



OFFICIAL MINUTES

The public is advised that the following minutes are not a verbatim transcription of business presented at the Council Meeting of the date shown; but are a synopsis of pertinent information. The public is further advised that the video recording for said meeting is a matter of public record and is available to be viewed at the City Clerk's office during normal business hours or viewed online at <https://www.youtube.com/user/alpharettagov>.

1. CALL TO ORDER

- Mayor Gilvin called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

• Council Members

- Mayor Jim Gilvin
- Mayor Pro Tem Dan Merkel
- Donald F. Mitchell
- Douglas J. DeRito
- Jason Binder (joined the Work Session at the time it was reconvened).
- John Hipes
- Brian Will

• Council Members Absent

• Staff

- Chris Lagerbloom, City Administrator
- Molly Esswein, City Attorney with Jarrard & Davis
- James Drinkard, Assistant City Administrator
- Lauren Shapiro, City Clerk
- Adam Montgomery, Director of Information Technology
- Cris Randall, Director of Human Resources
- John Robison, Director of Public Safety
- Kathi Cook, Director of Community Development & Economic Development

- Morgan Rodgers, Director of Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services
- Pete Sewczwicz, Director of Public Works
- Tom Harris, Director of Finance
- Lance Morsell, Economic Development Manager
- Michael Woodman, Planning and Development Services Manager

3. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

4. WORK SESSION ITEMS

A. Windward Technical Assistance Panel Presentation by Urban Land Institute

Presentation and discussion of findings from the Technical Assistance Panel’s visit and study of the Windward Terraces and Windward Plaza area.

- Economic Development Manager, Lance Morsell, came forward to present this item.
- The Urban Land Institute’s (ULI) Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) program is renowned for bringing together multidisciplinary experts to offer strategic advice on complex land use and development challenges. Earlier this year, the City of Alpharetta and the Alpharetta Development Authority engaged ULI Atlanta to conduct a TAP focused on the Windward Terraces and Windward Plaza area. The goal was to harness the expertise of ULI's members to explore innovative solutions for enhancing the economic vibrancy, placemaking, and connectivity of these key commercial and mixed-use zones.
- The TAP process encompassed a two-day onsite visit on April 25th and 26th and thorough stakeholder interviews, engaging a diverse range of local businesses, residents, developers, planners, and city officials. The panel conducted an indepth analysis of the existing urban fabric, market dynamics, and land use regulations to inform their recommendations.
- Several members of the Urban Land Institute presented their findings from the Windward Technical Assistance Panel. Their presentation is attached hereto as “Exhibit A.”
 - ❖ Council Member Will offered a motion to recess the Work Session in order to begin the City Council meeting.
 - Council Member Mitchell seconded the motion.
 - The motion was approved unanimously.
 - The meeting was recessed at 6:27 p.m.
 - The meeting was reconvened after the conclusion of the new business items during the November 13, 2023 City Council meeting.

B. Brookside Greenway Connection

Presentation and discussion of a request for congressionally directed funding for a future Brookside Concept Multi-Use Trail Connection.

- Director of Community and Economic Development, Kathi Cook, came forward to present this item.
- The grant proposals are for Congressional Directed Spending, specifically in order to further the goals and recommendations with the adopted Brookside Small Area Plan. Trail connectivity has been identified as a key component within the Brookside Plan with proximity to the Big Creek Greenway and Brookside Park.
- The purpose of this discussion was to gather Mayor and City Council's feedback on whether or not to submit this project for a grant.
- At the conclusion of the discussion, there was a consensus for staff to move forward with creating a request for congressional funds.

C. 2024 Taste of Alpharetta – Event Management and Production

Presentation and discussion of implementing a hybrid-approach for the production of the City's annual Taste of Alpharetta event and the associated event management, logistics and costs therein.

- Director of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Services, Morgan Rodgers, came forward to present this item.
- The Taste of Alpharetta (TOA) is one of the City's premier events and averages over 40,000 attendees, 60 participating restaurants, two live music stages, a fun zone featuring enticing inflatable entertainment, and much, much more.
- Over the last few years, the City contracted with a vendor (Outsourced Vendor) to manage the event's communications and tracking, on-site staffing, vendors and logistics, and sponsorship sales. The intended approach was simple: to outsource one of the City's most resource consuming events to alleviate the responsibility placed upon the small Special Events Team that spearheaded the event and the countless City employees recruited to staff it.
- Under the Outsourced Vendor contract, all TOA revenues were collected and remained with the vendor and the City's contracted contribution said vendor was to decline to \$0 over a three-year period (2022 = \$96,438; 2023 = \$56,863; 2024 = \$0). The FY 2024 Budget was built upon these contract terms, including the removal of the Outsourced Vendor contribution.
- The City and the Outsourced Vendor elected to discontinue the current contract effective September 4, 2023.
- The Department is presenting the new approach to the 2024 Taste of Alpharetta event to gauge the Mayor & Council's interest. Should the Mayor & Council find the

concept promising, staff will return to seek approval to proceed with awarding the contract to the highest evaluated event management vendor under RFP 24-105 and request a reallocation of \$70,000 from General Fund contingency to cover the TOA Event Management Services contract and will include the remaining event financial activity (revenue/expense) further detailed in the attached material as part of a FY 2024 Mid-Year Budget request.

- The Recreation Services Division of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Services published RFP #24-105 on August 24, 2023, in partnership with the Finance Department, seeking vendor applicants for a five-year comprehensive event management services contract for the city's annual Taste of Alpharetta event.
- At the conclusion of the discussion, there was a consensus for staff to move forward with the hybrid model approach for event management for the Taste of Alpharetta.

CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION

- Council Member Will asked about where the revenues would go from the Taste and whether or not there were ways that we could generate the additional \$80,000 so that the city would have no expenses for this event.
- Council Member Hipes applauded this approach and believes that this would be the best of both approaches.
- Mayor Gilvin shared that it would be great if the Taste of Alpharetta could keep the digital ticketing app and not go back to paper tickets.

5. EXECUTIVE SESSION (IF NECESSARY)

- There was not an executive session.

6. ADJOURNMENT

- ❖ Council Member Mitchell offered a motion to adjourn the Work Session.
 - Council Member DeRito seconded the motion.
 - The motion was approved unanimously (7-0).
- With there being no further items to consider or discuss, Mayor Gilvin adjourned the work session.

Respectfully submitted,



Lauren Shapiro, City Clerk

EXHIBIT A



Atlanta

ALPHARETTA, GEORGIA

Repositioning and Redevelopment Opportunities along the Windward Parkway Corridor





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Shape the future of the built environment for transformative impact in communities worldwide

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INSPIRE best practices for equitable and sustainable land use through content, education, convening, mentoring, and knowledge sharing

LEAD in solving community and real estate challenges through applied collective global experience and philanthropic engagement



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1. Increasing Housing Attainability in Communities Around the World
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ULI is the premiere convener of real estate and land use professionals founded in 1936



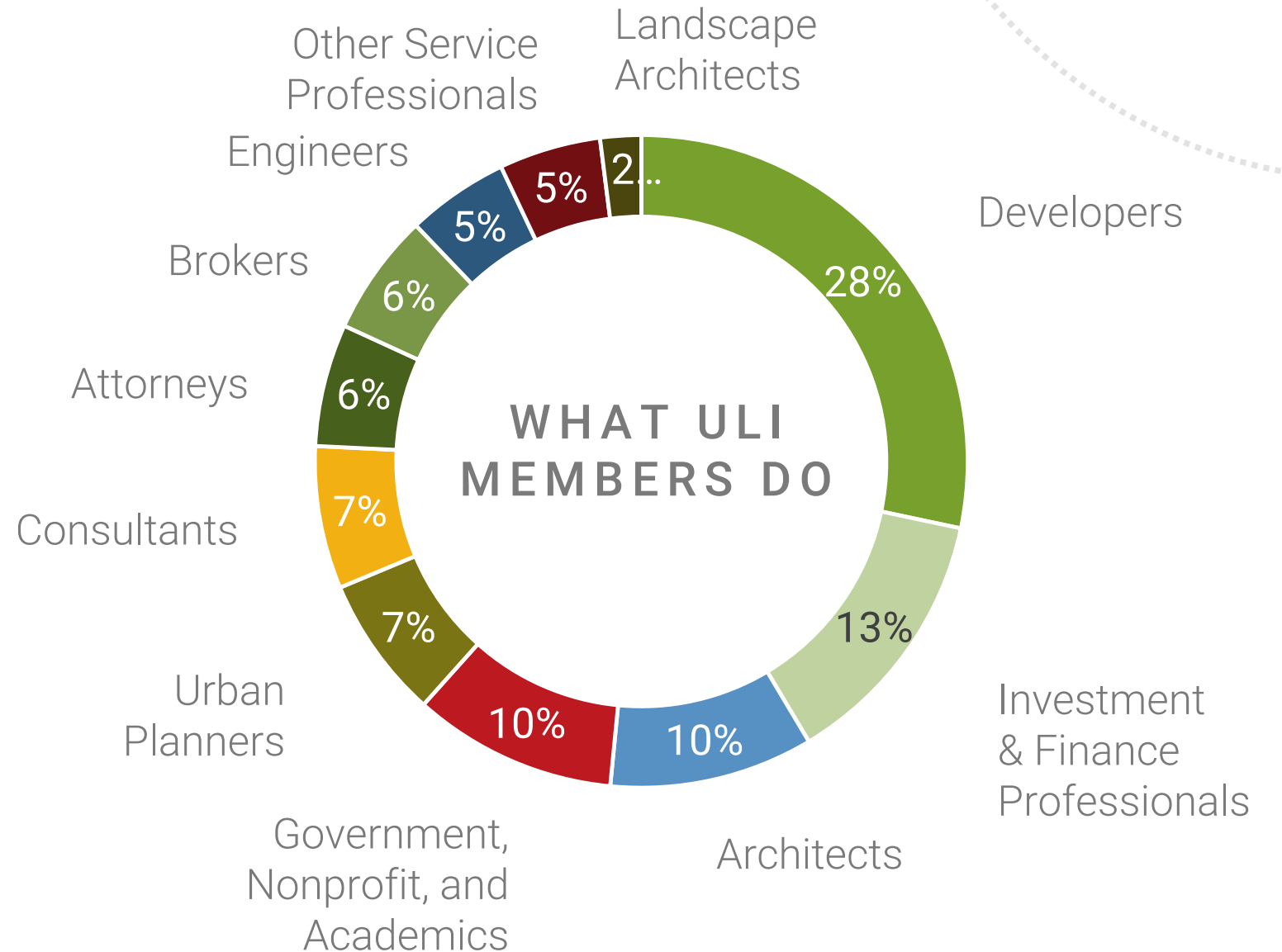
48,000+

Members in more than 80 countries



1,400+

Members in the Atlanta region and our broader geography



Technical Assistance Panels (TAPs)

Why a TAP?

- ❑ Assemble a multidisciplinary team of volunteers within our membership who are senior practitioners to serve as panelists
- ❑ Central considerations are market viability and economic realities of community and place



Snapshot of Communities and orgs served

- ✓ All Saints' Episcopal Church
- ✓ Atlanta BeltLine
- ✓ City of Alpharetta
- ✓ City of Clarkston
- ✓ City of East Point
- ✓ City of Powder Springs
- ✓ City of Savannah
- ✓ City of Doraville
- ✓ Clayton Co.
- ✓ Fulton Co.
- ✓ Hall County
- ✓ Invest Atlanta
- ✓ MARTA
- ✓ Rabun County

Key Facts

- Program is over 27 years old
- 100+ Georgia based TAPs since 1996
- Reports are published w/ client permissions at <https://atlanta.uli.org/resources/reports/>



Arman Tolentino
Architect / TAP Project Manager
Associate
Smallwood



Bob Voyles
Developer
Principal & Founder
Seven Oaks Company



Brooke Perez
Community Developer
Comm. & Econ. Devel. Mgr.
Georgia Power



Chris Hall
Real Estate Consultant
Managing Partner
Haddow & Company



Jay Silverman
Architect / TAP Panel Chair
National Director of Arch.
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Jennie Lynn Rudder
Landscape Architect
Associate
Starr Whitehouse



Joe Stryker
Architect
Regional Director
Ware Malcomb



Joel Dixon
Developer
Principal
Urban Oasis Development



Mark Vollbrecht
Owner / Property Manager
Principal
Zeller Realty Group



Faith Hoople
Business Developer
Director of Business Development
GreenbergFarrow

THE SCOPE OF WORK

- 1) How does the City of Alpharetta **activate office nodes** in the Windward corridor following high vacancy rates after the Covid-19 pandemic?
- 2) What **land-use decisions** can be made to facilitate **long-term economic sustainability** for the Windward corridor? Specifically, how can the City of Alpharetta activate unused parking lots to encourage an experiential location.
- 3) How can the **existing infrastructure**, such as the Big Creek Greenway, be leveraged to offer office users a walkable, green environment?
- 4) Given a more **hybrid working environment** in the post pandemic world, what **industries** could flourish in the Windward corridor in this **new reality**?
- 5) How does the City of Alpharetta use **branding** and **placemaking** strategies to encourage a more vibrant place where employees and residents alike would want to be after business hours?



TAP Process

- Briefing documents provided by City of Alpharetta
- Study area tour of Windward Pkwy
- Stakeholder interviews with community leaders, businesses owners, tenants, etc.
- Panel discussions
- Recommendation formation





Stakeholder
interviews
and guest
speaker

Study Area Context

Purpose

To create a vision for the Windward Tech District that could inform and guide future development and planning of underutilized suburban office parcels.





