

Georgia State University Master Plan



COOPER ROBERTSON

FINAL SUMMARY REPORT

March 26th, 2019 revised April 19th, 2021

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Executive Summary

The following is a summation of over fifteen months of effort, working closely with the Georgia State community, that entailed numerous visits to each of the University's campuses, dozens of interviews and discussions with University leadership, meetings with important partners with the city of Atlanta, copious engagement of key stakeholders, thorough due diligence, macro to micro physical analysis, a prolific exploration of design ideas and, finally, synthesis and refinement.

Addressed herein are first impressions, planning drivers, big ideas, and how to implement the plan.

In addition, the process that led to the conclusions and ultimate Master Plan is laid out in clear terms - a process that is essential to a thoughtful, thoroughly considered and insightful Master Plan; one that is sensible, articulate, tough-minded, nicely crafted and "works".

The Master Plan that resulted is one that goes beyond traditional notions of campus planning - beyond the two-dimensional - and proposes bold, transformational architectural solutions to issues of identity, connectivity, presence and place-making.

INTRODUCTION

Founded in 1913, Georgia State University is embedded in the heart of downtown Atlanta and is one of the most diverse universities in the nation: a community of faculty, staff and students from varied racial, ethnic, socio-economic and lifestyle backgrounds. Georgia State's campus is a laboratory that includes the entire community in building understanding, tolerance and concern for others – qualities that are central to human progress. Located in the heart of one of the world's global centers, the university has an opportunity to demonstrate to the world how diversity can be a catalyst for change and inclusive growth.

In 2016 Georgia State University became the largest institution of higher education in the University System of Georgia, with an overall enrollment of approximately 52,000 students. That occurred by virtue of two key, strategic decisions on the part of University leadership: 1) Growth in enrollment and retention on its main, downtown campus; and, 2) Incorporation of the Georgia Perimeter College and its five campuses in the Greater Atlanta area. Over the course of the 2008 Recession, Georgia State also acquired additional real estate holdings downtown as well as the former Turner Field, previously home to the Atlanta Braves and now home to the GSU Panther football program.

Those transformational events, coupled with the ability to grow the University to 60,000 students, precipitated the need for a fresh look at Georgia State's Master Plan and how it serves the University's mission and strategic goals.

In 2018, US New & World Report placed Georgia State University second in its ranking of “most innovative colleges and universities” nationwide, ahead of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Georgia Institute of Technology and Stanford University, among others.

From actions to outcomes, Georgia State University is central to the national agenda.

Georgia State's campus is a laboratory that includes the entire community in building understanding, tolerance and concern for others—qualities that are central to human progress. Located in the heart of one of the world's global centers, the university has an opportunity to demonstrate to the world how diversity can be a catalyst for change and inclusive growth.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Georgia State University is a decidedly urban campus largely comprised of buildings the University has acquired, which were built for other than academic uses – as such no real consistency of architectural expression. Georgia State, along with State and City government, is a major stakeholder in downtown Atlanta, but does not control the public realm around its real estate holdings. The overarching question, and challenge, for the Master Plan, therefore, was how to make Georgia State look and feel like a campus? How to create psychological thresholds and connectivity for what is now mostly a disparate collection of buildings that happen to share a zip code? What are the models one should look to – other urban campuses – which do this well? And how to, in remedial, if not surgical, ways, create a “fabric” that knits together, physically, Georgia State?

PLANNING DRIVERS & BIG IDEAS

With these challenges in mind, the first focus of the Master Planning effort became the street level pedestrian experience – having to do with landscaping, signage and active and inviting street front uses – and where active uses are not readily possible, employing urban “cosmetics” in the form of super graphics, billboards, façade “screens”, and public or student art at the scale of the city.

BIG IDEAS

The Master Planning effort settled on a series of Guiding Principles – the “Big Ideas” that would drive the design work going forward in the Options and Preferred Plan phases of work. These are:

1. Define the GSU Campus as a Unified Whole
2. Create Gateway Nodes
3. Transform the Campus Core
4. Celebrate the Precincts & Districts





Planning Context

The context in which this Master Plan was developed began with Georgia State University's Strategic Plan, updated and approved in April, 2016 and transformational events that had occurred after the 2012 Master Plan update: Consolidation of Georgia State and Georgia Perimeter College; growth in enrollment; real estate holdings on the downtown campus; and, acquisition of former Turner Field. Past and parallel planning studies were taken into consideration and a high level of stakeholder engagement helped mold the goals and ideas that are now part of the Master Plan. After a rigorous period of due diligence, options were tested, synthesized and refined, resulting, ultimately, in a final illustrative Master Plan.

STRATEGIC PLAN

In 2011, the University Senate adopted the 2-11-2016/21 Strategic Plan. A Strategic Plan Update was approved on April 5, 2016. The 2011 Plan did not anticipate the consolidation of Georgia State and Georgia Perimeter College, and the 2016 Plan does not address it either, as it was on-going when the April 2016 Plan was developed and approved.

The 2016 Strategic Plan maintains the original five goals from the 2011 Plan. Many of the initiatives, to achieve the goals, from the 2011 Plan have been completed with success. The initiatives identified below are those outstanding or on-going from the 2011 Plan, or were updated in 2016.

Goal One: Become a national model for undergraduate education by demonstrating that students from all backgrounds can achieve academic and career success at high rates.

- > Initiative One: Increase the level of scholarship support for undergraduate students;
- > Initiative Two: Reduce the time to earn a Georgia State undergraduate degree;
- > Initiative Three: Establish new pathways that facilitate seamless college to career transitions;
- > Initiative Four: Find the balance between technology and human interaction in instruction so that education and student success outcomes are greatly enhanced.





Goal Two: Significantly strengthen and grow the base of distinctive graduate and professional programs to assure development of the next generation of researchers and societal leaders.

- > Initiative One: Expand support for doctoral programs. Grow and enhance graduate programs to the level where they are commensurate with top tier research universities;
- > Initiative Two: Leverage GSU's national reputation in professional degree programs for the development of societal leaders. Create innovative and flexible graduate and professional programs that respond to evolving market and society needs;
- > Initiative Three: Become a national model for creating a pipeline into graduate school and professional programs to increase the diversity of strong leaders in academic and professional careers.



Goal Three: Become a leading public research university addressing the most challenging issues of the 21st Century.

- > Initiative One: Enhance a research culture. Support a research culture that tackles large and complex problems;
- > Initiative Two: Establish university-level research centers;
- > Initiative Three: Create a Faculty Fellowship Program. Expand the Faculty Fellowship Program to include support for faculty to expand their research through a new discipline;
- > Initiative Four: Enhance the supporting infrastructure for the conduct of research, not limited to laboratory and experimental sciences;
- > Initiative Five: Enhance Georgia State's contributions to the sciences, and health and medical research and education. Use team approaches to build upon partnerships with institutions in Atlanta and beyond to expand the magnitude and impact of our health-related research efforts.



Goal Four: Be a leader in understanding the complex challenges of cities and developing effective solutions.

- > Initiative One: Form the Council for Progress of Cities (CPC; established 2011). Establish an institute that will be the nexus for research and degree programs focused on complex challenges of cities;
- > Initiative Two: Highlight the arts and media;
- > Initiative Three: Be a nationally recognized model for leadership inclusion.



Goal Five: Achieve distinction in globalizing the university.

- > Initiative One: Create an International Consortium of Universities for Critical Issues Challenging Cities. Build the Global Partnership for Better Cities to become a unique joint-venture of international universities providing perspectives from cities around the world;
- > Initiative Two: Promote externally funded research on the challenges facing emerging nations. Enhance and promote research and scholarship on the challenges facing the global community;
- > Initiative Three: Establish a Georgia State International Center;
- > Initiative Four: Enhance the global competency of students, faculty and staff. Leverage Atlanta's global footprint to further the global perspective of students, faculty, and staff through experiential learning, research and community engagement.



PROCESS

A University's Strategic Plan necessarily influences, to degrees, the development of a physical Master Plan. The physical Master Plan must support the University's goals, vision and mission, to the greatest degree possible – and therefore must be understood and digested before pencil is put to paper.

In preparing the 2018 Master Plan, Cooper Robertson employed a time-tested process, with proven results of success, which includes three distinct, but interrelated phases of work:

- > Engagement & Discovery
- > Options
- > The Preferred (Illustrative) Plan.

The purpose of the Engagement, Due Diligence & Discovery phase of work was to learn as much as possible about Georgia State Downtown and the five metropolitan campuses – culturally, programmatically and physically, including their history and the larger contexts in which they are situated – before proffering design solutions – beginning with the Strategic Plan and building from there.

In the process themes emerge and are synthesized into Guiding Principles which form the basis of the Options phase of work. The physical setting of each campus was analyzed and from this Opportunities & Constraints were identified. In the Options phase of work, using the Guiding Principles as a compass and the Opportunities & Constraints as parameters, a variety of conceptual design ideas are tested.

In the final phase of work, the Preferred Plan, the best and most successful aspects of various design options were blended into a single plan, as the preferred direction for the Master Plan. This is further developed in greater detail as The Preferred Plan.

PAST AND PRESENT PLANNING EFFORTS

Previous master plans were reviewed thoroughly as part of the initial phase of work and vetted for their current applicability and usefulness. It warrants noting, however, that these plans addressed the downtown campus only and predate a number of events that make Georgia State University a very different institution and environment than it was in 2012: 1) Consolidation of Georgia State University with Georgia Perimeter College and its five campuses; 2) Recent expansion and growth of the main, downtown campus; and 3) Georgia State University's



acquisition of former Turner (Atlanta Braves baseball) Field, now home to the GSU Panther football program.

Additional planning studies include the 2017 Library Master Plan by Pfeiffer Partners Architects and a concept study for the expansion of Student Center East begun in late 2018 by Perkins & Will.



2020 CAMPUS SPACE ANALYSIS STUDIES

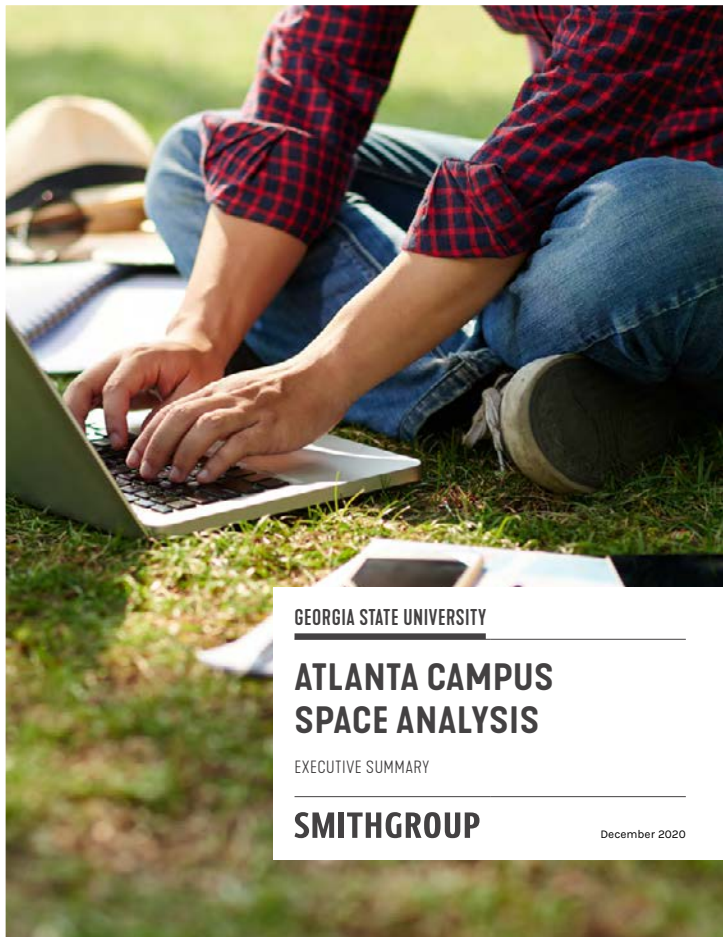
In 2019, the University commissioned SmithGroup to undertake comprehensive space analysis studies for both the Atlanta campus and Metropolitan campuses. These studies are based on the Fall 2019 term, establishing a snapshot for campus activities in 2019.

