SWEET AUBURN
A COMPREHENSIVE URBAN DESIGN PLAN
FOR AUBURN AVENUE, ATLANTA, GEORGIA

Prepared for
THE CITY OF ATLANTA, GEORGIA
Maynard Jackson, Mayor

by the
COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE
GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
December, 1975
December, 1975

The Honorable Maynard Jackson  
Mayor  
City of Atlanta  
City Hall  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303  

Dear Mayor Jackson:

We are pleased to submit this final report summarizing the substantive results of the "Sweet Auburn" study—a urban design plan and an historic preservation plan for Atlanta's nationally significant Auburn Avenue community.

The proposals contained in the report are a blend of ideas generated by individuals, institutions, and organizations located on and adjacent to the Avenue, by the staff of the City's Planning Bureau and by the project design team. Many of the ideas are responses to physical problems existing within the community and others are offered in anticipation of needs arising within the near future. Still other proposals respond to the belief that Auburn Avenue is Atlanta's other great street and that its special meaning requires special treatment at all levels of public and private decision making.

We hope the policies and plans presented within the report are the starting point for actions designed to make Auburn Avenue sweeter still.

Yours very truly,

Arnall T. Connell  
Professor and Project Designer

ATC/jb
The preparation of this report dated December 1975 was made possible through the efforts of the City of Atlanta with federal financial assistance from the National Endowment in Washington, D. C., a federal agency for the arts. The findings, conclusions, and recommendations do not necessarily represent the view of the Endowment.
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**Photo Credits:** All photographs used in this report were produced by students in the College of Architecture and by members of the Sweet Auburn design team except the following: Page vi, Aero Surveys, Inc.; Pages ii, 26 and 45, courtesy of the Atlanta Historical Society.
INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the substantive outputs of the "Sweet Auburn" project—an urban design plan and an historic preservation plan for Atlanta's historically significant Auburn Avenue community.

The project was conducted from September 1974 through December 1975 and was funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, "City Options" program, with matching contributions from the City of Atlanta and the Georgia Institute of Technology. Project staff included an urban planner from the City of Atlanta, historians from Atlanta and Emory Universities, and urban designers, planners, and architects from the Georgia Institute of Technology. Numerous other organizations were involved in the project, including the Inner-City Development Corporation and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Social Change.

The project "scope of services" included four major substantive elements: an Inventory Series, a Design Study Series, an Implementation Study, and a History and Culture Study. The inventory series was principally concerned with a review of previous planning and related studies as they affected the Auburn Avenue community, and the collection and analysis of additional data relative to land use, transportation, and other functional areas. The design study series involved the formulation of three iterations of an urban design plan: a land use and zoning plan, a transportation and circulation plan, and a public facilities plan. The implementation study formulated the policies, programs, and priority actions necessary to carry out the proposed plans. The history study involved the preparation of an historic development report and the formulation of an historic preservation plan.
This report summarizes the above activities; the more complete presentations are contained in the following reports and/or graphic materials:

200.00 Inventory Series

300.04 A Proposed Urban Design Plan
300.04 B Proposed Land Use and Zoning Plan
300.04 C Proposed Transportation and Circulation Plan
300.04 D Proposed Public Facilities Plan
300.05 Sub-Area Plans

400.02 Implementation Report

500.02 Historic Development Report
500.03 Historic Preservation Plan

The "Sweet Auburn" project has identified the many problems that exist within the community, has identified opportunities for improvement, has documented the historic and future significance of the community to the City and Nation, and has formulated a long-range (15-year) comprehensive plan for the re-creation of a distinct, viable business and residential community. Specific implementation activities have been identified in priority sequence. The extent to which the community is improved in future years will depend on three interrelated factors: public sector commitment, private sector involvement, and community organization. Each is addressed in this report.
INVENTORY

THE "SWEET AUBURN" COMMUNITY

The Auburn Avenue Community (study area) lies east of, and adjacent to, Atlanta's central business district (CBD). It is bounded by the I-485/Stone Mountain stub and Cain Street on the north, Peachtree Street on the west, the Georgia Railroad on the south, and the Southern Railroad on the east. Auburn Avenue runs east-west through the center of the area, from Central City Park in the CBD, east through the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District, to Randolph Street. The area is bisected by the North-South I-75/85 freeway ("downtown connector") into a CBD-related western section and a primarily residential eastern section.

The Auburn Avenue Community is primarily known for its rich cultural heritage, as a historic center of internationally significant Black institutions and individuals, and particularly as a center of Black entrepreneurial activity. John Wesley Dobbs took the name "Sweet Auburn" from the poem, "The Deserted Village" by Oliver Goldsmith. Auburn was "sweet" because, unlike the situation in many towns where Dobbs traveled, the Black business section was not behind the railroad tracks: it began downtown adjacent to white business on Peachtree Street.

Recent decades have witnessed a general deterioration of the social and physical aspects of the community. The once vibrant Auburn Avenue street life has essentially disappeared, business activity has declined, and many historic and other structures stand deteriorating and underutilized. The casual observer might easily call much of the area a "slum." However, it is clear that the area has a significant potential for renovation—for the re-establishment of a viable, distinct, residential and business community.
SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

The study area contains a population of approximately 9,000 persons (1970 census). The Black population represents over 90 percent of the total. All but approximately 200 persons reside in the area east of the I-75/85 "downtown connector." Thirty-one percent of the population is seventeen years of age or younger; fifty-four percent are between eighteen and sixty-one; fifteen percent are sixty-two or older. Median family income (1970 census) is less than $4,000 per year; approximately 4,000 persons are below the "poverty level." A significant number of persons receive some form of public assistance, including rent subsidies, especially in the Wheat Street Gardens, Grady Homes, and Antoine Graves housing complexes. Median family size is just above three persons, with 610 female heads-of-household, 166 male heads-of-household, and 1,118 families having both husband and wife present. Females make up forty percent of the labor force, with manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, and personal services as the primary employers.

LAND USE

The section of the study area lying west of the I-75/85 freeway consists essentially of institutional, office, commercial, and hotel uses, with some residential use (notably, the Big Bethel Towers), and is functionally and spatially related most directly to Atlanta's central business district. The major institutional uses (i.e., Grady Hospital, Georgia State University, etc.) south of Edgewood Avenue exhibit long-range stability and therefore require no exceptional action. Likewise, the major office and hotel uses (mainly north of Houston Street and east of Ivy Street, exhibit appropriate growth and stability, and consequently require no exceptional attention. However, the central part of the western section of the Auburn Avenue area between Houston Street and Edgewood Avenue is characterized by underutilized land, aging
and substandard buildings, a mixture of viable and marginal businesses, and insufficient public and private maintenance.

The area to the east of the I-75/85 freeway consists of a mix of residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional uses. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Social Change and the adjacent M.L.K., Jr. Historic District (predominately single-family units, with some conversions to apartments) are centrally located within the area on Auburn Avenue. The north and south sides of Auburn Avenue (between I-75/85 and the M.L.K., Jr. Center), Edgewood Avenue and Decatur Street are lined with commercial and light industrial activities with an occasional interspersion of churches and other institutions. These strips, and especially Edgewood Avenue, include many marginal and vacant commercial structures and a number of underutilized land parcels. Although most of the commercial buildings are outmoded, some small and long-established firms continue to serve the community. In addition, the major churches and institutions remain strong in the area. Other industrial uses are located at the north edge of the study area (e.g., Scripto) and along the east boundary (Southern Railroad). Much of the industrial land of the latter site is vacant. Residential land use includes major housing projects (Grady Homes, Antoine Graves, Wheat Street Gardens, and Wheat Street Towers) and several areas of mixed single-family and multiple-family units.

Land use problems can be summarized as belonging to one or more of several categories:

1. Functional disorganization of land uses (geographic)
2. Physical deterioration of buildings and structures
3. Outmoded forms of commercial and industrial use
4. Underutilized and vacant parcels and structures
TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

The transportation pattern in the western section of the study area is affected by a typical set of CBD surface streets, including one-way pairs of four-and five-lane capacities, with heavy traffic volumes. Major problems include the inevitable traffic congestion and a relatively severe lack of parking facilities.

