

Action Playbook
Collective Implementation of the
Canal District Master Plan

Action Playbook

Collective Implementation of the
Canal District Master Plan

Credits

2019 Mayor and Council

Eddie DeLoach
Mayor

Alderman Carol Bell
Post 1, At-Large

Alderman Brian Foster
Post 2 At-Large

Alderman Van R. Johnson, II
District 1

Alderman Bill Durrenece
District 2

Alderman John Hall
District 3

Alderman Jillian Miller
District 4

Alderman Dr. Estella Edwards Shabazz
District 5

Alderman Tony Thomas
District 6

2020 Mayor and Council

Van R. Johnson, II
Mayor

Alderman Keshia Gibson-Carter
Post 1, At-Large

Alderman Alicia Miller Blakely
Post 2, At-Large

Alderman Bernetta B. Lanier
District 1

Alderman Detric Leggett
District 2

Alderman Linda Wilder-Bryan
District 3

Alderman Nick Palumbo
District 4

Alderman Dr. Estella Edwards Shabazz
District 5

Alderman Kurtis Purtee
District 6

City of Savannah

Patrick Monahan
City Manager

Bret Bell
Chief Operating Officer

Taffanye Young
Chief Officer of Community Services

Bridget Lidy
Sean Brandon
Nick Deffley
Manny Dominguez
Martin Fretty
Kenan Hall
Zack Hoffman
David Keating
David Maxwell
Carol Moon

Chatham County-Metropolitan Planning Commission

Melanie Wilson
Director

Heath Lloyd
Assistant City Manager/Chief Operating Officer of Infrastructure and Development

Philip Kalogitonas
Willie Mae Knight
Cristy Lawrence
Roger Raines
Cornelia Reed
Kerri Reid
Leonard Tropea
Margaret Williams
Nick Zoller

Planning Team

Jeff Williams
Perkins and Will

Cassie Branum
Perkins and Will

Denise Grabowski
Symbioscity

Kendra Harruff
Perkins and Will

Lauren Hawley
Perkins and Will

Lauren Neefe
Perkins and Will

Blake Reeves
Perkins and Will

Jeff Chermely
Perkins and Will

Kevin Smith
Thomas & Hutton

Jim Collins
Thomas & Hutton

C.J. Chance
Hussey Gay Bell

Design Review Team

During the planning process, this team provided a peer review of the project.

Michael Brown
Co-Owner, Principal
Gabrielle Bullock
Director of Global Diversity, Principal
Malcolm Davis
Civic Architect, Senior Associate
David Green
Global Urban Design Leader, Principal
Sylvester M. Gould
Vice President, Principal Owner
Paula Kreissler
Executive Director
Dwayne Stephens
Vice Chair, Savannah Downtown Historic District Board of Review, Parsons Program Management Team

David Green
Global Urban Design Leader, Principal
Sylvester M. Gould
Vice President, Principal Owner
Paula Kreissler
Executive Director
Dwayne Stephens
Vice Chair, Savannah Downtown Historic District Board of Review, Parsons Program Management Team

Contents

The Canal District Master Plan consists of two critical documents that should guide the future of the area.

This document is the Action Playbook.

01



The Master Plan
A document that focuses on the process, vision, and design recommendations for the Canal District

02



The Action Playbook
A document that focuses on the actions needed to implement the Master Plan in an equitable and inclusive way

Playbook Contents

02 Introduction

14 To Guide

- 18 Action 01: Establish a Three-Year Arena Area Plan
- 20 Action 02: Establish a Canal District Leader
- 22 Action 03: Build Support for the District's Open Spaces
- 24 Action 04: Designate a Tax Allocation District
- 26 Action 05: Establish a Community Improvement District

28 For People

- 32 Action 06: Support Local Employment and Businesses
- 34 Action 07: Repurpose the Water Works Building
- 36 Action 08: Curate and Build a West Savannah Heritage Trail
- 38 Action 09: Strengthen Partnerships with the Land Bank Authority
- 40 Action 10: Organize a Community Benefits Framework
- 42 Action 11: Expand Homeownership and Home-Buying Initiatives
- 44 Action 12: Develop Renter and Rental-Housing Affordability Initiatives

46 For Nature

- 50 Action 13: Institute a Neighborhood Stormwater Program
- 52 Action 14: Expand Green Infrastructure Programs
- 54 Action 15: Develop a Stormwater Strategy for the Springfield Basin
- 56 Action 16: Complete the Canal District Brownfield Assessment

58 For Place

- 62 Action 17: Institute a Community Street Improvements Program
- 64 Action 18: Revise Canal District Zoning and Establish an Overlay District
- 66 Action 19: Install a Neighborhood Wi-Fi Umbrella and Smart Lighting

Everyone has a role to play.

The Canal District Action Playbook is a tool for every citizen who is hopeful and committed to the future of west Savannah.



Everyone carries responsibility for the communication and accountability that define this Plan.

The Action Playbook charts a clear and steady course for the long-term growth of the Canal District. It's for the longtime residents of west Savannah — Brickyard, Springfield Terrace, Waterworks, Historic Carver Village, Cloverdale, and beyond. It's for the new residents moving into the Canal District. It's for the neighborhood and community leaders who are continually seeking the best for their neighbors. It's for the local historians and artists who are inspired to preserve the cultural landmarks, places, and identities of their community. It's for the future developers, architects, engineers, and planners whose creativity will construct this new place. It's for the City of Savannah departments and the local partners who are laying the groundwork for change. It's for the City of Savannah Council, which will set it all in motion. Most of all, this Playbook is a record of Savannahians' expectations for growth and accountability in the development of the Canal District.

The Playbook recommends the next steps in building a Canal District that works and sustains itself as the promised engine of equitable growth and transformation.

Planning for change.

The City, its partners, and Savannah's communities should start acting immediately to elicit participation in the implementation of the Canal District Master Plan. This Playbook supports that effort with a comprehensive strategy to launch implementation of the Plan's recommendations. It details a set of 19 Actions that organize collective participation in the development of infrastructure, policies, and programs that should drive measurable progress toward the long-term success of the new District.

The vision for Canal District success was defined by Savannah's communities in a series of public workshops held over several months in late 2019. The engagement process began in August with a Listening Workshop that invited the City's communities to identify their strengths, the possible benefits of the new District, and how Savannahians might live in the new District and its open spaces. Timed to the Savannah Arena's groundbreaking in September, a Visioning Workshop was then held on City Lot to share the collected feedback and confirm what was heard in August.

From this communication loop emerged priorities and values that translated into a vision of leadership, social and ecological issues, and the physical environment in the Canal District. When the first draft of the Master Plan was unveiled to the City, its newly elected Council, and a panel of experts at a public Design Review in November, a set of four Goals for this ambitious civic project had emerged from the community's input: to Guide change that serves People, Place, and Nature in the Canal District.

Change ripples outward over time.

Where change will happen.

There are two planning geographies in the Canal District Master Plan. The first geography comprises the area immediately surrounding the new Savannah Arena. This area is called the Canal District. The second geography comprises the halo of historic neighborhoods that, in turn, surround the Canal District and will see the greatest impact from its transformation.

This Playbook accounts for the impacts of change in both geographies. Its carefully considered set of interdependent Actions is intended to promote different types of change in different areas. There are Actions that focus explicitly on the Canal District, and there are Actions tailored to the immediately adjacent neighborhoods, such as Springfield Terrace and Brickyard. It is fully expected that the effects of these Actions will ripple out well beyond the boundaries of the Canal District into the surrounding neighborhoods as well as greater Savannah.

Change at the right speed.

The new Savannah Arena is scheduled to open in spring 2022. This Playbook is intended to guide the pace of development in the Canal District, so that the benefits of change are felt equitably by the Plan's critical geographies. To that end, the Action Playbook focuses on two specific planning horizons:

- a concrete near-term three-year timeframe keyed to the opening of the Arena; and
- a long-term timeframe that extends into the indefinite future.

The three-year horizon should prepare the Canal District for the Arena's opening. The long-term horizon should sustain the Canal District as it grows into the more visionary aspects of the Master Plan.

Each Action proposes "catalytic" and "sustaining" moves that serve the two planning horizons.

- Catalytic Moves are time-sensitive, high-priority steps that should launch the Master Plan in a sustainable direction.
- Sustaining Moves should ensure long-term success and equitable benefit in the Canal District and the City at large.

Taken separately, these two kinds of moves should steer change incrementally toward the right pace of development. Undertaken as a whole, they should set a course toward sustainable transformation.



The Playbook is a system of goal-directed actions.

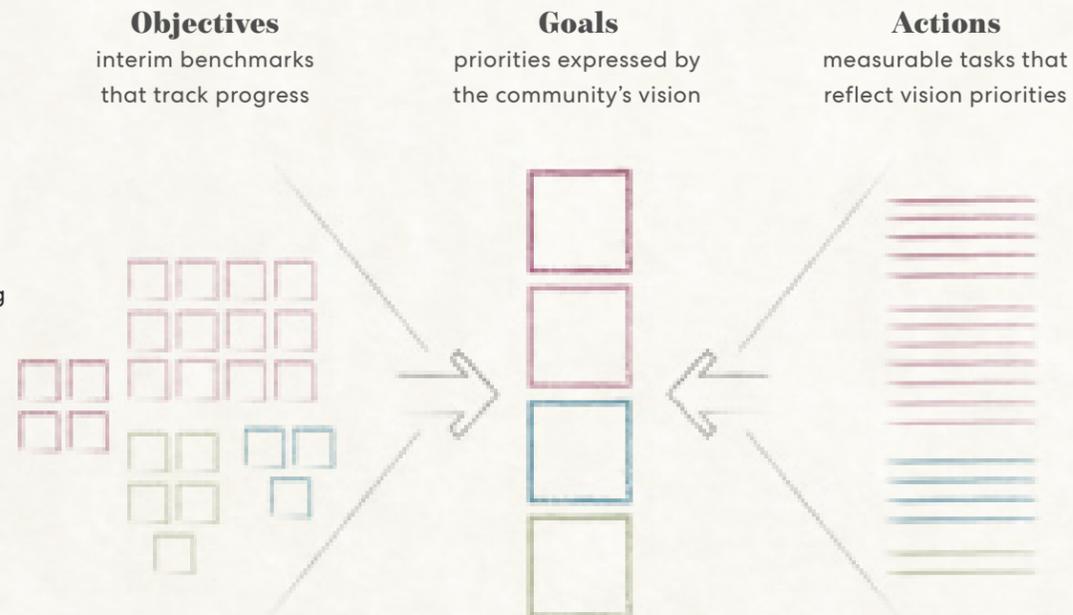
The Playbook's 19 Actions are designed to work simultaneously as a system, achieving interim Objectives that support the progress of the Canal District Master Plan. These Supporting Objectives capture the priorities expressed by Savannahians during the visioning process in the fall of 2019, and they articulate four broader Goals of the Plan: to Guide, for People, for Nature, and for Place. The wheel to the right illustrates the relationship between the four visioning Goals and the Playbook's Supporting Objectives. The rest of the Playbook maintains the four-color system to organize the proposed Actions according to the corresponding Objective and Goal of each.

