A black and white photograph of a city street corner in Atlanta, Georgia. The image shows a wide street with a crosswalk. On the right side of the street, there is a large, multi-story brick building with many windows and a decorative cornice. A vintage car is parked on the street in front of it. To the left of the main building, there is another brick building with a prominent tower or spire. In the background, other city buildings are visible, including one with a sign that says "HOSPITAL". The sky is clear and bright. The overall scene depicts a historic urban environment.

Auburn and Edgewood Avenues Commercial Subarea **DESIGN GUIDELINES**

Atlanta, Georgia

Auburn and Edgewood Avenues Commercial Subarea Design Guidelines

Atlanta, Georgia

Originally published in 1990 as “Auburn Avenue Commercial Area Design Guidelines”
Completely revised 2017

Prepared by:

The National Main Street Center,
National Trust for Historic Preservation
Washington, D.C.

Prepared for:

The Atlanta Urban Design Commission

Revised 2017 by:

Sweet Auburn Works

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Graphics and layout by Emily Taff

Original graphics and layout by Angela McLean Wishart

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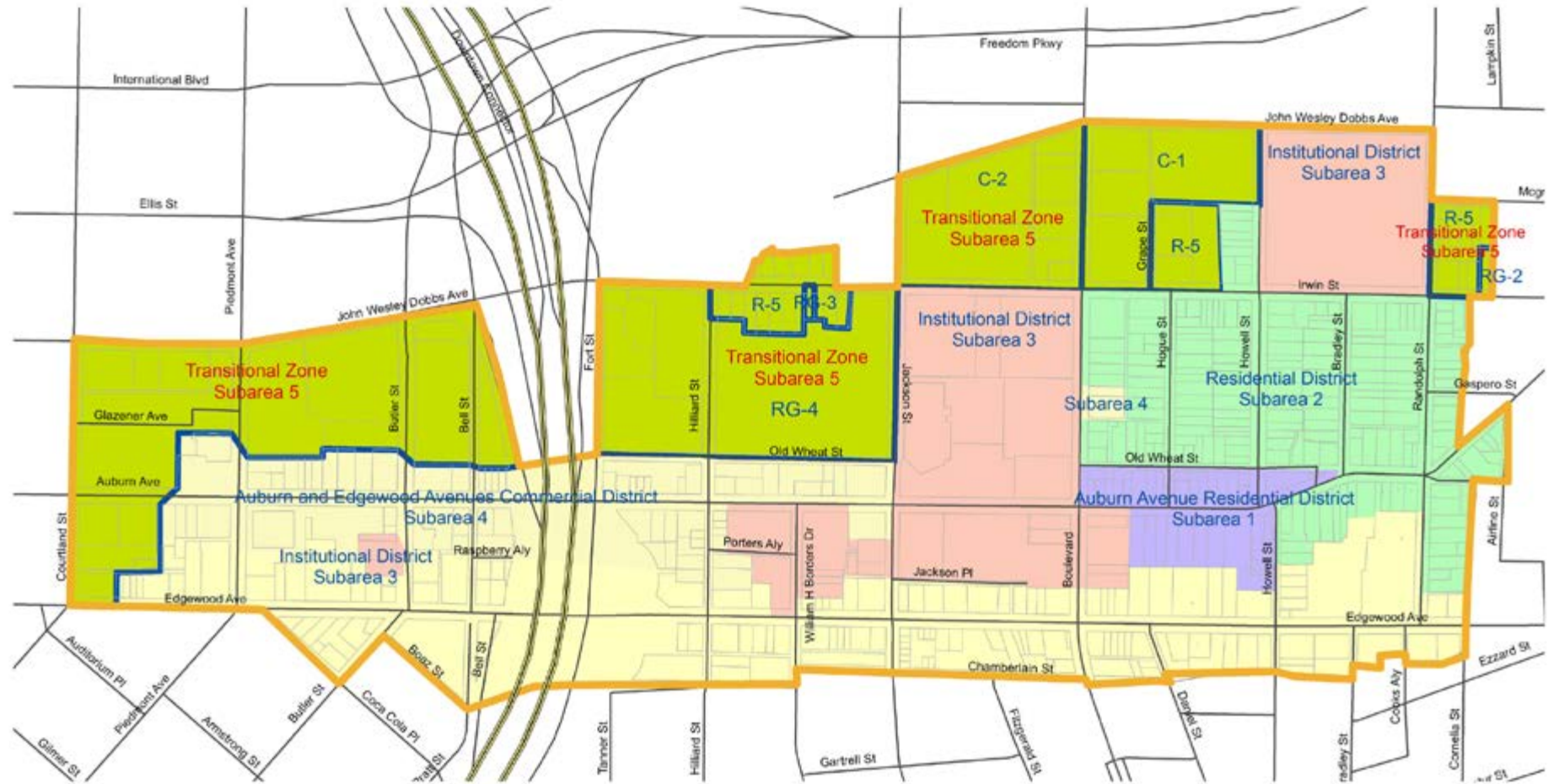
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MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. LANDMARK DISTRICT ZONING MAP



Legend

Zoning

- | | |
|--|---|
| Auburn Avenue Residential District, Subarea 1 | Institutional District, Subarea 3 |
| Residential District, Subarea 2 | Auburn and Edgewood Avenues Commercial District, Subarea 4 |

Zoning Overlay

- | | |
|---|---|
| Transitional Zone, Subarea 5 | Streets |
| | Parcels |
| | MLK District |

Introduction

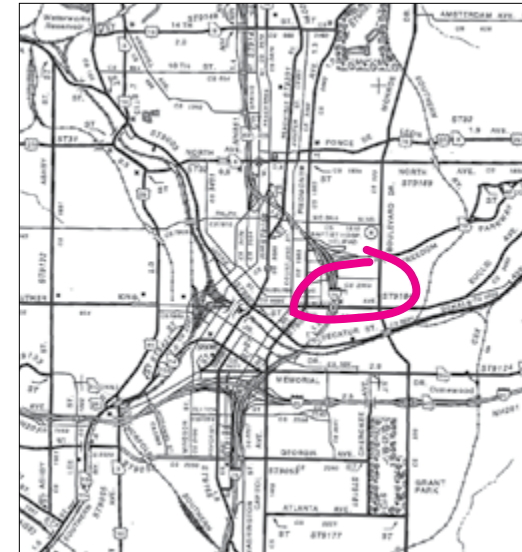
The City of Atlanta's Auburn and Edgewood Avenues Commercial Subarea is identified as Subarea 4 in the Martin Luther King Jr. Landmark District map of Atlanta (shown at left). Its revitalization is important to neighborhood businesses and residents, the citizens of Atlanta and the nation.

The Martin Luther King Jr. Landmark District was created to expand on the historic “Sweet Auburn” area along Auburn Avenue, to include the surrounding neighborhoods into an area of preservation. Sweet Auburn was historically understood to be the commercial area concentrated along Auburn Avenue and, depending on the reference, either stretched approximately from the east to the west sides of the Martin Luther King Jr. Landmark District, or was concentrated more around today's interstate crossing. Sweet Auburn was known as one of the most prosperous and influential streets in segregated “Black America” from 1910 to 1960. It included thriving businesses and educational institutions, a diversity of churches, and all classes of people. There were groups within the Sweet Auburn community that were very active in the modern American Civil Rights Movement—the National Negro Business League, the National Negro Chamber of Commerce, and the Atlanta Daily

World newspaper. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and many other prominent and influential Atlanta community leaders came from this unique environment of African American independence, pride, and progress. It was the birthplace of many of today's major African American financial institutions, insurance companies and service businesses as well as the focus of entertainment and shopping for black Atlantans. The buildings that housed these organizations are important reminders of the efforts of a people to shape the future of their lives and country.

The design guidelines for the Auburn and Edgewood Avenues Commercial Subarea are intended to serve four major functions:

1. Improve the appearance and use of the area's **existing buildings** by being sensitive to their original architecture, the functional needs of their uses and the costs associated with their rehabilitation.
2. Improve the appearance and use of the area's **public spaces**, creating an atmosphere conducive to commerce and enjoyment.
3. Encourage the construction of **new buildings** that are compatible with the unique architectural character of the



The Martin Luther King, Jr. Landmark District is located due east of downtown Atlanta.

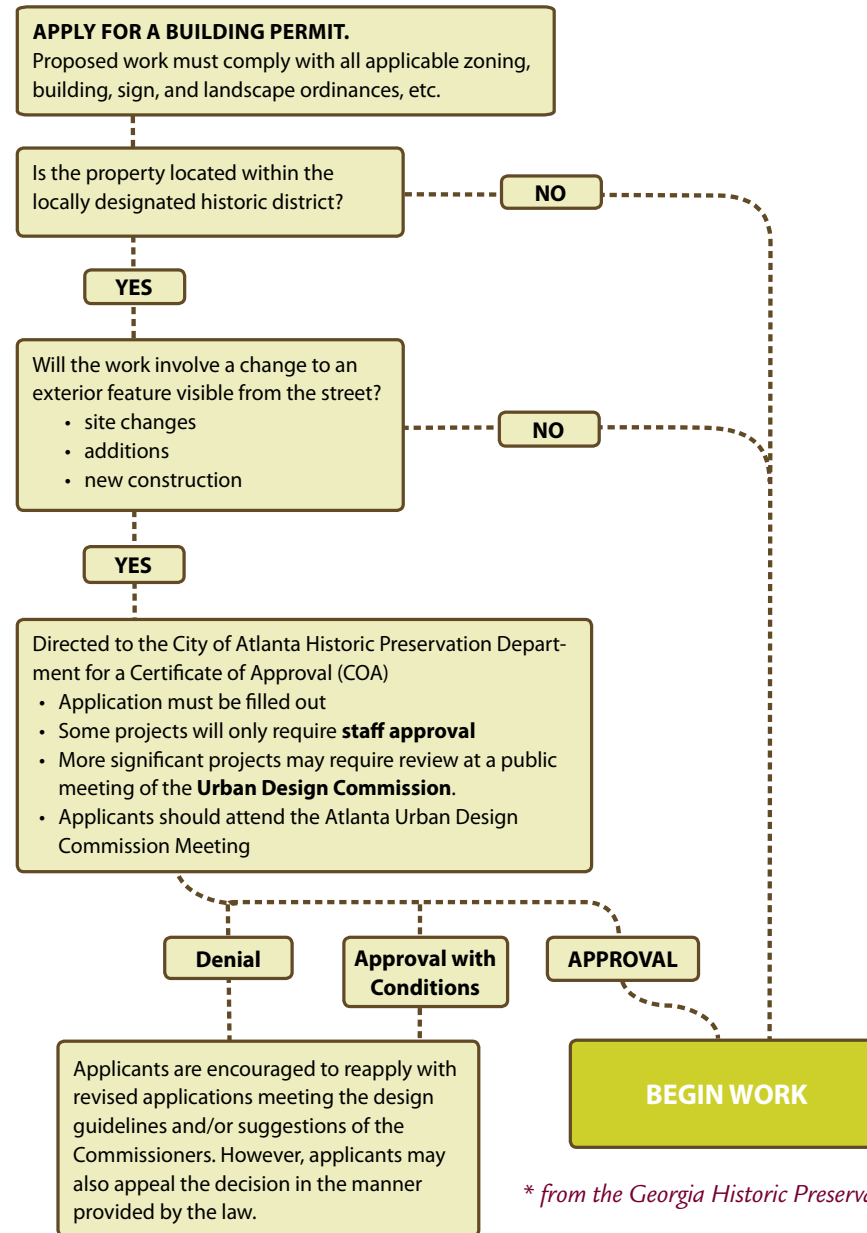
area—its history and traditions as well as the needs of its businesses and residents.

4. Encourage the **preservation of the architectural character of the area**—its history and traditions—while serving the needs of its businesses and residents, both current and future.

The design guidelines are based on the design philosophy expressed in *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation & Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*. These Standards encourage the sensitive treatment of historic buildings while still allowing change to occur. They seek to guide architects, property owners, and others involved in building rehabilitation projects. The Standards do not dictate any specific design approach or stylistic treatment and are compatible with Atlanta's design review procedures, zoning codes, and building regulations.

The *Auburn and Edgewood Avenues Commercial Subarea Design Guidelines* were produced for the Auburn Avenue Main Street Project by the National Main Street Center in 1990 under the name *Auburn Avenue Commercial District Area Design Guidelines*. The *Guidelines* were written by Richard Wagner, AIA, and edited by Linda Glisson. The graphics and layout for the manual were produced by Angela McLean. In 2016, they were revised by Central Atlanta Progress and the Sweet Auburn Works Design Committee with graphics and layout by Emily Taff.

WORKING ON BUILDINGS IN A LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT *



* from the *Georgia Historic Preservation Handbook*

Before you Begin

Before you begin, you should know that many changes in the Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Landmark District must be approved by the Atlanta Urban Design Commission (AUDC), including:

- Demolition or moving of existing buildings;
- Design of new construction, additions, accessory buildings, or parking facilities;
- Certain changes in the use of buildings;
- Variances, and;
- Design of alterations or changes to the exterior of buildings, such as to windows, storefronts, walls, roofs, porches, foundations, signage, security grilles, awnings, planters, trash containers, lighting, walls and fences.

It is advisable to contact the AUDC at 404-330-6145 before you begin a project in the Martin Luther King Jr. Landmark District in order to save you time and money.

The Commission staff can advise you on what kind of city approvals you will need to begin your project and whether the work you are proposing falls within the district regulations and guidelines. In most cases you will need a permit from the City of Atlanta Bureau of Buildings and a Certificate of Appropriateness from the AUDC. The Commission encourages property owners to become knowledgeable regarding work that is compatible

with the district and spend money wisely on planning work that can be approved.

The Commission staff will be happy to meet with you to discuss your project, advise you on how your project can be compatible with the regulations and assist you with the filing of the Certificate of Appropriateness application and any additional information that may be required. Some types of projects can be approved in-house by the Commission staff; larger projects may require your application to be heard by the AUDC board, which meets the second and fourth Wednesday of every month at City Hall.

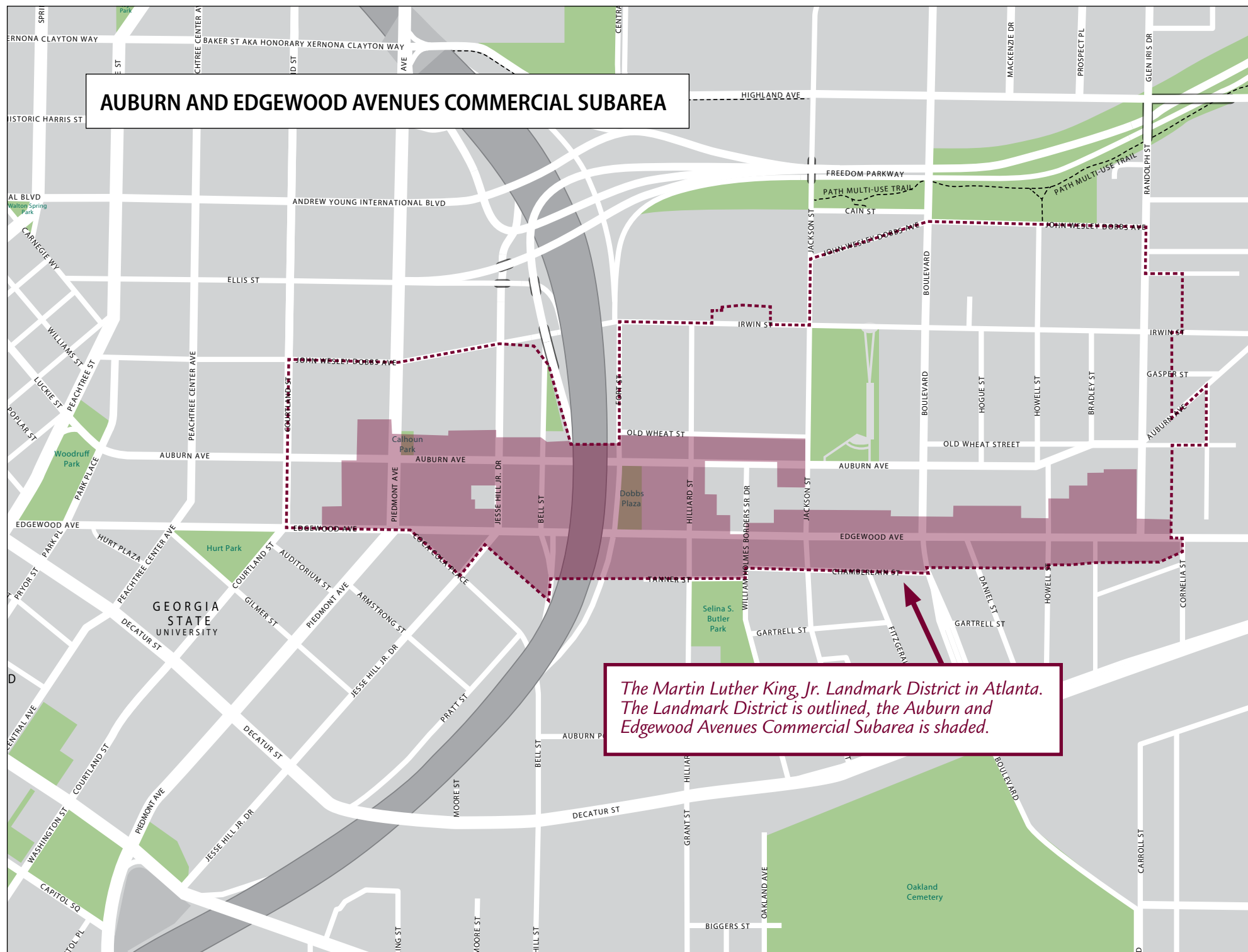
It is also strongly advised to contact the Sweet Auburn Works Design Committee. Sweet Auburn Works (SAW) is a nonprofit organization leading the preservation-based cultural and economic revitalization of Auburn Avenue. The Design Committee revised and edited these design guidelines and can provide technical assistance regarding development in the Auburn and Edgewood Avenues Commercial Subarea. Visit sweetauburnworks.com/meetings.aspx to obtain contact information for the Design Committee.

If you see an error in this document, please contact info@sweetauburnworks.com.

Contact the AUDC at 404-330-6145 before you begin your project.

*The designation of the Martin Luther King Jr. Landmark District [as such a district] was accomplished through an amendment to the 1982 Zoning Ordinance of the City of Atlanta, **Section 16-20.001**. The Martin Luther King Jr. Landmark District regulations can be found in **Section 16-20C.001** of the 2016 Zoning Code and all rehabilitation, new construction and demolition in this landmark district must adhere to this section. (For information regarding city, state and federal assistance programs, please see p.89 of this document.)*

AUBURN AND EDGEWOOD AVENUES COMMERCIAL SUBAREA



*The Martin Luther King, Jr. Landmark District in Atlanta.
The Landmark District is outlined, the Auburn and
Edgewood Avenues Commercial Subarea is shaded.*

Design Guidelines



The Rucker Building (demolished in 2001) was just one example of a multistory commercial building in the subarea. Design of the proposed facade for the rehabilitation of the Rucker Building courtesy of the Historic Facade Program.

Building Facades

Building facades are one of the most important physical components of the Auburn Avenue Commercial Area—functionally, economically and aesthetically. Their physical improvement will play a significant role in the economic revitalization of the area. Equally important, the facades of the existing commercial buildings in the area can help establish the standard for new construction.

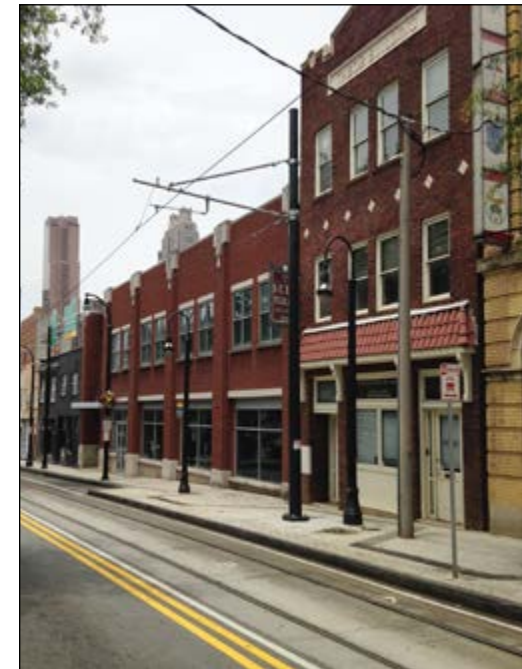
The majority of the subarea's buildings were built after 1910 in a relatively plain commercial style. The facades of these buildings form a backdrop for the streets. Behind their facades were housed many businesses of significance to African American Atlantans and the nation. As an ensemble, the commercial facades in the subarea create a distinctive ambience that, from a preservationist view, should be maintained and enhanced.

