

# FULTON COUNTY EXECUTIVE AIRPORT

Building a World-Class Industrial District



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ON THE COVER: Aerial image of the Fulton County Airport property and study area. (*Google Earth*)



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## About the Urban Land Institute

The Urban Land Institute is a global, member-driven organization comprising more than 45,000 real estate and urban development professionals dedicated to advancing the Institute's mission of providing leadership in responsible land use and creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. ULI's interdisciplinary membership represents all aspects of the industry, including developers, property owners, investors, architects, urban planners, public officials, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, and academics. Established in 1936, the Institute has a presence in the Americas, Europe, and Asia Pacific region, with members in 81 countries. ULI's extraordinary impact on land use decision-making is based on its members' sharing expertise on a variety of factors affecting the built environment, including urbanization, demographic and population changes, new economic drivers, technology advancements, and environmental concerns. Peer-to-peer learning is achieved through the knowledge shared by members at thousands of convenings each year that reinforce ULI's position as a global authority on land use and real estate. Drawing on its members' work, the Institute recognizes and shares best practices in urban design and development for the benefit of communities around the globe.

More information is available at [uli.org](http://uli.org). Follow ULI on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram.

## About ULI Atlanta

With over 1,400 members throughout the Atlanta region (Georgia, Alabama & Eastern Tennessee), ULI Atlanta is one of the largest and most active ULI District Councils worldwide. We bring together leaders from across the fields of real estate and land use policy to exchange best practices and serve community needs. We share knowledge through education, applied research, publishing, electronic media, events, and programs.

### ULI District Council Leadership

#### **Lisa Gordon**

President & CEO, Atlanta Habitat for Humanity  
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#### **Kevin Cantley**

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#### **Sarah Kirsch**

Executive Director, ULI Atlanta

## ULI Advisory Services: National and Global Programs

Since 1947, the ULI Advisory Services program has assembled well over 700 ULI-member teams to help sponsors find creative, practical solutions for complex land use challenges. A wide variety of public, private, and nonprofit organizations have contracted for ULI's advisory services. National and international panelists are specifically recruited to form a panel of independent and objective volunteer ULI member experts with the skills needed to address the identified land use challenge. The program is designed to help break through obstacles, jump-start conversations, and solve tough challenges that need an outside, independent perspective. Three- and five-day engagements are offered to ensure thorough consideration of relevant topics.

An additional national offering is the project analysis session (PAS) offered at ULI's Fall and Spring Meetings, through which specific land use challenges are evaluated by a panel of volunteer experts selected from ULI's membership. This is a conversational format that lends itself to an open exchange of ideas among diverse industry practitioners with distinct points of view. From the streamlined two-hour session to the "deeper dive" eight-hour session, this intimate conversational format encourages creative thinking and problem solving.

Learn more at [americas.uli.org/programs/advisory-services/](https://americas.uli.org/programs/advisory-services/).

## Technical Assistance Program (TAP)

Since 1947, the Urban Land Institute has harnessed its members' technical expertise to help communities solve difficult land use, development, and redevelopment challenges. Technical Assistance Panels (TAPs) provide expert, multidisciplinary, unbiased advice to local governments, public agencies, and nonprofit organizations facing complex land use and real estate issues in the Atlanta Region. Drawing from our seasoned professional membership base, ULI Atlanta offers objective and responsible guidance on various land use and real estate issues ranging from site-specific projects to public policy questions. The sponsoring organization is responsible for gathering the background information necessary to understand the project and presenting it to the panel. TAP members typically spend two days developing an understanding of the problem, coming up with recommendations, and contributing those findings and recommendations to the sponsoring organization.

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Distinct from Advisory Services panels, TAPs leverage local expertise through a half-day to two-day process.

## Technical Assistance Panel and Project Staff

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Fulton County airport tower and airport restaurant.



TAP PANEL

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ULI panel and Fulton Co. staff on a caravan site tour.



ULI ATLANTA

# INTRODUCTION

Fulton County engaged ULI Atlanta to assess changes around Fulton County Executive Airport since the county's last master plan was completed. ULI Atlanta's Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) will provide complimentary support and strategic advice that will help the county understand overall redevelopment strategies for the airport site that are market viable, with funding strategies and an implementation plan. This TAP will assist the county in identifying priorities for the new Airport Master Plan and identify appropriate redevelopment opportunities to pursue. The forthcoming Airport Master Plan will focus primarily on improving areas on and adjacent to property owned by Fulton County.

## Questions for the Panel

The scoping questions provided by Fulton County and agreed upon by the TAP panel representing a robust cross-section of ULI members included:

1. What are some market-driven redevelopment opportunities for Fulton County-owned properties adjacent to Fulton County Executive Airport? What are appropriate businesses, housing models, or retail that could be supported in the area?
2. How could the airport drive or catalyze redevelopment for Fulton County-owned properties adjacent to Fulton County Executive Airport?
3. Identify how to implement proposed strategies, including organization, management and financing.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The importance of Fulton County Executive Airport to the metro Atlanta region is indisputable. It is not only the third-busiest airport in metro Atlanta, but it is also at the center of the largest commercial corridor in the Eastern United States. The airport serves many of the city's premier corporate clients and is one of only two airports in the area with a 24/7 control tower. About 164 operations (takeoff or landing) occur every day at the airport or about 65,000 annually. The airport also plays a vital role in the economic health of the region. No airport is closer to downtown Atlanta's hustle and bustle, and Fulton County boasts a roster of corporate clients who appreciate its location's convenience. It's an overwhelmingly positive story, and yet, there are reasons for concern. The airport has experienced a 52 percent decrease in operations since 2008, and tenants complain about the significant disrepair, both inside and outside the airport. The airport sits among an aging industrial zone, beset by increasingly obsolete buildings and perceptions of crime and decay.

In many ways, Fulton County Executive Airport and the entire Fulton Industrial Boulevard Corridor stand at a crossroads—where the past intercepts the future. The airport may face headwinds, but it's the tailwinds that impressed this Technical Advisory Panel (TAP). Assets aside—and they are plentiful—it's a can-do, want-to attitude demonstrated by airport leaders, county politicians, and other stakeholders who are committed to making the airport a destination.

Nothing made this impression more vivid than a story told in the TAP's preliminary work for this study. Realizing that a blighted motel on Fulton Industrial Boulevard provided a bleak gateway to the airport, county officials bought the motel and tore it down. It was the first of many expected changes near the airport. It coincided with big plans to add more hangars for corporate jets, extend the airport's main runway, and create a vibrant, economic center for the surrounding community. The level of enthusiasm for these plans and strong agreement for real change among many leaders and stakeholders suggests the airport can indeed be a catalyst for transforming the surrounding community. The recommendations, guidelines, and ideas presented in this TAP report are designed to help make that transformation a reality by offering a vision and initial steps forward.

## The Vision

In developing recommendations, the TAP grounded its work in an aspiration for the Fulton Industrial Boulevard Corridor to become a world-class industrial district. The panel envisioned innovation, productivity, efficiency, and resiliency to equip the basic needs of the people who work and potentially live there as well. The TAP views Fulton County Executive Airport as a critical anchor to rebirthing the FIB Corridor as a world-class industrial area.

## Recommendations

The TAP's recommendations are intended to provide strategic direction, guidance, and big-picture thinking to promote development around the Fulton County Executive Airport. Specifically, the plan focuses on market opportunities within Aviation Circle and the intersection of Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and FIB, with potential for a spillover effect along the larger FIB Corridor.

The TAP's first recommendation is to use the airport to create a sense of place, similar to how the Atlanta BeltLine and the Atlanta Aerotropolis Alliance have used connected spaces to bring people together and forge a distinctive experience. The panel envisions the Fulton County Executive Airport as a similar catalyst, albeit on a smaller scale, to create a sense of place for the FIB Corridor. To create that sense of place, the panel proposes five essential ideas:

- Create a Main Street for the area by developing available land around the airport.
- Leverage the proximity of a nearby natural resource: the Chattahoochee River to build a trail system that can drive development at and around the airport.
- Identify a mix of uses for the existing property.
- Secure an educational campus for the area that can be used to support workforce development.
- Implement streetscape enhancements.

