



**2014 American Planning Association National Planning Conference  
AICP Community Planning Workshop  
Historic Broad Street SW / Garnett MARTA Station Area  
Downtown Atlanta, Georgia**

**April 26, 2014**

**Workshop Report**

## **WORKSHOP OVERVIEW**

The 2014 AICP Community Planning Workshop focused on the revitalization of the Broad Street SW corridor, which connects the MARTA Five Points Rail Station and Garnett Rail Station in the historic heart of Downtown Atlanta.

The goal of the workshop was to identify specific blockages to implementing the community's vision and establish a realistic set of "first steps" to spur community confidence and lead to community revitalization in the area. (For the complete detailed workshop agenda, see Appendix A.)

The workshop took place at 236 Forsyth Street SW; an office building located in the workshop area, and included walking tours of the area.

The workshop was built around addressing the following topics:

- Strategies to Address Quality of Life Issues (public safety/homelessness)
- Pop-Up Community: Tactical Urbanism
- Investments in the Public Realm: Connectivity and Aesthetics

Planner participants learned the area's past, present, and future:

- The rich history and legacy of this part of Downtown when it was a thriving business center in post-war Atlanta
- The physical and social quality of life issues facing the area
- Recent and ongoing community efforts at revitalization and redevelopment efforts, including tactical urbanism and public art

The workshop also included participation of numerous community stakeholders, including people involved in local government, business, social services, arts organizations, and real estate, as well as residents of the workshop area and Downtown Atlanta as a whole. (For a list of workshop participants see Appendix B.)



*Workshop participants touring the workshop area.*

## **BRIEFING PRESENTATIONS**

The workshop began with a series of presentations designed to give planners a sense of the area's past, present, and future. (For the content of these presentations, see Appendix C – Briefing Presentation.) Presentations are summarized below, grouped by speaker:

*James Shelby - Commissioner, Department of Planning and Community Development for the City of Atlanta*

- The area is surrounded by “hot stuff” – development like National Center for Civil & Human Rights, new Falcons stadium – as well as existing attractions like Philips Arena, Georgia World Congress Center.
- Key focus: How to transform the area to benefit not only the City of Atlanta but residents.

*Gary Cornell, Host Committee and Board Member, Georgia Chapter, American Planning Association*

- Workshop will hopefully be a legacy of the national conference.
- Introduction to goal and focus areas:
  - Blockages to implementing community's vision and establish a realistic set of “first steps” to spur changes.
  - Areas: quality of life / perception, pop-community, enhanced public realm.
  - Connectivity between MARTA stations, residents, businesses, and government – all disconnected.

*Jennifer Ball, Vice President, Planning and Economic Development, Central Atlanta Progress*

- Focus is Broad St. SW (3 blocks) and nearby blocks to east and west.
- Existing Master Plan
  - Central Atlanta Progress (CAP) with the City of Atlanta have done a vision and master plan for Downtown Atlanta, called Imagine Downtown. This is due for an update.
  - Imagine Downtown includes sub-areas and Broad St. SW area is one of them.
  - Plan is land-use and transportation focused.
  - Identifies opportunity for future development, infrastructure needed to get us there.

- Lots of opportunity in underutilized land, especially parking lots – right by MARTA.
- Asks what existing buildings can work for adaptive reuse? Norfolk-Southern building is big example. And what could be built?
- Infill opportunities abounds – small offices and retail.
- There's more in the plan regarding this area but skipping for now.
- Downtown Development Technical Advisory Group.
  - Recent tactic to bring together stakeholders regarding Downtown Atlanta.
  - Group included 30 people and meetings over 6 months.
  - Group came up with 3 high priority tasks and identified immediate actions needed.

*Bruce Gallman, CEO, Gallman Development Group*

- Gallman's company developed Castleberry Hill – arts community in Downtown – beginning in the early 1980s. Has done historic preservation, adaptive reuse and new construction in historic neighborhood/s.
- Overview of what neighborhood could look like:
  - Obvious connection between Castleberry and this area
  - Garnett Station provides immediate MARTA access
  - Generational differences, like millennial's preferences for urban environments, mobility without a car, could make area attractive to that market.
  - Residential rents could potentially work, although not at level announced for Ponce City Market.



*Garnett MARTA Rail Station*

- Overview of recent investment
  - M. Rich Building, Capitol Center, Georgia Municipal Association, etc.
  - Gallman has worked with Russell McCall of Atlanta Foods International and Gourmet Foods International, investing in the area with about 50 acres between them.
- Concepts and concerns:
  - Idea of Forsyth St. as a nice boulevard.
  - But what about Greyhound? Passengers waiting attract unwanted elements. What to do? When are they going to move?
  - Trying to get rid of the gaps that keep people from continuing down the block, separate one neighborhood from another.
  - Parking lots are just waiting for someone to bring them to their best use. Lots are never the best use.
  - Problem of parking decks, blank walls.

*Kyle Kessler, AIA, LEED AP BD+C, Atlanta Downtown Neighborhood Association (ADNA) President and neighborhood resident*

- Historical background
  - Broad St. originally stopped at Mitchell St. Plans beginning in 1870s to extend street for increased property frontage and higher tax value.
  - Rich's moved to Broad St. in 1924 and aided extension of the street south past Mitchell St. in 1937 adding street capacity to handle car traffic.
  - Broad St. still hasn't recovered from MARTA construction in late 1970s and early 1980s – open cut street. Very disruptive, destructive. Plazas and pedestrian malls that were built didn't work out as planned.
  - In early 1990s some people did move into south Downtown but momentum didn't continue after Olympics. People were in a rush, but then afterwards lots of unoccupied.
  - Now everything is full – lots of demands, not a lot of residential space.
- Paradoxes
  - Tons of parking next to massive transit hub
  - Perception of crime and actual crime, when there's law enforcement all around.
  - No grocery store because not enough residents but no more residents because no grocery store.

- Arts and Tactical Urbanism
  - Positive impact of Elevate street festival -- funded by percent-for-art program from a city parking deck. South Broad mural project. Elevate's goal is to keep on adding to murals until such time as buildings do turn over.
  - Brighten Up Broad events with tactical urbanism.
  - Other initiatives – Operation Best Foot Forward, Partner for Hope, Façade Improvement Grant Program, Downtown South Transit Area Enhancements and South of Marietta Security Alliance (SOMA).
  - Arts organizations – Mammal, Eyedrum, C4Atlanta, Living Walls, Dashboard Co-op, etc.
  - Love Your Block, Cultural District, First Thursday Art Walk, Farmer's Market, Historic Resources Survey, Atlanta StreetsAlive, Kick Ass Mall Cop, etc.

*Heather Alhadeff AICP, President, Center Forward*

- Recent study looks at the qualities that attach people and places, and it comes down to 1) social offerings, 2) openness (feeling of welcome), and 3) aesthetics.
- What is “place-making”? Tactical urbanism and place-making not one and the same. One is longer term; one is quicker, cheaper, energy building.

## **WALKING TOUR OF STUDY AREA**

Each of the three Breakout Groups received a specially-designed tour map and made a separate tour of the area. Expert facilitators / tour guides escorted each group, paying special attention to explain the significant features, points of interest, and resources along the way. Participants were encouraged to take photos and ask questions of the facilitators as well as local experts during the tour. The tour period of the workshop lasted approximately an hour and a half.

## **WORK SESSION ONE**

### **Scoping the Problem and the Alternatives**

After the walking tours concluded, participants gathered in three breakout groups – each organized around one specific topical focus including Quality of Life, Pop-Up Community and Public Realm - to begin Session One of the workshop. Each group was asked to assign a leader and scribe from among participants. Several resource persons from the community were available to answer questions and provide more background information.



The goal of this session:

To identify specific blockages to implementing the community's vision and establish and realistic set of "first steps," utilizing successful placemaking principles that will spur community confidence and lead to community revitalization in the study area.

The objectives of this session were to

- outline the scope of the problem;
- point out barriers to implementation; and
- suggest three or more alternative approaches for overcoming the most important barrier.

Each group was also asked to:

- suggest best practice examples and models that Atlanta should be aware of and research;
- prepare notes so that a spokesperson could give an oral summary of the discussion.



*Workshop participants at work*

Summaries for each group are given below. (For detailed notes see in the Appendix B - *Breakout Session Group Notes*.) Note that there is overlap between groups, so that for example the Pop-Up Community group addressed Quality of Life issues.