The east-west components of this street system (Houston-Irwin, Auburn, Edgewood, and Decatur) run through the community and carry peak hour traffic volumes at or above capacity to and from the CBD. Major north-south streets in the eastern section include Jackson, Randolph, and Boulevard, the latter carrying the heaviest volume. The major problem with the eastern section is the inherent incompatibility of major through-traffic streets with the existing forms of residential land use. These streets constitute effective barriers to pedestrian travel within the community (traffic hazards) and create generally unacceptable levels of noise and air pollution.

In addition, the I-75/85 connector divides the Auburn Avenue community into two sections and, given the physical state of underpass conditions, effectively constrains pedestrian movement between the two sections.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

An inventory of facilities and services in the study area, and a limited survey of residents (conducted by Bureau of Planning personnel) indicates that a good basic structure of facilities and services exists, although the level of service appears to be seriously deficient. Questionnaire respondents indicated as serious problems: (1) the lack of parks and playgrounds; (2) the lack of recreation for teenagers; (3) the absence of major food stores, drug stores, and laundromats; and (4) the high level of unemployment. Other concerns included needed improvements in garbage and trash collection,
police protection, street and sidewalk repairs, rodent control, library services, day-care facilities and services for children, senior citizen services, legal aid, family planning, job training, adult education, and services for the handicapped.

The lack of private services (stores, etc.) is partially a function of the unwillingness of major enterprises to invest in an area of the city where aggregate income is low. Lack of adequate public services in the area is partially a function of the severe fiscal constraints under which the City must operate, a lack of clear identity for the study area as a community, and a lack of priority for the allocation of resources to the area.

However, the existing facilities provide a good structure for improvement. Educational facilities include three elementary schools (Butler, Hope, and the private school, Our Lady of Lourdes), one middle school (Walden), one high school (Howard), and the Georgia State University. The elementary and middle schools are currently operating under capacity and can easily handle increases in enrollment which may arise from future residential development. The high school and university are also presently sufficient. Therefore, no significant new capital expenditures for educational facilities are required, other than those which may be needed for Georgia State University or may be necessary for the maintenance of existing facilities.

Existing or currently anticipated recreation space in the eastern residential area includes the Butler Street Park, the King Recreation Center Park, the proposed Great Park (I-485/Stone Mountain R.O.W.), and several small playgrounds inside the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District. Additional recreation space is available north of, and adjacent to, Walden Middle School. All of this constitutes approximately twenty acres within the residential area, which, based on National Recreation Association Standards, is clearly inadequate for the
community. Parks in the western part of the study area include the Central City Park and Hurt Park, both passive recreation areas which are oriented toward the central business district.

Existing health care facilities exist in the western part of the study area, including Grady Hospital, the Edgewood Emergency Clinic, and the Fulton County Health Department. There is no general health care facility in the eastern, or residential section of the study area.

HOUSING

Of the approximately 1,100 structures in the study area, 790 (72 percent) are in residential use. Approximately 230 (29 percent) of these are single-family structures, while the remaining 560 (71 percent) are multiple-family structures. The residential structures house 3,775 residential units, with 70 percent reported to be in standard condition, 18 percent reported to have minor deterioration, 11 percent with major deterioration, and one percent reported as dilapidated. Housing conditions vary from block to block, with some continuing concentrations of structures clearly beyond repair and others occupied by housing that is quite stable and attractive.
HISTORY

The Sweet Auburn District represents—in bricks and mortar, as well as in extant institutions—more than a century of Afro-American contributions to the survival and success of an historic Black community in Atlanta. Because the history of this community has been generally unrecognized and uncollected, official city activities and development within its area have suffered from a general lack of community identity. In view of the limited previous research, this present study could be only a beginning in the investigation of the rich heritage of this area.

Historically, Blacks have constituted a significant portion of Atlanta's population since the Civil War. This population was distributed in the nineteenth century in numerous diverse settlements throughout the city's area. During the early years of the twentieth century, and especially following the Atlanta Race Riot of 1906, an increasingly segregated pattern of life concentrated the Black population on the eastern side of the city in the Auburn Avenue area. With the concentration of business, social, religious, and cultural institutions in this area, especially along Auburn Avenue itself, a distinct community was established. The roots of this community go back to the pioneers who were active there in the nineteenth century.

CIVIL WAR - 1890

Nineteenth-century achievement in the Auburn Avenue area inspired and supported the future development of an east-side community. From a nearly destitute position following the Civil War, Atlanta's Black population developed institutions and businesses which would eventually become important forces in the life of the community.

During this period there were no precise physical patterns of segregation in Atlanta. Black business enterprise developed within the
present central business district. Auburn Avenue and the surrounding streets were racially mixed and predominately residential. Some commercial activity developed in the blocks adjacent to the central business district. The largest concentration of Black commercial activity was along Decatur Street, but the major enterprises were in the central area. Nevertheless, important institutions were begun within the Auburn Avenue district which would become highly significant to Atlanta. Some, like Atlanta University which began classes in an old railroad boxcar set up in the area; and Morris Brown College, which was originally located on Boulevard, eventually moved to the west side. Others, like First Congregational Church, Big Bethel Church, and Wheat Street Baptist Church, remain today as viable institutions.

In addition, studies suggest that, before the turn of the century, Black citizens had acquired property and lived comfortably in modest to wealthy homes in the Auburn Avenue district.

While the study data show no physical pattern of segregation, they do reveal numerous evidences of racial hostility and an environment which severely limited opportunities for its Black citizens. Progress within Atlanta's Black community was therefore both offensive and defensive.

1890-1930

During this period a race riot in 1906 and the consequent redrawing of the color line affected the concentration of both commercial activities and residential population. This was the period during which Auburn Avenue developed and flourished as the major center of Black entrepreneurial and social activity within a large residential community. Black business turned from a white clientele to a Black one. Racial pride and a spirit of fraternity within the Black community increased simultaneously with the tightening of segregationist practices by the white community. Substantial business
THE GREAT FIRE - 1917

EXTENT OF DAMAGE IN "SWEET AUBURN" AREA
and community structures built along the Avenue helped to concentrate business and professional activity there. Between 1900 and about 1920, Black businesses moved out of the central business district and began to establish themselves in the blocks between Courtland and Hilliard Streets along Auburn Avenue. In 1920 a substantial drop in the number of Black businesses within the central business district can be observed. Among the important and still extant enterprises established during this period are the Atlanta Life Insurance Company, Citizen's Trust Company Bank, Mutual Federal Savings and Loan Association, and the Atlanta Daily World.

Increasingly segregated residential areas developed in the streets adjacent to the Avenue. The section of the district, part of which is now known as the Martin Luther Kind, Jr. Historic District, grew into a substantial middle class neighborhood. Later, this community expanded northward to North and Angier Avenues. A poverty area called Darktown was located to the west of this neighborhood, and a fine section of homes was built along Houston Street eastward from Courtland Avenue into the area occupied by the old campus of Morris Brown College. The eastside residential community was later known as the "Old Fourth Ward."

In 1917, the "Great Fire" destroyed 73 city blocks, many within the eastside community. The destruction of these residential blocks subsequently encouraged migration of community residents to sections on the west side of the city which began to open up to Black development during the next decades. However, the Auburn Avenue community continued to house and support the major concentration of Afro-Atlantans into the 1950's.

The first Atlanta zoning ordinance, drawn in 1922, but finally instituted in 1928 after its constitutionality was established, documented and enforced the pattern of segregation in Atlanta which was created during this period. This legalization of traditional attitudes and building practice was an important factor in
maintaining the commercial and residential concentration on the east side. A strong sense of solidarity and group responsibility, and the physical concentration within a relatively small area of much of the economic, social, religious, and cultural activity available to Atlanta's Black population, worked together to foster an active community life. This sense of community was carried over into later decades.

1930 - 1965

During this period, the residential migration to the west side, which had begun in the twenties and slowed down during the depression, again picked up momentum. An alternate Black business center developed along Hunter Street, with the largest volume of building along this street occurring between the post-World War II years and the mid-sixties. However, major enterprises remained or kept their headquarters on Auburn Avenue. In 1956, Auburn Avenue was promoted by a national journal as "the richest Negro street in the world," and an urban renewal report two years later identified the Avenue as the major Black commercial area. Few new buildings were constructed, though one of the major extant landmarks, the Prince Hall Masonic Building, was built in 1940. Many of the buildings, singled out by urban renewal planners in the late 1950's as needing modernization, were not renovated but continued to house the major concentration of Afro-Atlanta's business and professional activities.