In addition to the plain commercial facades, a number of architecturally distinct commercial buildings are located specifically on Auburn Avenue. The original home of Atlanta Life Insurance, with its neoclassical front, and the Odd Fellows Building and Annex, both in the modified Jacobethan style, comprise three architecturally significant buildings

located in the western part of the subarea on Auburn Avenue. Institutional buildings, such as the Romanesque Revival Big Bethel AME Church and the vernacular Late Gothic Revival Ebenezer Baptist Church, are prominent structures that help set the architectural character of the eastern part of the subarea on subarea. Anchoring the east end of the subarea is the contemporary Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change (hereafter referred to as the “King Center”).

The historic commercial buildings along Auburn Avenue vary mostly from one to three stories in height, with several notable buildings rising above these structures, demonstrating that street's comparative prominence as the traditional African American cultural and business center of Atlanta: three historic churches, a Masonic temple, and the six-story Odd Fellows Building. An additional four-story building (the Herndon Building) was demolished in 2009. A multi-story apartment complex was constructed in the 1970s.

The buildings along Edgewood Avenue are only one to three stories in height, with no historic churches and no major institutions except a municipal market and, just south of



A mix of one-, two- and three-story buildings along the north side of Auburn Avenue, c.2015.

it, a four-story historic shoe factory, exhibiting in general the historic secondary commercial nature of that street.

With only two remaining exceptions—the Butler Street YMCA Building, and the Trinity Building—the buildings located on the cross streets in the area are one to two stories high and have plain commercial facades.

The facades of the one-story commercial buildings in the Auburn Avenue Commercial Area are typically organized into a one-part commercial block (a term designating an historic one-story front façade of a retail building, as opposed to a two-part commercial block, with façades of two or more stories. First appearing in the mid-19th century, the one-part

commercial block is typified by one or more large display windows fronting the street; one or more doors, often centrally located and/or recessed, that provide access to the retail space; display windows and doors set under structural beam headers (often exposed) and between structural columns; head ends of masonry side-walls at sides, and a pronounced parapet and cornice, which are often decorated. Many one-part commercial blocks contain transoms above the display windows and most have bulkheads below. Usually executed in inexpensive materials, the one-part commercial block is functional and business-like in appearance. Most of the one-part commercial blocks located in the subarea are constructed of brick. Some contain inset date stones or decorative brick panels in the parapet above the storefront base. Most are capped with either a metal or brick cornice.

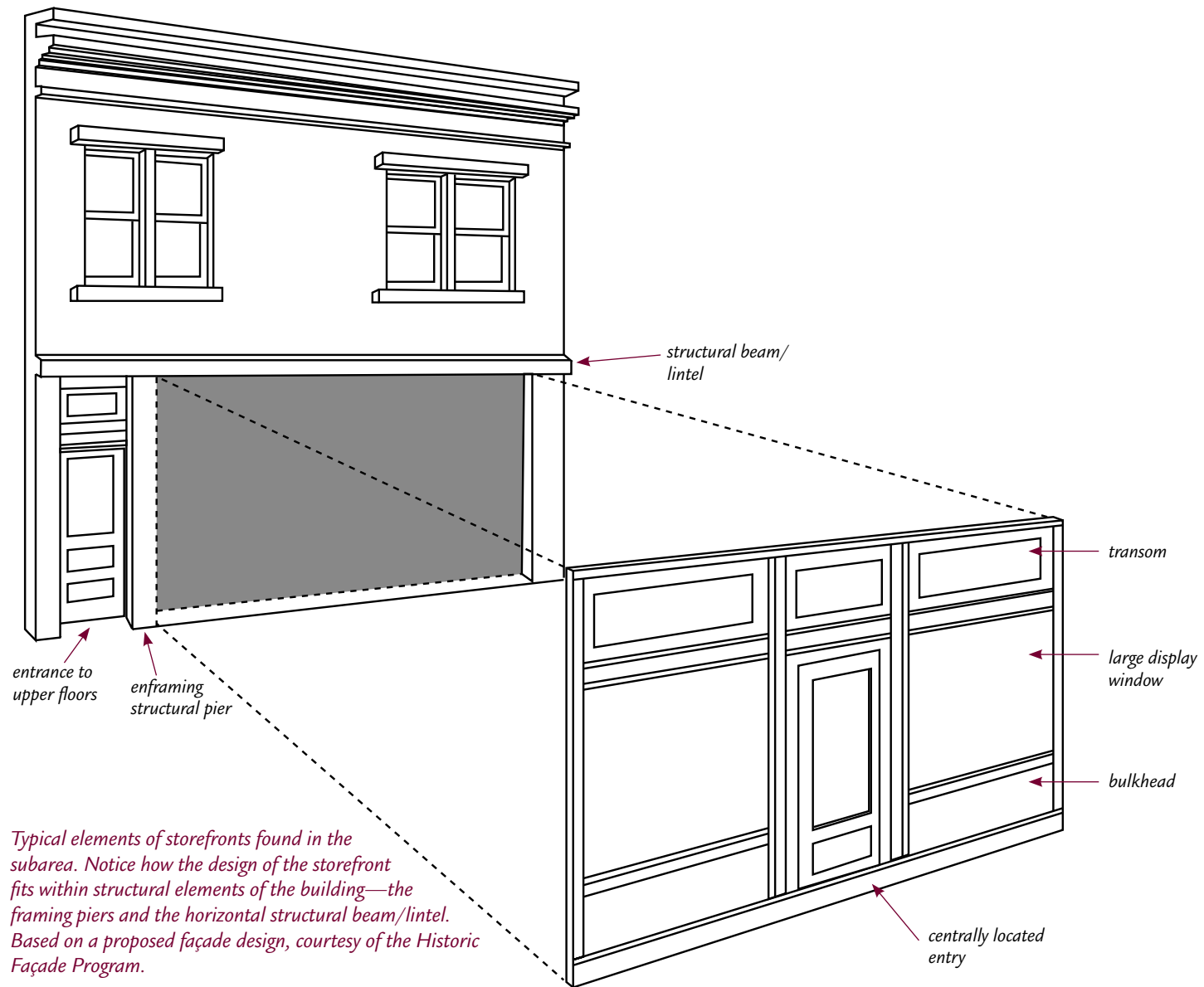
The two-part or multi-story commercial blocks in the subarea usually consist of a ground floor storefront, similar to what is found in the one-part commercial block, except that they are topped by an upper facade with regularly spaced windows and a cornice at roof level. Brick is also the predominant facade material, with date stones and decorative brick panels just below the cornice.

Buildings along Edgewood Avenue in the subarea are primarily one- and two-story buildings, overall lower in scale than those on Auburn.





368-376 Auburn Avenue. This single-story, one-part commercial block is one of the styles found in the Auburn and Edgewood Avenues Commercial Subarea.



Building Facades STOREFRONTS

The storefront is the most important element of a commercial building. Storefronts typically consist of three major elements—display windows (sometimes augmented by transom windows above), entry doors and enframing structural members. The display windows allow customers to window-shop and view activity inside the store, as well as providing daylight and views inside the store. Transom windows allow additional light and views into the commercial space and match the glazing height to the interior ceiling height. The entry door invites customers inside. The storefront's enframing structural members unify the storefront and distinguish the business from its neighbors.

The display windows in the subarea storefronts are usually large sheets of plate glass set above brick, wood, tile or glass block bulkheads. The bulkheads provide protection for the display windows as well as giving a visual base to the building. Above the display windows, many storefronts in the subarea originally contained transom windows; these transoms are either made of single sheets of glass with wood framing or are smaller transom lights separated by wood, lead or zinc comes.

Traditionally, entry doors were centrally located in the storefront. Often consisting of glass and wood, they presented an inviting appearance. In addition, some of the retail

entries were originally recessed to draw people in as well as provide protection from the weather.

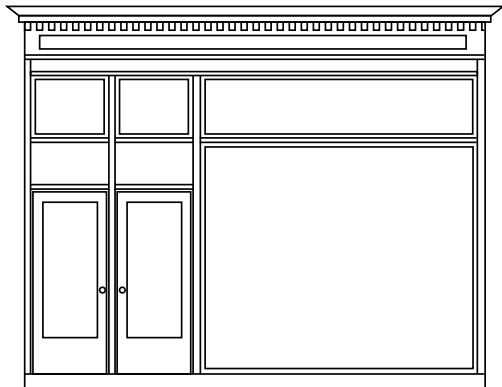
The typical storefront on Auburn Avenue is enframed with masonry piers or columns and a structural beam (either exposed or hidden from view) which carries the weight of the parapet and cornice or the upper facade. Exposed beams are usually made of iron or steel and give a pronounced visual upper terminus to the storefront. Hidden beams raise the visual height of the one-part commercial blocks to their cornice line. The beams and walls that extend the façade to the building's full height



353 Edgewood displays the typical architectural elements of storefronts in the area: display windows set over a bulkhead and on either side of a recessed center shop entrance and a transom across the top to allow more light into the commercial space.

Maintain the historic configuration of a storefront, highlighted on the building facade (right).

INAPPROPRIATE alterations to storefronts include (below top) an applied sheathing and infill windows that do not match the original window design, and (bottom) the removal of original storefront elements including the bulkhead which significantly alters the historic design of the storefront.



frequently serve as locations for business signboards. The enframing storefront piers and beam create a defined space for the bulkheads, display windows, entry doors and transoms. Bulkheads, signboards and decorative trim are three architectural elements typically found in the subarea's storefronts.

RECOMMEND

1. Storefronts should respect the integrity of the building as a whole and relate to its original character. The storefront should be compatible with the scale, materials, color and texture of the original building.*
2. Storefronts should be designed to fit within the original enframed openings.
3. The original locations of entry doors, display windows and transoms should be maintained.
4. Storefronts should be designed with a display window area that is equal in size to the original opening, or alternatively, with the largest possible display area that is compatible with the original opening. Visual emphasis should be placed on the display windows and entry doors.
5. Bulkheads should be maintained to separate the display windows from the ground. Do not remove original material. If repair is not feasible, temporarily cover with compatible material.

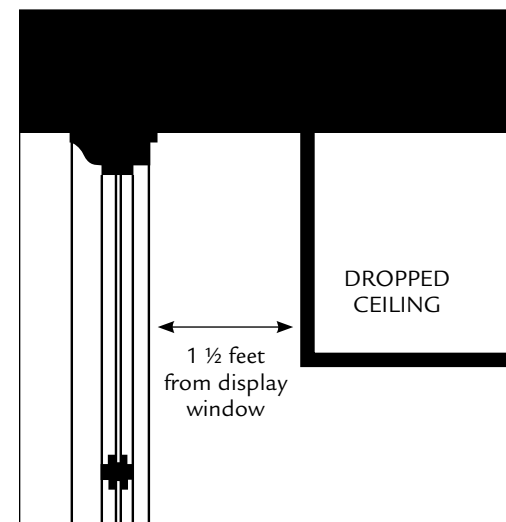
6. Storefronts should not be partially blocked by a dropped ceiling; any dropped ceiling should be set back from the inside of the storefront at least 1 ½ feet (see illustration at right).
7. The storefront's original materials should be repaired and maintained if possible. If a replacement material is used, it should be identical to or, alternatively, compatible with the original.

DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Avoid storefront designs that significantly alter the original character of the building or the storefront's relationship with the upper facade.
2. Avoid historically inaccurate yet historical-appearing storefront designs.
3. Do not block in storefronts, display windows or transoms with opaque materials.
4. Do not cover bulkheads with an incompatible material or a material that is susceptible to damage or decay.



While references in these guidelines may be made to color, paint color and color schemes, the Atlanta Urban Design Commission does ***not*** regulate color.



The dropped ceiling shown in this diagram begins 1 ½ feet from the inside of the storefront.

Building Facades DISPLAY WINDOWS

Display windows in the subarea were originally designed to fill as much space as the storefronts would allow. This design permitted maximum display space, let people see inside the store and allowed natural light to enter. With minimum separation between the building interior and the street, the entire store was on display to customers and pedestrians.

Unfortunately, a number of display windows in the subarea have been altered. Some were blocked-in for security reasons (see *Security Systems*, p.29) and others because the original retail space now contains non-retail functions.

RECOMMEND

1. Display windows should fill their original openings.
2. The original framing material should be maintained and repaired. If replacement frames are needed, their size, profile and material should match the original as closely as possible.
3. Clear plate or tempered glass should be used. Consider double low-e glazing for energy efficiency.
4. Interior artificial lighting should be designed to highlight displays as well as correct for glare from the sun, and be energy-efficient (consider LED lighting).
5. Owners might consider displays which are attractively presented to best highlight their wares.
6. Signs in or on display windows should not obscure the view into the building.
7. If the use of the retail space makes large display windows inadvisable, use curtains or blinds to create privacy or use interior display cases to display and accentuate the merchandise (see photos below).

DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Do not block-in display windows.
2. Avoid the use of tinted glass, reflective or mirrored glass, Plexiglas or glass block.

The following are a few of the preferred treatments of storefront display windows (left to right):

1. *For an office, interior blinds hung below the transom can provide privacy.*
2. *The window display case at the APEX Museum building provides visual interest while providing privacy for the rest of the building.*
3. *Interior shades can provide much-needed sun protection, and privacy when the shop is closed.*



Building Facades

UPPER FACADE AND WINDOWS

The image of multistory buildings is heavily influenced by their upper facades. The visual appeal of the upper facade is derived from a number of elements, including window size and placement, wall material, decoration and detail, and cornices, as well as from its visual harmony with the storefront below.

Typically, windows in the upper facades are positioned at regular intervals and establish a visual rhythm for the exterior design of the building. Their shape, size, placement, number of lights and decorative trim constitute a major element in creating the character of the building. Many of the upper facade windows of buildings in the subarea have double-hung sash, with varying numbers of lights per sash. In most cases, decorative trim is restrained or nonexistent.

The wall material used for upper facades gives color and scale to the building. Many of the multistory buildings in the District subarea have upper facades of brick, which give a sense of permanence to the streets. Wall decorations are usually rather plain, executed in brick patterns and accented with stone or cast concrete details. The cornices, used to visually cap the buildings as well as to protect the junction of roof and wall from weather, are also relatively plain, executed in sheet metal, brick or cast concrete.

RECOMMEND

1. Original window placement in upper facades should be maintained.
2. Materials that have been used to cover original window openings should be removed.
3. Damaged window sash and frame should be repaired and maintained. If replacement is necessary, the material, size and profile of the new sash and frame should match the original as closely as possible, while improving energy efficiency and sound insulation.
4. The placement and number of original window lights should be visually maintained. Clear window glass should be used in the lights (invisible low-e is acceptable, tinted glass is not).
5. Consideration should be given to preserving or restoring historic business signs on windows.
6. Paint, gold leaf or vinyl stick-on signs should be used for new business signs on upper-floor windows.



A change in decorative detailing and window rhythm in the upper facade of the Odd Fellows Building Annex marks the entrance that leads to the auditorium, c.1979. Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Historic American Building Survey Collection.

The varying size and shape of the windows and the cornice detailing in this commercial building add visual interest to the upper facade. A rhythm of A-B-A repeats itself across the facade. This building was rehabilitated through funds and architectural services obtained from the Historic Façade Program. 476-480 Edgewood Avenue.



7. Deteriorated window trim should be repaired and maintained. If replacement is necessary, the material, size, placement and color of the new trim should match the original as closely as possible.
8. Curtains or blinds should be installed at windows in vacant spaces.
9. If storm windows are used to improve thermal and sound insulation performance, they should resemble the existing windows as closely as possible in shape, appearance and color. Storm windows should be sized to fit the entire window opening, and should have weep holes to allow condensation to escape, as moisture can damage the original window. Consider using internal storm windows or storm panels.
10. Upper-facade wall material should be repaired and maintained. If replacement material is required, its color, texture, scale and composition should match the existing wall surface as closely as possible.
11. Cornices should be repaired and maintained. If replacement is required, the scale, material, profile and color of the new cornices should closely match the originals.
12. Unpainted material, especially masonry, should remain unpainted.
13. If previously painted material is restored to its original condition, use the guidelines on "Maintaining the Surface," pages 30-31.

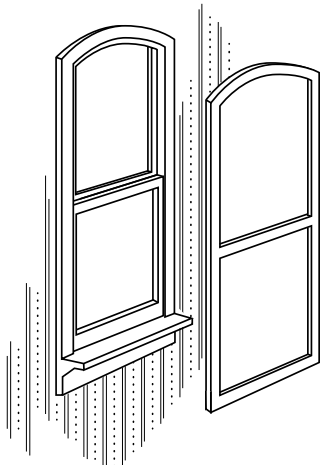
DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Do not block-in upper-facade windows or window openings, neither permanently nor temporarily.
2. Do not use storm windows that have no weep holes to allow condensation to escape, as retention of moisture will damage the original window.
3. Avoid using mirrored or tinted glass.
4. Avoid using through-wall or through-window heating/air conditioning units or vents.
5. Avoid using shutters except where clear evidence indicates their historic presence. If shutters are used, they should be functional.
6. Do not substitute one type of sash for another.
7. Do not store material inside directly in front of windows, as it makes the exterior unsightly.
8. Do not remove cornices.
9. Do not apply a water-repellent or waterproof coating to undamaged masonry surfaces.

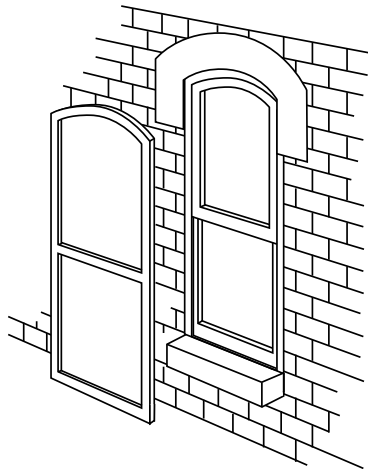


New windows (top right) in the addition to 420 Edgewood Ave. (below) were made to look like the original windows in the historic building (top left).



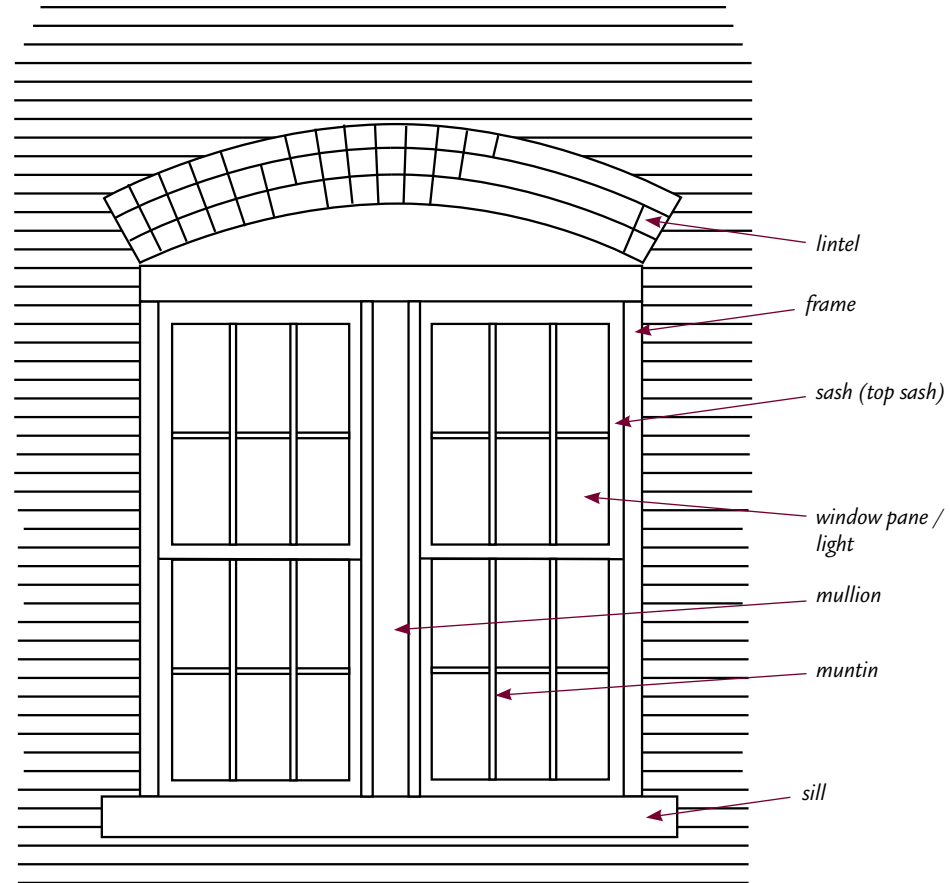


Interior or exterior storm windows should fit the shape of the existing windows as closely as possible.



