



*downtown*MACON

*Economic
Development Strategy
and Urban Design Plan*

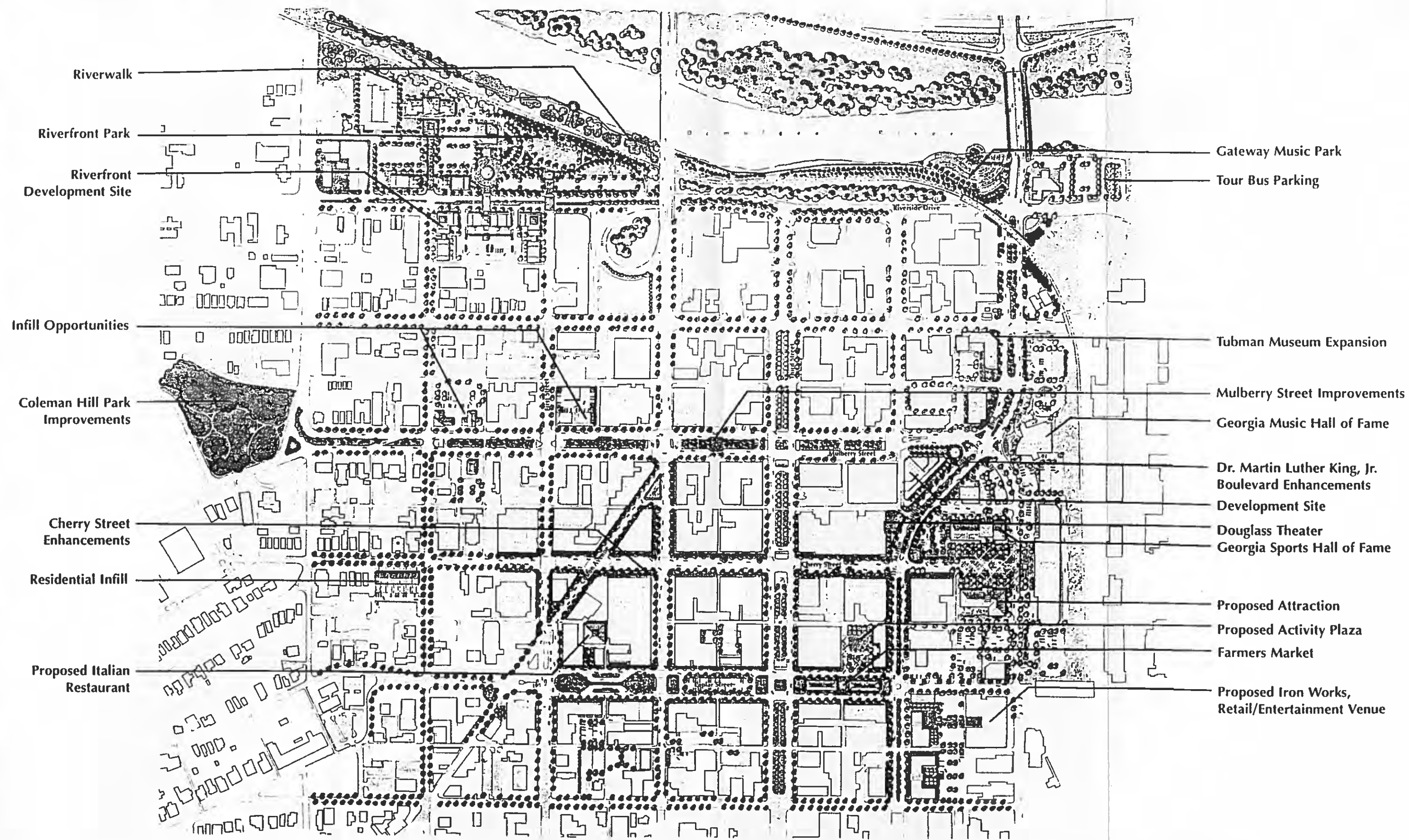
*Draft
For Board Review*

*Prepared for
NewTown Macon, Inc.*

*Prepared by
LDR International, Inc.*

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Map 4. Downtown Illustrative Plan



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard

Capitalizing on Development Opportunities and Streetscape Enhancements to Reinforce Macon's Visitor Domain

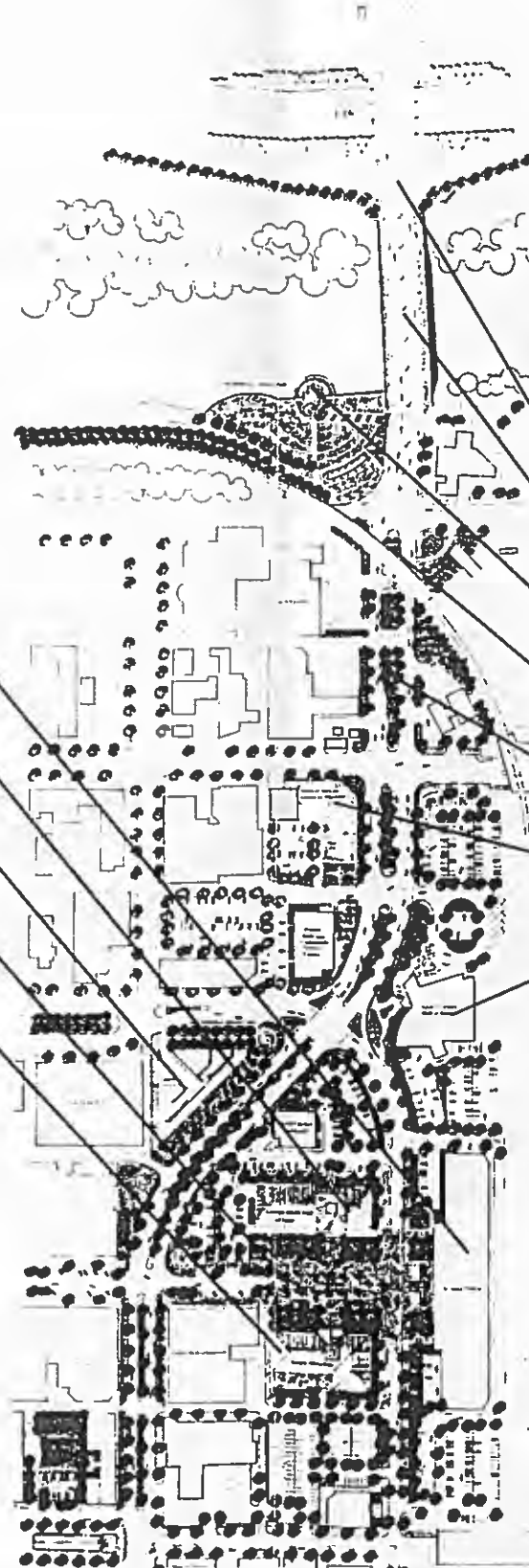
I-16 Gateway Enhancement

Important first impressions are made at exit ramps from I-16. The Georgia Department of Transportation has plans to improve the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. interchange, creating an opportunity to improve this downtown gateway.

Several proposed elements will enhance the arrival experience including brick retaining walls that define the intersection, pedestrian crossings, additional plantings on the roadway berm, a row of trees that screen utilities on the river and an entrance monument that will be visible from the interstate.



Concept Plan



Proposed Gateway Music Park

There are few places for the public to enjoy the Ocmulgee River. A new amphitheater will introduce a major public open space on this largely untapped resource. Pedestrian enhancements to the Otis Redding Bridge will contribute to the transformation of the area. In the future, this park will serve as the anchor for an expansion of Macon's riverwalk.



Terminal Station Reuse

Georgia Sports Hall of Fame

Development Opportunity Site

Macon Civic Plaza

Visitor Attraction Opportunity

Gateway Improvements at I-16

Pedestrian Enhancement of Otis Redding Memorial Bridge

Otis Redding Gateway Park

Norfolk Southern Trestle Enhancement

New Sidewalks, Street Trees, and Lighting

Tubman Museum Expansion

Georgia Music Hall of Fame Site Improvements

Norfolk Southern Railroad Trestle Improvements

A double set of train tracks blocks downtown from the Ocmulgee River. These tracks are elevated on a trestle as they cross Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. and are unsightly.

With minimal investment, the trestle can be screened and made into an interesting entrance element. Where space allows, Leyland Cypress trees will be planted to soften the mass of the trestle. Where the trestle remains visible, a colorful, decorative screen will be attached to the bridge.



Mulberry Street Development Opportunity

The corner of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. and Mulberry Street currently sits vacant. The site has excellent visibility and access, creating an economic development opportunity.

A three to six story building responding to the triangular shape of the site could take advantage of views of new visitor attractions and the rest of downtown. A water feature would animate the northeast corner of the building, adding another "monument" to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. Parking would be shared with neighboring development.



Downtown Macon:
Economic Development Strategy and Urban Design Plan

DRAFT June 18, 1997

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Downtown Macon:

Economic Development Strategy and Urban Design Plan

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1.0 Introduction

Macon has the potential to become a great city, not just in the State of Georgia and in the Southeast, but nationally. Downtown Macon is at the heart of this opportunity. Its unique design and wealth of historic and architecturally significant buildings set it apart. Conservation and preservation, which have been an important part of the downtown heritage, must continue into the 21st Century. At the same time, growth and change must continue to occur within the downtown area.

New visitor attractions, including the Georgia Music Hall of Fame, Georgia Sports Hall of Fame, Harriet Tubman Museum, and Douglas Theatre, provide a basis for substantial economic growth through tourism development. This potential is enhanced by Macon's location and proximity to Atlanta and by its outstanding interstate highway linkages. Planning for progress and development plays an important part in becoming a successful downtown.

As Macon moves into the next century, downtown will offer a unique alternative for businesses otherwise considering a location outside the city. Opportunities exist for new office sites, health care and medical-related services, specialty and discount/outlet retail, entertainment and arts venues, and adjunct operations that capitalize on these downtown activities, especially restaurants and support services. Downtown offers a unique environment with an historic flavor that is not found elsewhere in the region. It also offers a vibrant environment in which to do business, with people of all kinds crossing paths and interacting. These kinds of benefits (and others) will continue to make downtown a viable and attractive place to invest.

Without guidance, new investment can create an undesirable hodgepodge of development that can potentially compromise the character that makes Downtown Macon special. NewTown Macon, Inc., a diverse group of Macon public and private stakeholders, has sponsored the creation of this Downtown Economic Development Strategy and Urban Design Plan to guide public and private investment decisions and to provide the stimulus for continued community interest in making Downtown Macon an outstanding place to live, work and visit.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Economic Development Strategy and Urban Design Plan is to illustrate how development in Downtown Macon could occur over the next ten to twenty years. The overall goal is to preserve existing resources, while creating new development opportunities that will enhance the viability of downtown well into the next century.

Many of the recommendations involve public improvements such as streetscape enhancements, roadway improvements and open space amenities. The purpose is to illustrate how public investment can be leveraged to create a high-quality public environment that will stimulate sustainable, private economic development. The quality and design of Macon's public realm will have a profound impact on its ability to maintain and attract new residents, visitors and businesses. The Urban Design Plan illustrates these improvements as well as ways in which new private development could occur as a result.

1.2 Scope

Generally, the Plan provides guidance for those area's not currently planned for, or where additional enhancements would have a real impact. Downtown was considered comprehensively, however, the Plan recognizes the critical importance of concentrating resources in a small area to be effective. For the purposes of illustrating urban design concepts, downtown was defined as the area bounded by the Ocmulgee River to the north (including the north bank), Plum Street to the south, the train tracks behind Terminal Station to the east, and Spring Street to the west. From an economic and tourism perspective, downtown is placed in its larger, regional context. Appendix A. provides an overview of Macon's economy and recommendations for capturing the benefits of tourism.

1.3 Background

Macon has gone through several planning efforts over the last two decades, from Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) initiatives to privately funded strategic plans. Some recommendations have been implemented, while others have simply collected dust for lack of public and/or private support. This current planning initiative is being spearheaded by NewTown Macon, Inc., a dynamic group of public and private stakeholders who are wholly committed to making things happen by setting aside personal agendas and working together towards a common goal. NewTown's membership is diverse, including elected public officials, local planning administrators and a wealth of private stakeholders who are deeply concerned about the future of downtown.

NewTown Macon, Inc. was formed in the summer of 1996 through the initial efforts of the Peyton Anderson Foundation. As one of its first projects, NewTown commissioned LDR International to complete a "Downtown Status Report" that examined the current state of downtown from both a physical perspective (vacancies, development opportunities and so on) as well as a leadership perspective (how things get done, who are the major players, etc.). The result of this "report card" process was a clear understanding of the need for a larger plan to guide public and private investment decisions throughout the downtown core.

NewTown followed up by engaging LDR to complete the larger study. Perhaps more important than the physical plan that has come from this process is the communication and community commitment that has evolved. The level of participation in the NewTown organization has proven that City and County leaders, as well as the multitude of downtown stakeholders, can effectively cooperate and accomplish significant progress when given the appropriate vehicle for communication.

This report contains strategies and recommendations developed over a nine-month period. Dozens of one-on-one interviews were conducted, as well as several public meetings including three Town Hall Meetings and regular meetings with the NewTown Board and its Implementation Committee. The report begins with an overview of the current planning issues and opportunities impacting downtown, then presents a framework for how development should occur. The Urban Design Plan illustrates where and how public investment should be concentrated and provides ideas for private development as well. The report concludes with an implementation strategy and action agenda that identifies which projects should receive highest priority and who should be charged with their implementation.

2.0 Downtown Macon Today

Unlike many downtowns throughout the United States that suffer from disinvestment, crumbling infrastructure and a lack of pedestrian activity, Downtown Macon attracts thousands of people everyday who bring life, vitality and economic prosperity into the area. They work in downtown's banks, professional and government offices, hospitals and clinics and restaurants. People also come to do business: they go to the bank or lawyer's office; they stop by the County Court House or City Hall; they visit the doctor or pharmacy. People are also coming downtown to be entertained. There are several good places to eat, there are theaters and museums, and increasingly, new attractions. Special events also draw thousands of visitors regularly. The Cherry Blossom Festival attracts 400,000 to 500,000 people every year.

Macon has the right ingredients for becoming a successful middle-tier city. The entire region must agree, however, that downtown is the center of the region, and that a healthy downtown is a symbol of the entire region's prosperity. This section identifies the current status of downtown, as well as issues and opportunities that should be addressed.

2.1 Location

Macon's location is among its greatest assets. It is centrally located in Georgia: just an hour's drive from Atlanta and within a comfortable driving distance (150 miles) from over 8.5 million people. Two major interstates serve the area; I-75, a major interstate and tourism route from the Midwest to Florida and Interstate 16, connecting Atlanta to Savannah. Downtown is located within sight of I-16, with several convenient exits to provide access. While many cities have interstate access, it remains a critical ingredient for a successful downtown.

Air service is the other critical component of access. While Macon provides air service through the local Herbert Smart Airport, the area's major international air service is one hour away at Atlanta's Hartsfield International Airport.

2.2 Downtown Boundaries

While Macon's core civic, office and retail center is within a relatively tight geographic area, several major in-town uses have an impact on downtown including the Macon Centreplex, the Medical Center of Central Georgia, Mercer University, historic districts, neighboring residential and industrial areas. These surrounding influences were identified as important attractors and potential beneficiaries of this effort, however, to ensure a focused planning process, a relatively compact study area was identified. The core study area was arrived at by consensus: it is bounded by the Ocmulgee River to the north (including the north bank), Plum Street to the south, the train tracks behind Terminal Station to the east, and Spring Street to the west. People felt that this area accurately represented the "downtown core" and the area where resources should be concentrated. The overall study area is bounded by the area just north of the Ocmulgee River on the north (Centreplex); the 7th Street corridor on the east; Oglethorpe Street on the south; and College Street on the west. Core and overall study areas are shown on Map 1.