Getting started.

Because the Savannah Arena is scheduled to open in just three years, the Playbook's strategy needs to go into effect immediately, and all 19 Actions should be undertaken at the same time. Nevertheless, the Actions and Supporting Objectives under To Guide have a crucial role in implementation. They put in place the leadership, funding, and communication systems that underlie all the other recommendations of the Plan. In particular, Action 01 (Establish a Three-Year Arena Area Plan) and Action 02 (Establish a Canal District Leader) will powerfully affect the resources and organizational capacity of the rest of the Playbook's strategy.

Developing the Strategy

The Master Plan visioning process established priorities that gave rise to Goals and Supporting Objectives, which organize the Playbook's Actions.



Goals and Supporting Objectives of the Canal District Master Plan



The Playbook coordinates collective effort.

The Actions are numbered for ease of reference, but they are not ranked. All are of equal priority. Implementing the Playbook will require strong collaboration between leadership and partners to advance all the Actions at the same time.

How Each Action Supports the Others.

All 19 Actions depend on one another. Each Action unlocks the effectiveness of other Actions in the Playbook. The matrix below maps these relationships to highlight where to focus effort for the greatest impact.

Guide	01	Establish a Three-Year Arena Area Plan
	02	Establish a Canal District Leader
	03	Build Nonprofit and Philanthropic Support for the Canal District's Open Spaces
	04	Designate a Tax Allocation District
	05	Establish a Community Improvement District
People	06	Support Local Employment and Businesses
	07	Repurpose the Water Works as a Community Market and Business Center
	08	Curate and Build a West Savannah Heritage Trail
	09	Strengthen Partnerships with the Land Bank Authority for Community Development
	10	Organize a Community Benefits Framework
	11	Expand Homeownership and Home-Buying Initiatives
Nature	12	Develop Renter and Rental-Housing Affordability Initiatives
	13	Institute a Neighborhood Stormwater Program
	14	Expand Green Infrastructure Programs to Include the Canal District
	15	Develop a Comprehensive Stormwater Strategy for the Springfield Basin
Place	16	Complete the Canal District Brownfield Assessment
	17	Institute a Community Street Improvements Program
	18	Revise Canal District Zoning and Establish an Overlay District
	19	Install a Neighborhood Wi-Fi Umbrella and Smart Lighting

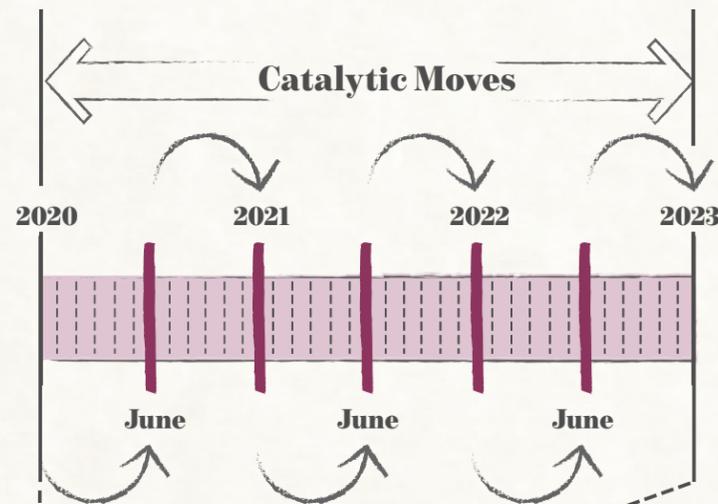
	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
01	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
02	●	●	●	●	●		●	●		●			●	●	●	●			●
03	●	●	●					●		●			●	●	●	●			
04	●	●		●	●		●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
05	●	●		●	●		●			●					●		●	●	●
06	●					●	●			●			●		●		●		●
07	●	●		●	●	●	●			●									●
08	●	●	●	●				●		●					●		●	●	●
09	●								●	●	●	●						●	
10	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		●		●
11	●			●					●	●	●	●		●					●
12	●			●					●	●	●	●							●
13	●	●	●	●		●				●			●	●	●	●			●
14	●	●	●	●							●		●	●	●	●			●
15	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		●			●	●	●	●			●
16	●	●	●	●									●	●	●	●			●
17	●			●	●	●		●		●							●		●
18	●			●	●			●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●			●
19	●	●		●	●	●	●	●		●					●		●		●

Change needs to be tracked.

Communication and accountability should support the progress of the Canal District Master Plan and Action Playbook.

Three-Year Accountability

Communicate updates every six months between 2020 and 2023.



The Arena Area Plan.

During the next three years, the leadership identified for each Action should be held accountable for the completion of Catalytic Moves, progress toward Sustaining Moves, and overall communication. The Canal District community — residents, partners, organizations, and other leaders — should plan to hold the identified leadership accountable by asking key questions that appropriately measure success.

Catalytic and Sustaining Moves.

The Canal District Master Plan is a visionary target that will take many years to reach completion. The Action Playbook supports this long-term goal by recommending a set of Catalytic Moves that address today's immediate concerns alongside a set of Sustaining Moves that will guide incremental change in the right direction.

The Action Playbook should be revisited and discussed at least every three years. Progress should be celebrated, and the Plan should be updated as needed. This cycle of tracking and reporting should sustain investment in the Canal District and keep the Plan's vision alive.

Long-Term Accountability

Revisit and update the Action Playbook every three years.



How to make the Actions work.

The following Action pages are organized to facilitate two primary uses: communication and accountability. The first page explains key information. The second page defines expectations, so that each Action's progress is communicated and leadership is held accountable.

Communication of Key Information

Key Takeaway
how the Action supports the vision

Action
concrete task aimed at meeting Supporting Objectives and visioning Goals

Moves
steps that steer the Plan toward successful change

Catalytic Moves
immediate steps that launch the Master Plan in a sustainable direction

Sustaining Moves
steps to ensure long-term success and equitable development

To Guide **01** **Establish a Three-Year Arena Area Plan**

The milestones established by the Three-Year Arena Area Plan make explicit the City's coordinated effort to listen to and communicate with impacted communities and align critical urban relationships with Arena operations.

What is involved?

The City of Savannah needs an Arena Area Plan that establishes infrastructure and development milestones for ensuring both operations of the Savannah Arena upon its opening as well as essential relationships between the Arena and surrounding neighborhoods. The plan is distinct from the ongoing design and construction of the Arena. It must reinforce communication and accountability for the Master Plan's implementation from its initial stages.

Why this Action?

Whereas the development of the Canal District is a long-term endeavor for the City of Savannah, the Savannah Arena's construction and operations are a near-term priority. The project's initial stages will trigger infrastructure and development that must support the Arena's operations while establishing the foundation for long-term growth that reflects the integrity of Savannah's urban form and commitment to the residents of the Canal District neighborhoods.

Catalytic Moves

- 01** Identify a position within the City structure to manage the execution of the Arena Area Plan.
- 02** Prioritize critical paths and relations for each element of the Three-Year Arena Area Plan, such as traffic improvements, temporary parking, and stormwater infrastructure.
- 03** Communicate status of Three-Year Arena Area Plan to the City's communities at regular intervals.

Sustaining Moves

- 01** Align infrastructure and redevelopment decisions with the values identified by residents in the Canal District neighborhoods.
- 02** Identify strategic partnerships that focus on the physical and social implementation of the Arena to generate widespread support from the Canal District neighborhoods.
- 03** Build trust and generate support through a communication campaign that highlights project milestones that have been met and identify benefit used Savannah communities and neighborhoods.

Accountability Expectations

Baseline
existing resources and initiatives that ground the Action

As of 2020 ...
the Savannah Arena has broken ground. District projects and programs need to be undertaken immediately.

Expect leadership and action.

Who should lead this effort?
The Office of Planning and Urban Design should coordinate the execution of the Three-Year Arena Area Plan.

What should happen by 2022?
A Three-Year Arena Area Plan should be completed.

- Who are potential partners?**
- Newly selected project manager
 - Mayor's Arena Advisory Group
 - Community leaders from the Canal District neighborhoods
 - City departments
 - Neighborhood Advisory Council for the Community Benefits Agreements

What to ask leadership in 2022?

- What do the mobility and parking, public safety, and housing plans for the Canal District look like?
- What is the progress on other long-term recommendations, such as the Water Works Community Market and Business Center, West Savannah Heritage Trail, Neighborhood Stormwater Program, Community Water Improvements Strategy, and Neighborhood Wi-Fi Umbrella and Smart Lighting System?

What are the anticipated benefits?

This Action should advance the Plan toward these Supporting Objectives:

- SO.1** Create a Three-Year Action Plan
- SO.2** Create a Communication System
- PL.1** Secure Delivery of a Policy Framework
- PL.2** Secure Appropriate Transitions

Accountability
who should be guiding the next steps and the progress to expect in the near term

Leaders should be held accountable for the progress of the Action.

Partners assist leaders to lift ideas off the ground and should be considered a key resource.

Questions phrase what to ask leadership when checking on progress.

Anticipated Benefits
how progress on the Action contributes to the overall Playbook strategy of Supporting Objectives and vision Goals

To Guide

To Guide

These policies should create long-term leadership and resources to ensure the vision becomes a reality.

Supporting Objectives

<p>Create a Three-Year Action Plan</p> <p>for infrastructure and services to support operations of the Arena</p> <p>G.1</p>	<p>Create a Communication System</p> <p>for ongoing and open dialogue between the public and project leadership</p> <p>G.2</p>	<p>Create Funding Mechanisms</p> <p>for infrastructure, environmental remediation, and community development</p> <p>G.3</p>	<p>Create a Team</p> <p>to lead the development of the Canal District and protection of the Canal District neighborhoods</p> <p>G.4</p>
---	--	---	---

Near-Term Actions

We must provide leadership.

<p>To Guide 01</p> <p>Establish a Three-Year Arena Area Plan</p>	<p>To Guide 02</p> <p>Establish a Canal District Leader</p>	<p>To Guide 03</p> <p>Build Nonprofit and Philanthropic Support for the District's Open Spaces</p>
--	---	--

We must allocate resources.

<p>To Guide 04</p> <p>Designate a Tax Allocation District</p>	<p>To Guide 05</p> <p>Establish a Community Improvement District</p>
---	--

Establish a Three-Year Arena Area Plan

The milestones established by the Three-Year Arena Area Plan make explicit the City’s coordinated effort to listen to and communicate with impacted communities and align critical urban relationships with Arena operations.

What is involved?

