing pool tiles - 14
Upgrade the fence & chains. - 5
Improve horseshoe area - benches, shade - 4
Create a better entrance from the parking lot, not Russell St

Operation

Bring back swim team and lessons - 7
Re-open kid's pool - 6
Charge the real operating cost, OR close it
Include guest in family pass
More free days with special events
Can it be rented?
Would like it to become a year-round pool to generate more income
Concessions/ vending machines
More chairs
Slide

to the playground?

Bathrooms available
Add mulch & maintain (volunteer maintenance) advisory committee run by kids (5-16) – 3
Upgrade structures, different size slides, non-wood equipment – 11
Add motion sensor lights
Separate equipment for younger and older children
Install zip line
Benches for parents
Sand box - 2
Less shade
Move swings to lawn area

or the lakeside pavilion?

Maintenance and operation
Pressure wash regularly – 7
Better grilles, with ash cans – 3
Voluntary fee box (similar to national and state parks) – 2
Better trash collection, recycling bins

Safety
Lighting – 2
Keep vehicles from parking there
Perhaps a chain to close after dark
Don't chain it off, but keep it patrolled/watched
Bathrooms available

Improve
Add another dock on the open side – 2
Add a firepit
Duck food dispensers
Install bench on dock
Food concessions/vending
New tables
Less grass to allow other uses.

Are there other City properties that can be turned to public use?

Community garden – 7
Saturday AM market
Volleyball, basketball or grass tennis court; or community garden (iiii)
Lake Garret walking trail - 9
Use empty lots for event parking
How about property given by Rockland?

Are there other properties that the city should acquire?

No - 9
Sell City Hall
City buys green space to benefit a few people – shame!

Yes - 11
Vacant lot across from pool lots where city sign is at intersection of Cedar and Mtn Park Rd.
Small individual and/or un-buildable lots, lots available due to unpaid taxes – 3
Abandoned or foreclosed homes – 2
City owned rental homes – 2
Anything available, especially around the lake – to protect the habitat – 2
If properties can be sold, the City needs the revenue.
If it can be done with grants and used for protecting our green space

Are there amenities that could be added . . . a community garden . . . volley ball court . . . soccer goals . . . tennis courts . . . ?

Yes.

Community garden – 21.

Volleyball / soccer – 17

Tennis courts / grass tennis court – 6

Basketball court – 3

Trails –3

Rouboat, paddleboat, canoe or kayak rentals – 2

Maze/ meditation labyrinth – 2

Baseball backstop.

Organized sports programs, training camps for soccer, etc.

Frisbee field

Small amphitheater

Scheduled games for kids and adults; encourage activities

Youth community building

Ping-pong table

Small indoor fitness center (fee and/or membership)

Free fishing for residents

No –7. management & maintenance issues

How should we go about preserving and protecting the lakes?

Dredge Lakes – 10

Establish a maintenance fund – 6

Research grants, government funding, private funding – 6

Maintenance, regularly scheduled – 4 Volunteer clean-up weekends

Hire consultant to design our wetlands - 3

Bring both dams up to class 1 standards

Maintain ditches – homeowner program Access for residents only

Protect and preserve

Fix beaver problem

Remove gasoline engines both lakes

Work with Roswell to monitor further development and control excess sediment runoff – 2

Develop plan to allow lakefront owners to improve shoreline

Stop spending money on litigation

Erosion protection on building sites to prevent silting-2

Ask other lake communities what they are doing.

OUR SHARED ECONOMY

Would you support a coffee shop, art gallery or other commercial use in the city?

Yes – 32.

*Small country store, coffee shop - 7,
art gallery - 3.*

Festivals, small business rentals.

Limited to around the public parking areas – 2.

Only if locally owned and operated.

Only if it would be a source of revenue for the City.

Can this be limited to small artisan commercial, without being discriminatory?

Maybe, depends on project – 5

No – 9

Would not pay for itself in security, trash, noise control

Would you support bed and breakfasts or weekly rentals in the city?

Yes – 20. Limited

No – 16 the risk of strangers. Why would anyone want to vacation here?

Bed and breakfasts yes, weekly rentals maybe not – 6

Maybe – 4 If City can collect fees - limited to the Commercial district and near public parking.

Do you have other ideas for increasing income to support new initiatives?

