

ULI mTAP Team 5
SONO: Downtown Connector Capping Study
Central Atlanta Progress
May 2012

mTAP Team Members

- Gil Hearn
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**Urban Land
Institute**

Atlanta


Serving Georgia, Alabama, and Eastern Tennessee

ULI Atlanta
Center for Leadership



Central Atlanta Progress
Atlanta Downtown Improvement District

Agenda

- Project Overview 
- Assets & Stakeholders
- Research
 - Case Studies
 - Past SONO Capping Studies
- mTAP: SONO Capping Proposal
- Conclusions and Recommendations
- Appendix



Objective

- ULI mTAP Project Theme: Connectivity
- Client: Central Atlanta Progress
- Study: SONO Interstate Capping Study
- Situational Summary
- Project Profile: Connectivity



Client Profile

- Central Atlanta Progress (CAP), a private nonprofit community development organization, seeks the economic betterment of Downtown Atlanta, more specifically the Atlanta Downtown Improvement District, a 220 block area bounded by North Avenue on the north, Memorial Drive on the south, Piedmont Avenue and the Downtown Connector on the east, and the Norfolk-Southern rail line on the west.
- CAP recently completed the first phase of the I-75/85 Connector Transformation Project, a strategic plan for enhancing the visual appearance of the Connector through various means including greenery, artwork, pedestrian connections, and signage, thereby creating a positive economic impact on the City. One of the common themes that emerged from the July 2011 public workshop for the project was the capping the Connector at Peachtree Street.



Situational Summary

- Atlanta's urban interstate was constructed in the late 1940s and early 1950s as a six-lane divided highway.
- The highway effectively created a boundary between Atlanta's Midtown and Downtown business districts that persists today, effectively bisecting the SONO district along several major surface road arteries.
- SONO is an urban sub-district of Downtown and Midtown that originally consisted of lower-income areas such as Buttermilk Bottom, which were razed for urban redevelopment projects in the 1960s.
- Greenspace within SONO includes Renaissance, Central and Mayor's Parks.
- Recent construction cycle brought office, hotel and residential development within immediate vicinity of SONO district without directly adding to that area's commercial space.



Situational Summary

- The study will examine options to improve connectivity and spur economic development in the SONO district of Atlanta.
- The project will evaluate the potential of capping the I-75/85 connector with a concrete podium and explore the feasibility of two main uses: a green space or enhanced pedestrian streetscape; as well as an option to create developable commercial parcels over and adjacent to the Interstate.
- Peachtree Street is the economic and cultural spine of Atlanta, and this particular stretch connects two of the most important pieces: Midtown and Downtown.
- A thriving, walkable street in this area would help to create a continuous stretch between the districts and would remedy the pervasive disconnect that currently exists between these thriving business districts.
- The project also provides opportunities to create a better and more usable connection from the Civic Center MARTA rail station to surrounding parcels, potentially spurring economical development.



Project Profile

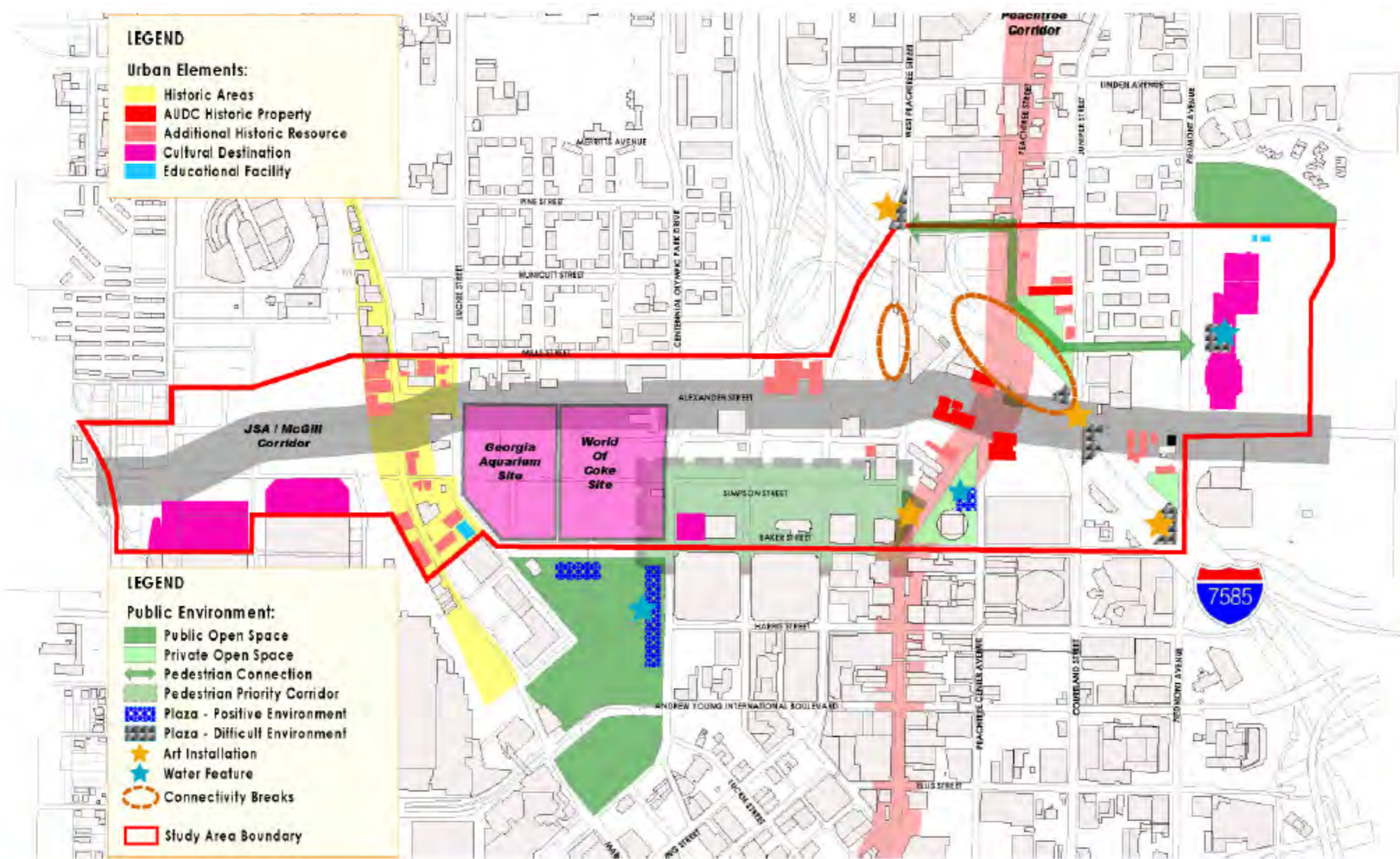
- Capping the Connector is not a new idea as there has been significant discussion regarding the expansion of Mayor's Park via such a freeway cap predating the Connector Transformation Project.
- Funding to advance the project was never acquired or even actively pursued.
- By providing CAP with additional data and ideas regarding a capping project, the Client in conjunction with its board of Downtown leaders and its network of corporate and institutional donors can be better equipped to harness the positive momentum that the Connector Transformation Project is generating.
- By knitting back portions of the street grid torn apart during the Connector construction and creating new public and private spaces, a cap of the connector would be the largest economic development initiative that Downtown has seen since the advent of Centennial Olympic Park over a decade ago.



Project Objectives

- **Conduct research of other successful capping projects.** Specific research will include funding mechanisms, construction costs and impacts, lessons learned, and economic impacts to the capped and surrounding areas. This task will also include review and understanding of studies in this area including the Imagine Downtown vision plan and Connector Transformation Plan.
- **Develop a conceptual plan.** A proposed area of capping will be developed based on surrounding parcels, roadway geometry, and past conducted studies. This plan will be a conceptual exhibit in order to define a scope of the project and prepare Task 3.
- **Prepare a financial analysis of the proposed cap.** A pro forma will be prepared taking into account estimated construction costs, land created, funding sources, development potential and market demand to identify the feasibility of the proposed cap. This task will help to identify the density and value required for positive financial performance. It will also identify the potential required public infrastructure investment.
- **Meet with stakeholders.** A list of stakeholders will be identified and ULI will attempt to meet with them to discuss the proposed project, solicit feedback, and gauge interest. Two of the major stakeholders identified is the GDOT group and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) since the cap would involve air rights over their right-of-way, and design and construction of a cap would include significant oversight from their offices.





JSA McGill LCI Plan

SONO Downtown Connector Capping Study



Special Collections Department, Pullen Library, Georgia State University



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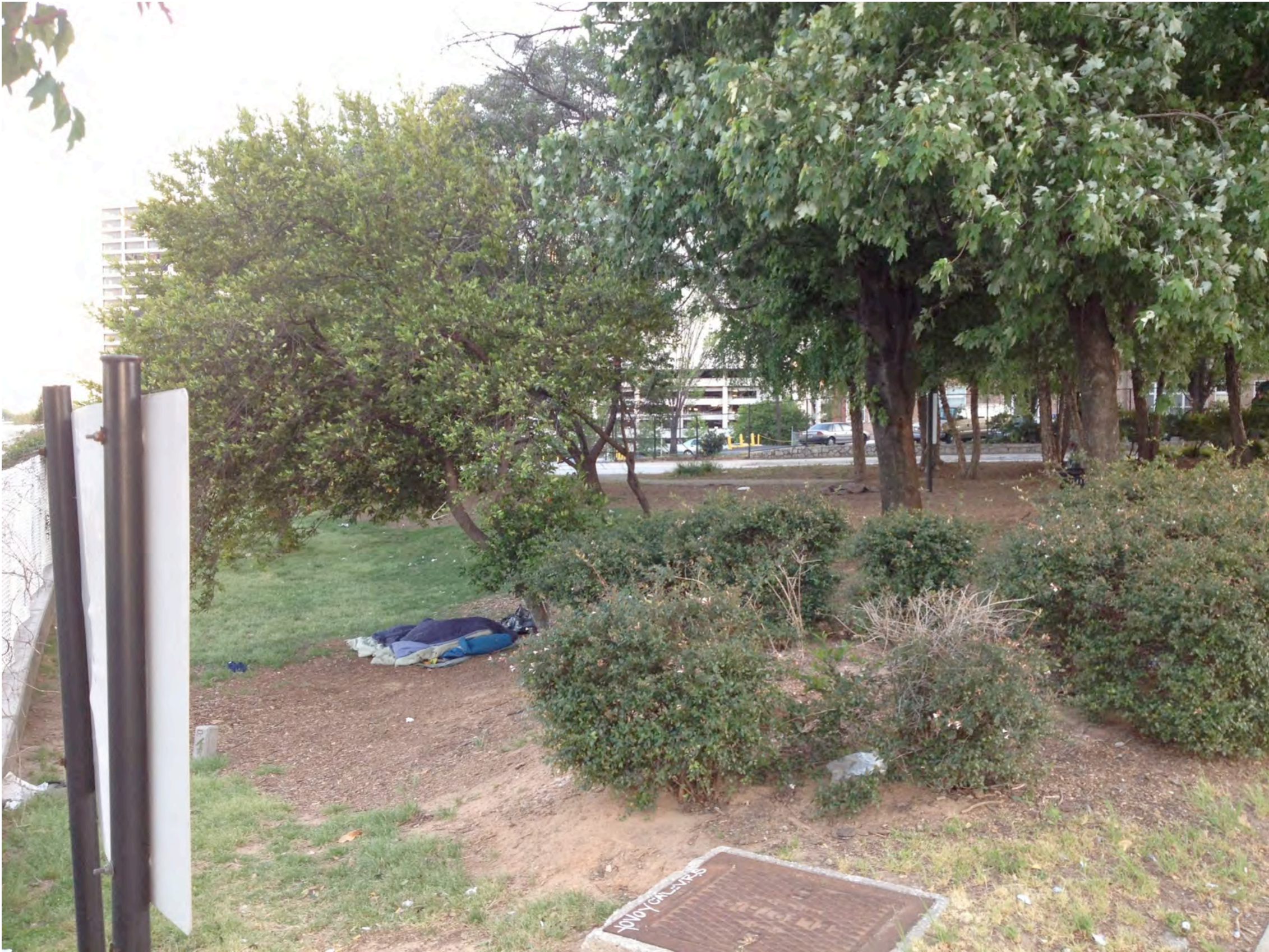
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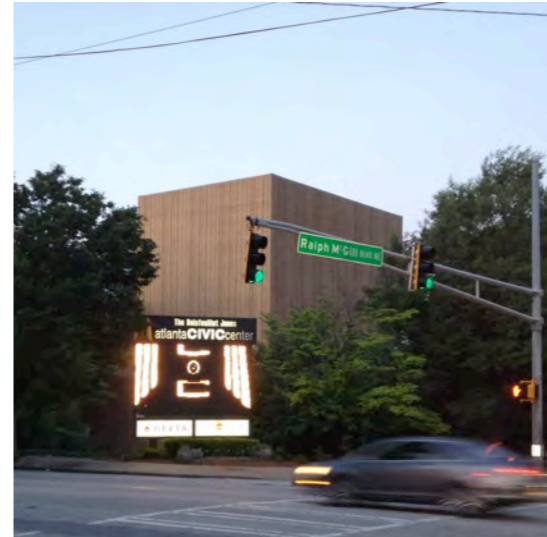
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Assets

