



Savannah Canal District

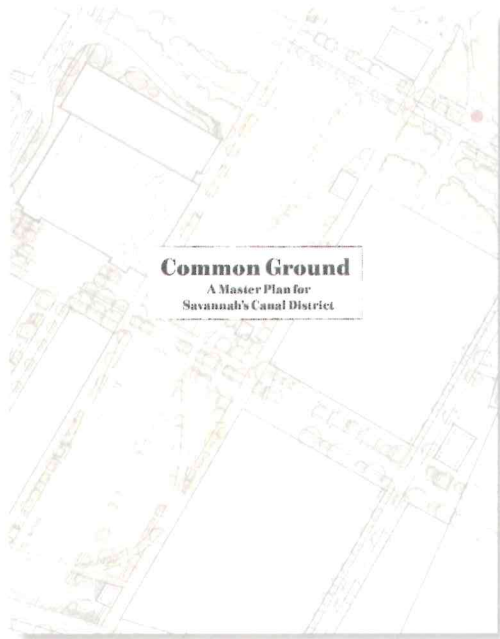
Master Plan Update

April 23, 2020

A Master Plan is a
Blueprint for the future that is
aspiration and achievable.
Comprehensive,
far-reaching plan of action.

Documents

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



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



Proposed Vision

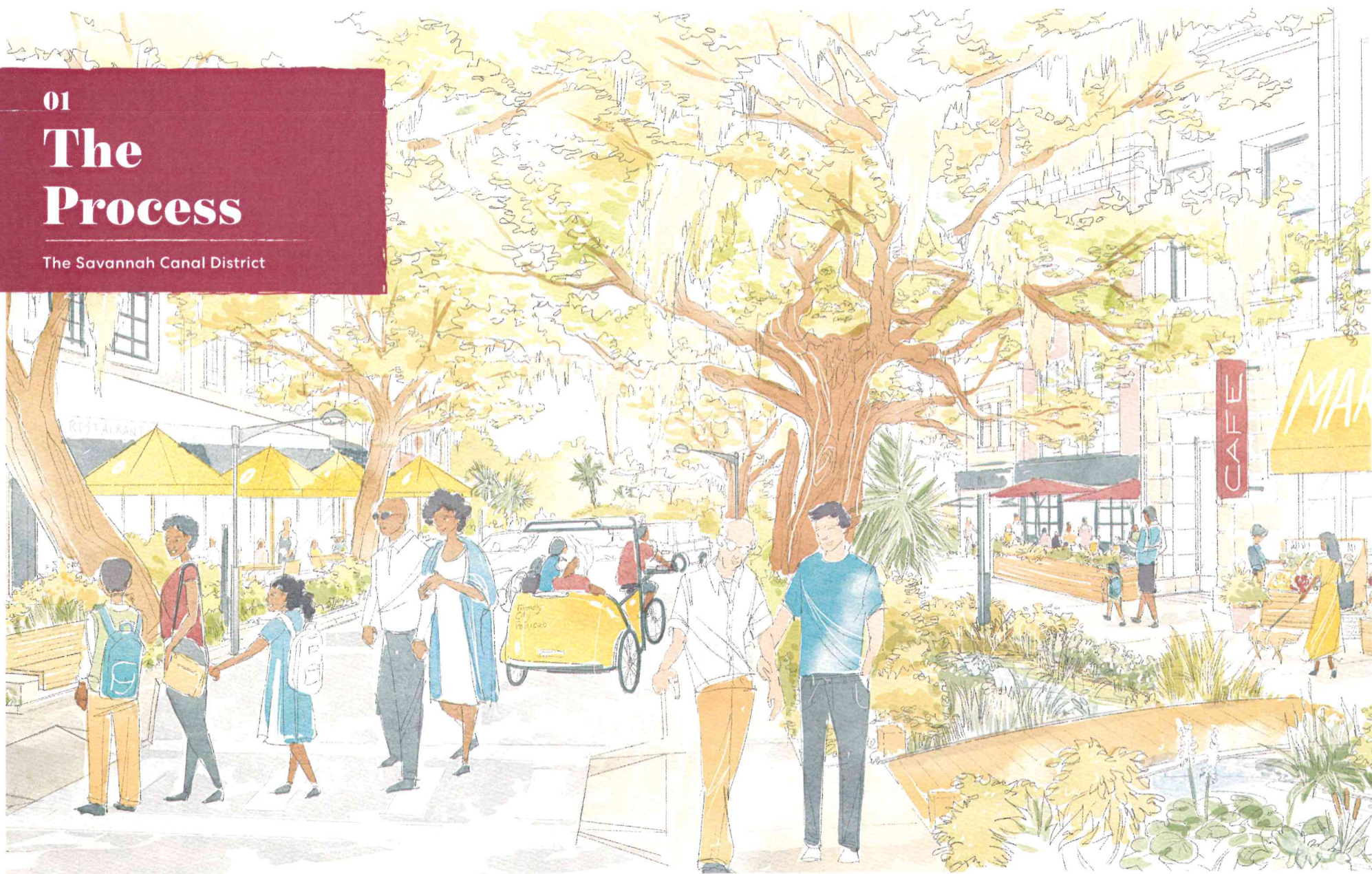
**The Canal District is new common ground in Savannah.
It protects historic communities, rebuilds nature,
elevates civic life, and allows the City to grow.**

**The Master Plan seeks to coordinate actions and
communication into a shared perspective, empowering
Savannah residents and leadership to work together
to develop resilient places and a stronger City.**

01

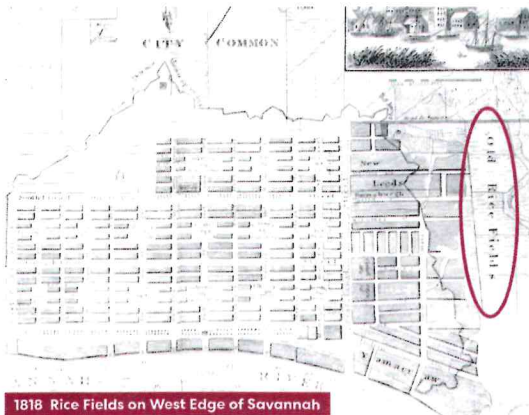
The Process

The Savannah Canal District

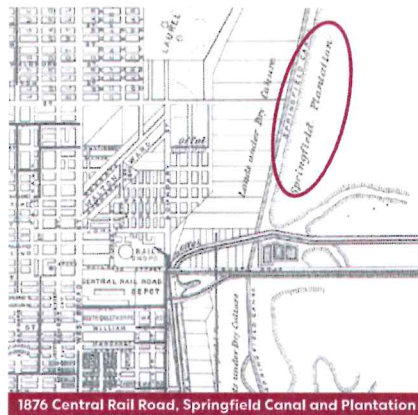


Built on History

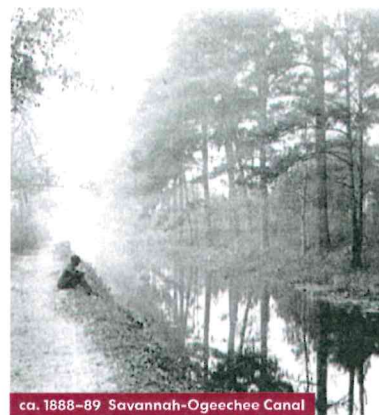
The Canal District Master Plan highlights and celebrates the many narratives running through the site.



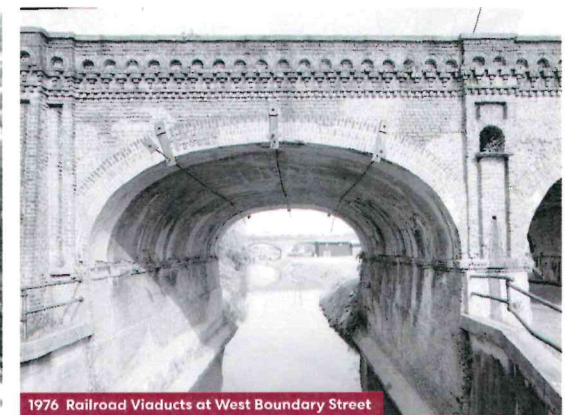
1818 Rice Fields on West Edge of Savannah



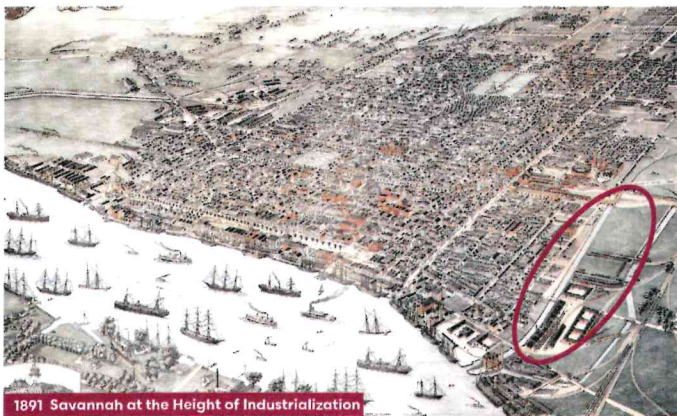
1876 Central Rail Road, Springfield Canal and Plantation



ca. 1888-89 Savannah-Ogeechee Canal



1976 Railroad Viaducts at West Boundary Street



1891 Savannah at the Height of Industrialization



1949 Still from Promotional Short for Carver Village



1918 Map of Brickyard Lots

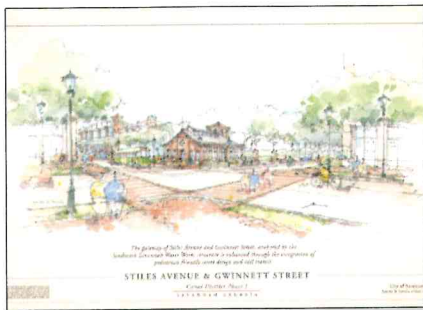
Built on Previous Work

The Canal District Master Plan captures the decades of planning work that have been put into the Arena and the site.



