

4

PUBLIC PROCESS & PARTICIPATION

The following pages describe the I-16 Exit Ramp Removal Charrette, held February 17-19, 2010, and the Open House, held on October 12, 2010. The Charrette process is highlighted as well as participation of stakeholders in public presentations and discussions and as citizen designers during the Hands-On Design Session. The Open House offered members of the community an opportunity to review and comment on the three plans for redevelopment created as a result of the Charrette.

Design Charrette

Invitation & Schedule

Visioning & Goals

Hands-On Design Session

Context & Concept Diagrams

Work-in-Progress Discussion

In Progress Open House

Invitation

Public Review & Commentary

Concept 1: Minimum Removal

Concept 2: Intermediate Removal

Concept 3: Maximum Removal

Conceptual Evolutionary Studies

Survey & Results

Final Open House

Invitation

Public Review & Commentary

DESIGN CHARRETTE

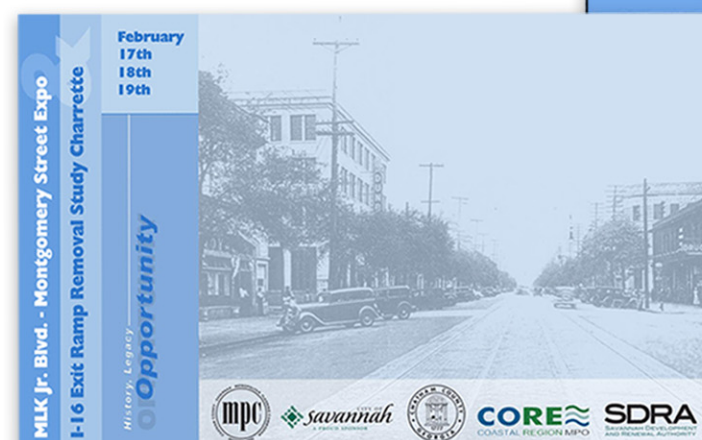
Invitation & Schedule



More than 250 citizens attended and participated in the I-16 Charrette including the Kick-Off Presentation, the Hands-On Design Session, Pin-Ups, Discussions, Open Studio and Public Presentations.

The I-16 Exit Ramp Removal Study Charrette & the MLK Jr. Boulevard - Montgomery Street Expo were held February 17 -19, 2010. The events were held at the Con-Ed Center in the historic McKelvey-Powell building at 714 MLK, Jr. Boulevard.

The event was organized by the Metropolitan Planning Commission, The City of Savannah, Chatham County, Coastal Region MPO, and Savannah Development & Renewal Authority.



Invitation to Charrette & Expo

MLK Jr. Blvd. - Montgomery Street Expo

I-16 Exit Ramp Removal Study Charrette

When:

February 17th
Opening Night: Kick-off Presentation, Goals & Visioning

5:30-6:00 Opening Reception
6:00-7:00 Presentation
7:00-8:00 Facilitated Discussion on Goals and Vision for Project

February 18th
Design Charrette and Expo

9:00-11:00 Hands-On Design Charrette (open to everyone)
11:00 Informal Pin-Up
1:00-5:30 Design Team Session, Open House Studio
5:30 Informal Pin-Up

February 19th
Design Charrette and Expo

9:00-5:30 Design Team Session, Open House
5:30-7:00 Work-in-Progress Pin up Presentation

Where:

Con-Ed Building Ball Room, 714 MLK Jr. Blvd.

Information:

I-16 Study - Ellen Harris: 651-1482, harris@thempc.org
MLK Jr. Blvd. - Montgomery Street Expo - Lise Sundria: 651-6973, lise_sundria@sdra.net

3 Day Event

Visit the EXPO:

- MLK, Jr. Blvd Streetscape Improvement Plan and Implementation Phases
- Business and Property Resources
- Individual Business and Property Consultations
- MLK, Jr. Blvd and Montgomery Street Low-cost Wireless Internet Services and tech support opportunities

Expo hours:

February 18th: 9AM to 5:30PM
February 19th: 9AM to 5:30PM



TO ADEQUATELY PLAN FOR THE FUTURE, you have to respect the past. That sentiment was a recurring theme as the community came together this past week in a three-day expo on the Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard/Montgomery Street revitalization plan.



WHAT'S NEXT

The design charrettes were just one segment of a longer process. Although streetscape improvements to MLK have begun and more are expected to be under way this summer, deciding the next phase of the corridor's revitalization will be drawn out and put on display at the design charrette. So even if you didn't attend any of the meetings, for public scrutiny. So even if you didn't attend any of the meetings, you still have a chance to make your voice heard.

The study is expected to wrap up by the end of the summer. Besides design, other important components include funding, land use and transportation needs.

In a week or so, look for drafts at www.sdra.org and www.thempc.org. Copies of the documents will be available for viewing at SDRA and MPC offices.

With the expo came a design charrette to explore ideas to remove the Interstate 16 flyover, formally called the Earl T. Shinhoster Interchange. The first two days attracted more than 250 citizens to the sessions, with some 75 neighborhood residents, corridor business and property owners, civic leaders and community partners participating in the open hands-on charrette. They came up with several preliminary concepts for removal and redevelopment of the I-16 site and corridor.

"This kind of thing was long overdue," said Mayor Pro Tem Edna Jackson. "There have been sections of M.L. King Boulevard that have been neglected for too long, and it will be good to see especially the southern end — Waldburg, Bolton, Gwinnett and Alice streets — come back."

Jackson's sentiments were echoed by native Savannahians, historic preservationists, business owners and concerned citizens.

Bernetta Anderson, president of the Hudson Hill Community Association, was part of a team that suggested creating a transportation transfer station with park-and-ride, streetcar and bus access. Their plan also would add greenspace as well as pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly roadways.

"My grandmother lived here, and she had no say in tearing down the neighborhoods and putting up the flyover," Anderson said. "This process is a new and different way to plan that's more inclusive and makes sure the public has some input."

To truly understand how the flyover has affected the physical, social, economic and psychological

SEE FLYOVER, PAGE 5A

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Work-in-Progress Pin up Presentation during the charrette.



The Work-in-Progress offered another opportunity for public comment.



The Hands-On Design Session was followed by a Pin-up where each team presented their ideas for the I-16 and MLK area.

DESIGN CHARRETTE

Process & Participation

The Kick-Off Meeting, Goals & Visioning, Hands-on Design Session, and Progress Presentations were well attended with great participation from numerous citizens, community leaders, and property owners. Many citizens and officials also stopped by the open Design Studio during the three-day Charrette to offer additional input as various options were developing.

DESIGN CHARRETTE

Process & Participation

I-16 EXIT RAMP REMOVAL PROJECT
SAVANNAH GEORGIA
City of Savannah
Chatham County
Metropolitan Planning Commission
CORE Metropolitan Planning Organization
Savannah Development & Renewal Authority



Public Comments recorded at the Visioning and Goals Session

- Creative Enterprise Zone- develop incentives to support urban vibrancy
- Creative/knowledge based industries; music-media hub
- Community - civic pride
- A place where businesses can survive
- Make people feel good about MLK/Montgomery
- Multi-layered uses of buildings - hotel to retail to school to community use/housing
- Incentive to invest and to encourage all citizens opportunity to be a part of revitalization
- Look at un-met needs and integration of diverse options
- Look at other communities and their efforts
- Neighborhoods were deteriorated in the 50s and 60s change needed to occur
- Consider cost of undertaking this project
- Re-create Union Station - grocer, retail
- Recognize elders in Civil Rights - WW Law and Earl Shinhoster
- Create a place for ALL citizens
- Rebuild, Retain Character
- Diverse Cultures
- Consider ways to engage youth
- Trees, grass, parks
- Build for the future
- Consider our kids
- Consider Healthcare Needs

FACILITATED DISCUSSION ON VISIONING AND GOALS

Kick-Off Presentation, February 17, 2010

- Sustainable development: multi-modal, mixed housing stock, urban gardens
- What makes Savannah memorable? Oglethorpe Plan - still working
- Focus on basic infrastructure to grow with City - dynamic - flexible
- Consider generators of traffic flow west/south
- Multiple movement options leads to economic development
- Don't concede to auto-oriented solutions
- Take the 50-100 year vision forward
- Concern about natural disaster - how to evacuate quickly
- Crosswalks needed - esp. in Kayton and Frazier homes area
- Traffic lights - need to provide enough time to cross
- Get people into the city effectively- don't back up traffic on I-16
- Gwinnett Street might need to be enhanced
- Arena Potential, Gwinnett Improvements
- Look for other models for Federal financing
- Planning too often related to buildings - relate to people too
- People need to be protected - this is their home - don't displace
- Don't forget to design for entire community
- Make transition as easy and accessible as possible
- More connectivity/more options to get into town will alleviate stress
- SCAD and other development will generate more people/commerce
- Cars are not the only way to move people
- Look at what other cities are doing
- High-priced oil, schools (distance learning), food production (local)
- Many more people will be moving to urban centers
- Welcoming image for native Savannahians to come home
- Focus on recreation, education
- Structure sessions so young people can participate
- Connect neighborhoods, connect streets
- Focus on affordability
- Replace lost amenities (movie theater) and lost history
- Entertainment history - retain cultural roots
- Consider needs of aging population
- Opportunity for local jobs through construction and demolition
- Current system works well - new plan must work as well

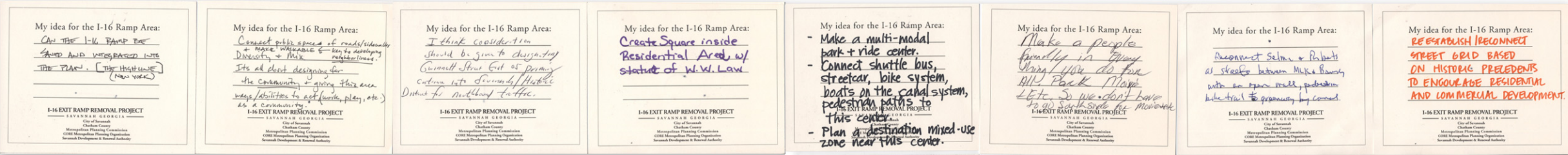
- Think Big
- 37th Street - need to protect the neighborhood fabric
- Return to retail and commercial along MLK and Montgomery
- Reference Atlantic Station in Atlanta as a case study
- Consider removing ramps but re-purposing bridge - crosswalk
- Gaston at West Broad: in West Broad's heyday - "could see everyone"
- "Always was a community"- make it community again - safe, everyone knew each other, diverse
- Potential hub for transit system
- Streets historically ran all the way to cemetery
- Care must be taken to sell off parcels smaller in size- don't sell all land to one developer for one development
- Provide incentives for lower/middle incomes
- Better public notice to Kayton and Frazier Homes about meetings
- Redevelopment will encourage travel south of Liberty Street
- What is it going to cost? Where is money going to come from?
- Don't squeeze out the little person - allow renters
- Avoid gentrification
- Concern about mix of land use - think it through
- Financing - use long-term debt to finance improvements over a long period of time - leverage local funds with state and federal funds
- Multi-modal transportation
- Mixed housing stock
- Let vision be fundable
- Plan for people who live here now as well as in the future
- Do not build a school on a highway
- Don't repeat mistakes of the past
- Look out over 50 years to create opportunities to finance improvements (political and community partnership)



Citizens participated in the Hands-On Design Session in small groups, working together to develop ideas for the I-16 Area.



