

Parks, Plazas and Streetscapes

With the demolition of Kell Hall in 2018, there is an opportunity to create a continuous string of public realm improvements in the form of Parks, Plazas and Streetscapes beginning at Science Park at the south-eastern most tip of the campus and meandering its way to Hurt Park and west to Woodruff Park.

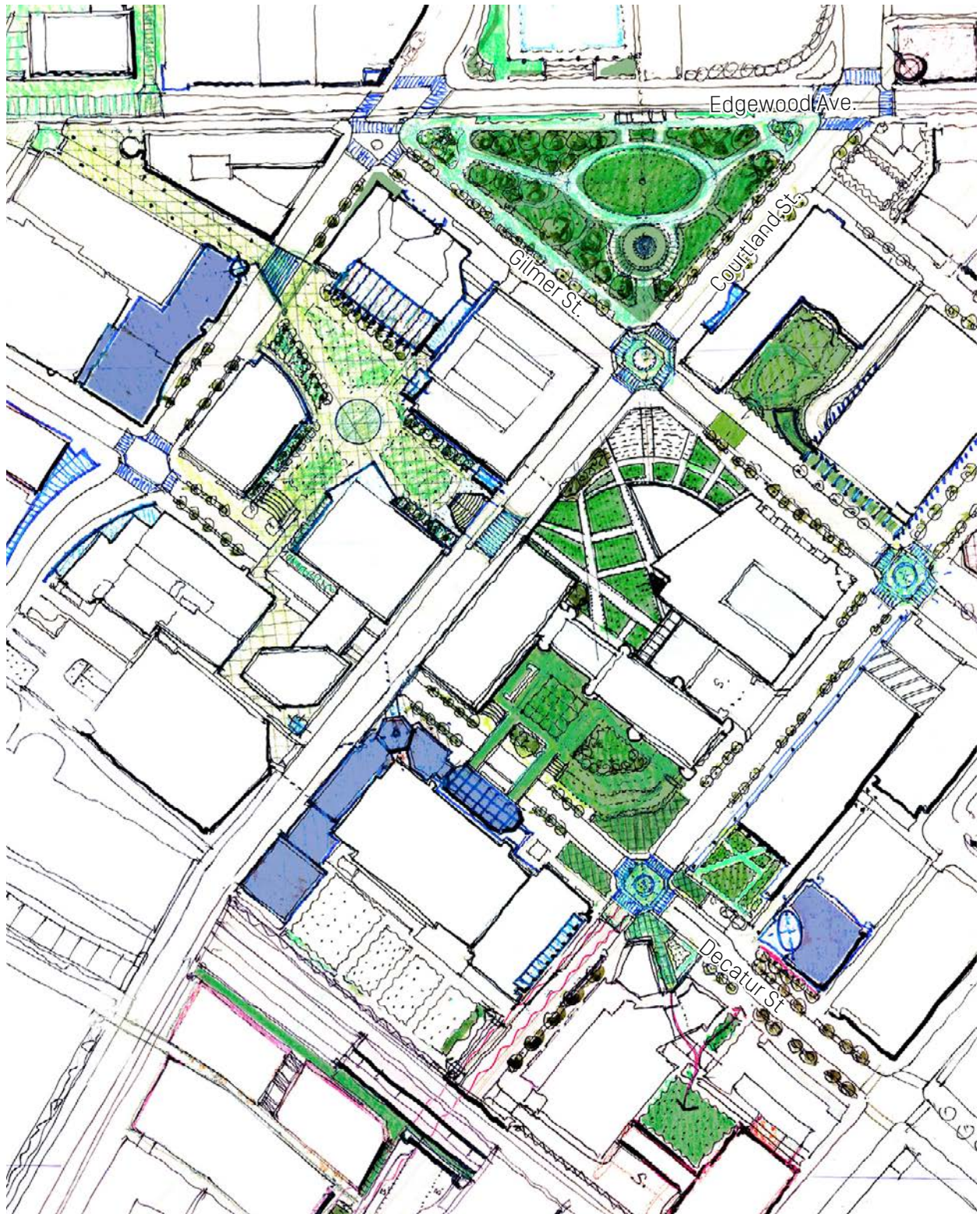
Modest additions, façade renovations, and transformations of “dead zones” along Courtland and Decatur Streets at the Sports Arena, at the Decatur Street side of the Urban Life building and along Peachtree Center Avenue at the Natural Science Center and Science Annex have the potential to activate the pedestrian experience at street level.



Opportunities to integrate of facade retrofits, building design and signage



Opportunities for distinctive sidewalk and landscape design



Potential Core Campus open space improvements





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.

DEFINE THE GSU CAMPUS: A UNIFIED WHOLE

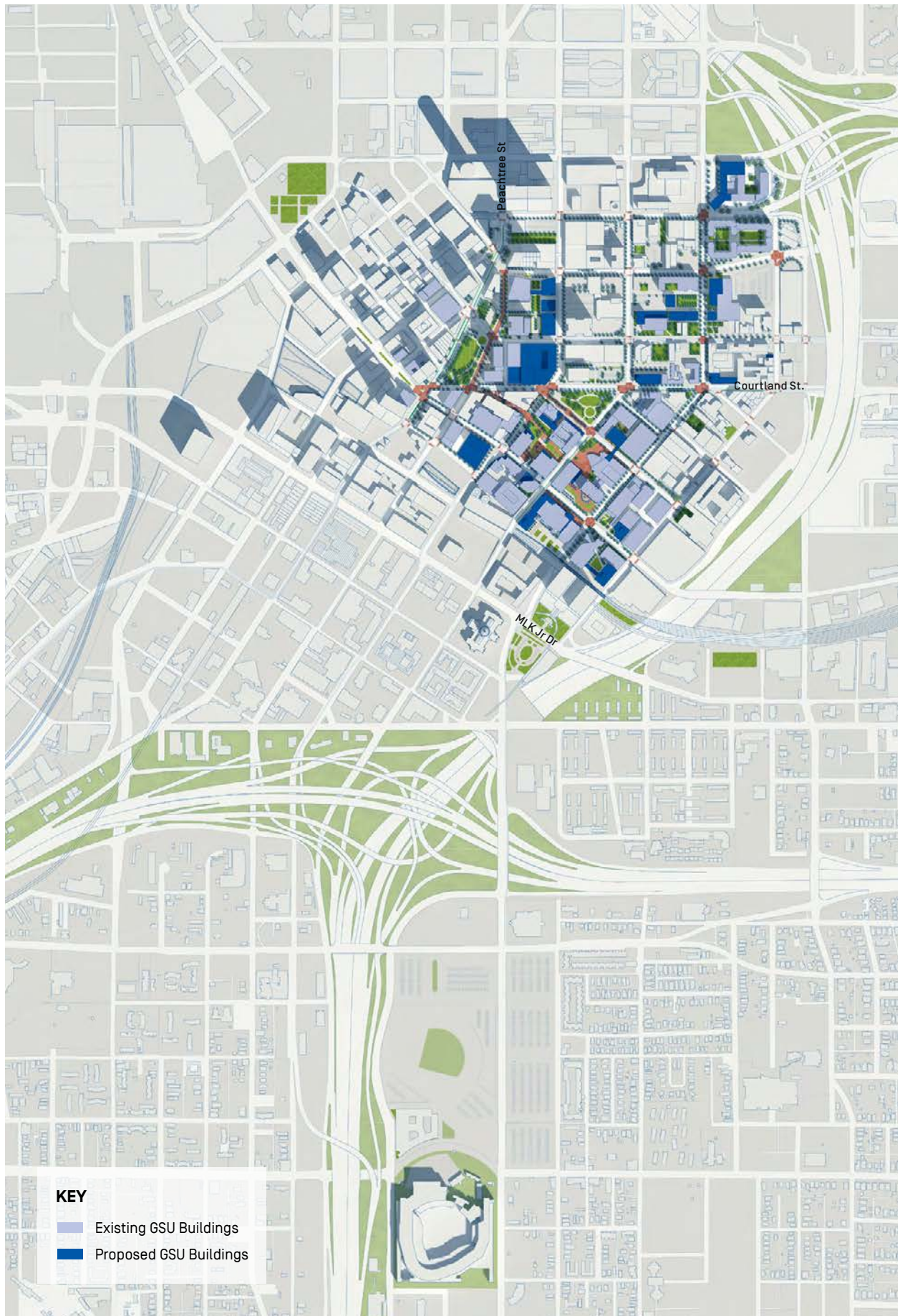
A primary focus of the Master Plan is creating high-quality public-realm space where possible and where Georgia State's real estate holdings allowed – which envisions an interconnected open space network with a consistent palette of landscape, hardscape and architectural interventions, knitting together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

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

The multi-modal 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 multi-modal transportation system, this will create opportunity in campus core quad, where existing structured parking might make way for new GSU buildings and programs.

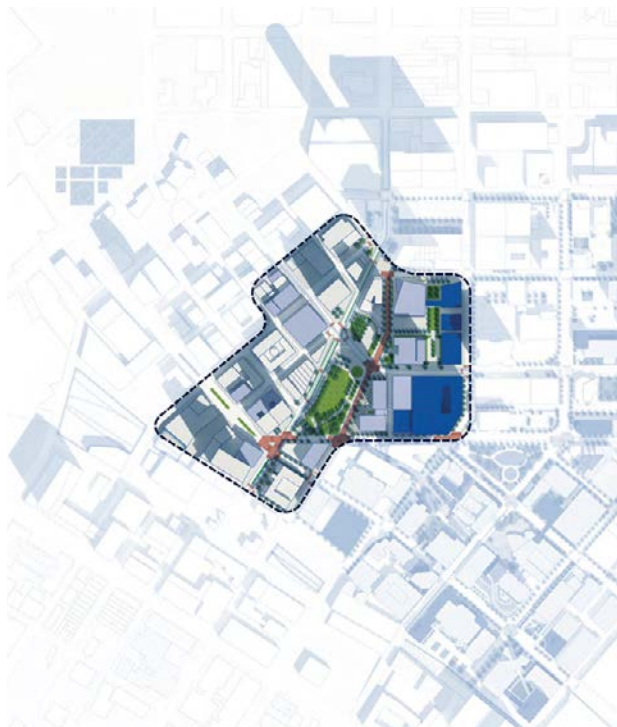


Illustrative Master Plan



Precincts & Districts

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.



The Square [Woodruff Park]



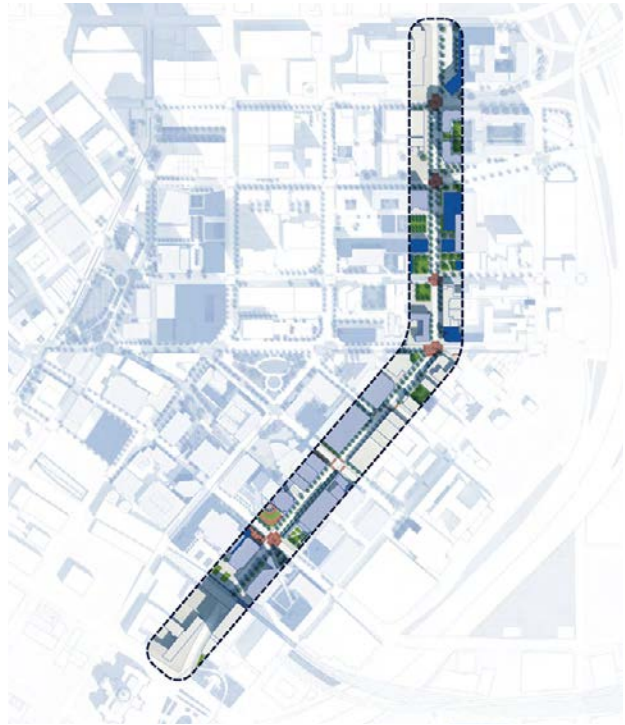
The Quad [Campus Core]

KEY

- Existing GSU Buildings
- Proposed GSU Buildings



The Super Blocks
(North Of Edgewood, East of Peachtree)



The Corridor (Piedmont Avenue)

Illustrative Diagrams of Proposed Interventions at Each of the Precincts





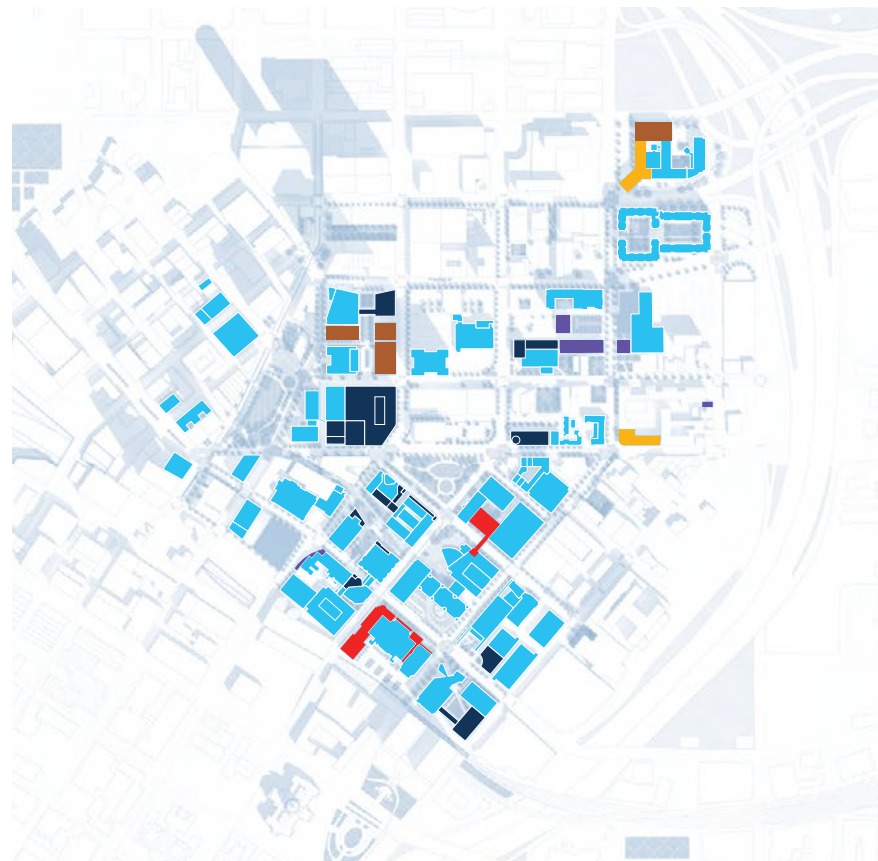
New Buildings

Strategically, it is Georgia State University's goal to grow its student population over the next many years from 52,000 to 60,000 students, a fifteen-percent (15%) increase in the student body – largely on the downtown campus. Based on this, and with the consolidation of the former Perimeter College, the University's academic, athletic and recreational programs will soon need to be updated. New facilities will be required to accommodate such significant growth. As a framework for growth, therefore, the Master Plan identifies sites for a series of new buildings, with an eye toward strengthening GSU's campus fabric.

It should be noted that the infill and building addition design ideas outlined in this document are conceptual in nature and are subject to future detailed studies to better determine size, scale, and location.

