Today we are celebrating more than the construction of a $180 million complex of facilities. We are celebrating the restoration of the historic connection between Georgia Tech and Midtown, and the realization of a vision for the future of the Institute and the neighborhood.

The construction of the expressway through Atlanta nearly 50 years ago brought the city many advantages, but an unfortunate side effect was that it severed Georgia Tech from our natural neighbor, Midtown. The Biltmore Hotel, once the hot spot of Tech social life, was closed and boarded up, and the surrounding area deteriorated into abandoned buildings and vacant lots.

Today, Midtown is undergoing a renaissance. Bell South, the Federal Reserve, and Crawford Long Hospital are expanding into new facilities. The arts community is flowering, and thousands of new residential units are emerging.

Georgia Tech is a participant in this renaissance, not only because we are a major institution in this community, but also because as a research university we are a magnet for innovators and entrepreneurs and a driver of high-tech economic development. The leading-edge technology businesses that are clustering around our campus are helping to make Midtown the primary technology corridor of Atlanta and the state of Georgia.

Technology Square will take that process to a new, higher level by bringing together the Georgia Tech units and programs that are directly related to shaping a high-tech community here in the midst of Midtown. Those entities include:

- The DuPree College of Management and its Executive Education Center, which have a special focus on entrepreneurism and the management of technology, making them unique among business schools.
- The Global Learning Center, which will be the nerve center for Georgia Tech’s distance learning and continuing education programs, both here and around the world.
- The Economic Development Institute, which serves small and mid-sized businesses throughout the state and advises Georgia communities on economic development planning.
- The Center for Quality Growth and Regional Development, which studies the problems of urban sprawl and their smart-growth solutions.
• A hotel and conference center, which will serve the needs of these other Georgia Tech programs as well as the Midtown community.
• The Georgia Tech Bookstore, managed by Barnes & Noble, which will be the South’s leading center for technological publications.
• And finally, a selection of light retail to serve the students, faculty, and clients of Technology Square as well as the surrounding community.

These programs and the buildings that will house them are all designed to work together. The hotel and conference center will enhance the Global Learning Center, for example, and be a resource for the College of Management Executive Education Center. The programs of Technology Square will also work together with the Yamacraw Broadband Design Center and the Advanced Technology Development Center, which are part of Midtown Park and will be built on the north side of Fifth Street at the same time we are building Technology Square here on the south side.

The combination of Technology Square and Midtown Park with the presence of the larger Georgia Tech campus, is a deliberate gathering of the elements we need to create one of the nation’s premier high-tech business centers. And it is coordinated with the surrounding neighborhood to enhance the quality of community life and promote a model of smart urban growth. The project’s design is pedestrian friendly, and it will create a new gateway and a primary artery between the Tech campus and Midtown across an enhanced Fifth Street Bridge.

This nexus of so many resources, brought together within a broader vision for a live-work-learn-play community, will not only change the face of Midtown. It is also unique in the nation, and it embodies Georgia Tech’s vision of the technological university of the 21st century. So there is excitement in the air at Georgia Tech as we break ground and embark on this historic project. We are pleased that you are here to share it today, and we invite all of you to join us in celebrating a remarkable future.

At this time I am pleased to introduce our first speaker of the afternoon. During his 15-year political career in the Georgia State Senate and as Lieutenant Governor, Mark Taylor has focused on creating jobs, and improving schools and communities. Those goals are closely aligned with our mission at Georgia Tech and with what we want to accomplish at Technology Square. So we are very honored to have Lieutenant Governor Taylor with us and I am pleased to introduce him to make a few remarks.

(TAYLOR SPEAKS)
As the nation’s 12th-largest high-tech center with a high-tech workforce of more than 150,000, the City of Atlanta understands the value of technology in generating prosperity. Six weeks ago, Atlanta hosted the first National Technology Summit, and was honored for creating a national model for bridging the digital divide. We are pleased to have Atlanta Mayor Bill Campbell here with us this afternoon, and I invite him to say a few words.

(CAMPBELL SPEAKS)

As one of the 34 public institutions of higher education in the University System of Georgia, Georgia Tech has a distinct mission to serve the citizens, businesses, and communities of this state, and that is reflected in Technology Square. Hilton Howell is the chairman of the Board of Regents of the University System, and also president and CEO of Atlantic American Corporation, and I am pleased to introduce him to say a few words at this time.

(HOWELL SPEAKS)

At Georgia Tech we know that our efforts in technology transfer and economic development will have a positive effect on Midtown, and that our faculty, staff, and students will benefit from having a safe, vibrant neighborhood around our campus. So Georgia Tech folks spent many long hours working together with the Midtown Alliance, coordinating our Campus Master Plan with the Alliance’s Blueprint for Midtown. At this time I am pleased to introduce Midtown Alliance President Susan Mendheim to say a few words on behalf of the neighborhood.

(MENDHEIM SPEAKS)

Technology Square would not be possible without the participation of the Georgia Tech Foundation, which provided the initial funding to get the project through the design phase and is serving as guarantor for the construction bonds. The Foundation board also brought its expertise in real estate and financing to the project, and asked a lot of good questions at every stage to make sure Technology Square was developed in an effective and fiscally responsible way. I am pleased to introduce chairman Buck Stith to speak on behalf of the Georgia Tech Foundation.

(STITH SPEAKS)

At this time we are going to do what we came here to do, which is to actually shovel some dirt. We are going to do it in about three stages to allow the many people who
have a role in this project to participate. I am first going to ask the speakers who are here with me on the platform to join me at that large pile of dirt to my right. They will be followed by the administrative leaders from Georgia Tech who are most directly involved with Technology Square, then the representatives of the architectural and construction firms that are bringing the project to fruition.

The rest of you are invited to stay and watch as long as you like, then cross the street to the Biltmore for a reception, the screening of a short video, and an exhibit of design ideas for additional connections across the interstate between Georgia Tech and Midtown. Simply head toward the Biltmore, and Georgia Tech staff stationed along the way will direct you.

3 GROUND BREAKING GROUPS:
   1. SPEAKERS: GWC, Taylor, Campbell, Howell, Mendheim, Stith
   2. GT ADMINISTRATORS: GWC, Thompson, Chameau, Blum, Hodges, Myers, DiGregorio
   3. ARCH/CONSTRUCT: main reps from JLL, Hardin-Holder, TVS.

IN BILTMORE BALLROOM, MICROPHONE IN FRONT OF SCREEN:
I would like to welcome you to the air-conditioned Biltmore and the cooler phase of our ground-breaking celebration for Technology Square. We are not going to have any more speeches, but we would like to give you the opportunity to see a brief video that captures the vision for this unique and historic project from the perspective of the students, the lifelong learners, and the technology businesses who are looking forward to it and will benefit from it.

After the video, I also encourage you to take a look at the exhibit of ideas for broadening the connection between Georgia Tech and Midtown by capping I-75/85. They were developed by architecture students from Georgia Tech, who are here with us, so feel free to ask them any questions you may have.

And now, please turn your attention to the video.