

MIDTOWN Alliance

Progress Report

2024



2022



Cover image: The Commercial Row Commons launch party drew attendance from 300+ people.
Inside Cover image: Catenary overhead public art installation at Commercial Row Commons featuring swallows made by Cracking Art.

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A look at some of the projects, partnerships and success stories that defined the past year in Midtown Atlanta.



Six new developments opened their doors in Midtown in 2022. In North Midtown, the mixed-use Midtown Union project opened in late-2022 with office space, a hotel and residential offerings.



Introduction

When it comes to citybuilding, it's understood that the environment we are operating in today is different than it was just a few years ago. Midtown Alliance continues to focus on making the district more engaging and compelling - from infrastructure to social cohesion.

I have been involved in guiding Midtown Alliance's work for two decades. And in my first year as Midtown Alliance Board Chair, I have come to more fully understand the hard work that goes into moving this urban district and our city forward. We can't get there without allied partners and a dedicated staff that delivers. The pages in this report summarize just some of the key accomplishments in Midtown that everyone should feel proud about. Read about them and let's all get excited about the important work we will do together in the year ahead.

Mary Pat Matheson
Midtown Alliance Board Chair
President and CEO, Atlanta Botanical Garden

District Highlights

The Midtown skyline continues to change rapidly.

- During 2022, the **City of Atlanta** garnered #1 national rankings as a quality destination. The accolades showed up across a range of topics: *Money* magazine ranked Atlanta the best place to live in the U.S. in 2022. *The Economist* named Atlanta America's Most Livable City. Atlanta was also named America's #1 City for Gen Z (*Commercial Café*) and the top city for creative talent (*Workamajig*).



- **Intown Atlanta** led the nation in new apartments delivered over the past 10 years according to Yardi Matrix data compiled by *StorageCafe*, and was ranked among the top cities for attracting real estate investment as well as renters. Atlanta also ranked among the top markets nationally for tech job openings in 2022. And the State of Georgia again ranked Number One for business according to *Area Development* magazine, continuing a streak of nine consecutive years in the top spot.
- **Midtown** led all submarkets in the Atlanta region on new office supply delivered (1.2M SF), overall net office absorption (750K SF) and rental rates per SF (\$42.41). Midtown ended 2022 with a greater amount of office space leased than vacated than all of the suburban Atlanta markets combined. *Source: Atlanta Business Chronicle (bizjournals.com)*
- **Since the beginning of 2022**, development activity in the rapidly-densifying 1.2 square mile Midtown district has been on a tear. Between delivered projects and those under construction, some 2.3M SF of office, 6,300 residential units, 455 hotel rooms and 206K SF of retail space are being introduced into the district, totalling a combined \$4.6B of new investment.



The staff and volunteer members of the **Midtown Development Review Committee** reviewed five major new projects during 2022.



See the latest development summary in our [Resource Center](#)



Midtown Alliance delivered 40K SF of publicly-accessible open space improvements in the district, creating new and enhanced places for people to spend time enjoying the district.



Our team produced **more than 25 public events** over the course of the year, from live music performances to a special event for canine companions celebrating Midtown's newest dog park.

Capital Projects and Transportation

Creating an exceptional urban experience.

Among the 40K+ SF in combined parks and plaza improvements delivered in 2022:



The Commercial Row Commons project created expanded public space with seating, landscaping and art, provided safer crossings for people on foot and fixed the poorly aligned intersection condition at Peachtree Street and Peachtree Place.



Improvements and enhancements to the **Arts District Plaza** at Peachtree and 15th Streets included new landscaping, tables and seating, along with performance space.



The revitalized 10th Street Park opened this fall, creating new options for pet owners and families to enjoy outdoor recreation. This project was made possible with a commitment from the **Dewberry Foundation**.



New parklets at Spring Street between Peachtree Place and 8th Street made creative use of **six on-street parking spaces** that were no longer accessible behind the barrier-separated southbound bike lane.



Midtown Alliance completed the first wave of enhancements at the **North Avenue MARTA station plaza** including repairing low granite walls, installing and painting benches, building new box planters to replace the empty tree wells, updated landscaping and lighting and painting site furnishings (bollards, bike racks, handrails and lights). Next up: future programming such as live music and food trucks to welcome transit riders and pedestrians back to the refurbished plaza.