In determining space needs for the University, data was augmented with campus discussion, and the outcomes of these meetings was incorporated into the space utilization expectations and space needs guidelines.

In general the analyses indicate:

- > The overall space on the Atlanta campus is currently in slight deficit, but essentially balanced. However, the significant surplus in office space is not easily repurposed into the type of space the campus needs.
- > As the Atlanta campus enrollment increases to the 40,000 student target, new purpose built space will be required along with reconfiguration of existing office space to achieve appropriate efficiencies.
- > The Metropolitan campus space needs were established using the same guidelines for all locations. The student experience should be similar at all of the campuses according to leadership.
- > This approach yields a range from a slight deficit at Alpharetta to a 35% surplus at Newton.
- > Enrollment at the Metropolitan campuses is projected to increase to 20,000 students.

The Executive Summaries for both Atlanta Campus Space Analysis and Metropolitan Campus Space Analysis are included in the Appendix of this document. It should be noted that these studies were completed after the completion of the physical Master Plan, and therefore do not directly inform the physical Master Plan.



GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY

METROPOLITAN CAMPUSES SPACE ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SMITHGROUP

December 2020

GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY

ATLANTA CAMPUS SPACE ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Engagement and Discovery

The purpose of the Engagement & Discovery phase of work was to learn as much as possible about Georgia State and its six campuses - culturally, programmatically and physically, including their history and the larger contexts in which they are situated - before proffering design solutions.

Engagement began with the Strategic Plan and continued with “listening tours”, where all key constituent groups were interviewed. Over the first many weeks of the project some twenty-five interviews were conducted with well over thirty stakeholders such as the President, Provost, Vice Provost, Associate Provosts, Senior Vice Presidents, Vice Presidents, Associate Vice Presidents, Directors, Deans, Chief Innovation Officer, Chief of Police, Vice Chancellor, Special Advisors and others. The discussions were open, candid and animated - and themes began to emerge that would influence the later phases of work. Those themes were synthesized into Guiding Principles which would form the basis of the Options phase of work.

Each of the six GSU campuses was visited multiple times and the physical settings - including land-use patterns, existing open space networks, circulatory systems, landscape palette, lighting standards, street furniture, infrastructure, parking, and athletic and recreational facilities - were analyzed; as well as, on the downtown campus, the character and quality of street level uses and frontages. Regulatory and environmental issues impacting the campuses and the ultimate Plan were researched and itemized. From this Opportunities & Constraints were identified.

Additionally, previous master plans, prepared in 1999, 2006 and 2012 were reviewed thoroughly and vetted for their current applicability and usefulness - as was the 2017 Library Master Plan.

LISTENING TOUR

The following key stakeholders and leaders at Georgia State were interviewed as part of the Engagement & Discovery phase of work:

“GSU has a clear and present presence in downtown Atlanta; especially as a result of its community outreach, programs et al.”

Dr. Mark Becker, President
Risa Palm, Sr VP for Academic Affairs & Provost
Jerry Rackliffe, Sr VP for Finance & Administration
Tim Renick, VP for Enrollment Mgmt & Student Success
Charlie Cobb, Dir., of Athletics
Walter Massey, VP for Development & Alumni Affairs
James Weyhenmeyer, VP Research & Economic Development
Mary Beth Walker, Assoc Provost, Strategic Initiatives
Chip Hill, Asst. Provost for Admin Operations
Phil Ventimiglia, Chief Innovation Officer
Rick Parker, Dir., Research Facilities
Peter Lyons, VP, Dean, Perimeter College
Sara Rosen, Dean, Arts & Sciences
Rich Phillips, Dean, Business
Paul Alberto, Dean, Education & Human Development
Nancy Kropf, Dean, Byrdine F. Lewis School of Nursing & Health Professions
Michael Eriksen, Dean, Public Health
Wendy Hensel, Interim Dean, Law
Sally Wallace, Interim Dean, Andrew Young School of Policy Studies
Wade Weast, Dean, Arts
Larry Berman, Honors College
Jeff Steely, Dean, University Library
Douglas Covey, VP for Student Affairs
Darryl Holloman, Assoc VP for Student Affairs & Dean of Students
Randy Brown, Dir., Univ. Housing
Jeffrey Coleman, Dir., Multicultural Center
C. Bernard McCrary, Dir., Black Student Achievement
Ramesh Vakamudi, VP Facilities
Russ Seagren, Dir., Facilities Planning
Alvin Clark, Manager, Facilities Information Services
Joseph Spillane, Chief of Police
Beth Jones, Assoc VP for Finance & Admin
Boyd Beckwith, Senior Dir., Student Center
Tim Keane, Commissioner, Department of City Planning
Jennifer Ball, VP, Planning & Economic Development, Central Atlanta Progress

KEY FINDINGS

Certain themes emerged from the interviews with key stakeholders and university leadership, which are outlined below:

GSU is a very different place than it was five years ago

The [positive] **“GSU Impact”** on Downtown Atlanta, and the **beautification of downtown Atlanta**, is Extraordinary and Unequivocal.

Student Housing is an essential component of enhancing the student experience at GSU, student success, participation, engagement and retention, and the continued revitalization of downtown Atlanta; “community living architecture” is preferred.

A high percentage of **GSU students have jobs**; and a high percentage of **GSU students have families**.

GSU has **clear and present presence** in downtown Atlanta; especially as a result of its community outreach, programs et al.

There should be **greater visual identity for the campus**; greater visual indicators you are on campus; and one should know when you walk into a GSU classroom, that it is GSU.

Hurt Park is a lynch-pin for the betterment of the GSU downtown campus.

The Priorities at GSU are **Students, Research, Academics, Student Success, and Student Life**.

Student Housing at the five metro locations does not seem to be a promising idea.

Most of GSU's buildings were acquired or inherited and were designed for other purposes; and, therefore, do not always serve the mission of the school and its programs as effectively as they might had they been designed for academic, rather than commercial purposes.

There is a need for **more classroom space** [GSU has enough office space].

There is a **need for large lecture halls and auditoriums**.

There is a **need for “advance classrooms”** and “specialized rooms”.

There is a **need for “swing space”** in each of the colleges.

There is a **need for an entertainment space** that seats about 300 people for alumni and fundraising events.

There might be a **need for a “University Guest House”**.

There is a **need to connect all of GSU** through technology and transportation.

Nursing and its five [5] related Health Profession programs, is scarce on space and does not have the right kinds of space; “nursing” is not taught like English or history. GSU should be educating greater numbers of students to enter the Health Care Industry, because the demand and the need is there and growing.

There is **not enough parking and the parking access control systems** are antiquated and ineffective; students can’t find the parking they need when they need it.

How can **GSU leverage technology in its pedagogy**, transform the “one-to-the-many” into a more intimate educational experience, move toward experiential learning and look for ways to create opportunistic collisions.



Existing streetscape at downtown Atlanta campus



FIRST IMPRESSIONS

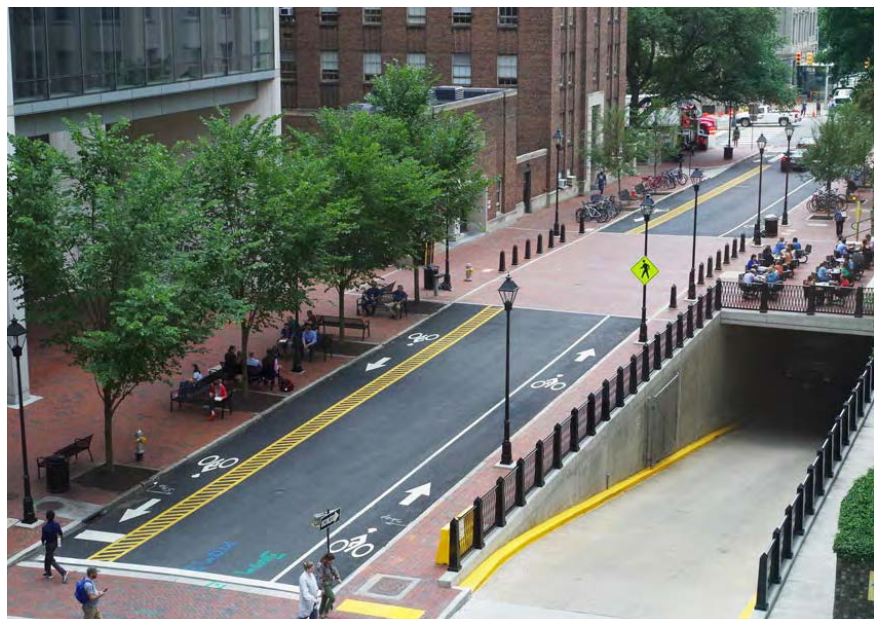
First impressions are lasting and “first take” observations are useful because they are made without preconceptions or prejudices. A fundamental first impression is that Georgia State University lacks a sense of place – an identity that distinguishes itself as its own while still being an integral part of the fabric of downtown Atlanta, which become an overarching preoccupation in the Master Planning effort. Currently, it does not “feel like a campus” and is more akin to New York University or Pace University in Manhattan than it is like the Drexel University and the University of Pennsylvania, which sit in the heart of Philadelphia, or Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia. NYU and Pace University are indistinguishable from their urban context, while UPenn, Drexel and VCU make great strides to a distinct setting within an urban context. How to do that at Georgia State became an overarching preoccupation of the master planning effort. The following are first impressions from early visits to the University.