Each of the five Design Teams presented their ideas to the entire group during an informal Pin-up Session.



Participants recorded additional ideas about redeveloping the I-16 and MLK area.

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HANDS ON DESIGN SESSION *Process & Participation*

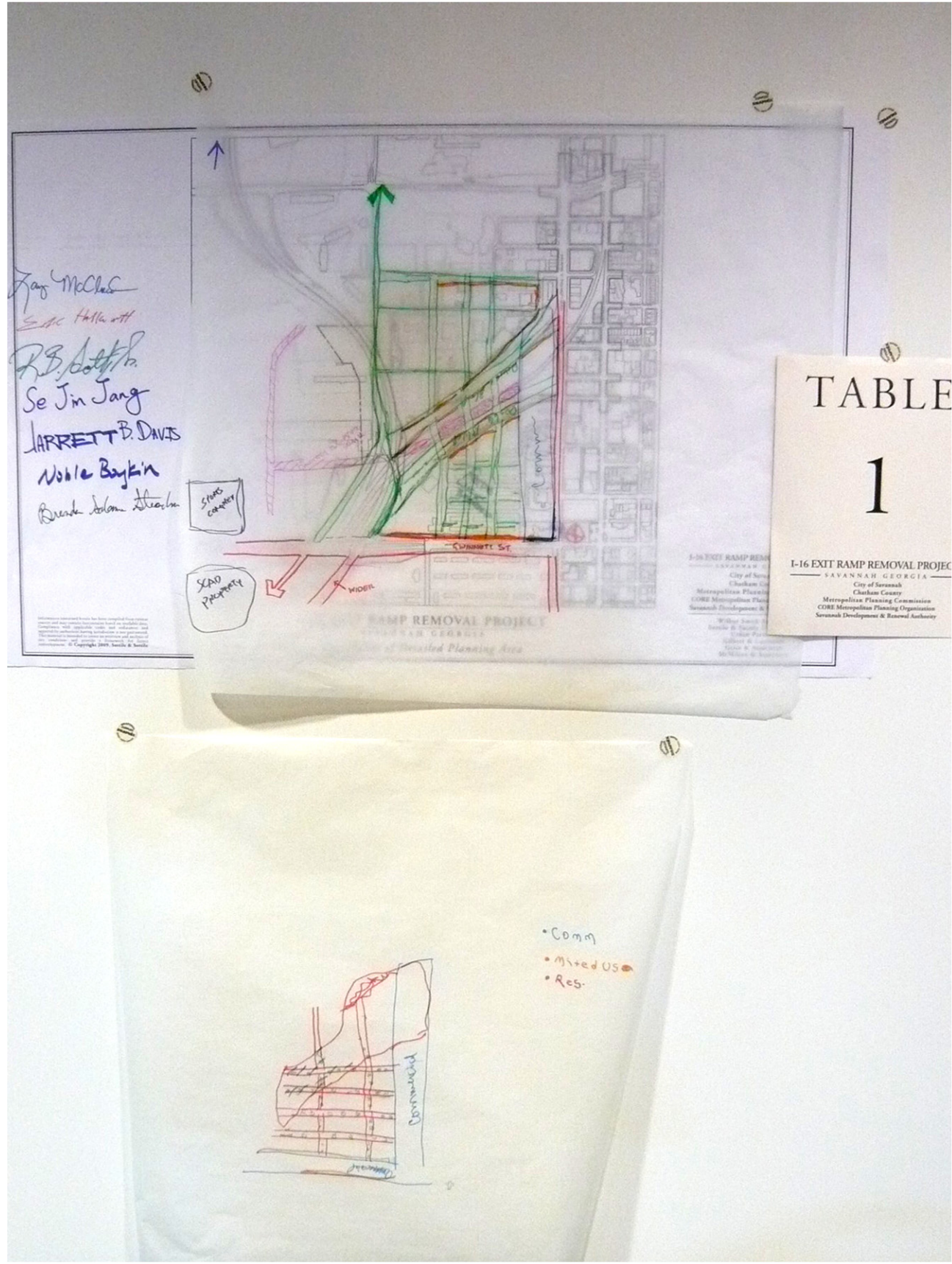


TABLE 1 CONCEPTS *Hands-On Design*

- Encourage diverse interests in the area
- I-16 at Gwinnett – beautified as a major entry to Savannah; Gwinnett connected as an important corridor
- From Gwinnett, a redeveloped Boundary Street connects to Jones and Louisville
- I-16 movement to spread out to network vs. “Pipeline” approach
- Boulevard to replace I-16 ramps with green space between to accommodate bikeway or canal
- Residential – Mixed & Sustainable

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TABLE 1 CONCEPTS *Hands-On Design Session*

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SAVANNAH, GEORGIA
City of Savannah
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TABLE 2 CONCEPTS

Hands-On Design Session

TABLE 2 CONCEPTS

Hands-On Design

- Essential to knit together major projects and create access among them, where historic development pattern meets new technology/development; Avoid barriers
- Access to redevelopment area from 17, coming south; after Oglethorpe exit – How can we get in?
- Triangular garden lots – Develop to showcase farming, working history & sustainability
- Work with the flood plain in creating civic space (i.e. develop lake & canal)
- Trolley Hub developed at Union Station

I-16 EXIT RAMP REMOVAL PROJECT
 SAVANNAH GEORGIA
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TABLE 3 CONCEPTS

Hands-On Design

- Restore historic street patterns & residential community
- Gwinnett & Louisville – Improve entry experience to Savannah
- I-16 Exit ramp transitions to an urban boulevard, creates numerous economic development opportunities
- Park & Ride – Access to possible arena site, streetcar, canal, mixed-use development
- Design for not only cars; Route west for streetcar; Create connections to West Savannah neighborhoods
- Sustainable boulevards for residents and business users
- Public Park to honor W.W. Law

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TABLE 3 CONCEPTS

Hands-On Design Session

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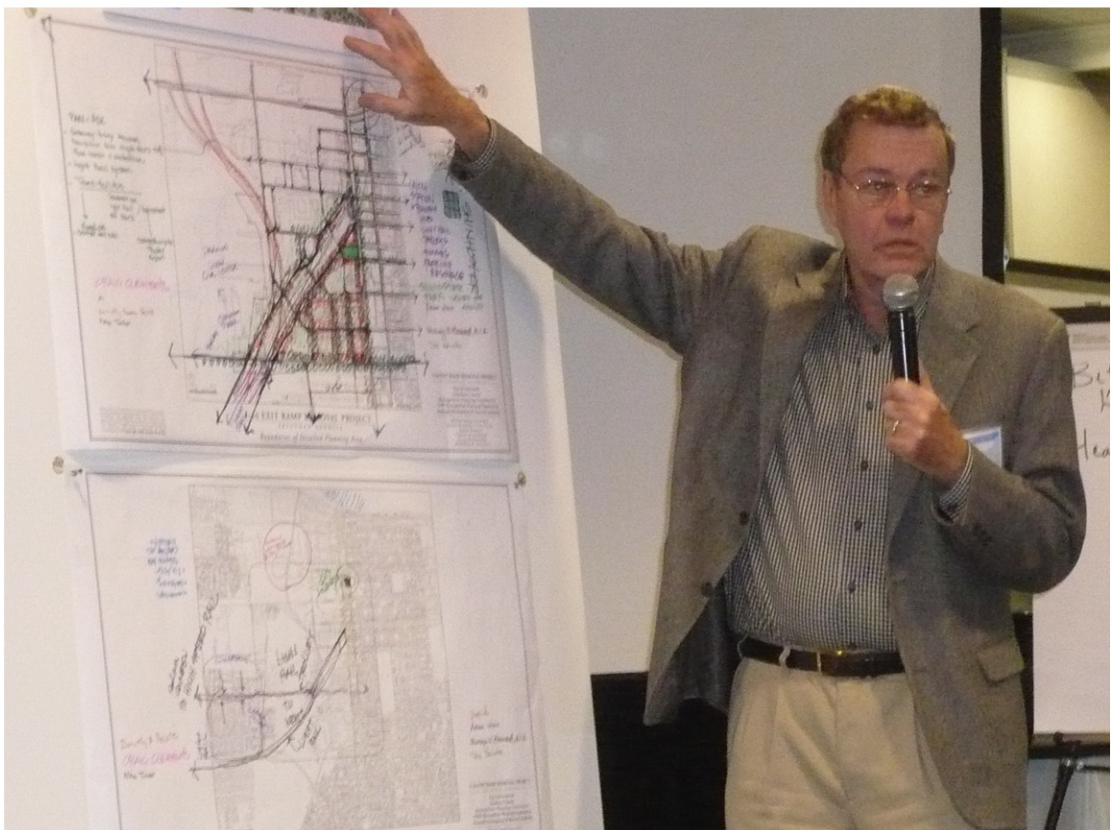