Built on Previous Plans

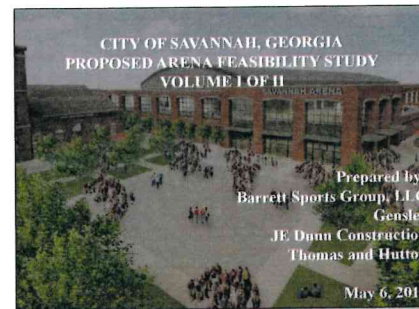
The Canal District Master Plan aligns with ongoing planning efforts to connect the District to the region.



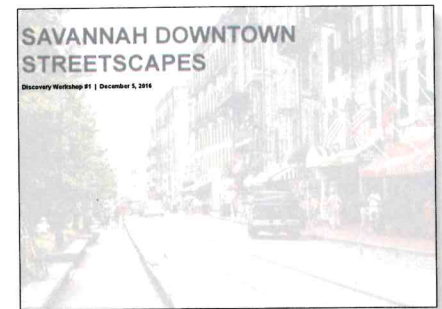
Canal District Vision Plan, 2013



Savannah Arena Subcommittee Reports, 2015



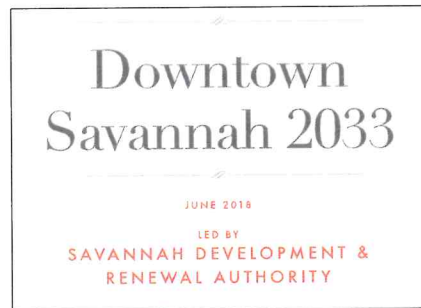
Savannah Arena Feasibility Study, 2016



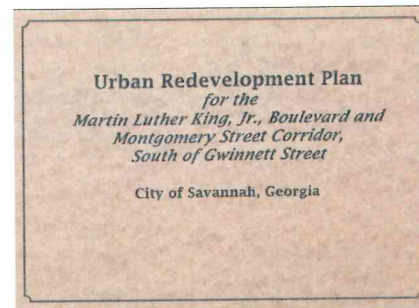
Downtown Streetscape Plan, 2016



Downtown Savannah Master Plan, 2011



Downtown Savannah Master Plan 2033, 2018



MLK-Montgomery Street Redevelopment Plan, 2001



Reclaiming Old West Broad Street with the Removal of the I-16 Flyover, 2015

Built on Recent Initiatives

The Canal District Master Plan incorporates the City of Savannah's existing commitments for this area of town.

Coordination with local economic development organizations on business-retention programs for existing local businesses

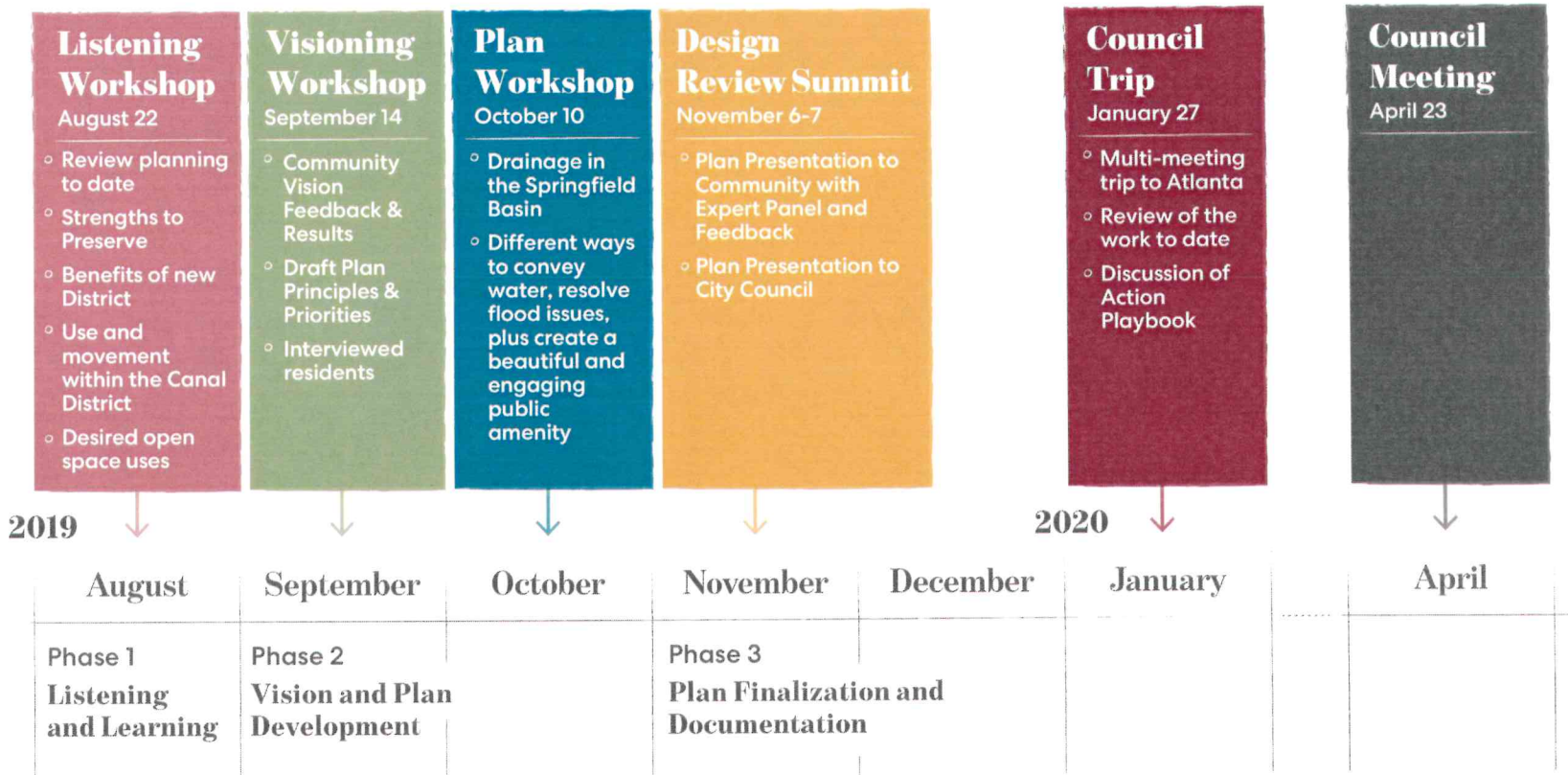
Development and construction of Tide to Town to enhance bike and pedestrian connectivity

Collaboration with neighborhood residents, artists and local historians to develop strategies for reflecting local history in new development as well as public art

Initiatives to promote health and community through the development of local food systems

Built on Community Input

The Canal District Master Plan solicited the opinions of community members and leaders in a number of different ways.



Built on Community Input

The Canal District Master Plan conveys the goals and priorities of the adjacent neighborhoods and greater Savannah.

A space where the community has the opportunity to be active and get out and walk in a more beautiful environment.

- Resident, Savannah

I would like to maintain that community spirit—the one that's already been there....I'd like to see that area not compete with other districts that are currently being redeveloped right now.

- Resident, Savannah

Inclusion, economic development for all, job creation. When I think about the Canal District, I also think about expanding the money that is being concentrated there, to my district.

- City Council, Savannah

This is a much bigger project than I realized.

- Resident, Kensington Park

Sometimes I feel like it really doesn't matter what I think about it cause I feel like they gonna do what they wanna do anyway.

