



CHAPTER ELEVEN

MEMORIALIZATION



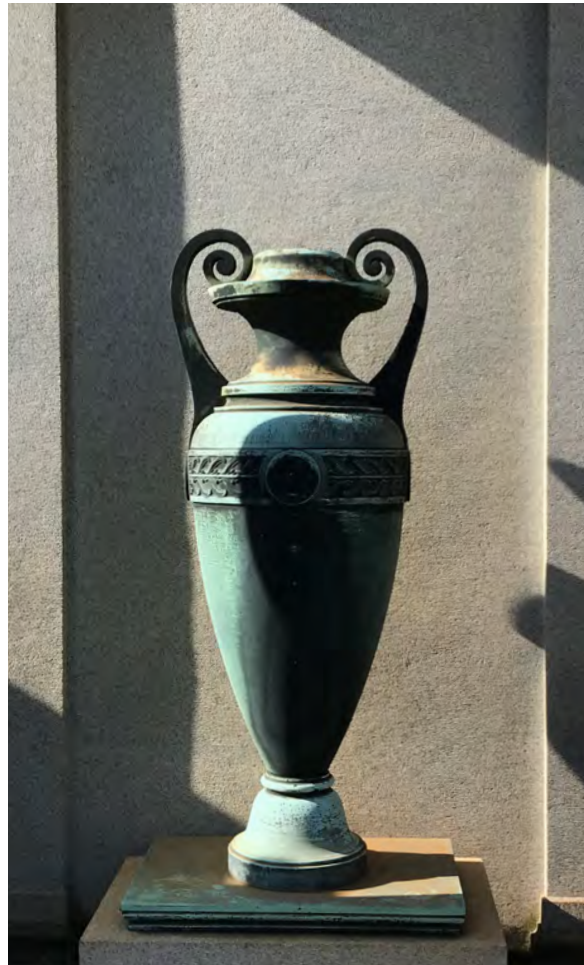
MEMORIALIZATION

Importance

Oakland has limited space for burials and few designated spaces to hold memorial services. To remain an active cemetery, Historic Oakland Foundation, (in coordination with the City of Atlanta) will need to explore creative interment opportunities that efficiently use space and create formalized space for congregating and contemplation.

Existing Conditions

Oakland has approximately 40,000 gravemarkers, monuments, and funerary structures created in a wide range of styles, including Neo-Classical, Egyptian Revival, and Romanesque. They are also comprised of a wide array of materials, sizes, ornamentation, and carvings. These range from simple vernacular headstones with no engravings to elaborate structures with detailed carvings, fine art, statuary, and high-style architecture. Preservation of the gravestones, funerary art, and architecture is an ongoing task that requires the supervision of a professional conservator, working with staff members and volunteers who have been specifically trained in this area. Despite



the enormous task of memorial restoration and preservation, there are still many opportunities for Oakland to continue as an active cemetery, with new interments and memorials.

Unfortunately, many families are gone and untraceable, and many of the families do not maintain the burial plots of their relatives. When burial plots have become abandoned, Historic Oakland Foundation assists in their preservation and restoration.

Burials continue to occur at Oakland under three conditions:

- If a plot is abandoned, it can sold or reallocated by the City of Atlanta for a future burial
- If a family decides to sell plots or portions of their lots
- If a family retains space and intends to use the plot(s)

Although Oakland is an active cemetery with some spaces for future burials, local historic district regulations specify that no new buildings or structures, such as mausoleums, may be built

MEMORIALIZATION

without a variance. Large structures would disrupt the continuity and historic integrity of the site. There are however, additional memorialization opportunities to explore for interred cremains.

A previous master plan and subsequent studies investigated the reuse of the Comfort Stations as Columbariums. After further examination, a more multi-functional and less-costly use was identified with preservation as a priority. (See strategy pages in Chapter 10 for more information.)

Proposed Strategy

The following strategy on page 163 calls for pursuit of new opportunities to inter cremains at Oakland (with the goal of generating the necessary funds for maintenance of new memorial spaces).

Opportunities

Currently, Oakland has no columbariums or sanctioned areas to spread ashes. (The Paupers Grounds is one location that could be used, although this is not technically allowed.)

Apart from conventional burials, the greatest opportunities for memorialization going forward are spreading and memorializing ashes, and

interring ashes in niches, such as a memorial wall, foot path, or seat wall. As shown on page 160, successful precedents of these methods can be seen at Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond, Virginia and Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Boston, Massachusetts. Memorialization in these forms efficiently uses space and can double as gathering spaces.

