PIEDMONT HEIGHTS

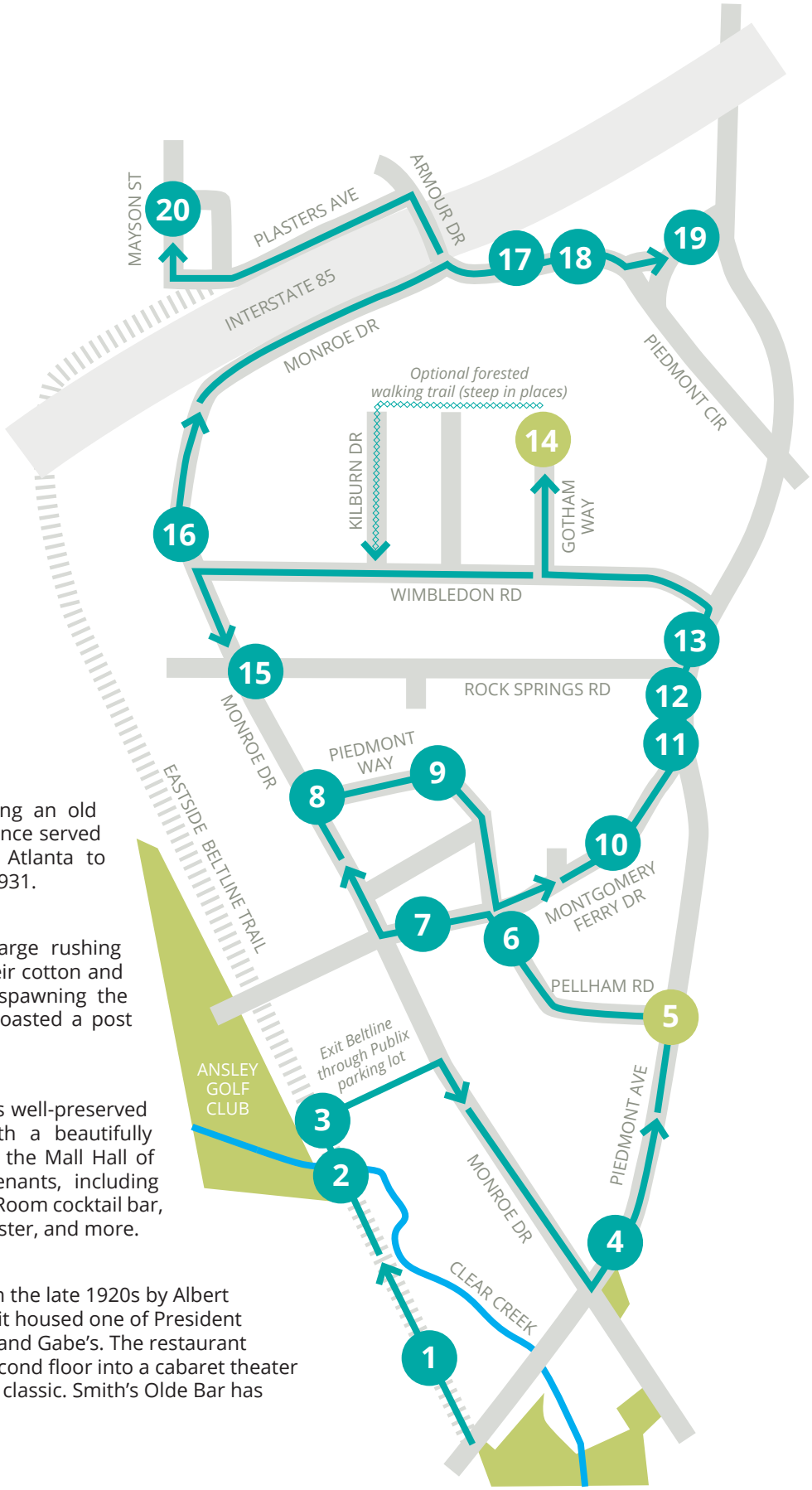
Neighborhood Walking Tour

Welcome to Piedmont Heights, a "Small Town in a Big City."

Piedmont Heights is Atlanta's oldest community, settled by Benjamin Plaster in 1822. Today, this "Small Town in a Big City" is home to over 3,000 residents and over 100 businesses. We invite you to take a stroll through its past, present, and future!

This walking tour is approximately 4 miles long. You can split it up into smaller routes by enjoying a bite at one of our locally-owned restaurants!

For more about Piedmont Heights' history and these points of interest, visit **www.PiedmontHeights.org/Walk**



1 Atlanta Beltline & Airline Belle

The Atlanta BeltLine circles the city along an old railroad corridor. This particular section once served the Airline Belle commuter train from Atlanta to Toccoa in north Georgia from 1879 until 1931.

2 Walker's Mill

Walker's Mill on Clear Creek, once a large rushing stream, is where local farmers ginned their cotton and ground their grain in the early 1800s, spawning the unincorporated town of Easton, which boasted a post office and a depot for the Airline Belle.

3 Ansley Mall

Built in 1964 in a former cow pasture, this well-preserved example of an early open-air mall with a beautifully landscaped central garden is featured in the Mall Hall of Fame. This complex has seen many tenants, including Woolworth's, a mini-cinema, the Matador Room cocktail bar, Ansley Florist, Piccadilly cafeteria, Blockbuster, and more.