- Resident, Springfield Terrace

Creating something other than just the Historic District... there's so much opportunity for active recreation with the park system above the railroad tracks and then a connection hopefully into some historically African-American neighborhoods that...have seen a barrier build over time...so building some continuity...and connection.

- Resident, Ardsley Park

I think it needs to have some supporting interests too that are not just getting tourists in the area but actually getting people who live in the landmark district...to come to the Canal District and interact more and really link that area with the rest of the community.

- Resident, Savannah

It's important to bring communities together and have things available for them—not just for tourism, but also for them to enjoy without having to drive out of town four hours to enjoy certain events.

- Resident, Pooler

Those who will be coming from out of town, who will be coming from other counties, maybe they can find a way there could be a halfway point to minimize some of those traffic concerns.

- Former Resident, Cloverdale

Leafy vegetation, trees, kind of like little parks and... canals along them, linking different urban areas together so that you can bike or walk down them and then maybe sit down and have a picnic.

- Resident, Savannah

The gathering place.

- Childhood Resident

If this project is done right—if it's done correctly—it could make Savannah be a world-class city. If it's done wrong, you're gonna have more crime. You're gonna have more depressed people. And you're gonna have deeper depression in these already depressed neighborhoods.

- Resident, West Savannah

I just want to make sure there's a community-benefits agreement in place, that we protect the people who live there, protect the businesses, protect the churches. And we can have a free-flowing walkway, waterway, and a good box in place so that we can drain the water off, so it's a win-win for everybody: the City, the community, and people ten years down the road.

- Candidate, Savannah

I would like to see vehicles excluded except for possibly bicycles and have it just open for people to come down to relax in.

- Resident, Ardsley Park

Expansive property with lots of opportunity.

- City Official, Savannah

I don't know if it'd be big enough, if the water channel would be able to connect to the Savannah River and have small boats come up it?

- Resident, Savannah

We moved into Carver Village in 1955, so we've been in it and we're still there...even though we've remodeled it and everything. But drainage is still an issue for us....It's only improved slightly.

- Resident, Carver Village

A blank slate that offers us an opportunity to re-create an entirely new neighborhood and a second downtown to Savannah.

- Resident, Downtown Savannah

I look forward to the time when we can all congregate in that one location with a large crowd and get the energy going that I think is gonna be there.

- City Official, Savannah

An opportunity to...make something happen on an open canvas with community feedback and input in order to ensure we're capturing what the future of Savannah should look like in that area.

- City Official, Savannah

Built on Community Input

The Canal District Master Plan translates community feedback into Master Plan direction and policy strategies.

The Community

Cultural Heritage
Neighborhood Fabric
Historic Features
Homes and Jobs
Natural Environment
Built Environment
Community
Entertainment
Economic Mobility
Well-Being
Connection and Movement

The District

Be Family-Friendly
Foster Community
Be a Place to Relax
Be for Daily Use
Be a Platform for Culture
Be a Recreation Hub
Engage with Nature
Be an Entertainment
District
Be Active at All Times
Changes with the Seasons

Connectivity

A Connected Place
Within Reach
Walkable
Bikeable
Transit Rich
Car Independent
Traffic Sensitive

Open Spaces

Water and Flooding
Environmental Quality
Community Impact
Historical Assets
Buffers and Transitions
Adjacencies
Connectivity
Parks and Open Space

Built to Address Obstacles

The Canal District Master Plan recognizes the division created by infrastructure and circulation systems for these residents.

Informal Growth and Hidden History

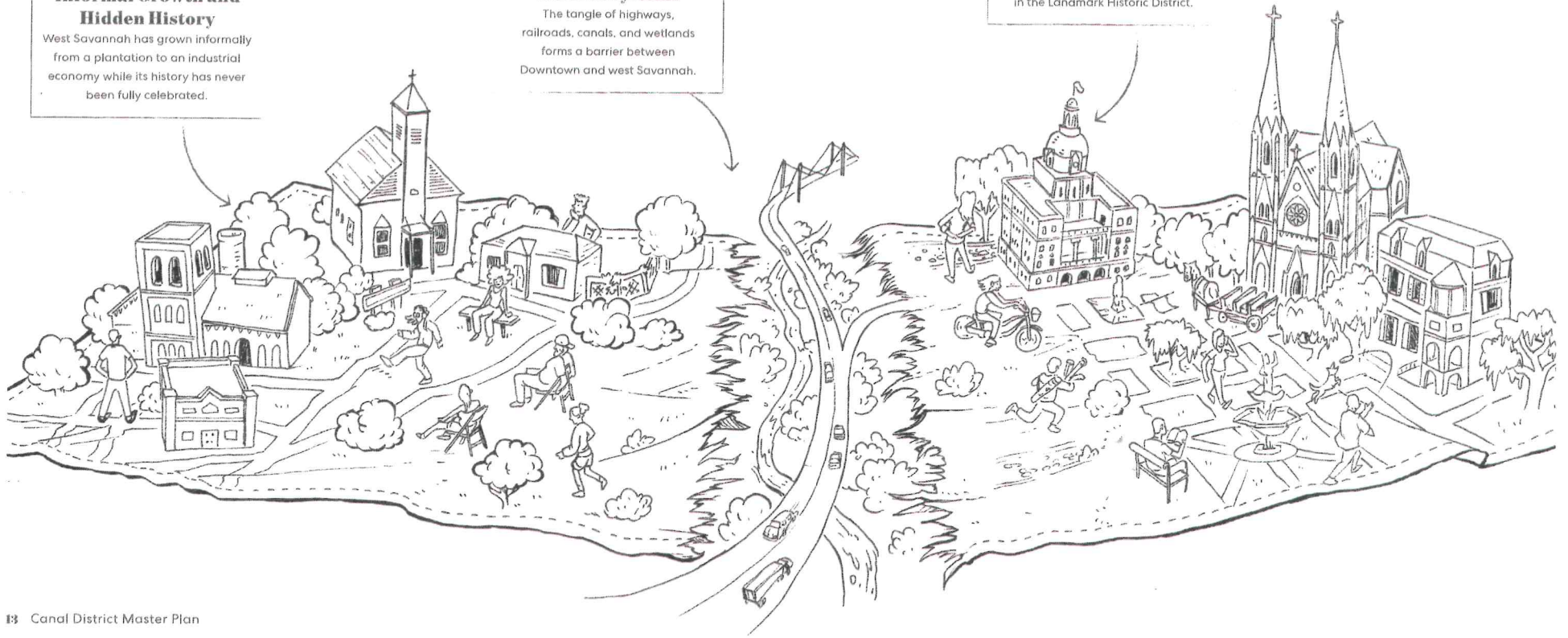
West Savannah has grown informally from a plantation to an industrial economy while its history has never been fully celebrated.

Infrastructure and Natural Systems

The tangle of highways, railroads, canals, and wetlands forms a barrier between Downtown and west Savannah.

