

## 2.5 Cultural and Tourism

### Existing Major Cultural Activities

#### *Northeastern Area*

##### *Atlanta Civic Center*

The Civic center is the southeast region's largest theatre, hosting nearly 5,000 guests, and the largest performance stage. It also serves as a meeting facility for corporate giants headquartered in Atlanta, and special events venue for local civic and government organizations. Its downtown location is among major hotels, restaurants, shopping, corporate headquarters and upscale residential housing. The Civic Center is in fairly close proximity to other downtown attractions such as the World of Coca Cola, Underground Atlanta, and the Fox Theatre. The Atlanta Civic Center earned the privilege of serving as the official venue for the 1996 Olympic Games' Cultural Olympiad. In 2001, the newly renovated Atlanta Civic Center was renamed as a lasting tribute to one of Atlanta's most beloved philanthropists, Boisfeuillet Jones.

##### *City Gallery East*

Located on the first floor of City Hall East adjacent to the lobby, this 8,000-square-foot gallery is the largest continuous exhibition space in Atlanta. Improvements have been ongoing since 1995 and there are plans to add office and reception areas to the gallery and entrance/exit facades to the corridor.

##### *East by East Cultural Center (City Hall East)*

This facility was inaugurated as the Carlos C. Museum at City Hall East to house *Souls Grown Deep: African American Vernacular Art of the South* during the 1996 Summer Olympic Games. Since the Olympics, the East by East Cultural center has been home to the ARTSCool Summer Apprentice program. Studio and rehearsal spaces make up this facility, which is slated for major renovations.



City Hall East

### *Fox Theatre*

The Fox Theatre began as the Yaarab Shrine Mosque in the 1920s at the beginning of the Great Depression; its entertainment and movie activities suffered through the 1930s. However the Fox prospered as one of Atlanta's finest movie houses from the 1940s to 1960s. The 1976 designation of the Fox Theatre as a National Historic Landmark sparked aggressive restoration of the building. Today a full-time program is in place to ensure ongoing restoration.

Located on Peachtree Street in midtown, the Fox is located in what can be considered the heart of Atlanta's arts and cultural activities. It is located in close proximity to the Woodruff Arts Center, and the Margaret Mitchell House that are easily accessible by transit; all three locations are within walking distance to a transit station.

### *Woodruff Arts Center*

Comprising the Alliance Theatre, the Atlanta College of Art, the Atlanta Symphony, the High Museum of Art, and the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Playhouse, the Woodruff Arts Center is ranked among the top four art centers in the nation. Because of audiences from throughout the region, the Center has plans to expand existing programs and facilities. The Arts Center is at the intersection of Peachtree and 14<sup>th</sup> Streets and is within walking distance to Piedmont Park, a proposed BeltLine stop.

### ***Southeastern Area***

#### *Atlanta Cyclorama*

The Cyclorama is located in Historic Grant Park near Zoo Atlanta. Pre-dating motion pictures, this 42-foot-high cylindrical oil painting depicts the Battle of Atlanta in 1864. Viewed from a 360-degree rotating platform, the vivid details of this historic Civil War battle are now restored and enhanced with music, narration and sound effects. Accompanying the Cyclorama is the Civil War Museum, highlighted by a steam locomotive from 1862.

In 1996, the Atlanta Cyclorama received a new architectural gateway and an entry plaza along with interior renovations. Improvements include state-of-the-art projection equipment; new landscaping; and a multi-lingual, synchronized translation system for non-English speaking visitors. In 1998, an introductory film was produced on the Civil War narrated by renowned actor James Earl Jones.

## ***Southwestern Area***

### *Wren's Nest*

The Joel Chandler Harris Home, more commonly known as the Wren's Nest, is located at 1050 Ralph David Abernathy Blvd., in southwest Atlanta, in the Historic West End District. Harris penned the "Uncle Remus" stories, the beloved folk tales that feature Brer Rabbit, Brer Fox and the notorious Tar Baby. Variations of Brer Rabbit are found in the folklore of other countries where slavery existed. The Wren's Nest has original Harris family furnishings, books, photographs and memorabilia.

### *Historic Parks: Anderson, Maddox, Mozley, and Washington*

Four of Atlanta's historic parks are located in or adjacent to the northwest part of the study area. Mozley and Anderson Parks are adjacent to the study area and jointly total 85 acres. Washington and Maddox Parks, 72 combined acres, are on proposed BeltLine stops. The connection of these two community parks, both in historic districts, is one example of several possible Beltline connections. There is great potential to increase accessibility to approximately 150 significant park acres.

## **Existing Major Tourism Sites**

### ***Northeastern Area***

#### *Atlanta Botanical Garden*

The Atlanta Botanical Garden is located at 1345 Piedmont Road at The Prado, adjacent to Piedmont Park. The Garden was incorporated in 1976 to develop and maintain plant collections for the purpose of display, education, research, conservation and enjoyment. Featured at the Garden are 15 acres of outdoor display gardens, the 10-acre Storza Woods, a two-acre Children's Garden, a conservatory, an orchid center, and a Center for Education and Conservation.