2.3 Summary of Downtown Planning Issues

Downtown is in relatively good economic health, although vacancies and certain transitional uses (unimproved surface parking lots, retail uses with open storage or large, low-cost square footage requirements among others)

demonstrate a need for more careful planning and proactive measures in the downtown area. The following list summarizes the major issues confronting downtown. These must be considered and appropriately addressed. Much of this list is directly derived from what was heard from Maconites themselves:

- ***There are too many organizations, authorities and commissions involved in economic development, as well as planning for downtown.*** There are several economic development organizations and planning bodies which, although each was established for specific purposes, confuse the picture and make it difficult to assign responsibility and affect change.
- ***Downtown is not a static entity.*** Businesses grow (or leave) and new investment / projects are initiated constantly. A plan is needed to coordinate the dynamic nature of downtown development, otherwise public investment will respond to immediate demands, without working towards a larger vision. In an increasingly global marketplace, competition for jobs, investment and tourism dollars is fierce. Macon cannot maintain the status quo and expect to continue its success.
- ***Significant transportation improvements may impact the way downtown functions.*** The Fall Line freeway, as well as major improvements to exits from I-16, may have a tremendous impact on the way people get to, or go around, downtown. These projects are being developed in isolation from their downtown context. As a result, the potential impacts on downtown are not fully understood. Also, state highway designations on downtown streets may work against efforts to make downtown more walkable and pedestrian-friendly.
- ***The Macon Centreplex is isolated and lacks a hotel in its immediate vicinity.*** The Centreplex is difficult to walk to from downtown, limiting the functional linkage between downtown and the region's primary meeting and conference facility. A hotel would enable the facility to market beyond the region for convention business.
- ***Poplar Street is weak.*** Poplar Street is a high-profile street near major centers of activity, including City Hall. Currently, the street can be characterized as an expanse of asphalt, with few trees, high vacancies and many "missing teeth" within key block frontages.
- ***Downtown's upper floors are almost entirely unused.*** Throughout the downtown area, upper floors are mostly boarded up or used for storage. These represent excellent opportunities for urban housing, studios and offices. Current regulations make it difficult to reuse these spaces.

- ***The Bibb Mill Site is a key downtown redevelopment opportunity.*** Located adjacent to the Macon Centreplex, the former mill property currently sits vacant, although plans for its redevelopment are falling into place. The site is ideal for a hotel related to the Macon Centreplex.
- ***The Ocmulgee River is blocked from downtown by an active rail line.*** As a result, its potential has gone largely untapped. The river also floods, making it difficult to develop waterfront property. There is limited access to the northern bank for recreational purposes, but there is no continuous pedestrian access. None of these obstacles are insurmountable, however.
- ***Mulberry Street requires environmental enhancement.*** As downtown's primary office and institutional address, Mulberry Street should present a very positive image to the world. The street needs street trees and the median requires enhancement.
- ***Downtown contains abundant infill opportunities.*** In several places along downtown's primary streets, vacant or underutilized land holds excellent potential for new development. If left undeveloped, these areas will have a blighting influence on downtown.
- ***Investment in new attractions must be supported with enhancements to their surrounding settings.*** The Georgia Music Hall of Fame, the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame, an expanded Tubman Museum and other investment in Macon's attractions must not occur in isolation. Careful attention must be paid to the entire visitor experience, from arriving downtown to having restaurants and other services within a safe and comfortable walk.
- ***Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard is evolving as the primary entrance into downtown.*** Currently, this corridor contains strip commercial from the south and an unattractive railroad bridge from I-16. Most visitors will arrive via this route, so special attention must be paid to create a positive first impression.
- ***Several gateways and downtown entrances need enhancement.*** Some points of arrival portray a clean, green and inviting image of downtown, while others are cluttered with high voltage wires, unattractive strip commercial and billboards.
- ***Coleman Hill Park is in need of maintenance and enhancement.*** The park contains some of the best views in the city, but it is not developed to highlight and celebrate them.

- ***Several areas within downtown contain marginal uses.*** Because of lower land values and a lack of demand for land close in to downtown, many properties have become run down and uncared for in very close proximity to the heart of downtown. Likewise, many buildings throughout downtown are not being used to their highest potential, creating pockets of inactivity and disrepair that tarnish the image of downtown.
- ***Downtown bridges do not facilitate pedestrian use.*** The most critical is the Otis Redding Bridge, which provides a very narrow ledge for pedestrians, but could potentially become a major pedestrian linkage between the Centreplex, the Bibb Mill site and downtown's visitor domain.
- ***Riverside Drive is too wide and traveled too heavily by trucks taking short cuts.*** As a result, traffic moves very quickly and development is auto-oriented and unattractive. A close proximity to the river, as well as plentiful underutilized land, makes Riverside Drive a logical expansion area for downtown. But its environment must be improved.
- ***City Hall lacks a civic image and setting.*** Currently, the front door of City Hall faces a confusing intersection and parking lot. City Hall should have a more dignified civic setting.
- ***There is a desire to relocate the state's farmers market back downtown.*** The farmers market used to be located in the median of Poplar Street.
- ***Cherry Street requires continual investment to remain successful.*** Cherry Street plays the important role of downtown's primary shopping street and is generally successful. While the atmosphere of Cherry Street is adequate, it must be continually maintained to ensure its viability.
- ***Terminal Station is underused.*** Because the ownership of this landmark building has been in complex litigation, no long-term use has been identified. Terminal Station is an important anchor to downtown's visitor domain, and should contain an appropriate entertainment-related or other visitor-related use.
- ***Downtown residential neighborhoods must be sustained and new residential development encouraged.*** Residential development plays a critical role in creating downtown activity after hours. Many of Macon's in-town residential neighborhoods contain beautiful homes and tree lined streets. In addition to protecting these existing enclaves, new housing should be promoted in the downtown core itself.

- ***There is no nightlife downtown.*** After business hours, most of downtown empties out, leaving little activity on the streets after dark. While there are theaters and several restaurants downtown, most complain of a lack of night time activities.

Many of these issues stand in the way of Macon's success. Some issues may never be solved, while others can be addressed with minimal investment.

3.0 Economic and Tourism Overview

3.1 Economic Overview

Although Georgia as a whole, and the Atlanta area in particular, have grown rapidly in recent years, Macon and Bibb County have been constrained. Population and employment growth have been slow and are projected to remain slow in the near future. There has actually been an outmigration of population in recent years, although it has apparently abated. The market to support new investment in downtown will need support from tourism.

Population and Employment -- Like many communities, changes and shifts in the national and world economy have impacted Macon. The textile industry has been lost, and manufacturing has been reduced and replaced by a service oriented economy. Dependency upon tobacco and the aero-space industry has been problematic. It has been suggested that Macon has not been anxious to change and recruit newer industries. The result has been a stagnant and/or slow growth rate although the community is adjacent to Atlanta, one of the nation's fastest growing areas.

- With respect to population, between 1980 and 1995, Georgia population grew 32 percent, the Macon MSA 14 percent and Macon-Bibb County, three percent as shown in *Table 1*.
- Population projections, shown on *Table 2*, indicate a similar pattern. Between 1995 and 2010, Georgia population is projected to grow 20 percent; the Macon MSA, 9 percent and Macon-Bibb County, three percent.
- Although unemployment remains low, employment growth has been slow, as well. *Table 3* shows the civilian labor force and employment for the MSA and Bibb County. Between 1990 and 1995, employment growth was almost stagnate although the unemployment rate was about 5 percent throughout the period.

- *Table 4* shows the distribution of wage and salary employment (excluding self-employed and military) for the MSA and Bibb County for 1995. It illustrates the current structure of the economy and the heavy dependence upon government, the lesser significance of manufacturing, and the importance of trade and services. Although Macon-Bibb County has about 50 percent of the population in the MSA, it has 69 percent of employment. Macon-Bibb County is an important job center for the area. In the MSA, 25 percent of employment is government, without including the military.
- *Table 5* shows employment by sector (including self-employed and military) for the larger region around Macon - Middle Georgia, an 11 county region defined by the state. In this larger region, employment declined across all sectors of the economy between 1990 and 1995.
- The projections for employment growth in 1996, from the University of Georgia, ranked the Macon MSA as second to last, at about 57 percent of the state rate.

Projected Employment Growth, 1996

Georgia	3.0 %
Atlanta MSA	3.7 %
Athens MSA	3.0 %
Savannah MSA	2.3 %
Columbus MSA	2.2 %
Albany MSA	2.3 %
Macon MSA	1.7 %
Augusta MSA	0.8 %

Prospects for the Future -- The Macon area does have the foundation for a successful future and development. It has a diversified economy, a strategic location and a significant resource with the military.

- Macon is a regional medical center, with 1,000 general acute beds and 200 psychiatric beds. The Mercer University Medical School adds to the complex making it a health center for 60 - 80 counties in Georgia, or about one-third of the state. The health care industry is a growth industry.
- Macon is an important higher education center with Mercer University, Wesleyan and Macon College.
- The Macon area has a major resource at the Warner Robins Air Logistics Center, including the Robins AFB, where there are some 21,300 personnel, both civilian and military. The center was not downsized during the recent military base realignments.

- The strategic location along major interstate highways and the nearness to Atlanta are advantages for the community, both for attracting investment and tourists.
- Tourism offers a significant opportunity to be developed and provide support for an enhanced downtown. Tourism employment has been growing at about twice the rate of all employment in the U.S. Tourism spending supports services and activities that enhance the entire community. Tourism can contribute to the quality of life in Macon by adding to the market for entertainment, restaurants, attractions, shopping and recreation that can be enjoyed by both residents and visitors.

The Multiplicity of Organizations -- One of the factors that can diminish future opportunities for the Macon area is the multiplicity of organizations and governmental agencies. The complexity of organizations and agencies makes it difficult to coordinate, cooperate, focus responsibility and achieve results. The problem is not unique to Macon. A state commission, *Georgia Futures Communities Commission*, established in 1995, has pointed out that the system of local government is decentralized, fragmented, inefficient and a barrier to growth and change.

- Regional coordination is difficult because of the many different regions established for the area, often with overlapping responsibilities and confused identities.

<i>Middle Georgia Regional Development Center</i>	<i>11 counties</i>
<i>Historic Heartland (Tourism Region)</i>	<i>20 counties</i>
<i>Council of Economic Development Organizations</i>	<i>20 counties</i>
<i>CEDO Region 6</i>	
<i>Metropolitan Statistical Area/Labor Market Area</i>	<i>5 counties</i>

- *The Bibb County Efficiency Committee*, in 1996, recommended a total reorganization and consolidation of Macon and Bibb County to facilitate efficiency and effectiveness.
- There are several economic development organizations which, although each was established for specific purposes, create confusion and make it difficult to assign responsibility for new developments and change. These include:

The Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce
Development Authority of Bibb County
Macon-Bibb County Industrial Development Authority
Macon-Bibb County Urban Development Authority
Macon Economic Development Commission
Downtown Council

- It is within this difficult structure that developing tourism must occur. The existing principal tourism organization, the Macon-Bibb County Convention & Visitors Bureau, has only limited authority and responsibility, at this time.

Table 1: Population Trends 1980, 1990, 1995
Georgia, Macon MSA, Macon-Bibb County

	1980	1990	1995	Change 1980 - 1995
Georgia	5,452,989	6,478,149	7,200,882	31.8%
Macon MSA	272,945	291,079	309,756	13.5%
Macon-Bibb County	150,256	150,137	155,066	3.2%
Percent of Georgia	2.8%	2.3%	2.1%	

Source: U.S. Census
LDR International, Inc.

Table 2: Population Projections 2000, 2005, 2010
Georgia, Macon MSA, Macon-Bibb County

	1995	2000	2005	2010	Change 1995-2010
Georgia	7,200,882	7,703,202	8,137,471	8,663,057	20.3%
Macon MSA	309,756	319,452	329,015	336,880	8.8%
Macon-Bibb County	155,066	156,930	158,499	160,084	3.2%
Percent of Georgia	2.1%	2.0%	1.9%	1.8%	--

Source: US Census
Middle Georgia RDC
LDR International, Inc.

Table 3: Resident Civilian Labor Force: 1990, 1995
Georgia, Macon MSA, Macon-Bibb County

	Macon MSA		Bibb County	
	1990	1995	1990	1995
Labor Force	136,818	141,960	69,708	70,665
Employment	130,264	134,833	66,131	66,887
Unemployed	6,584	7,127	3,577	3,776
Rate	4.8%	5.0%	5.1%	5.3%

Source: Georgia Department of Labor
LDR International, Inc.

Data are non-agricultural wage and salary and self-employed

Table 4: Wage & Salary Employment: 1995
Georgia, Macon MSA, Macon-Bibb County

	Macon MSA		Macon-Bibb County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agriculture, Mining	2,564	1.9%	459	0.5%
Construction	5,551	4.1	3,592	4.3
Manufacturing	19,666	14.4	13,427	15.9
Transportation, Communication, Utilities	5,003	3.7	3,980	4.7
Wholesale Trade	5,327	3.9	4,370	5.2
Retail Trade	27,789	20.4	17,790	21.1
F.I.R.E.	7,822	5.7	6,140	7.3
Services	28,594	21.0	20,492	24.3
Government	34,069	25.0	14,008	16.6
Federal	13,014	9.5	1,425	1.7
Local	16,887	12.4	10,009	11.9
State	4,168	3.1	2,574	3.1
Total	136,385	100%	84,258	100%

Source: Georgia Department of Labor
LDR International, Inc.

Wage and salary employment excludes military and self-employment.

Table 5: Employment by Sector: 1990, 1995
Middle Georgia and Bibb County

Sector	1990		1995	
	Middle Georgia	Bibb County	Middle Georgia	Bibb County
Farmers	3,278	204	2,790	173
Ag. Services	1,466	492	1,229	426
Mining	1,666	60	1,420	83
Construction	9,415	4,808	7,778	3,951
Manufacturing	29,044	13,367	28,849	13,110
Trans, Comm, Utilities	8,007	4,807	7,644	4,572
Wholesale Trade	7,761	6,053	7,689	6,208
Retail Trade	33,252	17,986	31,493	17,149
F.I.R.E.	13,127	8,688	12,793	8,688
Services	44,176	26,300	41,793	25,390
Government	53,941	13,040	50,714	14,731
Federal Civilian	18,295	1,409	15,496	3,458
Federal Military	5,823	809	6,339	732
Local, State	29,823	10,822	28,879	10,541
Total	205,133	95,805	194,192	94,481

Source: Middle Georgia RDC
LDR International, Inc.

Middle Georgia - 11 Counties: Baldwin, Monroe, Bibb, Peach, Crawford, Putnam, Houston, Twiggs, Jasper, Wilkinson, Jones

Data are wage and salary, self-employed and military.

3.2 Tourism Assessment

Tourism is emerging as a very significant opportunity for Macon at this time. Macon itself has had, until recently, very limited tourism attractions. The Cherry Blossom Festival for ten days in March, has been the only major destination attraction. The tourism that has been present is largely business travel associated with the major employers and institutions (including medical), some limited meetings and pass-through traffic. However, there are major developments occurring which can increase the role tourism can play in Macon.

- The data on existing tourism in Macon show that there is a substantial market now, much of it business and interstate traffic. *Table 6* shows the growth in tourism expenditures in Georgia and Macon-Bibb County from 1990 to 1995. Georgia and Macon-Bibb County tourism expenditures have been growing at the annual rate of 5.7 percent. In 1995, Macon-Bibb County was estimated to have experienced tourism expenditures of \$ 270 million, a recovery of almost 15 percent from 1994 when the flood reduced tourism. Macon-Bibb County has about the same share of tourism as it has of population in Georgia.
- There are almost 4,000 hotel rooms in Macon-Bibb County, most clustered in three areas, one cluster along I-75; one along I-475; and a smaller cluster downtown. There are less than 500 hotel rooms in downtown. The shortage of rooms downtown is a problem.
- Macon has limited tourism within the city at this time. *Table 7* shows attraction visitation in the area in 1995. The Cherry Blossom Festival reporting 400,000 - 500,000 attendees, is the single significant attraction. (And this probably reflects multiple visits by the same people.) The I-75 Welcome Center in 1995 had 1,031,500 visitors, however, most are just stopping through. The total attendance (in delegate days) at conferences and meetings, at all venues including hotels, was 420,700. Most of the other attractions have limited visitation and much of that is school children and local residents.
- With respect to group tour traffic, the Macon-Bibb County C.V.B. reported 725 coaches in 1995, with 225 (31 percent) coming during March and the Cherry Blossom Festival.
- There are two major tourism attractions outside of Macon, which draw significant numbers of tourists: the Georgia National Fairgrounds and Agricenter in Perry and the Air Museum at Robins AFB. Each of these draw visitors from throughout the country.
- Although Macon has outstanding historic districts and architecture, it has not become a major heritage destination like Savannah and Charleston. The several historic attractions draw limited visitors at this time.
- The major marketing for the area is performed by the Macon-Bibb County C.V.B., which had a 1995-96 budget of \$ 1.2 million, almost entirely funded by shares of a 6 percent hotel room tax in both the city and county. Its 1995-96 budget was distributed as follows:

Macon-Bibb County C.V.B. 1995/96 Budget of \$ 1.2 million:

<i>Salaries, operations</i>	<i>46.0 %</i>
<i>Welcome centers</i>	<i>15.7 %</i>
<i>Brochures, general ads</i>	<i>9.0 %</i>
<i>Group, meeting marketing</i>	<i>17.7 %</i>
<i>Sidney Tours</i>	<i>10.4 %</i>
<i>Other</i>	<i>1.2 %</i>

- Until recently, the convention and meeting market has been limited. *Table 8* shows the meetings tracked by the C.V.B. for 1995 (held both at the Coliseum and in hotels). Although Macon is centrally located and convenient to Atlanta, it has not, in the past, attracted a strong meeting market. As shown, 63 percent of delegate days were from sports events and religious meetings. These are reportedly events that have a limited impact on the economy of the area.
- The most important tourists are those who stay overnight in motels and hotels in an area, as they represent about two-thirds of all tourism spending. Revenues at the hotels and motels in the Macon area have been growing. Between 1993 and 1996, as shown in *Table 9*, revenues increased almost 9 percent per year.
- The tourism market in Macon has a balanced season, with few monthly variations. A balanced seasonal market is easier to develop than one with sharp variations between the high seasons and the low seasons. *Table 10* shows seasonal use of hotels in Macon-Bibb County by tracking monthly room revenues, which shows very little monthly variation.
- The State of Georgia, through the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism, provides regional representatives, who coordinate activities within tourism regions. The Historic Heartland Region, of 20 counties, has tourism representatives who meet monthly. However, there is little direct marketing for the region by the state.

