



A TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL REPORT:

Strategy to Develop a Portion of the  
Former US Army Base,  
Fort McPherson in Atlanta, GA

June 2015

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# FORWARD

## The Panel's Assignment

The McPherson Implementing Local Redevelopment Authority (MILRA) requested the assistance of the Atlanta District Council of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) to advise and make recommendations concerning the development opportunities for a portion of the former Fort McPherson (Fort Mac) in Atlanta, Georgia, as part of a strategy to redevelop the former United States Army base. ULI, through its Technical Assistance Program, convened a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP or Panel) to address the issues on June 3rd - 4th, 2015. The Panel consisted of experts from a variety of disciplines connected with land use and real estate development, including landscape architecture, residential development, commercial development and management, community planning and design, historic preservation, economic development, brokerage, marketing and urban design.

MILRA asked for assistance in determining the market opportunities for the 145-acre± parcel within Fort Mac (the Study Area) that MILRA acquired from the Army. The 145-acres are what remain following Tyler Perry Studios' (TPS) acquisition of approximately 330 acres (TPS property) to develop a studio with multiple sound stages. MILRA also sought advice on ways to enhance the marketability of the Study Area to new retail businesses and other investors, leverage existing relationships and improve the image and connectivity of the Study Area to surrounding communities. To accomplish these objectives, the TAP evaluated the components necessary for a revitalized Study Area and recommended steps MILRA could take to facilitate redevelop-

ment. More specifically, the primary objectives of the TAP were to advise MILRA on:

- How to influence market dynamics and create market opportunities in the Study Area
- Ways Tyler Perry Studios' plans can be leveraged to support redevelopment of the Study Area
- The role MILRA should play in redevelopment
- Specific actions MILRA should take to support redevelopment, including whether it would be advisable/feasible to:
  - acquire adjacent property to create a larger developable tract;
  - implement a 5-kilometer walking trail or other greenspace;
  - construct a pedestrian bridge across adjacent railroad tracks to connect to the Sylvan Hills community; and
- Opportunities to fund maintenance and security costs for the Study Area

*The panel discussion begins after hearing from the community stakeholders and touring the site.*



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After its closure in 2011, Fort McPherson is now looking towards the future. Although a comprehensive plan was created in 2010 to redevelop the fort as a research park, those plans did not materialize, and a recent opportunity to sell TPS approximately 330 of the fort's 486 acres altered the future landscape of Fort Mac. There are many challenges facing Fort Mac's redevelopment. It is boxed in by transportation infrastructure with little pedestrian access. The surrounding area suffers from blight, with high unemployment rates, many vacant buildings and a lack of amenities. Due to TPS' property line, MILRA will need to construct a new road through the Study Area for access.

MILRA also has to manage the diverse and varied expectations of the MILRA board, political forces and community needs and desires. While MILRA is focused on recruiting new investment into Fort Mac, the community is looking for job creation and a new sense of place that encompasses a more urban, walkable lifestyle.

Despite these challenges, Fort Mac has a wealth of history and cultural possibilities. The Study Area offers something not found in most new developments – *Authenticity*. MILRA should not miss the opportunity to capitalize on this important asset which sets Fort Mac apart.

The Panel's recommendations revolve around two major concepts.

- 1) *MILRA should assume the function of master developer.* MILRA should position itself to guide the Study Area's redevelopment and act as a catalyst for the greater community. MILRA should serve as the guardian of the long-term vision with the commitment to key goals and objectives. This will require building a development team and creating an appropriate internal management structure to properly assume the master developer role. The Panel urges MILRA to undertake a rebranding effort that advances placemaking with a new name, logo and marketing slogan (e.g., "The Mac").

As master developer, MILRA needs to create an *aggressive* marketing and business plan for developing, marketing, selling and/or leasing the Study Area. This

should include creating a 501(c)(3) charitable organization focused on the community and the Fort Mac legacy. Further, MILRA should become a player at the regional table by developing relationships with and initiating conversations among other local and regional organizations concerning common issues.

- 2) *The Study Area should be divided into several distinct development zones, each with a particular focus and use.* Organizing the property into smaller development parcels better facilitates phased development based on market demand. The Panel envisions the Study Area as a true mixed use project incorporating residential, retail, office and community uses. As illustrated on page 11, the Panel identified the following development zones: a historic village, film production supported retail, a wellness/office campus, Lee Street retail, a greenspace anchor, Campbellton Road mixed use, Campbellton Road residential and future office/residential.

MILRA's efforts should begin with the historic properties, which provide instant placemaking and can be leveraged to create a brand fusing together diverse uses throughout the Study Area. A portion of the fort's perimeter wall *must come down*, and the historic entrance on Lee Street should be reopened to be the project's new front door. MILRA should immediately put out its welcome mat and let developers know it is open for business. MILRA needs to cultivate *activity, momentum* and *excitement*. Further, the U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) building is a significant asset which should be *aggressively* marketed.

Greenspace planning presents another opportunity for creative placemaking. A trail network should be interwoven throughout the Study Area, link parks and greenspace and provide connection points to the Oakland City and Fort McPherson MARTA stations. An ambitious makeover of Lee Street and Astor Avenue to include tree-lined streets and pedestrian and bicycle paths is key to revitalizing the area. This metamorphosis would be a game-changer and provide the needed connection to neighborhoods east of the rail lines.

There is a tremendous amount of work ahead for MILRA to make things happen for the Study Area. It will take a lot of patience and perseverance. That said, Fort Mac is a remarkable place that has the power to be transformative for the area. This opportunity should not be wasted.

## *The MAC: Fortifying the Future While Protecting the Past*

# SWOT ANALYSIS

Part of the Panel's process includes identifying Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats for the Study Area. This aids the Panel in formulating recommendations for moving forward. The issues the Panel found most significant are:

## Strengths & Opportunities

### Strengths

- **VA** - The Veterans Health Administration (VA) already owns 10.5 acres in Fort Mac and wants to expand. The Atlanta VA has one of three fastest growing VA programs in the country, and it needs another 500,000 square feet of space.
- **TPS** is enthusiastic to move forward on production activity immediately, and could employ as many as 500 workers on site starting in September 2015. TPS intends to apply for construction permits and start construction by the end of the year. Construction activity will begin to change the feel of Fort Mac and lead to long term activity. It also increases funds going into the existing Campbellton Road Tax Allocation District (TAD), which includes Fort McPherson.
- **History** - Many of the historic buildings are habitable and ready to be converted for new business use. The Red Cross building and the Guard House/Chapel Center, among others, are architectural jewels that can be leveraged to form a new identity and brand for Fort Mac.
- **Location** - Fort Mac is very centrally located, being less than 5 miles from both downtown Atlanta and the airport. The two MARTA stations are also an attribute, as is the Atlanta BeltLine just over one mile away.
- **East Point** is a diamond in the rough with charming architecture and an abundance of greenspace (23 parks). There is also a strong cultural presence in this area with the Tri-Cities High School Visual and Performing Arts Magnet Program and the prestigious Ballethnic Dance Company.
- **Improvement Funds** - A \$250 million bond has just passed in order to make citywide infrastructure improvements, including revitalizing Lee Street. It is proposed to be converted into a "complete street" with additional bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- **Improving Conditions** - Abandoned properties in the surrounding community are in the process of being reclaimed. Many properties will be transferred to the Land Bank Authority, some of which haven't been on the tax rolls for 10 - 20 years.
- **TAD** - Although the current TAD tax base is small, TPS will lift the tax base and create an expansion of available funds for area projects and initiatives.
- **FORSCOM** - The building that once served as headquarters of the U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM), containing 371,000 square feet, is prime commercial real estate.
- **LCI** - The 2004 Oakland City/Lakewood Livable City Initiative (LCI) is currently being updated to include Fort Mac. A key focus of the study will be how best to reconnect Fort McPherson to the surrounding area. The study's stakeholders include MILRA, the City of Atlanta, Invest Atlanta, MARTA and adjacent communities including the City of East Point.



*FORSCOM is prime real estate.*

## Opportunities

- **Long-Term Activity** - TPS could have as many as 16 sound stages, each housing a single TV show or film production with 200 – 300 workers. This significantly enhances the opportunities in the Study Area for retail that can support film production and provide services for the surrounding community.
- **New Jobs** – An expansion for the VA, TPS and future retail in the Study Area will provide needed jobs for the neighborhood.
- **Historic Entrance** - The fort's original entrance along Lee Street can be reopened and the historic buildings leveraged to serve as a front door to the community.
- **Ripe for Redevelopment** - Campbellton Road, along with much of the area around Fort Mac, is a blank slate for new development.
- **Potential Customers** - Although the total population within a 1-mile radius of the fort is only 8,942, within 3 miles the population reaches 85,294.
- **TOD** - MARTA is considering turning the Oakland City station parking lot into a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) project. If MARTA proceeds as planned to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the station, it would be one of only five TOD projects to move forward in 2015. MARTA would like to get the property rezoned to mixed-use by or around the time of the RFP.
- **City Assistance** - The City of Atlanta and the Atlanta Housing Authority may be able to provide assistance with meeting MILRA's obligation to provide 325 housing units for the homeless.
- **Zoning** – Since all of the property has to be rezoned before development, there is an opportunity to ensure that the new zoning recognizes the historic properties and the attributes of the area.



### What is TOD?

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) creates walkable development (urban and suburban) in our cities and towns by connecting residential, retail, office and institutional developments with public amenities and high capacity transit to reduce significantly or eliminate the need for automobiles.

*Source: Urban Land Institute*



*Historic Entrance - by opening the original gate, the historic buildings, such as the recreation center built by the Red Cross shown in the picture above, can be leveraged and serve as a “welcoming hand” to the community. Building 46 is shown in the background.*

# Weaknesses & Threats

## Weaknesses

- *Willing Capital/ Investor Confidence* – It will be difficult for retail developers to obtain financing based on the area's current demographics. Theoretically, the film productions operating out of the Studio will provide sufficient support for new retail, but there is no reliable data to support this theory. In East Point, investors seem to be waiting for someone else to make the first move.
- *Appearance* - The blight of the surrounding area and the current MARTA frontage and landscaping create an empty feeling and impression of stagnation. The current wall surrounding Fort Mac protects people inside but makes the fort look unapproachable.
- *Demographics* - Within a 3-mile radius, the median household income is \$24,658, with a per capita income of \$14,741 and an average household income of \$35,739.
- *Unemployment* - The biggest hurdle for this area is job creation. The high unemployment rate has been pushed to the brink by the loss of an estimated 9,600 direct and indirect jobs attributable to the base closure.
- *TPS* – While the Studio will bring a lot of workers to Fort Mac, the workers typically stay within the Studio gates during working hours. Many developers question TPS's demand for retail before they are willing to commit.
- *Walker Avenue Relocation* - The VA must have access to its property, so MILRA will have to relocate Walker Avenue once a boundary fence goes up on the TPS Property. It will be challenging to fit a new road into the Study Area based on how the TPS Property line was drawn and the configuration of existing buildings.
- *Blight* – Much of the area surrounding Fort McPherson is suffering from blight, with a vacancy rate of 25.2% in weighted average for seven census tracts surrounding the Ft. McPherson, not unlike most of South Fulton County. Many homeowners are seniors. The last major development in this area was Greenbriar Mall, built in 1969.
- *Study Area Conditions* - MILRA cannot use the infrastructure currently in place. The electric voltage is too low and must be updated. Water, roads, power and fiber optics must all be put in at an estimated cost of an estimated \$50 million.
- *Poor Access* - Poor connectivity of the Study Area to the surrounding community is a major concern. There are a large number of restrictive elements in one small area - two MARTA stations, MARTA and railroad tracks and Highway 166. All of these cut Fort Mac off from the surrounding area. Lee Street is five lanes wide and with fast-moving traffic. Astor Avenue provides an East-West tunnel, providing access across the otherwise uncrossable rail lines.
- *Community Sentiment & Conditions* – Residents currently do not feel a sense of pride in the area. They feel like an invisible community. There is a surplus of affordable housing in the broader area, and MARTA's current plan is to build more. An over-abundance of affordable and low-income housing might drive banks and potential investors away. Many in the community feel that promises were made to them about what Fort McPherson would become through the research park master plan developed in 2010, and they are disheartened that the "promises" have not been fulfilled and likely never will be. The community wants development but does not want property taxes to rise.
- *Property Obligations* – The Study Area comes with significant obligations, which might deter developers. The homeless obligation is very complicated and commenced on the day MILRA took title

to the property. The sale included a requirement that 325 housing units be created onsite or off-site to serve the homeless population.

- **Building Conditions** - Some structures within the Study Area may be too costly to raze/remove, but they may not be practical for continued use. MILRA is responsible for demolishing outdated structures. While FORSCOM has a lot of space and other attractive features, its structure and layout is not in line with current office space demands and desires, so the pool of potential purchasers/tenants for this space is somewhat limited.
- **Property Configuration** – The layout of the Study Area is awkward and requires different strategies for different parcels.
- **Environmental Cleanup** - There is a one-acre site (Patton Plaza) which will not be conveyed to MILRA until the Army has completed the necessary environmental cleanup and remediation. The late conveyance of this property hampers the ability to develop the property which is most suited to film production-supported retail.
- **Operating Costs** – The cost of maintaining and providing security for the property is significant, and MILRA has little operating monies to fund these costs.



*Lee Street is five lanes wide and with fast-moving traffic. The current wall surrounding Fort Mac protects people inside but makes the fort look unapproachable.*

- **Suburban Character** – Even with nearby transit options, Fort Mac will remain car-dependent for the near future.

## Threats

- **Pace of Construction** - TPS will expend a large amount of capital in a construction whirlwind, leaving little time to develop a strategy for the overall property. Significant opportunities will be missed if MILRA cannot mobilize quickly enough to keep up with TPS' construction.
- **Managing Expectations** - MILRA must navigate and manage the different expectations of the greater community, and political forces.
- **TPS' Fence** - TPS' plan to construct a fence or wall around its property poses a significant threat to the historic district due to the very tight physical constraints in this area.



*The blight of the surrounding area and the current MARTA frontage and landscaping create an empty feeling and impression of stagnation. There are a large number of restrictive elements in one small area, including uncrossable MARTA & rail-road tracks.*

# RECOMMENDATIONS

The Panel's recommendations are intended to guide decision-making in planning and implementing development efforts for the Study Area. The following recommendations represent a big picture action plan for MILRA.