The remaining recommendations support the visionary goal of using the airport as a catalyst to create a Main Street or Town Center for the area. Specifically, the recommendations target existing resources and identify opportunities for Fulton County-owned properties near the airport itself. They include:

- **Leveraging the Aviation Community Cultural Center** to serve airport tenants by providing meeting and event space for visiting executives, corporate flight teams, and adjacent neighborhoods.
- **Providing convenience retail and amenity space**, including dining options, a neighborhood grocery, fitness center, nursery/preschool, local-serving office space, and a community pocket park for families.
- **Recruiting office or flex-type uses.** The airport seems ripe for a spillover effect from the Atlanta Aerotropolis Alliance's efforts to target such industries as logistics, freight forwarding and distribution, aerospace, aviation, and manufacturing.
- **Seek potential partnerships with colleges and universities with a focus on aerospace and logistics.** While targeting specific industries for location and

expansion, a concerted effort is also needed to develop the workforce required for those industries to succeed.

- **Evaluate the long-term potential of a hotel.**

## Where To Begin

This TAP heard loud and clear that airport and county officials need a clear sense of direction on how to proceed with this process. Many of this group's recommendations are high-level, visionary actions and suggestions that may take years to address. Simultaneously, several small steps can be taken without delay, with the potential to produce immediate results, visible change, and the necessary momentum to turn big ideas into workable solutions. These five steps are:

1. Improve the airport's aesthetics.
2. Ramp up the branding and marketing campaign for the airport.
3. Develop a plan to leverage the Cultural Center.
4. Evaluate opportunities for connectivity to greenspace (industrial desert).
5. Complete the airport's master planning process.

## Conclusion

County and airport leaders clearly understand the importance and potential of Fulton County Executive Airport to the wellbeing of the surrounding community and metro Atlanta. This recognition is underscored by the efforts already under way to develop a master plan to improve the operations side of the airport. This TAP has identified several high-level ideas that could leverage the airport as a catalyst to drive new development along the Fulton Industrial Boulevard Corridor. Ultimately, the recommendations, guidelines, and ideas presented in this TAP report are designed to help inform a master plan for the airport-owned property and the larger area. If the ideas in this report can bring vision, show possibilities, and generate excitement for the airport's future, this process will have been a success. As such, we encourage airport and county leaders to proceed with haste with the approval of a process and funding to create a master plan for the airport.

## DESCRIPTION OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL

This Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) for this project proved to be an experience like no other. Initially slated for late March 2020, the TAP was postponed because of the Covid-19 pandemic. When the session finally convened Sept. 30-Oct. 1, the panel used a hybrid delivery model where some parts of the TAP were in-person, and other parts were virtual to complete the project.

The TAP panel convened at the beginning with key staff and leadership from Fulton County for a socially distanced welcome and introduction to the project in the parking lot of the airport's administrative offices. After brief introductions of all the players, each participant drove in their vehicles for a site tour narrated by airport staff via Zoom.

The caravan's course gave participants a first-hand look at the airport tarmac and runways, the planned hangar expansions, and riverfront footage on Sandy Creek Road, the airport's proximity to Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and the FIB corridor. The group saw first-hand the 35 acres of county-owned land available for aeronautical development with runway access and the 50 acres of airport property designated for non-aeronautical development with access to Fulton Industrial Boulevard, Aero Drive, and Aviation Circle.

Following the tour, TAP participants returned to their respective homes and offices and conducted multiple sets of stakeholder interviews, all via Zoom. The panel interviewed more than 40 stakeholders, including airport tenants and operators, local service providers such as utilities and transportation entities like MARTA and the Georgia Department of Transportation, and representatives from Atlanta and South Fulton, Fulton County CID, Fulton County Schools, and Fulton County government. Several key themes emerged from the stakeholder interviews:

- Fulton County Executive Airport is the "airport of choice for people needing access to downtown

Atlanta." Big tenants plan to stay there, but they lament the significant disrepair both inside and outside the airport. The airport and the surrounding community's general upkeep and aesthetics create a poor impression of Atlanta for first-time visitors.

- The airport-owned land represents an opportunity for aspirational thinking to create a sense of place for the community and a better quality of life for workers in the area.
- A significant need exists for amenities such as restaurants, retail, and meeting space.
- With respect to environmental concerns, the airport and county's riverfront property needs to be leveraged for trails and greenways.
- Perceptions of crime in the area are a significant concern and a barrier to the area's attractiveness.
- Both needs and opportunities for workforce development and training could influence development opportunities in the area.
- When considering uses for the airport property, the focus needs to be weighted heavily toward income-producing options. Fulton County is not looking to subsidize nonrevenue properties.

Day two of the TAP began with an informative discussion with key Fulton County officials, including Commissioners Joe Carn, Natalie Hall, Liz Hausmann, Fulton County Development Authority CEO Al Nash, and top leadership from the airport and Fulton County government agencies.

The Fulton County contingent reiterated many of the key themes that emerged from the stakeholder interviews. Also, commissioners and airport officials identified several other key considerations, including:

- Concerns about the airport’s safety and security must remain front and center as plans are developed and implemented.
- The airport sits in a “no man’s land” as the only unincorporated area of Atlanta. At some point, the site probably will be municipalized, and whether it ends up belonging to the city of South Fulton or Atlanta will impact future plans.
- Developers are looking primarily for space that will accommodate buildings between 250,000 and 1 million square feet.
- Many of the existing buildings along the FIB corridor no longer meet the needs of height, parking, and other requirements to attract today’s prospective businesses. While the area seems poised for a rebirth, it would require substantial demolition and new construction. Hampering this emerging trend is that long-time owners of existing properties, many of which were built in the 1960s, are content with lower rental fees and have no interest in selling their buildings.
- Fulton County provided beneficial economic development and tax incentives to secure UPS and Amazon distribution facilities’ recent locations in the area.
- County officials are open to zoning recommendations supporting new commercial development, but they emphasized the importance of preserving the area’s industrial nature.
- An opportunity exists to enhance aesthetics around the airport’s perimeter, building on signage, sidewalk, lighting, and landscape improvements in place by the Fulton Commercial Improvement District along Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.

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Lining up for the caravan site tour of Fulton County owned land.

## UNDERSTANDING THE LAY OF THE LAND

In addition to the stakeholder interviews, the SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) was an important tool in helping the TAP synthesize the wealth of information and formulate its recommendations. Moreover, this process enabled the panel to sift through and prioritize the best options for further study. The SWOT Analysis contains the TAP's complete list of the Fulton County Executive Airport and the surrounding area's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to maximize its development potential. All of these conclusions are expounded upon in greater detail in the recommendations contained in the report.



GOOGLE EARTH, ULI ATLANTA

The route tour outlined in red. The caravan's course included Aviation Circle, a portion of the airport's tarmac, Sandy Creek Road, and Fulton Industrial Blvd.

## Strengths

- Existing labor force
- Access to the interstate and downtown
- Cultural Center
- Amount of county-owned land available for redevelopment
- Location near the river
- Existing airport tenants like Home Depot, Coca-Cola, etc.
- Strong agreement for change from existing airport and county leadership
- Highly valued asset by all stakeholders
- Resilient infrastructure
- Demand for hospitality and housing
- Strong and active CID
- Existing expansion plans for the airport
- Buy-in for new master plan and vision
- The airport is financially sound—profitable and self-sustaining
- Plans to add a firefighting base
- Police training facility and animal shelter can serve as corridor anchors

## Weaknesses

- Visual appearance creates a poor first impression
- Poor aesthetics both inside and outside
- Lack of services for airport users
- Perception of crime in the area
- No current master plan for the airport (even though it's underway; need a framework for existing capital improvements)
- Tenants unsure whether Fulton County wants the area to flourish (great ideas from airport management but resistance from Fulton County)
- Lack of marketing for the airport
- Lack of class A industrial buildings
- Poor brand recognition/inconsistent identity
- Cultural Arts Center not adequately staffed and underutilized

## Opportunities

- Connectivity to the river and capitalization of RiverLands Plan
- Engagement with critical businesses in Atlanta for future development
- Workforce development
- Active rail spur on the east side
- Possible extension of MARTA service
- Actively partner with developers to market the site (RFP)
- Identify a downtown for Fulton Industrial corridor
- Partnerships with the many civic leaders who use the airport or own land in the area
- Opportunity to increase park access and greenspace (be a model for green infrastructure)
- Availability of Aviation Circle and Cultural Center to create a focal point for development (downtown street)
- Plans to develop affordable housing (additional lower-cost housing for area workforce), including Atlanta Housing Authority-controlled land along Fulton Industrial Boulevard
- Improve stormwater retention
- Potential gateway to airport from Bolton Road

## Threats

- Behind in competition with other airports due to...
  - » Lack of collaboration and coordination among surrounding political entities
  - » Uncertainty of future government
  - » Crime and perception of crime along the corridor
  - » Age and obsolete design of building inventory in the corridor
- Environmental concerns along the river
- The negative effects of airport grounds and environment hampers competitive position for locating new business
- Management structure limits the availability of economic development tools
- Traffic gridlock around I-20 and FIB

## THE GOAL: A WORLD-CLASS INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT

Today, a drive along FIB carries you past acres and acres of aging buildings and roofs. The corridor may be one of the largest contiguous industrial areas east of the Mississippi River, but it presents a public image of decay and deterioration.