The City of Savannah needs an Arena Area Plan that establishes infrastructure and development milestones for ensuring basic operations of the Savannah Arena upon its opening as well as essential relationships between the Arena and surrounding neighborhoods. The plan is distinct from the ongoing design and construction of the Arena. It must reinforce communication and accountability for the Master Plan’s implementation from its initial stages.

Why this Action?

Whereas the development of the Canal District is a long-term endeavor for the City of Savannah, the Savannah Arena’s construction and operations are a near-term priority. The project’s initial stages will trigger infrastructure and development that must support the Arena’s operations while establishing the foundation for long-term growth that reflects the integrity of Savannah’s urban form and commitment to the residents of the Canal District neighborhoods.

Catalytic Moves

- 01** Identify a position within the City structure to manage the execution of the Arena Area Plan.
- 02** Prioritize critical paths and milestones for each element of the Three-Year Arena Area Plan, such as traffic improvements, temporary parking, and stormwater infrastructure.
- 03** Communicate status of Three-Year Arena Area Plan to the City’s communities at regular intervals.

Sustaining Moves

- 01** Align infrastructure and redevelopment decisions with the values identified by residents in the Canal District neighborhoods.
- 02** Identify strategic partnerships that focus on the physical and social implementation of the Arena to generate widespread support from the Canal District neighborhoods.
- 03** Build trust and generate support through a communication campaign that highlights project milestones that have been met and directly benefit west Savannah communities and neighborhoods.

As of 2020 ...

the Savannah Arena has broken ground. District projects and programs need to be undertaken immediately.

Expect leadership and action.

Who should lead this effort?

The Office of Planning and Urban Design should coordinate the execution of the Three-Year Arena Area Plan.

What should happen by 2022?

A Three-Year Arena Area Plan should be completed.

Who are potential partners?

- Newly selected project manager
- Mayor’s Arena Advisory Group
- Community leaders from the Canal District neighborhoods
- City departments
- Neighborhood Advisory Council for the Community Benefits Agreements

What to ask leadership in 2022?

- What do the mobility and parking, public-safety, and housing plans for the Canal District look like?
- What is the progress on other long-term recommendations, such as the Water Works Community Market and Business Center, West Savannah Heritage Trail, Neighborhood Stormwater Program, Community Street Improvements Strategy, and Neighborhood Wi-Fi Umbrella and Smart Lighting System?

What are the anticipated benefits?

This Action should advance the Plan toward these Supporting Objectives:

- G.1** Create a Three-Year Action Plan
- G.2** Create a Communication System
- PI.2** Ensure Delivery of a Policy Framework
- PI.3** Ensure Appropriate Transitions

Establish a Canal District Leader

A dedicated leader can guide and monitor Canal District development with attention to the evolving needs of the west Savannah communities.

What is involved?

The City of Savannah and community leadership should seat a dedicated leader with authority to direct Canal District development and protection of impacted neighborhoods in keeping with the values of the Canal District Master Plan.

Why this Action?

The success of the Canal District depends on developing the area to sustain its existing communities alongside neighbors and businesses. Development of the Canal District is a long-range and multifaceted city-building initiative in some of the most sensitive ecological and cultural areas of the City. It will bring new infrastructure, new services,

and new programs, as well as new homes, businesses, and activities. Integrating the effects of this change requires careful oversight, bold decision making, and accountability to the citizens of Savannah, and these roles require the time, attention, and expertise that only a dedicated leader can provide.

Catalytic Moves

- 01** Identify a department as an interim Canal District leader and liaison to the community. The Planning and Urban Design Office is suited to carry this roll forward for a period of 18 to 24 months as an extension of the Canal District Master Plan effort.
- 02** Hire a dedicated staff position to lead the implementation of the Canal District. During the interim duration, this staff position should be housed under the Planning and Urban Design Office.
- 03** Identify a geographic boundary that will represent the Canal District neighborhoods.
- 04** Establish a communication plan with City and community leaders for mutual accountability.

Sustaining Moves

- 01** Identify a long-term, sustaining leader to direct the development of the Canal District and the protection of the Canal District neighborhoods.
- 02** Convene Canal District coordination for team within City departments.
- 03** Secure funding sources to implement Canal District Master Plan.
- 04** Focus on sustained open dialogue within Canal District neighborhoods.
- 05** Report monthly to the Mayor, Council, and community leadership.

As of 2020 ...

no full-time position yet exists within the City to direct Canal District development and protection of the neighborhoods.

Expect leadership and action.

Who should lead this effort?

The City of Savannah should guide and monitor the Canal District's development for a period of 18 to 24 months.

What should happen by 2021?

A funded and staffed position should be in place to lead the development of the Canal District and protection of impacted neighborhoods. A long-term leadership and communications authority should be in place to continue efforts after the interim period.

Who are potential partners?

- City departments
- Neighborhood leadership

What to ask leadership in 2021?

- Who is leading the development of the Canal District?
- What is the funding and staffing plan for the leading authority?
- What is the geographic boundary that defines the Canal District neighborhoods?
- What is the plan for communicating with the Canal District neighborhoods?

What are the anticipated benefits?

This Action should advance the Plan toward these Supporting Objectives:

- G.1** Create a Three-Year Action Plan
- G.2** Create a Communication System
- G.3** Create Funding Mechanisms
- G.4** Create a Team
- PI.2** Ensure Delivery of a Policy Framework
- N.2** Fund Infrastructure

Build Nonprofit and Philanthropic Support for the Canal District's Open Spaces

A collaborative effort can lead to the community's strongest advocacy for the remediation and beautification of the Springfield Canal Basin and for widespread engagement with the Canal Park.

What is the Canal Park?

The Canal Park is the grand civic green space proposed for the new District. Running along the southeast face of the new Savannah Arena, it performs essential stormwater management and provides a beautiful environment for public gatherings and cultural exhibits.

As of 2020 ...

the Savannah Arena has broken ground. A strategy for the collaborative ownership, maintenance, and responsibility of the Canal Park is not yet projected or in place.

Expect leadership and action.

Who should lead this effort?

The Office of Planning and Urban Design should collaborate with existing community-based nonprofits to assemble strong leadership and maintain the future of the Canal Park.

What should happen by 2022?

Leadership should be solidified and active as the initial phases of the Canal Park proceed.

Who are potential partners?

- Tide to Town
- City departments
- Savannah Ogeechee Canal Society
- Savannah Tree Foundation
- Coastal Heritage Society
- Garden Clubs

What to ask leadership in 2022?

- Who is responsible for the Springfield Canal Basin and future Canal Park?
- Is there a plan to sustainably fund and maintain the future Canal Park?
- Is there a plan to create new public amenities from remediated properties?

What are the anticipated benefits?

This Action should advance the Plan toward these Supporting Objectives:

- G.2 Create a Communication System**
- G.3 Create Funding Mechanisms**
- G.4 Create a Team**
- P.8 Provide a Network of Trails and Open Spaces**
- N.2 Fund Infrastructure**
- N.3 Remediate Environmentally Contaminated Areas**

What is involved?

The City of Savannah should build a network of community nonprofit and philanthropic support for visioning, programming, maintaining, and/or operating Canal District elements, such as the trail network and parks.

Why this Action?

The success of the Canal District and its complex environmental and social conditions relies on layers of funding and layers of support from the Savannah community. Coordination between existing entities will ensure the implementation of the Canal District vision. The scopes of the

Savannah Ogeechee Canal Society and the Friends of Tide to Town coalition cross the Canal District. In lieu of a dedicated conservancy focused on the Canal District, partnership with these organizations will be essential for coordinated fundraising, advocacy, and activation of the District.

Catalytic Moves

- 01** Hold a meeting between City of Savannah, Friends of Tide to Town coalition, Savannah Ogeechee Canal Society, Canal District neighborhood leaders, and philanthropic partners to develop a plan for collaboration that outlines communication and funding among entities.
- 02** Create a strategic plan that clarifies both long-term vision and short-term actions that will support the Springfield Canal Basin and Canal Park.
- 03** Coordinate with the Real Estate Department and Sustainability Office to identify and maintain environmentally remediated brownfield lots and FEMA properties that are not suitable for development and best suited for public-space amenities in the Canal District.
- 04** Start the implementation of Tide to Town's 30-mile protected walking and cycling trails along the Springfield Canal, leading to the multipurpose Canal Park.

Sustaining Moves

- 01** Cultivate a membership that represents a broad spectrum of interests in the Canal Park.
- 02** Keep the City of Savannah Council informed.
- 03** Create an "adopt-a-lot" program that provides low-maintenance care to undevelopable properties designated for public use.

Designate a Tax Allocation District

A Tax Allocation District can alleviate the need for fundraising campaigns and ensure that neighborhood residents will see and directly benefit from the development their taxes are supporting.

What is a Tax Allocation District?

A Tax Allocation District (TAD) is a funding mechanism used by city governments to support new public and private redevelopment projects within a designated area. Incremental taxes generated in the TAD area go to identified projects. The TAD does not increase the taxes paid; it specifies where the designated taxes go.

As of 2020 ...

the City has not yet initiated plans to designate a Tax Allocation District.

Expect leadership and action.

Who should lead this effort?

The City of Savannah should oversee analysis of geographic boundaries for the TAD and its value in redevelopment activities, TAD approval, and long-term communication with neighborhood residents about TAD activities.

What should happen by 2023?

Thorough analysis of the projected TAD should be completed, impacted neighborhoods should have complete knowledge of the TAD objectives and procedures, and the TAD should be approved.

Who are potential partners?

- Savannah Downtown Authority
- Savannah Development & Renewal Authority

What to ask leadership in 2023?

- What is the geographic boundary for the TAD?
- What public-improvement projects are financially supported by the TAD?
- What is the current tax base for these projects?
- How much will it cost to construct the most critical public-improvement projects?

What are the anticipated benefits?

This Action should advance the Plan toward these Supporting Objectives:

G.3 Create Funding Mechanisms

N.2 Fund Infrastructure

What is involved?

The City of Savannah should explore and establish the designation of a Tax Allocation District to bond infrastructure and projects for the development of the Canal District.

Why this Action?

The success of the Canal District depends on building infrastructure to serve the present and future needs of the community. A sustainable long-term funding mechanism is needed immediately to support this development. The TAD can

stimulate economic activity to support development of the critical infrastructure. Neighborhood residents then see and directly benefit from expedited investment that leverages the future value of development in the District.

Catalytic Moves

- 01 Complete a study that analyzes potential District boundaries, the existing tax base, projected costs and timeline for identifying the most suitable geographic area and term length for the TAD.
- 02 Identify projects as part of the TAD's funding objectives with support of the community and taxing agency.
- 03 Secure agreements for participation by other jurisdictions, including Chatham County and the Savannah-Chatham County Public School System.
- 04 Approve TAD legislation.
- 05 Host workshops to educate and prepare community members for TAD implementation and benefits.