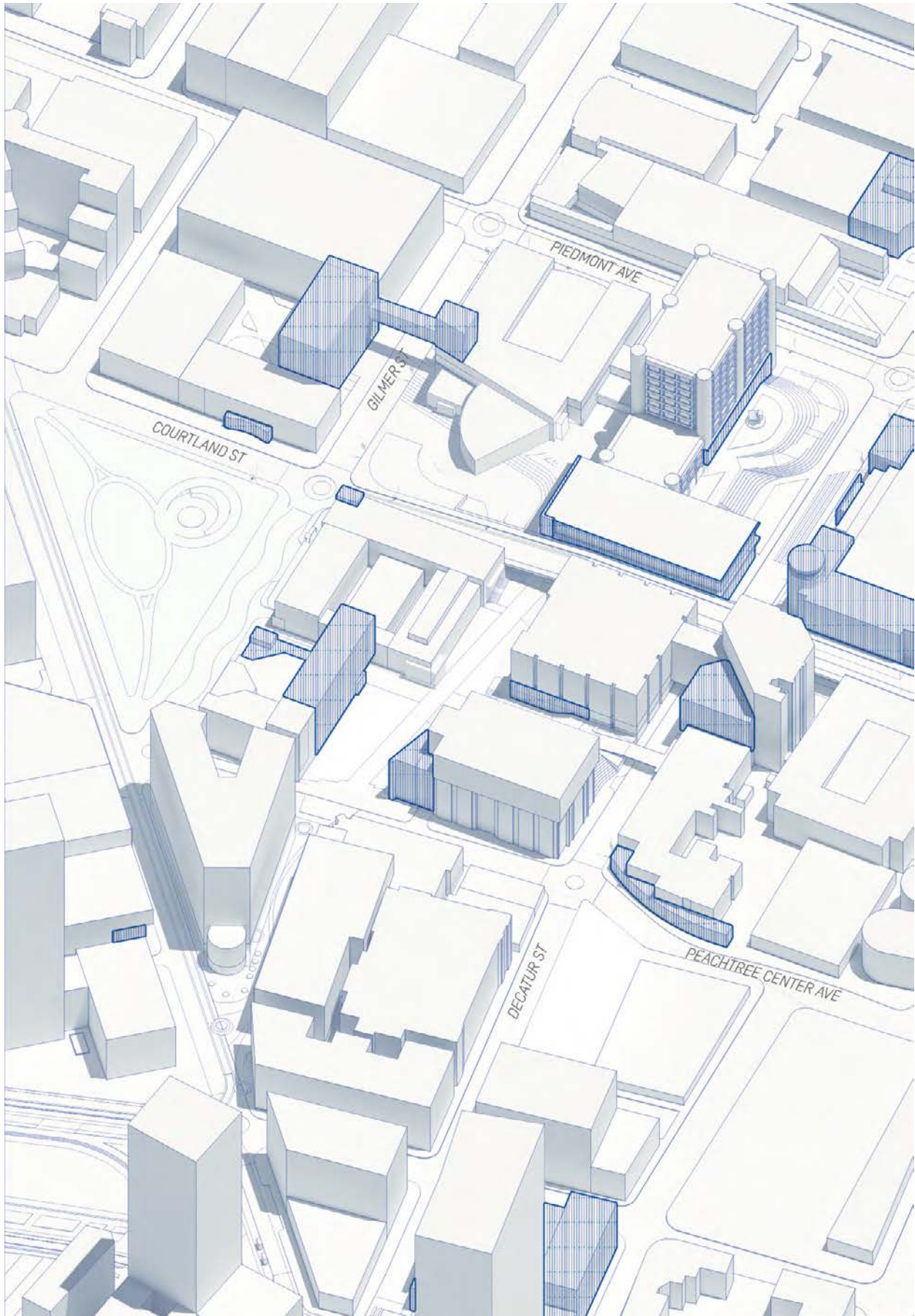
KEY

- Existing GSU Buildings
- Proposed Academic
- Proposed Student Life
- Proposed Residential
- Proposed Joint Venture & Ground-Level Retail



Proposed New Building Uses



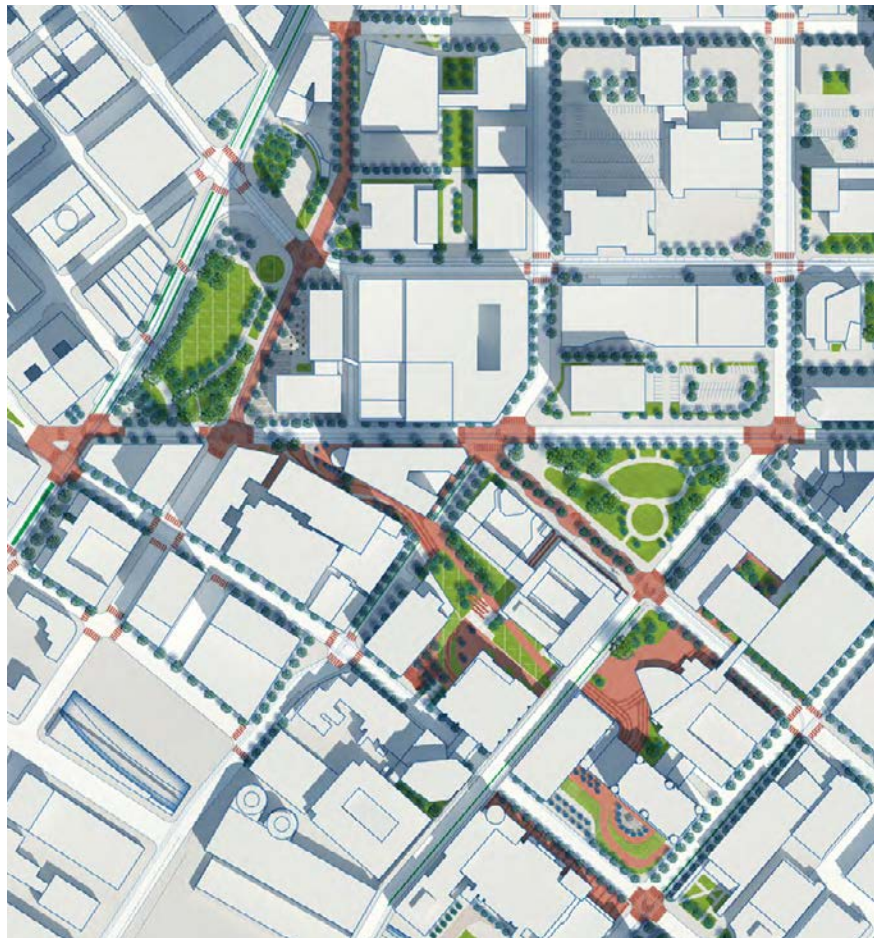


Proposed Interventions in the Core Campus: Additions, Renovations, & Facade Improvements

Landscape & Plazas

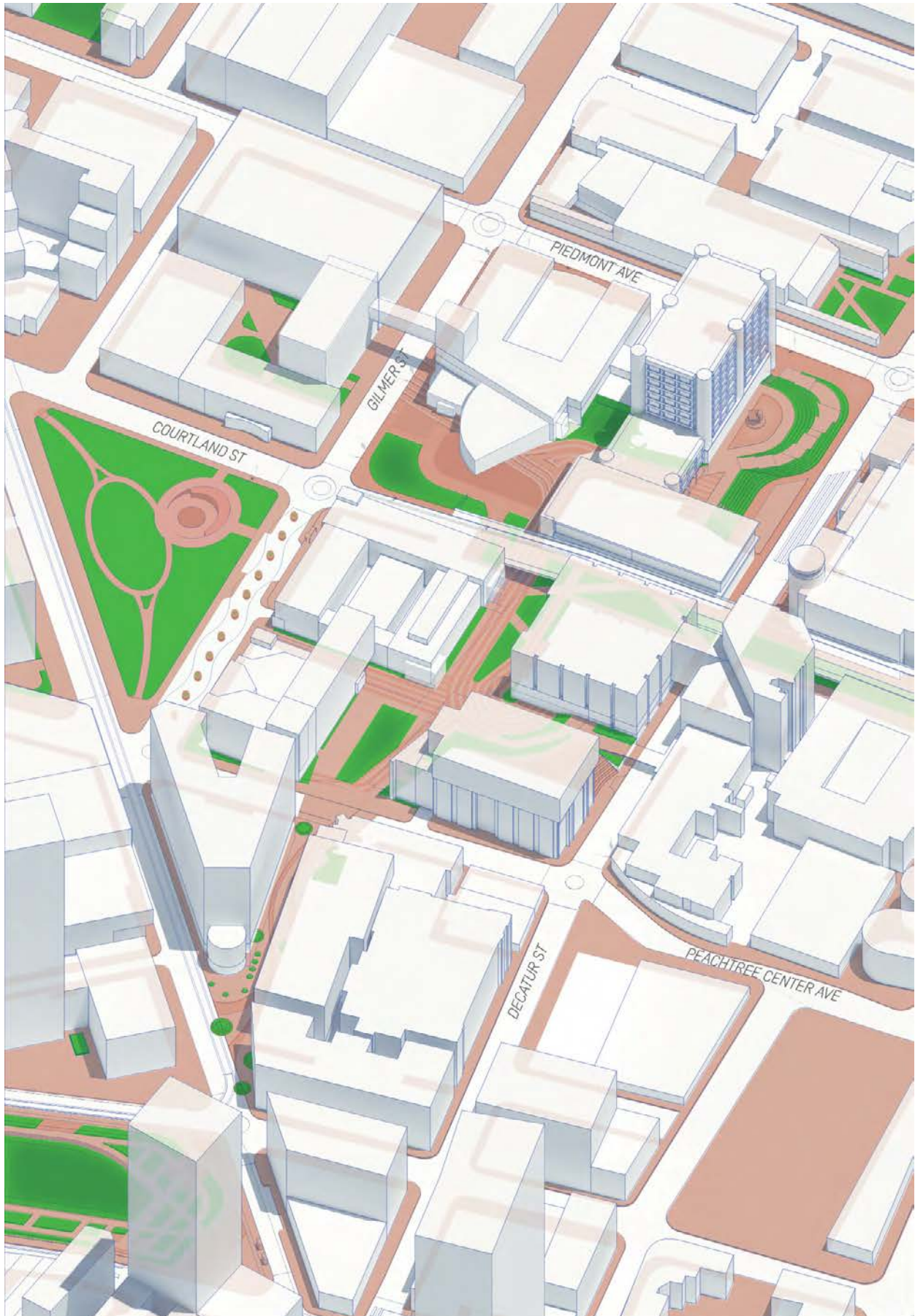
A threshold goal of the master planning effort was to create greater connectivity, cohesiveness and character on the downtown campus. Essential to this is coherent and consistent open spaces and landscaping – so the Master Plan has identified a series of opportunities for enhancing the hardscape, creating plazas, courtyards and forecourts, and augmenting the landscape in the downtown area.

The diagram below and the axonometric on the following page illustrate a proposed ground plane fabric of open space, plazas, courtyards, forecourts and landscaping.



