

• EAST-WEST CORRIDOR FORUM •
POST-FORUM REPORT

May 30, 2007

Prepared for Central Atlanta Progress and The City of Atlanta
by Civic Strategies, Inc., Urban Collage, Inc. and the Bleakly Advisory Group



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OVERVIEW

On April 18, 2007 eighty-nine people with significant interests in Downtown Atlanta – business leaders; developers; landowners; state, local and regional government agency officials; Downtown residents and civic leaders – spent a day thinking about and coming to consensus about how a large part of Downtown called the East-West Corridor should be developed. In the seven-hour meeting, which was sponsored by Central Atlanta Progress, participants reached some important conclusions about this important part of Atlanta.

The most important conclusion is that the Corridor has enormous potential as a walkable, livable, energetic center for Atlanta, but to be fully successful four things have to happen:



East-West Corridor Forum

1. There must be significant investments in transportation infrastructure, including building a multimodal passenger terminal.
2. The Underground Atlanta former World of Coca-Cola area must be successfully revitalized or redeveloped, perhaps with the addition of a casino.
3. The Capitol Mall project, which is a proposed park from the state Capitol to the edge of Oakland Cemetery, should be built – and, if possible, cross the Downtown Connector by means of a “cap” on the freeway.
4. MARTA’s Five Points station should be redeveloped.

In the course of the day, participants heard from three speakers and received several informational briefings. A large part of the day, however, was spent in 11 groups of eight or nine people, with participants describing what they wanted the Corridor to look like and act like in the future, brainstorming about projects that might create that future, listing obstacles to be overcome and suggesting ways of overcoming those obstacles.

The results of these discussions, which were captured on flipcharts, were strikingly similar across the groups. In brief, the groups agreed that, when the East-West Corridor is successfully developed, it will have:

- A lively residential and pedestrian environment
- New and exciting public spaces
- Major enhancements to public transit, including a multimodal passenger terminal at the “Gulch”
- A revitalized retail sector
- A safe and secure environment that attracts business travelers and tourists, as well as regional residents

- An area that is welcoming to diverse populations

Likewise, there was broad agreement about ways of creating momentum in the Corridor. To help focus on the parts of Downtown they knew best, participants were seated at East Corridor or West Corridor tables (with MARTA's Five Points station being roughly the dividing line).

Here are the projects or developments that East Corridor participants thought would create the greatest momentum in their part of Downtown:



"The Gulch" today (looking northeast)

- Redevelop the Underground Atlanta-old World of Coca-Cola area, possibly with a casino
- Build the proposed Capitol Mall east of the state Capitol, perhaps by capping the Downtown Connector and extending the park over the highway
- Hasten the development of Georgia State University housing in the East Corridor
- Redevelop MARTA's Five Points station

Here are the projects or developments that West Corridor participants thought would create the greatest momentum in their part of Downtown:

- Build a multimodal passenger terminal at the "Gulch"
- At the "Gulch's" street level, create a signature project, such as an "iconic" passenger terminal, a public plaza and/or a casino
- Redevelop MARTA's Five Points station

The obstacles that may stand in the way of progress in the East-West Corridor were also recognized equally by East Corridor and West Corridor groups. The three most commonly cited were:

- Lack of government commitment, leadership or cooperation
- Lack of obvious funding sources
- Racial or perception problems



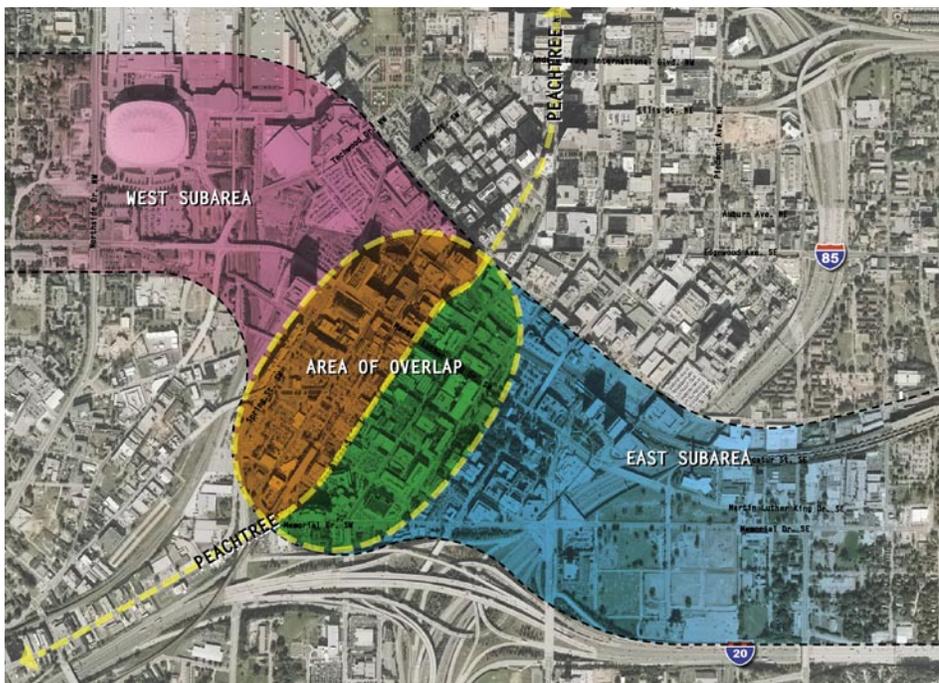
Georgia State Capitol

BACKGROUND

Downtown Atlanta is in the midst of an unprecedented resurgence in development activity and interest, from SoNo to Centennial Olympic Park, and from Auburn Avenue to Castleberry Hill. These areas are seeing investment in hotels, offices, residences and cultural facilities.

But one part of Downtown remains challenging: the East-West Corridor running from the Georgia Dome and Northside Drive on the west to the State Capitol and Downtown Connector on the east across the south central business district. This area has unique assets, including substantial local, state and federal employment; Georgia State University; Underground Atlanta; the Georgia World Congress Center; a wealth of regional transportation facilities; and the opportunity to create even more transportation assets. But it has not yet enjoyed investment in the kind of mixed-use developments that other Downtown areas have.

To help create that momentum, Central Atlanta Progress (CAP) hosted the East-West Corridor Forum on April 18, 2007. The aim of the meeting was to help participants learn what is happening in the East-West Corridor today, what might happen in years ahead, and to talk about ways of dealing with obstacles to the healthy development of the area.



East-West Corridor Study Area Framework Map

Participants were invited weeks in advance and, a few days before the forum, were sent briefing books prepared by CAP and its planning consultant, Urban Collage. The briefing books outlined current conditions in the East-West Corridor and summarized past plans for that part of Downtown.