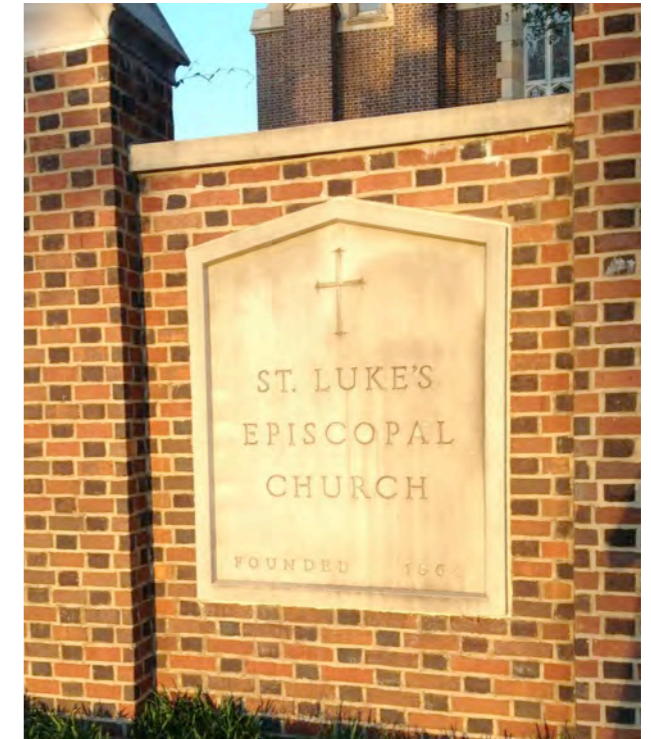
- Peachtree Street
- MARTA Civic Center Station
- I-75/I-85 Below-Grade Connector
- Civic Center
- Ivan Allen Plaza
- Peachtree Summit Federal Building
- Twelve Centennial Park Hotel and Condominiums
- W Hotel and Condominiums
- Restaurant and retail locations



Central Atlanta Progress
Atlanta Downtown Improvement District

Stakeholders

- St. Luke's Episcopal Church
- MARTA
- Georgia Department of Transportation
- Medical Arts Building Ownership
- Emory University Hospital
- City of Atlanta
- Central Atlanta Progress
- Building ownership and major tenants



Central Atlanta Progress
Atlanta Downtown Improvement District

Stakeholder: St. Luke's Episcopal Church

- The St. Luke's Real Estate Committee has been assembling the roughly three-acre property across from the church since the 1960's, with the last piece added in 2007.
- The overall opinion of the Church is that a park would be an exceptional addition to the area and are largely in favor of the capping idea.
- St. Luke's understands the inherent connection problems in SONO and are willing to participate and support any projects that connect and enrich the pedestrian experience.



Source: www.atlantatimemachine.com



Central Atlanta Progress
Atlanta Downtown Improvement District

Stakeholder: St. Luke's Episcopal Church

- In the short term, St. Luke's will continue to operate its land as surface parking lot to service church services/events, as well as surrounding business users, but would like to renovate the lot with a sustainable pervious concrete.
- St. Luke's would like to see the property developed for the betterment of the community over the long-term, but prefer to enter into a long term ground lease, rather than a sale.
- They envision ground floor retail with office and residential uses above. Their one requirement is that St. Luke's will have exclusive use of any future parking deck for use on Sundays.



Stakeholder: St. Luke's Episcopal Church

- Additional goals and potential action items for a proposed park were identified:
 - Should resemble a usage and containment similar to Centennial Park, as opposed to Woodruff Park.
 - All private property should be clearly marked and separated.
 - St. Luke's wants a front seat at the discussion and planning table.
 - Any conversion of the existing park currently connected to St. Luke's will need approval from the 501-3C that controls the park land



Stakeholder: Medical Arts Building Ownership

- Built in 1927, the beaux arts style Medical Arts Building was designed by G. Lloyd Preacher. Preacher was also the architect responsible for the design of Atlanta's City Hall, the Winecoff Hotel, the Henry Grady Hotel and Bass High School in Little Five Points.
- Purchased in 2004 by local investors under entity 384 Peachtree St., LLC, the 12-story, 88,000 sf building has suffered damage due to neglect, and any redevelopment will require significant work.
- There have been many ideas to renovate the building, including boutique hotel, office and medical.
- There are 266 parking spaces and the building qualifies for assistance within the East Side TAD.



Stakeholder: Medical Arts Building Ownership



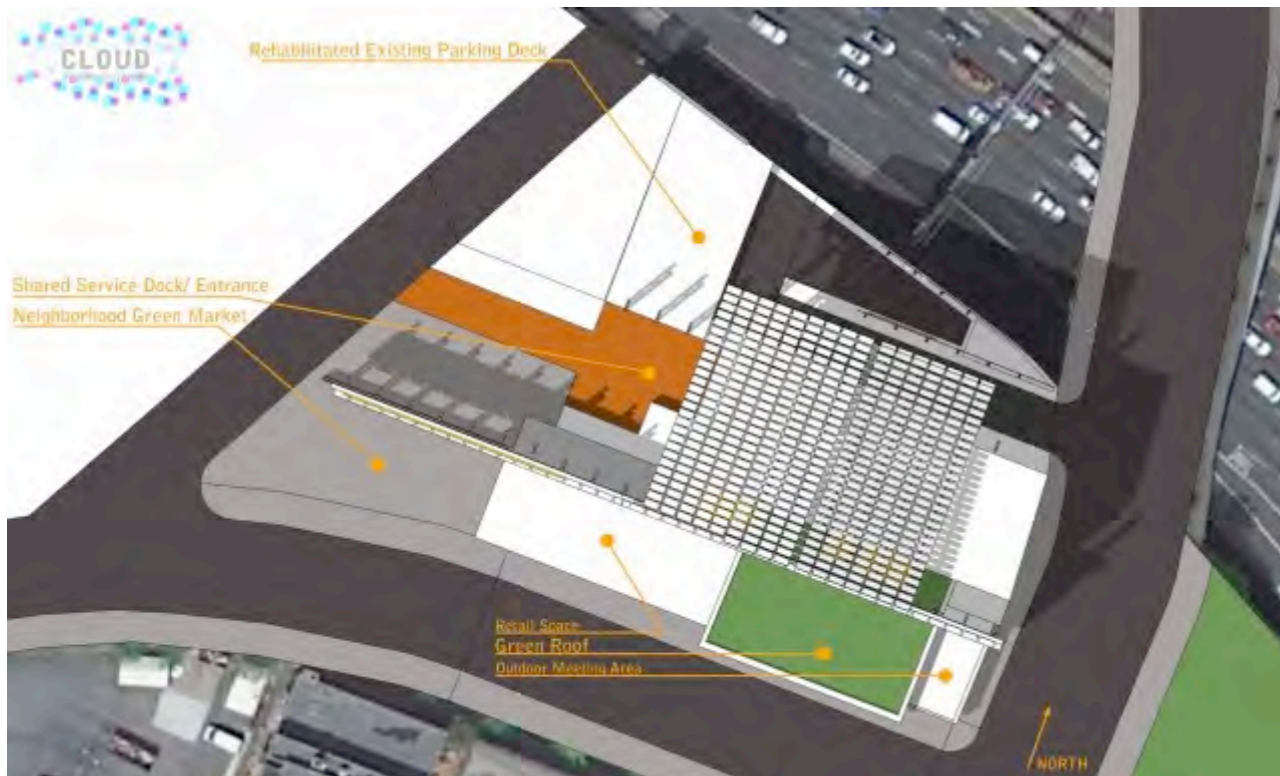
Source:<http://cloudarchitecturedesign.com>



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Stakeholder: Medical Arts Building Ownership

- Building ownership has expressed interest in redeveloping the property, but the partnership is currently in limbo and the economic situation has stalled any redevelopment plans.



Conceptual Redesign from revision|CLOUD; Site Plan



Conceptual Redesign from revision|CLOUD; View Looking North

- CAP and city leaders have expressed interest in helping push the redevelopment to the next level, as it has become an eyesore to the maturing skyline of the downtown CBD. The building is included on The Georgia Trust's list of 2011 Places in Peril.



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Stakeholder: Emory University Hospital

- 511-bed, community-based acute care teaching facility and full-service hospital that offers a full range of services, including general medicine, maternal and infant care, orthopedics and surgery.
- Staffed by 600 Emory medical faculty and 800 community physicians. More than 23,205 inpatients and 143,961 outpatients come to Emory University Hospital Midtown each year.
- The Hospital remains committed to its patients and expects growth in the coming years, which could impact roads, parking and other transportation methods. This growth will also necessitate additional retail, office and food services in the SONO area.
- The Hospital is engaged and interested to see the SONO area continue to evolve and agrees that better connectivity and development will be a boon for the area.



Source: Emory



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Stakeholder: MARTA

- Civic Center Station
- Unique location above interstate
- Fiscal Year 2012 Rail Ridership of 49.0 million passengers
- Disconnected from Civic Center
- Sole linkage to business and commercial properties via West Peachtree Street, complicated by poor pedestrian access to the north
- Under-utilized
- Rebranding opportunity
- Future development/air rights options



Source: Atlanta History Center



Source: MARTA




Source: MARTA



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Capping History

- Capping, or “decking”, involves constructing a usable structural space above a new or existing roadway, rail line, water body or other transportation system.
- Primarily pursued in an effort to maintain or reconnect neighborhoods that would otherwise be cut off from each other or from a major civic resource.
- Successful projects cover a diverse and disparate array of locations and scopes.
- Range greatly in construction cost and timeframe, depending in part on the scale of the project and on the amount of political and public support received.



Klyde Warren Park - Dallas, TX

- The Klyde Warren Park is a new park in the heart of Dallas, Texas built over the Woodall Rogers Freeway. Connecting downtown Dallas to the uptown Arts District, the 5.2 acre park is built on a capped bridge over the below-grade Woodall Rogers Freeway.
- Plans include a performance pavilion, restaurant, walking trails, a dog park, a children's discovery garden and playground, water features, an area for games and much more.
- Connectivity is central to The Park's purpose. The Park will promote increased pedestrian, trolley and bicycle use between Uptown, Downtown and the Arts District, contributing to a more walkable city center.