Niches holding cremated remains offer the most attractive choice for expanding burial practices at Oakland due to space limitations. The examples of Hollywood and Mt. Auburn illustrate the creativity that walkways, walls, and benches can serve as acceptable methods of memorialization. There are many walkways in Oakland, but most are narrow and not fit for a curbed memorial walk. Shown on pages 161 and 162, this plan has identified two different memorial walk and plaza locations:

Monument Drive: The portion in front of the Maynard Jackson monument. The adjacent North Public Grounds also serves as an opportunity to hold events such as memorial services. (See page 162.)

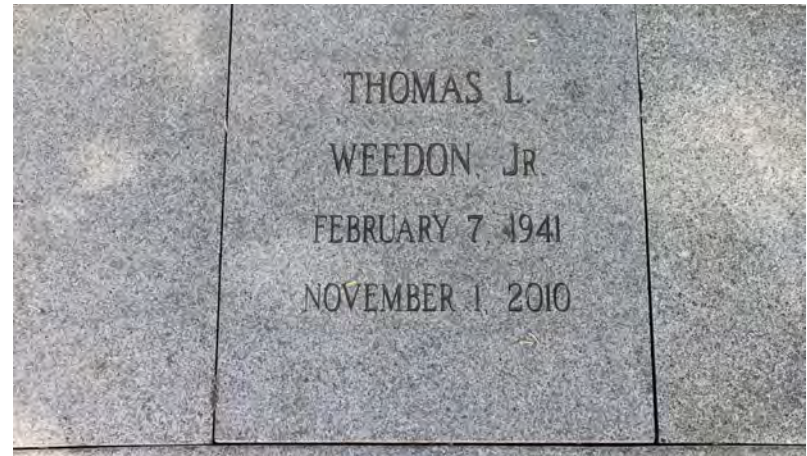
Women's Comfort Station: The walkway north of the station hold opportunities to host events or services. (See page 161.)

West Wall: This walk adjacent to Oakland Avenue provides opportunities for inlay plaques with cremated remains located in the raised curb area below. This area will need extensive rehabilitation to address hardscape/landscape restoration and flooding, but offers a relatively flat area from which to experience the wall. (See page 161.)

Paupers Grounds: Sloping topography from west to east creates multiple areas suitable for stone benches/walls. Similar to Mt. Auburn, these memorial spaces can provide opportunities for reflection, as well as niches for burials. This is dependent on the extent of burials within Paupers Grounds. (See page 162.)

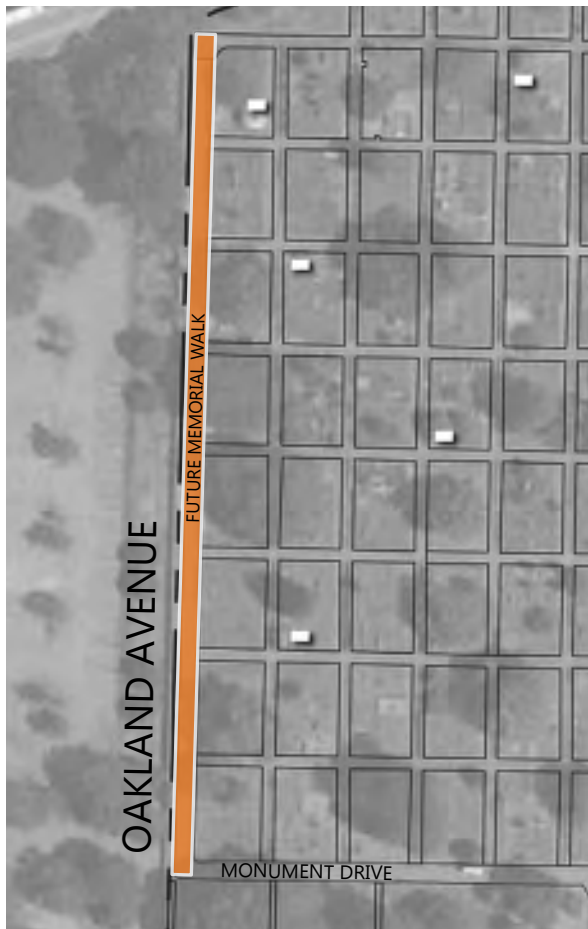
Currently the sexton for Oakland Cemetery manages the funerary process, and HOF has no legal agreement with the city to serve in this capacity. Additional study is needed and a champion identified within the organization to further investigate expanding the methods of burial at Oakland.