## Be the Master Developer

Perhaps the most important question the Panel tackled concerns the role that MILRA should play in the Study Area's redevelopment. The Panel recommends that MILRA position itself to function as the Master Developer to guide the Study Area's redevelopment and to act as a catalyst for the broader neighborhood. Taking a more aggressive approach to development will allow MILRA to be in the driver's seat of development of the Study Area. To position itself as Master Developer, the Panel recommends undertaking the following:

*Assemble Development Team.* MILRA needs to assemble a team of development professionals with traditional master developer skills to tackle diverse issues particular to the Study Area. The team can be comprised of both in-house personnel as well as outside consultants. The skills needed include:

- o Marketing
- o Community planning
- o Greenspace planning
- o Operations
- o Program management
- o Environmental management
- o Historic preservation
- o Legal
- o Base realignment and closure (BRAC) requirements
- o Brokerage
- o Finance

*Create an Executive/ Management Team.* In order to effectively implement a master development strategy and capitalize on the TPS construction, MILRA needs to be able to make decisions and act quickly when necessary. It is the Panel's understanding that TPS intends to construct the Studio at a very fast pace. MILRA needs to be able to

keep up with, if not stay ahead of, TPS' activity. MILRA needs to be proactive rather than reactive in making sure that it has an internal management structure that will allow such quick action. To accomplish this, MILRA may need to create a subcommittee or executive or management team comprised of less than all board members which can assemble and take action quickly.

*Rebranding Effort.* MILRA needs to rebrand itself with a new name, an iconic logo and a marketing slogan that advance placemaking. McPherson Implementing Local Redevelopment Authority is simply too long and sounds too governmental to be a Master Developer operating name. MILRA needs a brand that creates name recognition and a clear sense of place and is welcoming to both the broader community and the development community. The brand should encapsulate the story of the new Fort McPherson. A new operating name and marketing slogan should be crafted to further the brand. This will help create the momentum necessary for redevelopment. One branding suggestion is to use the name "The MAC," although the name would have to be investigated to rule out any possible trademark infringement issues.

It is also very important for MILRA to develop a marketing strategy to manage community and board expectations for all redevelopment. Listening to the community is essential. TPS and other developers might not have the finesse necessary to deal with the complex public aspect of this project. The community MUST be involved in redevelopment to reestablish trust.

*Create a Master Developer Strategy.* MILRA needs to create a comprehensive business plan for developing, marketing, selling and/or leasing the Study Area. While MILRA should be capable of acting quickly, it should "act smart" in all developmental decisions - not move too quickly to sell the Study Area in a piecemeal fashion without a master development strategy. MILRA should keep an open line of communication with TPS. Having a clear understanding of the improvements TPS is planning will aid efforts to master plan the entire site. For instance, MILRA should explore whether there is any possibility of keeping a few key internal roads within the TPS Property as public access but with

a streamlined street closure process for the Studio so they can be closed as needed.

Before selling any of the Study Area, MILRA needs to evaluate whether any type of unifying legal structure or overlay covenants should be put into place. The development strategy should include an exit strategy for MILRA. Is there a need for any entity to assume a function or responsibility that MILRA currently performs once MILRA has sold all of the Study Area? MILRA also needs to create developmental guidelines – the principles of development that any parcel developer will need to follow. These principles should include job creation. MILRA should consider how any plan or recommendation for the Study Area supports the creation of jobs.

Immediate land values for the Study Area will be based on the purchase by TPS, which will serve as a development catalyst. Bonds could be used to update infrastructure, along with opportunity zone tax credits. Try not to scare the first developers away with MILRA's overall obligations. For example, the BeltLine first focused on hardscape and infrastructure, and *then* shifted focus to community building, based on their needs.

*Forge Alliances & Partnerships.* Part of the master development strategy should include participating in, and perhaps driving, discussions and plans for regional development. MILRA should get involved in and/ or broaden conversations already ongoing among other regional groups and, in some cases, MILRA may need to initiate the conversation. There are a number of groups and organizations which could be beneficial for MILRA to join or participate in, but in particular, the Panel recommends that MILRA work to form relationships with:

- *City of Atlanta* – A good relationship with the City is important for multiple reasons, including the fact that the property will need to be rezoned.
- *Tyler Perry Studios* – A cooperative relationship with the large next-door neighbor is critical to the entire Fort Mac property.
- *MARTA* - Having connectivity to the Oakland City and Fort McPherson MARTA stations is key. MILRA should also be involved in any discussions

about development at either station. The connections to and from the two MARTA stations are not very welcoming and need to be updated. MARTA's assistance should also be sought to transform the Fort McPherson station to reflect the look, feel and brand of the new Fort Mac. In addition, one area of focus for the LCI study underway could focus on transformation of the two MARTA stations. MARTA has partnered with WonderRoot and the Transformation Alliance to revitalize selected MARTA stations with art. MILRA and MARTA should discuss the possibility of having the Ft. McPherson Station included on the list for art.

*"WonderRoot, in partnership with MARTA and the TransFormation Alliance, recently announced the launch of the En Route program with a goal to revitalized select MARTA stations and their surroundings with public art. The stations selected include King Memorial, Oakland City, Hamilton E. Holmes, and a yet-to-be-announced station.*

*The newly formed TransFormation Alliance is looking to provide a platform through this public art project for community residents to engage in their neighborhoods, create access to transit, and bring economic prosperity to the area.*

*En Route's goal is to make these stations more approachable to people outside the community, but also encourage bonding among riders living nearby."*

*~ Creative Loafing, August 4, 2015*

- **Atlanta BeltLine**– MILRA should seek to make a connection from the BeltLine to the Study Area.
- **Atlanta Aerotropolis Alliance** – Although Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport is a primary driver of metropolitan Atlanta's economy, development around the airport to date has been unplanned, with no cohesive strategy. The Atlanta Aerotropolis Alliance seeks to change that by transforming the area around the airport into a world-class "aerotropolis" or "airport city." The goal is to make the airport vicinity more attractive to international corporations, logistics companies and others that can benefit from proximity to the world's busiest airport and to connections to national and international markets. Fort McPherson lies within the defined Atlanta Aerotropolis area. MILRA should be a part of this collaborative effort which also includes the City of Hapeville, the City of East Point and the City of College Park. By taking a larger area into account, the smaller communities can complement rather than compete with each other.
- **City of East Point** – MILRA should seek to work with the City of East Point on issues that could be beneficial to both entities. For example, there could be opportunities for joint marketing efforts.

**Education & Job Training Organizations** – It would be beneficial to make connections with several area colleges and job training programs. Dr. Mary Schmidt Campbell, Spelman College's new President, led efforts to expand programs at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts to include a new multi-media, interactive telecommunications and game design divisions. It is the Panel's understanding that there is a need in Atlanta for training pro-

grams and schools geared toward the technical aspects of media and entertainment. There may be an opportunity to partner with Spelman College, Atlanta Metropolitan State College, Atlanta Technical College, or the new Georgia Film Academy to provide such training within the Study Area. Not only could such training programs generate some activity within the Study Area, but there is also the potential to be a feeder to TPS and other area studios.



*The panel recommends that MILRA have conversations with regional and local organizations. MILRA needs to be an active participant with these organizations to get their name front and center when planning sessions take place.*

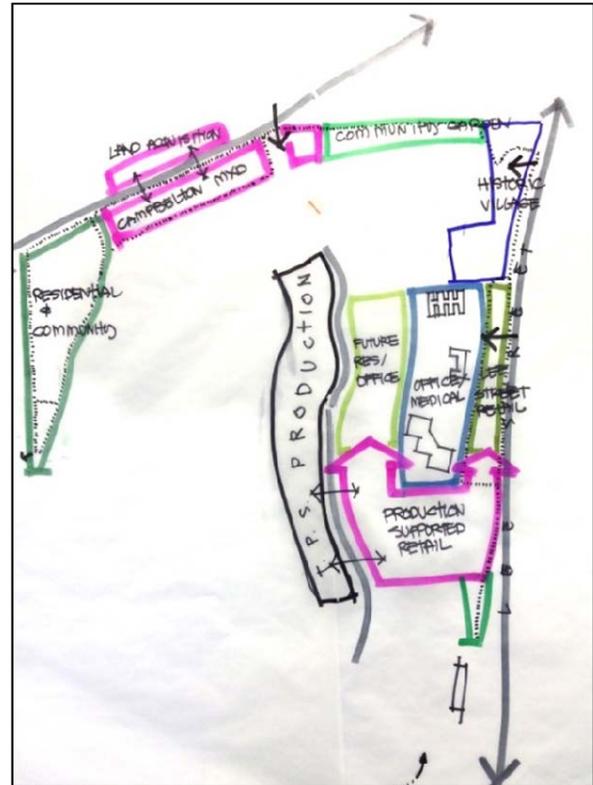
**Start Marketing.** Once the brand is created, MILRA should *aggressively* market the Study Area. The development community needs to know that MILRA is open for business. Many developers may have been uninterested in the property to date due to the lengthy delay in MILRA being able to get the property from the Army. Create real estate presentations to address housing and raise the area's profile. Residential brokers need to be convinced to act now before home values rise. Marketing could also help change residents' outlook into feeling a sense of pride for the broader community.

**Create a Special Purpose 501(c)(3) charitable organization to serve Fort Mac.** The mission of this organization will need to be further explored, but it could serve as the community outreach and community building arm of Fort Mac, maintain greenspace, preserve and maintain historic structures with the Study Area and/or operate a museum and conduct history tours. Having a separate charitable organization undertake these efforts provides a vehicle for raising outside funds to further these goals since donations would be tax-deductible for the donors. MILRA should create the charity and control the governance and focus of its board. Historic preservation could be a great way to engage the philanthropic community. It would also be a great way for TPS to get involved by engaging in high profile philanthropy. A fundraiser that generates publicity could endear Mr. Perry to local residents and jumpstart donations to create a pool of funds for grants and future improvements. Examples of similar organizations include Atlanta BeltLine Partnership, Piedmont Park Conservancy, and Cobb Landmarks and Historical Society.

## Development Zones

The Panel envisions the Study Area as being divided into several distinct development zones, each with a particular focus and use. Organizing the property into smaller, concrete development blocks will make the project appeal to a broader development audience than just master developers. It also allows the project to move forward in stages based on demand.

In addition to assembling a development team to advise MILRA on a project-wide basis, a special team should be formed for each development zone based on the particular needs of that zone, and each zone should have its own



*Development Zones rendering.*

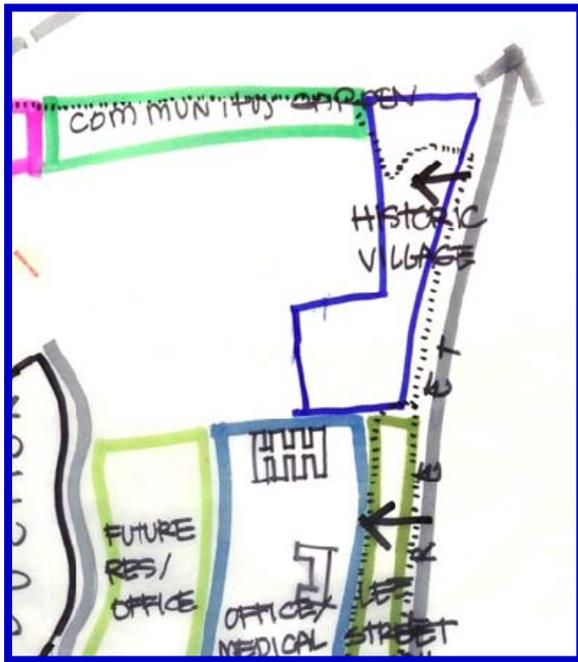
action plan for marketing and developing the property. It is important, however, that a master development strategy be in place for the overall property to ensure that zone development works with the overall plan.

While development of each zone will occur as the market allows, in an effort to channel MILRA's efforts, the zones are presented in the order in which development is more likely to occur. Nonetheless, significant planning needs to occur for several zones as a phase one strategy, as described in the following sections.

### 1. Historic Village

The northeast corner of the fort encompasses the Fort McPherson National Register Historic District, and includes a number of historic buildings, such as Staff Row, the Old Post Area and the Historic Parade Ground. This historic district is the heart and soul of Fort McPherson. A portion of the historic district was transferred to TPS, but much of it remains owned by MILRA. The Panel envisions developing this portion of the Study Area as a Historic Village. This area should also serve as the new front door to the community. The Historic Village contains architectural jewels

that provide instant placemaking and an authenticity that people crave. MILRA should capitalize on these important assets and begin its efforts in this zone.



*Historic Village Zone rendering.*

- Tear Down That Wall: Establish New Front Door to the Community.*** First, MILRA should take the existing inventory of the historic properties in the Study Area and develop an adaptive reuse plan based on the size/floor plan/viability of each building and its suitability for other uses. Then, the Panel suggests several actions for the initial phase of development efforts in this zone. At least a portion of the perimeter wall around the fort must come down in this area, and the historic entrance on Lee Street should be reopened. Strategically remove a section of the wall and create a more welcoming feel. This should serve as the new main entrance to the property with an understanding that, security aspects must continue to be addressed. The Historic Village should no longer be hidden away behind a fortress, but other property owners (such as the VA) and new tenants must continue to feel safe, so the master plan must address security measures. The goal of reopening the historic entrance should be to instill a sense of welcome to the property after many years of being closed off behind a fortress. The remade entrance should evoke the picturesque "main street" look and feel that used to exist in this district.

- As an immediate step, MILRA should make every effort to negotiate with TPS concerning the look and feel of the TPS fence/wall where the TPS Property abuts the Historic District.*** The Panel identified the TPS fence in this area as a threat to development of the Study Area due to its proximity to the historic buildings in this zone. Ideally, the fence would be semi-permeable, allowing the public to "see through" the fence to the historic parade ground and Staff Row. This would help this significant portion of the National Register Historic District from seeming "cut off" from the Historic Village. It would be wonderful if a deal could be struck allowing the fence in this area to be opened on certain occasions to allow the public into the parade ground area, such as for history tours, on Veterans Day and the like. In any event, it is imperative that the TPS fence in this area not detract from the Historic Village. At a minimum, perhaps the fence could be painted to depict the scene beyond.
- Create Activity.*** MILRA should move its headquarters into the Guard House/Chapel Center (Building 51) and also create a sales office and welcome center here. This adaptive reuse lays groundwork with an open hand to bring the community into the building and creates a connection. MILRA should also recruit some type of small retail business(es) to open in the zone on an expedited basis. The idea is to generate foot traffic and buzz about what is going on at Fort Mac. This creates an impression of new growth and prosperity and helps build a sense of community and the brand of



*The remade entrance should evoke the picturesque "main street" look and feel that used to exist in this district.*

the larger development. In an effort to get something opened quickly, MILRA should consider offering very favorable lease terms on a temporary basis. For example, at Ponce City Market, the developer gave free space to a coffee shop that became a hub of activity. This very small act generated goodwill and encouraged people to visit the project years before other retail space was available.

One way to get developers, investors and the community excited about this area is to highlight the creative and cultural wealth in the surrounding area through creative placemaking. Inviting local artists to come into the Study Area and showcase their talents can spark an artistic hub and drive momentum. This can be accomplished through live performances and/or art exhibits or art installations. MILRA could begin by making connections with Tri-Cities High School and the Ballethnic Dance Company.