4 Morningside Shopping Center

Atlanta's very first shopping center, built in the late 1920s by Albert Bailey, originally had eleven stores. Later, it housed one of President Jimmy Carter's favorite restaurants, Gene and Gabe's. The restaurant transformed the Masonic Lodge on the second floor into a cabaret theater where "Della's Diner" became a 1980s cult classic. Smith's Olde Bar has been a neighborhood staple since 1993.

5 Morningside Baptist Church

Situated on the second-largest tract of land in the neighborhood, the church was designed by Thomas W. Gardner. Completed in 1951, the church is noted for its tall steeple and spire, visible from downtown Atlanta. Encompassing the church are roughly seven acres of largely undisturbed forest.

6 Kathleen the Cow - 566 Pelham Rd.

Kathleen the Cow moved to Piedmont Heights on June 21, 2013, as a surprise gift for resident Donna Gensler who grew up on a dairy farm and learned to love cows. Kathleen has a "sister," Priscilla, who lives nearby in Morningside.

7 Liddell House - 464 Montgomery Ferry Rd.

Atlanta's second-oldest house, built in the 1860s by James McAlpin Liddell on 150 acres of farmland, is a classic antebellum farmhouse with a porte-cochère, clapboard siding, and slate roof. It features much of its original ornamentation, including fireplace mantels, door knobs, hand-blown glass window panes, and heart-pine flooring with horseshoe nails.

8 Fallout Shelter - 1799 Monroe Dr.

Built in 1960 in the backyard at 1799 Monroe Drive, the nine-foot-by-nine-foot underground metal box was for protection from atomic bomb radiation. No longer accessible, it contained a toilet, four cots, electricity, and two fresh air vents.

9 Creek on Piedmont Way

This unnamed brook, one of several still flowing through the neighborhood, is a charming feature in the back yards of several Piedmont Heights homes.

10 Council Bluff

This knoll, the highest elevation in Atlanta, was called Council Bluff by the local Native American tribes who used it as a neutral meeting ground.

11 Rock Spring Presbyterian Church

The church's congregation was formed in 1870 in a log building. Today's house of worship, built in 1923, was designed by English architect Charles Hopson using granite quarried on nearby Cheshire Creek. Its Tudor Revival style with half-timbering and stucco is reminiscent of 16th-century England. The church is listed on the National Register of Historic places.

12 Rock Spring Cemetery

On a plot donated by Daniel Liddell Plaster in 1874, this graveyard is the final resting place of some of Atlanta's founding families, including the Cheshires, Liddells, Pharrs, and Plasters.

13 Two Minit "Gorilla" Car Wash

This landmark establishment has endured since opening in 1954. Original owner Howard Kinnon sold it to his employee Bobby Coleman, who then sold it to his son Paul, the current owner. The gorilla mascot, named George by a customer shortly after arriving in the late 1970s, is much beloved by customers. He's weathered a lot of storms and even survived a hot water heater explosion.

14 Gotham Way Park & Creeks

This private park is owned by the Piedmont Heights Civic Association. The 2.5-acre site was gifted to the neighborhood by Stein Printing Company in 1957 to serve as a buffer between the existing homes and a new printing plant on Monroe Drive. Originally called Monroe Park, it was officially dedicated as Gotham Way Park in 1961. There are two unnamed creeks in the park, one in a deep swale off the right side of the entry and another now piped under the park but partially visible just left of the entry.

15 Monroe House - 1845 Monroe Dr.

William Monroe, Sr. built this home in 1951 for his daughter, Evelyn, and her family. Today it is subdivided into eight apartments.

16 Monroe Gardens

In 1925, Landscape Architect William Monroe, Sr. bought 15 acres on then North Boulevard at Rock Springs Road, built a home, and established a landscaping business. He transformed the surrounding property into a nursery where he grew plants for his clients. He built a large lodge, fishing pond, waterfall, wishing well, and picnic areas to demonstrate his skills and entertain clients. The grounds were popular for weddings and other social gatherings. Monroe designed and installed hundreds of gardens—private, public, and commercial throughout the Southeast, including gardens at Emory University, the Coca-Cola headquarters, and Chastain Park. North Boulevard was renamed Monroe Drive in his honor. Today, townhomes occupy the site, but you can still visit the huge chimney from the lodge, chapel, and an above-ground bomb shelter from the 1950s.

17 Henri Jova Bank Building

"Atlanta's Finest All 'Round Bank" opened for business in the early 1960s as a branch of the Trust Company Bank. The futuristic round building was designed by Atlanta architect Henri Jova, who also designed the Carter Center and Colony Square. The bank's interiors were spectacular, with marble finishes and avant-garde furnishings from Eero Sarinen for Knoll and Herman Miller. The building is on the National Register of Historic Places.

18 Atlanta Fire-Rescue Station #29

From this station, our firefighters have been protecting us since 1958. This historic building, designed by Fuller & Becket Architects, is a classic example of post-war, modern architecture featuring clean, no-frills lines and an efficient floor plan. Built without air conditioning, the iron pipe grilles in front were originally covered with vines to provide shade.

19 Gold Tooth John Historical Marker

This historical marker commemorates Gold Tooth John, handyman for the Edwin Plaster family who were among the area's first settlers. The stone steps were built by Gold Tooth John and are the site's only remaining relic of the Plaster home.

20 Mayson Chapel Baptist Church

This house of worship, once part of the William Plaster plantation, is home to an African-American congregation. Founded in 1909 by Reverend George Gladson to serve the Armour Community, the building also doubled as a school for African-American children during the 1930s.