The most dramatic changes in the physical environment during this period were the result of public housing, urban renewal, and transportation planning. One of Atlanta's earliest large public housing projects, Grady Homes, was built in 1948 in the southern portion of the study area. Later additions of two high-rise residential buildings for the elderly were placed in the immediate area. The Butler Street urban renewal project divided the Auburn Avenue district into two sections: one becoming a part of the central business district through clearance
and hotel-motel, office building redevelopment; the other supporting a large-scale clearance and low-rent housing redevelopment program. Scattered sections of older style housing and residential environment were preserved through rehabilitation programs on a few selected streets. Additional pieces of the older streetscape also remain in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District outside the urban renewal boundaries. When the downtown connector was completed in 1964, the community division was reinforced. The connector also severely and negatively impacted the once-vital transportation and community communications spine—Auburn Avenue.

Additional factors which caused a decline in cohesiveness and economic viability of the Avenue's business community included both local and national events. Nationally, the heightening of urban aspects of the Civil Rights movement and the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, resulted in changes in the options open to Afro-Americans and had a direct impact on the businesses in the Auburn Avenue area. Locally, long-time business leaders were reaching retirement age and were less amenable to drastic change; new and often younger men were taking over business direction and choosing office and shop locations in newer buildings that were now available in other areas of the city. These developments had serious consequences for the development of the Avenue. A once-flourishing business area in a distinct community was now in danger of being absorbed and overrun by the expansion of the central business district without regard to the unique potential of this historic area. Preservation planning for this area offers the opportunity to build a new vitality here, where economic and cultural strength grows from the uniqueness and national significance of the area's heritage.
PLANNING AND DESIGN

OVERALL PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN POLICIES FOR THE "SWEET AUBURN" COMMUNITY

The following general policies are recommended for the "Sweet Auburn" Community:

Historic Preservation

The history of the Auburn Avenue community reveals the magnitude and significance of the contributions of its residents and institutions to our society. "Sweet Auburn" represents a rich cultural heritage that should not be neglected. For that reason, the history of the area is an important aspect of future policies and plans. In addition, the recognition of the historic aspects of the area can be a positive element in the future improvement of the area. It does provide a unique "identity" for the area, it can encourage a flow of resources into the area (tourists, investment), and it can affect eligibility for certain Federal grants and aids for enhancement. Therefore, long-range policies should include a major recognition of historical significance and identity, and should include the preservation and enhancement of selected historical elements.

Area West of I-75/85

The part of the study area that lies west of the I-75/85 freeway consists primarily of institutional, office, commercial, and hotel land uses, with some residential uses, and is spatially and functionally most directly related to Atlanta's central business district. The institutional uses (i.e., Grady Hospital, Georgia State University, and others) exhibit long-range stability and thus require no exceptional action in terms of long-range planning policies. Likewise, the hotel uses (northwest) and the office uses (extreme west) exhibit both stability and growth and require no attention in this report. However, the central part of the study area, the Auburn Avenue corridor, is characterized by aging and underutilized office and commercial structures. The location of this area (adjacent
to the central business district) is such that the future demand for higher intensity development is highly probable. Therefore, long-range policies for this area should include the development of high-intensity office, commercial, and other CBD-related uses in an effort to capture these stabilizing and profitable activities for the community. Short-range plans should include the enhancement of existing viable enterprises and structures, along with the development of new medium- and high-rise office and commercial uses. A major commitment to public improvements in the area is required, as well as private initiative by institutions such as the Inner-City Development Corporation (ICDC). (See the Auburn Avenue, Hunter Street Development Strategy, prepared for the Inner-City Development Corporation by Adley and Associates, Inc., Atlanta, Georgia, and published in December 1973. The ICDC adopted this report and prepared subsequent studies of the area.)

Area East of I-75/85

The area to the east of the I-75/85 downtown freeway connector consists of a mixture of residential, industrial, commercial, and institutional uses. The area can generally be characterized as deteriorating, overcrowded, low-income, and functionally disorganized. Approximately thirty percent of the resident units are in substandard condition. Median family income is less than $4,000 per year; land uses are scattered; and traffic flow exceeds capacity on many of the major streets. Many of the commercial and industrial structures are in economically marginal use and in poor condition. Nevertheless, this area has a significant long-range potential for enhancement and redevelopment. The primary positive factors include:

(1) The close spatial relationship and the direct and historic connection (via Auburn Avenue) with the central business district

(2) The existence of distinct community boundaries (Southern Railroad on the east, Georgia Railroad on the south, I-75/85 on the
west, and the I-485/Stone Mountain stub/proposed Great Park on the north)

(3) The existence of an internationally significant institution (Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Social Change) and a historic district (M.L.K., Jr. Historic District), centrally located in the area, as stabilizing and catalytic factors

(4) A favorable quantity and distribution of public facilities that can be improved

(5) A rich cultural history as an identity, and a rich source of individuals and institutions in leadership roles. (This attribute exists for the entire study area.)

Therefore, long-range policies for this area should include the improvement and development of a distinct, complete, functional residential community.

Auburn Avenue

Auburn Avenue ("Sweet Auburn") is a historically significant street that begins in the central business district at Central City Park and extends easterly through the study area to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District. A number of significant historical sites, structures, and institutions exist along and near this street. "Sweet Auburn" serves as the focus of the rich cultural history of the entire area. However, much of the Avenue is in a deteriorating and otherwise marginal condition, with little or no recognition or exploitation of its historical significance. The recognition of the importance of the Avenue to the community, to the City, and to the Nation, and the improvement of the Avenue, can have a dramatic and significant impact on the future of the community and the entire City. Therefore, long-range policies should include the improvement of the environment of Auburn Avenue as a "special" and "unique" street of national historical significance.
The Entire Community

Although the eastern and western halves of the study area generally exhibit different characteristics, they are integral components of the same "Auburn Avenue Community." Unfortunately, the construction of the I-75/85 freeway has visually and functionally cut the community into two parts. The study area should be developed as one community; the barriers should be minimized in future development. Specifically, the Auburn Avenue underpass area should be improved to create a better visual and functional connection that would encourage pedestrian traffic between the two areas.

LAND USE AND ZONING PLAN

The land use plan for the "Sweet Auburn" community represents a fifteen-year modification of existing uses to a pattern that is consistent with the policies outlined above.

Land use for the CBD section of the community (west of I-75/85) retains the existing pattern of primarily institutional uses south of Edgewood Avenue, and basically office, commercial, hotel, and ancillary uses north of Edgewood. The intensity of development and the scale of structures should be at a maximum nearest to the central business district, and should gradually decrease as one moves east into the residential community. The gradation of the physical profile of the structures from the CBD to the residential community should be gradual rather than abrupt. The north-south profile west of I-75/85 should represent a consistently strong intensity of structure and scale.

Land uses along this western section of Auburn Avenue should retain existing institutions and viable enterprises. In the short run, business properties should be restored and occupied with adaptive uses. New development should include primarily office, commercial, and related uses, including a major hotel. Occasional high-rise residential uses should also be permitted.
Specific zoning provisions should encourage the development of parking facilities and should require a fifteen-foot setback for new development on Auburn Avenue itself. Policies and plans should provide general guidance for future development, but should not be so rigid as to constrain initial short-range development opportunities.

The land use plan for the east section of the community affects changes to the existing pattern necessary to the revitalization of a distinct residential community. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Social Change and the Historic District remain centrally located as a focal point for the community. Likewise, Wheat Street Gardens, Grady Homes, Antoine Graves high-rise for the elderly, Wheat Street Towers, and other viable multiple-family residential projects remain and should be upgraded. Significant single-family areas, industrial sites, and major institutional uses also remain and should be renovated.

However, a number of land use changes are required. Two sites for contemporary forms of commercial activity are needed. One commercial site is proposed for a location south of Auburn Avenue between I-75/85 and Hilliard Street. This site would house community-related services including a major food co-op and/or grocery store, drug store, medical offices, and related uses. A second, but similar, commercial site is proposed for a location in the eastern part of the community to serve new residential development in that area.