Klyde Warren Park - Dallas, TX

2004	Initial design and planning
2006	Park design completed; bond funding approved
2007	City approves road closures and construction agreement
2008	Donations of \$11.5 million obtained
2009	Construction on cap begins
2010	First beams across Woodall Rogers installed
2011	Base of cap completed; Construction on park begins
2012	Naming donor announced
2012	Park scheduled to open



Klyde Warren Park - Dallas, TX

- Construction is funded through a public-private partnership including \$20 million in bond funds from the City of Dallas, \$20 million in highway funds from the state and federal government through TxDOT and almost \$50 million from private donations.
- In addition, the Park was selected to receive \$16.7 million in stimulus funds that are specifically for transportation enhancement construction.
- The Woodall Rodgers Park Foundation continues to raise private funds, including the naming rights for park features, to fund amenity construction, operations and programming.
- The Park will be owned by the City of Dallas and managed by the private Woodall Rodgers Park Foundation.



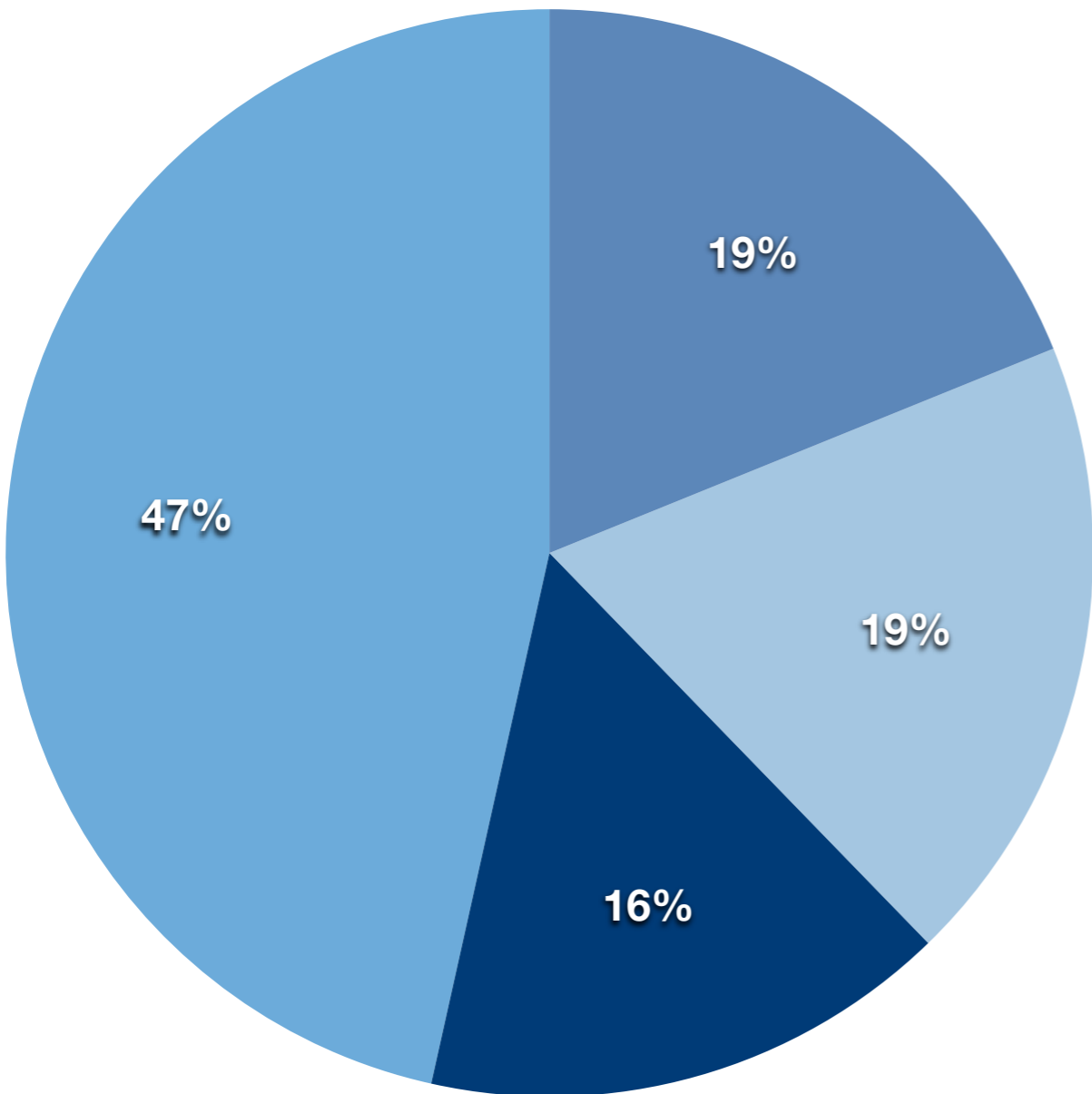
Klyde Warren Park - Dallas, TX

- Total cost of the deck, park and all amenities is \$106 million, paid for as indicated above.
- The Park seeks an additional \$4.0 million in donations to support ongoing operations.

Funding Source	Amount
City Bond Funds	\$20,000,000
Federal & state highway funds	\$20,000,000
Federal stimulus funds	\$16,700,000
Private donations	\$49,300,000
	\$106,000,000

Klyde Warren Park - Dallas, TX

- Funding Sources



- City Bond Funds
- Federal & state highway funds
- Federal stimulus funds
- Private donations

Klyde Warren Park - Dallas, TX

- Funding and support from private sources were crucial for project success.
- Naming rights can be a source of private income for a portion or all of the project.
- Greenspace and parks can be primary ingredients in capping project.



Klyde Warren Park - Dallas, TX



The Cap at Union Station - Columbus, OH



Photo by author



Photo by author



Photo by author



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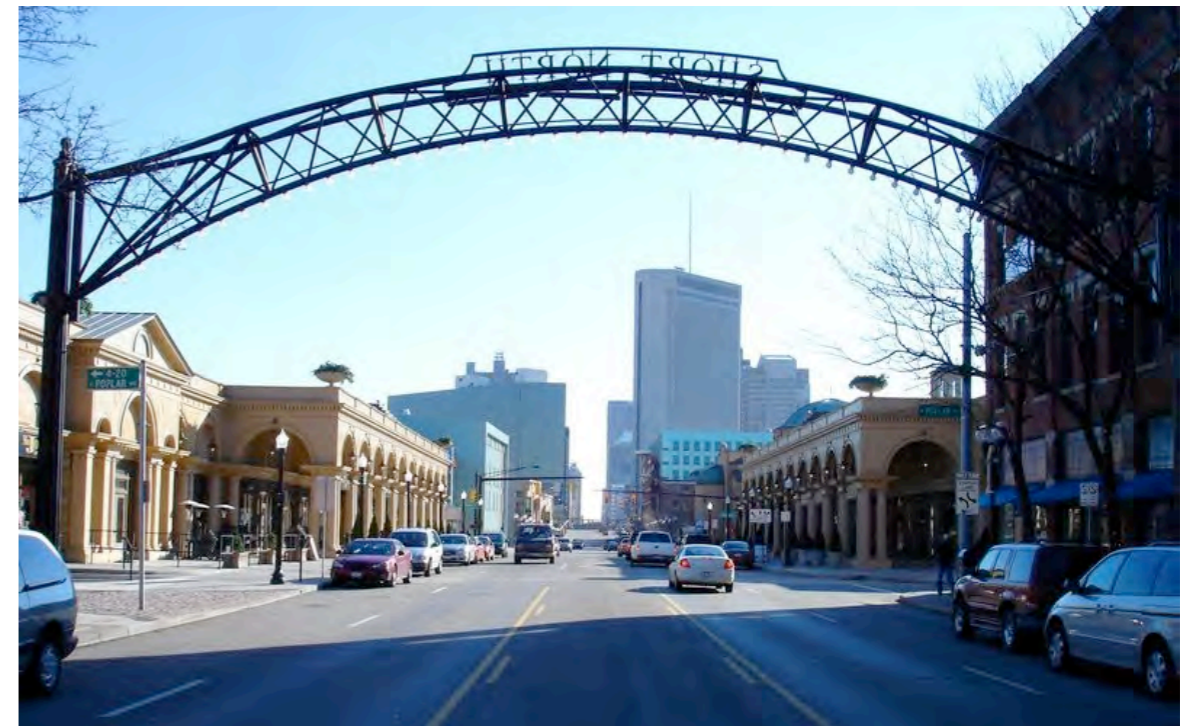
The Cap at Union Station - Columbus, OH

- \$7.8 million, 25,496 square-foot retail project
- Connects downtown with the Short North arts and entertainment district.
- Three bridges spanning I-670 - outer bridges contained retail space with the inner for traffic
- Highway called an “engineered gash” by New York Times architecture critic Herbert Muschamp.
- Hardscape park originally proposed during discussions around widening of I-670 from 4 to 8 lanes as a concession to residents.
- Residents and business owners preferred pedestrian-friendly streetscape to replace dead zone to encourage convention goers to cross bridge.
- City signed a memorandum of understanding with developer Continental Real Estate.
- If city obtained air rights and permission from ODOT and FHWA, Continental would enter into ground lease and construct retail.



The Cap at Union Station - Columbus, OH

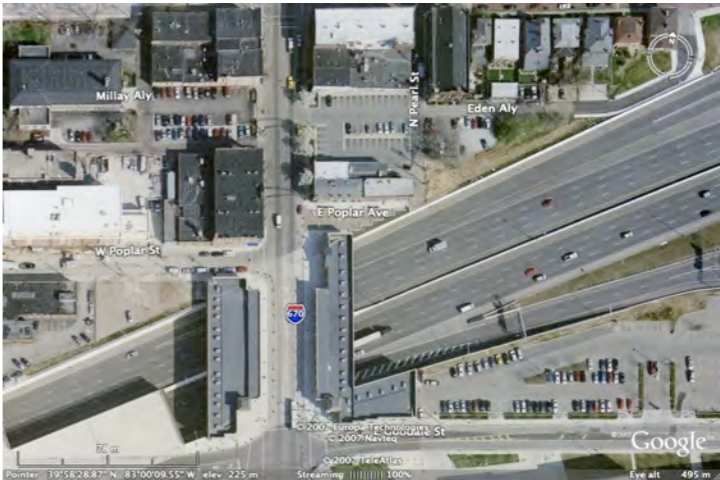
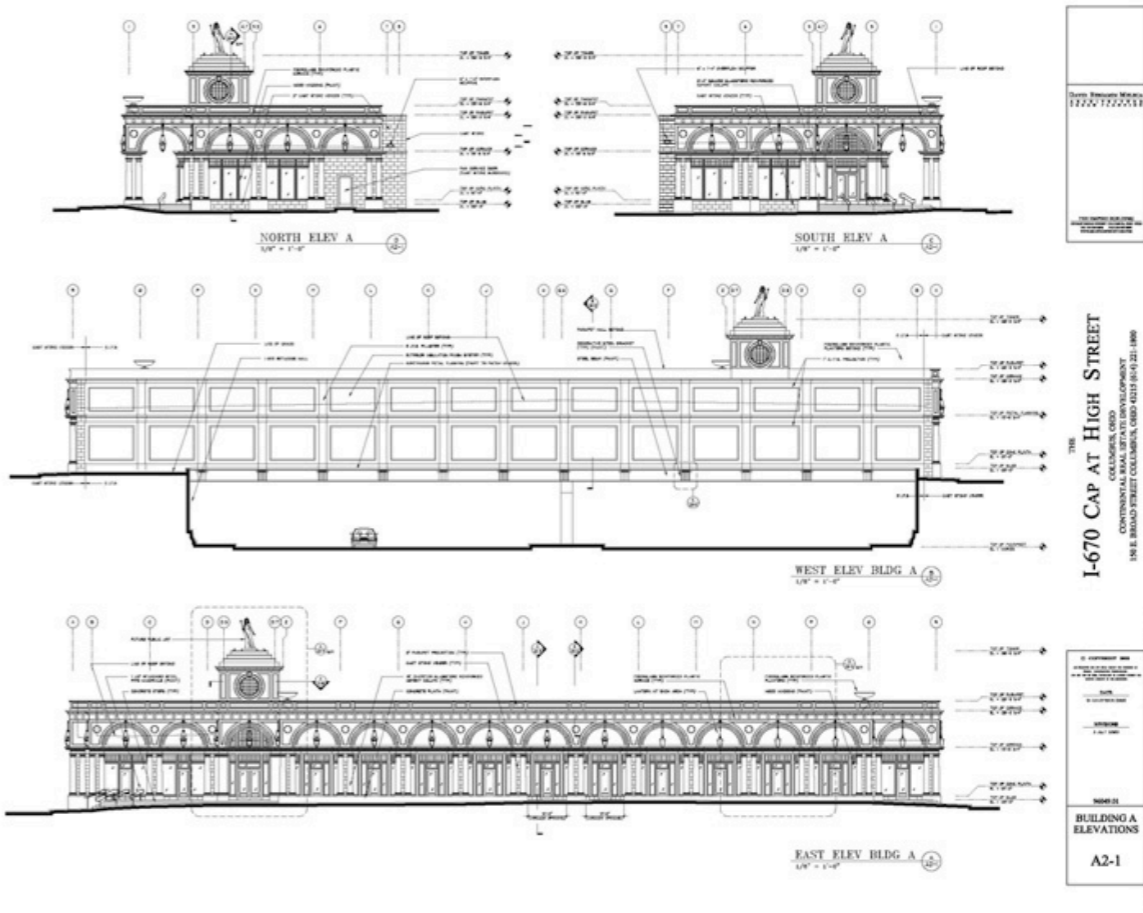
- Highway was built with ground rights only, as air rights were not purchased at original construction.
- City obtained air rights on the 13 parcels under the Cap after two years and spending \$50,000.
- Federal statutes required a fair market rent charged for non-highway use.
- City leased to developer for \$1/year with city sharing in 10% of ongoing profits and 10% of sale price in event of sale.
- 20-year lease with eight five-year renewal options.
- City obtained an easement from ODOT to construct the platforms.
- ODOT can evacuate the Cap in case of emergencies.
- ODOT restricted elements that could distract highway drivers.