ALDERMAN DRIVE

WINDWARD CONCOURSE

UNION HILL ROAD

WINDWARD PARKWAY

WINDWARD PLAZA

MARCONI DRIVE

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Demographics
- Access (vehicular, potential pedestrian via trail)
- Trailhead opportunity and regional connectivity (Big Creek Greenway is 8.3 miles)
- Good bones in existing infrastructure
- Physically high topography (no floodplain issues) – resilience
- Fiber backbone
- City leadership is motivated
- Strong, long-term retail owner
- 2-3 new tenants in office and new energy
- Available 8.5-acre parcel
- Biophilia – natural environment
- School districts
- Proximity to Halcyon

Weaknesses

- One-sided parking (office)
- Visibility to retail and hotel (landscaping is overgrown)
- Multiple owners – 4-5 in study area
- Housing affordability (mid-level workers)
- No plan for retail today
- No sense of place – wow factor
- Site is large – there is a lot to activate and hard to make an initial impact
- 2-sided retail – too much retail
- City may not be cohesive
- Not currently well-suited for R&D/BioMed
- No communications lead on city staff
- Alpharetta “brand” not known to young workers
- Wayfinding and signage

Opportunities

- Continue trail to Halcyon
- Parking distant from office over 750
- Focus on activation for office
- Site is large
- Excess parking – allows redevelopment
- Nodes of development
- Low park presence
- Two characteristic for each side of retail
- More opportunities for retail and dining options
- Hybrid users – R&D (light industrial and lab space)
- “Tech ecosystem” in Alpharetta
- Opportunity for middle-level housing (young families)
- McGiniss Ferry interchange
- Time is right for planning and entitlement
- Tactical moves can be made now
- Proximity to “The Gathering”

Threats

- Loss of commercial tax base
- Will building owners ever get their investment back from tenant concessions?
- Cost of redevelopment
- Lack of “perceived value” of redevelopment of office
- Uncertain market conditions
- Zoning concurrency requirements
- Lack of housing choice
- There are new office options in stronger locations (see Office Market Overview in on page 40 of the LCI)
- Lack of proximity to “young” workforce
- Commercial lending environment
- Selling collateral might not benefit the property owner
- Limits on rental multifamily units, strategically deployed
- Active adult is not encouraged

FIGURE 3-1

Elements of a Successful Project



Source: SB Friedman Development Advisors.

Create a shared vision, goals, & public purpose

Shared goals identified through TAP:

- ✓ Incremental development and revitalization
- ✓ Finding the right balance of the use of public space through public funds; and have surrounding space privately financed

Further consensus building required:

- ✓ Clear vision of how success is defined
- ✓ Rank priority of goals
- ✓ Priority of various redevelopment initiatives
- ✓ Refine branding

All successful projects start with a vision. Without a vision, the project will most likely fail. The vision is the framework for project goals and serves as the benchmark to ensure the realization of joint objectives.


Recommendations

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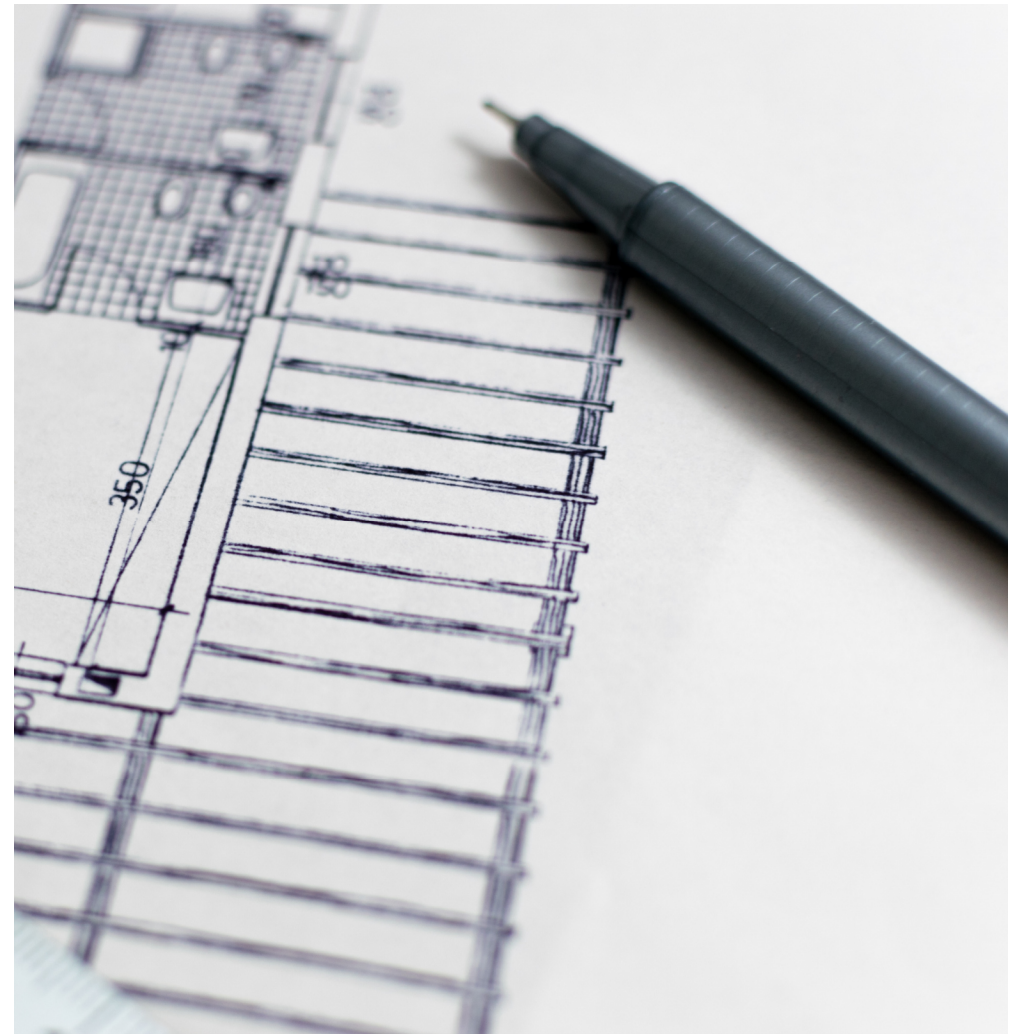


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Land Use Recommendations

- Start with a public space framework plan
- Diversity of housing is important (more on next slide)
- Create an overlay district
- Flexibility with zoning – move away from concurrency (due to unforeseen market conditions)
- Not plan-specific zoning – to allow for flexibility
- Empower city staff with plan approval powers to provide developers with consistency and certainty
- Flexible parking requirements – adapt to changing market forces and financing
- Update regulations for containers and food trucks





Diversity of Housing

- Housing affordability/attainability came up in many stakeholder interviews, relative to workforce housing needs
- Essential housing is key
- For sale to attract talent for office space and users for retail
- Service and retail providers

Leverage Existing Infrastructure

- Add a true trailhead, complete with restrooms, parking, portal
- Increase greenway connections on site and off site, e.g., neighborhood and street connections
 - On-site at GA Power easement, fire station connections, throughout the site and on Market Street
 - Public safety component with trailhead
 - Parking arrangement with owners
- Temporary and permanent pickleball courts
- Creative approach to stormwater and water quality



Hybrid Working Environment

- Incubator spaces
 - Include non-corporate approach and environment, e.g., food incubator
 - Cyber security
 - Healthcare IT
 - Leverage access to GA 400
 - Care industry – senior, dog, child
 - Fintech and biotech are less fundable today; Cannot control the market
- Bring work to home
- Experiential – across industries – make it attractive and industries will follow
- Consider arts and culture – include a venue (small show); connect to trail; Art on the Trail (Sugar Hill, Crabapple)



Case studies: Taxi project in Denver; Pike District in Rockville, Maryland

Branding and Placemaking

- Technology, EV Infrastructure, Micro-mobility
- Avalon's Funky Cousin
- Incorporate art and music
- Hyper-local retail
- Family-oriented – splash pad, art, playground, recreational play/ball
- International flavor – 25% are foreign-born (local ingredients, international flavors)
- Create a district – starts here and grows out using streetscape and signage
- Connect to natural environment
- "Pull people off the trail, also waiting for a table"
- Office amenity during the day
- E-mobility for tech workers and trail users



INCENTIVES



- Development Authority
 - Abatement
 - Creative public space activation/shared costs
- Market and Tax Credits
 - Based on current market conditions
 - Time sensitive, cyclical
- Targeted Infrastructure Investment
 - Stormwater
 - Trails
 - Greenspace
 - Structured parking

NEW STEPS



Near-term (12-18 months)

- ⑩ Create a corridor plan (District) - 400 to residential neighborhoods; lead to overlay district and zoning.
 - ⑩ Include a stormwater plan
 - ⑩ Explore a parking plan
 - ⑩ (Facilitate bond issuance for infrastructure – roads, trails, public amenities, parking)
- ⑩ Coordinate with LCI process
- ⑩ Engage property owners
- ⑩ Tactical elements to test the market (food trucks, pickleball, community garden, music and arts)
- ⑩ Develop district branding, ID concept
- ⑩ Identify staff/resources for programming

Mid-term (18-24 months)

- ⑩ Property owner buy-in, including retail
- ⑩ Enact overlay district
- ⑩ Negotiate easements
- ⑩ Trail extensions and greenway improvements
- ⑩ Additional steps (lesser priority):
 - ⑩ Implement public signage/ branding + wayfinding
 - ⑩ Begin public art program for the district
 - ⑩ Programming and events

Long-term (24 months - 5 years)

- ⑩ Overlay in place
- ⑩ Developer donates land to build parking (city advances funds)
- ⑩ Design and build new roads/infrastructure (In return for park and trailhead)
- ⑩ Construct trail extension and improvements
- ⑩ Windward Plaza pedestrian improvements
- ⑩ Road extension (Market Place extension)
- ⑩ Table is set for private development
- ⑩ Facilitate discussions with residential developers and property owners
- ⑩ Establish quality of retail development

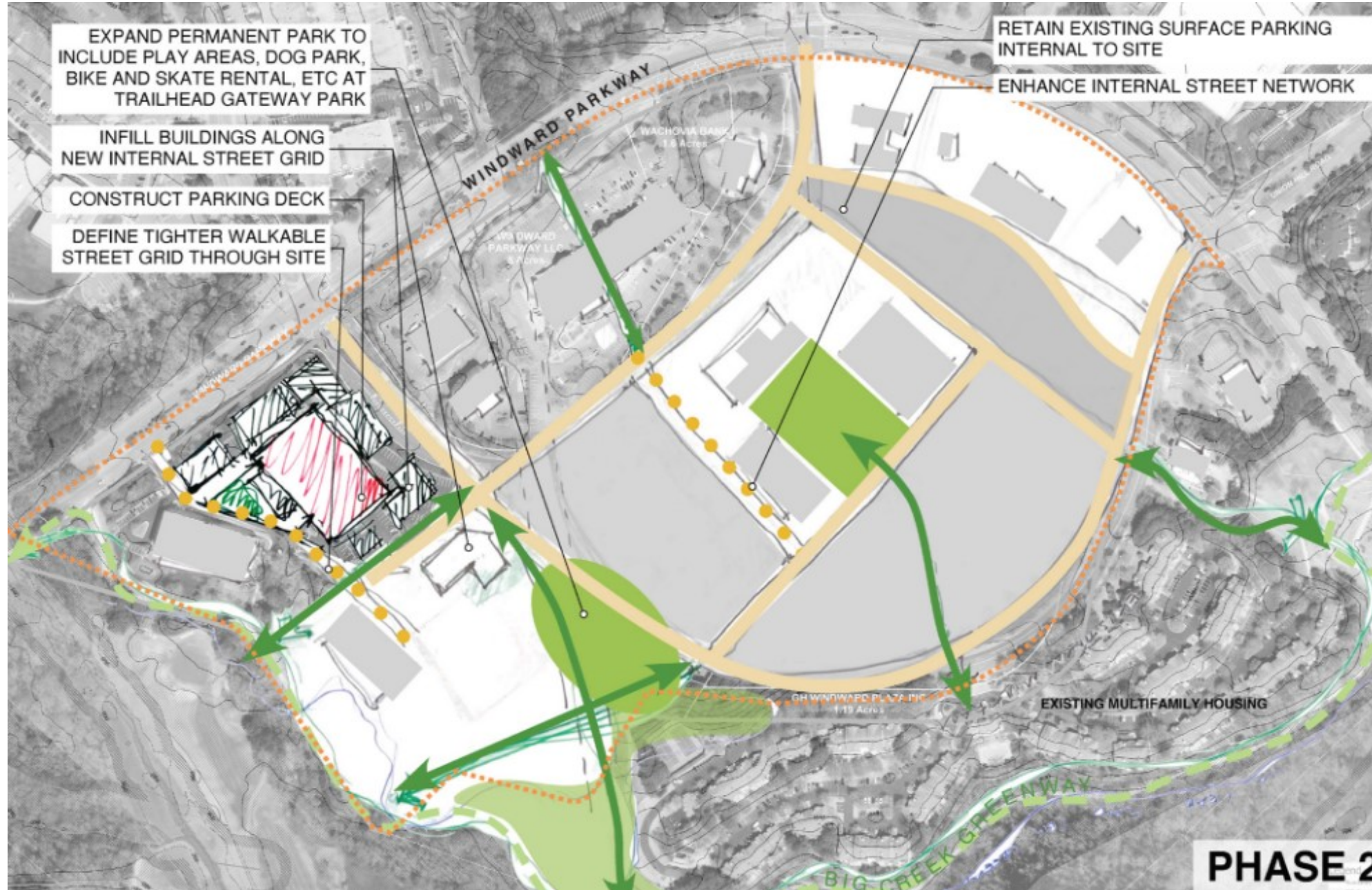
Next Steps: The Plan

1. Establish the boundaries of the Windward Tech District
2. Accommodate flexibility in uses that reflect evolving market conditions
"Every decision is made on incomplete information!"
3. Have a sense of urgency and confidence in the process
"A good solution applied now with vigor is better than a perfect solution applied later."
"Begin with the end in mind."
4. Conduct meetings with property owners within District to get buy-in
5. Create a public infrastructure / public space framework plan with a focus on connectivity
6. Establish a funding mechanism / methodology
7. Identify private developers with a shared vision!