In developing recommendations, the TAP sought to reimagine the industrial work environment for the 21st century. The panel envisioned more than buildings, trucks, and traffic for the area. The recommendations were grounded in an aspiration for FIB to become a world-class industrial district.

A world-class industrial district should not only meet the needs of investors and tenants. It should be part of a healthy community, promoting innovation, productivity, and efficiency. It should consider the health and basic needs of the people who work there. It should preserve the natural environment, and it should be flexible, adaptable, and resilient.

The panel views Fulton County Executive Airport as a critical anchor to the broader FIB Corridor and, potentially, for the surrounding neighborhoods. As such, projects thoughtfully initiated on the airport's property—particularly the first interventions—can set the tone for the additional investment on private land and catalyze redevelopment along the FIB Corridor.

Ultimately, this report is designed to create a compelling vision and outline the initial steps and priorities that could use the airport-owned property to build a community gateway and rebirth the FIB Corridor as a world-class industrial area.



DHA ARCHITECTS

Architectural rendering of the mixed-use master plan for the Cecil Commerce Center. Rendering obtained from DHA Architects with permissions from Glenn Dasher.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

First and foremost, it is crucial to recognize the TAP's recommendations to provide strategic direction, guidance, and big-picture thinking to promote development around the Fulton County Executive Airport. Specifically, the plan focuses on market opportunities within Aviation Circle and the intersection of Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and FIB, with potential for a spillover effect along the larger FIB Corridor. The recommendations emphasize the importance of creating a commercial hub for the area—a destination point that will give the site a sense of place and a framework that could be utilized to make it. In no way can two days of consideration and idea generation replace the need for a master plan for the airport-owned property and the larger area. The panel noted with enthusiasm that a master plan for the airport's "airside" was in the works. Besides, the panel believes the strong and active Fulton Commercial Improvement District could play a central role in identifying and pushing forward plans that would build on the recommendations in this report and the forthcoming master plan. Given that the Fulton County Executive Airport is such a highly valued asset by so many stakeholders, the TAP believes there is a collective will and way forward to maximize its potential to catalyze redevelopment in the community.

## Recommendation 1 – Create a sense of place

The panel's first recommendation builds upon the core belief that the FIB Corridor can be transformed into a world-class industrial district. While recognizing this will be a long-term pursuit, the process can begin by creating a sense of place. Drawing on the work of [ULI's Healthy Corridors Project](#) – the TAP panel explored how this commercial corridor could be transformed to become a safe, healthy, vibrant, mixed-use destination.

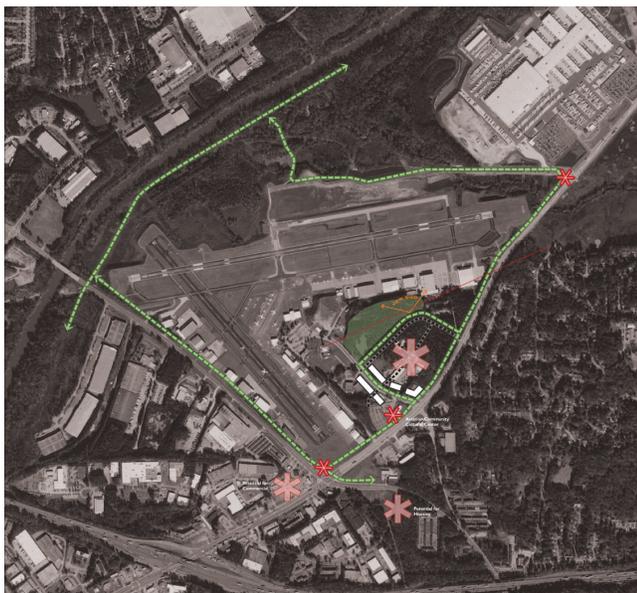
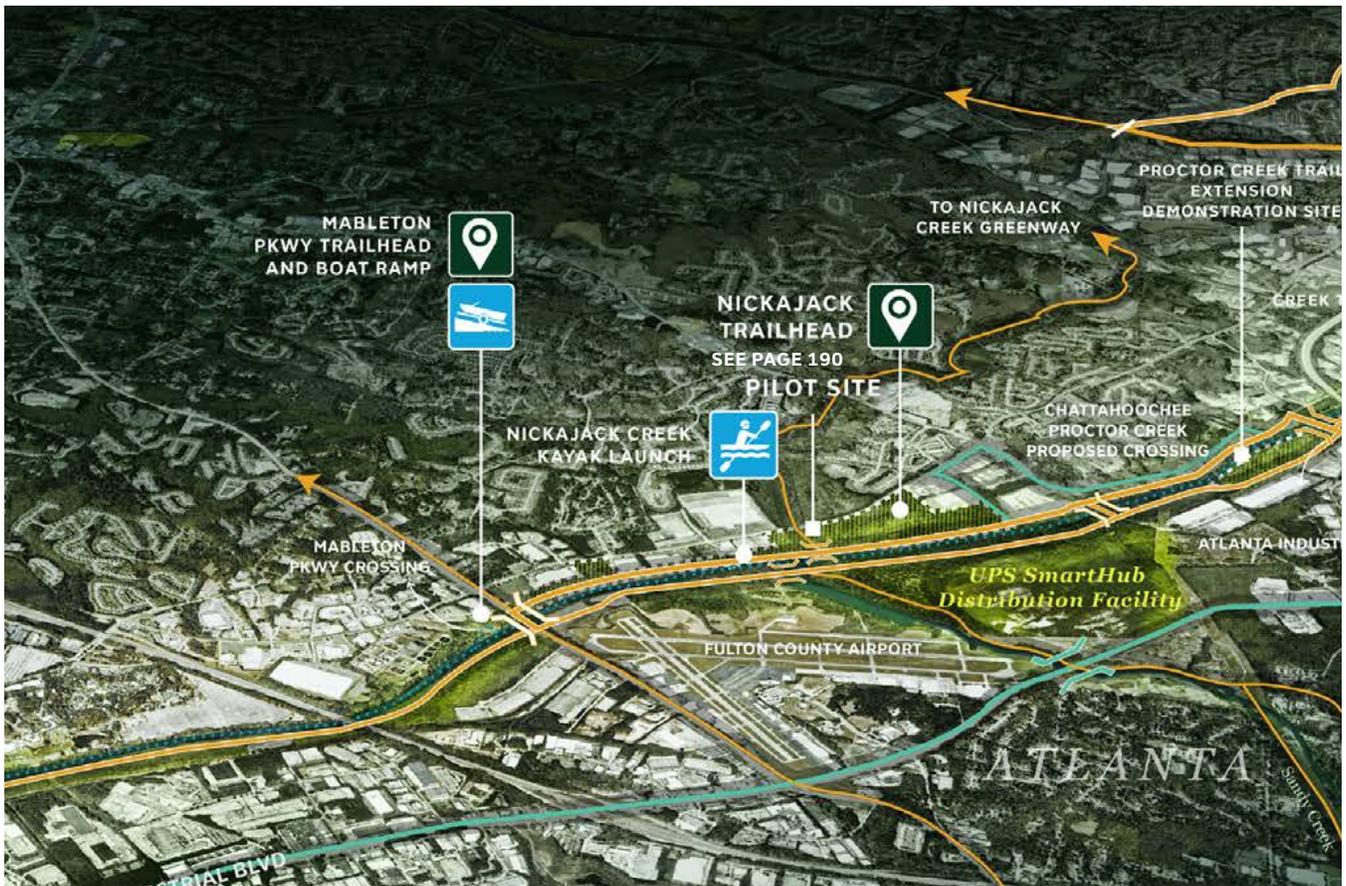
Atlanta is home to two excellent examples of this thinking, both in terms of infrastructure built and the importance of public-private partnerships in ushering change.

The [Atlanta BeltLine](#)—a transformative urban infrastructure project connecting 45 intown neighborhoods via a 22-mile loop of multi-use trails, transit, and parks is one example. As the BeltLine develops, it creates new places, businesses, and memorable experiences that were not previously



imagined for the areas it touches. In addition to multiple destination points, the BeltLine is creating an image for metropolitan Atlanta—a distinctive Atlanta-specific example that provides impressive views of the city skyline and connects the user to the city's history as a railroad town.