### **Quality of Life Issues**

Discussion summary as presented by the group:

1. Public perception - The area's image is being defined by public safety issues that continue to plague the area (prostitution, drug trafficking, organized crime, theft by taking, counterfeit good sales, criminal recidivism. criminal loitering, aggressive panhandling, gambling, public intoxication, misdemeanor assault (sexual harassment), robbery (cellphones) burglaries (car break-ins). When visitors see crime or become victims of crime this creates a perception that the area is not safe. When it happens to visitors the message is carried outside of Atlanta. This persistence presence of quality of life crimes detracts from the tourist experience and also deters development and investment. There is a perception that the area has been abandoned by the city government and city police. A suggestion was made to replace measuring the area using the major

crime statistics and start measuring the area against the crimes listed above that are more commonly committed in the area. This would be a more realistic way to measure police effectiveness and progress in the area.

2. Creative Place Making – The group suggested that we use the areas that are frequently used to commit crimes and repurpose them into places for lawful community engagement. For example agreements can be made with the parking lot owners to set up temporary places to show movies. Vacant blighted buildings can be repurposed and rented at a reduced rate if they are habitable (i.e. Eyedrum). This strategy should be employed block by block and business by business.
3. Funding – The group suggested that an experienced person be hired for a minimum of three years that is fully accountable for executing a set of desired goals aimed at real substantive change. The person would have previous experience driving development and change in underserved, inner city communities and be able to work with the current stakeholders in the community.

### **Pop-Up Community**

Discussion summary as presented by the group:

- Barriers
  - Group spent a lot of time talking about barriers – what’s blocking us, why can’t we go further?
  - Lots of groups have been working on it and while not fighting, also have not been cohesive, coordinated, united.
  - Recommend somehow fostering conversation among government agencies that are so invested in the area with real estate (including both buildings and parking lots).
- Paradox: Razor wire is against local code yet it’s around City of Atlanta parking lots!
- Homelessness & shelters:
  - Question: What it would take to have what we want coexisting with homeless population?
  - Example of Gateway Center vs. Atlanta Recovery Center – different models, different results. One coexists well, the other is perceived as a problem. Similar examples around the city, such as Atlanta Mission (in Castleberry Hill) vs. Peachtree-Pine.
  - How area suffers from the concept of “containment” – as long as the “problems” are contained here, we don’t have to really deal with the problem (except if you live or work here).



- Bruce Gallman shares experience of Castleberry and how they have *one* mission open, because after denying one project, community decided they “had a conscience” and negotiated a deal with certain ground rules. While relationships haven’t been perfect, it’s allowed coexistence. Key element that mission/shelter not cut out, but also agreed not to expand and add other shelters, so the area did not become dominated by similar establishments, which in greater concentrations could be disruptive.

## **Public Realm**

Discussion summary as presented by the group:

- Two main issues group discussed:
  - Perceptual issues of having “uncomfortable” feeling in area, based not only on seeing homeless but on feel of streetscape, empty lots, whether things are maintained or not.
  - Need for reinvestment not just by private sector but by the public sector.
- Need for stronger intergovernmental coordination. Example is looking at those parking lots, where much of use is government agencies, which are impacting the area negatively.
- Recommend calling the area the Railroad District, rather than tying to a street or area.
- Note significant lack of maintenance on streetscape and infrastructure. This has been left in hands of public entities, which have not done it.
- Recommendation for ramping up tactical urbanism – keep up what’s already been started, with Brighten Up Broad Street, Elevate, etc.



*Broad Street SW, view north from Trinity Avenue*

## **WORK SESSION TWO**

### **Meaningful Actions to Spur Community Confidence**

Each Breakout Group was next asked to use the feedback from the first session to refine its ideas into a specific set of “first steps”. The groups were encouraged to engage stakeholders to sound out these ideas, and then identify a sequence of action steps and the agency or stakeholders who should initiate each step in the action plan. A spokesperson for each group was asked to prepare a flip chart and oral summary to present the group’s action plan.

Summaries for each group are given below. (For detailed notes see Appendix C - Breakout Session Group Notes.) Note that once again there is overlap between groups.

#### **Quality of Life Issues**

Discussion summary as presented by the group:

##### **Lack of Confidence**

- Current business owners believe that the #1 barrier to entry in investing and starting a business in Downtown are quality of life concerns. How do we address the public safety issues that are stifling the area from attracting the same kind quality investment and development opportunities that are happening in north Downtown, Old Fourth Ward and Midtown?

##### **Lack of Accountability**

- There are a number of agencies and organizations that perform various functions for the area but there is not one group that is accountable for the overall performance of the area. The area is perceived as a liability instead of an asset. As a result stakeholders are unwilling to take complete responsibility for the area. Participants stated “Who wants to be The Captain at the helm of a sinking ship?”
- A recommendation was made to hire a full time person to work with area stakeholders. This person would be accountable for the area. The position would be full funded for a minimum of 3 years.
- The person would continue the work that has already been started but serve as a catalyst and connector between all the different stakeholders to drive change. The person would serve independent of the city government and be ultimately accountable for goal setting and driving change in the area.

##### **The Cost of Crime and unresolved Public Safety issues**

- Public Feeding - During the community walk visitors witnessed how people were illegally crossing fenced off barriers and driving onto private property to feed the

needy while the police stood and watched. . A recommendation was made to make sure that the current laws on the books are enforced for criminal loitering on private property. Additional recommendation was made to find a place where people can lawfully help the homeless. Participants from the other cities gave us examples of programs in their cities and informed us that they do not have these problems because the city enforces the criminal loitering laws, requires that people who feed the homeless have a permit to serve food and also require that adequate bathroom and sanitation be provided. They were shocked to see people breaking the law in order to feed the needy in parking lots on Peachtree and Trinity.

- Crack Houses– Participants talked about having a ‘Bad Neighbor Good Neighbor Code of Conduct Agreement’ in other cities. In these cases the neighborhood code of conduct would be the first line of defense in repairing the confidence and restoring community engagement. If a neighbor willfully violated the code of conduct the neighborhood as whole would move in support of resolving any issues either through contacting the police or contacting code enforcement. The belief is that if the community is working together to resolve issues than response time to resolving crime improves and crime is less likely to reoccur inside of businesses. Challenges to implementing this model include trying to connect and actively engage the diversity of stakeholders that exist in South Downtown.

#### Activate Area Assets

- Parking lots – Participants educated us that they can be big assets for the area. They are undeveloped parcels that provide limitless development potential. We have the opportunity to start from scratch instead of being limited by building structures that may not be part of the neighborhood’s vision.
- Vacant Blighted Properties – Participants commented that we have a great stock of buildings. However, we have to find incentives for property owners to repair their blighted properties so they can be used.

#### **Pop-Up Community**

Discussion summary as presented by the group:

- Branding – implementation steps
  - Move away from the old direction, old conversation. Put out the NOW, not the THEN. Arts and culture, residents, funky building. We’re done with the old. (Example of Fairlie-Poplar, which did this in the late 1990s.)
  - Use partners, university, pro bono assistance, get money to get us started.
  - Making a list of “asks” – specific stuff we need to “make this thing go.”

- Specific steps
  - use media tools to create virtual neighborhood (online)
  - streamline approval for events
  - artistic wayfinding
  - activity programming (art festival, food trucks, music).
- Give it a name, give it boundaries, and stick with it. (Again, think Fairlie-Poplar.)
- Racism
  - Looking at overcoming racism → multicultural events, partnerships, mitigate area's perception.
  - Area is multicultural but disjointed, with groups butting up against one another but not mixing.
  - Avoid being pigeonholed as black-white thing or class thing etc. In planning activity, building an image, keep the tent big.
- Pop-up stuff – interim steps
  - Use city lot across from MARTA, more inclusive (diversity), artist-designed bike racks, dancing outside, celeb chef event, busking permits.
  - Bringing camera to every event and see if it can be funded as “street film.”
  - Cohesive community calendar would also help.
- Funding
  - Jay Tribby (City of Atlanta) suggests ADID needs to look to expand or change funding, as right now they serve areas which contribute most to their funding.
  - Kyle Kessler (ADNA) says return-on-investment (ROI) for investing a little bit of resources to South Downtown would be big.



*Elevate Broad Street SW Mural Project*

- Somebody suggests that residents might be able to contribute to ADID assessment to have skin in the game.
- Question about whether we form a development corporation (where proposed full-time manager works). Board of that org. would have individuals from various organizations who are related
- Role of Georgia State University (GSU)
  - Jay Tribby brings up GSU – fearless and creative students, and yet?
  - Break down barriers.
  - Art as a way to connect – GSU art school, sculpture, students, ties to galleries, etc.
  - Also bringing up Underground as something that freaks out parents / liability re GSU.
  - Area lighting issues that put off GSU admin. Areas that aren't lit enough are ones they'll tell students to avoid and will avoid investing in.

