



# IMPACT REPORT 2023

CREATE - CONSERVE - CONNECT




A boardwalk over Orkin Lake is part of the first section of the Springway.

## A YEAR OF PROGRESS ON GREENSPACE INITIATIVES!

The Sandy Springs Conservancy in 2023 has enthusiastically continued to advance its mission of creating, connecting and conserving parks, trails and greenspace in the community. With the support of sponsors and donors, the Conservancy has allocated more than \$50,000 in 2023 to implement and advance projects that will provide outdoor enjoyment for the entire community for years to come. Efforts have included pledging funds to a construction grant application for the Springway trail and improvements at Abernathy Greenway South, providing funds and organizational efforts for the library garden renovation and purchasing a large bicycle sculpture that's sure to become a recognizable fixture on a key trail head! The Conservancy is looking ahead at future opportunities with the Chattahoochee RiverLands program for increased river accessibility. Our work is made possible by continued trust and support from business and civic communities.

## SANDY SPRINGS CONSERVANCY AND THE NEW CITY TRAIL SYSTEM



The Conservancy has been a driving force in the development of the 31-mile city-wide trail plan, now called the Springway. Current construction of the first segment is expected to be completed spring of 2024. The section features a boardwalk over Orkin Lake and connects the Chattahoochee River at Morgan Falls Overlook Park to Cimarron Pkwy and Roswell Road at Big Trees Forest Preserve. The Conservancy pitched the plan idea to city officials and contributed \$25,000 toward its development, \$30,000 to help the city secure a \$3 million construction grant for the first segment and has pledged another \$30,000 for a construction grant application for the second trail segment. Conservancy officials also work to secure critical land easements for trail construction.



# FOCUS ON A TREASURE THAT CONNECTS US

## Thought Leaders Dinner Gathers River Experts

More than 150 people attended our 2023 Thought Leaders Dinner that brought together a panel of experts on the Chattahoochee River to discuss the future of recreational access, trails and conservation. Gabriel Sterling of the Conservancy board moderated the discussion with Graham Dorian of the Chattahoochee National Park Conservancy, Walt Ray of the Chattahoochee RiverLands project and Jason Ulseth of the Chattahoochee Riverkeeper. Sandy Springs has more than 20 miles of river flowing through it and six parks with river access including city and national parks. The Conservancy is focused on enhancing river access in our community for the future enjoyment of all residents. Also at the event, our annual Greenspace Champion award was presented to SSC Chair Emeritus Steve Levetan for his many years of dedication to the mission.



Event panel speakers Jason Ulseth, Walt Ray, Graham Dorian



Tony Coaxum, Georgia Power/SSC; Kamy Molavi, SSC; Andrea Molavi; Johnny Simpkins, Morgan Stanley



Chattahoochee River at Morgan Falls Overlook Park which provides a river access launch dock.



Bryan Palmer, sponsor United HealthCare; Sharron Hastie-Grissom, UHC/SSC



Jack Misiura SSC Chair, left, SSC Greenspace Champion honoree Steve Levetan; Terry Morris, SSC

## SANDY SPRINGS CONSERVANCY 2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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# THANK YOU SUPPORTERS



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## Trail Blazers

Marquis and Sharron Hastie-Grissom  
Marian Macleod-Elliott  
Jack and Pamela Misiura  
Mark and Sarah Moore  
The Morgan Family  
Sunny Park  
Pete and Sally Parsonson  
Katherine and David Paul  
Tara and Mark Widener

## Explorers

William and Alexandra Allen  
Bob and Carolyn Axt  
Convergint Technologies  
Steven Gapp  
Grover and Mary Gilchrist  
Andy and Abigail Gross  
Laura and Bert Jones  
Catherine Lautenbacher  
Nancy and Jim Schisler  
Jay Schmitt  
Johnny Simpkins

## Friends

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Bryan and Lauren Gershkowitz  
Nathan Hendricks III  
Kelly Jordan  
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Brian and Rosa McHugh  
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Evan Ottaviano  
Al and Kathi Pond  
Helen Pregulman  
Jody Reichel  
Brent Reid  
Vince Riggio  
Doug Selph  
Gabriel Sterling  
Shawn and Sharon Tokanel  
Philip Tribble

The mission of the Sandy Springs Conservancy (SSC) is to create, conserve and connect parks and greenspace in Sandy Springs, Georgia.

[WWW.SANDYSPRINGSCONSERVANCY.ORG](http://WWW.SANDYSPRINGSCONSERVANCY.ORG)



Photo: Lose Design

# ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

## Trail Blazers



### GUIDED EVENTS DRAW WALKERS TO PARKS

The Sandy Springs Conservancy's 2023 Trail Blazers program brought walkers to nine different parks in the area with nine different guides who shared their knowledge and expertise. Dozens of walkers from Sandy Springs and beyond joined each month from February to October. They explored Lost Corner Preserve, Morgan Falls Overlook Park and the Georgia Power hydro-plant, City Springs and Marsh Creek Rain Garden, Powers Island Unit of the Chattahoochee River National Recreational Area, Ridgeview Park, Abernathy Greenway, Island Ford of CRNRA, Hyde Farm in Cobb County and East Palisades of CRNRA. Look for Trail Blazers to resume in the spring of 2024 and join us!



### GROUPS HELP RENOVATE LIBRARY READING GARDEN

The Sandy Springs Conservancy led efforts in 2023 to renovate the Sandy Springs Library Reading Garden. The Conservancy contributed \$10,000 in micro project funds, board volunteer manpower, and organized corporate volunteer groups from Bennett Thrasher and Morgan Stanley. Together with help from the Sandy Springs Garden Club and W Designs, the reading garden was cleared of ivy and debris, planted with rescued plants from the nearby Spruill property. The labyrinth and walking paths were refurbished with new slate, dead vines were removed from the pergola, the Peace Pole was refurbished and tons of mulch was spread. The Conservancy also funded an Eagle Scout project that consisted of a covered wood informational kiosk with a glass door.



### CONTINUED INVOLVEMENT & ENHANCEMENTS

- Trails at Morgan Falls Overlook Park
- Abernathy Greenway
- Allen Road Park
- Old Riverside Park
- Sandy Springs Farmer Market