MEMORIALIZATION



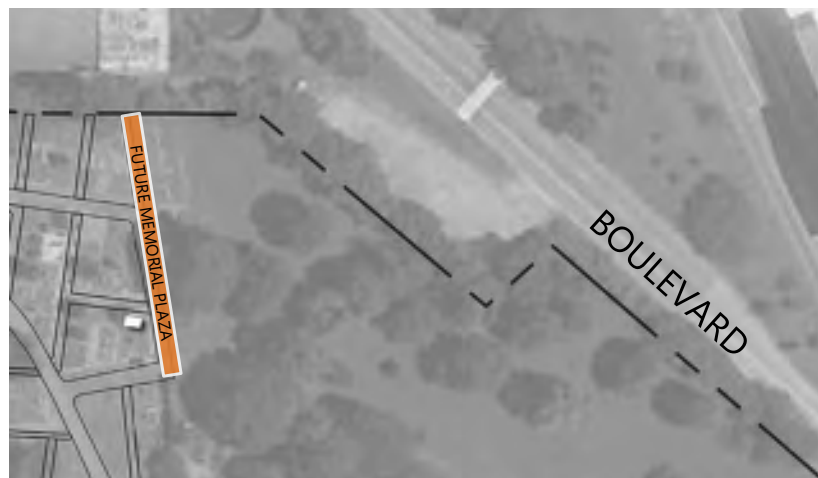
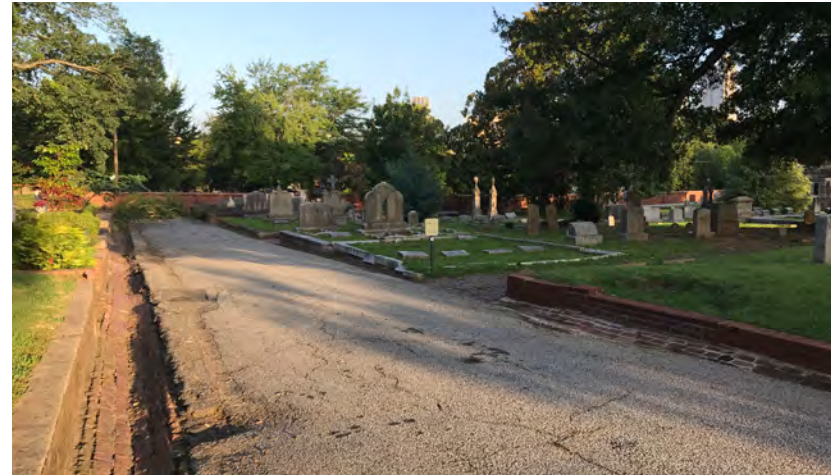
Top: Memorial walls at Mt. Auburn Cemetery. Walls such as this can also function as seating areas. Bottom: Memorial path with niches in the curb at Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond, VA.

MEMORIALIZATION



These two spaces, along Oakland Avenue, and immediately north of the Women's Comfort Station, present opportunities to create a memorial plaza or memorial walk, similar to the precedents above. These spaces could double as gathering spaces for future events.

MEMORIALIZATION



These two spaces, along Monument drive near Maynard Jackson's grave and the west edge of the Paupers Grounds, also present opportunities to create a memorial plaza or memorial walk, similar to the precedents above. These spaces could double as gathering spaces for future events.

Strategy: Future Interment Strategies

Description:

As Oakland continues to be an active cemetery, HOF should explore creative opportunities to memorialize cremains through spreading ashes and niches in memorial spaces. This is a long-term project with the potential to activate underutilized portions of the cemetery and continue interments. Ideally, this would come at little cost to Oakland, as resources for memorials come from individuals and families.



Steps Required for Implementation:

1. Identify a board or staff member to lead the effort.
2. Engage the city to determine if they are willing to allow HOF to lead this type of venture.
3. Establish a legal mechanism which allows funds raised for this effort to go to HOF and preservation of the cemetery.



Cost Type:
Capital Improvement



Partners:
Department of Parks and Recreation



Cost Range:
Varies depending on type of memorial. Intended to be revenue neutral.

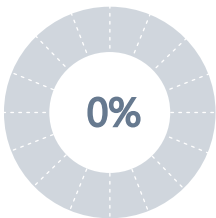


Duration:
2018-2021 (establish legal mechanism)
2022 (establish new interment program)

Prioritization



Future Interment Strategies



of total dollars
(revenue neutral)

Excluded from \$43.5 M total for all capital improvement strategies

This page intentionally left blank.