PARTS OF A WINDOW

Parts of a typical window found in the subarea.



Building Facades DOORS AND ENTRIES

Doors are one of the primary elements that give individual character to the exterior of a building. Historically, the storefront entry was more than just a door. Its design and appearance reflected its commercial importance. The storefront entry door was usually tall in proportion and built of wood and glass. It looked substantial yet inviting to the customer.

The typical one-part commercial block in the subarea has a central storefront entry, while most of the multistory buildings have an additional, architecturally more important and more detailed door that permits access to the upper floors. Both types of doors usually contain large areas of glass, traditionally set in wood. In addition, service doors may be found on the side and rear of buildings.

RECOMMEND

1. Original door locations should be maintained.
2. Original doors should be retained, repaired and maintained. Attractive door hardware, such as brass door pulls and plates, add visual value to the entrance and should be retained. If replacement is necessary, the material, color and decorative trim on the

new doors should resemble the originals as closely as possible, while considering upgrades for energy efficiency.

3. A storefront door should be at least 70% glass; in entry doors leading to upper floors, the glass area should cover at least 50% of the door.
4. Entries should meet the requirements of federal, state and local standards for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) unless exempt. *

DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Avoid the use of fake “historic” doors that are incompatible with the character of the facade.
2. Do not use mirrored or tinted glass in doors.
3. Do not install solid wood or metal doors (except for service entries).
4. Do not install storm doors whose size, color, material and texture are incompatible with the original door or that require replacement of the original door.



For more information on accessibility and historic buildings, see U.S. Park Service *Preservation Brief 32: Making Historic Properties Accessible.* Online: www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm

The storefront entry and doors contain a large amount of glass which is typical in the subarea, the entrance on the right leads to the upper floor.



TYPICAL DOORS AND ENTRANCES IN THE SUBAREA

This centrally located door is a major entry to the upstairs of a business building, it is more elaborately decorated than the storefront entries but also has a smaller area of glass and an awning which distinguish it. 323 Edgewood Ave.



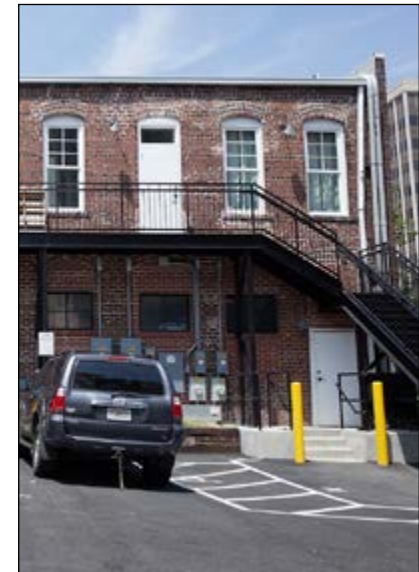
Many entrances to the upstairs floors are secondary to the storefront entries such as this side door on 141 Auburn Ave.



Typical storefront entry door at 234 Auburn Ave., note the glass front entrance, storefront door tend to have more than 1/2-glass doors.



Service entries, located on the side or rear facades of commercial buildings, are generally functional by nature. However, they have the potential of becoming a secondary entrance to a store or building from a rear parking area.



Building Facades SIDE AND REAR WALLS

The side walls of most one-part commercial blocks in the subarea are utilitarian, unrelieved by openings. In many cases, the side wall originally served (or was intended to serve) as a party wall with adjoining buildings. The side walls of many of Auburn Avenue's multistory buildings often face open space and then are treated in a manner similar to upper front facades, with regularly spaced windows and pronounced cornices. Some of these side walls were also used as locations for business signs (see *Ghost Signs*, p.44). Most side walls are unpainted brick.

The design of the rear facades of buildings in the subarea is typically utilitarian as well. Often, only a solid service door is located in the rear facade. Most of these rear facades are constructed of unpainted brick.

RECOMMEND

1. The original material of side walls and rear facades should be repaired and maintained. If replacement material is required, its color, texture, scale and composition should match the original as closely as possible.
2. Unpainted material, especially brick or stone masonry, should remain unpainted.
3. The original door and window openings in

side and rear walls should be maintained.

4. The original cornices and decorative trim on side and rear walls should be repaired and maintained. If replacement is required, new trim and cornices should match the originals as closely as possible in terms of scale, profile, composition and color.
5. If service doors are to be used as customer entries, they should be clearly marked and contain at least 50% glass.
6. Historic signs painted on side walls or rear facades should be maintained as ghost signs. (see *Ghost Signs*, p.44)

DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Do not cover side walls or rear walls with incompatible material.
2. Do not block-in existing openings that are significant to the appearance of the wall or facade.
3. Avoid painting an unpainted wall or undamaged facade surfaces (except for signs) or using water-repellent or waterproofing coatings on original masonry surfaces.



135 Auburn Avenue; Apex Museum. The side wall of this multi-story building demonstrates the continuation of regularly spaced windows. However, the cornice detail simply turns the corner and stops, while on other buildings it can continue down the length of the side wall.

The side facade of 186 Auburn Ave. contains no fenestration as it was built to abutt another building. Another building could be constructed against the side wall, but for now it makes a good canvas for commissioned wall art.





The rear of most buildings in the subarea are not ideal for public access unless there is public parking. The small private parking area behind 145 Auburn Ave. allows for the accommodation for private rear access to the commercial spaces on the first floor and residential spaces above.

This drawing illustrates how the back facade of a commercial building can be visually improved to accommodate entry from the rear parking area into the store and the office above.



Building Facades DETAIL AND DECORATION

Most of the commercial buildings in the subarea are plain, without intricate detail or decoration. When detail and decoration occur, they are often executed in patterned brick or cast concrete or stone. However, examples of detail and decoration executed in other materials such as cast iron and terracotta are also found in the subarea.

Cornices (or caps) are used to protect the junction of the roof and wall from water penetration as well as to provide a visual cap to the building. The one-part commercial blocks in the subarea usually have fairly plain cornices, located above the parapets and executed in the same material. Other cornices are made of pressed metal. Multistory buildings typically have accentuated cornices made from a variety of materials, including terracotta.

RECOMMEND

1. Deteriorated details, decorations and cornices should be repaired rather than replaced. If replacement is necessary, the composition, design, color and texture of the new material should match the original. Repair or replacement of missing architectural decorations and details should be based on accurate duplication,

substantiated by historical, physical or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural design.

2. Heavy or numerous coats of paint that obscure architectural decorations and details should be removed before repainting, using removal methods that provide preservation of the substrate, worker safety, and safe disposal of the removed material.
3. Sagging details, decorations and cornices should be firmly re-anchored, after stabilizing substrates as appropriate.
4. When replacing or repairing masonry details, decorations or cornices, take care to prevent obvious and unsightly patches. The size, profile, color and texture of new brick and mortar should match the original as closely as possible.

DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Do not remove existing historic details, decorations or cornices.
2. Avoid altering the height or visual appearance of cornices.
3. Do not add non-historic details or decorations to buildings.

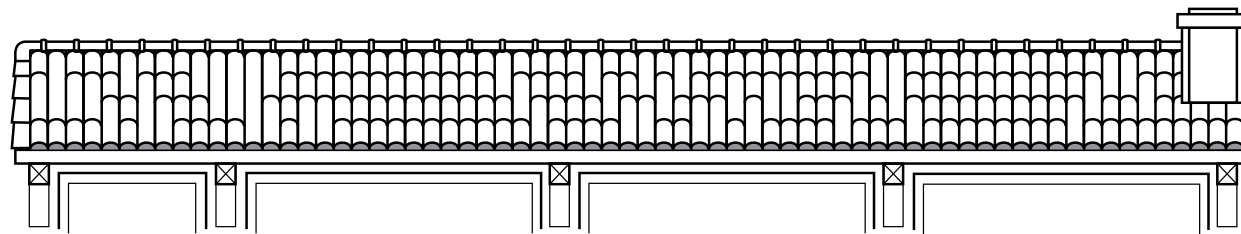
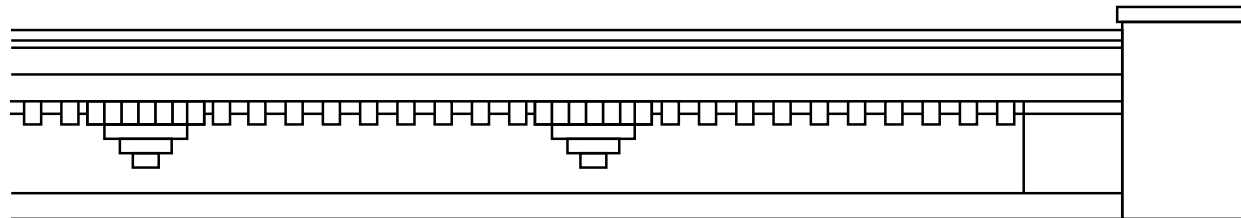
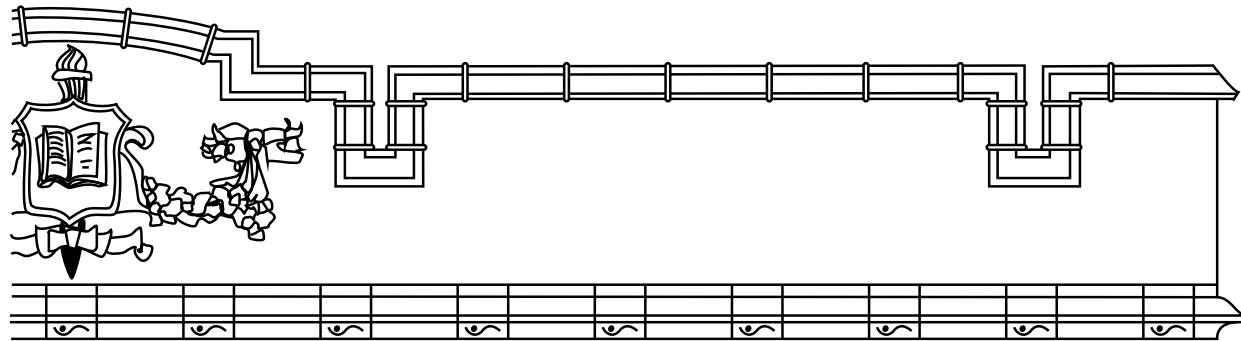
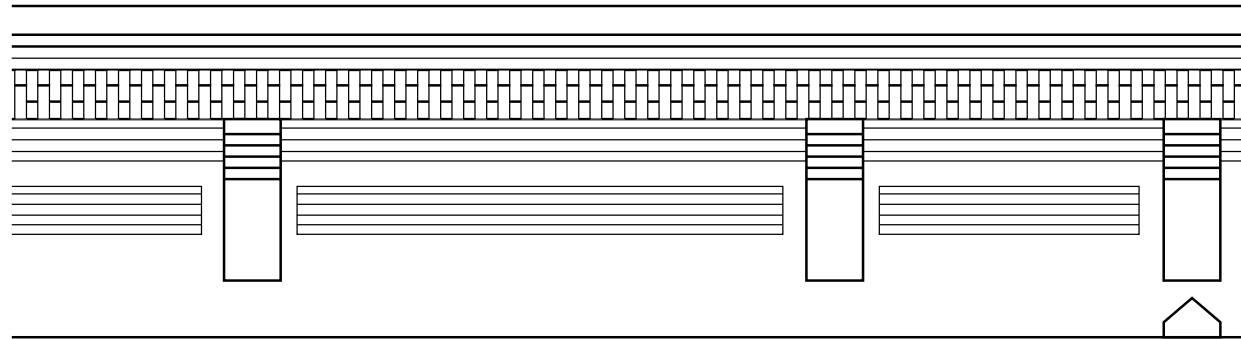
Decorative details (top to bottom):

1. *Brick patterns, corbelling and terracotta ornamentation on 541 Edgewood Ave.*
2. *Carved stone details adorn 323 Edgewood Ave.*
3. *Decorative brick and cast concrete of the c.1924 Sweet Auburn Curb Market*



Cornices on historic buildings in the subarea generally have some decorative detail although some are simpler than others, some examples include (top to bottom):

1. 158 Edgewood Ave. A decorative brick cornice, is common on many multistory commercial buildings.
2. Apex Museum, 135 Auburn Ave, originally built as Southern School Books Depository. Institutional buildings are often capped with more ornate cornices than the commercial buildings.
3. 482 Edgewood Ave. Many one-part commercial buildings in the district have a simple brick cornice.
4. 333 Edgewood Ave. A sloped tile roof with brackets and molding is another common way to visually cap the one-part commercial building.



Building Facades AWNINGS

Awnings are both visually and functionally appropriate for many commercial storefronts and upper-facade windows. As a visual element, an awning can create a pleasant space in front of the building, providing shade and shelter for customers and a resting place for pedestrians. Awnings also reduce glare and can save energy when used to control the amount of sunlight that penetrates to the interior.

In some cases, awnings can inexpensively disguise inappropriate alterations, provide additional color and create a strong business identification. Awnings should be installed without damaging the building or visually impairing distinctive architectural features. Operable awnings can be used to optimize daylighting, solar gain and shading to improve energy efficiency.

RECOMMEND

1. Awnings should ideally be fire, UV, water and stain resistant and resemble historic fabric materials such as canvas. They should be appropriately attached to metal awning frames.
2. The awning frame should fit within the storefront or upper-facade window opening to which it is attached and be the same shape.
3. Methods of attachment to the building should avoid harming important historic material.
4. Owners might consider awnings that complement the color of the building.
5. Signs used on awnings should be silkscreened or sewn onto the fabric.
6. Appropriate illumination should be used to highlight awning signs.

DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Avoid using metal, wood, fiberglass, plastic or vinyl awning material.
2. Do not backlight entire awnings.

This awning on 421 Edgewood Ave., is appropriately situated between the structural piers of the building.



Awnings should fit the shape of the windows or doors. Examples here show a half-round dome awning above entry to upper floors and traditional straight-slope awnings over the store-fronts and fitted to the upper windows.



Building Facades CANOPIES

Fixed canopies are appropriate for many existing buildings in the subarea, particularly the one-part commercial blocks. A fixed canopy is usually supported by a steel frame and diagonal tie-rods or chains. Canopy fascias are usually constructed of metal.

Functionally, canopies perform as awnings. Visually, they highlight the storefront and often give the building a horizontal appearance. Tie-rods and chains are not normally visually important, being utilitarian in nature.

Canopies may extend the entire length of the storefront or cover only the entry, but they are never used above the ground floor.

RECOMMEND

1. Canopies should fit within the enframed storefront or entry door.
2. Structural supports such as chains and tie-rods should be visually de-emphasized.
3. Fascias should be constructed of metal, colored to be compatible with the building's facades.
4. Signs should be located on the canopy's fascia.
5. The canopy's ceiling may contain lighting directed at the display windows.

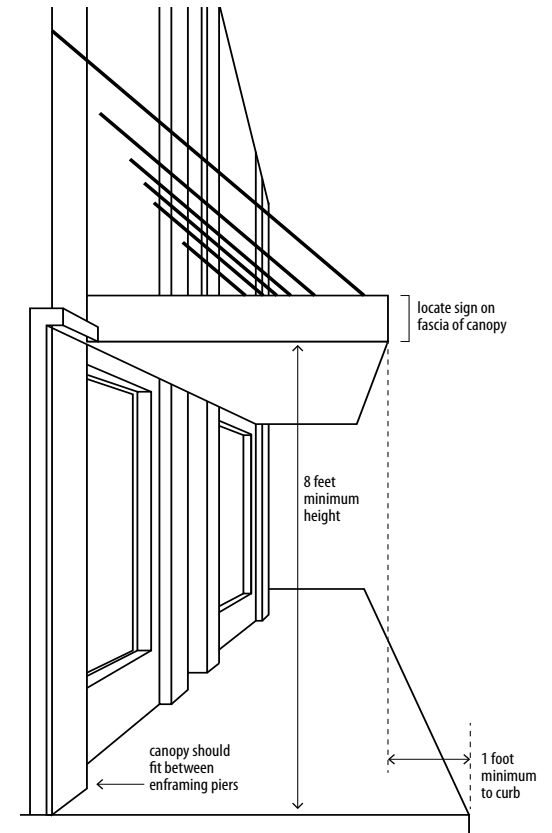
6. Water runoff from canopies should be directed to downspouts located against the building.
7. Canopies should be at least 8 feet above the sidewalk, and there should be at least a foot of space between the canopy's outward projection and the edge of the curb.

DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Avoid using decorative fascias.
2. Avoid using fabric canopy skirts.
3. Avoid mounting signs on top of canopies.



The entrance canopy at 399 Edgewood Ave. sits just above the storefront and is centered on the building over two entrances.



The drawing illustrates the design concepts to consider before installing a canopy in the subarea.

Building Facades LIGHTING

Illuminating a building at night, if handled correctly, can greatly enhance the architectural character of the structure and give it additional identity and interest. The illumination of buildings also creates a sense of security for people visiting the subarea after dark. In the subarea, nighttime lighting of important commercial and institutional buildings is appropriate.

*Illumination on facades at night.
(Left to right) 357, 353, and 349 Edgewood Ave.*



RECOMMEND

1. Illumination should provide safety to pedestrians and at building entrances and exits, and can also be used to highlight architectural features, such as principal facades, towers and important details.
2. Light sources should give true color rendition; they should also be shielded to protect vehicles and pedestrians from glare, to minimize light trespass beyond the property border, and to prevent night sky pollution.
3. Attachment of light sources should avoid damaging historic materials.
4. Electrical conduits should be covered or buried as appropriate.
5. For conservation of energy, consider programmed lighting for reduced illumination during hours when all businesses are closed; consider motion-activated security lighting.

DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Avoid using multicolored lighting.
2. Avoid using programmed lighting with frequent changes.
3. Avoid using interior lighting after hours except for minimum security lighting.

Building Facades SECURITY SYSTEMS

Security systems are an important consideration for buildings in the subarea. Typically, these systems externally secure storefronts and entry doors after business hours and keep other ground-floor openings locked at all times. Quality electronic security systems notify the police and private security firms when triggered.

Visibly obtrusive external security systems do not enhance business; rather, they could reinforce the customers' perception that an area is unsafe. External rolling door or rolling grille storefront security systems are often attached to the enframing structural beam or to the underside of an awning or canopy. Scissor-guard security systems are frequently attached externally to the storefront's enframing columns. Scissor-guard security systems can also be mounted

inside the display windows and entry doors. They may be fixed or operable. Although they protect the business from entry, these systems also expose glass to breakage. Instead, consider state-of-the-art electronic security systems.

RECOMMEND

1. External security systems should be fully retractable during business hours. In the retracted position, they should be as unobtrusive as possible and should be made to blend in with the storefront elements.
2. External security systems should fit within the opening (storefront, door or window) to which they are attached.
3. Attachment of security systems should avoid damaging historic materials.

4. Consider omitting visible security systems in favor of invisible wired or wireless motion and glass breakage detection systems.

DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Do not use non-operable external security systems for storefronts and entry doors.

APPROPRIATE

Wood signboards were used on the storefronts of the Odd Fellows Building Annex to disguise the exterior security gate which can retract fully into the housing hidden behind the signs.

INAPPROPRIATE



Building Facades MAINTAINING THE SURFACE



More on cleaning the various elements of historic storefronts can be found in *Preservation Brief 11: Rehabilitating Historic Storefronts*. Online: www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm



Except for cast iron, metal elements on storefronts such as sheet metals should **not** be cleaned with abrasive cleaners as their plating or finish can be damaged. Clean these softer metals with a chemical method (acid pickling or phosphate dipped). Once cleaned, a rust-inhibiting primer coat can be applied, and the feature re-painted.