Proposed Plazas & Landscape

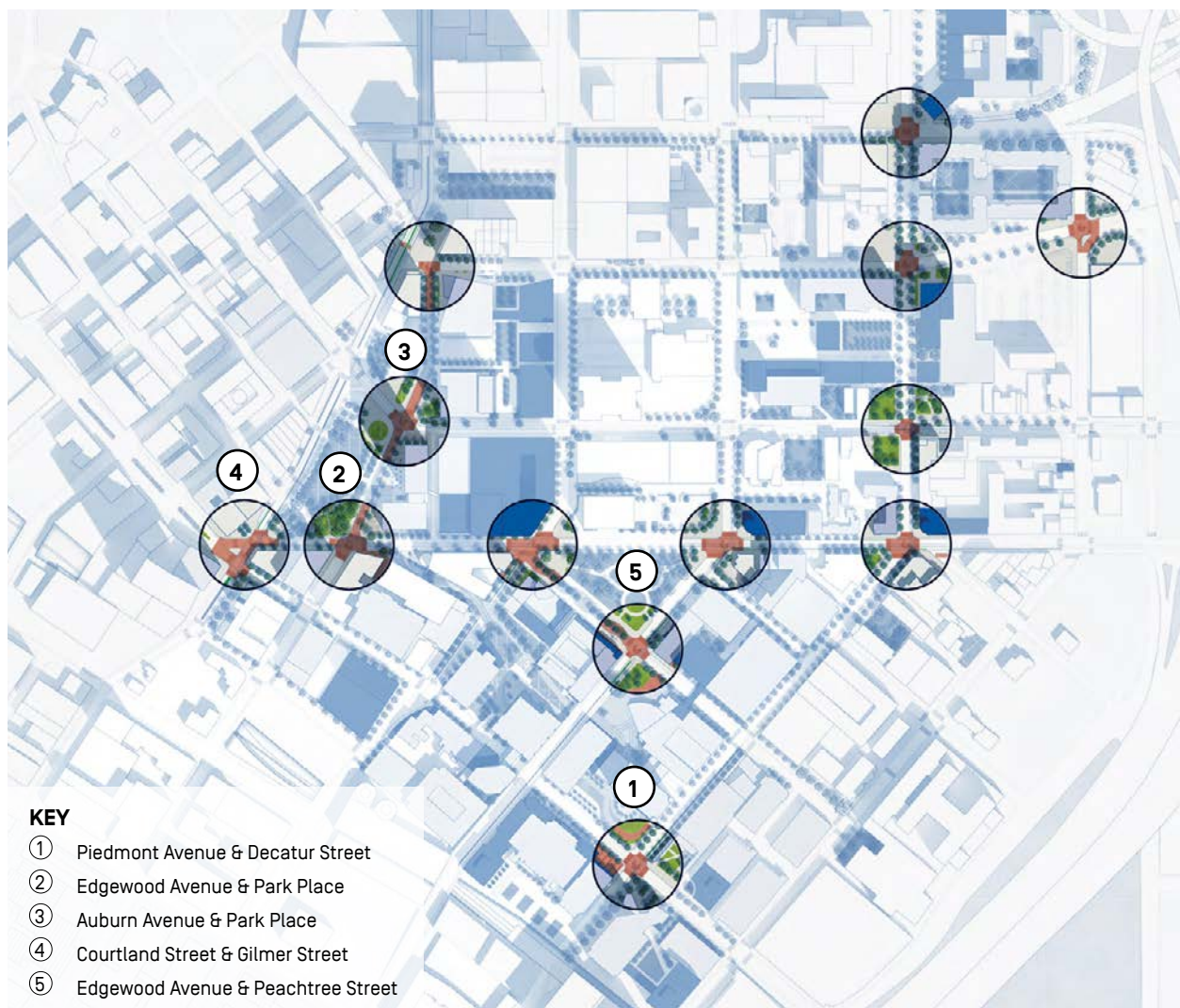


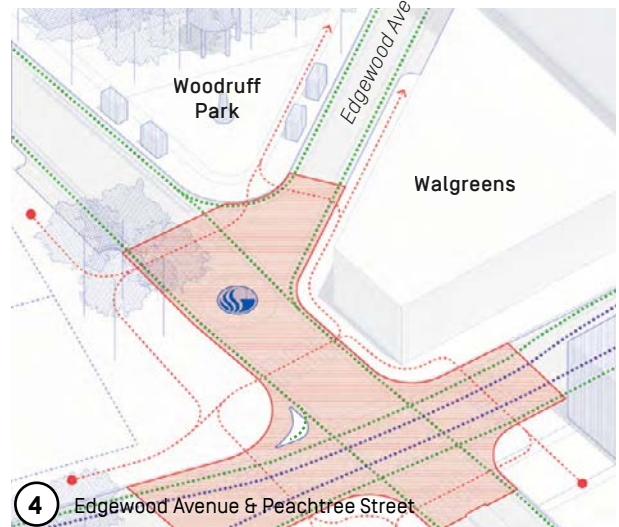
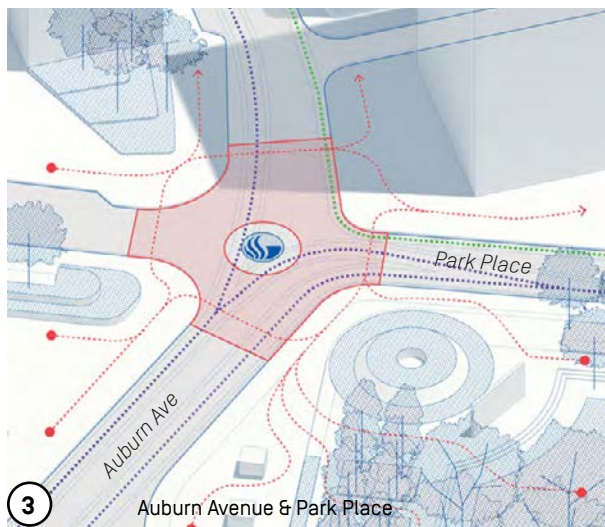
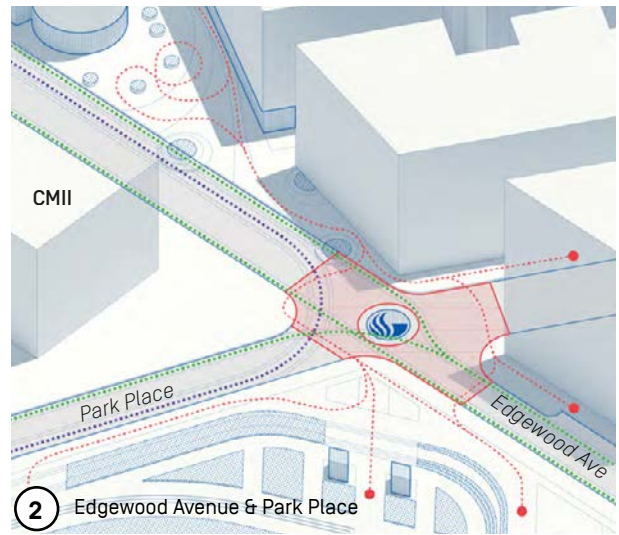
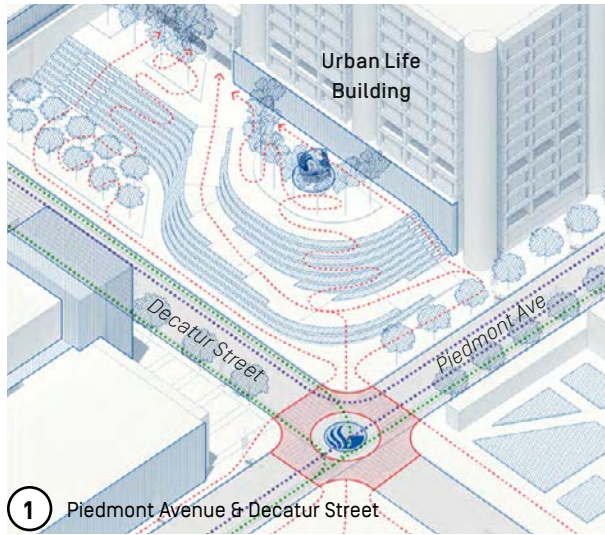


Proposed Plazas & Landscape

Gateway Nodes

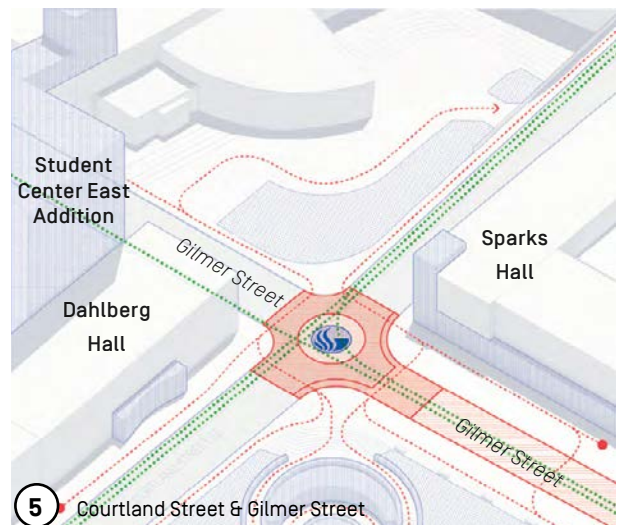
A third focus of the Master Plan is to create gateway nodes at key intersections at the periphery of the campus that mark thresholds and provide a sense of arrival. These gateways would be articulated with special paving, landscape, signage and, where feasible, architectural elements. These would not be literal gates, rather they would be ceremonial and subliminally suggest campus edges within the fabric of downtown Atlanta.





KEY

- Pedestrian
- Bicycle Lane
- GSU Bus Route



CAMPUS IDENTITY



Red Cube Sculpture: NYC, New York

Defining a consistent palette of materials, color, lighting, hardscape, landscape, and wayfinding is essential to the establishment of a coherent campus identity. The Master Plan advocates for the development of universal standards that can serve as “connective tissue”, knitting all of the University properties together in a consistent manner. Options to be considered include brick, glass, screen, and precast panel systems, and should aim to unify the architecture of the downtown campus.

Notably, GSU’s downtown campus is populated by a significant number of blank facades from parking garages which are visually unappealing. The re-skinning of these facades can dramatically improve the urban streetscape.

The Master Plan also envisions a “gallery” of inexpensive, but visually lively, banners, murals, screens and public art that would help make the downtown area GSU’s own. The diagram on the opposite page identifies some potential opportunities for this type of intervention.



Hardscape Plaza, VCU, Richmond



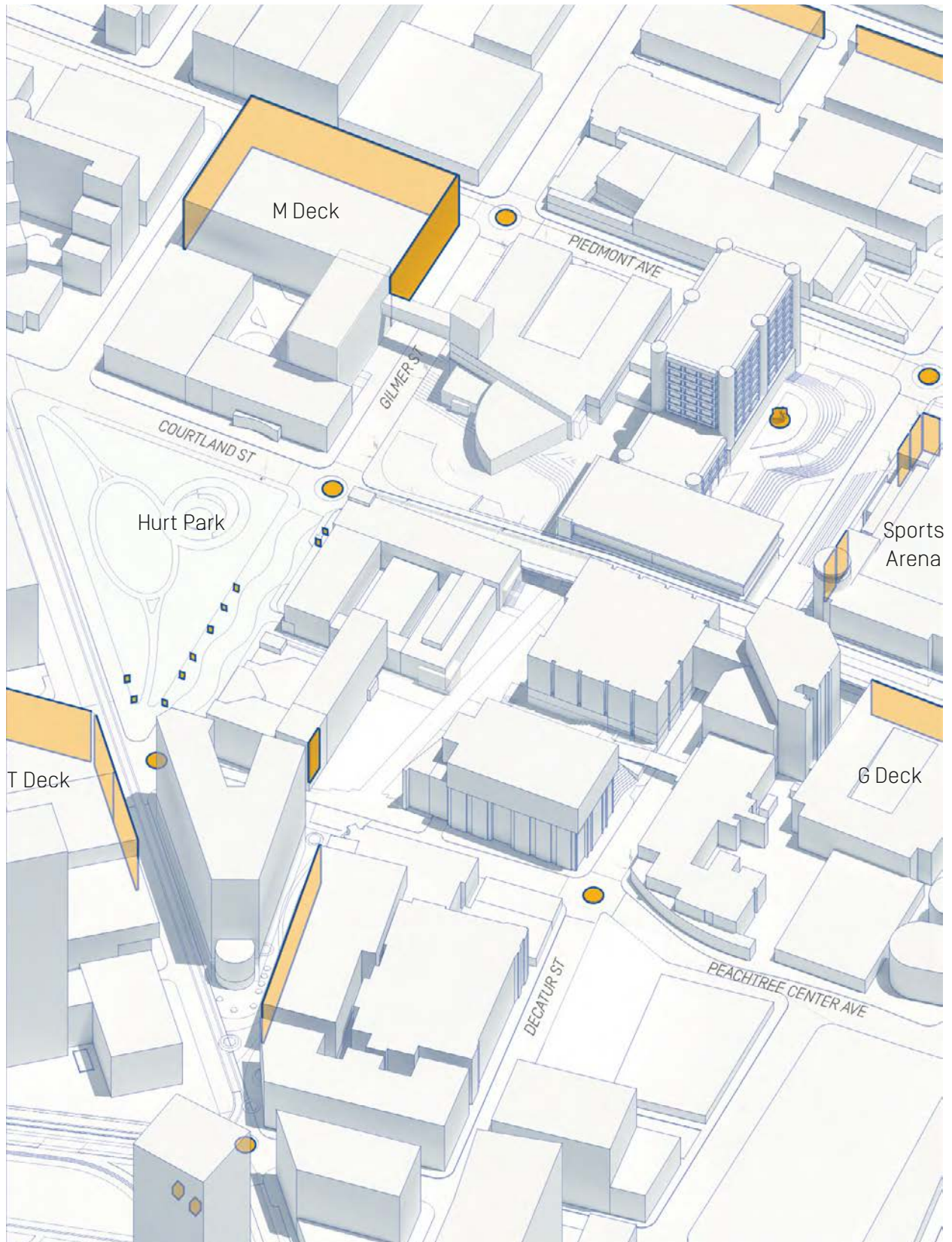
University Branding, Drexel University, Philadelphia



Parking Garage, Stanford University



“Hands”, San Jose International Airport, California
















Opportunities for Art, Signage, & "Screens"

TRANSIT NETWORK

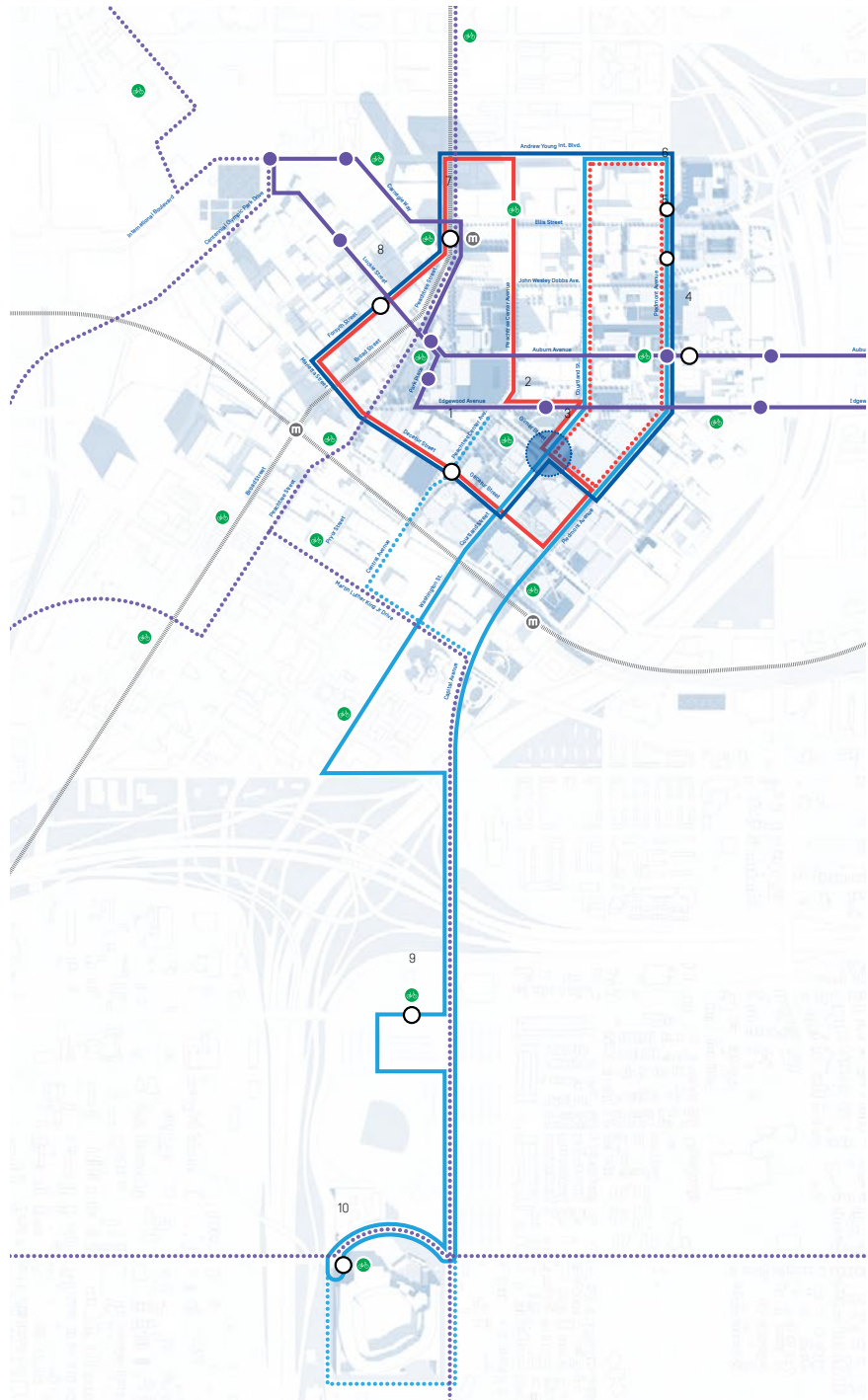
The diagram to the left and that on the facing page illustrate a comprehensive expansion of integrated transit systems for Georgia State in the downtown area, reaching to Georgia State Stadium and the future Convocation Center to the south.