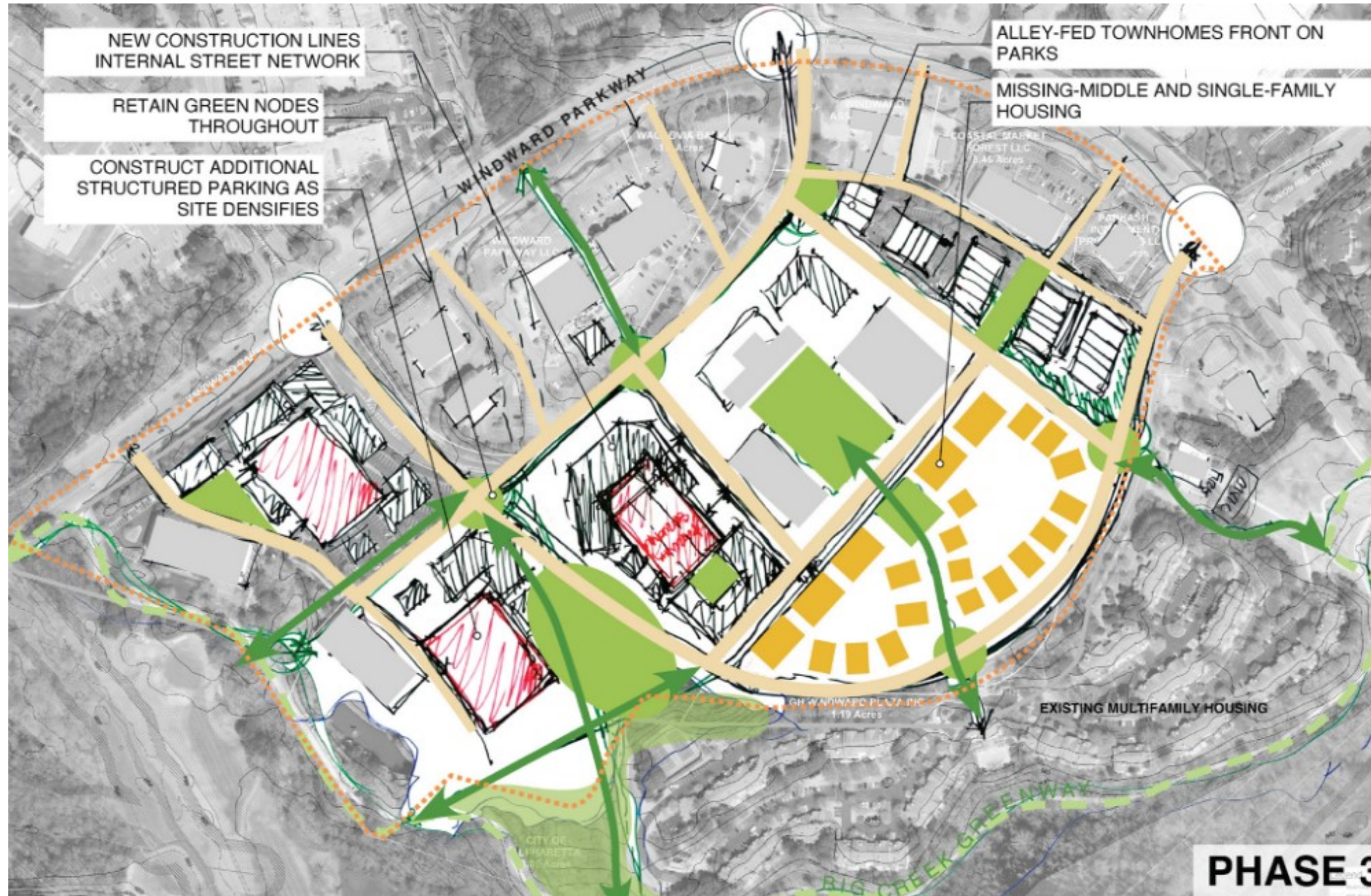
Existing Conditions



Master Plan: Phase II



Master Plan: Long-Term



Q & A

ULI Atlanta

Daphne Bond-Godfrey
Executive Director, ULI Atlanta
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ALPHARETTA, GEORGIA

Repositioning and Redevelopment Opportunities along the Windward Parkway Corridor



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Alpharetta Development Authority

ON THE COVER: Suburban office buildings face unique challenges in 2023's hybrid working environment.



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About the Urban Land Institute

The Urban Land Institute is a global, member-driven organization comprising more than 48,000 real estate and urban development professionals dedicated to advancing the Institute's mission of shaping the future of the built environment for transformative impact in communities worldwide. ULI's interdisciplinary membership represents all aspects of the industry, including developers, property owners, investors, architects, urban planners, public officials, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, and academics. Established in 1936, the Institute has a presence in the Americas, Europe, and Asia Pacific region, with members in 81 countries. ULI's extraordinary impact on land use decision-making is based on its members' sharing expertise on a variety of factors affecting the built environment, including urbanization, demographic and population changes, new economic drivers, technology advancements, and environmental concerns. Peer-to-peer learning is achieved through the knowledge shared by members at thousands of convenings each year that reinforce ULI's position as a global authority on land use and real estate. Drawing on its members' work, the Institute recognizes and shares best practices in urban design and development for the benefit of communities around the globe.

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

About ULI Atlanta

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

ULI District Council Leadership

Marc Pollack

Chairman Emeritus, RangeWater Real Estate
District Council Chair, ULI Atlanta

Bob Voyles

Co-Principal and Founder, Seven Oaks
Chair for Mission Advancement, ULI Atlanta

Steve Foster

Economic and Community Development, GA Power
(retired)
TAPs Committee Co-Chair, ULI Atlanta

David Scott

Senior Principal and Partner, DaVinci Development
Collaborative
TAPs Committee Co-Chair, ULI Atlanta

Daphne Bond-Godfrey

Executive Director, ULI Atlanta

ULI Advisory Services: National and Global Programs

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

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

Learn more at americas.uli.org/programs/advisory-services.

Technical Assistance Program (TAP)

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

Technical Assistance Panel and Project Staff

Panel Members

Jay Silverman (Panel Chair)
National Director of Architecture
Dwell Design Studio

Joel Dixon
Principal
Urban Oasis Development

Chris Hall
Managing Partner
Haddow & Company

Faith Hoople
Director of Business Development
GreenbergFarrow

Brooke Perez
Community & Economic Development Manager
Georgia Power

Jennie Lynn Rudder
Associate
Starr Whitehouse

Joe Stryker
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Principal & Founder
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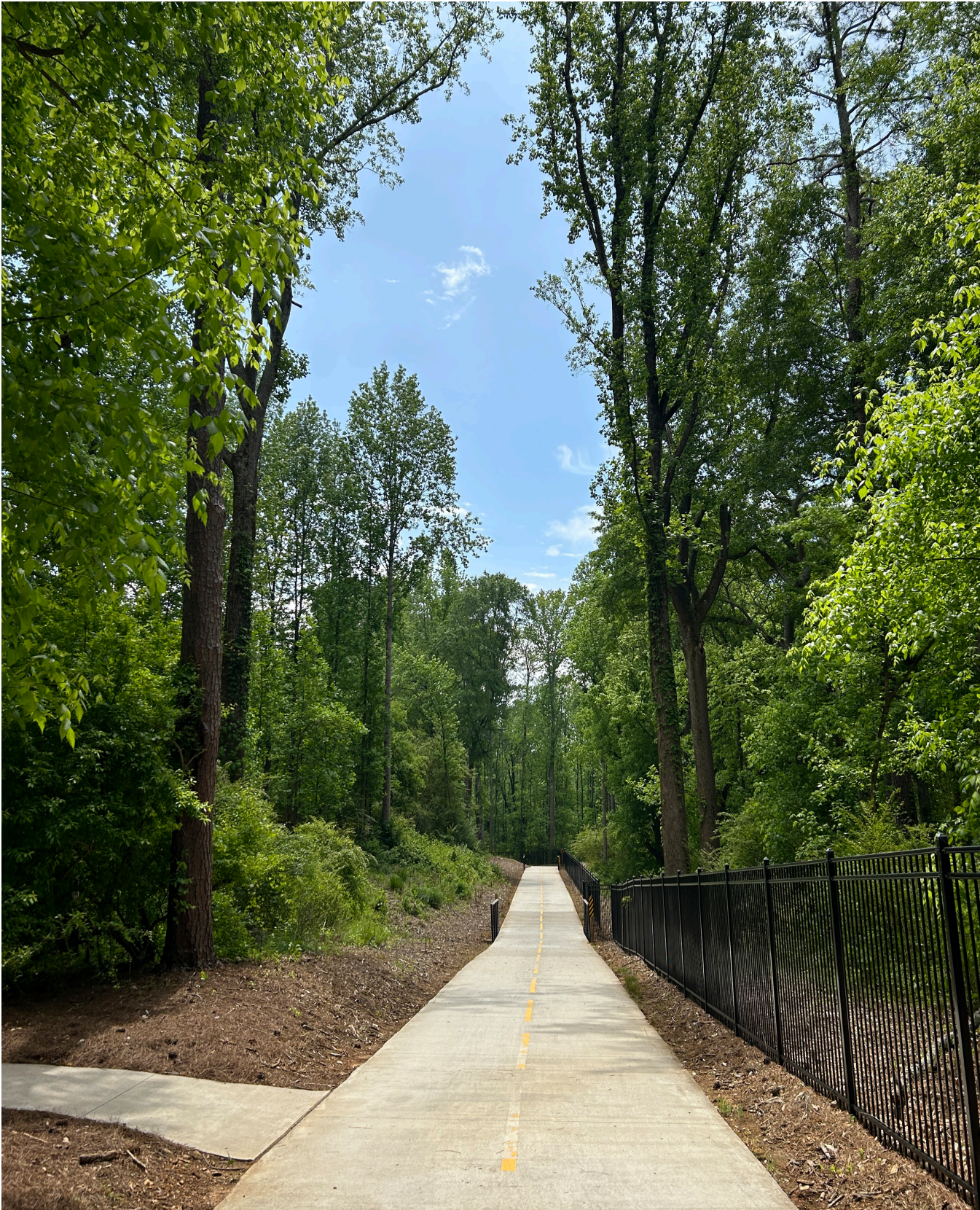
Felicia Neil
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Acknowledgments

ULI Atlanta is grateful to the professional staff of the City of Alpharetta Community and Economic Development department, particularly Kathi Cook, Brian Borden, Lance Morsell, and Charlotte Christian for their leadership, assistance, and support of the information gathering critical to the success of this study. ULI Atlanta would like to thank Arman Tolentino for his leadership in bringing ULI Atlanta this project and was instrumental in working with the City of Alpharetta's Community and Economic Development team in the formation of this study.



The Big Creek Greenway lines the southern edge of the Windward Tech District and has become an important local amenity.

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The retail center at the eastern end of the study site no longer enjoys sustainable traffic from the neighboring office buildings.