Housing areas that are beyond repair (primarily in the eastern and south-eastern sections), and vacant and underutilized industrial sites should be cleared for the development of new medium-density residential uses. Once the community starts to "come back" these large sites will represent significant private development potential. In addition, the outmoded strip commercial and industrial uses (largely underutilized and vacant) along Edgewood Avenue and certain sections of Auburn and
Decatur Streets should be eventually converted to additional medium-density residential use.

The total effect of the planned land use changes is to reduce acreage in marginal commercial and industrial uses, and to increase acreage in residential and public facility uses, while creating a functional overall community pattern or arrangement of uses. The M.L.K., Jr. complex (The Center for Social Change, Recreation Center, and the Historic District) serves as the focal point, and is surrounded by medium-density residential uses. Auburn Avenue serves as the functional and symbolic tie between the two sections of the community and links the community with the central business district.

The additional residential uses will allow an increase in population of approximately 2,000 persons for a total community population of 11,000; and will allow for the development of moderate- and middle-income housing. Both will yield a higher aggregate income and therefore will induce an expanded level of private investment and service.
TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION PLANS

The plan includes a number of major street and pedestrian improvements. The first, and perhaps the most important, involves Auburn Avenue. The Avenue should be developed as a "special" and "unique" street because of its historical significance and its potential for positive economic and spiritual impact on the entire community. "Sweet Auburn" should serve the functions of:

(1) Creation of a distinct street and community identity
(2) Visible recognition of historical significance
(3) Provision for renovation of existing viable enterprises and new development
(4) Provision of a suitable link between the CBD and the M.L.K., Jr. Center and Historic District

The Avenue should remain as a "two-way street," with reduced traffic volume and slow speed. Pedestrian facilities should be enhanced by providing additional sidewalk width, small parks, new paving, additional landscape materials, and appropriate street lighting. Streets crossing Auburn Avenue should receive compatible treatment for at least one-half block in either direction. Important adjacent elements (Citizens' Trust Bank, Butler Street YMCA, the Municipal Market, and others) should be visually and functionally tied to "Sweet Auburn." The area of the I-75/85 overpass should receive considerable improvement in order to minimize the "barrier" effect, to reduce adverse environmental effects, and to encourage pedestrian flow.

Access to the Auburn Avenue community should be improved. That is, the visibility and access to the community should be enhanced by retaining Auburn Avenue as a two-way street, by several long-range changes to the I-75/85 ramps, by improving the design and environment of the I-75/85 Auburn Avenue overpass, by
improving off-street parking and traffic flow characteristics, and by initiating a program of informational signs, including signs for directing traffic to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Social Change, and for identifying historic sites and structures.

The electric street railway line which was formerly routed down Auburn from Pryor Street to Boulevard Drive, should be reconstructed to serve as a "people-mover" connecting Central City Park with the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center. The single-track, slotted third-rail facility would start/terminate off-street at the northeast corner of Park Drive (Pryor) and Auburn and would loop around the block bounded by Auburn, Boulevard, Edgewood, and Jackson Street. This facility would provide a delightful ride along historic Auburn for tourists, conventioneers, and residents visiting the King Center and would have the beneficial effects of reducing traffic congestion around the Center and of reinforcing the businesses along the Avenue.

Vehicular traffic with neither origin nor destination within the Auburn Avenue corridor should be discouraged from using the community's residential streets. The high volume of traffic bound for the CBD that currently flows through the Auburn Avenue area (via Irwin, Houston, Auburn, Edgewood, and Decatur Streets) produces a high level of congestion, pollution, safety hazards, and forms a series of barriers that effectively fragment the community into small, unrelated areas. These problems could be greatly ameliorated and the overall traffic pattern enhanced by the construction of a new roadway element that would connect the I-485/Stone Mountain stub with Edgewood Avenue and Decatur Streets (the proposed DeKalb Parkway). This proposal would permit traffic bound to and from the CBD and east Atlanta areas to use a high speed/high volume facility rather than residential streets and Auburn Avenue.

Other transportation and circulation improvements include the following: pedestrian circulation within the study area should be enhanced through some street improvements and closings.
Pedestrian access among elements of the community (commercial, residential, schools, etc.) to the CBD and to the planned MARTA stations, should be improved. Provisions should be made throughout for "barrier-free" circulation of aged and handicapped persons. In addition, Old Wheat Street should be closed to all but local traffic and converted to a pedestrian way running from the I-75/85 bridge area east, by the M.L.K., Jr. Center, into the Historic District. Hilliard Street should be widened and enhanced as a north-south vehicular and pedestrian route to connect Auburn Avenue and major residential areas with the Grant Street MARTA station. Such enhancement would include street and sidewalk widening, additional signalization, street lighting, street furniture and landscaping. Major parking facilities should be provided at the M.L.K., Jr. Center for Social Change, on both sides of Edgewood Avenue, south of and adjacent to the Center. Buses should be prohibited from parking on Auburn Avenue. Streets in the M.L.K., Jr. Historic District should be renovated, consistent with appropriate design criteria.
PUBLIC FACILITIES PLAN

The long-range improvement of the "Sweet Auburn" community and, more specifically, the re-establishment of a complete, distinct, and functional residential and business community will require an increased commitment to the supply of public services. The structure for improvement exists as identified in the inventory section of this report.

Services needing early attention include: police protection, garbage and trash collection, street and sidewalk repair, and rodent control. New facilities should include a community multi-service center and a community health care center, centrally located near the M.L.K., Jr. complex. Approximately six additional acres of recreation space should be provided, and improvements should be made to the recreation/play area behind Walden Middle School, the proposed Great Park, and the new M.L.K., Jr. Recreation Center. These six acres should be located in the eastern portion of the residential area, should be in the form of several small parks and playlots, and should be implemented as part of residential renovation and/or new residential development. In addition, the plan calls for five new child-care facilities to be distributed throughout the study area, and a branch library or reading room in the Odd Fellows Building.
LEGEND FOR PUBLIC FACILITIES PLAN
(Numbers identify locations on the map.)

1. Austin T. Walden Middle School
2. Mount Zion Second Baptist Church
3. David T. Howard High School
4. St. Peter AME Church
5. Howell Station Church of God in Christ
6. Unity Prayer House
7. First Congregational Church
8. Fire Station No. 4
9. Southern Bell Telephone Company
10. Big Bethel AME Church
11. Georgia Power Sub-Station
12. Masonic Relief Association
13. Southern Christian Leadership Conference
14. Economic Opportunity Atlanta--East Central Office
15. Martin Luther King, Jr. Recreation Center
16. John Hope Elementary School
17. Martin Luther King, Jr. Nursing Home
18. House of God
19. Central City Park
20. Auburn Avenue Parking Building
21. Edgewood YMCA
22. Butler Street YMCA
23. American Legion Post #574
24. Wheat Street Baptist Church
25. Ebeneezer Baptist Church
27. Fire Station No. 6
28. Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Elementary School
29. Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church
30. Greater Fellowship Baptist Church
31. Hurt Park
32. Georgia State University
33. Municipal Auditorium
34. Edgewood Emergency Clinic
35. Butler Street CME Church
36. Fulton County Health Department
37. Police Station, Atlanta Headquarters
38. Municipal Market
39. Fulton County Medical Examiners
40. Grady Child Care Center
41. Grady Memorial Hospital
42. Grady Homes Child Development Center
43. Butler Street Park
44. H. R. Butler Elementary School
45. Grady Graves Tenants Association
46. Liberty Baptist Church
47. Kittridge Early Learning and Child Care Center
48. Economic Opportunity Atlanta--Field Office
49. Rolling Church of Our Christ
URBAN DESIGN PLAN
PREMISE AND APPROACH

The contemporary patterns of functional and physical relationships within the study area were established by a myriad of public and private actions over many years. The area is presently built-up (except for parking lots and a few small house plots), and the basic grid pattern of streets remains workable even though the construction of I-75/85 through the area and the acquisition of right-of-way for the I-485/Stone Mountain Freeway has blurred its legibility. Since the "Sweet Auburn" community lies partly within the CBD and wholly within the Atlanta Central Area, physical changes likely to occur in the community within the foreseeable future will reflect a process of private redevelopment very much like that at work during its initial development—the parcel-by-parcel conversion of land in use for one activity to a more intensive and profitable activity. The demand for conversions will be greatest within the CBD portion of the community (west of I-75/85) and least in the area east of the Interstate. The Urban Design Proposals made in this section and elsewhere in the report reflect this premise and focus on ideas intended to respect, correct, and perfect the area—ideas generated by residents (individuals, institutions, business, and citizens groups) and by members of the design team.

