

REMARKS BY GEORGIA TECH PRESIDENT G. WAYNE CLOUGH  
Atlanta Rotary Club, March 18, 2002

It is a great opportunity to be a member of the Atlanta Rotary Club, and listening to the many different speakers at these lunches is one way that I keep up with what is going on in this busy city. Georgia Tech wants to be a good citizen and an active contributor to Atlanta's well-being, and today I'm honored to have a turn at the podium to tell you about an exciting project we are doing in Midtown called Technology Square.

Our mission at Georgia Tech is to shape futures through innovation. That means shaping the futures of our students through education, and shaping our future quality of life through technology research and innovation. But it also means helping to shape Georgia and Atlanta into major players in the technology-based economy that is emerging around the world. And it means shaping the future of our own campus and the neighborhoods around it to create a quality environment.

To do that, we are changing the way we relate to our neighbors. Georgia Tech doesn't have much of a history of being involved with our own neighbors. The old Techwood Public Housing Project cut us off from the downtown business community, and the Downtown Connector cut us off from our natural neighborhood constituency in Midtown. So for many years we were isolated from our neighbors, and we felt like something of an orphan.

Today that is changing dramatically as we reach out from our campus in all directions. To the north, we are building a day care center together with the Home Park neighborhood. To the south, we helped to replace Techwood Homes with a new, mixed-income townhouse neighborhood called Centennial Place, where we are involved with the new elementary school and the YMCA. To the southwest, our new North Avenue Research Area will work in tandem with COPA's Northyards Business Park to improve another pretty decrepit part of town.

But the direction I want to focus on today is to the east of our campus, where we are reaching across the Downtown Connector to reconnect with the Midtown neighborhood. When the freeway cut off Georgia Tech from Midtown, the area directly across from our campus deteriorated into overgrown vacant lots and abandoned buildings. The Biltmore Hotel, once the site of innumerable Georgia Tech social functions, was closed and boarded up in 1982.

Today, a convergence of factors is giving Midtown an opportunity to evolve as a model of the next generation urban neighborhood – a vibrant, high-tech community that offers good jobs, first-rate educational opportunities, quality residential options, superior cultural activities, and excellent retail, dining, and recreation outlets.

Midtown is already home to Atlanta’s finest arts establishments and venues, including the Symphony, the High Museum, the Alliance Theatre, and the Fox Theatre. These anchoring institutions have attracted a wide array of smaller arts organizations, including Georgia Tech’s own Ferst Center for the Arts. In addition to being Atlanta’s arts center, Midtown houses some of Atlanta’s largest business operations, from BellSouth to IBM, from Bank America to the Federal Reserve.

Midtown is also emerging as Atlanta’s high-tech corridor, and Georgia Tech is a driving force in this development. Our Advanced Technology Development Center is widely recognized as one of the nation’s best incubators for new high-tech businesses. ATDC has well over 100 member and graduate companies, and many of them are located in Midtown close to our campus.

Jack Gwynn, president and CEO of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, which recently moved into a new facility on Tenth Street, has said that a “new” Midtown is emerging that will be a “gestalt of residential, commercial, and artistic venues that add economic and social value to each other.”

And that is very beneficial for Georgia Tech. Our campus is in the middle of the South’s largest city, but we have had virtually none of the amenities that usually surround a campus. There were no grocery stores, drug stores, hardware stores, or specialty shops where you could run a quick errand; no nearby restaurants that would impress important visitors. Our faculty, staff, and even students live in other parts of the city, and many of them have long commutes. A well-rounded, revitalized Midtown neighborhood will create the feel of a “university village” and encourage more of our faculty and staff to live close by.

So we have eagerly worked together with the Midtown Alliance to develop a blueprint for the neighborhood and a master plan for our campus that complement each other in developing the model in-town neighborhood that will benefit us both.

Today, the once-dilapidated section of Midtown across the freeway from our campus is bristling with construction cranes. The Novare Group has renovated the Biltmore, and it is attracting young high-tech companies as tenants. Immediately south of the Biltmore, BellSouth is building three new office towers that will house 5,000 employees. To the

immediate north of the Biltmore, the Mid City Lofts project is under construction, adding to the 7,000 residential units that have recently been built in Midtown.

**(SLIDE: Map)**

To give you a better feel for what I'm talking about, I'm going to show you a few pictures as I go. To get our bearings, we'll begin with a map of Midtown.

**(KEYSTROKE)** Right in the middle, Georgia Tech is building a two-block complex we call Technology Square, along the south side of Fifth Street between the freeway and the Biltmore.

**(KEYSTROKE)** Across the street is a very closely related development called Centergy, which is being developed by our good friends, The University Financing Foundation.

**(SLIDE: Street-level)**

Technology Square is designed to be pedestrian friendly, to accommodate a smooth flow of traffic, and to provide a stunning new gateway to our campus across an improved Fifth Street Bridge. More importantly, Technology Square is also designed to gather Georgia Tech's business-oriented functions together in the heart of Atlanta's emerging high-tech corridor – making it easier to develop relationships with the business community that will serve both Georgia Tech and Atlanta, and carry us forward together.