One visual way to convey cultural vibrancy is make the wall surrounding Fort Mac less off-putting. It is imperative that a portion of the wall come down immediately, but it may take some time before the entire wall can be removed. Instead of the usual advertising banners that one sees outside of new construction, perhaps a more creative approach could be employed for the Fort Mac wall. Utilizing local artists, possibly from the local high school, to transform the wall with paintings and murals could also serve as a focal point to uplift the community and create a sense of ownership and pride. MILRA should also investigate whether any grants are available through the Atlanta Regional Commission's Public Art Program to help fund a public art project on the wall or elsewhere in the Study Area.

- **Make Space Occupancy Ready.** For the next phase of development in the Historic District, MILRA should make the space in other buildings ready for tenants. Ideally, this district would contain shops and restaurants that would attract the public. MILRA should consider both short-term and long-term strategies for the area. For example, the initial retail might be food stalls or small restaurants geared toward serving construction workers that will be working in Fort Mac for the next several years. MILRA should make every effort to capitalize on the construction traffic while it lasts. Lat-

er, the retail can be transitioned to suit the new market that will exist once TPS construction is done.

The historic buildings fall under the guidelines of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Clarity is needed going forward on the role of the Atlanta Urban Design Commission and/or Georgia State Historic Preservation Office in enforcing the Standards for all of the Fort McPherson historic structures with respect to any restoration, rehabilitation or renovation work. This oversight is critical to ensure that any work embarked upon any of the historic buildings will preserve the historic character for generations to come.

- **Capitalize on the History.** TPS likely will be offering a studio tour. MILRA could create synergy with a historic Fort McPherson museum that focuses on the historic buildings and the conflicts and operations that were planned and executed at the fort. A museum could inspire pride of place for the local community.



*"In August 2013, French artist, 3ttman, completed the Summerhill mural (pictured above) just south of downtown Atlanta. "Before Living Walls came to Summerhill, our main street was a sad strip of boarded up buildings. After Living Walls gave us multiple works of art, our main street is now a place our neighbors enjoy walking and appreciating those buildings," says Summerhill resident, David Glass."*  
~ [OneRegionAtlanta.org](http://OneRegionAtlanta.org)

"Seeing" the history with interpretive signage would add cohesiveness. MILRA should work with the Army to return artifacts to the fort and develop a museum. The Panel also suggests reaching out to the Atlanta History Center and other museum planners for assistance in planning both a short-term and long-term approach to incorporating the fort's history into development. For example, planning efforts could include incorporating historic concepts or interpretive signage into all portions of the Study Area to provide a continuous theme that weaves together the diverse uses throughout the Study Area.

The Red Cross building (Building 46) is another architectural asset, whose fate should be carefully considered as an integral part of the Historic Village development strategy. This may be a long-term option for housing a museum.

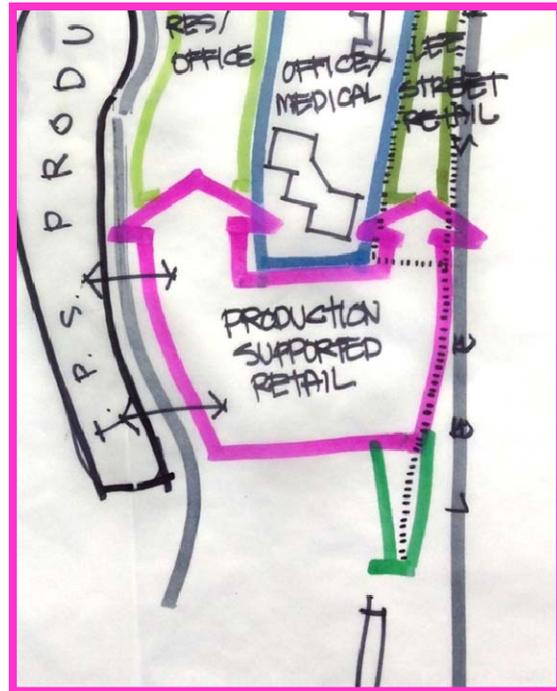
MILRA should investigate and employ all available economic tools to finance redevelopment in the Historic Village, which may include federal financial assistance for historic preservation through the Department of Housing and Urban Development, historic tax credits and/or a property tax freeze to get the buildings back into use and on the tax rolls.

## 2. *Production Supported Retail*

The Production Supported Retail Zone is centered around where the Panel understands TPS would like to put the main entrance to its property. The intent is for this area to contain retail establishments that serve both the Studio as well as the greater community. The zone could be expanded to wrap around the FORSCOM building if there is greater demand for retail space. The development plan should also include a pedestrian corridor to the Fort McPherson MARTA station from this zone.

MILRA should meet with three to four retail developers to determine the retail demand from both TPS and the community, but the retail mix will likely include a hardware store, home goods, car rental, gas station, dry cleaners, food/catering, apparel and perhaps urgent care facilities. Strip retail can be developed much quicker than "big box" retail. If a big box store is included, make it feel as urban as it can. TPS has expressed an interest in a 150-room

hotel. There may also be a need for some pre- and post-film production space which could be located in this zone.

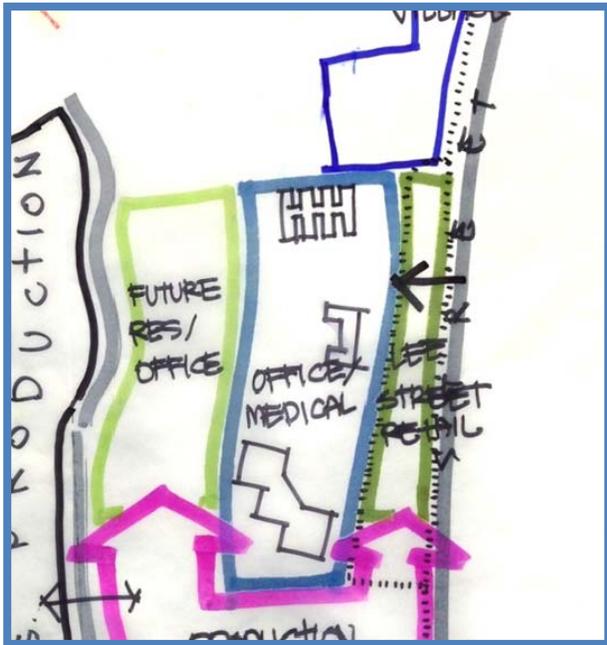


*Production Supported Retail Zone rendering.*

It will be difficult for retail developers to obtain financing based solely on the area's demographics without reliable data supporting demand or consumption commitments. Therefore, it is important for MILRA to work closely with TPS to produce reliable data or consumption commitments. In addition, MILRA should determine TPS' willingness to be an equity partner in this development zone. While this zone may not be able to come online as quickly as the Historic Village, planning efforts and discussions with TPS must begin immediately to ensure that development keeps up with TPS's construction pace.

To improve the marketability of this zone, activity should begin as soon as possible to create an impression of vitality. Again, both a short-term and long-term strategy should be employed. Food trucks and other pop-up businesses could be located in this zone to serve TPS from the beginning and create momentum. Note what businesses have been performing well nearby. For example, it was reported that the #1 location of Arden's Garden is in East Point. Leveraging the Studio and the burgeoning Atlanta film industry, this zone has potential for local community job creation.

### 3. Wellness or Office Campus



This zone is designed to leverage the existing VA facility and FORSCOM as anchors for a wellness or office campus. How FORSCOM is used will set the tone for this zone. The VA has indicated an eagerness to expand its facilities and has expressed an interest in FORSCOM. The Panel urges MILRA to take charge of this relationship and engage in active discussions with the VA. MILRA can work with the VA to plan a new medical campus that unites the existing VA facility with FORSCOM in a manner that has some permeability while still maintaining the security the VA needs. Filling the VA's space needs/wants within the Study Area would be a great way to create jobs, which could serve as the high income core to create economic multipliers.

However, while the VA has made a funding request to Washington and has significant political support for an expansion, it does not yet have funding in place, and a response from Washington is not anticipated until 2016. Therefore, MILRA's efforts to market FORSCOM and the surrounding property should not be focused solely on the VA. MILRA should *simultaneously aggressively market* FORSCOM to security, data and media users and others to whom the building's significant infrastructure would appeal, such as the Transportation Security Administration or the Federal Aviation Administration. FORSCOM should be

sold or leased as is with a view to making this a sector to provide needed operating income for MILRA.

### 4. Lee Street Retail

The Lee Street Retail zone encompasses the narrow strip of property in front of the Wellness/Office Campus, creating "friendly" frontage and attractive spaces to bring in pedestrians and traffic from Lee Street. The appropriate retail for this area here will be dictated by adjacent uses. An essential component of this zone, as well as the entire Study Area, is a transformation of Lee Street. MILRA needs to partner with the City to create a mission driven strategy. The plan should include a "complete streets" design that incorporates a tree-lined street as well as a multi-use sidewalk/trail. Create a greenspace square at the halfway point on Lee Street. Make improvements that will provide a welcoming entry point, such as planting trees along the east side to soften edges and create on-street parking.

Lee Street improvements are key to the revitalization of the area real estate market and sparking home values to rise.

*"Complete Streets is a transportation policy that provides safe access for all road users—pedestrians, cyclists, public transit users, and motorists—of all ages and abilities. It requires that transportation agencies routinely design and operate the entire right of way to enable safe access for all users and engage the public to identify the most desired and active transportation solutions. Although design features vary based on local context, basic elements should include wide sidewalks, well-marked or raised crosswalks, traffic-calming measures, protected bike lanes, and pedestrian safety islands."*

*~from "Ten Principles for Building Healthy Places", Urban Land Institute*

East Point can provide the main street experience while a redeveloped Fort Mac can provide a new mixed use district feel like that found at Atlantic Station.



The Panel was asked to consider whether MILRA should construct a pedestrian bridge across the MARTA and railroad tracks to provide a connection point to the Sylvan Hills community. Better connectivity to the adjacent community is certainly needed, and a pedestrian bridge would present a wonderful opportunity to create a real "wow" feature and community benefit. However, a pedestrian bridge is likely cost prohibitive due to the clearance required over the railroad tracks and not the best use of precious political will. A pedestrian bridge is also not likely to bring significant pedestrian traffic to Fort Mac. Instead, MILRA should focus on traffic calming and a walkability component.

A pedestrian bridge is likely cost prohibitive due to the clearance required over the railroad tracks and not the best use of precious political will. A pedestrian bridge is also not likely to bring significant pedestrian traffic to Fort Mac. Instead, MILRA should focus on traffic calming and a walkability component.

While the Panel does not suggest abandoning all efforts to find grant funds or another funding source for a bridge, it is the Panel's opinion that MILRA's limited resources could be better directed elsewhere. Astor Avenue already provides a connection point to Sylvan Hills, albeit an inadequate and unattractive one. Plans to transform the streetscape should also include Astor Avenue and create attractive, safe, and well lit pedestrian and bicycle access. It is also critical that the improvements be well maintained once completed. MILRA should work with the City and MARTA to ensure adequate levels of maintenance. To this end, it may be necessary for MILRA to provide some maintenance over and above what the City or MARTA can provide to avoid the unacceptable conditions that exist at present.

## 5. Greenspace Anchor

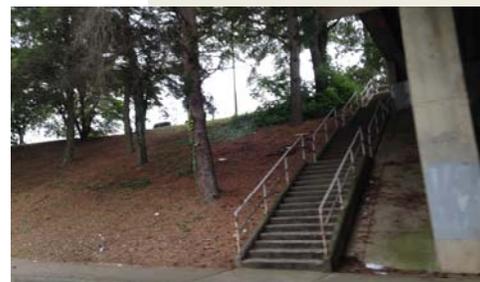
The narrow northern strip of the Study Area is envisioned as a community garden, park or other greenspace that "anchors" a greenspace and trail plan running throughout and weaving together the Study Area. MILRA should create a greenspace master plan for the entire Study Area, but the principles for development should allow some flexibility



*Greenspace Anchor Zone rendering.*

for each zone developer to design the greenspace within its zone. Proper planning of the greenspace is paramount, and the greenspace master plan should strive to provide community greenspace where possible. This will not replace the very large green fields proposed by the 2010 Research Park Master Plan, upon which the community has come to rely, but the Study Area can still provide significant and meaningful greenspace if properly planned. The greenspace plan should also contemplate a connection point to the Oakland City MARTA station.

The Panel views the narrow strip of land in this zone as being best utilized as an anchor for the greenspace plan. The Panel was asked to consider whether MILRA should seek to acquire the "triangle" of land between the Study Area and Campbellton Road (north of the Greenspace Anchor and the Historic Village). This approximately 40-acre parcel contains many vacant, abandoned and dilapidated homes. Acquisition of the triangle would expand the options for this very narrow section of the Study Area. However, due to the fractured nature of the property's ownership and MILRA's limited resources, the Panel suggests making that a long-term goal. As MILRA is able to jumpstart redevelopment and property values rise, the triangle area will either improve on its own or MILRA could consider purchasing it when there is more revenue available. Market forces may take care of that area's redevelopment without MILRA having to use its own funds.



*Astor Avenue pedestrian crossing.*

The Panel envisions the greenspace anchor as community gardens or some other feature that allows community participation and facilitates interaction. It will be prudent to engage local residents when determining what this feature should be. If this area is used as a community garden, the small historic garages could become charming potting sheds if the structures will accommodate new rear doors.

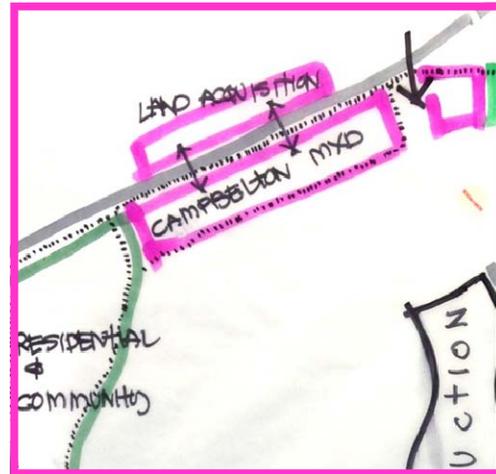
Incorporating a 5-kilometer trail into Fort Mac will provide a reason for residents to come to Fort Mac as well as provide a significant community benefit. One proposal envisions a 5K trail circling Fort Mac. This option would require acquiring land and/or easements beyond the Study Area from multiple property owners. Could TPS retract its fence 16 to 20 feet along the southern boundary of its property? A solution that may be more feasible is to weave the trail throughout the Study Area, creating 6 loops which add up to 5 kilometers. If necessary, pedestrian sidewalk can be used on the east side to make up the 5 kilometers, although sidewalk does not have the same appeal as a dedicated trail. Because a dedicated path takes you somewhere, it creates "riverfront" property, drives demand and instantly increases property values.

Sylvan Hills' residents should be encouraged to continue the 5K walking trail into their neighborhood. As a long-term goal, MILRA should seek for the Fort Mac trail to connect to the BeltLine in some fashion to make Fort Mac a destination along the larger trail network and widen the audience of visitors. MILRA could perhaps use 501(c)(3) funding to implement a trail and greenspace plan and/or to maintain the greenspace after MILRA exits the community at the completion of development.