KEY

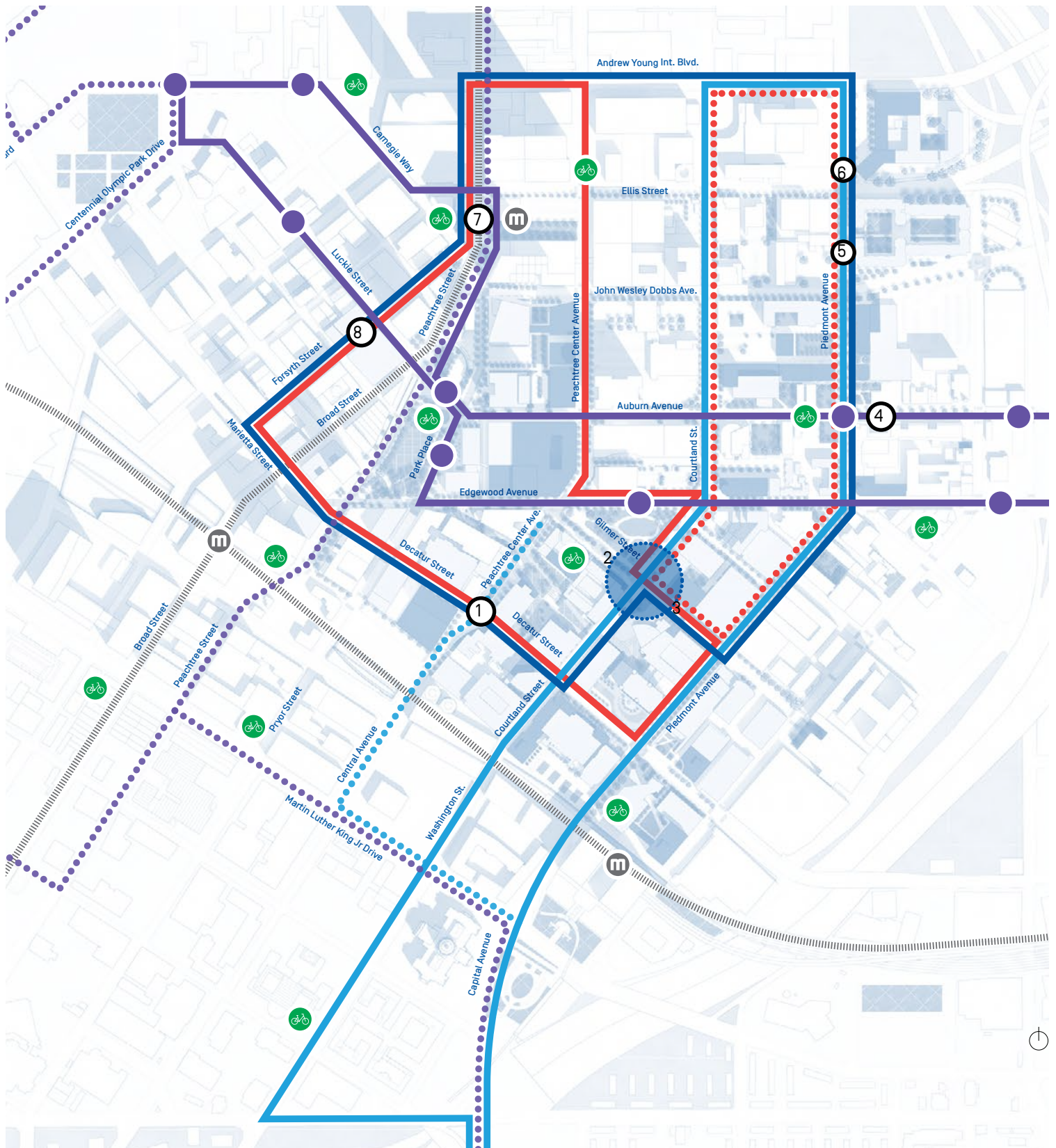
-  MARTA Rails
-  Streetcar Rails
-  Streetcar Expansion
-  Loop Route
-  Culture Route
-  North Route
-  Main Route
-  South Route Expansion
-  MARTA Station
-  GSU Bus Stop
-  Proposed Multi Modal Station
-  Streetcar Station
-  Bike Rack

SHUTTLE STOPS

1. Langdale Hall
- 2. Hurt Park**
Arts, Humanities and Sparks Hall
3. Student Center
- 4. Piedmont / Auburn**
5. University Commons
6. Piedmont North
- 7. Peachtree / Forsyth**
8. Rialto Center / Aderhold
9. Georgia State Stadium
10. Stadium South



Proposed GSU Shuttle Route to Georgia State Stadium



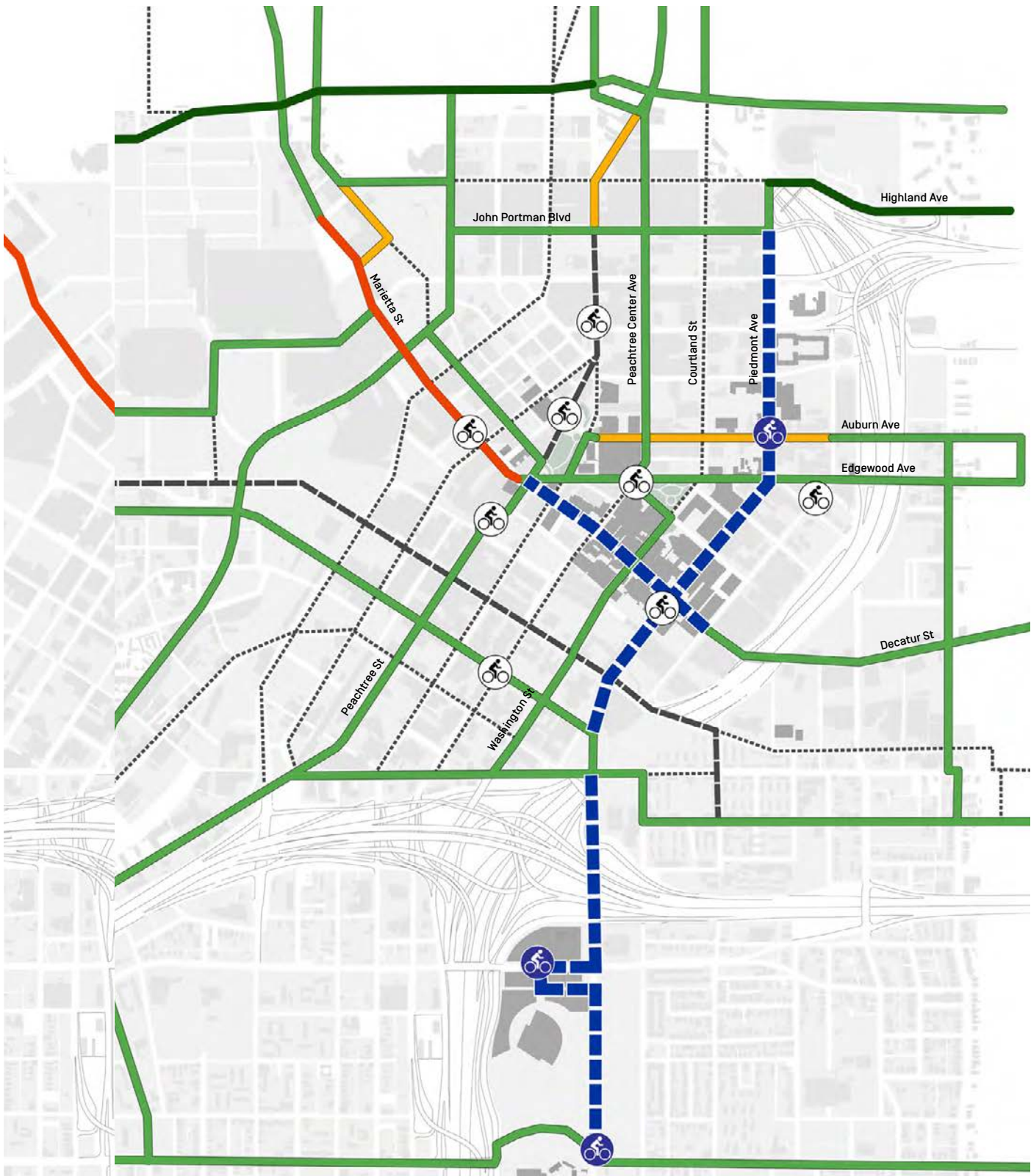
Downtown Area Map of Proposed Multi-Modal Transit Network

Proposed Bicycle Network

The Master Plan proposes a significant expansion of the existing Bicycle Network, including shared and dedicated bicycle lanes.



Existing Bike Lanes and Bike Stations

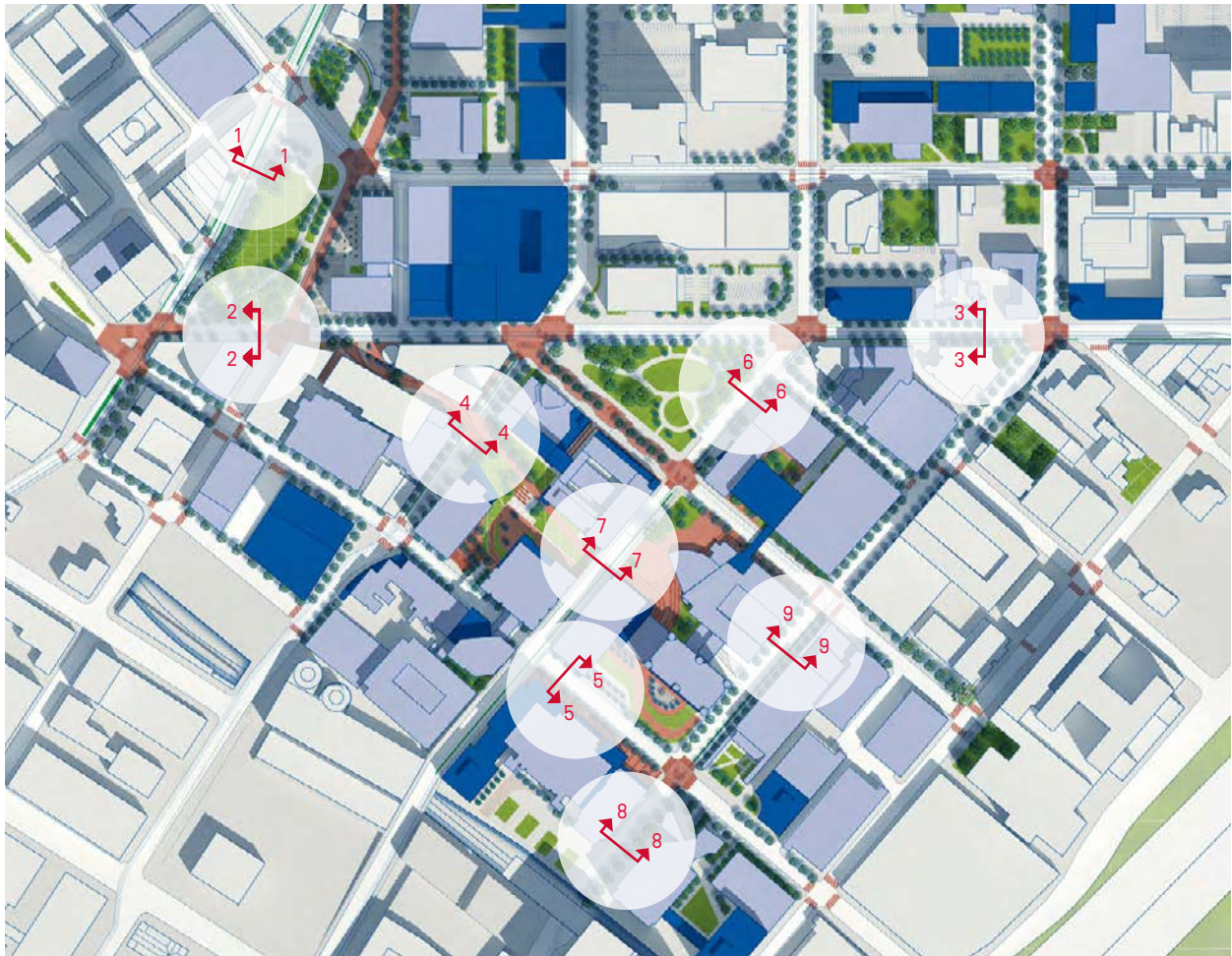


Proposed Bike Lanes and Bike Stations



MAKE COMPLETE STREETS

The implementation of a Complete Streets design approach has the potential to transform the Downtown Campus core, creating a public realm that is safer, more accessible, and encourages more sustainable modes of transportation.



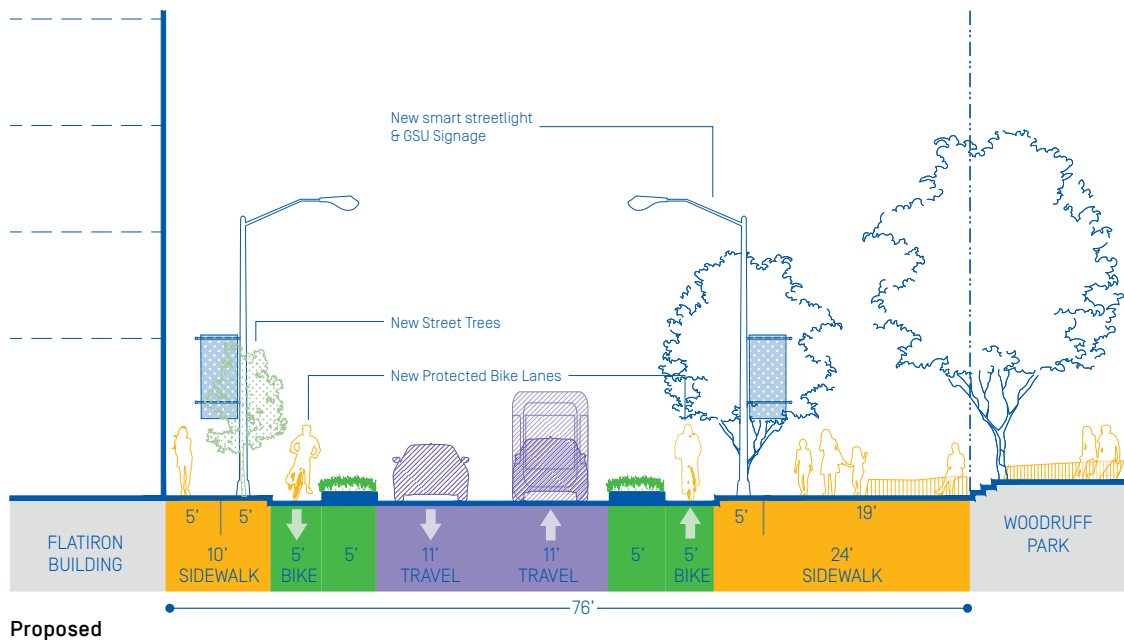
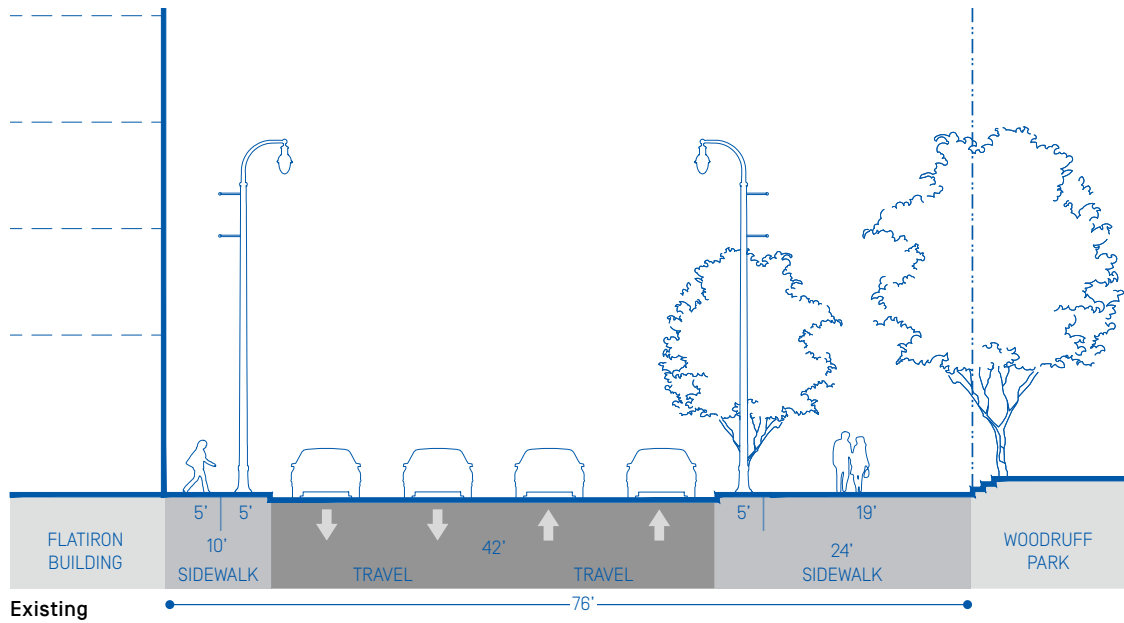
Street Sections Key Map

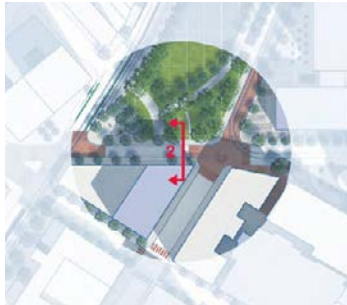


Peachtree Street [Section 1]

As Atlanta's most iconic street, Peachtree Street should become a more universally accessible multi-modal corridor. The master plan suggests:

- > Reducing the number of vehicle lanes from 4 down to 2.
- > Providing protected bike lanes in both directions, one on each side, to be protected by a planted median.