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The Cap at Union Station - Columbus, OH

- City paid architecture fees of \$115,000 to ensure structures would be compatible with highway (\$75,000 reimbursed by developer).
- ODOT paid \$1.3 million for construction of Cap platforms as part of \$187 million highway project.
- ODOT provided \$1.0 million in Transportation Enhancements (TE) funds. These were used in combination with \$300,000 from the city of Columbus to build the Cap's support structures on either side of the bridge, and to install decorative fencing, lighting, and landscaping.
- City paid \$325,000 to extend utilities across the bridge.
- City provided a ten-year 100% tax abatement.
- Parking allowed on bridge during off-peak hours and is otherwise accommodated elsewhere including valet.
- Lightweight construction materials were used in the design of the buildings.



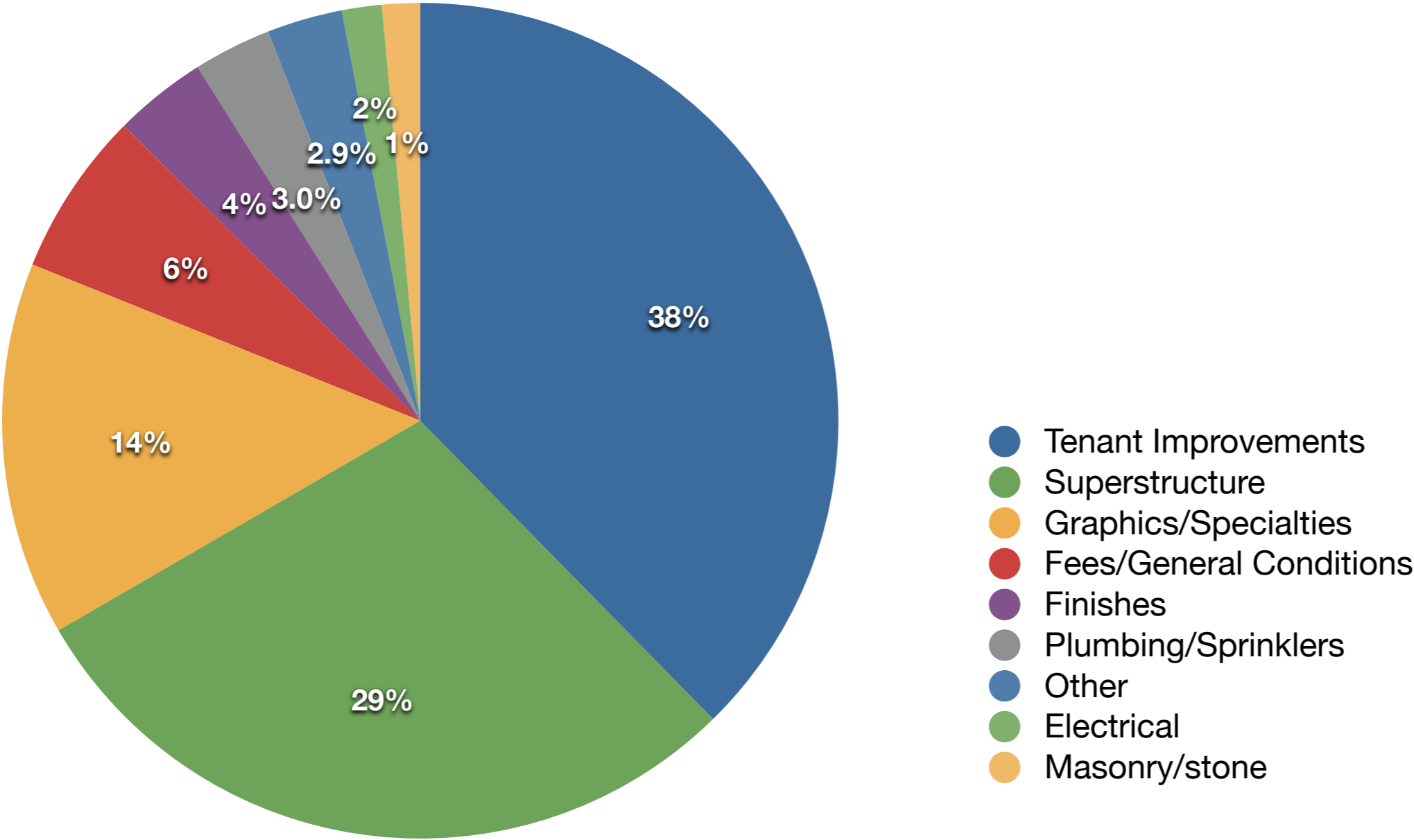
The Cap at Union Station - Columbus, OH

Construction Costs		Soft Costs	
Superstructure	\$1,693,500	Prelim Dev Zoning	\$28,000
Electrical	\$90,000	Appraisal	\$4,750
Plumbing/Sprinklers	\$176,000	Architecture	\$160,000
Masonry/stone	\$86,000	Construction Interest	\$450,000
Fees/General Conditions	\$372,000	Loan Fees	\$98,000
Finishes	\$210,000	Development Fee	\$600,000
Graphics/Specialties	\$845,000	Commissions	\$253,000
Tenant Improvements	\$2,200,000	Contingency	\$200,000
Other	\$170,500	Other	\$163,000
	\$5,843,000		\$1,956,750
		Total Costs	\$7,799,750



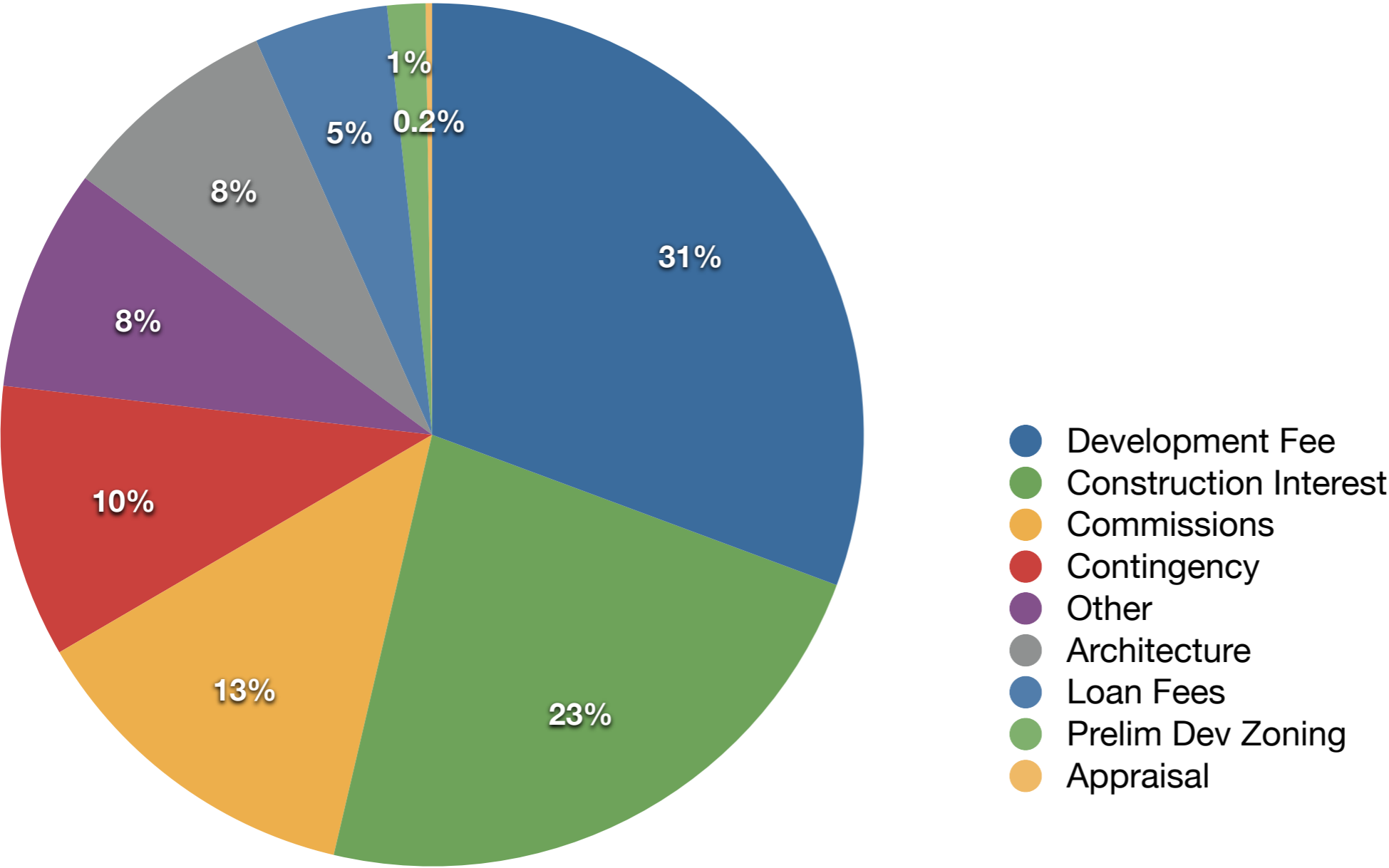
The Cap at Union Station - Columbus, OH

- Construction Costs (\$5.8 million)



The Cap at Union Station - Columbus, OH

- Soft Costs (\$1.9 million)