*The small historic garages could become charming potting sheds if the structures will accommodate new rear doors.*

## 6. Campbellton Road Mixed Use



The Panel believes the narrow strip of land along Campbellton Road is best suited for mixed use, with residential units located over ground floor retail. MILRA should reopen the Walker Gate to provide a connection point from Campbellton Road. MILRA should find a use for Building 22, referred to as the "Chateau." A short-term strategy might be to operate a bed and breakfast in the Chateau to serve TPS and airport travelers. This would be a way to test the market for the boutique hotel TPS would like to see in the Study Area. If the B&B is not consistently booked, then it will be hard to make the case that there is a need for



*Walker Avenue gate.*



*The "Chateau" could be converted into a B&B to test the market for the boutique hotel TPS would like to see in the Study Area.*

a hotel on site. Finding a way to test the market for hospitality and retail uses will help create the market data developers need to obtain financing. The bungalows (Buildings 136 - 142) located in the Future Residential Office Zone could also be operated for short-term rentals through the B&B.



*The bungalows.*

MILRA should also spearhead the redevelopment of the land across Campbellton Road. Having control over both sides of the street ensures that the retail on both sides is complimentary, has a cohesive look and is easily accessible. The Panel views this parcel outside of the Study Area as being more important to the overall development strategy than the triangle property described above. Not only is this area ripe for redevelopment, but it will significantly detract from the marketability of this zone if it is not redeveloped.

### 7. Campbellton Road Residential

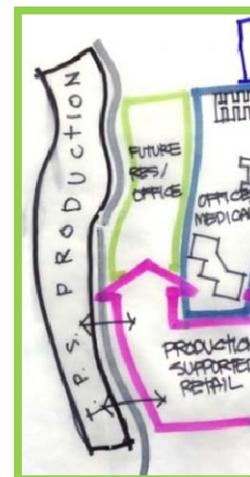


The northwest corner of the Study Area should be reserved for residential and community use. MILRA should talk to several developers to determine the right target market and mix of housing styles. Townhouses are a possibility for new development;

however, the topography grade here is steep, so that may not be the best option. MILRA should also use its building floor space inventory to determine an appropriate use for The Commons/Clubhouse (Building 499). This could be the site of a new charter school or perhaps a community center.

### 8. Future Residential or Office

The last development zone is located between the Wellness/Office Zone and the TPS Property. The Panel has left this zone largely undefined because the surrounding development will determine the market for this property. As mentioned above, the production supported retail could expand into this area. The property is also suited for office, residential and mixed-uses.



There are some business options worth investigating which could work in several different locations within the Study Area. Any type of educational facility or job training program that could generate activity within the Study Area and serve the larger purpose of job creation could be well suited for the Study Area. If the program could serve as a feeder to TPS or another large nearby employer, that would be a plus. For example, a second branch of the Georgia Film Academy could be opened here. The area could be the home for a school serving the hospitality industry. MILRA could also create relationships with Atlanta Metropolitan State College, Atlanta Technical College and Spelman College.

# IMPLEMENTATION

To help prioritize the next steps, below is an action plan to guide implementation of the TAP recommendations.

## Short Term (0 - 6 months)

- ✓ *Build* the Development Team
- ✓ *Forge* Alliances & Partnerships with key groups
  - Leverage relationships with volunteer councils to obtain free advice where appropriate; volunteers can conduct studies
- ✓ *Formulate* a Master Developer Strategy
  - Establish principles for development
  - Develop a plan for phased sale and lease of the property with a view toward getting the property on the tax rolls
  - Develop an aggressive plan for infrastructure
- ✓ *Create* a Brand and start marketing
  - Establish a new operating name
- ✓ *Form* a 501(c)(3) focused on the community and the Fort Mac legacy. Meet with other organizations to see how they run their charitable organizations
- ✓ *Initiate* conversation with MARTA about the Oakland City RFP and the Fort McPherson station
- ✓ *Develop* plans to transform Lee Street and Astor Avenue in conjunction with the City of Atlanta
  - Reopen the historic entrance to the Historic Village on Lee Street and take down the wall in this area to accentuate historic buildings
  - Transform other portions of the perimeter wall that cannot be removed right away
- ✓ *Develop* an adaptive reuse plan for the historic buildings
- ✓ *Negotiate* the appearance of the TPS fence - strive for permeability

✓ *Devise* a strategy for meeting the homeless housing obligations

✓ *Market* (aggressively market) FORSCOM

## Mid-Term (6 months – 2 years)

- ✓ *Create* a Vision and Framework Plan. Select development partners. Make a business case for each developmental zone
- ✓ *Identify* and quantify infrastructure cost
- ✓ *Conduct* market research and financial analysis
- ✓ *Implement* Edge improvement and Greenspace plan - Lee Street, Astor Avenue, greenspace anchor and trail network
- ✓ *Accomplish* Phase 1 of Historic Village
- ✓ *Execute* Production Supported Retail Project. The more TPS does, the easier it is to see how the story of Fort Mac can be told
- ✓ *Complete* other Phase 1 projects based on market research
- ✓ *Tell* the story and continue community marketing

## Long Term (2 to 5 years)

- ✓ *Focus* on Community Building & Impact to uplift and empower residents. Inspire redevelopment and beautification of the surrounding area
- ✓ *Formulate* a strategy for beyond the 145 acres to redevelop or influence redevelopment and beautification of the surrounding area
- ✓ *Devise* a Conversion Strategy to convert land from non-taxable to taxable

# PROJECT BACKGROUND

## Panel Overview

The Panel is designed to be a very condensed, information-filled period within which to provide feedback to the project sponsor. The Panel met for two days on June 4 – 5, 2015. In preparation for the Panel, each Panelist was provided with background materials, data and statistics compiled by MILRA and ULI staff. During the first day, Panel members took a tour of Fort Mac and worked with community leaders and key stakeholders through a series of interviews to gain local perspective about the status and potential for Fort Mac. Obtaining this background information through the interviews helped the Panel formulate recommendations for proceeding with development efforts.

The following persons participated in the stakeholder interviews: Lee Thomas (Georgia Department of Economic Development); Odessa Archibald (Georgia Power); Kevin Johnson and Jennifer Fine (Invest Atlanta); Community Representatives James Harris, Glenda Knight, Gamba Stewart and Robbie Hunter; Maeco Rogers (East Point Director of Economic Development); Geneasa Elias (East Point Director of Planning); Gregory Floyd (MARTA); Amy Goodwin (Atlanta Regional Commission); John VanBrunt (Georgia Department of Community Affairs); Alvin Rosado (US Department of Veterans Affairs); and Rob Brawner (Atlanta BeltLine Partnership).

The following MILRA Board members also participated in interviews: Aaron Watson, Joyce Shepard, Thomas Weyandt, Ken Deleon, and Meredith Lily. MILRA staff, including Brian Hooker, Darlene Hawksley, Michael Lusk and James McCormick guided informative dinner dialogue with the Panelists and participated in multiple interviews throughout the program.

In an effort to capture additional community insight and stakeholder input, an online survey of area residents was conducted in advance of the TAP. The survey results were provided to the Panel and are included in this report as Appendix A.



*Pictures from the TAP panel. The dinner after the tour and stakeholder interviews. The panelists start the discussion at dinner with the group to get additional insight about the subject site and possible issues. Day 2 - the panel starts the TAPs process.*

## Overview of Fort McPherson

Situated on approximately 486 acres in southwest Atlanta, Fort McPherson operated as an Army base from 1885 until 2011. At the time of its closure, it was one of the largest command centers in the U.S. military and employed 7,814 people, making the fort the 7th largest employer in Atlanta. The installation was home to a major unit of the Third U.S. Army as well as headquarters of the U.S. Army Forces Command, which is responsible for the command and control, unit training and operational readiness of the active army, National Guard and reserve.

### *Brief History of Fort McPherson*

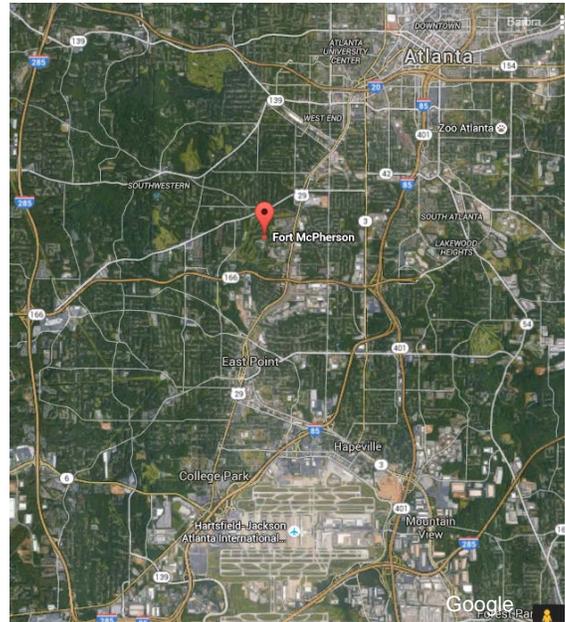
Fort McPherson was named in honor of Union Major General James McPherson, who was killed in action during the Battle of Atlanta in 1864 during the Civil War. When the Spanish-American War broke out in 1898, Fort McPherson became a major recruiting and training center with a military hospital.

The hospital was greatly expanded during World War I as some 10,000 wounded soldiers rotated through the wards between 1917 and 1919. Many new structures were built during this time, including Red Cross facilities, a chapel, schools and the Post Exchange.

During World War II, Fort McPherson was made one of 19 nationwide Army Personnel Centers. Soldiers entering and leaving the service flowed through the post. Between September 1945 and February 1946, an average of 20,000 soldiers was discharged every month at Fort McPherson's Separation Center.

After World War II, Fort McPherson continued its role as a major command post. The Third Army was headquartered at the fort from 1947 to 2001, and a unit remained there until the base closed. Fort McPherson played a major role in managing and training soldiers for the Korean Conflict and the Vietnam War. Before and during the Persian Gulf War (1990-91), The Third Army coordinated all ground forces involved and oversaw the U.S. Army presence in Southeast Asia from the Fort. Allied with these missions, the U.S. Army Reserve Command was activated at the post in 1997.

In 2005, the federal government announced that Fort McPherson would be closed as part of its Base Realignment and Closure plan. By September 2011, all troops had reported to their new posts. The Third Army moved to Shaw Air Force Base in South Carolina, while the U.S. Army Forces Command and the U.S. Army Reserve Command transferred to Fort Bragg in North Carolina.



*Ft. McPherson is less than 5 miles from downtown Atlanta and Hartsfield Jackson International Airport.*



*Inside FORSCOM.*



Announcement — On May 13, 2005, then-U.S. Army Garrison commander Col. Angela Manos announced the scheduled closure of Fort McPherson and Fort Gillem under the BRAC Act during a press conference held at the Vehicle Registration Center at Fort McPherson's Main Gate.

*Photo & text courtesy of [www.army.mil](http://www.army.mil)*

### Redevelopment Efforts

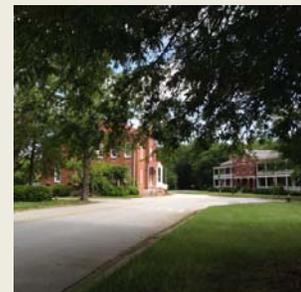
When the base closure was announced, McPherson Planning Local Redevelopment Authority, Inc., a nonprofit corporation (MPLRA), was formed to assume, on behalf of the Cities of Atlanta and East Point, Fulton County and the State of Georgia, responsibility for identifying development needs and preparing a redevelopment plan for the Military Department to consider. Through a multi-phased project over several years, MPLRA established a vision, mission and guiding principles for new development and reuse plan. However, the global economy experienced a recession during the third phase of this process.

MILRA was established by state legislation in 2009 to oversee implementation of the reuse plan, and will remain operational for seven years following its conveyance of the last piece of the Study Area. The Army transferred 11.5 of the approximate 486 acres comprising the fort to the VA and two credit unions, which were already operating on the base prior to its closure. MILRA contracted with the Army to purchase the remaining 475 acres for \$30 million, and the property comes with significant conditions which require additional funds. While some reports indicate that the Army agreed to sell the property at less than fair market value, due to recent changes to BRAC policies, MILRA was required to purchase the property from the Army in contrast to the Army's earlier practice of giving the land to the local jurisdiction. In 2010, a redevelopment plan was produced, which envisioned redeveloping 80 acres in the heart of the fort as a technology/research park. Efforts to recruit such development have not yielded the desired results.

In 2014, in an effort to raise the monies necessary to purchase the property from the Army, a deal was struck with TPS to sell approximately 330 acres to TPS. There were many critics and proponents of this deal. Some argued that the TPS purchase price was set far too low. Others were critical of the plan to sell most of the fort to TPS, eliminating the ability to implement the 2010 redevelopment plan. Yet, others lauded efforts for any sale of the property that would help fund the cost to purchase the land from the Army. The TPS Property includes a number of historic structures that will be preserved. Reportedly, TPS plans to invest at least \$100 million in the TPS Property for acquisition and above-ground improvements.

### Area Conditions

The Fort McPherson side of the rail tracks has experienced minimal demand for retail since the base closure and consists of aging, dilapidated housing stock. On the eastern side of the tracks lie the Sylvan Hills and Capital View neighborhoods. These areas are trending and beginning to see some new development. The City of East Point, which borders Fort McPherson to the south, currently has many vacant buildings. The community is looking for unskilled and low skill level jobs to combat the area's high unemployment rate, such as industry and manufacturing. The base closure was the last straw for systematic depression and blight in this area.



*Some of the historical structures that TPS acquired include the AG's offices, the General's home (President Roosevelt was known to sleep on the summer porch when traveling to & from Warm Springs), and the Officer homes.*

# PANELISTS BIOS



**MONTE WILSON**

*(Program Chair)*

Director - Advance Planning Group, Jacobs

(404) 978-7591 | [monte.wilson@jacobs.com](mailto:monte.wilson@jacobs.com)

Monte Wilson is a Director of Jacobs' Advance Planning Group. As a specialized business unit of the firm's global design practice, the Advance Planning Group provides Facilities Planning, Workplace Consulting, Business Strategies, Real Estate Advisory, Urban Design, Planning and Landscape Architecture services.

In addition to his role in defining the strategic direction for the practice, Monte serves as a Project Principal and Senior Designer on a range of projects, including new towns, mixed-use, urban revitalization studies, and transit-oriented developments as well as university, research park and corporate campus master plans.

Prior to joining Jacobs, Monte built and led a global planning and design practice as a Senior Vice President for HOK. He has worked in locations throughout the world, including the United States, China, Saudi Arabia, Columbia, Panama, Israel, North Africa, Canada and Mexico.

A registered landscape architect and a LEED Green Associate, Monte graduated from Texas A&M University with a Bachelor of Science in Landscape Architecture. Monte is an active member of the Urban Land Institute (ULI), a past Chair of the Atlanta District Council and charter member of the Congress for New Urbanism (CNU). He speaks internationally on landscape, urban design and planning issues.