We worked with ATLDOT to pilot a **pedestrian scramble** at 10th Street and Piedmont Avenue, creating a safer and more navigable intersection for people walking. After the pilot phase, ATLDOT made the pedestrian scramble permanent.



More than **\$250K** in sidewalk repairs were executed throughout the district in 2022, continuing our priority of ensuring that Midtown provides a safe and enjoyable experience for people on foot.



View a **summary** of 25+ improvement projects coming soon to Midtown.

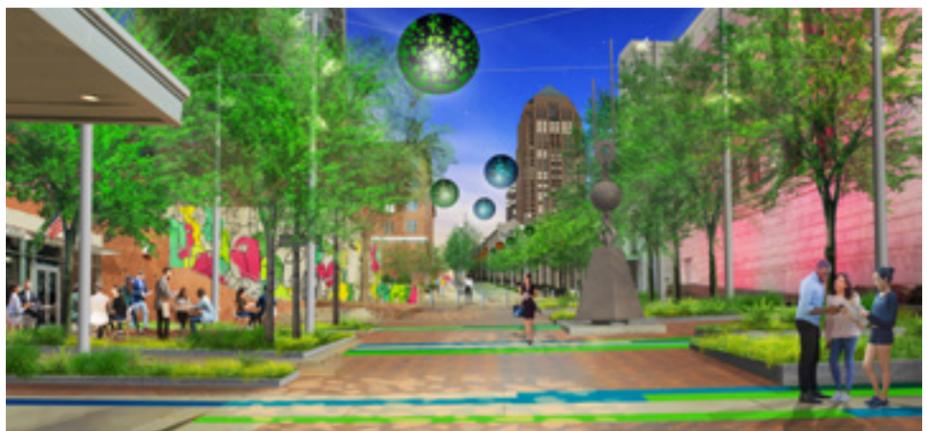
Advancing in 2023...



After working with the City on legislation that allows Midtown Alliance to take greater control of **advancing capital projects**, we were able to issue invitations to bid in late Q4 2022. More public improvement projects are headed out to bid in 2023, ranging from corridor enhancements to signalization projects.



As demand for outdoor gathering spaces will get even stronger, Midtown Alliance is designing significant enhancements on **11th Street** between Peachtree Street and Crescent Avenue in front of the retail spaces on the north side of the corridor. The reimagined space will offer amenities including seating and landscaping. The construction start goal is Q2 2023.



Construction continues on **Phase I of the Art Walk**, and we anticipate that construction will be completed by mid-year 2023. The Art Walk will feature art installations at various scales, unique overhead lighting, enhanced landscaping and other features to create a memorable experience for people exploring the corridor on foot.



The **17th Street Corridor** between Midtown and Atlantic Station is a wide expanse of concrete that could do more for people who navigate the area on bike, on foot and by bus. Our team has engaged designers and the public about the 17th Street corridor and 17th Street bridge to identify improvements that will create a safer and more engaging experience and to strengthen connections between the core of Midtown and Atlantic Station.



The Project for Public Spaces awarded Midtown Alliance a \$40K grant to work with MARTA and the community on enhancements to the **North Avenue MARTA station plaza**. Midtown Alliance's proposal was the lone grant selected from a competitive field of 100+ applicants. Our team led community visioning workshops in 2022 to gather ideas, with enhancements to launch in 2023 complemented by our recently completed outdoor plaza enhancements.



The Midtown **Central Connection Plan** will complete 100% design by Q4 2023 with new bike connections to move cyclists through Midtown from the end of the 10th Street cycletrack near Piedmont Park into the commercial core of Midtown via 10th Street and Peachtree Place and across the 10th Street bridge into Georgia Tech's campus.

Advancing in 2023...



Work in 2022 to reimagine Midtown bus stops via an Atlanta Regional Commission grant yielded compelling designs for bus shelters that draw inspiration from Midtown’s street tree canopy, informed by extensive public dialogues about what these transit riders need. Along with the design, we implemented a 100-day action plan and are currently securing fabricators, with pilot stops scheduled to be under construction in Q2 2023. In addition, we will be working to install a Peachtree Place parklet in Q1 2023 and we will be piloting bike/scooter corrals and installing in Q1 2023.



We are also completing a multi-year curbside management study that will address illegally parked vehicles blocking travel lanes. Implementation in 2023 will include an enforcement pilot, and projects/pilots to test curbside management strategies.



Our team is developing a scope of work for a potential Peachtree Street Redesign, with a goal of a publicly supported vision plan/concept and City support by Q3 2023.

