

2018 STOCKBRIDGE

RENAISSANCE STRATEGIC VISION & PLAN



Carl Vinson
Institute of Government
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

STOCKBRIDGE

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THE GEORGIA DOWNTOWN RENAISSANCE PARTNERSHIP

Bringing together a diverse mix of public institutions, nongovernmental organizations, and private foundations, the Georgia Downtown Renaissance Partnership combines the skills and resources of the Georgia Municipal Association, the Georgia Cities Foundation, and the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government to strengthen downtowns across Georgia. The Georgia Downtown Renaissance Partnership facilitates the creation of strategic visions, plans, and work programs for client communities throughout Georgia. The Georgia Downtown Renaissance Partnership works with government leaders and staff, downtown stakeholders, and local citizens to help ensure that all cities in Georgia have the resources and tools necessary to realize their vision and maximize their potential.

>> Members of the Georgia Downtown Renaissance Partnership



**Carl Vinson
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Carl Vinson Institute of Government

Since 1927, the Carl Vinson Institute of Government has worked with public officials throughout Georgia and around the world to improve governance and people's lives. From Georgia's early days as a largely agrarian state with a modest population to its modern-day status as a national and international force in business, industry, and politics with a population of 10 million, we have helped government leaders navigate change and forge strong directions for a more prosperous Georgia.



Georgia Municipal Association

Created in 1933, the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) is the only state organization that represents municipal governments in Georgia. Based in Atlanta, GMA is a voluntary, nonprofit organization that provides legislative advocacy and educational, employee benefit, and technical consulting services to its members. GMA's purpose is to anticipate and influence the forces shaping Georgia's communities and to provide leadership, tools, and services that assist local governments in becoming more innovative, effective, and responsive.



Georgia Cities Foundation

The Georgia Cities Foundation, founded in 1999, is a nonprofit subsidiary of the Georgia Municipal Association. The foundation's mission is to assist cities in their efforts to revitalize and enhance downtown areas by serving as a partner and facilitator in funding capital projects through the revolving loan fund. Its services include the Revolving Loan Fund Program, the Heart and Soul Bus Tour, the Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Tour, Downtown Development Authority Basic Training, and the Renaissance Award.

CREDITS

STOCKBRIDGE RSVP STEERING COMMITTEE

- Anthony S. Ford, Mayor
- Raoul Clarke, Downtown Development Authority, Chairman
- Lisa Fareed, Stockbridge Main Street Program Assistant
- Dianna Foster, Stockbridge Main Street Advisory Board, Business Owner
- Shomari Furtch, Stockbridge Main Street Advisory Board, Local Banker
- Ebony Gurndy, Stockbridge Main Street Advisory Board, Business Owner
 - Kira Harris-Braggs, Stockbridge Main Street Program Manager
 - Vanessa Holiday, Stockbridge City Clerk
- Willie Hopkins, Stockbridge Main Street Advisory Board, Community Representative
 - Greg Horton, Stockbridge Main Street Advisory Board, Business Owner
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- Anika Potts, Stockbridge Main Street Advisory Board, Community Representative
- Alison Ramsay, Stockbridge Main Street Advisory Board, Arts Representative
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 - Renee Shaw, Stockbridge Downtown Development Authority, Treasurer
- Alphonso Thomas, Stockbridge Main Street Advisory Board, Stockbridge City Council, Councilman

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- Lisa Fareed, Stockbridge Main Street Program Assistant
 - Vanessa Holiday, City Clerk
 - Randy Knighton, City Manager
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CITY OF STOCKBRIDGE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

- Anthony S. Ford, Mayor
- Lakeisha Gantt, Mayor Pro Tem
 - Elton Alexander, Councilman
 - John Blount, Councilman
 - Neat Robinson, Councilwoman
 - Alphonso Thomas, Councilman

Special thanks to all who attended focus group meetings, participated in interviews, voiced their opinions at the community meeting, and completed surveys. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to Kira Harris-Braggs and Lisa Fareed for their continuous assistance, insight, vision, and leadership during this effort.

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INTRODUCTION

*From the city's earliest beginnings,
Stockbridge has existed at a crossroads.*

Since its first substantial settlement in 1829, the town that developed around the historic Concord Methodist Church on Stagecoach Road was a center for social interaction, trading, and millworks. Later, the arrival of the Southern Railroad in 1881 brought new growth and challenges to the area. Responding to changes that caused other communities to falter, Stockbridge remained strong. A new hamlet formed a few miles southwest of the original settlement and boomed along the railroad, creating the foundation for modern Stockbridge.

Incorporated first as a town in 1895 and finally as a city in 1920, Stockbridge's fate was and remains tied to the transportation networks linking the city to metropolitan Atlanta 20 miles to the northwest. The growth of the railroad brought new industry and commerce to the area, including the Stockbridge quarry established in 1875. Later renamed the Stockbridge Stone Company, for over a century the quarry has supplied gravel and stone to booming Atlanta. Over the decades, the quarry employed many local citizens, including



local sharecropper James Albert “Jim” King. In 1899, Jim King’s wife Delia gave birth to a baby boy, Michael. Born into a life of farm labor and unyielding racism, young Mike King found refuge and community in Stockbridge’s black churches. At age 15, King was ordained as a minister and preached his first sermon at Floyd Chapel Baptist Church in downtown Stockbridge. King left home soon thereafter to seek greater opportunity in the big city of Atlanta. There, he worked as a truck driver and a traveling preacher while doggedly pursuing his education. After graduating from Morehouse College in 1930, King married Alberta Williams and worked his way up to become the pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church, where his father-in-law had presided. During his tenure at Ebenezer, King built the church into one of Atlanta’s leading black congregations. Stockbridge’s most famous native son, the Rev. Martin Luther King, Sr., known to most as “Daddy King,” arose

from humble beginnings to become a gifted orator and community advocate. Most importantly, King would be recognized later in life as father and mentor to world-renowned Civil Rights leader and Nobel Prize winner, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The grandson of slaves and son of sharecroppers, Daddy King left a legacy that has reverberated through the generations and remains relevant today.



From Daddy King: An Autobiography



Like the coming of the railroad in the 1880s, the construction of Interstates 75 and 675 three miles west of the city created a modern boom far beyond the wildest dreams of the city's earliest founders. Between 1990 and 2010, Stockbridge's population exploded approximately 750%. Bringing newfound metropolitan wealth, talented workers, and a racially mixed group of citizens to the community, this time of transition dramatically reshaped Stockbridge's demographic

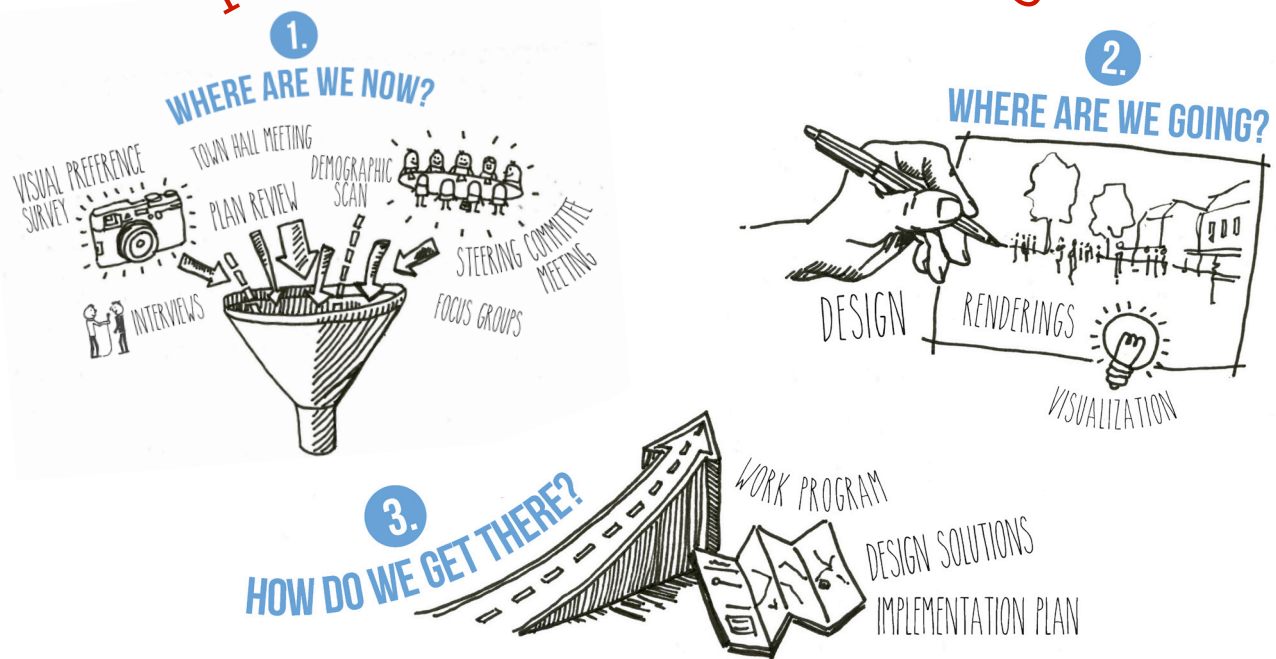
Between 1990 and 2010, Stockbridge's population exploded approximately 750%.

makeup. From a population that was 70% white in 2000, today Stockbridge citizens are increasingly diverse, with a majority African American citizenry, a white population of about a third, and significant Asian, Indian, and Latino communities. Modern Stockbridge celebrates the inclusiveness of the community with local landmarks like Floyd Chapel Baptist Church, the Martin Luther King,

Sr. Heritage Trail, and the Green Front Café that pay homage to Stockbridge's vibrant African American community. Events like Bridgefest and Hispanifest, food trucks at Tasty Tuesdays, Main Street Movies, and the Sounds of Summer concert series welcome a new generation of Stockbridge citizens to the community. With a median income \$10,000 above the state average, a quality school system, and affordable home values, Stockbridge remains an attractive location for growing families and businesses. Many newcomers and longtime residents alike are drawn to Stockbridge for the strong sense of community found here.

Stockbridge already boasts assets such as lively events and festivals, attractive public buildings, beloved parks, accessible playgrounds, scenic trails, and other sought-after amenities that draw locals to Stockbridge's quaint downtown district. However, commercial growth along North Henry Boulevard and beyond draws most daily activity out of the downtown core toward

THREE STEP PROCESS



the interstates. This situation poses a challenge to local leaders, who are tasked with ensuring positive commercial growth that furthers the collective goal of creating a vibrant downtown. With projected growth on the way, Stockbridge officials sought the assistance of the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government to help create a plan for the downtown area. The Stockbridge Renaissance Strategic Vision and Plan (RSVP) works to incorporate the voices of community members, civic leaders, and business owners, along with major downtown stakeholders, to create a cohesive, community-supported concept for the future. Planners from the Institute of Government helped local leaders craft their vision by relying on a three-step planning method that addressed three fundamental questions facing the community: Where is Stockbridge now? Where is Stockbridge going? And how does Stockbridge get there?

With a robust public input process that encompassed multiple one-on-one interviews, focus groups, an open community meeting, a survey

with more than 200 responses, and a comprehensive analysis of demographic trends and market conditions, the Stockbridge RSVP incorporates the desires of the community in a focused vision for the future of downtown. Throughout this process, a dedicated group of local citizens, business leaders, volunteers, and government officials convened under the leadership of the Stockbridge Main Street Program to refine desired priorities and guide development of the final plan. This group, the Stockbridge RSVP Steering Committee, reviewed and honed the hundreds of individual public responses to determine the community's top concerns. As part of this process, the Stockbridge RSVP Steering Committee also identified the community's current strengths and assets to build upon. Moving forward, the Stockbridge RSVP Steering Committee should continue to meet. Convening this group regularly will encourage implementation of the Stockbridge RSVP, while also furthering community engagement and continuing the momentum to improve downtown.



STEP ONE

During the community RSVP meeting, in focus groups and interviews, and via survey responses, local citizens presented a positive view of Stockbridge. Many highlighted the unique qualities that make the community strong. Citizens and local leaders view Stockbridge as a growing, diverse, and friendly place to call home. Locals noted that quality public schools, local arts outlets, varied youth organizations, and convenient proximity to employment hubs make Stockbridge a great place to raise a family. Residents overwhelmingly provided glowing reviews of activities organized by both the City of Stockbridge events team and the Stockbridge Main Street Program. Gatherings such as Bridgefest, Main Street Movies, Sounds of Summer concerts, and Tasty Tuesdays food truck events were noted for bringing people together, drawing longtime citizens and newcomers alike. These popular local events were seen to attract activity downtown and help to build Stockbridge's community identity.

Groups Represented in Focus Groups and Interviews

- Active Seniors
- Real Estate Professionals
- Middle School Students
- High School Students and Young Adults
- Parents
- Economic Development Professionals
- Stockbridge Community Cross Section
- Nonprofit Organizations, Community Groups, and Churches
- Arts and Cultural Professionals
- Large-Scale Employers
- Multicultural Community Members
- Educators
- Young Professionals and Entrepreneurs
- RSVP Steering Committee
- Restaurant Owners
- Small Business Owners



In addition to festivals and events, citizens greatly appreciated attractive public buildings and event venues like the Merle Menders Conference Center, Stockbridge City Hall, Cochran Public Library, and the Ted Strickland Community Center. They highly praised the city's beloved public parks and saw the improvements at Clark Park and along Martin Luther King, Sr. Heritage Trail as money well spent. Many also noted that friendly, locally-owned businesses contribute to the local economy and bring additional energy downtown.



While Stockbridge citizens lauded community events, public buildings, and local parks, many see downtown as in dire need of improvement and investment. Many local citizens do not consider going downtown except to visit the library, government offices, and Clark Park, or to attend regular events. Many community members noted that downtown lacks the restaurants, businesses, and other attractions that could draw daily activity. Residents frequently commented that the city should develop incentives for businesses, restaurants, entertainment options, and housing developers that are interested in coming to the area. Many also noted that downtown Stockbridge does not look or feel like a traditional downtown. Residents pointed to the incoherent assemblage of small commercial strip developments and sparsely occupied office complexes that

line the approach to downtown. They felt that these structures look rundown and fail to draw commercial activity. Additionally, citizens saw the demolition of historic downtown buildings and the razing of the Carrie Mae Hambrick Cultural Arts and Community Enrichment Center as creating a void in the center of the community. Many viewed the replacement of the center, coupled with the addition of new residences and businesses, as crucial to any successful rejuvenation of downtown.

Visitors to downtown currently encounter incomplete sidewalks and no pedestrian accommodations at railroad crossings. These hazards make visiting the area on foot an unwelcoming experience. Addressing pedestrian connectivity along and under the Martin Luther King, Sr. Memorial Bridge, connecting across the railroad tracks that bisect the downtown

core, and creating a pedestrian-friendly downtown remain central challenges for any proposed redevelopment. Additionally, while almost 600 public parking spaces exist, the absence of striping and public parking signage have created confusion for infrequent visitors. Public input participants noted that better lighting for sidewalks, streets, and parking areas would help encourage visitation during the evening hours and create a nightlife in the area.

While Stockbridge citizens lauded community events, public buildings, and local parks, many see downtown as in dire need of improvement and investment.