Sustaining Moves

- 01 Set clear expectations, milestones, and accountability systems for TAD implementation and project completion.
- 02 Set up an organized, universal system of communication between the public, leadership, and developers.
- 03 Recognize milestone achievements publicly with community members.
- 04 Consider a Community Builders Program that educates local business owners and residents in using the TAD for their business development.
- 05 Coordinate the TAD with the Community Benefits Framework, Homeowners Program, and Renters Protection Program.
- 06 Coordinate property revaluations with any tax increases that potentially affect TAD households.
- 07 Coordinate the TAD with other Canal District funding mechanisms, such as the Neighborhood Stormwater Program and Stormwater Credit Bank.

Establish a Community Improvement District

A Community Improvement District can maintain public spaces and fund the projects and services that sustain economic vitality and local investment in Canal District growth.

What is a Community Improvement District?

A Community Improvement District (CID) is formed by commercial and industrial property owners to create a steady funding mechanism for desired projects and services that add value to a designated geographic boundary. They pay an additional tax that does not reduce or eliminate existing taxes or City services.

As of 2020 ...

no plan for a Community Improvement District is yet in place.

Expect leadership and action.

Who should lead this effort?

The department and staff identified to oversee the Canal District should also oversee initial communication and organization of a new CID.

What should happen by 2023?

The idea of a CID should have been well received by community leadership as well as private-property and business owners. A steering committee should have been formed to communicate and keep track of existing or prospective developers. A feasibility study should be underway to determine the most suitable boundary and the best time to follow development with establishment of the CID.

Who are potential partners?

- Neighborhood Advisory Council for the Community Benefits Framework
- Property owners located in CID boundaries

What to ask leadership in 2023?

- What is the geographic boundary for the CID?
- What public-improvement projects will the CID financially support?
- Who is the CID's leadership?

What are the anticipated benefits?

This Action should advance the Plan toward these Supporting Objectives:

G.3 Create Funding Mechanisms

What is involved?

The City and a majority of commercial property owners should together establish a Community Improvement District to fund civic projects and programs such as public art, landscaping services, street cleaning and lighting, event safety, charitable events, and youth services.

Why this Action?

The success of the Canal District depends on bolstering the City's established funding toolkit with new, creative sources of funding. The Canal District is a long-term project, so these funding mechanisms must be layered and reliable. CIDs empower the business owners invested in a

place to direct the public works in their community. More important, CIDs stimulate economic activity that increases property values, and increased property values are essential for the recommended Tax Allocation District.

Catalytic Moves

- 01** Host a series of workshops to generate widespread support from existing and prospective property owners and commercial tenants in the Canal District neighborhoods.
- 02** Form a steering committee of existing and prospective property owners and commercial tenants in the Canal District neighborhoods.
- 03** Conduct a feasibility study that analyzes property usage, occupancy rates, local support, and future development of the tentative CID.

Sustaining Moves

- 01** Time the formation of the CID to support the Tax Allocation District.
- 02** Establish the CID only when a feasibility study has been completed and occupancy rates are high enough that existing property owners do not absorb the total cost and future development is not discouraged.
- 03** Ensure that the community has complete knowledge of what the CID is and how it benefits them.
- 04** Use community engagement to educate neighborhood residents and inform project selections.
- 05** Balance community-improvement projects with maintenance services.
- 07** Coordinate the TAD with other Canal District funding mechanisms, such as the Neighborhood Stormwater Program and Stormwater Credit Bank.

For People

For People

These policies should protect and promote community culture.

Supporting Objectives

Preference Local Employment

from within the Canal District, the Canal District neighborhoods, and the Savannah community

P.1

Create a Complete Range of Employment Opportunities

within the Canal District

P.2

Protect Cultural Legacies, Identities, and Landmarks

in the Canal District neighborhoods

P.3

Celebrate Cultural Heritage

by uplifting and sharing stories of the past

P.4

Increase Transit Access

between the Canal District, the Canal District neighborhoods, and Downtown Savannah

P.5

Make Streets Safe and Enjoyable

for walking and biking

P.6

Ensure Safety Every Day

in the Canal District neighborhoods

P.7

Provide a Network of Trails and Open Spaces

connecting the Canal District, the Canal District neighborhoods, and Downtown Savannah

P.8

Protect Community Cohesion

across the Canal District and the Canal District neighborhoods

P.9

Ensure Lifelong, Multi-generational Communities

in the Canal District and the Canal District neighborhoods

P.10

Create Ownership Opportunities for Residents and Businesses

in the Canal District and the Canal District neighborhoods

P.11

Ensure Current Residents Are Not Displaced

connecting the Canal District, the Canal District neighborhoods, and Downtown Savannah

P.12

Near-Term Actions

We must create jobs.

For People

06

Support Local Employment and Businesses

For People

07

Repurpose the Water Works as a Community Market and Business Center

For People

08

Curate and Build a West Savannah Heritage Trail

We must support our communities.

For People

09

Strengthen Partnerships with the Land Bank Authority for Community Development

For People

10

Organize a Community Benefits Framework

We must support housing.

For People

11

Expand Homeownership and Home-Buying Initiatives

For People

12

Develop Renter and Rental-Housing Affordability Initiatives

Support Local Employment and Businesses

Dedicated local business and employment programs can position Canal District residents to take advantage of job opportunities.

What is involved?

The City of Savannah should support local business development and channel employment opportunities into the Canal District neighborhoods by means of a dedicated program.

Why this Action?

The success of the Canal District depends on ensuring that longtime residents and community members directly benefit from the Arena development and investment in the Canal District. Employment is one of the most direct benefits to the

community. A program that leads to job security and satisfaction in turn leads to career development while building wealth and creating stability in families and communities from generation to generation.

Catalytic Moves

- 01** Identify an agency, department, or organization to lead this effort.
- 02** Create short- and long-term plans to employ residents in near-term development projects and sustainably support career development for future generations in the Canal District.
- 03** Coordinate employment opportunities with Arena development contractors, (e.g., AECOM Hunt) to establish a universal system for communicating referrals, job openings and hiring events to residents living in the Canal District neighborhoods.
- 04** Establish a matching grant program, similar to the Savannah Development and Renewal Authority's facade-improvement and edge grant programs, to sustain property improvements by existing local businesses.
- 05** Develop a new program that teaches Canal District neighborhood residents how to start and grow small businesses.
- 06** Coordinate with the Economic Development Department to explore local, state, and federal incentives to invest and create jobs in the Canal District.

Sustaining Moves

- 01** Identify a community outreach team to champion the communication of programs and services to Canal District neighborhoods and community centers.
- 02** Coordinate short- and long-term plans with existing agencies (e.g., Work Source Coastal) to provide workforce events and supportive services programs at local resource centers (MJAC and PARC).
- 03** Make supportive services like soft skills or work readiness training, GED remediation and preparation, childcare and transportation available in the District at little to no cost through existing programs and resources.
- 04** Work with existing programs to make vocational experience and paid workforce-training services available in the new District.
- 05** Prioritize employment opportunities that provide living wages and decent benefits.
- 06** Coordinate with Canal District stakeholders to encourage opportunity-zone investments that meet the needs of the surrounding community.

As of 2020 ...

the new program can build on the advancement programs and resources currently in place throughout Savannah:

City of Savannah Resource Centers: Moses Jackson Advancement Center (MJAC) and Pennsylvania Avenue Resource Center (PARC)

Certification and Education Programs

Savannah Entrepreneurial Center (SEC)

Youth and Young Adult Services

Jobs for Georgia's Graduates

Expect leadership and action.

Who should lead this effort?

The Human Services Department and Economic Development Department should be jointly responsible for community engagement using education and training programs to increase skills and entrepreneurship.

The Human Services Department should be responsible for the management, operation, and coordination of social and supportive services for youth, adults and families. The department oversees collaborations and partnerships with the faith-based community and not-for-profit organizations that provide direct services to families and individuals to assist them in reaching self-sufficiency.

What should happen by 2023?

City resources should be directed toward funding workforce training and business-support programs. A communication system should be in place for referrals and job openings in the Canal District. Incentives and programs should be in place.

Who are potential partners?

- Human Services Department
- Economic Development Department
- Work Source Coastal
- Savannah Logistics Technology Corridor
- Neighborhood Advisory Council for the Community Benefits Framework

What to ask leadership in 2023?

- Who is facilitating community outreach for work referrals in the Canal District?
- What jobs and business opportunities are available in the Canal District?
- What are the short-term and long-term plans for local employment in the Canal District?

What are the anticipated benefits?

This Action should advance the Plan toward these Supporting Objectives:

- P.1 Preference Local Employment**
- P.2 Create a Complete Range of Employment Opportunities**
- P.10 Ensure Lifelong, Multigenerational Communities**
- P.11 Create Ownership Opportunities for Residents and Businesses**
- P.12 Ensure Current Residents Are Not Displaced**

Repurpose the Water Works as a Community Market and Business Center

A Water Works Community Market and Business Center can provide essential economic support for the opening of the Savannah Arena and long-term economic support for the underserved Canal District neighborhoods and communities.

What is involved?

The City of Savannah’s Urban Planning and Design office and Economic Development Department should reinvent the historic Water Works Building and City Lot as a community market and local business and labor-force incubator.

Why this Action?

The success of the Canal District depends on the rapid transformation of City Lot into an economic anchor for the Canal District neighborhoods and Savannah Arena. The Water Works Building lends itself to repurposing as a community market, which can return long-absent goods and services to the

west Savannah neighborhoods as it revives the civic draw of the original Ellis Square open-air market. The market at the same time becomes a natural center for local-business incubation and career-skills education and development.

As of 2020 ...

the Savannah Arena is scheduled to open in early 2022. No initiative yet exists to renovate the Water Works Building or create a community market and employment program on City Lot.

Expect leadership and action.

Who should lead this?

The City of Savannah’s Planning and Urban Design and Economic Development departments should partner with local champions of the initiative.

What should happen by 2022?

Market studies and structural assessment of the Water Works Building should be completed, a strong City-community partnership should be in place, and the Water Works Building should be open for business to support the Arena opening.

Who are potential partners?

- City departments
- Savannah Food Truck Association
- Forsyth Farmers’ Market
- Healthy Savannah
- Savannah Chatham Food Policy Council
- Savannah Buy Local
- Neighborhood Advisory Council for the Community Benefits Framework

What to ask leadership in 2022?

- How do I become a vendor in the Water Works Community Market?
- What entrepreneurship or training programs are in place at the Business Center?

What are the anticipated benefits?

