



Atlanta's Ambassador Force Helps Visitors and Citizens Enjoy Downtown

ATLANTA – Downtown Atlanta is a safer, cleaner place to work and visit due, in large part, to the Atlanta Downtown Improvement District's (ADID) Ambassador Force, a 60-plus, full-time hospitality and public safety group that helps patrol downtown and assists visitors with helpful information about the city. Originally created in 1996 to be a presence on the street during the Olympics, the Ambassadors span a 200-block radius from North Avenue, south to Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive and from the Georgia World Congress Center to the Downtown Connector.

Ambassadors provide emergency assistance and information on Atlanta, from directions to event listings. They also work with the Atlanta Police Department to serve as the "eyes and ears" of the APD, observing and reporting happenings on the street that call for attention by certified law enforcement personnel. Dressed in pith helmets, members of the Ambassador Force travel primarily by foot, but can also be seen riding Segway human transporters or all-terrain bikes. Ambassadors also staff the Atlanta visitor's booth at the corner of Peachtree Street and Andrew Young International Boulevard, where maps and written material on the city are available. With more than 200 hours of training, the Ambassadors help create a safe, clean and vibrant downtown for visitors, residents and employees.

Along with the Ambassadors, the Clean Team, an eight-member cleaning crew and a vendor program in Five Points report and track street lighting, traffic and pedestrian signal control outages, and sidewalk, surface and street disruptions due to damage or construction. The Clean Team is equipped with five environmentally and pedestrian friendly machines to sweep, vacuum and sanitize sidewalks in the patrol area every Monday through Friday, along with pressure washing five days a week in the evenings. The Five Points Vending program is a partnership with individually licensed vendors around the Five Points MARTA station and Underground Atlanta in an effort to keep the area clean.

Created by Central Atlanta Progress, the Ambassador Force officially began in March 1996, and, since then, crime downtown has dropped significantly. Downtown Atlanta saw a 60 percent reduction in crime the first year ambassadors began patrolling a 120-block area; and according to FBI data, violent crime in Atlanta declined by approximately 9 percent between 2004 and 2005, despite a rise throughout the rest of the nation.

The Ambassador Force is funded by approximately \$2.5 million of the Atlanta Downtown Improvement District's \$5 million tax on all commercial property.

Established in 1913, ACVB is a private, nonprofit organization created exclusively to market metro Atlanta and Georgia as a premier convention, meeting and leisure destination in the

regional, national and international marketplace and to favorably impact the Atlanta economy through conventions and tourism. www.atlanta.net

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