Another example is the [Aerotropolis Atlanta Alliance](#), a public-private partnership working to improve the area's regional economic competitiveness around Hartsfield-



Fulton County, Georgia

**Parcels Owned By Fulton County Within Fulton Industrial District**

Parcels Owned by Fulton County  
 Fulton County Industrial District

Top: See the proximity of Fulton County Executive Airport to the river. Left: Panel-envisioned trail loop could encircle the airport perimeter. Right: In yellow, parcels owned by Fulton County. In red, Fulton Industrial Blvd.

Jackson Atlanta International Airport, the world's busiest airport. Aerotropolis Atlanta is producing meaningful economic development that fully integrates into the functions and impacts of the airport. The alliance facilitates workforce development solutions and partnering with educational institutions—all while working to promote the south side of metro Atlanta.

A key ingredient to both the BeltLine and Aerotropolis Atlanta examples are collaboration, leveraging natural resources, and a commitment to building healthier, more vibrant places.

The TAP envisions the Fulton County Executive Airport as a similar catalyst, albeit on a smaller scale, to create a sense of place for the FIB Corridor. To create that sense of place, the panel proposes five essential ideas:

- Create a Main Street for the area by developing available land around the airport.
- Leverage the Chattahoochee River's proximity to build a trail system that can drive development at and around the airport.
- Identify a mix of uses for the existing property.
- Secure an educational campus for the area that can be used to support workforce development.
- Implement streetscape enhancements.

Creating a sense of place for the airport community starts with developing a Main Street or Town Center that will make the area both attractive and useable to people visiting, living, and working in the community. Among the strengths identified in stakeholder interviews was the availability of significant swaths of the airport- and county-owned lands and proximity to the Chattahoochee River. The TAP recommends using the available land around Aviation Circle and the existing Cultural Center as starting points to make the Town Center a reality. Although airports have not historically served as the core amenity for such centers, there is precedent for how this can work. DeKalb-Peachtree Airport (considered to be the Fulton County airport's primary competition) supports air travel and a "campus" of related businesses, including

two restaurants, and its Airport Park Playground has become a family destination for birthday parties and for watching takeoffs and landings. This multi-use facility, widely accepted as a community asset, has helped to catalyze area redevelopment.

The TAP strongly believes Aviation Drive, the airport's existing entry road, has the potential to become a pedestrian-oriented Main Street corridor linking a similarly diverse mix of businesses and amenities. The existing cluster of uses along this road is a notable contrast to the surrounding industrial landscape, suggesting that if there is an opportunity to seed significant redevelopment in the FIB corridor, this is it. The area's connectivity to the Chattahoochee River presents an opportunity to augment this Town Center with increased park access and needed green space, which could strengthen its appeal as a "crossroads" for multiple audiences. There are Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations regarding the use of the land around the airport. Still, the panel envisions a trail loop that encircles the airport's perimeter (outside the security fence) and connects to the river in two places, off Sandy Creek Drive and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. (See diagram)

Moreover, this idea represents a natural fit for the emerging [Chattahoochee RiverLands](#) project, a proactive effort to build a 125-mile-long trail crossing back forth across the river from Lake Lanier to Chattahoochee Bend State Park in Newnan, Georgia. Indeed, the river located near the Fulton County airport was considered for a RiverLands demonstration project. While the airport site did not meet the criteria for selection into the RiverLands' initial phase of site-specific analysis, a strong possibility exists for inclusion in the future.

Perhaps most importantly, when thinking about the airport as a hub for the Town Center, there are approximately 70 acres of airport-owned property located between the intersection of FIB and Aviation Circle that are a prime opportunity for development and other nearby county-owned lands.



Rendering of the streetscape improvement plan completed at Fulton Industrial Blvd and I-20 Exchange.

The TAP envisions starting with a small stretch of land that fronts either side of Aviation Circle. This area seems ideal as a test site for locating a mix of commercial uses to make the area more appealing. These ideas are explored in greater detail in the remaining recommendations.

Finally, when thinking about this idea of a sense of place and a Town Center, the TAP recommends developing a targeted plan for streetscape enhancements and improvements. The area has a somewhat desolate feel at the moment, which contributes to the negative first impressions cited by current airport users and visitors. A well-designed streetscape plan—with trees and landscaping, lighting, pedestrian furnishings would make streets comfortable, walkable, more connected and user-friendly. It could offer a respite from the area’s business and truck traffic. We recommend exploring this idea further with the Fulton Industrial Boulevard Improvement District – who has recently championed streetscape enhancements,

like those completed at Fulton Industrial Boulevard and the I-20 Exchange.

A landscaped trail on the west side of the airport—along Martin Luther King Jr. Drive—could begin to change perceptions of the industrial landscape and encourage redevelopment of the other side of the MLK corridor. This airport frontage is home to several of its most high-profile corporate clients; if their presence was more evident along the trail, this could further shift perceptions. As envisioned, this trail would provide the shortest route from the river to Aviation Circle. Along Sandy Creek Drive, the other side of the airport affords frontage and a larger area of green space along the river and presents the opportunity for a small trailhead with a parking lot to access the river.

Our next set of recommendations address the market-driven redevelopment opportunities for Fulton County-owned properties adjacent to the airport. These opportunities need to be considered in context with the visionary goal of using the airport as a catalyst to

TAP PANEL



Outline of property located at the intersection of FIB and Aviation Circle, as well as a smaller piece of county-owned property at the junction of FIB and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.

create a Main Street or Town Center for this area. In this section, we are explicitly identifying opportunities for the 70 acres of property located at the intersection of FIB and Aviation Circle, as well as a smaller piece of county-owned property at the junction of FIB and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. These recommendations build specifically on strengths and need the panel heard from stakeholders, including a suite of amenities to serve workers and visitors in the area and opportunities associated with existing facilities, and the need for targeted workforce development.

### ULI's Building Healthy Places Initiative & Healthy Corridors

ULI's Building Healthy Places Initiative includes work around Healthy Corridors to explore how commercial corridors can be transformed to become safe, healthy, vibrant, mixed-use places with next-generation infrastructure. <https://americas.uli.org/research/centers-initiatives/building-healthy-places-initiative/>

## Recommendation 2 – Leverage Aviation Community Cultural Center

The Aviation Community Cultural Center represents low-hanging fruit that could produce immediate benefits if adequately staffed and marketed. This underutilized facility could play an essential role in providing meeting and event space for visiting executives, corporate flight teams, and adjacent neighborhoods, potentially reducing trips into downtown Atlanta. The TAP recommends a committee be organized to assess the center’s potential and craft a vision and strategic plan to maximize the facility’s use. Potential relationships between the cultural center and the airport’s high-level corporate tenants should be one of the first steps explored in a redevelopment plan. The cultural center could be a readily available anchor for the Main Street or Town Center concept identified in the TAP’s first recommendation.

## Recommendation 3 – Provide convenience retail and amenity space

The need for commercial amenities within the area surfaced repeatedly during our stakeholder interviews. Approximately 20,000 to 30,000 people work along the corridor every day, including a transient group (truckers and delivery personnel) and permanent employees, who are basically confined to their workplaces because of the area’s lack of services. In addition, the area is also home to a residential neighborhood near the airport whose residents have to travel away from the community to secure basic services. Immediate needs to serve this population include dining options, especially fast casual restaurants, a neighborhood grocery store, office space and basic convenience retail like a fitness center. While overall demand for retail on the FIB Corridor is limited relative to supply, so much of the supply is obsolete that a small retail center could fill



Aviation Community Cultural Center from Fulton Industrial Blvd.

TAP PANEL



Chamblee (PDK) Airport Park.

ANGEL FLIGHT SOARS, INC.



Image demonstrating ripe opportunity for redevelopment of existing Fulton Co. Executive Airport’s Control Tower, restaurant space, and greenspace for plane watching.

TAP PANEL

an important role for thousands of employees on the corridor every day. Several owners and operators in the area also advised that their buildings incorporated cafeterias to address the lack of dining options in the area. The county-owned site southeast of the airport could be well suited for such an offering as could be the small strip of property located on either side of Aviation Circle leading into the airport.

Other near-term market opportunities include an airport restaurant leveraging the historic control tower, and a community pocket park for families, kids and plane enthusiasts, as one would see at nearby Chamblee (PDK) Airport Park.

Finally, while it may be hard to envision places that don't exist today, the panel agreed that the sloping green area, which overlooks the runway, could present an exciting opportunity for office space, a restaurant, or even an overlook to the runway itself.