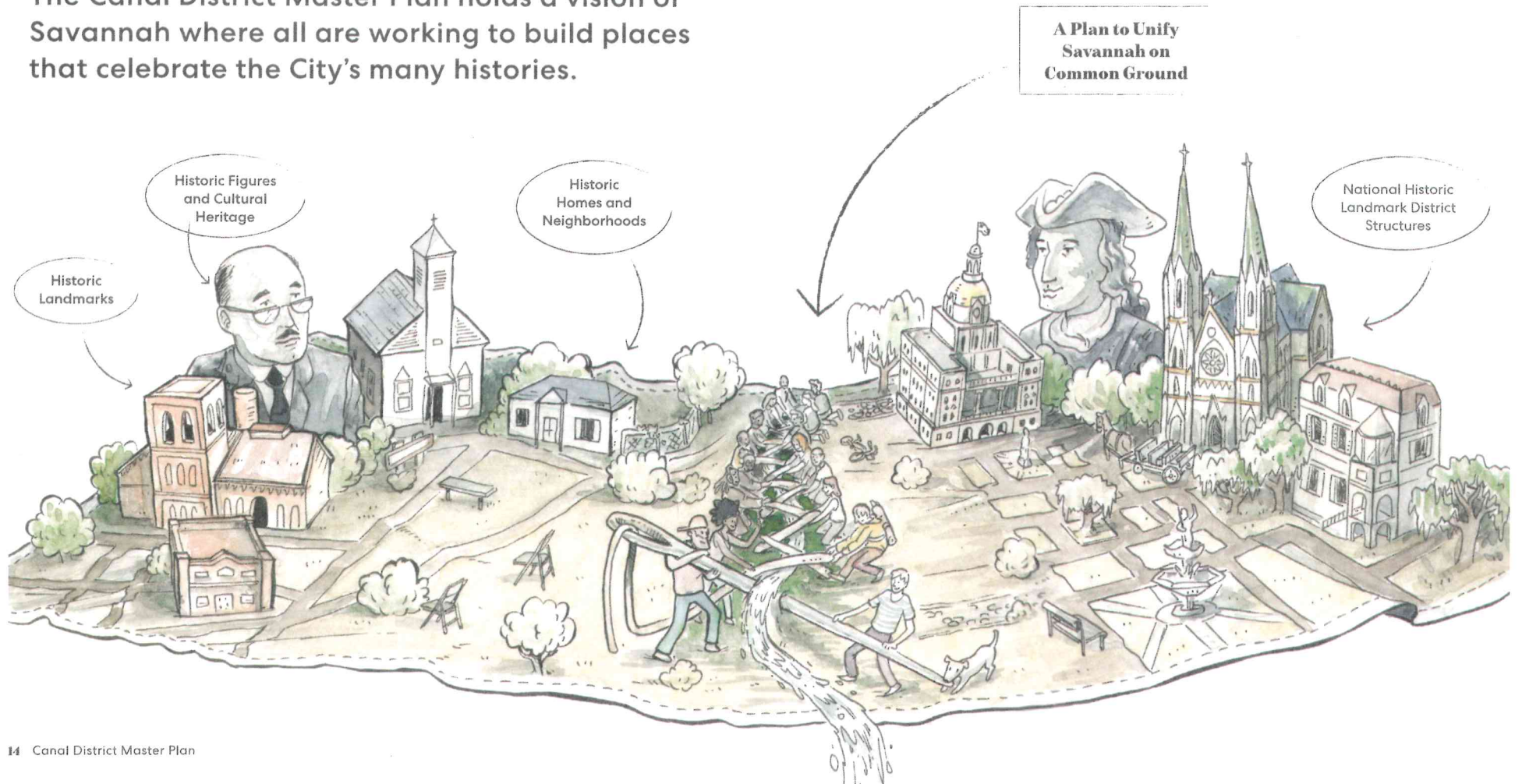
Organized Growth and Public History

Savannah's public face is its celebrated system of civic squares and residential blocks in the Landmark Historic District.



Built upon a Singular Vision

The Canal District Master Plan holds a vision of Savannah where all are working to build places that celebrate the City's many histories.



Built Around Two Geographies

The Canal District Master Plan recognizes that the impact of future action will extend beyond the District's boundaries.

1

A Master Plan for the Canal District

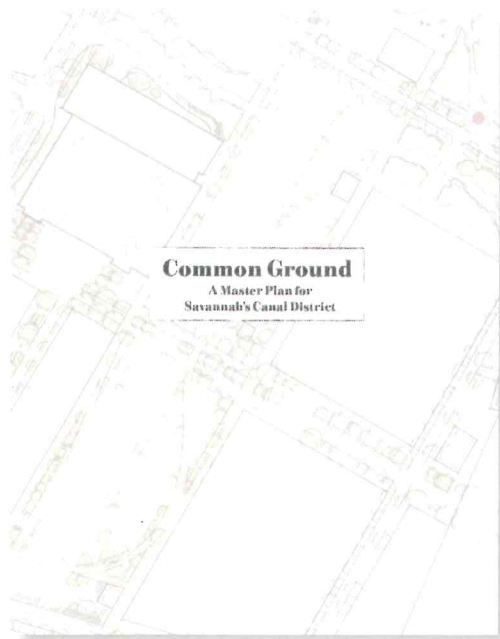
2

A Set of Policies and Actions for the Canal District Neighborhoods



Composed of 2 Documents

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



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

02

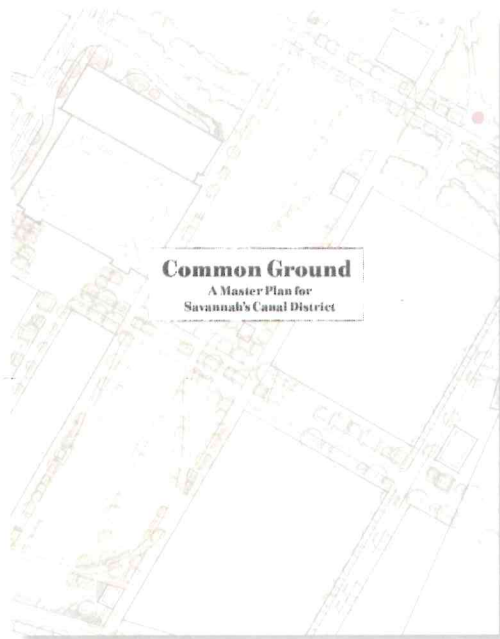
The Master Plan

The Savannah Canal District



Document Structure

The Canal District Master Plan conveys the physical site plan and the thoughtful rationale embedded within it.



Introduction

- History of the Place
- The Master Plan Process

The Master Plan

- Physical Plan
- Places that:
 - Protect Communities
 - Rebuild Nature and Elevate Civic Life
 - Grow the City

Embedded Strategies

- Mobility
- Public Space
- Development
- Three-Year Arena Area Plan

Provides Great Places

The Canal District Master Plan develops resilient places where people and nature thrive and the City can grow.

The Master Plan fosters places that:

01

Protect Communities

02

**Rebuild Nature,
Elevate Civic Life**

03

Grow the City



Protects Communities

The Canal District Master Plan preserves historic features as pillars of social life along the Canal.

Neighborhood Pockets

- A. Brickyard
- B. Collat's Quarters
- C. Springfield Terrace
- D. Waterworks

Characteristic Structures

- 1. Louisville Trading Company
- 2. Industrial Buildings
- 3. 1929 Seaboard Freight Station
- 4. Coastal Georgia Center
- 5. Savannah Visitor Center
- 6. Georgia State Railroad Museum
- 7. Savannah Children's Museum
- 8. Savannah Station
- 9. 415 West Boundary Street
- 10. Chatham Steel
- 11. Savannah Arena
- 12. Pearl Smith School
- 13. Water Works Building
- 14. Water Works Pump House

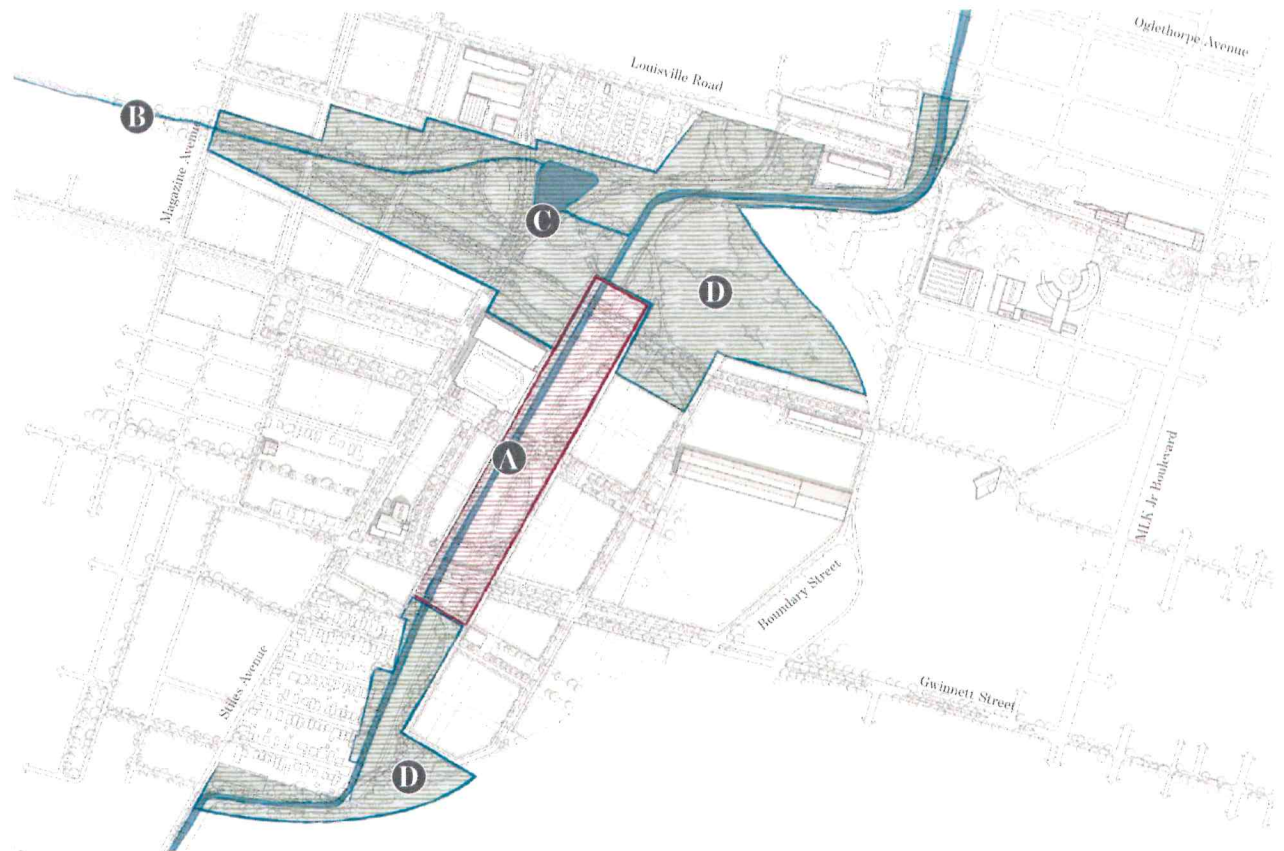


Rebuilds Nature and Elevates Civic Life

The Canal District Master Plan returns the Springfield Basin's wetlands and canals to being a source of strength for the City and its activities.