At the forum, participants were assigned seating at 11 tables, five tables with people interested mostly in the east side of the Corridor, six with participants interested mostly in the west side. Each table had a flipchart and a scribe to capture the group's comments and consensus. There were two meeting facilitators from Civic Strategies, Inc., Otis White and Jon Abercrombie. Joe Winter, also from Civic Strategies, assisted the facilitators.

The meeting opened with a welcome from CAP President A.J. Robinson and remarks by Charlie Battle, former president of CAP, who urged participants to think as boldly about the East-West Corridor as past Atlanta leaders had about civil rights, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport and the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games. The work of the forum began, with informational briefings interspersed by small-group work and presentations by two urban-development experts.

INFORMATIONAL BRIEFINGS

Participants heard three informational briefings, two by Stan Harvey, principal at Urban Collage, the planning firm, and one by Ken Bleakly, president of Bleakly Advisory Group, a real estate consulting firm.

In his first presentation, Stan Harvey outlined existing physical conditions in the

East-West Corridor. The current land use, he said, includes a large concentration of institutional uses, with a substantial portion of the land dedicated to parking. Most of the mixed-use developments in the Corridor are four stories or less in height. The Downtown Connector acts as a barrier to connecting the urban fabric, he went on, which could be reconnected by capping the interstate highway. He pointed out the prevalence of office and institutional uses versus residential uses in the area, which makes it difficult for retail shops to stay open after normal business hours.

The “Gulch” presents the greatest development opportunity in the Corridor, he said, but other areas offer opportunities as well. These include the surface parking lots surrounding the Garnett MARTA station, as well as opportunities along Memorial Drive. The “Gulch” has great potential as a binding element for the Corridor; the biggest challenge, he said, would be encouraging housing and mixed-use development while providing stronger connections between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods. The good news, he added: recent and planned zoning modifications have set the tone for the kind of mixed-use development and street character that many want to see.

In his presentation, Ken Bleakly described existing market conditions in the East-West Corridor. He reported that market dynamics were changing, with population growth of 39 percent expected by the year 2020. All the population losses that occurred between 1960 and 1990 have already been regained, he said, and the current annual population growth rate is three percent. The average resident is a 31-year-old, white collar, African-American professional. He said that 41 percent of the population is single, and the median income is \$26,138.

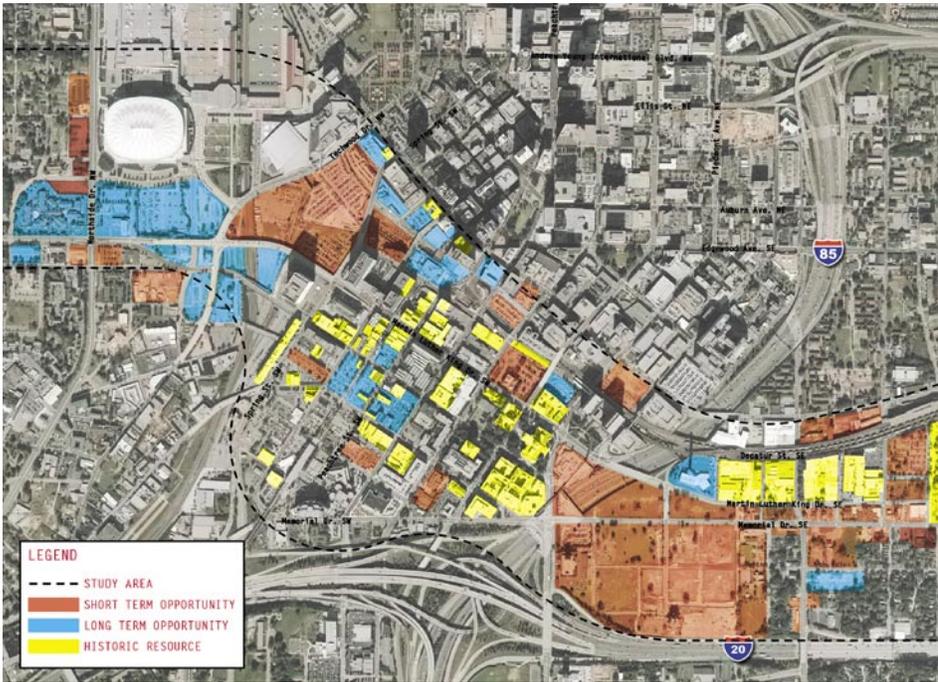
Georgia State University's enrollment is expected to grow to 36,000 students by 2015, a 30 percent increase from 2004. Today 47,704 people work in the Corridor, which means there is a 7-to-1 ratio of employees to residents. Between 3.5 million and 4.5 million visitors attend Downtown attractions each year, and at least 1 million more visit government institutions in the area. There are nearly 400,000 square feet of retail space, he said, with Underground Atlanta dominating the market with 220,000 square feet of that space. The average price of a home in the Corridor grew from \$206,440 in 2004 to \$274,229 in 2006 and there are an additional 2,500 residential units under construction.

In his second briefing, Stan Harvey described the elements of “what makes a great place” and the ideas that have been proposed in the past to raise Downtown's profile as a great place. He pointed out the quality public spaces that already exist in the Corridor, such as the state Capitol, International Plaza and Centennial Olympic Park, as well as examples of iconic buildings including City Hall, the Capitol and Philips Arena. While the architectural quality of signature buildings is important, he said, the background fabric of the community is also important. Place making, he said, is ultimately about people, the concentration and diversity of users.

The proposed multimodal passenger

Stan Harvey discussed aspects of “placemaking”





Development Opportunities Map

terminal, as a transportation hub and possible iconic structure, could be an important catalyst for the surrounding area, he said. He offered as examples terminals in other cities, such as Cleveland’s Tower City Center, and New York’s Grand Central Station. Due to their size and grandeur, these terminals have spurred new developments and acted, in some ways, as cities unto themselves. Atlanta’s Five Points MARTA station, by contrast, does not have enough activity, size or grandeur to have that kind of impact.

In the eastern part of the Corridor, he said, Memorial Drive has the potential to serve as a boulevard connecting the Capitol complex with historic Oakland Cemetery. A key catalytic project could be the proposed Capitol Mall, which would be a large park

beginning at the site of the old Capitol Homes east of the Downtown Connector and potentially stretching over the interstate to the east side of the Capitol. (There are some parking structures there now that would be replaced.) Not only would this make the Capitol area far more attractive, but it would likely open up the area to mixed-use development, which would be drawn to the new park.

PRESENTATIONS

In addition to Charlie Battle’s morning address, there were two other speeches. One by Chris Leinberger, a visiting fellow at the Brookings Institution; the other by Mark Bulmash, senior vice president in charge of East Coast development for Forest City Enterprises, a Cleveland-based developer.