Cleaning and Paint Removal

Cleaning facades and walls is one way to bring new life to a building's appearance and add years to its life. Dirt on bricks, stone or concrete will accelerate deterioration of the masonry and mortar. Always use the least abrasive cleaning method possible. Sandblasting brick or stone surfaces with dry or wet grit permanently erodes the surface of the material, thus accelerating deterioration. Harsh chemicals used for cleaning and paint removal can also hasten the deterioration of the exterior material.

NEVER SANDBLAST BUILDING FACADES.

The building below was sandblasted for cleaning purposes several years ago. Sandblasting removed the hard-fired exterior of the bricks leaving the softer insides exposed. The bricks and mortar then eroded significantly over very few years.



RECOMMEND

1. Water or steam cleaning is usually the safest method of cleaning buildings. A low-pressure water or steam method, when accompanied by manual scrubbing and a mild cleaner, will cause the least damage.
2. Paint can be removed with water-rinsable alkali and solvent-based chemicals applied by brush and removed with a medium-pressure water or steam spray. The chemical reaction of paint removal products on the building surface should be tested before proceeding.

DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Avoid cleaning or removing paint by blasting with sand, grit, chips, shells, beads or other abrasive substances.
2. Do not use chemicals that adversely affect the building materials.
3. Avoid wet cleaning when frost is expected.

Paint Schemes and Color Palette

Where appropriate, a new paint job can be one of the most dramatic and least expensive building improvements. Painting at regular intervals is also an essential element of proper maintenance since it protects vulnerable surfaces from deterioration. In addition, paint offers a practical way to visually tie together individual building facades in the subarea. Care should be taken not only to select appropriate colors, but also to prepare surfaces properly and choose the best paint type (latex or alkyd enamel base) and finish (gloss, semigloss or matte).

The following recommendations are strictly advisory. While the AUDC may regulate whether or not to paint unpainted material on the exterior of a building, they do not regulate paint color, that choice is left to the property owner.

RECOMMEND

1. Color applied to side and rear walls should be compatible with that on the front facade. A building should be visually consistent on all sides.
2. When a building is to be repainted, it is worth considering the original paint scheme and color palette.
3. Color can be used to tie together building

elements, such as details, decorations, cornices, signs and storefronts. Such color schemes are usually most successful when no more than three colors are used.

4. Color palettes should be consistent throughout both the upper and lower portions of the building's front facade.
5. Consider the compatibility of color palettes and paint schemes with adjoining buildings.
6. Color palettes should be based on the facade and wall materials that do not have applied or painted color—those that exhibit the material's natural color.
7. Painted masonry surfaces should remain painted unless they were not painted originally and the paint can be removed without damage to the masonry (see previous page).

DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Do not paint unpainted brick or stone masonry surfaces that are designed to be the exterior unpainted facade of a building.



The following recommendations are strictly advisory. While the AUDC may regulate *whether or not* to paint unpainted material on the exterior of a building, they *do not* regulate paint color, that choice is left to the property owner.



New Construction

New construction in the subarea is encouraged. New buildings and additions to existing buildings will help stimulate economic revival of the area as well as demonstrate that recovery is occurring.

New construction should reinforce the urban and architectural character of the subarea and help weave it together. While this can be accomplished in a number of ways, some fundamental architectural principles should be followed:

1. New construction should reflect the existing rhythm, proportion, scale, height and massing of the buildings in the area.
2. Facade materials and openings should be similar to those on existing buildings.

(opposite) Looking west along the north side of Auburn Ave, the two-story Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) building was built c.2007. Its facade maintains the rhythm of the historic facades nearby with the enframing piers and window placement. Its height is similar to other 2-story structures and provides an appropriate link to the 4-story Tabor building on the right. Additionally, simplified decorations also help make this building compatible with its historic setting while setting it apart as contemporary construction.

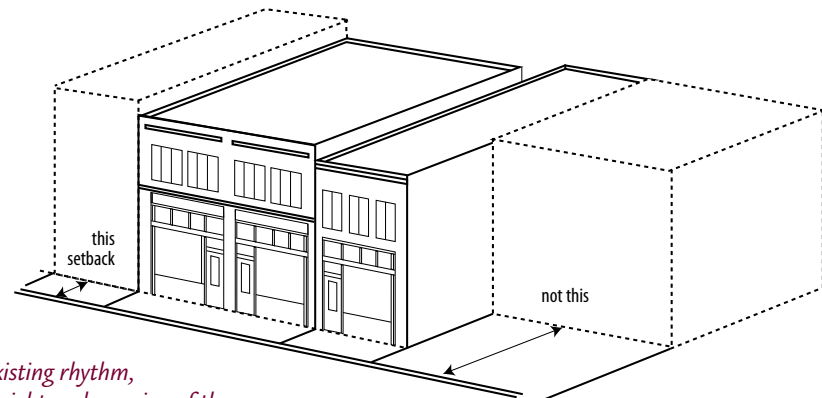
3. Important features of the area's skyline (church towers, Odd Fellows Building) should be respected; and
4. The ground-floor uses of new construction should reinforce the commercial nature of the street and contain businesses that typically generate customer traffic.

New construction in the district must adhere to current Zoning Codes, which are as follows as of 2017:

Building heights shall be permitted up to a maximum of one and one-half times the height permitted utilizing the compatibility rule, provided that:

- *For property located east of Interstate 75/85, no building shall be permitted to exceed a maximum height of 55 feet.*
- *For property located west of Interstate 75/85, no building shall be permitted to exceed a maximum height of 68 feet.*

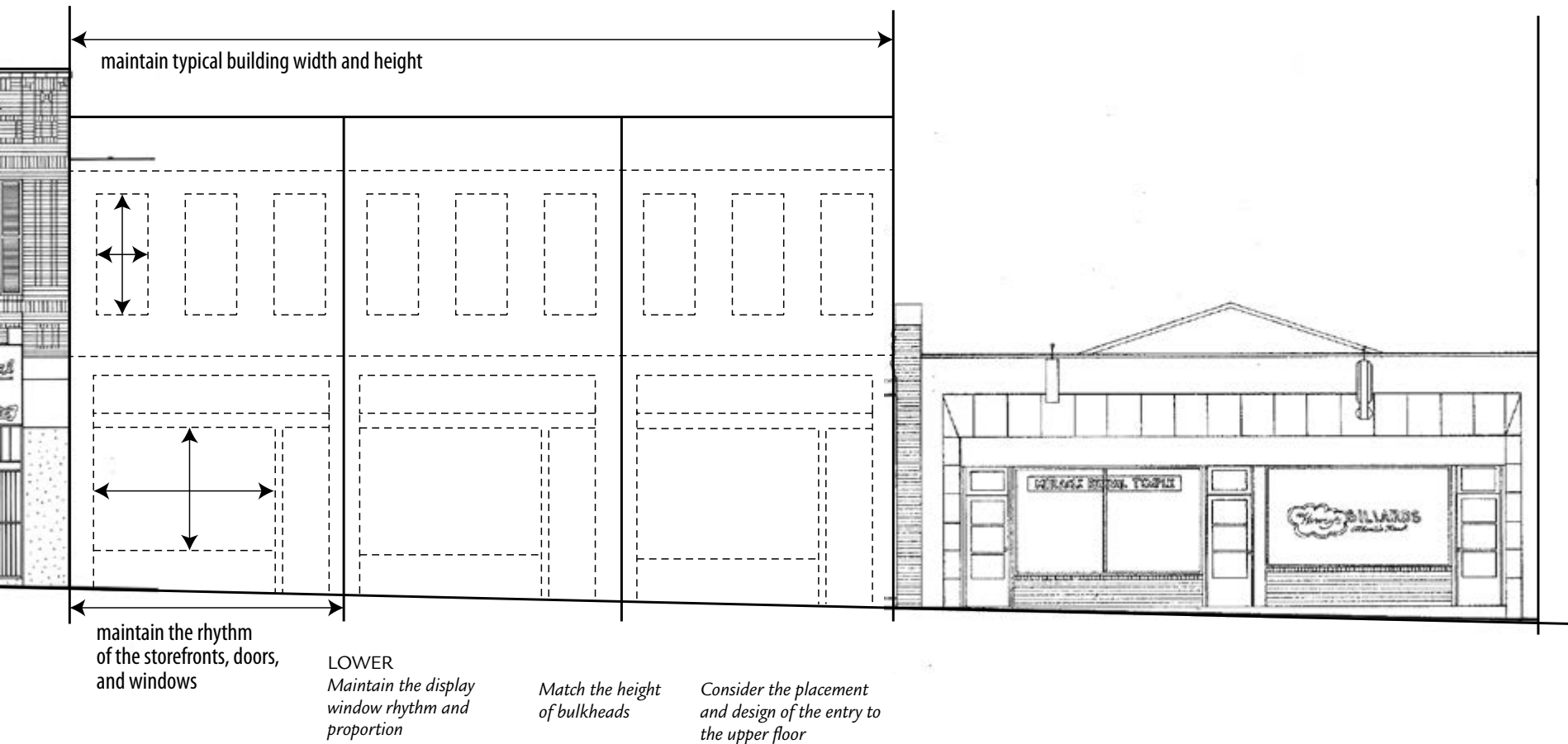
Further information regarding the allowable height of new construction can be found in Sec. 16-20C.006.2.a. of the *City of Atlanta Zoning Code*.



New construction and infill buildings should reflect the existing rhythm, proportion, scale, height and massing of the commercial block. This includes a consistent setback with the rest of the block as illustrated here.



Despite the varying building heights on these existing Auburn Avenue buildings, the illustration shows how proposed new construction should contain the fundamental principles of scale, rhythm, proportion, height and massing relates to the subarea, neighboring buildings, and to the pedestrian.



RECOMMEND

1. The height of new construction should consider the average of the buildings in the block where it is located and not exceed their height by a factor of 1.5, as well as height as per zoning code (see p.XX).
2. The rhythm, proportion, scale and massing of new construction should be similar to the buildings in the block where it is located.
3. The front ground-floor facades of new construction should contain storefronts similar in height and width to existing buildings in the block.
4. New storefronts should contain display windows similar in proportion to those of existing storefronts. Display windows should be separated from the sidewalk by a bulkhead similar in height to existing ones.
5. Facade and wall materials should be similar to neighboring buildings. The use of materials traditional to the subarea is encouraged.
6. Facade and wall surfaces should be relatively plain, in keeping with the established character of the subarea.
7. Recessed entries should conform to the average recess of existing buildings in the subarea.
8. Storefronts should be enframed.
9. New multi-story buildings should reflect the base, middle and cap composition of other multistory buildings in the subarea.
10. New commercial construction should be zero lot line, with no parking along Edgewood Ave or Auburn Ave.
11. Roof forms of new commercial buildings should be similar to the forms of other commercial buildings in the block.
12. Painted or applied color for new construction should follow the recommendations for existing buildings. (See Paint Schemes and Color Palette)
13. Parking associated with new construction should be located beneath or behind the building.
14. Consideration should be given to protecting the prominence of historic buildings such as the Odd Fellows Building, the Herndon Building, the Atlanta Life Buildings, the Butler Street Y, the Prince Hall Masonic Temple, and the church towers.

The illustration on pages 35-36 illustrates these recommendations.

DO NOT RECOMMEND

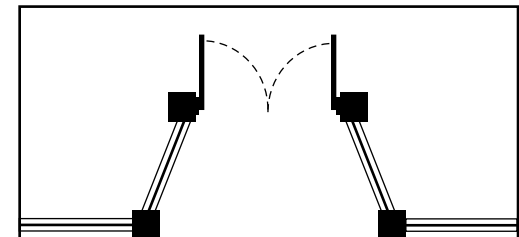
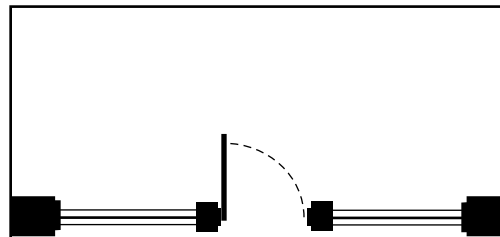
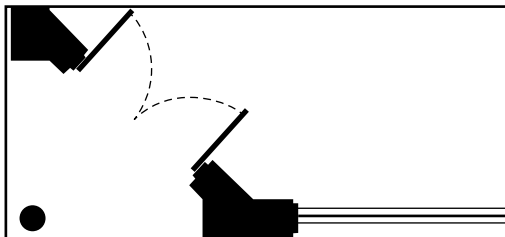
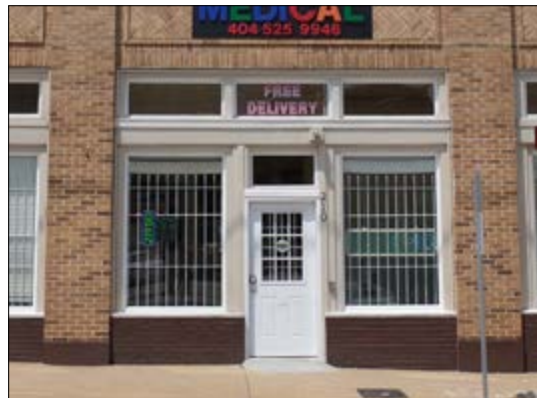
1. Do not locate parking in front or along the sides of buildings.
2. Do not locate parking entrances in the front facade of new construction. (See also pp.53-54)
3. Avoid the use of fake historic styles in the appearance, massing, proportion, scale, details or decoration of new construction.
4. Avoid exact duplication of existing styles or appearances.
5. Avoid setbacks on front facades of commercial buildings.
5. Avoid designs that give new commercial buildings a noncommercial appearance.



This contemporary building on Edgewood Avenue displays common elements of historic buildings in the district particularly in the pattern of windows and doors and the height and massing of the building itself.

Common types of storefront entries found in the Auburn and Edgewood Avenue subareas, (left to right):

1. 476-480 Edgewood Avenue has a typical corner entry with storefront display windows on both sides.
2. The entry to this storefront in the Annex is centrally located with display windows on both sides of the entrance.
3. This recessed storefront entry on Edgewood Avenue is common in the district and provides the merchant with a larger display area.





HABS # 64-1170 C-37

Business Signs

Not only are business signs a prominent visual element in the subarea, they also play an integral role in commercial activity. Signs identify individual businesses, give information about products sold, and reflect the image of each establishment. The main purpose of these signs, however, is to help customers locate businesses in the subarea.

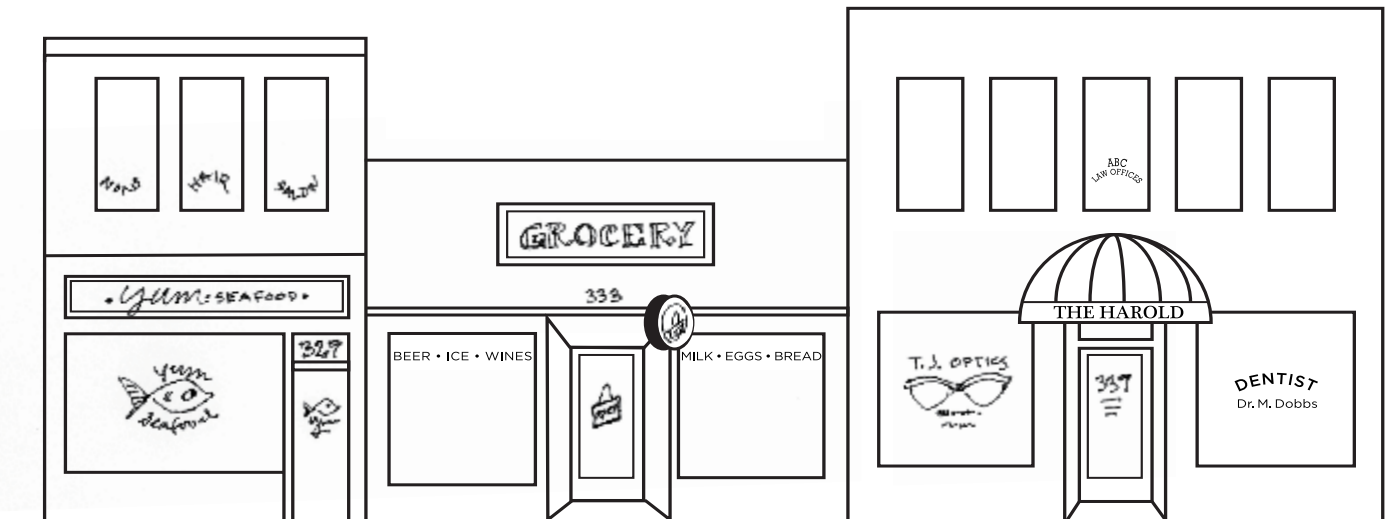
Common problems associated with signs are excessive size and inappropriate placement on buildings. In such cases, signs produce visual clutter and tend to cancel each other out. As a visual element, each business sign should

enhance the image of the entire subarea, not only of the individual establishment.

A good business sign conveys a simple, clear message. Words and graphic symbols are generally effective means of communication. Lettering styles and sign materials should relate to the facade on which the sign is placed. In addition, the size, location and design of a sign help determine how effectively it will communicate its message to the customer or client. A variety of different sign types is appropriate in the subarea, including:

1. signs applied to walls
2. small projecting signs
3. signs in or on windows
4. signs on awnings and canopies
5. neon signs.

The signboard area at 487-489 Edgewood Avenue is located above the transom windows and within the enframing piers.



A variety of business signs are prevalent in the district.

(opposite) The Bronner Brothers store at 126-255 Auburn Avenue, c. 1979. Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Historic American Building Survey Collection.

Business Signs APPLIED WALL SIGNS

The location and size of signs on any building should conform to the architectural character of that particular structure. A sign should never be so large as to overpower a facade or obscure a building's architectural features. Usually, the sign and the building's facade should work together to advertise the business. A sign will best communicate its message if it is compatible with its surroundings.

The signboard area at 487-489 Edgewood Avenue is located above the transom windows and within the enframing piers.



3. A wall sign's message should be simple. Keep wording to a minimum so that the sign can be read easily and quickly.
4. For applied wall signs, generally no more than 65% of the signboard should be devoted to lettering; the signboard itself should not exceed 2 ½ feet in height; and 18-inch high letters are typically large enough to read.

RECOMMEND

1. Applied wall signs should usually be located above the store entry where they can be easily seen by the pedestrian. On building facades, the best areas for wall signs are flat, continuous surfaces devoid of windows, doors and architectural details. If a building façade or storefront has a lintel strip or signboard, place the wall sign directly on it.
2. The allowable number of wall signs on each building is one for each street frontage, with a total area as per zoning (See *Sec. 16-28A-010(27) a and e* of the Atlanta City Zoning Code). Any additional wall signs or additional signage area will require a variance.

DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Avoid the use of flashing or moving signs.
2. Avoid the use of nationally distributed signs.
3. Avoid the use of vacuum-formed signs with white or light-colored backgrounds that are internally lit.
4. Do not place signs higher than above the first floor.

Business Signs HANGING SIGNS

Small-scale hanging signs are an effective method of advertising a business. Usually placed near the entry door, these signs not only identify the store and type of goods or services sold within, they also locate the entry and produce a rhythmic motion along the sidewalk. A particular type of hanging sign, called an icon sign, depicts a physical object, such as a shoe. The icon sign offers an effective means of advertising with a minimum amount of lettering.

RECOMMEND

1. Hanging signs should be mounted perpendicular to the building with a minimum clearance of 8 feet above the sidewalk.
2. Hanging signs should project no more than 5.0 feet from the face of the building and be at least 1.0 foot inside the curb line.
3. Hanging signs generally should be no larger than a maximum of 6.5 square feet.
4. Illumination for hanging signs should be external.