TOP ASSETS

- Public Events & Services
 - Recurring Events & Special Festivals
 - Tasty Tuesdays, Main Street Movies, BridgeFest*
 - Diverse Programming
 - Public Library
- Public Buildings & Parks
 - Beautiful Public Buildings
 - Attractive Parks
- Strong Community
 - Diverse, Inclusive, Friendly People
 - Youth Organizations
 - Schools & the Arts
 - Clean, Safe, & Quiet
- Placemaking Potential
 - Historic Buildings
 - King Family
 - Existing Downtown Businesses

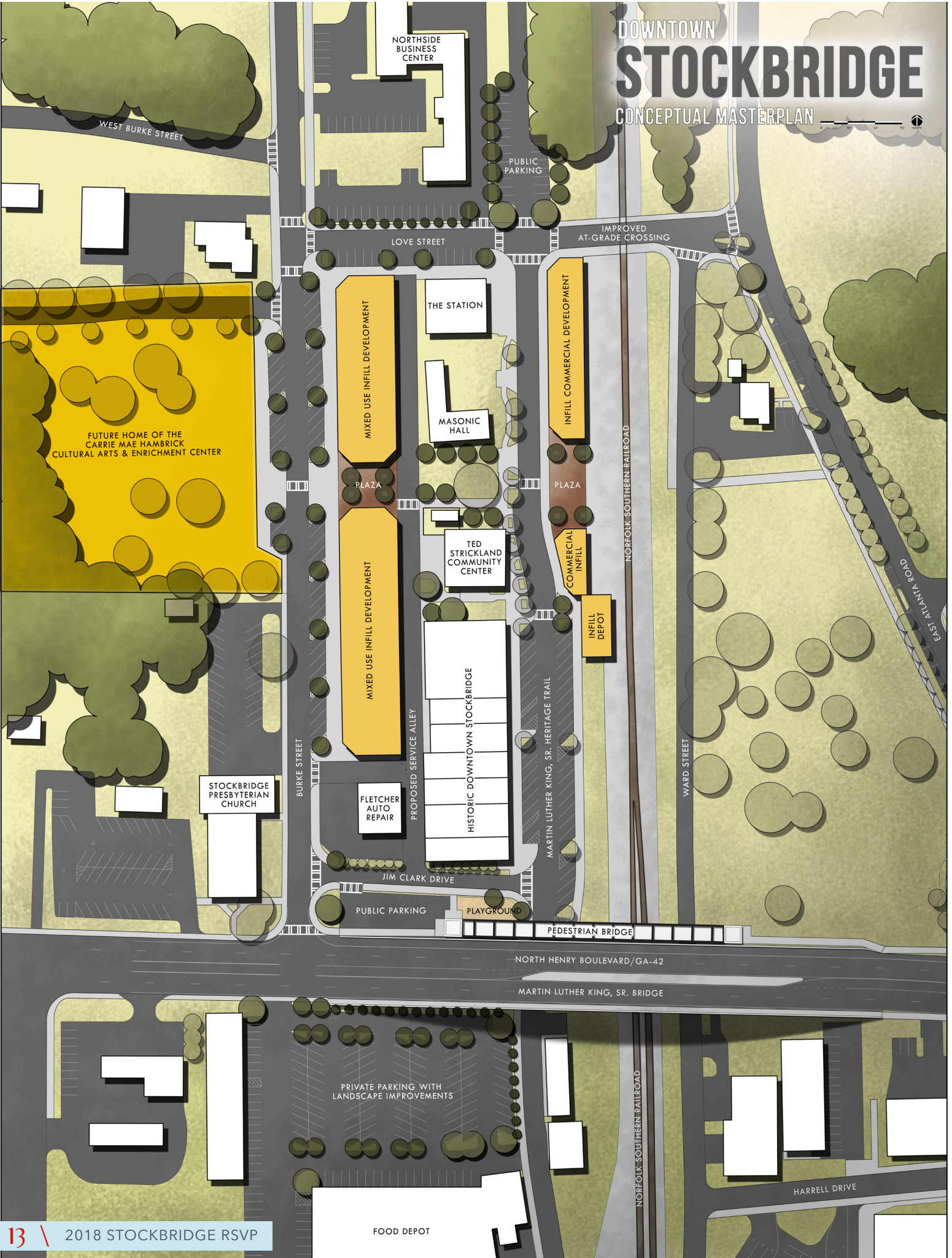
Stockbridge's fate remains tied to growth, evolution, and adapting to changing times. These traits remain central tenets of the city's character. For the city to own the future and embrace the growth to come, steps must be taken to create the vibrant downtown hub desired by the community. Shaped by the input of hundreds of community members, the Stockbridge RSVP provides an in-depth look at what local residents value and how community members would like to see growth evolve. The citizen-led Stockbridge RSVP Steering Committee worked diligently to incorporate these top issues into a plan that would guide the city's future. The final plan addresses the priorities of the community to ensure a thriving, active, and vital community hub in downtown Stockbridge.

TOP ISSUES

- > Downtown Feel
 - Visual Cohesion
 - Rundown Appearance
 - Mixed-Use Buildings
- > Creating a Destination
 - Lack of Attractions
 - Lack of Entertainment
 - More Reasons to Come Downtown (*Live, Work, Play*)
 - Need to Encourage Business Growth
 - Incentivize Restaurants & Shopping
- > Connectivity
 - Drivability: Congestion & Event Parking
 - Walkability: Train Crossing & Sidewalks

DOWNTOWN STOCKBRIDGE

CONCEPTUAL MASTERPLAN



FOOD DEPOT

STEP TWO

Stockbridge Downtown Masterplan & Vision

Immediately following an extensive public input process, a review of previous plans, and a study of Stockbridge's economic conditions, experienced planning professionals at the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government went to work designing a plan for downtown Stockbridge that accurately reflects the community vision revealed during Step I of the RSVP process. Foremost in this vision is the creation of a vibrant downtown center. As outlined in Step I, local citizens crave an active, inviting, and accessible community hub with a rich variety of restaurants, retail, entertainment, and housing options. Citizens envision this downtown as a place where Stockbridge citizens and visitors can live, work, shop, eat, find entertainment, and gather socially in the heart of the community.

The Stockbridge Downton Masterplan works to create this thriving hub by prioritizing new mixed-use infill development on currently vacant and underutilized parcels in the city's downtown core. New development proposed in the plan reflects the sophisticated tastes of the community, with a mixture of streamlined modern design, high-quality traditional materials, and fine craftsmanship found in civic buildings like Stockbridge City Hall and the Ted Strickland Community Center. With walkability and safety issues posing a central problem for downtown, the proposed masterplan for downtown incorporates new 10'-20'-wide sidewalks, lighting, and handsome streetscaping throughout downtown. These wide sidewalks expand access for residents and are capable of accommodating café tables, sidewalk sales, and other elements of downtown street life.

In addition to expanding the city's sidewalk network, the plan serves new and existing downtown development by extending the area's existing service alley and adding more than 70 landscaped on-street parking spaces. New two-story infill development along Burke Street incorporates an additional 35 private garaged parking spaces for future downtown residents. The plan easily accommodates new and current downtown visitors and expands the area's overall accessibility. While creating a new downtown hub that feels cohesive and integrates the existing downtown core, the Stockbridge Downtown Masterplan addresses persistent issues by connecting downtown across the Norfolk Southern right-of-way and beyond to the future development proposed behind Stockbridge City Hall.

“...local citizens crave an active, inviting, and accessible community hub with a rich variety of restaurants, retail, entertainment, and housing options.”

The plan further envisions the North Henry Boulevard overpass/Martin Luther King, Sr. Memorial Bridge as a prominent landmark for the community. Additions like landscaped medians, an iconic pedestrian bridge, expanded sidewalks, and a unique and interactive children's playground lend new character and expand connectivity downtown. Along the Norfolk Southern right-of-way in the center of downtown, the Stockbridge Downtown Masterplan proposes returning a portion of this property to development and community use. Designed in a manner and scale that evokes the city's now-demolished historic train depot, the development along the railroad enshrines Stockbridge's past while embracing the downtown's future as a vibrant gathering space.

STEP TWO

Stockbridge Downtown Masterplan & Vision

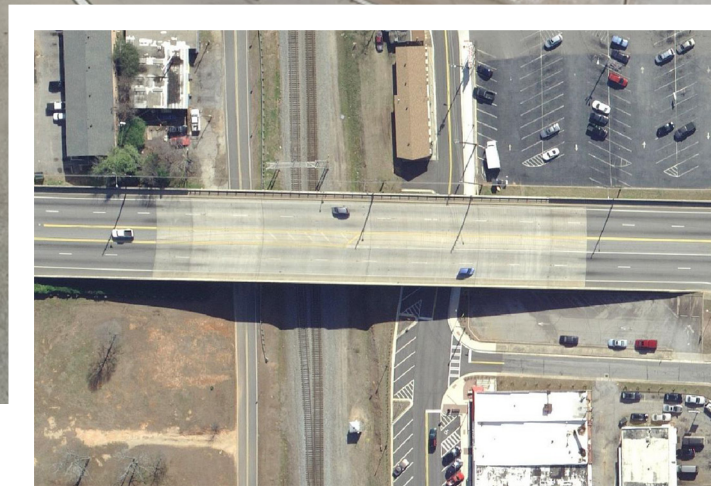
Beginning at Stockbridge City Hall, the renderings that follow illustrate specific elements of the Stockbridge Downtown Masterplan found on page 16 and provide a glimpse of the community vision that emerged in Step I of the RSVP process. These perspective and plan view illustrations provide a sense of what a vibrant, thriving downtown Stockbridge could look and feel like for visitors and local residents.



<<City Hall Turn Lane, Before:
Public input revealed that frequent backups at the intersection of North Henry Boulevard and East Atlanta Road present a problem for getting in and out of downtown Stockbridge.

vvCity Hall Turn Lane, After:
By utilizing the ample existing right-of-way, a new turn lane onto North Henry Boulevard from East Atlanta Road would help alleviate some of this area's frequent congestion.





MARTIN LUTHER KING, SR. BRIDGE

INTRODUCTION

The key gateway to downtown Stockbridge, the five-lane Martin Luther King, Sr. Bridge presents a number of issues for those wishing to visit downtown Stockbridge. This graphic illustrates the effect of reducing the bridge to four lanes and constructing a concrete median in place of an unnecessary turn lane. Improving the existing sidewalk on the south side of the bridge with a safety wall and constructing a new 8' sidewalk with safety wall on the north side of the bridge could all vastly improve the experience and safety of pedestrians navigating downtown.

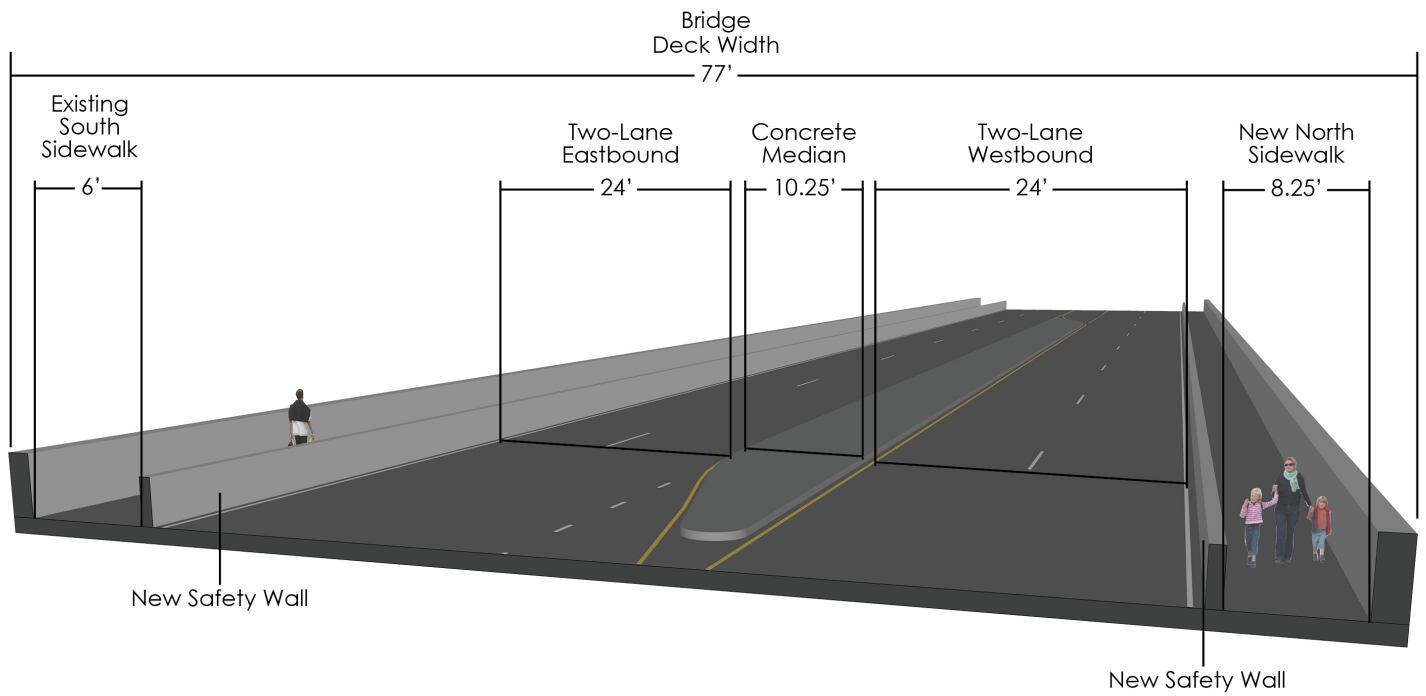
OPTION

1

Carrying busy North Henry Boulevard over downtown Stockbridge, the Martin Luther King, Sr. Memorial Bridge serves as both Stockbridge's primary landmark and a major hindrance for downtown connectivity. Currently this five-lane span presents a lack-luster image to potential downtown visitors, poses dangerous hazards for pedestrians, and encourages

motorists to speed over the heart of downtown. Constructed to minimum size standards, the lone sidewalk traversing the bridge lacks a safety barrier separating pedestrian and vehicular traffic. The inconvenient location of this sidewalk on the side of the bridge farthest from downtown further limits pedestrian connectivity.





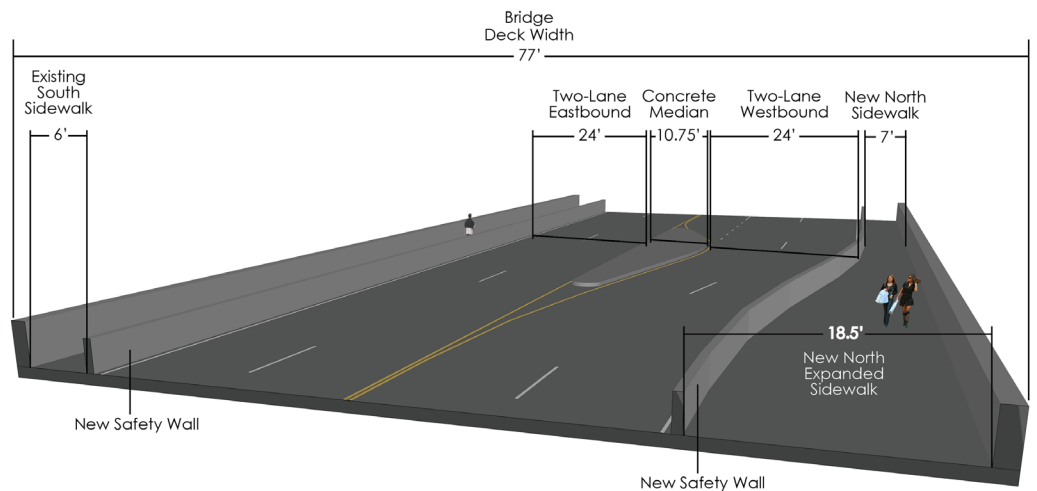
OPTION TWO

This “after” rendering replaces the center turn lane of the bridge with an attractive landscaped median featuring tough drought-tolerant grasses. Pedestrian improvements along the downtown side of the bridge include a new 8’-wide sidewalk and safety wall. Combined with a new safety wall buffering the existing 6’ sidewalk along the north side of the bridge, these enhancements could vastly improve pedestrian safety while creating a sense of arrival for downtown visitors.