Chris Leinberger spoke about how urban areas are being revived in cities across the country and, in the process, reversing some long historical trends. In the early 20th century, he said, America built “walkable urban” places. From the 1930s on, the prevailing development pattern became “drivable suburban.” But since the 1990s, the market has moved toward a choice: “either-or,” with sizable numbers of people choosing to live in walkable urban as well as drivable suburban areas.

In thinking about these areas, he said, it is important to realize how different walkable urban areas are from drivable suburban areas. For one thing, each additional element in an urban environment (housing, stores, offices) adds to the quality of life of existing residents. It’s just the opposite in drivable suburban areas, where additional elements often take away from existing residents, as nearby land is developed and congestion increases.

The reasons for the new demand for walkable urban places, he said, is because many baby boomers are becoming empty nesters and looking for more activity, while some Generation Xers, having watched television shows like Seinfeld, Friends and Sex in the City, are bored with conventional suburban developments. A recent market study, he said, showed that 30 percent of Atlanta residents prefer to live in walkable urban

places, compared with 41 percent who prefer drivable suburban, with the remainder being “agnostic.” The percentage of those preferring walkable urban is likely to increase even more in the future, he added. In fact, since 1996, the value of attached housing has risen faster than detached housing.

Washington, D.C., could serve as the model of where other American cities are headed, he said. The number of large walkable urban districts in Washington has increased from two to 20 in the past two decades. Something similar is ahead for Atlanta, he said, which has a good deal of pent-up demand for walkable urban places. To develop these places, he suggested concentrating on the areas adjacent to Downtown and suggested that Central Atlanta Progress act as a strategist, or “horizontal developer,” with one or more private or “vertical” developers as partners. He emphasized that, for Downtown to succeed, residential development must be the primary land use. Having a multimodal passenger terminal could also be critical for success, since the development of walkable

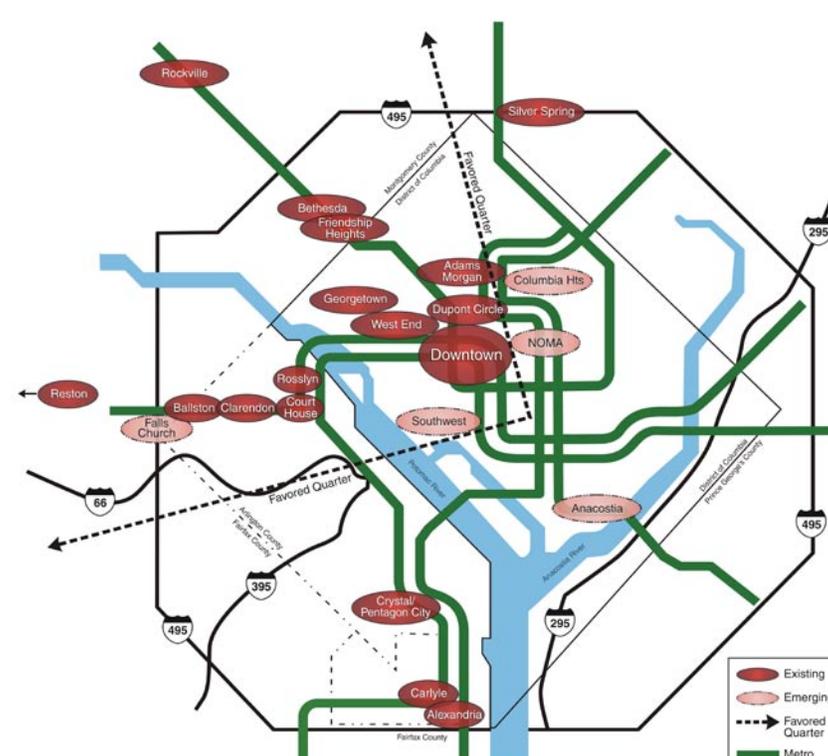
urban districts is tied closely to transit. Gaming could also have value as what he called “grown-up” entertainment.

Mark Bulmash of Forest City Enterprises shared three case studies from large-scale Forest City developments elsewhere in the country, all of which were breathtaking in scale and required significant public investments – but are having or will have significant impacts on their cities. (Forest City has no major developments in the Atlanta area.) One was Tower City Center, which is near downtown Cleveland. A key advantage for Tower City Center, he said, was its connections to transit. Forest City renovated an existing rail station with \$50 million in subsidies. Some of the challenges of the development, he went on, involved integrating several existing buildings into a single center and reusing historic elements. The development, he added,

spurred nearby developments of two sports stadiums, an amphitheatre, housing and additional office buildings.

Forest City also developed the huge Central Station development in Chicago, he said, by using air rights over railroad tracks. New towers were built along with green space. So far, he said, the development has generated over \$150 million in land sales, with more development planned in the area.

The final project was Atlantic Yards, a proposed development in Brooklyn, New York. He said the development would include a new arena for the New Jersey Nets basketball team, office space, retail space and more than 6,000 residential units. As with the Cleveland and Chicago projects, transit is important at Atlantic Yards: the development sits atop of 10 subway lines and the Long Island Railroad. Because transit is so available, he added, the development will provide fewer than 4,000 parking spaces; they will all be below-grade.



Chris Leinberger used Washington DC as a model for “where American cities are headed”

SMALL - GROUP WORK

The most important work of the day was done in small groups, where participants could take what they heard in briefings and presentations and apply it to the East-West Corridor. The groups were asked during the day to answer three questions:

- **What would you like the East-West Corridor to look like in the future?** (The exact question was: “What images or pictures do you have of this area of Downtown when it lives up to its highest potential?”)
- **Looking at your part of the Corridor (East or West), which projects are most likely to create substantial progress?** (The exact question was: “Which “Big Ideas” offer the greatest chances of creating substantial progress in your part of the Corridor?”)
- **Again looking at your part of the Corridor, what are the greatest obstacles to progress?** (The exact question was: “What are the greatest obstacles to substantial progress in your part of the Corridor in the next five years?”)



Groups discussed the corridor while “scribes” recorded comments on flip charts

The groups were given time to discuss and brainstorm, as scribes captured their comments on flipcharts. Afterwards, the scribes reported their groups’ results to the larger group.

In two instances, the “big ideas” work and the obstacles work, the groups were asked to identify the ideas or obstacles with the greatest amount of consensus (i.e., those that most of the group agreed could generate substantial progress or hinder substantial progress).

Finally, after the groups reported out the major obstacles to progress, the facilitators focused on the top three – lack of government leadership or cooperation, lack of apparent funding sources, and race and perception – and asked participants to offer possible ways of dealing with these obstacles.

A summary of the findings is in the first section of this report, and the list of all the ideas and comments follow in the next section.

CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING

At the end of the meeting, CAP President A.J. Robinson thanked participants for working so diligently and productively, and promised to follow up by sending out this report. He urged them to let CAP know if they would like to meet again about the East-West Corridor at some point in the future or stay in touch in some other way.

IMAGES FOR THE FUTURE

For this discussion, participants were asked the question, “What images or pictures do you have of this area of Downtown when it lives up to its highest potential?” Here is how the participants responded, organized by group:

GROUP 1 - EAST

- Millennium Park
- Active area / Broad Street / Pedestrian friendly
- Residential
- Human scale development
- Continuity / No gaps
- Retain a district identity for each sub-area



Group 1 - East

- On-street parking
- Racially diverse area
- Five Points Station should go vertical
- Upgraded street vendors
- Well-maintained area
- Eliminate surface parking and move all parking underground (Millennium Park, Post Office Square)
- People – High-density residential
- Retail along streets, parks

GROUP 2 - EAST

- Improve and enhance mobility
- Underground tunnels?
- Pedestrian
- Different modes
- MARTA: Fare restructuring
- Peachtree Streetcar
- Trams – Disney
- Above-ground transportation connecting attractions and hotel district
- Services (lack of) vs. Suburban congestion
- Transportation plan
- Grocer, etc. – Atlantic Station?
- Linkages to other Downtown areas

- Gulch plays a role in transportation management
- Multimodal passenger terminal important
- Some regional transit goals
- Vibrancy (There is currently not enough critical mass)
- Services
- Multi-purpose / Mixed-use



- Pedestrian
- Destination
- Complete community
- Historic / history
- Livable
- Atlantic Station a model?
- Problem: not clean. Downtown has a feel of being “on the other side of the railroad tracks”
- Money tied to TAD?
- Peachtree south of Upper Alabama has a third world feel
- Showcase to tourists
- There is only one shot to get it right

Group 2 - East

- Growth of Downtown tied to mobility
- Interest – Georgia State University – Concern for staff, students – Georgia State merge with surroundings
- Ability to mesh institutions
- Impressionability – students
- Capitalize on the university
- Georgia State University – Drive to attract freshmen
- Environmental issues a deterrent
- Safe and comfortable
- Tourists from metro region
- Business and personal relocation
- Self pride – what does Atlanta represent?
- People should say they “want to enjoy Atlanta in retirement”
- Look at Disney – First class
- Central park – could be on structure
- 24-hour livable community

- Increase the number of residents so they go beyond projections
- International – expand on what exists
- Atlanta has a great climate and is affordable

GROUP 3 – EAST

- Pedestrian activity
- Historic preservation
- Green space / environmental preservation
- There are charming and unique neighborhoods. The building stock exists – capitalize on this to build communities.
- Connections – act as a true corridor
- Set up something like Boston’s Freedom Trail. It acts to connect historic neighborhoods.
- Faneuil Hall
- Duplicate Big Dig effects to redevelop, and reconnect the city
- Small-town European
- The road network should be re-knit, not divided by the interstate
- Downtown should be live-work-play, like Georgetown in Washington, D.C., with residential as an integral part of fabric
- Transit-oriented development
- Beltline – unobtrusive transit to connect neighborhoods
- Clean, safe
- Courtyards – visually pleasing

Group 3 - East



- Spread success of Centennial Olympic Park to areas further south and east. It feels safe and clean at COP – why not at Underground or Five Points?
- Streets free of homeless, quality of life issues
- More stakeholders (residents) who take ownership / protect their neighborhood
- Virginia-Highland – Mixed-use, single-family homes, eclectic, restaurants
- Downtown Denver – connectivity with transportation, cleanliness
- Interactions with diverse populations

GROUP 4 - EAST

- Enhance livability of Downtown for residents, workers and visitors alike
- “Land assemblage is key” – What is the biggest demand creator?
- Multiplier of “international city”?
- Hub of communications
- International trade hub



Group 4 - East

- Communication/transportation enhancements
- Incorporate parking so that it is “out of sight, and out of mind”
- It takes too long to get “good” projects done
- Visitors come after residents “secure” their place
- Most of the corridor is a feeder system for interstates. We need “humanization” on the streets.
- There is nothing open later and nothing to do after events.
- There should be MARTA access to Turner Field

- There is momentum in the right direction for more residents
- More students – Georgia State University
- Without HOPE scholarship, there wouldn’t be more students
- This is a spot to “knit” things together
- Momentum from Fort Mac will push up the new “Peachtree” (formerly Lee St.)
- One of the major complaints by conventioners is that there’s nothing Downtown – they get in taxis and go to Buckhead.
- City has a bad habit of “spreading a lot of mayonnaise over bread.” We need to focus on one thing at a time.
- Developments that are happening elsewhere need to happen here. This area has better accessibility than Buckhead, for instance.
- The State of Georgia only cares about the World Congress Center and Centennial Olympic Park. They don’t care as much about the streets around the area.

GROUP 5 - EAST

- There should be a casino in Underground to fund Grady. This would generate business as a catalyst; economic values will rise as the incentive.
- Native growth

- Work – jobs
- Vibrant – opportunities, tourism
- Transit plans
- Convention center
- Chicago's Michigan Avenue – Mixed use
- Clean environment



Group 5 - East

- Tall structure that can attract people off the interstate, e.g., Calatrava design
- Skywalk – moves people into the area
- “Disneyland”
- Architecture of street and storefronts – 5th Avenue Pedestrian
- Safety
- San Francisco, NY – Nightlife
- 16th Street Pedestrian Mall – Denver
- International hub / theme – to attract international crowd
- High density and residential – live, work, play – 150 units per acre – Boston, New York’s SoHo

- Develop all along with transit
- Connect bus with rail and high-speed rail. Create multiple travel options.
- A transit terminal will enhance vibrancy
- Transit – try private involvement – Transit-Oriented development – Hong Kong, etc.
- CSX and Norfolk Southern – issue? They won’t move – Land use along rail lines, stations – A mindset and cultural change should lead to acceptance of growth near transportation
- Integrated plan
- Open spaces
- Huge opportunity – Lowry
- Major square / plaza / piazza – New York
- Shops = eyes on the street
- Transportation mechanism along corridor
- Toronto e.g. for transit development
- Land around MARTA stations
- Bridge, park – Georgia Tech – connector



Group 6 - West

GROUP 6 – WEST

- Life
- Pedestrian traffic
- More residents, 24 hours
- Street-level retail
- Attractive streetscapes
- Fewer surface parking lots
- Printers Row – Chicago
- Transportation – trolley, commuter rail
- Affordable/workforce housing
- Homeless
- Safety/public health, cleanliness, drug problem – Improved initiatives