Plans prepared for specific areas, systems and facilities by the Inner-City Development Corporation; Central Atlanta Progress, Inc.; MARTA; City of Atlanta; Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Social Change; and by others have been reviewed and, for the most part, incorporated into plans and designs proposed for "Sweet Auburn." The principal deviation from plans prepared by others concerns the traffic role to be played by Auburn Avenue, Houston/Irwin Streets, and Edgewood Avenue. The "Sweet Auburn" Urban Design Plan retains Houston/Irwin and Edgewood as major two-way traffic streets but rejects that designation for Auburn. These proposals, and other which may be considered
deviations, are discussed more fully in this and other sections of the report.

Auburn: Atlanta's Other Great Street

Auburn Avenue is a real place. Its reality as a physical element of the City, while obvious and finite, is transcended by its historic associations and symbolic meanings. As such, it is the principal organizing force in the community and the focus of design attention in this study. Auburn Avenue is Atlanta's other great street and its importance must be made vivid, its identity made secure, and its treasures of community life made accessible.

The Avenue crosses several different environments (precincts, neighborhoods) within its one-and-a-quarter-mile length. It connects the heart of downtown Atlanta and a turn-of-the-century residential community composed of small Victorian cottages. Both end (beginning) points are at about the same elevation (1050) above sea level, and the street falls uniformly about 80 feet toward the middle (970). The visual drama that should result from this configuration is blurred by a plethora of telephone/electric power poles, wires, roof-top billboards, parking lots, and the Interstate highway bridge that whacks at its middle. A number of urban design proposals intended to rid the Avenue of clutter, barrenness and technological bric-a-brac and to pull it back together are discussed in the report section on Planning and Design and accompany others proposed in this section.

THE PLAN BY PRECINCTS

The Urban Design Plan is presented by conducting the reader on a trip through each of the Avenue's four environments (precincts). We will begin at Central City Park and move eastwardly along Auburn Avenue through precincts delineated by the names of streets intersecting the Avenue. Major features of the Plan are pointed out and changes in the physical structure of the Avenue are proposed for the reader's consideration.
Peachtree to Piedmont

Auburn Avenue begins (ends) in the environment of Peachtree Street at Central City Park. Trust Company Bank Tower, the historic Candler and Old Georgia Savings Bank Buildings, the Equitable Building, and other tall and short buildings provide a partial frame for the park at the junction of Auburn, Park Place, and Peachtree. The proposed Urban Design Plan suggests that Marcel Breuer's powerful sculptural form for the new Central Library occupy the prominent site on Auburn Avenue immediately south of the Candler Building and overlooking Central City Park. (This proposal is a deviation from another city plan.) Just east of the Central Library site (across Park Place), two modest museums are proposed. The old, inactive firehouse now occupied by an office furniture company should be acquired by the City and restored as a Firefighter's Museum. A small, open plaza, perhaps an extension of Central City Park, adjoining the firehouse would provide a pleasant setting for the exterior display of historic firefighting machinery and for the Auburn Avenue Streetcar "roundtable" terminal. The terminal, boarding point for the Streetcar (people mover) to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center, would be part of a Street Railway Museum exhibiting streetcars of various vintages and designs and displaying memorabilia associated with the streetcar era and its influence on Atlanta's development. Many of the streetcars exhibited could be made operational and used on the Auburn Avenue run.

The vacant and underutilized land parcels within the blocks fronting on Auburn between Park Place and Courtland should be developed with office structures surrounding a major centerblock parking/building service structure. Retail and consumer service shops with a street orientation should occupy ground level space in office buildings, and consideration should be given to the conversion of sidewalk-level space in existing parking garages along Auburn Avenue to space for small (400-800 square-foot) shops. New structures along Auburn should be set back from
FIREFIGHTER'S MUSEUM, STREET RAILWAY MUSEUM AND TERMINAL FOR THE AUBURN AVENUE STREETCAR.
THE AVENUE: PEACHTREE TO PIEDMONT: FOUR TRAFFIC LANES:  
ONE STREETCAR LANE: NO PARKING.
the street right-of-way line a minimum distance of fifteen feet and should be either of low-height (up to about fifty feet) or should be stepped-back as they rise to permit adequate penetration of sun and light on the Avenue. Buildings of the greatest bulk and height (say, comparable to the Trust Company Bank) should be located along Houston Street and Park Place, and more modest-height buildings (comparable to the Hartford Building) should be located along Edgewood Avenue. All parking and building service facilities should be provided off-street and access should be provided only from Houston and Ivy Streets and Courtland Avenue to the maximum extent feasible.

Substantial new construction is also anticipated for the two blocks bounded by Courtland, Edgewood, Piedmont, and Houston. The block on the north side of Auburn--The Atlanta Life Insurance Company block—is proposed as the site for a major hotel, a headquarters office building for Atlanta Life and other office space intended for occupancy by international cultural and trade missions and by consulates of foreign governments. The historic structures on the north side of the Avenue (John Smith Carriage Factory, old Atlanta Life Insurance Building, the old Smith residence, Rucker Office Building, and the old Rucker residence) should be preserved and appropriate adaptive uses determined. The carriage factory might be adapted for reuse as part of the retail-service function associated with the proposed hotel: the Atlanta Life Building, and possibly the Smith and Rucker residences, could become a museum complex devoted to the history of Black entrepreneurial achievements. The Rucker Office Building could continue its present use as active office-retail space. Since the Atlanta Life Insurance Company has a corporate and proprietary interest in the ultimate redevelopment of the block, the prospects for superior contributions to the design and character of this stretch of the Avenue are comfortably promising.

A major communications center is proposed for a location directly across the Avenue from the Atlanta Life block. The City's Black-owned
and -operated print and electronic media are urged to examine the feasibility of physically clustering their offices and studios to obtain the advantages of shared services and facilities and to reinforce their individual and collective image as a force in the community. Such a nucleus could stimulate public and private reinvestment on the Avenue and, in turn, share in the benefits. The existing structures adjacent to the Atlanta Daily World are suggested as locations for separate (corporate) managerial and service functions while shared facilities (printing, distribution, receiving, parking, mechanical services, etc.) could be housed in both existing and new construction in the block's interior.

Auburn Avenue between Park Place and Piedmont has been designed to accommodate four ten-foot lanes of moving, two-way traffic and an eight-foot median for the proposed Auburn Avenue Streetcar shuttle. No street space for curbside parking or truck loading should be provided. Sidewalks should be extended in width by fifteen feet on each side at those locations where land is in non-building use and where new building construction would occur. Sidewalk widths should be increased up to a minimum of fifteen feet at all other locations where feasible. All public and private utility poles, wires, transformers, and other apparatus should be removed from the Avenue or placed below ground, not only within this section of the Avenue, but throughout its length.
The character of the Avenue changes sharply as it crosses Piedmont from the west and enters the historic area around the Atlanta Life Insurance Company. The macroscale of the CBD is dramatically reduced as the supremacy of the office function in the central business district is replaced by institutional, local business and residential functions. This precinct retains many of the social patterns and remnants of a vibrant street life that formerly existed throughout the Avenue. Big Bethel Church, the Butler Street "Y", the Municipal Market, the retail shops, restaurants, funeral homes, drug stores—all the institutional and business activities within the precinct provide a focus for and are sustained by the dynamics of community life.

Existing buildings along the Avenue in the blocks immediately east of Piedmont should be renovated when feasible and new structures should be erected on underutilized parcels of land. Citizens Trust Bank should consider ways to physically relate its operations more strongly to the Avenue when it becomes feasible to expand its present building. The Auburn entrance to Bethel Towers should be changed from an auto-pedestrian driveway to a landscaped court intended only for use by people. Automobile access to the existing building and to an additional residential tower proposed for a site just north of the present building could be provided undercover as part of an expanded parking garage.