OPTION

Presenting another traffic-calming option, this graphic illustrates the five-lane bridge again reduced to four lanes, with two northern lanes shifting into the center. Improving the existing sidewalk along the south side of the bridge with a safety wall, expanding the sidewalk to over 18' wide, and adding an overlook with safety wall all vastly improve pedestrian safety and the experience of navigating downtown on foot.





OPTION TWO

Designed around the unutilized paved area along the bridge, this concept shifts two westbound travel lanes to accommodate a large 18.5' pedestrian walkway with a safety wall retrofitted along the north side of the bridge. The existing 6' sidewalk along the south

side of the bridge is also improved with the addition of a safety wall. A new landscaped median planted with tough drought-tolerant grasses calms traffic while creating a sense of arrival downtown.

3 OPTION



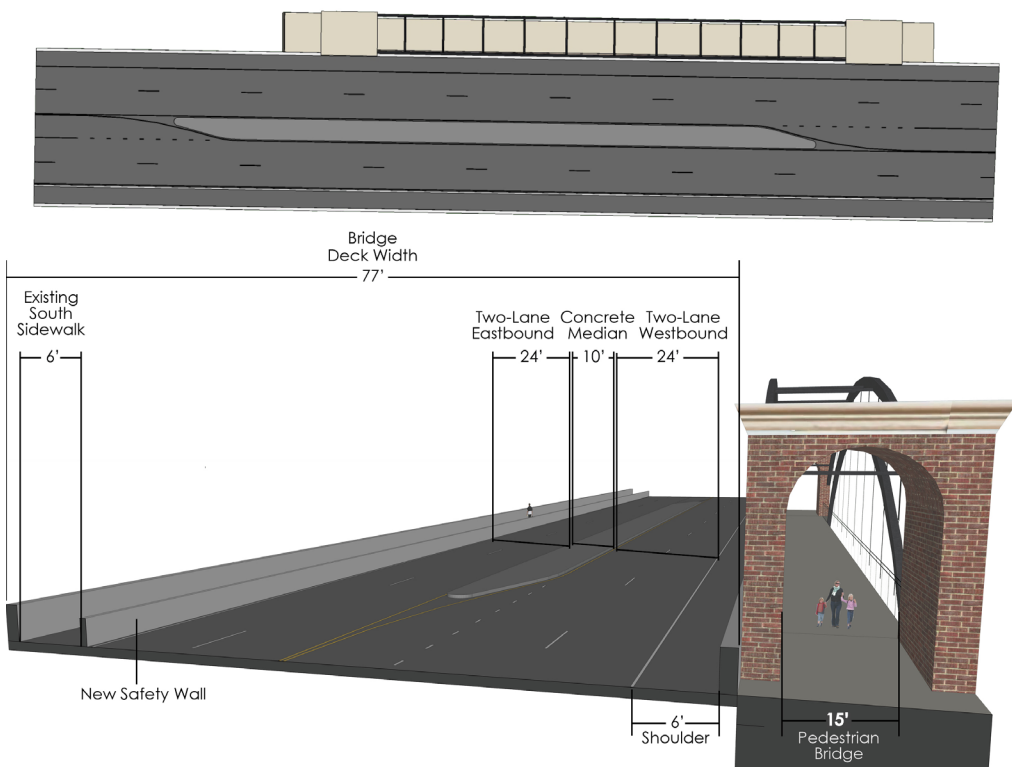
GOLDEN, COLORADO
PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
EXAMPLES



OPTION THREE Pedestrian Bridge

Public input results from Step I of the Stockbridge RSVP strongly indicated the desire for a safe, attractive pedestrian bridge connecting downtown across the railroad. The freestanding 15'-wide pedestrian bridge illustrated in this rendering fully separates pedestrian and vehicular traffic along busy North Henry Boulevard, enhancing safety for both pedestrians and

motorists. This new span builds on the Stockbridge brand, showcasing the city's name and creating a signature symbol for downtown. This view again shows Georgia Department of Transportation bridge improvements along North Henry Boulevard, including a safety wall along the existing 6' sidewalk and a planted concrete median in the unnecessary turn lane.



This graphic shows the five-lane Martin Luther King, Sr. Memorial Bridge reduced to four lanes with a concrete median. An improved sidewalk with safety wall along the south side of the span enhances safety and aesthetics. The north side of the bridge is improved with the addition of a freestanding 15'-wide pedestrian bridge.

Stockbridge Neon Sign

Before & After

This view from the bridge overlooks Stockbridge's historic downtown. The funky Billiards sign stands out, informing passersby of downtown attractions. There is opportunity to draw more traffic downtown by catching the attention of the copious traffic that passes over the bridge daily.

In the short-term, Stockbridge can look to draw more visitors downtown with fun branded signage, playing on the existing Billiards sign and the arched nature of its prominent bridge. Illuminating such signage invites people downtown to enjoy the nightlife.



Food Depot

Before & After



Seen from the North Henry Boulevard overpass, Food Depot and adjacent businesses bring locals to the downtown area. Having undergone a recent façade renovation, this complex could benefit from enhancements to the busy parking lot.



Converting unproductive painted areas to planting beds could transform this key downtown property and invite more visitors to shop and dine downtown. The low-maintenance laurel or willow oaks and Natchez crape myrtle shown in the rendering above provide shade, enhance aesthetic appeal, and work to reduce stormwater runoff from the property.

NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILYARD OPTION ONE



The Norfolk Southern railyard running parallel to the Martin Luther King, Sr. Heritage Trail dominates much of the real estate in downtown Stockbridge. Currently a number of storage buildings, a signal station, and miscellaneous equipment occupy much of this area.



This rendering illustrates buildings and equipment removed and the remainder of the lot planted with wildflowers. Inexpensive, low-maintenance wildflowers transform this key property from an eyesore into an asset, attracting the attention of downtown visitors.



NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAILYARD OPTION TWO

Constructing an infill building at the corner of Love Street and the Martin Luther King, Sr. Heritage Trail would transform this corner, anchoring one end of downtown. The plaza

provides an opportunity for public space in downtown and further enhances the pedestrian connection between Burke Street and the Martin Luther King, Sr. Heritage Trail.



THE STATION

The vacant former fire station located on the corner of Love Street and the Martin Luther King, Sr. Heritage Trail presents a unique opportunity to boost activity downtown. This building could serve as the location for the Stockbridge Main Street Program office. Shown in the renderings to follow, this facility, rechristened “The Station,” would include a shared work space with large table and ample cabinet space for storage, and more than 1,300 square feet of storage space on the second level. This storage space could allow Main Street and other organizations to easily accommodate spare program materials and holiday decorations. This building could also serve as the location of



SPECIFIC ELEMENTS OF • THE STATION •

- WELCOME CENTER
- MAIN STREET PROGRAM OFFICES
- DDA OFFICES
- CONCESSION AREA
- TOURIST INFORMATION
- GALLERY SPACE
- SHORT-TERM RETAIL POP-UP MARKET
- AMPLE STORAGE
- STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

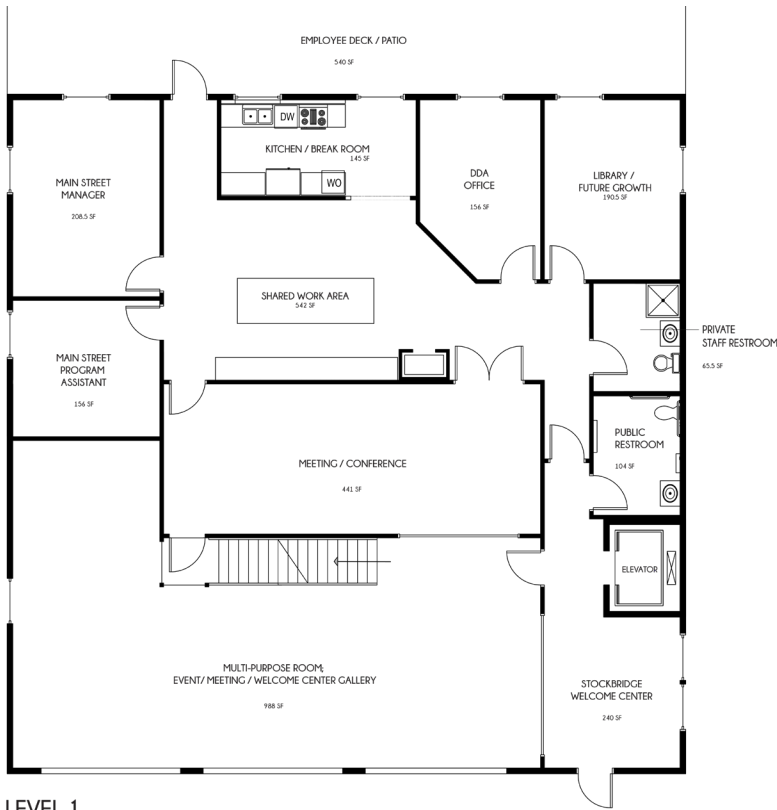
the city's Downtown Development Authority (DDA) office, which would encourage collaboration and easy communication between city employees.

The new building design concept also includes a welcome center and a small café that would offer light concessions. The large multipurpose room seen on the floor plan on page 29 features three garage doors that can be opened to allow ample natural light for a rotating local artist gallery space. This large space can host events, meetings,

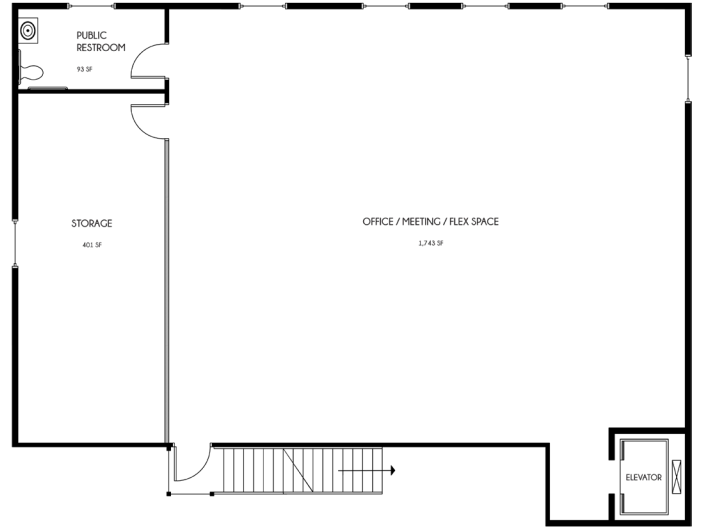
or pop-up retail. Access to a public restroom is also included as a critical amenity for downtown. It also features a front outdoor patio where visitors can enjoy a cold beverage after a long walk along the Martin Luther King, Sr. Heritage Trail.

This new building design concept also includes a meeting and conference room that can accommodate up to 20 people, a well-equipped kitchen, a break area, a deck, and a private employee bathroom with a shower and space for lockers.

THE *STATION* FLOORPLAN

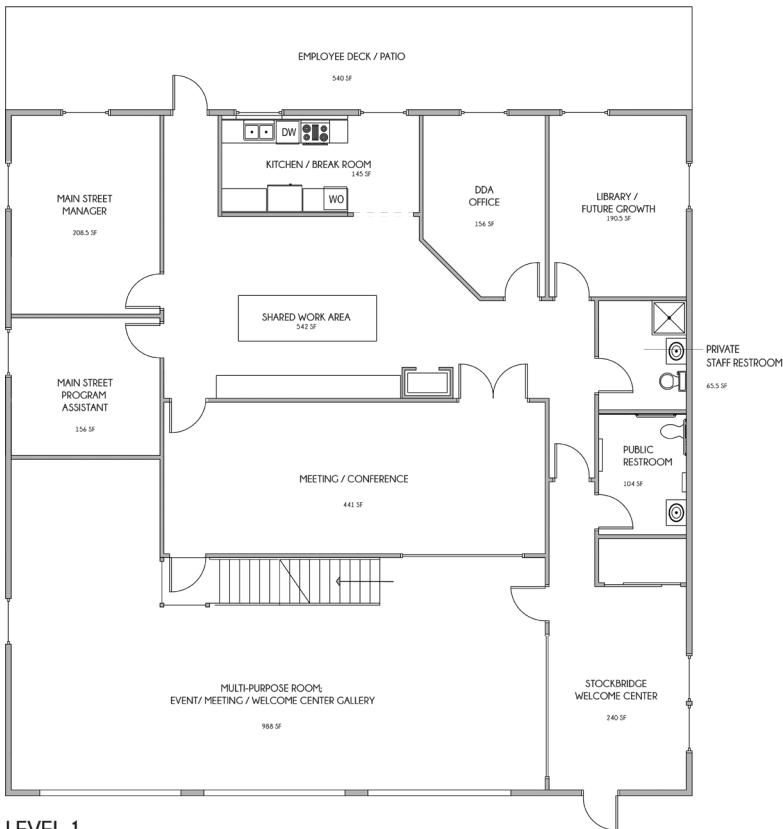


LEVEL 1

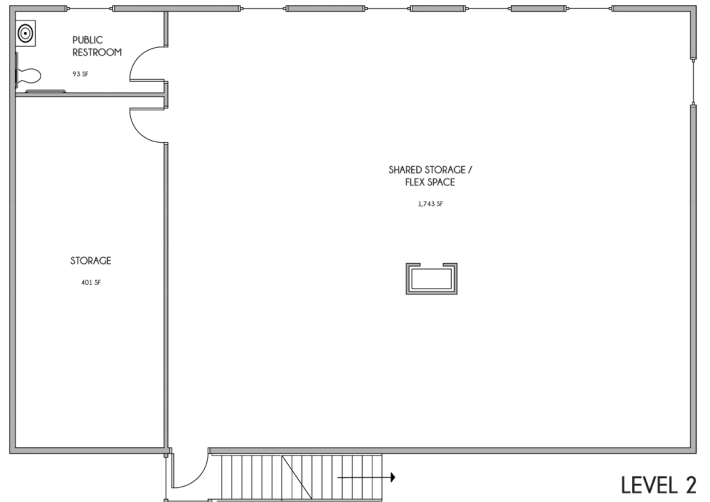


LEVEL 2

OPTION 1
with elevator



LEVEL 1



LEVEL 2

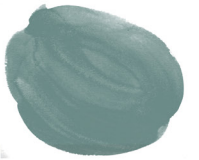
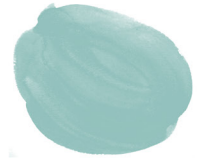
OPTION 2
without elevator



These images from a three-dimensional model of the proposed Station illustrate the potential of this currently vacant former firehouse. These images depict the building's ability to support a variety of activities and events, while integrating office space, conference rooms, public restrooms, and a concessions counter into the final design. Thoughtful use of space and careful design considerations can transform this humble structure into a community hub.