Heart of the Arts

Art. Everywhere. Midtown Alliance's artist residency program continued to grow and flourish in 2022. By partnering with commercial property owners to designate underutilized space as artist workspace, we enabled six artists to bring their practices and business to Midtown.

Our artist residency program has generated more than a dozen public-facing displays of work, including installations at the host sites and graphic reproductions of artwork onto vacant storefronts and banners throughout the district.

We hosted artist events in 2022 featuring unique, hands-on programming and opportunities for the community to engage with our resident artists.

We celebrated the culmination of the residency term at MODA. City Council President Doug Shipman moderated a discussion with our outgoing class of Artists in Residence about their experience this past year and how the arts can continue to contribute to vibrant public life in Midtown and our City.



Sincere thanks to our founding partners who sponsored our inaugural class of residents at the following sites:

- Atlanta History Center, Midtown Campus
- DataBank at Coda Midtown
- Dewberry Foundation | Peachtree Pointe
- Piedmont Office Realty Trust | 999 Peachtree
- Portman Holdings | Crum & Forster Building at Coda Midtown



A new group of partnering **property owners and resident artists** in will kick off the new year with colorful art displays and community programming.



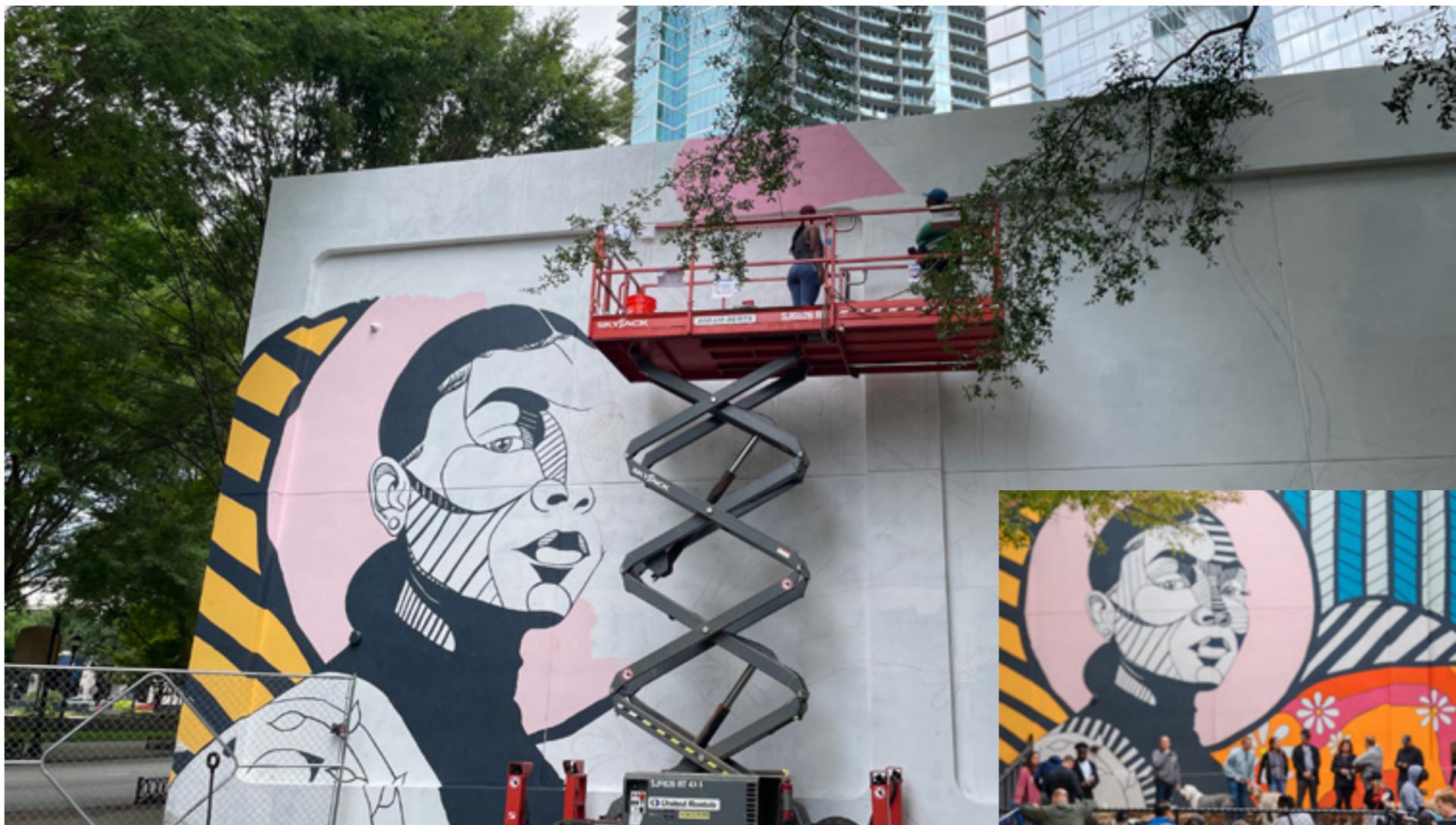
A partnership with Italy-based Cracking Art brought **colorful bird installations** overhead and on the ground at the new Commercial Row Commons outdoor plaza and at the Midtown MARTA station.