**KERRY BLIND**

*(Program Manager)*

Principal, Kerry Blind & Associates, LLC

(678) 296-9515 | [kerry.blind@gmail.com](mailto:kerry.blind@gmail.com)

Kerry Blind, FASLA, LEED AP is the Principal of Kerry Blind & Associates LLC. From the earliest days of his career, his professional experience has consistently been geared toward environmentally sensitive and sustainable community planning and design. His commitment to sustainability helped place Pond at the forefront of community planning, natural and cultural resource planning, and low impact development practices. He is a recognized speaker on green infrastructure and low impact development practices. His many LEED certified projects include two Platinum certifications including the Southface Energy Institute's Eco-office and numerous Gold certifications.

In 1999, Mr. Blind was elected a Fellow in the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA). He has chaired the ULI Atlanta Sustainability Committee and is the past chair of The Georgia Conservancy's "Blueprints for Livable Communities" committee and serves on the Southface Sustainable Atlanta Round Table Steering Committee. A graduate of Purdue University, Mr. Blind is licensed in Georgia, Florida, South and North Carolina, Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi, Texas and Pennsylvania. Mr. Blind is a member of ASLA, APA and the Urban Land Institute.



**JOHN GOFF**

Managing Principal, DaVinci Development Collaborative, LLC

(404) 929-3380 | [jgoff@davinci-dev.com](mailto:jgoff@davinci-dev.com)

With more than 32 years of commercial real estate development experience, John has a keen ability to direct large project teams to successfully execute complex, client-centric urban and mixed-use development opportunities. Bringing all parties together focusing on the Owner's goals,

John provides leadership to the diverse project team while orchestrating the process to guarantee the delivery of the Client's vision. After a successful career with Cousins Properties, John launched the DaVinci Development Collaborative in 2014 to bring a boutique type focus to the process of real estate development with an equal focus on the process, the product and the people.

### Education

- University of California-Berkeley / BA History with concentration in
- Economics
- Graduate level studies in real estate finance and development at MIT and Harvard Universities.

### Professional & Civic Affiliations

- Urban Land Institute- Full Member
- ULI Atlanta Livable Communities Council
- Atlanta Habitat for Humanity-Board Member & Chair of Real Estate Committee
- Georgia Institute of Technology-National ULI Mentor
- Former ULI District Council Chair-Atlanta
- Former Board Chair, St. James United Methodist Church



**DAVID HADDOW**

President, Haddow & Company

(678) 296-9515 | [kerry.blind@gmail.com](mailto:kerry.blind@gmail.com)

President of Haddow & Company, a real estate consulting firm founded in 1989. Formerly Senior Vice President with Landauer Associates, a national real estate consulting firm. Since 1979, he has represented individual and institutional clients in commercial real estate investments. Formerly employed as a commercial mortgage banker and city planner.

### Education

- MBA in Finance, Georgia State University, 1982.
- Master of City Planning, Georgia Institute of Technology, 1979.
- Bachelor of Arts, Emory University, 1975.

### Professional & Civic Affiliations

- Board of Trustees, Georgia State University Foundation
- Board of Directors, Pattillo Construction Company
- Board of Trustees, Early Learning Property Management Board of Trustees, Kiwanis Foundation of Atlanta



**GENE KANSAS**

Owner, Gene Kansas Commercial Real Estate

(404) 635-0027 | [gene@genekansas.com](mailto:gene@genekansas.com)

Founded in 2003, Gene Kansas | Commercial Real Estate buys, sells, leases, and develops commercial property throughout in-town Atlanta with a passion for community building and an expertise in place-making.

Gene continuously looks for new ways to learn, live, and love life, devoting his time to the city he adores, immersing himself in the arts, education and community, both in business and through philanthropy. As a former Board Member of the Atlanta Contemporary Art Center (2008 – 2011), as a 15-year mentor and former Board Member with Big Brothers Big Sisters (2011 – 2014), as Creator & Host of Sidewalk Radio on AM1690 “The Voice of the Arts”, and as an entrepreneur with Gene Kansas | Commercial Real Estate, Gene walks the walk.

With colorful, community-oriented marketing programs such as “The Clermont Hotel Design Competition”, and the creation of the first ever Midtown Pop-Up Shop retail district with partners Jamestown and Midtown Alliance, Gene is a standout in Atlanta commercial real estate. With clients that include everyone from Atlanta History Center to the Zac Brown Band, Arden's Garden, Portman, Novare and AT&T, Gene has made a career as a creative voice in a conservative industry.

Recently Gene Kansas | Commercial Real Estate was honored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation for its work on the Atlanta Daily World redevelopment, being named the #2 Preservation Win nationally for 2014. Additionally, as developer, Gene and his team were recognized by The Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation with a 2015

Preservation Award for Excellence in Rehabilitation for their work on the Atlanta Daily World project. And, the team was awarded a 2015 Atlanta Urban Design Commission Award of Excellence for their contribution and care to the historical fabric of our Atlanta community via the Daily World historic rehabilitation.



## BARBARA KOVACS BLACK

Owner, Barbara Kovacs Black  
Architect, LLC

(678) 772-2058 | [bkovacsblack@gmail.com](mailto:bkovacsblack@gmail.com)

Barbara Kovacs Black's 30 year career has focused on the design, management and construction of a collection of award-winning historic preservation, renovation, and adaptive reuse projects. Barbara is a respected architect with an established track record for managing reuse projects that embody the client's vision and enhance the communities where they reside. Her projects are cited for their intelligent use of space, embracing stakeholder's priorities, and respectful treatment of historic fabric.

Barbara has worked with numerous institutions, government agencies, universities, churches, non-profits as well as commercial and private clients. She has designed projects ranging from the large scale planning of building complexes to the artful crafting of intricate building elements. Recent clients have included The Paideia School, The Department of Natural Resources, the City of Dublin, the University of Georgia, GA Tech, Central Presbyterian Church and Haygood Memorial United Methodist Church. She is held in high regard by the Atlanta Urban Design Commission and the Georgia DNR State Historic Preservation Office.

Barbara has a Master's Degree in Architecture from GA Tech and is a registered architect in the State of Georgia. She is the Owner of Barbara Kovacs Black Architect, LLC.



## BRIAN MCGOWAN

Executive Vice President & COO  
Metro Atlanta Chamber (MAC)

(404) 586-8442 | [BMcGowan@macoc.com](mailto:BMcGowan@macoc.com)

Prior to his current role as Executive Vice President & COO for the Metro Atlanta Chamber (MAC), Brian McGowan served for three years as the President & CEO of Invest Atlanta – the economic development arm of the City of Atlanta. McGowan served as a member of Mayor Reed's cabinet and was appointed by Governor Deal to serve as a Board member for the Fort McPherson Redevelopment Authority. Prior to this, McGowan was appointed by President Obama as U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce in September 2009 where he served as the Chief Operating Officer for the U.S. Economic Development Administration. Before joining the Obama Administration, he was appointed by Governor Schwarzenegger as California's Deputy Secretary for Economic Development and Commerce – and was the lead economic development official for the State. McGowan received a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of California, Riverside and a Master's degree in Politics, Economics and Business from the Claremont Graduate University where he was the Michael and Mary Johnston Fellow.



## ROD MULLICE

National Director & Senior Vice President  
Colliers International

(404) 877-9226 | [Rod.Mullice@colliers.com](mailto:Rod.Mullice@colliers.com)

Rod Mullice joined Colliers International in 2014 as the National Practice Group Leader for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Strategic Advisory Services. Rod's practice is dedicated to leveraging experience in delivering real estate strategies to the world's leading agencies, municipalities and investors to deliver executable development strategies that are grounded in market reality. Rod's team provides an objective opinion on the assets and capabilities of a given location. Internal and external marketing efforts are aligned along with comprehensive demographic, psychographic, economic and financial evaluations, resulting in

smart investment decisions. He has assisted clients such as MARTA, City of College Park, GA, and H.J. Russell & Company, to name a few.

Rod currently resides on ULI's Transit-Oriented Development Council and has served as a moderator at the Rail-Volution Annual Conference. Prior to joining Colliers, Mr. Mullice served a five-year tenure at Newmark Grubb Knight Frank where he advised clients in the areas of capital markets and transit-oriented development projects.



## STEVE NYGREN

Serenbe Community

(770) 463-6014 | [steve@serenbe.com](mailto:steve@serenbe.com)

Steve and Marie Nygren discovered the property now known as Serenbe on an outing to introduce their children to the Georgia countryside. Weekend visits literally transformed their lives and in 1994 they sold their hospitality company, Peasant Restaurants, with 34 restaurants and their Atlanta home to relocate full-time to Serenbe. In 2000, Steve led the effort to create the Chattahoochee Hill Country Alliance to bring together landowners, developers and conservationists to find a mutually-agreed upon solution for balanced growth. In 2004, the Nygrens began development of Serenbe the community to demonstrate these concepts which interlace energy and water conservation, agriculture activity and arts with a range of housing choices mixed with shops, galleries, three restaurants and a 19 room Inn located in the historic farm compound. The result is reminiscent of century-old communities. Nygren Place Making is a consulting firm to share the lessons learned at Serenbe.

In 2013 Steve lead an effort to create Chattahoochee Now to coordinate a 106 square mile master vision along the Chattahoochee Rive and serves as Chairman of this group. He has been active in many civic and charitable organizations, including serving as Chairman of the Midtown Alliance, Chairman of the Georgia Hospitality and Travel Association, Chairman of the Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau and Chairman of The Chattahoochee Hill Country Alliance. He currently serves on the Georgia

Department of Community Affairs Board and chairs the Task Force for Comprehensive Planning for Georgia. He is a national board member of the Ray C. Anderson Foundation, The Children & Nature Network and Wholesome Wave.



## PATTI PEARLBERG

Partner/VP Asset Management, Coro Realty Advisors, LLC

(404) 846-4007 | [pearlberg@cororealty.com](mailto:pearlberg@cororealty.com)

Ms. Pearlberg has over 30 years experience in Commercial Real Estate, having worked in Retail, Office, Industrial, Multi-Family and Land Investments, encompassing Asset Management and law related responsibilities, including, defining Ownership Structures, Legal drafting and documentation, Zoning, Financing, Development, Leasing, Acquisitions and Dispositions. Ms. Pearlberg has worked in positions with many high-profile companies, including Regency Centers, Branch Properties, L.P., Trammell Crow Residential and Post Properties. She received her Bachelor's Degree from the University of Georgia, her MBA in Finance from Kennesaw State University and her Law degree from Georgia State University, graduating with honors in each instance.



## JANET L. BOZEMAN

Partner, Hyatt & Stubblefield, P.C.

(404) 659-6600 | [jbozeman@hspclegal.com](mailto:jbozeman@hspclegal.com)

Jan Bozeman is a principal of Hyatt & Stubblefield, P.C. She is a 1989 graduate of Auburn University and received her law degree from Georgia State University in 2000. She assists developers throughout the country in creating the governance structure for their planned communities, condominiums, and destination resorts and in establishing club membership programs for project amenities. Her experience includes small and large scale residential, commercial, and mixed-use projects, as well as age-qualified communities. She also counsels clients on club and community

association governance and operations.

Before joining Hyatt & Stubblefield in 2005, Jan's practice involved the representation of condominium and homeowners associations on a wide range of issues, including construction defect and development issues, covenant enforcement, corporate governance, easement disputes, sexual harassment, and fair housing claims.

Jan is a member of the Urban Land Institute, Commercial Real Estate Women (CREW), the Greater Atlanta Homebuilders Association, the National Homebuilders Association, the Georgia Association for Women Lawyers, and the State Bar of Georgia. Jan was the recipient of the Best Service to the Bar for Exemplary Service to the Bar and the Young Lawyers Division Award in 2003.

Jan is a frequent speaker at continuing education programs on issues relating to community associations, real estate development and 55+ housing.

Thank you to our additional technical writers who assisted with taking notes during the Stakeholder interviews.

**Jonathan Tuley, AICP**

Principal Planner, Atlanta Regional Commission  
(404) 463-3307  
jtuley@atlantaregional.com

**Darryl Moss**

Partner, Weissman, Nowack, Curry & Wilco  
(404) 926-4519  
darrylmoss@wncwlaw.com

ULI Atlanta would like to thank the panelists and TAPs committee for their time, energy and passion for ULI.

**ULI Atlanta  
TAPs Committee Members**

**Janet L. Bozeman**  
*Hyatt & Stubblefield  
(Chair)*

**Darryl Moss**  
*Weissman, Nowack, Curry & Wilco  
(Vice Chair)*

**Stephen Arms**  
*Marthasville Development*

**George Baker, III**  
*Baker Real Estate Services Group, LLC*

**Kerry Blind**  
*Kerry Blind & Associates, LLC*

**Steven Hinkle**  
*BBVA Compass*

**Derrick Holland**  
*Trinity Group*

**Jay Silverman**  
*dwel design studio, llc*

**Jonathan Tuley**  
*Atlanta Regional Commission*

**Jetha Wagner**  
*Euramex Management Group, LLC*

**Barbra Bowers**  
*ULI Atlanta Staff*

**Jennifer Avis Harper**  
*Technical Writer*

# ABOUT ULI - URBAN LAND INSTITUTE

The Urban Land Institute (ULI) was established in 1936 and has over 30,000 members from more than 90 countries. It is one of America's most respected resources of information and knowledge on urban planning, growth and development. ULI is a non-profit research and education organization. Its mission is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. To encourage an open exchange of ideas and sharing experiences, ULI membership represents the entire spectrum of land use and real estate development disciplines, working in private enterprise and public service. Among its members there are developers, builders, property owners, investors, architects, planners, public officials, brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, academics, students and marketing and brand identity experts.

## ULI ATLANTA

With over 1,000 members throughout Georgia, Alabama and Eastern Tennessee, ULI Atlanta is one of the largest District Councils of the Urban Land Institute. We bring together leaders from across the fields of real estate and land use policy to exchange best practices and serve community needs. We share knowledge through education, applied research, publishing, and electronic media.