The Cap at Union Station - Columbus, OH



Courtesy of Continental Real Estate Development Corporation



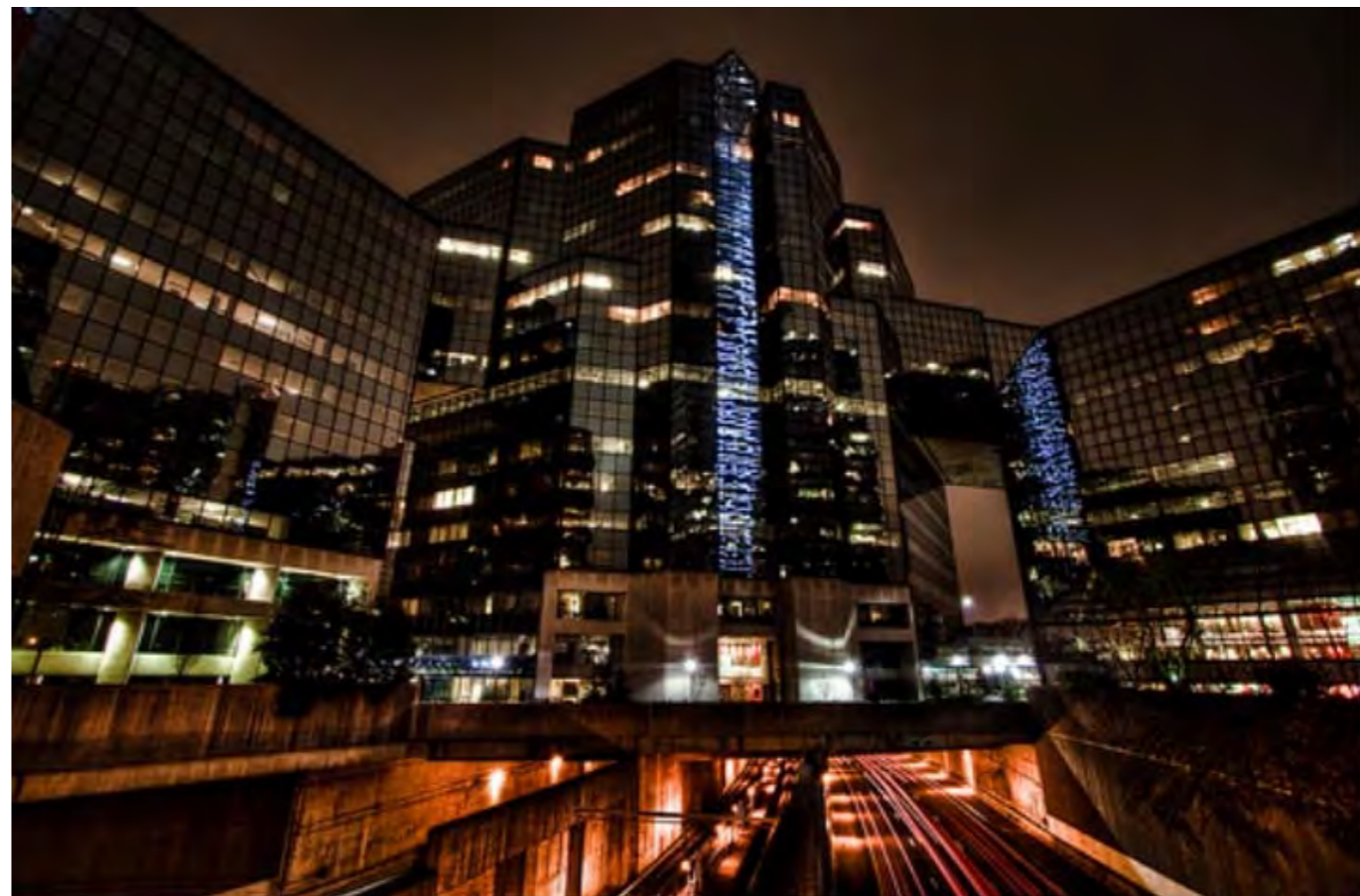
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The Cap at Union Station - Columbus, OH

- By leveraging existing infrastructure, this small 1.12 acre project achieved a cap at a relatively low cost.
- An existing highway project was key as it allowed the majority of the funds to come from a much larger DOT project.
- The city leaders viewed the cap as an economic development project and committed funding and other incentives to make it a feasible building pad for a developer.



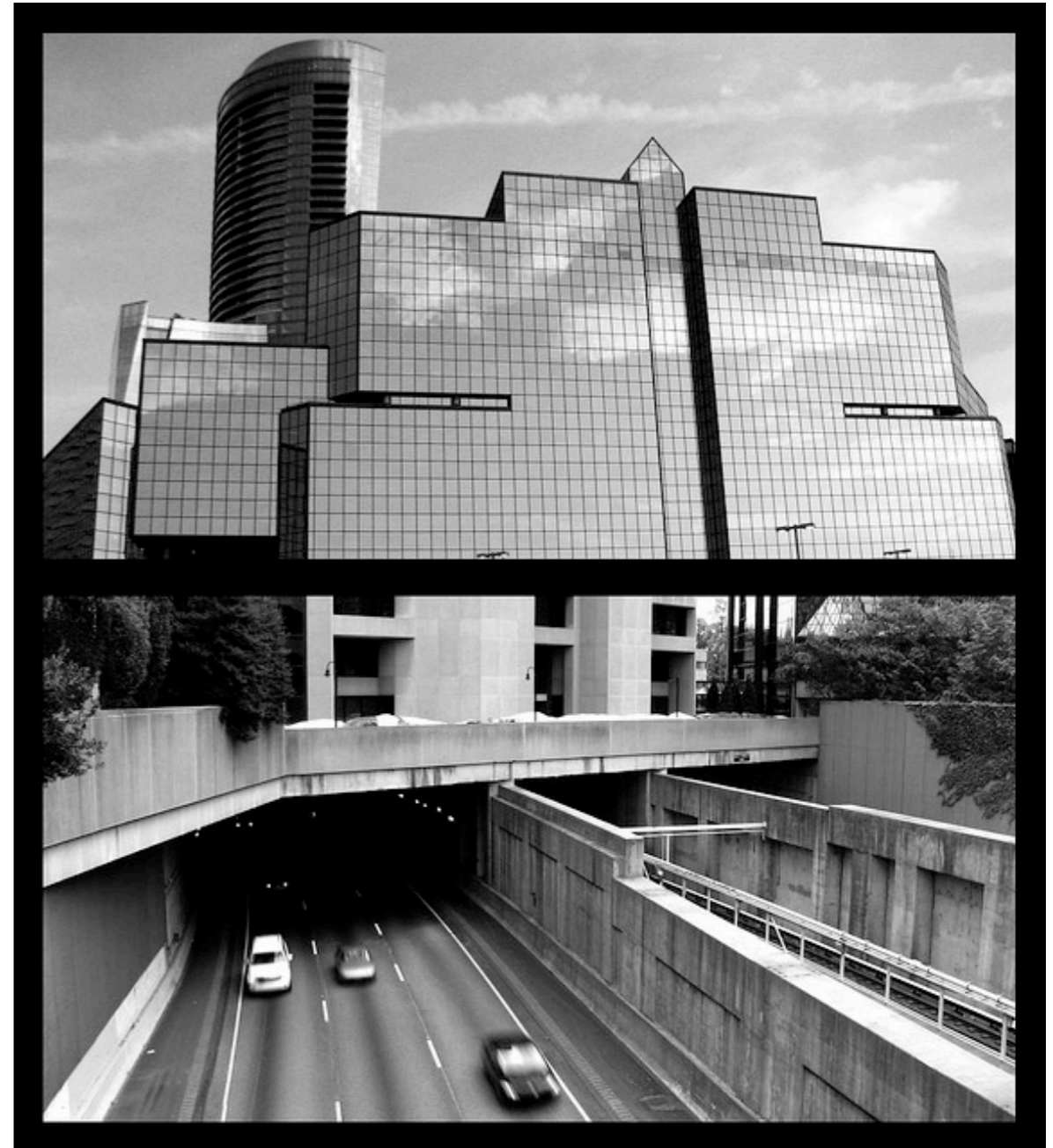
Atlanta Financial Center - Atlanta, GA



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Atlanta Financial Center - Atlanta, GA

- Three-building, 890,000 square-foot office complex in the Buckhead market of Atlanta
- Partnership between a private developer, GDOT and MARTA
- Unique in that land was owned by Robinson-Humphrey in process of developing site when approached by GDOT
- CAP specifically requested that this project be explored



Source: Scott Coutler, www.flickr.com



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Atlanta Financial Center - Atlanta, GA

1980	Land acquisition
1982	Atlanta Financial Center Phase I
1985	Developer ready to begin Phase II but delayed start to negotiate agreement with GDOT to enable GA 400
1987	Phase II
1989	Phase III
1989	Tollway construction start
1993	Tollway completion
1996	Buckhead MARTA station opening



Atlanta Financial Center - Atlanta, GA

- Developer approached by GDOT in 1985 with desire to build GA 400 toll road through site which ultimately had a new MARTA rail line in median.
- Despite the fact that the Phase II permit was obtained in 1985 for a structure not allowing road, developer agreed to delay plans to have discussions with state.
- Use of eminent domain was not possible in negotiations because road project was not yet approved. (Approval occurred in 1986.)
- Vocal opposition from Buckhead residents and Atlanta City Council who initially sided with the residents provided limited options for GA 400 to cross Peachtree Road.
- Appraisals for each side too far apart; GDOT avoided litigating due to construction delays.



Atlanta Financial Center - Atlanta, GA

- A turning point in negotiations occurred when the property owner recognized the benefit that the GA 400 project would have for all stakeholders.
- “I do not want to be the person that stops GA 400. Make it work,” Justus Martin, Managing Partner, Robinson-Humphrey Company.
- In 1985, an agreement between GDOT and the developer was made, one year prior to the road project being approved:
 - Robinson-Humphrey donated the subsurface right of way to GDOT for construction of the roadway contingent on approval of GA 400 project and start of construction
- Specially built caissons and foundation of Atlanta Financial Center Phase II would enable the tollway to be built with a minimum of disruption.
- Highway and rail right of way construction required the parking garage portions of the buildings to be extensively modified.
- Developer made a tax deductible contribution of \$1.0 million to GDOT to help in construction of the portion of the highway underneath the completed AFC, specifically to construct a retaining wall sufficient to support Phase III.



Atlanta Financial Center - Atlanta, GA

- GDOT acted on behalf of MARTA and ensured that the transit authority was accommodated in the negotiations.
- Continuity of Peachtree was achieved for a project where GDOT originally envisioned a sunken highway with a traditional fabric interrupting overpass.
- A private developer and a large scale public project were each able to achieve their goals by committing to working together for the best possible solution.



The Big Dig - Boston

- Planning commenced in 1982; construction in 1991
- Solution to Boston's traffic problems and opportunity to reconnect neighborhoods that were severed by the construction of the Central Artery through downtown Boston.
- Replaced six-lane elevated highway with 3.5 mile tunnel beneath approximately 30 acres of linear park along the Artery corridor.



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The Big Dig - Boston

- Motivated by efforts to bury interstate, reconnect the city, create new public spaces, and achieve environmental benefits.
- Public Funding
- In terms of design and construction, a cap is generally easier and cheaper than a tunnel; technical solutions are well understood.
- Holistic approach is the way cities have to approach large scale infrastructure projects in the 21st century.



