The Preferred Plan

The Due Diligence & Discovery phase of work was essential to understand the University - the issues it is confronting, the challenges it is facing, its culture and aspirations - as thoroughly as possible so Guiding Principles - the Big Ideas - could be articulated to guide the Options phase of work.

The Options phase of work is essential because, when done in earnest, it accomplishes two things: no idea is left untested or unconsidered; and, it illustrates clearly the implication of certain design proposals on the composition of the campus as a whole.

These lead to the development of The Preferred Plan, described in the pages that follow. The Master Plan that resulted from this rigorous process is one that goes beyond traditional notions of campus planning - beyond the formulaic; beyond the two-dimensional - and proposes bold, transformational architectural solutions to issues of identity, connectivity, presence and place-making.
BIG IDEAS

Define the GSU Campus: A Unified Whole

A primary focus of the Master Plan was creating high-quality public-realm where possible and where Georgia State's real estate holdings allowed – which envisions an interconnected open space network with a consistent palette of landscape, hardscape and architectural interventions, knitting together Georgia State's buildings and programs at street level.

Additionally, the Master Plan illustrates how to create an interconnected multimodal public transportation system that links pedestrian, bicycle, university and public transportation systems (MARTA and the Atlanta Streetcar), throughout downtown and beyond.

Hurt Park is the natural hub for this system as it is the geographic confluence of systems already in place.

To reinforce this, the Master Plan proposes closing Gilmer Street between Peachtree Center Avenue and Courtland Street, making a “transit mall” at the south end of Hurt Park. This is an opportunity to re-think and re-design Hurt Park itself, proposals for which are part of this Master Plan.

The multimodal system would connect the new GSU Convocation Center to be located at the site bordered by Capital Avenue, Pollard Boulevard and Fulton Street, south of downtown – and reach at least as far as the former Turner Field surface parking lots in the Summerhill neighborhood of Atlanta, approximately one and one-half miles from Hurt Park.

Georgia State is in a partnership with Carter USA to develop a new, mixed-use community on those lands. In the interim, the surface lots provide satellite parking, relieving demand downtown.

The Master Plan recommends a multi-level parking structure be built to maintain important satellite parking while accommodating development of the balance of the land. With a well-integrated and efficient multimodal transportation system, this will create opportunity sites downtown, where existing structured parking might make way for new GSU buildings and programs.
Aerial View of Proposed Interventions to the GSU Campus

The Preferred Plan
Celebrate the Precincts & Districts

Finally, there is the recognition that “districts” are emerging within the campus and city fabric – an arts district revolving around the Rialto Theater, a science district at “Science Park”, anchored by the Petit Science Center and Research Science Center and a Student Residence and Dining district to the northeast, emanating from the intersection of Piedmont and John Wesley Dobbs Avenues. The Master Plan takes the position that the art and science districts should be reinforced with additional, similar uses as Georgia State grows, but perhaps new student housing might want be located more centrally to the core campus, if possible.
Illustrative Master Plan
CLEARLY DEFINED PRECINCTS

Diagram of the Four Precincts Comprising the Main Campus
The Preferred Plan

Illustrative Diagrams of Proposed Interventions at Each of the Precincts