1. Inviting patio space 2. Multipurpose space 3. Conference room
4. Office space 5. Concessions counter 6. Shared workspace



THE *STATION*

INTERIOR DESIGN CONCEPT

Creating an interior that celebrates the history, character, and unique style of Stockbridge requires using a broad menu of materials, patterns, and color palettes. The new building will prominently feature art and furnishings from Barn Beautiful and other local businesses to celebrate community talent. Walls will serve as gallery spaces for local artists and photographers and can be rotated out periodically to feature new artists' work. The overall character could be described as "funky" and eclectic, using recycled materials and reclaimed wood, weathered metals, and glass. The floors are polished concrete in the public areas and carpet in the back-of-house and office spaces to minimize noise. Garage doors in the multipurpose room are a main design feature. Lighting is creative

and trendy, with a mixture of industrial pendants and chandeliers, while string lights hang above guests seated on the patio. Pops of turquoise and red accent the space and feature colors often found in the works of artists featured at Barn Beautiful. Black and white photography of old Stockbridge and key figures like Coretta Scott King and Martin Luther King, Sr. decorate hallways and meeting spaces. A chalkboard menu hangs above the café, which is designed with a minimum of interior walls to allow the aroma of freshly brewed coffee to spill out into the welcome center. Office spaces are modern and clean, using interior windows that serve as an abstracted version of the garage doors. This interior should be friendly, approachable, and rich with culture, just like Stockbridge.



OPTION ONE

MARTIN LUTHER KING, SR. HERITAGE TRAIL + LOVE STREET

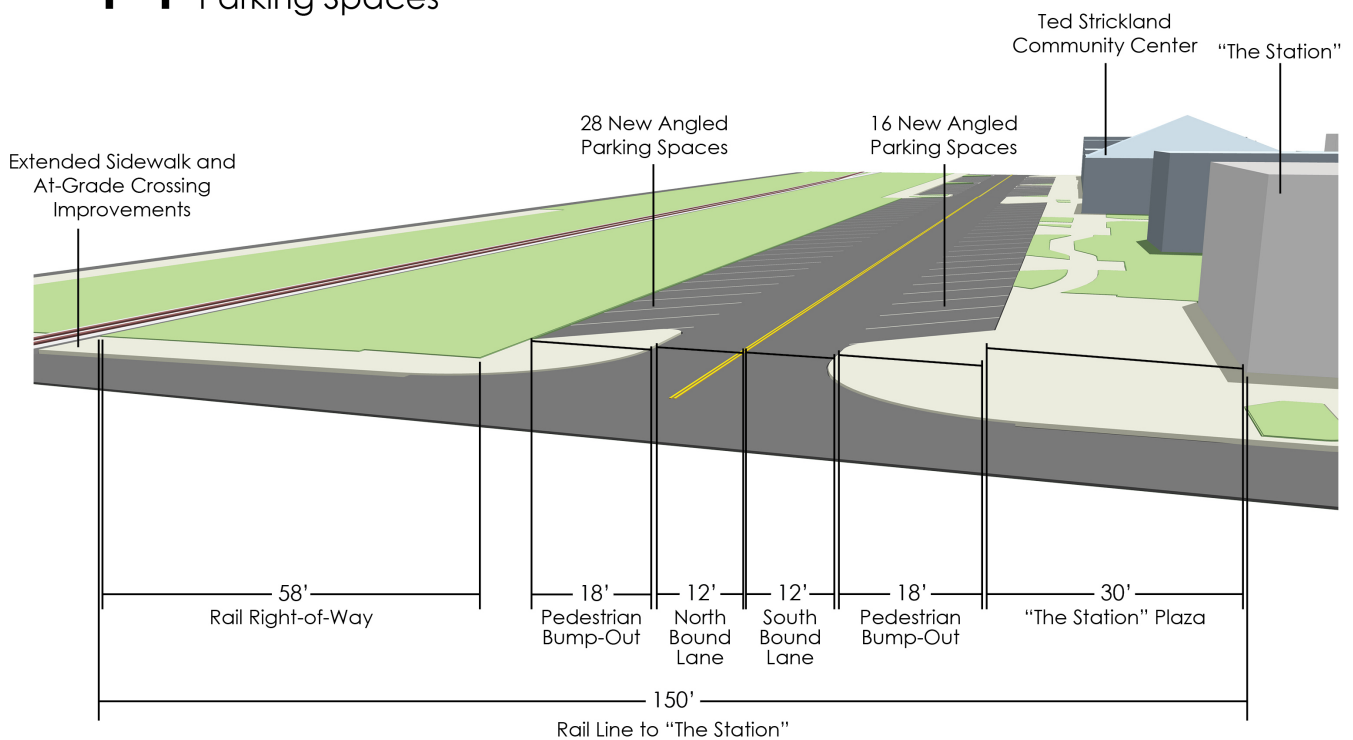
The prominent corner of Martin Luther King, Sr. Heritage Trail and Love Street is a key gateway to historic downtown Stockbridge.





Converting the former fire station into the proposed downtown welcome center enlivens this key entryway. A multi-purpose building, The Station would house a coffee shop, a pop-up market, and the Main Street and DDA offices. Realigning this downtown street expands the number of angled parking spaces on both sides. Demarcating the Martin Luther King, Sr. Heritage Trail with an eye-catching pillar and Coretta Scott King roses creates a proper trailhead and memorable gateway experience for downtown visitors.

44 Additional Angled Parking Spaces



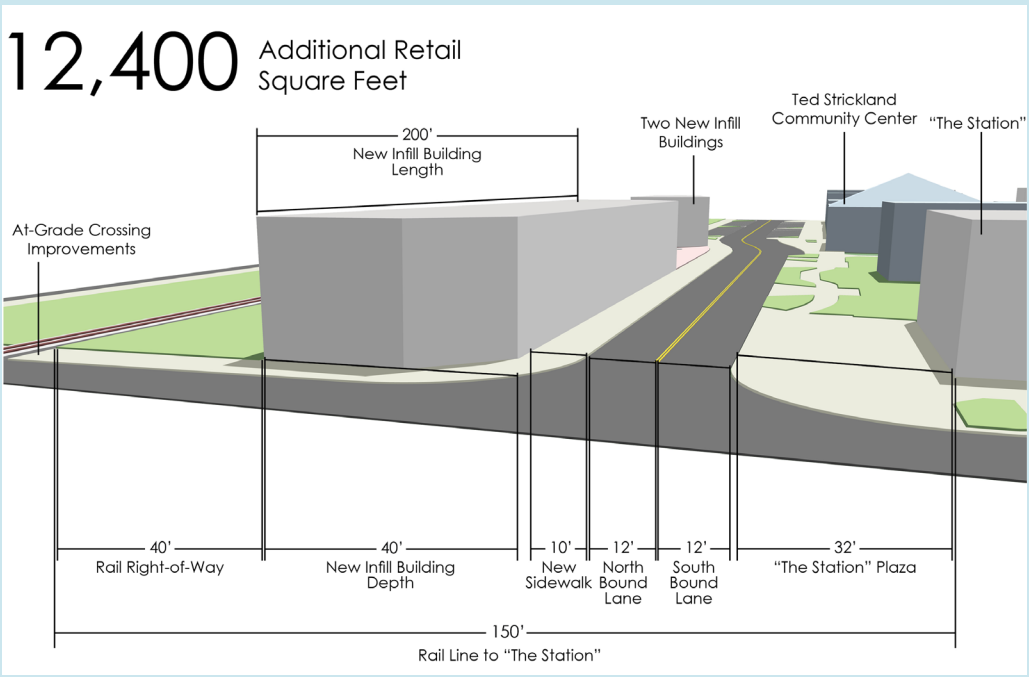
In this diagram, the Martin Luther King, Sr. Heritage Trail is realigned to accommodate new on-street parking spaces. This option provides 44 new parking spaces but does not further activate the street.



OPTION TWO

MARTIN LUTHER KING, SR. HERITAGE TRAIL + LOVE STREET

Historically inspired infill keeps with the character of Stockbridge's historic district while further activating this prominent corner. The Love Street Café plays off Love Street's name, building on Stockbridge's existing assets.



«This diagram shows the impact of attracting infill development to this prominent downtown corner. Providing 12,400 square feet of additional retail space, this new development creates a hub of activity at the trailhead of the Martin Luther King, Sr. Heritage Trail, extending the street life all the way down the block.

OPTION THREE

MARTIN LUTHER KING, SR. HERITAGE TRAIL + LOVE STREET



If infill development is not feasible at the site of the existing signal station, beautifying the structure could produce a major impact. Beautification can go beyond plantings. Displaying a historic steam engine train on site could screen the view of the signal station and honor the city's past while creating a memorable attraction for visitors.





MARTIN LUTHER KING, SR. HERITAGE TRAIL SCULPTURE WALK

A historic steam engine could serve as a backdrop for an Art Deco-style sculpture that brings the story of Martin Luther King, Sr. to life. As a 14-year-old, a young Daddy King ran away from home and took up employment with the Southern Railroad as a “fireman,” or “stoker.” This back-breaking work required him to chuck coal into the train’s engine to power the large locomotives of the day. Metaphorically, Daddy King stoked the flames of justice throughout his life, powering the quest for human dignity into what would become the Civil Rights Movement.

STORIED LANDSCAPES

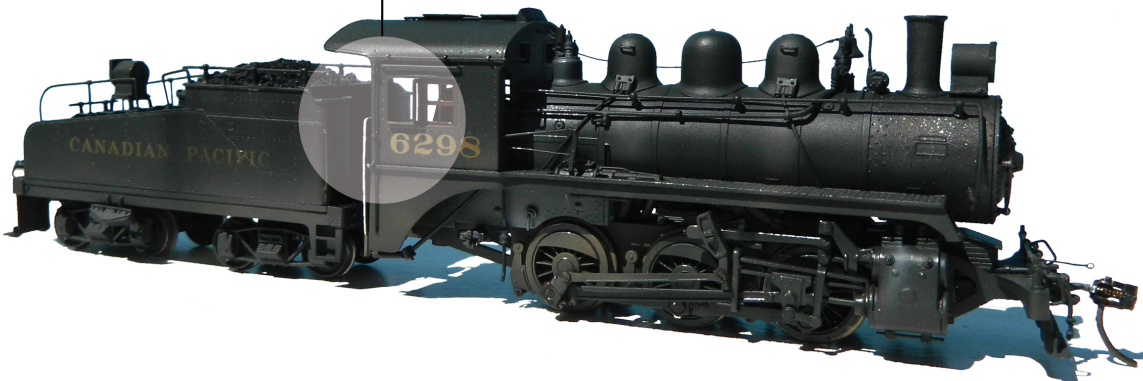
“FIREMAN” FOR ATLANTA RAILROAD



ART DECO STYLE BRONZE SCULPTURE



HONORING DADDY KING



“Taking the run down to Macon, the train would pass within a hundred yards or so of a hill crest where my brothers and I had played for years. Going through there, I stopped flinging my coal, and got the engineer to let me pull on the train whistle, and I’d give a little signal we all knew.

And sure enough, one evening, as the run was taking me back to Atlanta, I looked out near the hill crest, and James Jr. and Henry were running toward the tracks for all they were worth. And I started pulling on the whistle... They got close enough for me to see those big grins on their faces, and I just started to cry. The tears were in my eyes all the way back to the yards.”

From Daddy King: An Autobiography

This sculpture could be one in a series of works depicting other scenes from King Sr.’s life in Stockbridge. Whether depicting his first sermon at the Floyd Chapel Baptist Church, his travels around the state as a preacher, or another vignette from King’s life, there are many moments that could be further memorialized along the Martin Luther King, Sr. Heritage Trail. The Art Deco style referenced often celebrates ordinary people and laborers with monumental portrayals. This style emphasizes King Sr.’s humble beginnings and remarkable rise to a modern-day hero.

In whatever medium chosen to memorialize Daddy King, local officials should think deeply about the lasting form the artwork assumes. Taking into account King’s rural Stockbridge roots, in addition to celebrating King’s incredible life as a relentless fighter, tenacious student, transcendent preacher, and renowned figure of compassion, the artwork should tell a complete story of his triumph in the face of adversity.



Winding through the heart of downtown, the Martin Luther King, Sr. Heritage Trail contributes to local recreation options and creates a unique attraction honoring Stockbridge's rich history. Access to this important destination, and all of downtown, would be enhanced by connecting existing sidewalks across the Norfolk Southern railroad tracks.



With a handsome new stone marker, low-maintenance ornamental grasses like miscanthus and liriope, and Coretta Scott King roses, this attractive trailhead now welcomes visitors to explore the Martin Luther King, Sr. Heritage Trail and its environs. Connecting existing sidewalks across the railroad tracks provides a safe and welcoming pedestrian access point to the trail and all of downtown. The corner infill building located on the Norfolk Southern site pays homage to the city's historic railroad depot while bringing more commercial activity downtown.

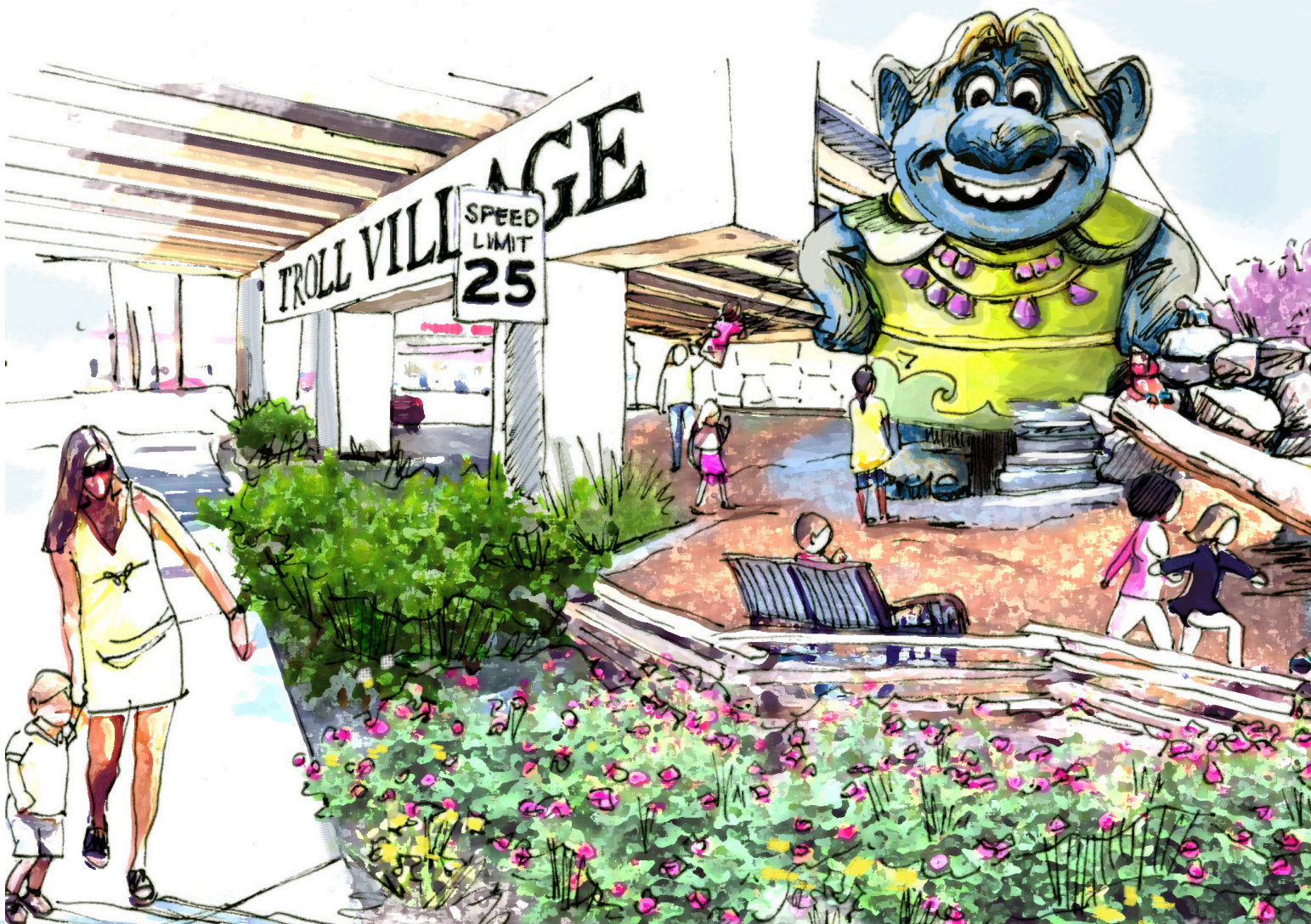


« This photo shows the area adjacent to the attractive Ted Strickland Community Center downtown.