TABLE 4 CONCEPTS

Hands-On Design

- Disperse highway among city streets
- Enhance Oglethorpe interchange to allow on-ramp south
- Transit Hub – Light rail to west for commuters, linking to trolley downtown; Intermodal connections from downtown system to western suburbs, airport, Pooler
- Reconnect street grids through Kayton & Frazier Homes
- Montgomery Street restored to two-way movement
- Connect streets across route of ramps
- Re-establish Selma & Roberts Streets
- Re-establish vital edges on MLK
- Create connected, walkable streets with short blocks, street trees
- Build parks with retail & active edges
- Re-build Union Station as transit hub; Psychological value in the image of Union Station; Civic focal point.
- Identity for district - naming opportunity

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TABLE 4 CONCEPTS

Hands-On Design Session

I-16 EXIT RAMP REMOVAL PROJECT

SAVANNAH GEORGIA
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TABLE 5 CONCEPTS

Hands-On Design

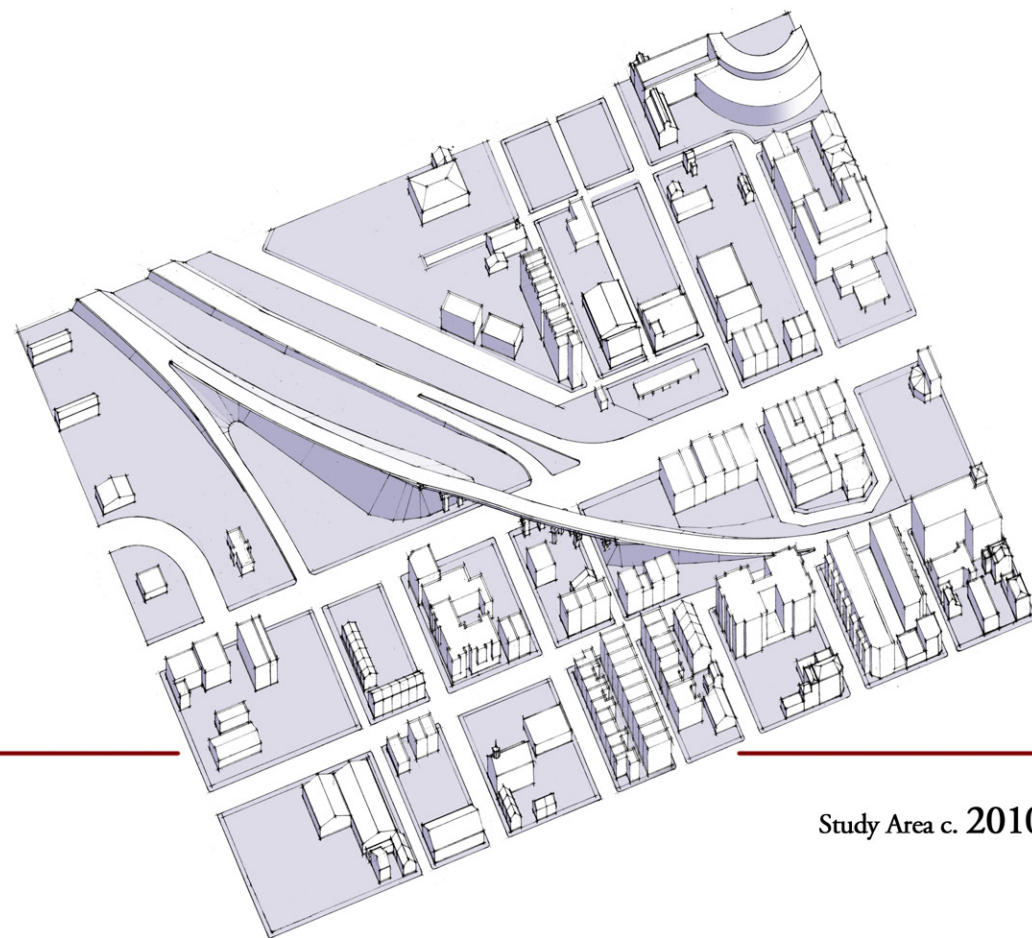
- Enhance I-16 gateway just north of Gwinnett; create routes into parking decks – intermodal center; tie to possible light rail on MLK
- Enhance interchanges at Gwinnett & Louisville
- Amtrak – Connect to Visitors Center
- East/west access from MLK to possible arena district via Cohen Street; Develop smaller streets west of MLK
- Develop Green space / Urban garden / lake within former right-of-way
- Create an Arts & entertainment – mixed-use district; with offerings for children - museum, gaming, movie theater
- Cultural/museum district along MLK & small business incubators
- The Frogtown Fleamarket, mix of produce and goods; Urban Grocery
- Encourage 3-4 story building heights along MLK; Allow for taller building heights, stepping back from MLK; bring in affordable & senior housing
- Bike routes, Connect to Henry & Anderson, return to two-way movement
- Create a destination for Savannah suburbanites to come Downtown

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TABLE 5 CONCEPTS

Hands-On Design Session

I-16 EXIT RAMP REMOVAL PROJECT
 SAVANNAH GEORGIA
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Study Area c. 2010



Study Area c. Future

Removal of the I-16 on-ramp and exits west to Gwinnett Street allows the creation of a new civic building fronting onto MLK, Jr. Boulevard with a public reserve to the west within the former right-of-way. This could be held as a green space and a future rail corridor opportunity or used as a neighborhood development area. A public park could be located along MLK, Jr. Boulevard across from the Civil Rights Museum with re-established streets and mixed-use buildings surrounding its edges as well as significant infill and revitalization opportunities within the Montgomery Street Corridor.

CHARRETTE CONCEPT

Maximum Exit Ramp Removal

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I-16 EXIT RAMP REMOVAL PROJECT