### **Public Realm**

Discussion summary as presented by the group:

- Tackled idea of barriers to redevelopment.
- Invited everyone to gather around the map they've made.
  - Illustrating their idea for between the two MARTA stations. Basically suggesting primarily housing in between. Tap into student residential potential. Redirect it from where it's spreading (eastern / northeastern Downtown).
  - Mixed opinions about the design of the two MARTA stations – what to do with them.
  - Concept is housing above and to rear, retail along the front.
  - Challenge of the Greyhound station – still grappling with it. Can it be MOVED? It's hogging a prime real estate spot. What would it take to get them to move? Bruce Gallman suggests moving to other side of Garnett MARTA rail station; nobody would want to live across from prison etc.
  - Discussion of closing up streets, opening others.
  - Improve Garnett with its ramp, no man's land. Put housing around it and open it up, make it more of a plaza (like the Decatur MARTA rail station)

- Government buildings and workers
  - If gov't buildings are fortresses, areas around it have to be inviting – sidewalks, streetscape, dead walls, parking lots, homeless, etc. etc. – for people to break out from their islands.
  - Incentives and communications to get gov't to get out onto the streets.
  - Building manager initiative, rather than going to federal, state, county etc. gov't – too much bureaucracy.
- Suggest there needs to be one person who is going to coordinating this all. Need “coalescing factor.”
- Quick fixes

- Suggest importance of building a name, a brand, for the area. Pick one and stick with this!



*Sidewalk along Broad Street SW*

- Suggest “rip out the wrong” – like fenced off trees, other vernacular “solutions” that aren’t working any more. Remove the things, subtle clues that turn people off.
- Activities
  - Tactical urbanism like Brighten Up Broad Street, painting buildings, Living Walls, Elevate, bringing people to an area. Continue that!
  - Key: Once you have a thing that’s working for you, build on that thing, and make it something people come to – and building a brand
  - Special events: “Taste of Broad” event with chefs, restaurants (use those sidewalks shelters on Broad. St., paint them up), lunchtime farmers market, food truck program, book swap, etc.
- Empty storefronts
  - Storefront program that shows “what could be” or using as display.
  - Eliminate dead facades, do something with those spaces.



## **SUMMARY DISCUSSION**

### **Workshop Participants and Community Stakeholders**

Below is a summary of the “big ideas” that came out of the three groups as well as the obstacles they identified. The groups overlapped one another and this is a synthesis of their collective assessments.

### **Big Ideas**

Based on the day’s discussions, including the groups’ final presentations as well as all they discussed prior to that (see *Breakout Session Group Notes* in Appendix), here is a breakdown of five major recommendations for action going forward:

#### **1. Coordinating Organization**

All groups agreed that a key to neighborhood development would be a full-time coordinator working at some type of organization (or as part of a greater one) whose job it would be to work on the issues in this report – pushing forward with goals and finding ways to overcome obstacles. The position would encompass event planning, working with multiple government agencies, arts groups, and social services, and marketing/branding work. It would be best if this person were not an employee of the City of Atlanta, as they would need to be more independent and also dedicated 100% to one area. Already existing groups, meanwhile, such as the Atlanta Downtown Neighborhood Association, would work closely with this person, bringing in the crowds to support events, putting feet on the ground for volunteer projects, etc.

#### **2. Tactical Urbanism**

The tactical urbanism campaigns that have already been going on in the area – such as Brighten Up Broad and Elevate – should continue and then be stepped up. There were many suggestions for “taking back” parking lots, using them for arts events, markets, music, as a counter to their current use, especially on weekends, as sites for public feedings and/or empty wasteland. Other suggested tactics included staging music/dance events at Garnett MARTA Station (on the long ramp), pop-up shops, late-night dancing, busking, and creative use of vacant storefronts, such as history displays and “Imagine what could be here” type murals.

### **3. Name the Area**

Throughout the day, there was talk about the need to give the area a name, one name that could be used by everyone and then branded and marketed. Two of the top suggestions were SoMa (for “South of Marietta”) and the Railroad District; however, participants agreed that a formal branding process was required to bring all groups together. By giving the area a name and boundaries, it would gain definition, and status, rather than being something nebulous, a “leftover” part of Downtown. The name could also be used in marketing efforts, for example in event names (e.g. SoMa Street Fest, SoMa Market, etc.), social media, and the name of the agency (see above) that focuses on the area. An example of such naming and branding is the Fairlie-Poplar district nearby, which was able to define itself and create many positive associations between its name and the amenities of the area, including arts, architecture, restaurants and more. Branding and name-giving was also cited as being important in attracting grants and investors.

### **4. Compassion and Cooperation**

Quality of life issues was a theme that came out of discussions over and over and a consistent recommendation was the need to avoid “pushing out” problem groups and activities, such as shelters, but rather work with groups to show how feeding is best (and legally) accomplished out of parking lots and public spaces. Discussion focused on working with the groups and agencies that run such operations and coming up with solutions that work both for the populations and for the area’s growth, including new businesses, convincing government workers to come outside, and making the area feel safe. Concrete suggestions for this included partnering locals (pastors, social service experts) with groups coming in from the suburbs to do public feedings, and to have them stress the need for more appropriate activities, with less negative impact and more positive long-term effects. Groups could be connected to local facilities that serve food inside or do job training or providing clothing. Another concrete suggestion was identifying facilities that actually benefit street populations in a positive way, beyond either subsistence (hand-outs) or allowing local businesses to “serve” them with alcohol, cigarettes, or by serving as fronts for drug-selling. A suggestion was floated for a community center or a jobs training program of some kind, such as one that trains people for food service and/or catering work, and then connects the newly trained with work.

## **5. Georgia State University and Government**

One major “disconnect” that was identified was the presence of large employers and populations at nearby Georgia State University (GSU) and government agencies (city, county, state, federal) who tend to avoid the area either because it offers nothing to them or because (as with GSU students) they’ve been outright told to avoid it. For GSU, some ties have already begun to be forged, with art students coming to local galleries, and it was suggested that the art and music school and its programs were a good way to begin connecting – not only students going to galleries, but students setting up their work in vacant store windows, or creating public sculpture or doing live concerts. Another way to connect the university to the area would be to go the GSU business school and students to seek help on things like business plan, financing, market research, etc. The school’s social work division might also be of assistance. As far as local government, one concrete suggestion was forging alliances with local building managers (rather than their lead agencies or departments) to find activities that might bring local workers outside. What services would they like to see? Would providing an events calendar or maps to them help?

## **APPENDICES**

- Appendix A: Workshop Agenda
- Appendix B: List of Participants
- Appendix C: Briefing Presentation
- Appendix D: Breakout Session Group Notes

**APPENDIX A**

Workshop Agenda

2014 APA National Planning Conference  
**AICP Community Planning Workshop (W350)**

**Broad Street SW / Garnett MARTA Station Area – Atlanta, Georgia**

April 26, 2014

**Workshop Agenda**

- 8:00 AM** Participants meet at Georgia World Congress Center, Building C, Lobby to load bus to Workshop site. In route to the site, the bus will tour the surroundings and context of the workshop planning area.
- 8:30 AM** Arrive at 236 Forsyth Street SW for Continental Breakfast and Networking  
*(At arrival/registration, participants to be assigned to groups for breakouts)*
- 8:45 AM** Briefing Presentation by Host Committee/ Community Partners  
*(Highlight briefing book materials and introduce and structure presentation around three breakout topics)*
- 9:30 AM** Depart for Walking Tour of Study Area  
*(Organize groups with tour guides/resources based on their breakout topic)*
- 10:15 AM** Return to 236 Forsyth Street SW and Take Break
- 10:30 PM** Breakout Session One: Scoping the Problem and the Alternatives  
*(Groups to assign leader and scribe from among participants)*  
Group #1: Quality of Life Issues (public safety/homeless)  
Group #2: Pop-Up Community: Tactical Urbanism  
Group #3: Investments in the Public Realm: Connectivity and Aesthetics
- 12:00 PM** Groups Report Out to Plenary during Working Lunch
- 1:30 PM** Breakout Session Two: Meaningful Actions to Spur Community Confidence  
Group #1: Quality of Life Issues (public safety/homeless)  
Group #2: Pop-Up Community: Tactical Urbanism  
Group #3: Investments in the Public Realm: Connectivity and Aesthetics
- 3:00 PM** Break
- 3:15 PM** Groups Report Out to Plenary
- 4:15 PM** Planner/Stakeholder Summary and Discussion  
Discuss key points, lessons learned, recommendations for follow-up, implementation models, responsibilities for follow through, Final Report
- 5:00 PM** Workshop Complete



## **Detailed Workshop Agenda**

**8:00 AM**      **Participants load bus at the Georgia World Congress Center, Building C Lobby.**

In route to the Workshop site, the bus will tour the surroundings and context of the workshop planning area. Jennifer Ball will lead the guided tour on the bus.