Removing the vacant cinderblock building on Burke Street would create new opportunities for a rear parking and service area, in addition to future infill development. In this rendering, a nostalgic mural and movable sandwich board signage direct downtown visitors to available parking. Extending attractive landscaped sidewalks encourages pedestrian activity.

« In this rendering, the whimsical troll builds upon the proposed troll village playground. Placing these statues at sites around downtown would create a fun “treasure hunt” for visitors.

TROLL VILLAGE



The City of Stockbridge could take advantage of the unique opportunity to create a troll-themed playground located on the Martin Luther King, Sr. Heritage Trail under and around the North Henry Boulevard bridge, a major gateway to downtown. The rendering shows a natural playscape featuring a large troll that children

can climb on as well as run through the hidden tunnels around his feet. Swings hung from the bottom of the overpass offer a shady place to play. This theme is fun and engaging and could serve as an excellent way to market what Stockbridge has to offer. The Stockbridge Troll Bridge could become a local landmark.



DOWNTOWN MURALS

This rendering shows how a simple mural can celebrate and honor the impact Martin Luther King, Sr. had on the Stockbridge community. A native of Stockbridge, King was a Baptist pastor, missionary, and an early figure in the Civil Rights Movement as head of the NAACP chapter in Atlanta. He was the father of civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr.





Creative signage painted on buildings serves multiple purposes downtown. The examples shown beautify the downtown area, advertise public parking, and highlight Stockbridge's unique history in a way that amplifies community pride.



To create a vibrant downtown, attracting complementary infill development must be the long-term goal of local leaders. That said, new development can take many years to complete. In the meantime, this vacant city-owned lot could better serve downtown businesses.

« Striping parking lines and advertising this space as free downtown public parking would bring short-term activity to Burke Street. This action would also meet the need for overflow and event parking.



«Currently, the main gateway to downtown, this key area of Burke Street just off North Henry Boulevard, lacks character and life. With only the rear entrances of the historic buildings and vacant properties in view, this area of downtown brims with potential.



BURKE STREET & NORTH HENRY BOULEVARD

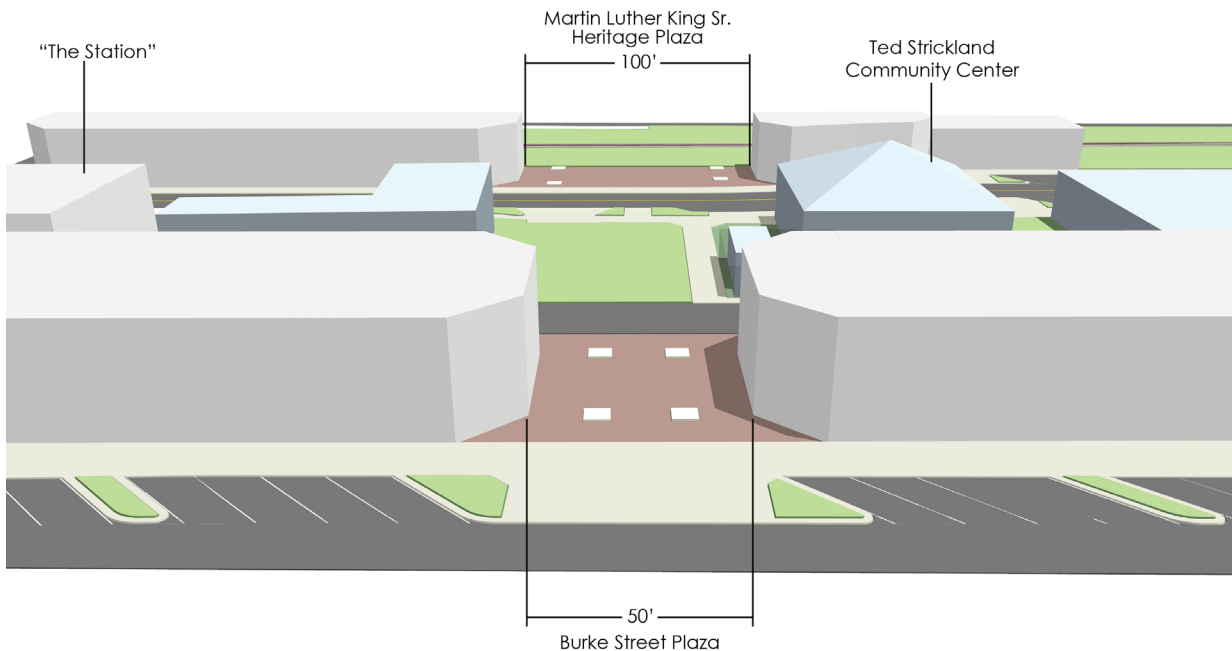
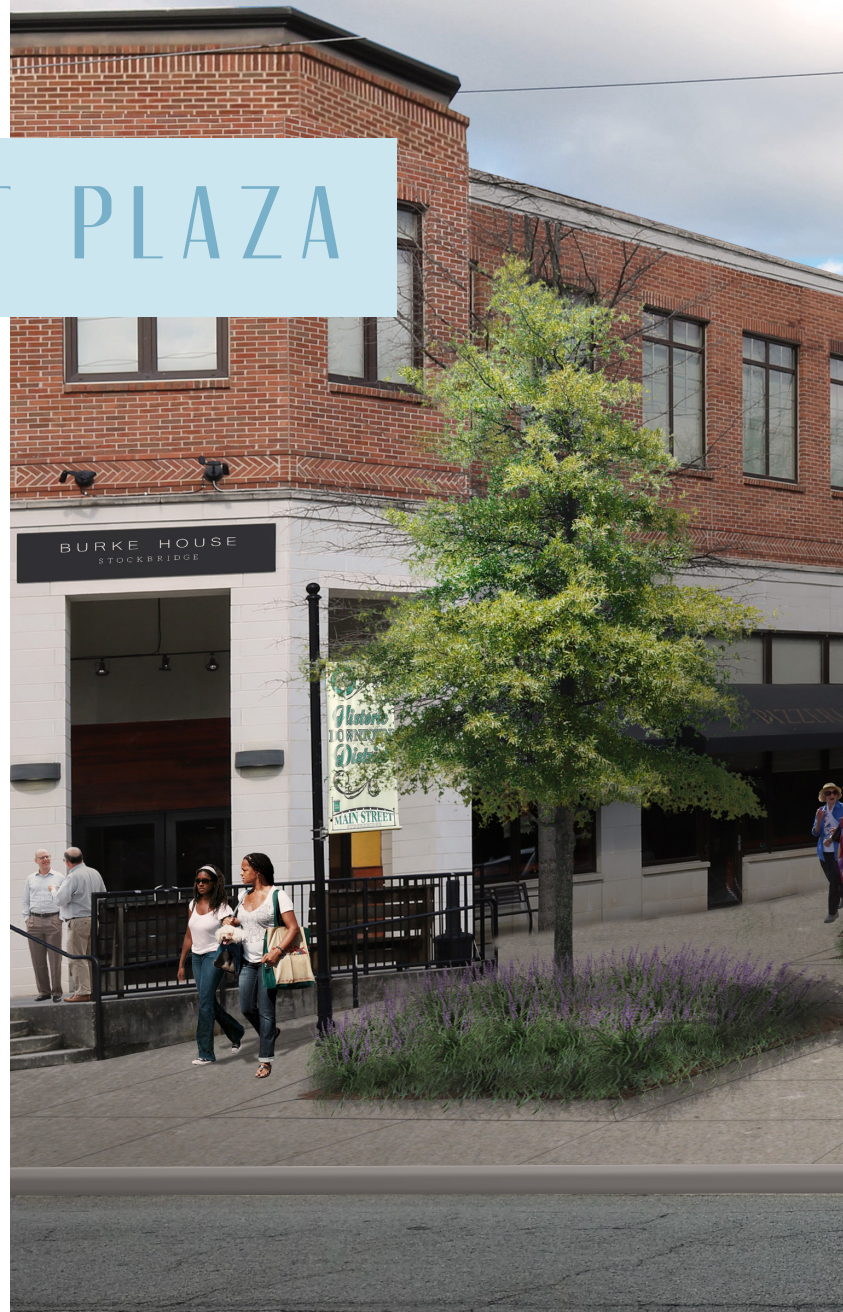


Infill development that pays homage to historic commercial architecture brings a sense of arrival and street life to this key downtown gateway. On-street parking, wide sidewalks, street trees, and first-floor commercial shops make for a pleasant pedestrian experience. Second-floor residences complete the downtown feel and bring 24-hour energy, vibrancy, and daily activity to the area.

BURKE STREET PLAZA



This largely vacant 1970s office building occupies a prominent location at the corner of Burke and Love streets downtown. The Ted Strickland Community Center, shown in the background, indicates this building's proximity to the heart of downtown Stockbridge.





Using this prime site for mixed-use infill transforms this neglected property into a vibrant extension of downtown. Designed as a greenspace adjacent to the Stockbridge Masonic Hall, this interior courtyard builds on the concepts shown in the Stockbridge Downtown Masterplan (See page 13). Attractive corner buildings shown here welcome visitors to shop, dine, and enjoy downtown. Using handsome materials and high-quality craftsmanship ensures that all new construction continues to enhance downtown.

30,760 ADDITIONAL UPPER STORY
RESIDENTIAL SQUARE FEET

7,755 PUBLIC PLAZA
SQUARE FOOTAGE

21,170 ADDITIONAL FIRST FLOOR
RETAIL SQUARE FEET

To incorporate the informal gathering and café spaces desired by the community, two-story mixed-use infill development along Burke Street could be designed around a central plaza space. These infill buildings provide residential space on the second story to help support first-floor businesses. The proposed Burke Street Plaza and Martin Luther King, Sr. Heritage Plaza illustrated here are visually connected by an allée of trees. Working with existing property owners and coordinating with the Masonic Temple to plant trees could help make this vision a reality.

BURKE STREET INFILL





BURKE STREET INFILL, BEFORE

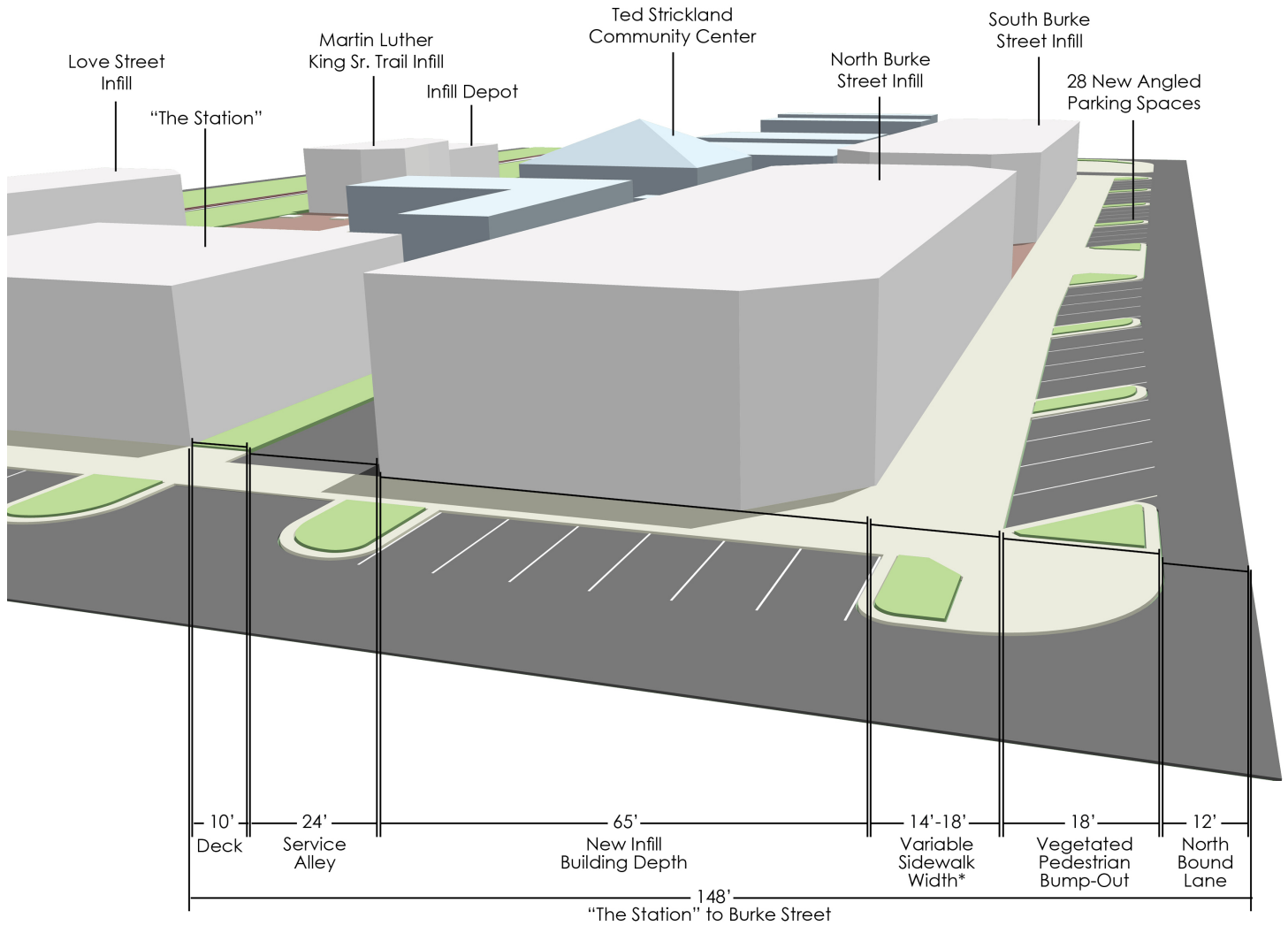
Located directly behind Stockbridge's downtown core, the office building at the corner of Love and Burke streets has seen better days. In the area shown, this important corridor and downtown gateway suffers from an absence of street trees and landscaping. Sidewalks here are piecemeal, and continuous curb cuts create an unappealing and unsafe environment for pedestrians.



BURKE STREET INFILL, AFTER

Encouraging attractive downtown infill development that meets the sophisticated tastes and demands of local citizens would revitalize downtown as a vibrant local destination. By matching the scale of existing downtown buildings, using timeless materials like brick, and repeating Stockbridge's existing planting palette, the two-story infill development is cohesive while elevating downtown's existing feel. Providing on-street parking, wide sidewalks, and integrated landscaping extends a downtown ambiance to this section of Burke Street.