- Mitchell, Broad Street – Positive PR
- Public space
- Live entertainment, shows
- Theatre
- Museums
- Metro-wide transportation plan
- Casino
- Convention destination
- Family destination – Better children’s museum, Parks and green space, Charter schools, Underground festivals
- Loss of tenants to Midtown
- World class water element
- Peachtree Street is like Magnificent Mile
- Peachtree Street @ Five Points – needs improvement – quality of retail, mixed-income housing, health/safety
- Need more parks, large park
- Multi-lingual signage – increase diversity
- Fewer dead blocks – Homeland security – regional
- Government buildings need to be held to the same standard as private sector
- Mixed-use/Mixed-income housing
- Require housing with every new project
- Use Gulch as outdoor music venue – double as park in daytime, walking trails, parks, destination retail/boutiques, Restaurant Row with mixed income

GROUP 7 - WEST

- Commuter rail – multimodal
- Chicago's Millennium Park
- Grand Central Station
- Union Station – D.C.
- Symphony – more cultural venues
- Magnificent Mile – Chicago – after-hours activity
- Gaming / casino – hotels, residences, retail
- Concern: homeless population
- Museums
- Mitchell Street – Hotel row – retail, residences

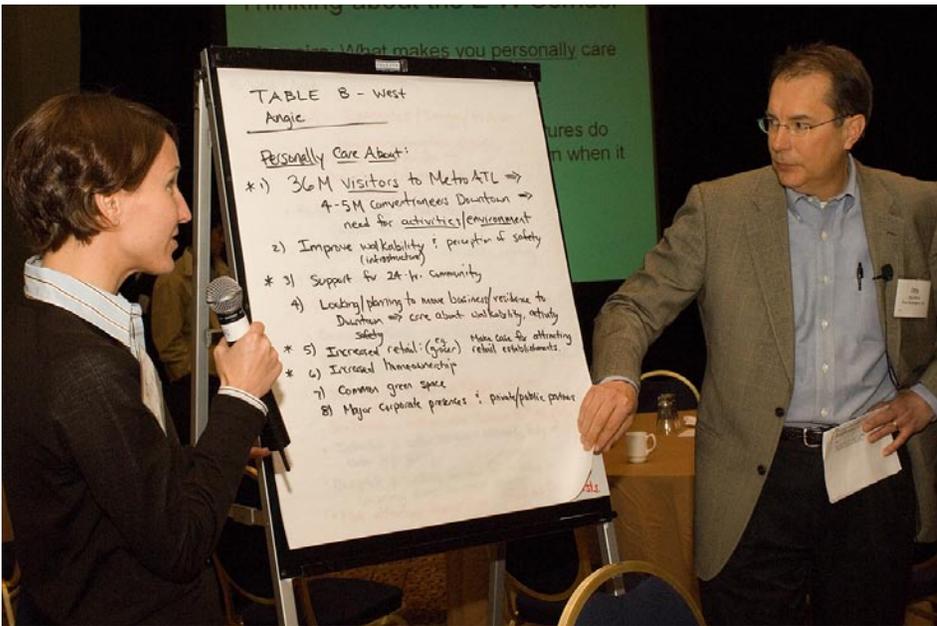


Group 7 - West

- Retain government entities in Downtown – provide leadership
- Security – continue efforts to make Downtown safe
- Promoting Downtown – need more effort to get the word out
- Philadelphia
- Park space – may be in the Gulch, has to be well-managed
- City/state can't agree and get along on / behind commuter rail, unlike other cities
- Charlotte – good example for commuter rail with both city and state support

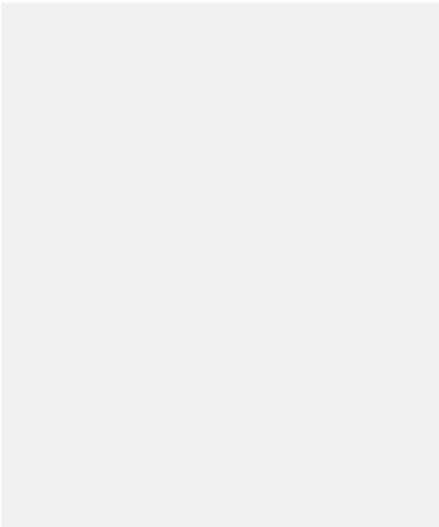
GROUP 8 - WEST

- 36 million visitors to Metro Atlanta – 4-5 million conventioners Downtown – need for activities, environment
- Improve walkability and perception of safety, infrastructure
- Support for 24-hour community
- Looking/planning to move business/residence to Downtown – walkability, activity, safety
- Increased retail, grocer, make case for attracting retail establishments
- Increased homeownership
- Common green space
- Major corporate presence and private/public partners
- New Orleans, Georgetown, Orlando, Denver, Nashville, Austin – downtown entertainment districts, attractions



Group 8 - West

- Hollywood, FL – Hard Rock Café casino district
- Charlotte, NC – nice sidewalks, lighting
- No panhandling district
- Chicago’s Millennium Park – underground parking, easy access, beautiful outdoor facilities
- Covered walkways – e.g., Bologna, Italy
- Castleberry Hill area is like the meat packing district in New York
- Seattle, WA – Pike Street Market; similarly – San Francisco Bay area market
- San Francisco – trolley – also Denver’s 16th Street Mall



- Introduce a water feature – man-made body of water – e.g., Gulch
- Designate a walking corridor for visitors – connecting World Congress Center to Hotel District
- More attractions around Centennial Olympic Park
- Roof-top bars, restaurants

GROUP 9 – WEST

- Magnificent Mile of Chicago
- Ethnic diversity – i.e., NY, Chicago
- Improved schools
- Include Atlanta University Center and link universities

Group 9 - West



- Georgetown
- Link historic neighborhoods
- More residential
- Encourage street-front retail
- Revitalized Oakland, CA
- Density leads to less crime
- Retail center for sports and after – Wrigleyville
- Connections – no islands
- Casino
- Lake in Gulch – public space



Group 10 - West

GROUP 10 - WEST

- Need major landmarks
- More connections – drop-off points, too many organizations, connect Gulch
- Vision for Gulch
- Tie to education – for old and young
- Gulch as a mini world expo – Focal point – European/international plaza with apartments, retail, parking underground – like Cotton States expo
- Crystal Palace
- International vision
- Need residential

- Green space – focus on a central space
- Cultural showroom
- Always changing – rotating countries
- Timeless and independent Downtown
- Must connect the surrounding area of the Gulch

GROUP 11 - WEST

- Grand Central
- An architecturally significant multimodal terminal will spur additional development
- Transportation museum – fitting because we are a hub
- Atlanta hasn't made good decisions on architecture because cost-effective
- Urban Design Commission is actually trying to get high-end architecture
- If there is new Dome built, could it be done in Gulch? Frees up current site
- We tend to focus one singular enterprise, but not the same as a big idea
- Gulch is subterranean and large – opportunity to do lots of things
- Peachtree Corridor exciting – could also make East-West Corridor more exciting
- Problematic environment by Five Points – what do we want to have there?
- Racial issue at Five Points
- Georgia State University should make a connection with underground