## Recommendation 4 – Recruit office or flex-type use

The panel sees FIB's historical and successful function as a logistics hub as an asset that can drive development opportunities near the airport. One of the priorities in this area should be a concerted effort to link up with the work currently being done by the Atlanta Aerotropolis Alliance. The Fulton County Executive Airport's proximity to the Aerotropolis footprint makes this effort ripe for a spillover effect. As noted in the Aerotropolis Blueprint, freight logistics and distribution, aerospace, aviation, and manufacturing are targeted industries that could find a desirable location near the Fulton County Airport. Additionally, these industries could leverage international and regional air travel and make a strong business case for future area growth. Employment-driven office uses could also be delivered within the airport property, with potential logistics or tech users in the 25,000 to 50,000 square foot range.

TAP PANEL



Image of construction happening along Sandy Creek Drive where new tenants are coming in.

TAP PANEL



The shuttered airport motel at the entrance of Aviation Circle.

## Recommendation 5 – Seek potential partnerships with colleges and universities that focuses on aerospace and logistics

While targeting specific industries for location and expansion in the Fulton County airport footprint should be a primary goal, the TAP also recommends a concerted effort to develop the workforce required for those industries to succeed. Multiple stakeholders have recognized there is a workforce shortage in the south metropolitan Atlanta. Given county-owned land availability around the airport, an educational center or training facility's location should be a key objective.

For instance, an educational center, such as the [Fairburn Educational Campus](#), could be delivered as a public-private partnership. Such a facility could offer specialized training relative to surrounding industries. The [Cecil Commerce Center](#) in Jacksonville, Florida, which is adjacent to the Cecil Airport, is another example worth exploring.

To fully explore this opportunity, the TAP encourages educational leaders' inclusion in the development of the airport's master plan. These organizations and the [Georgia Quick Start](#) training program should be an integral part of the planning process.

Also, partnerships with nearby colleges and universities could drive demand for labs, startup space, or centers of advanced manufacturing, advanced transportation and logistics, and aerospace; or even more specialized areas like drone technology, industrial ecology, or automated trucking.

## Recommendation 6 – Evaluate the long-term potential for hotel

Over the mid- to long-term, there could be an opportunity for a hotel on county-owned property. The county could facilitate such a deal by leveraging or creating a tax incentive.

### A Word About Market Opportunities along the Fulton Industrial Boulevard Corridor

While our recommendations rightly focus on development opportunities associated with county- and airport-owned property, we urge leaders to unite around the big-picture goal of rebirthing the FIB Corridor as a world-class industrial district. All of the preceding recommendations could perhaps be realized outside of the airport's immediate footprint. However, the TAP concluded that the airport offers the best possible starting point for such efforts. Any broader redevelopment effort will require its own visioning and master planning process, something well beyond the purview of this TAP's scope of work. It's easy to dream big, to think about the Fulton County Executive Airport and the FIB Corridor serving as a hub for drones, for instance, and we admit these kinds of thoughts crossed our minds in this process. For the time being, however, the TAP urges the leaders of this effort to focus on the area and opportunities within their direct control. If existing property is developed with a true end in mind, it could well have a ripple effect that eventually cycles out obsolete properties and replaces them with market-supported and 21st century modernization.

## Jacksonville’s Cecil Commerce Center is a model for transforming an existing property

In its heyday of the 1960s, the FIB Corridor was a world-class logistics hub. However, as the decades passed, the corridor lost this distinction and now lags behind other industrial areas in modernization.

As efforts to revitalize the area gain momentum, local leaders would serve the process well by studying the [Cecil Commerce Center](#) in Jacksonville, Florida. This commercial and industrial center located on Jacksonville’s westside and the former Naval Air Station Cecil Field could provide significant insight into transforming the FIB Corridor into an e-commerce/logistics hub, with the Fulton County Executive Airport playing a strategic role.

The Cecil Commerce Center has become one of the most sought-after locations in the Southeastern United States for manufacturing, supply chain logistics, and industrial end-users. This industrial and commercial-zoned site offers mid- to large-size parcels for development. It has incredible transportation, and utility infrastructure is adjacent to Interstate 10 and home to Cecil Airport, which boasts the third-longest runway in Florida. The center’s many assets include:

- The infrastructure that supports significant aviation, distribution, and manufacturing facilities.
- Excellent mixed-use development opportunities.
- Strategic location.
- Competitive utilities.
- A young and diverse talent pool to choose from.
- Workforce training centers on-site.
- The only certified mega-site in Florida, with 1,500 available acres for development.

The center’s history dates back to July 1993 when the

formal Naval Air Station Cecil Field was slated for closure. Jacksonville’s city promptly began efforts to develop a proposed reuse plan that would guide the transition of the property from a fully operational Navy base to civilian use. The Cecil Commerce Center Operations and Business Plan was approved in 1999. Ten years later, the project was lagging, having secured just 2,000 jobs, approximately one-third of what had been projected.

At that point, the city signed a contract with Hillwood as the master developer to expedite the development and provide expertise, strategy, and private capital for the long-term project. As a master developer of approximately 4,475 acres of city-owned property, Hillwood branded the site with its premiere brand name – AllianceFlorida at Cecil Commerce Center. Hillwood agreed to invest more than \$1.3 billion to develop the entire 31-million-square-foot master plan. These developments will attract companies that will bring thousands of new jobs and expand the tax base.

Among the Cecil Commerce Center’s corporate roster today:

- Amazon, Wayfair Inc., FedEx Ground Package System, and Bridgestone Americas Tire Operations all have distribution centers.
- Fightstar, heavy aircraft maintenance, repair, and overhaul contractor, maintains a \$27 million, 30,000-square-foot facility.
- Boeing houses its F-18 repair operations at the center.
- Florida State College at Jacksonville operates a state-of-the-art truck driving facility at their North Cecil Campus.
- SAFT America Inc., a world leader in the design and manufacture of high-technology batteries, operates a lithium battery-manufacturing plant on 12 acres at Cecil.



Left: Architectural rendering of the mixed-use master plan for the Cecil Commerce Center. Right: The retail portion of Cecil Commerce Center. Renderings obtained from DHA Architects with permissions from Glenn Dasher.

# IMPLEMENTATION PLAN – WHERE TO BEGIN

Typically, a TAP implementation plan identifies a series of short-term, mid-term and long-term action steps. For the purposes of this report, however, the panel modified its traditional approach. The group has outlined five initial action steps—a starting point—that could yield immediate dividends and lay the groundwork for significant action to come. Beyond those four action steps, the TAP has prioritized a list of actions that could be incorporated into the airport’s master plan and rolled out in a coordinated effort to maximize the airport’s impact on development in the area.

## Starting Point

This TAP heard loud and clear that airport and county officials need a clear sense of direction on how to proceed. Many of this group’s recommendations are high-level, visionary actions and suggestions that may take years to address. Simultaneously, several small steps can be taken without delay, with the potential to produce immediate results, visible change, and the necessary momentum to turn big ideas into workable solutions. These five steps are:

1. Improve airport aesthetics.
2. Ramp up branding and marketing campaign for the airport.
3. Develop a plan to leverage the Cultural Center.
4. Evaluate opportunities for connectivity to greenspace.
5. Complete the airport’s master planning process.

### 1. Improve airport aesthetics

The importance of Fulton County Executive Airport to the metro Atlanta region is indisputable. The third-busiest airport in metro Atlanta, Fulton County, serves many of the city’s premier corporate clients and is one of only two airports in the area with a 24/7 control tower. Approximately 65,000 operations (takeoff or landing)—occur annually, an average of about 164 daily. Moreover, the airport plays a vital role in supporting the region,

with 1,230 jobs with an annual payroll of \$75.2 million and \$198.6 million in economic output for the local and regional economies.

While no one underestimates the airport’s importance, there are legitimate concerns about the facility’s poor aesthetics, both inside and outside the fence. The airport presents a poor first impression of Atlanta, a message heard loud and clear from multiple stakeholders during the panel interviews.

“The airport is an upscale resource with a pawnshop mentality, the proverbial pearl in a pigpen,” one stakeholder observed. “This is literally a front door to Atlanta and getting here leaves you unimpressed.”

“It’s a window, a gateway into our community, and the appearance of it, the cosmetics, are lacking,” another stakeholder said. “We appreciate the proximity to the downtown environment; we’re not going anywhere. But a lot of people have left because they don’t feel safe and see an area in decline. They will not fly their expensive aircraft in and out of an airport they don’t feel good about.”

While conditions inside the airport fence were not part of the original scope of work, the TAP would be remiss if it failed to raise this significant issue. Despite image concerns, the Fulton County airport maintains a robust client list. Therefore, our first starting point is intended to jumpstart momentum for future development and preserve—and eventually—grow the airport’s client base.