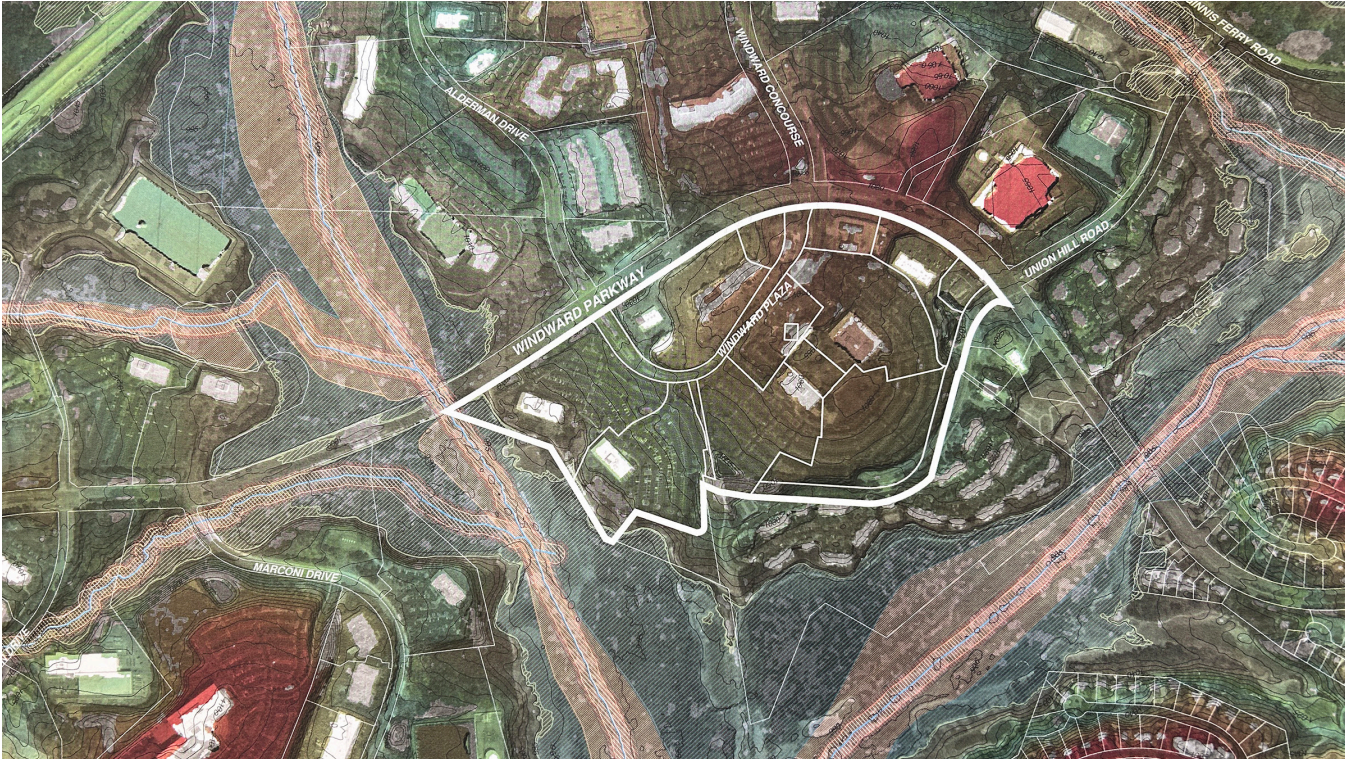
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Like many cities across the United States, the City of Alpharetta, Georgia, has a number of suburban-style office campuses and commercial corridors that are now underutilized. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, office occupancy has dropped significantly and while some office tenants are choosing to downsize their footprints, others are maintaining their space while still recognizing that not all offices will be full every day of the week. This daily drop in office worker volume has had ripple effects—proximate retailers are suffering, parking lots are nearly empty, and campus space is largely underutilized.

Recognizing this seismic shift in the office environment and understanding the city’s current inventory of office buildings and commercial corridors, the City of Alpharetta (the city) turned to the Urban Land Institute–Atlanta District Council (ULI) for guidance in repositioning these commercial corridors. The city has seen success with recent mixed-use developments like Avalon and Halcyon, and, with a vision for something as engaging in its underutilized commercial corridors, posed a series of questions to ULI that could help city planners and elected

leaders envision a new future for these broad commercial spaces that are often marked by 1990’s style office campuses.

Using the Windward Tech District as a sample study site, the city asked ULI to convene a technical assistance panel (TAP) to study the site, interview key stakeholders, and deliver a set of recommendations that the city can begin to use as a template for reshaping the future of these large, underutilized office properties.



BRIEFING MATERIALS

The Windward Tech District is outlined in white. The area is marked by large office buildings surrounded by surface parking lots.

The TAP panel, comprised of real estate experts from around the region, provided a road map for the city that addressed the following key themes: revising land use regulations; incorporating housing diversity; leveraging existing infrastructure; embracing a hybrid work environment; incorporating branding and placemaking; and identifying appropriate incentives for new development.

Recommendations

Revise land use regulations. Given the largely single-use zoning in place on the site, land use regulations and zoning controls will require updates. Incorporating a mix of uses into the site, including housing (and a diversity of housing options), can help activate the area outside of office hours and leverage the proximity of the Big Creek Greenway. An overlay district is also recommended to help guide future development while still allowing for flexibility and market adjustments over time.

Embrace housing diversity. Stakeholders noted a need for additional housing diversity in the city—both diversity of type and a range of price points. Essential housing—housing at prices that are attainable for teachers, retail workers, and young families—would be a welcome addition to the city and should be considered for the study site.

Leverage existing infrastructure. The site is rich in infrastructure. Surface parking is abundant, roads and utilities are already in place, and the proximity of the Big Creek Greenway is an enviable asset. With some additional infrastructure investments, notably connecting Market Place through the site and creating trail connections and related amenities (*i.e.*, a trailhead) at the site, the area can build on the assets in place and further activate the site.

Embrace a hybrid work environment. As much as many employers would like employees to return to the office all day every day of the week, that ship has sailed. A hybrid work environment has become the norm. By embracing this approach, property owners and developers can begin to envision new and expanded uses for existing underutilized spaces both inside and outside the buildings. Incubator spaces are also at a premium in the city, with the city's

current incubator at capacity and turning away prospective tenants. Launching a second incubator for either corporate or non-corporate business start-ups might be an interesting way to leverage space and nurture the next generation of scalable office tenants.

Incorporate branding and placemaking. The study area would benefit from branding. The tech district moniker may not fully represent everything that the site can and should become in a repositioned, mixed-use environment. With new branding in hand, signage and wayfinding should be added to the district, drawing visitors in and helping everyone better navigate the amenities on site. Placemaking, whether through art installations, musical performances, food truck gatherings, or temporary pickleball courts, would help raise the visibility of the area and activate the district with regular events and programming for the broader community.

Incentives. While financial incentives may be needed, the city can lead the way with investments in the public realm and infrastructure at strategic positions across the site. These public sector investments can help signal the city's willingness to see the area thrive and work with property owners and new developers in re-envisioning the district in this next chapter.

Implementation and Phasing

The recommendations posed by the panel will need to be rolled out over time, generally in phases that cover the next 12 months, 12–18 months, and within the next five years.

Facilitating conversations with property owners. Key to any progress on the site will be cooperation with the existing property owners. Starting conversations early and inviting the property owners to come alongside the city in re-envisioning the district will serve any redevelopment or new development well and should help position the site for improvements. Conversations around land use, particularly relating to the sea of surface parking and connections to the greenway, should be pursued early and with care.

Near term. In the next 12–18 months, the city is encouraged to create a corridor plan and coordinate

with the Livable Cities Initiative (LCI) work underway. Early tactical elements, even temporary activities, and branding can begin to activate and enliven the site, which may require additional staff and resources to execute well.

Mid-term. In the following 18–24 months, an overlay district should be put in place to help guide development. Greenway connections, any new easements, and trail extensions can also be tackled during this period.

Long-term. In the real estate industry, “long term” often means five years from the present. With the market changing quickly, the city is encouraged to work with a sense of urgency and intention. By setting the table early for private development, the city and existing property owners will be ready to entertain proposals from residential and commercial developers for discrete portions of the site. Roads and additional infrastructure should be put in place within this time period and pedestrian improvements, both interior to and around the site, should be completed.

Again, early and frequent engagements and ongoing conversations with the existing property and building owners are critical as their cooperation will launch any additional private investment at the site.

The professional and elected leadership of Alpharetta have demonstrated that the city can be an innovative and savvy partner in development, and the development community has responded. Together the city, district property owners, and new developers can begin to envision a new future for the Windward Tech District that embraces the assets in place, amplifies the benefits of the Big Creek Greenway, and provides additional housing, recreation, and economic development benefits to the residents of Alpharetta.



TAP PANEL



TAP PANEL

Top: The existing conditions at the site are noted, including the greenway and the utility easement. Below: A re-imagined site plan could feature fully-connected streets, multiple trail connections, potentially structured parking options, and a more dense and diverse mix of uses.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The COVID-19 pandemic created a seismic shift in the way many businesses operate. The work-from-home days early in 2020 sparked in many traditional office workers a lasting desire to continue to work from home many, if not all, days of the work week. While a number of office employers are striving to return to the days of 100 percent of their workforce in the office five days a week, others are coming to terms with this new office reality and are instead shifting to some form of hybrid environment in order to keep the employees they have today as well as attract talent in the future.

With roughly 20 percent of its four million square feet of office space currently vacant in Alpharetta and recognizing the shift in how businesses are using office space, professional staff at the City of Alpharetta turned to ULI for assistance in proactively addressing the potential challenges and opportunities posed by this shift in the way businesses use office space going forward.

Alpharetta, Georgia, a city of approximately 66,000 people, is known for its progressive approach to development and its proactive approach to planning. The city has seen recent success with Avalon and Alpharetta City Center, two the mixed-use developments that have garnered market

attention and investment by creating the same walkable amenities many would find in a more traditional urban core. It also understands and values the opportunities associated with greenways and trails, as evidenced by its investment in connecting its trail system regionally and widening existing sidewalks to cater to greater modalities—and yet this is where one of its greatest opportunities lies.

At the same time, the commercial corridors of the 1990's, marked by wide boulevards, tree-lined buffers, and wide-open surface parking lots, are no longer serving the community well. Visibility into the surrounding office campuses is challenging, limiting retail potential and

Questions for the Panel

1. How does the City of Alpharetta activate office nodes in the Windward corridor following high vacancy rates after the Covid-19 pandemic?
2. What land-use decisions can be made to facilitate long-term economic sustainability for the Windward corridor? Specifically, how can the City of Alpharetta activate unused parking lots to encourage an experiential location.
3. How to leverage existing infrastructure such as the Big Creek Greenway to offer office-users a walkable, green environment.
4. Given a more hybrid working environment in the post pandemic world, what industries could flourish in the Windward corridor in this new reality?
5. How does the City of Alpharetta use branding and placemaking strategies to encourage a more vibrant place where employees and residents alike would want to be after business hours?



Map of parcel ownership within the study area.

making navigation into and around these office campuses challenging. The parking lots are abundant, yet largely empty, adding to a sense that the buildings are mostly empty and the area is in hibernation or even decline.

Using the Windward Parkway commercial corridor and specifically the Windward Tech District as a sample study site, the city turned to ULI for assistance in envisioning the future of its commercial corridors and suburban-style office parks. Bound by Windward Parkway to the north, the Big Creek Greenway to the southwest, and a residential neighborhood to the southeast, the 63-acre study area is home to a retail plaza that is 50 percent vacant, a hotel, and several multi-story office buildings with associated surface parking lots. The study area also sits east of Georgia

Highway 400/US 19, which creates connectivity challenges to the more recent development activity west of GA 400.

ULI, using its trusted technical assistance panel program, convened eight ULI members with the real estate development expertise needed to study the site, address the questions posed by the city, and deliver a set of recommendations the city can use at this site as well as incorporate into other similar commercial corridors across Alpharetta. With experience in development, architecture, planning, and economic and community development, the TAP panel spent two days in intense study. The city provided extensive briefing materials and oriented the panel with a driving and walking tour of the study site. Following the tour, the panel interviewed



Left: The panel toured a section of the Big Creek Greenway that borders the study site. Right: The panel toured the retail center that sits at the eastern end of the study site.

community leaders, businesses owners, tenants, and other real estate owners to better understand the current challenges at and around the site and begin to identify potential opportunities. The panel reviewed the information gathered, conducted a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis, and applied their extensive knowledge and expertise to the questions posed by the city, with the ultimate goal of creating a vision for the Windward Tech District that could inform and guide future development and planning of underutilized commercial corridors and related office campuses.

As the TAP panel worked through its study, the panelists created a shared vision, a set of shared goals, and a public purpose for the TAP. This framework allowed the panelists to contribute their expertise through collaboration with the following shared goals in mind:

- Create a path for incremental development and revitalization; and
- Find the right balance for the use of public space through public funds and the surrounding space developed through privately financed means.

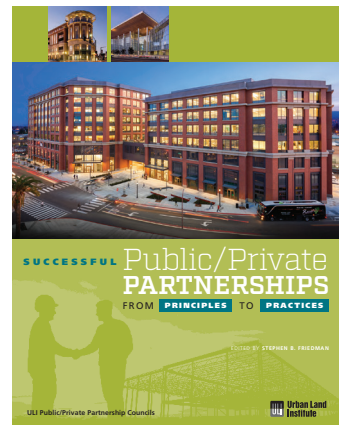
The panel also identified the following areas as important to answering the city’s questions and worthy of further discussion throughout the TAP process:

- The study area will benefit from a clear vision of

success in the redevelopment efforts.

- Ranking the priority of goals will be helpful.
- The redevelopment initiatives need to be prioritized.
- A refined brand will help further development efforts and assist existing Windward Tech businesses.

With this information and additional considerations in hand, the panel set forth a set of recommendations the city can use as it begins to approach redevelopment along the Windward corridor. The panel turned to a tried and true ULI resource for creating a shared vision, goal, and public purpose for this project. The graphic below (left) notes the key components of a successful project. More details on [the ULI resource can be found here](#).



A successful public private partnership, as may be required for the redevelopment of the study site, will incorporate economic feasibility, community goals, and site capacity.