SAVANNAH GEORGIA

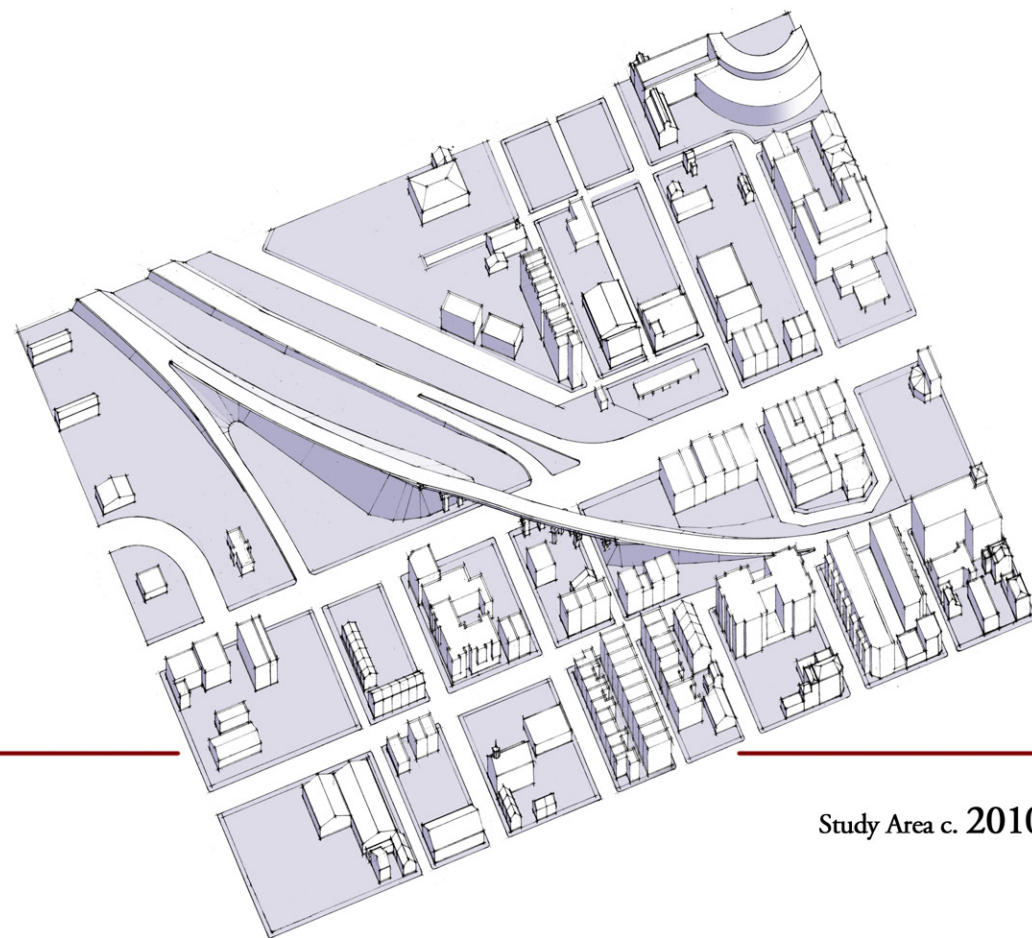
City of Savannah

Chatham County

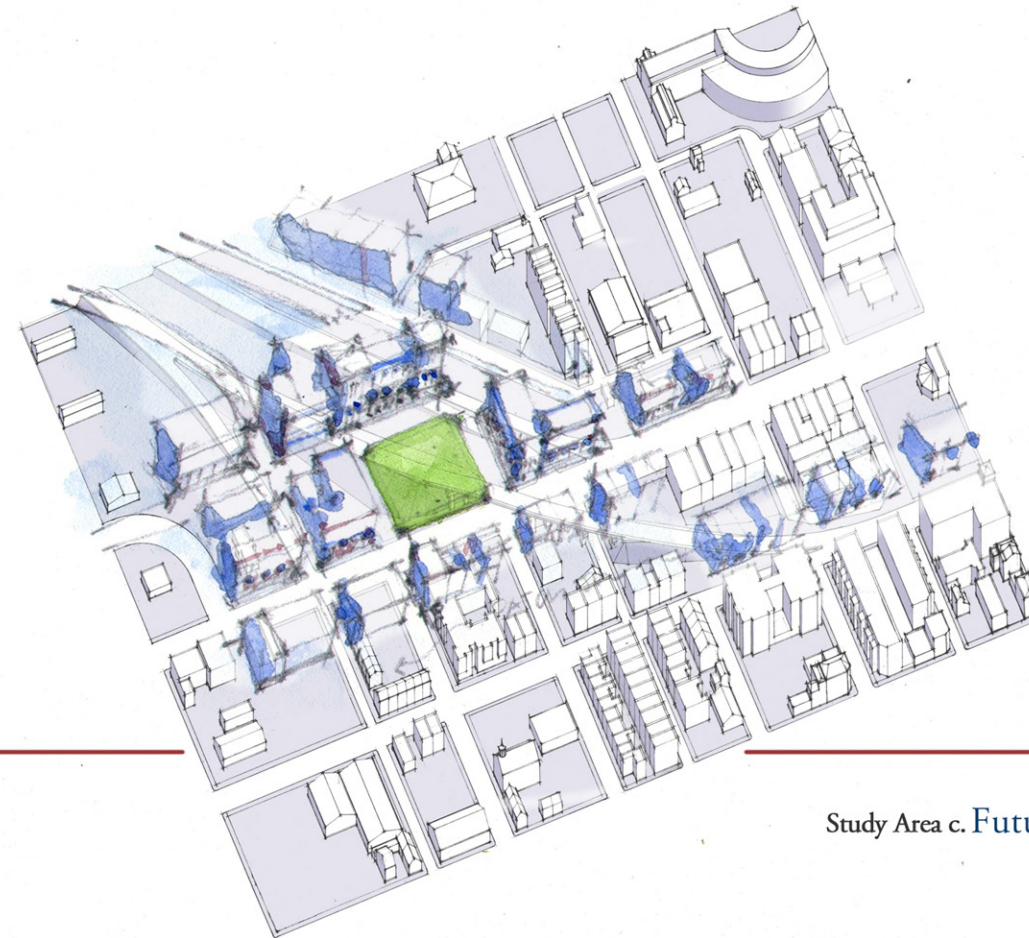
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Savannah Development & Renewal Authority



Study Area c. 2010



Study Area c. Future

Removal of the I-16 on-ramp and exits immediately west of MLK, Jr. Boulevard would allow for the creation of a prominent civic building site fronting a park at MLK, Jr. Boulevard.

This new park, across from the Civil Rights Museum, would have the opportunity for multiple additional mixed-use building sites surrounding its edges. With the removal of the elevated ramp structure, significant revitalization opportunities would also be created within the Montgomery Street Corridor.

CHARRETTE CONCEPT

Minimum Exit Ramp Removal

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I-16 EXIT RAMP REMOVAL PROJECT

SAVANNAH GEORGIA

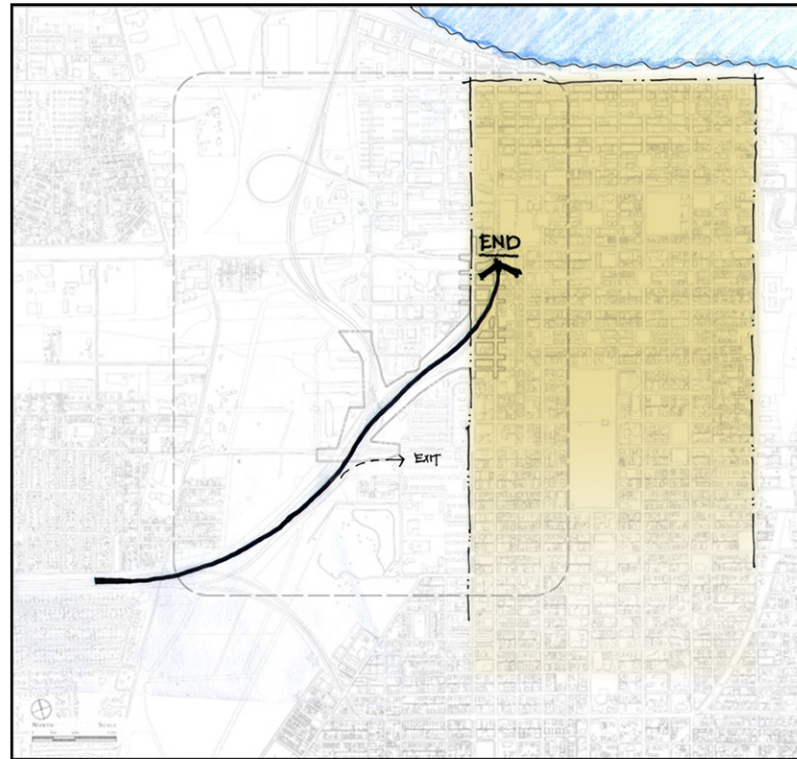
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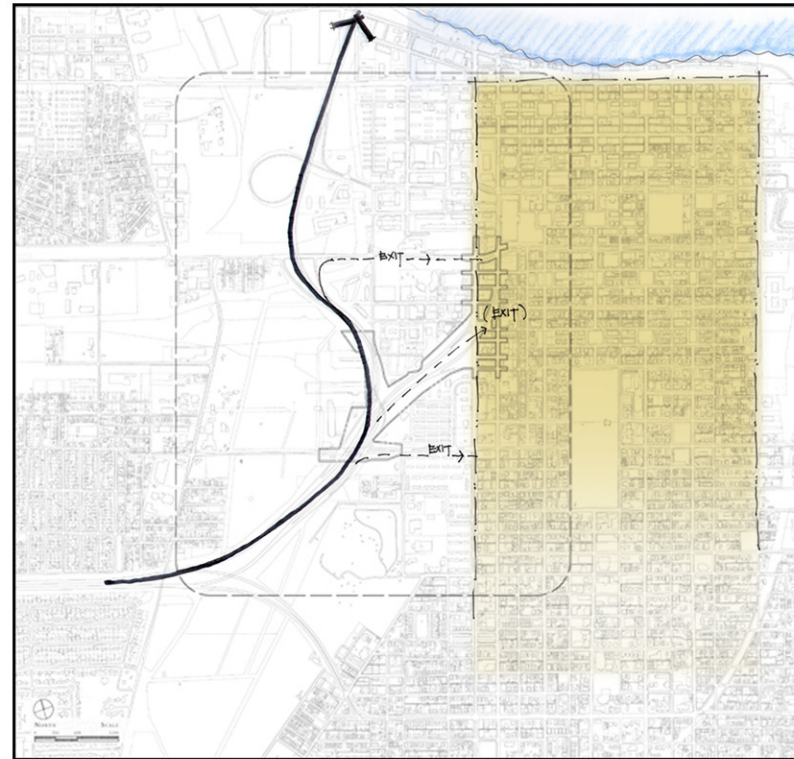
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1965

The Highway Ends

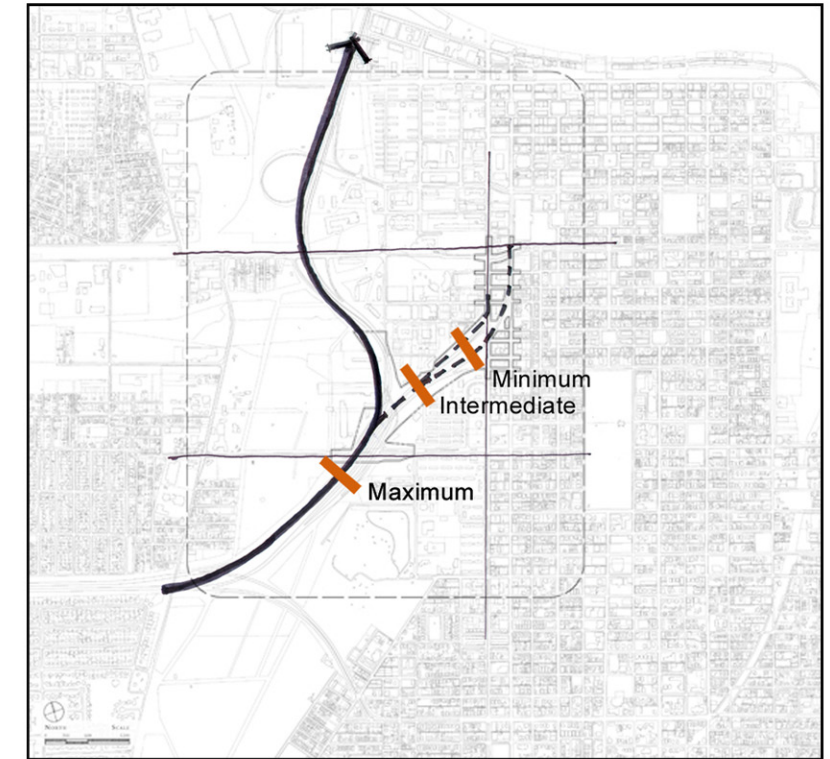
When I-16 was originally planned, the highway came to a complete terminus in downtown Savannah where the on-ramp and exit ramp currently merge into the urban street grid at MLK, Jr. Blvd. and Montgomery Street.



1990

The Highway Continues

By 1990, a new highway structure was constructed, continuing the end of I-16 to connect with Highway 17, and creating a continuous route with multiple access points. Currently, the MLK and Montgomery ramps of I-16 serve only as an exit from the highway to downtown Savannah.



2010

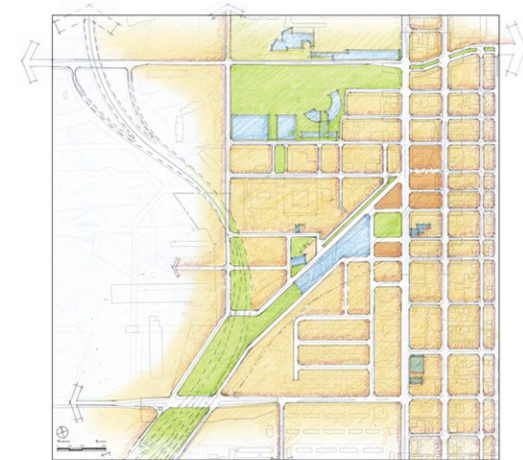
Now Only an Exit

THREE CONCEPTS
With the terminus now functioning as an exit, different strategies to reconfigure the ramps and restore neighborhoods can be considered. Three concepts were explored at the Charrette. These are differentiated by the extent of their removal of the I-16 ramps.