This Action should advance the Plan toward these Supporting Objectives:

- P.1 Preference Local Employment**
- P.2 Create a Complete Range of Employment Opportunities**
- P.3 Protect Cultural Legacies, Identities, and Landmarks**
- P.10 Ensure Lifelong, Multigenerational Communities**
- P.11 Create Ownership Opportunities for Residents and Businesses**
- P.12 Ensure Current Residents Are Not Displaced**

Catalytic Moves

- 01** Conduct a market study to assess the viability of a civic market and incubator on City Lot.
- 02** Explore opportunities for public-private partnerships for real estate development, operations and property management.
- 03** Explore opportunities for nonprofit partnerships in workforce development.
- 04** Survey the Water Works Building to assess the structure’s suitability as a market hall.
- 05** Create a marketing plan that focuses on local employment, entrepreneurship training, and communication with the Canal District neighborhoods.
- 06** Expand the Savannah Fresh program to increase access to healthy and affordable food options through business incentives and low-interest loans for grocery stores and other healthy-food retailers.

Sustaining Moves

- 01** Build a mutually beneficial relationship with the Arena economy and activities.
- 02** Treat the entire Canal District as a market district, complete with a spectrum of wholesale and specialty businesses that sustain the Community Market.
- 03** Explore opportunities to develop a public-private partnership.
- 04** Found or identify an existing nonprofit to focus on new-business creation.
- 05** Identify a person or organization from within the Canal District neighborhoods to champion the communication of this program to the impacted neighborhoods.

Curate and Build a West Savannah Heritage Trail

A West Savannah Heritage Trail, along the Springfield Canal and through the Canal District parks, can preserve and celebrate the legacies, identities, and landmarks that distinguish the African-American families and communities in the Canal District neighborhoods.

What is involved?

The City of Savannah’s Municipal Archives should facilitate the creation of a public exhibit of west Savannah’s history and culture throughout the Canal District’s new trail network and along the Springfield Canal.

Why this Action?

The success of the Canal District depends on the documentation and elevation of west Savannah’s histories into the mainstream history of the City. A public recognition and celebration of those histories along the new network of trails connects the Canal

District neighborhoods culturally and physically to the MLK corridor and helps complete the partial history highlighted in the City center.

As of 2020 ...

no initiative to design and curate a designated Heritage Trail is yet in place. However, a Heritage Trail curation and preservation process can build upon the artifacts already collected by the City of Savannah in its Municipal Archives, including the oral histories recorded during the Canal District Master Plan process.

Expect leadership and action.

Who should lead this effort?

The Office of Planning and Urban Design, in conjunction with the Municipal Archives, should facilitate and oversee the implementation of the Heritage Trail in partnership with community leaders.

What should happen by 2022?

Appropriate legislation or ordinance should be approved to protect the cultural places and landmarks that will compose the future West Savannah Heritage Trail.

Who are potential partners?

- Local residents and neighborhood associations
- Local historians
- Local libraries and archival repositories
- Tide to Town
- Coastal Heritage Society
- Savannah Ogeechee Canal Society
- Local colleges and universities (Savannah State University, Georgia Southern University/Armstrong Campus, Savannah College of Art and Design)
- City departments

What to ask leadership in 2022?

- Which landmarks and places were identified in the Historic Resources Survey?
- Where will trail access points be located?

Catalytic Moves

- 01** Complete a Canal District Historic Resources Survey to identify Heritage Trail landmarks, stories, and artifacts with the input of longtime residents and community leaders of the Canal District neighborhoods.
- 02** Approve the necessary legislation to protect the places and landmarks identified in the Canal District Historic Resources Survey.
- 03** Develop a set of design guidelines and a review process with neighborhood residents and community leaders for the physical design of the trail, access points, interpretive markers, and potential sculptural pieces.
- 04** Prioritize trail access points by foot or bike for neighborhoods west of the Canal District.

Sustaining Moves

- 01** Extend the Arena-site walking tour to the community landmarks that have informed the overarching vision of the Canal District.
- 02** Link the Heritage Trail to community anchors and historic anchors west of the Canal District and beyond the Canal District neighborhoods.
- 03** Coordinate with existing entities who are maintaining the Springfield Canal Basin and future Canal Park to identify sustainable funding mechanisms for Heritage Trail improvements.

What are the anticipated benefits?

This Action should advance the Plan toward these Supporting Objectives:

- P.3** Protect Cultural Legacies, Identities, and Landmarks
- P.4** Celebrate Cultural Heritage
- P.9** Protect Community Cohesion
- P.10** Ensure Lifelong, Multigenerational Communities
- P.12** Ensure Current Residents Are Not Displaced
- PI.1** Create a Place Aligned to Community Vision
- PI.4** Protect the Existing Urban Fabric and Character

Strengthen Partnerships with the Land Bank Authority for Community Development

What is involved?

New partnerships should support the Chatham County/City of Savannah Land Bank Authority (LBA), which has already acquired property in the Canal District neighborhoods and partners with the City's 1K-in-10 initiative.

Enhancing the City's land-bank initiatives with focused attention on Canal District properties can prevent the displacement of longtime residents and promote quality of life in west Savannah.

Why this Action?

The success of the Canal District depends on better use for currently abandoned or distressed property in the District. Chatham County and the City established an LBA compliant with State law. The LBA allows for the acquisition and transfer of underutilized properties within the

What is a Land Bank Authority?

The Land Bank Authority (LBA) is a public organization that acquires vacant or abandoned properties in order to return them to ownership that will directly benefit the surrounding community.

Canal District neighborhoods to heirs and owners who will return them to productive societal uses. Early involvement of the LBA in the Canal District may also mitigate predatory land speculation that can erode communities and displace residents.

Catalytic Moves

- 01** Support a strategic land-assembly plan that prioritizes the geographic area of the Canal District neighborhoods.
- 02** Support the acquisition of blighted or abandoned properties in the Canal District neighborhoods by the LBA and through the City of Savannah's 1K-in-10 initiative.
- 03** Coordinate with the dedicated staff in the Office of Planning and Urban Design on community outreach to grow program eligibility by ensuring residents are informed, knowledgeable, and financially ready for opportunities offered by the LBA.
- 04** Grow LBA program funding that financially supports the acquisition and maintenance of Canal District neighborhoods property until it transitions to new ownership.
- 05** Create a formal agreement that prioritizes the future use of land-bank property acquired in the Canal District neighborhoods for the needs of Canal District residents, such as housing and local job creation.
- 06** Encourage legacy homeownership by supporting will preparation and the donation of private property to the LBA for the future use and ownership of longtime Canal District neighborhood residents.

Sustaining Moves

- 01** Commit to transferring LBA properties for affordable housing, healthy-food access, healthcare access, small-business creation, and park and recreation space.
- 02** Partner with local not-for-profit and for-profit organizations, including Community Development Corporations and individuals.

As of 2020 ...

the existing Land Bank Authority and 1K-in-10 initiative are analyzing properties for acquisition and development potential in the Canal District.

The City's 1K-in-10 initiative anticipates acquiring and facilitating the renovation or development of 1,000 abandoned or distressed properties over ten years. It is acquiring property for housing and development that will benefit longtime residents of the Canal District neighborhoods.

Expect leadership and action.

Who should lead this effort?

The Chatham County/City of Savannah Land Bank Authority should have a leadership role in the acquisition and redevelopment of abandoned or distressed property to the benefit of the adjacent communities.

What should happen by 2023?

Eligible properties in the Canal District neighborhoods should be identified and available for redevelopment in a manner that aligns with the community vision. Where legal and financially possible, acquisition should be underway.

Who are potential partners?

- Chatham County/City of Savannah Land Bank Authority, Inc.
- Community Housing Services Agency, Inc. (CHSA, Inc.)
- City of Savannah 1K-in-10 redevelopment initiative
- City of Savannah Housing and Neighborhood Services
- REACH Savannah
- Neighborhood Improvement Association (NIA)
- Coastal Empire Habitat for Humanity
- Housing Authority of Savannah
- Chatham County Housing Coalition

What to ask leadership in 2023?

- Has a strategic land-assembly plan been completed for the Canal District neighborhoods?
- Is land-acquisition activity underway in the Canal District neighborhoods?
- What are the requirements for purchasing Canal District neighborhood property from the Land Bank Authority?

What are the anticipated benefits?

This Action should advance the Plan toward these Supporting Objectives:

- P.9 Protect Community Cohesion**
- P.10 Ensure Lifelong, Multigenerational Communities**
- P.11 Create Ownership Opportunities for Residents and Businesses**
- P.12 Ensure Current Residents Are Not Displaced**
- PI.5 Develop a Complete Range of Housing Options**

Organize a Community Benefits Framework

Direct investment in community infrastructure for the Canal District neighborhoods, administered through Community Benefits Agreements, will build trust, resources, and shared purpose for economic development.

What is a Community Benefits Agreement?

A Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) is a legal, enforceable contract between a developer and an organized group of community members. The contract outlines specific benefits—such as funding for community-directed projects (e.g., building a playground), a local-hiring policy, or affordable housing—that the developer will provide to the community as part of the project under negotiation.

As of 2020 ...

no plan for a Community Benefits Framework or Neighborhood Advisory Council has yet been initiated.

Expect leadership and action.

Who should lead this effort?

An existing active neighborhood leader should oversee the formation of the NAC and coordinate with the dedicated staff in the Office of Planning and Urban Design.

What should happen by June 2020?

The NAC should be formed to represent the Canal District neighborhoods in the signing of a Community Benefits Agreement.

Who are potential partners?

- City departments
- Neighborhood leadership
- Development community

What to ask leadership in June 2020?

- Has a Community Benefits Ordinance been approved?
- What neighborhoods are part of the Community Benefits Ordinance?
- Has a Neighborhood Advisory Council been formed?
- What benefits are listed in the Community Benefits Framework?

What is involved?

The City of Savannah and a new Canal District Neighborhood Advisory Council (NAC) should organize a framework to guide the negotiation of Community Benefits Agreements with public and private developers seeking projects in the Canal District. They should further establish reasonable parameters for the benefits provided.

Why this Action?

The success of the Canal District depends on the community's power to shape the process and effects of the steady development that will result from investment in the Savannah Arena and in public infrastructure throughout the coming decades. As the area developments, it is reasonable

for community groups to participate in the tangible benefits of economic development within their community. Those benefits can only be identified through a process, or framework, that facilitates open dialogue and establishes rules of engagement.

Catalytic Moves

- 01 Approve a Community Benefits Ordinance for the Canal District neighborhoods that establishes eligible projects, negotiable parameters, percentage of investment value, and processes for agreement.
- 02 Form an NAC to negotiate the Community Benefits Agreement on behalf of the Canal District neighborhoods.
- 03 Establish a process for coordination between the City of Savannah's leadership, prospective developers, and the NAC members in forming an agreement.
- 04 Work with the NAC to develop potential community-investment projects or programs.

Sustaining Moves

- 01 Provide the NAC access to free or low-cost legal aid for the writing of the Community Benefits Agreement.
- 02 Ensure that both public and private projects are included as eligible in the Community Benefits Ordinance.
- 03 Actively update and communicate the live list of all new development in the Canal District.
- 04 Prompt NAC meetings to communicate progress.
- 05 Allow developers to give quarterly or annual updates to the NAC representing the Community Benefits Agreement.
- 06 Keep the City of Savannah Council informed.