**8:30 AM**      **Arrive at 236 Forsyth Street SW for Continental Breakfast and Networking**  
*(At arrival/registration, participants to be assigned to groups for breakouts)*

**8:45 AM**      **Briefing Presentation by Host Committee/ Resources**

Members of the AICP Workshop Committee will provide workshop participants with an overview of the rich history and legacy of this part of Downtown when it was a thriving business center in post-war Atlanta. Participants will learn about the historic nature and planning efforts for the area, as well as the redevelopment efforts of the area. You will hear from high-spirited residents and artisans who launched a round of tactical urbanism in 2013 called “Brighten Up Broad Street” in an effort to recast its image from that of a dark and deserted place to a source of dazzling lights, blaring music, and ethnic food. These presentations will conclude with a brief showcase of the topics to be addressed in breakout group sessions throughout the day.

**James Shelby**, Commissioner, Department of Planning and Community Development for the City of Atlanta. Commissioner Shelby will welcome the group and speak about the City’s various planning efforts and goals for the area.

**Jennifer Ball**, Vice President, Planning and Economic Development, Central Atlanta Progress. Through her presentation participants will learn about the visionary plans of Central Atlanta Progress to redevelop the area into a bustling urban center with improved infrastructure, connected greenspace, and public-private-partnerships.

**Kyle Kessler**, AIA, LEED AP BD+C, Atlanta Downtown Neighborhood Association President and neighborhood resident. Kyle will share his perspective on the community’s efforts to spur the area’s revitalization through addressing quality of life issues, document the area’s rich history, partner with a variety of arts organizations.

**Bruce Gallman**, CEO, Gallman Development Group. Bruce is a local real estate entrepreneur who will tell about his on-going efforts to purchase and revitalize several key blocks for a vibrant transit-oriented development.

**Heather Alhadeff** AICP, President, Center Forward. Participants will learn about Place-making strategies and Atlanta’s recent efforts.

**9:30 AM      Walking Tour of Study Area**

Each of the three Breakout Groups will receive a specially designed tour map and make a separate tour. Facilitators will escort each group paying special attention to explain the significant features, points of interest, and resources along the way that are most closely related to the topic for which each break out group will undertake special exercises during the day. Participants are encouraged to take photos and ask questions of the facilitator during the tour.

**10:15 AM      Break**

**10:30 AM      Breakout Session One: Scoping the Problem and the Alternatives**

Each Breakout Group will move to assigned tables where they will identify a leader and scribe from among participants. Each Breakout Group will have a Facilitator who will guide the breakout session exercises and keep the group focused on the workshop's goal:

**WORKSHOP GOAL: TO IDENTIFY SPECIFIC BLOCKAGES TO IMPLEMENTING THE COMMUNITY'S VISION AND ESTABLISH A REALISTIC SET OF "FIRST STEPS" UTILIZING SUCESSFUL PLACEMAKING PRINCIPLES THAT WILL SPUR COMMUNITY CONFIDENCE AND LEAD TO COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION IN THE STUDAY AREA.**

The topics for discussion in each Breakout Group are as follows:

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>Group #1:</b> | <b>Quality of Life Issues (public safety/homeless)</b>              |
| <b>Group #2:</b> | <b>Pop-Up Community: Tactical Urbanism</b>                          |
| <b>Group #3:</b> | <b>Investments in the Public Realm: Connectivity and Aesthetics</b> |

Questions to guide the group's discussion will be provided at each table. A draft version of these questions can be found in Appendix J. Several resource persons from the community will be available to answer questions and provide more background information. The objectives of this session are to

- i. outline the scope of the problem;
- ii. point out barriers to implementation; and
- iii. suggest three or more alternative approaches for overcoming the most important barrier
- iv. what are best practice examples and models that Atlanta should be aware of and research

A spokesperson for each group will prepare an oral summary of the group's discussion.

**12:00 PM      Working Lunch and Group Reports**

Box lunches will be available for everyone. While everyone enjoys their lunch, a spokesperson from each group will make a 5 minute presentation to the entire workshop group and encourage feedback from participants of other groups. Pay special attention to common themes among the Breakout Groups.

**1:30 PM                      Breakout Session Two: Meaningful Actions to Spur Community Confidence**

Facilitators for each Breakout Group will help the group use the feedback from the plenary session to refine the alternative approaches into a specific set of “first steps”. The group will engage stakeholders to ground-truth intended outcomes then identify a sequence of action steps and the agency or stakeholders who should initiate each step in the action plan. A spokesperson for each group will prepare a flip chart and oral summary to present the group’s action plan.

**3:00 PM                      Break**

**3:15 PM                      Groups Report Out to Plenary**

A spokesperson from each group will make a 10 minute presentation to the plenary assembly and receive feedback from participants of other groups. Pay special attention to common themes among the Breakout Groups.

**4:15 PM                      Planner/Stakeholder Summary and Discussion**

Over beverages and hors d'oeuvres, each group facilitator will lead a discussion of key points, lessons learned, recommendations for follow-up, implementation models, responsibilities for follow through, and key elements of a Final Report that will be drafted by the Workshop Committee.

**5:00 PM                      Workshop Complete**

## **APPENDIX B**

### List of Participants

#### **Workshop**

Heather Alhadeff, CenterForward, Inc.  
Jennifer Ball, Central Atlanta Progress  
Anna Breinich, American Planning Association  
Wesley Brown, Central Atlanta Progress  
Greg Burbridge, Atlanta Regional Commission  
Susan Conger, U.S. General Services Administration  
Ginger Corless, American Planning Association  
Gary Cornell, City of Chamblee  
John Crocker, MARTA  
Wendy Darling, Downtown resident  
Philip Farrington, American Planning Association  
Chuck Fisher, American Planning Association  
Emma French, Student  
Bruce Gallman, Gallman Development Group, LLC  
Bill Gallman, Gallman Development Group, LLC  
Jennifer Graeff, American Planning Association  
Megan Griffith, Student  
Cynthia Hoyle, American Planning Association  
Valerie Hubbard, American Planning Association  
Kyle Kessler, Atlanta Downtown Neighborhood Association  
Stosh Kozlowski, City of Atlanta Office of Planning  
Richard Krier, American Planning Association  
Deborah Lawlor, American Planning Association  
Joseph Lee, American Planning Association  
Mark Lundgren, American Planning Association  
Richard Miller, Miller's Rexall Drugs  
Al Outland, Georgia Municipal Association  
Shayna Pollock, Central Atlanta Progress  
Vanessa Raye, SOMA

Pam Revie-Pettersen, Atlanta Downtown Neighborhood Association  
Ryan Scherzinger, American Planning Association  
Lance Schulte, American Planning Association  
Adam Seeley, Gateway Center  
James Shelby, City of Atlanta Office of Planning  
Priscilla Gay Smith, Eyedrum  
Karl Smith-Davids, City of Atlanta Office of Planning  
Midge Sweet, Property Owner  
John Sweet, Property Owner  
Flor Velarde, Invest Atlanta  
The Honorable Clea Winslow, Atlanta City Council

**Community Stakeholder Discussion**

Alison Cross, Boxcar Grocer  
Tim Dean, Provision Commercial Real Estate  
Deshana Dottrey, Downtown resident (Kessler City Lofts)  
David Emery, Conveyon  
Matt Garbett  
Woody Giles, Downtown resident (William-Oliver)  
Darin Givens, Downtown resident (Healey)  
Marlee Givens, Downtown resident (Healey)  
Kristin Halloran, Downtown resident (Kessler City Lofts)  
Herman Howard, KAI  
Mathew Jones, NPU M  
Eric Meyers, investor  
Anthony Owens  
Doug Pettersen, Downtown resident  
Pat Swindall, Property Owner  
Jay Tribby, Atlanta City Councilman Kwanza Hall's Office  
Jacob Vallo, Investor  
Clyde Ward, Speakeasy Lounge

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Briefing Presentation**





## WELCOME

### JAMES SHELBY

*Commissioner*

City of Atlanta Department of  
Planning and Community  
Development



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## TODAY'S WORKSHOP

### GARY CORNELL, FAICP

*Director of Development*

City of Chamblee, Georgia



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## THANK YOU!

1. McCall Realty, LLC and Gallman Development Group
2. Local Community Resources and Tour Guides
3. APA Staff
4. Workshop Planning Committee
5. And you – for your interest and participation!

