

Park Use

Issues and Opportunities:

The City of Atlanta's Grant Park provides a special and unique recreation and tourism opportunity. It appears there are six recreation functions under four separate authorities. Unlike other parks in Atlanta, the majority of the recreation/tourism uses are destination users (they are visiting a specific attraction and will unlikely visit other areas). Most visitors to Grant Park come for the two major attractions: the Cyclorama and Zoo Atlanta. These attractions draw visitors not only locally, but nationally and internationally.

Active Recreational Use:

Representatives from groups with an interest in Grant Park (interest groups) were interviewed on August 13, 1997. These groups included: Cyclorama, Park Maintenance, City of Atlanta Recreation Department, and Zoo Atlanta. *Interview summaries are included in Appendix A.* Highlights of the interviews are included below. Preceding each interview highlight is a brief description of the activity.

(1) The Cyclorama

The largest single canvas painting in the world depicts the Battle of Atlanta. The Cyclorama attracts over 200,000 local, national, and international visitors (interested in history and in particular military history) to the park. The Cyclorama is included in "must see in Atlanta." The Cyclorama is a popular Atlanta attraction, housing the painting "Battle of Atlanta," the world's largest painting. The facility, which is a tenant of Grant Park, attracts 250,000 visitors annually. Concerning storm water, Ms. Pauline Smith, Cyclorama employee indicated that "five employees had damage to automobiles during a severe rain event where flooding occurred in the 'circular parking' area in front of the Cyclorama." Other relevant comments included a need for improved signage and a potential expansion of the facility.

(2) The Atlanta Zoo

Considered one of the finest zoos in the country. Nearly one million visitors a year come to the Atlanta Zoo. The Zoo has its own programs within its confines, and is very popular with the metro-Atlanta school children, with educational events and student volunteer programs.

Zoo Atlanta is a tenant of Grant Park. While the Zoo has many issues with the Park, several interviewees focused on storm water issues. The Zoo uses two parking lots, the Cherokee and the Boulevard lots. The catch basin in the Boulevard parking lot periodically backs up and floods the Zoo with combined storm water and sewage. The Cherokee parking lot simply floods. There have been three sewer collapses in the parking lots that resulted in sink holes. When these problems occur, there seems to be difficulty in deciding who (the City or the Zoo) will fix it. There is a need for trails around the Zoo and better access from the parking lots to the Zoo. Both might reduce erosion. The Zoo feels that a total of 1500 parking spaces, including bus loading/unload-