Possible Macro to Micro Interventions

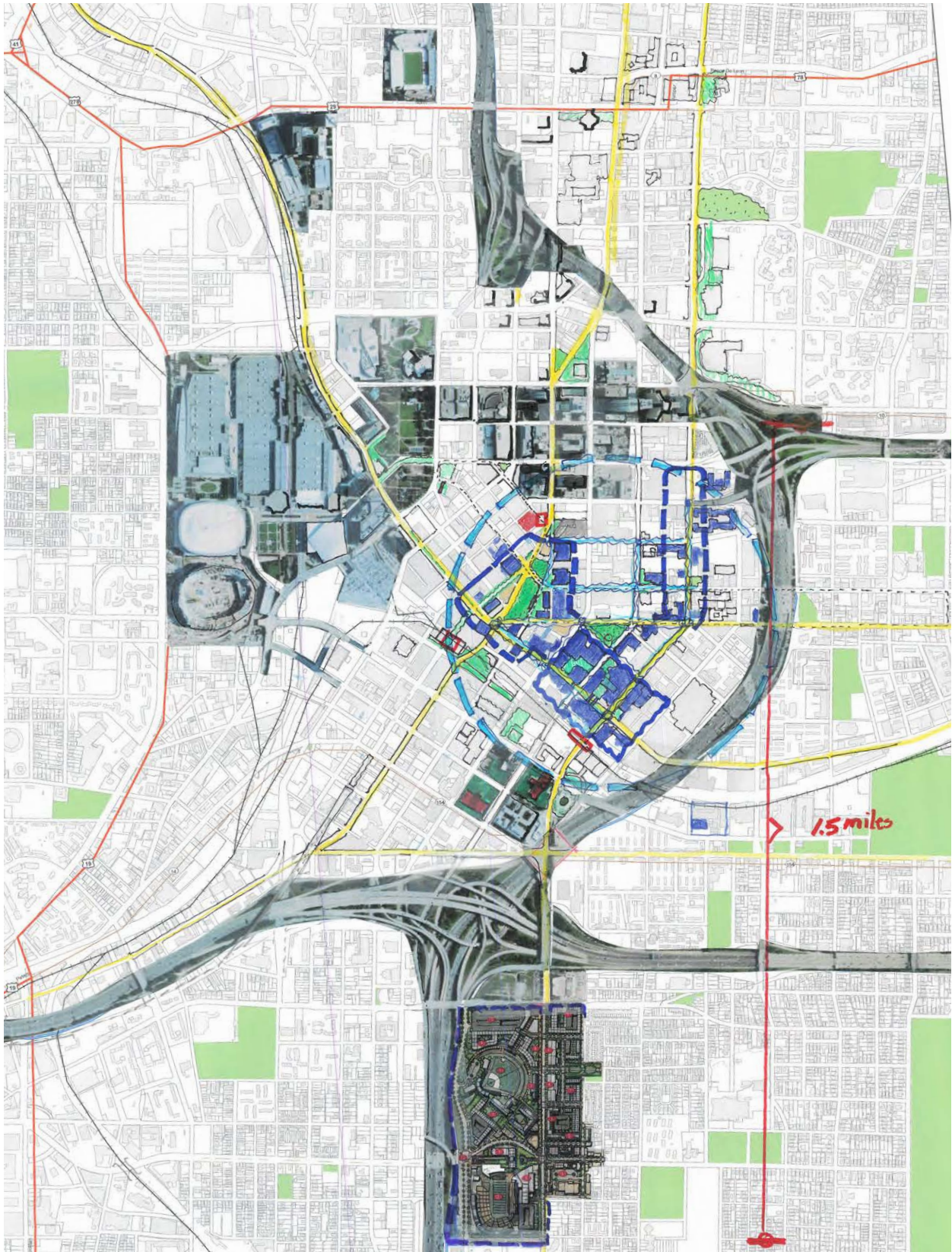
The Master Plan strives to address Georgia State's physical planning issues from a global to a granular scale.

Globally, the University should identify sites for strategic acquisition – properties that will allow the University to strengthen its physical setting with new buildings and/or open spaces; in-fill sites that will, by definition, better connect existing GSU facilities. These could include buildings to be re-purposed or demolished to make way for new uses, as well as vacant lots and surface parking lots that are a blight to the physical campus and are the equivalent of “missing teeth”. Further, there should be a comprehensive and holistic streetscape vision, to create an aesthetic “glue” that connects otherwise disparate elements of Georgia State. This would include hardscape, landscape, lighting, way-finding and street furniture. Strategies for parking are critical to this – by consolidating surface parking and two to three level parking structures to larger parking structures – creating opportunity sites – to satellite parking at the former Georgia State Stadium, with shuttle service and bicycle lanes to campus.

More granularly, the University should focus its investment in capital improvements on “everything from fifteen feet [15'] down” – with façade improvements and more active ground floor uses.



The 12th Street Plaza at Virginia Commonwealth University



Analysis drawing showing the impact of major roadways and how they define the outer boundaries of the downtown campus



PHYSICAL ANALYSIS

Campus Clusters



Understanding the DNA of what exists - the “genus loci” of the setting - is essential to building what is best about it and enhancing and positively transforming it in ways that will be at once fresh and familiar to those who will use it. The physical analysis of each of Georgia State's six campuses, therefore, was a critical first exercise as part of the Master Plan.

The overwhelming bulk of Georgia State's facilities and student activities reside on its downtown campus.

The focus of the Physical Analysis, therefore, concerned itself with the downtown context. The strategy for the metropolitan campuses is to “brand” them as Georgia State with GSU colors, signage, and a commonality of exterior furniture, street furniture and lighting; some of which has already begun.

The following is a synopsis of the findings of the Physical Analysis phase of work.

Campus Core

Georgia State's campus core pinwheels around Hurt Park, leaping Woodruff Park and extending west to the H.M. Aderhold Learning Center and Rialto Center for the Arts, as far east as Jesse Hill Junior Drive and reaching north along the Piedmont Avenue corridor beyond Ellis Street.

The beating heart of the campus core could be argued to be the two city blocks just south of Hurt Park - bordered by Gilmer Street to the north, Decatur Street to the south, Peachtree Center Avenue to the west and Piedmont Avenue to the east – as that two block area is home to Student Center East and West, the Urban Life building, Library North, Sparks Hall, Arts & Humanities, Langdale Hall and a planned new quadrangle where Kell Hall once stood (formed by Arts & Humanities, Sparks and Langdale Halls).

Programs and Precincts

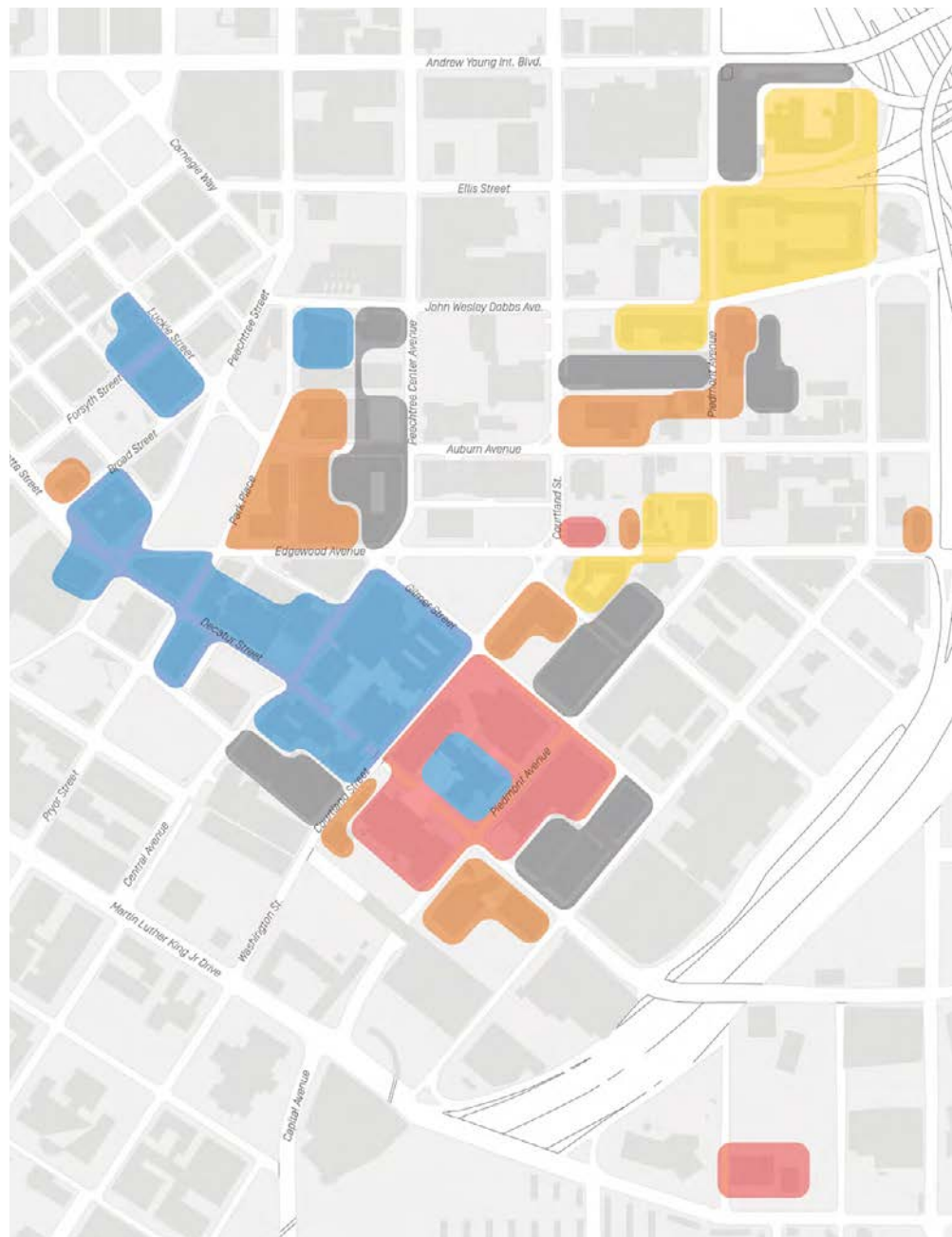
Precincts are emerging as planned on the Georgia State main campus and should be recognized and reinforced with new educational programs and facilities.

A Science Precinct is developing at the southeast corner of campus at "Science Park", anchored by the Petit Science Center and Research Science Center, including planned new facilities for the sciences. The Petit Science Center houses the Departments of Biology and Chemistry, the Institutes of Neuroscience and Biomedical Science, Viral Immunology Center and features a Bio-Safety Level 4 Lab, one of only five in the United States.

An Arts Precinct is emerging at the northwest corner of campus in the historic Fairlie-Poplar district, revolving around the Rialto Center for the Arts and the H.M. Aderhold Learning Center - with its Creation and Technology Lab (CATLAB), a general-use computer lab that offers state-of-the-art facilities to create, edit, and share media projects; where students work together in collaborative spaces with exceptional technical support.

To the northeast of the campus, along the Piedmont Avenue corridor, a Residential Precinct is growing. An issue with this is that student housing is removed from student activities, curricular and extracurricular, and the pedestrian desire lines are John Wesley Dobbs and Auburn Avenues – with the stretches between Piedmont Avenue and Peachtree Center Avenue largely not controlled by Georgia State and largely unpleasant to walk along given their physical conditions (vacant lots, surface parking lots, dilapidated buildings, little (if any) active street front uses, etc).

There are two, perhaps complimentary, strategies to address this: One, Georgia State has to be ready to respond to growth opportunities in the blocks bordered by John Wesley Dobbs, Edgewood Avenue, Peachtree Center Avenue and Courtland Street; Two, Georgia State might consider encouraging that new student residence halls be built closer to the core campus.



Existing GSU Campus Land Use Clusters

KEY

- Student Life
- Academic
- Administration
- Residential
- Parking Garages

Existing Open Spaces

Being an urban campus, Georgia State does not have a traditional network of open spaces in the form of quadrangles, alleys, mews, courtyards and landscaped recreational areas. Atlanta's Woodruff Park and Hurt Park are the two primary open spaces within the University's downtown fabric. The Master Plan addresses possible improvements to these parks, which would benefit both the downtown business and Georgia State communities.

The future Greenway formed by the former Kell Hall site, Sparks Hall, Library North, and Langdale Hall is located at the core of the campus and represents Georgia State's most defined element of public realm that is controlled by the University - something that has become a focus of this Master Plan.

Other opportunity sites include the land west of Student Center East, at the corner of Courtland Street and Gilmer Street, and opportunity sites along John Wesley Dobbs, Auburn and Edgewood Avenues.

Parking

Parking is a threshold issue at Georgia State, in downtown Atlanta, as it is everywhere, and a somewhat contentious source of debate.