Table 6: Tourism Expenditures: 1990-1995
Georgia, Macon-Bibb County

	Georgia (billion)	Macon-Bibb Co. (million)	Percent of Georgia
1990	\$10.33	\$204.7	2.0%
1991	10.36	244.7	2.4
1992	10.55	229.6	2.1
1993	11.46	252.3	2.2
1994	12.42	235.1	1.9
1995	13.56	269.7	2.0
Change: 1990-1995	31.3%	31.8%	--
Annual Rate of Change	5.6%	5.7%	--

Source: Davidson, Peterson. Georgia Department of Industry, Trade & Tourism
LDR International, Inc.

Table 7: Attraction Visitation: 1995
Macon Area

Georgia National Fairgrounds (Georgia National Fair)	747,400 (345,200)
Cherry Blossom Festival	400,000 - 500,000
Air Museum	400,000
Ocmulgee National Monument	114,500
Museum of Arts & Sciences	70,000 - 80,000
Harriet Tubman Museum	53,400
Hay House	44,000
Old Canonball House	10,300
Sidney Tours	8,500
Sidney Lanier Cottage	6,900
Welcome Centers	
I-75	1,031,500
Terminal Station	21,700
Macon Conferences, Meetings*	420,700

Source: Macon-Bibb County C.V.B.
Various Attractions
LDR International, Inc.

- * All conferences, meetings tracked by Macon-Bibb County C.V.B.; delegate days, see Table 8.

Table 8: Delegate Meeting Days: 1995
Macon-Bibb County

Meeting Type	Number of Events	Delegate Days ¹	
		Number	Percent
Education	20	8,404	2.0%
Government	34	8,053	1.9%
Minority	12	12,388	2.9%
Medical	12	9,423	2.2%
Reunions	4	4,020	1.0%
Corporation	16	7,650	1.8%
State Association	30	7,718	1.8%
Social, Fraternal	21	42,543	10.1%
Sports	65	118,042	28.1%
Religion	24	146,650	34.9%
Trade Shows	12	55,813	13.3%
Total	250	420,704	100.0%

Source: Macon-Bibb County C.V.B.
LDR International, Inc

Table 9: Hotel Room Revenues (in thousands)
FY 1993, 1995, 1996, Macon-Bibb County

FY	Macon	Bibb County	Total
1993	\$9,170.5	\$13,513.6	\$22,684.1
1995	10,226.3	15,492.1	25,718.4
1996	11,360.2	17,865.3	29,225.5

Source: Directors of Finance: Macon, Bibb County
LDR International, Inc.
Tax rate changed 1-01-94; FY '94 data not available.

¹A delegate x days in Macon = delegate days.

Table 10: Seasonal Hotel Use: 1995
Revenue by Month; Macon & Bibb County

Month	Percent of Revenue
January	7.8%
February	6.2
March	6.5
April	7.3
May	9.3
June	9.6
July	7.8
August	10.1
September	9.7
October	8.7
November	7.9
December	9.1
	100%

Source: Macon-Bibb County C.V.B.
LDR International, Inc.

3.3 Tourism Opportunities

There are several opportunities to enhance tourism in the area, if appropriate strategies can be pursued. Tourism is a growing industry. A number of investments are already being made or planned for Macon. And the development of the plan for Macon's downtown is a major opportunity. Some of these opportunities are outlined below.

- The Atlanta MSA, with a population of more than 3.0 million can provide a major market for Macon. Atlanta is a major source of visitors to the Tennessee Aquarium in Chattanooga. In addition, Macon could attract some state meetings now going to Atlanta.
- Interstate travel, particularly on I-75, represents a major opportunity. A survey done in 1988 showed that only 10 percent of the visitors to the Welcome Center on I-75 have a destination in Macon, although 28 percent were spending the night (not necessarily in a hotel or motel) and 16 percent were visiting attractions there. Traffic counts along I-475, I-75 and I-16 indicate that as many as 70,000-80,000 cars a day pass through in addition to those with a destination in the area.

- Robins AFB, with its military population, represents an opportunity. There is a market to attract from the military stationed there, from temporary trainees, from reservists, visitors and from military reunions. To date, few military events or meetings have been listed by the C.V.B..
- The Cherry Blossom Festival represents an opportunity, if more visitors could be attracted to stay overnight and see other attractions. A study done in 1990, assessing the festival, reported that only 8 percent of the estimated visitors stayed in hotels or motels. Data from hotel occupancies suggest that the marginal increase in March is from three to ten percent. The attractions being added to Macon may increase that impact
- The new tourism developments, including the Centreplex, Georgia Music Hall of Fame, Douglas Theatre and Georgia Sports Hall of Fame, will increase the tourism destination potential for Macon. Below are listed the tourism attractions that have recently been added or which are planning to develop in the Macon area:

Georgia Music Hall of Fame	New attraction (\$12.5 million)
Douglas Theatre	\$2.5 million renovation underway
Tubman Museum	Expansion being planned
Georgia Sports Hall of Fame	Being planned (\$8.3 million state)
Museum of Arts & Sciences	\$3.3 million addition & renovation
Coliseum/Centreplex	\$15.3 million addition

The Centreplex is the largest Georgia meeting facility outside of Atlanta.

- The historic attractions, including the historic districts and the Native American settlements, are an opportunity given the increased interest in heritage tourism.
- There is interest in a Georgia State Museum, to replace the limited facility in Atlanta, to collect, present, exhibit and interpret Georgia's heritage, which could be appropriate for Macon.
- The Terminal Station and the Bibb Textile Mill properties could be developed for tourism related developments. Both are largely vacant, but architecturally significant structures appropriate for adaptive reuse.
- The Ocmulgee Greenway project could enhance the eco-tourism potential for the area, and complement the archaeological resources.
- The National Georgia Fairgrounds in Perry and the Air Museum at Robins AFB are significant opportunities. Visitors to the Fairgrounds could be attracted to Macon as could those to the Air Museum. Also, Macon could promote both to its own benefit to broaden the appeal of the area.

There are limited hotels around Perry to support major convention meetings, and few attractions to interest those now coming to events (like RV rallies) there. The Air Museum is the second largest air museum in the U.S., second only to Wright-Patterson, with approximately 90 planes and helicopters.

- Macon's own strengths in medicine and education can contribute to a potential conference and meeting market.
- The Museum of Arts & Sciences might be persuaded to add a downtown satellite exhibit as a children's museum.

3.4 Tourism Issues

There are some major issues that must be addressed in any major strategy for tourism for Macon. These include the issues noted below.

- The limited hotel rooms downtown will limit the attractiveness of the Centreplex for multi-hotel conferences. An additional convention hotel would be desirable downtown. The Bibb Textile Mill is one opportunity for a hotel site. The Centreplex site is another.
- There is currently limited marketing of the area. Only the C.V.B., in addition to individual hotels, is doing any significant marketing. More resources need to be allocated to marketing and to reaching other markets. The small attractions and the National Park have no resources for marketing. The Georgia Music Hall of Fame has not yet undertaken a marketing program.
- The C.V.B. and Centreplex currently have no formal marketing agreement. The C.V.B. cannot "book" the facility and the Centreplex is reportedly not committed to bringing in outside meetings, which have the largest economic impact when they use hotel rooms for delegates. It is usual practice in many cities with convention centers to give the C.V.B. exclusive booking rights for any dates beyond 18 months. The C.V.B. then markets meetings. This is the time frame for planning most national and regional conventions. After 18 months, joint booking occurs. At the Centreplex, since the Coliseum is often a part of large meetings, regularly scheduled sporting events sometimes present a problem and will require careful balancing.
- Reportedly, the Centreplex is pressured to be more self-supporting, and make money, which is why it often books local events rather than keep the facility available to draw outside business into Macon. It's economic benefit should be measured by delegate business and hotel rooms booked rather than operating income alone.

- Regional cooperation in promoting tourism is limited. There is need for regional coordination and co-op marketing.
- The existing Visitor Center downtown in Terminal Station is not adequate, or well utilized. Macon needs an expanded centrally located visitor center which presents a convenient introduction (video or show) to Macon, easy access to attractions and a more inviting environment.
- The "Dreamtown" theme which has been used to market Macon is not popular and needs reconsideration as to its portrayal of Macon's image.
- The Georgia Music Hall of Fame needs to be completed, marketed and landscaped. The facility opened late and has not yet achieved its potential of 250,000-350,000 visitors per year.

3.5 Tourism Recommendations

Tourism growth will not happen without a significant coordinated effort in the Macon area. It is an increasingly competitive industry, and there is no single activity, attraction or marketing plan that alone can solve the many concerns. Initially, a number of strategies should be developed to enhance Macon's tourism. Tourism includes understanding the characteristics and potential of the market (the visitors). It requires developing the product to serve tourists, including attractions and supporting services. And it entails organization, marketing and management. Below are initial recommendations for developing and enhancing tourism in the Macon area.

- ***New facilities:*** In addition to the attractions already being developed, a number of other tourism venues and support services are needed in the downtown, including:
 - Acquisition, development of Terminal Station;
 - Development of Bibb Textile Mill as a hotel, tourism site;
 - Development of an enhanced downtown Visitor Center; and
 - Development of a children's museum downtown (satellite of the Museum of Arts & Sciences).

Tourism Recommendation #1: The planning for downtown development should address providing for new tourism-related attractions and venues.

- ***Improving access:*** Macon's attractions are not compact, coherently related, promoted on-site, well-signed or easily accessed by visitors. Access and "way-finding" should be improved by programs, including:
 - Creating a downtown shuttle between the Centreplex, historic areas, major tourism attractions and downtown hotels;

- Preparing a video introduction to Macon, its attractions and its history for use at the Visitor Center and hotels;
- Improved signage throughout the area.

Tourism Recommendation #2: The tourism related activities developed for Macon should include providing for public transportation around the area, signage and an introductory video or show about Macon and the area's tourism venues.

- **Strengthening marketing:** The marketing of tourism for Macon needs strengthening in several directions, including:
 - Establishing a marketing agreement between the C.V.B. and the Centreplex;
 - Establishing a consistent, and larger source of funding for marketing;
 - Focusing more on the Atlanta market for overnight visits;
 - Investing more money in marketing to individuals and independent leisure travelers;
 - Coordinating with regional facilities, especially the Air Museum and Georgia National Fairgrounds;
 - Developing a new marketing theme, image for Macon that is supported by the community.

Tourism Recommendation #3: The Macon-Bibb County C.V.B., in cooperation with other organizations and tourism stakeholders, should seek additional support for marketing tourism and develop an enhanced marketing plan which includes regional and local attraction participation.

- **Focusing responsibility:** Tourism, like other development activities in Macon, needs more focused responsibility. There are too many uncoordinated organizations and agencies involved in development in Macon. Responsibility for implementing improvements needs to be clarified. With the current organizational structure, few improvements in tourism can be implemented successfully.

Tourism Recommendation #4: An organizational study of tourism-related organizations (and complementary development agencies) needs to be undertaken to clarify current roles, identify areas for improvement and to define responsibilities for developing, managing and marketing tourism product in the Macon area.

- **Strategic plan for tourism:** Macon would benefit by having a coordinated tourism strategy that addresses all of the previous areas - new facilities, access, marketing and responsibility. The issues are complex, inter-related and of serious concern. Tourism is economic development. It involves use of public funds. It deserves a concentrated, cooperative and comprehensive strategy. It also requires accountability.

Tourism Recommendation #5: The Macon area, through the leadership of the Macon-Bibb County C.V.B. and NewTown Macon, Inc., should undertake a comprehensive tourism development strategy which involves regional tourism stakeholders, addresses the issue of organization, establishes accountability and develops a detailed action plan for tourism product, promotion and management.

Tourism development is essential to the success of downtown Macon. It is also an opportunity for economic development which is enhanced at the moment by the many activities and new attractions developing in downtown. Now is the time to focus on this important industry for the future.

4.0 Urban Design Framework

Addressing the issues identified in Section 2.3 will require patience and a community-wide commitment to change. Although the list of issues seems immense, Downtown Macon is doing quite well. It has many strengths, including public and private leadership that is proactively engaged in improving downtown. Continued growth and success will require both public and private investment, as well as careful attention to the public environment. Macon can, and should, be a high energy place where people, young and old, will want to go for business and pleasure during the day, in the evening and on weekends.

There are several reasons to act proactively in addressing Downtown Macon's issues. From the City's perspective, a successful downtown highlights Macon's prosperity and outstanding quality of life. In more practical terms, continued investment reaps direct returns through expanded property and retail sales taxes. From a private investment perspective, developers are more likely to invest in downtown if there is a plan in place that clearly illustrates what is envisioned for the future. Potential developers want to minimize risk. They want to know what they are buying into and want the City to support their investment. They want to be assured that their investment is supported by a clean, safe and well-maintained environment. Finally, residents and visitors want to feel safe and cared for while in downtown, especially after business hours.

The first step in proactively affecting positive change is to understand how downtown currently functions and how it could function better. There are considerations relating to how people move through downtown: how they arrive, which streets are the most heavily used, where people park and where they tend to walk. In addition to the movement of people, it is important to understand where the major opportunities are: which uses are viable, where strong architecture exists and where vacant land presents opportunities for new development. Section 3.4, the Framework Plan, illustrates which specific streets and public places should receive emphasis, and for what reason. Section 3.5 contains an analysis of vacant and underutilized property. These two should be used in tandem: the Framework Plan shows how the downtown street network would ideally function and the vacant and underutilized property diagram shows where development is likely to occur.

4.1 Gateways and Entrances

The arrival experience is an important one. Downtown Macon's "front door" should convey a positive image and welcome the visitor by providing sufficient guidance to find parking, attractions and important landmarks, such as the Medical Center and Bibb County Courthouse. The goal is to make downtown easy to find and use so people will want to return. Needless to say, today's visitor may be tomorrow's investor!

Most people traveling to Downtown Macon arrive by car. There are six primary points of arrival -- five are relatively well defined. Visitors and many regional residents use the interstate system, while residents from the south arrive via Forsyth, First, Second and Broadway Streets. The Broadway Street entrance corridor lacks a strong point of arrival, containing mostly strip commercial development up to Poplar Street. The intersection of Spring Street and Riverside Drive is another important gateway that does not portray a positive image for downtown. The River is a strong delineating element that creates a very strong sense of arrival at the three bridge crossing points. There is great potential to accentuate these crossings as gateways into downtown.

Two major gateways occur at the edge of the larger downtown area. They are the intersection of College and Forsyth Streets and the intersection of Oglethorpe and First Streets. Both areas contain potential redevelopment opportunities that could take advantage of their strategic locations.

4.2 Major Vehicular Routes

Major vehicular routes into and through downtown include Georgia Avenue to Mulberry Street; Forsyth Street to Cotton Avenue to Second Street; First Street; Broadway to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard; Spring Street; Poplar Street and Riverside Drive. Several streets within the downtown core carry substantial traffic volumes, but function primarily as local streets. These include Cherry Street; Plum Street; Third Street and portions of First and Second Streets.

A careful balance must be maintained between accommodating peak hour traffic volumes and creating a pedestrian-friendly downtown environment where one feels safe and comfortable walking throughout downtown.

4.3 Pedestrian Focus Areas

Some downtown streets contain more pedestrian activity than others. Cherry Street, for example, contains substantial pedestrian traffic, primarily due to the comfortable scale of the street and the presence of many active retail stores. Second Street, between Cherry and Mulberry Streets, functions in much the same way.

There are also important pedestrian linkages, or connections, between major centers of activity, including parking areas. Cotton Avenue, between City Hall and the Bibb County Court House is perhaps the most clear example of an important pedestrian linkage. Several other downtown streets could potentially have a pedestrian focus, but currently do not. Poplar Street and Third Street could contain more pedestrian activity if storefronts were more active and the pedestrian environment improved.

