



## The Stone Mountain Action Coalition

The Stone Mountain Action Coalition (SMAC) is a movement dedicated to a more inclusive Stone Mountain Park centered on the principles of healing, transformation and progress. SMAC membership is comprised of a diverse coalition of concerned citizens, political leaders, community organizations, religious groups and businesses who are dedicated to supporting constructive solutions and ideas that reflect a new, shared vision for the Park. **We thank you for your interest and invite you to [join us!](#)**

We are in the midst of an unprecedented, national movement to correct social injustices and advance racial equity in our communities. However, the prominent symbols and monuments on display at the Park continue to evoke pain in the hearts and minds of visitors and are an unjust tribute to those who fought for slavery and inequality. For most visitors to the Park, the Confederacy represents a dishonorable, rebellious act against the United States of America that caused cataclysmic suffering and death. **We can do better.**

While Stone Mountain Park has moved beyond its historical relationship with the Ku Klux Klan, it still remains the world's largest Confederate memorial. The Park's prominent carving glorifies three Confederate leaders and was largely funded by the state of Georgia in an effort to promote an inaccurate re-writing of history that perpetuates racism and white supremacy.

Despite common sense changes such as ending the sale of Confederate merchandise in the gift stores and rejecting permits for Ku Klux Klan cross burnings, the Park experience continues to be scarred by the prominent display of Confederate flags, monuments, streets and attractions named in honor of Ku Klux Klan and Confederate leaders, a partnership with the United Daughters of the Confederacy and representations of the Antebellum South and Civil War eras that lack proper context. The Park in its current form presents a romanticized, historically inaccurate narrative about the American South that we must move beyond.

## The Economic Case for Change

Simply put, the Park's Confederate symbols and narrative detract more visitors and funders than they attract. The economic case for changing Stone Mountain Park is based on two interlinked factors: 1) historical and ongoing loss of consumer revenue related to the Park's controversial features and 2) the opportunity cost of not attracting new customers and funders.

[StoneMountainAction.org](https://www.stonemountainaction.org)

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First, current financial support of the Park is largely derived from the local community, which is largely comprised of people of color, and from business entities that support racial equity. Thus, the Park is out of step with its sources of funding. Consumers are increasingly vocal and willing to boycott entities, like the Park, that do not align with basic concepts of social justice. No institution is immune from the short and long-term economic impacts of this form of activism. According to Edelman's recently released, "Special Report: Brands and Racial Justice in America," sixty percent (60%) of consumers think that companies must publicly speak out against racial injustice and will base their decisions on a company's response to the current movement for racial equity. This should be increasingly worrisome for the Park given the changing demographics of our State.

Second, for so long as the Park continues to resist change to its prominent Confederate symbols and themes, it will continue to lose revenue from individuals, corporate partners and foundations that have avoided the Park due to its controversial history and practices. Envisioning a new Stone Mountain Park experience focused on healing and inspiration will unlock funding opportunities and contribute to the Park's financial viability.

The economic case for change is strengthened by the unfortunate reality that the theme park industry and the Park itself have been financially decimated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Park must choose the most economical path forward to survive. Thus, this is a time of opportunity to both ensure the Park's economic survival and create a place that truly welcomes all of its visitors.

## **The Historic Opportunity and Vision for a New Stone Mountain Park**

With the compounding impact of the social justice movement and the COVID-19 pandemic, Stone Mountain Park faces a historic opportunity to establish its current impact and ultimate legacy. The Park is at a fundamental crossroads and must decide whether it will continue to operate as the largest Confederate memorial in the United States, which is divisive by its very nature, or seize this opportunity to transform into a landmark destination for healing and reconciliation.

A new community-driven vision for the Park must be bold and transformative. Imagine a Stone Mountain Park that attracts millions of visitors each year as an inclusive historic, natural, cultural and recreational center; that accurately contextualizes southern history through interactive programs and multi-media experiences; that partners with African American and Native American groups in the spirit of cooperation and progress; that expands its focus on nature and conservation; that is no longer a place of protests and controversy; and that is a world class destination for tourism, recreation, education, meetings and conferences of all kinds.

This vision is ambitious, but Georgia has a strong history of pursuing bold ideas that transform and define our communities. Atlanta is the capital of the New South and the cradle of Civil Rights. **We have moved mountains before. And we can do it again.**

To join the Stone Mountain Action Coalition's initiative to drive historic change at the Stone Mountain Park, please complete the form on our [website](#).

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## **The Stone Mountain Advocacy Coalition Goals and Objectives**

Through a diverse and expansive network of individuals, political leaders, community organizations, religious groups, and businesses, SMAC focuses its collective efforts to:

- Advocate for the immediate and long-term changes needed at Stone Mountain Park.
- Mend racial injustices and provide proper contextualization.
- Lead the conversation about a renewed Stone Mountain Park that celebrates diversity, racial equity and social justice.
- Advocate for a greater focus on the natural elements of the Park.
- Serve as an intermediary between the Park's governance and stakeholders to provide input, feedback, updates and accountability.

Specifically, SMAC will leverage its collective voice, resources and activism to achieve the following objectives:

- Work collaboratively with the Stone Mountain Memorial Association as its primary community partner.
- Detail the changes and improvements needed to address Stone Mountain Park's Confederate symbols and monuments.
- Launch a Request for Ideas initiative to solicit creative proposals about the future of Stone Mountain Park from broad and diverse contributors, including concerned citizens, urban planners, historians, artists, children, geologists, teachers, elected and non-government officials, architects, engineers, designers, artisans and technology experts.
- Prioritize solutions based on a pragmatic review of needs and resources.
- Develop advocacy campaigns for short and longer-term initiatives at Stone Mountain Park.
- Ensure that change at Stone Mountain Park remains a priority to those who govern the Park.

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