



GRANT PARK is a historic park established in the 1880's with a large land donation from Lemuel P. Grant to the City for all Atlantans to enjoy as a park. In the early 1900's, the Olmsted firm made several design improvements to ensure the park remained a respite from urban life. Today, Grant Park still retains many landscape features for which Olmsted parks, like New York City's Central Park, are revered.

Grant park and Zoo Atlanta share 131 acres of land surrounded by residential homes. Zoo Atlanta's growth over the years has resulted in the public park space shrinking to less than 90 acres. The latest zoo expansion will require nearly 400 trees in about 15 acres of the existing park's public space to be clear cut to expand the elephant exhibit, create a new Zoo entry way, renovate the former Cyclorama building into Zoo event space, and erect a 1,060-space parking deck. This tree removal will result in 10% of the public park's tree canopy (387/4000 trees) being removed. Over 250 are healthy, non-invasive trees.

Many of these healthy trees are being removed to erect the parking deck, but not because they are in the deck's footprint. Many of these trees are being removed to:

- Add a large expansive pedestrian walkway
- Enlarge the existing pond to deal with additional water runoff from the new deck
- Grade ramps up to the upper level of the deck
- Pile dirt from excavation of the deck
- Install the Beltline overlay on top of the deck

Most of the healthy trees are to be replaced with young, smaller trees at the site of the clearcutting, but this replacement plan only replaces inches for two-thirds of the nearly 400 trees being removed and does not factor in the percentage of trees that will not survive.

Minimizing tree removal ensures a sustainable tree canopy is maintained in the park. Replacing large mature trees with young, smaller trees that will not mature for decades will not restore this natural resource because they will not contribute to cleaning the air, reducing noise and water runoff, or supporting an abundant wildlife like the current mature trees do.

SAVE THE TREES OF GRANT PARK is an initiative to save the urban tree canopy by reconsidering the parking deck design.

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These mature trees do a lot for our community:

- Together the trees marked for removal in Grant Park sequester over 100 tons of carbon dioxide every 6 years (about 18 tons a year).
- These trees improve public health by keeping pollutants out of our lungs by trapping and removing dust, ash, pollen, and smoke with their leaves.
- Mature trees offset increased temperatures generated from concrete and asphalt by generating cool air through a process known as evapotranspiration, which is when trees release water through their leaves.
- Mature trees in large areas (such as Grant Park) capture rain in their canopy which in turn reduces storm water runoff.
- Large areas with trees can reduce noise in the park by up to 50%.
- These trees maintain a rich wildlife of birds (woodpeckers, cardinals, owls, etc.), squirrels, and other creatures, whose habitat will be lost because the size of land being clear cut.

References:

Grant Park Master Plan 1999

<http://www.americanforests.org>

<https://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/Downloads/method-calculating-carbon-sequestration-trees-urban-and-suburban-settings.pdf>

www.savethetreesGP.org

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