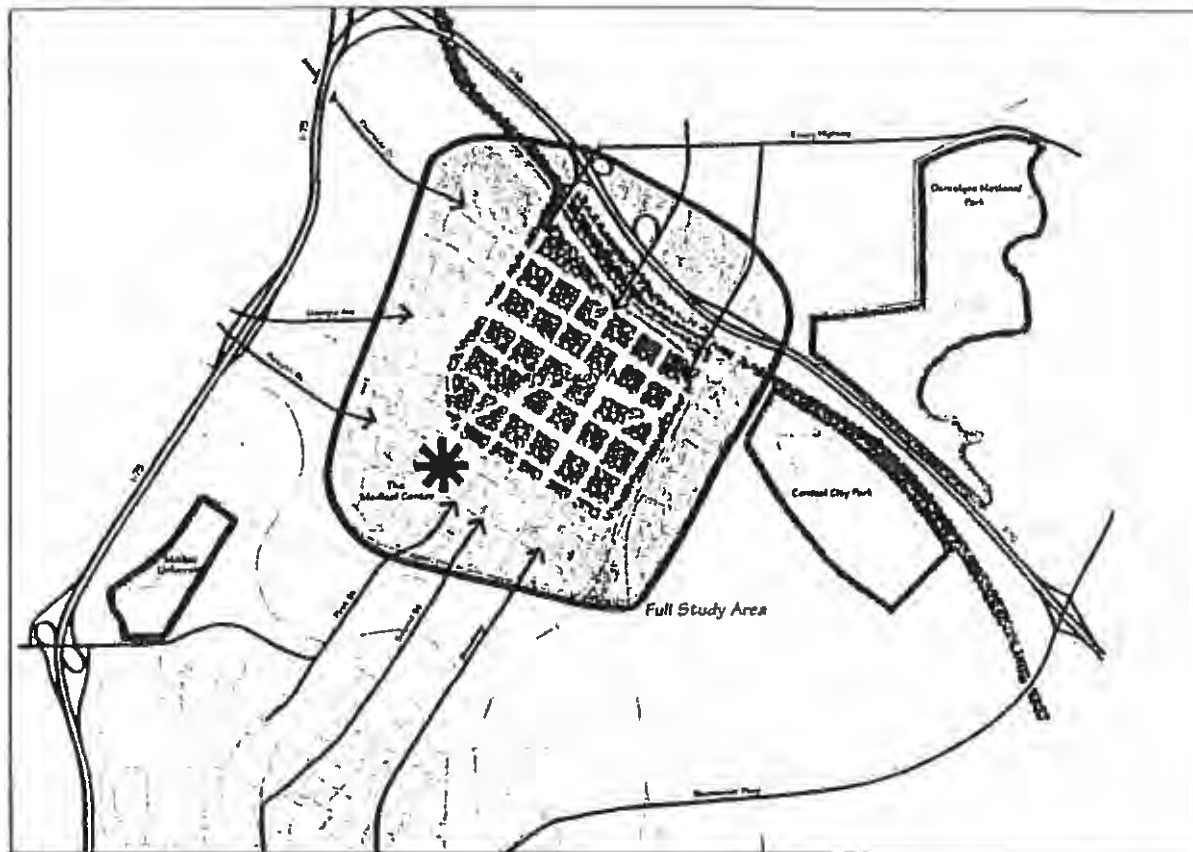
4.4 Framework Plan

When Macon was originally planned in 1822, designer James Webb envisioned a "City in a Park," with a rectangular street grid and unusually wide streets that were "named for the trees of the forest through which they were laid." This 175-year-old plan still governs the orderly layout of buildings on Macon's streets. Poplar, Mulberry and Third Streets, Macon's classic urban boulevards, continue to dictate the character and image of downtown.

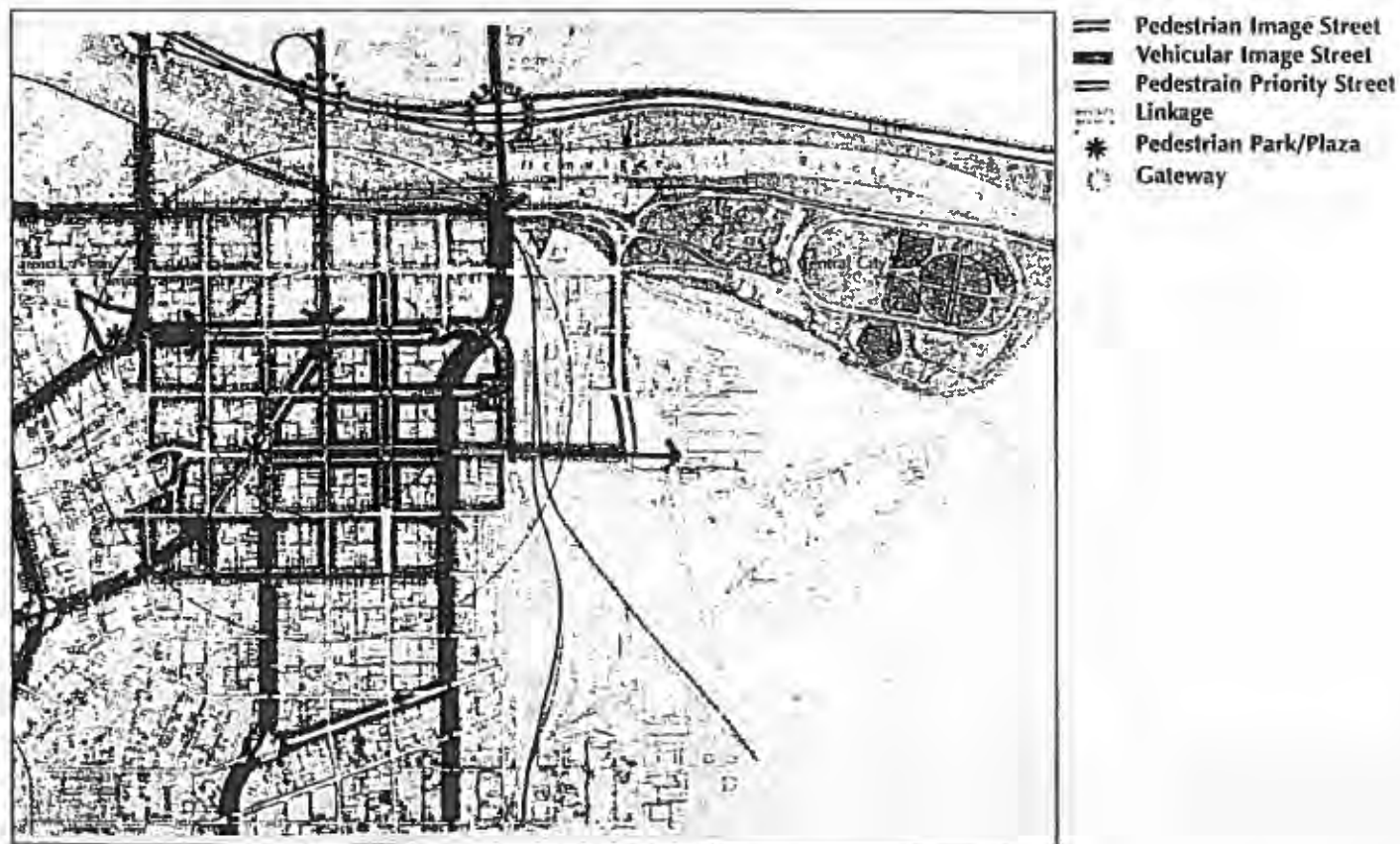
The strong historic street grid and development pattern should generally dictate how future development should occur. Public money should be strategically invested to guide private development and create a positive environment that is attractive to private investors. Map 2, the Downtown Framework Plan, illustrates a preferred street hierarchy for downtown Macon. This plan gives certain streets emphasis, suggesting that the level of investment and priority given a particular street should depend on the role it plays. A street that will be heavily traveled by foot and used by most visitors, for example, should receive a higher priority and different treatment than a street that will primarily be used for moving cars. Both may be important streets, but they would be detailed differently.

Downtown must present and maintain a positive image at its gateways, along major thoroughfares and in areas where people spend the most time on foot. The proposed street hierarchy illustrates several types of streets and the kind of emphasis they should receive:

Map 1. Study Area Boundaries



Map 2. Downtown Framework Plan



- **Gateways** (Peach circles). These intersections are downtown's most important points of arrival. Special consideration should be given to signage, landscaping and the image of surrounding development so that the visitor is "greeted" at these places and can sense the quality and care given to the downtown environment.
- **Vehicular Image Streets** (Purple with green edges). These streets are Macon's most important entrance corridors and will most likely be viewed from a car. Emphasis should be placed on coordinating development, screening parking areas, developing attractive signage for attractions and creating a positive and unified image for downtown with street trees, light standards and attractive traffic signals.
- **Pedestrian Image Streets** (Peach with dark green edges). These streets should receive the highest level of streetscape treatment. They are Macon's primary pedestrian areas and important pedestrian linkages. Emphasis should be placed on creating active building fronts (shops, restaurants and other activity generators), pedestrian-scaled street furnishings (lighting, trash receptacles, benches, water fountains, and the like) and creating rich surface textures for sidewalks and pedestrian crossings.
- **Pedestrian Priority Streets** (Peach with light green edges). These streets are the secondary streets of the pedestrian network. They are also important image streets, but will probably not have the same concentrations of pedestrian traffic. Emphasis should be placed on creating a safe and accessible pedestrian environment, with appropriate furnishings (benches and trash receptacles) at corners.
- **Linkages** (light green outline). These streets are routes traveled predominantly by vehicles, with little pedestrian activity. These streets have a high profile because they are within the downtown core, so they will be seen by most visitors. Emphasis should be placed on maintenance and screening parking and service areas.
- **Pedestrian Parks and Plazas** (red asterisks). These are Macon's public gathering places and civic spaces. There is potential to reinforce important civic buildings such as Terminal Station and City Hall with well-designed, pedestrian-scaled public places.

This street hierarchy has important implications for future development. If public investment is to be effectively leveraged, it should be concentrated in areas with the highest visibility and profile. In turn, these areas will be most attractive to investors, stimulating new development where public enhancements have been made.

4.5 Vacant and Underutilized Property

Portions of downtown contain commercial and industrial property that are either vacant or occupying land that could be developed for a “higher” use. Map 3 generally illustrates vacant land and areas that are “in transition.” Areas identified as “in transition” contain marginal uses or buildings in poor physical condition that are candidates for rehabilitation or redevelopment. The black lines identify the edges of buildings with strong architectural features. A building that is in transition, but has strong architectural character, should be given high priority for preservation and adaptive reuse. Vacant land along vehicular and pedestrian image streets should be given high priority for infill development.

Poplar Street contains the most significant level of marginal and vacant property within the downtown core. Property along Riverside Drive also contains substantially underutilized property in close proximity to the center of downtown and the riverfront. Several individual redevelopment opportunities are spread throughout downtown.

A large concentration of industrial land lies east of the railroad tracks on Seventh Street. While outside the downtown core, this area has great potential for large-scale redevelopment as an in-town office, R&D and commercial business park.

When combined, the Framework Plan and the diagram of vacant and underutilized property begin to suggest where new development might occur.

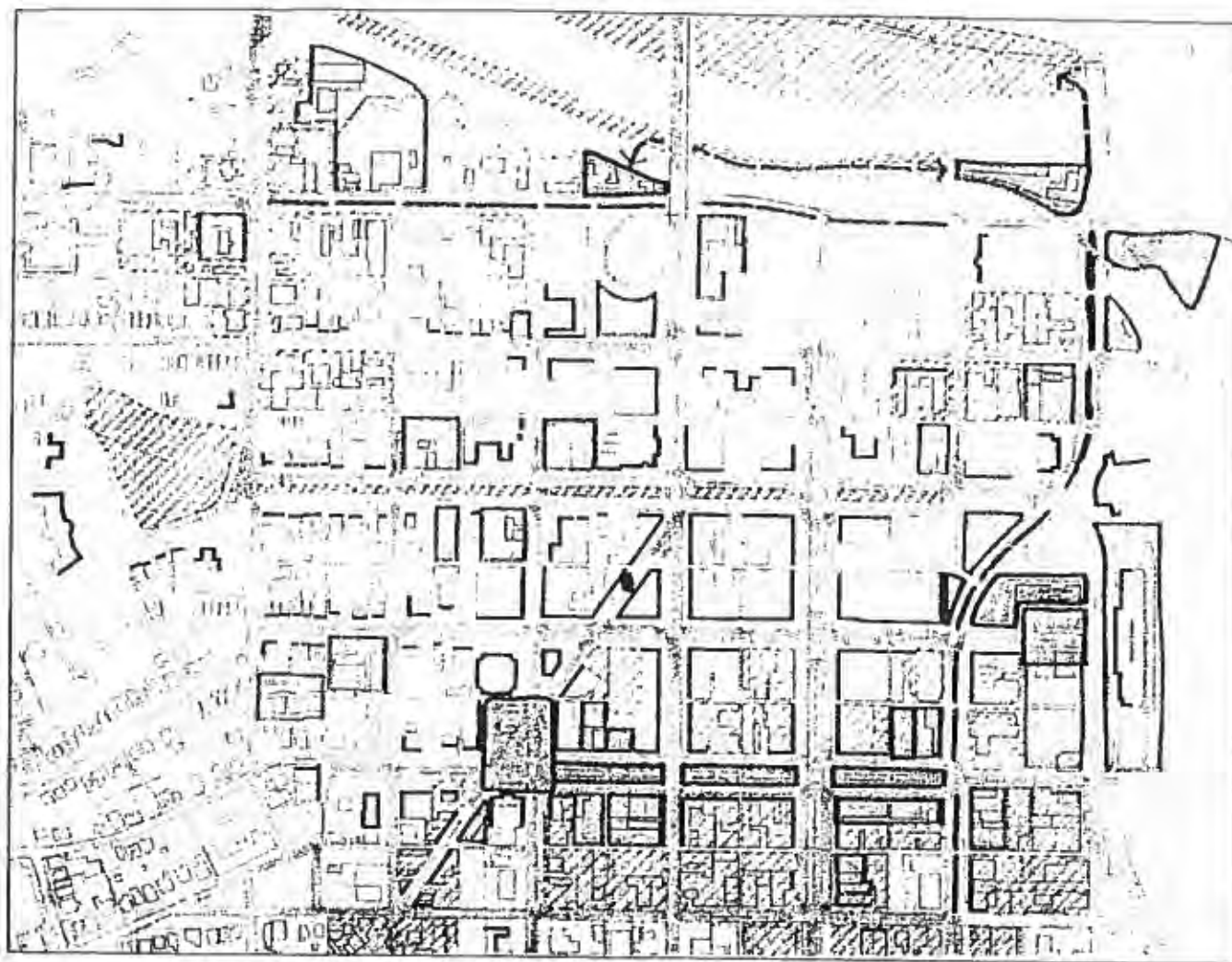
5.0 Urban Design Plan

The Urban Design Plan contains specific recommendations for how future development should occur in Downtown Macon. It is not expected that every recommended improvement be implemented. The Plan shows a build-out scenario that captures the many ideas and projects envisioned by downtown stakeholders and the community. It illustrates a long-term view of how new development could occur when coupled with a focused program of public investment. Some recommendations will take little to implement or are already underway, while others will take years to develop. The purpose of the Plan is to give the community an idea for where the major opportunities lie and how they could be played out.

5.1 Recommended Strategies to Shape Downtown Development

The Urban Design Plan illustrates site specific design concepts. Whether or not development occurs exactly as shown in the Plan, there are several guiding strategies that should be considered as downtown attracts new development:

Map 3. Vacant and Underutilized Land



-  Committed Projects
-  Development Opportunities
-  Areas in Transition
-  Open Space Enhancements
-  Major Open Space Opportunities
-  Strong Architectural Edges

- ***New development should respect the established patterns that make Downtown Macon unique.*** Streets have evolved with a particularly comfortable human scale and a certain architectural character that evokes a sense of history. New development should fit within this historic context. It should respect the surrounding physical context in terms of building height, massing, setback, window openings and building materials.
- ***New development should infill gaps in the existing downtown street fabric before new development areas are created.*** This uses existing infrastructure more effectively and helps maintain a consistent level of activity along existing streets.
- ***Existing uses should be reinforced.*** While downtown Macon contains a true mixture of uses -- government, institutional, commercial, office and residential -- certain streets have a clear emphasis. For example, Mulberry Street contains civic and institutional offices and minimal shopping. Cherry Street, on the other hand, contains the majority of downtown stores, creating a lively shopping street. These historic patterns of use should be respected and reinforced.
- ***Public improvements should build on existing investment.*** There is significant public and private investment already taking place, including the new visitor attractions and a variety of private initiatives ranging from rehabilitation of storefronts to new office buildings. New public investment should reinforce these initiatives by creating and maintaining an attractive street environment.
- ***Parking should be located in mid-block parking lots and structures where possible.*** Surface parking lots break up the continuity of streets, causing undesirable gaps in activity. If mid-block parking is not feasible, then surface lots should be located on side streets, not downtown's image streets. Where possible, structured parking should contain active street frontages, with shops or office space on the ground level.
- ***Downtown housing should be encouraged.*** Throughout the United States, cities are discovering that a key to creating a safe and active downtown is increasing the residential population. Opportunities for unique living situations are found throughout the downtown core. Residential development should be encouraged.
- ***Historic buildings should be preserved and reused whenever possible.*** The character of downtown is created by Macon's historic architecture and urban grid layout. While not every building can be preserved and reused, historic preservation should be given high priority. At a minimum, facades should be preserved and integrated into new structures.