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## AGENDA

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| 1. Overview Briefing Presentation        | 45 minutes |
| 2. Broad Street SW Corridor Walking Tour | 45 minutes |
| 3. Group Work Session #1                 | 90 minutes |
| 4. Working Lunch – Sharing Observations  | 90 minutes |
| 5. Group Work Session #2                 | 90 minutes |
| 6. Groups Report to Plenary              | 60 minutes |
| 7. Discussion and Summary                | 45 minutes |

AICP COMMUNITY WORKSHOP – BROAD STREET SW

## GOAL AND FOCUS AREAS

GOAL: IDENTIFY SPECIFIC BLOCKAGES TO IMPLEMENTING THE COMMUNITY'S VISION AND ESTABLISH A REALISTIC SET OF "FIRST STEPS" UTILIZING SUCCESSFUL PLACEMAKING PRINCIPLES THAT WILL SPUR COMMUNITY CONFIDENCE AND LEAD TO COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION IN THE STUDY AREA

### THREE AREAS OF FOCUS AND EXPLORATION:

1. QUALITY OF LIFE
2. POP-UP COMMUNITY
3. ENHANCED PUBLIC REALM

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## GROUND RULES

- There are no observers. This is a participation exercise. Everyone is encouraged and welcome to join in and everyone has something to contribute.
- There are no right or wrong answers as we think about the future of the sites.
- Respect the opinion of others. Encourage others to participate.
- Commit yourself to a team approach—together we can generate ideas and options.
- Think in terms of how to make things happen.

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## STUDY AREA OVERVIEW

### JENNIFER BALL

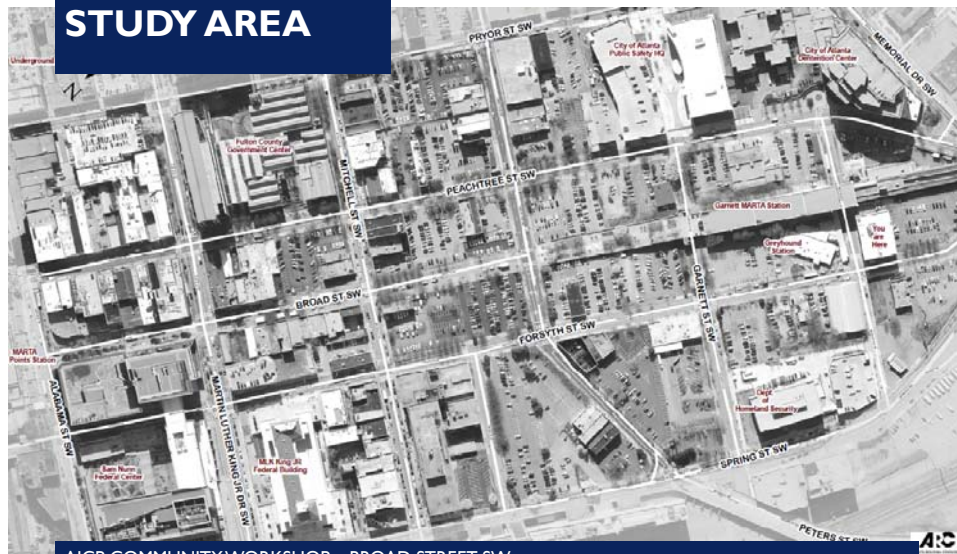
*Vice President, Planning and  
Economic Development*

Central Atlanta Progress and the  
Atlanta Downtown Improvement  
District



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## STUDY AREA



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## VISION

### **Capitalize on residential opportunities, especially converted historic structures and new mixed-use redevelopment at the Garnett MARTA Station**

*Existing isolated projects total approximately 335 units:*

*Kessler, SoMar Lofts, City Plaza, 82 Peachtree, Sylvan Factory, Gordon*

*Surrounding activity: Castleberry-Hill, Capitol Gateway, McDaniel Glenn*

*Immediate opportunities: 222 Mitchell Street and Norfolk Southern Building*

### **Infill opportunities for small offices and retail to serve workers and new residents**

*Existing established retail niches: Hotel Row, South Peachtree Street*

*Available storefronts and small buildings of historic commercial character abound – particularly Broad Street*

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## RECENT STRATEGY

### Downtown Development Technical Advisory Group

Immediately and assertively prioritize the following tasks:

1. Seek to enforce laws and deploy operational resources to ensure a high **QUALITY OF LIFE**
2. Reposition **UNDERGROUND ATLANTA** as a neighborhood asset
3. Transform the appearance and user experience of the **MARTA FIVE POINTS STATION**

Following the immediate actions and building on their momentum, focus on:

1. Supporting the large-scale **TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECTS** adjacent to the core focus area
2. Targeting public infrastructure projects to enhance **CONNECTIVITY** - particularly transportation-related projects
3. Deploying **STRATEGIC INCENTIVES** toward specific real estate projects
4. Ensuring a unique and authentic **NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER**

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## DEVELOPMENT PROSPECTS

### BRUCE GALLMAN

*President*

Gallman Development Group



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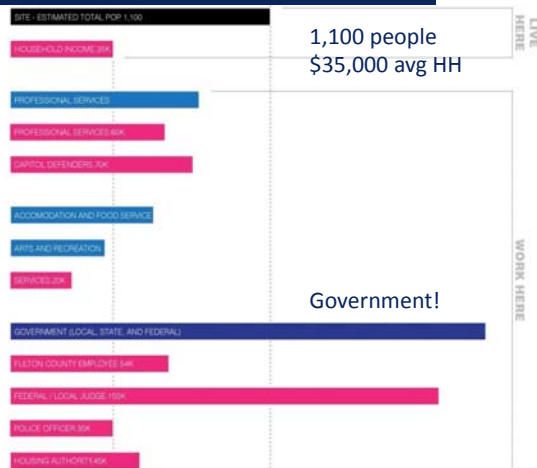
**COMMUNITY DATA**  
30303 ZIP CODE vs ATLANTA



**POPULATION**

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**AREA POP & EMPLOYMENT**



Government!

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## RESIDENTIAL MARKET

### HOUSING DATA

MARKET RENT RATES + LOW INCOME RENT

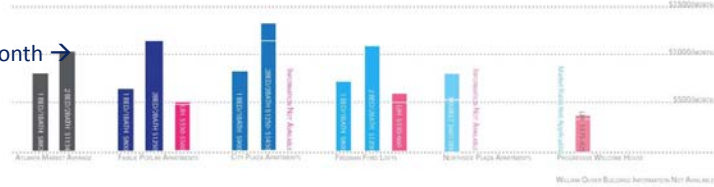


AVERAGE COST PER SQFT 2013



\$1.00 - \$1.10/s.f. →

\$1,000/month →



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## INVESTMENT



M. Rich Building  
(82 Peachtree / 115 M.L. King)  
Fuse Arts Center



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## DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY



Capitol Center  
(110 Mitchell)

GMA  
(Pryor at Mitchell)



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## DEVELOPMENT PLAN



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## AERIAL MASSING



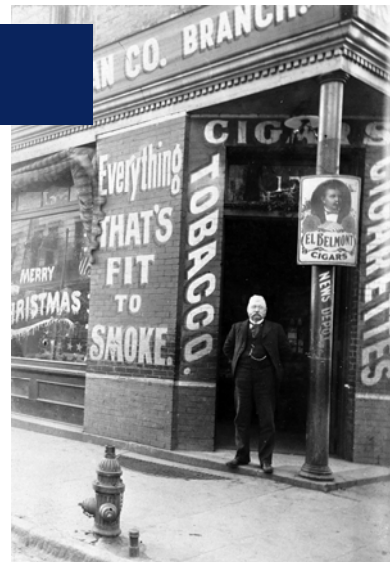
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## CURRENT INITIATIVES

**KYLE KESSLER,**  
**AIA, LEED AP BD+C**

*President*

Atlanta Downtown  
Neighborhood Association



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## FORMERLY CURRENT INITIATIVES : INCREASE THE TAX BASE



# 1871

**EXTENSION OF BROAD STREET.**—Alderman Cassin, Friday night, made an eloquent speech in favor of the proposed extension of Broad street. The exordium was classically elegant, replete with poetic images and fine touches of humor. The opening of Broad street cost \$25,000; had paid into the City Treasurer, in the shape of taxes, \$100,000, a net gain of \$75,000. The first year it paid \$20,000; the next \$25,000; the next \$25,000—a continued increase. He estimated the cost of the proposed extension at \$15,000. The effort of Mr. Cassin evidenced that he was an orator and a man of ripe culture.

The property owners, or a portion of them on the line of the proposed extension, protested, through Col. E. F. Hoge, against it, on the ground that it was not warranted by necessity. He contended that it would not be beneficial. He had not heard of the extension until Thursday morning.

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## FORMERLY CURRENT INITIATIVES : CODES & AESTHETICS

*Does This Show the "Atlanta Spirit?"*



**DILAPIDATED AWNINGS IN BROAD-ST.**

Incongruous with the recent improvements in the erection of handsome business buildings, laying smooth wood block street paving, tile sidewalks and other betterments are the dilapidated store front awnings over the sidewalks in South Broad-st., especially between Hunter and Mitchell-sts. Where the city and some property owners have gone to great expense to make this a modern business street, other property owners, with an apparent lack of civic pride, allow these eyesores to remain as a reflection on the progressiveness of a city of Atlanta's primities.