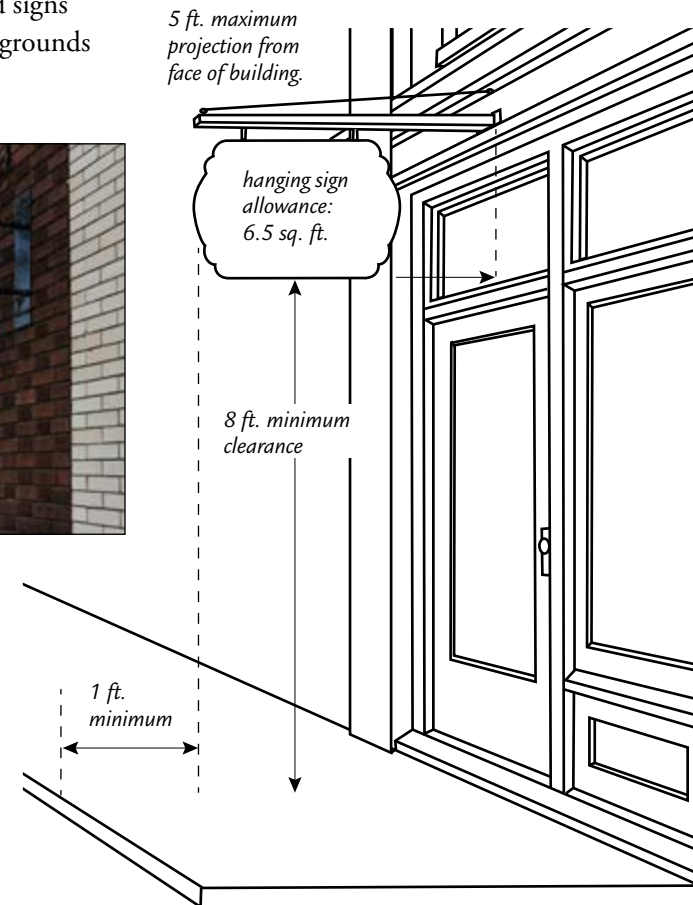
DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Avoid using flashing, moving or programmed signs.
2. Avoid using nationally distributed signs.
3. Avoid the use of vacuum-formed signs with white or light-colored backgrounds that are internally lit.



The business and building signs on 145 Auburn Avenue high enough and close enough to the building not to present a hindrance to passage on the sidewalk.

The signboard area below is located above the transom windows and within the enframing piers.



Business Signs DISPLAY WINDOW AND ENTRY DOOR SIGNS



The Silver Moon Barbershop, now closed, was well-known for the boldness of the signage painted on the storefront windows.



Businesses in the Oddfellows Annex had the signs for their upstairs offices painted in the upper floor windows. Above photo c.1979. Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Historic American Building Survey Collection.

Display window and entry door signs are traditional sign types in the subarea. Permanent window and door signs are usually painted on glass or constructed of applied vinyl letters. Gold leaf can also be used to make attractive window or door signs. Neon signs hanging inside display windows are also an effective means of advertising. Quality of workmanship and construction are vital to the success of the sign and the business it advertises.

RECOMMEND

1. Display window and entry door signs should be applied so that they do not obscure visibility.
2. Permanent display window and entry door signs generally should occupy no more than 15% of the total glass area on which they are displayed.
3. Temporary display window and entry door signs should not obscure the view into the building.

DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Avoid using vinyl lettering or letters with backgrounds.

Business Signs UPPER-FACADE WINDOW SIGNS

In the subarea, upper-facade window signs have traditionally been used to advertise offices and businesses located above the ground floor. Typically, the business signs were made of gold leaf or painted. This tradition should be continued.

RECOMMEND

1. Upper-facade window signs should be executed in gold leaf, paint or neon. New upper-facade window signs generally should occupy no more than 15% of the total glass area on which they are displayed.

DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Avoid the use of vinyl or plastic lettering unless they closely mimic the historic precedents.
2. Avoid using temporary signs.

Business Signs SIGNS ON AWNINGS

Signs on awnings also offer a viable method of identifying a business. Considering the cost as well as the life span of today's awning fabrics, these signs can provide effective and long-lasting advertising.

RECOMMEND

1. Signs should be color coordinated with the awning and the rest of the building facade.
2. Signs should generally be located on the awning's valance or return.
3. Lettering should generally occupy not more than 65% of the surface plane on which it occurs.
4. The lettering on awning signs should be either screened or sewn onto the fabric.
5. Only the sign, not the entire awning, should be illuminated.

Business Signs SIGNS ON CANOPIES

Signs on canopies are also an effective means of advertising a business. As with awning signs, they are most effective when designed as part of the canopy.

RECOMMEND

1. Signs on canopies should be located on the front or side fascia.
2. Lettering should generally occupy no more than 65% of the surface plane on which it occurs.

DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Do not mount signs on top of canopies.



The Oddfellows Annex entrance has a barrel awning at the entrance to the building with signage on the front and sides of the awning.

Business Signs GHOST SIGNS



The “Department Store” ghost sign was painted directly on the brick of the front facade above the transom windows.



The Atlanta Daily World building (145 Auburn Ave.) has a historic memorial marker on either side of the door to the upper floors, additionally, when the building was redeveloped in 2013, the historic Atlanta Daily World sign in the transom was recreated.

Ghost signs are reminders of the businesses and people who built the Auburn Avenue commercial area. They are located on the sides and front facades of buildings as well as on windows and doors. Typically painted, the ghost signs in the subarea should be preserved in the condition in which they are found.

RECOMMEND

1. Significant ghost sign related to the history and development of the Auburn Avenue commercial area should be retained.
2. Careful consideration should be given to retaining ghost signs in the condition in which they are found.

Business Signs HISTORICAL BUILDING MARKERS

The history and significance of the Auburn Avenue commercial area should be accessible to all who visit and work in the district. One method of ensuring this is to put historical markers on subarea buildings. These markers would describe the history and significance of each structure.

RECOMMEND

1. Historical markers generally should be approximately 1 ½ square feet in size.
2. Historical markers generally should be made of cast metal or other durable materials.
3. The design and text of the historical marker should be legible and clear.
4. Historical markers should be attached so that they lie flat against the building. They should be located near the entry door or another area of high pedestrian traffic.
5. Coordination will be required and specific guidelines will need to be followed if a new historic marker intends to be part of a recognized historic marker program.



Signs hang over the sidewalk along Auburn Avenue, 1978. Photo courtesy of the Atlanta Journal-Constitution Collection, Georgia State University Library.

THE GOLD DUST TWINS

The Gold Dust twins, “Goldie” and “Dustie,” were the cornerstone of a late 19th-early 20th century advertising campaign for Gold Dust washing powder that drew heavily on negative African American racial stereotypes. They were, of course, just one of many examples of advertisers using images of black people to sell products, other well-known examples include Aunt Jemima and Uncle Ben. The Gold Dust twin advertisements were everywhere in their day and marketed, oddly, to both white and black audiences.

The Gold Dust Twins advertisement only survived here because it was hidden by another building (the Herndon Building, constructed in 1922) for more than eighty years. A tornado in 2008 severely damaged the Herndon Building which was subsequently demolished exposing the advertisement painted on the east side of 229 Auburn Avenue.





Public Space

Public space in the subarea consists of streets, sidewalks, parking lots and parks. These areas contain surface materials, street furniture and landscape material. The design of these spaces and their contents should reinforce the commercial nature of the subarea and encourage the flow of pedestrians throughout the subarea. In addition, the public space located under the expressway should continue to be enhanced to help knit the east and west portions of the commercial district together.

The following guidelines for public space in the subarea will require the cooperation of both public and private sectors. Improvements to public space are necessary to encourage and support investment in buildings and businesses. They are also essential to improving the impression that neighborhood residents, Atlanta citizens and visitors have and will gain of the subarea.

The sidewalks and streets, parks and parking areas are much a part of the Auburn and Edgewood Avenues Commercial Subarea as the buildings themselves. The public spaces create the environment through which we experience this historic district. Atlanta Streetcar on Auburn Avenue at Piedmont, photo credit Central Atlanta Progress.

Public Space SIDEWALKS

Sidewalks are the primary pedestrian connectors in the subarea. They should provide easy access to businesses and reflect the commercial nature of the subarea. It is also important that sidewalks in the subarea be safe and well maintained. Along Auburn Avenue, between the Auburn Library and the Royal Peacock at Courtland Street and the area of M.L. King, Jr.'s birthplace east of Boulevard, sidewalks connect the subarea's major cultural anchors and should be designed to encourage pedestrian traffic between them.

RECOMMEND

1. Surface material for sidewalks should be uniform throughout the subarea; the material's design should be based on existing historic hexagonal concrete pavers, or, if no pavers are used, on the use of concrete.
2. New surface material should match the original in scale, pattern, texture and color.
3. Consideration should be given to the subarea's historic character, on-street parking

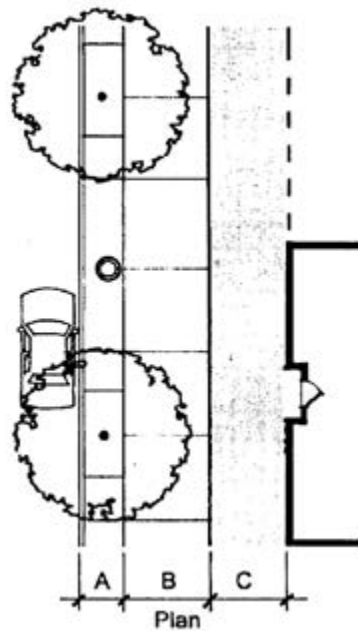
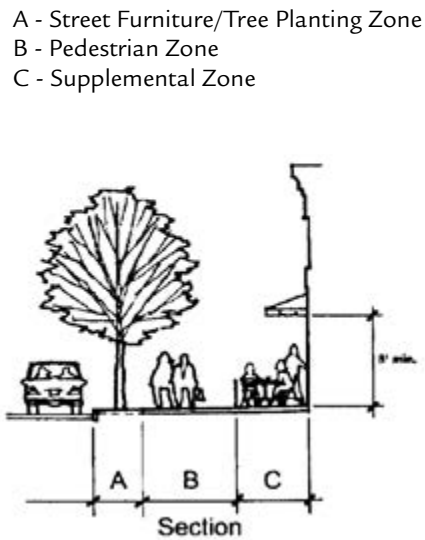


Sidewalks are the primary pedestrian corridors and are the scene of a vibrant street life in the subarea. Photo credit Central Atlanta Progress.

For detailed information on sidewalk regulations, see City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances Chapter 138 - "Streets, Sidewalks, and Other Public Places."

Online: *Atlanta Zoning Code Chapter 138* and also *Section 16-20C.007* for information specific to the MLK Landmark District.

(below) Diagrams of streetscape requirements from the City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances from Zoning Chapter 18V.-SPI-22, Sec. 16-18V.027. Illustration courtesy of Tunnell-Spangler-Walsh.



and safe crosswalks before changes are made to the width and location of the sidewalks.

4. ADA ramps should be properly located at all street intersections, and should be scored or provided with ADA-compliant tactile surfaces.
5. Vehicular curb cuts should be kept to a minimum and should be avoided on Auburn and Edgewood Avenues in favor of access from side streets and back streets.
6. The width of curb cuts should generally not exceed 10 feet plus side ramps, and shall follow City of Atlanta guidelines.
7. Special sidewalk material, such as tile, historically associated with subarea businesses, should be preserved in-situ, including in entry recesses.
8. If subarea businesses decide to use new special sidewalk material, such as tile, it should be located within entry recesses, outside of the public right-of-way.
9. Zebra striping should be used to delineate crosswalks.

DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Do not install brick sidewalks.
2. Avoid installing custom sidewalk material associated with a business within the public right-of-way.
3. Do not remove or replace historic tile
4. Do not use conjectural tile.

Hexagonal pavers were traditionally used as a sidewalk material in the subarea.



Public Space STREETS

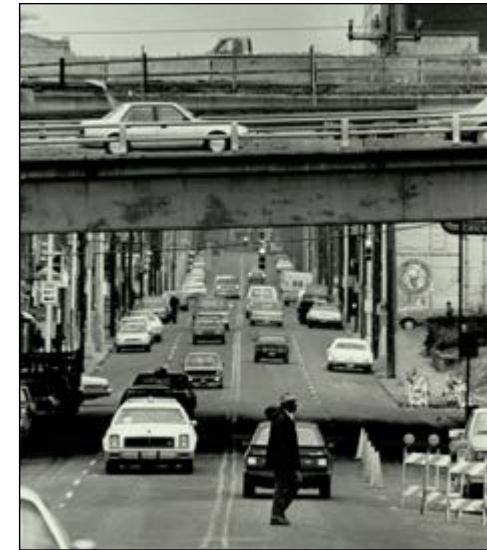
Streets provide the primary connective network in the subarea. The two main east-west streets are Auburn Avenue and Edgewood Avenue, which constitute the historic commercial spine of the district. Auburn Avenue connects the two cultural anchors in the district—Auburn Avenue Research Library and the King Center—and is the address of many of the subarea’s most significant historic buildings. The Auburn Avenue commercial corridor has its eastern end at Boulevard. One block south and parallel to Auburn, the Edgewood Avenue commercial corridor extends further east to Cornelia Street and has seen a major renaissance of new restaurants and businesses.

Running north and south, Courtland Street forms the subarea’s western boundary, leading to Atlanta’s Central Business District and Georgia State University. One block east of Courtland, Piedmont Avenue is a major Atlanta thoroughfare connecting downtown with Piedmont Park and beyond. Flanking I-75/85, Bell and Fort Streets direct the flow of commuters and visitors to and from the subarea. From the expressway the unique views of the taller buildings, such as the Odd Fellows Buildings and the churches, can be appreciated and should be considered in any changes made in the district. Other cross streets in the subarea—Piedmont Avenue, Jesse Hill Jr. Street (formerly Butler Street), Hilliard Street, William H. Borders, Sr. Drive and Boule-

vard—connect Edgewood and Auburn Avenues at regular intervals and help link the commercial area to the surrounding neighborhoods.

RECOMMEND

1. Auburn Avenue should continue to be the “Main Street” of the commercial area, linking the two most important cultural and institutional nodes—the Auburn Avenue Research Library and the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site—and being the site of major religious and civil rights historic buildings.
2. Edgewood Avenue should be considered the supporting main street, with many small business, restaurant and retail establishments and the Sweet Auburn Curb Market food court.
3. Fort and Bell Streets should continue to be used to direct the flow of traffic to and from the subarea.
4. The block toward Courtland Street and Jackson Street should be viewed as the western and eastern edges of the Auburn Avenue commercial/institutional area.
5. The block toward Courtland Street and Cornelia Street should be viewed as the western and eastern edges of the Edgewood Avenue commercial/institutional area.
5. Other cross streets in the district should be viewed as neighborhood connectors.
6. Asphalt, the current surface material of the district’s streets, should continue to be used, except as noted below.
8. Street curbing material throughout the subarea should be granite.



Auburn Avenue looking east past expressway in the 1970s. Photo courtesy of the Atlanta Journal-Constitution Collection, Georgia State University Library.

DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Do not repair cuts in surface materials with incompatible temporary or permanent material.

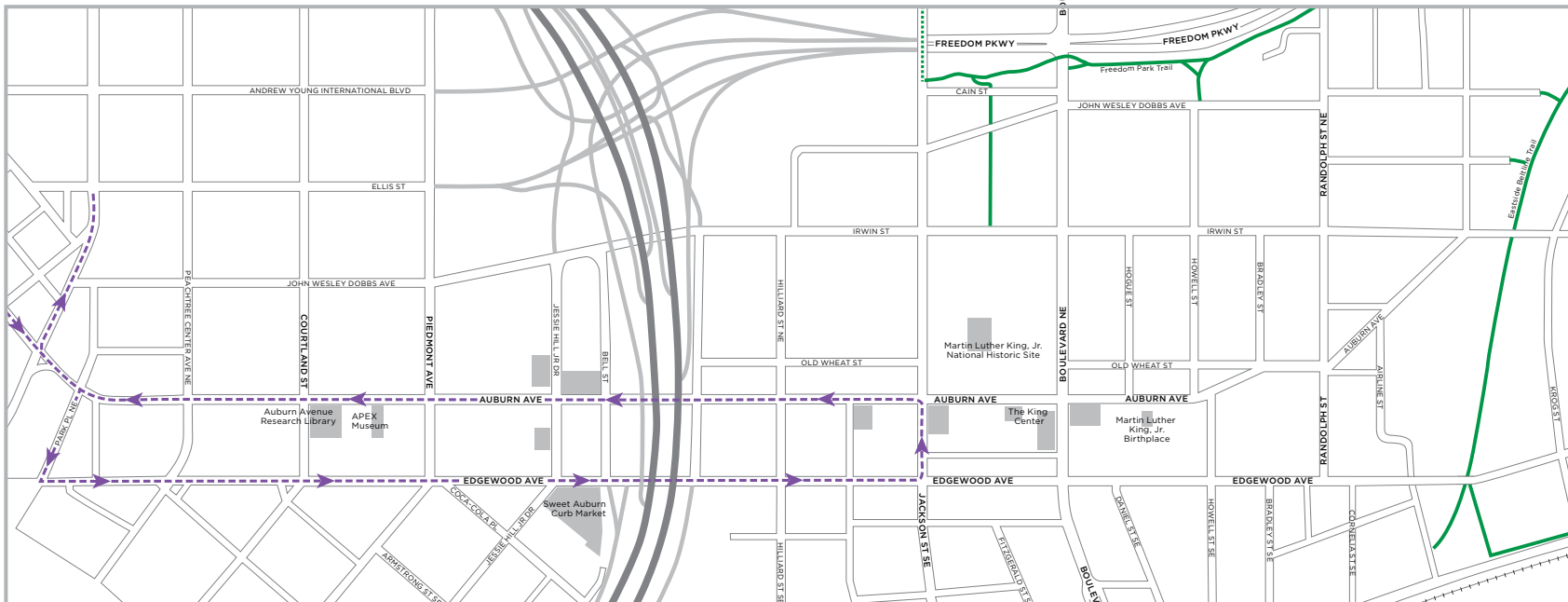
Public Space TRANSIT

The Atlanta Streetcar, which began operation in 2014, ties together the subarea and Atlanta's Central Business District and makes it easier for residents, workers, students, and tourists to access both areas. The opening of the National Center for Civil and Human Rights, at the western end of the streetcar route, gives visitors to the subarea along the eastern loop an additional destination to experience the civil rights movement in Atlanta.



The map below shows the Atlanta Streetcar route through the Subarea (purple) and the nearby Freedom Parkway PATH and Atlanta Beltline. These multiuse trails are within walking distance of the Subarea.

The Atlanta Streetcar runs through the Subarea on Auburn Avenue (2016).



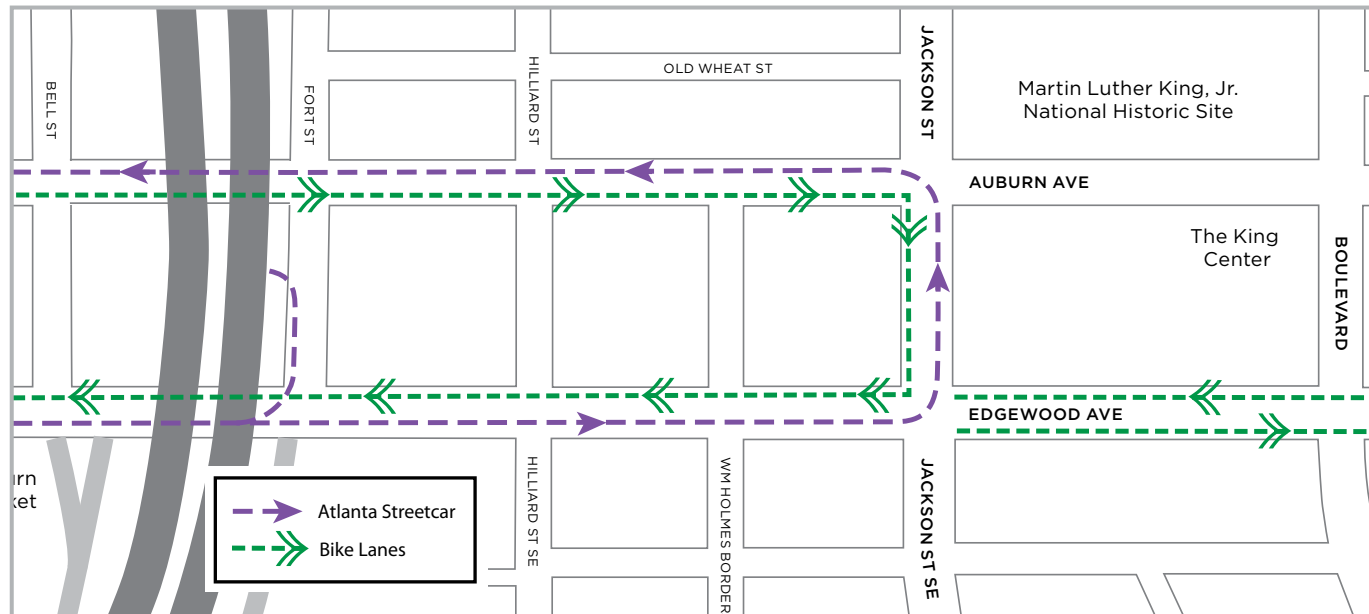
Public Space BICYCLES

Bicycling is becoming increasingly popular as a viable mode of transportation in Atlanta. As the city works to provide appropriate infrastructure to encourage bicycling, the subarea would do well to be forward-thinking in the accommodation of bikes as well. A number of bicycle lanes or sharrows are available in the subarea. Bicycle riders need to take the hazards that parallel streetcar tracks can create for their bike's wheels into account when planning their trips in the subarea. Due to this hazard and limited street widths, bike lines or

sharrows are only available as follows where the streetcar runs:


- westbound only on Edgewood Avenue as the streetcar runs on the eastbound side, coming from downtown
- southbound only on Jackson Street as the streetcar turns north for its east-most turn of the loop).
- eastbound only on Auburn Avenue, as the streetcar runs on the westbound side, heading back toward downtown

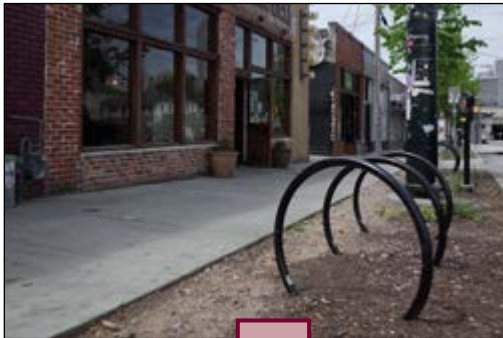
See illustrated map below.



