Options Testing

Using the findings from the Due Diligence & Discovery phase of work as a launch point, the second phase of work in preparation of the Master Plan was the testing of various Options for review with University leadership. Each Option was vetted with respect to how will it addressed the Guiding Principles and Big Ideas with respect to practical considerations. The Options were refined and, in some cases, melded with other Options toward the final, Preferred Plan. The following pages are a summary of the ideas that were tested, and the issues that were identified, in this phase of work.

Creating a Campus Identity and Gateways

Defining a consistent palette of materials, color, lighting, hard-scape, landscape, and way-finding is essential to establishing the Campus Identity. Creating psychological thresholds is also essential to place making. The Master Plan identifies key nodes to be marked with architecture, hardscape and landscape and advocates that the University develop a standards to be used universally to create a visual "connective tissue" that knits all University properties together.
Planning Drivers

The following ideas and issues were taken into consideration in the development of Options:

- Opportunity Sites for New Buildings or Open Space
- Buildings to be re-purposed, demolished or sold
- Opportunities for more Active Ground Floor Uses or occupancies
- Prime Retail Opportunity Sites
- Façade “Facelifts” for unattractive and/or blank street walls
- Holistic Streetscape Upgrades: Make Complete Streets
- Augment Landscaping and Street Lighting
- Mark Key Intersections and Make Gateways
- Develop Strategies for Vacant Lots and Surface Parking Lots
- Replace Surface Parking Lots with a Structured Parking Deck; or
- Transfer the Parking burden to Turner Field
- Enhance/Re-Think Woodruff and Hurt Parks
Development Joint Venture Opportunities

- Improve the pedestrian experience for students
- The city parks, Woodruff and Hurt, need re-designing
- Address outmoded buildings and infrastructure
- The MARTA Plaza needs redesign and a solution to vagrancy
- More ground floor frontages should have active uses
- Auburn and John Wesley Dobbs Avenues need infill buildings with active street level uses
- Buildings along Decatur Street from Piedmont to Central Avenues should open up to the street
- At street level, re-skin unattractive facades, windowless walls and parking structures
- At parking garages and buildings like the Sports Arena and Student Recreation Center, re-skin the facades, employ Super Graphics or and/or infuse them with active street level uses
- Streetscapes need to be upgraded
- Piedmont Avenue is an important corridor with important intersections at J.W. Dobbs, Auburn and Edgewood Avenues
- Other important corridors to receive upgrades are Decatur and Courtland Streets
- Have a strategy for surface parking and vacant lots
- Downtown Atlanta seems full of joint-venture development opportunities for GSU
OPPORTUNITY AREAS

Precinct Analysis

In breaking down a larger whole it became useful to think of GSU’s downtown campus as four precincts, each with a character of its own, though interrelated: 1) The precinct that surrounds and shapes Woodruff Park; 2) The precinct at the core of the campus anchored by Student Center East and Student Center West; the Piedmont Avenue corridor; and, the super-blocks north of Edgewood Avenue to Ellis Street. Additionally, the former Turner Field Site is a fifth district, though aloof of the main campus.

In an effort to give them an identity that would resonate, each of these precincts were named:

- The Square (the Woodruff Park precinct)
- The Quads (the core of the campus with the Student Center buildings)
- The Corridor (Piedmont Avenue)
- The Super Blocks (Edgewood Avenue to Ellis Street, east of Peachtree Street)
- The Satellite (former Turner Field)