In partnership with the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs, Midtown Alliance welcomed Willie Cole's **Sole Sitter** sculpture to Commercial Row Commons overlooking Peachtree Street.



Watch Willie discuss the inspiration for his work.



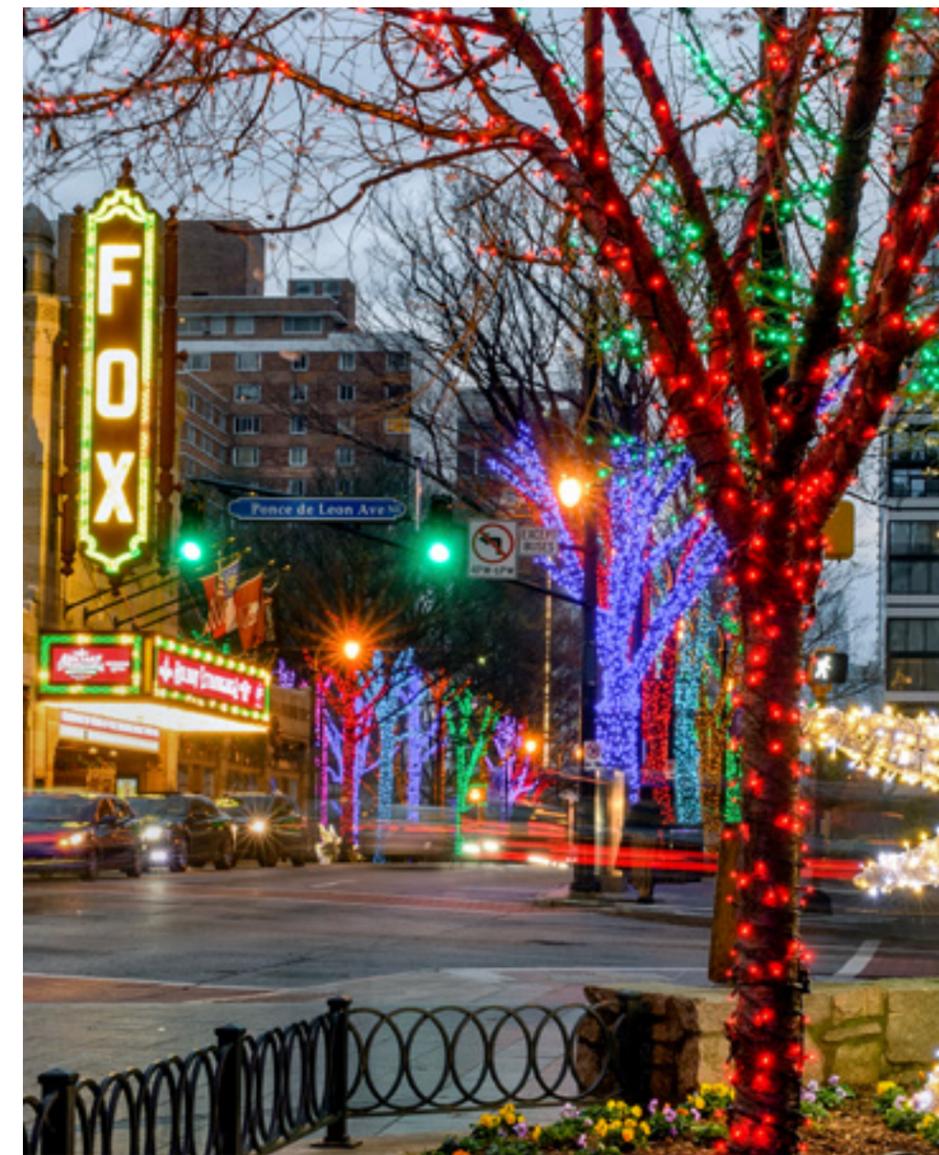
Midtown artist-in-residence **Jasmine Nicole Williams** painted a new mural, *On The Strip*, on the vacant building overlooking the 10th Street dog park that explores the history of Midtown’s counterculture. The project was made possible with a commitment from the Dewberry Foundation.