While proposing an improvement plan is beyond this panel's reach, we encourage airport leadership to consider the increasingly vital role that airport interiors and exteriors play in the overall experience of those passing through the facilities. Beautification, lighting, lounges, quiet zones, wayfinding, convenience—all of these are ideas that need serious consideration to create a positive ambiance for everyone using the airport.

## 2. Ramp up the branding and marketing campaign for airport

One of the significant weaknesses identified for the TAP was the lack of marketing for the airport, low brand recognition, and an inconsistent identity. Indeed, many of the stakeholders and panel participants did not even recognize the airport's official name as Fulton County Executive Airport. Large numbers of people continue to call it Brown Field and Charlie Brown Airport.

While the TAP understands a branding campaign may have been initiated, there was no clear sense of its effectiveness or status. For maximum effectiveness, the airport needs its own brand identity as soon as possible. The TAP recommends engaging a public relations consultant to create a brand strategy and public relations plan. The plan should be formulated to capitalize on these significant opportunities identified in the TAP's SWOT analyses:

- Strengthen relationships with key tenants like Home Depot, Coca-Cola, etc.
- Engage with key businesses in Atlanta for future development.
- Actively partner with developers to market the site (use an RFP to secure a master developer).
- Build partnerships with the many civic leaders who use the airport or own land in the area.
- Position the airport to maximize its existing expansion plans.
- Leverage the airport's proximity to downtown Atlanta.



Existing signage at Fulton County Executive Airport - further causing confusion on the property's official name.

## 3. Develop a plan to leverage the Cultural Center

As previously noted, the airport's cultural center was identified as one of the airport's primary strengths and had significant potential for meeting immediate and future needs. Work should begin immediately on crafting a vision and strategic plan to maximize the facility's use (see recommendation 2). The TAP strongly believes this center can provide an immediate win to demonstrate the value of Fulton County Executive Airport.

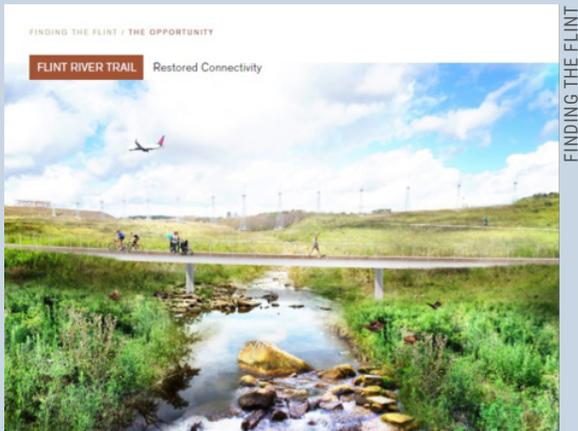
## 4. Evaluate opportunities for connectivity to greenspace

The TAP cannot overestimate the importance of greenspace to any airport to bring new development and give character to the airport. Creating green space and connectivity to the Chattahoochee River is the centerpiece of the panel's vision for a Main Street or Town Center to anchor this community. A study committee should be created immediately to begin identifying opportunities

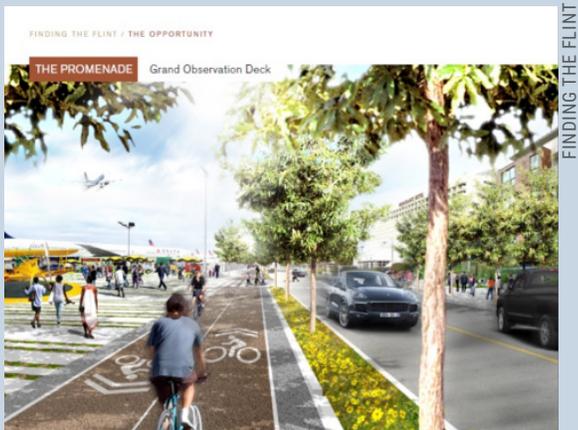
## A different airport, another river

Recently named one of America’s Most Endangered Rivers—Georgia’s Flint River is a local water source that is running dry. Metro Atlanta’s rapid growth on top of the Flint’s headwaters—creeks that flow in, around, and underneath Atlanta’s Hartsfield Jackson International Airport—has had long-term consequences for the river.

[Finding the Flint](#) is an effort to reveal these hidden headwaters that restore the river and creates great places for people. It’s a big vision for a healthier river, and better quality of life in the airport area made up of many individual projects—big and small, public and private— which offer ways to experience and enjoy the Flint River.



The Flint River Trail envisions a trail system encompassing Hartsfield Jackson International Airport while also daylighting portions of the Flint River.



The Promenade is a re-imagined space and observation deck fitting for the world’s busiest airport. It creates a wide public interface where visitors and locals can meet, stroll, and watch airplanes take flight.

to partner with the existing Chattahoochee RiverLands Study work - to make this vision a reality. Naturally, this must be done without compromising safety and security, and the panel believes this is possible based on several national precedents, including San Antonio’s Stinson Airport, which is highlighted in this report.

## 5. Complete the airport’s master planning process

This TAP has done its best to identify several high-level ideas that could leverage the Fulton County Executive Airport as a catalyst to drive new development along the Fulton Industrial Boulevard Corridor. We have also identified four initial steps—with the potential for quick wins—that could serve as starting points for the process. The TAP’s recommendations merely constitute big ideas that would need to be further explored and developed as part of a master planning process for the airport. If the ideas in this report can bring vision, show possibilities, and generate excitement for the airport’s future, this process will have been a success. We encourage airport and county leaders to proceed with haste with the approval of a process and funding to create a master plan for the airport.

## San Antonio's Stinson Airport enjoys the benefits of green space

The benefits of urban green space to revive blighted communities has been well documented. New green space can convert brownfields, vacant lots, and former industrial sites into vibrant community activity areas.

Airports big and small are seeing the value of efforts to balance runway expansion and related industrial development with planned green spaces.

In 2019, San Antonio's Airport System partnered with the San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department to unveil the brand-new Stinson Hike and Bike Trail. The new trail design connects the historic Mission Trail along the San Antonio River with Stinson Municipal Airport, traversing through San Antonio's World Heritage Site and historic San Antonio Missions. Visitors to Stinson are now greeted with new amenities, including added parking and a trailhead kiosk that shares the airport's history and its importance to military and commercial aviation history.

[Stinson Municipal Airport](#) holds a unique place in aviation history. The pioneering Stinson family established the Stinson School of Flying in 1915, and today the airport is the second-oldest continuously operated airport in the country and serves as a general aviation reliever airport to San Antonio International Airport.

The trail begins with a new parking lot marked by plenty of signs, directly across Mission Road from the historic Stinson Municipal Airport's front gate. It features a charming weathervane in the shape of an old Cessna and handsomely framed maps and history displays.

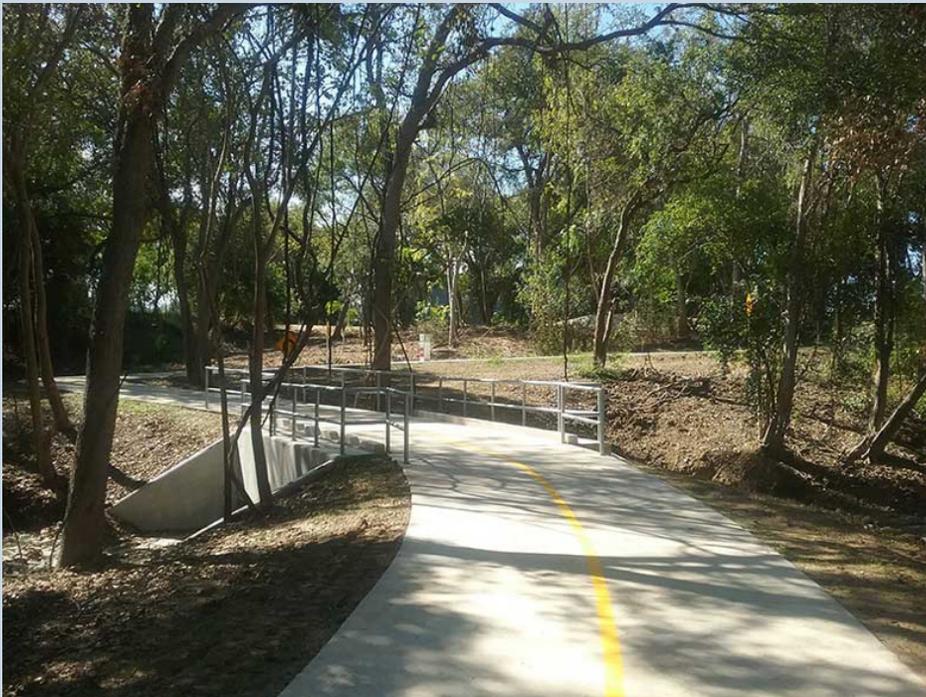
The shady trail cut through woods and brush across from the airport makes a loop just 1.3 miles long, and is perfect for a nature walk with children, dogs, or to get exercise.