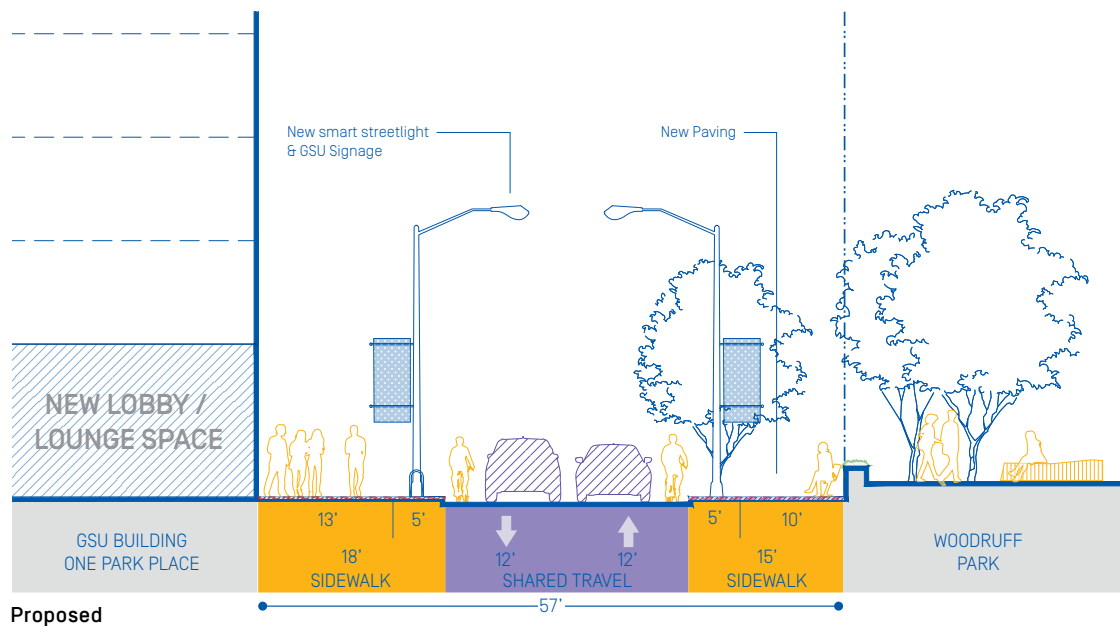
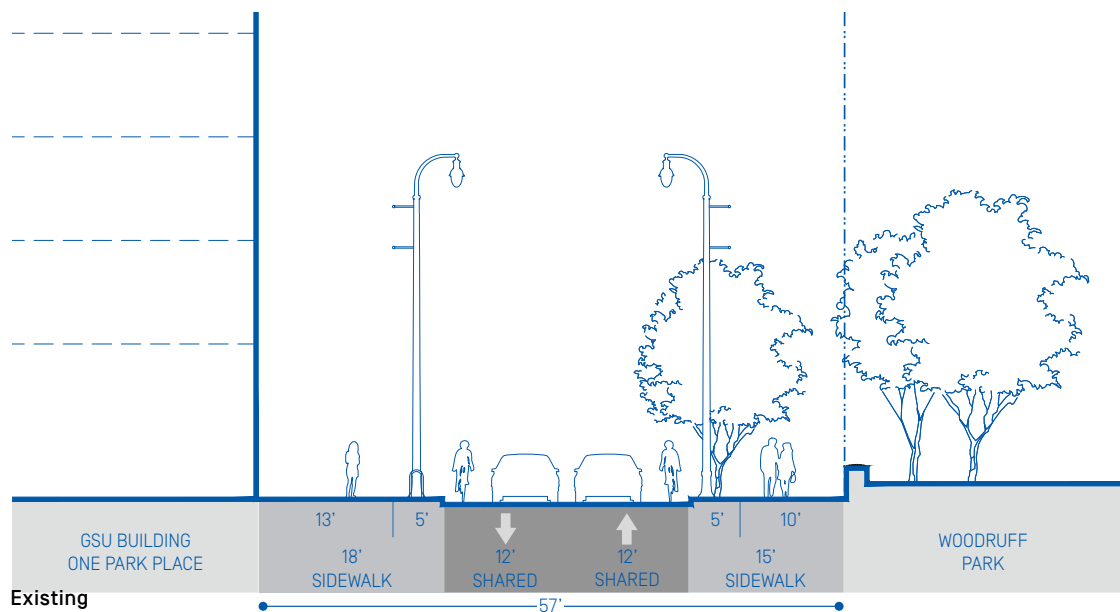




Edgewood [Section 2]

For the section of Edgewood Avenue adjacent to Woodruff Park, the master plan suggests:

- > Increased activation of southern street frontage through the ground floor renovation of GSU lobby at One Park Place.
- > Street beautification measures to include new paving and signage.

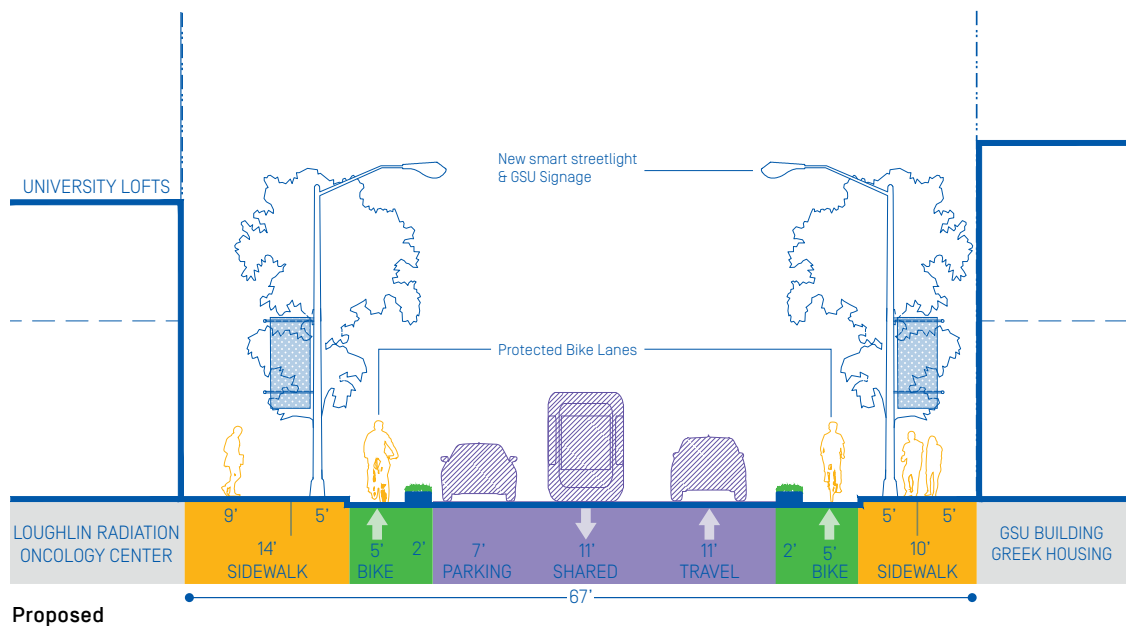
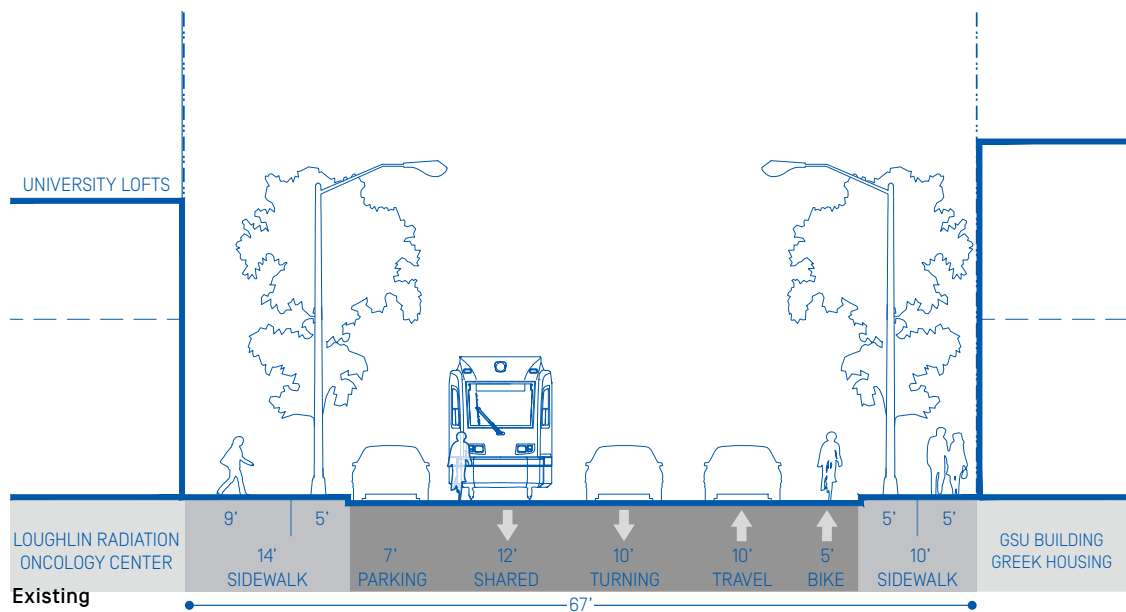




Edgewood [Section 3]

For the section of Edgewood Avenue between Piedmont and Courtland Avenues, the master plan suggests:

- > Reducing the number of vehicular traffic lanes down from 4 to 3.
- > Adding protected bike lanes on both sides.

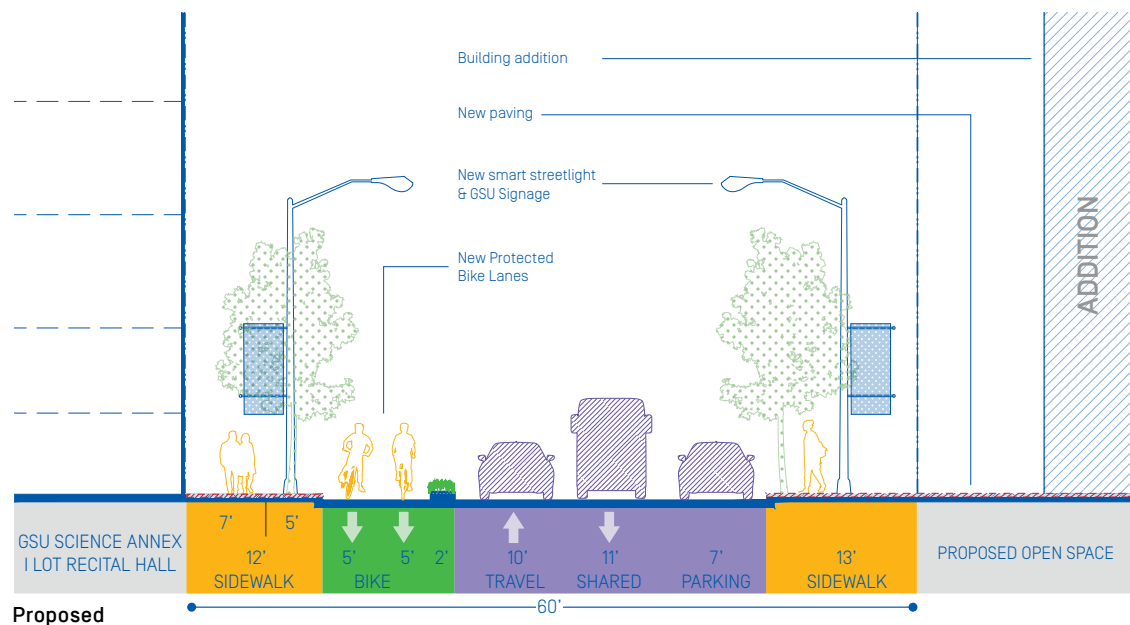
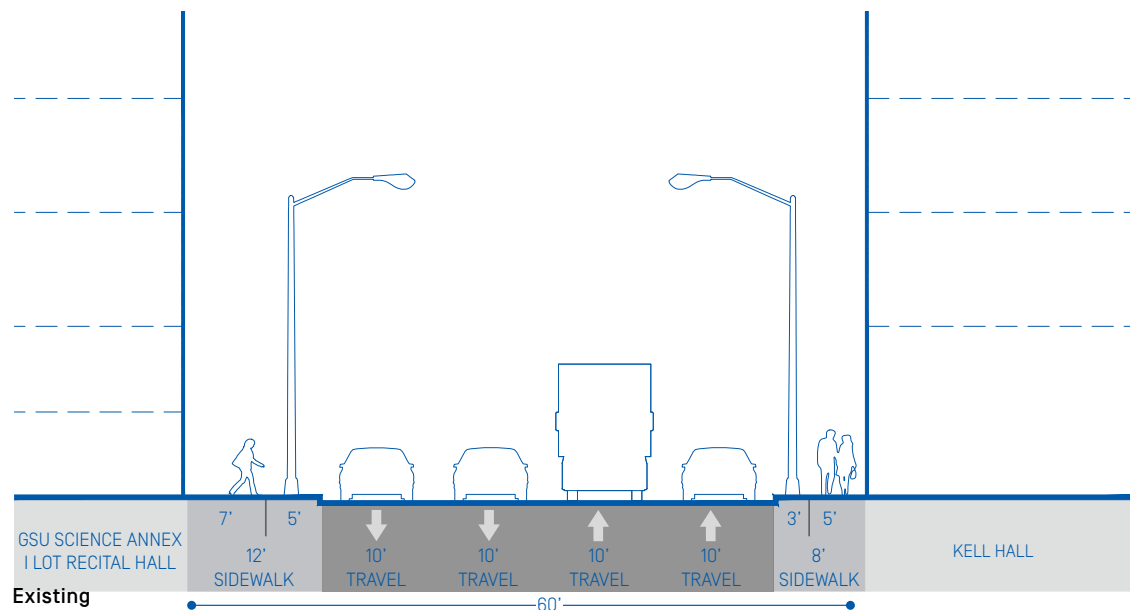




Peachtree Central [Section 4]

For this section of Peachtree Central Ave, the master plan suggests:

- > Working with the City of Atlanta to transform the western apex of Hurt Park from a left-turn lane into a new public open space.
- > Reducing the number vehicular lanes down from 4 to 3, enabling widened sidewalks and a two-way bike lane.