Thousands of strangers, coming into the city at the Terminal station, are impressed with the magnificence of that structure and the up-to-dateness of the rebuilt portion of Mitchell-st., but when they turn into Broad-st., that impression is lost by the contrast of unsightly awnings and unattractive store fronts.

Isn't it time for these awnings to be removed?

Do they show the Atlanta Spirit?

# 1910

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## FORMERLY CURRENT INITIATIVES : VALUES & TRAFFIC

*Extension of South Broad St. Discussed;  
Property Owners Association Is Formed*

# 1919

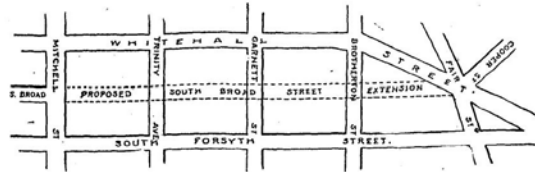


Diagram showing proposed extension of Broad street south from Mitchell to a junction with Whitehall and Fair streets. It was pointed out at a meeting of property owners that 3,200 feet of business frontage could be developed by the plan, and that space now serving largely as back yards and alleys added to the taxable value of the city to the approximated extent of a million and a quarter dollars.

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## FORMERLY CURRENT INITIATIVES : TRAFFIC OUTLET

# STREET EXTENSION BELIEVED ASSURED

# 1937

**Plan Will Provide Second  
Through Artery on  
Broad, Relieving Spring**

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## FORMERLY CURRENT INITIATIVES : TRANSIT & PEDESTRIANS

### Broad St. Portion To Be A Mall

Walk down lower Broad Street two years from now and what you'll see is a tree-lined mall, with wide-tiled sidewalks, benches, special lighting and turn-of-the-century buildings which no longer look wilted, but tidy and spruced up.



Artist's View Of Broad Street Looking North Toward Transit Mall

# 1979

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## FORMERLY CURRENT INITIATIVES : ARTISTS & RESIDENTS

### Settling down in Downtown

Residents wanted: The city would like for more people to move Downtown to revitalize the area by 1996.

While scouting locations for a network television production, Jerald Henry spotted the perfect backdrop for the scene — a three-story, 40,000-square-foot building in Downtown Atlanta.

"We needed something really seedy, with garbage and graffiti," says Mr. Henry, a location manager for local film productions. "We wanted a funky neighborhood, definitely not Buckhead."

But the building on Broad Street, tucked between a small grocery and a hair salon, also became Mr. Henry's Shangri-La, the perfect space to establish a live-in gallery with three friends who are graphic artists. Four months ago, they moved in and founded New School Arts.

"When I was trying to get the building, I had to explain to the landlord how and why somebody would want to live Downtown," Mr. Henry says. "He couldn't understand that, and I still don't think he does."

Rush of gentrification worried  
Mindful of the area's image



City officials are considering tax incentives to lure new development.

down here, but I spent 10 years in the service," he says. "This is nothing compared to what I've been through."

#### Pervasive fear of crime

City officials acknowledge that their toughest task is dispelling fears that Downtown is crime-ridden.

"There is a perception that has evolved over the years that Downtown is unsafe, that normal people don't live Downtown, and it's quite common," Mr. Costa says. "It's a perception we can gradually erase. We have to."

Although no clear plan of action to rejuvenate Downtown has emerged, city officials are considering tax incentives to lure new development. That tactic has worked at McGill Park, for example, where condo buyers do not pay full property taxes for their first 10 years.

Patrolled by 24-hour guards and ringed by a security fence, McGill Park offers one vision of a self-contained Downtown community with sidewalks, a swimming pool and an exercise room. "I lived in Buckhead and I hated it. The traffic was horrible," says Jonathan Smith, a

# 1992

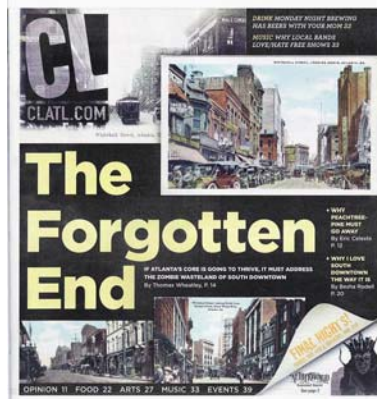
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## CURRENT INITIATIVES : ISSUES & PARADOXES



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## CURRENT INITIATIVES : ADDRESSING THE ISSUES



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## CURRENT INITIATIVES : ELEVATE



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## CURRENT INITIATIVES : BRIGHTEN UP BROAD ST



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## CURRENT INITIATIVES : OTHER

### Operation Best Foot Forward

- to mitigate the aesthetic look of the physical structures, streetscapes, cleanliness, perception, and public safety of the area

### Partner for Hope

- to encourage organizations and volunteers to give their time and resources in a way that helps achieve long term results rather than feeding and donating items on the city's streets

### Façade Improvement Grant Program

- to enhance the appearance of commercial areas while building safer, more attractive and stable neighborhoods; to help businesses attract new customers; to complement other revitalization efforts

### Downtown South Transit Area Enhancements

- to research, evaluate, design, document and execute creative placemaking and 'tactical urbanism' enhancements for the Five Points and Garnett MARTA rail stations – Five Points Station and Garnett Station

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## CURRENT INITIATIVES : OTHER

### South of Marietta Security Alliance (SOMA)

- to help resolve specific quality of life issues that affect everyone that works, lives, shops and visits South Downtown

### Arts Organizations:

- Mammal Gallery
- Eyedrum
- C4 Atlanta
- Dashboard Co-op
- Living Walls

### And many more...

Love Your Block, Cultural District, First Thursday Art Walk, Farmer's Market, Historic Resources Survey, Atlanta Streets Alive, Kick Ass Mall Cop, etc.

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## PLACEMAKING

**HEATHER ALHADEFF, AICP**

*President*

Center Forward, LLC



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## Qualities Attach People/Place

1. Social offerings (entertainment venues and places to meet)
2. Openness (how welcoming a place is)
3. Area's aesthetics (its physical beauty and green spaces)



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## What is Place-making?

Definition of Placemaking: The deliberate shaping of an environment to facilitate social interaction and improve a community's quality of life

- Art is a universal icebreaker
- Experiences make places lovable

Definition of Tactical Urbanism: Strategic, experimental, small-scale interventions aimed at instigating longer-term change

- Low Costs with High Impact
- Land + art + food + programs = happy people (\$)



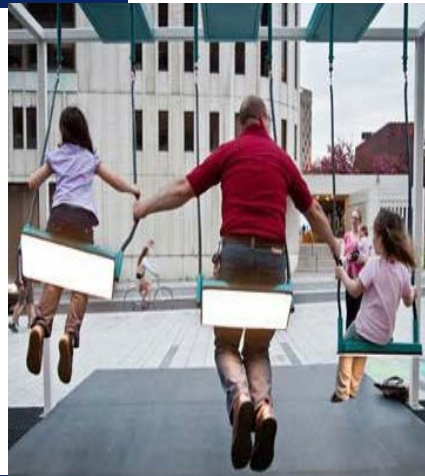
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## Precedent Examples



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## Precedent Examples



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## Precedent Examples



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## Precedent Examples



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## Precedent Examples



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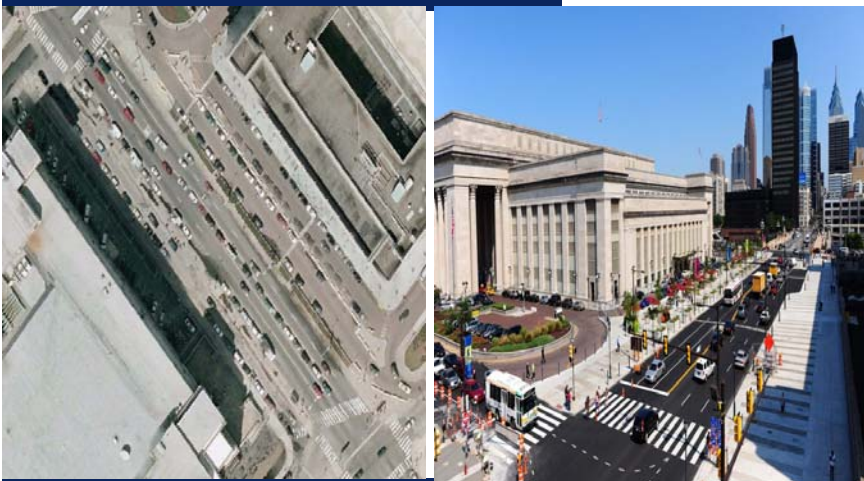