What are the anticipated benefits?

This Action should advance the Plan toward these Supporting Objectives:

- G.2 Create a Communication System
- P.1 Preference Local Employment
- P.2 Create a Complete Range of Employment Opportunities
- P.5 Increase Transit Access
- P.6 Make Streets Safe and Enjoyable
- P.7 Ensure Safety Every Day
- P.8 Provide a Network of Trails and Open Spaces
- P.9 Protect Community Cohesion
- P.11 Create Ownership Opportunities for Residents and Businesses
- P.12 Ensure Current Residents Are Not Displaced
- PI.1 Create a Place Aligned to Community Vision
- PI.5 Develop a Complete Range of Housing Options

Expand Homeownership and Home-Buying Initiatives

Home-improvement and home-purchase initiatives can empower current and future homeowners with the necessary resources, including knowledge, to improve and purchase homes in Canal District neighborhoods.

What is a homestead exemption?

A “homestead exemption” is a legal protection for homeowners against property-tax increases. The protections vary state by state, but in general the provisions allow a homeowner to exempt a certain amount of the value of their residence from taxation. In Savannah, homeowners must apply to be eligible for property-tax relief.

What is involved?

The City of Savannah should grow participation in initiatives that educate potential homeowners and protect existing homeowners through home-improvement programs. Further, it should fund the development and maintenance of housing that is affordable for existing and new low- and modest-income homeowners in Canal District neighborhoods.

Why this Action?

The success of the Canal District depends, in part, upon the availability of quality housing that is affordable for low- and modest-income homeowners and home buyers living in Canal District neighborhoods. It also depends on the longevity of legacy homeownership that has been a source of stability and pride in the surrounding neighborhoods. Existing homeowners need resources

to improve and live in their homes and take advantage of available property-tax exemptions. Those interested in purchasing existing or new housing need access to housing choices, financing, and education programs, while those entities interested in renovating or building new housing for sale to home buyers need financing and incentives to do so.

Catalytic Moves

- 01** Complete a baseline study that: a) identifies existing housing conditions, ownership, and demographics in Canal District neighborhoods; and b) projects future housing needs based on anticipated growth in the Canal District.
- 02** Identify a community outreach team who can work with the Housing & Neighborhood Services Department to inform and prepare residents for homeownership eligibility.
- 03** Coordinate with dedicated staff in the Office of Planning and Urban Design to inform residents and increase program awareness on how to financially prepare for homeownership.
- 04** Hold a meeting for all homeowners residing in the Canal District neighborhoods (i.e., the geographic area defined by leadership) to prepare homeowners to take advantage of exemptions and services available to them.
- 05** Coordinate workshops with Housing & Neighborhood Services to sign up homeowners for available housing resources.
- 06** Increase funding for the Savannah Affordable Housing Fund to address more localized needs, ranging from home repair to the construction of affordable-housing options.
- 07** Support a property-tax incentive that will keep property taxes down in the Canal District neighborhoods (as designated by the leadership).
- 08** Identify resources, organizations, services, educational opportunities, and legislation that can benefit homeowners and home buyers in the Canal District neighborhoods.
- 09** Identify possible properties as well as incentives for the improvement, development, and sale of housing that is affordable to low- and modest-income home buyers.

Sustaining Moves

- 01** Conduct workshops on available housing-improvement and home-purchase resources.
- 02** Provide budgeting, financial-management, debt-reduction, home-purchase, and related workshops and classes for homeowners and home buyers.
- 03** Raise homeowner awareness about taking advantage of property tax-relief programs, including homestead exemptions, the Stephens-Day exemption, and exemptions associated with age or disability.
- 04** Refer individuals to free or reduced-cost legal services related to estate planning, will preparation, and title clearance.
- 05** Support increased local-government and private-sector funding for the Savannah Affordable Housing Fund.
- 06** Support local and state legislation that offers incentives that lead to the retention, improvement, or development of quality housing that is affordable to low- and modest-income households.
- 07** Support the City of Savannah’s 1K-in-10 initiative and the Land Bank Authority’s initiative to acquire abandoned or distressed property in the Canal District and surrounding neighborhoods and advance its redevelopment.
- 08** Market initiatives to homeowners, home buyers, and others.
- 09** Provide home-improvement, construction, and permanent financing.
- 10** Encourage property owners to use qualified, licensed neighborhood contractors to undertake home-improvement and construction projects.
- 11** Encourage home-construction training and employment opportunities for residents in the Canal District neighborhoods.
- 12** Encourage code compliance to enforce property-maintenance code and ensure homeowners are compliant.

As of 2020 ...

Multiple homeowner and home-buying initiatives are already in place. They include the following programs: Volunteer Home Repair, Minor Home Repair, Dream Maker Home Buyer Assistance, Georgia Dream Homeownership, Federal Home Loan Bank, Employer-Assisted Home Purchase, Infill-Housing Development, will preparation and title clearance

What are the anticipated benefits?

This Action should advance the Plan toward these Supporting Objectives:

- P.9 Protect Community Cohesion**
- P.10 Ensure Lifelong, Multigenerational Communities**
- P.11 Create Ownership Opportunities for Residents and Businesses**
- P.12 Ensure Current Residents Are Not Displaced**
- PI.5 Develop a Complete Range of Housing Options**

Expect leadership and action.

Who should lead this effort?

The Housing & Neighborhood Services Department should play a leadership role in implementing new and existing homeownership and home-buying initiatives.

What should happen by 2021?

A Canal District housing study should be completed, and an approved strategic-action plan should be guiding long-term growth. All homeowners living in the Canal District neighborhoods should be aware of exemptions and other supportive programs that will address immediate needs in the Canal District neighborhoods.

Who are potential partners?

- Community Housing Services Agency, Inc. (CHSA, Inc.)
- Chatham County Housing Coalition
- Housing Authority of Savannah
- Chatham County/City of Savannah Land Bank Authority, Inc.
- City departments
- Georgia Legal Services
- Consumer Credit Counseling Services
- Neighborhood Improvement Association (NIA)
- Coastal Empire Habitat for Humanity

What to ask leadership in 2021?

- How much funding has been made available for the Savannah Affordable Housing Fund to support affordable housing in the Canal District neighborhoods?
- What are the existing housing conditions in the Canal District neighborhoods?
- As a homeowner, what programs or services are available to me in the Canal District neighborhoods?

Develop Renter and Rental-Housing Affordability Initiatives

Rental-property initiatives can help ensure that tenants are aware of their rights and responsibilities and of opportunities for economic self-improvement. They can also create opportunities for the improvement and development of housing that is affordable to existing and new low- and modest-income residents in Canal District neighborhoods.

What is involved?

The City of Savannah should establish and implement initiatives that educate and protect renters. Further, the City should contribute to efforts to retain and create rental housing that is affordable for existing and new low- and modest-income residents living in Canal District neighborhoods.

Why this Action?

The success of the Canal District depends in part upon the availability of quality housing that is affordable to low- and modest-income persons living in Canal District neighborhoods. Renters, in particular, can be vulnerable to the unintended consequences of new development, such as increases in property values, marketability, and rents. Initiatives that educate renters about tenant rights and responsibilities or provide

legal and other types of assistance can support renters in avoiding eviction, managing their finances, and finding pathways to homeownership. Additional protections include code enforcement, provision of affordable financing, property-tax relief, and incentives for improving and developing rental property that is affordable to low- and modest-income residents.

Catalytic Moves

- 01** Complete a baseline study that identifies existing housing conditions, ownership, and demographics in the Canal District neighborhoods.
- 02** Complete a market study that projects anticipated rental-housing needs.
- 03** Identify organizations, services, educational opportunities, and legislation that could benefit renters in Canal District neighborhoods.
- 04** Identify properties and incentives that could be made available for the improvement or development of new rental housing that is affordable to low- and modest-income households.

- 05** Identify a community outreach leader who can work with the City's Housing & Neighborhood Services Department to increase program awareness and inform residents on how to financially prepare.
- 06** Support a property-tax incentive that will keep property taxes down in the geographic area defined by leadership as the Canal District neighborhoods.
- 07** Coordinate with the Land Bank Authority on initiatives to support longtime Canal District neighborhood residents who are transitioning into homeownership through the City's Dream Maker program.

Sustaining Moves

- 01** Provide workshops on renter rights and responsibilities.
- 02** Refer individuals to free or reduced-cost legal services related to evictions and landlords in violation of leases.
- 03** Provide budgeting, financial management, debt reduction, home purchase and other associated workshops and classes.
- 04** Encourage code compliance to ensure rental-property owners and tenants are compliant.
- 05** Provide rental-property improvement, construction, and permanent financing.
- 06** Support increased local-government and private-sector funding for the Savannah Affordable Housing Fund.
- 07** Support Low-Income Housing Tax Credit, bond, opportunity-zone, and similar rental-property development to ensure that high-quality, long-term housing is affordable to low- and modest-income households.
- 08** Support the Chatham County/City of Savannah Land Bank Authority and the City's 1k-in-10 initiatives to acquire and bring about the redevelopment of distressed or abandoned property.
- 09** Support legislation that offers property-tax reduction and other incentives for the retention, improvement, or development of quality rental housing affordable to low- and modest-income households.
- 10** Market initiatives to residents and investors.

As of 2020 ...

the Housing & Neighborhood Services Department and several local partners are already involved in similar rental-property and tenant initiatives. They can be called upon to help accomplish the activities described above.

Expect leadership and action.

Who should lead this effort?

The City's Housing & Neighborhood Services Department should play a leadership role in implementing renter and rental-housing initiatives.

What should happen by 2021?

A housing study should be completed for the Canal District neighborhoods, and policies that protect renters should be in place.

Who are potential partners?

- Community Housing Services Agency, Inc. (CHSA, Inc.)
- Housing Authority of Savannah
- Chatham County/City of Savannah Land Bank Authority, Inc.
- Chatham County Housing Coalition
- Human Services Department
- Code Compliance Department
- City departments

What to ask leadership in 2021?

- As a renter, what programs or services are available to me in the Canal District neighborhoods?
- Is there a plan for affordable multifamily housing in the Canal District neighborhoods?

What are the anticipated benefits?

This Action should advance the Plan toward these Supporting Objectives:

- P.9 Protect Community Cohesion**
- P.10 Ensure Lifelong, Multigenerational Communities**
- P.11 Create Ownership Opportunities for Residents and Businesses**
- P.12 Ensure Current Residents Are Not Displaced**
- PI.5 Develop a Complete Range of Housing Options**

For Nature

For Nature

These policies should rebuild natural systems and mitigate flooding.