*Outside activities; antique/art show, car show, pet show, bike race, farmer's market , spring art festival, food concession, watercraft rentals, fishing license and bait & gear sales.
restaurant day on the Green – 7*

Ask local colleges, UGA to take us on as a class project – 3

Increase Civic Bldg. rental fees & advertise – 2

Develop a list of reputable contractors/service providers – fee or % to City – 2

Generate power from dam – 2

Grants – 2

Increase fees in the Enterprise Fund,

Wi-Fi run by City

Private donations

Fundraising

Small increase in taxes

Instead of finding more funding, focus of cutting costs, more volunteerism -2

MP Police?

Close the fire department 80% of calls are outside of MP

If necessary, would you support the issuance of bonds to fund major projects?

No – 13 This only postpones the cost and adds interest.

Can we handle this? Future taxes – 3

Only if approved by public vote for each bond

As a last resort

Yes – 11

Only to dredge / repair lakes – 3 if it would stabilize taxes

Maybe – 9 Depends on the project. As long as it doesn't raise taxes.

Would you pay higher taxes to support expanded services?

No – 30 Continue current services and focus on doing them well

Maybe – 6

Yes – 3

Would support taxes to buy green space or designated for alternative energy or self-sustaining endeavors.

What are other sources of funds for City projects?

Grants (Federal, State, County) – 10

Event rentals – 6

Civic Club or Fire Department fundraising,

Stop paying for failed litigation – 2

Allow small businesses – 2

Summer film/movie series for children and families – possibly charge admission

Rent indoor games (table tennis) in Winter

Use lakes as a learning resource for local schools (possibly fee-based)

Donations

Get more people to use the pool

Sell City properties

How is the City paid by the utility companies?

Sell sewer taps

Yacht Club

Volunteer events other than Earth Day. Don't hold these only on Saturday.

OUR GOVERNANCE

Should Mountain Park continue to be a city, or should we city consider annexation into Roswell?

Annex into Roswell - 20

Can we afford to be a City

*Suspect we are too small to handle the infrastructure needs of a City.
Can we be designated a historic community?*

Maybe 13

*Should research and share all factual information
Would Roswell annex us? – 3*

Remain a City– 17

Or annex into Cherokee County?

No – 17 Fulton schools are an asset.

Maybe – 13

*Would this make a difference?
If it would lower taxes.
If it would help clean up the lakes.*

Yes – 12. But prefer Roswell

Is this legally possible?

We'll still be a unique community no matter what group we're part of, but we need to be able to maintain the lakes, roads, public recreation and safety.

Are there city services that you would like to see expanded which have not been mentioned above?

No – 7

*Cut expenses.
Use volunteers for snow/ice removal*

Road maintenance – 7

Maintain lakes – 4

Expanded police service – 2. Around public areas after dark.

Library, mobile library – 2

Recreation Dept.

Code enforcement

Senior citizen programs

Adult and children programs

Sidewalk connection to 92

Contract for snow / ice removal

Create a clearing house for exchanging services

Fire Dept. is wonderful and underrated

Yard debris pick-up as part of trash service

Provide electronic water billing and bill-paying

Develop / expand alternative energy

Water quality

A reasonable way to get quick answers as a homeowner

Nature / wildlife preservation projects

Are there other codes that you think should be strengthened, or enforced more strictly? Less strictly?

Get rid of speed bumps – enforce speed limit – 4
Uneven application of codes -3
Don't require Parking Permits – just notify the Fire Department-2
Too many now.
Building codes are too strict
For every new code – eliminate 3 others
Stop all the variance hearings – need a tax break
Less strict on tree size, “No disturbance zone”, tree protection requirements.
Allow pine tree removal per homeowner decision

Junk around homes, failure to maintain properties – 12
Continue to limit building size (SF) – 2
Increase lease laws.
Projects needing building permits are overlooked – need education on ordinances
The grass ordinance
Allow room or basement apartment rentals
Recent building code changes are a step in the right direction
Get Roswell to enforce the noise ordinances in Brookfield
Strengthen building permits and fishing permits
Permit and encourage any advances in sustainable living (solar or wind power, grey-water)
Maintain unique cabin and small dwelling atmosphere

Are there changes we should make in the structure of our government or the role of elected officials?

Get rid of this government structure – 5
We need a City Administrator as a manager – 2, and let elected officials serve as legislators.
Council needs to be accountable and have less “attitude”
Reduce to Mayor and 4 Council
Need experienced leadership
Council does not represent families well
All complaints should be taken in writing.
Address the perception of City management impropriety
Make Council attendance at Work Sessions mandatory.
Major decisions (particularly financial) should be made with the written support of at least a portion of residents. Decisions involving tax dollars should be voted on.
Current elected officials are wonderful, but their jobs are overwhelming
Never seen a more responsive, friendly, helpful group of elected officials.
More civic participation
Working committees should include 3-5 citizen volunteers per committee – 3
City information emails for meetings and committee meetings
Neighborhood codes / homeowners association with fees

Other than committee participation, what other citizen run opportunities for involvement should there be?