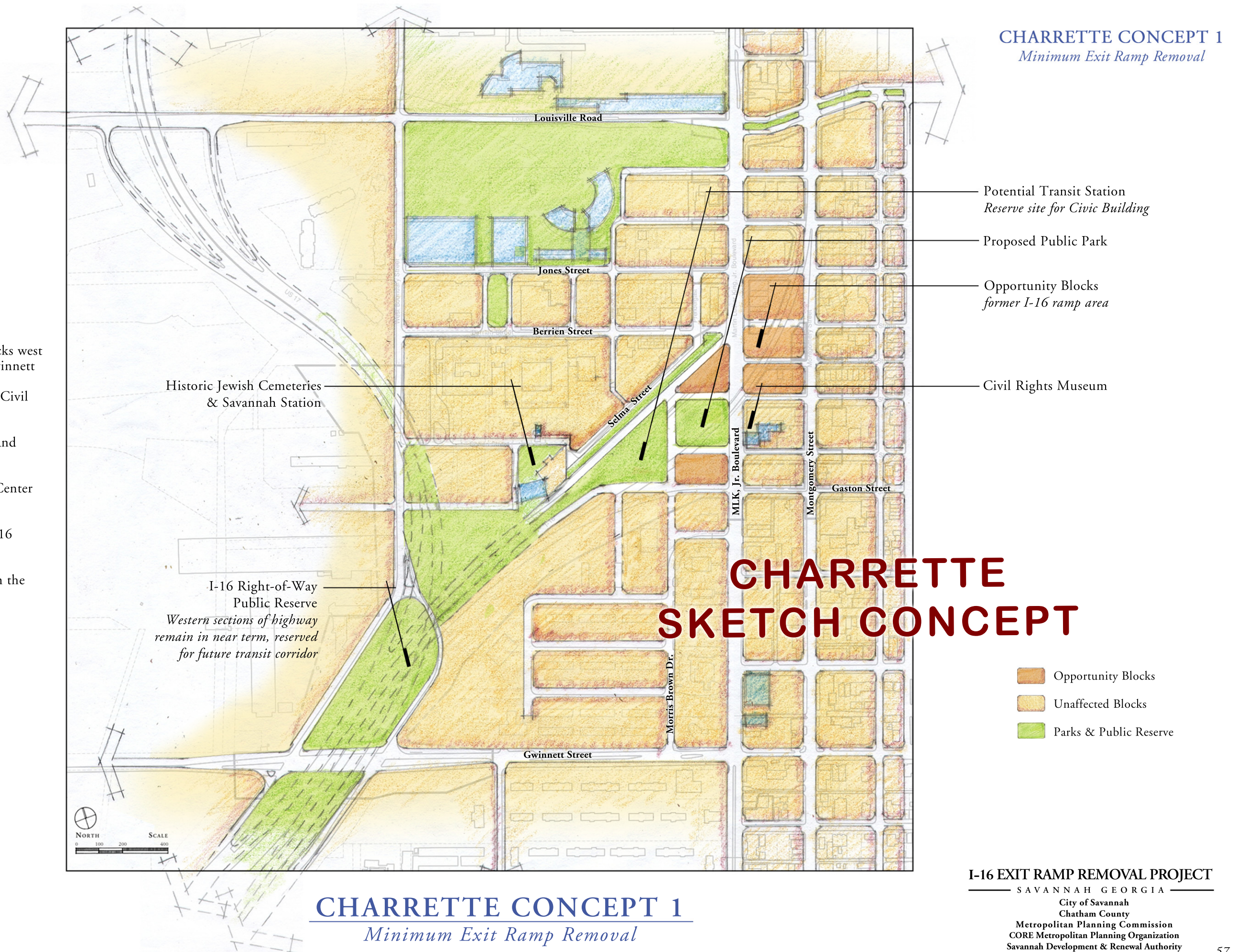
Minimum Removal KEY IDEAS & BENEFITS

- Remove Exit Ramps initially two blocks west of MLK; in the future, remove to Gwinnett
- Public Park on MLK across from the Civil Rights Museum
- Restoration of Historic Selma Street and later, Roberts Street
- Potential Site for new Transit / Rail Center fronting Public Park
- Potential for future rail corridor in I-16 right-of-way
- Opens two new developable blocks on the West side of MLK



FUTURE CONCEPT
Transit Station on Public Reserve,
Highway removed back to Gwinnett Street

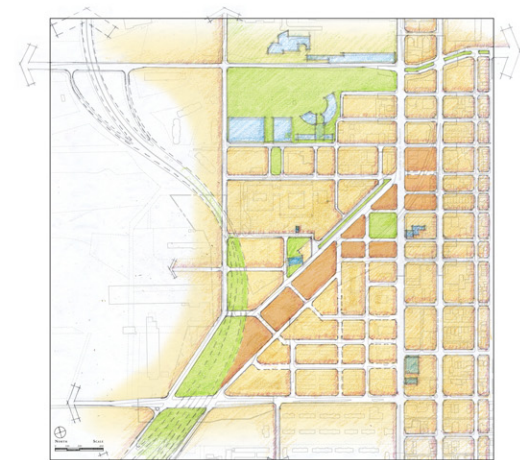
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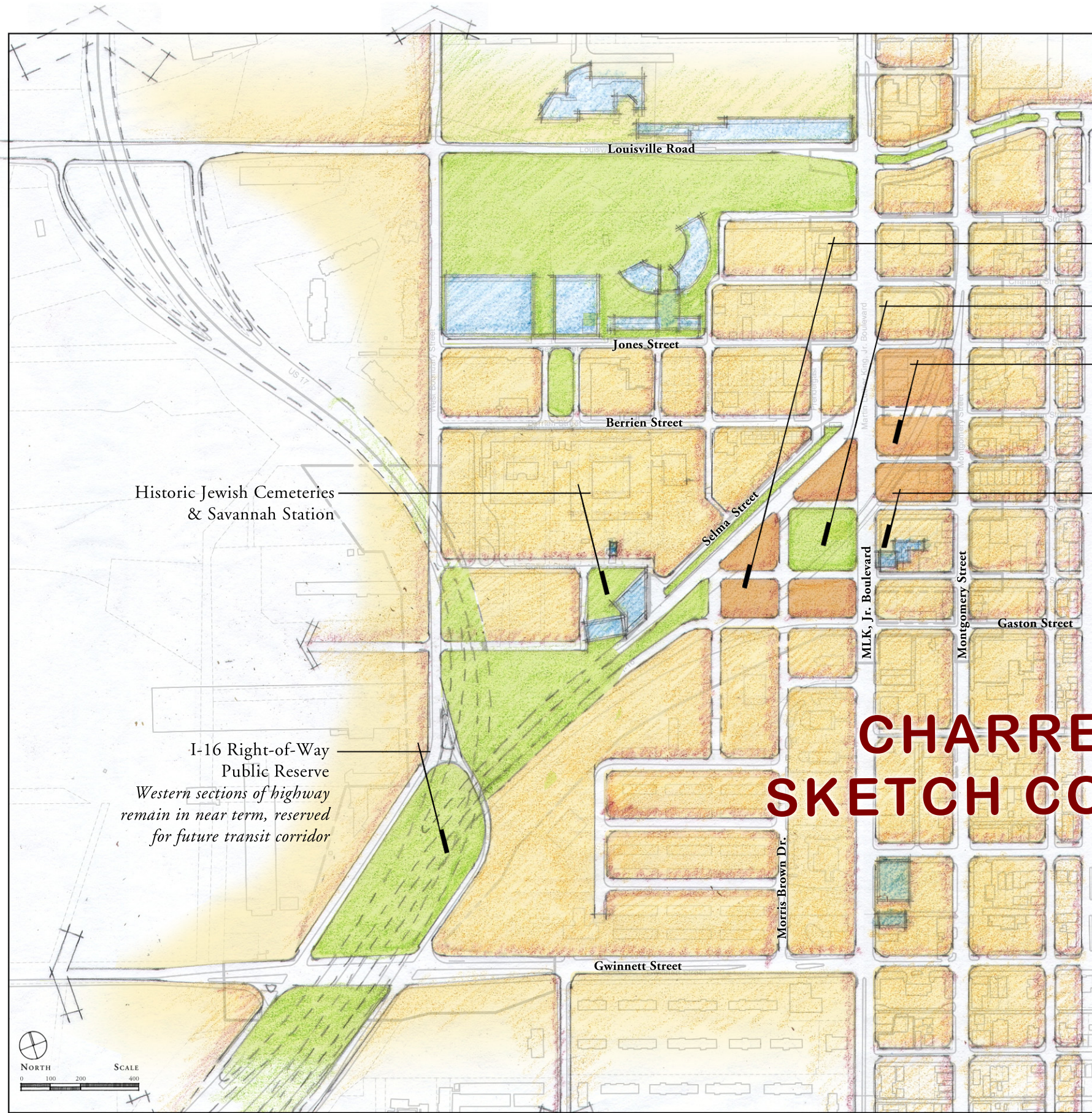
Intermediate Removal KEY IDEAS & BENEFITS

- Remove Exit Ramps initially three blocks west of MLK; in the future, remove to Gwinnett
- Public Park on MLK across from the Civil Rights Museum
- Urban Boulevard along Historic Selma Street
- Opens three developable blocks on the East side of MLK
- Opens four new developable blocks on the West side of MLK



FUTURE CONCEPT
New Development within former I-16 right-of-way
Highway removed back to Gwinnett Street

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CHARRETTE CONCEPT 2 Intermediate Exit Ramp Removal