## Precedent Examples

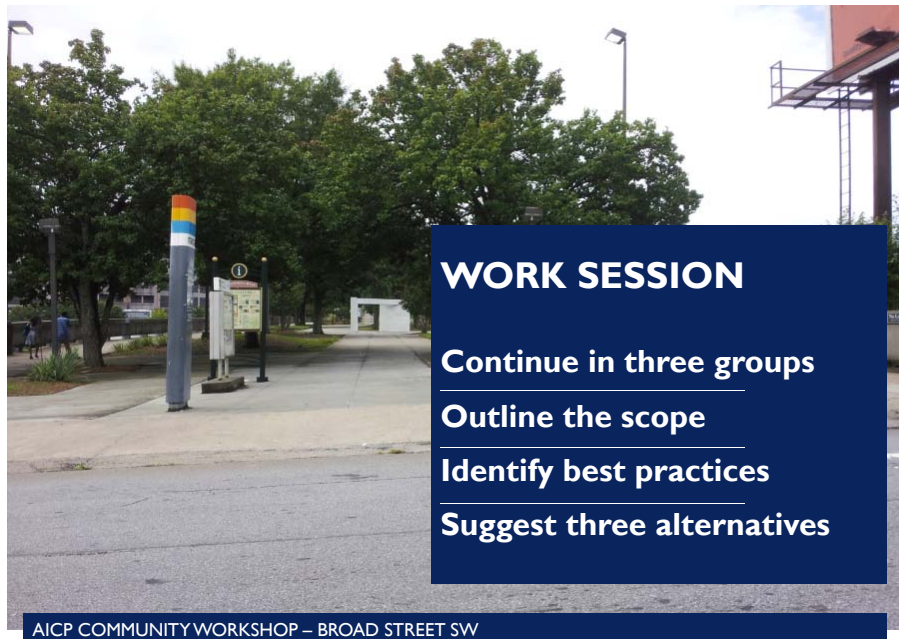
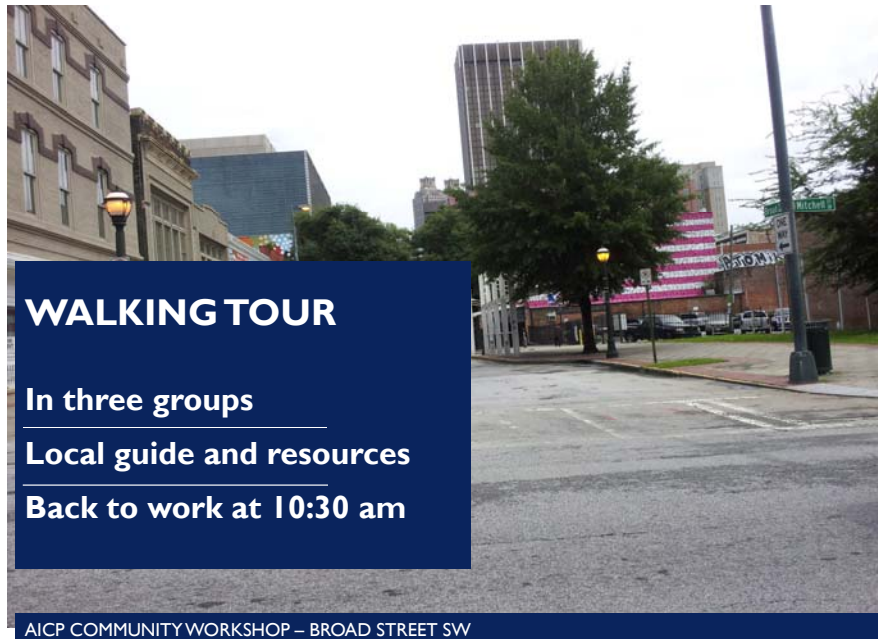


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## Precedent Examples



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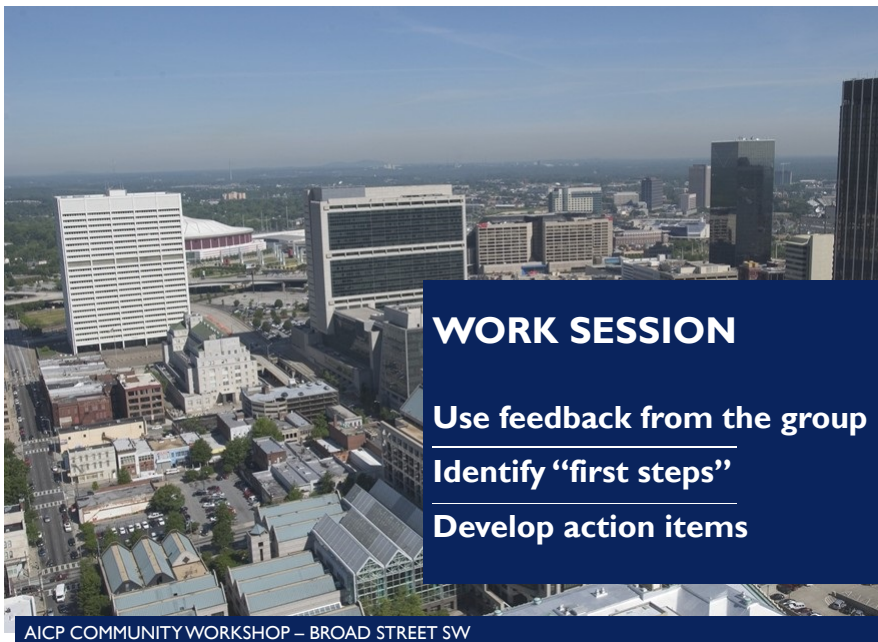
**GROUP REPORTS**

**Quick Summary**

**Questions for each Group**

**Discussion**

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**WORK SESSION**

**Use feedback from the group**

**Identify “first steps”**

**Develop action items**

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## **APPENDIX D**

### **Breakout Session Group Notes**

#### **Breakout Session One: Scoping the Problem and the Alternatives**

##### **Quality of Life Issues - Group Notes**

Need to focus / channel the effort of political will into controlling the situation.

##### **Survey**

- 32 Businesses were polled on Peachtree Street and Broad Street 47% of businesses polled would not recommend this area as a destination for visitors. On a scale from 1-5 with 1 being the safest and 5 being the least safe 60% rated the area between 4 & 5.
- Long legacy of crime - Laws to address Code Violations and drug crimes are slow and not harsh enough to deter illegal activity. Continued presence of repeat offenders in the area that have familial generational ties to the area market this area as a safe haven for illegal activity.
- Absentee owners - There isn't a financial incentive to improve a blighted property in downtown and often owners are interested in just filling the spaces for a quick buck. As a result building owners are targeted by drug dealers and other unscrupulous businesses to rent property. Community members shared that it is nearly impossible to deter illegal activity inside of a private business unless the building owner cooperates with the community and evicts the tenant. Currently the city of Atlanta does not use seizure and forfeiture laws that it has in order to curb drug crime that other participants mentioned that they have in their cities. Multiple drug crimes are committed inside of properties without any real financial or legal incentive to stop renting to drug dealers. Drug forfeiture laws are not used and Code violations are not slow to react and not harsh enough.
- APD is setup to be reactive instead of proactive. APD is setup to answer 911 calls and is not setup for community policing. Examples of community policing in Time Square, Washington DC are not used here. Police are often seen cruising in the area but not interacting directly with the community.
- Too much focus spent on tracking major crimes and not enough focus on crimes that affect the overall perception and quality of life in the neighborhood. Various police departments (APD, MARTA, Georgia State) are competing against each other for reduced crime numbers and as a result take a hands off approach to aggressive community policing. Participants suggested that police

do a better job at enforcing the laws, take a harder approach for drug crimes (using the drug forfeiture laws) and also have more “boots on the ground”.

- Social media content showcasing the area as a destination for crime overshadows any marketing that is done by area stakeholders. There is just too much content that we are not able to market the area for development. Area has been affected disproportionately by foreclosures and reduced city tax base compared to Midtown, North Downtown and Castleberry Hill. People are afraid their investments will not be protected.

#### Perception

- Precarious place to live, perception of danger. Reality is currently not far off
- Homeless center of gravity has moved here.
- There’s critical mass that supports the drug trade.

#### Homeless Service Orgs

- Example of San Diego’s Partners for Hope – volunteers. Feeding with dignity, religious mission, service providers.
- Gateway Center – Pryor St.

#### Outdoor Feedings

- Groups that serve food draw in homeless
- Not disciplined for actions
- Political system covers for non-compliant church actions
- Strategic for self-sustainability
  - Health codes apply (enforced?)
  - Peer counseling among pastors (local pastors to suburban pastors sending in flocks)
  - Health department and code enforcement don’t work on weekends yet require photos / evidence to enforce violations. How to solve?