Mountain Park Improvement Club can help maintain building and facilities – 3
Hire professional city management group under Homeowner Association status.
Use Facebook and other social media
Continue Town Hall meetings
Welcome committee
Maintain email or postal mail list of citizens for notification of meetings (with agendas) The City does a pretty good job of keeping us informed; the newsletter is great. Need more advance notice of community meetings Newsletter good Surveys for specific topics or describing more options.
Decent, City website with “up-to-date” calendar and event notifications and links. Don't rely on Civic Club website or biased websites.

*More specific surveys that address major decisions before they are made – 2.
Open forums to discuss proposed decisions with Mayor & Council.
Mandatory 2-year service by all resident adults
A Review Board and Meetings where the public can be heard and not “shut down”.
Civic club should be run as a social, community organization, but not supported by tax dollars.
No more involvement*

Should we establish a community watch program?

*Yes – 18 Already exists – 8 www.nationofneighbors.com
No – 2 Hard to be effective in this environment.
Maybe. Depends on what they are watching for*

OUR FUTURE

What is your biggest concern about Mountain Park?

Our financial condition – 21. Bankruptcy. Short term and long term.
Taxes – 10
Lakes and dams – 8
That it become like Roswell/ more dense development – 5. A real concern if annexed.
“Rundown” houses – 4
Losing our unique setting; losing our small independent, spirited community feel – 2
Too small to be a city – 2
Preservation of wildlife-2
Decreased property values – 2
Maintenance of facilities, roads, pool
Charter
Federal and state mandates
Getting people to volunteer
Junk around houses
Possibility of bigger houses being built on smaller lots – loss of trees.
Difficulty in trying to improve my house
Clearing roads of snow and ice

What are your goals for Mountain Park?

Preserve like it is 3

Clean up junk – 3
Clean up properties
To remain a peaceful, tolerant, eclectic community off the beaten path. – 15
Continue as a City
Dissolve City – 2
Become part of Roswell – 6 As a historic community?
Financial stability – 2
Fix tax rate
Modernize
Work together as a community in constructive ways– 4
Clean and deepen the lakes – 6
Fix bridge
Take care of our elderly
Harmony

Why do you choose to live in Mountain Park? What do you like?

Environment / Nature – 21
Solitude and beauty – 16 Rustic charm. Small town feel.
Park like setting, eclectic/diverse mix of homes & landscapes – 8
Lakes – 6
Quiet – 4 No traffic
Diverse population – 8
Good energy – a special place, a very creative place – 3
Sense of community. Volunteerism, helping each other – 5 Cooperation
Neighbor-friendly – 4
Private – 3
Pool – 3
Activities
Funky
Too old to move
Having the Heron House
We thought it was an affordable place to live

*Schools
Kids earning to swim in the pool
Fire Department service. Access to City Hall
Playground*

What do you dislike?

*Junk, trailers etc around homes, rundown properties, unmaintained – 18
Code Compliance should be proactive, not just responding to complaints
Dangerous trees - 2
Taxes – 3 Financial uncertainty
Lawsuit – 2
City corporate structure – ii. City Council
Speed bumps – 6. And too many stop signs.
The government – 6 Ugly politics. Divisive politics.
Infighting among people – 4
Rumor mills
Lack of neighbor communication
Lack of unbiased, detailed communication on community topics for residents that cannot attend meetings
Too much power in too few hands
Letting / expecting others to fix our problems
Feeling suffocated and stagnant
Indian Springs is capped
Unsuited leaders
Why pay for Christmas lighting if we can't afford to plow and sand the roads
No activities for teens or kids
Insufficient street lighting for walking to events
Constant disregard for property by non-residents touring the neighborhood*

Any other comments?

*Could help with expanding the City directory to include more (voluntary) info such as profession, retired?, interests, etc.
I want to live in Mt. Park, but I may have to move if taxes continue to go up and our property value depreciates more.
We will move soon if things don't change
Is there a plan to pave Laurel Street?
Would like to see Mayor and Council receive more compensation, which should raise the level of service
Fire Department appears to run the City at times, then chooses not to sand the roads.
Hope the City will make smart decisions and be willing to change with the times for the benefit of all residents.
We like the increase in communication from City Hall*

Mountain Park is run almost entirely by the volunteer spirit. In what areas can you help our city?

*Would rather pay for professional work – 2
I would provide labor for physical work, if asked*