Supporting Objectives

Decrease Long-Term Flood Risks

in the Canal District and the Canal District neighborhoods

N.1

Fund Infrastructure

without placing additional tax burdens on economically vulnerable populations within the Canal District neighborhoods

N.2

Remediate Environmentally Contaminated Areas

in the Canal District

N.3

Near-Term Actions

We must create infrastructure.

For Nature

13

Institute a Neighborhood Stormwater Program

For Nature

14

Expand Green Infrastructure Programs to Include the Canal District

We must build open space.

For Nature

15

Develop a Comprehensive Stormwater Strategy for the Springfield Basin

We must clean our city.

For Nature

16

Perform a Canal District Brownfield Assessment

Institute a Neighborhood Stormwater Program

A Neighborhood Stormwater Program can add responsive maintenance, repairs tracking, and direct citizen accountability to the City’s modernization of stormwater infrastructure.

What is involved?

The City of Savannah’s Department of Public Works & Water Resources should institute a pilot Neighborhood Stormwater Program to perform necessary expansion, maintenance and monitoring in the Canal District and in surrounding neighborhoods. If successful, the program could be replicated as a model in other parts of the City.

Why this Action?

The success of the Canal District depends on solving the historic flooding and insufficient drainage infrastructure in the west Savannah neighborhoods immediately adjacent to the Springfield Canal. The Springfield Basin is among the oldest drainage networks in Savannah. A

localized stormwater program can focus on neighborhood-specific issues that will be identified by residents in the vicinity of the Springfield Canal.

Catalytic Moves

01 Identify program leadership from within the Public Works & Water Resources Department and build on its existing maintenance and inspections program.

02 Coordinate community outreach with the dedicated staff in the Office of Planning and Urban Design to grow the program in concert with a comprehensive Canal District communications program.

03 Establish a tracking system for flooding issues identified by residents.

04 Increase residents’ awareness of Citywide Adopt a Drain program.

05 Offer rain barrels to residents if funding is in place.

Sustaining Moves

01 Provide residents with a resource book on ways to reduce stormwater runoff.

As of 2020 ...

no plan for a Neighborhood Stormwater Program is yet in place.

Expect leadership and action.

Who should lead this effort?

Public Works & Water Resources should oversee the modernization of stormwater infrastructure and establish a system of communication and accountability around neighborhood drainage.

What should happen by 2023?

A Neighborhood Stormwater Program should be well established and operational.

Who are potential partners?

- City departments
- Neighborhood leadership and Canal District residents
- Savannah Riverkeeper

What to ask leadership in 2023?

- Is there a system for reporting stormwater and flood issues?
- Who do I call for stormwater repairs in my neighborhood?

What are the anticipated benefits?

This Action should advance the Plan toward these Supporting Objectives:

N.1 Decrease Long-Term Flood Risks

N.2 Fund Infrastructure

Expand Green Infrastructure Programs to Include the Canal District

Existing green infrastructure programs can model a funding mechanism and adapt to include construction of District-serving stormwater infrastructure.

What is involved?

The City of Savannah should take advantage of existing green-infrastructure and low-impact development (GI/LID) programs as a mechanism to provide sustainable, consolidated stormwater infrastructure to properties within the Canal District.

Why this Action?

The success of the Canal District depends on the effective management of stormwater to protect from flooding, promote urban development, improve water quality, and support wildlife habitat. Balancing these objectives cannot be achieved on a property-by-property and case-by-case basis. It requires comprehensive District-wide green infrastructure. GI/LID programs provide a vehicle

for the City to, for example, build infrastructure that serves the District's needs for floodplain mitigation and allow real-estate developers to buy infrastructural capacity that would otherwise encumber the development of a property. They support the City's ability to build infrastructure properly and sustainably for the District by leveraging costs otherwise borne by individual site developers.

As of 2020 ...

a permeable paver green-infrastructure program exists for the Bilbo Canal and can be leveraged to create similar infrastructure in the Canal District.

Expect leadership and action.

Who should lead this effort?

Public Works & Water Resources should oversee the modeling and adaptation of existing GI/LID programs for the Canal District.

What should happen by 2023?

District-wide green infrastructure funding should be in place, allowing developers to begin purchasing the rights to use it.

Who are potential partners?

- City departments
- Development community

What to ask leadership in 2023?

- Who is paying for the stormwater improvements?
- What types of stormwater improvements do existing green-infrastructure programs support?

What are the anticipated benefits?

This Action should advance the Plan toward these Supporting Objectives:

N.1 Decrease Long-Term Flood Risks

N.2 Fund Infrastructure

Catalytic Moves

- 01** Work with Public Works & Water Resources to scale up the GI/LID programs.
- 02** Coordinate with the dedicated staff in the Office of Planning and Urban Design for outreach to property owners and prospective developers.
- 03** Establish costs and budget for green-infrastructure improvements in the Canal District.
- 04** Explore a funding mechanism that allows developers to purchase the rights to use the City's new infrastructure.

Sustaining Moves

- 01** Enlist local nonprofits, such as the Friends of Tide to Town, to assist with additional fundraising and advocacy for green infrastructure in the Canal District.
- 02** Coordinate green infrastructure with Canal District open space and parks plans to multiply the benefits of new infrastructure.

Develop a Comprehensive Stormwater Strategy for the Springfield Basin

What is involved?

The City of Savannah should assemble a comprehensive Stormwater Strategy to address flooding, drainage, and infrastructure improvements throughout the Springfield Basin. The Strategy should anchor the design of the proposed Canal Park and prioritize the necessary widening of the Canal to convey stormwater for the entire Basin. Wetland preserves should provide District-wide floodplain mitigation to support development and create new recreational green spaces.

Catalytic Moves

- 01** Commission a master plan to study stormwater alleviation and infrastructure improvements throughout the Springfield Basin.
- 02** Create an action plan for addressing stormwater issues, including specific projects.
- 03** Develop a capital improvement budget for basin-wide as well as Canal District Improvements.

Coordinated investment in District-serving stormwater infrastructure throughout the Springfield Basin can make the Canal District livable, the new Arena viable, and an iconic, naturalistic park for Savannah possible.

Why this Action?

The success of the Canal District depends on effective and durable stormwater infrastructure for the entire Springfield Basin. A comprehensive strategy will coordinate investment along the length of the Springfield Canal with required stormwater conveyance and floodplain mitigation to solve longstanding drainage issues

for residents within the Basin. The strategy will sustain the level of new development activity the Arena and Canal District attract and will prepare the ground for a new 21st-century park in Savannah.

Sustaining Moves

- 01** Institute a strong communication system for residents, community members, and visitors to report drainage, flooding, and infrastructure issues.
- 02** Design the Canal Park to be an essential instrument of stormwater mitigation as well as an attractive feature of the City and its landscape.
- 03** Maintain the mutually beneficial relationship with the Georgia Ports Authority.
- 04** Ensure adequate space for a maintenance-vehicle path on both sides of the widened Springfield Canal.

As of 2020 ...

a Springfield Canal assessment is currently underway. The City needs immediately to coordinate and integrate this ongoing assessment with the creation of a comprehensive strategy for the entire Springfield Basin, including stormwater conveyance and floodplain mitigation to support the Arena and proposed Canal Park.

Expect leadership and action.

Who should lead this effort?

The Planning and Urban Design, Public Works & Water Resources, and Sustainability offices should coordinate the City's efforts to fund the construction of stormwater infrastructure that will sustain the Arena, a new park, and the District's livability.

What should happen by 2022?

A comprehensive Stormwater Strategy for the Springfield Basin should be completed, design of the Canal Park should be completed, and the widened portions of the Canal immediately adjacent to the Arena should be constructed.

Who are potential partners?

- Public Works & Water Resources

What to ask leadership in 2022?

- What is the projected timeline and cost for completing the remaining stormwater improvements as part of the Canal Park and Springfield Basin Master Plan?
- What funding mechanisms will sustainably support the remaining work?

What are the anticipated benefits?

This Action should advance the Plan toward these Supporting Objectives:

- P.8** Provide a Network of Trails and Open Spaces
- P.10** Ensure Lifelong, Multigenerational Communities
- PI.1** Create a Place Aligned to Community Vision
- N.1** Decrease Long-Term Flood Risks
- N.3** Remediate Environmentally Contaminated Areas

Complete the Canal District Brownfield Assessment

Further brownfield assessment of industrial properties in the Canal District can lead to the remediation and repurposing of underutilized property and improved environmental health for neighborhood residents.

What is a brownfield?

A "brownfield" is an abandoned tract of land previously developed for industrial or commercial purposes and currently disregarded on account of real or perceived environmental contamination.

As of 2020 ...

the City has received a \$300,000 Brownfield Assessment grant and in June 2019 conducted a community meeting on the use of the grant. A large portion of the grant has been allocated to the Canal District City Lot site and has almost reached its limit of expenditure in the Canal District. Applications for additional grants to support the assessment and environmental remediation of contaminated areas of the Canal District are not yet underway and must begin immediately.

Expect leadership and action.

Who should lead this effort?

The City of Savannah's Sustainability Office should oversee the implementation and communication of brownfield assessment in the Canal District.

What should happen by 2022?

The City of Savannah should have applied for additional grants for the environmental remediation of inventoried brownfield properties in the Canal District. A near and long-term plan for the redevelopment of these properties should be in place.

Who are potential partners?

- Neighborhood Advisory Council for the Community Benefits Agreement
- Healthy Savannah
- State Environmental Protection Division Brownfield Office
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Existing industries in the Canal District
- Not-for-profit developers
- Real Estate Services Department
- City departments
- Chatham County/City of Savannah Land Bank Authority, Inc.

What to ask leadership in 2022?

- Is there a complete inventory of contaminated properties in the Canal District?
- Has the Sustainability Office applied for additional grants to support the assessment and environmental remediation of remaining Canal District properties?
- What is the near and long-term plan for putting remediated properties back into full use?

What are the anticipated benefits?

This Action should advance the Plan toward these Supporting Objectives:

G.2 Create Funding Mechanisms

P.7 Ensure Safety Every Day

P.10 Ensure Lifelong, Multigenerational Communities

N.3 Remediate Environmentally Contaminated Areas

What is involved?

The City of Savannah should complete Phase I and II assessment of City Lot using the funds allocated from the 2018 EPA Brownfield Assessment grant and pursue new funding for identification and assessment of properties in the area. Full environmental remediation of properties should then begin.

Why this Action?

The success of the Canal District depends on the reclamation of contaminated industrial land to make it safe for new development, such as housing and small businesses. The Springfield Canal has historically been used for dumping construction debris and household waste. Environmental assessments will reveal contaminated

soils on properties where pollutants or other hazardous materials have been used and prioritize those properties for remediation.