5.2 Specific Recommendations

Map 4, the Downtown Illustrative Plan, shows recommended improvements and potential development opportunities. Detailed descriptions of the proposed improvements, along with the significance of each subarea, are as follows:

5.2.1 *Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard*

The past decade has witnessed the evolution of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard as a civic address of statewide significance with the Peyton Anderson Community Services Building, the renovated Douglas Theatre and the new Georgia Music Hall of Fame. Additional investment in the area is anticipated with an expansion of the Tubman Museum and the forthcoming Georgia Sports Hall of Fame. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard should be given high priority as the center of Macon's visitor-related activities. Additional attractions, restaurants and limited retail are ideal uses along this high-profile corridor. Map 6, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive Illustrative Plan shows how this corridor might develop over time. The letters on the plan correspond to the projects described below.

Significance:

- Gateway corridor into Downtown and the Visitor District
- Significant public investment already made
- Opportunities for additional attractions and new development

Potential Improvements/Projects:

A. Interstate Gateway: I-16 to Riverside Drive

Important first impressions are made at exit ramps from I-16. The Georgia Department of Transportation has plans to improve the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard interchange, creating an opportunity to enhance this downtown gateway. Several elements could enhance the arrival experience including brick retaining walls that define the intersection, pedestrian crossings, additional plantings on the roadway berm, a row of trees that screen utilities on the river and an entrance monument that will be visible from the interstate. Page ____ shows an artists rendition of how this gateway statement could appear.

B. Otis Redding Memorial Bridge Enhancement

The Otis Redding Memorial Bridge provides a potential pedestrian linkage between downtown visitor attractions and the Macon Centreplex. Currently, the bridge has very narrow walkways on either side and no guard rail to separate pedestrians from fast-moving traffic. The pedestrian walkways should be enhanced with expanded sidewalks, pedestrian-scale lights and decorative railings.

C. New Gateway Music Park

There are few places for the public to enjoy the Ocmulgee River. The corner of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Riverside Drive is an opportunity to capitalize on a high visibility location that is environmentally constrained. FEMA and the Army Corps of Engineers is studying the site for potential construction of a flood wall. This new amphitheater and park would introduce a major public open space on the Ocmulgee River. The park would serve as the eastern anchor for a proposed riverwalk. An artists rendering of the proposed park appears on page ____.

D. Norfolk Southern Railroad Trestle Improvements

A double set of train tracks blocks downtown from the Ocmulgee River. These tracks are elevated on a trestle as they cross Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and create an unpleasant visual experience for the visitor. The tracks are in full operation. With minimal investment, the trestle can be screened and made into an interesting gateway statement for Macon's visitor domain. Where space allows, Leyland Cypress trees, or similar species, should be planted to soften the mass of the trestle. Where the trestle remains visible, a colorful, decorative screen should be attached to the bridge. A sketch of how this could appear is shown on page ____.

E. MLK Street Enhancement (Riverside to Cherry Street)

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard will be a major visitor entrance and thoroughfare. Currently, the street lacks landscaping and curb appeal. The corridor should be enhanced with additional street trees, brick edging and continuous boulevard treatment. Page ____ contains a rendering of this new streetscape could be implemented.

F. MLK Monuments

A series of monuments could be installed at strategic points along Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard to enhance the civic character of the street and commemorate Macon's great historic figures. The Peyton Anderson Community Services Building already contains a sculpture of Mr. Anderson in the front courtyard. Additional monuments could include: a statue of a famous Macon musician in front of the Music Hall of Fame; a monument to Harriet Tubman in front of the Tubman Museum and a statue of a Macon sports hero in front of the proposed Sports Hall of Fame.

G. New Office Development Opportunity

The corner of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Mulberry Street currently sits vacant. The site has excellent visibility and access, creating an economic development opportunity in the heart of Macon's visitor domain. A three- to six-story building responding to the triangular shape of the site could take advantage of views to new visitor attractions and the rest of downtown. A water feature could animate the northeast corner of the building, adding another monument to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. The development could take advantage of some 160 available parking spaces in the neighboring parking structure. An artists rendering of this proposal appears on page ____.

H. Civic Plaza

There is an opportunity to reinforce the terminus of Cherry Street with a major civic plaza in front of Terminal Station and the proposed Sports Hall of Fame. The plaza should be designed to accommodate cars, but should provide the opportunity to host major outdoor gatherings and special events. The plaza should be simple and kept uncluttered to preserve sight lines to Terminal Station and create a focal point for Macon's visitor domain.

I. New Attraction

A new attraction located across from the proposed Sports Hall of Fame would build critical mass and pedestrian activity in the heart of the visitor domain. The new building should mirror the site layout and architectural articulation of the Sports Hall of Fame. Parking could be provided behind the building.

5.2.2 *Cherry Street*

Cherry Street is downtown Macon's primary retail shopping street. Cherry Street's central location, wide sidewalks and ample on-street parking make it ideal for downtown retailers. Retail stores and small-scale businesses should be encouraged to concentrate on Cherry Street and on north-south streets to either side, including Cotton Avenue and Second and Third Streets. Public improvements should be used to enhance the existing street environment and reinforce the linkage between visitor attractions on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive and dining and shopping on Cherry Street.

Significance:

- Successful retail street; need to reinforce/support success
- Important functional and physical linkage to visitor attractions

Potential Improvements/Projects:

A. Streetscape Improvements (MLK to 1st Street)

While the street environment is adequate, additional maintenance and streetscape improvements would greatly enhance Cherry Street as the central shopping spine. The street trees require pruning and better maintenance. They could be placed in low planting beds to further separate the pedestrian environment from parked cars. Streetscape improvements could also include improved sidewalk paving and pedestrian amenities such as benches and new lighting. An artists rendering of these enhancements appears on page ____.

B. Facade Improvement Program/Design Standards

Most shops take great pride in maintaining the historic character of their store fronts, however, some rehabs have been poorly executed and do not fit into their historic context. A facade improvement program could be developed to help educate business owners doing rehab work, provide free or low-cost design consultation and low-interest financing to facilitate building improvements. Design standards should be implemented to ensure that new construction and rehabs along Cherry Street help create a cohesive and pleasing environment.

5.2.3 Mulberry Street

Mulberry Street, one of three grand boulevards, contains several of Macon's civic landmarks including the Bibb County and Federal Courthouses. The street serves as Macon's office, civic and institutional address. Currently, there are no street trees or other streetscape enhancements on Mulberry, although the median is heavily-planted. Several infill opportunities exist at key locations along the street.

Significance:

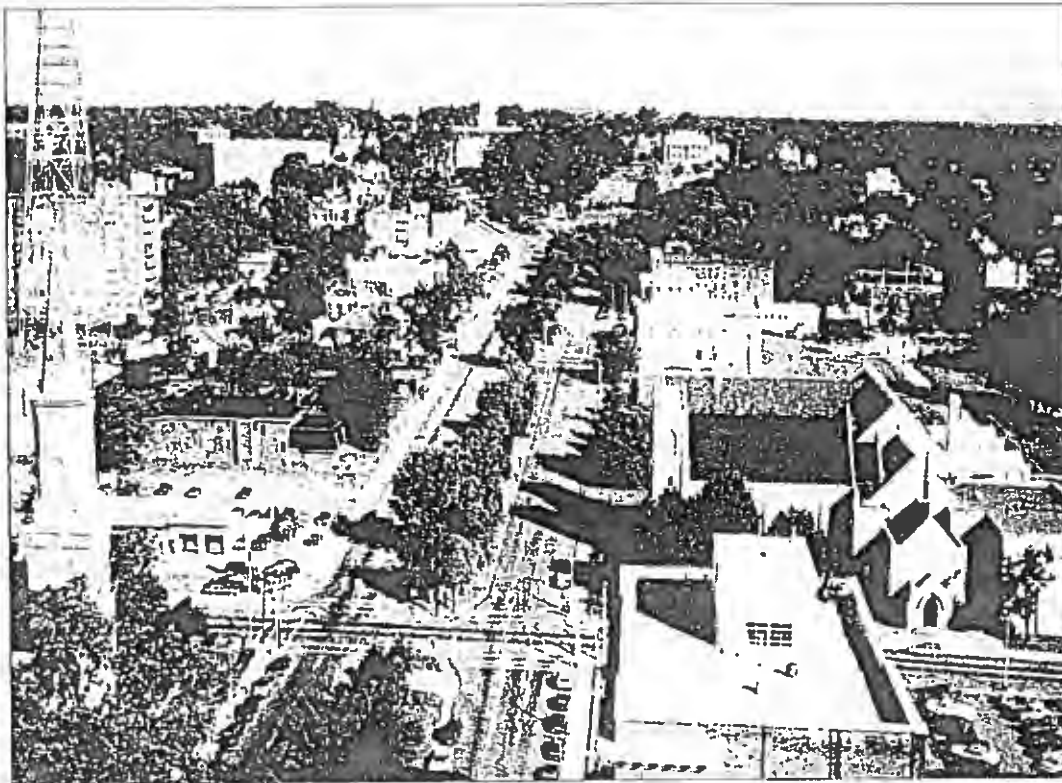
- Primary Office and Civic Address Street
- One of Macon's original grand boulevards

Potential Improvements/Projects:

A. Median Landscape Maintenance

Landscaping in the median should be simplified. Trees and shrubs are mostly overgrown and require significant thinning and pruning. By removing tall shrubs and limbing up trees in the median, views through this area could be significantly opened up. This relatively low-cost improvement would greatly enhance the image of Mulberry Street.

Mulberry Street Improvements



View looking west

Mid block median enhancements



Before



After

B. Pedestrian Amenities

Currently, pedestrian crossings are located at corners and at the mid-block along Mulberry. The mid-block crossings should be enhanced with bump outs and special paving to increase their visibility and provide safer pedestrian crossings. Within the median, these mid-block crossing could be expanded into mini-parks with benches and plantings. Page ____ contains a sketch of how such a mid-block park could appear.

C. Streetscape

Currently, plantings in the median provide the only trees along Mulberry. Street trees should be planted on both sides of the street to soften and shade the pedestrian environment and provide additional greenery. In selected areas, special paving could be used to accentuate pedestrian crossings and other key features.

D. Infill Opportunities

Several key intersections along Mulberry contain vacant or underutilized property, offering excellent development opportunities on one Macon's most important address streets. The northeast corner of First and Mulberry Streets, next to the Grand Opera, is currently used as a parking lot. As a key gateway intersection, this property should be given high priority for infill. Similar infill and redevelopment opportunities exist on the opposite corner (southwest corner of First and Mulberry) and the northeast corner of Spring Street.

5.2.4 Cotton Street/Cotton Street Triangle

The intersection of Cotton Street, Second Street and Mulberry provides a center and key focal point for the west side of downtown. It is surrounded by several of Macon's architectural landmarks. The triangular park at this intersection could be expanded and redesigned.

Significance:

- Located on an important entrance corridor from south
- Links to Cherry Street and primary retail core
- Provides focal point for shopping district

Potential Projects/Improvements

A. Streetscape Improvements between Poplar (City Hall) and Mulberry

Cotton and Second Streets contain a high volume of pedestrian traffic, including shoppers and office workers. These streets contain mature street trees that require maintenance. The area would benefit from additional street trees where there are none, as well as additional pedestrian amenities including pedestrian-level lighting and site furnishings (benches, trash receptacles, etc.).

B. Reconfiguration of Street / Park Expansion

The park located at this intersection is constrained by traffic movements along all three of its edges. There are limited paths, making the park of minimal use as a pedestrian island. The park could be significantly expanded by extending the curb line to include the area that is striped beyond the northern point of the triangle. Once it is expanded, it could function better as a pedestrian island, with additional paths, landscaping and furnishings. Page ____ contains images of how this triangle is currently configured.

5.2.5 City Hall Civic Plaza

City Hall is one of Macon's most important civic buildings. It is located at the intersection of two major entrance corridors (Forsyth and First Streets) and it anchors the western terminus of Poplar Street. Its Greek Revival architecture stands out among the surrounding 19th century brick commercial buildings. The Macon Auditorium, done in a similar architectural style, is located across the intersection to the north. Currently, City Hall lacks a dignified civic setting. The intersection in front of City Hall is a confusing array of turning lanes and parking. As it is currently configured, City Hall has no relationship to the Macon Auditorium.

Significance:

- Major Macon landmarks front the space
- At the convergence of two important entrance corridors
- At the terminus of a grand boulevard

Potential Projects/Improvements:

A. Reconfiguration of Traffic Movements

The street network should be simplified to eliminate unnecessary and redundant turning movements. Ideally, Forsyth would T into Poplar, eliminating the segment of Cotton Street (Forsyth becomes Cotton) between Poplar and First Streets. This would provide the opportunity to create a plaza in front of City Hall, as well as across the street near the Macon Auditorium. This area is currently being studied and redesigned by a local architect hired by the City.

B. Surrounding Streetscape

The area surrounding City Hall should be enhanced with additional street trees and improved pedestrian crossings.

5.2.6 Poplar Street

Once a bustling urban boulevard featuring a farmers market, the three-block segment between Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and City Hall has experienced steady decline and disinvestment. In the past, a typical tenant occupied a single storefront, creating a vibrant street environment geared towards shoppers on foot. The street has changed over the years. Cars now dominate. Rents have declined. As a result, upper stories go almost entirely unused and single tenants occupy multiple storefronts. These changes have reduced the compact feel of the street, and ultimately, the appeal of Poplar Street as a place to invest. But new investment and other signs of positive change are emerging. Plans for new restaurants, outdoor activity spaces and other new uses are in the pipeline. The key to stimulating continued private investment on Poplar Street is to improve the way the street appears and functions. Page ____ contains the Poplar Street Illustrative Plan, which illustrates the improvements described below.

Significance:

- One of Macon's grand boulevards
- Major linkage between City Hall and visitor attractions
- Investment occurring; needs public support to complete the effort
- Vacancies are detrimental to image of downtown

Potential Projects/Improvements

A. Monument Plaza / Transit Center

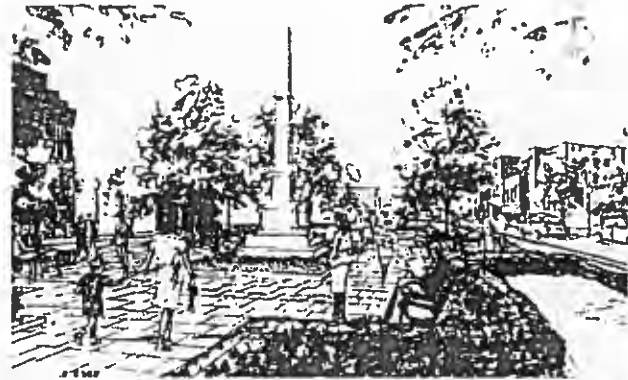
The median between First and Second Streets contains a monument of _____ and a transit plaza serving eastbound buses. Parking is provided on the opposite side of the transfer area. The median should be reconfigured to create a new setting for the monument, with a new plaza containing plantings and benches. Bus transfer facilities should be consolidated on this block in a reconfigured transit mall that would accommodate both eastbound and westbound bus transfers close to City Hall. The mall would contain waiting shelters on either side. The east end of the median would contain a new park. These changes would greatly enhance the appearance and function of the median system on Poplar Street. Lost parking spaces (approximately 38) could be accommodated in the reconfigured median (13 new spaces; see "B") and within 500 feet in new and reconfigured lots. An artists conception of this proposal is shown on page ____.

Poplar Street

Revitalizing One of Macon's Historic Boulevards

Monument Plaza / Transit Center

Two proposals will enhance the use and appearance of the Poplar Street block: consolidating transit activities with a shared shelter at the mid block and creating a new setting for the monument at the end of the median. Parking spaces will be reorganized in mid block parking areas screened by landscaping.