- Opportunity Blocks
former I-16 ramp area
- Proposed Public Park
- Opportunity Blocks
former I-16 ramp area
- Civil Rights Museum

CHARRETTE SKETCH CONCEPT

- Opportunity Blocks
- Unaffected Blocks
- Parks & Public Reserve

CHARRETTE CONCEPT 2 Intermediate Exit Ramp Removal

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Maximum Removal KEY IDEAS & BENEFITS

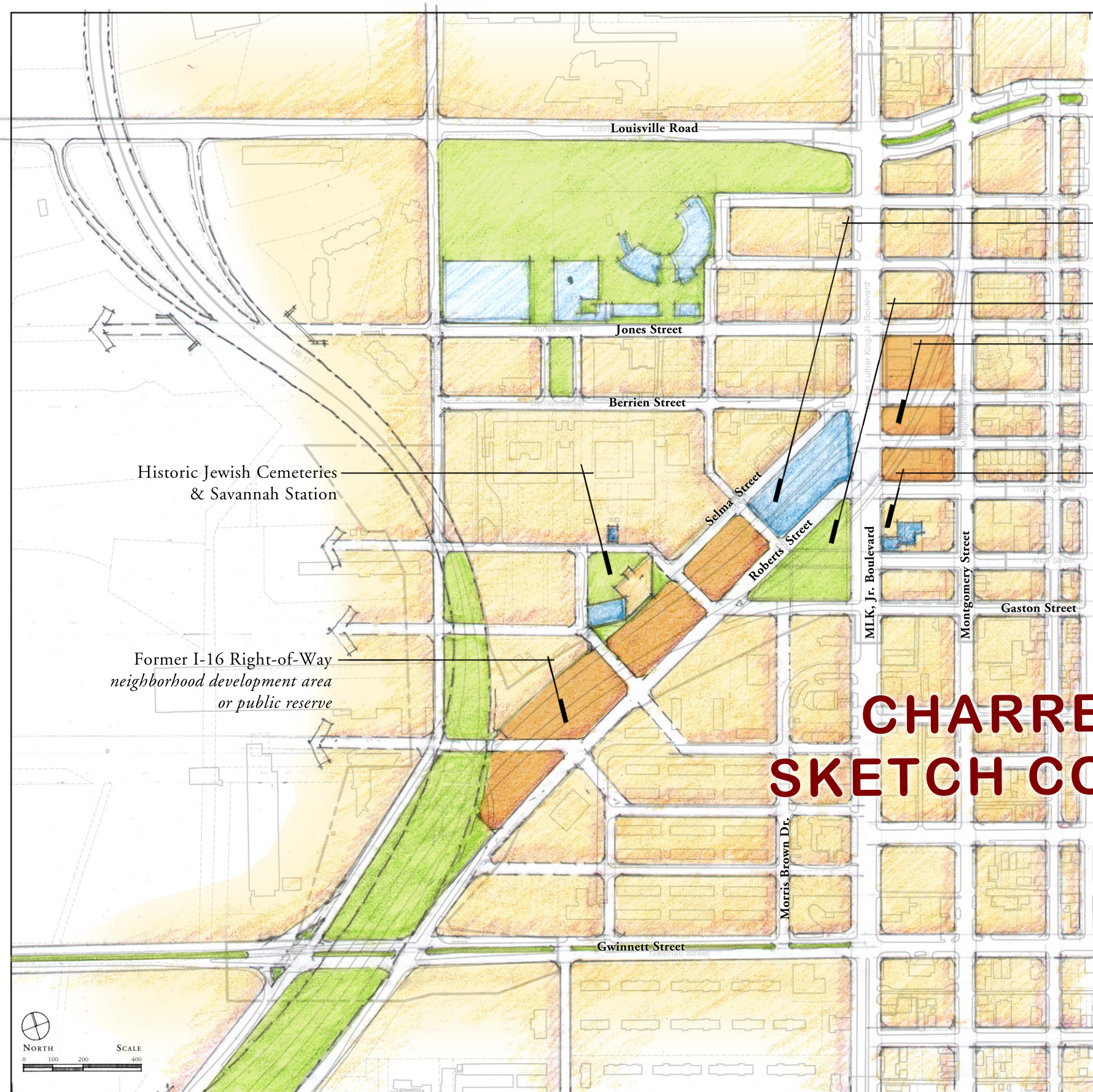
- Remove Exit Ramps back to Gwinnett Street
- Public Park on MLK across from the Civil Rights Museum
- Restoration of historic Roberts Street
- Potential Site for new Transit Center fronting MLK on old Union Station Site
- Opens three developable blocks on the East side of MLK
- Potential to open four large developable blocks West of MLK



ALTERNATE CONCEPT

Public Reserve for future rail line in I-16 right-of-way

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CHARRETTE CONCEPT 3

Maximum Exit Ramp Removal

Potential Transit Center
former I-16 ramp area

Proposed Public Park

Opportunity Blocks
former I-16 ramp area

Civil Rights Museum

CHARRETTE SKETCH CONCEPT

- Opportunity Blocks
- Unaffected Blocks
- Parks & Public Reserve

CHARRETTE CONCEPT 3

Maximum Exit Ramp Removal

I-16 EXIT RAMP REMOVAL PROJECT

SAVANNAH GEORGIA

City of Savannah

Chatham County

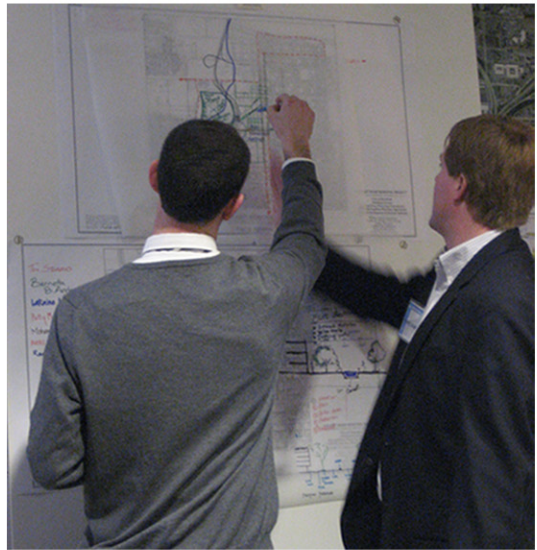
Metropolitan Planning Commission

CORE Metropolitan Planning Organization

Savannah Development & Renewal Authority

COMMENTS ON WORK-IN-PROGRESS

Presentation, February 19 2010



Citizens helped draw preliminary concepts during the Hands-On Design Session and Open Studio.

- Strengthen community - develop enough creative capital to be sustainable
- Need to develop analysis to identify what “entertainment/culture” means
- Project must incorporate economic and financial plan
- Does one component stand out as achievable now?
- Common ownership of land by the City - could make redevelopment happen more quickly
- Next Steps - 7 year game plan to build - money to make vision actionable - must proceed with the optimism that it MUST happen
- Don’t create expectations if leadership can’t make it happen
- Let’s be bold and mighty forces will come to our aid
- Make corridor the destination once again
- It is Time to Act
- Concept and Charrette format used is productive - nothing is carved in stone
- Pull together- something positive will result
- Multi-modal question - getting to historic district core - facilitate transportation - discussion/need
- Where will the people come from?
Who will live where new neighborhoods are created?
- Be inclusive with the community
- Keep land costs down, keep ownership in City’s hands - give a helping hand to smaller developers and land owners
- Value of land could support financing
- Create opportunities for all citizens to invest
- Reasonable time frame?
 - 10-20 year build out
 - Spread investment out over larger area
 - Government entities determine priority
- Zoom to fine grain details
- Eco-land use-finance - government has to provide support
- Let’s not blow it - an opportunity like this comes along only once in many years
- MLK/Montgomery needs to remain the priority
- How will we handle traffic? Alice? Gaston?
- City government has to commit - fast track
- Public funds have to be committed to creating and sustaining. Rooftops=business
- Resources need to be put in place to support residential and business growth
- Can a resolute action be taken? Yes. We should move quickly and expediently
- Very good - inspired to support what’s best for the City
- Doesn’t have to be grand but need an entry way to Savannah that represents Savannah



New ideas shared during Pin-Ups and Public Presentations.

DESIGN CHARRETTE

Process & Participation

I-16 EXIT RAMP REMOVAL PROJECT

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Savannah Development & Renewal Authority

I-16 Exit Ramp Removal Study Open House

When: October 12th 2:00-7:00pm

Where: Con-Ed Building Ball Room, 714 MLK Jr. Blvd.

What: A public meeting in “Open House” format.

Come view progress, and provide input on:

**Civic Master Plan Concepts
Economic Strategy
Transportation Analysis
MLK Jr. Blvd. Streetscape Plan
Urban Ecology Study**

More Information:

**I-16: Ellen Harris: 651-1482, harrise@thempc.org
MLK Jr. Blvd. Streetscape Plan: SDRA 651-6973**

Invitation to Open House



Transportation Analysis, Economic Analysis, Cost Estimates were Presented for all Three Alternative Concepts

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CONCEPT PROPOSAL OPEN HOUSE

Public Review & Commentary



Design team members reviewed the concept proposals with elected officials.



Individual interest groups, like the Savannah Bicycle Campaign, had opportunities to discuss ideas with the design team.



Supplemental information on the Martin Luther King, Jr./Montgomery Corridor was presented by community advocates.

On October 12, 2010, the public was invited to the I-16 Exit Ramp Removal Study Open House. As a result of the charette held in February 2010, three preliminary plans for redevelopment of the area were developed in detail. At the Open House, the public was encouraged to comment, ask questions, and participate in discussion.

The Open House was held at the Con-Ed Center in the historic McKelvey-Powell building at 714 MLK, Jr. Boulevard. In attendance were representatives of the City of Savannah, Chatham County Elected Officials, business owners, advocacy groups, residents, and members of the community.

I-16 EXIT RAMP REMOVAL PROJECT

SAVANNAH GEORGIA

City of Savannah

Chatham County

Metropolitan Planning Commission

CORE Metropolitan Planning Organization

Savannah Development & Renewal Authority



Representatives from Chatham County, City of Savannah, Elected Officials, and Members of the Community had the opportunity to review the three alternative design concepts, ask questions and provide comments.