Cyclists should exercise caution on streets with streetcar tracks and ride only where bike lanes or sharrows (above) are marked on the road. Streetcar tracks can 'grab' bike wheels if crossed as less than a 90° angle (below).




The Atlanta Bicycle Coalition and the SOPO Bicycle Cooperative offer bike parking solutions, to find out more go to: www.atlantabike.org/bike_racks or call the Atlanta Bicycle Coalition at (404) 881-1112



These bicycle racks along Edgewood Avenue are well positioned for accommodating the maximum number of bicycles out of the way of pedestrians and vehicles. Additionally, located in front of several business establishments makes them highly visible attracting cyclist customers and reducing the threat of theft.

Bicycle riders are also advised to cross the tracks at right angles. Signage exists throughout the corridor to guide cyclists and the map below shows the current layout of these on-street markings.

Sturdy, well-placed bike parking would be an asset to the subarea. When no bike parking infrastructure is provided cyclists improvise and lock their bikes to anything that seems secure, and haphazardly locked bikes can get in the way of pedestrians and are often not secure enough to prevent theft. Bike racks behind buildings or other out-of-sight locations are inconvenient and leave bicycles vulnerable to theft as well.

RECOMMEND

Bike Lanes

1. Bike lanes should be kept clear of hazards, which include surface debris, parked or stopped vehicles, opening car doors, or any other objects which threaten the safety of a person operating a bicycle.
2. Avoid parking or stopping in a bike lane; it is illegal.

Bike Parking

3. Make bike racks visible and prominent.
4. Use the current City of Atlanta standard for bicycle parking in the MLK Landmark District (*Atlanta Zoning Code Section 16-20C.009*)
 - Two or more spaces near each entrance (buildings with high traffic should provide additional spaces)
 - At least one parking space for every 50 employees
 - One space for every residential unit.
5. Properly situate bike racks for best use. A bike rack can only park the maximum number of bicycles if it is properly situated.
6. A bike rack should not obstruct other objects such as street furniture, access to doors or rights of way.
7. Initiate public bike rental stations and bike helmet rentals.

Public Space PARKING

The Sweet Auburn neighborhood grew in a time when Atlanta was supported by a well-established transit network that served the urban core. Automobiles and parking were not concerns during the development of the neighborhood and so accommodations for vehicles, such as on-street parking, were considered secondary and introduced later. Now that the neighborhood is widely recognized as a significant historic resource worthy of preservation, restoration and re-use, the approach to the automobile in the subarea should follow this historic pattern. Automobiles should be included, yet not at the expense of the buildings and the historic building pattern.

While convenient and safe parking is essential to the economic health of the subarea's businesses, minimizing the amount of land dedicated to parking contributes to the positive aesthetic quality of a place suited for walking, biking and transit use. Moreover, there is adequate parking capacity in the subarea for the foreseeable future, especially with the construction of the new parking deck adjacent to the Auburn Avenue Research Library. Any additional parking demand should be handled using the least invasive, lowest impact options outlined below. These options should be considered and implemented before any new structured parking is introduced to the district. If it is determined that new structured parking

is to be constructed, its location should have the smallest impact possible on the subarea. Structured parking should only replace existing parking lots and be located on the subarea periphery with no direct access from Auburn Avenue or Edgewood Avenue. *No building or structure currently standing should be removed or demolished for a parking lot*, and buildable lots along Auburn and Edgewood Avenues should be used for new buildings with occupants.

The current parking issues in the subarea can be relieved by the following recommendations and next steps:

- Encourage public transit use
- Encourage bicycle and pedestrian traffic and accommodate bike parking
- Institute shared parking and shared rental cars
- Encourage the use of ride sharing and taxi car services to and from the subarea
- Consider shuttles to MARTA and/or remote parking for special events
- Coordinate current parking lots through the institution of a Parking Improvement District or similar governing body
- Construct new parking structures only as a last resort and under strict design guidelines, sensitive placement and security optimization



The Martin Luther King Jr. Landmark District (Chapter 20C) regulations **do not** impose a required parking minimum, in contrast to other zoning districts that govern land nearby. The construction and provision of parking spaces as a component of a new construction project or adaptive re-use of a building should be examined on a case-by-case basis.

All parking regulation in the MLK Landmark District can be found online here:
Atlanta Zoning Code Section 16-20C.009



A surface parking lot along Auburn Avenue.

RECOMMEND

1. Existing on-street parking should be retained and regulated as needed for safety and traffic flow. On-street parking near businesses should also be regulated to make it available for use by business customers and clients, not by employees and other long-term users (as is currently done on Edgewood Avenue with metered parking).
2. Existing parking lots along Auburn and Edgewood Avenues that create gaps in the building line should use plantings or low walls to reestablish that line.
3. Additional parking demand can be handled using the least invasive, lowest impact options possible.
4. If it is determined that any new structured parking is to be constructed, its location should have the smallest impact possible on the subarea. Structured parking should

only replace existing parking lots and be located outside the subarea, unless it is located in the interior of blocks or below grade under new buildings.

5. The surface material of parking lots should be asphalt (preferably pervious), sheet concrete or pavers (including grass pavers), not gravel.
6. Parking lots should be well lit for security, without glare, and with avoidance of light trespass and night sky pollution.
7. Parking lots should contain trees and/or shrubs to provide shade and visual relief.
8. Parking lots should comply with ADA guidelines for the mobility impaired by providing one appropriately located space for every 25 spaces.
9. Each block of on-street parking should provide two spaces for the handicapped by complying with ADA guidelines for the mobility impaired.

10. A standpipe for watering with a lockable faucet should be provided in each parking lot containing trees or plant material.

DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Do not locate parking at the sidewalk edge.
2. Do not make the access to parking lots wider than 10 feet plus side ramps.
3. Do not make on-street parking durations near businesses longer than four hours.
4. No building or structure currently standing should be removed or demolished for a parking lot, and buildable lots along Auburn and Edgewood Avenues should be used for new buildings with occupants.
5. Parking lots should not have access directly onto Auburn or Edgewood Avenues.

When an existing parking lot is located at the sidewalk edge, a low wall and trees can be planted at intervals to reinforce the rhythm and spacing of the storefronts and re-establish the building lines.



Public Space PARKS

John H. Calhoun, Jr. Park and John Wesley Dobbs Parks are the two public parks in the subarea. These parks provide public space for gatherings and a place for quiet conversation with neighbors and friends. As the major green spaces in the subarea, they bring natural material into the concrete and brick of the subarea. Other parks nearby include Helen Butler Park, and the park in front of the National Park Service visitor center in Institutional Subarea 3.

RECOMMEND

1. The parks should provide places for public gatherings as well as quiet conversation.
2. The design of any park should give users a sense of security.

DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Before any new parks are created, consideration should be given to maintaining and repairing the historic building pattern of the subarea.



*Dobbs Plaza, photo courtesy
of Wally Gobetz via flickr
Creative Commons*

Public Space STREET FURNITURE

Street furniture is a general term used to describe elements such as benches, trash and recycling receptacles, planters, bicycle racks and similar items placed in public pedestrian areas. These elements contribute to creating a safe, comfortable and pleasant environment and improve the quality of life for pedestrians.

Taken singly, each of these elements may seem insignificant. Collectively, however, they all too often produce a confusing array of images for motorists and pedestrians. If, in their design and placement, these elements are viewed as components of a coordinated system, they can become visual assets and an essential part of the total business district. Street furniture that has a unified appearance will also enhance the integrity of the commercial area.



Despite best intentions, Recycling cans on public sidewalks are rarely used appropriately when placed alone. Clustering trash and recycling receptacles near other street furniture such as lampposts and benches not only reduces the amount of obstacles pedestrians must maneuver around but may improve actual clutter collection.

RECOMMEND

1. Street furniture should be integrated into the overall design of the subarea. Its selection and design should be coordinated with the surface materials for streets, sidewalks and both old and new buildings.
2. Street furniture should be positioned so that it does not impede pedestrian, bicycle or vehicular traffic.
3. Whenever possible, various street elements should be clustered to reduce visual clutter.
4. All outdoor seating should reflect basic human design dimensions as well as concern for maintenance and durability. Materials used for seats and backs should not conduct heat or cold rapidly. Where possible, seating should be incorporated as part of planters and/or low permanent walls. Independently sited, securely anchored benches should also be located in appropriate areas such as at bus or streetcar stops or in front of retail establishments where seating is appropriate (coffee shops, bakeries and the like).
5. The design of public drinking fountains should be compatible with the overall design concept for the subarea's street furniture. Fountains should be located in places where people congregate, such as parks.
6. Trash and recycling receptacles should be designed to blend into the environment. They should contain easily removed containers and be covered from the elements. Receptacles should be located where people congregate, such as parks, plazas, transit stops, bike racks, street crossings, intersections and entries to parking areas. Receptacles should follow guidelines for safety and should be emptied under a maintenance program.

7. Planters should be designed to be compatible with the overall design concept for subarea street furniture, provide enough soil and drainage to support plant material, have lockable public water sources nearby, be vandal resistant and allow for easy maintenance.

DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Avoid the use of street furniture that is not compatible with the design of the subarea's public spaces and buildings or with the commercial/cultural nature of the subarea.
2. Avoid the use of street furniture that invites vandalism or other abuse.

The building lot line is defined, the parking area is visually enhanced and a pleasant environment for pedestrians is created by combining several streetscape elements such as a brick seating wall, landscape material and trash receptacles. Illustration based on previous edition.



Public Space LIGHTING

Lighting should support and encourage safe activities at night. Lighting design should address the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users and motorists as well as highlight special buildings and amenities. Proper lighting design can also enhance the appearance of the subarea.

Typically, there are three kinds of lighting required to accommodate the diverse physical and psychological needs of the pedestrians,

bicyclists and motorists who use the subarea after dark.

Pedestrian lighting should provide low-scale, localized light where people need it most—on sidewalks, at transit stops and in parking lots. This type of lighting can also identify major points in the pedestrian circulation system, such as intersections, crosswalks and curb cuts. Attractive pedestrian lighting can provide a unifying visual element in the subarea.

Street lighting is the prevalent form of artificial illumination currently used in the subarea. Street lighting should be used to illuminate bicycle and vehicular areas, but not be made to function as pedestrian or amenity area lighting as well.

Accent and amenity lighting should also be considered an important part of the subarea's illumination. Imaginative lighting of important buildings and landscaping can make the subarea a delightful and attractive place at night for all users.

The creative use of outdoor lighting can be instrumental in promoting the nighttime use of the subarea and will significantly improve the public's appreciation of the subarea after dark.

This illustration shows the difference in use and scale of pedestrian and street lighting.



RECOMMEND

1. Light standards and poles should be compatible in scale with the buildings in the subarea.
2. Light standards and poles that are used to support street furniture should use attachment hardware painted to match the standard or pole.
3. All luminaires should provide true color rendition while being energy-efficient and incorporate reflectors or other devices to reduce glare, light trespass and night sky pollution, and focus light where it is needed.
4. General lighting should be provided for bicyclists, transit users and vehicular traffic, while more intense varied, glare-free lighting should be used to illuminate pedestrian areas, transit stops and parks.
5. Provide lockable outlets on light standards and other poles as required to accommodate seasonal and special lighting.
6. Streetlight standards should be approximately 40 feet high.
7. Pedestrian light standards should be approximately 12 feet high, contain luminaires that give true color rendition, while being energy-efficient, and provide for an overlapping light pattern at least 7 feet above the sidewalk.
8. Pedestrian light standards should be the same throughout the subarea to create a cohesive image for the subarea.
9. Special attention should be given to lighting areas of pedestrian/ bicyclist/ streetcar users vehicular conflict, such as crosswalks, intersections, bike rack areas, transit stops and curb cuts and parking lots.
10. Accent and amenity lighting should be used to illuminate landscape areas, seating areas and trees as well as important buildings in the subarea.
11. Light standards should be equipped with hardware to allow for the mounting of banners for special events.

DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Avoid the use of sodium vapor or clear mercury vapor luminaires due to their poor color rendition.

Public Space UTILITIES

Existing overhead wires in the subarea, including those for the streetcar, create visual clutter, and additional visual overhead clutter should be minimized. Placing wiring underground, while expensive, will improve the image of the subarea, contribute to business recruitment and create a more pleasant environment for customers, clients and visitors.

RECOMMEND

1. Putting as much wiring as possible underground should be included as part of an overall public space improvement plan.



Visual clutter is caused by overhead wires.

Public Space TRAFFIC SIGNALS AND SIGNAGE

Public sign and informational systems are useful to the efficient flow of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users and motorists in the subarea. Displays would help people know what destinations are available, the best way to proceed to their chosen destination, and safety regulations. Ideally, they would display transit information in real time. Improved informational signs and traffic control devices must strive for simplicity, ease of comprehension and immediate visual impact. The public informational signs must also complement the private retail and business signs in the district.

RECOMMEND

1. Standards for traffic signs and control lights should be part of a unified design system for the subarea.
2. Signs and control devices should be placed to allow safe passage for pedestrians, bicyclists, streetcars and motorists.
3. Signs and control devices should be located so as to avoid conflicts when the doors of parked vehicles are opened.
4. Public information signs should be clustered to reduce visual clutter. Whenever possible, signs and control lights should share the same standard.
5. The subarea should eliminate as many traffic control devices, including push-to-walk buttons, as possible, to encourage more pedestrians to use the subarea; pedestrian walk signals should be automatic.
6. Special signs that identify entrances to the subarea should be provided, and informational signs that indicate the locations of nearby public parking lots should be placed near the entries to the subarea.
7. In the parking areas, publications for events, and on websites, alternative transportation should be highlighted and explained in detail.

Public Space KIOSKS AND INFORMATIONAL SIGNS

Historic and informational signage in public spaces are useful for residents and visitors to the subarea. Directional and informational signage may overlap, improved informational signs must strive for simplicity, comprehensibility and immediate visual impact. Kiosks and historic markers provide space for a more in-depth educational experience. These may be permanent fixtures or temporary “exhibits.”

RECOMMEND

1. Any directional signs should be easy to comprehend quickly and visible to multiple modes of transportation: pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders and private vehicles.
2. Public information signs should complement the private retail and business signs in the district.

DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Informational signs, while striving for visual impact, should not compete with more important traffic and safety signage along streets.

Markers and educational signage at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site.



Public Space ACCESSIBILITY

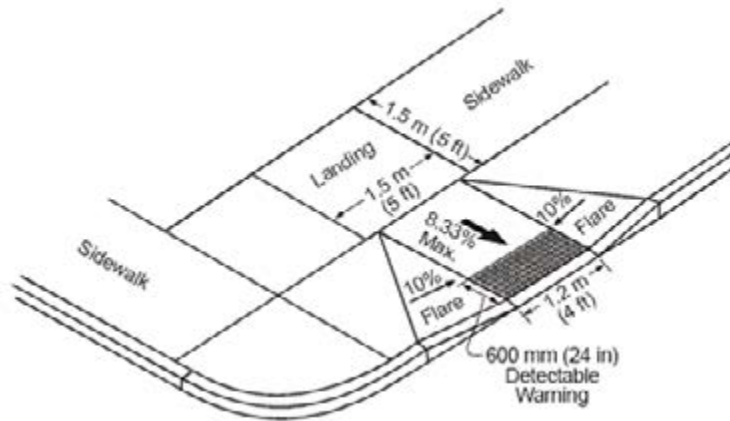
The Auburn and Edgewood Avenues Commercial Subarea should be universally accessible to all members of the community, including those with impairments addressed in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

RECOMMEND

1. Comply with federal, state and local requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act, consisting of a variety of disabilities, including mobility, visual and hearing impairment.
1. Sidewalks at all intersections should have flared curb ramps with safe width and slope and tactile colored surfaces.
2. Curb ramps should have textured, non-slip surfaces (see images below).
3. All drain inlets at curb ramps should have safety grates.
4. All on-street parking, as well as lots and garages, should provide spaces for the mobility impaired.
5. Crosswalks should be as wide as the sidewalk they adjoin and have audible signals.
6. Drop-offs such as at transit stops should have detectable warnings.
7. Street Furniture, signage and landscaping should avoid creating a hazard for the visually impaired.



*Non-slip and detectable warning surfaces such as this one are required where ramps meet traffic.
Image credit: cslandscapearchitect.com*



Curb ramp diagram from the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration.

Public Space VACANT LOTS

Vacant lots can have a significant effect on the appearance of a commercial district. While some vacant lots may have existed historically, they are often the result of disinvestment and often suffer from a lack of maintenance. If left unattended, a vacant lot can contribute to the impression of an economically depressed district, especially when weeds, trash and discarded items litter the lot.

With routine maintenance, a vacant lot can be viewed more as land for future growth and expansion than as an indication of decline. Edges featuring low shrubs are more attractive than hard edges, such as chain link fences and walls. Routine removal of trash and recyclables and mowing of weeds and grasses will reinforce the concept of land awaiting future development.

RECOMMEND

1. Low shrubs and/or trees should be planted at the edges of vacant lots.
2. Ground cover should be mowed and kept free of trash, debris and improperly discarded or stored materials.
3. Vacant lots should be lighted at night to provide security (see *Lighting*, p.58)

DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Avoid using chain link or plywood fences and similar barriers to discourage encroachment, as they reinforce the image of isolation.
2. Avoid using vacant lots for unauthorized or spontaneous vehicular parking.

The vacant lots on either side of 420 Edgewood Ave. were included in the rehabilitation plan for the building. On the left, a compatible one-story addition was constructed while the space on the right was enclosed with an attractive brick wall to make space for a patio.





Special Features

The subarea contains a number of special features that must be carefully considered during the revitalization process. They include: unique and institutional buildings, public space under I-75/85; materials and elements of the subarea's historic buildings; the skyline; and special events held in the subarea.

Special Features INSTITUTIONAL BUILDINGS

Important institutional buildings in the subarea include the Big Bethel AME Church, Wheat Street Baptist Church, the Butler Street YMCA, the Apex Museum, the Atlanta Life Buildings, the Oddfellows Building, and the Prince Hall Masonic Lodge. At the eastern end, in the Institutional Subarea, Ebenezer Baptist Church and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center (the "King Center") for Nonviolent Social Change are important destinations.

The Oddfellows Building and the Prince Hall Masonic Lodge are stylistically akin to the commercial buildings in the subarea, yet more elaborate. The Apex Museum is located in a rehabilitated structure originally built as the Schoolbook Depository in 1936. The Masonic Lodge was designed as an office building as well as a meeting hall. The three churches are constructed of stone and brick in various styles that were traditionally popular for religious buildings. The front facades of the church buildings contain major entries on Auburn Avenue. Each front facade is accentuated by a tower that is important to the skyline of the district.