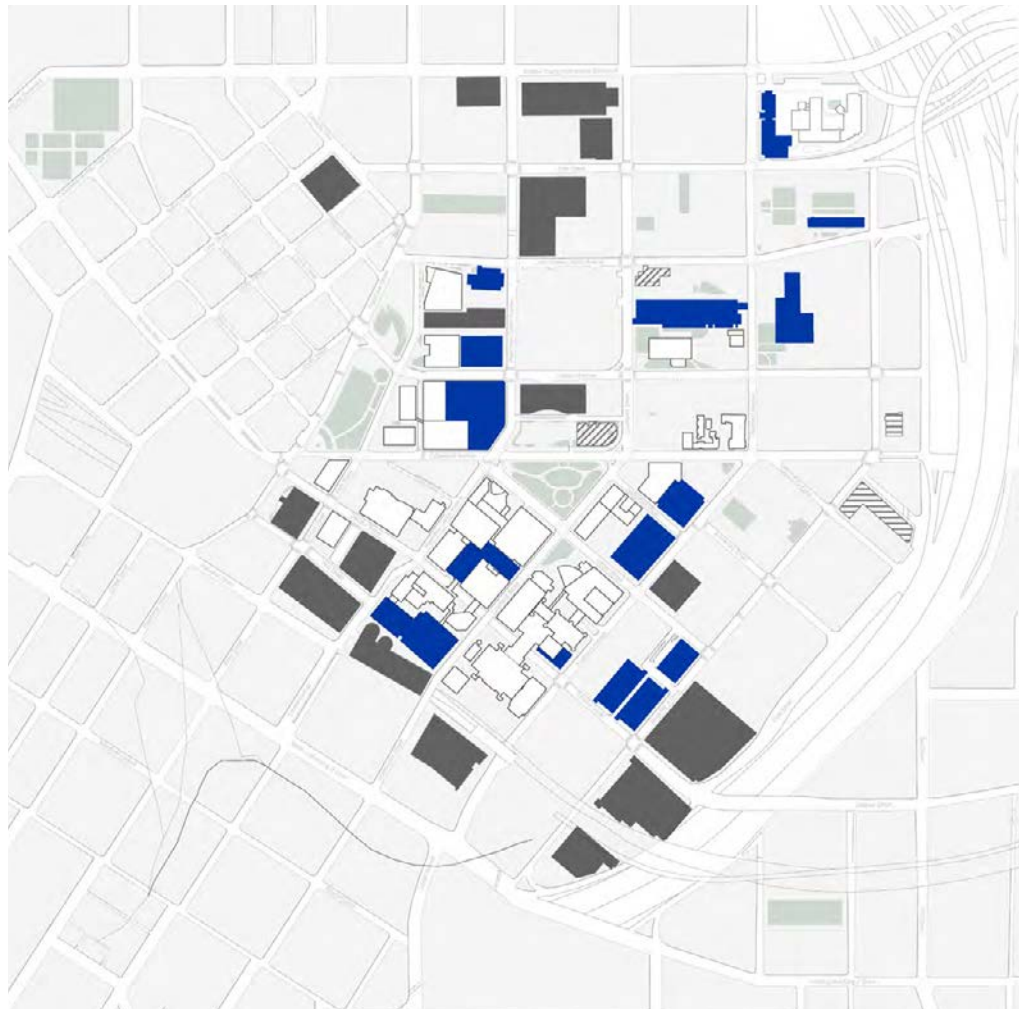
Given that Georgia State is inextricably woven into the downtown Atlanta fabric, with the State Capital (and the plethora of government workers that brings), Grady Memorial Hospital, hotels, conference centers, the relatively new Mercedes Benz Stadium and corporate headquarters like Georgia Pacific, parking (and traffic congestion) tends to be a major issue.

The downtown area is served by three Metro Atlanta Rapid Transit rail, multiple MARTA bus stops and the Atlanta Streetcar system. Atlanta is a car-oriented culture and usage of public transportation is lower than one would hope, compounding the parking issue.

Further compounding the parking issue is that an overwhelming majority of Georgia State students live off-campus (more than 80%), and drive to the University. Many also have part-time jobs and/or have started families – meaning time is especially precious to them so not only is an ample supply of parking critical to them, but conveniently located parking is equally important.

All that said, the City of Atlanta has launched the SMART-ATL initiative that is focused on relieving traffic congestion and the demand for parking in the downtown Atlanta area.

The Master Plan also conceives of an integrated multi-modal transportation network of bicycle lanes, streetcar and shuttle buses connecting downtown Atlanta and beyond to the new Georgia State Stadium where satellite parking is located, taking demand off of inner city parking and opening the potential of demolishing existing parking structures within downtown to make room for additional open space or new program.



Main Campus Parking Facilities

KEY

- Current GSU Parking Facility
- Non GSU Parking Facility [Deck]
- Non GSU Parking Facility [Lot]

Street & Block Network

The downtown Atlanta Street & Block Network is varied – particularly across those areas of downtown occupied by Georgia State University. Also, south of Edgewood Avenue the street grid shifts forty-five degrees southwest – “bending” the major north-south avenues from Spring Street to Jesse Hill, Jr. Drive.

The Street & Block pattern of downtown is in three tiers, identified in the drawing on the opposite page:

1. North of Edgewood Avenue and east of Peachtree Street is comprised of large blocks approximately 500' X 500', on average;
2. South of Edgewood Avenue the block pattern is somewhat more manageable but still large with blocks in the range of 300' X 400' to 400' X 500';
3. North of Marietta Street to Carnegie Way and west of Peachtree Street to Spring Street is the Historic Fairlie-Poplar District, made up of modestly scaled blocks of approximately 200' X 200', creating what is arguably the most pedestrian-friendly, human-scaled, urban fabric in the downtown area.

Street Hierarchy

The Street Hierarchy of Georgia State's downtown campus is a series of primary, secondary and tertiary streets, beginning with major north-south and east-west corridors.

The major north-south corridors are:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| > Peachtree Street | > Courtland Street, and |
| > Peachtree Center Avenue | > Piedmont Avenue |

The major east-west corridors are:

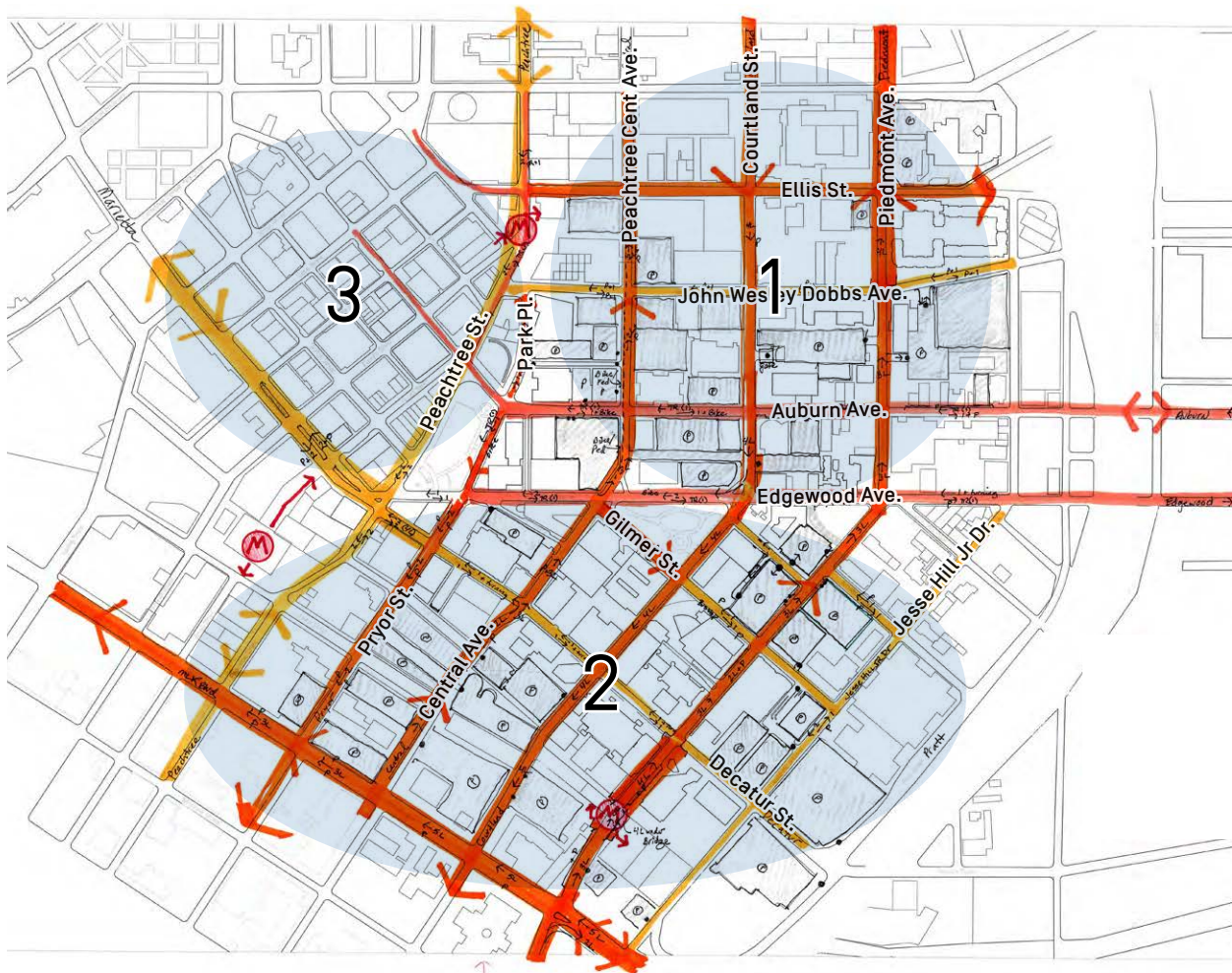
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|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| > Andrew Young International Blvd. | > Auburn Avenue |
| > Ellis Street | > Edgewood Avenue, and |
| > John Wesley Dobbs Avenue | > Decatur/Marietta Street |

The secondary streets are:

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------|
| > Gilt Street | > Pryor Street, and |
| > Wall Street | > Carnegie Way |

The tertiary streets are located primarily in the historic Fairlie-Poplar District are:

- > Broad Street
- > Forsyth Street
- > Farlie Street
- > Cone Street
- > Williams Street
- > Luckie Street
- > Poplar Street, and
- > Walton Street



Street Hierarchy

KEY

- Primary Streets
- Secondary Streets

Existing Street Conditions

The downtown campus includes a variety of street types, widths and configurations, as illustrated in the diagram on the opposite page:

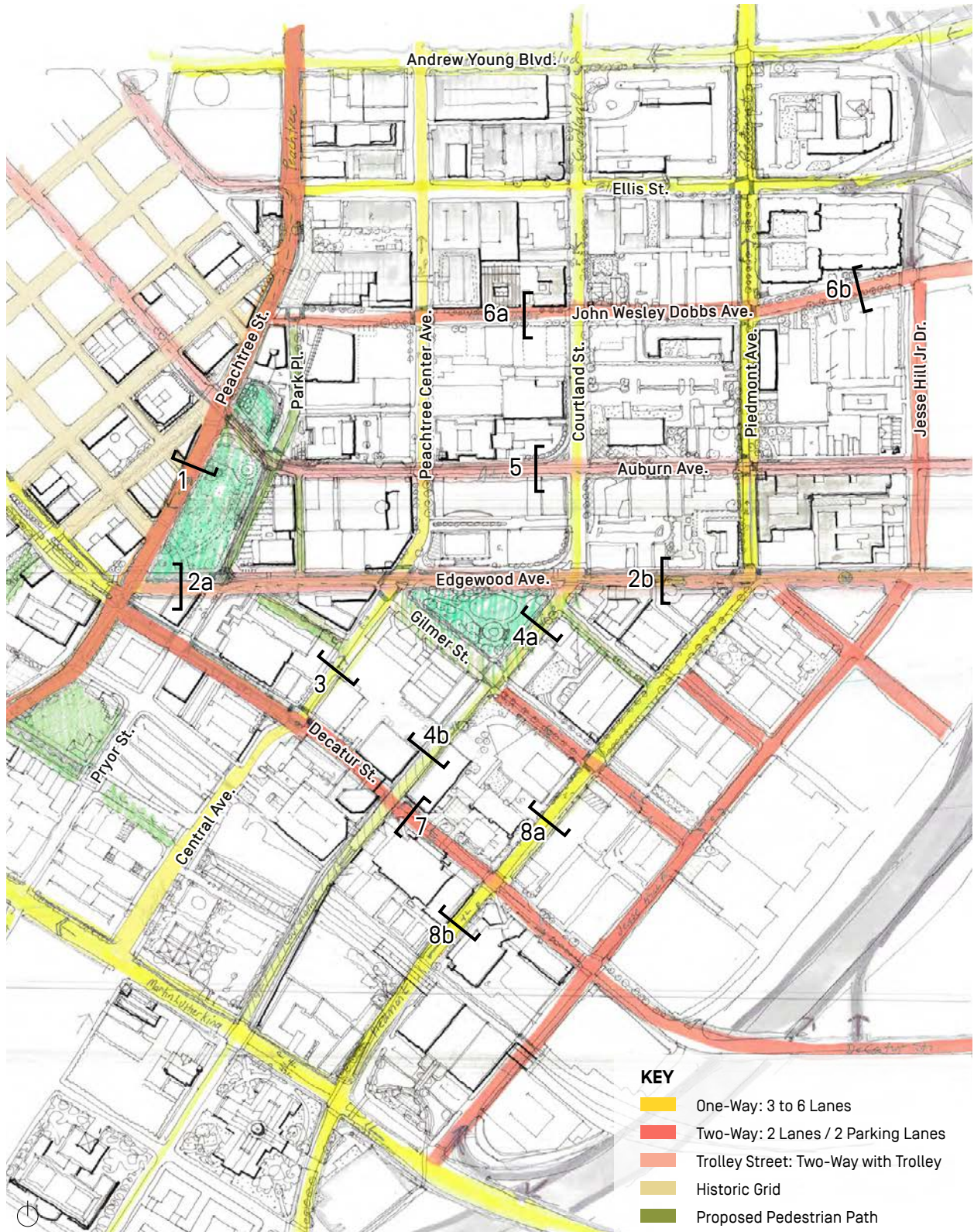
- > One-Way Streets: three [3] to six [6] lanes
- > Two-Way Streets: two [2] lanes with two [2] parallel parking berths
- > Two-Way Streets with an Atlanta Street Car lane
- > One-Way Streets in the historic Fairlie-Poplar District

A brief analysis of typical conditions for each individual street is outlined on the following pages. Also included are some initial ideas on how these the City of Atlanta could improve these streets in a manner that would benefit GSU, generally encompassing:

- > More two-way streets
- > More on-street parking
- > More street trees
- > Improved street lighting
- > Elimination of “free right” hand turns
- > Increased ADA accessibility
- > Wider sidewalks
- > Bicycle lanes, and
- > Tighter turning radii at street intersections



Preliminary Analysis Drawing of Existing Street Network



Existing Street Network

Street Analysis [Sections 1, 2A, 2B, 3]

PEACHTREE STREET (SECTION 1)

- > Atlanta's most iconic street should be Atlanta's best street.
- > A good street with generally nice frontages.
- > Could be augmented with more landscaping and street trees.

EDGEWOOD AVENUE (SECTION 2A)

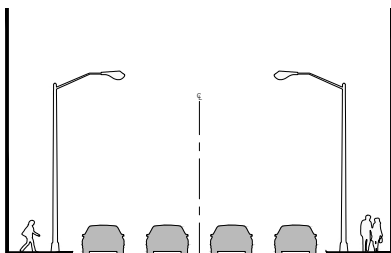
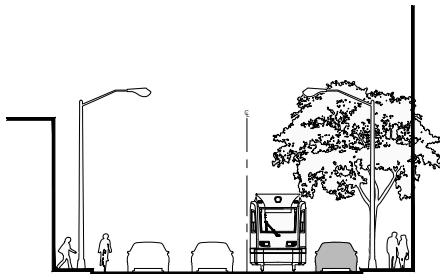
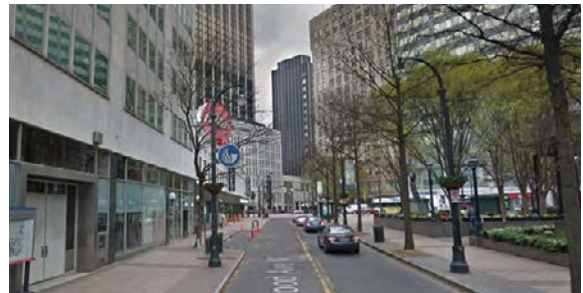
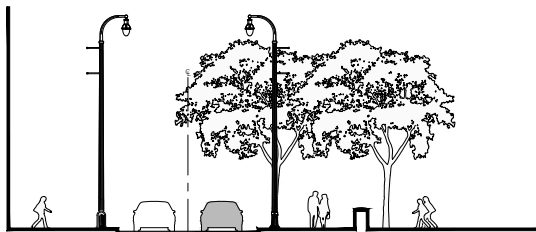
- > Nice street with good dimensions and proportions.
- > Narrow carriage width and wide sidewalks.
- > Street trees and street lamps enhance its spatial quality.
- > More activated ground floor uses would improve it.

EDGEWOOD AVENUE (SECTION 2B)

- > Wide street.
- > Narrow sidewalk.
- > No street trees on north side of the street and less-than optimal frontages.
- > The Scale of buildings on the north side of the building do not have sufficient massing to define the street spatially.
- > D.O.T. Standard "cobra" street lamps.

PEACHTREE CENTER AVENUE (SECTION 3)

- > Narrow-ish sidewalks and four carriage lane wide street with street level frontage devoid of landscape and activity.
- > Right lane includes bus stops and delivery drop-off points. Left lane is mostly on-street parking from Decatur Street to Hurt Plaza.
- > Consider narrowing the street by a least one carriage lane, widen the side walks, add street trees and encourage food trucks to improve it.
- > D.O.T. standard "cobra" street lamps.



Street Analysis [Sections 4A, 4B, 5, 6A]

COURTLAND STREET (SECTION 4A)

- > Bleeds out spatially and is five carriage lanes wide.
- > Consider a ten-foot wide landscaped median and additional street trees to improve it.
- > Approach the City about eliminating “Free Right” hand turns in GSU’s core campus.

COURTLAND STREET (SECTION 4B)

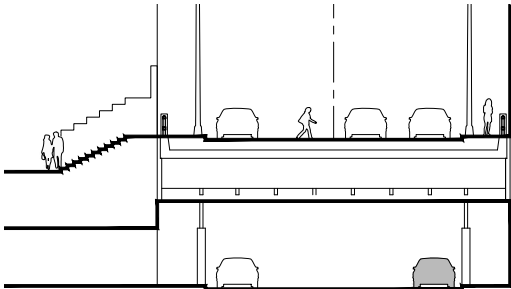
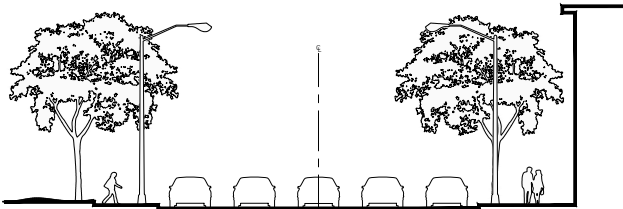
- > Pedestrian unfriendly & visually unattractive.
- > Deficient light-Bring daylight down to the viaduct below.
- > Unpleasant vertical circulation from viaduct to the surface.
- > Poor sidewalk conditions.
- > Suboptimal pedestrian crossings & lack of access for the disabled.

AUBURN AVENUE (SECTION 5)

- > The intersection at Courtland Street is important but is terribly wide; can something be done?
- > Two carriage lands (including Trolley) and two lay by parking lanes.
- > “Free Right” hand turns are problematic to pedestrian safety and walkability.

JOHN WESLEY DOBBS AVENUE (SECTION 6A)

- > This stretch of John Wesley Dobbs Avenue has potential if augmented with more street trees, nicer lighting and a street diet.



Street Analysis [Sections 6B, 7, 8A, 8B]

JOHN WESLEY DOBBS AVENUE (SECTION 6B)

- > Facade & frontages need to be addressed
- > On south side, create a planting verge at the curb, widen the sidewalk, and replace the chain link / razor wire fence with a landscape barrier.
- > Is there an opportunity to terminate this vista architecturally? With a bridge or marker?

DECATUR STREET (SECTION 7)

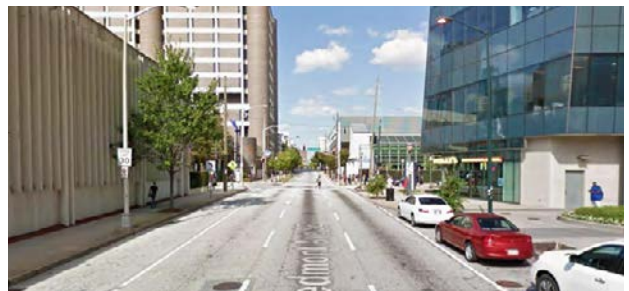
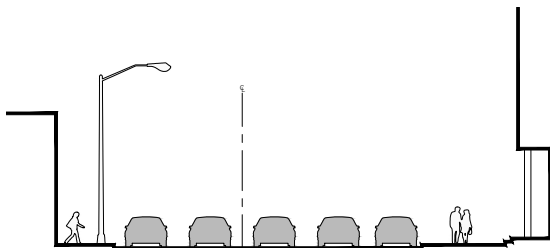
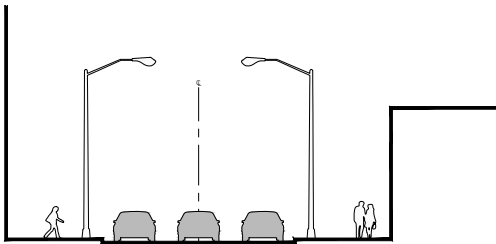
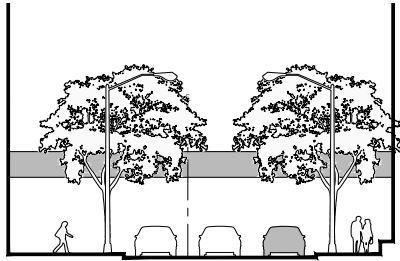
- > Pedestrian friendly sidewalks
- > Super Graphic potential on/under the bridge and building
- > Nothing [Uses/Activities] comes to the street; Open up the buildings at grade level; Re-skin them with transparent new facades.