BIG IDEAS

For this discussion, participants were asked the question, “Which ‘Big Ideas’ offer the greatest chances of creating substantial progress in your part of the Corridor?” Here is how the participants responded, organized by group:

GROUP 1 – EAST

- Capping the connector
- Multimodal Passenger Terminal
- Regional park / green space
- GA State student housing / Revitalize, redevelop Five Points / Redevelop World of Coca-Cola block / Casino in Underground
- Upgrade / activate government buildings
- Fix the I-20, 75/85 interchange

GROUP 2 – EAST

- Major transportation initiative to bring in suburbs up and down interstates
- Rail – Handle volumes
- Transportation hub
- Gaming at Underground – great domino effect to Downtown
- Institutional synergy (Georgia State University and government) – programs?
- GSU Dorms – jump the Gulch – circle residents around campus – connect across Gulch, like 5th street

“Capping” the Interstate with a park was a major discussion point for the groups (Below: Capitol Gateway Illustrative Plan - 2003)



- Capping interstate
- Extended mall to Oakland Cemetery
- Gaming – huge revenue – jobs, casino, hotel, restaurants, additional retail, and other services
- Enough room? Need additional buildings.
- Need old World of Coca-Cola site for gaming
- Sports capital – sports hall of fame, tied into sports network, NBC – anchors/commentators working out of facility – Hall of Fame inductees – location not necessarily near Dome
- Water feature (large)
- Multimodal passenger terminal – office, retail

- Norfolk Southern headquarters Mixed Use
- Pedestrian environment
- Park with water – incorporate stormwater retention
- How to connect streetscapes
- Moving sidewalks, pedestrian bridges
- Pedestrian connectivity strategy
- West to East – Link up Sweet Auburn, Consider contribution of churches

GROUP 3 – EAST

- Capitol Greenway – Need funding for acquisition – City and State working together – Clean and inviting – Capping the connector, Capitol to Oakland as seamless connection – Dramatic entry to Capitol – Parks provide gathering place
- Completion of Capitol Mall and its extension east to Oakland
- Gaming at Underground – Proceeds go to City, Fulton County, State – \$300 million revenue for PeachCare, HOPE, infrastructure – 2,000 new jobs – acts to better connect neighborhoods – Attract conventioners to City – Increase hotel occupancy to >90% – connects east and west – Acts to catalyze development and investment – retail, shows can still attract families (e.g., Vegas) – Retail additions attract families to Downtown gaming at Underground provides “easy sell” to diverse retailers – Underground surrounded by non-residential neighborhoods



The establishment of a casino was a common discussion point for many of the groups

- Five Points MARTA – build up, add visual masterpiece – connect to multimodal – retail, residential – activate the existing amphitheater on roof – make station part of community, warm it up – As center of corridor, station should act as center of community – Grand Central-like – Circulators to connect neighborhoods – Integrate into redevelopment surrounding King and GSU MARTA – Less concrete, more inviting
- Speed up King Memorial TOD development

GROUP 4 – EAST

- Underground = Amphitheatre – Vendors catering near GA State – “Automatic” spot for inauguration – Larger than Chastain
- Parks and cultural study says people want more outdoor facilities
- Amphitheatre with 10-15,000 seating capacity at old World of Coke site



View of the previous World of Coca-Cola site and plaza at Underground Atlanta

- Ice skating rink
- Move Grady – partially to Gulch, to a few specialized hospitals (cancer center, cardiac, women’s center) – ties into AU Center School of Medicine – Series of 6-8-story buildings – Create street fronts
- Transportation hub with casino on top – focus on stretch of Peachtree between Five Points and Trinity – International Pavilion with soccer component

GROUP 5 – EAST

- Outdoor space – Area behind Hilton – use for condo residents
- Connection between Memorial and King District – Linear parkway – Control price through Atlanta land assemblage – Connect neighborhoods, too

- Entrance to Underground, parking, need for development – Parks, events (Centennial Olympic) – Concern = management, security, maintenance
- Landscape / hardscape streets
- Casino in Underground
- Connect Grant Park, etc., to the corridor over I-20
- Destination points – Neighborhoods, Stadium, Underground – Connectivity
- Garnett MARTA – year-round market, increase residential density
- Anchor store
- Anchor company that gives incentives to employees to locate around the area
- Develop Broad Street like Little Five Points
- Distinguish important destinations – e.g., in the skyline

GROUP 6 – WEST

- Casino in the Gulch
- Entertainment district
- Arts focus
- Multimodal terminal
- Northside Drive – Gateway district to Neighborhood, aka Memorial Drive
- Family-oriented, mixed-use – Single Family residences, Schools
- Gulch – Casino, theme park, Anchor (move Civic Center, entertainment complex, sports), Southern Millennium Park, University component, Atlanta version of French

Quarter, Lake/water element as focal point

- Multimodal terminal – Historic architecture, landmark building, office/residential above (Cleveland), Signature public art, Redevelopment of Five Points, Major destination draws people, Greyhound component

GROUP 7 – WEST

- Commuter rail / multimodal
- Casino with hotel, retail, residential at the Gulch
- Museum/symphony
- Urban public space – has to be well-managed (some type of space that does not encourage the homeless to gather, like a plaza, hardscaped, amphitheater, etc.)



Utilization and redevelopment of the Five Points MARTA rail station was a common theme of the forum

GROUP 8 – WEST

- Gulch becomes multimodal passenger terminal – multi-use development, entertainment uses, retail, housing, casino?
- Underground and Five Points MARTA – Casino, Open air market, increased presence of Five Points MARTA
- Infrastructure – Lighting, streetscape improvements, utilities, greening the corridors, surface improvements, covered walkways – will help with progress: perception of crime, increase pedestrians, increased activity

GROUP 9 – WEST

- Lake – Power of Water
- 2-way Streets – Mitchell
- Pedestrian-friendly bridges
- MARTA Five Points/Multimodal
- Nightlife for students – organic growth – link to AUC – Businesses for students

GROUP 10 – WEST

- International plaza above the Gulch – parking underground – move people out instead of in with casino
- Major observation tower with museum – Call sign of transportation, tall, fits with other tourist locations, fits with Atlanta skyline, tie into transportation, Barcelona towers, postcard monument

- Transportation – Needs to be an experience, incorporates Atlanta’s trains and history, E-W loop from a major tower, 16th St mall in Denver, E-W MLK hanging cable car, move jail, loop around Downtown