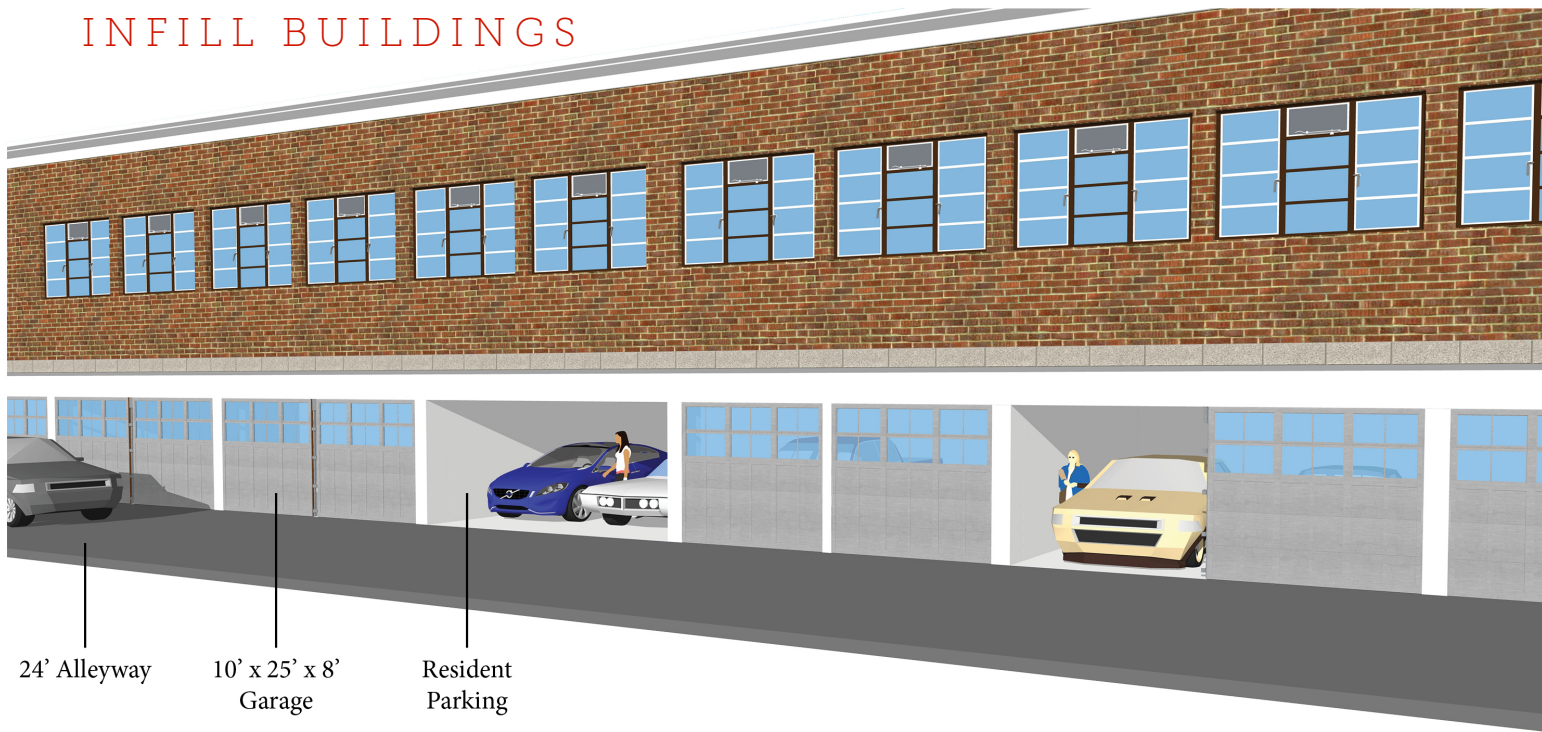
BURKE STREET INFILL



*Varies based on road centerline

Building footprints with zero lot lines, wide sidewalks, street trees, and on-street parking creates the urban form that makes cities active and exciting places. The diagram of a potential infill building on Burke Street illustrates these qualities. This design also incorporates an expanded service alley to provide for residential parking access, deliveries, and waste removal. It is imperative that qualities listed above be adhered to in order to expand and improve upon the downtown feel of the historic district and fit the needs of a quickly growing community.

REAR OF BURKE STREET INFILL BUILDINGS



Local officials must think critically about incorporating sufficient parking into new infill design. Prioritizing surface parking lots over good infill design sacrifices the quality of new development and undermines the vibrant downtown feel desired by locals. Incorporating parking while expanding downtown takes skill and planning. The parking diagram shown

above illustrates infill development along Burke Street equipped with rear parking garages and an extended service alley that runs between Burke Street and the Martin Luther King, Sr. Heritage Trail. This arrangement preserves dense, pedestrian-friendly development along Burke Street while relegating parking and service alleys to the back of new buildings.

INFILL SQUARE FOOTAGE

BURKE STREET INFILL BUILDING

>North Burke Infill

Commercial: 9,254 sq. ft.
Residential: 13,195 sq. ft.
(14 private parking spaces)

>South Burke Infill

Commercial: 11,913 sq. ft.
Residential: 17,564 sq. ft.
(21 private parking spaces)

MARTIN LUTHER KING, SR. HERITAGE TRAIL

>North Plaza/Corner Building

Commercial: 7,841 sq. ft.

SOUTH PLAZA BUILDING

Commercial: 2,110 sq. ft.

RECONSTRUCTED DEPOT

Commercial: 2,285 sq. ft.

DOWNTOWN FLYTHROUGH

3-D MODEL VIEW OF DOWNTOWN



1. PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

2. BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF BRIDGE AND HISTORIC DOWNTOWN

3. BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, SR. HERITAGE TRAIL WITH NEW INFILL BUILDINGS

DOWNTOWN FLYTHROUGH

Presented below are images from a three-dimensional model generated as part of the visualization process. These images illustrate the effects of a pedestrian bridge and the scale of change to downtown's footprint that the addition of several infill buildings would bring.



- 4. BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF BURKE STREET INFILL BUILDINGS WITH ROOFTOP GARDENS
- 5. BURKE STREET PLAZA LOOKING THROUGH TO MARTIN LUTHER KING, SR. HERITAGE PLAZA
- 6. BURKE STREET INFILL BUILDINGS

STONE COTTAGE



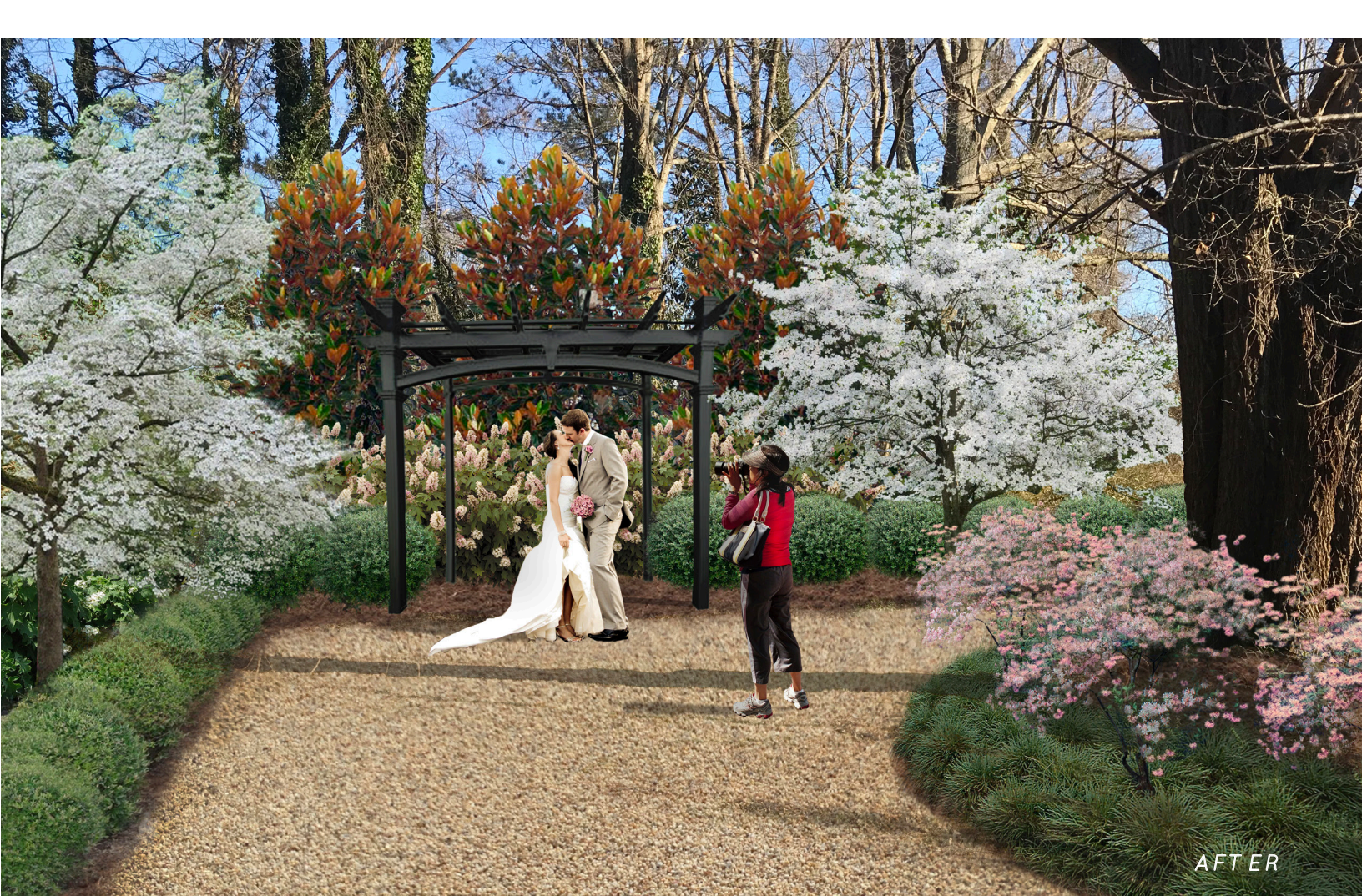
If properly renovated, the historic stone and brick residence adjacent to the Merle Manders Conference Center would supplement existing programming at this facility and create a more intimate venue for smaller gatherings.



Installing sidewalks, trees, and handsome landscaping would create a sense of investment and an extension of the downtown feel to this area. Adding a semicircular drive, simple pea gravel parking, and façade improvements including fresh paint, window treatments, and sophisticated signage lends curb appeal and creates a better ambiance for intimate gatherings like bridal showers, bachelor parties, and retirement celebrations.



Beneath a canopy of handsome old oak trees and adjacent to the administration building for the Merle Manders Conference Center, the backyard of this former residence could serve as an attractive location for outdoor events, parties, and wedding photos.



Defined by simple pea gravel paving and a planting palette of inexpensive, low-maintenance liriop ground cover, yaupon holly hedges, and oakleaf hydrangea, this backyard could be transformed into a simple, elegant venue for outdoor receptions, wedding photos, and small

events. Framed by an allée of native dogwood trees and shaded by handsome old oaks, this courtyard elevates the offerings of Stockbridge's public venues and expands the appeal of the Merle Manders Conference Center.



MERLE MANDERS
CONFERENCE CENTER
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

TURF

NEW SIDEWALK

PARKING/SERVICE

TURF

DRIVEWAY

STONE COTTAGE
EVENT VENUE

DECK

TURF

ENTRY

PEA GRAVEL PATHWAY

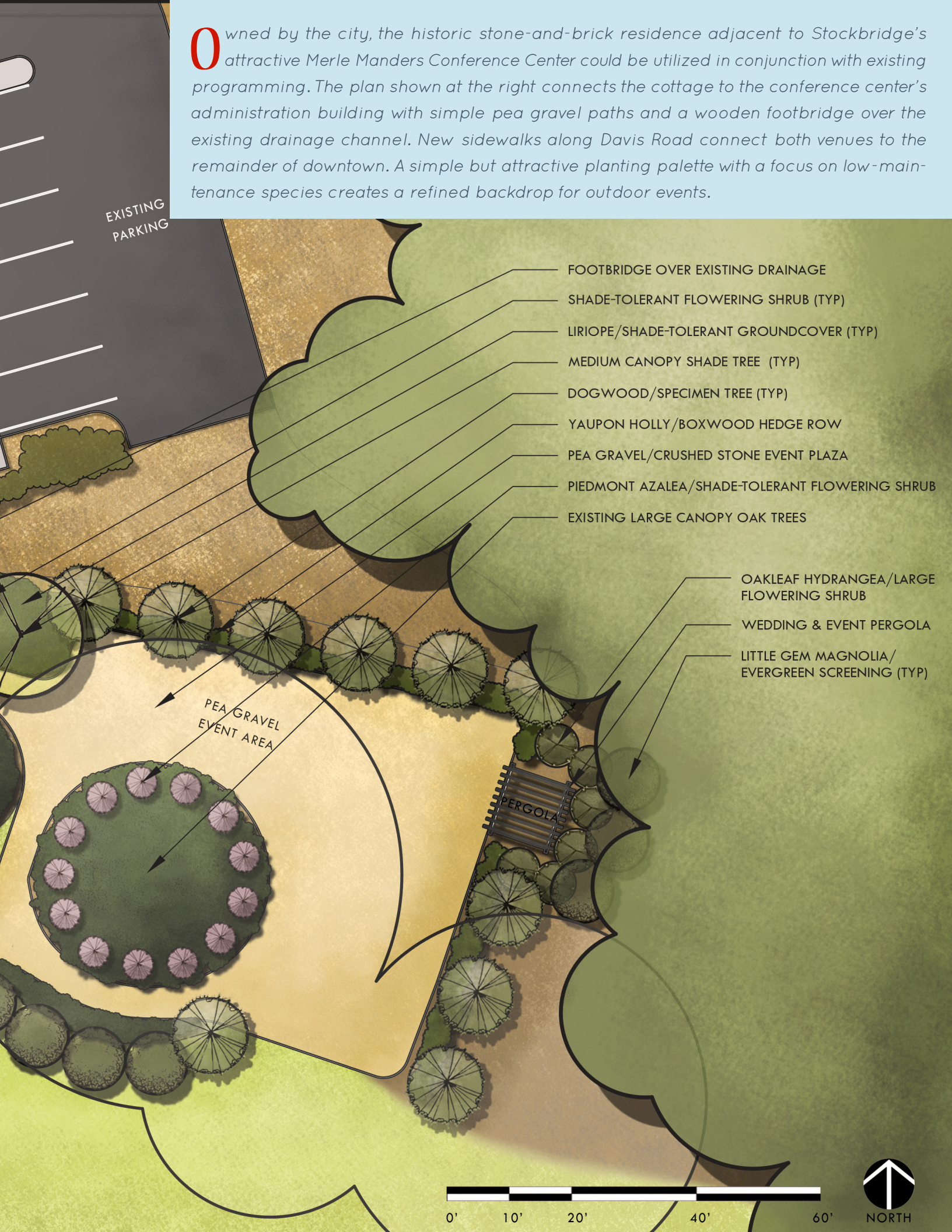
DAVIS ROAD

NEW SIDEWALK

NEW SIDEWALK

NEW SIDEWALK

Owned by the city, the historic stone-and-brick residence adjacent to Stockbridge's attractive Merle Manders Conference Center could be utilized in conjunction with existing programming. The plan shown at the right connects the cottage to the conference center's administration building with simple pea gravel paths and a wooden footbridge over the existing drainage channel. New sidewalks along Davis Road connect both venues to the remainder of downtown. A simple but attractive planting palette with a focus on low-maintenance species creates a refined backdrop for outdoor events.