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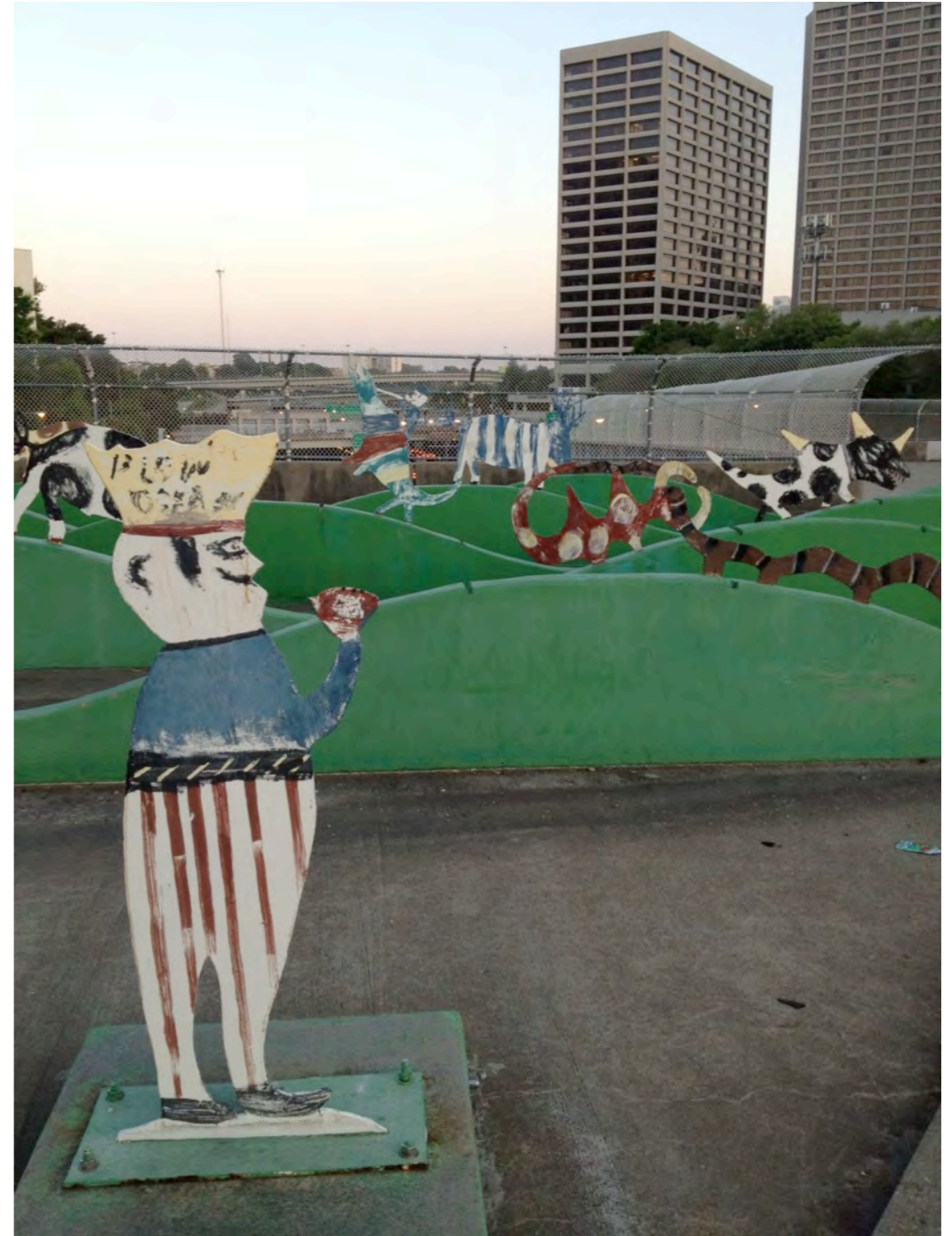


Imagine Downtown

- Imagine Downtown 2.0 vision plan promotes the responsible growth and development of a vibrant and attractive Downtown Atlanta.
- Plan envisions a Downtown that is:
 - The center of a world-class city that welcomes diversity
 - A model of progressive growth for the region
 - Reflective of the rich cultural traditions of the South
 - The bridge between neighborhoods north, south, east and west
 - The location of choice for urban living in the metro area
 - Safe and barrier-free for working families and seniors



- Post-Olympic Momentum
- Portman Study - Mayor's Park Expansion
- JSA – McGill LCI Study
- Post LCI Efforts



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Post-Olympic Momentum

- Folk art exhibits installed by City to attempt to lessen impact of interstate crossing at Courtland.
- Idea of capping the connector along Peachtree St has been developed for many years.
- Momentum gained after Olympics, but \$20 million estimated price stifled further development of idea; GDOT not interested in funding.
- Mayor Franklin's Parks and Green Spaces Task Force goals:
 - Doubling the acreage of parks and green space in the City by 2012;
 - Raising \$400 million over ten years to support parks and green space acquisition and development; and
 - Partnering with organizations to create a world-class park system.

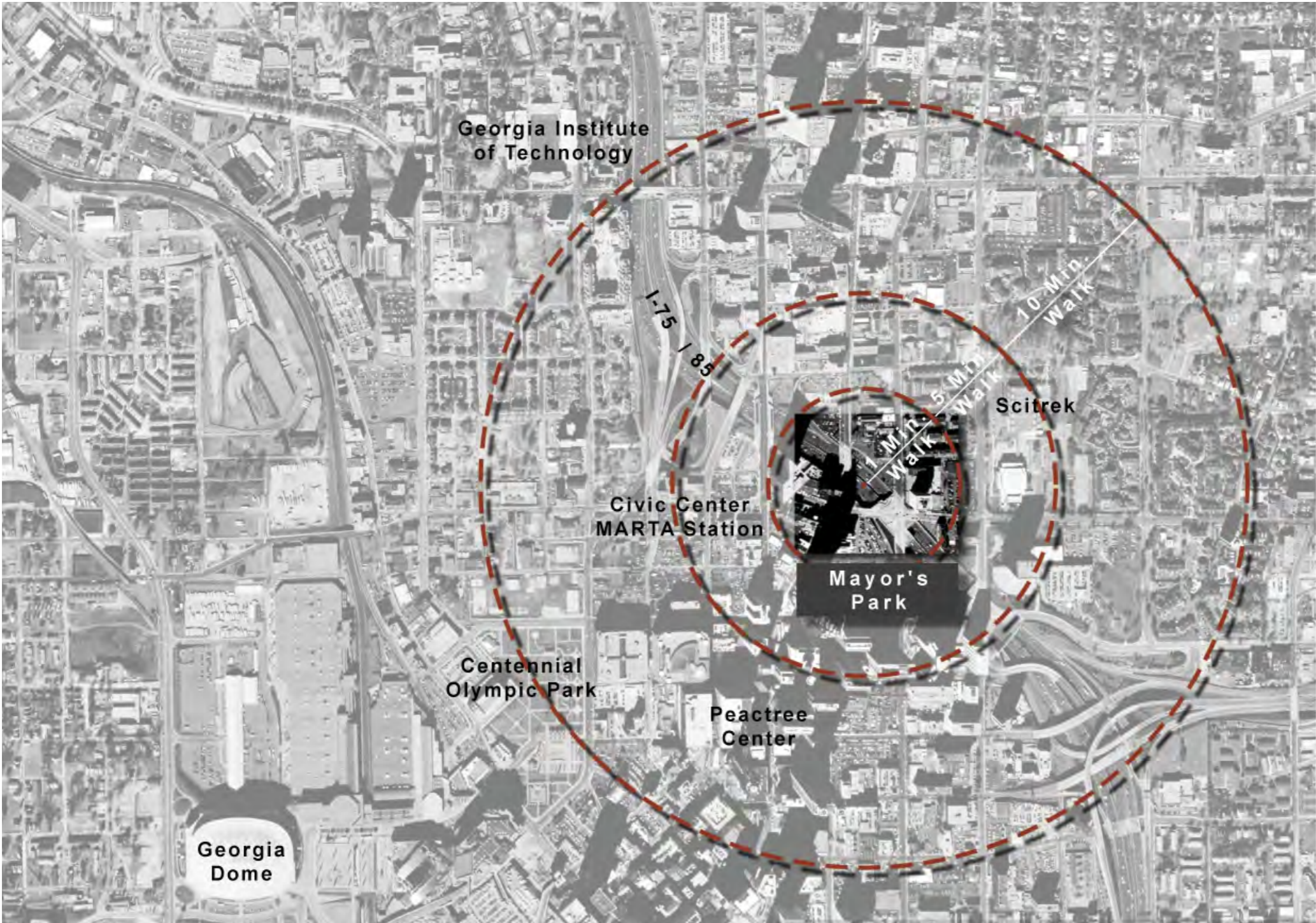


Portman Mayor's Park Extension

- Identify need for connections – N/S and E/W. The connector creates a hole in connection.
- Proposed 800-foot capping interstate between Peachtree and Juniper at Ralph McGill for extended Mayor's Park expansion.
- The study referenced City and Blank Foundation Greenspace Initiative.
- Identified users: Local churches, Peachtree Center visitors, Emory, hotel guests, Civic Center.
- Estimated construction time of two years.
- Design and construction cost estimated at \$23 million.
- Funding sources considered: City, State, County, private foundations, businesses, and HOAs.
- Identified hurdles: securing funding and GDOT approval.
 - GDOT involved in 90% of design phase
 - Impact to connector traffic during construction



Portman Mayor's Park

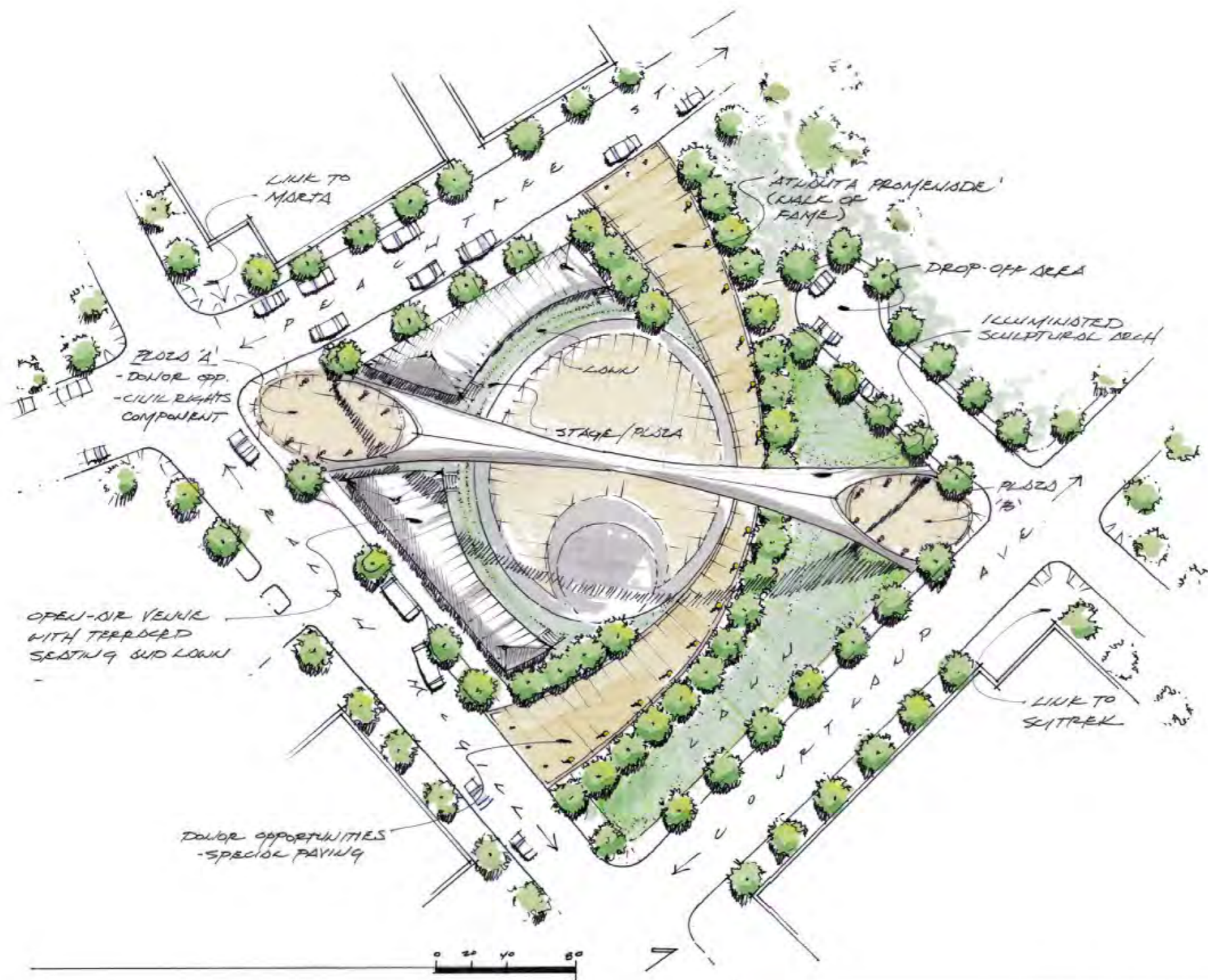


Portman Mayor's Park



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Portman Mayor's Park



JSA – McGill LCI Study (2003)

- Focus on East – West corridor.
- Identified need for connection from MARTA to Civic Center as well as a signature park for area.
- The connector cap park (Mayor's Park) was the most significant proposal to emerge from stakeholders during LCI process.
- The proposed scope included the Portman Mayor's Park with additional:
 - Extension of Currier Street, extension of Alexander Street (pedestrian only) with triangular plaza formed to mark entry of Downtown, extension of promenade along southern connector to connect to MARTA.
 - Folk art exhibit stays and is enhanced.
 - Identify long-term option of continuing the cap to the MARTA station with vertical development with air rights in that area.