Catalytic Moves

- 01** Identify properties in the Canal District that should be supported by assessment grants.
- 02** Inventory a complete list of Canal District properties needing environmental remediation.
- 03** Hold a meeting that informs the community of the goals for assessment, remediation, and redevelopment of brownfield lots in the Canal District.
- 04** Coordinate with the Real Estate Department and Land Bank Authority to transfer ownership and maintenance of property that is ready for redevelopment whether for public-space amenity, or affordable housing where feasible.

Sustaining Moves

- 01** Regularly communicate progress on the funding and remediation of brownfield lots.
- 02** Register City-owned Canal District properties in the state's brownfield program to limit future liability.
- 03** Produce a specific plan that illustrates how brownfield assessments directly benefit Canal District residents and property owners.
- 04** Solicit advocacy and fundraising assistance from existing and projected organizations such as Healthy Savannah.
- 05** Apply for additional EPA Brownfield Assessment grants to sustain and promote the effort. Applications should target: property-specific cleanup grants, workforce training grants, revolving loan fund grants, any appropriate assessment grants.

For Places

For Places

These policies should preserve and create celebrated places.

Supporting Objectives

<p>Create a Place Aligned to Community Vision</p> <p>where new development, retail, and services balance with the communities' needs</p> <p>Pl.1</p>	<p>Ensure Delivery of a Policy Framework</p> <p>for the Canal District in conjunction with the Three-Year Arena Area Plan</p> <p>Pl.2</p>	<p>Ensure Appropriate Transitions</p> <p>between new development and existing neighborhoods, such as appropriate height, density, and use</p> <p>Pl.3</p>	<p>Protect the Existing Urban Fabric and Character</p> <p>of the Canal District and the Canal District neighborhoods</p> <p>Pl.4</p>
<p>Develop a Complete Range of Housing Options</p> <p>in the Canal District and the Canal District neighborhoods</p> <p>Pl.5</p>			

Near-Term Actions

We must increase mobility.

For Places **17**

Institute a Community Street Improvements Program

We must preserve and grow our neighborhoods.

For Places **18**

Revise Canal District Zoning and Establish an Overlay District

We must build our networks.

For Places **19**

Install a Neighborhood Wi-Fi Umbrella and Smart Lighting

Institute a Community Street Improvements Program

A Community Street Improvements Program can promote safe, walkable streets in the Canal District and surrounding neighborhoods.

What are complete streets?

“Complete streets” are designed and operated for safe use by people of all ages and abilities and any mode of transportation. Complete streets make it easy to cross the street, promote efficient public transit, reduce car dependency, and support urban density.

As of 2020 ...

a plan or program for Canal District and neighborhood street improvements has not yet been initiated.

Expect leadership and action.

Who should lead this effort?

Mobility and Parking Services should oversee the communication and implementation of a program of practical and aesthetic upgrades to streets and transit modes throughout the Canal District.

What should happen by 2022?

The most critical improvements should be completed in preparation for the Savannah Arena’s opening day. An active campaign for community street improvements should be taking place in the Canal District neighborhoods.

Who are potential partners?

- Healthy Savannah
- Bike Walk Savannah
- Existing community organizations in the Canal District neighborhoods
- Neighborhood Advisory Council for the Community Benefits Framework

What to ask leadership in 2022?

- Has a complete-streets policy been approved for future Canal District streets?
- How many jobs have been created from the street improvements in the community?
- Have the most critical street improvements been completed?
- Is there a comprehensive map or list of all street improvements for the Canal District neighborhoods?

What is involved?

The City of Savannah’s Mobility and Parking Services department should initiate a program of practical and aesthetic upgrades to streets throughout the Canal District and into the surrounding neighborhoods.

Why this Action?

The success of the Canal District depends on the accessibility, versatility, and safety of the streets that take people into and out of the Canal District. A comprehensive street-improvements program will address new parking needs and traffic concerns, encourage transportation

alternatives, reduce car dependency, and introduce walkability in the Canal District and surrounding neighborhoods.

Catalytic Moves

- 01** Extend the City’s complete streets policy to the Canal District.
- 02** Complete a walking survey of existing conditions with residents to identify critical repairs in the Canal District neighborhoods.
- 03** Coordinate the resources for identified repairs among funding mechanisms, such as the proposed Tax Allocation District, Community Improvement District, Community Benefits Framework, and existing City resources.
- 04** Create a campaign with neighborhood residents to establish accountability, keep residents informed, and get residents excited.

Sustaining Moves

- 01** Align Community Street Improvements projects with Arena construction and Canal District development.
- 02** Leverage program initiatives to stimulate job opportunities for Canal District residents.
- 03** Leverage street improvements to catalyze and support simultaneous projects, programs, and developments in the Canal District.

What are the anticipated benefits?

This Action should advance the Plan toward these Supporting Objectives:

- P.1 Preference Local Employment**
- P.2 Create a Complete Range of Employment Opportunities**
- P.5 Increase Transit Access**
- P.6 Make Streets Safe and Enjoyable**
- P.8 Provide a Network of Trails and Open Spaces**
- PI.1 Create a Place Aligned to Community Vision**
- PI.3 Ensure Appropriate Transitions**

Revise Canal District Zoning and Establish an Overlay District

Revised zoning recognizes appropriate transitions between historic patterns of residential development and appropriately scaled growth on future development sites.

What is zoning?

Zoning is a set of rules that determines the physical development and use of land. Zoning determines, for example, how tall a building can be and whether a property can be used for a residence or a business.

As of 2020 ...

a Conservation Overlay District for Historic Carver Village–Flatman Village has been created. The Historic Preservation Commission prevents the unnecessary demolition of historic buildings in the Overlay District and prohibits the recombination of lots.

The new Overlay District is a baseline measurement for future zoning activity in the Canal District. The New City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance has been adopted and is available for application in the Canal District.

Expect leadership and action.

Who should lead this effort?

The Office of Planning and Urban Design and the Chatham County–Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission should facilitate the rezoning of the Canal District for appropriate transition zones and suitably scaled development.

What should happen by June 2020?

The City should have approved a zoning strategy that establishes a standard for new development while protecting the people and places of the Canal District neighborhoods.

Who are potential partners?

- Local planning and design professionals
- Community leadership

What to ask leadership in June 2020?

- Is there an appropriate zoning strategy for the Canal District?
- Do we have a set of design guidelines for future development in the Canal District?
- How is mixed-use development being encouraged in the Canal District?
- Has a complete-streets policy been approved? (See Action 16.)

What are the anticipated benefits?

This Action should advance the Plan toward these Supporting Objectives:

- P.3 Protect Cultural Legacies, Identities, and Landmarks
- P.10 Ensure Lifelong, Multigenerational Communities
- P.12 Ensure Current Residents Are Not Displaced
- PI.1 Create a Place Aligned to Community Vision
- PI.3 Ensure Appropriate Transitions
- PI.4 Protect the Existing Urban Fabric and Character

What is involved?

The City of Savannah's Office of Planning and Urban Design should revise zoning regulations in the Canal District to guide sustainable development and provide appropriate transitions between historic patterns of residential development and appropriately scaled growth on future development sites.

Why this Action?

The success of the Canal District depends on sensitive regulation of property development and land uses. Updated regulations will be essential to protecting the west Savannah neighborhoods' character and history. They can also form the foundation for new, sustainable development within the District and ensure that future

development supports the vision of the Canal District Master Plan.

Catalytic Moves

- 01 Review the New City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance to determine which zoning districts and standards meet the intent of the Canal District Master Plan.
- 02 Conduct a historic resources survey of the Canal District for historically significant structures, patterns, and neighborhood boundaries.
- 03 Adopt new base zoning for the Canal District.
- 04 Develop and adopt a set of design guidelines for a Canal District Overlay District and a Canal District Conservation District.
- 05 Approve a complete-streets policy for future Canal District streets. See Action 16.
- 06 Support dense mixed-use development that promotes a range of affordable-housing options and neighborhood-scale businesses.

Sustaining Moves

- 01 Promote walkable sidewalks that are wide, shaded, safe, and lively.
- 02 Integrate natural drainage and stormwater quality into the site and infrastructure design.
- 03 Allow alternative compliance with stormwater regulations (e.g., participation in a managed stormwater district).
- 04 Provide for architectural variety.

Install a Neighborhood Wi-Fi Umbrella and Smart Lighting

A neighborhood Wi-Fi umbrella and lighting program can use smart technology to address public safety, elevate the Canal District neighborhoods as leaders in civic innovation, and lay the groundwork for transformative change in the west Savannah communities.

What is involved?

The City of Savannah should initiate a smart-technology strategy for installing Wi-Fi access and smart lighting throughout the Canal District.

Why this Action?

The success of the Canal District depends on its reputation as a place that balances Savannah's investments in historic preservation with visionary city building. A smart-technology strategy will provide smart lights for the Canal District and connect the lights to a Wi-Fi canopy that enables

strategic dimming and brightening of the District while delivering Wi-Fi access to visitors and the surrounding neighborhoods.

Catalytic Moves

- 01** Apply for a grant to expand the existing collaboration between the City of Savannah and Georgia Tech as part of the Georgia Smart Communities Challenge.
- 02** Identify the locations and phases for implementing new street lighting and Wi-Fi hot spots.
- 03** Install at least one Wi-Fi hot spot near the Savannah Arena as part of early site activation.
- 04** Create a campaign with neighborhood residents to establish accountability, keep residents informed, and get residents excited.

Sustaining Moves

- 01** Locate amenities near community anchors.
- 02** Communicate implementation milestones and project deadlines to neighborhood residents and community leaders.
- 03** Coordinate the strategy with other economic-development actions like the Water Works Community Market and Business Center, the local employment program, and the Community Street Improvements program.

As of 2020 ...

the City of Savannah, as a participant in the Georgia Smart Communities Challenge, has already developed a sea-level-sensor network. However, a Wi-Fi Umbrella and Smart Lighting System has yet been initiated, planned, or approved for the Canal District.

Expect leadership and action.

Who should lead this effort?

The Department of Public Works and the Office of Planning and Urban Design should oversee the execution and public communication of a Wi-Fi Umbrella and Smart Lighting campaign in the Canal District neighborhoods.

What should happen by 2022?

Neighborhood residents should be fully aware of the new program and its campaign. Phase 1 of the program should be completed.

Who are potential partners?

- Georgia Tech's Georgia Smart Communities Challenge
- Georgia Power
- Office of Sustainability
- Mobility and Parking Services
- Police Department
- Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD)
- Neighborhood Advisory Council for the Community Benefits Framework
- Savannah Logistics Technology Corridor

What to ask leadership in 2022?

- What is the plan for completing the remaining phases of the Wi-Fi Umbrella and Smart Lighting plan?
- What jobs were created as part of these public smart-technology improvements?

What are the anticipated benefits?

This Action should advance the Plan toward these Supporting Objectives:

- G.3** Create a Funding Mechanism
- P.1** Preference Local Employment
- P.2** Create a Complete Range of Employment Opportunities
- PI.1** Create a Place Aligned to Community Vision