#### *Carter Center (Freedom Park)*

Located where the Virginia Highland and Historic Inman Park neighborhoods meet, the Carter Center sits on 35 landscaped acres just east of downtown. The landscaped gardens feature five interconnected pavilions that house offices of the former President, research and foundation facilities, and the Jimmy Carter Library and Museum. The center is a short distance from the Atlanta-Stone Mountain Trail that connects to Freedom Trail at Freedom Park, and from City Hall East, a proposed BeltLine stop.

### *Little Five Points*

This neighborhood has emerged as one of Atlanta's newer destination spots. Little Five Points has grown into a rich mix of art, theater, and commerce. It is nestled between two of the City's historic neighborhoods, Inman Park and Candler Park, located just adjacent to the northeast part of the study area.

### *Margaret Mitchell House*

Originally built as a two-story single-family home in 1899, it was later converted to a 10-unit apartment building in 1919. Margaret Mitchell, author of *Gone with the Wind*, wrote most of the novel during her stay in one of the apartment units from 1925 to 1932. In 1995 the building suffered severe fire damage and in 1997 the newly restored Margaret Mitchell House was dedicated and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The structure is located a few blocks west of Piedmont Park at the intersection of Peachtree and 10<sup>th</sup> streets and within walking distance to the Midtown MARTA transit station.

### *Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site*

The site is located just a few blocks east of downtown on Auburn Avenue in the Sweet Auburn neighborhood and is operated by the National Park Service. The historic site covers several city blocks and contains a Visitor Center, Dr. King's boyhood home, his crypt, and the Ebenezer Baptist Church.

### *Oakland Cemetery*

The historic cemetery is the final resting place for many Civil War soldiers, golfing legend Robert T. "Bobby" Jones, and "Gone with the Wind" author Margaret Mitchell. In 2003, the cemetery began a 5-year, \$15 million restoration project. Not only is Oakland Cemetery a popular destination for history enthusiasts, it is also a City of Atlanta park. The park is located at intersection of Boulevard and Memorial Drive. Oakland Cemetery was named for the numerous oak trees located on the property.

### *Piedmont Park*

The park is the most expansive and popular of Atlanta's city parks and was originally laid out for the Cotton States and International Exposition of 1895. The park attracts more than 2 million visitors annually and plays host to many concerts and festivals. The 180+ acre facility is home to the Atlanta Botanical Garden and scenic lake Clara Meer. The park runs along the proposed alignment greenway trail and would be a stop on the BeltLine.

## ***Southeastern Area***

### *Grant Park, Atlanta Cyclorama, and Zoo Atlanta*

These attractions are frequented by numerous visitors every year. Zoo Atlanta and the Atlanta Cyclorama are adjacent within Grant Park. The Park is located in Historic Grant Park neighborhood, and is a proposed stop on the BeltLine. The park would connect to Piedmont Park via the Beltline.

### *Turner Field*

The ballpark is located just west of Grant Park, near the Summerhill and Peoplestown neighborhoods, on Hank Aaron Drive. Turner Field was originally home of the 1996 Summer Olympic Games, Olympic Stadium and was later retrofitted into a baseball-only facility. It is a few blocks south of the State Capitol building and Atlanta City Hall.

## ***Southwestern Area***

### *Westview Cemetery*

Westview became the primary burial place for Atlanta citizens when historic Oakland Cemetery sold its last burial plots in the late 1880s. It is a protected part of the battlefield where the July 28, 1864 Battle of Ezra Church took place. A monument for the battle is located within the cemetery. The present day cemetery gatehouse and office is located on part of the Confederate battleline. The cemetery is located on Westview Drive in southwest Atlanta near Historic West End, but closer to Washington Park, a proposed BeltLine stop.

## ***Northwestern Area***

### *Centennial Olympic Park*

This State park is probably one Atlanta's best known landmarks. Located downtown, the park is close to other attractions such as the CNN Center and Underground Atlanta. Located within walking distance of a MARTA transit station, the park is very accessible and is well-connected to other Atlanta attractions via the transit line.

### *Underground Atlanta*

Underground Atlanta is located in downtown in the area known as Five Points, which is also where MARTA's north-south and east-west rail lines connect. The history of Atlanta and the history of the South can be told from the area that has become Underground Atlanta. Originally known as Standing Peachtree in 1782, a thriving Creek Village and Trading Post, Underground Atlanta is rich in history

and culture. The site is accessible via MARTA and is adjacent to the World of Coca Cola.

#### *CNN Center*

The Center conducts studio tours open to the public. In addition, it is located directly across from Centennial Olympic Park, and is adjacent to the Omni Hotel, Phillips Arena, the Georgia World Congress Center, and the Georgia Dome.

#### *World of Coca Cola*

The three-story pavilion is located adjacent to Underground Atlanta in downtown at the intersection of Central Avenue and Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive. The World of Coca-Cola captures the rich history of the beverage that was created in Atlanta over 110 years ago. It is another attraction that is synonymous with a visit to Atlanta.

### **Proposed Cultural and Tourism Activities and Facilities**

#### ***Northwestern Area***

##### *Georgia Aquarium*

Scheduled to open in late 2005, the aquarium will be one of the world's largest with more than 55,000 animals from 500 species, and 500 million gallons of fresh and marine water. It will be located in downtown Atlanta across from Centennial Olympic Park and the Georgia World Congress Center.