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CONCEPT PROPOSAL OPEN HOUSE

Public Process & Participation

I-16 EXIT RAMP REMOVAL PROJECT
 SAVANNAH GEORGIA
 City of Savannah
 Chatham County
 Metropolitan Planning Commission
 CORE Metropolitan Planning Organization
 Savannah Development & Renewal Authority

October 12, 2010 Open House Results

On October 12, 2010 three concepts were presented that were developed as a direct result of the community ideas vocalized at the February 2010 charrette. Participants in the Open House were asked to fill out a survey form (see below).

I-16 Exit Ramp Removal Study Questionnaire

Your input is critical to this important project and we need to hear from you. Please circle or write in your response.

1. Do you think the I-16 exit ramps at MLK Jr. Blvd. and Montgomery Street should be removed?

Yes No

2. Do you prefer:
Concept 1 Concept 2 Concept 3 Other (please explain)_____

3. If you chose a preferred concept above, what do you like about it (circle all that apply)?

Street pattern Block sizes Greenspace
Restoration of historic streets Traffic pattern Selma Boulevard
Restoration of blocks on MLK and Montgomery Other:_____

What do you not like about it? _____

4. Do you believe that the Economic Strategy is appropriate for the area?

Yes No Don't know

If no, please elaborate on what should be included in the Economic Strategy:

5. Do you believe the community input, goals, and vision provided during the charrette in February 2010 were incorporated into the concepts?

Yes No Didn't attend charrette

If no, what input, goals, or vision was left out?

6. Recognizing that this study is a feasibility study and more analysis will be necessary, what do you think needs to be studied further as a part of the next phase of analysis on removing the exit ramps?

7. Please provide any other comments or suggestions you feel may be helpful:

The survey form was also posted on the MPC webpage (www.thempc.org) for 30 days. A summary of the results of the survey compiled at the public meeting and from the website is below.

Should exit ramps be removed?

- ✦ Yes- 90%
- ✦ No- 2%
- ✦ Blank- 8%

Preferred Concept:

- ✦ Concept 1- 8%
- ✦ Concept 2- 28%
- ✦ Concept 3- 55%
- ✦ None/Other- 8%

Based on the results of the survey, Concept 3 was selected as the Preferred Concept and additional analysis on Concept 3 was completed.

I-16 Exit Ramp Removal Study Open House

When: October 12th 2:00-7:00pm

Where: Con-Ed Building Ball Room, 714 MLK Jr. Blvd.

What: A public meeting in "Open House" format.

Come view progress, and provide input on:

- Civic Master Plan Concepts
- Economic Strategy
- Transportation Analysis
- MLK Jr. Blvd. Streetscape Plan
- Urban Ecology Study

More Information: I-16: Ellen Harris: 651-1482, harris@thempc.org
MLK Jr. Blvd. Streetscape Plan: SDRA 651-6973

IN PROGRESS OPEN HOUSE

October 12, 2010 Results

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I-16 Open House October 12, 2010

Comments

Concept 1

- I think that concept 1 could be the first phase to concept 3 to help financially
- Simple- KISS Keep it simple less expensive
- Put in more greenspace
- Seems like the most feasible in the near future
- More room for private development
- Hopefully you can start and finish sooner with #1
- Most bang for buck

Concept 2

- I don't like the way Concept 2 meets MLK and blocks are too large
- Less traffic near public school
- I like the big block better than concept 3
- More viable space at lower cost
- Less streets and more income from taxes and property value
- Don't like street emptying into corner of Jones and Berrien
- New/old road will not unload on Montgomery- this is good
- Need more greenspace
- Option 2 would create unusable properties on what would effectively be an off-ramp, and would not achieve sufficient reintegration of the additional land to justify the cost.

Concept 3

- Restores pattern of the city better
- Do in phases
- We get the best bang for the bucks used
- Will be empty for awhile
- Better scale
- Square park more Savannah
- Selma Blvd typical Savannah
- The greenspace seems superficial nod to historicism and not well integrated into the design
- More connectivity potential would emphasize orthogonal streets over Roberts

- I would convert Roberts to housing "loop" and not connect it to Gwinnett
- Is a 10 year timeline feasible/possible/ maybe a mix of concept 2 and 3 is best
- Green
- Creative
- Go ahead and invest for the future and the best option for neighborhood, like smaller blocks, smaller development opportunities
- It will be the most effective and beneficial to the city in the long run. It will bring the community back together
- Rather than having the option to add onto each phase, wouldn't it make sense to do it all now? Financially and for the residents
- Good to take away problem and restore community
- Go ahead and take the problem (flyover) away the first time, instead of creating a new problem- time contingency between concepts.
- May take so long to implement and complete
- More squares
- More potential for smaller development
- Provides more space and more room to develop more of the land
- Area 10- based on the scope of the space, let's put a walking trail/green space in
- Shorter varied blocks
- Include service corridors/lanes
- Although it is the most costly, Option 3 provides the best and most workable end result. My second choice would be Option 1, as the cheapest.

Economic Strategy/land use

- More houses, stores
- Friendly user businesses for the neighborhood
- More food stores
- I think particular uses of land being freed up should come later. Priority should be on getting the flyover out and reconnect streets
- Mix of uses- not a repeat of low-density residential in nearby areas
- This could be a good spot for the transfer center to include a bike depot and streetcar exchange

- Creating a liveable community by mixed use and income
- Integration of economic levels of housing- desegregating commercial, affordable housing, luxury housing
- This timeline is more like 25-30 years
- Mixed use
- Too vague
- I would prefer they return to the station (AMTRAC) where it is now is not economically integrated
- Economic development will be stronger with bikes encouraged to be part of plan
- Please include more retail space, however keep the cost low
- Before we create 100k more retail space will it be used? Empty storefronts are not good
- Support minority businesses- to help them develop within your plan
- Include redevelopment of MLK
- Include more modern affordable housing
- Concern about perceived negative impact of Kayton Homes- City could split up lowest income residents and spread out in other blocks.
- City can require new development include % of affordable housing
- It would be great if the main library were moved here at some point in the future
- Don't let it be hotel space.
- How do you retain the residential space and preserve the history of the area?

I-16 Open House October 12, 2010 Comments (cont.)

Transportation

- Concern about potential impact on Louisville Road and Gwinnett Street (Concept 3)
- Transportation study graphics are not very clear
- Connect west highway to east highway
- On ramp needed in I-16 west at Bay Street to accommodate truck traffic
- More study needed on traffic patterns on Gwinnett and Louisville Road
- Addition of an off ramp from Hwy 17 to Oglethorpe Ave
- Study off/on ramps to hwy 17
- No mention of the passenger rail train station
- Exiting from interstate with multiple lanes wanting to turn left (north) is a bad concept
- Leave the ramp where it is (location). Reconstruct on pedestals (new design) allowing traffic patterns and avoid need to acquire new ROW. Traffic wise I think the existing pattern does a good job getting workers and tourists into downtown area.
- Study on-off ramp at Louisville Road
- Traffic flow in Option 3 appears to create a head-on conflict along the new boulevard (Selma). The proposed traffic flow in the restored blocks is unnecessarily complex and appears to be addressing some concern that is not readily apparent or overtly stated.
- Need to designate primary interchange as access point in and out of Historic District from I-16
- Keep Boundary Street and use it as an additional feeder into downtown via Jones, Louisville Rd, etc.
- Need another I-16 exit from SC
- More on transportation w/the identification of a transportation transfer station for multi-transportation modes.
- Also, an additional exit from the Savannah River Bridge into Savannah somewhere in the greater downtown area was excluded, but extremely needed.
- We need to look at ALL of MLK down to Bay St. and make the necessary changes as needed to prevent "bottle necks" etc.and perhaps even make some of the streets not available for left turns headed North.

- Please leave the I-16 flyover as is. Removing the flyover would dump the current eastbound commuter traffic into MLK and entry points south and west. This would create another barrier between midtown and the bridge, and, for the many of us that commute to SC every day, it is already very difficult to get out of town and to the bridge. For the many that commute to downtown on I-16, the I-16 flyover is an important access point to downtown, and removing 2 lanes of access would likely back up traffic on I-16 eastbound in the morning commute. Clearly, the importance of Montgomery is recognized because of the parking capacity that has been built along Montgomery. It's unwise to dump the traffic in elsewhere and force commuters to crawl through side streets to get to the parking that is designed for access from Montgomery. Finally, with traffic pushed west of Montgomery, SCAD students would be put at risk by the increase traffic in their dormitory complex off Boundary and their main crossings on MLK. Leave I-16 as is to conserve money and prevent negative impact on traffic. (email)
- Since moving here in 1991, I have long wondered why the east-west corridor problem hasn't been resolved. It seems that a logical solution is the extension of I-16 eastward, then joining up with the Islands Expressway. Bridges can be attractive structures and blend in with the historical nature of the city. If the eastward extension of I-16 passed just south of Forsythe Park, the Historic District would remain untouched, and some blighted areas would be eliminated. This would solve several current problems. First, trucks that are now routed down Bay Street (which is a terrible situation, especially for the tourism industry), could follow this route. Second, it would relieve much of the traffic on DeRenne Street, eliminating the need for changes there. Third, if it is decided that the LNG terminal will be sending trucks through town, this would be a much safer route. Fourth, it would give residents and visitors both far better access to Tybee than is currently available. Fifth, it would show everyone that we have the ability to maintain the integrity of our history while we progress forward with infrastructure needs. There are several ways this could all be accomplished. I-16 could link to the Truman Parkway, or to President Street near the Truman Parkway. Or it could go further east and connect to the Islands Expressway directly. The details should be worked out by the engineers. (email)

- Been very frustrating reading about it in the paper, which never once identifies, simply and clearly, where myriad morning commuters will be diverted. Most folks like to hear the bottom line first: How much will the flyover tear-down/re-routing cost me time/distance-wise? Put another way, how many tax dollars will it *cumulatively* cost, including lost-structure cost (i.e., we all spent what, \$10 million to build the flyover?), plus re-routing cost. THAT is what I and I'm sure my fellow-commuters want to know first (i.e., the bottom line). THEN we'll hear all the rosey projections about "opportunity blocks" (I just love P.R. terms cooked up by developers who smell an economic upside, taxpayer-losses be damned....). (email)

Bicycle

- Minimal bicycle accommodations +
- Bike lanes not indicated
- More study on bikeways- connect low volume streets to greenway to west
- No bike paths
- Don't like integration of pedestrians and cyclist

Floating park (citizen idea)

- Need to do more development on floating park
- Add other Shinhoster floating park
- The floating park would bring a space that could provide some great opportunities
- Floating park is cool

I-16 Open House October 12, 2010 Comments (cont.)