Ecological Anchors

- A. Springfield Canal
- B. Savannah-Ogeechee Canal
- C. Retention Pond
- D. Native Wetlands





Grows the City

The Canal District Master Plan fills out reclaimed spaces with sustainable development organized around civic amenities.

New Civic Space

- A. City Lot
- B. Canal Park
- C. Wetland Preserve Park

Places to Grow

-  City-Owned Lots
-  Intentional Growth



Connects People

The Canal District Master Plan enhances and expands the City's famed street network, broadening opportunity for all.

Planned Street Improvements

1. Stiles/Louisville Intersection
2. Louisville Streetscape
3. Louisville Boundary Intersection
4. Boundary Streetscape
5. Stiles Widening
6. Gwinnett/Stiles Intersection
7. Gwinnett Widening
8. Gwinnett Streetscape
9. Stiles Streetscape
10. Cohen to Gwinnett Connection
11. Cohen Extension to Magazine

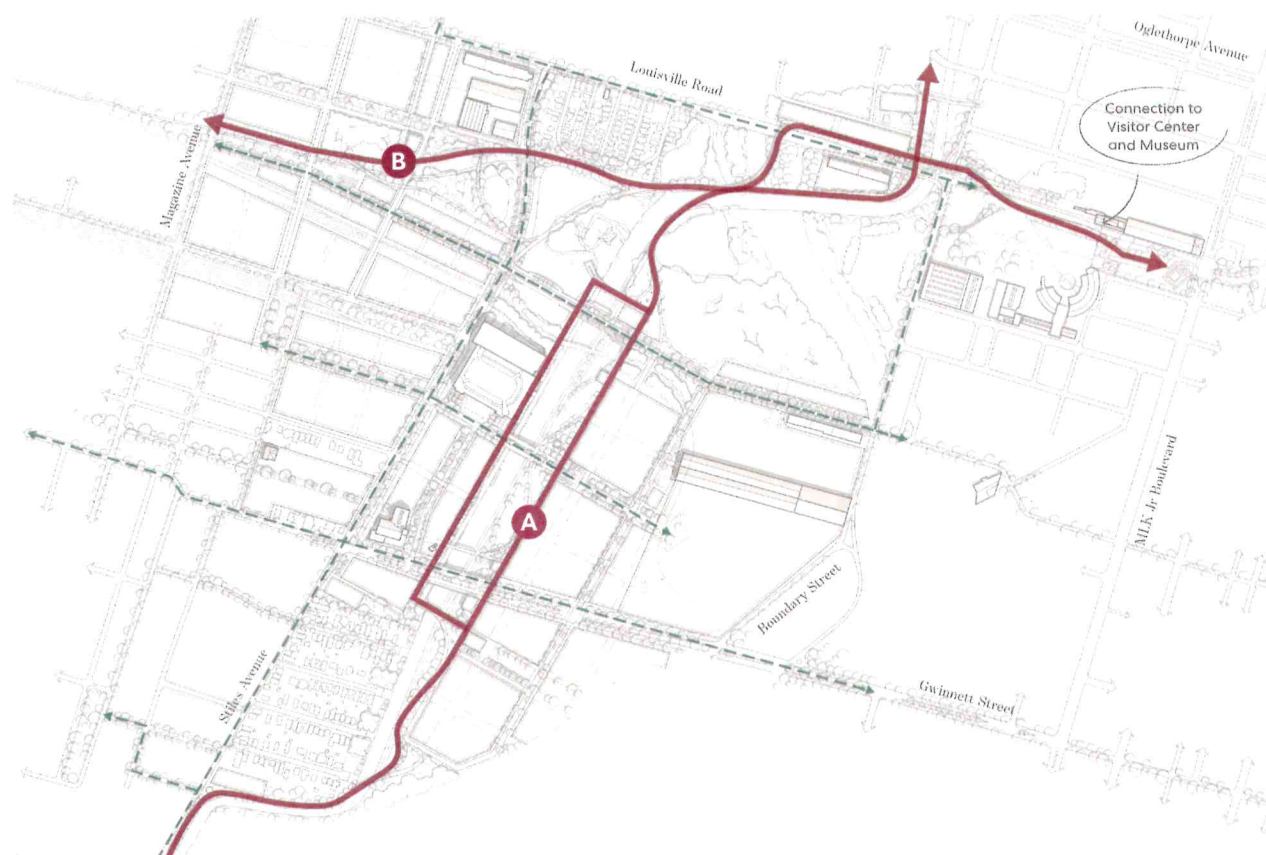


Makes Places Accessible

The Canal District Master Plan provides new ways to reach vital destinations in the form of a dynamic path network.

Planned Street Improvements

- A. Tide to Town Urban Trail
- B. Savannah-Ogeechee Trail Connection

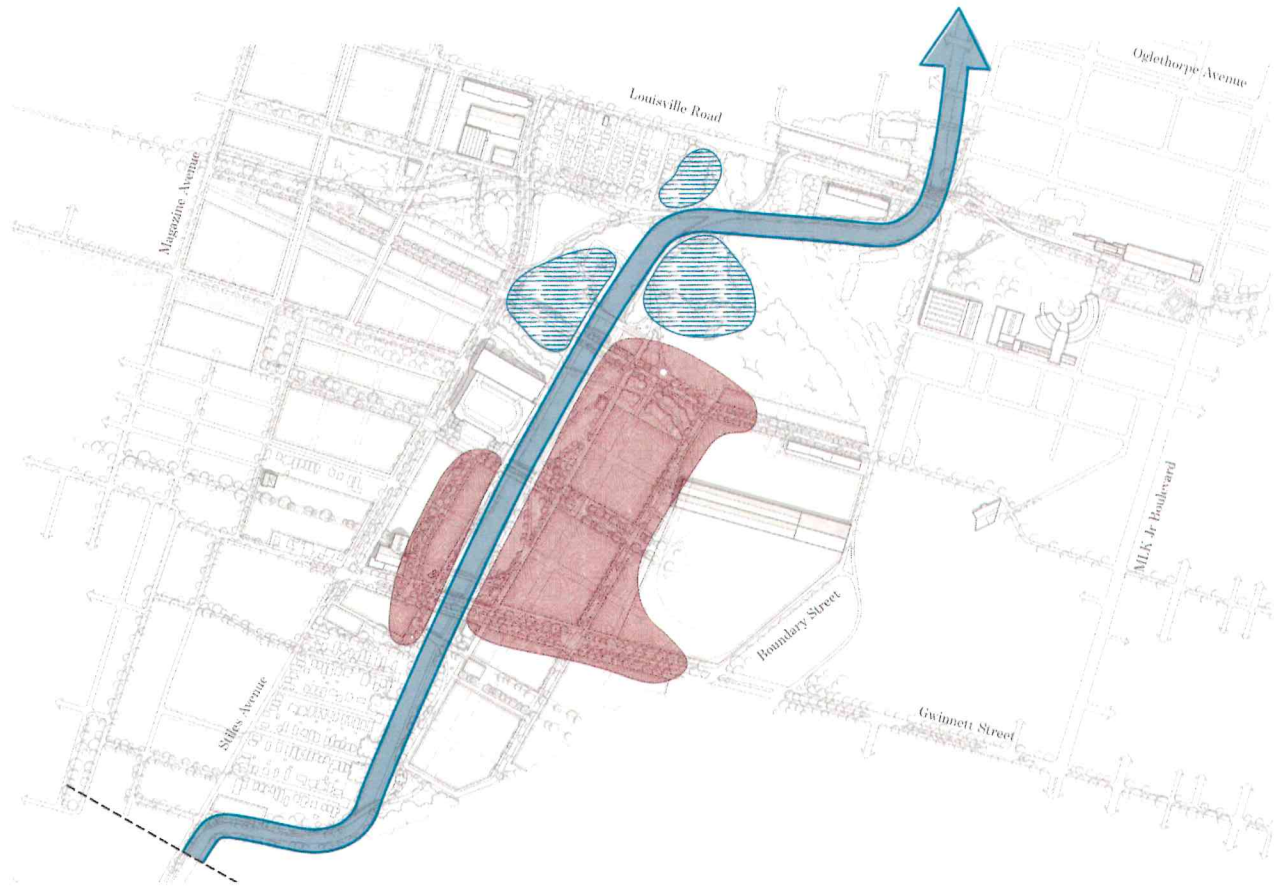


Mitigates Flood Concerns

The Canal District Master Plan manage the rise and flow of water while bringing out the natural features of the landscape.