Major reinvestments of public and private funds should be concentrated in this precinct during the next five years to create a dramatically visible "Sweet Auburn Center." The recent refurbishing of the Municipal Market may be considered the beginning event in an energetic public/private joint-venture effort to create a new physical environment that will complement and reinforce the presently strong social environment. The nucleus of the proposed Sweet Auburn Center should include the frontage along the.
HISTORIC BUILDINGS PROVIDE THE NUCLEUS
FOR THE SWEET AUBURN CENTER
Avenue from about Piedmont to Fort Street and the frontage on Butler Street south from Auburn to the Municipal Market.

Several capital improvements are suggested by the design study of the Sweet Auburn Center area:

(1) A small recreation and open space area should be provided at the southwest corner of Butler and Auburn to supplement the programs and activities of the Butler "Y", to provide outdoor recreation for the residents of Big Bethel Towers, and to complement the facade of Big Bethel Church and enhance the environment of the Avenue.

(2) The Odd Fellows Building should be renovated for retail, office, and cultural activities. The theater portion should be made available for live productions of the performing arts; active retail activities should be continued in street-level store space; and the interior of the tower portion should be remodeled for occupancy as offices and possibly as a branch library.

(3) The I-75/85 structure over Auburn should be rebuilt to create a substantially wider pedestrian open space link between the western and eastern portions of the Avenue, to permit an extension of Sweet Auburn Center activities into the shops and stores east of the overpass and to provide additional land for new construction. Vertical retaining walls could replace the banked construction now pinching off one part of the Avenue from the other, and by extending the vertical walls northwardly toward Houston/Irwin and southwardly to the south side of Edgewood Avenue along the freeway, additional buildable land could be created.

(4) Critically needed retail/personal service establishments should be located in existing and new buildings within the superblock proposed between Auburn and Edgewood, Butler, and I-75/85. Bell Street should be closed between Auburn and Edgewood Avenues, to create the superblock and to provide additional building sites. The Herndon Building should be
renovated for retail/office occupancies, and new food stores, personal service shops, appliance and furniture stores, eating/drinking/entertainment places, community and institutional offices and other retail/community outlets should be accommodated in existing and new buildings. New construction should be designed to harmonize (scale, bulk, materials, architectural and aesthetic expression) with the existing buildings and with the proposed Sweet Auburn Historic District. A pedestrian walkway/plaza should be constructed to facilitate movement between the Municipal Market and the residential areas east of I-75/85 and to spatially unify the center and enhance its image.

(5) The Municipal Market renovation of 1974/1975 was an important commitment by the City to preservation in general and to the Sweet Auburn community in particular. The Market is the principal food store serving the area and functions as one of the "anchors" in the proposed Center. It also attracts shoppers from other areas of Atlanta. Parking facilities serving the Market and other Center activities should be enlarged, possibly by the construction of a parking garage along Boaz Street or adjacent to I-75/85 along Bell Street.

The physical configuration of the Avenue should change east of Piedmont. The number of traffic lanes should be reduced from four to two and curbside parking for autos and service vehicles should be permitted at selected parking bay locations. The eight-foot median for the Auburn Avenue Streetcar line should be retained.
THE AVENUE: PIEDMONT TO FORT STREET: TWO TRAFFIC LANES:
ONE STREETCAR LANE: PARKING IN BAYS TWO SIDES.
The proposed extension of Sweet Auburn Center activities into this precinct would substantially increase the probability of reuniting the western and eastern portions of the Avenue. The provision of increased visual and pedestrian space, the re-establishment of a continuity in the sequence of retail/service activity, and a reduction in the actual and perceived bulk/mass of freeway construction are mutually reinforcing and unifying elements of the plan. The proposed relocation of the Edgewood Avenue off-ramp to Houston Street is critically important to this reunification concept. The land now occupied by the ramp (about two acres) would be used for the construction of new shops, stores, residences, and institutions on Auburn Avenue and on Edgewood Avenue.

A replacement for the Edgewood Avenue ramp should be constructed to take traffic off the freeway at the Auburn Avenue bridge and feed it onto Houston Street at the Fort Street intersection. The proposed ramp would permit traffic destined for the CBD to utilize a street with more available capacity than Edgewood Avenue and would tend to ease the traffic burden on Edgewood Avenue.

The two blocks formed by Hilliard Street, Auburn Avenue, Jackson Street, and Edgewood Avenue should be consolidated into a super-block and redeveloped for residential use. Wheat Street Church and Wheat Street Towers (high-rise housing for the elderly) provide the nucleus for new low- and mid-rise family housing. Wheat Street Gardens (low-rise garden apartments) located north of Old Wheat Street between Fort and Jackson Streets can become an attractive residential grouping by increasing the level of building maintenance, by correcting site drainage and circulation problems, and by adding landscape features (play space, outdoor sitting areas, ornamental plant materials, etc.) which may be considered appropriate and useful by residents.
THE MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. CENTER COMPLEX
Hilliard Street presently serves as a major pedestrian path for children living in Grady Homes and in other residential areas and attending Walden Middle School. Hilliard Street also provides the most direct pedestrian link from Wheat Street Gradens and other nearby neighborhoods to the Grant Street MARTA station site. It also functions as a "feeder" street for MARTA buses which will serve the Grant Street Station. Hilliard, now dangerously narrow and poorly aligned, should be restructured to accommodate the pedestrian and vehicular traffic presently using the street and anticipated in the near future.

The Southern Christian Leadership Conference headquarters (Prince Hall Masonic Building), Ebeneezer Baptist Church, and the Martin Luther King Birth Home, each located on the Avenue, are physical links to the life of Dr. King. His crypt, resting in the garden of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Social Change, also on the Avenue, is an appeal to the spirit of man to hear the message of brotherhood and to fulfill its goals. Dr. King's accomplishments are celebrated daily by busloads of people from all over the world who visit the Center, Ebeneezer Church, and the Birth Home.

The development plans prepared by the M.L.K., Jr. Center Board for the Center site have been included unchanged in the Sweet Auburn Urban Design Plan. However, recommendations are made that are intended to resolve transportation access and parking problems and to provide a more appropriate visual frame for the Center.

(1) The open space on the north side of Auburn Avenue across from Ebeneezer and the M.L.K., Jr. Center (now used as a front yard for the King Recreation Building) should be restructured to blend with and to extend the spatial form of the Center's Memorial Garden. A monument dedicated to Dr. King should be placed within the proposed garden extension and should be of such significant size (height and mass) that it could be clearly seen from the Peachtree end of the Avenue.
(2) The property fronting on Edgewood Avenue between Jackson Street and Boulevard should be acquired for the construction of transportation and parking facilities. The area along the north side of Edgewood Avenue should be designed to accommodate the loading-unloading and parking of school buses and tour buses. The land area not needed for bus operations should be landscaped to complement the design of the Center and to facilitate crowd movement.

(3) A multi-level parking garage should be erected in the area between Edgewood Avenue and Chamberlain Street to accommodate tourists' arriving by private automobile and to serve the Center's employees, conference participants, and guests. A two-level, split-ramp garage on this site could accommodate about four hundred cars.

(4) Edgewood Avenue should be given special treatment between Boulevard and Jackson Street to call attention to the unique nature and importance of the M.L.K., Jr. Center. The proposed plan suggests a landscaped median (which also would facilitate pedestrian crossings) and trees along each edge.

The physical form and dimensions of Auburn Avenue proposed for the Piedmont to Fort Street precinct immediately to the west should be retained throughout the Fort Street to Boulevard area. The Auburn Avenue Streetcar shuttle line should continue along the Avenue past the M.L.K., Jr. Center, turn south on Boulevard, west on Edgewood Avenue, north on Jackson Street, and west on Auburn Avenue for its return trip. A stop should occur on Auburn Avenue near Boulevard and on Edgewood Avenue near Jackson.