Read more about this project on our News Center.



Midtown Alliance partnered with AT&T Georgia to create a large-scale mural at the Central Office Building on Peachtree Place. Rendered by Midtown artist-in-residence **George F. Baker III**, the mural acts as a wayfinding aid to find the Midtown MARTA station next door and the artistic theme carries over to the ground-floor windows to be enjoyed by people walking.



The **Midtown Bright** seasonal lighting program involves year-round work to install and maintain festive, colorful LED lighting in trees along a two-mile stretch of Peachtree Street. In addition, several property owners are partnering with us to host installations that create a magical feel at night on the street from Thanksgiving to Valentine’s Day.

Bringing Our Community Together

We produced more than 25 community events in 2022. Programming and activation are priorities to create a more engaging and lovable Midtown.



The Midtown Alliance annual meeting returned to the Fox Theatre in 2022, with 700+ attendees hearing remarks from **City of Atlanta Mayor Andre Dickens** and Midtown Alliance leadership, plus a keynote from Matthew Lister (Gehl Studio) on the increasing importance of “public life” to create a compelling urban experience.



Watch video replays from presenters' remarks.



Midtown Alliance worked with the City of Atlanta to secure sites for **food truck vendors** to operate in the district. Staff augmented the food trucks with weekly entertainment and activations, as well as seating and extensive promotion.



Midtown Alliance held **mixer events** at various venues in 2022 to connect people to each other and to Midtown as a place.



The **Jazz on the Plaza** music series drew people to Arts District Plaza in the spring to enjoy music performances leading up to the City's annual Jazz Festival.



The 2022 **Parliament of Owls** community lantern parade was held at Colony Square and despite rainy conditions, attracted energetic participation and turned into a party.



Our mid-year **Let's Talk Midtown** town hall event provided crucial district updates on a range of topics, bringing the community closer to our work.



The Commercial Row Commons project celebrated its opening with a **Launch Party** open to the community that featured music and food from Savi Midtown and Café Agora.



In partnership with Zero Mile, the **Atlanta Songwriter Series** introduced Midtown to local performing artists at Arts District Plaza.



The public gathered in Commercial Row Commons to enjoy an **outdoor screening** of Alfred Hitchcock's "The Birds" powered by Midtown Alliance.



The **Midtown Transportation** team delivered events to build community among bicycle commuters of all abilities during Biketober, a monthlong competition designed to increase trial of bike ridership.



We hosted an event with SCAD Atlanta's singing group for an evening of holiday songs titled **Holidays with the Honeybees**.



Midtown Alliance hosted a special event to celebrate the opening of the new **off-leash dog park** within 10th Street Park. Attendees brought their dogs to play and compete for honor on the Doggie Homecoming Court.



Midtown Transportation also hosted the annual **Walk Challenge** to encourage daytime workers to explore the district on foot. The event brings awareness to Midtown's robust network of walking infrastructure.



We are planning more events and programming in 2023 to build on the successes and learnings of the past year. Watch our events calendar at MidtownATL.com/Events for fun things to experience in 2023.

What We Learned from You: 2022 Midtown Community Survey

More than 3,900 respondents participated in the 2022 Midtown Community Survey, a longitudinal study conducted every three years to measure attitudes and priorities about Midtown. The findings guide the work of our 50-person staff.