Proposed Restaurant and Outdoor Courtyard

This adaptive re-use project will convert a former blacksmith's shop into a restaurant and the vacant lot on Poplar Street into an attractive forecourt.

Infill/Adaptive Reuse Opportunities

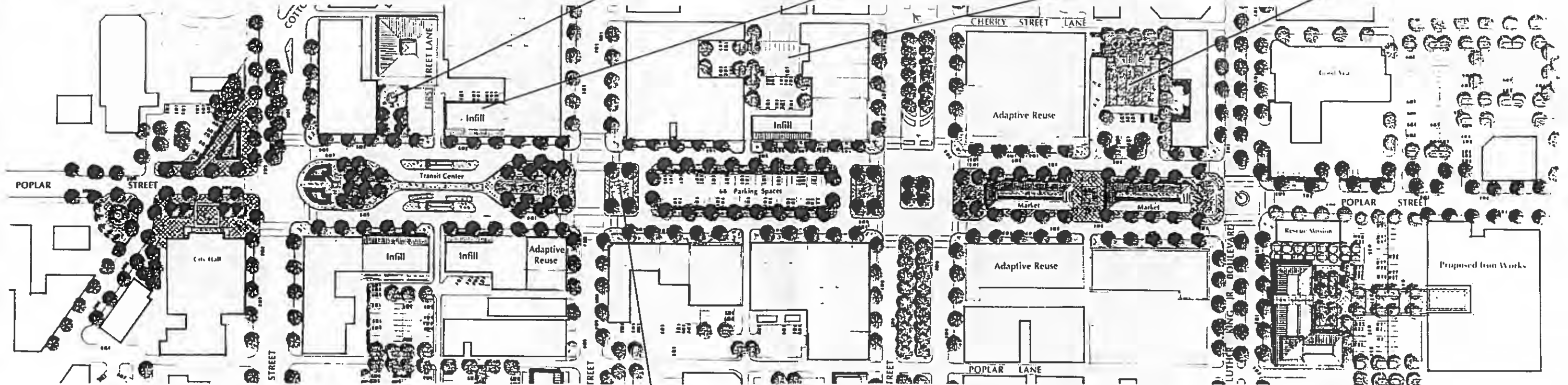
While many old buildings are gone, the historic character of Poplar Street remains. Existing structures offer abundant opportunities for ground floor retail and upper floor residential conversions. "Missing teeth" along Poplar Street should be filled in with new development that is sympathetic to the historic context of the area.

Mid-block Parking Opportunities

Enhancements to Poplar Street including median improvements and new infill development, will require additional parking resources nearby. Instead of creating expansive parking lots open to the street, parking should be tucked behind buildings. Lots should be well-lit and contain convenient pedestrian connections to Poplar Street.

Proposed Multi-purpose Activity Courtyard and Restaurant

This surface parking lot will be redesigned to include a grass lawn, an attractively paved parking area, outdoor dining spaces and a pedestrian walkway to the Cherry Street parking garage.



Reconfigured Parking and Median Improvements

The median between Second and Third Streets will be reconfigured to improve vehicular circulation and allow the creation of a planting bed surrounding the existing lot. Shrubs and street trees will soften the appearance of the area and minimize the scale of the street.



Streetscape Enhancements

Planting street trees and installing special paving at strategic locations will soften the street's wide dimension and reinforce Poplar Street as a desirable address for reinvestment.

Farmers Market

Historically, Poplar Street was home to a public market where farmers and artisans could sell their goods. Replacing the market will anchor this end of Poplar Street and provide vital economic development activity. Its location is excellent: the market adds an additional dimension to Macon's growing list of attractions. As shown in this proposal, the median will continue to serve the area's parking needs when not in use.



B. Reconfigured Parking and Median Improvements

The median between Second and Third Street should be reconfigured to improve vehicular circulation and allow the creation of a planting strip surrounding the existing lot. Shrubs and street trees will soften the appearance of the parking area and minimize the scale of the street. Small parks would be introduced in the islands separating the U-turn lanes from the main intersections. A sketch of how these improvements would look is found on page ____.

C. Farmers Market

Historically, Poplar Street contained a public market in the median between Third Street and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard where farmers and artisans sold their goods. The market was replaced by a parking lot many years ago. There is renewed interest in creating a new farmers market downtown. Replacing the market in this block would help anchor the eastern end of Poplar Street. This location would provide multiple benefits: the market would add an additional dimension to Macon's growing list of attractions near Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard; an architectural feature in the median would reduce the scale of the street; and it would introduce vital economic development activity to this end of downtown. The design of the market should allow parking in the median when the market is not in use. An artists rendering of the market is shown on page ____.

D. Overall Streetscape Improvements

In its current condition, Poplar Street is dominated by cars. The distance between building fronts is nearly 180', with no trees to give the street a human scale. Planting street trees and installing special paving at strategic locations will soften the street's wide dimension and promote reinvestment in the many architectural treasures of Poplar Street.

E. Infill/Adaptive Reuse Opportunities

While many old buildings are gone, the historic character of Poplar Street remains. Existing structures offer abundant opportunities for ground-floor retail and upper floor residential conversions. "Missing teeth" along Poplar should be filled in with new development that is sympathetic to the historic context of the area.

F. Mid-block Parking Opportunities

Enhancements to Poplar Street, including median improvements and new infill development, will require additional parking resources nearby.

Instead of creating expansive parking lots open to the street, parking should be tucked behind buildings. Lots should be well-lit and contain convenient pedestrian connections to Poplar Street.

G. Proposed Multi-purpose Activity Courtyard and Restaurant

This surface parking lot will be redesigned to contain a lawn area, attractively-paved parking area, outdoor dining spaces for several restaurants and a pedestrian walkway to the Cherry Street parking garage.

5.2.7 Ocmulgee Riverfront

The Ocmulgee Riverfront presents a major open space and development opportunity for Downtown Macon. In the past, the Riverfront was written off as “undevelopable” and a lost opportunity. In the Town Hall Meetings held as part of the downtown planning process, citizens reinforced their desire to create new opportunities to walk, jog and ride along the river’s edge.

Significance:

- Significant natural resource close to downtown
- Significant underutilized land nearby
- Important “front door” to downtown

Ocmulgee means “boiling water” in the ancient Hitchiti, one of several nomadic tribes linked to the Macon Plateau. Archeological evidence suggests that the first American Indian tribes camped on the banks of the Ocmulgee River about 10,000 years ago. Since then, the Ocmulgee has passed through many cycles of use: from a waterway used to transport goods to an unused and hidden resource. Most recently, visions of the development potential of the Ocmulgee River have been gaining momentum in the community.

Two obstacles have prevented the full utilization of the Ocmulgee River in the past.

- ***The river floods***, making any improvements within the floodway costly and potentially unstable. The Army Corps of Engineers is studying this issue and will be recommending remedial improvements for selected riverfront properties.
- ***Access to the Ocmulgee is cut off by an active rail line***. This has given Macon’s riverfront an industrial image. While often seen as an insurmountable obstacle, many cities have found creative ways to capitalize on their riverfronts, regardless.

Riverside Drive Illustrative Plan

Identifying Long-term Development and Open Space Opportunities on Macon's Ocmulgee Riverfront

New Office Building

A new river oriented office building on this highly visible site will take advantage of views to the river. A parking deck would accommodate necessary parking.

Riverside Restaurant

Macon lacks a riverfront dining opportunity. A restaurant situated well above the railroad tracks would take advantage of river views and pedestrian access to the Ocmulgee Riverwalk.

Bus Parking and Drop-off Area

A flexible use parking area would accommodate buses and provide a dramatic drop off for guests to the Botanical Gardens.

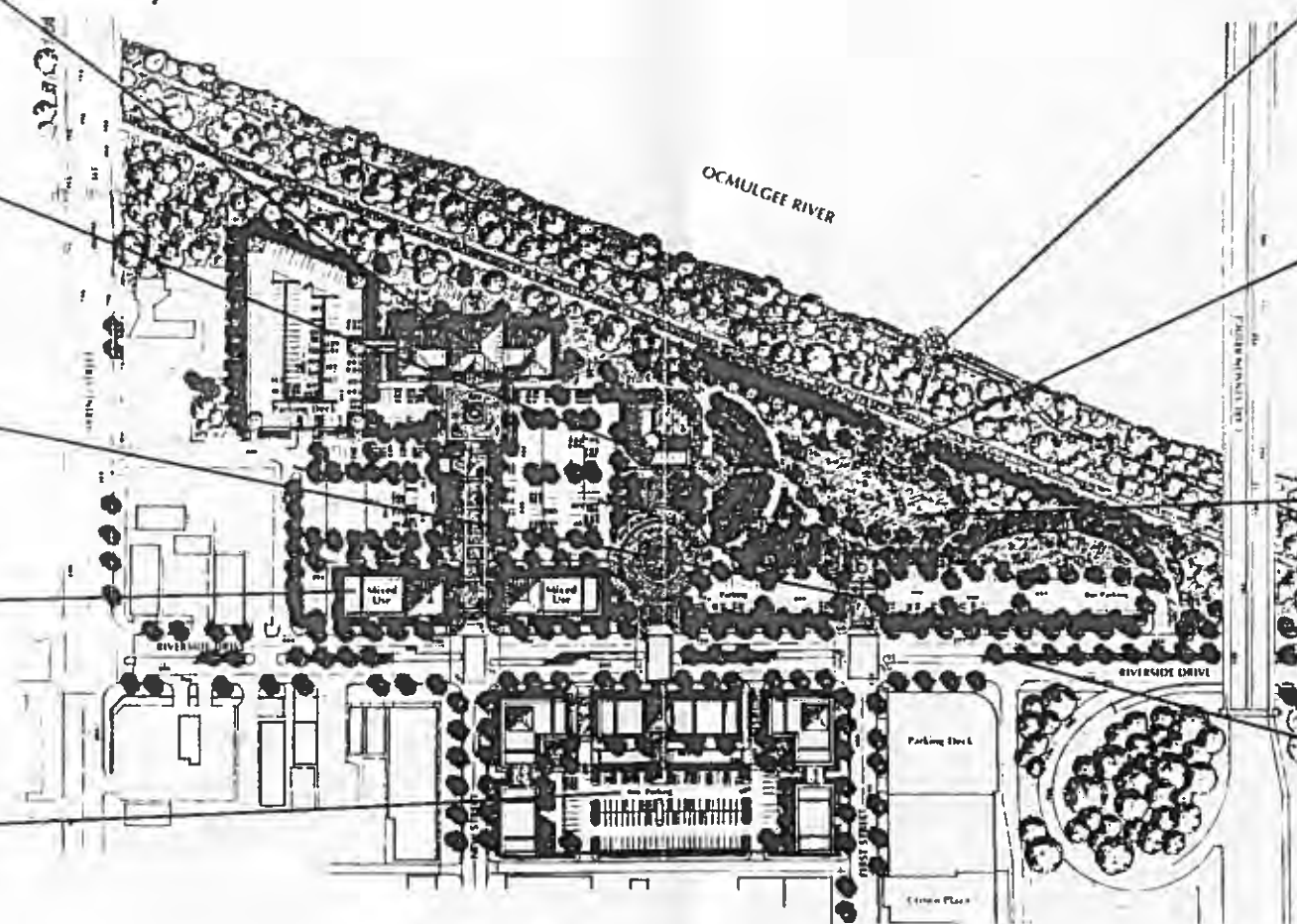
Mixed Use Development

Lower scale buildings would take advantage of a new address on Riverside Drive. Two buildings would frame the entrance to New Street Extended.

Long-term Development Potential

As demand dictates, this half block could be developed with an internal parking deck that would take advantage of the area's steep grades. Existing uses should remain as long as viable.

Concept Plan



Ocmulgee Riverwalk and Overlook

Residents and visitors would be able to enjoy the water's edge along a raised riverwalk that could ultimately extend well beyond downtown. The overlook terminates the pedestrian connection under the railroad.

Pedestrian Portal

An active railroad line blocks access to the Ocmulgee River along most of its downtown edge. A pedestrian tunnel would accommodate safe pedestrian passage to the Riverwalk and beyond.

Riverside Park and Botanical Gardens

A passive riverside park would provide space for festivals and events as well as room to develop an outstanding collection of flora within comfortable walking distance from other attractions.

Riverside Drive Streetscape Enhancement

Currently used largely as a service route into the downtown, Riverside Drive would be enhanced to provide a river-oriented address for new development. A planted median would create a more comfortable scale for the street.

Looking West from Second Street Bridge



Concept Section



Aerial View Toward Second Street Bridge



Opportunities on the Ocmulgee Riverfront are two-fold: first, there is the opportunity to capitalize on the river as a regional recreational amenity by enhancing access and creating new places for the public to enjoy the river's edge. Second, there are significantly underutilized properties in close proximity to the river on Riverside Drive. There is an opportunity to redevelop these sites and take advantage of views and linkages to the river. The Riverside Drive Illustrative Plan on page ____ shows the development opportunities that are described below.

Potential Projects/Improvements:

A. Riverside Drive

Riverside Drive is a fast-moving roadway that currently carries significant truck traffic through downtown to the industrial area in the east. In the future, Riverside Drive could evolve as a significant business address, with high visibility from the Interstate and dynamic views of the river. The image of Riverside Drive could be transformed by introducing a new landscaped median that would create a more comfortable scale to the street.

B. Ocmulgee Riverwalk and Overlook

The focus of the riverfront would be a one-mile-long riverwalk between Otis Redding Memorial Bridge and Spring Street. Residents and visitors would be able to enjoy the water's edge along a raised wooden boardwalk that could ultimately extend well beyond downtown. An overlook would terminate the pedestrian connection under the railroad with a place to view the river.

The Ocmulgee Greenway project is an ambitious state initiative seeking to capture and protect several thousand acres of land in the Macon area for public use. Several large private holdings are being pursued as part of a continuous public open space along the Ocmulgee River corridor. Downtown Macon will provide the perfect launching point for a day's activities along this larger network of parks and trails.

C. Pedestrian Portal

An active railroad line blocks access to the Ocmulgee River along most of downtown. A pedestrian tunnel would accommodate safe pedestrian passage to the Riverwalk and beyond.

D. Riverside Park and Botanical Gardens

A passive riverside park would provide space for festivals and events as well as room to develop an outstanding collection of flora within comfortable walking distance from other attractions. An important component of the park's layout would be the ability to accommodate motor coach parking, an essential feature for attracting group tours to Macon.

D. Riverside Restaurant

Macon lacks a riverfront dining experience. A restaurant situated well above the railroad tracks would take advantage of river views and pedestrian access to the Ocmulgee Riverwalk. Other amenities could also be introduced, as shown in the illustrative plan.

E. Mixed Use Development

While intended as a long-term vision, consolidating land between the Second Street and Spring Street bridges is the first step in attracting a major new user to downtown Macon. As demand for new downtown office space dictates, development could be steered towards the highly visible sites along Riverside Drive. A new river-oriented office building, as shown in the illustrative plan, could take advantage of views to the river and high visibility from I-16. A parking deck would accommodate the necessary parking. Lower-scale buildings could frame the entrance to this development at the corner of Riverside Drive and New Street Extended.

F. Long-term Redevelopment Opportunity

As demand dictates, the half block between First and New Streets fronting Riverside Drive could be redeveloped as a mixed-use building with an internal parking deck that would take advantage of naturally steep grades. This concept is shown in the illustrative plan.

5.2.8 Coleman Hill Park

Coleman Hill Park contains some of the best views of downtown from any public place, however, the park is not laid out to take advantage of them. Perched at the west end of downtown, the park represents a major opportunity to create a high-quality public open space.

Significance:

- Major in-town park; an anchor for nearby residential neighborhood
- Terminates Mulberry Street
- Located on an important entrance corridor (Spring Street)
- Good views to Downtown

Potential Projects/Improvements:

A. Walkways, Seating Areas and Landscaping

Walkways in Coleman Hill Park should be reconfigured to take advantage of views and natural topography. Special seating areas should be included at the best viewing points. Existing trees should be thinned to allow for a central green where people could have picnics and relax in full sun. Walkways should be developed to tie in existing monuments in the park. Special pedestrian furnishings including benches and pedestrian-level lighting should be installed throughout.

6.0 Cost Estimates for Public Enhancement Projects

Some of the recommendations described in the Urban Design Plan would not require substantial public investment, while others would be implemented in conjunction with adjacent infrastructure improvements. The following cost estimates have been prepared as a guide to give the community an idea about how much a given public improvement would potentially cost.