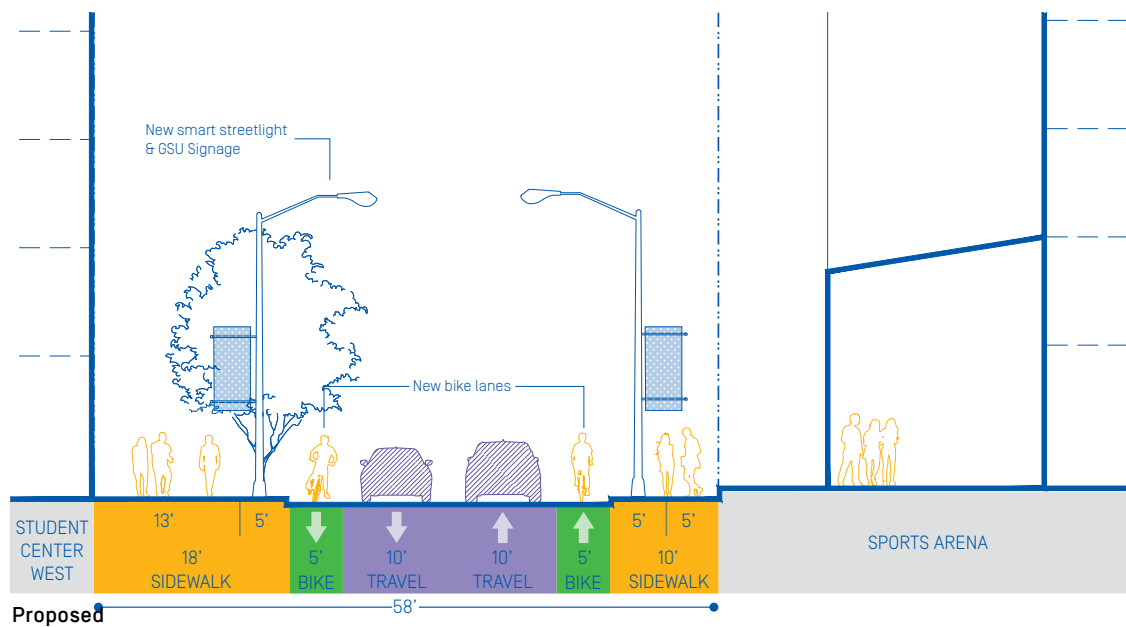
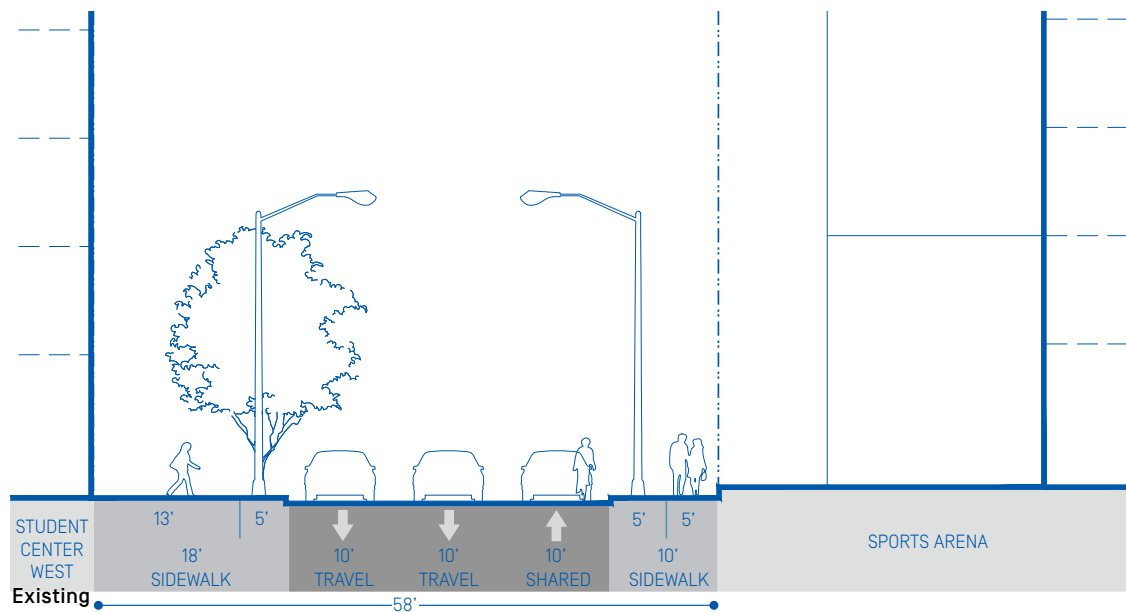




Decatur [Section 5]

For the section of Decatur Street, the master plan suggests:

- > Reducing the number of vehicular lanes down from 3 to 2, and adding protected bike lanes on both sides.
- > Street beautification measures to include new paving and signage.

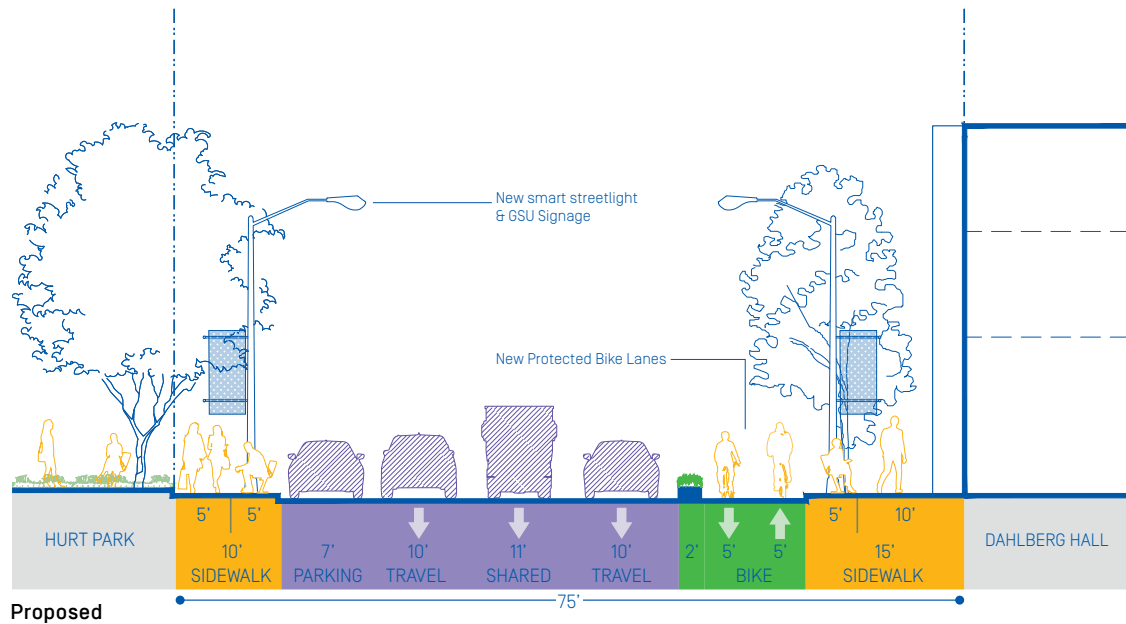
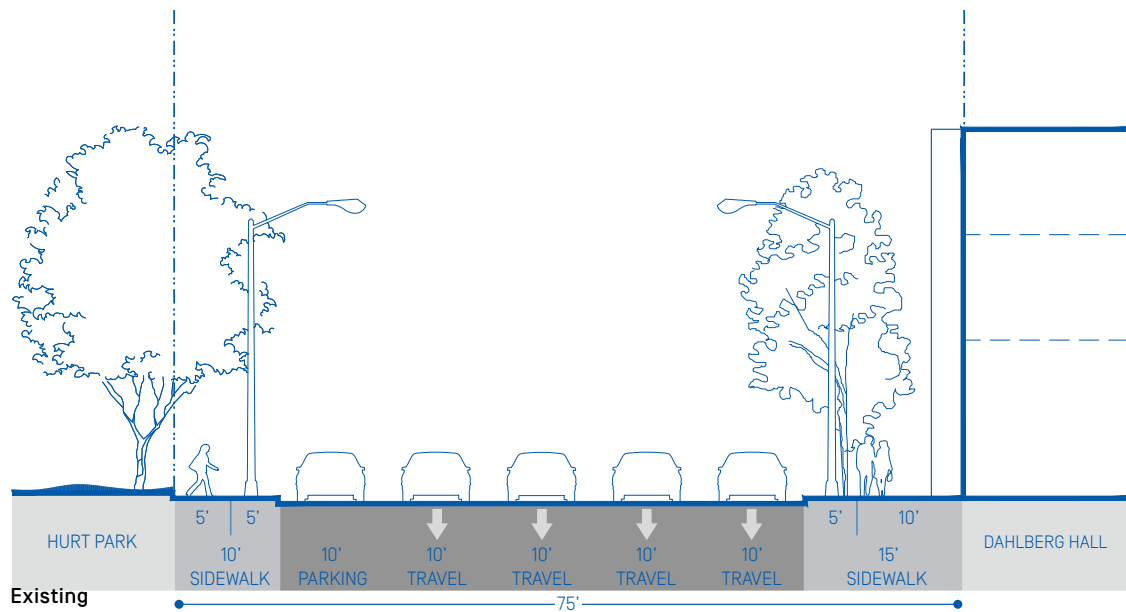


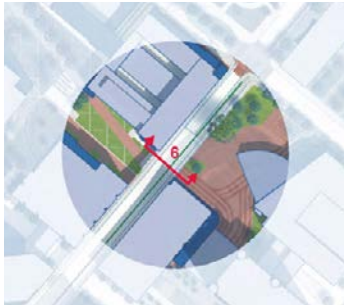


Courtland [Section 6]

For Courtland Ave, the master plan suggests:

- > Reducing the number of vehicular lanes from 5 down to 4, enabling the addition of a protected two-way bike lane on the eastern side of the street.
- > Street beautification measures to include new paving and signage.

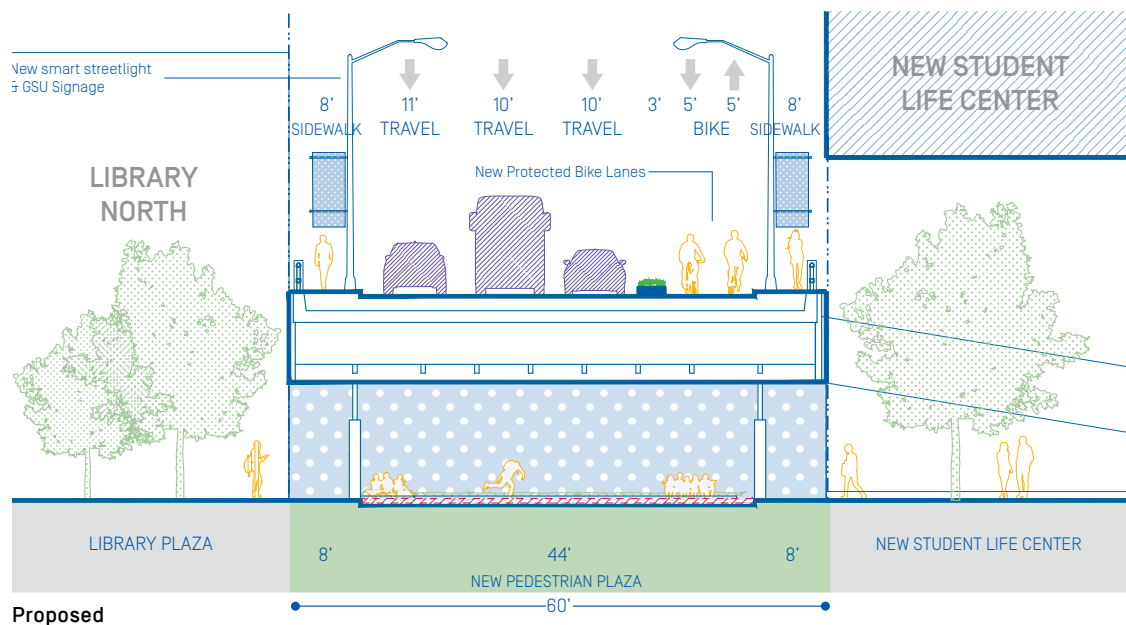
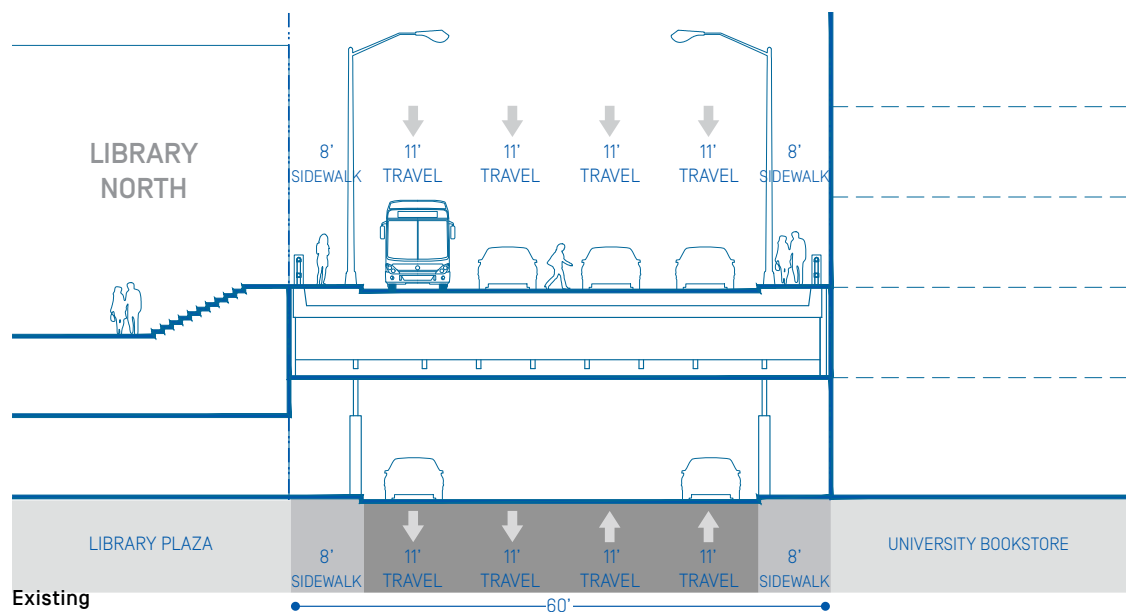


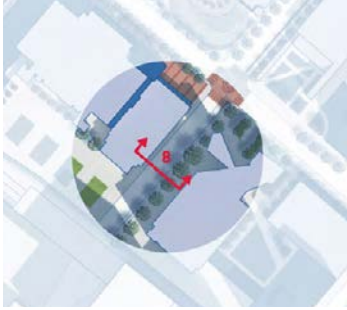


Courtland [Section 7]

For the section of Courtland, the master plan suggests:

- > A dramatic transformation of the lower level, closing this to traffic and creating a pedestrian plaza that opens off a new Student Life Center.
- > On the upper level, reducing the number of vehicular traffic lanes down from 4 to 3, and adding a two-way protected bike lane on the east side.