Floodplain Mitigation

-  Cut Earth for Flood Plain Mitigation
-  Fill Areas for Infrastructure & Redevelopment
-  Widening to Convey 100-Year Flood



Mitigates Flood Concerns

The Canal District Master Plan manage the rise and flow of water while bringing out the natural features of the landscape.

Flood and Stormwater Mitigation Proposed Plan

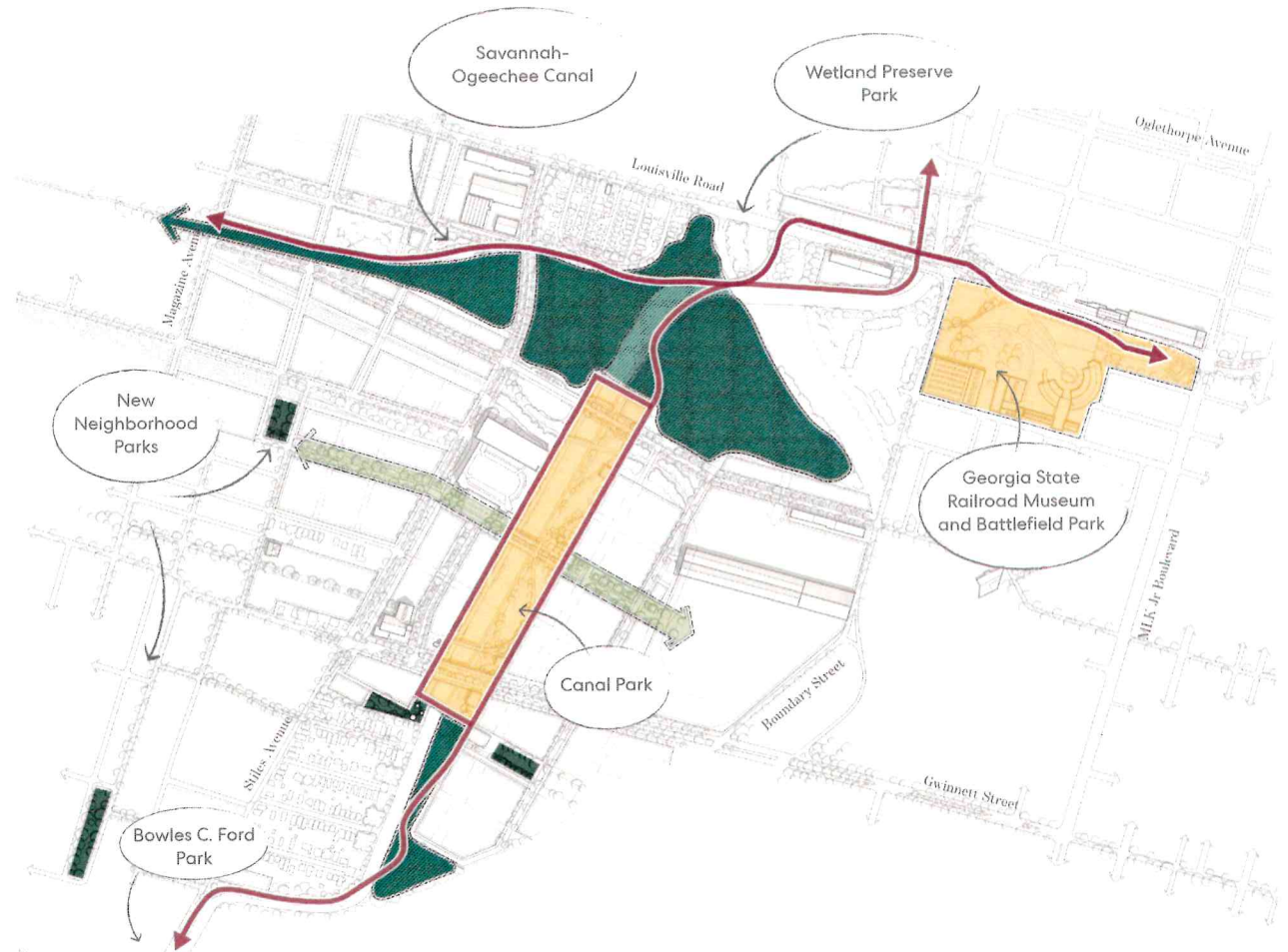
Phase	Proposed Tasks	Possible Funding Source	Estimated Cost
Phase I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Widening Springfield Canal between I-16 and Louisville Road Excavating City properties south of Louisville Road and north of Arena to -1' elevation to assist with storage capacity Utility Relocations (estimated costs not included) 	SPLOST 7 and Water and Sewer Funds (utility relocation)	\$6M
Phase IA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excavate City properties south of Louisville Road and north of Arena to -5' elevation to create Wetland Preserve Park 	Other Funding Source	\$8M
Phase II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial Widening Springfield Canal north of Louisville Road Property acquisition Utility relocation 	SPLOST 7 and Water and Sewer Funds (utility relocation)	(Remaining SPLOST 7 Funds)
Phase III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete widening Springfield Canal north of Louisville Road to the Savannah River outfall 	SPLOST 8	
Phase IV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add pump station to area north of Louisville Road 	SPLOST 8 and 9	

Provides Grand Civic Spaces

The Canal District Master Plan offers a network of community-space amenities that support daily and seasonal activities.

Types of Parks

-  Wetland Preserve Park
-  Neighborhood Parks
-  Promenades
-  Civic Parks
-  Planned Trail Network

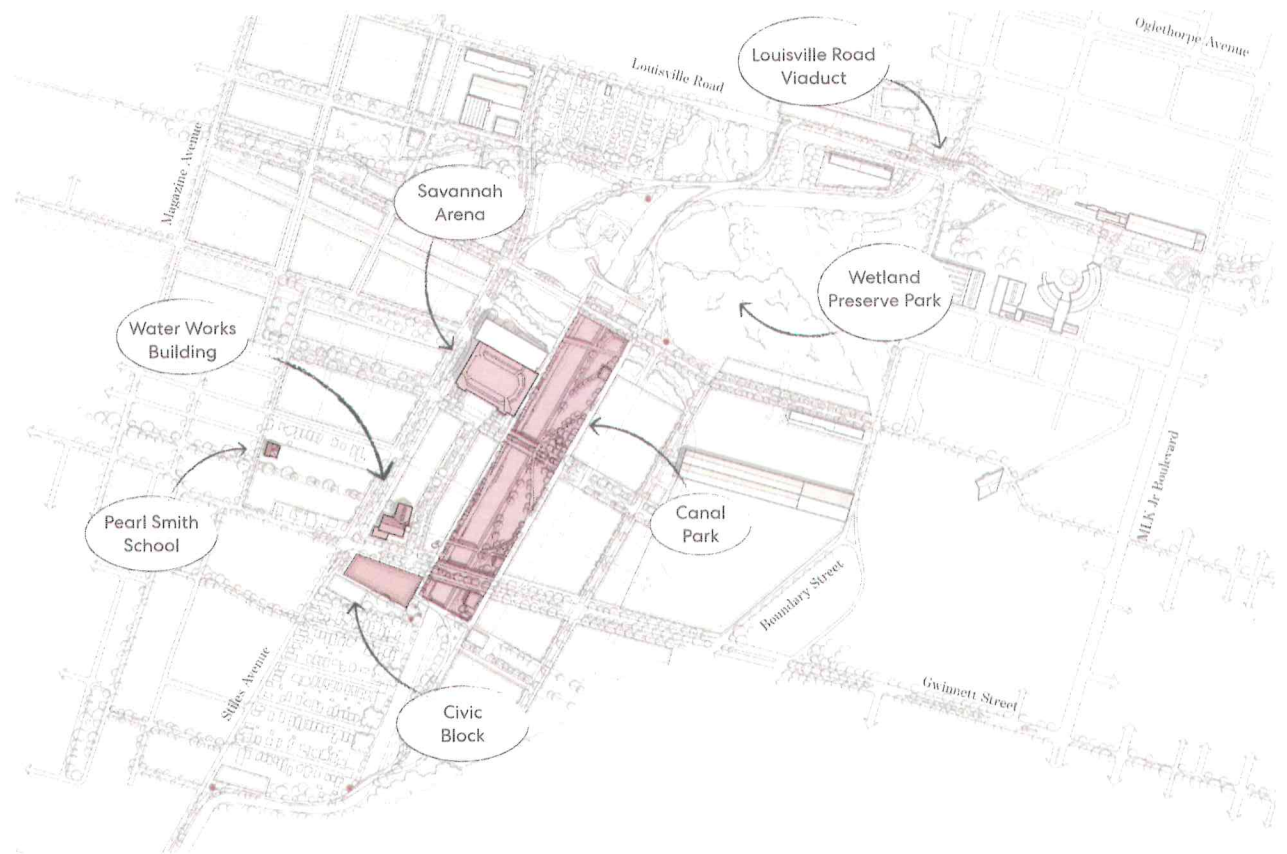


Builds on Catalytic Projects

The Canal District Master Plan jump-starts development by focusing on key projects that unlock future growth potential.