The new trail coincides with the airport's expansion and upgrades to attract more small planes and corporate jets. The famous Big Bib barbecue restaurant in the terminal draws diners, and spiffed-up meeting rooms and other facilities bring the community together. The new hike-and-bike trail fits into the overall plan.

It took a lot of teamwork to build the route, officials said, with two San Antonio agencies playing key roles. The Aviation Department performed project management, and Parks and Recreation provided guidance and input from the planning phase through completion of trail construction.

The project's total budget was about \$2.5 million—funded by both departments from design through fruition.

The trail will have connectivity to other trails in the area, including some under construction that will eventually transition into the 17-mile-long Medina River Greenway Trail.



COURTESY PHOTO

The newly Completed, \$2.5 million Stinson Hike and Bike Trail is about 1.3 miles long and connects to the Mission Reach.

## Implementation Plan Priorities

The ideas presented below are offered as opportunities to inform the airport’s master plan. Some may be readily implemented—such as a strategy for expanding the Cultural Center’s use—but others will require significant study. The TAP recommends assigning champions for the various ideas so that the knowledge and expertise are available when and if these elements are incorporated into a master plan.

### Short-Term

- Develop a Branding and Marketing campaign
- Develop a Master Plan for Aviation Circle
- Analyze the Zoning Plan for the greater area (Fulton County Commission) and rewrite overlay zoning district
- The airport should review current plans for how improvements can incentivize redevelopment along the east side of MLK
- Build a relationship with Atlanta Technical College (i.e., Aerotropolis example)
- Connectivity to greenspace

- Create a strategy for expanded use of the Cultural Center (i.e., food trucks, meeting space)
- Identify and attract potential development partners
- Develop district signage and graphics
- Implement a streetscape plan
- Create a holistic development plan (restaurants, fitness, hotel)

### Mid-Term

- Develop a greenway trail along the river that can connect to the RiverLands Trail
- Implement a development plan (restaurants, fitness, hotel)
- Develop a neighborhood retail center (mixed-use)

### Long-Term

- Develop a program for hotel and conference center
- Extend MARTA (BRT, light or heavy rail) beyond Hamilton E. Holmes station as the area continues development as a major employment center
- Implement permanent improvements

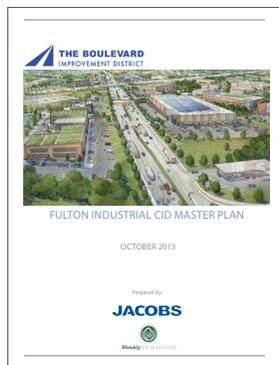
# STUDIES CONSULTED



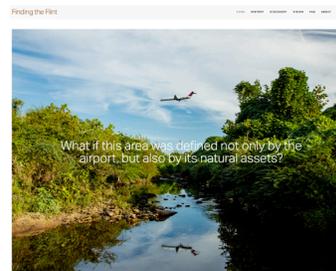
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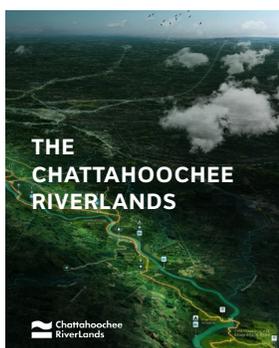
Chattahoochee River  
Park Studio (Georgia  
Conservancy)



Atlanta Regional  
Commission (ARC) and  
Fulton Industrial Blvd CID  
Master Plan (2013)  
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portfolio/master-plan-2/](https://boulevardcid.org/portfolio/master-plan-2/)



Finding the Flint  
<https://findingtheflint.org/>



Chattahoochee RiverLands  
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## ABOUT THE PANEL



**Jonathan Bartlett**  
Senior Consultant  
Jacobs

Jonathan Bartlett is a Senior Consultant in the Advance Planning Group (APG) of Jacobs. As a focused strategic consulting and urban planning team embedded in one of the world's largest engineering firms, APG works around the world helping public and private sector clients meet their business objectives in the face of change. Based in Atlanta, Jonathan's core skills are in forward-looking market, financial, and strategic analysis of real estate opportunities. Since joining Jacobs in 2014, Jonathan has worked extensively with developers, corporations, and local governments providing market analysis, site selection, and portfolio strategies. Prior to joining Jacobs, Jonathan was a Vice President with RCLCO in Bethesda, Maryland and Atlanta where he conducted strategic market analyses for master-planned communities and mixed-use projects throughout the United States. He is a full member of the Urban Land Institute's Urban Revitalization Council and has served on local and national ULI Advisory Panels as a real estate market specialist. Jonathan also teaches Real Estate Market Analysis in the Goizueta Business School at Emory University. A Boston native, Jonathan has a BA from Washington & Lee University and an MBA in Real Estate from the University of North Carolina. He has lived with his family in Decatur, Georgia since 2007.



**Kenwin Hayes**  
Managing Principal  
ReUrbanis Advisors

Kenwin M. Hayes, Sr. is a development strategist who works with private, public, and non-profit organizations to deliver their visionary development.

After spending over 15 years of municipal planning and economic development, Kenwin understands the relationship between design, financial feasibility, and market conditions. Kenwin believes that developments can not only serve it's tenants but serve as a source of inspiration and human interactions. Kenwin has assisted in the transaction of over 300 properties

and 600 businesses. In addition, Kenwin is a certified economic development (CEcD) professional, certified planner (AICP), economic development finance professional (EDFP), and real estate broker. He is currently the managing principal for ReUrbanis Advisors, a real estate, planning, and economic consulting firm. Kenwin holds a Masters in City & Regional Planning from the Georgia Institute of Technology with Urban Design concentration. He resides in Metro-Atlanta with his wife Charmaine and their four (4) young leaders.



**Alex Heaton**  
Attorney  
Morris, Manning & Martin

Alex Heaton is an attorney in Morris, Manning & Martin, LLP's Commercial Real Estate Development & Finance practice. Mr. Heaton represents a wide variety of clients, with the primary focus of his practice is in the hospitality sector, the industrial sector, and in the representation of specialty lenders for bridge and construction lending. Clients seek his advice and counsel in connection with developing operating and investment strategies that harmonize business objectives with legal structures. Mr. Heaton has been involved in over a billion dollars of hotel-related transactions, with experience in construction of new developments, opportunity zone investments, acquisition and disposition of operating assets, and the negotiating entitlements and other development rights. In addition to his hometown of Atlanta, Mr. Heaton has lived and worked in London, England and Dalian, Liaoning, China. Mr. Heaton has prior experience working as a member of Urban Land Institute's Technical Assistance Program, including as a junior staff member for the Savannah Civic Center Redevelopment and as a co-author and committee member of the ongoing Atlanta Community Schoolyards project. He is also a member of Trust for Public Land's Georgia Outdoor Recreation Coalition Steering Committee and a member of ULI's Center for Leadership Class of 2021. A graduate of Georgia State University's College of Law and Master of Taxation program, Mr. Heaton has achieved the highest level of pro bono achievement in each year of his legal practice.



## Steve Nygren

**Founder & CEO  
Serenbe**

Steve Nygren began his career in the hospitality industry, eventually starting a restaurant corporation that grew to 36 restaurants. In 1994, he and

his wife Marie retired to a farm outside Atlanta, with their three daughters. Six years later, he became concerned about urban sprawl invading their adopted country paradise and in 2000 led the effort to create the Chattahoochee Hill Country Alliance to bring together landowners, developers, and conservationists to find a mutually agreed upon solution for balanced growth. Through two years, a land use plan was adopted to preserve 70% of the 40,000 acres on the edge of Atlanta while providing 20% more housing than traditional suburban sprawl yield. In 2004, the Nygrens began the development of Serenbe interlacing agriculture with a range of housing choices mixed with shops, galleries, restaurants and a full-service Inn. The result is reminiscent of century-old communities where many of your needs are within a walkable distance and neighbors know each other. Today, Steve serves as the CEO of Serenbe and lives in the community full-time. Steve has won numerous awards throughout his career, including Southface's Argon Award-2017, the Global Wellness Institute's Leader in Innovation Award for 2017, the International Ground Source Heat Pump Association's Visionary Award for 2018, Georgia Trend's Most Respected Business Leader for 2019, Atlanta Magazine's Groundbreaker Award for 2019, and Atlanta Magazine's Atlanta 500: Legend in Restaurants & Hospitality for years 2016 -2019. He is also a member of the ACVB Hospitality Hall of Fame.



