



## Midtown Neighbors' Association

P.O. Box 77112  
Atlanta, GA 30357

### FACT SHEET – Proposed Midtown Local Historic District

For two years the Midtown Neighbors' Association Historic Preservation Committee has been assessing whether to enhance Midtown's existing national historic designation with an overlay of local zoning codes to protect the area's unique character and charm.

Founded in the late 1960s, The Midtown Neighbors' Association (MNA) represents both residents and businesses in the area. The MNA aspires to preserve Midtown's neighborhood character, maintain an eclectic mix of houses in age and architectural styles, improve safety and reduce crime, encourage diversity of residents, promote beneficial economic activity, and ensure walkability and proximity to parks, shopping and restaurants. The not-for-profit organization annually sponsors Midtown Shop & Dine Week and the Midtown Tour of Homes.

[www.midtownatlanta.org](http://www.midtownatlanta.org)

**BOUNDARIES:** The proposed boundaries of the historic district follow Piedmont Road and parts of Juniper Street on the west; 10<sup>th</sup> Street on the north; Monroe Drive, Monroe Circle and Lakeview Avenue on the east; and Ponce de Leon Avenue on the south.

**HISTORY:** The 360-acre mostly residential neighborhood developed north of downtown Atlanta in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. A number of the homes are more than 100 years old, and some are historically significant.

**ARCHITECTURE:** In addition to single-family houses and duplexes, the proposed district includes architecturally distinctive apartments and commercial buildings as well as three historic institutional buildings Grace United Methodist Church, a Primitive Baptist church (now the Victory Tabernacle United Holy Church), and Henry W. Grady High School. Architectural styles range from the Queen Anne of the 1890s through the Craftsman and eclectic revival styles of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to the modern designs of the early post-World War II period. Some of Atlanta's best-known architects designed homes and buildings in the district including the firm of Hentz, (Neel) Reid and Adler and its successor Hentz, Adler and (Philip Trammel) Shutze, which were commissioned to do Grady High School and its gymnasium. The Tyree on Durant Place and several other apartment buildings in the district are individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

**PROMINENT CITIZENS:** Residents included many prominent Atlanta citizens such as Italian-born pianist Alfredo Barili; Julian L. Harris, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and son of author Joel Chandler Harris; Ralph McGill, famed editor and publisher of *The Atlanta Constitution*; historian and artist Wilbur Kurtz; dentist and oral surgeon Thomas P. Hinman and others. Dr. William P. Nicolson, a skilled surgeon who reportedly performed the first appendectomy in the South, lived at 821 Piedmont Avenue in one of the earliest (1892) homes built in Midtown. The Nicolson House, now the Shellmont Bed and Breakfast, is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

**PRECEDENT:** Through the efforts of a diverse group of neighbors, Midtown was established as a National Register Historic District in 1999. While the national designation recognized Midtown as an area worth saving, it does not confer any protections. Only a local historic district can provide the framework for protecting Midtown's historically and architecturally significant structures from being razed, replaced or altered in ways that would detrimentally affect the neighborhood and lower property values.

**PROCESS:** The MNA Historic Preservation Committee has already done extensive research on the historical and architectural significance of the proposed district, the advantages of living in a protected district and the positive effects on neighborhood stability and property values. Visit [www.preservemidtownatlanta.org](http://www.preservemidtownatlanta.org) for more information. The committee is holding a series of community meetings to inform home/property owners about the proposed local historic district and obtain their input on the extent of the regulations to be adopted for the district. The MNA Board would then submit the proposal for the district to be considered for nomination by the Atlanta Urban Design Commission, followed by reviews and recommendations from Neighborhood Planning Unit E (NPU-E), the City of Atlanta Bureau of Planning and the Atlanta Zoning Review Board, a vote by the Atlanta City Council, and mayoral action. The procedure involves public notices and hearings along the way.

**REGULATIONS:** These would vary according to the location and significance of the structures with the MNA recommending limited restrictions in some areas. To see the regulations that have been developed with neighborhood involvement and adopted for other historic districts in Atlanta go to [www.atlantaga.gov/government/boards/districtregulations.aspx](http://www.atlantaga.gov/government/boards/districtregulations.aspx).

**PROPERTY VALUES:** Studies in other historic districts report that property values increase and outpace comparable unprotected neighborhoods. The market values the extra protection offered by local historic district status and rewards property owners with a higher rate of return on their investments. Go to [www.preservemidtownatlanta.org](http://www.preservemidtownatlanta.org) to review studies of the impact of historic districts on property values in Columbia, Beaufort, Greenville and several other cities in South Carolina; Athens-Clarke County, GA; Rome, GA; Tifton, GA; and Chicago, IL.

**OTHER ATLANTA HISTORIC DISTRICTS:** Other historic districts in Atlanta include Adair Park, Grant Park, Inman Park, Oakland City, West End and Whittier Mill. The Atlanta City Council also recently approved Atkins Park as a historic district.

## **INFORMATION LINKS:**

### **Atlanta**

- Midtown Neighbors' Association: [www.midtownatlanta.org](http://www.midtownatlanta.org)
- Midtown Local Historic District [www.preservemidtownatlanta.org](http://www.preservemidtownatlanta.org)
- Midtown Alliance: [www.midtownalliance.org](http://www.midtownalliance.org)
- Atlanta Preservation Center: [www.preserveatlanta.com](http://www.preserveatlanta.com)
- Atlanta History Center: [www.atlantahistorycenter.com](http://www.atlantahistorycenter.com)
- Atlanta Urban Design Commission: [www.atlantaga.gov/government/urbandesign.aspx](http://www.atlantaga.gov/government/urbandesign.aspx)

### **State of Georgia**

- Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation: [www.georgiatrust.org](http://www.georgiatrust.org)
- Georgia State Historic Preservation Office: [www.gashpo.org](http://www.gashpo.org)

### **National**

- National Register of Historic Places, U.S. National Parks Service:  
[www.cr.nps.gov/nr/index.htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/index.htm)
- National Trust for Historic Preservation: [www.nthp.org](http://www.nthp.org)
- Advisory Council on Historic Preservation: [www.achp.org](http://www.achp.org)

*(Additional Web site resources are listed on [www.preservemidtownatlanta.org](http://www.preservemidtownatlanta.org))*