Highlighted History of The Atlanta Region

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Early History

- Evidence Exists of Native Civilization Dating to 6000 BC
- Later the Moundbuilders Arrived-Mound Built on West Side of Chattahoochee River at Confluence of Peachtree Creek
- Creek Indians Occupied a Village at Standing Peachtree Before the American Revolution
19th Century Atlanta

- An Indian Trail from Suwanee to Standing Peachtree is Upgraded to Create Peachtree Road
- 1813 Fort Peachtree Constructed-Connected to Fort Daniel by Peachtree Road
- 1823 DeKalb County Created-a New Road is built connecting Fort Peachtree and Decatur
19th Century Atlanta

- 1835 Half Way between Decatur and Fort Peachtree a Tavern and Post Office Became Whitehall
- 1837 Just East of Whitehall the Southern Terminus of a Railroad from Chattanooga is Located at 0 Mile Post
- Construction Began on the Railroad to Augusta and the Settlement Became Known as Terminus
19th Century Atlanta

- 1843 Terminus Became Marthasville in Honor of Governor Wilson Lumpkin’s Daughter
- 1844 Jonathan Norcross arrives and Builds a Sawmill Stimulating Growth
- 1845 Marthasville Renamed Atlanta
- 1845-1847 First Rail Service to the East, First Doctor, First Newspaper, First School and New Railroad to Macon
19th Century Atlanta

- 1847 Atlanta Incorporated as a City
- 1848 Moses Formwalt Defeats Jonathan Norcross to Become Atlanta’s First Mayor
- 1849 First Telegraph and Volunteer Fire Department
- 1849 Norcross is Elected Mayor and Begins a Period of Unprecedented Growth
19th Century Atlanta

- 1854 Atlanta Gets Its Own County-Fulton Created by Georgia Legislature
- Atlanta Became a Major Rail Hub with New Railroads to LaGrange, Memphis and Charleston
- 1860 Population 7741 had Grown to Over 20,000 by 1864
- 1865 Atlanta Burned and Came Under Military Control Lasting Seven Years
Reconstruction

- Military Controllers Abolished the State Government and Moved the Capital from Milledgeville to Atlanta
- Entrepreneurs Flock to the City—Recognizable Names Kimball, Hape, Rich, and Mitchell
- Population Expands
Local Control

- 1872 Elected Governments, State and Local Resume
- Rails Installed in Streets for Horse or Mule Drawn Trolleys
- Public Schools Created
- New Waterworks Constructed
- Henry Grady Writes “New South” Editorial
Local Control

- Permanent Relocation of the State Capital is Approved in Referendum 1877
- First Telephones are Installed
- President Rutherford B. Hayes Became the First Sitting President to Visit Atlanta
- 1879 General William T. Sherman Visited for Two Days and Left Apparently Unscathed
- Expositions Call Attention to Atlanta and Boost Growth
20th Century Arrives

- 1902 Fire Destroys Much of the Business District.
- 1906 Candler Building Dedicated - Racial Unrest Sparks Riots
- 1914 Stone Mountain Carving Proposed
- 1917 Fire Destroys 300 Acres and 1938 Structures
- 1922 First Radio Broadcast at WSB—Two Days Later WGST Goes on Air
20th Century

- 1925 Asa Candler Offers His Race Track to City for Use as an Airport
- William B. Hartsfield is Appointed Head of a Committee to Oversee the Airport
- Harriet Harwell Wilson High Donates Land to Build an Art Museum
- 1926 Air Mail Flights to Atlanta Begin
- 1929 Fox Theater Opens
20th Century

- 1930 New Union Station Opens – Inaugural Air Service between Atlanta and New York, Passengers Include NY Gov. Franklin Roosevelt GA Gov. Elect Richard Russell and Sen. Walter George
- 1939 First Television Demonstration in Southeast at Rich’s Department Store
- 1941 Delta Airlines Moves to Atlanta
- 1941-1945 World War II
Modern Atlanta History

- 1945 As the War Winds Down Atlanta Prepares for the Future
- Leadership Has Realized the Potential to be More Than Another Southern Town
- 1946 Consultants Present First Regional Transportation Plan
- “Reed Report” Recommends Many Far Reaching Changes
Modern Atlanta History

- 1947 Legislature Creates Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC)
- 1950-1952 Plan of Improvement Adopted Implementing Much of Reed Report
- Mayor Hartsfield Lobbies Congress for Authorization of Buford Dam
- Airport Runways Expanded to Accommodate Jet Passenger Aircraft
Modern Atlanta History