- FOOTBRIDGE OVER EXISTING DRAINAGE
- SHADE-TOLERANT FLOWERING SHRUB (TYP)
- LIRIOPE/SHADE-TOLERANT GROUNDCOVER (TYP)
- MEDIUM CANOPY SHADE TREE (TYP)
- DOGWOOD/SPECIMEN TREE (TYP)
- YAUPON HOLLY/BOXWOOD HEDGE ROW
- PEA GRAVEL/CRUSHED STONE EVENT PLAZA
- PIEDMONT AZALEA/SHADE-TOLERANT FLOWERING SHRUB
- EXISTING LARGE CANOPY OAK TREES

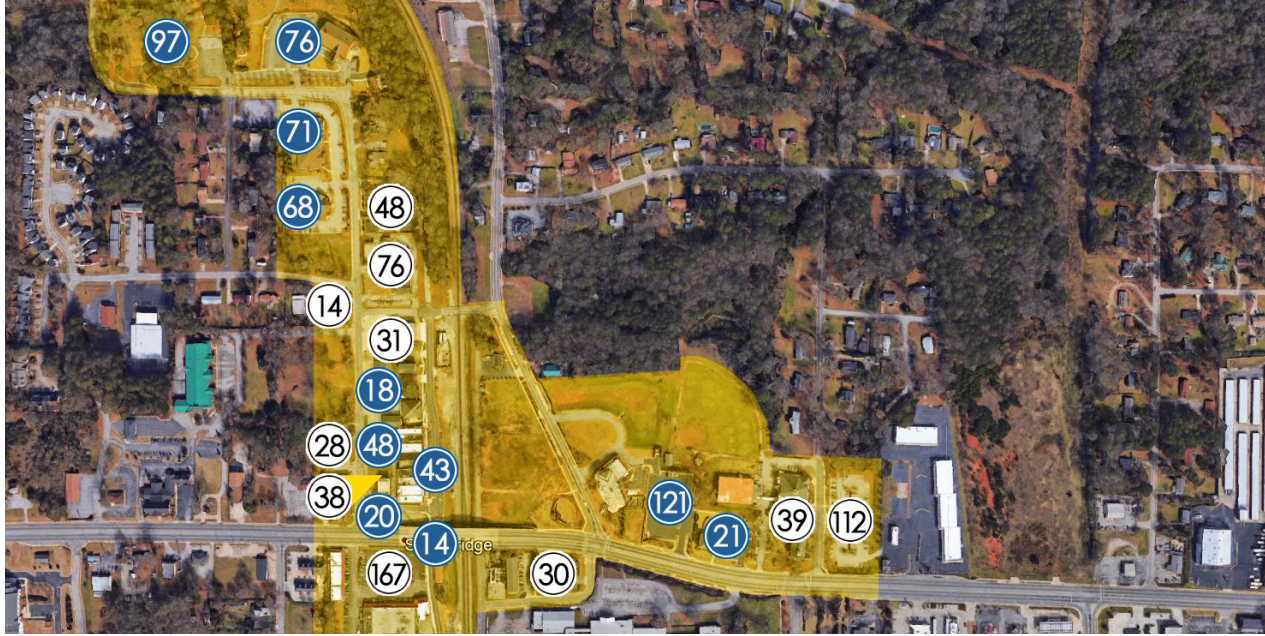
- OAKLEAF HYDRANGEA/LARGE FLOWERING SHRUB
- WEDDING & EVENT PERGOLA
- LITTLE GEM MAGNOLIA/EVERGREEN SCREENING (TYP)

PEA GRAVEL
EVENT AREA

PERGOLA



PARKING INVENTORY



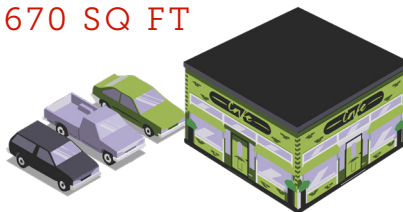
During the public input process, some residents noted that parking opportunities downtown can be limited during key events and programs. The parking inventory shown below illustrates existing public and private parking spots in Stockbridge’s downtown core. Currently, downtown offers approximately 597 public parking spots and 583 spots on private lots. Increasing the visibility of these spots to visitors, connecting existing parking via sidewalks, and coordinating with local business owners for overflow parking during off-hours would help better meet existing and potential parking demand. The parking area at the former Carrie Mae Hambrick Center should be considered for overflow parking during events as well.

COMPARING PARKING MODELS ATL - STOCKBRIDGE

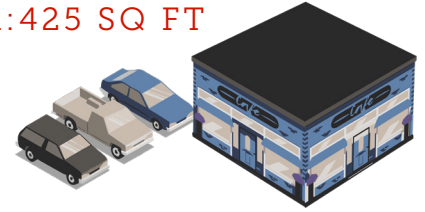
BROOKHAVEN VILLAGE
1:520 SQ FT



ROSEWOOD
1:670 SQ FT



@ 1377 APARTMENTS
1:425 SQ FT



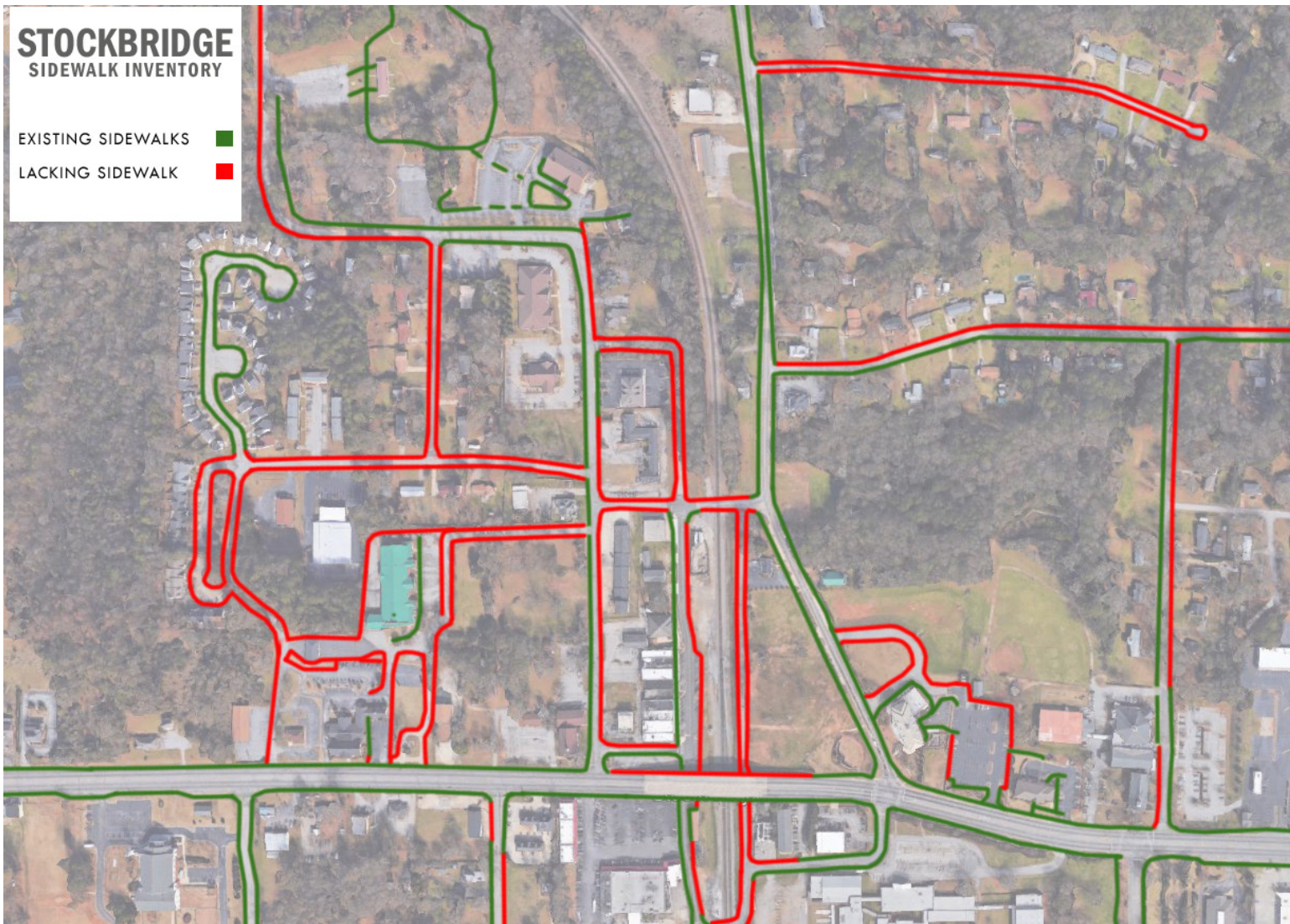
PROPOSED DOWNTOWN
DEVELOPMENT
1:600 SQ FT



<<To determine a suitable amount of new parking for proposed downtown infill, Institute of Government researchers studied three successful suburban Atlanta infill developments. A key aspect in this study was an inventory of parking for each site. These three models required one parking space for every 425-670 square feet of development. The new downtown infill development proposed in the Stockbridge Downtown Masterplan incorporates one parking space for every 600 square feet of development.

SIDEWALK INVENTORY

Stockbridge suffers from a lack of continuous sidewalks due, in part, to the railroad bisecting downtown. All too often, sidewalks in the downtown core offer only piecemeal connections to key destinations. Connecting existing sidewalks would better accommodate pedestrian traffic in the area.



STEP THREE

Conclusion & Action Items



When working to improve downtown, those involved should think through each step of actualizing their goals and determine who is responsible, what will be achieved, and when improvements will take place. Each of these questions is critical to community implementation. Any strategy included in the Stockbridge RSVP has the potential to serve as a future action item. For any strategy included, a designated lead should be assigned to oversee implementation efforts and develop concrete steps for project completion.

Action items should meet the criteria for **SMART** (*specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely*) goals. By adhering to the SMART process, Stockbridge's future vision will become a reality through practical and achievable steps. Once the long-term vision of the Stockbridge Downtown Masterplan is broken down into achievable short-term action items, the community can successfully realize the development potential of downtown.



SHORT-TERM PRIORITIES

- ✓ THE STATION
- ✓ EAST ATLANTA ROAD TURN LANE
- ✓ PARKING
 - REAR PARKING CONNECTION
 - REAR PARKING STRIPING
 - REAR PARKING SIGNAGE
- ✓ STONE COTTAGE EVENT VENUE
- ✓ MARTIN LUTHER KING, SR. HERITAGE TRAILHEAD
- ✓ WEEKLY LUNCH FOOD TRUCKS
- ✓ FILM INDUSTRY PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS
- ✓ DOWNTOWN MURALS

In Step I of the Stockbridge RSVP process, local citizens overwhelmingly indicated that they want downtown to feel like a downtown. Stockbridge citizens want an active, vibrant local destination that offers plenty of retail, dining, and entertainment options. The community also prioritizes downtown access, with most citizens wanting to improve the experience of visiting downtown by car, by bike, and on foot. To realize this long-term vision, local leaders, city staff, and community members

must work now to prioritize short-term projects. Accomplishing a few simple short-term projects over the next one to two years will go a long way toward creating a thriving downtown. Beginning with properties that the local government already controls, leadership can easily complete short-term priorities that, in turn, will build the momentum necessary to tackle larger improvements and generate wider investment from the private sector.

THE STATION



During the community-wide meeting, via interviews, in focus groups, and throughout the Stockbridge RSVP planning process, local citizens communicated that downtown needs a place that can consistently draw activity and community life to the area without scheduled programming. Whether it centers on businesses, parks, or community buildings, many see the need for a unique central hub that speaks to local character and provides a permanent place

to socialize with neighbors and friends. Due to the general absence of restaurants and cafés in the downtown core, the community overwhelmingly favors attractions where one can grab a cup of coffee or take the family out for a quick ice cream.

The former fire station located at the corner of Love Street and Martin Luther King, Sr. Heritage Trail presents an unequalled opportunity to create the type of unique community activities that are desired by Stockbridge citizens. Already owned by the City of Stockbridge, the open interior of this building would serve this purpose. In addition to creating a downtown welcome center with public restroom facilities, The Station would also house the city's Main Street and DDA offices, along with a multipurpose room that could serve as a gallery, local museum, or small event space. Partnering with a local business could attract a concession stand-type vendor offering barista-prepared beverages, snack items, and pre-packaged ice cream bars like King of Pops™ to this prominent downtown corner. Together, these elements could consistently draw tourists and locals downtown.



The Station would feature a sophisticated design that celebrates local history, complete with sliding glass garage doors that create an

open indoor-outdoor experience. To finish the look and vibe, a welcoming outdoor patio visible from busy Love Street would make The Station a magnet for activity and galvanize further investment in downtown. With a minimal outlay, Stockbridge could instantly claim a venue offering fresh coffee and other simple, grab-and-go refreshments at a unique space in the center of town. By bringing government employees, visitors, and the community downtown daily, The Station could be the tipping point to creating the downtown vibrancy demanded by the community.

EAST ATLANTA ROAD *TURN LANE*

From the railroad tracks to the North Henry Boulevard overpass and elsewhere, significant barriers to pedestrian and vehicular activity exist throughout Stockbridge's downtown area. With two travel lanes and no turning lanes, the busy intersection at East Atlanta Road and North Henry Boulevard becomes a major traffic bottleneck during peak travel times. City leadership should consider developing a turn lane at this busy location to ease the experience of visiting and traveling through downtown.



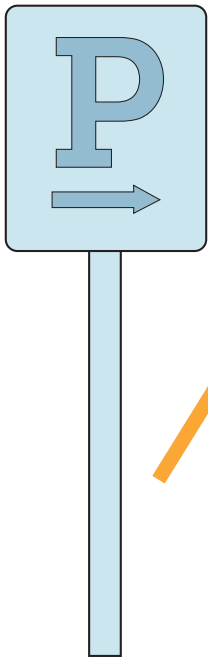
PARKING



Apart from a select number of community events, downtown does not have a parking problem. Currently, the immediate downtown area features 597 public and 583 private parking spots within approximately a quarter-mile of the downtown core. While finding parking does not generally pose a problem for downtown visitors, attracting activity and investment to the downtown will also increase demand for existing parking spaces.

Prior to attracting the vibrant new development desired by the community, Stockbridge officials and the DDA should consider a variety of short-term options to keep downtown parking available and accessible for visitors. The attractive, landscaped on-street parking spaces along Martin Luther King, Sr. Heritage Trail are the most convenient and in-demand parking options. As is the case in most dense downtown areas, the number of these spaces is limited. Encouraging more shop owners and visitors to park behind downtown businesses using a variety of short-term actions would significantly increase the amount of day-to-day parking.

Immediately behind the downtown core, the City of Stockbridge owns an approximately 6,700 sq. ft. unlined parking lot on Burke Street, adjacent



> Encourage visitors to park behind downtown businesses

> Stripe existing lot on Burke Street

> Use downtown properties for event parking

SHORT-TERM PARKING SOLUTIONS



to the rear parking lot of the Ted Strickland Community Center. Simply striping this existing lot could send the signal to visitors and local residents that this parking is safe and available to use.