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<p>Demographics</p> <p>Trailhead opportunity and regional connectivity (Big Creek Greenway is 8.3 miles long)</p> <p>Good bones in existing infrastructure</p> <p>Physically high topography (no floodplain issues) which adds to resilience at the site</p> <p>Access (vehicular, potential pedestrian via trail)</p> <p>Fiber backbone is in place</p> <p>City leadership is motivated</p> <p>Strong, long-term retail owner</p> <p>Two to three new tenants in office and new energy</p> <p>Underutilized 8.5-acre parcel</p> <p>Biophilia—the natural environment</p> <p>School districts are a draw</p> <p>Proximity to Halcyon</p>	<p>One-sided parking (office)</p> <p>Two-sided retail and perhaps too much retail</p> <p>Under-performing retail</p> <p>Visibility to retail and hotel (landscaping is overgrown)</p> <p>Multiple owners with four or five in the study area</p> <p>Housing affordability for mid-level workers</p> <p>No sense of place—lacking a “wow” factor</p> <p>Site is large—there is a lot to activate and hard to make an initial impact</p> <p>City may not be cohesive</p> <p>Not currently well-suited for R&D or BioMed</p> <p>No communications lead on city staff</p> <p>Alpharetta “brand” not known to young workers</p> <p>Wayfinding and signage</p>	<p>Continue trail to Halcyon</p> <p>Parking distant from office</p> <p>Focus on activation for office</p> <p>Site is large</p> <p>Excess parking allows for redevelopment</p> <p>Nodes of development</p> <p>Low park presence</p> <p>Retail center can benefit from different uses on each side</p> <p>Opportunities for retail and dining options near future trailhead and amenities</p> <p>Hybrid users like R&D (light industrial and lab space)</p> <p>“Tech ecosystem” in Alpharetta</p> <p>Opportunity for middle-level housing (young families)</p> <p>McGiniss Ferry interchange</p> <p>Time is right for planning and entitlement</p> <p>Tactical moves can be made now</p> <p>Proximity to “The Gathering”</p>	<p>Loss of commercial tax base</p> <p>Uncertainty around building owners’ potential to recover investments in tenant concessions</p> <p>Cost of redevelopment</p> <p>Lack of “perceived value” in office redevelopment</p> <p>Uncertain market conditions</p> <p>Zoning concurrency requirements</p> <p>Lack of housing choice</p> <p>There are new office options in stronger locations (see Office Market Overview on page 40 of the LCI)</p> <p>Lack of proximity to “young” workforce</p> <p>Current commercial lending environment</p> <p>Selling collateral might not benefit the property owner</p> <p>Limits on rental multifamily units, strategically deployed</p> <p>Active adult developments are not encouraged</p>

The future of office markets across the United States is in question as evidenced by these recent headlines (May 2023).

26 Empire State Buildings could fit into New York’s empty office space. That’s a sign. ([New York Times](#))

“It’s really the perfect storm”: Empty office buildings across U.S. could lead to financial meltdown ([CBS News](#))

Atlanta awaits office market ‘reckoning’ as financial pressure mounts ([AJC](#))

Rushing the Return to Office: Why Forcing Feds into In-Person Work Could Backfire ([Government Executive](#))

Bridging the Occupier-Landlord Gap for the Future of Workspace ([Urban Land Institute](#))

RECOMMENDATIONS

As the city considers the redevelopment opportunities in the Windward Tech District, the panel set forth its recommendations in a series of categories, including land use, housing diversity, existing infrastructure, hybrid working considerations, branding and placemaking, and incentives. While the specific recommendations within each category relate to this particular study site, the broad categories and recommendations can apply to redevelopment considerations along all of Alpharetta's commercial corridors.

Update Land Use Regulations

As the city considers new or additional uses in the district, land use regulations and zoning controls will require revisions and updating to allow for and attract new uses to the site.

Create a framework plan for public space. Given the proximity of the Big Creek Greenway, planning and redevelopment of the Windward Tech District (the district) should include a framework plan amplifying this compelling public space amenity. The city will need to lead these planning efforts. The Atlanta BeltLine is an excellent example and could serve as a model for the type of development sought here.

Include diverse housing options. Alpharetta is a city known for its lovely homes, beautiful neighborhoods, and quality of life. Housing in the city is also quickly becoming unattainable for the next generation. The city is strongly encouraged to build in a diversity of housing options for the district as well as in other areas of the city as housing attainability will be important to the long-term success and viability of the city.

Create an overlay district. Certain land use controls should be put in place now to help facilitate the type of development the city would like to see in the district. An overlay district in particular will help set the stage for future development while still maintaining the current framework of uses.

Provide zoning flexibility. While concurrency has worked well for the city's growth in the past, the forced adjacencies are no longer a positive control on development. Building flexibility into the city's zoning regulations will allow for development to flex and bend with market demands while still working within defined parameters. Similarly, the panel recommends moving away from plan-specific zoning, particularly for the district going forward, as this will provide needed expediency and flexibility, supporting growth and development at the site.

“The basis of every decision is made on incomplete information.

–TAP Panelist

Move to staff approvals for plans. As plans come before the city, it is strongly encouraged to empower the city's professional staff with necessary plan approval powers. Shifting the approval process from the city council to the municipal professional staff can provide the development community with consistency and process certainty across development pursuits.

Uses should shape parking configurations. The site today is marked by large surface parking lots, all of which are underutilized today. The city should embrace a flexible approach to its parking requirements, providing opportunities for adaptation to changing market forces and financing. Some of the lots may shrink, structured

parking may play a role, and other uses may share parking spaces—regardless, the uses should drive the parking needs. Do not allow the current parking lots to shape future development.

Allow temporary uses. As (re)development unfolds across the district, programming some of the parking lots with new, even temporary, uses can help activate the district. Updating current city regulations to allow for the use of shipping containers as temporary retail locations and opening the doors to food trucks can create attractive and engaging temporary uses across the site, adding vibrancy and commerce to an otherwise sleepy corporate campus.

Create Diversity of Housing

Numerous stakeholders made mention of the critical need for additional housing options for the city, particularly housing that is attainable to teachers and service workers.

Pursue essential housing options. The city needs housing that is attainable for its workforce and affordable to the teachers, fire fighters, and service workers who are essential to the city's operation. Working with developers to find sites that can facilitate this type of expanded housing diversity will be key to the long-term attainability and viability of the city.

Create both rental and for sale options. A broadened diversity of housing options should include options for both rental and for-sale housing. While many residents will still prefer to purchase a home in Alpharetta, a growing population, even those who can afford to purchase, is preferring instead to rent. Pursuing a range of housing options can help employers attract office and retail talent as people considering relocating to the area may wish to rent before purchasing or continue to rent to maintain their personal housing flexibility. Homeownership may still be the goal for many residents, but rental options can provide a critical on-ramp to eventual homeownership.



ADOBE



ADOBE



ULI

A diversity of housing options—including multi-family (top), townhomes (middle), and single-family units (bottom)—will support the variety of residents who wish to call Alpharetta home.

Pursue diverse housing types. In addition to the wide-range of single-family homes in Alpharetta, downtown has seen a rise in popularity of townhomes and condominiums. Embracing this diversity of housing types in other areas of the city, particularly in the commercial corridors exemplified by the Windward Tech District, will be key to residential housing success going forward.

Leverage Existing Infrastructure

The panel was impressed by the balance Alpharetta has struck between supporting new development while embracing the natural beauty of this part of the state. This attention to and connection with nature throughout the study site and the other commercial corridors should be preserved and celebrated.

Create a Big Creek Greenway trailhead. The proximity of the greenway to the study site is a tremendous asset that should be amplified across the site. The panel strongly encourages the addition of a true trailhead to the study site, complete with restrooms, parking, and shelter. A trailhead in the district could serve as a catalyst for development and support public safety in the area by bringing a meeting place and sense of purpose for community connection deep within the study site.

Create greenway connections. There are a couple of connections from the site to the greenway, but they are tucked away and difficult to find. It is also not clear where the connections may go beyond the greenway – are there deeper connections into the surrounding neighborhood or are there connections to other city streets that may help users better navigate the city? Creating clear and accessible connections to the greenway, and using easy-to-follow wayfinding, will increase greenway use, better connect current district employees/visitors to the greenway, and perhaps encourage additional users to use the district as their starting or ending point in their recreational activities.

- **Consider using the utility easement as a connector.** The Georgia Power easement that runs through the site creates certain constraints on development,



OVERTON PARK CONSERVANCY

Trailhead infrastructure can be an important factor in placemaking, creating a recognizable, attractive, and even whimsical location for gathering and accessing the greenway beyond.



ULI

Sidewalks connecting to the greenway can be better utilized with more signage and wayfinding throughout the district.



ULI

The GA Power utility easement is already being used as an informal trail connection. Making this connector more accessible with paving and signage will help greenway users connect more safely.

yet, at the same time, it also presents a compelling opportunity for a connection to the greenway. Using the easement as a greenway connector may make good development sense and should be explored.

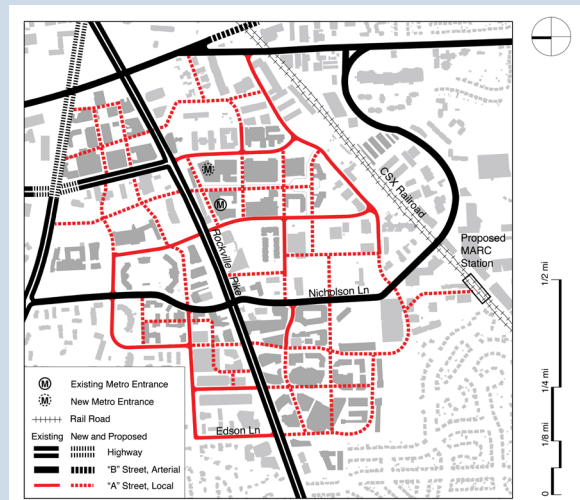
- Finish and expand roadways throughout the site.** The potential connections around the fire station on Market Place and the Market Place street itself can also help to better connect people to and throughout the site. Whether Market is extended beyond its current terminus or not, there are additional development opportunities on the north and west side of the roadway that should be explored and potentially built with the added benefit of having a roadway already in place.
- Reconfigure parking.** The sea of existing parking may require reconfiguration to meet the needs of new development. It may also need to be reconfigured to provide proximate and accessible parking for future greenway trailhead users. Conversations with existing property owners will be required to ensure that their business parking needs continue to be met while also providing flexibility or potentially shared use with trail users.

Create activation opportunities. In an effort to create energy and activation across the site, tactical urbanism interventions, such as temporary and even permanent pickleball courts and food truck plazas can help create a fun public destination at the site and bring people into the area for recreation, whether they are discovering activities along the greenway or are exploring from surrounding neighborhoods.

Embrace stormwater management opportunities. Much of the study site today is covered by impervious asphalt pavement. During rain events, water runs off the parking lots in sheets down to the greenway and the creek beyond, eventually impacting properties downstream. In the midst of redeveloping the district, creative thought should be given to on-site approaches to stormwater and water quality management with the goal of capturing as much of the stormwater runoff on-site and relieving the stream and the downstream properties of the absorption burden.

Interview with Ellen Dunham-Jones

As a function of its fact-finding mission around the repositioning of the Windward Tech District, the panel met with renown architect and urban designer Ellen Dunham-Jones during the TAP. In addition to her work as a professor and director of urban design at Georgia Tech, Ellen has authored several publications and books (most recently the *Retrofitting Suburbia* series) and is a leading authority on sustainable suburban redevelopments. Ellen shared her research and insights on the particular opportunities and challenges found in and around the Windward Parkway corridor and helped the panel identify several complementary case studies that may further define the potential paths forward for the City of Alpharetta.



The Pike District in Rockville, Maryland, from *Case Studies in Retrofitting Suburbia* by June Williamson and Ellen Dunham-Jones, (Wiley, 2021) based largely on the plan by Glattig Jackson.



The TAXI Community in Denver, Colorado, could serve as an interesting case study for additional incubator facilities in the district.

Embrace the Hybrid Working Environment

The office demand that existed before the COVID-19 pandemic is not coming back at the same levels. While cities have built entire systems around a nine-to-five workday away from home, surrounded by retail uses catering to daytime office workers, those commercial systems no longer fit today's office environment.

Explore additional incubator facilities. The city is home to a highly-successful business incubator facility that is at capacity. Knowing that there is demand for additional incubator space in Alpharetta, the city should consider pursuing additional similar uses on the site and even expand beyond the corporate approach into other industries, *e.g.*, a food and beverage or restaurant industry incubator. Additional businesses may be wishing to expand in Alpharetta and could use incubator space to gain a foothold in the market. Cyber security, healthcare information technology, and care industry businesses (catering to seniors, children, and even pets) are expanding and could embrace incubator space during their start-up years. (Fintech and biotech are in a less fundable position today and may be less interested in expansion or incubation sites.) The proximity and access to GA 400 may also be a positive characteristic that an incubating business may seek, and the study site is well-positioned with excellent auto access. Given the ever-changing nature of the market, the flexibility of an incubator location may make great sense for some of the district's current office spaces.

Explore an experiential environment. The blending of work, play, and leisure can create a vibrant environment that is attractive to employees, giving them a reason to leave their home office. Experiences and places that are engaging and welcoming will be attractive to people and businesses will follow, seeking to locate in a place where their employees want to spend time. Consider all of the ways that experiences can be built into the publicly and even privately-owned areas of the site to create a place that is compelling and worth a return visit.



Branding and wayfinding can be equally effective and attractive.

Leverage arts and culture as a draw. The addition of arts and culture to the site, enlivening areas with a small venue for performances, connections to the trail, and space for art exhibitions (Art on the Trail as seen in Sugar Hill and Crabapple), can attract additional visitors to the district and add life to the site. The city should evaluate potential areas across the site that could work well for either temporary or even permanent installations and performances.

Use Branding and Placemaking

Commercial corridors and suburban office campuses were designed with the goal of moving workers to office buildings, keeping them there for the day, and then sending them back home at the end of the workday.