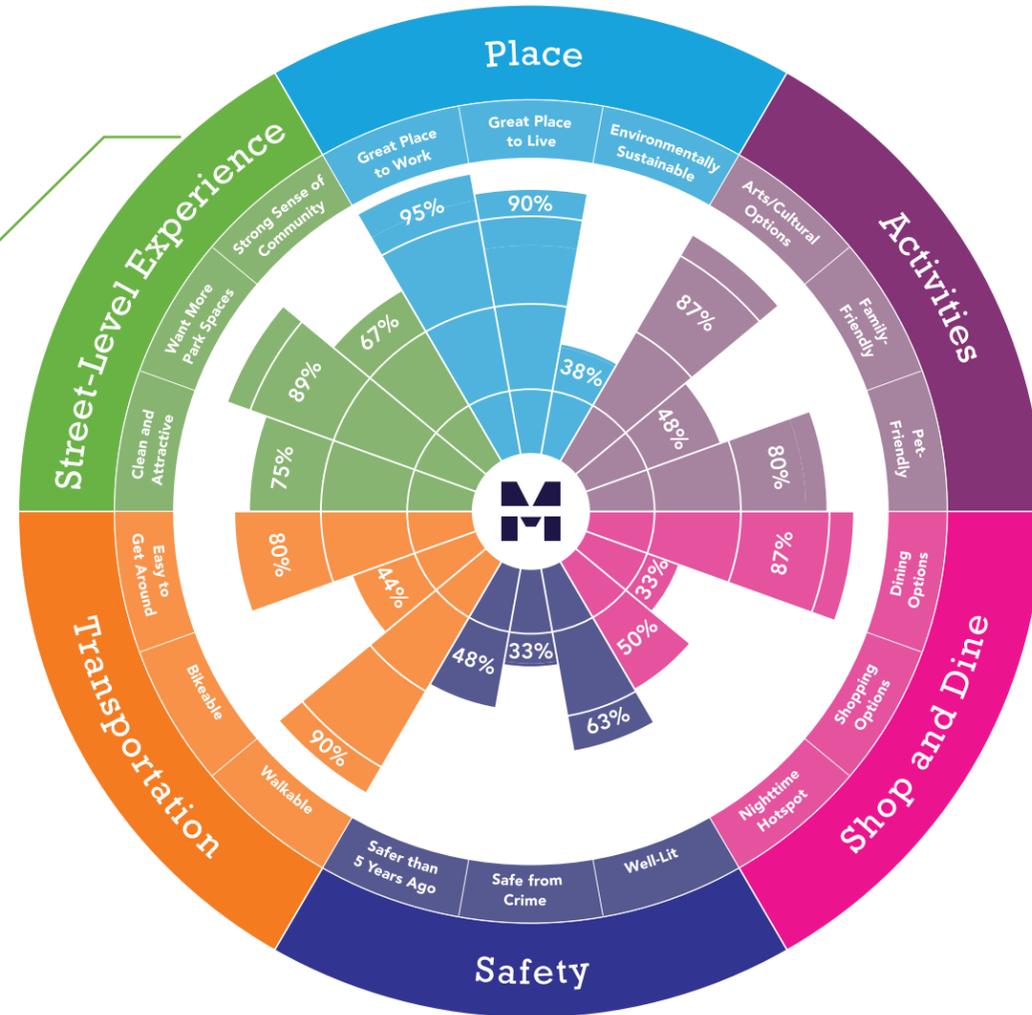
The district continues to earn high marks as a great place to live and work that is walkable and full of dining options.

“How likely are you to describe Midtown as...”

67%

of respondents feel a “Strong Sense of Community” in Midtown.

Overall, people who spend time in Midtown are enthusiastic about their experiences here and feel connected to the district. But there is more work to do.



Thanks to all of our partners for help with getting the word out.

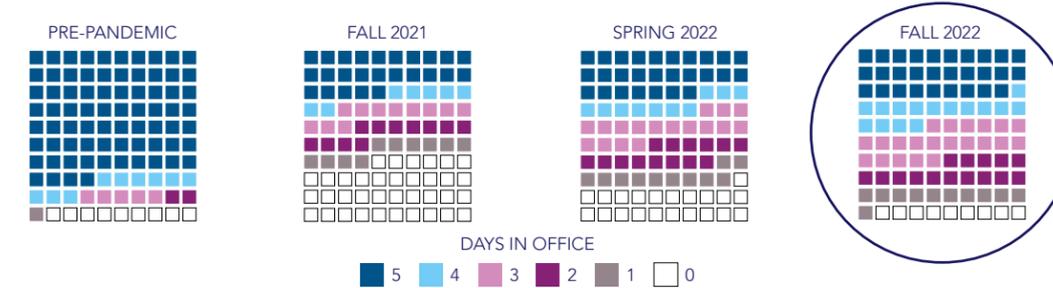
Transportation priorities remain consistent.