JSA – McGill LCI Study (2003)



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JSA – McGill LCI Study (2003)



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SONO Downtown Connector Capping Study



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JSA – McGill LCI Study (2003)



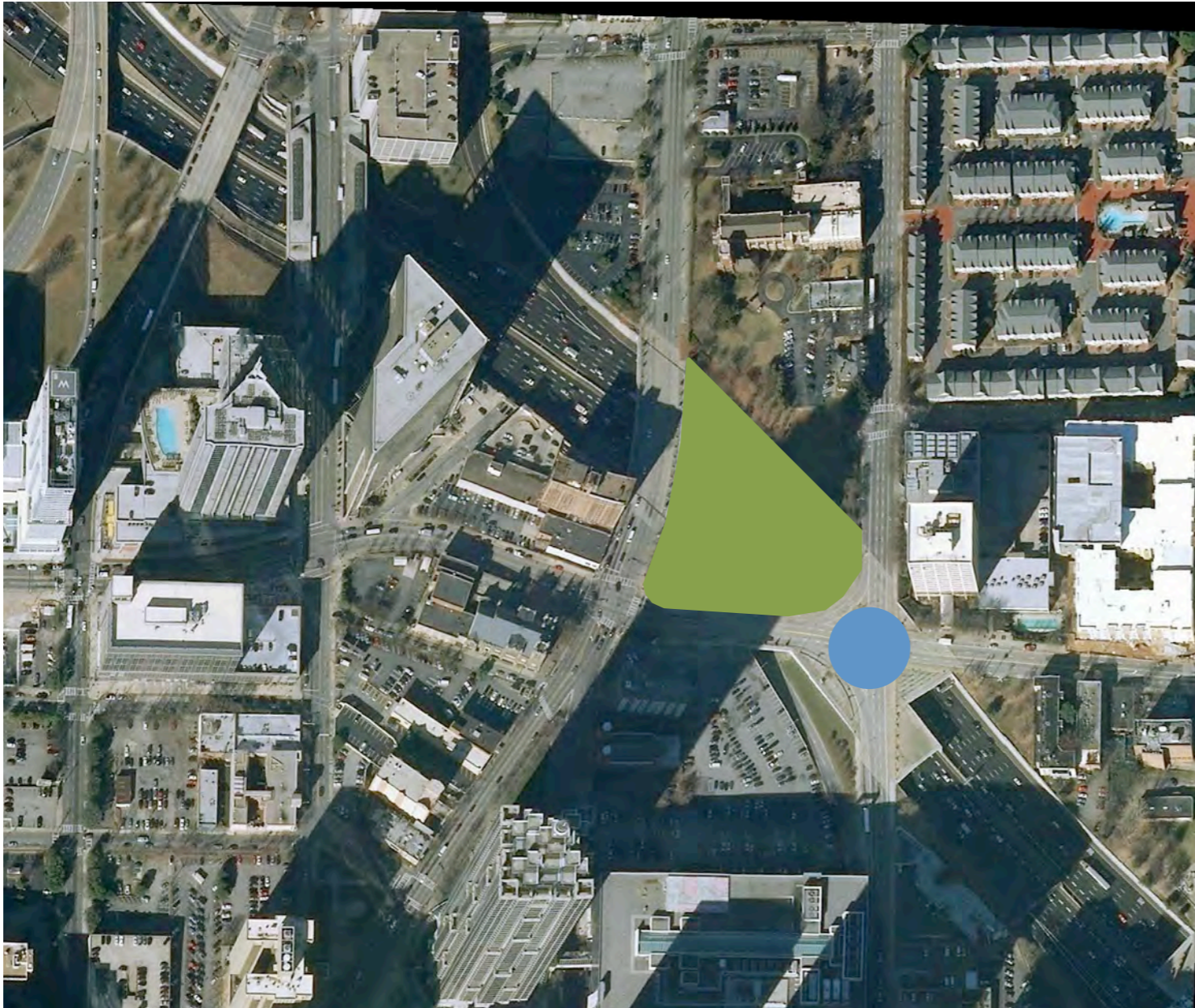
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Post LCI Efforts


- Imagine Downtown planning process again polled public opinion and identified park bridging the connector ranked as a preferred public priority.
- Developed idea that expanded Mayor's Park would be an appropriate way to pay respects to Maynard Jackson and Ivan Allen, Jr.
- Mayor Franklin appointed panel to determine best way to celebrate their contributions to Atlanta.
- I-75/85 Connector Transformation Plan
 - Draft recommendations include park and hardscape plaza bridging the connector at the corner of Peachtree and Ralph McGill.



Post LCI Efforts



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SONO: Past



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SONO: Present



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Central Atlanta Progress
Atlanta Downtown Improvement District

SONO: Present



Central Atlanta Progress
Atlanta Downtown Improvement District

SONO: Future



Central Atlanta Progress
Atlanta Downtown Improvement District

SONO: Future



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Central Atlanta Progress
Atlanta Downtown Improvement District

SONO: Future



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Budget

Research and Analysis	
Concept	\$20,000
Construction feasibility	\$15,000
Financial	\$10,000
Subtotal	\$45,000

Budget

Partners & Investment	
Marketing	\$20,000
Due Diligence	\$10,000
Public Meetings	\$25,000
Subtotal	\$55,000

Budget

Design Phase	
Civil Engineering	\$2,500,000
Structural Engineering	\$1,250,000
Master Planning	\$500,000
Landscape Architecture	\$500,000
Air Quality	\$500,000
Legal	\$500,000
Survey and Title Work	\$500,000
Project Management	\$500,000
Subtotal	\$6,750,000



Budget

Construction Phase	quantity	unit cost	
Bridge Cap Structure	138,570	\$300	\$41,571,000
Top Deck Waterproofing	138,570	\$12	\$1,662,840
Air Rights	138,570	\$30	\$4,157,100
Landscaping Install			\$1,500,000
Hardscape Install			\$1,500,000
Soundproofing and Air			\$500,000
Staging			\$250,000
Traffic Control			\$250,000
Project Management			\$175,000
Resident Engineer			\$550,000
Construction Admin			\$50,000
Testing			\$125,000
Subtotal			\$52,290,940

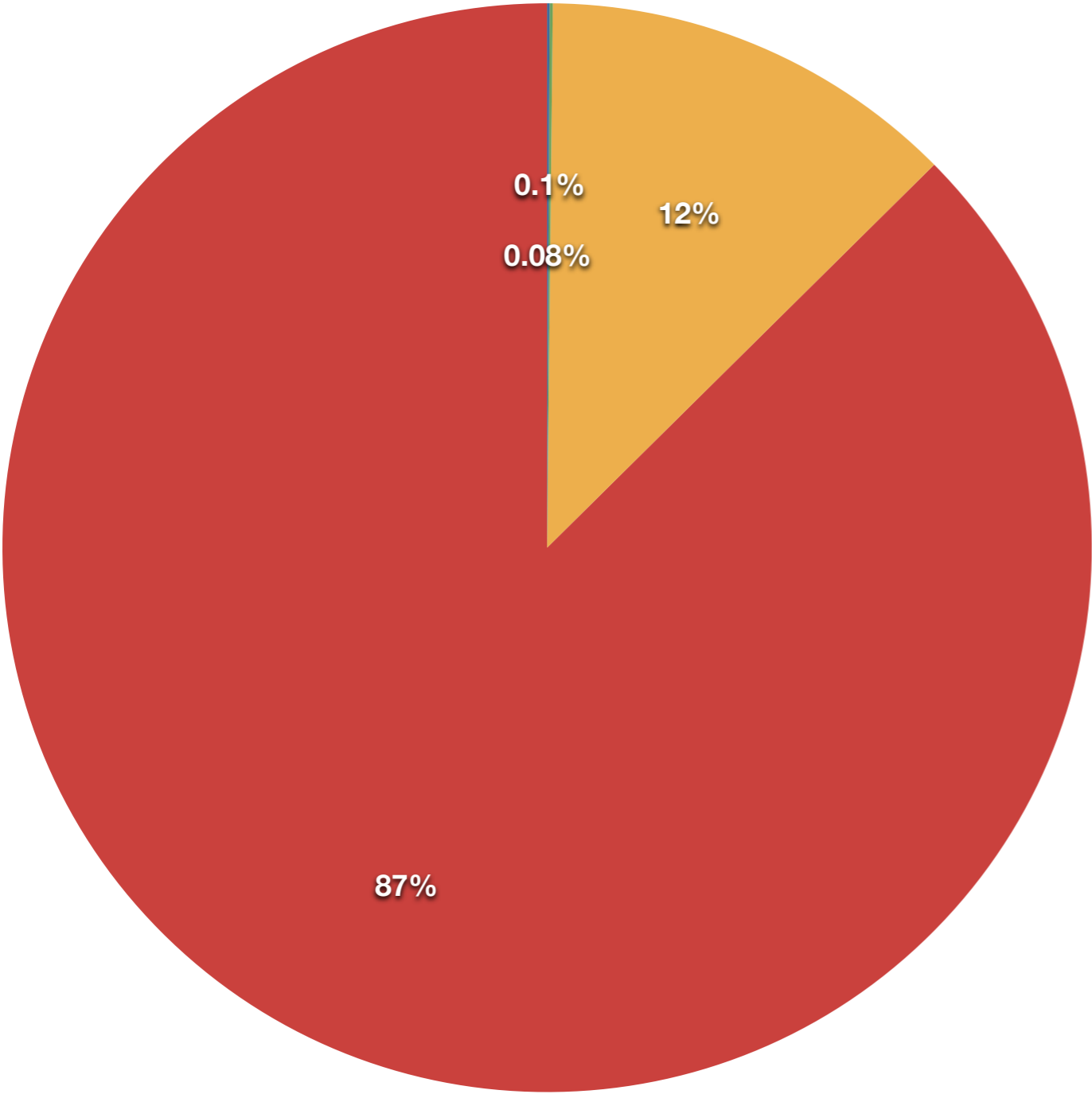


Budget

Research and Analysis	\$45,000
Partners and Investment	\$55,000
Design Phase	\$7,425,000
Construction Phase	\$52,290,940
15% Contingency	\$7,843,641
Total*	\$67,659,581

* Budget projections based on assumptions from prior projects and MMPT. All costs should be verified during design & planning phase.