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP)

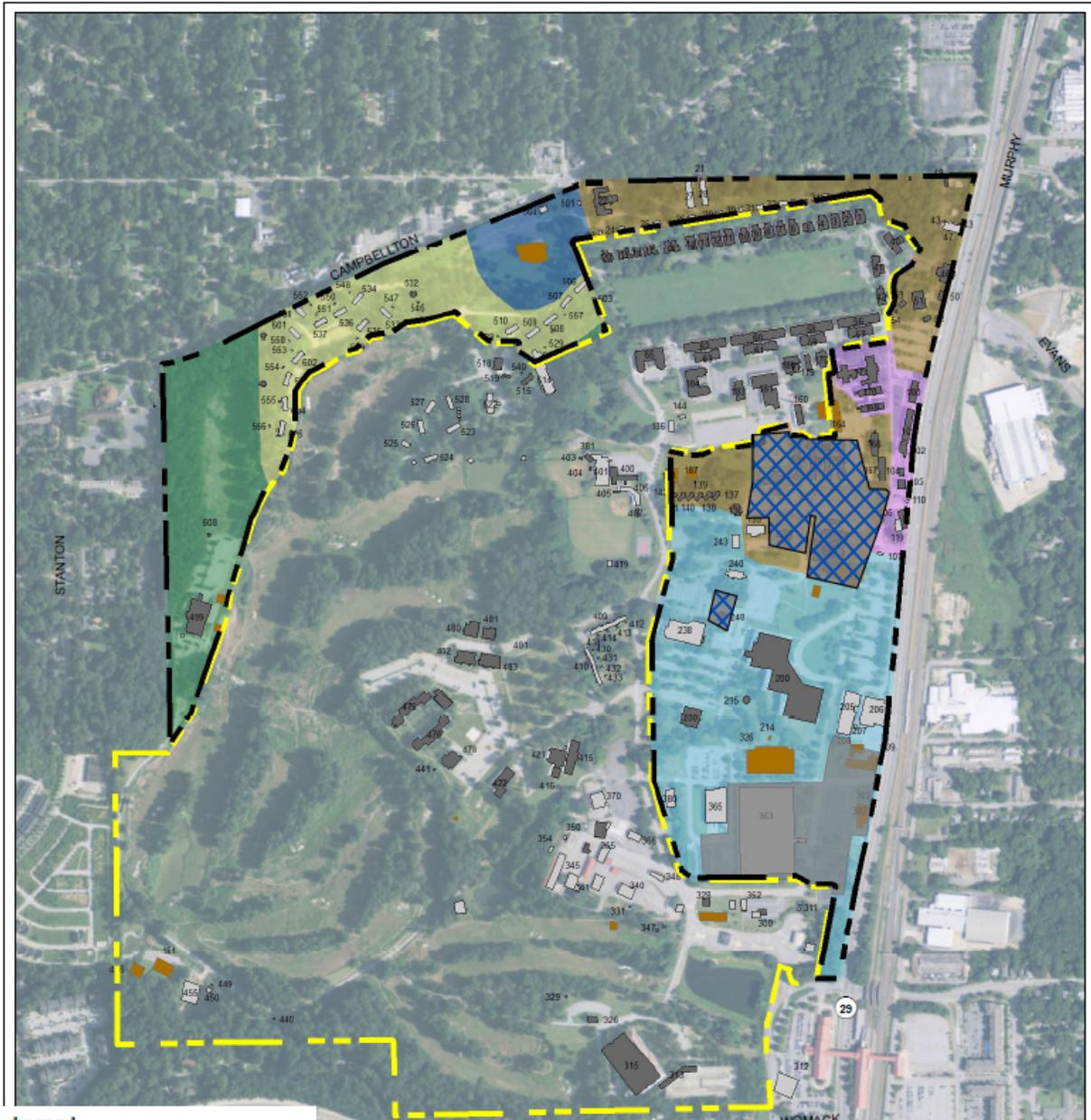
Since 1947, the Urban Land Institute has harnessed the technical expertise of its members to help communities solve difficult land use, development, and redevelopment challenges. ULI Atlanta brought this same model of technical assistance to the Metropolitan Atlanta area. Local ULI members volunteer their time to serve on panels. In return, they are provided with a unique opportunity to share their skills and experience to improve their community.

Through Technical Assistance Program Panels, ULI Atlanta is able to enhance community leadership, clarify community needs and assets, and advance land use policies that expand economic opportunity and maximize market potential.

# APPENDICES

# BOUNDARY MAP

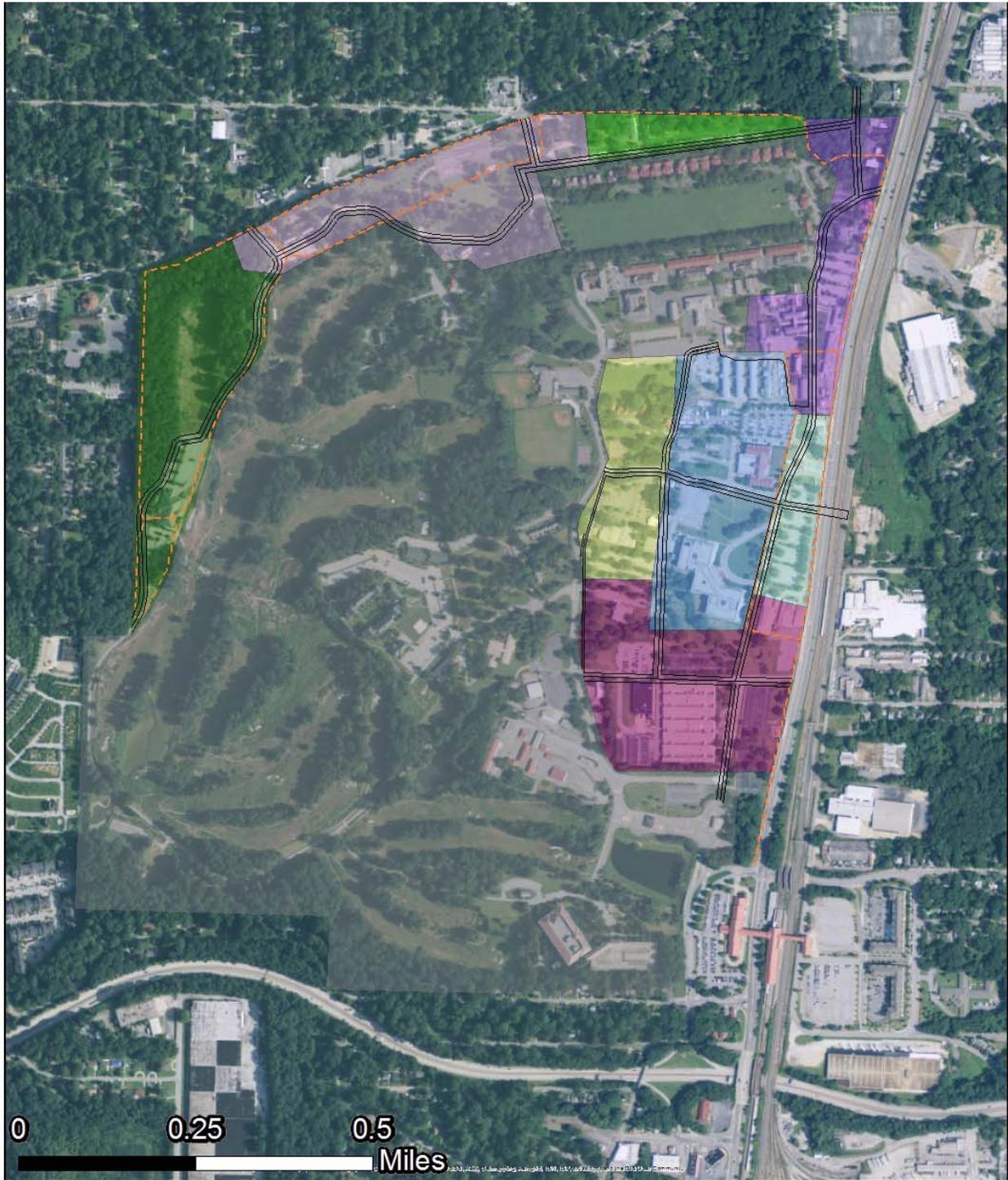
# APPENDIX A



**Legend**

-  MILRA Phase I Property
-  TPS Phase I Property
-  Property Previously Conveyed
-  Phase II Property (To Be Conveyed at a Later Date)
-  Buildings To Be Demolished
-  Existing Buildings
-  Demolished Buildings
- Land Use**
-  Green Space
-  Historic Infill Transition
-  Historic Preservation
-  Main Street, Research Center
-  Neighborhood Commercial
-  Residential

# PROPOSED DISTRICTS BOUNDARY MAP APPENDIX B

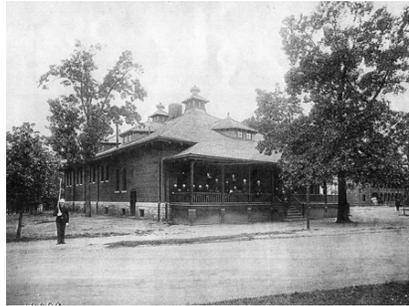


Districts	
Campbellton Mixed-Use District	Office & Medical
Community Garden	Production Supported Retail
Historic Village	Residential & Community
Lee Street Retail	Residential & Office
	Tyler Perry Studios
	Proposed Multi-Use Trail
	Proposed Roadways

# HISTORIC BUILDINGS

# APPENDIX C

The following are some of the historic buildings that will remain part of the MILRA site.



*Building 51, constructed in 1891. It is recommended that MILRA move its headquarters into the Guard House/ Chapel Center and also create a sales office and welcome center inside this building.*



*The Red Cross building (Building 46) is another architectural asset, whose fate should be carefully considered as an integral part of the Historic Village development strategy. This may be a long-term option for housing a museum.*



*Building 50, built in 1918 was used as a post office.*



*Building 53, built in 1944 was used as a Red Cross building.*



*Building 100, built in 1897 was used for administrative purposes.*



*Building 101, built in 1889 was used the public safety building.*



*Building 102, built in 1889 was used as a the MP station.*



*Building 104, built in 1897 was used for administrative purposes.*



*Building 168, built in 1933 was used as nurses' and transient quarters.*



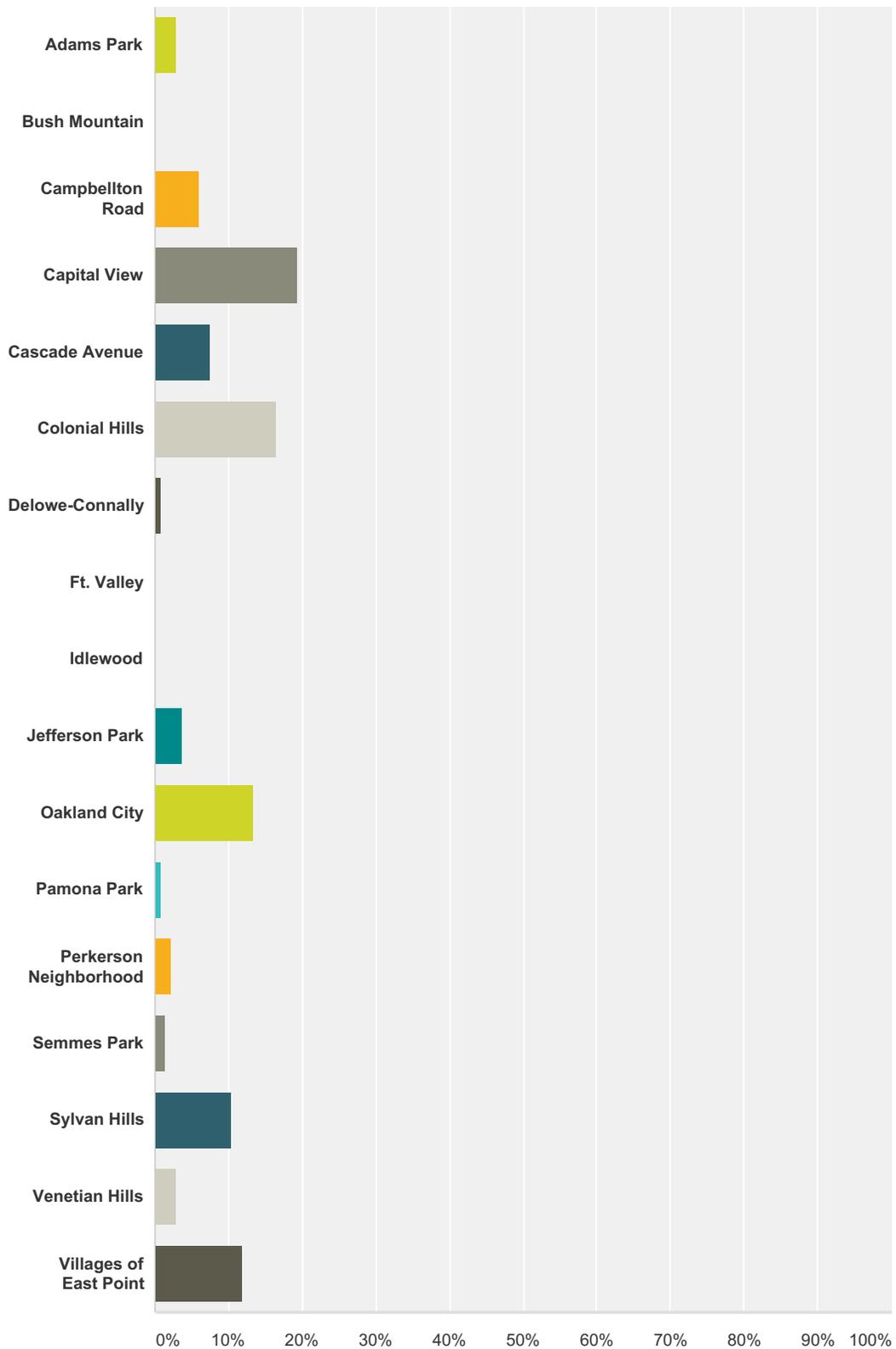
*Building 171, built in 1889 was used as a post hospital building.*



*Building 532, built in 1887 served as a family headquarters.*

### Q1 Please select the neighborhood that you live in below:

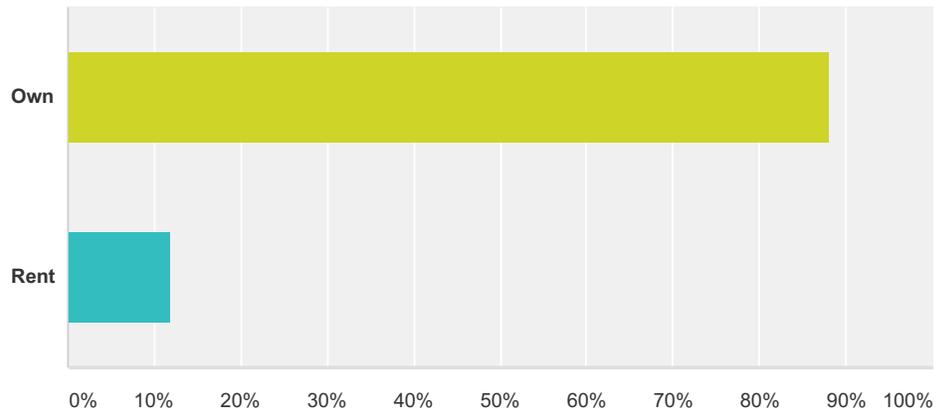
Answered: 134 Skipped: 3



Answer Choices	Responses	
Adams Park	2.99%	4
Bush Mountain	0.00%	0
Campbellton Road	5.97%	8
Capital View	19.40%	26
Cascade Avenue	7.46%	10
Colonial Hills	16.42%	22
Delowe-Connally	0.75%	1
Ft. Valley	0.00%	0
Idlewood	0.00%	0
Jefferson Park	3.73%	5
Oakland City	13.43%	18
Pamona Park	0.75%	1
Perkerson Neighborhood	2.24%	3
Semmes Park	1.49%	2
Sylvan Hills	10.45%	14
Venetian Hills	2.99%	4
Villages of East Point	11.94%	16
<b>Total</b>		<b>134</b>