Respondents continued to give strong validation to transportation priorities in Midtown that support **walkability, transit and cycling** ahead of cars. This trend has continued across four rounds of surveying over the last decade.



65% of daytime workers are in the office 3+ days per week.

Overall, workers want access to more affordable lunch options, transportation improvements and **events such as live music after work** for them to come into their Midtown workplace more often.



89% of respondents felt having more publicly accessible open space is important for Midtown's future.

The most popular answers about how they want to use these spaces were for visiting and working, opportunities to buy food/drink and to see live performances.



Read more findings in our report on the MidtownATL.com Resource Center

Public Life Action Plan

Building off the primary message shared at our 2022 annual meeting about accelerating post-pandemic recovery with more focus on active public life at street-level, Midtown Alliance created a special project with Gehl Studio to develop a comprehensive public life action plan.

The engagement is looking holistically at Midtown's opportunities to dedicate more physical space for community programming, events, seating, art and activities that make people want to choose to spend time in Midtown. But it also considers new strategies and big moves that can attract and support neighborhood-serving retail businesses, potential zoning updates, transportation enhancements, and more. This work will require strong partnerships between the private sector and the public sector.



More than 50 Midtown community members with expertise and property holdings are participating on a steering committee to guide the **action plan** that will anchor many of Midtown Alliance's workplan priorities for 2023 and beyond.

No Interventions

Some Interventions

More Interventions



Central to the urban experience is creating a **network of activities** for people on both private and public property, knit together by a walkable street grid and well-designed spaces between buildings.



The entire Midtown Alliance staff conducted **field research** to assess every block in Midtown, examining the performance of building facades and open spaces and documenting activity on the street.



Watch for more info on how this plan will come to life in 2023.

Public Safety

Crime data show that Midtown remains very safe.

In an activity center that hosts 80,000+ individuals who live, work, or visit the area daily, the district only experienced 17 violent crimes in 2022 that were considered stranger on stranger.

In 2022 we saw further year-over-year decreases in violent crime and property crime.

- Violent crime was down -12% year-over-year in 2022 in the Midtown Improvement District.
- 2022 marked the fewest number of violent crimes in the MID **in the past 14 years.**
- There were 17 pedestrian robberies in 2022, a -39% decrease from 2021. Twelve of the 17 incidents occurred between 11pm and 5am.
- Property crime was down -29% in 2022.
- 73% of property crimes in the MID involve two categories – car break-ins (down -34% in 2022) and stolen autos (down -37% in 2022).

Part 1 Crimes Midtown Improvement District		Yr End 2018	Yr End 2019	Yr End 2020	Yr End 2021	Yr End 2022*
Violent Crime	Homicide	2	1	3	2	6
	Rape / Sexual Assault	5	7	6	3	2
	Robbery - Commercial	3	10	0	1	1
	Robbery - Pedestrian / Residential	30	29	28	28	17
	Aggravated Assault	37	35	52	44	43

Violent Crime Totals	77	82	89	78	69
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Property Crime	Burglary - Commercial	21	15	35	17	25
	Burglary - Residential	35	36	11	18	13
	Larceny From Vehicle	641	618	651	871	577
	Larceny - Non Vehicle	319	285	221	192	190
	Auto Theft	168	130	194	347	217

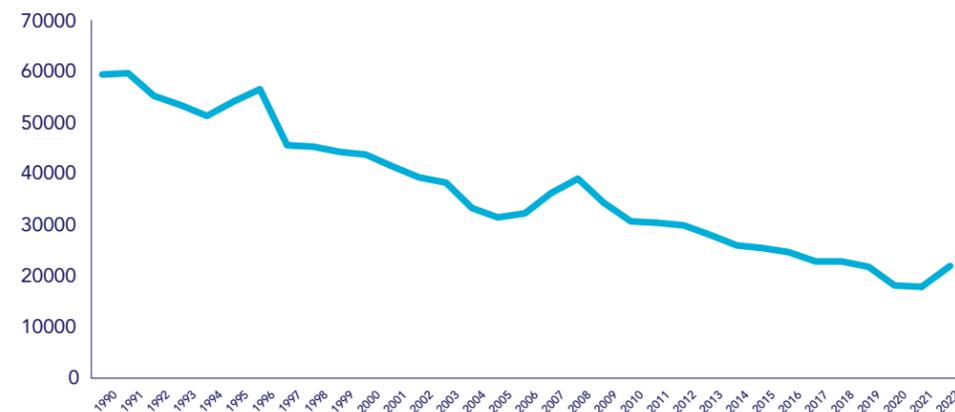
Property Crime Totals	1184	1084	1112	1445	1022
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*Crime data in the table is sourced from APD Part I Crime reports through the end of the year 2022 and covers the 1.2 square mile Midtown Improvement District (MID)

Overall, crime in the MID was down -28% in 2022.