Three important religious institutions in the MLK Landmark District are located on Auburn Avenue, they are (left to right):

1. *Ebenezer Baptist Church in the Institutional Subdistrict 3*
2. *Big Bethel AME Church (Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Historic American Building Survey Collection. c.1979)*
3. *Wheat Street Baptist Church.*



The King Center is a 1970s building constructed of brick and concrete. It is a complex of two major structures focusing on an internal courtyard that provides a quiet area for visitors. The courtyard contains the tombs of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King.

These institutional buildings contribute to the subarea's unique character. They house institutions that played a significant role in the development of African American culture as well as the commercial enterprises that once filled the subarea. As such, these buildings should be preserved and given prominence in the future development of the subarea.

RECOMMEND

1. The church towers should remain prominent features of the district's skyline.
2. Any new institutional buildings proposed for the subarea should be designed to reinforce the commercial nature and recommended design of the subarea.

DO NOT RECOMMEND

1. Avoid building new institutional buildings in the subarea that are not in character with the existing commercial structures of the subarea.

Special Features BUILDING MATERIALS

The majority of the subarea's commercial buildings are made of brick and decorated with details in various materials such as cast iron, pressed and stamped metal, glass block, terracotta, stone, cast stone, Carrara glass and patterned, colored brick. These buildings give the district a unique character, which should be retained in any new construction. Some important institutional buildings are constructed of stone and brick, or entirely of stone, which makes them stand out in the streetscape. This visual prominence serves to reinforce their importance to the history and development of the subarea. A few newer buildings—built since the 1960s—are out of character in scale and materials; these include the Wheat Street Tower and a senior citizen community at 375 Auburn Avenue. The materials used to construct the subarea's historic buildings should be repaired and maintained. If replacement is necessary, use the same material or choose a substitute material that matches the color, texture and composition of the original as closely as possible. It is especially important to retain the materials used for details on historic buildings.

RECOMMEND

1. Retain historic material used for details on historic buildings, especially cast iron, pressed and stamped metal, glass block, terracotta, stone, cast stone and Carrara glass.*
2. Retain existing colored brick patterns on building facades.

** Pigmented structural glass, popularly known under such trade names as Carrara Glass, Sani Onyx/Rox, and Vitrolite, was developed in the United States in 1900. It was widely used in the first half of the 20th century, particularly in Art Deco and Streamline Moderne buildings or facades. (from "Preservation Brief 12: The Preservation of Historic Pigmented Structural Glass")*

Among the building materials commonly found in the subarea are:

Top row (left to right): brick and concrete, glazed brick, and granite.

Bottom row (left to right): terracotta and carved stone, sheet metal ornamentation, and wood.



Special Features

SPECIAL EVENTS

Special events offer a means of enlivening the subarea, educating citizens and visitors about its history, and development and marketing the businesses in the subarea. While each special event has its own requirements for space, transportation, temporary stands, safety, etc., all require access to electrical power, water and sanitation. Future public space improvements to the subarea should address these needs.

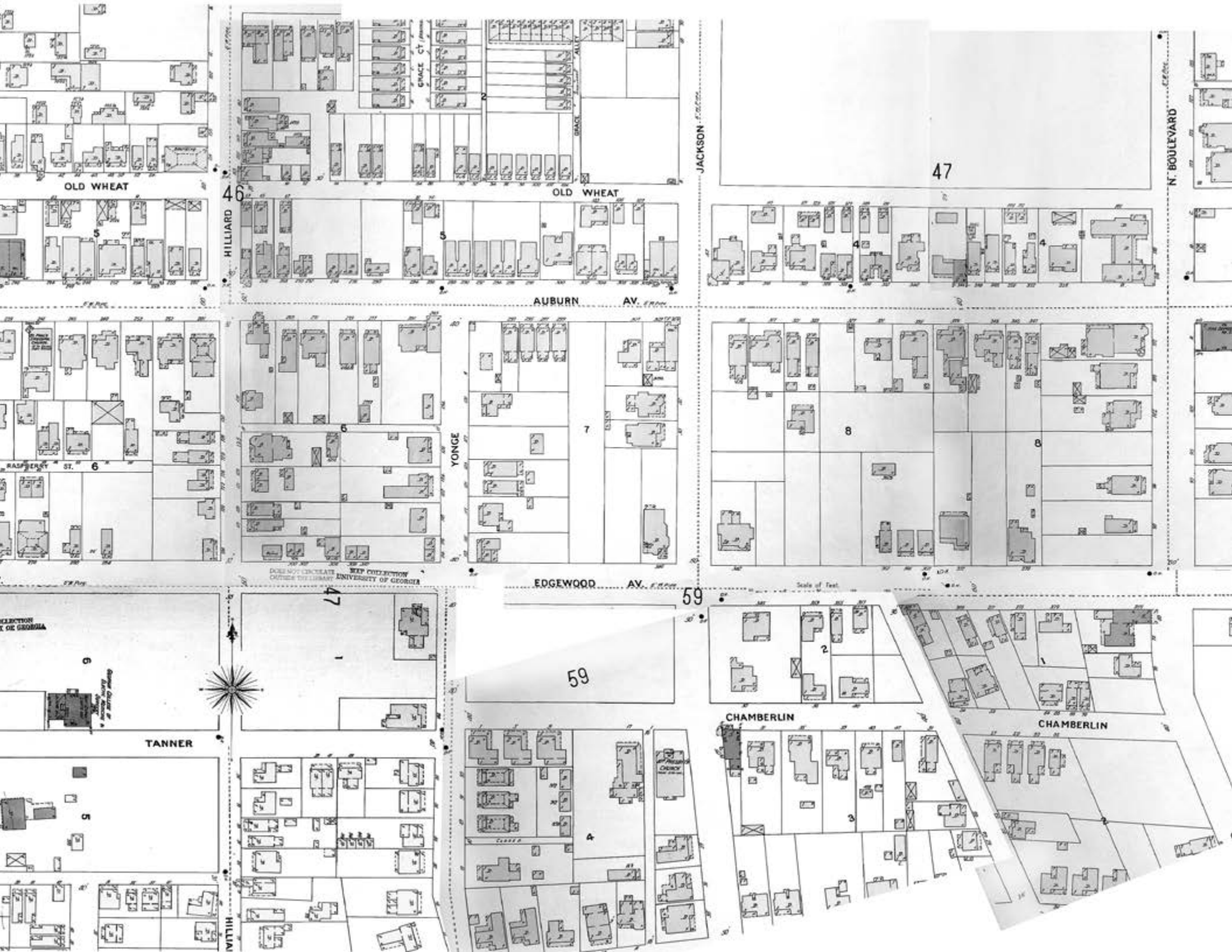
RECOMMEND

1. Appropriate locations for portable toilets should be considered in the design of public space improvements.
2. Light standards should be equipped with locked outlets of 110 and 220 volts.
3. Drinking fountains and standpipes should be equipped with lockable hose bibs.

*“Fire in the Fourth”
festival, photo credit the
Old Fourth Ward Business
Association.*



Developmental History





Developmental History

The growth of the Sweet Auburn Commercial District, today's Auburn and Edgewood Avenues Commercial Subarea, is more than just a story of the construction of streets and buildings; it is the story of the development of African American businesses in Atlanta and the South. It is also the story of the churches, social clubs and fraternal organizations that nurtured black entrepreneurs and statesmen. In recent years, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Landmark District has been recognized as a nationally significant district because of the contributions of African-American Atlantans to our nation's history. Prominent African Americans such as Benjamin J. Davis and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., have been associated with the businesses and institutions of this area. Their stories

Auburn Avenue looking east across Piedmont Avenue, 1963. Photographer standing roughly in front of the Atlanta Daily World building at 145 Auburn Ave., the Rucker Building (demolished 2001) is in the left foreground. Courtesy of Georgia State University, Lane Brothers Photographic Collection.

can be found elsewhere, including the National Park Service website at www.nps.gov/malu.

In 2011, the commercial portions of the district were identified by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as one of America's 11 most Endangered Historic Places and was acknowledged as a National Treasure. The Trust conducted a site visit and assessment in 2012, as part of its commitment to assist in the preservation and revitalization of one of the most significant historically African-American commercial areas in the South. The primary goal for the Sweet Auburn National Treasure campaign was to craft and implement a plan which would result in the revitalization of the neighborhood's commercial district. In 2012, a new organization named Sweet Auburn Works, Inc. (SAW) was created to lead the preservation-based economic resurgence in the Sweet Auburn commercial area.

This brief overview of the development of the Sweet Auburn Commercial District will concentrate on the physical development and its importance as one of the nation's first African American business districts.



Mule car on Auburn Avenue, before the electric streetcar came to Atlanta in 1891. Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress.

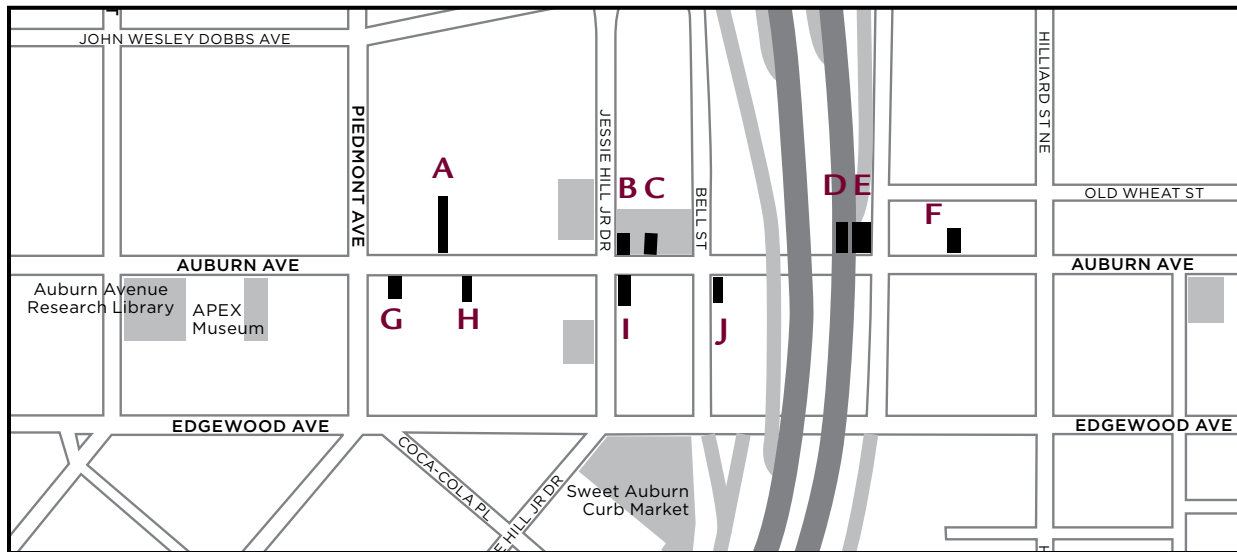
Information compiled by the National Park Service in “Sweet Auburn, The Thriving Hub of Black Atlanta 1900-1960,” shows the location and type of African American businesses operated along Auburn Avenue in 1900.

- A.** Tribune Publishing
- B.** Gate City Drug Store
- C.** W.C. Alston and S.B. Laster’s Coal, Wood and Grocery
- D.** Model Wimbish’s Bicycle Repair
- E.** Elbert Wimbish’s Grocery
- F.** Lucy Robinson’s Eating House
- G.** Model Laundry
- H.** Floyd Crumbly’s Grocery
- I.** Peter Eskridge’s Grocery
- J.** C.C. Cater’s

Wheat Street, as Auburn Avenue was called until 1893, was laid out in 1853, just six years after the railroad town of Atlanta was chartered. At that time, Atlanta’s black population was scattered throughout the city. The first African American property owner in Atlanta was Mary Combs, whose property was located at the intersection of Wheat and Peachtree Streets. The development of black businesses in the Auburn area had its roots in the self-help and assistance societies formed in the 1870s to aid a population recently released from enslavement and abandoned by the Federal government. These societies helped African American Atlantans secure mortgages and obtain insurance as well as organize schools and orphanages. They also assisted the community’s churches in providing for the spiritual needs of African American citizens.

According to the “History of Auburn Avenue,” prepared as part of a preservation plan in 1975, the subarea’s business and physical growth occurred in three major phases. During the first phase, from 1890 to approximately 1930, the Sweet Auburn commercial district emerged as the major center of African American entrepreneurship and society in Atlanta. Throughout most of the second phase—1930 to 1965—Auburn Avenue was at its zenith. In 1956, Fortune Magazine described Auburn Avenue as “the richest Negro street in the world,” while a 1958 urban renewal report identified the Avenue as the city’s major black commercial district. The third phase, from 1965 to 1990, was marked by a significant decline in the importance of the street as a business center and concurrent physical deterioration. From 1990 to present, the residential

area adjacent to the business center saw extensive rehabilitation of existing houses and construction of new housing. In addition there was an expansion of the presence of Georgia State University, in residential, classroom and administrative spaces.



1890-1930

The rise of the Sweet Auburn commercial district can be traced in part to the 1895 U.S. Supreme Court decision, *Plessy vs. Ferguson*, which ushered in segregation laws across the nation, and led to cities establishing areas for different races and disenfranchising people of color. According to the “History of Auburn Avenue,” city directories from the early 1900s showed increased segregation, a pattern accelerated by the 1906 Atlanta race riot. The neighborhood, which had been racially mixed before the 1906 riot, lost much of its European American population. In 1910, the census recorded three black citizens for every white person living in the area.

The shift in the racial composition of the neighborhood as well as its growing importance as a center of African American enterprise

resulted in an increase in the number of businesses along Auburn and Edgewood Avenues, with the vast majority owned and operated by blacks. City directories from the first decade of the 20th century show a significant concentration of businesses on Auburn Avenue between Courtland and Fort Streets as well as on Edgewood Avenue and the subarea’s cross streets. This trend continued over the next five decades.

All of the businesses needed buildings in which to operate. The city’s first black-owned office building was constructed in 1904. Owned by Henry Rucker, the three-story red brick building was constructed at a cost of \$5,000. It was located on Auburn Avenue at Piedmont Street and was one of the subarea’s most significant structures, until its demolition in 2001.

In 1912 and 1913, two of the subarea’s

The buildings that today are one parcel—142 Auburn Ave.—were (left to right): the Atlanta Life Insurance Company Annex (c.1936), Atlanta Life Insurance Main Building (c.1920), the Smith House (date unknown, demolished), and the Rucker Building (c.1904, demolished 2001). Photos c.1979, courtesy of the Library of Congress, Historic American Building Survey Collection.



The following poem published in the Atlanta Independent in 1914 describes an African American writer's response to the Odd Fellows Building:

At length this dream of strength and
beauty stood
An answer, argument and challenge bold—
A landmark and milestone for the race,
To which posterity shall point with pride.

—Wellborn Victor Jenkins



The terra-cotta and stone faces on the Odd Fellows Building reflect the black experience. 250 and 228-244 Auburn Avenue, Odd Fellows Building and Annex; 1912 and 1913. Photos c.1979, courtesy of the Library of Congress, Historic American Building Survey Collection.

The Odd Fellows Building, 250 Auburn Avenue, constructed in 1912. Photo c.1979, courtesy of the Library of Congress, Historic American Building Survey Collection.



most significant buildings were constructed on Auburn Avenue between Bell and Butler (now Jesse Hill, Jr.) Streets. The six-story Odd Fellows Building (1912) provided office space for many of black Atlanta's most important businesses, including the Atlanta State Savings Bank, the first chartered African American bank institution in Georgia. Located on top of the building was The Roof Garden, the site of many of black Atlanta's dances and social functions during the 1920s and 1930s.

In 1913, the Odd Fellows Auditorium building (also known as the Annex) opened. The two-story building housed businesses along the street and a 1,296-seat auditorium in the back. These businesses included the Yates and Milton Drug Store, Curry-Hall Haberdasher and the offices of Dr. Shaw, Atlanta's first African American optometrist. The building's auditorium became the center of black entertainment in Atlanta as soon as it opened.

In 1917, Atlanta's Great Fire destroyed 73 blocks of buildings on the city's east side. Fortunately, the commercial district was spared, although much of the surrounding residential area was destroyed. The fire led to new zoning laws in 1922 which accelerated the concentration of black businesses in the subarea. Designed to protect the city from future conflagrations, these laws were also used to institutionalize the racial and land-use patterns that had developed during the previous 30 years. For the first time, the 1922 laws zoned Auburn and Edgewood Avenues as commercial areas.

A major portion of the surrounding residential area was zoned R-2, or "a colored district."

In 1920, another of the district's prominent buildings, the Butler Street YMCA, was constructed. The Butler Street "Y" has played a central role in encouraging and guiding the development of black businesses and culture since its founding and served as a meeting place for leaders of the Civil Rights Movement. The five-story building, located on Butler Street (now Jesse Hill, Jr.) between Auburn and Edgewood Avenues, contributes significantly to the architectural heritage of the district

The building vacated for the new Butler Street Y was at 148 Auburn Avenue, next to the Rucker Building and it became the home of the Atlanta Life Insurance Company, founded

The Butler Street YMCA at 24 Butler St. Built in 1920, a later renovation included the installation of modern windows.



The Butler Street YMCA in Atlanta, c.1975. Photo courtesy of Archives Division, Auburn Avenue Research Library on African American Culture and History, Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System. Ann States Collection



Prince Hall Masonic Lodge, 330 Auburn Avenue. Built in 1940. Served as headquarters of the SCLC in the 1960s and 70s. Photo c.1955, courtesy of Georgia State University, Lane Brothers Photographic Collection.

North front facade of Herndon & Atlanta Life Building, 229-243 Auburn Ave. For years the Herndon Building was a major black office complex in Atlanta, originally housing retail shops, medical and dental offices, the headquarters for the Atlanta Urban League, the Atlanta School of Social Work, and a 34-room hotel. Completed in 1924, it was very much a personal extension of businessman Alonzo Herndon. He used found materials and day labor, designed, financed and supervised the building's construction daily. In this sense, the Herndon Building was a monument to individual black entrepreneurial achievement. Photo and text courtesy of the Library of Congress, Historic American Building Survey Collection, c.1979.

The building was significantly damaged in a tornado in 2008 and was later demolished.

by Alonzo Herndon in 1905. A new classical front was constructed on the building and in 1934 an Annex was added to accommodate the thriving business. The Herndon Building was constructed in 1924 on Auburn Avenue across from the Odd Fellows Building and Auditorium. Named after Norris B. Herndon, second president and son of the founder of the Atlanta Life Insurance Company in the early 1900s, the Herndon Building was one of the most imposing edifices in the subarea. Businesses and organizations housed in this building over the years have included: The Savoy Hotel, Galanti Brothers Delicatessen, the Atlanta Office of the National Urban League and the offices of many of Atlanta's African American physicians.



In 1925, the Citizen's Trust Company Bank was purchased from the Standard Life Insurance Company by three prominent black businessmen, Lorimer D. Milton, Clayton R. Yates and Jesse B. Blayton. Located at 210 Auburn Avenue for many years, the bank was the area's first source of convenient financing for businesses and developers. For the next 50 years, it remained the major source of financing for businesses in the area.

1931-1965

By the 1930s, the Auburn and Edgewood Avenues Commercial Subarea had become Atlanta's major African American business center. With hundreds of businesses catering to

the needs of black Atlantans, the district prospered—so much so that John Wesley Dobbs, head of the fraternal organization Prince Hall Masonic Lodge of Georgia for 30 years, nicknamed the district “Sweet Auburn” because “it is the money invested in Auburn Avenue that... makes the street so sweet.”

Between 1920 and 1940, Atlanta's population grew from 200,000 to more than 302,000; the African American population alone doubled, from 51,000 to more than 104,000. Official segregation

policies and Sweet Auburn's proximity to Atlanta's central business district limited the ability of the district to expand and absorb the city's growing African American population. Thus, a second black enterprise center began to emerge around Atlanta University on the west side of the city. While this commercial area created an alternate location for black businesses, the growing African American population and the segregation laws ensured Sweet Auburn's position as the city's premier black business center until the mid-1960s.

In 1940, the Prince Hall Masonic Building was erected at 330 Auburn Avenue, with an addition built in 1955. The Prince Hall Masonic Building not only housed the Masons, it also served as the headquarters of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in the 1960s and 1970s. WERD, the nation's first black radio station, was also located in the building.

In addition to the fraternal organizations of the Prince Hall Masons and the Odd Fellows, the subarea boasted numerous other organizations that supported the black business community, such as the Elks. The 1945 city directory lists 27 of these organizations on Auburn Avenue, many of which had their headquarters in the Prince Hall Masonic Building.