THE AVENUE: FORT TO BOULEVARD
URBAN DESIGN PLAN: BOULEVARD TO RANDOLPH
Boulevard to Randolph Street

The character of the Avenue again changes sharply after it intersects with Boulevard and proceeds eastwardly toward Randolph Street. The small store-building and institutional-open space pattern that characterizes the precinct west of Boulevard gives way abruptly to the small- and modest-sized detached dwellings of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District. Except for the area east of Randolph Street and the frontage on the north side of Edgewood Avenue, the existing residential community is well-preserved. The rehabilitation activities apparent here and there in the neighborhood are indicative of a strong sense of community and of an experience resource that can greatly benefit community-wide preservation programs.

The character of the M.L.K., Jr. Historic District neighborhood should be protected and its distinctive qualities revealed through sensitive handling of rehabilitation activities. These objectives have been masterfully achieved in the restoration of the M.L.K., Jr. Birth Home, and the visual results obtained suggest design principles which should guide preservation activities throughout the neighborhood. Renovation projects for individual houses should preserve the form (roof style and pitch, building size and shape) of the basic structure and should retain those design features (such as windows, doors, porches, dormers, railings, brackets, steps, chimneys) which articulate that form and generate its style. New materials should be the same kinds as those originally used in the building, and alien materials (such as aluminum, asbestos, plastic, fiberboard) should be strictly avoided. Paint colors should be selected that will best express the form and design of the structure and that will blend reasonably with color schemes nearby. Landscape materials should be selected from species that grow well in Atlanta's climate and soils without constant and frequently expensive maintenance.
New residential construction should be placed on sites scattered throughout the neighborhood. The size, shape, bulk, position, materials, and other aspects of new construction should strongly reflect the architectural and site design characteristics of the existing neighborhood. Particular attention must be given to the design and environmental impact of off-street parking areas. All healthy, existing trees should be retained to the maximum feasible extent.

The historic Fire Station #6 located at the southeast corner of Auburn and Boulevard should be retained in full operation as part of Atlanta's firefighting resources.

A major concentration of new buildings should be erected east of Randolph Street on land currently occupied by streets, deteriorating houses, and dilapidated warehouses. The general outline of the proposed site would be formed by the rear lot-lines of properties along the east side of Randolph Street and the north side of Edgewood Avenue and by the west right-of-way line of the proposed roadway connection between the I-485/Stone Mountain stub and DeKalb Avenue. Ella and Airline Streets, Auburn Avenue, and other streets within the boundaries should be closed to create a total site area of about ten acres. The cylindrical concrete water tower positioned on Irwin Street should be preserved as an urban sculptural element and as an historical artifact. All other structures should be demolished or, if it is determined they could be rehabilitated, they should be moved to other sites within the neighborhood.

The design sketch prepared for the east-end site responds to the planning objectives of providing additional housing, recreation, and neighborhood shopping activities within the community. A park/play space of about two acres should be made available. The two mid-rise apartment buildings could provide 200 to 250 units of housing for families without small children, singles, newly married couples, families in the late child-launching years, and for
THE EAST END OF THE AVENUE FOCUSES ON A NEW RESIDENTIAL COMPLEX ACROSS RANDOLPH.
the elderly. Attached single-family and garden apartments (about 80 to 100 units total) should be built for families in the child-bearing and child-rearing years. Off-street parking facilities should be constructed for existing as well as new residential units, and a linear, dense, evergreen forest should be planted along the eastern edge of the site to ameliorate the environmental effects of the proposed roadway.

Placement of the tall apartment elements should respond not only to the physical characteristics of site and the functional need for direct access to Randolph Street and Edgewood Avenue, but should also respond to the visual geometry of Auburn Avenue. The buildings should extend to a height of about 12 to 14 stories and should be sited to align with that portion of Auburn Avenue lying west of Boulevard. The intended effect of this idea is to provide a visual focus marking the east beginning (end) of the Avenue.

A small concentration of neighborhood retail shopping space is suggested for the northwest corner of Randolph Street and Edgewood Avenue. The increased buying power anticipated by the addition of new, moderate-income households in the east-end development should attract food and personal service stores into the area. Existing shops, such as the "Too Tight Barber Shop," should remain and new establishments should occupy existing buildings to the maximum extent feasible. Some rearrangement or removal of existing buildings may be required to permit the construction of a shopper parking lot.
The historic sites of the "Sweet Auburn" district are visible records of the events, institutions, and persons who have created and built this community. Planning for the community should consider the on-going life in the community and utilize its historic resources to support new development. The goal of both preservation planning and new development in the district should be to recognize and make visible the history of the Sweet Auburn area as an outstanding part of the history of the City of Atlanta. It is equally important to recognize that the texture and detail of the interesting and historic structures and settings in the area have value for residents, businessmen, and for all Atlantans. These structures and settings should be preserved in the context of compatible new development. Urban Design Plans should: (1) recognize the existence of a unique and historic community, (2) make the identity of this community visible, and (3) use the community's history as a foundation for future development. The success of such planning depends upon the extent to which an adequate historic preservation program becomes an integral part of the City's comprehensive planning process.

Suggested methods for accomplishing preservation planning goals for the community, which are detailed in the Preservation Plan, include:

(1) The utilization of existing federal and/or state programs, such as the National Register of Historic Places, not only for establishing the value of the sites but also for the funding sources available to listed properties.

(2) The use and enforcement of Historic Atlanta or special historic/conservation district zoning.

(3) The development of innovative city policies such as development rights transfer and tax relief measures.

(4) The use of a variety of preservation approaches under a general policy of rehabilitation. This is a policy which lends impetus to the improvement of economically and structurally
deteriorated areas by stressing neighborhood historical heritage and new feelings of responsibility and commitment through the adaptive use of the older historical structures.

(5) The development of design criteria and construction standards both for new construction within the district and for building restoration and rehabilitation. For example, predominant features of the older commercial buildings which enhance the traditional pedestrian patterns of the area include their orientation to the street and the human scale of their form and detailing. In residential areas, typical house types which provide a valuable and characteristic community fabric have been identified. Among the typical features which clearly enhance the quality of life are ubiquitous and visually interesting verandas, qualities which should be emphasized in the design criteria.

(6) The development by the City of Atlanta of preservation consulting services that would be available to businessmen and residents of the community. Some professional consultation services are available through existing state and national programs, but trained city personnel and/or consultant preservation professional teams provided throughout the City are urgently needed.

(7) The development and encouragement both by the City and by public-private groups (such as Inner-City Development Corporation and Central Atlanta Progress) of a public awareness program at various levels of the Atlanta community. One type of planning resource for such a program would be similar projects in other cities which have been identified in the detailed preservation plan.

A variety of federal and state funding programs which could be used in the Auburn Avenue district have been identified. Some are grant programs which the city government can use to support the development of the area; others are potential resources for urban design and building rehabilitation and restoration within an historic area.
HISTORIC PLACES INDICATED ON PRESERVATION PLAN

Notable and Significant Structures and Districts

1.01 Atlanta Life Insurance Company Building
148 Auburn Avenue

1.02 John Smith Carriage Factory
122-124 Auburn Avenue

1.03 John Smith Home
150 Auburn Avenue

1.04 Rucker Building
152 Auburn Avenue

1.05 Rucker Home
172 Piedmont Avenue

2.00 Big Bethel AME Church
220 Auburn Avenue

3.00 Odd Fellows Office Building/Auditorium
250 Auburn Avenue

4.00 Herndon Building
251 Auburn Avenue

5.00 Tabor Building
323 Auburn Avenue

6.00 Prince Hall Masonic Building
330 Auburn Avenue

7.00 Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic District
7.01 Ebeneezer Baptist Church
413 Auburn Avenue

7.02 Crypt Site - Martin Luther King, Jr.
413 Auburn Avenue, east of Church

7.03 Fire Station No. 6
39 Boulevard Avenue

7.04 Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church Mission
25-29 Boulevard

7.05 Martin Luther King, Jr. Birth Home
501 Auburn Avenue

8.00 Butler Street YMCA
22 Butler Street

9.00 Walden Building
20 Butler Street

10.00 Municipal Market
209 Edgewood Avenue

14.00 H. R. Butler (Yonge Street) School
69 Yonge Street

Surrounding Historic Structures and Districts

15.00 Roane Building
541 Edgewood Avenue

17.00 Shepherd Decorating Company
Yonge Street

18.00 First Congregational Church
105 Courtland Street

19.00 David T. Howard School
551 Houston Street

20.00 Wheat Street Baptist Church
18 Yonge Street, corner Auburn Avenue

87.00 Georgia State U. Baptist Student Center
125 Edgewood Avenue

88.00 Grady Hospital - Original building
36 Butler Street
IMPLEMENTATION

The activities, participants, primary funding sources, sequence, and priorities required to implement the proposed plan are summarized in this section. In the case of the City of Atlanta departments' and/or budget categories, the following abbreviations are utilized:

- Department of Budget and Planning (DBP)
- Department of Contracts and Grants (DCG)
- Department of Community and Human Development (DCHD)
- Department of Environment and Streets (DES)
- Department of Parks, Library, and Cultural Affairs (DPLC)
- Department of Public Safety (DSP)
- Atlanta Urban Design Commission (UDC)
- Community Development Block Grant (CD)

In addition, operating funds and capital funds are identified with an (o) and (c), respectively.