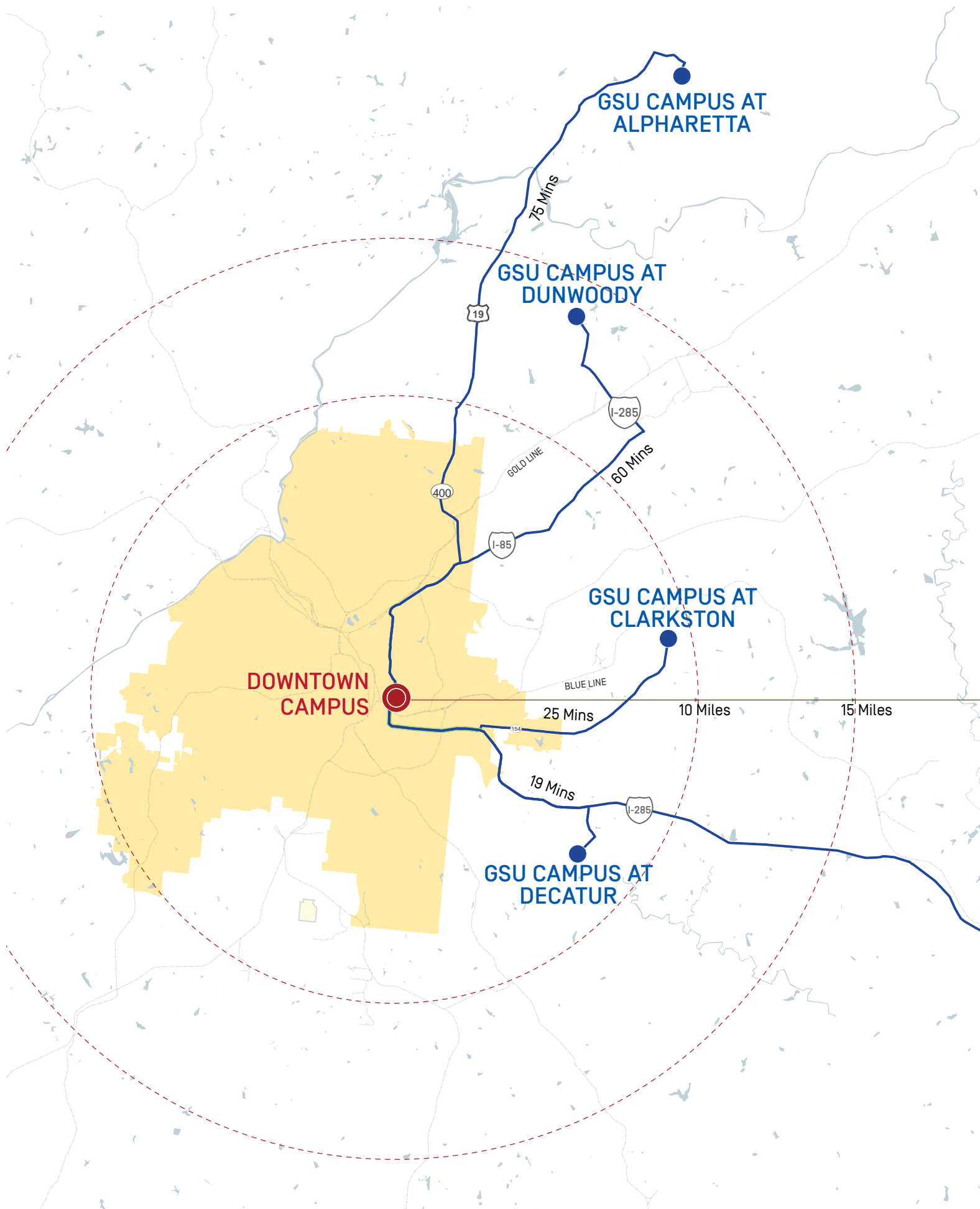
PIEDMONT AVENUE (SECTION 8A)

- > This stretch of Piedmont has potential.
- > Consider a landscaped median or one lane of on street parking with landscaped “bump cuts”.
- > Make street lamps consistent
- > Augment the landscaping
- > Address the ground floor frontages architecturally and in terms of uses.

PIEDMONT AVENUE (SECTION 8B)

- > Continue street narrowing south to M.L.K. Boulevard.
- > Widen sidewalk on west side of street.
- > Add street trees and nicer street lamps.
- > Add GSU sport murals to the blank wall.
- > Try to mitigate [reduce in dimension] the curb cuts on the east side of the street.





GEORGIA STATE METROPOLITAN CAMPUSES

In 2016, Georgia State University consolidated itself with Georgia Perimeter College and its five campuses serving the communities of Alpharetta, Clarkston, Decatur, Dunwoody and Newton, making Georgia State the largest university in the University System of Georgia with an overall student population of 52,000.

Georgia State's strategic plan for these metropolitan campuses is for them to provide access and excellence in their academic programs. The Metropolitan Campuses located at these five locations will focus on a high degree of individual attention and support to better prepare its students for the rigors of a university education.

In case of future student enrollment increases, each of the campuses have ample capacity for new buildings, facilities and recreational areas. In the interim, the Metropolitan Campuses should be "branded" to the greatest degree possible as "Georgia State" by adopting the same palette of materials, hardscape, landscape, lighting, way-finding and street furniture as the downtown campus.

30 Miles

45 Mins

**GSU CAMPUS AT
NEWTON**



Dunwoody



Decatur



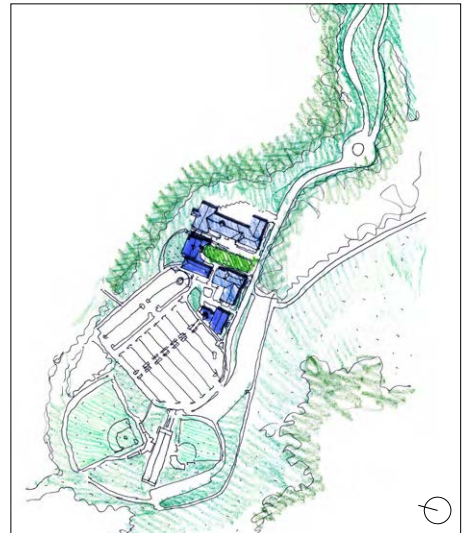
Clarkston

KEY

- Existing Building
- Potential Building



Alpharetta



Newtown

| CAMPUS | STUDENT POPULATION | ACRES | EXISTING BUILDINGS | EXISTING GSF | POTENTIAL BUILDINGS | POTENTIAL GSF |
|------------|-----------------------|-------|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Dunwoody | 6,840 | 60 | 12 | 340,722 | 5 | 179,960 |
| Decatur | 2,671 | 40 | 8 | 264,556 | 8 | 192,549 |
| Clarkston | 5,155 | 60 | 15 | 770,527 | 6 | 212,253 |
| Alpharetta | 2,202 | 20 | 2 | 99,114 | 1 | 38,580 |
| Newtown | 1,781 | 110 | 3 | 164,966 | 2 | 64,582 |



Clarkston campus

SUMMARY OF KEY RECOGNITIONS

GSU Downtown lacks a strong sense of continuity & identity;

GSU Downtown has substantial office space acquired for academic uses.



SUMMARY OF ISSUES

How does GSU Downtown transform itself to become a 21st Century Campus and Research Institution?

What is the connective tissue that links GSU Downtown's component parts?

How does GSU Downtown differentiate itself from other urban universities?







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 well 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.

PLANNING DRIVERS

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

1. Opportunity sites for new buildings or open space
2. Buildings to be re-purposed, demolished or sold
3. Opportunities for more active ground floor uses or occupancies
4. Prime retail opportunity sites
5. Façade “facelifts” for unattractive and/or blank street walls
6. Holistic streetscape upgrades: make complete streets
7. Augment landscaping and street lighting
8. Mark key intersections and make gateways
9. Develop strategies for vacant lots and surface parking lots
10. Replace surface parking lots with a structured parking deck; or
11. Transfer the parking burden to turner field
12. Enhance/re-think Woodruff Park and Hurt Park



Planning Drivers



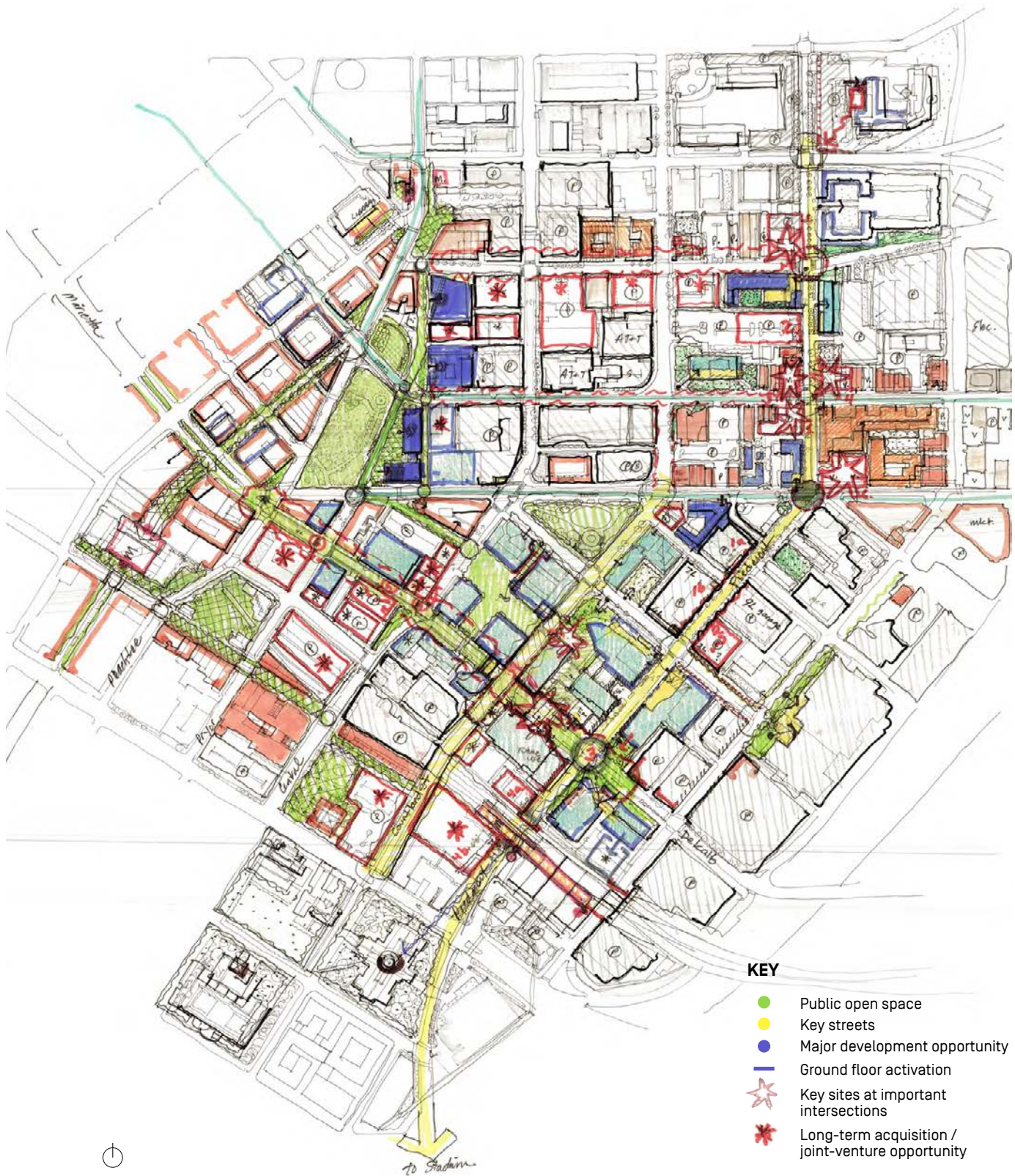
KEY

- Opportunity Building / Site
- Ground Floor Use
- ▮ Façade Renovations
- ▬ Streetscape Improvements
- Repurposed Parking Lot

JOINT VENTURE IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

There are opportunities to improve the public realm by working with the City of Atlanta, the Central Atlanta Progress, and the Atlanta Downtown Business Improvement District. These include the following:

1. Improve the pedestrian experience for students
2. Redesign Hurt Park
3. Address outmoded buildings and infrastructure
4. The MARTA Plaza needs redesign and a solution to vagrancy
5. More ground floor frontages should have active uses
6. Auburn and John Wesley Dobbs Avenues need infill buildings with active street level uses
7. Buildings along Decatur Street from Piedmont to Central Avenues should open up to the street
8. At street level, re-skin unattractive facades, windowless walls and parking structures
9. 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
10. Streetscapes need to be upgraded
11. Piedmont Avenue is an important corridor with important intersections at J.W. Dobbs, Auburn and Edgewood Avenues
12. Other important corridors to receive upgrades are Decatur and Courtland Streets
13. Have a strategy for surface parking and vacant lots
14. Downtown Atlanta seems full of joint-venture development opportunities for GSU



Analysis sketch showing key streets, major open spaces, and potential development sites

PRECINCTS AND OPPORTUNITY AREAS

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; 3) The Piedmont Avenue corridor; and 4) The super-blocks north of Edgewood Avenue to Ellis Street. Additionally, the former Turner Field Site is a fifth district, though some distance from the main campus.