GREEN STREET ST. LOUIS



PROSPECT YARDS

Placemaking efforts can draw on the area's history and tie past to the present

Today, however, when given the option of working at home or going to an office campus, most employees are choosing to stay home. It will be important going forward to re-envision these office campuses in a way that embraces placemaking and branding practices, creating an environment that is enticing, unique, and attractive.

Pursue placemaking opportunities. The Windward Tech District will benefit from a new sense of place. Incorporating technology, EV infrastructure, micro-mobility, and E-mobility for technology workers and trail users within the district can position the area as a connected—and tech-connected—hub. Other features, such as leveraging and incorporating art and music and hyper-local retail, can create a destination at the site and one that office workers, surrounding neighbors,

and even visitors from around the region will enjoy. Other features, particularly family-oriented features like a splash pad, interactive sculptures, playground, and space for recreational play/ball can make the area a draw for families, particularly those in surrounding neighborhoods, during the day as well as on the weekends. This will create a desirable amenity for the office users as well as the city more broadly.

Update the branding for the district. Working closely with the placemaking efforts, a new district branding strategy is recommended. Using streetscape improvements and branded signage, the district can become recognizable as a unique place for a blend of activities and one that draws people in from Windward Parkway and the surrounding area. While the daytime office environment may be the draw for some, the natural environment, the trail connections, and even the international flavor of Alpharetta's population (25 percent are foreign-born) can be teased out and celebrated in a branding strategy that connects people to the trail, local businesses, and even international flavors. Windward Tech District could be Avalon's Funky Cousin, providing hyper-local retail that highlights the global flavors of Alpharetta's foreign-born population.

Provide Incentives

The City of Alpharetta has a long history of creative and successful public private partnerships (P3) that can and should be further leveraged at the study site. That P3 history, combined with an astute public-sector leadership team fully aware of the need to reposition these office campuses, positions the city well for action today that can begin to meet and even influence the market. That said, additional financial resources and public incentives will likely be necessary to support the moves recommended by the panel.

Alpharetta Development Authority. The Alpharetta Development Authority can be a powerful partner in the redevelopment considerations across the site. Tax abatement is often a foundational incentive that

can move projects off paper and into action. Another incentive could include public investments in the public realm across the site. Sharing costs or even taking on the cost of public space amenities can support the site's landlords in their improvement and signal the city's interest in seeing additional privately-funded improvements made.

Explore potential tax credit options. The city has demonstrated its willingness to lean into supportive programs, as demonstrated by its match of the Quality Jobs Tax Credits for its residents. Similarly, there are other market and tax credit programs that could catalyze further private investment with the financial support of the public sector tax credits. It is important to note that

many of these programs are time sensitive, cyclical, and will be based on current market conditions. The city should explore all of the tax credit options that may be available and map each out in a manner that is clear and accessible to interested developers.

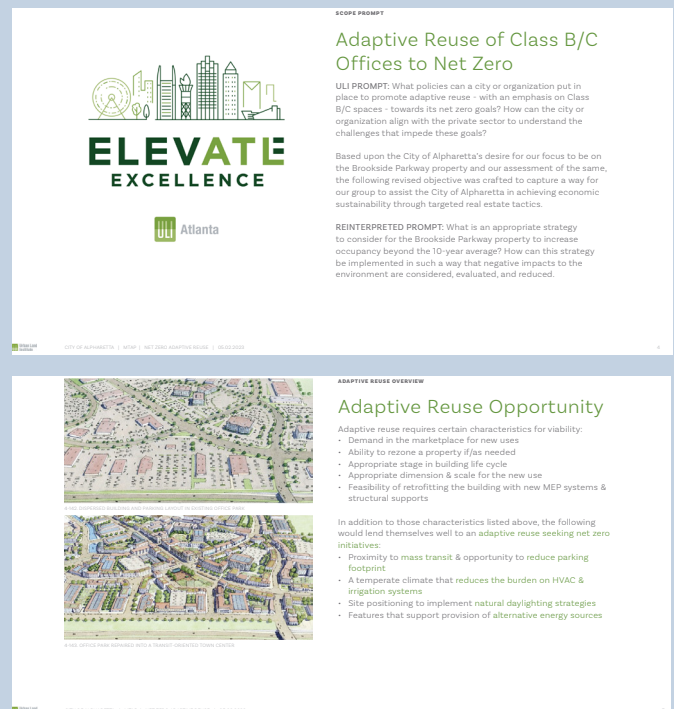
Consider all potential infrastructure investments. The public sector has an important and influential role to play in development and redevelopment projects through infrastructure improvements and/or other contributions. From stormwater management improvements, to trail installations and connections, to green space improvements and structured parking, these public space improvements may be the tipping point for a developer, helping to fill a critical financing gap and help the project finally pencil.

ULI Atlanta mTAP Report Adaptive Reuse of Class B/C Offices to Net Zero

A team involved in ULI Atlanta's Center for Leadership (CFL) class of 2023 studied the redevelopment potential associated with the City of Alpharetta's class B and C office properties. Using its creative and hyper-focused mTAP process, the CFL participants studied the Brookside Parkway corridor at the request of the city and delivered a set of recommendations it can consider in working with the development industry to reposition these suburban-style office buildings into assets that better align with the city's net zero real estate goals.

The prompt for the CFL team was to develop a strategy for the Brookside Parkway property to increase occupancy beyond the 10-year average and begin to detail how this strategy could be implemented in a way that places sustainability at the center of the work.

[The full report may be found on the ULI Atlanta website here.](#)



IMPLEMENTATION AND PHASING

As the city considers the recommendations set forth by the panel, the following guidance can help city leadership begin to phase the actions recommended. The city cannot address all of the panel’s recommendations today. Indeed, careful planning today and community engagement throughout the coming months and years can help ensure that progress is made at a pace that makes sense to property owners, brings the community along in the progress, and helps ensure lasting successful change.

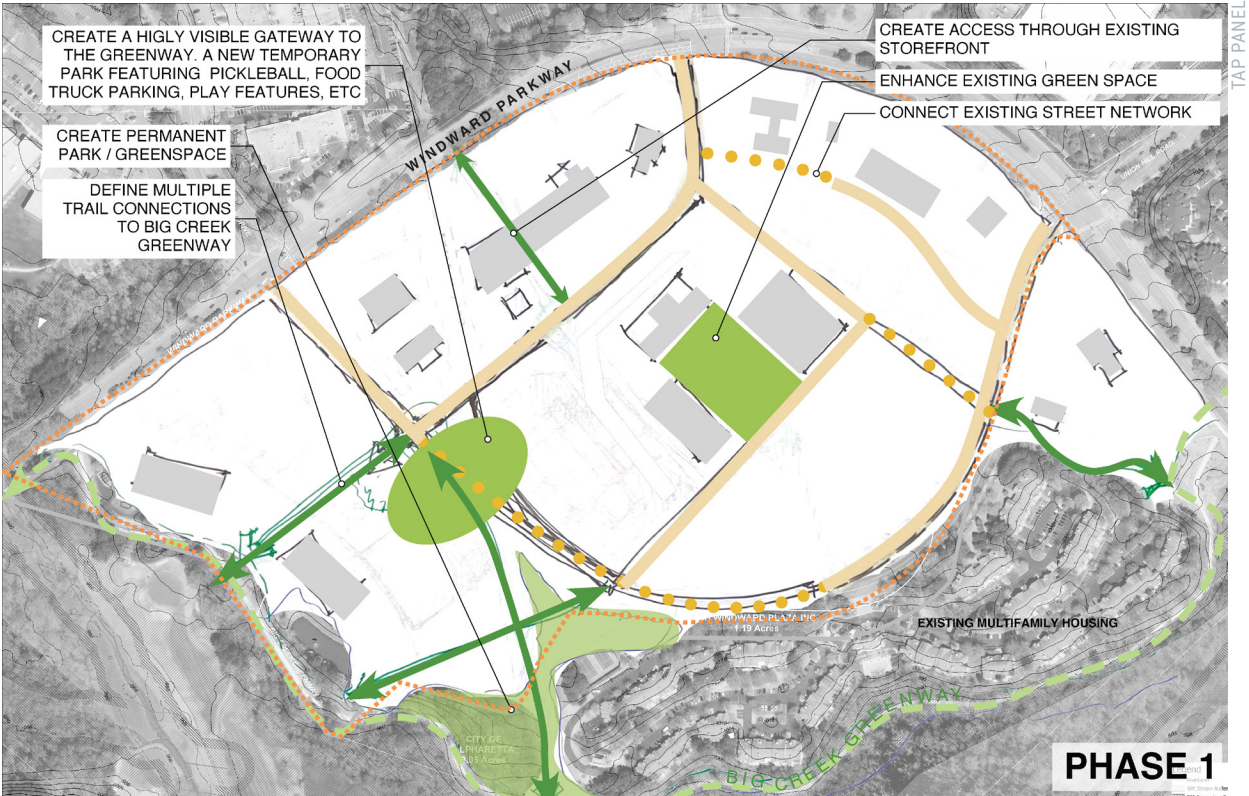
Near-term (12–18 months)

Within the next 12 to 18 months, the city is encouraged to pursue the following steps.

Create a corridor plan. A corridor plan for this study site can serve as a template for other under-utilized commercial

corridors in the city. A plan for the district should include GA 400 and the surrounding residential neighborhoods. The corridor plan should also address stormwater management along the roadway and deep into the study site. The city is also encouraged to explore a parking plan in the process as a district framework for parking can lead to more efficient use of existing spaces and perhaps identify potential

Phase One



The existing site is marked by large office buildings (noted in grey above) surrounded by large surface parking lots. The Big Creek Greenway borders the southern edge of the site and Market Place terminates midway through the site. Initial improvements should include an extension of Market Place to the west and north, reconnecting at Windward Parkway with a signalized intersection. Trail connectors should be incorporated throughout the site and a new trailhead and tactical urbanism elements could draw in and welcome visitors.

areas of consolidation. The corridor plan may help the city facilitate a bond issuance for infrastructure improvements, including roads, trails, public amenities, and parking. Finally, the formulation of the corridor plan can lead to the creation of an overlay district and revised zoning for the area.

Coordinate with Livable Centers Initiative process. The work underway with Alpharetta’s LCI will influence and inform the planning work in the district and care should be taken to coordinate efforts and ensure communication channels are open and flowing in both directions.

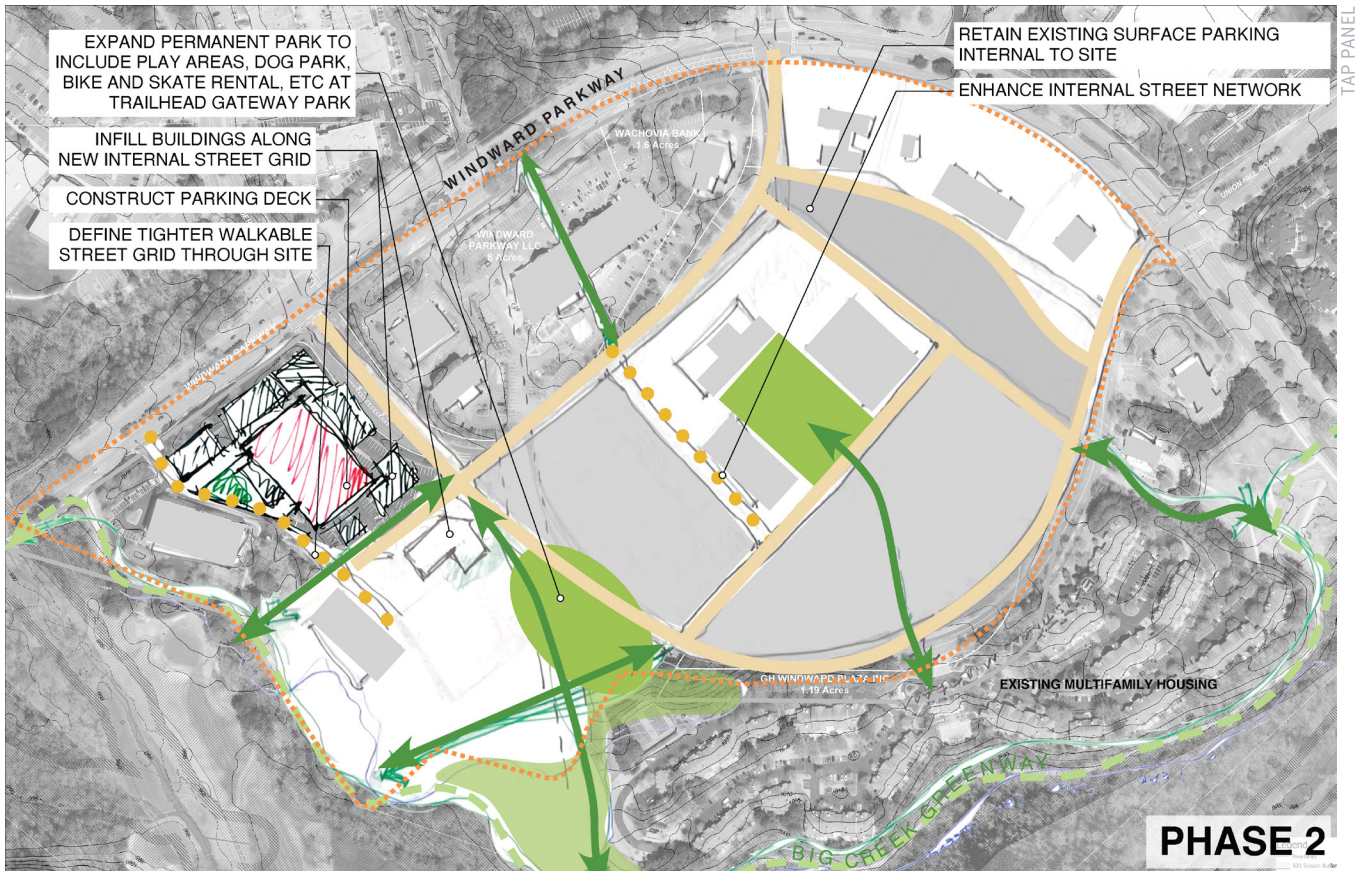
Engage property owners. Much of the land in the district is privately owned. The city should take early steps to engage with the property owners and invite them to participate, come alongside, or even lead part of the process where there is interest and capacity.