Project	Estimated Cost
5.2.1 MLK Boulevard Improvements	
I-16 Gateway	\$650,625
Gateway Music Park	\$1,090,000
Trestle Improvements	na
Riverside Drive to Mulberry Street	na
5.2.2 Cherry Street Enhancements	\$741,000
5.2.3 Mulberry Street Enhancements	\$1,080,000
Median Landscaping	\$240,000
Perimeter Streetscape	\$840,000
5.2.4 Cotton Street / Cotton Street Triangle	na
5.2.5 City Hall Environs	na
5.2.6 Poplar Street	\$2,900,000
Median Improvements	\$1,715,000
Perimeter Streetscape	\$1,185,000
5.2.7 Ocmulgee Riverfront	\$3,943,000
Riverwalk and Overlook (to 1st St. Park)	\$1,162,000
Riverwalk (1st Street Park to Spring Street)	\$390,000
First Street Riverside Park and Gardens	\$2,391,000
5.2.8 Coleman Hill Park	\$280,000

Breakdowns of these cost estimates are included in Appendix C. of this document.

7.0 Implementation Strategy and Action Plan

Implementation of the recommendations contained in this Plan will require public and private stakeholder coordination, commitment and funding. There is no single implementor of the Plan's recommendations; however, NewTown Macon is positioned to act as a catalyst and coordinate the numerous interests involved in downtown development.

This section includes an inventory of the current agencies and organizations involved in implementing downtown improvements and projects, the mission and goals of NewTown Macon, Inc. and the role they will play, a list of priority projects for NewTown to consider and finally a summary list of potential funding sources.

7.1 Current Downtown Organizations

Aside from the primary implementors of downtown development -- the private sector -- there are several key groups involved in implementing public improvements and projects. Each has a slightly different charge, although there is overlap among them.

City of Macon. The City, along with the Urban Development Authority, has been the primary implementor of downtown improvements. Current leadership has exhibited great interest in making downtown successful, including soliciting support for the Halls of Fame and streetscape improvements.

Macon-Bibb County Urban Development Authority. The Authority is the key agency with the legal responsibility of planning, advocating and coordinating redevelopment and revitalization in Downtown Macon. It consists of seven members appointed by the city and county. The Authority works closely with the Downtown Council.

Bibb County. The County continues to be supportive of downtown development, primarily in the acquisition of key properties. Current leadership supports downtown as the region's center and key to the region's economic success. The County supports many downtown projects, including cosponsoring the Ocmulgee Greenway project.

State of Georgia. The state supports several levels of planning and capital investment in Downtown Macon. Most recently, state investment has been critical to bringing the Georgia Music Hall of Fame to downtown. They are also in the process of implementing plans for the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame. Additional and matching funds for roadway improvements are also instrumental to downtown enhancement.

Federal Government. The Federal government, through special programs such as ISTEA (Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act) and NEXTEA (National Economic Crossroads Transportation Efficiency Act) will continue to play an important role in funding primarily transportation-related projects. Pedestrian and bicycle-oriented improvements have a high likelihood of being funded. HUD, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, funds special projects through its many programs, primarily targeting home ownership, although other programs offer low-interest loans and special grants to other forms of downtown development. Finally, the Army Corps of Engineers also plays a role in downtown because of flooding issues related to the Ocmulgee River.

Downtown Council. The Council is a division of the Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce, with a membership of 200 businesses and professional people. The Council works as an advocate for economic enhancement and development for the downtown core, although its membership includes people from outside the downtown area. Along with advocating and supporting new business activity, the Council supports strategic planning and also hosts two of Macon's largest one-night festivals. Funding for the Council comes from membership dues and special events.

Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce / Macon Economic Development Commission. The Chamber and MEDC actively promote downtown to prospective businesses and investors.

The Peyton Anderson Foundation. The Foundation supports downtown development through direct investment and grants, as well as proactive planning and coordination. This current plan is fully sponsored by the Foundation.

Macon-Bibb County Convention and Visitors Bureau. The CVB promotes downtown as part of its marketing package. Downtown is highlighted as the cultural center of the region, with over half the total attractions listed in its visitor guide in the downtown core.

Macon Heritage Foundation. The Macon Heritage Foundation is a private, non-profit membership organization that promotes the preservation and revitalization of Macon's historic resources. The goal of the foundation is to stimulate investment in Macon's historic districts through raising public awareness of the benefits of preservation and utilizing local ordinances and a revolving loan fund.

7.2 NewTown Macon, Inc.

As can be seen from the multiplicity of organizations and agencies listed above, there are many groups with a stake in downtown development. NewTown Macon, Inc. was formed in 1996 as an umbrella oversight organization with the purpose of coordinating the diverse agencies and stakeholders interested in downtown.

The group's membership includes the region's private sector leadership, as well as representation from most every stakeholder organization listed above, including the region's political leadership and public sector planning agencies.

The group has adopted the following mission:

NewTown Macon, Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to the vital and effective development of Downtown Macon, capturing the community's imagination, achieving a compelling community consensus, and coordinating the community's comprehensive plan for enriching the downtown area.

NewTown Macon's goals include:

1. To regain the historic, cultural, educational, governmental, entertainment and commercial significance of Downtown as the focal point of activity in Macon, Bibb County and the Macon marketplace.
2. To involve interested citizens and stakeholders in conceiving and participating in claiming the best future for Downtown Macon.
3. To serve as an advocate for positive and productive change in Downtown, supporting the community and its investors in implementing new initiatives and undertaking new enterprises.
4. To foster the development of an economic strategy for Downtown Macon which will create a model-city environment.
5. To work with existing authorities, commissions, departments, governments, and organizations who participate in planning for Downtown and to facilitate a better coordination of their efforts.
6. To build consensus, develop broad understanding for projected plans and opportunities, and encourage action that will contribute to the economic growth, the historical and cultural stability, and the positive image of Downtown.

7. To listen, respond and represent the larger public interest, cultivating private and individual interests that contribute to the broader and more comprehensive good of Downtown.

NewTown Macon, Inc. will not directly implement the majority of the recommendations contained in this Plan. Their role is to coordinate interests, provide a conduit for public participation in the downtown planning process, to advocate and fund downtown planning efforts, and when appropriate, to pursue funding and/or investors for specific projects. The intention of NewTown is not to replace or make obsolete any planning agency or organization. The goal is to involve these stakeholders in the NewTown organization itself.

7.3 Priority Projects

Successful implementation will require a focused effort, with clear priorities and strong leadership and support provided by NewTown Macon, Inc. The following initiatives should be given top priority for immediate action by NewTown. These recommendations are based on direct input from the NewTown Executive Board.

To implement these initiatives, we propose developing *NewTown Macon Task Forces*, composed of five to seven NewTown Board Members and one Executive Board member who would act as chairperson. Consideration should also be given to outside participation beyond the NewTown Board. These task forces would be responsible for a particular issue area or project, with responsibility for identifying issues, creating a strategic approach for addressing obstacles that may impede a successful project, coordinating stakeholder and implementor interests and reporting back to the Board.

The following are initial task forces that NewTown should consider for immediate actions:

Proposed Task Force A: NewTown Organization

Operational issues must be resolved including how NewTown will address downtown issues, when it will meet and how membership will be addressed. This task force should be composed of members of the *NewTown Macon Executive Board*.

Potential Action Items:

- Define regular *meeting times and locations*;
Time Frame: immediate

- Establish *task force/subcommittee structure*;
Time Frame: immediate
- Create mechanism to *maintain/expand membership*;
Time Frame: immediate
- Research and fund *NewTown Macon Storefront Outreach Center*
Time Frame: Fall 1997

Proposed Task Force B: Downtown as a Visitor Destination

Tourism presents a major growth opportunity for downtown. New attractions, entertainment options and support services must be solicited and developed to further reinforce investment in the visitor domain.

Potential Action Items:

- Encourage Convention and Visitors Bureau to prepare *Strategic Plan for Tourism*.
Time Frame: immediate
- Complete *Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard* gateway and streetscape enhancements.
Time Frame: immediate
- Facilitate *Tubman Museum expansion* (location, program and potential funding)
Time Frame: Fall 1997
- Facilitate *Terminal Station reuse* for new attraction/visitor-related activities
Time Frame: Fall 1997
- Focus on attracting *visitor-oriented uses* to the vicinity of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard (key developable properties include the triangular site at MLK and Mulberry; Western Union site)
Time Frame: 1998

Proposed Task Force C: Ocmulgee Riverfront

Strategic steps must be taken to ensure that plans for enhanced public access to the Riverfront can be successfully implemented.

Potential Action Items:

- Facilitate acquisition of *Washburn property*
Time Frame: immediate
- Coordinate with GDOT on *Otis Redding Bridge* widening / pedestrian walkway
Time Frame: dependent on GDOT timing
- Coordinate with Army Corps of Engineers on *flood improvements*
Time Frame: dependent on Corps timing
- Develop *acquisition strategy* for proposed First Street Riverside Park property
Time Frame: Fall 1997

Proposed Task Force D: Old Mill Property

The former Bibb Mill site presents an outstanding opportunity to strengthen the Macon Centreplex with a new hotel and mixed use development.

Potential Action Items:

- Work with property owner to promote a *high-quality mixed use development*
Time Frame: immediate
- Coordinate *public acquisition of open space* (by the Trust for Public Land)
Time Frame: immediate
- Solicit developer for *high-quality hotel*
Time Frame: immediate
- Create *new point of access to Ocmulgee National Monument*
Time Frame: 1998

Proposed Task Force E: Downtown Housing

Downtown housing is critical to creating a vibrant and active downtown. Additional housing should be encouraged and supported on an ongoing basis.

Potential Action Items:

- Summarize and publicize existing *housing development incentives*
Time Frame: immediate

- Actively *seek developers* for downtown residential projects
Time Frame: 1998/1999
- Explore potential for a *downtown housing demonstration project*
Time Frame: Goal for 2000

Future Implementation Priorities

The following areas should be given priority in the near future:

- **I-16/MLK Gateway.** The Georgia Department of Transportation is studying this interchange for potential improvements. Pedestrian amenities, signage and special features (entrance pylon) should be coordinated with this effort.
- **Greenway/Ocmulgee Riverwalk.** As key parcels are acquired along the river, the proposed riverwalk should be developed. A study being completed by Glatting Jackson Kercher Anglin Lopez Rinehart, Inc. for the City of Macon, Bibb County and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources outlines recommendations for a regional greenway along the Ocmulgee River that will pass through downtown. Key properties are currently being acquired to bring this project to fruition. Implementing the Greenway Project will require cooperation among state and local entities, as well as the Trust for Public Land.
- **Poplar Street.** Poplar Street was identified as a key transportation linkage, major redevelopment opportunity area and pivotal to the downtown revitalization process. There is the opportunity to coordinate enhancements with the existing Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and potentially pursue ISTEA and NEXTEA grants to fund part of the plan for this area.
- **Mulberry Street/Coleman Hill Park.** Mulberry Street is a critical image building street for downtown and an important civic address. Coleman Hill Park has the potential to be an attraction in its own right. In the near future, private funding for all or a portion of the proposed enhancements should be pursued.

7.4 Potential Funding Sources

There are a variety of potential funding sources for downtown development. The following list identifies the appropriate sources for Macon that are associated with funding downtown projects:

- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- Urban Development Authority Bonds
- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
- Special Downtown Tax Districts (BID and CID)
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
- ISTEA and NEXTEA
- Community Development Grants
- Institutional/Corporate/Private Financing
- Special Events/Fundraisers
- Small Business Loans

Appendix A. Downtown Challenges: What Maconites Have to Say About Downtown

The following is a summary of what was heard and recorded in the initial assessment phase:

Maconites had a great deal to say about their downtown. They are proud of their downtown and their city. They see a historic downtown with broad, tree-lined streets and boulevard "parks" with historic buildings and interesting and significant architecture. They are proud of the many accomplishments made in downtown in recent years: facade and building rehabilitation; streetscape improvements; the outstanding "Cherry Blossom Festival", Macon Auditorium improvements; Centreplex expansion; saving the Terminal Station; dramatic expansion of the Medical Center; Mercer University support for downtown through its Law School and the planned enhancement and use of the Grand Opera House; the renovation of the Douglass Theater; plans for a new Tubman Museum; the soon to open Georgia Music Hall of Fame; and, planned development of the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame.

Macon has a great deal to be proud of in its downtown. From an outsider's point of view, downtown has many strengths to build upon. Macon should be proud of its downtown -- it is stronger than many downtown areas in cities of similar size in the southeast and the U.S.

We sense that Maconites know what the problems are and what the solutions are for Downtown. Having listened carefully, we believe that Maconites are, perhaps, not listening carefully to their neighbors. Therefore, we feel it is important to summarize what we heard so that they may hear more clearly what is being said.

The material that follows summarizes what we heard Maconites say about their downtown. Comments are listed under five broad headings: (1) leadership (2) organization and management; (3) projects; (4) community; and, (5) planning and action. The words and phrases are listed in no particular order and are stated essentially as we heard them. Some obviously represent concerns and needs that go beyond downtown. We have set some words and phrases in **bold type**. These are the items that the consultant team felt were of particular importance to the planning process.

Leadership

Leadership seemed to be on almost everyone's mind. There seems a strong desire for consolidation of City and County governments. Most see this as a panacea for all of Macon's problems, not just downtown. A new spirit of cooperation and partnership would be beneficial, with or without consolidation.

The leadership issue goes well beyond the top elected officials to the heads of Authorities and Commissions, City and County departments and with private leaders and organizations. A wide-range of leadership issues (challenges) were defined by those interviewed in the Status Report process. Particularly relevant challenges are indicated in bold type.

- **Lack of leaders, leadership**
- Leadership is old/tired
- Good old boys have got to go
- Perceived inability of leaders to be pro-active
- Turf wars and in-fighting
- Don't have act together
- **Need downtown oversight "umbrella" organization to assure plan implementation**
- Need "champions for change"
- Poor self-image and self-esteem
- Lack of community involvement/buy-in
- **Community participation/buy-in of plans essential**
- Lack of City and County cooperation
- Need consolidation
- **Lack of plan and priorities**
- **Need to act and succeed**
- Need to take risks
- **Create new partnerships**
 - **Mayor and Commission Chairman**
 - **City and County**
 - **Public/private**
 - **City/County and State (DNR River Corridor)**
- Reactive rather than proactive
- Funding/taxes
- **Inability to implement plans**
- **Lack of cohesiveness, commitment and consensus**

Organization and Management

Following leadership was a concern for the way Macon and Bibb County are organized to implement plans and facilitate economic development downtown, and beyond. It was almost unanimous that there are too many authorities, commissions and organizations involved in downtown with resulting turf wars over authority, leadership and use of scarce public funds. The challenges of organization we heard about include:

- **Too many authorities/commissions/organizations**
- **Need consolidation**
- **Some agencies, departments and authorities need to be abolished**

- **Turf wars and in-fighting between organizations**
- Authorities/commissions/city and county departments are not investor/developer-friendly
- Lack of downtown development incentives
- **Authorities/commissions/city and county departments are reactive rather than proactive and perceived as generally uncooperative**
- Need "one-stop shop" for development permits and inspections
- Laws not enforced downtown, i.e., litter and trash containers
- Perception that downtown is unsafe
- New partnerships
- Need downtown oversight ("umbrella") organization to assure plan implementation
- No one person/organization in charge of downtown
- Funding/taxes
- Lack of city/county cooperation
- Need manager focus of government (city and county)
- Develop new partnerships
- **Business retention/expansion program**

Projects

A wide-range of project challenges were identified, many having to do with implementing present plans that have not being acted on. Other project challenges relate to ideas for new projects and particularly projects that will support or build on the Music Hall of Fame. Project challenges include:

- **Continue to expand Mercer University presence downtown**
- **New hotel at Centreplex**
- **Bed and breakfasts**
- **Antique mall**
- **City market**
- **Relocate State Farmers Market downtown**
- **Develop decorator/designer market**
- **Summer theatre festival**
- **Arts/crafts center (Iron Works Center)**
- **Sustain and support Cherry Blossom Festival**
- **Develop family attractions**
 - Science Center
 - Children's Exploreum
- **New/expanded retail**
- **Public restrooms**
- **Attract new office users**
- **Retain existing office users**
- **Make parking garages more user-friendly (paint, light, sign, and secure)**

- **Linkage between Centreplex (and I-16) and downtown**
- **Terminal Station redevelopment**
- **Lack of nightlife**
- **Lack of restaurants**
- **Sustain and enhance downtown neighborhoods**
- **Develop new housing (particularly upper floors in existing buildings)**
- **Arts, cultural, educational, entertainment district**
- **Fall Line Freeway (action)**
- **7th Street opportunity site**
- **Vacant buildings**
- **Ocmulgee River Greenway (park and trails)**
- **Redding Bridge, MLK "Gateway" streetscape and traffic calming**
- **Banks become partners/lenders**
- **Micro brewery and music clubs**
- **Expand sports/recreation opportunities at Central City park**
- **Link downtown and regional attractions**
 - Ocmulgee National Monument
 - Bond Swamp
 - Warner Robbins
 - Central City Park
- **Assure success of music and sports halls of fame**
- **Market Downtown Macon (and Macon/Bibb county) more effectively**
- **Sell benefits (public and private) of investing in downtown**
- **New downtown cinemaplex (theaters and restaurants)**
- **Build music park and public plaza projects**

Community

Many of the challenges listed under other headings seems to also relate to "community." A great deal of interest was expressed in the challenges of self-image and self-esteem, as well as the need for community involvement. Housing, historic districts and the quality of life were also important. Most significant is the view that downtown should be important to everyone -- everyone's neighborhood.