GROUP 11 – WEST

- Garnett Street Station – underutilized – Norfolk Southern and Gulch
- Too many public institutions around Garnett
- Need to rise above institutional constraints
- Gulch and Garnett are connected
- What goes on top of Gulch should be iconic
- Get private investment in Gulch
- Multi-use plan with iconic anchor
- More organic activity around Garnett
- Identify all stakeholders for the Gulch for funding
- Transportation improvements (infrastructure)
- Watershed development on top of that (needs to be revenue generating). Open space can work because property values go up

- Whoever is undertaking this needs to fund this, or attract a sizeable investor
- How to create market so that iconic development is financially feasible
- Plaza or fountain as anchor
- Recreation of the urban fabric
- Lot of audience potential from multimodal
- Once iconic thing is announced, investment follows
- Announce the iconic thing, then state and federal will follow
- Gulch connects to Five Points station
- Underground opportunity under Gulch has large potential



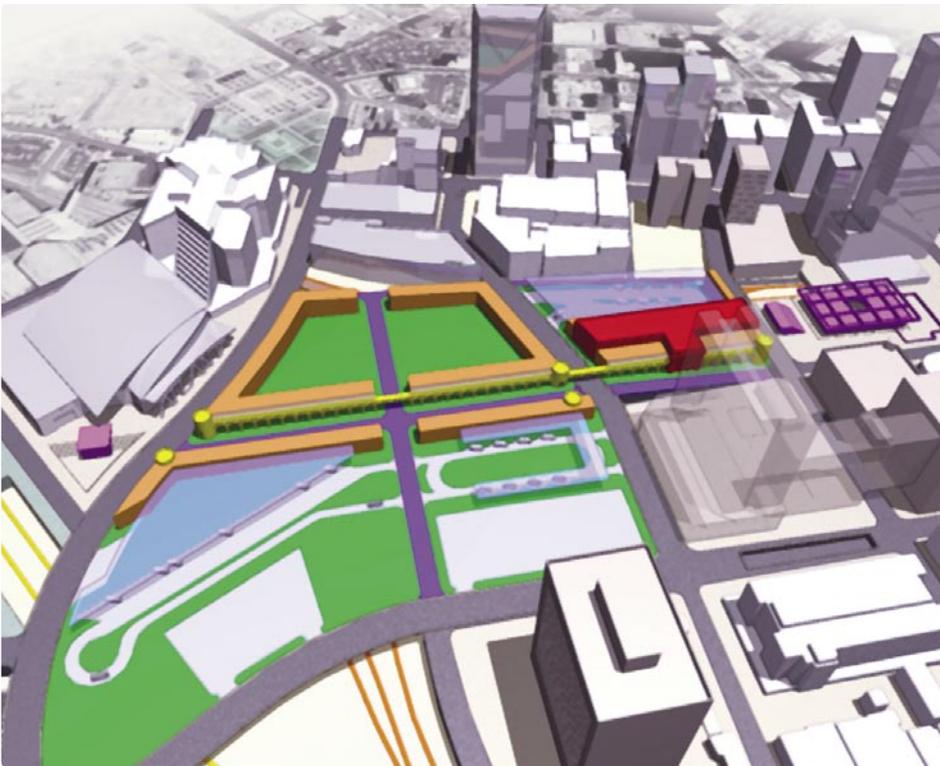
Aerial view of the potential re-development of the South CBD

CONSENSUS: BIG IDEAS

Participants were asked to go back over their lists of “Big Ideas” and indicate which of the ideas had the greatest consensus or agreement in their groups. Here are the consensus ideas the groups indicated:

- Capping the connector
- Multimodal Passenger Terminal
- GA State student housing / Revitalize, redevelop Five Points / Redevelop World of Coca-Cola block / Casino in Underground
- Transportation hub
- Georgia State University Dorms
- Pedestrian connectivity strategy
- Capitol Greenway
- Gaming at Underground
- Five Points MARTA
- Amphitheatre with 10,000-15,000 seating capacity at old World of Coke site
- Move Grady
- Transportation hub with casino on top
- Connection between Memorial and King District
- Entrance to Underground, parking, need for development
- Casino in Underground

A potential Multimodal Passenger Terminal was a main topic of the forum (below is an early concept plan for the site)



- Gulch
- Multimodal terminal
- Commuter rail / multimodal
- Casino with hotel, retail, residential at the Gulch
- Museum/symphony
- Gulch becomes multimodal passenger terminal
- Underground and Five Points MARTA
- Infrastructure
- Lake – Power of Water
- MARTA Five Points/Multimodal
- Nightlife for students – organic growth – link to Atlanta University Center – Businesses for students
- International plaza above the Gulch

- Major observation tower with museum
- Transportation
- Transportation improvements (infrastructure)
- Watershed development on top of that (needs to be revenue generating). Open space can work because property values go up
- Recreation of the urban fabric



Schematic view of potential over build development in the "gulch"

OBSTACLES

For this discussion, participants were asked the question, “What are the greatest obstacles to substantial progress in your part of the Corridor in the next five years?” Here is how the participants responded, organized by group:

GROUP 1 – EAST

- Money
- Race / Racism / Safety perception
- Perception – Negative
- Legal issues
- Concentration of government
- Land assemblage
- Eminent domain limits
- Poor schools inhibit residential
- Land cost



GROUP 2 – EAST

- Money (lack of)
- Perception (race?)
- Urban rail to bring people in, not send out
- Connectivity (lack of)
- Infrastructure (physical, economic) (deferred multimodal passenger terminal)
- Stop waiting around for government
- TADs (in place)
- Political will
- Good leadership – need continuity
- Expand / rezone quality of life
- State acknowledges Atlanta’s contribution and sharing

- Tax incentives (for gaming)
- Lack of consensus among stakeholders
- CAP facilitate ongoing forums
- Increase competitiveness of salary
- Gaming
- Hospitality

- Emulate MARTA Civic Center success at Garnett
- Quality of life (homelessness, panhandling)
- Change land use
- Support parking strategy

GROUP 3 – EAST

- Focusing efforts/investment on “the” idea
- Government approvals (e.g., Casinos) and strong, supportive, continuous leadership
- Finding necessary funding, especially for transportation (from State)
- Acquiring land for redevelopment, parks
- Media perpetuating negative perceptions
- Affordability of housing
- Large institutional owners with limited budgets – less of focus on iconic architecture, improvements, etc.
- One-way streets make connectivity difficult
- Getting air rights to build over interstate
- City and State at odds
- Ownership of land by Railroads
- Multiple / fragmented owners, out-of-town landlords

GROUP 4 – EAST

- Lack of cooperation between State and Local Governments
- Variety/Number of land owners
- Racism
- Government incentives to make projects feasible
- Low wages, concentration of poverty, low income
- Poor quality of urban schools – disconnect between improvement/money and kids that need the most help
- Image perception (always parked in “Gulch”) – “Gulch”, Downtown Atlanta, Racism
- Homelessness

