

ULI ATLANTA CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP

2019-2020 mTAP Program Application

Project:

Mechanicville Neighborhood Redevelopment

Your Goal | Client's Charge

With your help, the historic neighborhood of Mechanicville could be the next unicorn neighborhood of Atlanta. The community is looking for ideas to spur development, particularly with the public land owners. While positioned just minutes from downtown, it is largely disconnected from adjacent neighborhoods by two major highways and an active industrial rail-line. With over 300 vacant parcels, no major grocer and limited public transportation access, the neighborhood has been struggling to attract impactful development for decades. The association & residents are looking for updates from existing public land stakeholders on their plans & ideas to revive & re-connect Mechanicville to the rest of Atlanta. One priority of the neighborhood is the multiple blocks of paved parking lots located along the highway currently used for jury parking currently owned by City of Atlanta & Fulton County.

WHY Mechanicville | Context

Located just south of downtown, Mechanicville is one of the oldest neighborhoods in Atlanta. The neighborhood sprang up in the late 19th century, adjacent to several railroad lines just south of downtown. The name "Mechanicville" comes from the "mechanics" that worked on the railway lines. It was once a vibrant multiethnic community with working class blacks and middle class whites, and home to several prominent merchant families, including the Rich family, of department store fame. Mechanicville was established in 1870. Its decline was caused by urban renewal, migration to the suburbs, and the construction of Atlanta–Fulton County Stadium and the nearby interstate highways.

While the City of Atlanta has announced potential for revitalization, not much impactful development has happened in the core of the neighborhood. During the most recent recession, a number of large public land owners have demolished many of the structures, including schools & residential housing blocks. Currently, there are over 300 vacant parcels in the community between public and private entities. There have been multiple attempts to include Mechanicville in redevelopment plans. These include: Stadium TAD Redevelopment Plan & Opportunity Zone.

More history here: <http://mechanicvilleatl.org/history/>

List of public stakeholders:

- City of Atlanta, Fulton Co., Board of Education, Atlanta Housing Authority, Atlanta Land Bank, Parks & Rec., etc.
- Other entities: Columbia Residential, SUMMECH.

Your Potential Objectives:

- Future Plans: Connect with existing public stakeholders.
- Life Cycle Approach: Connect with past developers: Columbia, Integral, etc.
- Case studies of successful neighborhood revival
- Proposal for future development (Ideas, Budgets, etc).
- Highway adjacent development: Explore how the jury parking lots can be transformed into the promised vision.

Supporting Information | Client profile

Mechanicsville Neighborhood Association Participants:

- Jane Ridley, President
- **Jason Dozier, Vice-President** – jasondozier@gmail.com
- Tommy Cooper, Secretary
- Geoffrey Grice, Treasurer
- Evelyn Clemmons, Chaplain
- Ocie Fulford, Esq., Parliamentarian

Meetings: Dunbar Recreation Center - 477 Windsor St SW, Atlanta, GA 30312

Point of contact – CFL Liaison:

- **Senya Zaitsev** – Senya@Sunnyetc.com - 404.210.9240

Available reference material:

2004 - Community Redevelopment Plan Update

2016 - Stadium Neighborhoods – Livable Center Initiative LCI

2019 - GaTech Study - Cultivating Connections: A Housing and Economic Development Implementation Strategy for the Mechanicsville Neighborhood of Atlanta, Georgia