- Explore “walkover” concept- save a piece of ramp that crosses over MLK to form pedestrian bridge
- Prefers floating park concept
- Keeping a piece of flyover for public greenspace will increase tourism
- Make the flyover a pedestrian crosswalk and park
- In the pedestrian park over MLK- Put in a waterfall that takes coins then push a button to make the water fall from the top to a wishing pool below- gather coins also from the wishing pool
- Love bridge for crosswalk
- Prefers floating park
- Study the possible use of existing structure for pedestrian walkover
- Study the highline as a model
- If the actual overpass is left, it’s pointless

Other

- I-16 exit ramp serves as a reminder of destabilizing the community
- There is currently a “Roberts Street” in Savannah so I’d suggest changing Roberts Street to Frogtown Avenue.
- Some type of civic building in the area have a façade that replicates Union Station
- As much permeable paving as possible
- As many trees as possible
- As long as I-16 exit ramps are going to be removed, lets consider 10, 20, 30 years in the future and not have to re-do the development in a few years because we didn’t do enough initially
- Do it once and do it right- why not the best? Which will be cheaper in the long run and will be enjoyed for centuries. The better design, the more taxes it can command so #1 and #2 is apples compared to #3- oranges.
- Reuse of ramp material
- But I liked the triangular shaped gardens
- Is there a reason to consider bringing back some of the light industrial business that once was there?
- We spend too much money and time on analysis with the goal never in reach
- Recreation of Union Square would be a great addition

- There should be an anchor building and/or park- something dramatic- will be a draw like River Street- not a box building with a lawn
- Gateway opportunities on parcel 10- connect w/ Springfield canal
- Just put in more light under the bridge and introduce street lights on MLK
- Where is the downtown swimming pool?
- I do not see what the people want- you are taking away the history
- Cater towards west Broad Street not MLK
- Consult with community on Frogtown

Ideas, goals, visions omitted

- Connectivity to Springfield Canal
- Union Station
- Totally green
- Transportation hub
- Lack of train station from past
- The public transportation hub at the "Arena Site" was excluded.

Suggestions for next phase

- Bike/greenway along Roberts Street
- Service corridors
- Widths of streets
- Accommodating alternate modes of transport
- What the economic impact can actually be on the area that will be impacted- pros and cons
- How to stage and prioritize so we can afford #3 concept
- Analysis of restaurants and food providers
- Developing the street patterns and connectivity further
- Land acquisition in surrounding blocks
- MLK corridor up to 37th Street
- Stormwater management, utilities and infrastructure (preferably sustainable)
- Safe clear wayfinding
- Uses/scale/height
- Developer funding possibilities and financing
- Stormwater and localized flooding in direct areas
- Economics- direct effect on residents and commercial
- Economics- effect to community

- Access to downtown Savannah (historic district) from the west (I-16)
- Impact on the property tax base to pay for the project
- Reincorporation of public housing
- Rail
- Making it an area that draws people to it so it helps integrate the different social classes
- More visual displays or powerpoint
- The impact of removal on residents who have become acclimatized to this structure in their lives
- Environmental implications
- The effects of regentrification on low income residents
- Study the impact on parking
- Study the cost to locals who must park and enjoy the new development
- Historic Preservation
- Affordable housing
- Zoning
- Traffic and economic analysis
- Plan on rebuilding Montgomery Street (Streetscape plan)
- More traffic studies, and looking at real estate sales (buying & selling).....what retail operations are showing interest in this area?
- the economic impact, the addition of Greenspace and how we best utilize it and how this will affect the community now present.
- Appropriate exit strategies, signs, communication to the community and region. Ensuring a positive sense of arrival during remediation and construction is vital.

Reclaiming Old West Broad Street

I-16 Exit Ramp Removal Study Open House

When: July 18th 4:00-7:30 with Presentation at 6:00

Where: Con-Ed Building Ball Room, 714 MLK Jr. Blvd.

What: A public meeting in “Open House” format.

Come view the culmination of 2 years of study and extensive public input on:

- Civic Master Plan
- Economic Strategy
- Transportation Analysis
- Implementation Plan

More Information: Ellen Harris: 651-1482, harrise@thempc.org

The invitation for the Final Open House, July 18th, 2012



Information on the previous public meetings was available for review.



Local news media interviewed citizens on the I-16 flyover removal.



The open house allowed citizens to study the Civic Master Plan and proposed street sections in detail.



A synchro analysis provided the community with a visual representation of alternative future traffic patterns.

FINAL OPEN HOUSE

On July 18, 2012, the final public open house and presentation was held at the Con-Ed Center at 714 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard.

Members of the community, residents, business owners, representatives from the City of Savannah, and Elected Officials from the City of Savannah and Chatham County participated.

The Civic Master Plan for 'Reclaiming West Broad Street' was presented during the final public open house along with the transportation analysis, economic study, and implementation plan and timeline. Detailed materials were also available for review in individual table stations that were arranged according to topics. Project representatives were available to receive input, answer questions and provide additional information.



The I-16 Civic Master Plan, developed from the public's preferred alternative, was available for review and comment.



Design team members were available to answer questions and receive feedback from the public.



Stations were available to discuss the Civic Master Plan, economic analysis, transportation analysis and implementation strategies.

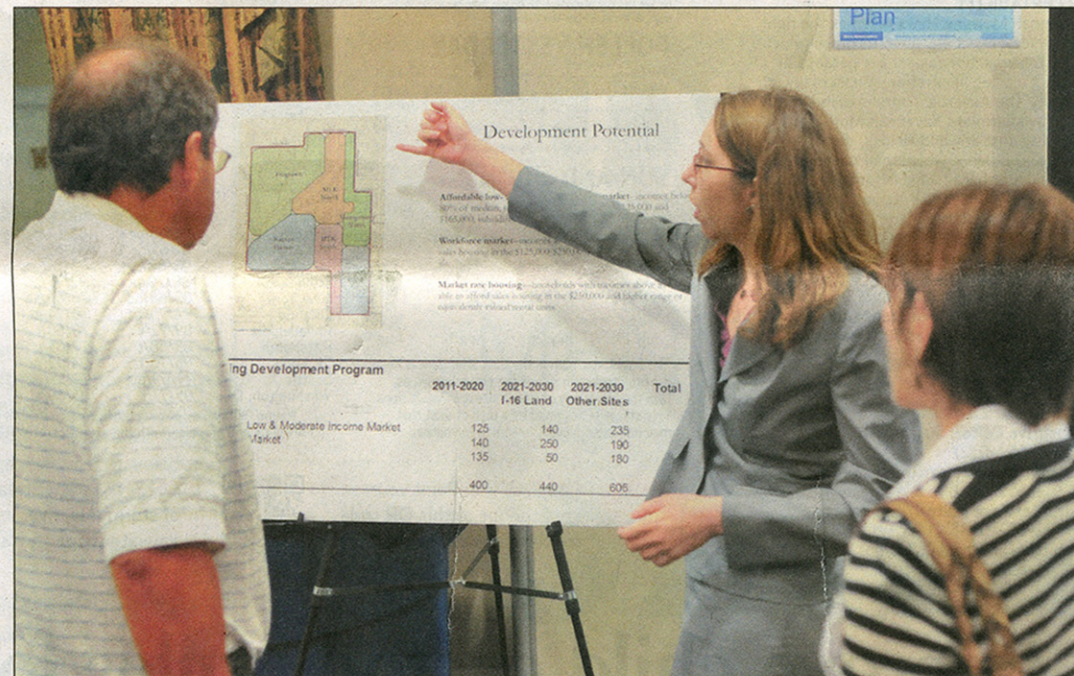
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FINAL OPEN HOUSE

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I-16 FLYOVER REMOVAL PLANS MOVE FORWARD



Richard Burkhardt/Savannah Morning News

Ellen Harris of the Metropolitan Planning Commission talks about the development potential of the I-16 flyover removal during an open house Wednesday evening at the Con Ed Building on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

MPC presents design for MLK at open house

BY ADAM VAN BRIMMER

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One downtown Savannah monument's days are numbered.

The Earl T. Shinhoster Overpass, better known as the Interstate 16 flyover, moved closer to its final demise Wednesday with the unveiling of the conceptual plan to remove it and restore the historical street structure of the area.

The design was presented during an open house hosted by the

Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission at the Con-Ed Building on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, within site of the I-16 terminus that opened in 1967.

"Go home and mark this date down," Tom Thomson, the MPC's executive director, told the crowd of approximately 25 Savannahians in attendance. "Ten to 12 years from now, you'll be able to say you were there the night we moved this project forward."

Wednesday's meeting was held as the flyover's removal project, or the

Reclaiming Old West Broad Street initiative as it is officially known, moves from the "planning phase" to the "required documentation and approval phase," according to project manager Ellen Harris.

The open house also comes 13 days before a potential source of funding for the project, the Transportation Investment Act, better known as T-SPLOST, goes before local voters. T-SPLOST would include \$22 million for the \$37.2 million project.

SEE FLYOVER, PAGE 5A



Community members were presented with details on the project.



Elected Officials shared the history of Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. and the importance of removing the I-16 flyover.



The I-16 Civic Master Plan was presented during the open house.

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FINAL OPEN HOUSE
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I-16 EXIT RAMP REMOVAL PROJECT

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