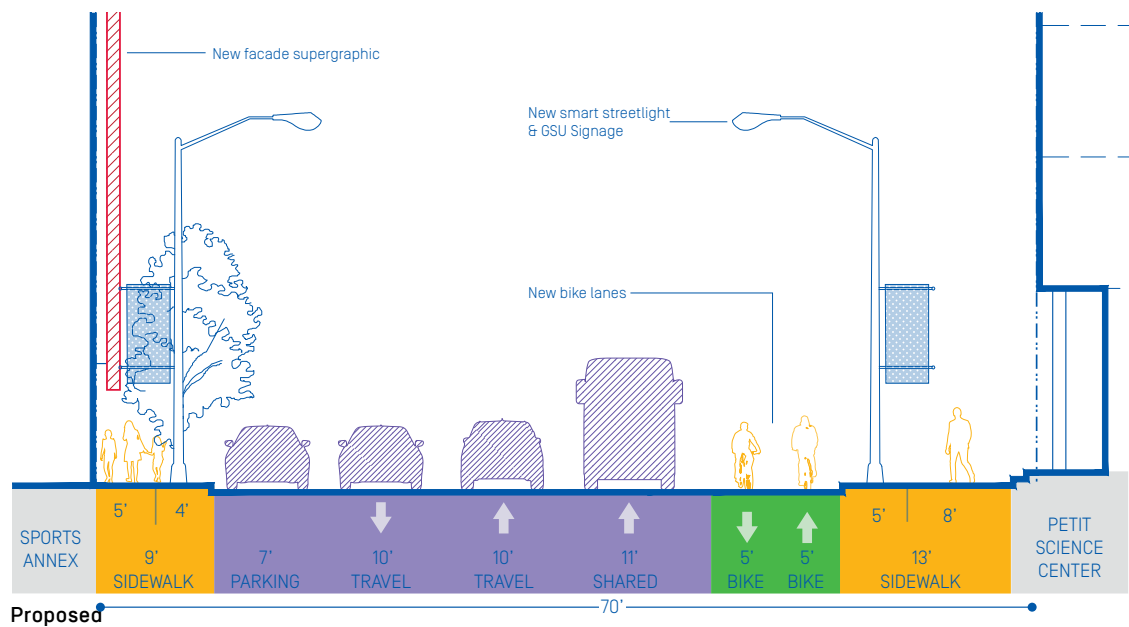
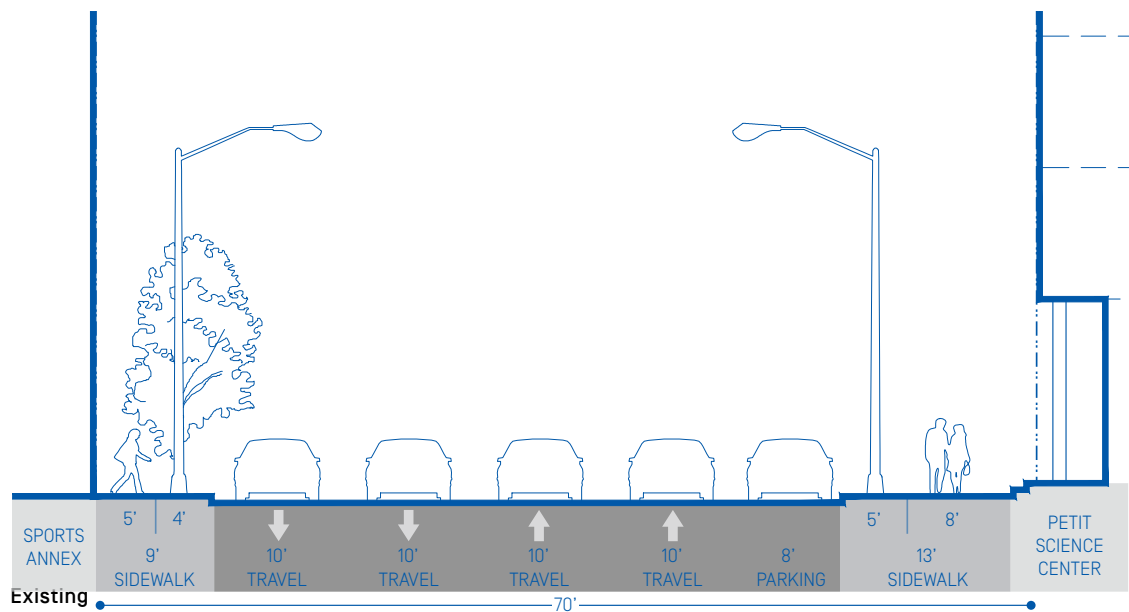


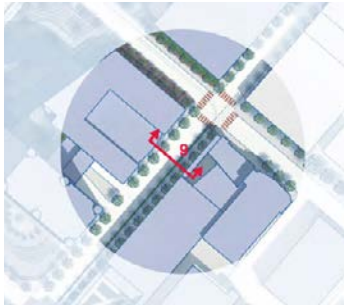


Piedmont [Section 8]

For this section of Piedmont Ave, the master plan suggests:

- > Reducing the number of vehicular lanes down from 5 to 4, enabling a two-way bike lane on the east side.
- > Street beautification measures to include new paving and signage.

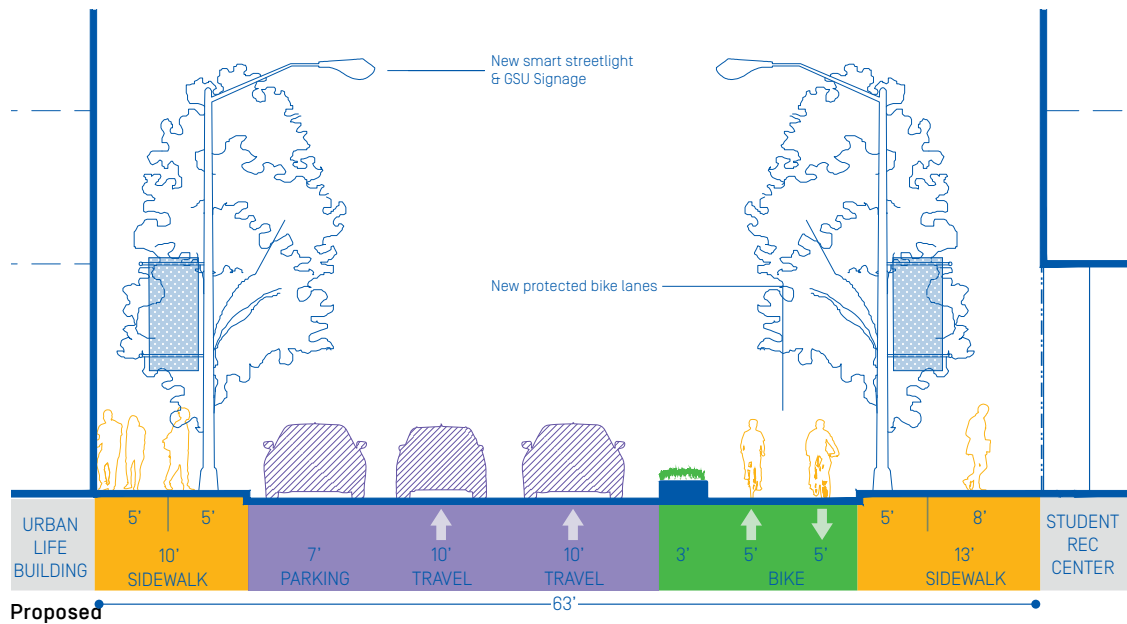
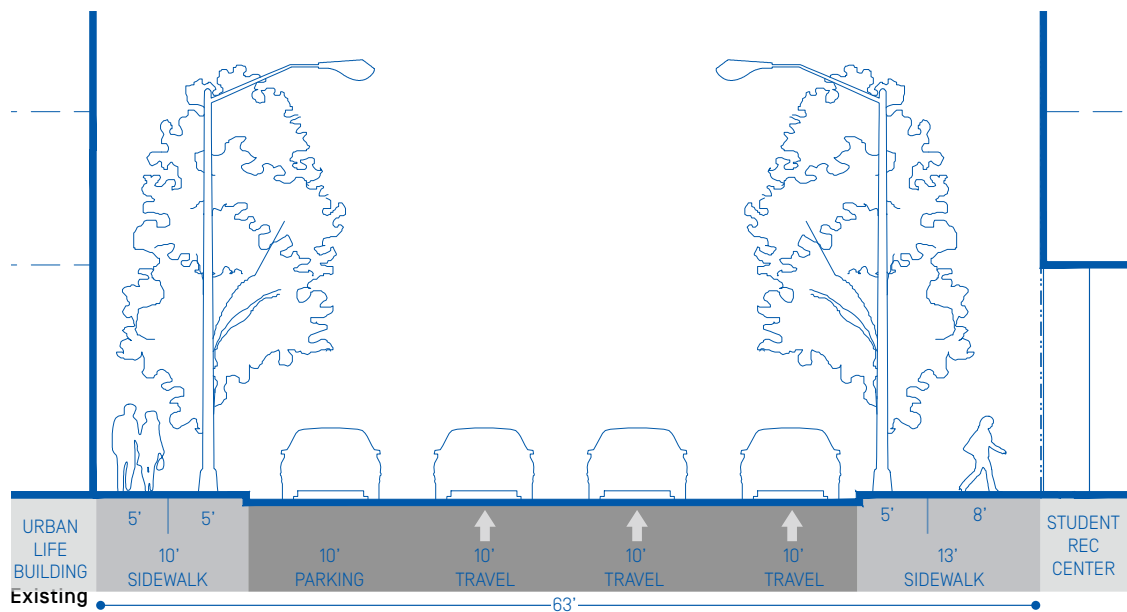




Piedmont [Section 9]

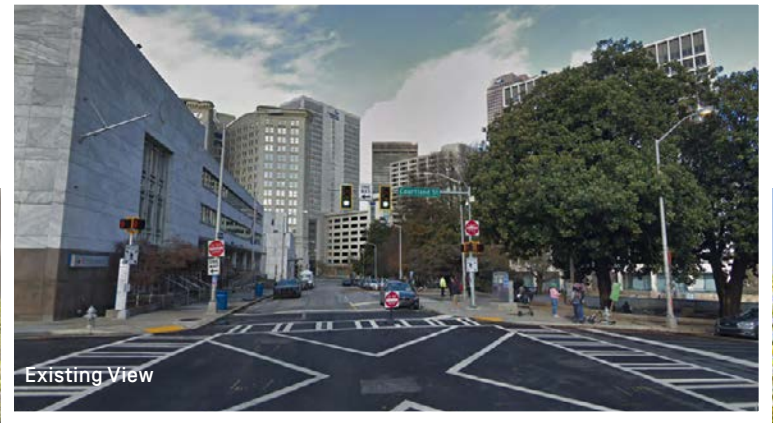
Similarly, for this section of Piedmont Ave, the master plan suggests:

- > Reducing the number of vehicular lanes down from 5 to 4, enabling a protected two-way bike lane on the east side.
- > Street beautification measures to include new paving and signage.



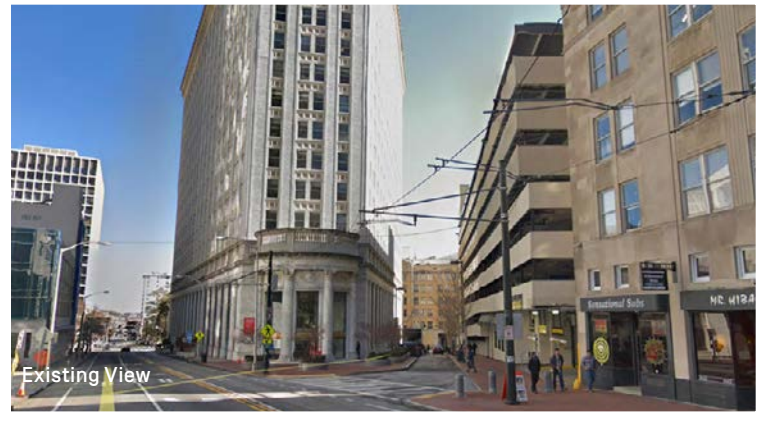
STREET IMPROVEMENTS AT GILMER STREET AND HURT PLAZA





STREETSCAPE AND FACADE IMPROVEMENTS AT HURT PLAZA





TRANSFORM THE CAMPUS CORE

The two city blocks bounded by Gilmer Street, Piedmont Avenue, Decatur and Courtland Streets form Georgia State's campus core and is the heart of the campus; its most intense activity center.

As an integral and central element of the overall Master Plan, the proposal defines a connective tissue of landscaped urban plazas, pocket parks and amphitheaters including:

- > The Urban Life building;
- > Student Center East and Student Center West buildings;
- > Hurt Park;
- > A new Plaza (where Kell Hall once was); and,
- > Woodruff Park; via
- > An enhanced Hurt Plaza

Further, the Master Plan re-imagines both Woodruff and Hurt Parks, addressing the inherently problematic issues of their current designs and enhancing both as urban oases.

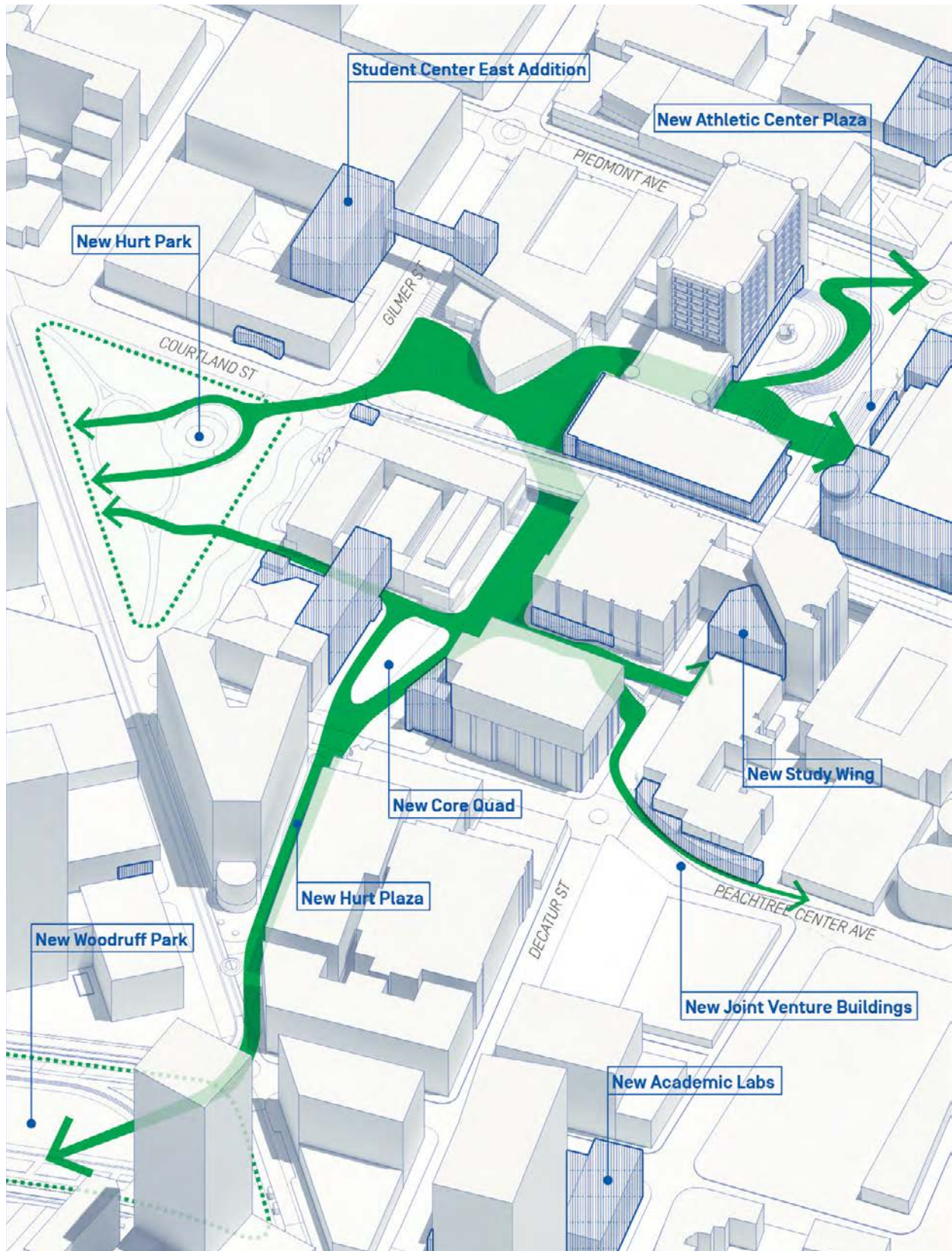
This creates a campus core that is cohesive, legible and memorable.