GROUP 5 – EAST

- Perception of Crime
- Transit planning / implementation
- Funding priorities and politics

- Implementation strategies, taking initiative
- Government/private/non-profit leadership and coordination and persistence of major investor
- Master development plan for initiatives of funding
- Champion leader – no bias
- Funding incentives provided by different government entities

GROUP 6 – WEST

- Perception – public safety, crime
- Money – Property assembly, consensus, infrastructure, housing/jobs
- Political will/consensus – time to accomplish projects, term limits
- Race/Class – visual, mix of diversity?, housing/jobs



GROUP 7 – WEST

- Money – state and federal participation, TAD financing or other public incentive, Gas tax to fund transit, 1-cent sales tax across the state
- Risk/risk tolerance – PR, City taking leadership to clean up areas, get more groups behind Downtown
- Government and politics – Education both for the public and government officials, rural vs. urban should find middle ground, objectify the debate
- Crime and perceived safety of Downtown – solve perception issue, continue increased police presence

GROUP 8 – WEST

- Lack of a document that captures the group's direction
- Indecision on multimodal passenger terminal – need movement (result, without, is uncertainty in the market place)
- Politics of gaming approval
- Funding and competing resources

GROUP 9 – WEST

- State Government – Transportation, Casino

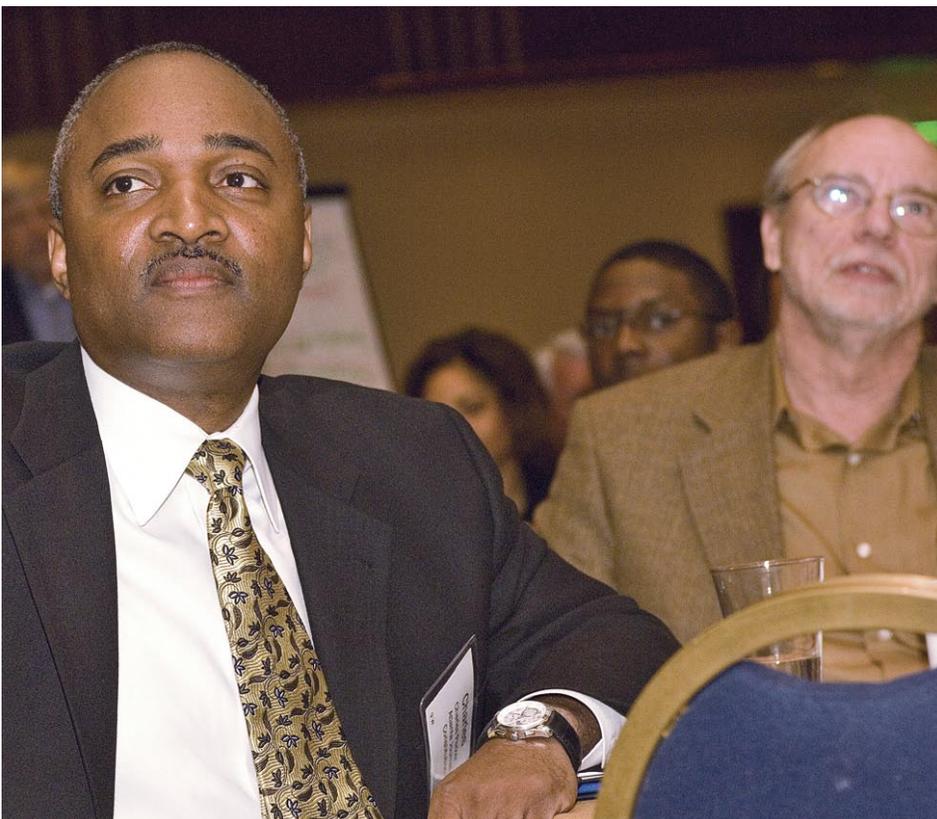
- Local government – Zoning restrictions – Higher density, lower parking requirements
- Parking lots
- Bad image of public transit

GROUP 10 – WEST

- Money, funding – where does it come from? Who profits from it? – economy, housing cycle
- Starting cooperation – bring stakeholders together, bringing property developers together, different governments (city, state, fed), government dead zone, exchange of information, communication coordination in development
- Transportation – getting people to the area, cost of transportation
- Quality of life – perception, chicken or the egg, does development bring a rise in quality of life?

GROUP 11 – WEST

- Not enough shared information
- Homelessness & homeless activity
- State does not want to participate in planning Downtown
- Incongruence of vision – getting player at the table
- Motivate key investors – institutional property owners, etc. to move forward together
- Ongoing negative perception of mass transit



- Lack of education around planning principles
- Not enough connectivity between public transit
- Poor location and design of MARTA stations
- Perceptions and realities of crime and homelessness
- Efforts and boundaries of Ambassadors

CONSENSUS IDEAS: OBSTACLES

Participants were asked to go back over their lists of potential obstacles and indicate which of the ideas had the greatest consensus or agreement in their groups. Here are the consensus ideas the groups indicated:



MARTA Five Points Peachtree Street entrance



Existing rail infrastructure in the "gulch"

- Money (lack of)
- Perception (race?)
- Connectivity (lack of)
- Infrastructure (physical, economic) (deferred multimodal passenger terminal)
- Political will
- Increase competitiveness of salary
- Quality of life (homelessness, panhandling)
- Government approvals (e.g., Casinos) and strong, supportive, continuous leadership
- Finding necessary funding, especially for transportation (from State)
- Acquiring land for redevelopment, parks
- Lack of cooperation between State and Local Governments
- Poor quality of urban schools
- Image perception
- Funding priorities and politics
- Implementation strategies, taking initiative
- Government/private/non-profit leadership and coordination and persistence of major investor
- Starting cooperation
- Homelessness & homeless activity
- State does not want to participate in planning Downtown
- Ongoing negative perception of mass transit

OVERCOMING THE OBSTACLES

The participants were then asked, “Looking at the top 3 obstacles, what are some possible ways of overcoming them?” Here were the ideas:

MONEY

- Public-private partnerships
- Ad valorem tax reductions
- Parking authority
- Commuter tax

RACE AND PERCEPTION

- Education, dialogue – improve public schools
- Housing development patterns – mixed-income diversity
- Common connection
- Leadership Atlanta – race program
- Communication – dialogue (groups)
- Social ills that confront all cities – address, confront homelessness
- Façade improvements



GOVERNMENT PROBLEMS

- Campaign finance reform
- Streamline government process – permitting
- Change state government leadership
- Eliminate mayor’s term limit
- Political will, coordination
- No divide between Atlanta and the balance of the State
- Revolutionize NPU system
- Atlanta/State consensus building

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