These projects support the Savannah Arena with:

- Infrastructure
- Adaptive reuse
- Preservation





Fosters Development Potential

The Canal District Master Plan considers zoning and land-use regulation as vital tools within its coordinated growth effort.

An Overlay District will establish:

- Design Standards
- Development Guidelines
- Land-Use Regulations

Canal District Zoning

-  Transitional Zone
-  New Zoning

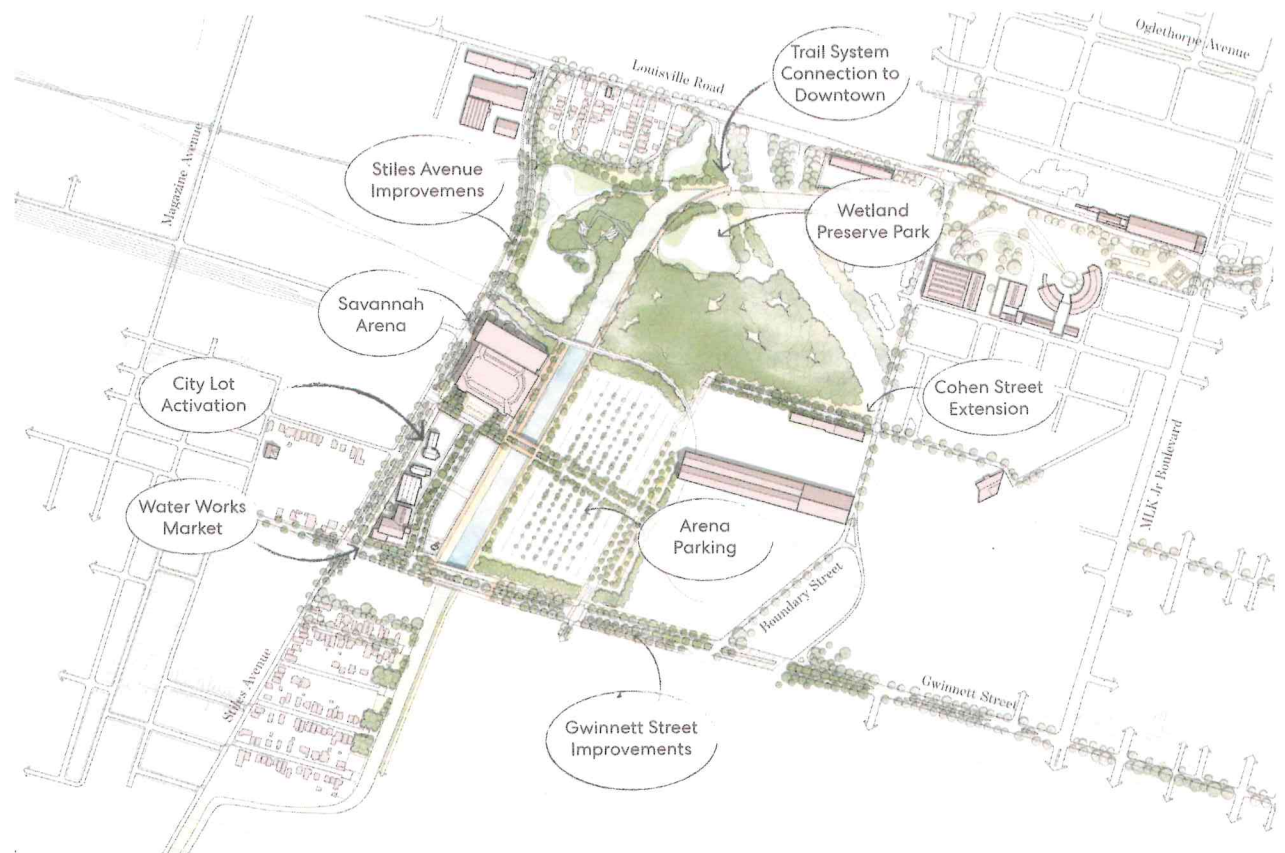


Focuses on Short-Term Wins

The Canal District Master Plan galvanizes energy and resources around a series of projects to be opened in the next three years.

Catalytic First Steps:

- A. Canal Widening
- B. Street Improvements
- C. Pedestrian Enhancements
- D. Repurposed Water Works



03

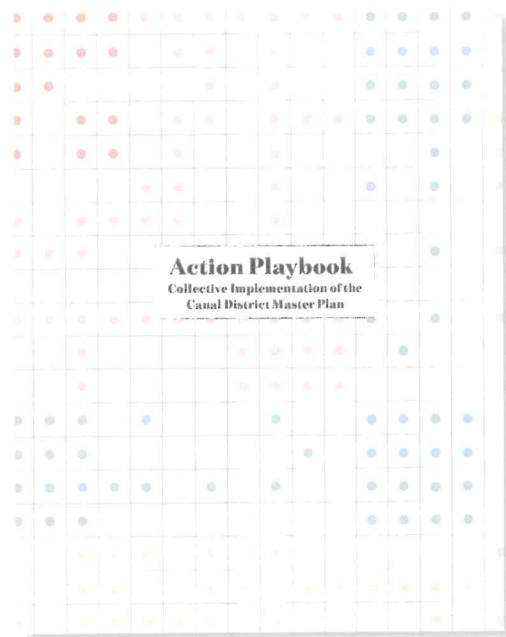
The Action Playbook

The Savannah Canal District



Document Structure

The Action Playbook lays out the Actions needed to implement the Master Plan in an equitable and inclusive way.



Introduction

- What is the Playbook?
- How Can It Create Change?
- Goal-Directed Actions
- Interrelated Actions
- Tracking Actions
- How to Use the Playbook

Actions

- To Guide
- For People
- For Nature
- For Place

Directed Toward Goals

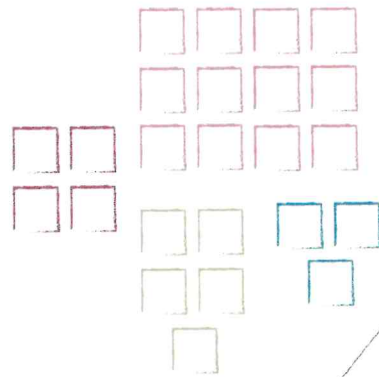
The Action Playbook captures the priorities expressed by Savannahians during the visioning process.

Vision

The Canal District is new common ground in Savannah. It protects historic communities, rebuilds nature, elevates civic life, and allows the City to grow.

Objectives

interim benchmarks that track progress



Goals

priorities expressed by the community's vision



Actions

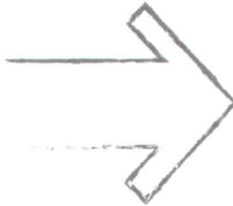
measurable tasks that reflect vision priorities