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

1. The Square [the Woodruff Park precinct]
2. The Quads [the core of the campus with the Student Center buildings]
3. The Corridor [Piedmont Avenue]
4. The Super Blocks [Edgewood Avenue to Ellis Street, east of Peachtree Street]
5. The Satellite [former Turner Field]



Campus Precinct Opportunities

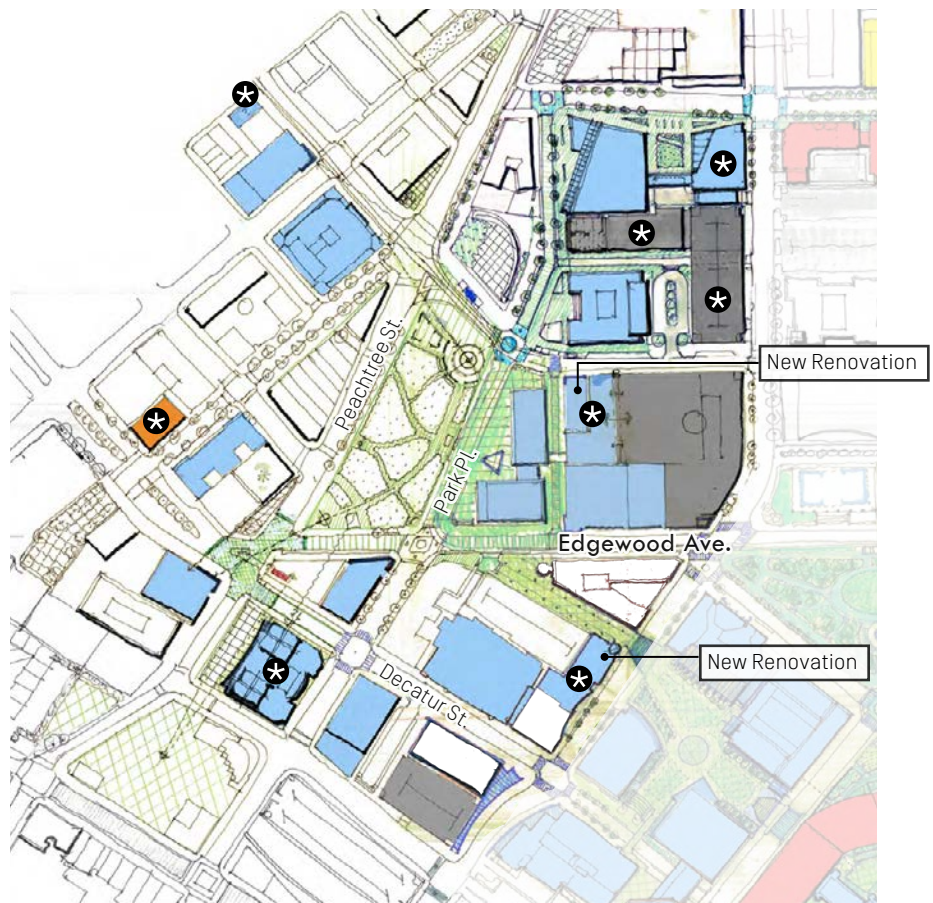


1. The Square [Woodruff Park]

- > Consider development of vacant floors in Commerce Building.
- > Old College of Business to become the new College of Arts?
- > Consolidate Fine Arts programs in the Fairlie-Poplar historic district.
- > What is the best use for 25 Auburn Avenue?
- > Relocated Career Services office to 25 Park Place, making this an important center on campus.

KEY

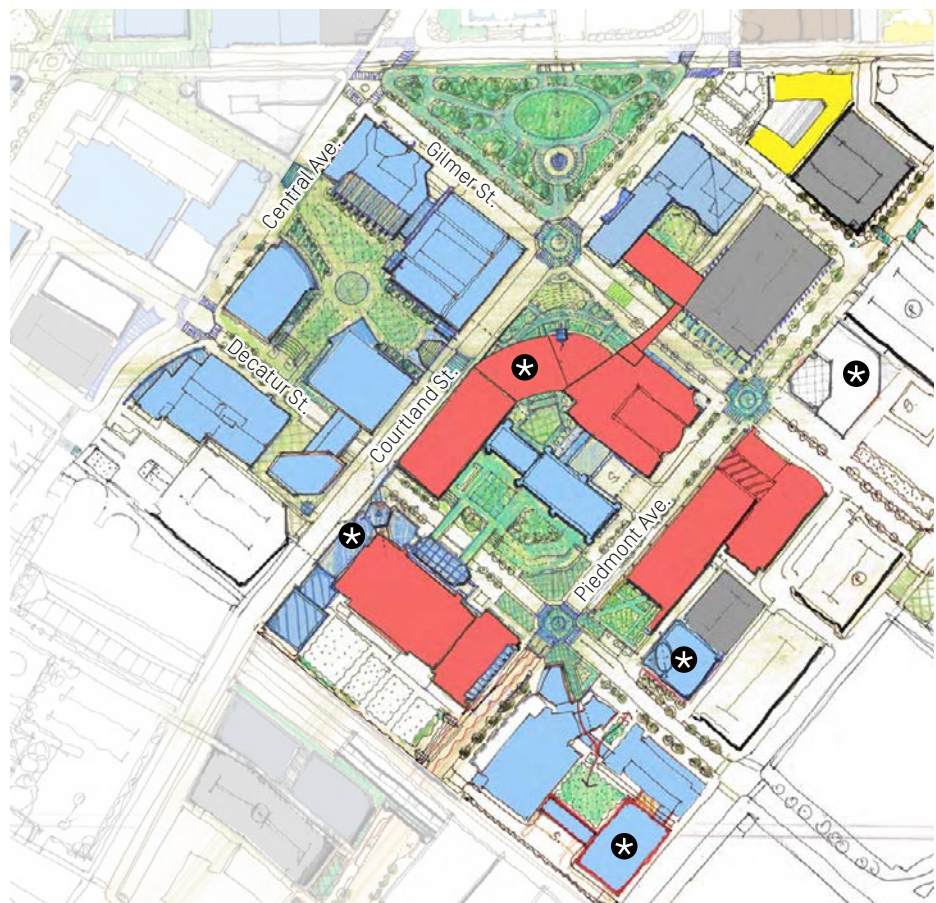
- Academics
- Student Life
- Residential
- Office
- Joint Venture
- ⊗ Potential New or Renovated Program





2. The Quad (Campus Core)

- > This precinct has great potential for place-making and to forge a stronger GSU identity in downtown Atlanta.
- > The Library should be renovated and added-to, making it a more integral to the core of the campus.
- > Unfriendly facades and inactive ground floor uses need to be addressed.
- > Hurt Park should be closed and renovated in partnership with the City of Atlanta.
- > Gilmer Street should be closed to vehicular traffic and made into a vibrant pedestrian-friendly environment.
- > The university should explore joint-venture and/or public-private partnership opportunities involving the City of Atlanta, CAP and ADID.



KEY

- Academics
- Student Life
- Residential
- Office
- Joint Venture
- ✱ Potential New or Renovated Program



3. The Corridor [Piedmont Avenue]

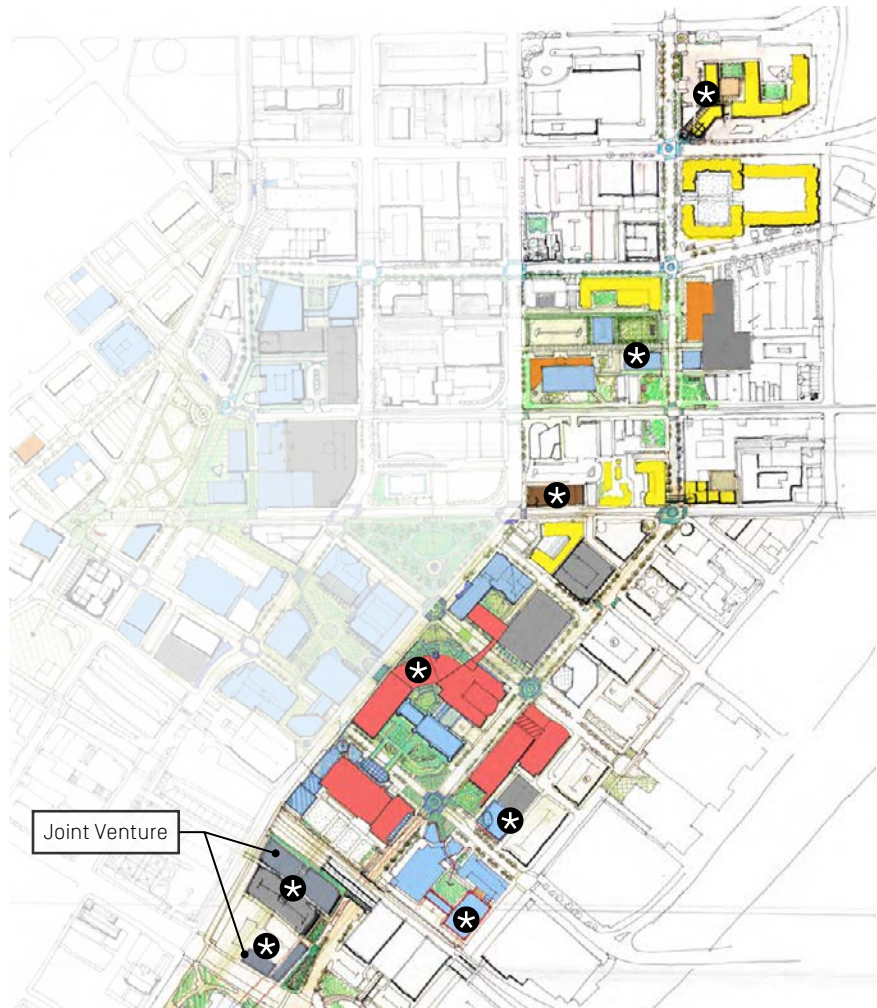
The Piedmont Corridor should be treated as three segments: North of Edgewood (where Piedmont Avenue bends), Edgewood to Decatur Street, and Decatur Street to the State Capital and beyond to the former Turner Field.