**(SLIDE: Map w/ DCOM)**

At the eastern end of Technology Square across from the Biltmore, will be new facilities for the DuPree College of Management and its growing executive education programs. Atlanta has lots of business schools, but our College of Management is unique among them.

**(SLIDE: COM Elevations)**

We specialize in managing the technology that is increasingly coming to dominate the workplace, and providing the knowledge and skills that entrepreneurs need. We serve managers, whose traditional business education did not help them understand technology and how to manage it well. We serve engineers, who have been promoted into the ranks of industrial management and need to strengthen their management skills. And we offer an unmatched level of expertise to those who want to start their own business. Entrepreneurism is a buzzword at a lot of business schools these days, but Georgia Tech's faculty teach it from personal experience with our award-winning business incubator as a resource.

Technology Square will put our College of Management right in the middle of Atlanta's high-tech business community and give it the first-rate physical platform it needs to take its place with the top-ranked business programs in the nation.

**(SLIDE: Map w/ GLC)**

At the other end of Technology Square, the Global Learning Center will bring together our rapidly growing continuing education and distance learning programs. Continuing education used to be a cozy little niche where school teachers updated their certification and senior citizens learned new hobbies. Today, rapidly changing workplace technology has transformed it, and a growing number of engineers and industrial managers are turning to Georgia Tech to update their skills.

**(SLIDE: GLC Elevations)**

Our continuing education programs have increased by nearly 300 percent over the past two decades. Last year, we had 25,000 people participating in continuing education courses and conferences. These programs outgrew the space we had on campus long ago, forcing us to lease space at Colony Square and in two dozen hotels. So we are looking forward to trading this haphazard collection of less-than-ideal facilities for a custom-designed Global Learning Center that is easily accessible.

Georgia Tech has another 900 students in remote locations, enrolled in nearly 100 distance learning courses, and name of the Global Learning Center reflects our intent to do a much better job of serving them. It will contain state-of-the-art distance learning technology to provide our alumni and our business partners across the nation and around the world with learning opportunities that are second to none. And it will work in the other direction, too, bringing quality course offerings to Atlanta from Georgia Tech's campuses in Savannah, France, and Singapore.

**(SLIDE: Map w/ Hotel)**

Executive degrees and continuing education programs often require participants to spend several days or even a week or two in residence at Georgia Tech. So, Technology Square will include a first-rate hotel and conference center, conveniently located between the College of Management and the Global Learning Center.

**(SLIDE: Hotel Elevations)**

The hotel and conference center will also serve as a broader resource for Georgia Tech and for Midtown businesses. As Tech grows in national and international prominence, we are hosting an increasing number of higher-level conferences. Right now that's a scramble, because we have very few suitable meeting rooms on campus, and we have to bus participants back and forth to hotels. The hotel at Technology Square will serve our

conference needs and also be available to nearby businesses for conferences and employee training.

**(SLIDE: MAP w/ Bookstore)**

Another facet of Technology Square is to help to create that “university village” we are missing by offering retail outlets and restaurants to the Georgia Tech and Midtown communities. The anchor retail establishment will be the Georgia Tech Bookstore – a large, two-story facility managed by Barnes & Noble. Our goal is to develop it into the South’s leading source of technology materials, serving a much wider clientele than just our students. It will be open seven days a week and offer early risers and night owls a Starbucks Coffee shop.

**(KEYSTROKE)**

There will also be other light retail and restaurants along the sidewalks of Technology Square, and a large parking deck at the rear. Finally, Technology Square will house our outreach activities in economic development and research centers that study the pressing urban problems Atlanta faces.

**(SLIDE: Streetscape)**

The architects for Technology Square have developed a look that is modern, but at the same time blends in with the bricked design of our campus on the one side and the Biltmore on the other. From east or west, north or south, Technology Square will be appealing to the viewer as it provides a gateway to our campus.

**(SLIDE: Centergy)**

Across Fifth Street in the Centergy project, the Yamacraw Broadband Design Center is taking shape. This facility will house a unique state initiative to create a partnership between Georgia Tech and other University System institutions and corporations in the advanced communications sector. Its goal is to make Atlanta and Georgia a major center for innovation in broadband communications. Forty-five faculty from our College of Computing will be based here.

Next door a new home for the Advanced Technology Development Center will bring our nationally acclaimed high tech business incubator into close proximity with our College of Management. And a facility behind ATDC will house technologically related businesses that want to partner with Georgia Tech and our faculty.

**(SLIDE: Street level)**

Technology Square is a tangible expression of Georgia Tech’s commitment to help make Atlanta a major technology hub; to serve the ongoing education needs of workers and

industries in our city and beyond; and to join with our neighbors in creating a positive environment with a high quality of life around our campus. Together with Centergy it will form a landmark that tells people who travel through Midtown that they are in the heart of a major high-tech center.

**(SLIDE: Aerial view)**

We broke ground for Technology Square last September with a large crowd on hand. Construction began shortly afterward, and the buildings are now beginning to rise up out of the red Georgia clay. So keep an eye out as you travel through this part of Midtown. In five or ten years you can be one of the few who was a personal witness to how dramatic and positive the changes have been.