

Piedmont Heights is a small neighborhood, but it has a big history and many notable features. Thousands of commuters pass through it each day on Monroe Drive between the Downtown Connector and Piedmont Avenue unaware that is a residential area. There are no identification signs and one could walk completely around or through it and be unaware of its uniqueness.

Some examples:

- Most Atlantans have heard of Ansley Mall, on the corner of Piedmont Avenue and Monroe Drive, but few know it is in the Mall Hall of Fame.
- The mall backs up to Clear Creek where Watkins Mill ground corn for the area's settlers in the early 1800s. A town called Easton grew up around the mill and soon had a depot serving the Airline Belle train on the Atlanta to Toccoa line. That very same line is today's BeltLine.
- Just north of Ansley Mall at 464 Montgomery Ferry Road is the Captain James McAlpin Liddell house, said to be the second the oldest in Atlanta.
- A few blocks further up Monroe Drive, beside the BeltLine, are remnants of Monroe Gardens which in the 1940s hosted many important Atlanta social events.
- Farther on is the round former Trust Company bank designed in the 1960s by local architect Henry Jova. Across the street is Fire Station #29, another architectural classic of the same era. Both are on the Historic Register.
- Around the curve, fronting on the Downtown Connector, is a 1950s former Holiday Inn. In the early 1800s the site was the home place of the Edwin Plaster family. During the Civil War their home was burned and military battlements constructed on the knoll. A historic plaque on the edge of the property commemorates the Plaster family handyman, "Gold Tooth John."
- Proceeding up Piedmont Circle and turning right on Piedmont leads to the Two Minit Car Wash which opened in 1954. Known as the "Gorilla Car Wash" for the gorilla mannequin placed out front in the 1970s, named "George" by a long ago customer.
- Next is Rock Spring Presbyterian Church on the northwest corner of Piedmont Avenue and Rock Springs Road. The Plaster family and others first organized a Sunday School in a one-room log schoolhouse beside a spring on the property. A congregation was chartered in 1870 and the present church, now on the Historic Register, replaced an old wooden structure in 1922.
- Across Montgomery Ferry Road is Morningside Baptist Church. Founded in 1930, the congregation moved from its original site in Morningside to Piedmont Heights in 1951. The high ground on which it sits was called "Council Bluff" by the Indians in the area who held their important meetings on its summit.
- Further south on Piedmont, just before we arrive back at Monroe Drive, is Atlanta's first strip shopping center, built in 1925 by Albert Bailey, who also developed many homes in the area. In 1974 a masonic lodge on the second floor became a popular cabaret called "Upstairs at Gene and Gabe's" which today is noted a music venue for Smith's Olde Bar.
- This brings us full circle around the perimeter of the little community, but there is more to see internally: bomb shelters from the 1950s, creeks, a park, a new 10,000 square foot house, etc.
- A walking tour map of Piedmont Heights is coming soon. In the meantime, take a look at

the Piedmont Heights Civic Association website for more of its colorful history ([piedmontheights.org](http://piedmontheights.org)).