Sketch showing potential building demolitions and additions



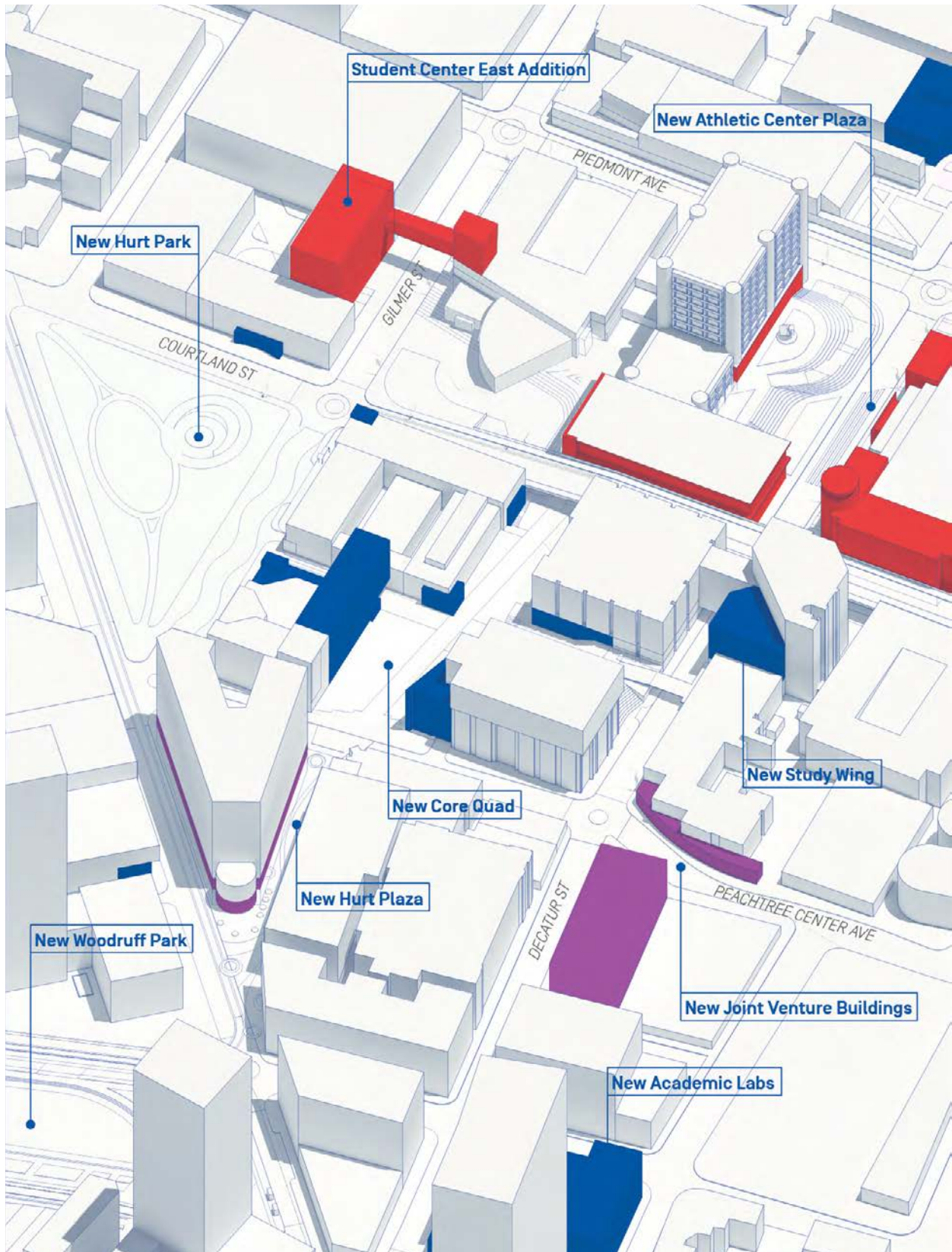
A framework for creating an integrated campus core



Flow of Pedestrian Traffic to and from the New Student Center Plaza

New Student Center

The University anticipates the completion of a number of significant capital projects in the years ahead. This includes Student Center East, an extension of the existing Student Center building, which will consist of a variety of meeting spaces and student support areas in anticipation of the proposed student enrollment increases. Still in the early stages of design, the new building will most likely be 4-5 stories, with a pedestrian bridge over Gilmer Street providing a seamless interior connection with the existing student center.

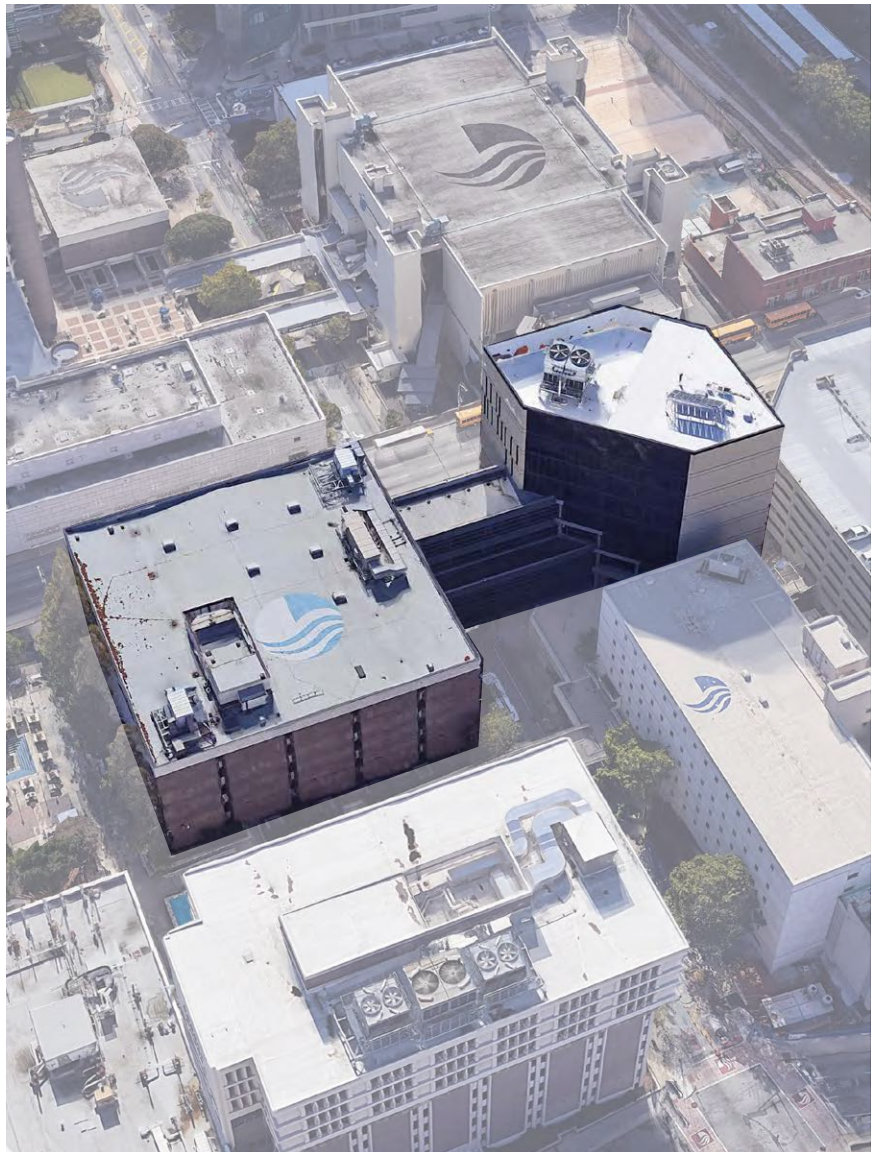


Proposed Additions & Renovations

Library Expansion

The 2017 Library Master Plan for the Atlanta campus library calls for a dramatic transformation of the interior spaces and improved accessibility from street level.

A new plaza entrance, new glazed openings, a new lantern stairway, and a reconfigured interior layout are key features of the master plan proposal. The study recommended the recalibration of existing spaces to adapt to contemporary use patterns, incorporating a new 'Global Studio' as well as an increased number of group study rooms.



Existing Library Building



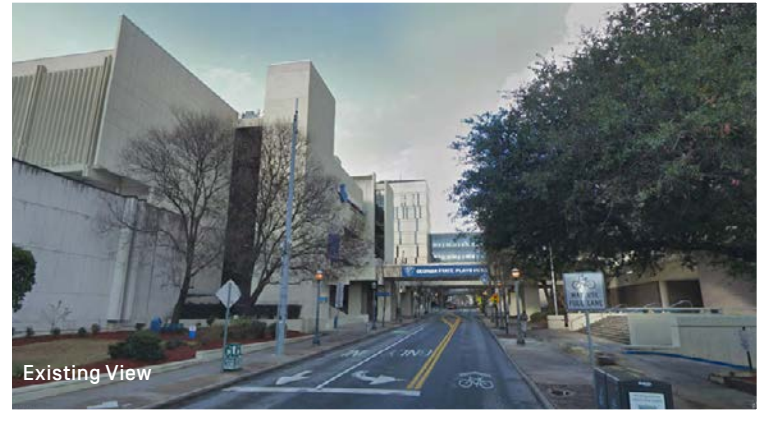
Excerpt from the 2017 Library Master Plan



Excerpt from the 2017 Library Master Plan

A REIMAGINED SPORTS ARENA, URBAN LIFE BUILDING, AND DECATUR STREET









The Road Ahead

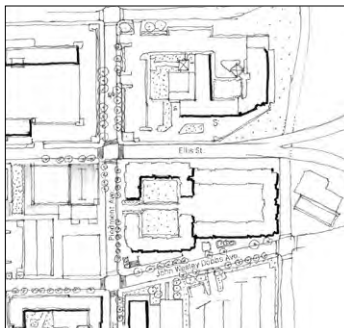
The combination and integration of all of the ideas outlined in this Master Plan would establish a physical and visual presence for Georgia State University in downtown Atlanta that it does not currently have, would create a cohesive sense of place and would go a long way to mitigating the notion that the downtown campus is unsafe. It would improve the threshold issues facing all Universities: relevance, recruitment and retention. A simple strategy of drawing the project boundaries for new capital improvement well beyond the building footprint, to incorporate streetscape improvements, new plazas and courtyards and additional landscaping, would go a long way toward implementing the Plan overtime. Partnering with the City of Atlanta and local business leaders on mutual areas of interest and projects that are mutually beneficial is a policy the University should consider adopting. Rome was not built in a day, and the Master Plan for Georgia State University will not be either - but bit-by-bit progress, on a project-by-project basis, will yield long term benefits and will build a momentum that will become hard to resist.

QUICK WINS

Toward the end goal of implementing the Plan, the Master Plan identifies a handful of manageable projects that could be achieved almost immediately, quickly and inexpensively, that would be profoundly transformative. These “quick wins” or “low-hanging fruit” are illustrated in the following diagrams.

Piedmont Avenue & Ellis Street

The surface parking lot at the north-east corner of Piedmont Avenue and Ellis Street is a “missing tooth” that could be transformed in a number of ways to mark that important intersection and, potentially, provide amenities and new uses to enhance student experience.



Existing Condition



Option One: A Landscaped Plaza with Modest Additions



Option Two: A Galleria Connection with New Multi-Purpose Uses

Auburn Avenue NE & Piedmont Avenue SE

Piedmont Avenue and Auburn Avenue are plagued with vacant lots, surface parking lots and abandoned or dilapidated buildings. A quilt of a rich variety of high-quality, landscaped open space - coupled with a combination of new, in-fill, mixed-use building and a re-purposing of existing buildings - can be imagined that would transform this environment from one that is unwelcoming to one that is inviting.



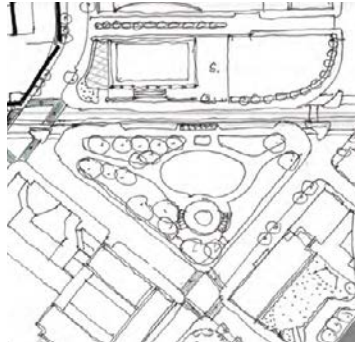
Option One



Option Two

Woodruff Park & Hurt Park

Georgia State University should partner with the City of Atlanta to re-imagine Hurt Park to better serve the University and public community.



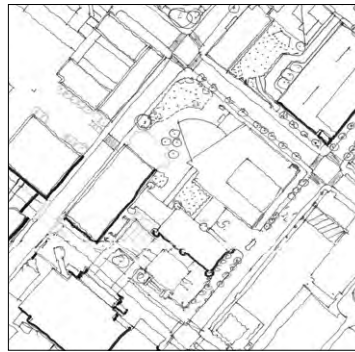
Existing Condition



Proposed Hurt Park Design

Student Center

Built interventions have the potential to transform the existing Student Center and surrounding urban landscape, redefining this important central hub.



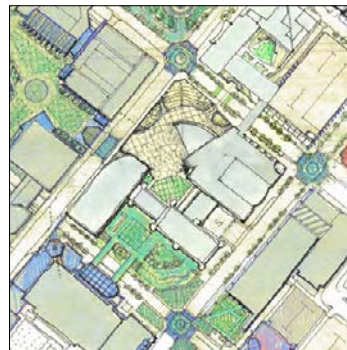
Existing



Option One



Option Two



Option Three





Acknowledgments

GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY

Special thanks are in order to the leadership of Georgia State University for their time, focus, energy, stewardship and support of the Master Planning effort, without which this Master Plan would never have taken meaningful shape.

MASTER PLAN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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