- **Poor self-image/self-esteem**
- **Lack of community involvement**
- **Homeless**
- **Perception of Downtown public safety**
- **Housing/neighborhoods**
- **Assuring future of historic districts**
- **Need success stories**
- **Downtown, a place for everyone - everyone's neighborhood**

Planning and Action

A great deal of concern was expressed for the lack of planning and for the apparent inability to implement plans. We observed that "many plans seem to have been implemented." The response was that "too many plans end up on the shelf and responsible officials and organizations don't act on the plans". Great concern was expressed of the need for an "individual or organization that would be responsible for planning and implementing." Someone needs to be in charge! What people want are plans that can and will be implemented. Plans that are doable and that responsibility can be assigned to. They want action. Planning and action challenges include:

- **Economic development strategy/plan**
- **Comprehensive/urban design plan**
- **Priorities**
- **Action/implementation strategies**
- **Need downtown oversight "umbrella" organization to assure plan implementation**
- **Need development design standards and criteria - architectural and streetscape**
- **Expanded Mercer University presence downtown**
- **Home for CVB and new visitor center**
- **Entrances (gateways)**
- **Plan to assure success of halls of fame**
- **Leverage halls of fame to make other things happen**
- **Maximize downtown market of 10,000+ employees**
- **Encourage new and adaptive reuse housing**
- **Identify new downtown users - restructure and diversify**
- **Music Park and Pedestrian Plaza implementation**
- **Suburbanization of downtown's edges - loss of urban fabric**
- **Expand sports/recreation opportunities at Central City Park (relocate State Fair)**

Appendix B. Notes from Town Hall Meetings

The following notes are summaries of public comments heard at town hall meetings.

Town Hall Meeting *November 19, 1996*

NewTown Macon Inc. sponsored a Town Hall Meeting on Tuesday evening, November 19, 1996 at the Macon Centerplex. The meeting attracted approximately 250 participants.

What Do You Like Most About Downtown Macon?

Positive Things

- Business can be successful downtown
- Broad sidewalks
- Parks
- Feel safe
- Press needs to be careful when using "downtown"
- The City is a open museum! Treat buildings as part of one entity

Strengths

- Convenience for errands
- Not fearful/sense of safety
- Low "Scale" of Downtown
- Successful business environment
- Diversity of architecture not "reproducing" historic architecture
- Exterior architecture and interiors
- "Loft potential"
- Historic resources
- Residential potential
 - upper stories...
- Community Spirit/Interest
- Great "Policing"
 - bikes, horses
- Historic architecture
- Ocmulgee River
- Original Town Plan
- New Town Macon Organization
- Terminal station
- Dempsey building
- Art community downtown
- Trees downtown

What Do You Like Least About Downtown Macon?

"Challenges"

- Transportation (public)
- Opportunity for hotel on Mill site
- Obsolete buildings — we should re-use them
- Lack of cohesiveness in implementing plans
- "Not enough is said" about downtown historic residential neighborhoods
- Conversions from residential to other uses
- Lack of mass transit options
- Historic Review Board doesn't "control" downtown — Need an overlay
- Empty stores

Issues

- Needs immediate change
- Getting people into Downtown - Signage
- Need better signage
- Emphasis needed on 1-16
- Trees on Cherry Street
- Vacant stores
- Large-scale busses
- No rockie mountains
- Directional signage
- 2000 AC - original plan for Native Americans
- Market educational institutions
 - expand programs
- Promote Mercer .U.
- Connect Ocmulgee with downtown attraction visitor center
- (Muskogee Creek Indians)
- Expand Indian heritage resources (Ocmulgee National Monument)
- Develop cultural resources, e.g. Poplar Street
- "Close-in" neighborhoods need attention
- Destruction of downtown neighborhoods
- Interstate entrances/exits
- No planting
- Need to attract private \$

If a Genie Gave You Three Wishes, What Would You Wish for Downtown Macon?

- Fishing Marina
- Apartments Downtown

- Capitalize on Central City Park
 - additional recreation resources → REC COMPLEX
- Historic overlay district
- Waterfront amphitheater
- Downtown apartments
- Major recreation complex
- Riverfront walkways
- Public Art
- Macon at top of "Best Cities" list
- Market District
- Known as town that private enterprise rebuilt
 - deed river back to Indians
- Public transportation
- Downtown Loop System
- Casino development on Indian property....
- Public Plaza in front of City Hall by 2001
- City/County Government working together
- Increased marketing/cooperative marketing
- Corporate "Big Brother" program
- Businesses to capture energy from Downtown events
- Market District Downtown
- Buildings refurbished on Cherry Street
- Develop Fort Hawkins
- City/County working together (2001)
- Facilities for homeless
- Extend bus service hours (to 12-1)
- Downtown theater
- Family-oriented
- Terminal station → one stop
 - "Shop for economic development"
- Move chamber to terminal station
- Defined mission, goals, accountabilities, etc.
- An accessible, family-oriented downtown
- An implementable vision • Entertainment options
 - concerts
 - theater
 - big names
- Amphitheater adjacent to Capricorn at end of Poplar
- Turn rescue mission into B&B
- Trolley Downtown
- Fund for historic streetscape for maintenance
- Fort Hawkins -
 - Bring Fort Hill into City
- Attractions for families
- Arts center - for major shows
- Place for artisans, teaching

- Afro Americans participate in process
- Eat supper on the river
- 800 Mercer students living downtown (see pg 19)
- Climate controlled connection
- Moving sidewalks
- Black and White community coming together
 - celebrating diversity
 - youth
- 800 Mercer students living downtown
- Re-use Terminal Station for entertainment center
- Football stadium
- Interpreting railroad heritage in Terminal Station....
- Walkway on trestle
- Build on local talent
- The Rose Hill cemetery as an "attraction"
- Botanical garden downtown
- Restore the Round Building
- Need night time security
- Parking
- Create mixed use center at Mill
- Restaurant on the River...
- Dredge River for boat access
- Maintenance and "respect" for public investment (streetscape)
- Tree Preservation program
 - and other landscaping
- Non-profit to plant trees.... "Trees Macon" Trees Atlanta is a success
- Continued commitment to the Plan
 - benchmarks
 - who's responsible
 - stick with the Plan, but stay flexible
- Big shade trees in the medians
- More fountains....
 - active/interactive...
- Illumination of commercial building..
- Light/Sound show on Terminal
- Bibb Mill redevelopment — rehabilitation → connection underground to Centerplex
- (Banner hangers are in place from Olympics....)
- There is no "point person" for permits, etc.
 - "Ombudsman"
- There hasn't been a preference survey done of downtown workers...
- Parking structures that fit into the historic context
- Keeping people in Macon — Focus on - Education Career Center
 - Jobs Keep it Downtown

Town Hall Meeting

February 13, 1997

- Competition with Macon Mall
- Maintain parking on Poplar Street and throughout downtown
- Terminal Station - interior quality
- Don't close streets for special events - particularly not before events
- Support local musicians
- Fair after Cherry Blossom Festival
- "Macon on the Move" - theme
- Improved handicap accessibility
- Themed restaurants
- Extend normal bus transportation hours past 7 P.M.
- Downtown is on the edge of Macon - consider context and walking distances
- 3.5 M people within 1-1.5 hours
 - Tap surrounding market
 - Tap Atlanta population
- Train from Atlanta to Macon
- Shift Transit Hub to Cherry and Broadway
- Recognize value of historic architecture - preservation
- Mixed-use development downtown
 - Change "Perception" of what's downtown
- Capitalize on participants in sports programs
- Unified theme with billboards
- Entertainment venues needed alternate to County
- Convention Center connection to Downtown
- Directional signage leads people out - sign "Downtown" sign - "Music Hall of Fame"
- Promote size of Macon Mall
- Status of "Dempsey?"
- Safety has improved - poor perception still exists - needs positive promotion
- Approach Civic Clubs for "Demonstration Projects"
- Bring "Back Office" business into downtown to create new jobs
- Longer hours for public offices and facilities
- Public rest rooms
- Adequate trash receptacles
- Recognize work in progress accomplishments
- Animated Billboard/Radio Broadcasts

Appendix C

Detailed Cost Estimate Breakdown

Enhancement Projects

Macon, Georgia

June 1997

LDR International, Inc.

	Quantity		Unit Price	Price
Area 1. I-16 Gateway Enhancement (@MLK Blvd)				
New Low Brick Wall (@ 5' Average Height)	1,300	L.F.	\$125	\$162,500
New Brick Paving	8,000	S.F.	\$10	\$80,000
Pylon				\$200,000
Historic Pedestrian Lights	4		\$2,500	\$10,000
Street Trees	30		\$600	\$18,000
Flowering Trees	160		\$250	\$40,000
Shrub Masses				\$10,000
Subtotal				\$520,500
25% for Design & Construction Administration				\$130,125
Total				\$650,625
Area 2. Otis Redding Bridge Expansion (Enhancements Only)				
New Sidewalk Brick Paving	15,000	S.F.	\$10	\$150,000
Historic Pedestrian Lights (with Banners)	14		\$3,000	\$42,000
Steel Handrail	880	L.F.	\$75	\$66,000
Low Brick Wall (Traffic Divider)	860	L.F.	\$65	\$55,900
Subtotal				\$313,900
25% for Design & Construction Administration				\$78,475
Total				\$392,375
Area 3. Riverfront Music Park (Washburn Building Site)				
Special Paving	38,600	S.F.	\$10	\$386,000
Arbor	Allowance			\$75,000
Statue	Allowance			\$100,000
Bulkhead (not included - to be determined by COE)				
Concrete Seat Wall & Steps	Allowance			\$125,000
Aluminum Flag Pole (assumed 30' tall)	12		\$2,500	\$30,000
Lights (assumed 80' spacing)	16		\$2,500	\$40,000
Sod	48,000	S.F.	0.5	\$24,000
Trees	30		\$600	\$18,000
Hedge	200	L.F.	\$10	\$2,000
Site Grading	Allowance			\$75,000
NOTE: Building Demolition/Bulkhead not included				
Subtotal				\$875,000
25% for Design & Construction Administration				\$218,750
Total				\$1,093,750

Area 4. First Street Riverfront Park**Land Acquisition**

Central Services	+/-2.2	Ac.	Not	Included
Macon Transit Authority	+/-3	Ac.	Not	Included
Restaurant and Mix Use	+/-1.6	Ac.	Not	Included
Commercial Parcels	+/-4.2	Ac.	Not	Included
City Property	+/-1.3	Ac.	Not	Included
Out Parcel	+/-0.3	Ac.	Not	Included
Subtotal	+/-12.6	Ac.		

Site Improvements

New Low Brick Wall (@ 10' Average Height)	200	L.F.	\$250	\$50,000
Existing Pavement Demolition	33,880	S.Y.	\$7	\$237,160
Grading (3' depth on 8 Ac.)	38,720	C.Y.	\$5.0	\$193,600
Portal (Under Train Tracks)	1		\$250,000	\$250,000
Special Paving	58,400	S.F.	\$10	\$584,000
Fountain	1		\$100,000	\$100,000
Gazebo	1		\$25,000	\$25,000
Pavilion 30'x30'	1		\$55,000	\$55,000
Benches	30		\$800	\$24,000
Trash Receptacles	12		\$400	\$4,800
Historic Pedestrian Lights (assumed 80' spacing)	15		\$2,500	\$37,500
Trees	100		\$600	\$60,000
Shrub Planting	225		\$50	\$11,250
Seasonal Planting	1,600		\$5	\$8,000
Sod	132,680	S.F.	\$0.5	\$66,340
Curb and Gutter	2,100	L.F.	\$30	\$63,000
Parking Lot	4,075	S.Y.	\$15	\$61,125
New Concrete Walks @ 10' width	6,600	S.F.	\$4	\$23,100
Street Trees	40		\$800	\$32,000
Shrub Planting	425		\$65	\$27,625
Note: Building Demolition not included)				

Subtotal **\$1,913,500**

25% for Design and Construction Administration **\$478,375**

Total **\$2,391,875**

Area 5. Coleman Hill Park

New Low Brick Wall (@ 3' Average Height) 1' thickness	160	L.F.	\$75	\$12,000
Grading	Allowance			\$10,000
Special Paving	11,640	S.F.	\$10	\$116,400
Benches	16		\$800	\$12,800
Trash Receptacle	8		\$400	\$3,200
Historic Pedestrian Lights (assumed 80' spacing)	10		\$2,500	\$25,000
Special Lights for Monuments	4		\$1,500	\$6,000
Trees	30		\$600	\$18,000
Shrub Planting	300		\$50	\$15,000
Seasonal Planting	200		\$5	\$1,000
Sod/Seeding	Allowance			\$5,000
Subtotal				\$224,400
25% for Design and Construction Administration				\$56,100
Total				\$280,500

Area 6. Poplar Street (MLK Blvd to First Street)**Median**

Existing Pavement Demolition	13,500	S.Y.	\$7	\$94,500
Curb and Gutter	3,700	L.F.	\$30	\$111,000
Special Paving	40,600	S.F.	\$10	\$406,000
Market Buildings	15,000	S.F.	\$50	\$750,000
Transit Shelter Buildings	1,500	S.F.	\$65	\$97,500
Sculpture/Special Feature	1		\$50,000	\$50,000
Benches	30		\$800	\$24,000
Trash Receptacle	18		\$400	\$7,200
Historic Pedestrian Lights (assumed 80' spacing)	15		\$2,500	\$37,500
Trees in Grates/Planters	80		\$1,400	\$112,000
Shrub Planting	300		\$50	\$15,000
Seasonal Planting	650		\$5	\$3,250
Sod	16,000	S.F.	\$0.5	\$8,000
Subtotal				\$1,715,950

Perimeter

Special Paving	43,050	S.F.	\$10	\$430,500
Benches	8		\$800	\$6,400
Trash Receptacle	8		\$400	\$3,200
Historic Pedestrian Lights (assumed 80' spacing)	30		\$2,500	\$75,000
Trees in Grates/Planters	65		\$1,400	\$91,000
Subtotal				\$606,100
25% for Design and Construction Administration				\$580,513
Total				\$2,902,563

Area 7. Cherry Street (MLK Blvd to First Street)

Existing Pavement Demolition	28,750	S.Y.	\$7	\$201,250
Special Paving	28,750	S.F.	\$10	\$287,500
Benches	12		\$800	\$9,600
Trash Receptacle	8		\$400	\$3,200
Historic Pedestrian Lights (assumed 80' spacing)	30		\$2,500	\$75,000
Trees in Grates/Planters	12		\$1,400	\$16,800
Subtotal				\$593,350
25% for Design and Construction Administration				\$148,338
Total				\$741,688

Area 8. Mulberry Street (Broadway to First Street)**Medians**

Existing Pavement Demolition	2,500	S.Y.	\$7	\$17,500
Curb and Gutter	850	L.F.	\$30	\$25,500
Special Paving	9,800	S.F.	\$10	\$98,000
Benches	12		\$800	\$9,600
Trash Receptacle	4		\$400	\$1,600
Historic Pedestrian Lights (assumed 80' spacing)	20		\$2,500	\$50,000
Trees	40		\$600	\$24,000
Shrub Planting	400		\$50	\$20,000
Subtotal				\$246,200

Perimeter

Special Paving	43,500	S.F.	\$10	\$435,000
Benches	12		\$800	\$9,600
Trash Receptacle	4		\$400	\$1,600
Historic Pedestrian Lights (14' tall @ 80' on center)	30		\$2,500	\$75,000
Trees in Grates/Planters	70		\$1,400	\$98,000
Subtotal				\$619,200
25% for Design and Construction Administration				\$216,350
Total				\$1,081,750

Area 9A. Riverwalk (First Street, Riverside Park, to Otis Redding Memorial Park)

Boardwalk	14,800	S.F.	\$60	\$888,000
Overlook	150	S.F.	\$100	\$15,000
Special Paving	2,700	S.F.	\$10	\$27,000
Subtotal				\$930,000
25% for Design and Construction Administration				\$232,500
Total				\$1,162,500

Area 9B. Riverwalk Part B (Riverside Park to Spring Street)

Boardwalk	5,200	S.F.	\$60	\$312,000
Subtotal				\$312,000
25% for Design and Construction Administration				\$78,000
Total				\$390,000