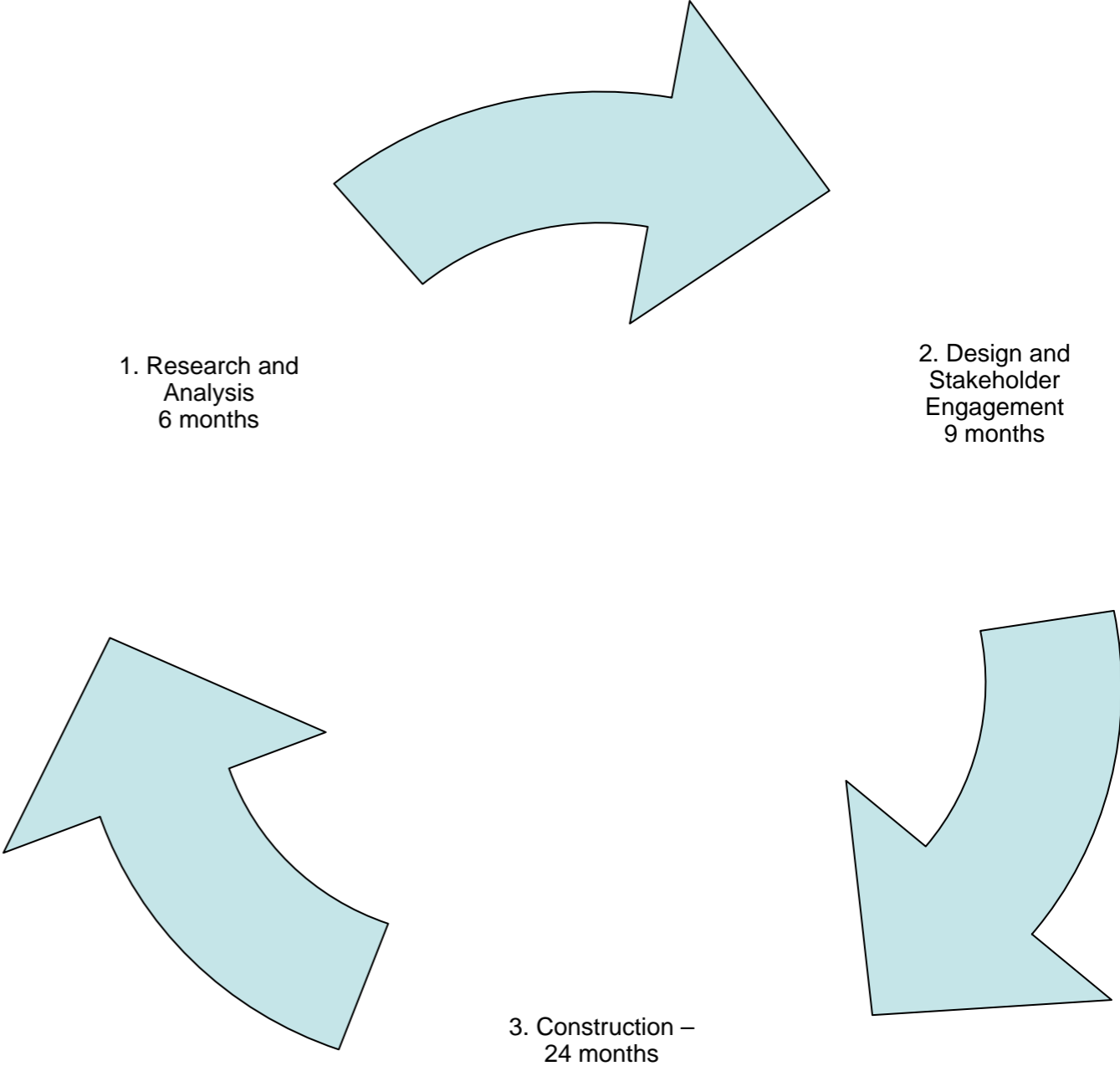
Budget



- Research and Analysis
- Partners and Investment
- Design Phase
- Construction Phase

Construction Timeline

- Post 3-5 year planning and design phase.
- Phase I Capping:
 - 39 months
 - Research and Analysis
 - Design and Stakeholder Engagement
 - Construction



Design

- Main design item to consider: Ventilation/ Air Quality
 - Especially for hazardous transport, potential fire
 - GA 400 was able to restrict hazardous transport which relieved intensity of some design elements and costs.
- Structural support:
 - Limited space between Northbound/Southbound for columns;
 - Cap will have long spans



Permitting and Construction

- FHWA and GDOT will be governing agencies.
- Environmental Impact Study (EIS) will be required
 - 1-2 year federal process with public involvement process
- GDOT will manage project and construction, especially the structural cap.
- Construction logistics will be critical to GDOT approval.
- Eight year approximate timeline from first conversation to project open.



Public Funding Considerations

- GDOT P3 – investment generates revenue to cover future costs, typically operations and maintenance, and maybe some capital
- Bonding capacity of GDOT is limited
 - Look for private financing
 - Use revenue to repay capital



Agenda

- Project Overview
- Assets & Stakeholders
- Research
 - Case Studies
 - Past SONO Capping Studies
- mTAP: SONO Capping Proposal
- Conclusions and Recommendations
- Appendix



Conclusions and Recommendations

- Connect multiple parcels, Marta, and Peachtree Street by providing a capping structure over the Downtown Connector.
- Focus on initial phase spanning the bridge at Peachtree Street to the MARTA Civic Center Station.
- Create a public park on the cap and consider naming it Mayor's Park, as an homage to past Mayors.
- Leverage Mayor's Park idea to gain support from important public officials past and current.
- Consider naming rights if significant private donation is available as an alternative or supplemental funding source.
- Identify a champion for the project to beat down the doors, carry it through GDOT process, and generally make noise.
- Embrace public-private partnerships.
- Focus on greenspace development with buy-in from adjacent stakeholders and leverage economic development potential to access necessary funds and incentives from city leaders, and achieve support from adjacent business and civic entities.
- Engage InvestAtlanta for greenspace acquisition, evaluate available funding through Eastside TAD.
- Potential redevelopment or renovation of Medical Arts building could serve as historical linchpin to future expansion of Emory University Hospital and other developments oriented towards the healthcare industry.



Challenges

- Securing up-front capital made difficult by current budget constraints and economic conditions
- Identifying appropriate private capital sources and advocates
- Design Challenges:
 - Ventilation
 - Fire rating
 - Air quality
- Construction logistics - Mitigate traffic flow during the project
- Gain GDOT approval and support
- Competing funds for greenspace and public space allocated to Beltline and similar projects



Next Steps


- Engage engineering firm to perform further due diligence as it relates to design, construction feasibility, environmental impact and GDOT involvement.
- Engage consulting firm to gather and identify sources of funding for the project.
- Pass the Transportation Referendum on July 31, 2012 to ensure necessary funds are not reallocated to other planned initiatives.



Q&A



Agenda

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Capping Lessons

- Public involvement process can have major impact on the final design and community benefit of a decking project.
- Variable tunnel lighting controls provide adequate levels of illumination, saves money, and is safe.
- Timing the construction of a decking project with needed highway reconstruction can help create an opportunity to build high a quality park and major civic improvements by leveraging the reconstruction/rehabilitation of the existing freeway.
- Air rights leases can be difficult to assess for fair market value. It's a good idea to talk with people who have negotiated the process before.
- It's best to plan for a maximum weight on top of a deck so there's more flexibility with what can be put on top. This eliminates the need to add or re-do supports/reinforcements later.
- Use the word "mitigation" as often as possible when applying for grants and funding (the word has "legal pregnancy").
- Brainstorm what to do in the interim, in between time when the foundation is complete and when the design is actually built.
- Determine what the potential range of costs is first.
- Good interdepartmental communication system is key.
- Cut and cover construction can easily accommodate multi-story buildings over deck, with a potential for leveraging costs of freeway construction as well.



SONO Downtown Connector Capping Study



Central Atlanta Progress
Atlanta Downtown Improvement District

SONO Downtown Connector Capping Study



Central Atlanta Progress
Atlanta Downtown Improvement District

SONO Downtown Connector Capping Study



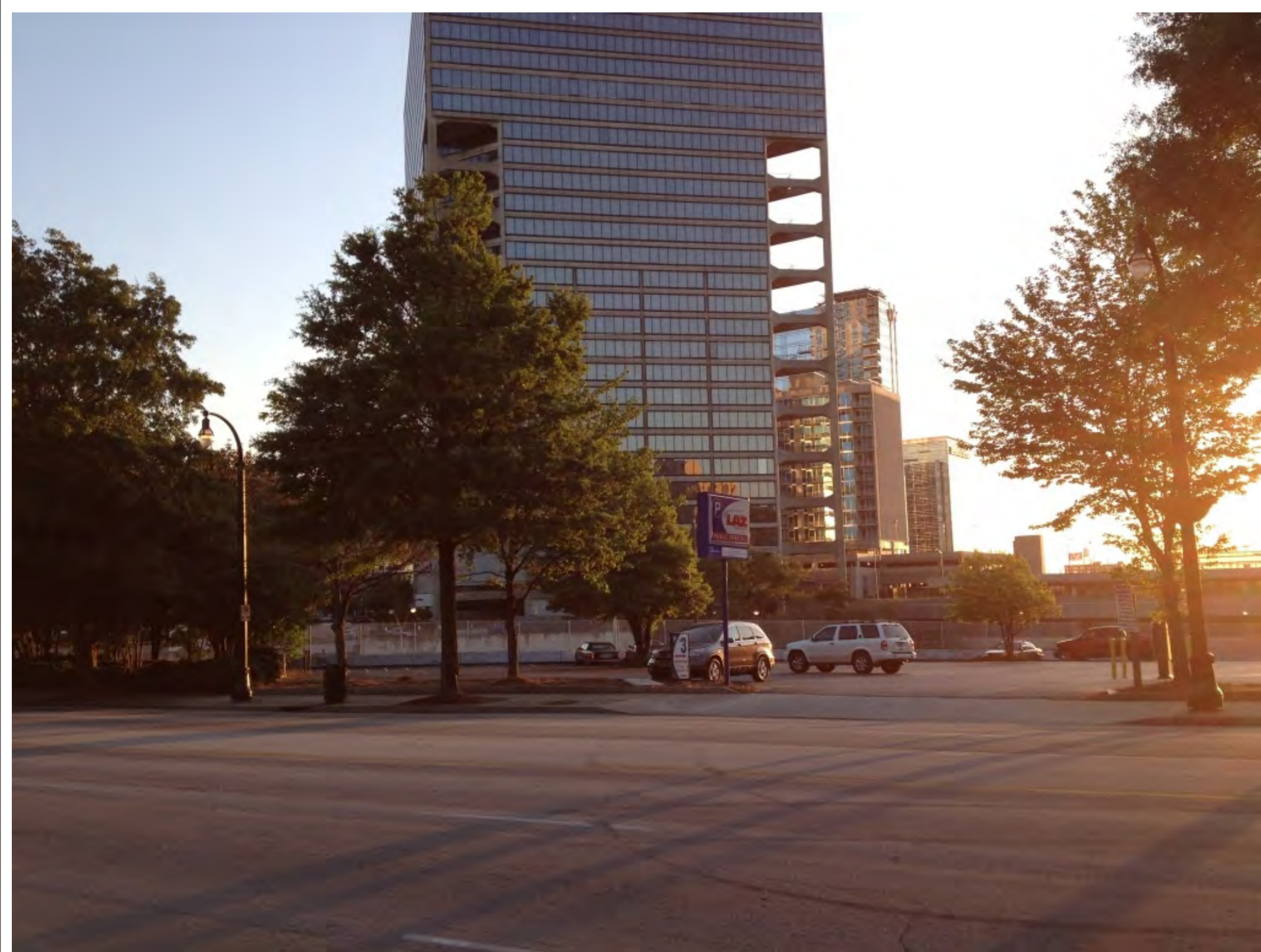
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