## Brad Pope

**Senior Vice President  
JLL**

Brad is focused on serving clients by providing real estate solutions to supply chain challenges. He has represented clients in both

the acquisition and disposition of warehouse/distribution, manufacturing and office properties throughout the United States and has consulted on overseas projects for Fortune 500 clients. Brad has been actively involved in all aspects of industrial real estate brokerage for over 25 years. His expertise in leasing,

sales, site selection, build to suits and investment sales has led to direct involvement in over \$1 billion of consummated real estate transactions for his clients. Brad currently serves as Vice President on the Board of Directors for the SIOR Georgia Chapter and is Chair of the SIOR Global Industrial Practice Group. Prior to joining JLL, Brad served as Managing Director and Principal of NAI Brannen Goddard where he also served as the Southeastern Representative on the Major Markets Logistics team and on East Coast Industrial Group. Brad graduated from the University of Georgia, has achieved his Certified Commercial Investment Member (CCIM) designation, is an active SIOR member where he is Vice President of the Georgia Chapter and Chair of the SIOR Global Industrial Practice Group. Brad is also a member of the JLL Supply Chain and Logistics Group. Brad was recently honored as #1 Industrial Broker in Atlanta by the Atlanta Board of Commercial Realtors in the Agency Category. Additionally, he received the Silver Phoenix Award for 25 consecutive years of achieving Million Dollar Club status.



## Jay Silverman

**Managing Principal  
Dwell Design Studio**

Jay has over 25 years of experience working on a wide variety of project types including housing and mixed-use, retail, government, office, interiors,

and single-family residential design across the country. He has a reputation for the design of high-rise mixed-use towers and multi-building residential projects, as well as complex urban infill mixed-use developments, including new construction and the rehabilitation and adaptive use of older buildings. He takes pride in directing all phases of a project from master planning and schematic design through construction and completion, creating great places, as well as finding creative solutions to complex design challenges associated with mixed-use and urban-infill development. Jay has a strong legacy of service to the community and the architectural profession. He is a former President of the Atlanta Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, a recipient of the prestigious Ivan Allen Award for service to the profession, and currently serves as Treasurer of the Architecture Foundation of Georgia. He is also active in the Urban Land Institute, and as a 2009 graduate of the ULI Center for Regional Leadership, has served two terms as Chair of the ULI Technical Assistance Program Committee and as a member

of the ULI Atlanta District Advisory Council. He also serves on the Advisory Council for the Sandy Springs Conservancy. Jay holds licenses to practice architecture in Tennessee, Alabama and Georgia. He lives in Dunwoody with his wife and two sons. In his spare time, he enjoys running and coaching his sons' sports teams.



**Jon Tuley**  
**Planner**  
**Kimley-Horn**

Jon Tuley has worked in Urban Planning and Community Development for 15 years. He earned an undergraduate dual degree in

Marketing and Management from Lipscomb University and his Masters in City and Regional Planning from the Georgia Institute of Technology. Upon joining Kimley-Horn, Jon focused his practice on local and regional planning efforts, community and economic development, airport area and airport city planning, transit-oriented development and other multidisciplinary planning initiatives. Jon has experience both in local and regional planning having worked with various local governments and for the Atlanta Regional Commission, where he served as a Senior Principal Planner and Managing Director of CATLYST, the economic development strategy for the Atlanta Region. In these roles, Jon led various economic development initiatives, served as a founding member and primary staff for the Aerotropolis Atlanta initiative, oversaw the Developments of Regional Impact (DRI) program, oversaw housing related work including the creation of the Metro Atlanta Housing Strategy and served as project manager for Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) studies.



**Bill Tunnell**  
**Founding Principal**  
**TSW**

Bill Tunnell, TSW Founding Principal in the design firm of TSW, has over 35 years of experience in planning and architecture. As principal-in-charge

of TSW's Planning Studio, Bill directs projects ranging from the planning of new towns and resorts to the detailed architectural design of individual residential and community buildings. Bill began his land planning career in 1980. With partner Jerry

Spangler, he founded Tunnell-Spangler & Associates in 1990. Prior to 1980, Bill practiced architecture and planning with three notable Atlanta firms, and his background in design/build and architectural design also adds a significant dimension to his planning expertise. His primary focus is the promotion of New Urbanism and Smart Growth practices in the firm's work and in the Southeast. As a planner, Bill has designed mixed-use, resort, residential, commercial, and golf community projects in sixteen states, and in Europe, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Bill is the Founding Co-Chair of ULI's Atlanta Smart Growth Committee and he also is affiliated with the Congress for the New Urbanism. He has won numerous awards throughout his career, including the 2017 Georgia Planning Association Outstanding Planning Document for the Large Community for Buckhead REdeFINED, the 2011 Georgia Planning Association Outstanding Planning Document for the Doraville Downtown Master Plan LCI, the 2006 Florida Planning and Zoning Association Master Planning Award (Private) for Rivertown, the 2006 ULI (Atlanta Chapter) Project of the Year for Glenwood Park, and the 2003 CNU Charter Award for Glenwood Park. An avowed urbanist and intermittent musician, Bill lives with his wife/artist Karen in Midtown Atlanta.



**Aundra Wallace**  
**President**  
**JAXUSA Partnership**

Aundra Wallace is president of the JAXUSA Partnership, the private, nonprofit regional economic development arm of JAX Chamber

overseeing efforts of the seven counties of Northeast Florida. He directs a staff of 14 in the areas of business development, international investment, workforce development, research and marketing. JAXUSA's mission is to be a catalyst for economic growth and maximize the region's unique resources to aggressively recruit jobs and capital investment. Prior to joining JAXUSA Partnership in October 2018, Mr. Wallace served as CEO of the City of Jacksonville's Downtown Investment Authority (DIA). In this role, he spearheaded a diversified portfolio of infrastructure improvement projects, led economic development initiatives, invested in real estate development projects, managed the Downtown Development Design Review Board and oversaw the City's Public Parking Division. Over the course of his tenure with DIA, Mr. Wallace leveraged more than \$150 million of public investment dollars to create more than

\$800 million in private capital investments, thus, producing a tax payer-friendly return on investment of 5-to-1. More than 2,850 multi-family units, approximately 900 hotel rooms and 575,000 square feet of commercial space were planned, permitted and/or are under construction. More than 2,500 jobs were created and recruited to downtown during his tenure with such companies as Citizens Property Insurance, VyStar Credit Union and One Call Medical moving its headquarters downtown. A leader in managing community, housing and economic development initiatives throughout his career, Mr. Wallace has managed more than \$650 million of equity, grants, loans and tax-exempt bonding capacity, in addition to creating and/or retaining 7,000 direct jobs. He spent more than three years as executive director of the Detroit Land Bank Authority before relocating to Jacksonville. There, he oversaw and directed the investment of \$30 million into the acquisition and restoration/renovation of single-family homes. He has also served as the senior vice president for commercial real estate at the North Carolina Community Development Initiative and held several executive and senior leadership positions over the course of 12 years with Miami-Dade County Government, including the title of president & CEO with the Miami-Dade Empowerment Trust. Mr. Wallace serves on the board of directors of Goodwill Northeast Florida and World Affairs Council Jacksonville and is a member of Leadership Florida, Urban Land Institute (ULI), NAIOP, International Economic Development Council (IEDC) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA). He holds a Master of Public Administration from Clark Atlanta University and a Bachelor of Science in Political Science from Georgia Southern University. He is a Certified Housing Development Finance Professional and a Certified Economic Development Finance Professional.



**Addie Webber**  
**Atlanta Office Director**  
**Toole Design**

Addie Weber, AICP leads Toole Design Group's Atlanta office. As an urban designer and planner with extensive experience leading and collaborating with multidisciplinary teams, Addie has worked with numerous communities across North America on livable transportation projects. She understands the interconnected relationship between land use and transportation in transit station area planning, corridor redevelopment, strategic land planning, and small area plans. Addie was the Project Manager for the Aerropolis Atlanta's Blueprint, which outlined a framework for growth and development for the communities adjacent to Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. In addition, she led the transportation and urban design elements for the Charlotte Douglas Airport Area Strategic Development Plan, and worked with large land-owners around Sydney, Australia's proposed second airport with her work on the Western Sydney Priority Growth Area. Addie's notable US efforts include master plans for two subareas along the Atlanta BeltLine, and station and corridor planning for Charlotte's Blue Line Extension. She is currently leading the City of Atlanta's Peachtree Shared Space project. Addie has served as a national panelist for ULI's Largo Town Center Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and as resource member for the 69th National Session of the Mayors' Institute on City Design.



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