### Q2 Do you own or rent housing?

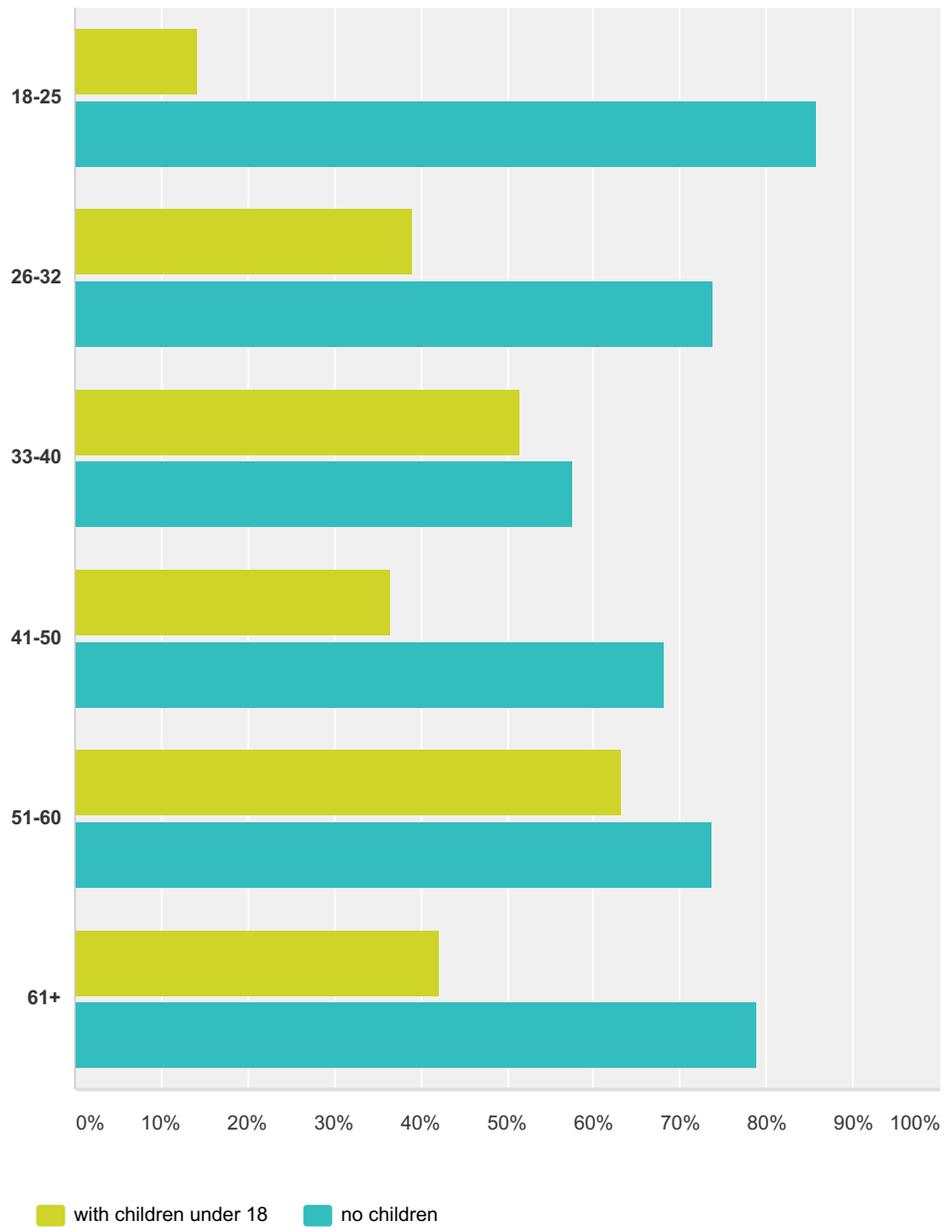
Answered: 134 Skipped: 3



Answer Choices	Responses
Own	88.06% 118
Rent	11.94% 16
<b>Total</b>	<b>134</b>

### Q3 What is your age and do you have children below the age of 18 living in your home?

Answered: 134 Skipped: 3

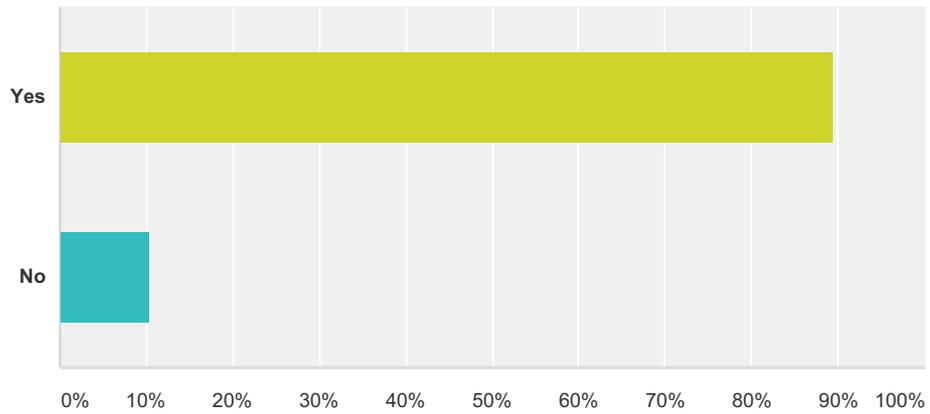


	with children under 18	no children	Total Respondents
18-25	14.29% 1	85.71% 6	7
26-32	39.13% 9	73.91% 17	23
33-40	51.52% 17	57.58% 19	33

41-50	<b>36.59%</b> 15	<b>68.29%</b> 28	41
51-60	<b>63.16%</b> 12	<b>73.68%</b> 14	19
61+	<b>42.11%</b> 8	<b>78.95%</b> 15	19

### Q4 Are you employed?

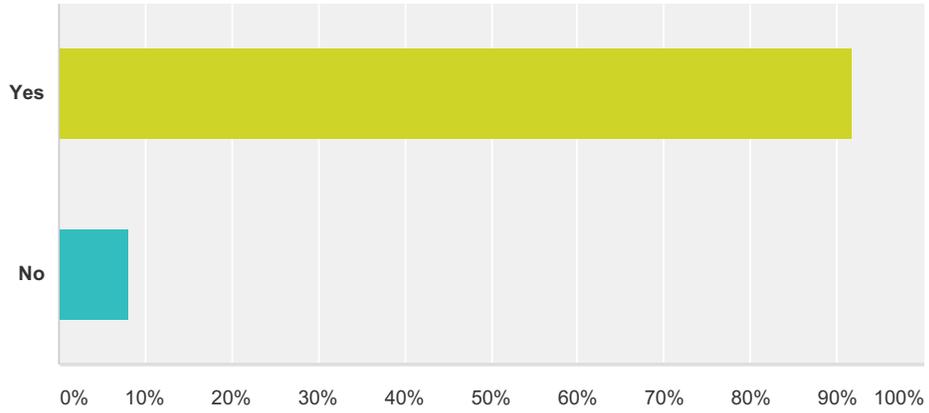
Answered: 134 Skipped: 3



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	89.55%	120
No	10.45%	14
<b>Total</b>		<b>134</b>

**Q5 If a business park was offered in the area that provided job opportunities in your career field, would you be willing to work in the Ft. McPherson area?**

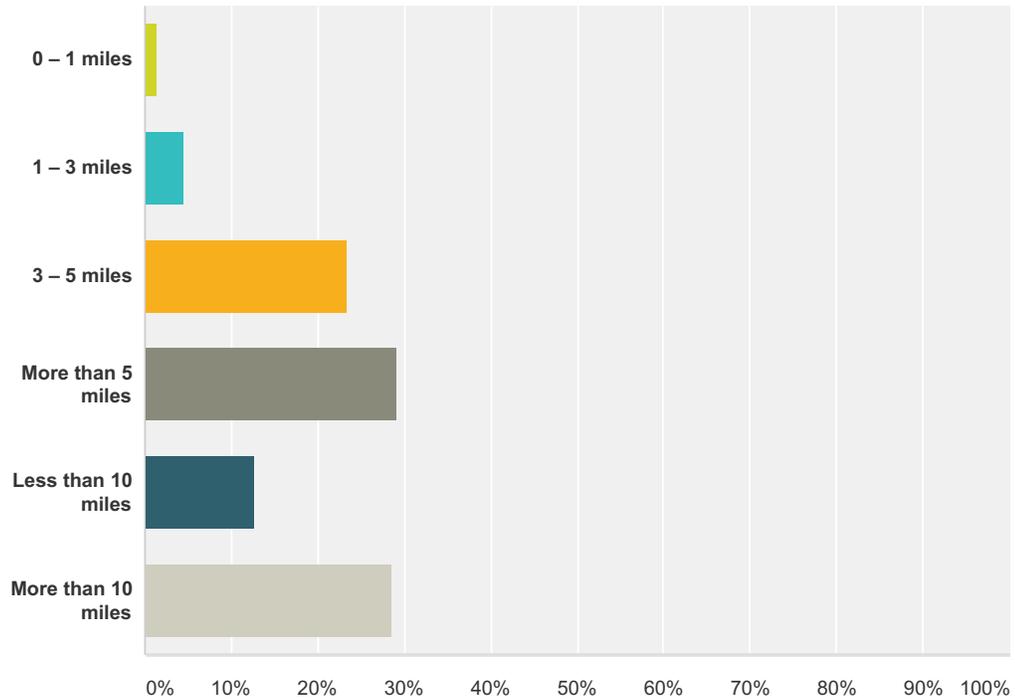
Answered: 134 Skipped: 3



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	91.79% 123
No	8.21% 11
<b>Total</b>	<b>134</b>

### Q6 How far do you travel for medical care services (i.e. walk-in clinic, general/family medicine, specialty doctors, psychiatric or psychological care, pharmacy)?

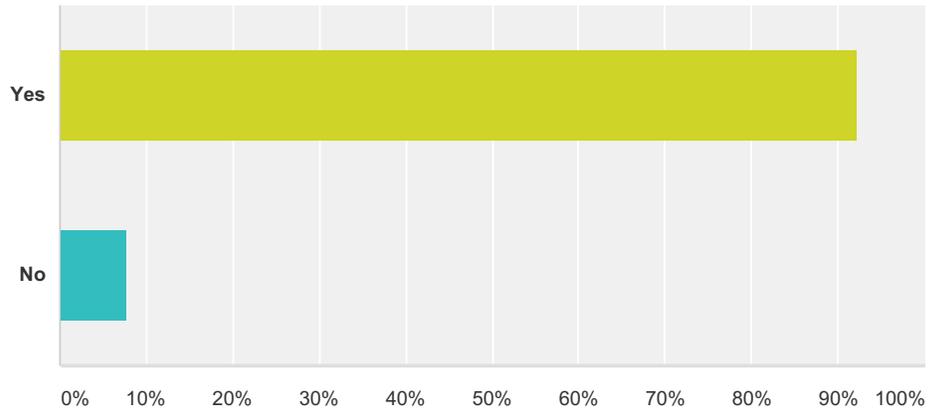
Answered: 133 Skipped: 4



Answer Choices	Responses
0 – 1 miles	1.50% 2
1 – 3 miles	4.51% 6
3 – 5 miles	23.31% 31
More than 5 miles	29.32% 39
Less than 10 miles	12.78% 17
More than 10 miles	28.57% 38
<b>Total</b>	<b>133</b>

**Q7 7. If there were medical services provided in the Ft. McPherson area that could provide you with proper care, would you be willing to receive medical attention in the Ft. McPherson area?**

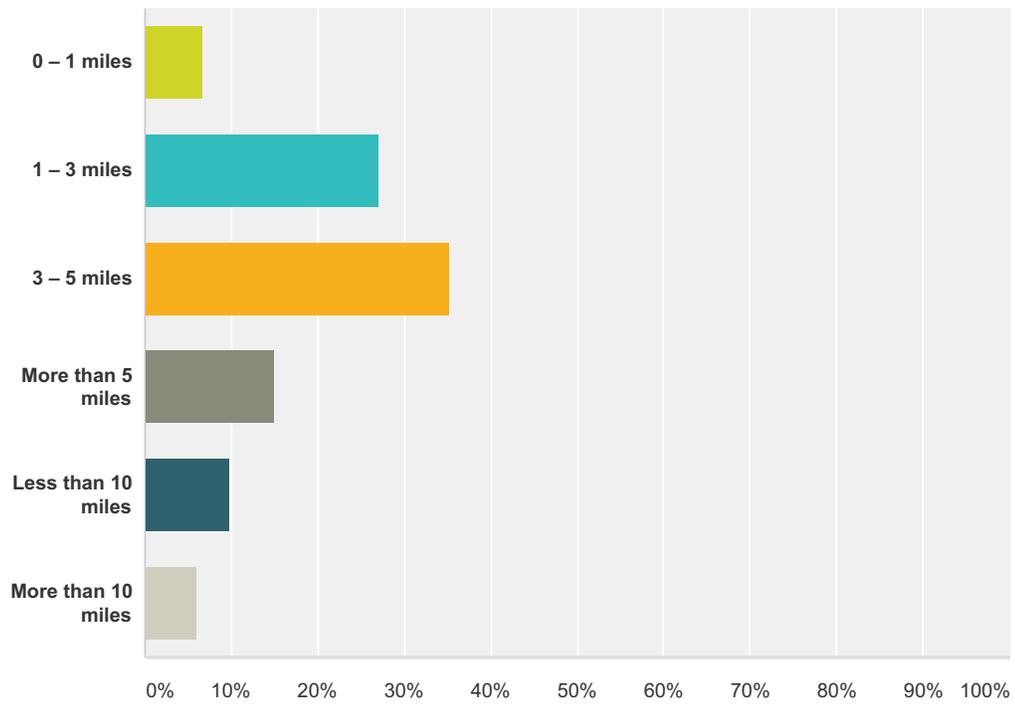
Answered: 131 Skipped: 6



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	92.37% 121
No	7.63% 10
<b>Total</b>	<b>131</b>