During the 1940s and 1950s, entertainment businesses flourished in the subarea. The Top Hat Club Building, located at 186 1/2 Auburn Avenue, displayed elaborate Egyptian decor. Renamed the Royal Peacock Lounge by a subsequent owner, the Top Hat Club featured

the most prominent African American entertainers of the day. Another popular night spot during the forties was Club Poinciana, located at 145 Auburn Avenue, now known as the Atlanta Daily World building. Other popular establishments such as the "81" and "91" Clubs, the Famous Door Club and the Silver Streak Grill, were located in the subarea.

Throughout the thirties and forties, Sweet Auburn also contained many thriving restaurants. The 1935 city directory lists 15 restaurants, while the 1945 edition lists 25. Located at 312 Auburn Avenue, Ma Sutton's, known for its family-style meals, was one of the most popular. These restaurants weren't just good places to eat; they also functioned as informal gathering spots for residents and business people.

Although business activity in the subarea continued to prosper during the 1950s, signs of decline were beginning to appear. The surrounding neighborhood was changing from single-family residences to apartment dwellings, as many of the area's more prominent citizens moved to newer neighborhoods that were open to blacks. In 1954, a portion of the area was rezoned for light industrial use, prompting other families to move. And, in the east end of the district—the location of some of

The Lochner Plan was an expressway study done in 1948 that proposed highways that would have divided the MLK Landmark District horizontally, the north from the south as seen by the black dotted line here in this 1952 illustration. However, the eastern arm was later moved north a few blocks and I-75/85 ultimately divided east from the west, physically splitting the Auburn and Edgewood commercial subarea in half. Courtesy of the Planning Atlanta Collection, Georgia State University Library.





The Atlanta Daily World Building (145 Auburn Avenue) was rehabilitated in 2013. The Atlanta Daily World was a daily newspaper started by W.A. Scott and housed in this building along with several other Auburn Avenue businesses and organizations.



Sweet Auburn's finest homes—the zoning was changed from residential to commercial, leading to the demolition of some houses and the conversion of others to commercial uses.

In 1956, Atlanta joined the national trend and began to launch urban renewal programs. As in other cities, areas with little power to resist were often labeled “blighted” and targeted for demolition to make way for new highway systems. Sweet Auburn was chosen as one of the city's first project areas for a new expressway (now I-75/85) that would connect downtown Atlanta to its growing suburbs. The right-of-way for the expressway cut the commercial district in two. The western sector, from Courtland to Bell Streets, was envisioned as office buildings, high-rise apartments and hotels, while the eastern sector, from Fort Street to Boulevard, was designated for subsidized housing, a retail shopping center, support facilities such as schools and parks and a light industrial zone. Thus, the Auburn and Edgewood Avenues Commercial Subarea of the past was slated to have its identity disappear, with the west side becoming part of downtown

Atlanta and the east side a commercial area serving the immediate residential population.

Completed in the early 1960s, the I-75/85 connector physically and culturally divided the subarea. In addition, more than 200 acres in the western sector were cleared, making way for the construction of isolated buildings unrelated to the historic character of the subarea. In the eastern sector, new subsidized housing was built, including Wheat Street Gardens, the first Federal Housing Administration (FHA) project in the nation developed by an African American church and constructed by a black construction firm.

While the urban renewal project was being developed, the project's prime contractor, Robert and Company, commissioned a marketability study. Released in 1958, the study assumed that the area would continue to be “the main center of Negro business firms, office buildings, churches and entertainment facilities.” Oddly, the report also recommended that the commercial district include the entire area from Courtland in the west to Boulevard in the east, a difficult feat given the disruption caused by the connector. This study, prepared by Hammer and Associates, contained a number of important concepts, many of which today remain important. Among the report's central concepts are: 1) the historic and economic importance of the business district; 2) the importance of treating the entire length of the business district as a

unit; and 3) the need to create new retail and business opportunities in the area.

In common with most urban renewal projects of the 1950s and 1960s, only a portion of the overall development was ever accomplished. By the time the project was closed out in 1971, the physical changes resulting from the expressway and clearances were complete. On the other hand, stabilization and improvement of the neighborhood and the local businesses were not. This failure was due partly to the enormous changes that occurred in the American South during the 1960s and 1970s.



Martin Luther King, Jr. Birth Home, 501 Auburn Avenue; built in 1895.

1965 – 1990

The Civil Rights movement of the 1960s, the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the demographic changes that took place in Atlanta during the 1970s all contributed to the rapid decline of the Sweet Auburn commercial district. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., one of the leaders of the Civil Rights movement, is closely associated with Auburn Avenue. His birth home is located at 501 Auburn Avenue, where he and his family lived until he was 12 years old. The historic Ebenezer Baptist Church, located at 407 Auburn Avenue, was Dr. King's spiritual home where, during his childhood, he observed his maternal grandfather and his father preach, and where he served as pastor for many years.

The 1964 Civil Rights Act opened up new economic and locational options for the traditional businesses in the area. No longer confined by zoning to the "Negro commercial district," African American businesses began to move into formerly white-only business areas. Many of the African American support organizations formed during the segregation era also moved or disappeared. With better housing available in other sections of the city and the growth of subsidized housing in the subarea and surrounding neighborhood, much of the remaining middle-class population left the neighborhood. In addition, the racial composition of Atlanta shifted. In 1960, 38% of its

The tombs of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King are located in the courtyard of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change.





The rehabilitation and opening of the Royal Peacock in 1983 and the Oddfellows building in the late 1980s were just a few of the extensive Sweet Auburn Revitalization efforts by individuals in the 1980s and 1990s. Photos courtesy of the Atlanta Journal-Constitution Collection, Georgia State University Library.

citizens were African American; in 1970, 51%; and by 1980, nearly 60% of the city's population was African American.

These fundamental changes had a marked effect on the commercial district. By the late 1960s, vacancies in the subarea's buildings began to rise. As rental incomes decreased, landlords found it increasingly difficult to maintain and improve their buildings. The impact of the expressway, dividing the subarea in half, took firm hold. Many Atlantans, regardless of race, began to see the area as a problem. Its physical deterioration was giving rise to an unsavory reputation and people no longer felt comfortable shopping or working in the subarea.

At the same time, however, there was a growing recognition of the importance of Auburn Avenue to the history and culture of Atlanta and the nation. In 1975, a preservation plan prepared for the City of Atlanta by Drs. Blackwell, Lyon and Bacote noted that "the preservation of buildings [in the Sweet Auburn commercial district] depends upon the economic revitalization of the area." The report also stated that any urban design plans and future development "should: 1) recognize the existence of a unique and historic community; 2) make the identity

of the community visible; and 3) use the history as a foundation for future development."

The Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site was created by Congress in 1980 to preserve, protect and interpret for the benefit, inspiration and education of present and future generations the places where Martin Luther King, Jr. was born, where he lived, worked, and worshiped, and where he is buried, while also interpreting the life experiences and significance of one of the most influential African Americans in the 20th century.

In the late 1980s, the preservation and rehabilitation of buildings began. In 1989, two developers substantially rehabilitated the Odd Fellows Building and Annex. The 1912 building will continue to be used for offices, while the 1913 annex provides retail and office space.

The Historic Facade Program, administered by the Atlanta Urban Design Commission (AUDC) and the Atlanta Economic Development Corporation (now Invest Atlanta), offered interest-free loans and free architectural services to property owners for the rehabilitation of building facades. By 1991, eleven buildings in the Auburn area (one of the three areas designated by the City to participate in the program) had received assistance from the Historic Facade Program.

1990 TO PRESENT

While the Historic District Development Corporation was established in 1980, residential construction and rehabilitation took place in the 1990s on a scale not seen for several decades. Along the commercial corridors, a number of facades were improved under the Historic Façade Program; a large student housing building was constructed near Georgia State University along Edgewood Avenue, a forerunner of continued expansion of the university; Grady Hospital built a medical outbuilding at the intersection of Edgewood Avenue and Piedmont

Avenue; and, toward the end of the decade, the nearby Studioplex became a prototype for restoration and adaptive reuse in the district.

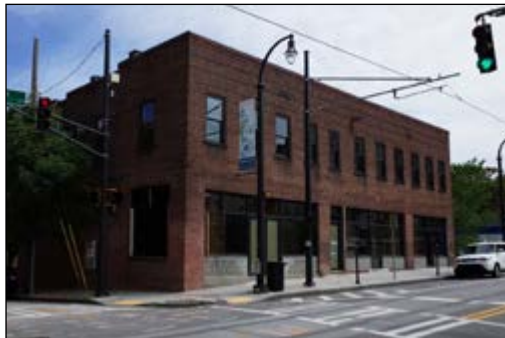
In the 2000s, additional redevelopment began to appear. Change came in the form of new businesses, restoration, new construction, and demolitions. Dynamic Metals, a mix of retail and residential space project was started in 2004. Restoration of neighborhood historic buildings also began. This included the The Wigwam Apartments and the First Congregational Church, which also encompassed the



The coming 1996 Olympics spurred renewed focus on the revitalization of “Sweet Auburn” as seen in this illustration from the Corporation for Olympic Development in Atlanta (CODA)’s Olympic Plans. Image courtesy of Georgia State University Library, Planning Atlanta Collection.



The Downtown Façade Improvement Grant Program has been spurring the revitalization of storefronts and buildings in the Auburn and Edgewood Avenues Commercial Subarea since 2014.



340 Auburn Avenue was rehabilitated using a facade improvement grant in 2016.

construction of a new addition. More recently, restoration of the Atlanta Daily World Building has been completed and work is being planned for the Haverty Building and YMCA Boys Branch. Invest Atlanta has initiated a façade improvement program in the neighborhood, many along Edgewood Avenue. New construction is also beginning. The largest and most recent new construction in the district is the City Walk building, taking up nearly the entire south side of Auburn Avenue between Piedmont Avenue and Jesse Hill Jr. Drive. While several buildings were removed for this apartment building, three historic buildings were incorporated into the design. Even more recently, The Auburn Avenue Research Library has completed an expansion.

In the same time frame, historic buildings were lost in the subarea as well. In 2001, the Rucker Building collapsed as a result of a car accident. In 2008, a tornado passed through the district, resulting in damage to multiple buildings and the loss of the long vacant Herndon Building at the intersection of Auburn Avenue and Jesse Hill Jr. Drive. An adjacent service station that had housed a police precinct was demolished shortly thereafter as well.

Underlying all of these physical changes are core changes to the usage in the subarea. Georgia State University, long a neighbor, has expanded, requiring student housing, classroom and administrative buildings. Throughout the City, a trend toward urban live, work and play neighborhoods and development of surrounding neighborhoods is creating a demand for new neighborhood amenities such as restaurants, retail, office space and more. Through Invest Atlanta's Downtown Façade Improvement Grant program, funding was allocated for façade improvement work for a number of buildings in the district. Façade improvement awards were made in the fall of 2014. As of 2017, façade improvement projects were completed on 9 buildings in the district. All of this growth increases the transportation needs of the neighborhood. Transportation in the subarea will be supported by the Atlanta Streetcar, implemented in late 2014, and further development of the Atlanta Beltline with transit. The combined forces of new residents, new businesses and new transportation options is expected to have a positive influence on the neighborhood for the foreseeable future.

Appendices

Glossary

Bond (brick or other masonry): The regular arrangement of masonry units into a pattern which increases the strength of a wall and enhances the appearance of a building.

Brick course: A continuous, horizontal, single layer of similarly-sized units, usually in a wall.

Bulkhead: Portion of the storefront that forms the base of one or more display windows.

Came: A soft metal dividing strip between adjacent pieces of glass in leaded or stained glass windows.

Color rendition: Reflects true color of object.

Composition (of material): Chemicals and/or elements that make up a material.

Corbel/corbeling: Overlapping arrangement of brick or stone projecting in steps from the vertical face of a wall.

Cornice: Projecting element at the top of a wall.

Drip Cap: A horizontal molding placed over exterior door or window frames to divert rainwater.

Efflorescence: A crystalline deposit of salts on the surface of concrete, brick, stucco, or natural stone surfaces; occurring when water is present on or in the masonry surface.

Façade: The exterior of a building, usually the front.

Fascia: Horizontal band on the front of a canopy, also the horizontal band along the front of eaves.

Gold leaf: Very thin sheet of gold.

In-situ: In place.

Kiosk: A small structure usually used to provide information in a public space.

Light (windows): a pane of glass within a window.

Light standard: Pole, usually made of metal, concrete or sometimes preserved wood, used for street lighting.

Luminaire: Lighting unit which usually consists of a bulb and reflector, and sometimes shielding.

Massing (of building): Overall architectural composition of building created by major elements such as towers, bays, walls and windows.

Neckdown: an angled narrowing of the roadway by a curb extension at intersections, also called a bulb-out or bump-out.

Night sky pollution: Excessive, misdirected, or obtrusive artificial illumination. Night sky or light pollution washes out starlight in the night sky and wastes energy.

Programmed lighting: Lighting controlled to blink or flash at set intervals, or to follow a pre-determined schedule.

Proportion (of building): Relative size of one building as compared to another or the parts of a building to each other.

Return (of awning): Side of an awning, usually triangular in shape.

Rhythm (of building): Expression of architectural composition, usually established by placement of windows and doors.

Scale: Relative size of architectural element or building, usually in relation to a person.

Sharrows: Road markings used to indicate a shared lane environment for bicycles and automobiles.

Signboard: Area above storefront used to attach a business sign.

Texture (of material): Visual and/or tactile smoothness or roughness.

Tie-rods (of canopy): Structural elements, usually angled, which support a canopy attached to a building facade.

Transom: Window(s) located above display window or entry door.

Transom light: The pane of glass within a transom above a display window or entry door.

Valance (of awning): The short piece of fabric hanging down on the front portion of an awning or canopy.

Window frame: Fixed frame of a full window consisting of two jambs (vertical sides), a head (top), and a sill (bottom).

Window light: Individual pane of glass. In double-hung sash, one-over-one window lights consist of a single piece of glass in each sash.

Window sash: The frame in which panes of glass are set, the sash is usually the moveable part of a window (double-hung windows have two sashes, one over the other)

Spalling: A condition resulting from water entering brick, concrete or natural stone and forcing the surface to peel, pop out or flake off; can ultimately cause crumbling and destruction of a structure.

Local Resources

Many changes in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Landmark District must be approved by the Atlanta Urban Design Commission, including:

- Demolition or moving of existing buildings;
- Design of new construction, additions, accessory buildings, or parking facilities;
- Certain changes in the use of buildings;
- Variances, and;
- Design of alterations or changes to the exterior of buildings, such as work on windows, storefronts, walls, roofs, porches, foundations, signage, security grilles, awnings, planters, trash/recycling receptacles, lighting, walls and fences.

In most cases, you will need a permit from the Bureau of Buildings and a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Urban Design Commission. For this reason, it is always best to contact the Urban Design Commission at 404-330-6145 before you begin work in order to make the best use of your time and money.

City of Atlanta Department of City Planning

Office of Design *Urban Design Commission*

55 Trinity Ave. SW
Suite 3400
Atlanta, GA 30335-0331
(404) 330-6145

Doug Young, Executive Director, AUDC
dyoung@atlantaga.gov

In addition to the Urban Design Commission, there are a number of other city and neighborhood resources that can aid you in your work.

Atlanta Development Authority *Invest Atlanta*

133 Peachtree Street NE, Suite 2900
Atlanta, GA 30303
(404) 880-4100

As the economic development agency for the City of Atlanta, Invest Atlanta's economic tools include revolving loan funds, housing financing, tax credits, small business loan funds, grants for startups and entrepreneurs, and other programs to support neighborhood revitalization/investment and innovation/entrepreneurship.

Georgia Department of Natural Resources

Historic Preservation Division *State Department of Historic Preservation*

Jewett Center for Historic Preservation
2610 GA Hwy 155 SW
Stockbridge, GA 30281
(770) 389-7848

William Hover, Section Chief and Deputy
State Historic Preservation Officer
william.hover@dnr.ga.gov

FEDERAL TAX CREDIT PROGRAM

If a property is listed on the National Register, the owner or long-term lessee of an income-producing property is entitled to an investment tax credit of up to 20% of the qualified rehabilitation expenses of a substantial rehabilitation performed in accordance with the U. S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

The Historic Preservation Division provides information on tax incentives available for owners of a historic property who carry out a substantial rehabilitation: www.georgiashpo.org/incentives/tax

STATE TAX INCENTIVES

The Georgia Preferential Property Tax Assessment Program for Rehabilitated Historic Property allows eligible participants to apply for an 8 1/2 -year property tax assessment freeze. The Georgia Preferential Property *Tax Assessment Program Fact Sheet* provides an overview of the state tax abatement program and those properties that may be eligible to apply for this incentive.

The Georgia State Income Tax Credit Program for Rehabilitated Historic Property allows eligible participants to apply for a state income tax credit equaling 25% of qualifying rehabilitation expenses capped at \$100,000 for personal, residential properties, and \$300,000 for income-producing properties. The Georgia State Income *Tax Credit Program Fact Sheet* provides an overview of the state income tax credit program and those properties that may be eligible to apply for this incentive.

Easements Atlanta

Easements Atlanta

327 St. Paul Ave. SE
Atlanta, GA 30312
(404) 688-3353 x16

Wright Dempsey, Director
director@easementsatlanta.org

Easements Atlanta's, created in 1984, accepts qualified historic preservation easement donations of certified historic and cultural properties within metropolitan Atlanta, and in turn offers perpetual stewardship and potential tax incentives for property owners.

Historic District Development Corporation

HDDC

522 Auburn Ave. NE
Atlanta, Georgia, 30312
(404) 215-9095

info@hddc.net

The Historic District Development Corporation (HDDC), established in 1980, is a non-profit community development corporation whose mission is to facilitate the preservation,

revitalization and non-displacement of residents in the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic District.

Sweet Auburn Works

SAW

522 Auburn Ave.
Atlanta GA 30312
(470) 240-4909

info@sweetauburnworks.com

Sweet Auburn Works was established in 2013 to represent the institutions, property owners, business owners and residents of the Historic Sweet Auburn district, one of Atlanta's most historically significant neighborhoods. Sweet Auburn Works initiates and supports economic development initiatives and projects that promote commerce, tourism and the relentless preservation of historic places within the Sweet Auburn neighborhood, one of Atlanta's most historically significant neighborhoods.

Image Sources

The Lane Brothers Commercial Photographers Photographic Collection

Online: *Lane Brother Photographs*

The Lane Brothers Commercial Photographers Photographic Collection consists of about 258,100 (196,800 4x5 inch and 61,300 2 1/2 inch) acetate negatives which are housed in 43,486 envelopes. The collection spans the years 1920 to 1976 with the bulk of the negatives dating from 1939 to 1975. Some of the images are copy negatives of photographs which date as early as 1864.

Atlanta Journal-Constitution Photograph Collection

Online: *Atlanta Journal-Constitution Photographs*

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution Photograph Collection contains over five million images from the newspaper's photo morgue. The bulk of these images come from the 1950s-1980s, but the collection also includes images that appeared in the Atlanta Journal, the Atlanta Constitution, and many of the smaller newspapers they absorbed over the years.

Planning Atlanta—A New City in the Making, 1930s–1990s

Online: *Planning Atlanta Collection*

Planning Atlanta: A New City in the Making, 1930s – 1990s is a digital collection of material related to city planning and urban development in Atlanta. The collection consists of city planning maps, city planning publications, demographic data, photographs depicting planning activities, oral histories, and aerial photographs. Much of the Planning Atlanta material was created by the City of Atlanta, the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), and the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. Additionally, items from other agencies and entities, such as the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA), are included.

The 1979 “Sweet Auburn” Project: Historic American Building Survey Collection (HABS)

Online: *1979 “Sweet Auburn” Project*

The documentation of the Sweet Auburn Historic District was completed by the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1979-1981 in order to assist in revitalization efforts. Field teams comprehensively recorded the Odd Fellows Building & Auditorium, the Hern-don Building, and a number of commercial structures along a four block area of Auburn Avenue. This pilot project was under the direction of the survey's chief, John Poppliers and Kenneth L. Anderson, principal architect. Technical Preservation Services provided a staff historian, Dan Durett, to coordinate the project.

Auburn and Edgewood Avenues
Commercial Subarea Design Guidelines

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