Grouped into 4 Themes

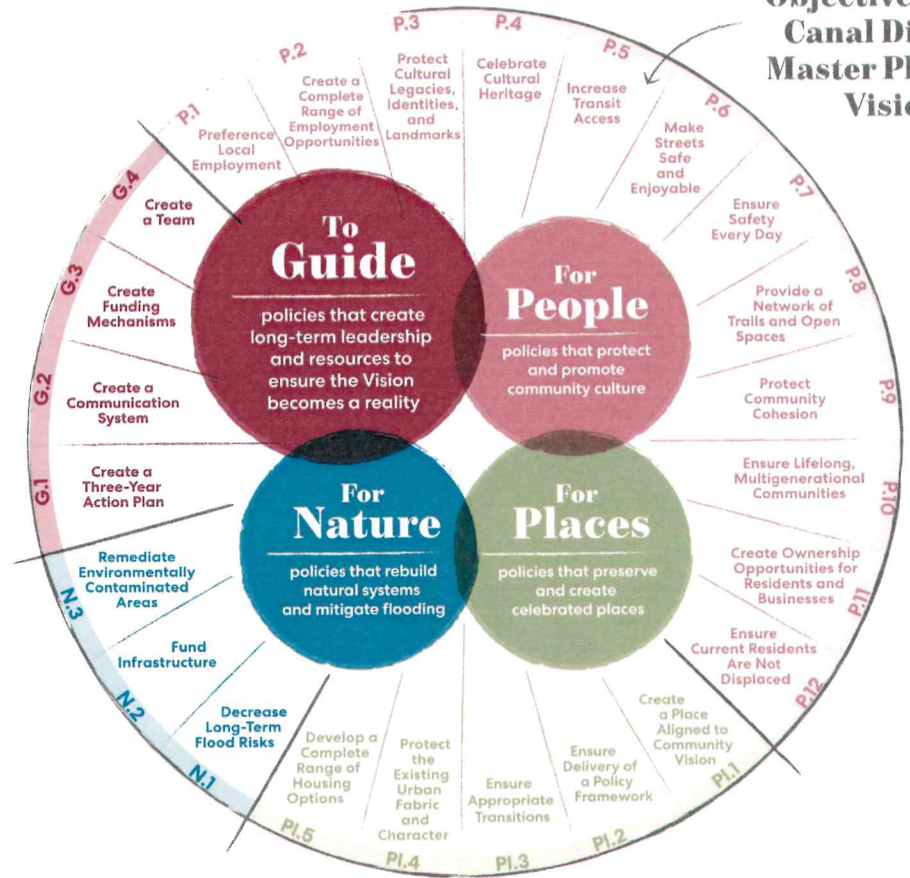
The Action Playbook organizes all of the Actions and Supporting Objectives into four categories.

- To Guide**
- For People**
- For Nature**
- For Places**



The Vision The Canal District is new common ground in Savannah. It protects historic communities, rebuilds nature, elevates civic life, and allows the City to grow.

Goals and Supporting Objectives of the Canal District Master Plan and Vision



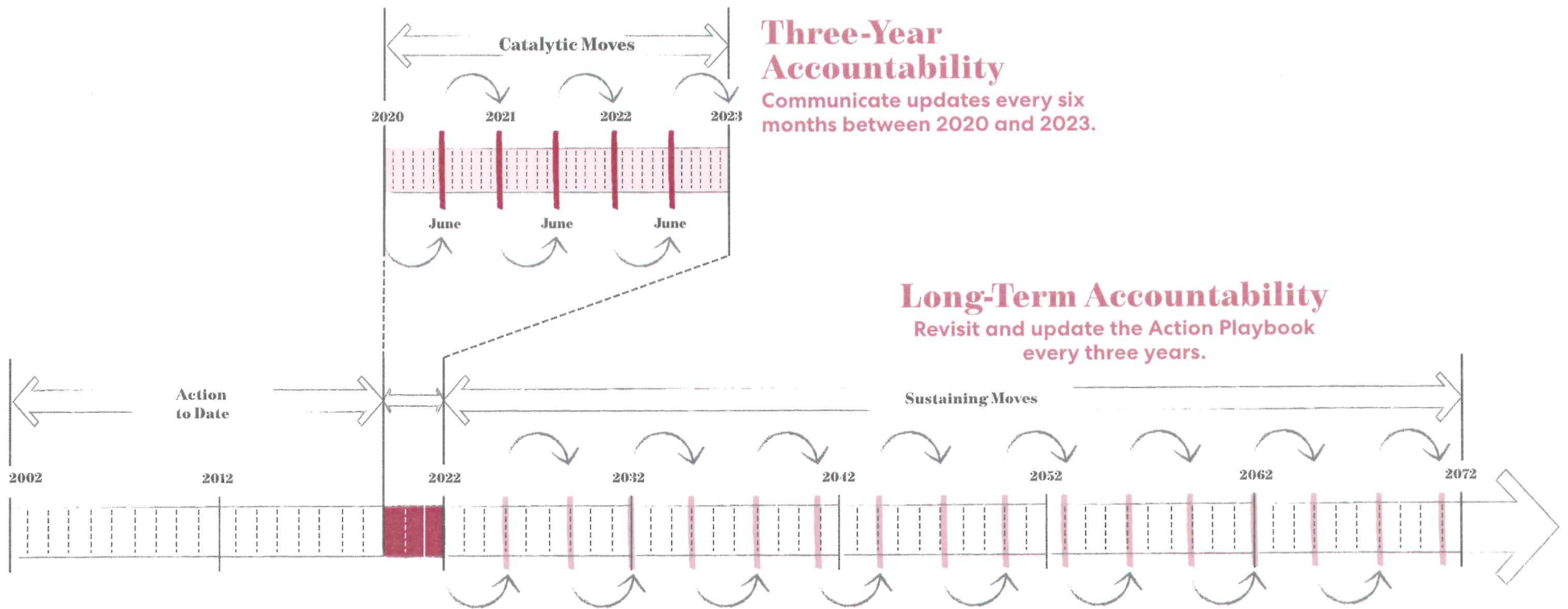
Expressed as 19 Actions

The Action Playbook defines the Actions as nineteen strategic directives that will enable project implementation.

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
	12	Develop Renter and Rental-Housing Affordability Initiatives
Nature	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
	16	Complete the Canal District Brownfield Assessment
Place	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

Tracked Overtime

The Action Playbook should be regularly updated to reflect project progress and create metrics for accountability.



Playbook

To Guide

For People

For Nature

For Places

Goals

These are Actions that:

- **Provide leadership**
- **Allocate resources**

Playbook



To Guide

For People

For Nature

For Places

Objectives

Some of the Objectives:

- G.1 Create a Three-Year Action Plan**
for infrastructure and services
to support operations of the Arena
- G.2 Create a Communication System**
for ongoing and open dialogue between
the public and project leadership
- G.3 Create Funding Mechanisms**
for infrastructure, environmental
remediation, and community development

Playbook



To Guide

For People

For Nature

For Places

Actions

Some of the Actions:

- 02 Establish a Canal District Leader**
- 03 Build Nonprofit and Philanthropic Support for the District's Open Spaces**
- 04 Designate a Tax Allocation District**

Playbook

To Guide

For People

For Nature

For Places

Goals

These are Actions that:

- **Create jobs**
- **Advance culture**
- **Support communities**
- **Support housing**

Playbook

To Guide

For People

For Nature

For Places

Objectives

Some of the Objectives:

- P.1 Preference Local Employment**
from within the Canal District, the Canal District neighborhoods, and the Savannah community
- P.4 Celebrate Cultural Heritage**
by uplifting and sharing stories of the past
- P.7 Ensure Safety Every Day**
in the Canal District neighborhoods

Playbook

To Guide

For People

For Nature

For Places

Actions

Some of the Actions:

- 07 **Repurpose the Water Works as a Community Market and Business Center**
- 10 **Organize a Community Benefits Framework**
- 11 **Expand Homeownership and Home-Buying Initiatives**

Playbook

To Guide

For People

For Nature

For Places

Goals

These are Actions that:

- **Create infrastructure**
- **Build open space**
- **Clean the city**

Playbook

To Guide

For People

For Nature

For Places

Objectives

Some of the Objectives:

N.1 Decrease Long-Term Flood Risks
in the Canal District and the Canal District neighborhoods

N.2 Fund Infrastructure
without placing additional tax burdens on economically vulnerable populations within the Canal District neighborhoods

N.3 Remediate Environmentally Contaminated Areas
in the Canal District

Playbook

To Guide

For People

For Nature

For Places

Actions

Some of the Actions:

- 14 Expand Green Infrastructure Programs to Include the Canal District**
- 15 Develop a Comprehensive Stormwater Strategy for the Springfield Basin**
- 16 Complete the Canal District Brownfield Assessment**

Playbook

To Guide

For People

For Nature

For Places

Goals

These are Actions that:

- Increase mobility
- Preserve and grow neighborhoods
- Build networks

Playbook

To Guide

For People

For Nature

For Places

Objectives

Some of the Objectives:

PI.3 Ensure Appropriate Transitions

between new development and existing neighborhoods, such as appropriate height, density, and use

PI.4 Protect the Existing Urban Fabric and Character

of the Canal District and the Canal District neighborhoods

PI.5 Develop a Complete Range of Housing Options

in the Canal District and the Canal District neighborhoods

Playbook

To Guide

For People

For Nature

For Places

Actions

Some of the Actions:

- 17 **Institute a Community Street Improvements Program**
- 18 **Revise Canal District Zoning and Establish and Overlay District**
- 19 **Install a Neighborhood Wi-Fi Umbrella and Smart Lighting**



Next Steps

**Accept feedback from City Council
(today and throughout the process)**

**Plan Presentation to MPC
(Metropolitan Planning Commission)**

**Accept feedback from Citizens / Public
(May 20 - June 2)**

Take Formal Vote on June 25

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new common ground in
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historic communities,
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The Savannah Canal District

