



Atlanta Public Safety Training Center Q & A

Q.

Why is the new Public Safety Training Center needed?

A.

- Morale, recruitment and retention suffer when our public servants must be trained in sub-standard facilities that fail to meet the training needs required of a major urban law enforcement agency.
- Attracting new recruits is an uphill battle, at best, when the existing training facilities are sub-standard. Reversing the trajectory of public safety is dependent on staffing our agencies to their full complement of authorized officers.
- Atlanta Fire Rescue abandoned its training facility last year and now trains in borrowed facilities.
- APD moved from its obsolete training center to leased space at Metropolitan State College — a temporary, two-year lease.
- Neither fire rescue nor police department currently have an Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC) to train on. Having this course will make a huge impact on the safety of operations and will reduce liability throughout the city.
- Training is essential to continuing to uphold 21st Century police reform excellence.
- Our citizens rightfully demand policing excellence. The City's obligation is to ensure that we provide the resources and training that enable our law enforcement officers to adhere to the high professional standards we expect.
- The Key Road plan is a giant leap from the sub-standard training facilities of today to state-of-the-art facilities that will meet modern Atlanta's complex public safety training needs for the next 40 years.

Q.

Why this site? Are there other places the training center could be built?

A.

- The City went through an exhaustive review of its properties before selecting the Key Road site - it is the only parcel owned by the City that is large enough to accommodate police and fire department training needs.
- Even if an alternate site controlled by a private entity could be identified, assembling it for development would take decades and present taxpayers with an unwarranted financial burden.
- The private sector has committed \$60 million, contingent on City-approval of a long-term lease, to fund the first phase of construction, making this a financially responsible choice for taxpayers.
- PSTC will be located on 150 acres of a 380-acre parcel of land the City of Atlanta has owned for 100 years in unincorporated DeKalb County.
- The parcel is the original site of the Police and Fire departments' training centers and has been in continual use for outdoor tactical training for Atlanta's public safety agencies for more than 50 years.
- The City needs a site that can accommodate the necessary facilities required to effectively train 21st century law enforcement agencies responsible for public safety in a major urban city:
 - 12-acre Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (to train fire fighters to drive the big fire engines and police to train for those instances where they must chase vehicles),
 - Mock cityscape
 - Burn buildings
 - 40 acres of stable and pastureland for the Mounted Patrol
 - Kennel for K-9 unit and training

<p>Q. Will the site be a noise nuisance to surrounding residents?</p>	<p>A.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current firing range is 500 feet from the nearest residential neighborhoods. The new training center will be located approximately one-half miles from the closest residential area.
<p>Q. But aren't you cutting down acres and acres of trees?</p>	<p>A.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absolutely not. As aerial photographs (available on our website) show, the 150-acre parcel we've identified does not contain significant tree cover. • The site was previously the City's Honor Farm, and the land was clear cut for crops decades ago. • In addition, the City long ago approved a treeless utility easement some 250-feet-wide, that runs the length of the property. • Arborists have confirmed that tree cover today on this parcel is overwhelmingly dominated by invasive species. • It is devoid of thick forest and hardwood trees. • Yet we have committed to replace any hardwood tree destroyed in construction with 100 new hardwoods and replace any invasive species tree with a new hardwood planting.
<p>Q. Will the project cause pollution on the site?</p>	<p>A.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The training center will be built with 21st century EPA standards and controls, mitigating all pollution to the environment, including Entrenchment Creek.
<p>Q. Are you ignoring the historical import of the long-shuttered Honor Farm?</p>	<p>A.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will install a permanent exhibit to commemorate the Honor Farm, whose original intent was an early 20th century experiment to replace incarceration with rehabilitation founded on the dignity of work. • This exhibit will underscore APD's reinvigorated commitment to inculcate officers' respect for the civil and human rights of the citizens they protect.

Q. Does the public community's opinion matter?

A.

- APF has engaged in a community outreach program, including:
 - tours of the site for interested Council members guided by APD and AFR command staff
 - conversations with the Nature Conservancy and Atlanta Preservation Center;
 - an open forum and Research Action meeting with the Atlanta Planning & Advisory Board
 - Listening sessions with Atlanta and Dekalb residents
 - a commitment to creating a committee of resident stakeholders to develop the final design.