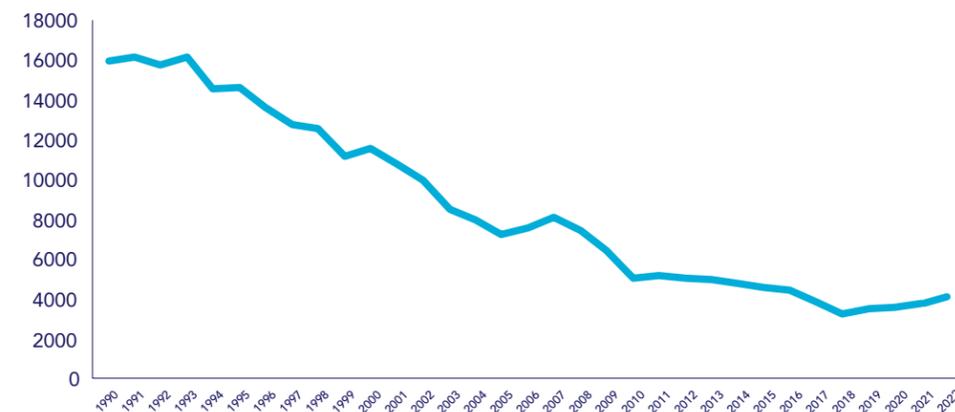
Crime in Atlanta overall has decreased steadily over the past three decades.

Property Crime in the City of Atlanta 1990 – 2022



Source: Atlanta Police Department Crime Reporting Statistics

Violent Crime in the City of Atlanta 1990 – 2022



Source: Atlanta Police Department Crime Reporting Statistics

Who's Who

More than **40 people** support the Midtown Blue program, including off-duty APD officers, PSOs, shift supervisors, dispatchers and administrators.



Off-Duty APD

Sworn officer with full arrest authority, patrolling in Midtown Blue marked vehicles and on foot.

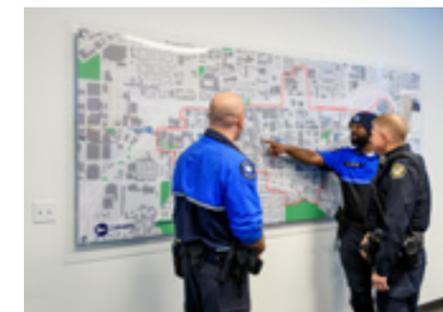
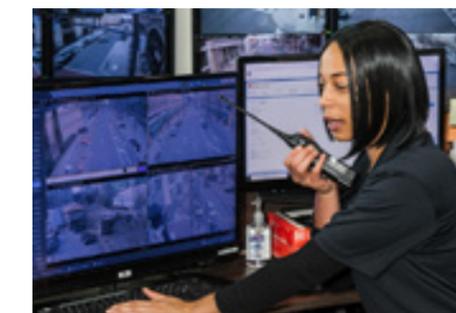


Public Safety Patrol

Civilian security professional, patrolling on foot, Trikke, bicycle and marked vehicles.

750

Combined total number of hours of patrolling in the Midtown Improvement District **each week.**



Subscribe to receive our bi-monthly Public Safety Report for crime data and analysis in the Midtown Improvement District.

Clean and Green

The Midtown Green crew works year-round, in all weather conditions and for long hours, to keep Midtown looking its best.



The Midtown Improvement District approved funding for **new all-terrain litter vacuums** that are instrumental to keeping the district clean where the sidewalk meets the street.



From clearing storm drains to cutting back overgrown vegetation for better visibility and removing graffiti, **this team does important work** 365 days a year – benefitting everyone who spends time in Midtown.

Looking forward to 2023

Thank you to our committed leaders and allied community partners for the great work we've done and the great we're going to do with each other in the new year.

On behalf of our leadership and staff, thank you for being part of this incredible community.

Onward!



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