

# Liberty Plaza

## For over 100 years discussions have surrounded an assembly area adjacent to the Capitol.

- Beginning in 1910, Atlanta architect Haralson Bleckley developed a plan for a civic center park on the west side of the State Capitol building (on the site of three historic churches). He vigorously campaigned for his vision until his death in 1933.
- In 1927 a new Bleckley civic center plan called “Monument Square Park” was developed.
- In 1932 the city planning commission develop a plan with Bleckley and A. Ten Eyck Brown.
- In 1944 the City of Atlanta and the Chamber of Commerce developed a master plan with a large green space area on the west side of the State Capitol.
- In 1952, architect Willliam Creighten developed a new “Civic Park” plan to the west of the Capitol that would keep two of the historic churches and clear the rest of the lot for a park with underground parking.
- In 1953, the State Office Building Authority’s Jurisdiction was expanded to include public parks and parking lots and was authorized to spend \$1 million on the project. Governor Talmadge eventually put the project on hold – not wanting to force an established congregation to relocate.
- In 1960, Fulton County hired A. Thomas Bradbury to update plans for a “Civic Park” and proposed a \$3 million bond issue. The voters rejected the plan in 1962.
- In 1969, The State began construction on “Georgia Plaza Park”, but with an obstructed view of the State Capitol Building the Park was never able to fulfill the vision of a civic area.
- In 1974, the State of Georgia commissioned Eric Hill Associates to develop a new twenty-five-year Capitol Hill Master Plan. The plan included an elevated pedestrian level with several plaza areas around the Capitol.
- In 2004 a Capitol Vista Mall spanning the downtown connector was proposed, but with the downturn in the economy and a lofty price tag, the project never received significant consideration.
- In 2008, Steve Fanczi, Deputy Executive Director of the Georgia Building Authority, developed and proposed the concept of a public plaza on the east of the State Capitol called “Liberty Plaza.”
- In 2013, the Georgia Building Authority received approval to demolish the parking structure and construct “Liberty Plaza.” Funding was provided from proceeds from the sale of surplus GBA properties.
- Demolition/construction began in June of 2014.
- Liberty Plaza was dedicated Friday, January 16, 2015.

## Liberty Plaza is the home of a Liberty Bell and Statue of Liberty

- In 1950, the U.S. Department of Treasury commissioned 55 exact replicas of the Liberty Bell, one for each State Capitol. One of the plaques for the bell states “Dedicated to you, a free citizen in a free land.” Cast by Paccard Fonderie des Cloches, France. Refurbished by Christoph Paccard Bell Foundary, Charleston, SC.
- In 1951, the Boy Scouts of America donated an 8 ½ feet tall replica of the Statue of Liberty celebrating Scouting’s 40th anniversary (1950) theme, "Strengthen the Arm of Liberty."

## Plaques of note

- Declaration of Independence (excerpt)
- Preamble to the Constitution (excerpt)
- The Star-Spangled Banner
- Pledge of Allegiance