Activate the area. Small-scale, tactical urbanism elements installed on a temporary basis can help test the market for potential permanent retail and entertainment uses. Ideas that have proven popular and effective include food trucks, pickleball courts, community gardens, musical performances, and arts installations.

Develop district branding. The district is in need of a brand and a vision. The city can lead the work in identifying a branding concept that can work across the district and then lead the way in rolling out that brand in signage and wayfinding elements.

Identify programming resources. Staff and financial resources will be needed to organize and manage the activations and programming elements recommended by the panel. The city will need to identify where and how these resources will be secured and deployed.

Phase Two



Phase Two improvements could include enhanced park features, new infill buildings along new street grid, and potentially a new parking deck to begin the process of moving surface parking to more space-efficient structured options.

Mid-term (18–24 months)

The following actions should be taken within the next two years. Real estate is cyclical and while the market may be a little slow today, the city will need to be ready to move when the market is ready. These steps will assist in that preparation.

Gain property owner buy-in. Property owner participation, both office and retail owners, is key to the implementation of most of the recommendations delivered by the panel. Engaging the owners early, with the goal of securing their cooperation and support, will be critical to the future success of the district.

Enact an overlay district. With the framework plan in place, the city can pursue and pass the legislation needed to create and enforce an overlay district. This

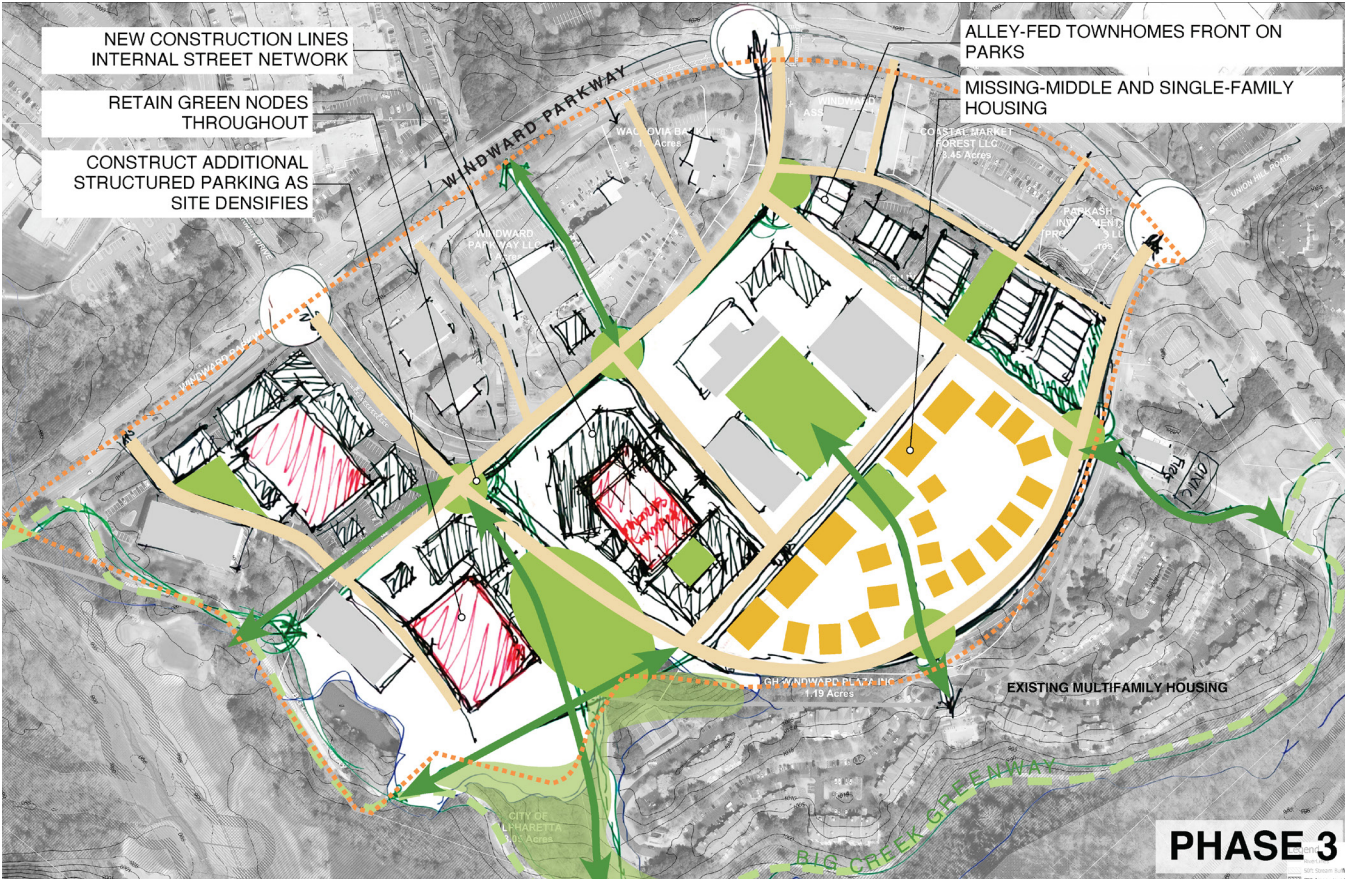
overlay will help make the city’s expectations clear and help developers understand the type of uses and future development sought for the district.

Negotiate easements. Additional easements will be necessary to clear a path for the additional trail connections and extensions contemplated for the site. Once the easements are secure, the city should proceed with construction and installation of the trail extensions and greenway improvements.

Additional steps. While perhaps a slightly lesser priority than the actions above, there are additional steps the city is encouraged to take in this mid-term period.

- **Create and install signage and branding.** The city is encouraged to implement a public signage and wayfinding effort that leverages unique branding for the district.

Phase Three



Additional development across the site can provide needed housing options, including townhomes, missing-middle, and single-family housing. Additional structured parking may also be added as the site uses densify and former surface lots are develop into more productive uses.

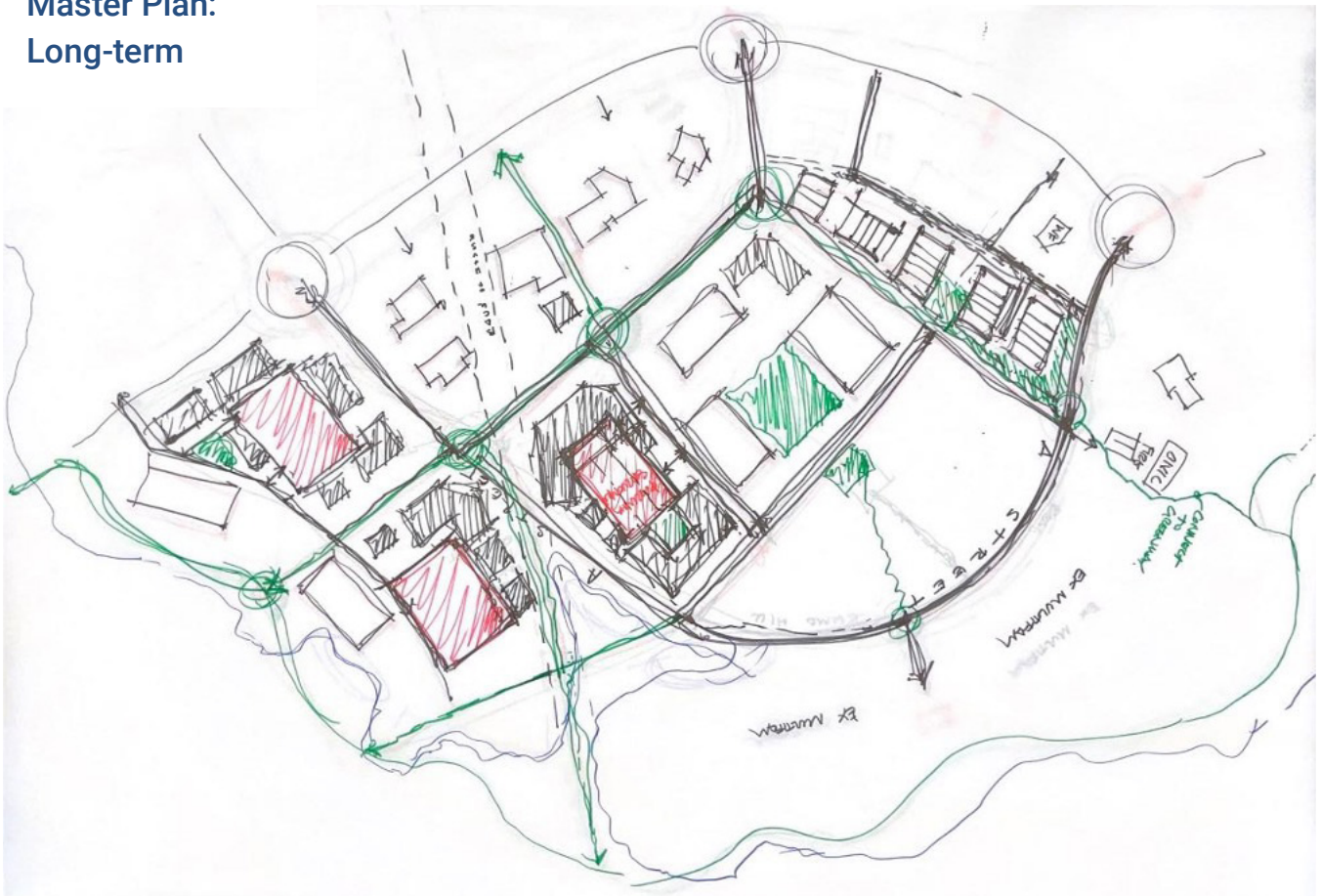
- **Begin a public art program.** The influence of an arts program can be strong enough that concentrated efforts to launch an art program for the district is recommended. The curation and installation of arts displays can take time and is well-suited to come alongside these other mid-term actions.
- **Establish district programming and events.** Much like the art program, other events and district programming can help activate the area, draw visitors to the district, and begin to shape a new narrative for this sleepy corporate campus. Taking the time to establish a district program in the early years can serve both current and future district tenants and visitors well.

Long-term (24 months–5 years)

With the overlay district in place, the table is set for private development, and the city can turn its attention to the slightly longer-term actions that will facilitate the type of mixed-use development proposed by the panel.

Facilitate ownership discussions. With five primary property owners represented within the district, the city will need to facilitate discussions with property owners and potential residential developers on the topic of densification across the site. This densification can potentially lead to competitive office lease rates for property owners.

Master Plan: Long-term



As connectivity across the district improves, additional development is attracted to the site and density increases. Additional housing opportunities and even new office buildings, as the market dictates, will further densify the site, supporting the retail businesses and adding vibrancy to the district. Trail connections are clear and the trailhead welcomes users.

Pursue a consolidated parking strategy. In pursuit of a more efficient and consolidated parking strategy, the city is encouraged to develop an approach whereby a developer with ownership interest in the site donates land to the city for the construction of a new parking structure. This land swap, which may involve negotiating lower and long-term future parking arrangements for the property owners, can still support current office tenants while opening up land for additional development.

Accelerate infrastructure improvements. While there are roads in place (Market Place) that can be extended to better serve new development at the site, there will likely be a need for additional roads and infrastructure to better serve any new development and a greenway trailhead. The city should pursue an arrangement wherein the city designs and builds the new infrastructure for the development and, in return, one of the site developers delivers a new park and trailhead for the district.

Address trail and pedestrian improvements. The pedestrian experience around and through the site will need additional attention. As the city considers the infrastructure investments associated with the site, it should also factor in pedestrian improvements, *i.e.*, sidewalk widening, along Windward Plaza. A trail extension and connector to trails to the north of the site should also be factored into the trail infrastructure plan and improvements.

Support quality retail improvements. The retail development at the site today is run by a top-notch retail developer. As improvements at the site progress, the quality of any new retail should meet or exceed that of current offerings. Quality retail options will create an additional draw to the site and all of the amenities within.

NEXT STEPS

The Windward Tech District, developed as the premiere office address of the 1990's remains in very good shape today. The site has generally withstood the test of time and, with certain key improvements, will be well-positioned to meet the needs of Alpharetta's business and residential markets into the future.

Today, city leaders are taking positive and proactive steps to re-envision the district. By firmly establishing the boundaries of the Windward Tech District, property owners can begin to see where and how their buildings will fit into this new vision for the district.

**“ The bones are good.
–TAP Panelist**

Working with the property owners, establishing a clear, welcoming, and open line of communication, will be a critical first step. As the city does not own the land or buildings under consideration, it will need to enter into a balanced relationship with the existing owners and any new developers attracted to the new opportunities that may evolve on the site.