- 1960 Region Expanded to 5 Counties—Population Reaches 1 Million
- MPC Reorganized to Serve 5 Counties and Renamed Atlanta Region Metropolitan Planning Commission (ARMPC)
- 1965 Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) Created by Legislature
- Region Prospers and Grows Throughout ’60s Dealing With Civil Unrest Much Better than Most Other Metropolitan Areas, but
Modern Atlanta History

- As Domestic Legislation Streamed Out of Congress, Atlanta Region Created New Regional Agencies to Plan Rather Than Assign the New Programs to ARMPC
- By The End of The Decade, The Region Had Created Atlanta Area Transportation Study (AATS), Metropolitan Atlanta Council for Health (MACHEALTH), Metropolitan Atlanta Council of Local Governments (MACLOG) to Name a Few
- All Were Planning for the Same Geographic Area and Competing for the Same Local Leadership and Resources
Modern Atlanta History

- 1969 A Consultant Study of the Feasibility of Consolidating Atlanta and Fulton County Called Partnership for Progress Recommended Greatly Expanding the City Limits
- The Recommendations Became a Subject of Debate in the Campaign for Mayor
- After the Election the Report Began Gathering Dust
Modern Atlanta History

- 1970 Legislature Attempted to Consolidate ARMPC, AATS, MACHEALTH and MACLOG
- 1971 Legislation Passed Consolidating the Four Agencies and Creating What We Know as Atlanta Regional Commission
- Referenda Implementing MARTA Passed in DeKalb and Fulton Counties
- 1972 ARC Declared Water Supply to be the Regions Number One Long Range Problem
Modern Atlanta History

- 1972 Updating the Regions Transportation Plan Began
- 1973 Long Range Water Supply and Waste Water Management Planning Began in Cooperation with the Corps of Engineers and GAEPD
- Several Viable Plans Were Produced, None Implemented and Then the Litigation Started
- 1975 Regional Transportation Plan Adopted
Modern Atlanta History

- If The 1975 Transportation Plan Had Been Implemented the Atlanta Region Would Be a Different Place Today
- It Was To Serve a 2000 Population of 3 Million Along with Corresponding Job Growth
- The Plan Emphasized Maximizing All Existing Freeways and Extending Rail Transit to 5 Counties with Bus Service in 7 Counties
- Freeways Were Expanded, 3 Million People Showed Up in 2000, BUT No Transit Expansion Occurred
Modern Atlanta History

- The 80’s Saw the Exodus of People and Jobs to the Suburbs, Particularly the Northern Tier
- This Phenomenon Placed a Great Pressure on All Levels of Government for Expansion of Infrastructure as the Existing Infrastructure Operated at Less than Capacity
- Not the Way One Would Run a Business, but We Had Failed to Implement Our Plans
Modern Atlanta History

- 1990 Atlanta Selected to Host the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games
- Pressure to Insure the Games Would Be Successful in Some Cases Required Normal Work to be Delayed, Particularly Transportation Planning
- ARC Tasked With Preparing the Transportation Plans for the Games Had to Delay Updating the Regional Transportation Plan
Modern Atlanta History

- 1997 The Centennial Olympic Games Were Successful, but ARC Had a Bad Hangover
- The People Who Said It Will be OK to Delay the Update of the Regional Transportation Plan Were Gone and the Old Plan Would Not Meet Air Quality Conformity
- Under Normal Circumstances This Would not Have Been a Major Problem – Metro Areas Across the Country Go In and Out of Conformity Regularly
Modern Atlanta History

- All That Was Needed Was to Update the Plan
- News Media Caused a Panic Saying All Federal Transportation Dollars Would Be Lost, A Completely Erroneous Statement
- During the Period of Non Conformity Not One Cent of Federal Money Was Lost
- Businesses Planning to Take Advantage of the Olympic Spotlight Didn’t Want Negative Publicity, They Had to Do Something “positive”
Modern Atlanta History

- So At The Behest of the Business Community, the Governor and Legislature Created Another Planning Agency
- ARC Produced a New Plan Meeting Requirements and the Issue Became Moot
- 8 Years Later The Additional Planning Agency is Still With Us as is a New Transit Planning Board
- A New Water Planning Agency Was Created by the Governor and Legislature When the Water Plans Couldn’t be Implemented
Modern Atlanta History

- Expansion of the Rail Transit System Still Has Not Happened, Nor Has a Long Range Water Supply Been Assured
- We Do Have 3 Additional Public Agencies
- It Has Been Said that History Has a Way of Repeating Itself