ACTIVITIES, PARTICIPANTS, AND FUNDS

General

(1) Introduce project plans into the City's comprehensive planning process, including required annual plan review and revision, creation of a special development district, and related planning staff work; participants: DBP and UDC; funds: DBP (o).

Land Use and Zoning

(2) Implement zoning changes in the area west of I-75/85 as required by the plan, including technical assistance to land and business owners; participants: DBP, UDC, and the Inner-City Development Corporation (ICDC); funds: DBP(o). Technical assistance: DCHD and Mayor's Office.

(3) Implement zoning changes in the area east of I-75/85, including the provision of new historic zones, conversion of outmoded commercial and industrial land uses to residential...
use, technical planning and funding aid to residents, institutions, etc.; participants: DBP, UDC, local institutions; funds: DBP(o), and historic preservation grants (see historic preservation report); technical assistance: DCHD and Mayor's Office.

(4) Rehabilitate existing viable housing stock, clear dilapidated structures, construct infill housing; participants: DBP, DCHD, UDC, and private investors, residents, and institutions, with historic renovation, code enforcement, moderate-income mortgage, structural rehabilitation, and tax incentive programs; funds: all departments(o), historic preservation grants, CD, and private investment.

(5) Develop major new residential projects in areas of dilapidated housing, and vacant and outmoded commercial and industrial sites, with tax incentive and tax increment programs; participants: private, quasi-private, and/or quasi-public developers; funds: primarily private capital.

(6) Develop two new commercial areas, one near Auburn and Hilliard Streets, and another at the eastern edge of the community; participants: private developers; funds: primarily private capital (possible CD assistance).

(7) Acquire a total of six acres, develop at least one two-acre park and a number of smaller playgrounds; participants: DPLC; funds: DPLC(c), CD, and private capital as a part of private housing development.

Transportation and Circulation

(8) Renovate streets and sidewalks in the existing M.L.K., Jr. Historic District, including new lights, street and sidewalk paving, landscaping, and street furniture; participants: UDC, DES; funding: DES(c), CD, historic preservation grants.

(9) Acquire land and construct parking facilities for the M.L.K., Jr. Center for Social Change and Historic District; participants: M.L.K., Jr. Center, DES; funds: DES(c), CD.
(10) Construct I-485/Stone Mountain/DeKalb Avenue connector road, including land acquisition, relocation of residents, engineering studies, and construction; participants: DES, State of Georgia DOT; funds: Federal aid to State under the Federal Aid Highway Act, matching funds from State.

(11) Improve Hilliard Street, including an increased right-of-way, street and sidewalk paving, lighting, landscaping, and street furniture; participants: DBP, DES; funding: DES(c) and CD.

(12) Convert Old Wheat Street to a pedestrian way, including closing of the street to all but local traffic, repaving, lighting, landscaping, etc.; participants: DBP, UDC, DES; funding: DES(c), CD.

(13) Reconstruct Auburn Avenue streetcar line from Central City Park to Martin Luther King, Jr. Center to serve as a people mover; participants: DES, MARTA, UDC, MLK, Jr. Center, ICDC; funding: DES(c), CD, MARTA(c).

(14) Eliminate one off-ramp, construct one off-ramp (I-75/85) as per the Transportation and Circulation Plan; participants: DES, State of Georgia DOT; funds: federal and state capital funds.

Urban Design

(15) Renovation of Auburn Avenue as a "special street" and construction of a "Sweet Auburn Center"; public improvements include street and sidewalk improvements (street and sidewalk construction, lighting, landscaping, street furniture, signs and signals, small parks, etc.); private improvements include renovation and/or restoration of viable businesses, construction of new office and commercial space; participants: Inner-City Development Corporation, M.L.K., Jr. Center for Social Change, other institutions and enterprises, DBP, DCHD, UDC; funding: City departmental operating and capital funds, CD, private capital, historic preservation grants.

(16) Construct a major monument to Martin Luther King, Jr. near the King Center; participants: M.L.K., Jr. Center; funds: private capital, National Endowment for the Arts.
Public Facilities and Services

(17) Improve public services within the community, including police protection; rodent, dog, and pest control; garbage and trash removal; street and sidewalk repairs; participants: DES, DPS; funds: DES(o) and (c), DPS(o).

(18) Improve the level of social services within the community; participants: DCHD, Economic Opportunity Atlanta, and other delivery agencies; funds: all agency operating funds, CD.

(19) Establish a community multi-service center to house a mix of existing social service offices; participants: DCHD; funds: CD.

(20) Establish a health care center within the community; participants: DCHD, Fulton County; funding: DCHD and County (o) and (c), CD.

(21) Establish five child-care centers; participants: private enterprise; funds: private capital.

(22) Establish a branch library and/or reading room in the Odd Fellows Building; participants: building owners, ICDC, DPLC; funds: DPLC(o) and (c), CD.

Historic Preservation

(23) Exploitation of historic preservation fundings, including technical aid in the preparation of applications, delineation of historic districts, etc.; participants: UDC with consultants; funding: DCG and DBP(o).

(24) Design and construct historic identification signs for districts, sites, and structures; participants: UDC with consultants; funds: CD, historic preservation funding, National Endowment for the Arts grant.

(25) Renovate, restore historic structures, promote adaptive uses; participants: UDC, ICDC, consultants, private owners; funds: CD and historic preservation funds.

(26) Provide design and other technical aid to individuals and institutions involved with preservation or new development efforts; participants: UCD with consultants, DBP; funds:
DAF, DBP, historic preservation funds, National Endowment for the Arts grant.

(27) Conduct a city-wide public awareness program relative to "Sweet Auburn"; participants: all concerns, consultants; funds: DCG and National Endowment for the Arts grant.

(28) Establish a Sweet Auburn Historic District; apply for designation as National Historic Landmark; participants: UDC, M.L.K., Jr. Center, ICDC, State of Georgia DNR; funds: UDC, private foundations.

SEQUENCE AND PRIORITY

The following chart identifies the sequence and priority for each of the required activities over a fifteen-year planning period. Activities are listed by functional category (numbered as above), each with a graphic bar that represents the initiation date and duration period. Since priorities are always general, this chart should never be interpreted so rigidly as to constrain development or improvement activities. However, the chart does reflect an appropriate sequence of activities intended to maximize the effects of each activity toward implementation of the entire plan.

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<td>(d) Structural rehabilitation</td>
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<td>8. Renovation of streets in M.L.K., Jr. Historic District</td>
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<td>9. Construction of bus and parking facilities, M.L.K., Jr. Center</td>
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<td>12. Reconstruction of Old Wheat Street</td>
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<td>(b) I-75/85 underpass area (Auburn)</td>
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<td>(c) M.L.K., Jr. Historic District</td>
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16. M.L.K., Jr. monument construction

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

17. Improvement of priority public services
   (a) Police protection
   (b) Rodent, pest, and dog control
   (c) Garbage collection
   (d) Street and sidewalk repairs

18. Improvement of social services

19. Establish a community multi-service center

20. Establish community health care center

21. Establish five child care facilities

22. Establish branch library in Odd Fellows Building

23. Exploitation of historic funding

24. Historic marker program

25. Renovation of historic structures

26. Design aid and regulation

27. Public awareness program

28. Establishment of Sweet Auburn Historic District: apply for designation as National Historic Landmark
"SWEET AUBURN" PROJECT STAFF

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