The city will need to consider its appetite for offering incentives and investing in the additional site infrastructure posed by the panel. These investments however will be a clear signal to the existing owners and new developers that the city is interested in being an active and capable partner in repositioning the district. Having a sense of urgency and confidence in the process will also be important to help ensure that vacancies do not continue to rise and that the site is ready to meet market demands.

Initial investments by the city could include the creation of a public infrastructure and public space framework plan. This plan will establish the basis upon which future development can build, leveraging the city's efforts to accelerate private development. With a focus on connectivity, these improvements can facilitate movement

throughout the site, connect trail users to the greenway and beyond, and provide enhanced connections with the surrounding streets and neighborhoods, inviting neighbors and visitors into and through the site.

Funding for work across the district will require careful study. The city can take the lead by establishing a funding mechanism and funding methodology for public infrastructure improvements that can help catalyze private investment and development

The city should remain flexible and build flexibility into the overlay district and zoning for the area, allowing for evolving market conditions. While the panel has identified a need for additional essential housing for Alpharetta, the potential for new incubator space and the vibrancy associated with the trail proximity, the market will dictate exactly where and how new uses come to the site. The city can and should create the guiding framework but then allow the market and individual developers to make the final use a reality.

Alpharetta has a reputation in the region for innovative thinking and a willingness to try new approaches. Building on this reputation, city leadership is encouraged to work with the development community to identify private developers who have a shared vision for what the Windward Tech District can become and then begin to envision the application of these principles across the city's underutilized commercial corridors. Working together, the city, the current owners, and new developers can begin to shape the next chapter for this important real estate asset.

ABOUT THE PANEL



Jay Silverman
Panel Chair
Dwell Design Studio

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

across the country. He has a reputation for the design of high-rise mixed-use towers and multi-building residential projects, as well as complex urban infill mixed-use developments, including new construction and the rehabilitation and adaptive use of older buildings. He takes pride in directing all phases of a project from master planning and schematic design through construction and completion, creating great places, as well as finding creative solutions to complex design challenges associated with mixed-

use and urban-infill development. Jay has a strong legacy of service to the community and the architectural profession. He is a former president of the Atlanta Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, a recipient of the prestigious Ivan Allen Award for service to the profession, and currently serves as treasurer of the Architecture Foundation of Georgia. He is also active in the Urban Land Institute and, as a 2009 graduate of the ULI Center for Regional Leadership, has served two terms as chair of the ULI Technical Assistance Program Committee and as a member of the ULI Atlanta District Advisory Council. He also serves on the Advisory Council for the Sandy Springs Conservancy. Jay holds licenses to practice architecture in Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia. He lives in Dunwoody with his wife and two sons. In his spare time, he enjoys running and coaching his sons' sports teams.



Joel Dixon
Urban Oasis Development

Joel Dixon is Principal of Urban Oasis Development. Urban Oasis is a real estate development company focused on residential and commercial projects intown Atlanta. He oversees

Business Development & Community Development along with Investor Relations.

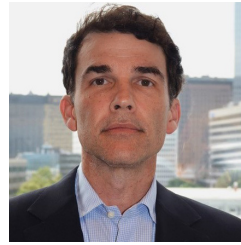
Joel has been involved in both market rate and affordable housing development with strong community-based support. He has been instrumental in helping facilitate growth of Urban Oasis and in-house construction partner Sims REG by mobilizing private and public sector resources. Having been raised in westside Atlanta public housing (former John Hope/University Homes), he understands the city and is well-connected with Atlanta’s business and grassroots community leadership.

In addition to Urban Oasis Development’s projects, Mr. Dixon has provided real estate and community advisory services to a variety of 3rd-party commercial/residential acquisition projects totaling over \$900MM.

Prior to launching Urban Oasis, Mr. Dixon had over 15 years of sales and business development experience in high technology and real estate with deep ties to the burgeoning Technology Venture community in Atlanta.

Joel is a graduate of the Urban Land Institute’s prestigious Center for Leadership (CFL) and has been an active ULI member serving as a 2018 CFL Day Chair and member of ULI Atlanta’s Creative Development Product Council. He is a graduate of Invest Atlanta’s Community Builders 1.0 Program and he serves as faculty member for Incremental Development Alliance, a not-for-profit alliance of practitioners who train small developers, helping citizens strengthen their own neighborhoods and helping city champions get the development their community wants.

Joel has a B.S. in Symbolic Systems from Stanford University and Certificate of Mandarin Chinese from Beijing Language and Culture University.



Chris Hall
Haddow & Company

Chris Hall has 20 years of experience as a real estate consultant. He has worked on a wide variety of real estate assignments including market studies, highest and best use analysis, and

revitalization plans. Prior to Haddow & Company, Mr. Hall worked as an urban planner for both an architecture firm and the City of Nashville. Chris received an undergraduate degree from Kenyon College and master’s degree in city planning from the University of Texas at Austin. Mr. Hall is a licensed real estate broker in Georgia, a member of The Counselors of Real Estate, and teaches an undergraduate real estate course at Georgia State University. He is also actively involved with the Urban Land Institute as a volunteer for the UrbanPlan program, which exposes high school and college students to the development process.



Faith Hoople
GreenbergFarrow

Faith Hoople is a solutions-oriented business development professional with over a decade of experience in the architecture, engineering and construction industry. Throughout

her career in the AEC, Hospitality and Education fields, Faith consistently delivered exceptional results for all stakeholders by forging strategic partnerships, identifying growth opportunities and centering the human experience. She excels at communicating complex ideas in a clear and concise manner to win new business and maintain strong relationships with existing clients.

Faith is a natural leader and collaborator, adept at working cross-functionally with architects, engineers, project managers and other professionals to deliver innovative and integrated solutions. She possesses a keen business acumen, leveraging strategic thinking and analytical skills to evaluate market trends, identify untapped market segments and develop targeted marketing campaigns.

Her experience also includes volunteering with the Urban Land Institute, specifically with the Technical Assistance Panel and Women’s Leadership Initiative. Additional industry experience includes volunteer leadership positions with the Society for Professional Services Marketing, American Council of Engineering Companies Inclusion & Diversity Task Force

Steering Committee Member as well as Guest Speaker for the Georgia Tech Graduate Leadership Class for the College of Design & School of Building Construction.

Faith earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Oklahoma. She enjoys travel, tennis and pickleball with her husband, Michael, and any time spent with her grown children.



Brooke Perez
Georgia Power

Brooke Perez joined Southern Company in 2009 facilitating process and technology transformation for one of the largest technology projects in Southern Company history. She

worked to enable adoption and integration of the solutions across each business unit and subsidiary across Southern Company's footprint.

She joined the Community and Economic Development organization in 2016 as Workforce Development Manager and has a deep passion for advocating and supporting our state's education and workforce efforts. She led a team focused on two initiatives: improving education and workforce outcomes for Georgia and preparing a pipeline for the energy industry workforce.

In 2019, she transitioned to the regional community and economic development team where she works with key economic development partners in Dekalb, Gwinnett, Rockdale, and north Fulton counties to support industry and communities as they prepare for growth. In addition to leading these efforts within her communities, she is also responsible for supporting a team of community and economic development managers in Georgia Power's metro Atlanta, West, and Northwest regions.

She is a graduate of The Urban Land Institute Center for Leadership, Leadership Sandy Springs, Georgia Academy of Economic Development, as well as Glance Gwinnett. She held several external leadership positions including UGA's Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication Alumni Board, Georgia's FIRST Robotics Board, and chair of the state's energy workforce consortia, the Georgia Energy and Industrial Construction Consortia (GEICC). She is currently Chair of the Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement, a member of the Georgia Economic Developers Association, a member of The Atlanta Women's Foundation Inspire Class of 2023, and founder and co-leader of Women in Economic Development.



Jennie Lynn Rudder
Starr Whitehouse

Jennie Lynn Rudder is a landscape architect and urban designer focused on resilient urban systems. Her nearly two decades of practice have spanned a broad array of project types and

land typologies. Jennie Lynn is an Associate at Starr Whitehouse Landscape Architects and Planners where she enjoys the challenges and energy that come with leading interdisciplinary project teams toward common goals. Her projects are connected by a common thread – a collaborative approach that seeks to unite design, equity, enhanced site performance, and urban form. Jennie Lynn holds a Master of Urban Design from the Georgia Institute of Technology and a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture from the University of Georgia; she is licensed to practice landscape architecture in Georgia and North Carolina. Jennie Lynn was a member of the Urban Land Institute's Center for Leadership ('19), the Atlanta Regional Commission's New Voices Committee ('15) and served on the University of Georgia's College of Environment and Design Alumni Board.



Joe Stryker
Ware Malcomb

Joseph Stryker, AIA is the Regional Director, Atlanta of Ware Malcomb, an award-winning international design firm. In this position, Joe leads the growth and management of the

Atlanta Office and oversees all Business Development efforts and operations for the Atlanta office. Joe is a seasoned architect who brings over 25 years of experience in the Atlanta market to his role at Ware Malcomb. His industry knowledge spans project and personnel management, business development and contract administration. Joe specializes in complex, mixed-use buildings, and has successfully delivered projects in the office, hospitality, medical office, public, multifamily and education sectors.

Joe earned a Bachelor of Architecture degree from the University of Cincinnati. He is a Registered Architect in the State of Georgia and is certified by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB). He is also an associate member and alumni of the ULI Center for Leadership, a member of the National Multifamily Housing Council, and a member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA).



Arman Tolentino
Smallwood

Arman Tolentino is an Associate at Smallwood. His passion for quality urban design has translated well to the types of projects he has worked on since joining Smallwood in 2012, particularly the large-scale, mixed use projects in urban cores. In addition to mixed use, Arman has contributed to the design and management of architectural services for Hospitality, Multifamily, Office, Retail, Performing Arts, Convention Center, and Parking projects. Arman excels at coordination of and communication with all team members. He also pays special attention to details and collaborates with the design team to create solutions that not only meet code and accessibility guidelines, but also the clients' budget, schedule and design goals. Arman is passionate about boiling down complex problems into practical, yet aesthetically-pleasing, design solutions that improve the user experience. Arman takes pride in conveying these solutions via easy-to-understand methods of communication, both verbally and through drawings, diagrams, and construction documents. Arman graduated from Georgia Tech with a Master of Architecture and Master of City & Regional Planning in 2011. He is involved with the Atlanta Chapter of the Urban Land Institute (ULI), is a graduate of the ULI Atlanta Center for Leadership, and currently serves on the ULI Atlanta Technical Assistance Panel Committee.



Mark Vollbrecht
Zeller

Mark Vollbrecht joined Zeller in 1996. As Principal, Mark is responsible for the performance of Zeller's Southeastern market portfolio as well as the company's engagement and reputation in the local market. He currently serves as the Atlanta Market Leader and is a member of the Investment Committee. Prior to his current role, Mark was the Market Leader for the Chicago office and was responsible for opening Zeller's

Indianapolis office and the Southeast region office in Atlanta. Before joining Zeller, Mark served as Vice President and top producing broker with Miglin-Beitler and as a Property Manager and Leasing Agent for a multi-property office building portfolio in Chicago's CBD. Mark is a graduate of the University of Illinois, Urbana, where he earned a BA in Economics. He is and has been an active member and speaker for industry and community organizations in Atlanta, Indianapolis and Chicago including ULI, BOMA, NAIOP, ICBR, CCIM, BISNOW and the Chicago Architecture Foundation. Mark is also a Board Member of the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library Foundation.



Bob Voyles
Seven Oaks Company

Bob Voyles is a 40 - year veteran of Atlanta real estate. He began his career at Alston & Bird, where he became partner, and then joined Hines, eventually becoming the Senior Development Officer for the Southeast Region. Bob and his teams have developed over 3.5 million square feet of office and mixed-use projects, 2,500 acres of commercial land throughout the Southeast, and acquired 2 million square feet of Class A office projects in Atlanta and other SE cities. Bob's projects have won numerous prestigious industry awards, including ULI "International Building of the Year" award for 1180 Peachtree and NAIOP's national award for Cool Springs mixed-use development in suburban Nashville. Bob founded Seven Oaks in 2004 and, along with his partner Randy Holmes, has grown the company to 30 employees with practice groups in development, acquisition, property management, LEED certification and asset management / advisory services. They actively manage nearly 2M SF of office, and have recently completed several projects in Chamblee including an adaptive reuse conversion of a 1940's warehouse into office. His team is currently developing some of the first new warehouse space inside the Perimeter in the last decade. Bob is a frequent industry and university speaker, having received numerous industry recognitions and awards, including the Atlanta Business Chronicle's "Visionary Leader" award in 2015. Bob's current civic

involvements include the Perimeter Business Alliance, Perimeter Community Improvement District, Cumberland Community Improvement District (CCID), Cobb-Marietta Coliseum and Exhibit Hall Authority, and Urban Land Institute. Bob has a long history of community involvement. He has served on the boards of numerous civic and charitable institutions and, along with his wife Belle, have spent several years traveling to and from Africa working with various mission organizations as well as sponsoring both pastors and churches serving within Atlanta's oldest working class neighborhoods. Bob regularly mentors groups of young men and couples through Radical Mentoring. Bob and Belle have four grown children and are members of Church of the Apostles where he has served on the Vestry 3X , as Church Treasurer, Church Warden and most recently Rector's Warden.



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