



Broad Street Plaza Top 10 Issues List October 9, 2007

Overview

Part of the Atlanta Downtown Neighborhood Association's strategic plan to help work on issues in Broad Street Plaza is to compile a Top 10 List of major issues. The list is a community effort. Below is a brief description of the process:

- Residents of the Metropolitan Condo Association and The Kessler Condo Association were specifically invited to participate in a working session to determine the Top 10 List. These residents live the closest (if not adjacent to) Broad Street Plaza.
- The same invitation was extended by the ADNA President to a broader group of people who have to walk-thru or use Broad Street Plaza regularly. This was sent to the ADNA membership via the email distribution list.
- A group of 20 individuals made up of residents from Metropolitan, Kessler, William-Oliver, Healey, 1 employee and 1 board member of the Christian Science Reading Room and 1 student from GSU attended the working session on Monday, October 8th.
- The session lasted 2 hours. Each person was asked to write one issue on one post-it note. Some people used as many as 15 post-its. Then everyone was asked to place/organize their notes into 5 different categories—Law Enforcement, Physical Space, Vagrancy, Homelessness, Other/Miscellaneous.
- The group was then divided into groups of 4 and each group took one of the categories and each group was asked to prioritize the top 2 from each category—and this is how we determined the first 12 issues, which as a group, we then concentrated into 10.
- It was a lively and passionate discussion, but in the end, everyone firmly believed the group had come up with a good, solid list.

Participants (in alphabetical order)

Justin Adler-Swonberg
Dexter Austin
Maria Balais
Scott Fortney
Laverne Hedgepeth
Nellie Grant
Chris Livingston
Jodi Mount
John Mount
Ed Neyhart
Julie Paulk

Richard Hooker
David Holmes
Robyn Jackson
Stuart Jackson
Matt Jordan
Vanessa Raye
Adam Shumaker
Val Williams
Gary Zaccaria



Top 10 List of Issues

1. Lack of Law Enforcement and Presence of Law Enforcement Officers

- Multiple law enforcement jurisdictions overlap in Broad Street Plaza. This becomes detrimental because there is no clarity as to which entity is responsible for enforcing laws and ordinances.
- There is no actual physical presence of law enforcement officers in uniform.
- Even though “sweeps” are done regularly, the rate at which serious crimes are being committed now out weigh this approach and a more regular and consistent approach is needed not just during daytime business hours, but after dark as well.
- Individuals who have been harmed in the square have had to wait up to 1.5 hours for a police officer.
- 9-1-1 calls are often not responded to or the officers arrive 1-2 hours after the call was made.

2. Re-design and Maintenance Plan

- Security cameras need to be installed.
- Comfortable seating needs to be removed. Broad Street Plaza should not be a place to stay and relax, it should be a pass-through to enter or leave the train station.
- It is too dark and more low-level lights should be installed.
- The trash cans should be “dig proof”—similar to the cans they are now using in Midtown.
- The pavement is uneven, broken and in bad disrepair.

3. Drug Dealing and Drug Use

- Drug dealers use the tree planters to hide drugs.
- Drug dealers are in the square even during broad daylight hours—and are there without fear of being caught.
- Drugs are being used in the square, and drug users use the concrete benches to sleep off their high or drunkenness.
- Drug users and dealers leave trash in the square.



4. Trash

- Improved and “dig proof” trash receptacles will help decrease the amount of trash.
- Law enforcement present to enforce litter laws will help decrease amount of trash.
- More thorough cleanings are needed—but it is also observed that public works employees do not like to thoroughly clean because the Square is “not safe”, and there are too many people loitering that it prevents them from cleaning more effectively.
- The rats are the size of a Buick in the square.

5. Street Vendors

- Basic vendor ordinances are not being enforced.
- The vendors create trash themselves and they sell items which generate even more trash.
- They are placed/located inappropriately and block the entrance to the plaza.
- The manner in which they “set-up” is makeshift, cheap and esthetically inconsistent.
- The street vendors sell items which can be purchased at any convenient store, and therefore do not add a novelty value to the neighborhood.
- Their vans and trucks are parked in the 15 minute loading and unloading zone ALL DAY.

6. Public Drunken-ness and Verbal Harassment

- People who are publicly drunk are not being arrested, and they are stumbling around in the square or are usually passed out on their backs on the ground, or urinating on the buildings surrounding the square. Sometimes drunk individuals wander down the street and urinate on another building on Broad Street, where they may have more “privacy” than in the square.
- There are people who illegally sell small individual bottles of liquor in the square and are not being arrested.

7. Bio-Waste

- People who publicly urinate or defecate in the square are not being arrested.
- Bio-waste is not thoroughly cleaned often enough, but the cleaning schedule cannot keep up with the rate at which the waste is being creates.

8. Loitering and Panhandling

- The panhandling ordinance is not enforced.
- The loiterers are often times the panhandlers.
- Individuals who are minors also loiter in the square.



9. Noise

- The noise ordinance is not being enforced.
- Local businesses blast music through amplification without permits and do so within 50 feet of residential property.

10. Camping and Sleeping

- People who are sleeping or camping in the square should be removed, and should be delivered/directed to a facility that meets their needs.