#### Government Interests

- Physical redevelopment would displace Underground Atlanta / GSU renewal
- Redevelop APD car lot (public land)
- GSU won’t go south of Marietta
- TADs

#### Assets

- Building stock
- Spirit of good will
- Institutions

#### Block by Block

- “Block by block” partnership/strategy

- couple of projects for momentum
- media strategy
- compassion
- involve Chamber of Commerce

#### Streets Alive

- Bike festival next coming in May on Peachtree.
- Why not Broad Street? Extend reach? Idea for future.

#### Housing

- Housing along Broad St. corridor
- For a transit-oriented development (TOD), there could be federal support

#### Market Gaps / Barriers

- Grocery store
- Leadership
  - Need key center of leadership to lead “block by block” work
  - Need champion funded by salary
- Parking lot owners could support public use for festival activities

#### Cost of Crime

- Drugs, prostitution, panhandling
- Policy of not enforcing high cost to public
- Cost of all the police calls
- Revenue would come in from increased development, whereas it costs without it

#### Homelessness & Drug Use

- Need for public toilets
- Hope VI programs
- Big cuts coming in social services
- Can business / neighborhood development co-exist with homeless?

#### **Pop-Up Community - Group Notes**

##### Blockages

- No communication/coordination between government levels
- Enforcers working at cross-purposes with community
- Feeding on streets - refuse + rats
- Parking lots - core problem
- Government doesn't obey own rules / lead by example
- No respect for neighborhood / political influences. Tied with fact that it's split into multiple City Council districts
- MARTA – both asset and blockage.
- Poor transit service + not enticing

- Increased cost \$50-90 month
- No place for buses idling
- Federal approval for pop-up on federally-funded MARTA sites. MARTA is working on this.
- Can't get permits for pop-up events on public property (ordinance)
- Few retail offerings for residents
- Perception of low income (Note: lack of data)
- Perception of what will work (Note: lack of data)
- Lack of coherent identity / advocacy group / umbrella organization
- Negative perception of area, stemming from racism

#### Overcoming Barriers

- Pull together multiple groups
- Increase influence
- Establish coherent, coordinated, local advocacy group
- Need name + branding + placemaking
- Events to bring people in
- More inclusive pop-up events
- Transportation plan implementation that doesn't kill neighborhood
- Dress up MARTA station
- Embrace Greyhound bus station. Make it work, make it permanent.
- Start putting pressure on City Council members

#### **Public Realm - Group Notes**

##### Scope of Problem

- Disconnection to issues/people
- Difficulties in establishing partnerships/connections
- Waiting for first "domino" – planning getting in the way of implementation?
- Fencing off failed public spaces
- Workers going north for lunch, social
- Pioneering lofts etc. not translating to street-level vitality
- Inward/upward focus in architectural solutions typically in Atlanta
- Need for more human-scale solutions / ground-level focus
- Zoning less an issue than building code limitations, especially with older buildings. Possibly aggregate buildings to overcoming code barriers?

##### Barriers to Implementation

- Eminent domain rarely used
- City housing policies – incentives, not requirements
- TAD
  - Area within tax allocation district (TAD), but scale a problem for project?
  - TAD doesn't apply to some of Garnett Station area – problem?

- Urban enterprise zone tax abatement (10 yrs. available)
- Perception (security, crime, homelessness) creates a barrier
- Surface parking = revenue generation for owners without risk
- Older owners/heirs no incentive to improve, more likely to simply sell
- Parking on street vs. capacity / congestion vs. commercial loading needs – adequate permit/standards? Example, one-way MLK
- Government parking
  - Government subsidizes parking (?) (They do subsidize MARTA.)
  - Parking at “Gulch” and many nearby lots
- Second largest concentration of homeless in Downtown
- Church providers and services
- Zoning allowances for services
- Public investments / development turn back on the street – example police station.
- Fencing
  - Barbed wire around parking lots? What the heck? Exacerbates perception of crime.
  - Fencing is response to loitering
- Passing the buck
  - Public sector isn’t invested / owning quality of life issues
  - Left to (private) Central Atlanta Progress (CAP) and business improvement district (ADID).
  - Public sector doesn’t comply with codes.
- Naming area
  - Absence of a name – agreed upon – makes it difficult to brand
  - Railroad District?
  - SoMa (South of Marietta)?
- Housing would be reason to be/stay in area, rather than avoiding area by flocking to north, Five Points

## **Breakout Session Two: Meaningful Actions to Spur Community Confidence**

### **Quality of Life Issues - Group Notes**

Strategies for Accountability / Leadership / Partnership

#### **Goal 1 – Organizing**

- HUD federal grant as start-up seed money
- Community development corporation
- Hire an expert to lead / get money
- Enterprise Foundation (Rouse Corp.)
- “Block by block” block captains – block planning

**Goal 2 – Enforcement of the Law**

- Critical mass of good neighbors
- Political will
- “Block by block” buy-in of business owners
- Case management approach for being good neighbors
- Band together like mosquitoes, all sides taking multiple smaller actions together against offensive agents / criminals.
- “10,000 cuts” – apply persistent pressure
- Community policing, partnership in neighborhood, “officers” take ownership

**Goal 3 – Restoring Confidence (Positive Perception)**

- Get state/federal/etc. office workers out of their “bubble”
- Social media - positive view
- Food truck festivals in parking lots
- “Castleberry Hill Phase 2” on Broad St.
- Tell success stories ☐ rebrand

**Possible Models**

- Huntsville, AL -- AAMU – CDC
- Salem Kaiser – CDC
- San Diego + Downtown LA
  - Stapleton “Little Italy” BID
  - Gas Light District
  - Critical mass of residential - grocery store
  - Father Joe’s Villages in San Diego
  - Partners of Hope – San Diego corporate money used to help support
  - homeless services.

**Pop-Up Community - Group Notes**

**Branding Implementation**

- Recognize new direction + honor old (identity)
- Use university, pro bono assistance
  - Local planning firms
  - Business school (GSU) - business plan, branding
  - Portfolio Center
  - Local artists – facilitate branding of overall umbrella
- Ask local developers / vendors for support (financial)
  - Identify stakeholders + constituents
  - Make a list of “asks” for City Hall
- Talk to Congressman (John Lewis)

**Specific Steps**

- Use (new) media tools
  - “Virtual neighborhood” before physical neighborhood “gets there”
  - Controlled and consistent message
  - Crowdsourcing for funds
- Event permitting
  - Pursue streamlined approval process for repeat events, getting a “master permit”
  - Follow model used by Atlanta Streets Alive
  - Would allow flexibility, avoid repeated red tape
- Artistic wayfinding with branding & streetscaping
- Active programming
  - farmer’s market
  - art festival
  - food trucks
  - music

#### Funding/Finance and/or Implementation Steps

- Make list of “asks”
- Bring in street films – get financing for films, film events, activate
- Seek federal funding for transit-oriented development (TOD)
- New Greyhound station – permanent
- Talk to Congressman (John Lewis) re transportation funds & other issues
- Busking permit for Eyedrum

#### Overcoming Racism

- Multicultural events & partnerships
- Mitigate area’s perception
- Utilize branding

#### “Pop-Up” Interim Steps

- Use city lot across from (Garnett) MARTA
- More inclusive (diversity)
- Catalyst moments
- Art-designed bike racks
- Dancing @ 2 am
- Celebrity chef event
- Active programming
- Busking permit for Eyedrum

#### **Public Realm - Group Notes**

Need leadership - Need Accountability

Perception & Reinvestment – Approaches to Overcome



- Tax parking lots to make parking use less attracting than housing
- Urban redevelopment bonds and City assemblage, as was done elsewhere.
- Government
- Find champion(s) for governmental entities at all government levels.
- Make them care!
- Address building maintenance / landscaping.
- Accountability
- Intergovernmental accountability – find \$\$\$ to walk the talk
- Main Street / streetscape / programs + investment
- Induced funkiness (e.g. such as awnings, canopies on Broad St.)
- Need multimodal station to happen
- Incentives
- Explore options for terminal access improvements at Broad St. / End / Garnett Station

#### **Tactical Urbanism – Strategies / Short-range, Quick Fixes**

- Lunchtime farmer's market
  - Cater to government workers
  - Use sidewalk shelters on Broad St.
- Vending
  - Food trucks and developing vendor program
  - Activate street frontages of parking lots, on Broad St.
- Special events
  - Continue Brighten Up Broad Street
  - Add on to it, building reputation, brand
  - Murals
- Book swap – at Miller's Rexall and beyond
- Storefronts
  - Rich's could display art on street front
  - Fill in vacant windows with examples of "what could be." Example: Salt Lake City.
- Neighborhood music in/at MARTA stations
- Dedicate staff to area – somebody to take lead on action items
- Adopt-a-Block program/s to lead to replacement of trees, streetscape improvements.