The Piedmont Corridor should become a spine of the University, employing a combination of strategies:

- > Improved Streetscape
- > New Open Space where there are now vacant lots or surface parking
- > Building façade renovations at grade and active ground floor uses
- > Creation of a University 'Transit Spine'

KEY

- Academics
- Student Life
- Residential
- Office
- Joint Venture
- ⊛ Potential New or Renovated Program



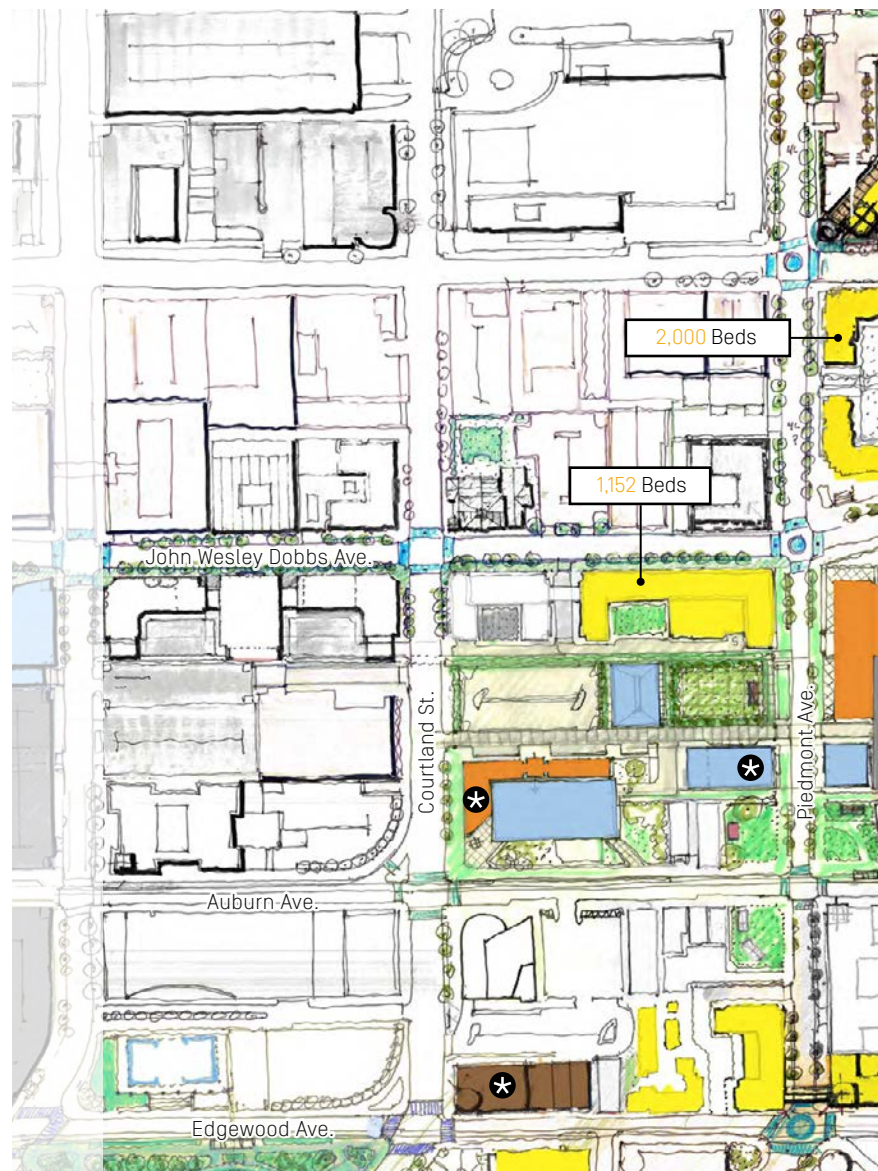


4. The Super Blocks (north of Edgewood Ave, east of Peachtree)

- > This precinct may want to continue to develop primarily as student housing.
- > John Wesley Dobbs and Auburn Avenues are major student-concentrated areas today and should be a focus for infill development of active, transparent uses, and creation of mixed-use, retail, and restaurant establishments.
- > This precinct has experienced significant GSU and non-GSU student housing growth in recent years and this trend could continue in the future.

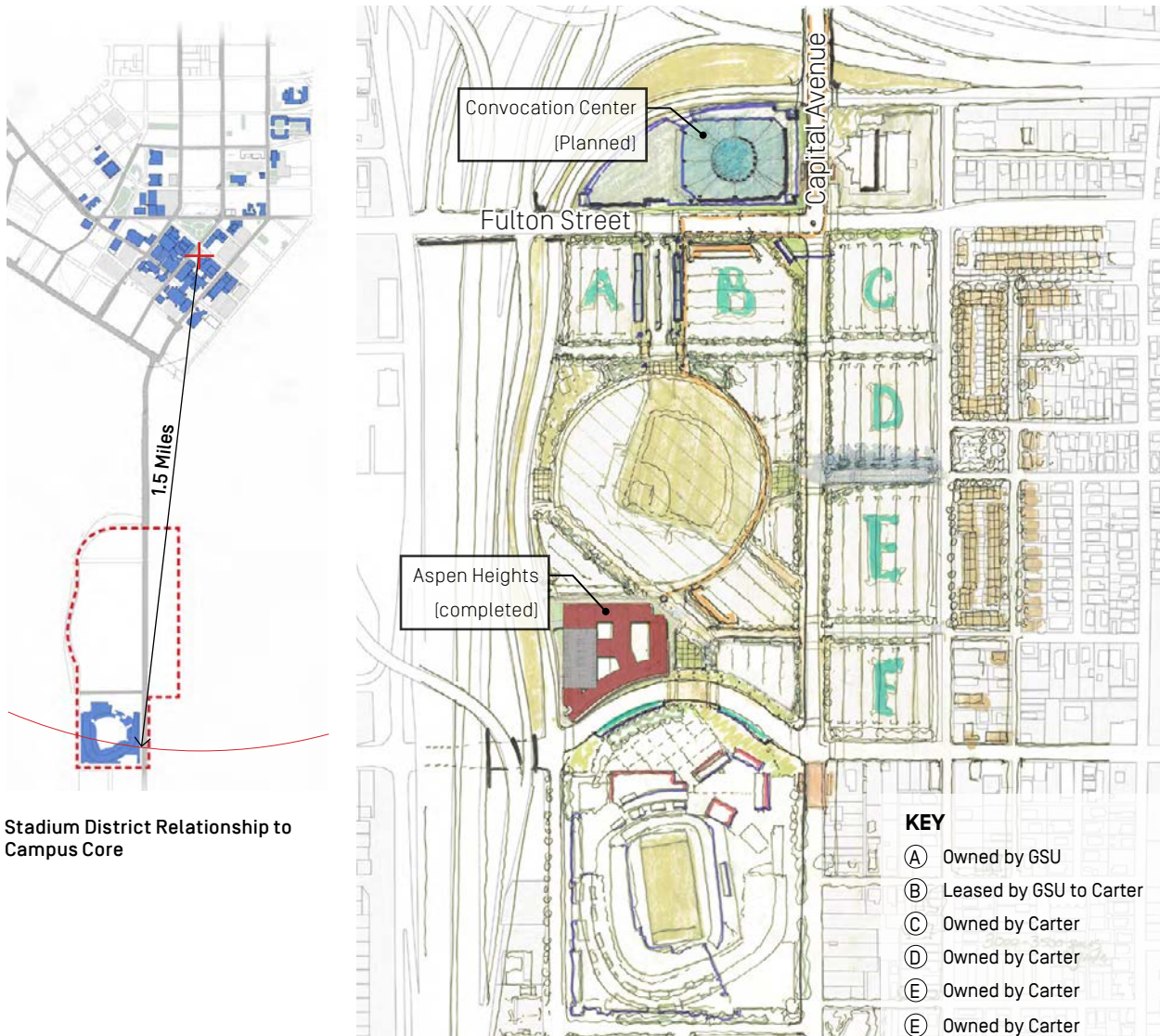
KEY

- Academics
- Student Life
- Residential
- Office
- Joint Venture
- ⊗ Potential New or Renovated Program



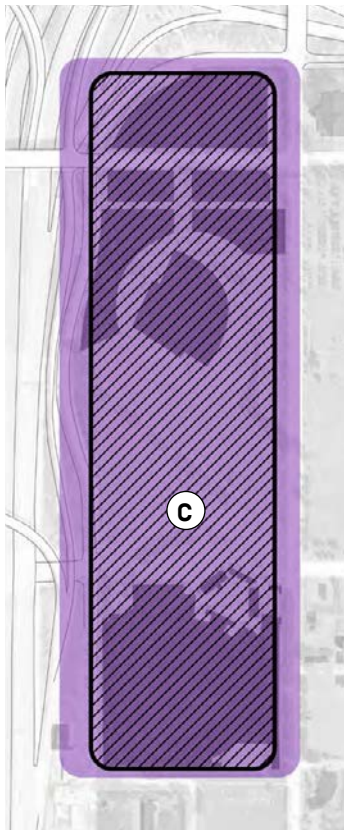
5. The Satellite (Stadium Precinct)

- > The former Turner Field site, now Georgia State Stadium, has significant potential for growth. Located within a four-minute shuttle ride or a fifteen-minute bicycle trip of the main campus, it is an ideal location for satellite parking and other academic and extracurricular uses.
- > Within this neighborhood, Carter USA is developing “Summerhill”, a large mixed-use development with new multi-family and student housing, such as Aspen Heights.
- > A new baseball stadium for the Panthers is also planned adjacent to the football stadium and a new Convocation Center is slated to be built at the northern tip of the site.

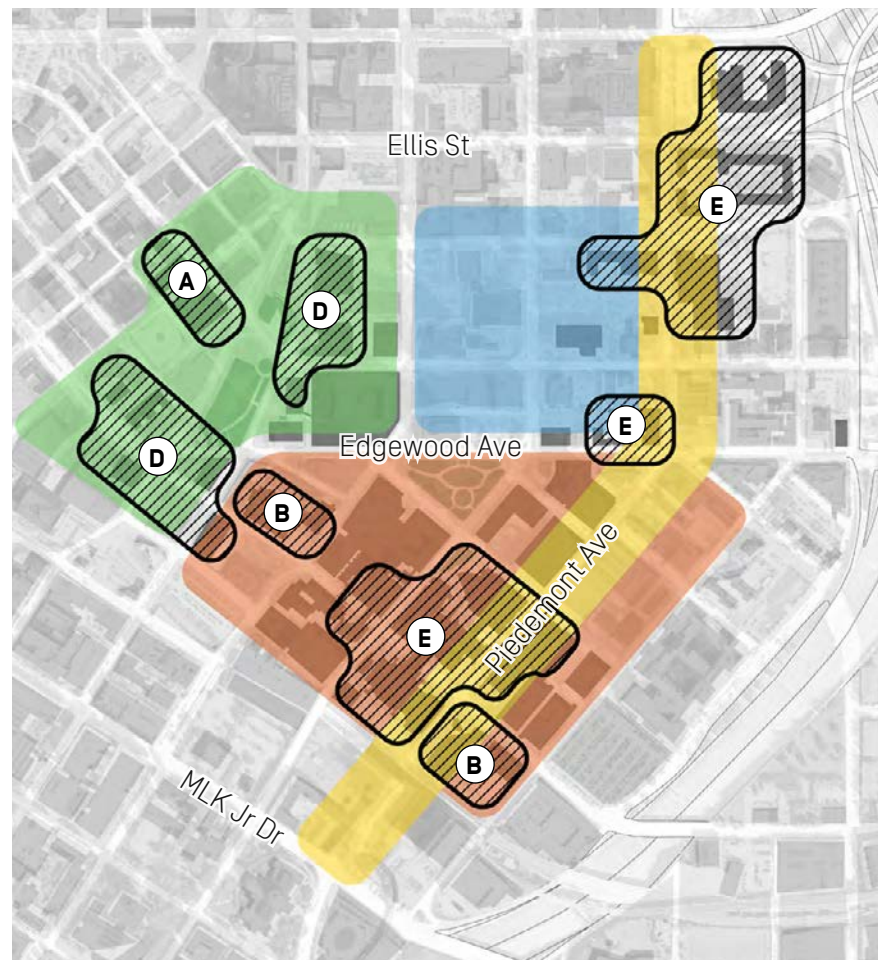


EMERGING LAND USE

In addition to physical precincts, land use districts within the GSU campus are emerging as similar uses begin to cluster and coalesce: Arts, Sciences, Athletic, Professional, Student Life and Residential. The Master Plan recommends that Georgia State reinforce these precincts as new programs, amenities and facilities develop.



Stadium District



PRECINCTS

- The Square
- The Quad
- The Corridor
- The Super Blocks
- The Satellite

LAND USE

- Ⓐ Arts
- Ⓑ Sciences
- Ⓒ Athletic
- Ⓓ Professional
- Ⓔ Student Life / Residential

OPEN SPACES

The University should invest in developing a network of landscaped open spaces for recreational and social use by its students, and as outdoor classrooms when the weather is accommodating. There should be a variety of such spaces:

- > Parks
- > Plazas
- > Courtyards / Forecourts
- > Pedestrianized Streets



Bryant Park, NYC