### Q8 How far do you travel to the grocery store?

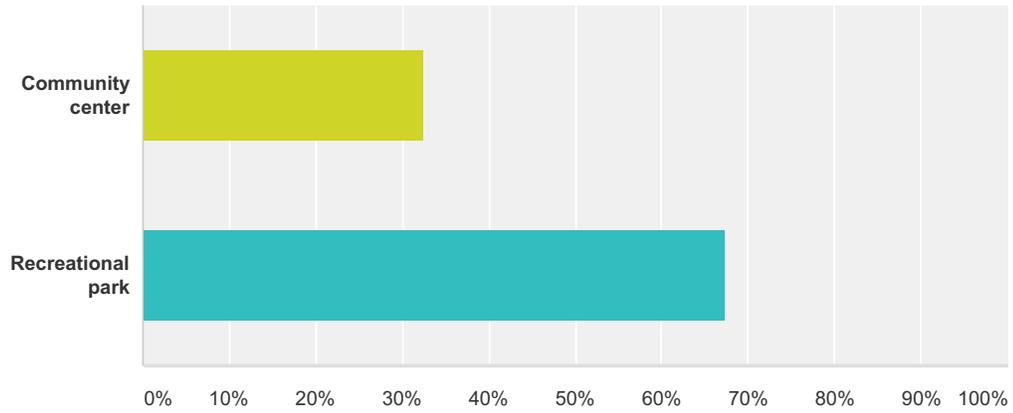
Answered: 133 Skipped: 4



Answer Choices	Responses
0 – 1 miles	6.77% 9
1 – 3 miles	27.07% 36
3 – 5 miles	35.34% 47
More than 5 miles	15.04% 20
Less than 10 miles	9.77% 13
More than 10 miles	6.02% 8
<b>Total</b>	<b>133</b>

**Q9 If there were an opportunity to have a community amenity in or around the Ft. McPherson property, such as a community center or recreational park, which would you prefer?**

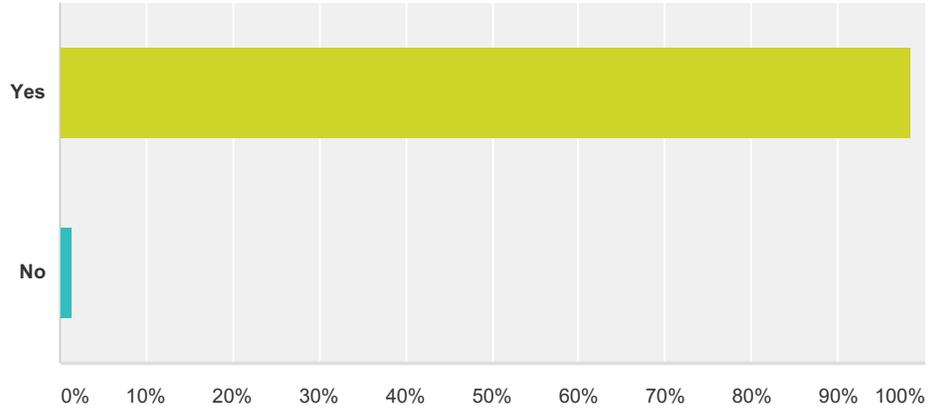
Answered: 132 Skipped: 5



Answer Choices	Responses	
Community center	32.58%	43
Recreational park	67.42%	89
<b>Total</b>		<b>132</b>

**Q10 Thinking about walkability and open space, would you utilize a bike/walk/run trail in the Ft. McPherson area? (Yes/No)**

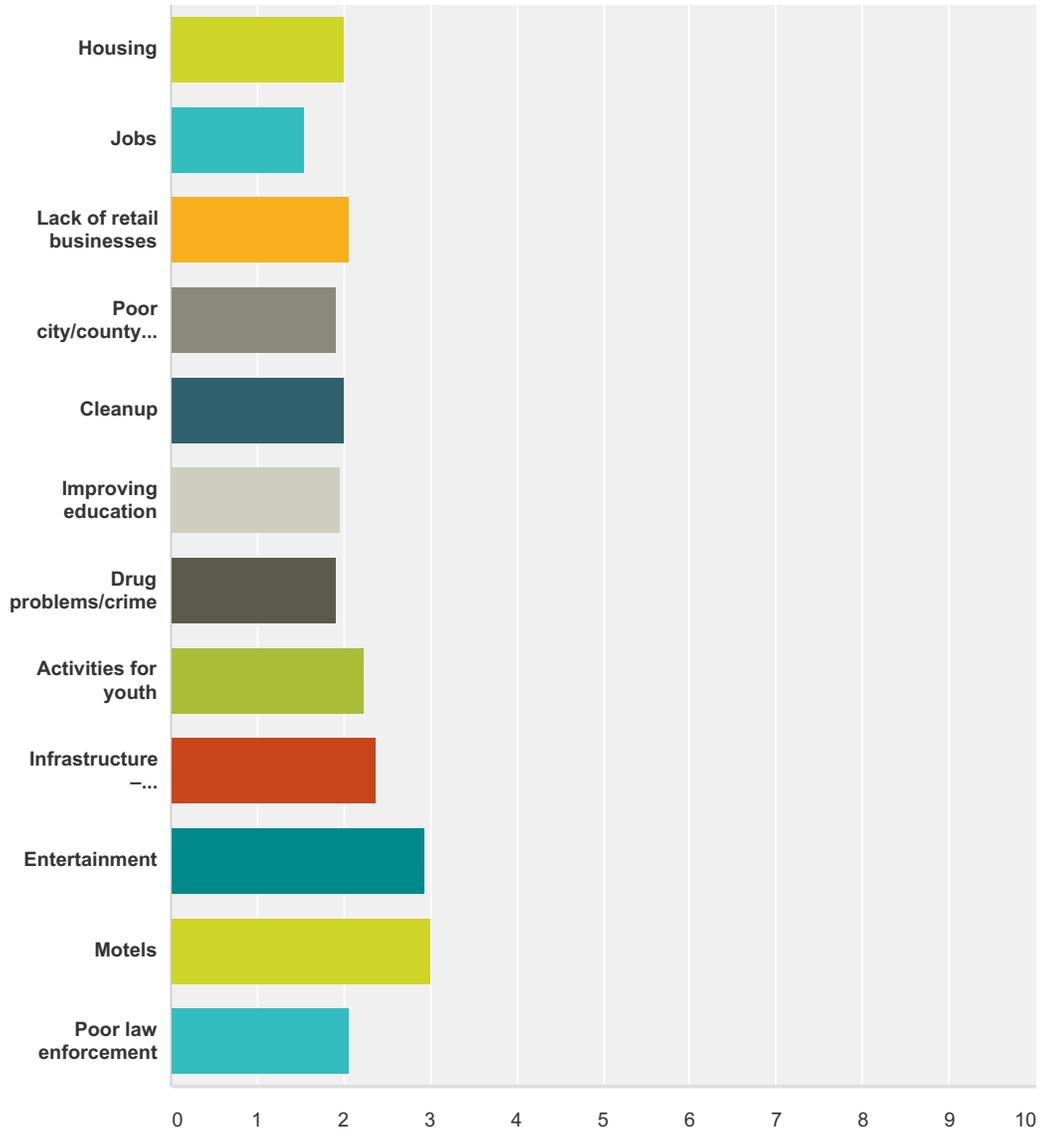
Answered: 133 Skipped: 4



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	98.50% 131
No	1.50% 2
<b>Total</b>	<b>133</b>

### Q11 What would you say are the top 3 most critical issues facing the communities surrounding Ft. McPherson today?

Answered: 134 Skipped: 3

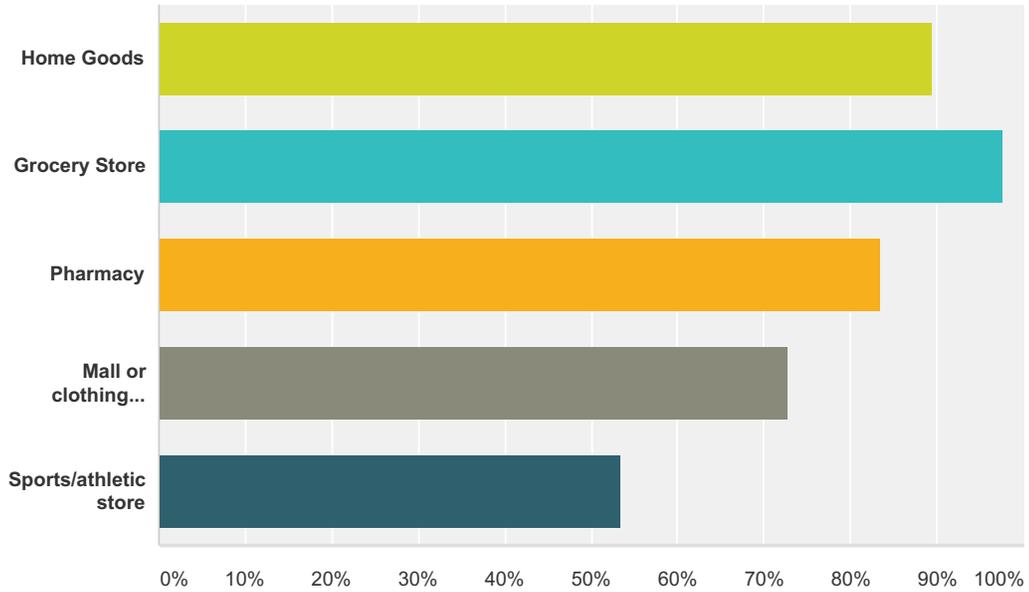


	Most Critical	2nd Most Critical	3rd Most Critical	Total	Weighted Average
Housing	28.00% 7	44.00% 11	28.00% 7	25	2.00
Jobs	65.28% 47	15.28% 11	19.44% 14	72	1.54
Lack of retail businesses	23.38% 18	46.75% 36	29.87% 23	77	2.06
Poor city/county government	41.38% 12	24.14% 7	34.48% 10	29	1.93

Cleanup	<b>29.17%</b> 7	<b>41.67%</b> 10	<b>29.17%</b> 7	24	2.00
Improving education	<b>24.24%</b> 8	<b>54.55%</b> 18	<b>21.21%</b> 7	33	1.97
Drug problems/crime	<b>38.18%</b> 21	<b>30.91%</b> 17	<b>30.91%</b> 17	55	1.93
Activities for youth	<b>19.23%</b> 5	<b>38.46%</b> 10	<b>42.31%</b> 11	26	2.23
Infrastructure – streets/road/sewage	<b>15.79%</b> 3	<b>31.58%</b> 6	<b>52.63%</b> 10	19	2.37
Entertainment	<b>0.00%</b> 0	<b>5.88%</b> 1	<b>94.12%</b> 16	17	2.94
Motels	<b>0.00%</b> 0	<b>0.00%</b> 0	<b>100.00%</b> 1	1	3.00
Poor law enforcement	<b>33.33%</b> 6	<b>27.78%</b> 5	<b>38.89%</b> 7	18	2.06

### Q12 In the past year, which types of retail businesses have you purchased resources from?

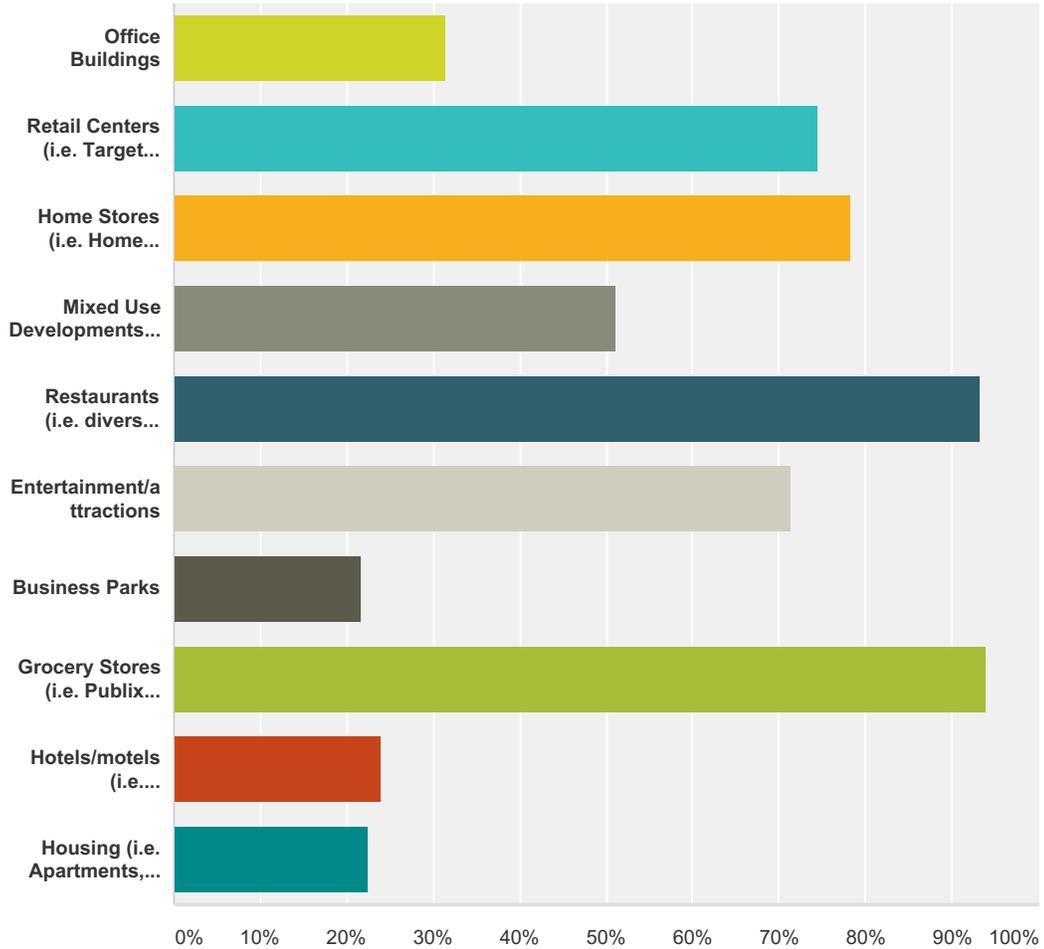
Answered: 133 Skipped: 4



Answer Choices	Responses
Home Goods	89.47% 119
Grocery Store	97.74% 130
Pharmacy	83.46% 111
Mall or clothing store/boutique	72.93% 97
Sports/athletic store	53.38% 71
<b>Total Respondents: 133</b>	

**Q13 If the following types of redevelopment were offered in the Ft. McPherson area, which businesses would you utilize or financially support through your patronage?**

Answered: 133 Skipped: 4



Answer Choices	Responses
Office Buildings	31.58% 42
Retail Centers (i.e. Target, Walmart, Walgreens, CVS, Best Buy)	74.44% 99
Home Stores (i.e. Home Depot, Home Goods, Lowes, Ace Hardware)	78.20% 104
Mixed Use Developments (live/work)	51.13% 68
Restaurants (i.e. diverse cuisines, fine dining)	93.23% 124
Entertainment/attractions	71.43% 95
Business Parks	21.80% 29

Grocery Stores (i.e. Publix, Farmers Market, Whole Foods, Aldi, Kroger, Wayfield)	<b>93.98%</b>	125
Hotels/motels (i.e. Conference centers)	<b>24.06%</b>	32
Housing (i.e. Apartments, Townhomes, Condos, Senior Living, Low-Income)	<b>22.56%</b>	30
<b>Total Respondents: 133</b>		



Peachtree Center, South Tower  
225 Peachtree Street, NE | Suite 1450 | Atlanta, GA 30339  
(404) 331-1800 | [www.uliatlanta.org](http://www.uliatlanta.org)