In addition, the Stockbridge DDA should consider developing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with downtown property owners, including Stockbridge Presbyterian Church and others, to make their parking lots available for

major events and programs. When additional parking capacity is needed, liability would shift to the local government. By directing overflow parking to the former Carrie Mae Hambrick Center's lot, the shortage of special event parking could be addressed.

Together, these short-term actions would vastly expand the number of available parking options and accommodate the growth of downtown businesses for many years to come. Directing visitors to existing rear parking using creative signage options like murals and sandwich boards and improving pedestrian connections to rear parking could all encourage the more efficient use of downtown parking opportunities and present downtown as a fun, convenient, and easy-to-navigate destination.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, SR. *HERITAGE TRAILHEAD*



As the birthplace of Rev. Martin Luther King, Sr., Stockbridge can proudly claim its place in the fight for Civil Rights and the global movement for racial justice. Currently, Stockbridge celebrates this heritage with colorful banners, prominent landmarks like the Martin Luther King, Sr. Memorial Bridge, a handsome marker at Floyd Chapel Baptist Church—the site of King’s first sermon—and the Martin Luther King, Sr. Heritage Trail, which meanders through the downtown area.

While Stockbridge citizens already take pride in the community’s Civil Rights legacy, more can be done in the short-term to promote Stockbridge as a go-to destination for heritage

tourists. Along the Martin Luther King, Sr. Heritage Trail and at prominent downtown locations, murals and signage by local artists could showcase Stockbridge’s role in the founding of the Civil Rights Movement. Prominent quotes by Martin Luther King, Sr. could be featured in these works or even incorporated into paving along the trail. In addition, the city could further research the King legacy in Stockbridge and work to create materials, like a brochure and map, to guide visitors to key sites. Implementation of this action item would be crucial to attracting heritage tourists that are already visiting the Atlanta-metro area in search of King, Jr. and Civil Rights history.

Rev. Martin Luther “Daddy” King, Sr. grew up in rural Stockbridge during the early 1900s. King frequently encountered brutality and racism in

his youth. At the age of six, King was beaten by a powerful local saw mill owner. King’s mother, Delia Linsey King, confronted the man responsible. This incident forced his father to leave town for several months. Delia King and her children found refuge from the daily toil of hard labor and trials of racism in the sanctuary of local African American churches. In the loving embrace of his community and faith, Daddy King grew up inspired to preach the gospel and reach for a higher purpose in life. Beginning at age 15 with his first sermon at Stockbridge’s Floyd Chapel Baptist Church, Daddy King preached love in response to hatred and injustice. After living through the assassination of his son and namesake, the drowning of his son A.D., and the murder of his beloved wife, Alberta, Martin Luther King, Sr. still expressed love at the end of his life.



Reflecting his everyday language, the simple and powerful inscription on Daddy King’s tombstone reads, “I Love Everyone.” His son, Martin Luther King, Jr., credited his father’s example for his own life of service in the ministry, noting,

“He set forth a noble example that I didn’t mind following.”



From Daddy King: An Autobiography

DOWNTOWN MURALS



"MURALS BUILD A SENSE OF COMMUNITY,"

stated renowned muralist Grace McCammond when asked about how this form of public art impacts downtown areas. "They make [an area] welcoming and walkable and they make you want to go there." This is the sentiment that Stockbridge can evoke by adding murals and other forms of public art to the fabric of

downtown. Wherever blank walls exist downtown, local leaders should consider working with downtown property owners and local artists to bring unique murals and artwork downtown. Vibrancy and energy are two very positive byproducts generated when murals are introduced into any area.

WEEKLY LUNCH FOOD TRUCKS

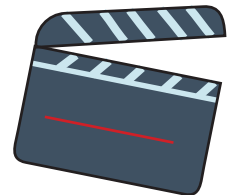
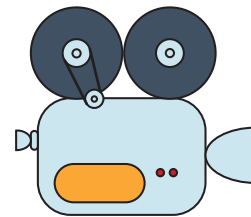
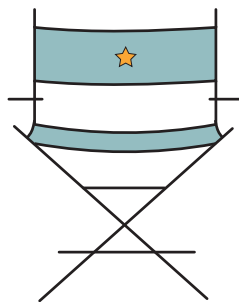
Building on Stockbridge's popular Tasty Tuesday food truck event at Clark Park, the city should consider working with food truck operators to bring a food truck downtown during lunch hours weekly. Reserving a spot in front of the Ted Strickland Community Center on a set day during the workweek would ensure a highly visible downtown attraction that brings new flavors and dining options into the Main Street district. Making sure patrons have attractive places to sit and eat would encourage more visitors to explore downtown businesses on their lunch hour.



FILM INDUSTRY PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

From the groundbreaking blockbuster film *Black Panther* and critically acclaimed television program *Atlanta*, to the wildly popular Netflix favorite *Stranger Things*, Stockbridge has served as the background for a growing and diverse set of high-profile

films and television shows. With limited time and investment, the local government or DDA could promote Stockbridge's film repertoire to interested tourists and visitors. With simple and creative outreach like themed Snapchat filters, the city could promote Stockbridge to the young crowds drawn to these and other works. Increasing social media outreach, developing materials for self-guided tours, and reaching out to Atlanta-based tour companies would all promote Stockbridge as a motion picture hub. The city should also consider developing a promotional packet for film producers with information and coupons for local businesses.





STOCKBRIDGE DDA ACTION ITEMS

- ✓ PRIVATE PROPERTY OPTIONS
- ✓ BUSINESS INCENTIVES
Sign Grants, Beautification Grants, Fee Incentives, and More
- ✓ PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP FOR REDEVELOPMENT

PLANNING DEPARTMENT ACTIONS

- ✓ MIXED-USE ORDINANCE
- ✓ RAILROAD QUIET ZONE
- ✓ RAILROAD SIDEWALK
- ✓ EAST ATLANTA ROAD TURN LANE
- ✓ TAX ALLOCATION DISTRICT
- ✓ EXPLORE ADDITIONAL FUNDING SOURCES
 - SPLOST, TSPLOST, CDBG, Tourism Development Grants, and Public/Private Partnerships

While the previous short-term action items should be noted as essential to creating the vibrant, community-focused downtown, several additional actions should be taken over the next one to two years to increase foot traffic in the area. Taken together, these actions will help build the habit of coming downtown. Although outside the scope of Stockbridge's Main Street Program, the actions described in detail below help to address the three key priorities of the

community: building downtown as a destination, creating a downtown feel, and addressing downtown connectivity. Whether initiated by the local government, civic groups, local volunteers, the DDA, or other key stakeholders, the following short-term action items offer Stockbridge the opportunity to build downtown as a destination and create the active environment envisioned by the community.

PRIVATE PROPERTY OPTIONS

Prior to pursuing long-term redevelopment options and attracting infill development downtown, the Stockbridge DDA should work now to contact private property owners and get options on parcels slated for redevelopment. Waiting any length of time could dramatically escalate costs, extend development timetables, and imperil the long-term redevelopment potential for properties throughout the downtown area. Investing time and money now could pay dividends for the Stockbridge community long into the future.

BUSINESS INCENTIVES

To create the desired downtown experience, Stockbridge should look to the example of peer cities and replicate the types of incentives that have fostered downtown growth elsewhere. In response to community demand for expanded dining options, Stockbridge could look to emulate successful incentives that have worked to lure dining options to cities like Powder Springs. That city's Restaurant Grant Incentive provides up to 50% matching funds, not to exceed \$10,000, for interior improvements and exterior façade work for new restaurants. Employing other incentives, including waiving alcohol license fees, waiving water and sewer tap fees, and offering special grants for wiring, sprinklers, signage, and beautification could all attract new restaurants and businesses downtown.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP FOR REDEVELOPMENT

With limited powers and funds for redevelopment, Stockbridge must harness the power of the private sector to create the desired downtown experience. The Stockbridge DDA should examine successful downtown redevelopment efforts in cities like Sugar Hill or Duluth and replicate proven models of public-private partnerships to redevelop downtown.

MIXED USE ORDINANCE

To create the envisioned walkable and “bikeable” downtown, Stockbridge officials must ensure that current ordinances allow for downtown development to occur. Working with the Stockbridge Planning and Zoning Department to establish appropriate zoning that encourages walkable development with a dense mix of uses is essential to creating a traditional downtown

character. Such standards could include reducing setbacks, allowing zero-lot-line development, requiring on-street parking, reducing parking requirements, and allowing for a mix of uses throughout the district. Stockbridge should look to areas where vibrant downtown development has occurred and emulate the ordinances that have proven successful in other communities.



RAILROAD QUIET ZONE

While the railroad once provided the commercial lifeblood for the community, today the trains traveling through the center of Stockbridge produce many unwanted challenges for downtown business and property owners. In addition to creating traffic bottlenecks and obstructing both pedestrian and vehicular connectivity, locomotive

horns and related noise frequently interrupt downtown programs and aggravate business owners. To help ease the burden of heavy train traffic, Stockbridge should work with Norfolk Southern to establish a downtown “Quiet Zone.”

RAILROAD SIDEWALK

Despite investing in pedestrian amenities like the Martin Luther King, Sr. Heritage Trail, Stockbridge has no sidewalks in the center of town that connect across the railroad tracks. While successful installation could take a number of years, Stockbridge must begin working with Norfolk Southern immediately to create safe pedestrian crossings. These safety measures are essential to developing a walkable downtown.

TAX ALLOCATION DISTRICT

While ambitious plans exist for a more vibrant downtown Stockbridge, funding must be raised to realize the community's vision. Stockbridge leaders could consider creating a tax allocation district (TAD) in the downtown area to help fund improvements like sidewalks, new infrastructure, infill development, a rebuilt cultural arts center, and more. Local leaders and planners should carefully consider whether developing a TAD to finance downtown revitalization could be beneficial for the community.

EXPLORE ADDITIONAL FUNDING SOURCES

Funding is the major roadblock to any large-scale infrastructure improvements. With decreasing federal funding and grants for projects available, many cities around the state have successfully used SPLOST or TSPLOST initiatives to fund specific improvements. Stockbridge's mayor and council could consider researching these and other funding mechanisms and communities where they have been implemented to determine if they could be a good fit for the community.



MEDIUM TERM 3-7 YEARS

- ✓ TROLL VILLAGE PLAYGROUND
- ✓ DOWNTOWN SIDEWALKS
- ✓ RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY IMPROVEMENTS
- ✓ FOOD DEPOT LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS
- ✓ CARRIE MAE HAMBRICK CULTURAL ARTS
AND ENRICHMENT CENTER

TROLL VILLAGE PLAYGROUND

Carrying the busy traffic of North Henry Boulevard above the center of town, the Martin Luther King, Sr. Memorial Bridge dominates many views in downtown Stockbridge. The paved area underneath the bridge is largely neglected, with limited natural or artificial light and no trees or vegetation to soften the stark landscape. This area is utilized sparingly, mainly for a limited number of overflow downtown parking spots. Creating a vibrant and unique attraction could transform the gloomy area beneath the bridge. With some very simple modifications, this location could become a local landmark and signature attraction.

During Step I of the Stockbridge RSVP process, public input participants noted repeatedly that local children need fun, safe places to go and that the city could benefit from adding family-friendly attractions. With some creativity and investment, the currently dark and uninviting area beneath the bridge could be transformed

into a friendly troll-themed playground for children and families. Stockbridge should use examples from the successful rejuvenation of downtown areas like Greenville, South Carolina, to create a downtown that attracts locals and visitors alike. Among many other city-led efforts to build downtown Greenville as a destination, the community placed unique bronze sculptures of mice throughout the downtown area. Searching for the “Mice on Main” is now a fun activity for visitors that helps to draw foot traffic to downtown Greenville. In Stockbridge, reiterating the troll theme of the playground with whimsical troll statues in discrete locations around downtown could create a fun scavenger hunt for local children and visitors. Like in Greenville, this could encourage foot traffic, engage businesses, and bring a relatively simple element that would further the goal of building downtown Stockbridge into a destination.

EXAMPLES FROM SEATTLE & GREENWICH



DOWNTOWN SIDEWALKS



While major corridors like North Henry Boulevard and East Atlanta Road feature continuous sidewalks, only a piecemeal sidewalk network exists in the center of downtown. To become the walkable, mixed-use community that residents desire, the area must be made easy and safe to navigate on foot. Stockbridge must make a commitment to connect existing sidewalks and extend safe pedestrian paths throughout downtown. Regularly budgeting for sidewalk development and including these measures in special funding requests could finance these improvements over the next three to seven years.

RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY IMPROVEMENTS

Like pedestrian crossings, a downtown “quiet zone,” and other recommendations, many proposed improvements depend on Stockbridge’s relationship with Norfolk Southern. City leaders should see the railroad as a critical downtown stakeholder and work to build a mutually beneficial relationship with this entity. At the intersection of Love Street and the Martin Luther King, Sr. Heritage Trail in the heart of downtown,

much of the railroad’s right-of-way is dedicated to a storage lot and a signaling station. Working with the railroad, the city could possibly extend parking and streetscaping along this key segment of right-of-way. At a minimum, the railroad could consider sowing wildflowers in the vacant portions of the right-of-way and beautifying the corridor with additional landscaping.

FOOD DEPOT LANDSCAPING



Located just off North Henry Boulevard, Food Depot benefits the community by offering a convenient grocery option for downtown residents. Given Food Depot's recently renovated exterior, the city could consider reaching out to the owners of the building to extend renovations to the parking lot. Adding trees and landscaping here could contribute to the look and feel of downtown and welcome more visitors to the area.

CARRIE MAE HAMBRICK CULTURAL ARTS & ENRICHMENT CENTER

Since the demolition of the building that housed the Carrie Mae Hambrick Cultural Arts and Enrichment Center last year, local officials have collaborated with architects and engineers to develop a new arts and community center downtown. This project is currently still in the planning stage. During the public input sessions, stakeholders repeatedly cited the need for a community space and arts venue in

downtown. Additionally, many noted that the site should serve local seniors, provide an opportunity for unique businesses, and create a safe environment for local youth activities. This new development would create a magnet for community life downtown. Stockbridge should continue working on developing a complex that matches the needs of local citizens, attracts evening activity, and contributes to the vibrancy of downtown.



LONG TERM | 7-15 YEARS

- ✓ BRIDGE RECONFIGURATION
- ✓ DOWNTOWN INFILL

NORTH HENRY BOULEVARD/MARTIN LUTHER KING, SR. BRIDGE RECONFIGURATION



Carrying five lanes of traffic over the downtown district, the Martin Luther King, Sr. Memorial Bridge serves as a Stockbridge landmark and major thoroughfare. With heavy, rapid vehicular traffic, limited safe crossings, and only a narrow sidewalk to accommodate pedestrians, the bridge creates a major barrier that severely restricts downtown connectivity. Working in collaboration with the Georgia Department of Transportation, and with the long-term investment of time and resources, several remedies can be achieved. Installing a pedestrian bridge with attractive lighting, enhancing sidewalks, and constructing low-maintenance medians would improve pedestrian connectivity and transform this span into a welcoming landmark for the community.

DOWNTOWN INFILL

On Burke Street and elsewhere in the downtown district, large vacant lots and forlorn properties could be developed to create the vibrant city center desired by the community. Through efforts like implementing a downtown overlay district and forming a public-private partnership, Stockbridge could incentivize infill development and revitalize downtown. By matching the scale

of existing buildings, using timeless materials like brick, and repeating Stockbridge's existing planting palette, the city could ensure cohesive infill development, while also enhancing the character and appearance of downtown. On-street parking, wide sidewalks, and integrated landscaping would further extend a traditional downtown ambiance to new development.

