

SAVANNAH DOWNTOWN STREETScape IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVE PROJECT OVERVIEW

In 2014, the City of Savannah launched the Downtown Streetscape Improvement Initiative.

The project builds on previous planning efforts to revitalize downtown Savannah and create an environment that contributes to its livability and the economic vitality of the community. The initiative will enhance the public realm for corridors in the area from Liberty Street to the Savannah River and from Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to E. Broad Street.



Phase One of the Streetscape Improvement Initiative will seek to improve three of historic downtown's most prominent streetscapes – Broughton Street, Bay Street, and River Street, between Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to E. Broad Street – to create a rich and exciting pedestrian realm. Redevelopment of these downtown Savannah streetscapes will combine an understanding of the vast historical significance and the variety of land uses that currently exist, enhancing the vibrant downtown community in a way that is attractive to local business owners and the surrounding community. The proposed street improvements will build on the best aspects of great streets in the U.S. and abroad, while capitalizing on Savannah's highly visible location and landmark destination.



The enhancements to downtown will appeal to residents, commuters, and tourists by allowing the public realm to be embraced as a place for people. The City of Savannah has the opportunity to rethink the street's purpose, functionality, programming and characteristics to create a fresh and appealing image as downtown destination corridors. A key goal will be to realize each street's full potential as a rich and varied pedestrian



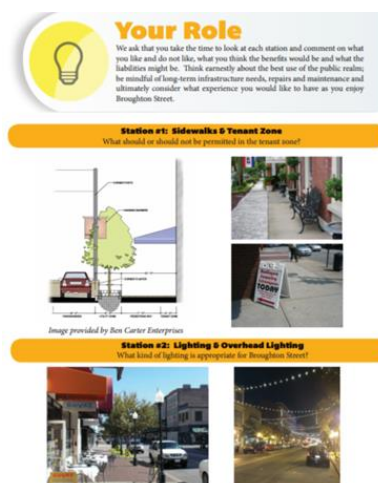
experience. The general project objectives include the following:


- Create an environment that contributes to the livability of Savannah’s community and serves as a model for urban streets in the U.S.
- Encourage new design concepts and ideas, emerging environmental ideas, emerging technology, smart transportation design, context sensitive design, new urbanism concepts, and include 21st century innovation
- Respect, preserve, and maintain the aesthetic character of the National Landmark Historic District
- Provide a safe environment for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles
- Create a visual identity and public space
- Provide consistency and uniformity with streetscape elements
- Create places for events, festivals and community gatherings
- Build upon the character of the existing infrastructure (mature trees, cobblestones, etc.)
- Develop overall theming with a series of pedestrian nodes that ‘pull’ people out and about
- Address programming/management opportunities including existing and additional retail and commercial activities
- Study/allow for alternative forms of transportation
- Analyze vehicular circulation to address traffic calming measures and how those measures may impact surrounding streets
- Use lighting to create a variety of moods/themes
- Maintain neighborhood integrity

Downtown Savannah is a unique, diverse, and historic place. The streets selected for Phase One are no different. Broughton Street, Bay Street and River Street each have a unique level of complexities and should be approached and designed in a distinct way. Program elements should be consistent along each street, while keeping in mind the overall aesthetic and theme of downtown Savannah.

In 2014, the City hosted a workshop to roll out the project and engage the community on concepts for the first area of focus—Broughton Street. Discussions focused on the character of the buildings, the space between them, ground surfaces, landscaping and vegetation, walls, fences and furnishings that enrich the public space. Through a series of work stations, the public provided comments on design ideas and concepts for Broughton Street.

During 2015, additional opportunities for comment were provided to citizens through the City’s website. The input





received from this process will assist the City in looking comprehensively at a project area and incorporate new ideas to improve downtown.

Information on the public meetings can be accessed through these links:

- [Handout from public meeting held in December 2014](#)
- [Public comments on Broughton Street for December 2014](#)
- [Public comments on Broughton Street for February 2015](#)

In June 2015, the Downtown Streetscape Initiative was presented to City Council with favorable comments. [Download the presentation.](#)