

Planning for Economic & Fiscal Health in the 21st century

John Robert Smith
Chris Zimmerman

Atmore, Alabama
February 19, 2019



Smart Growth America
Improving lives by improving communities



Who is Smart Growth America?

Smart Growth America envisions a country where no matter where you live, or who you are, you can enjoy living in a place that is healthy, prosperous, and resilient. We empower communities through technical assistance, advocacy, and thought leadership to realize our vision of livable places, healthy people, and shared prosperity.



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Local Leaders Council



**Transportation
for America**

LOCUS

FBCI Form-Based
Codes Institute



What is smart growth about?

A vibrant, tree-lined pedestrian street. On the left, there's an outdoor cafe with several tables and chairs where people are sitting. The street is paved with red bricks and lined with lush green trees. People are walking along the sidewalk, and several bicycles are parked on the right side. In the background, there are modern buildings with large windows. The overall atmosphere is bright and lively.

Shaping the quality of the place and the lives of the people who live there.

...and it's not new!



The ways we plan our cities

Patterns of development



Traditional town plan

- Mixed-use
- Compact
- Buildings of several stories
- Blocks with multiple building types
- Street grid



Atmore – 1941



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Source: Alabama Department of Archives and History



Downtown Atmore



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c. 1920



Main Street in the 1960s

Downtown Atmore



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Image sources: <https://www.pinterest.com/moorekipp/>;
<http://fbcatmore.org/gallery/vintage-first-baptist-church/>

Industrial

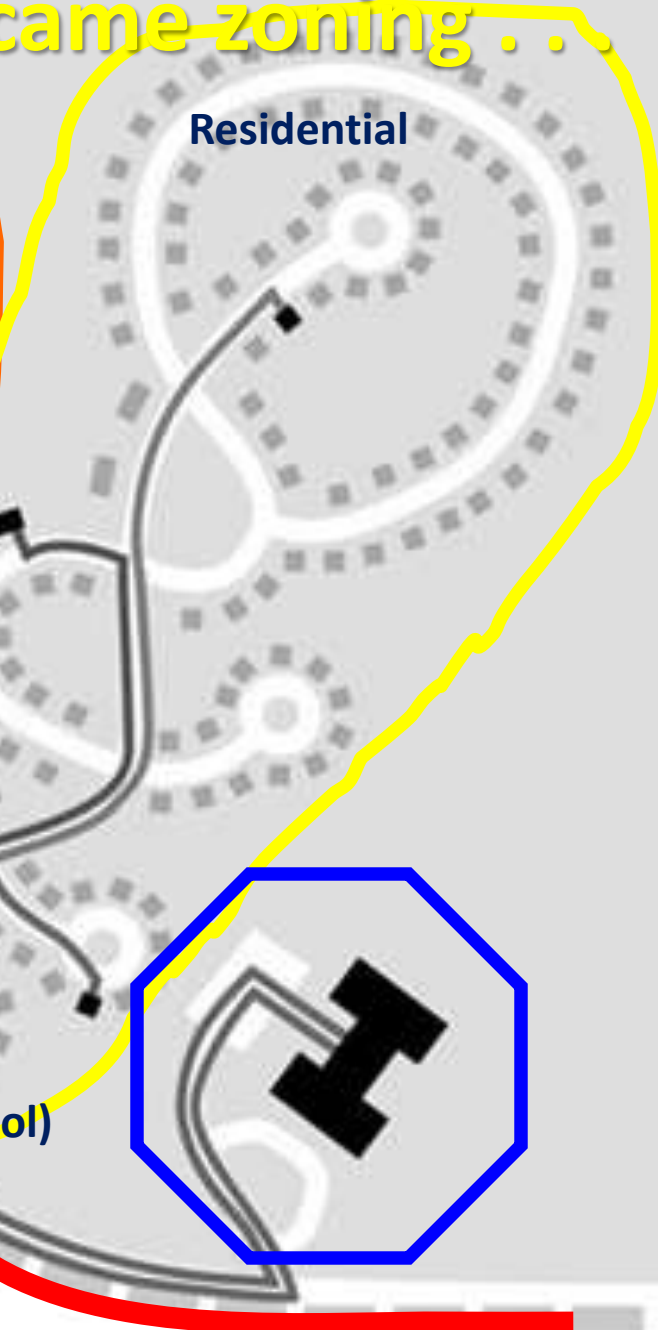


Commercial



Then came zoning . .

Residential



Civic (School)

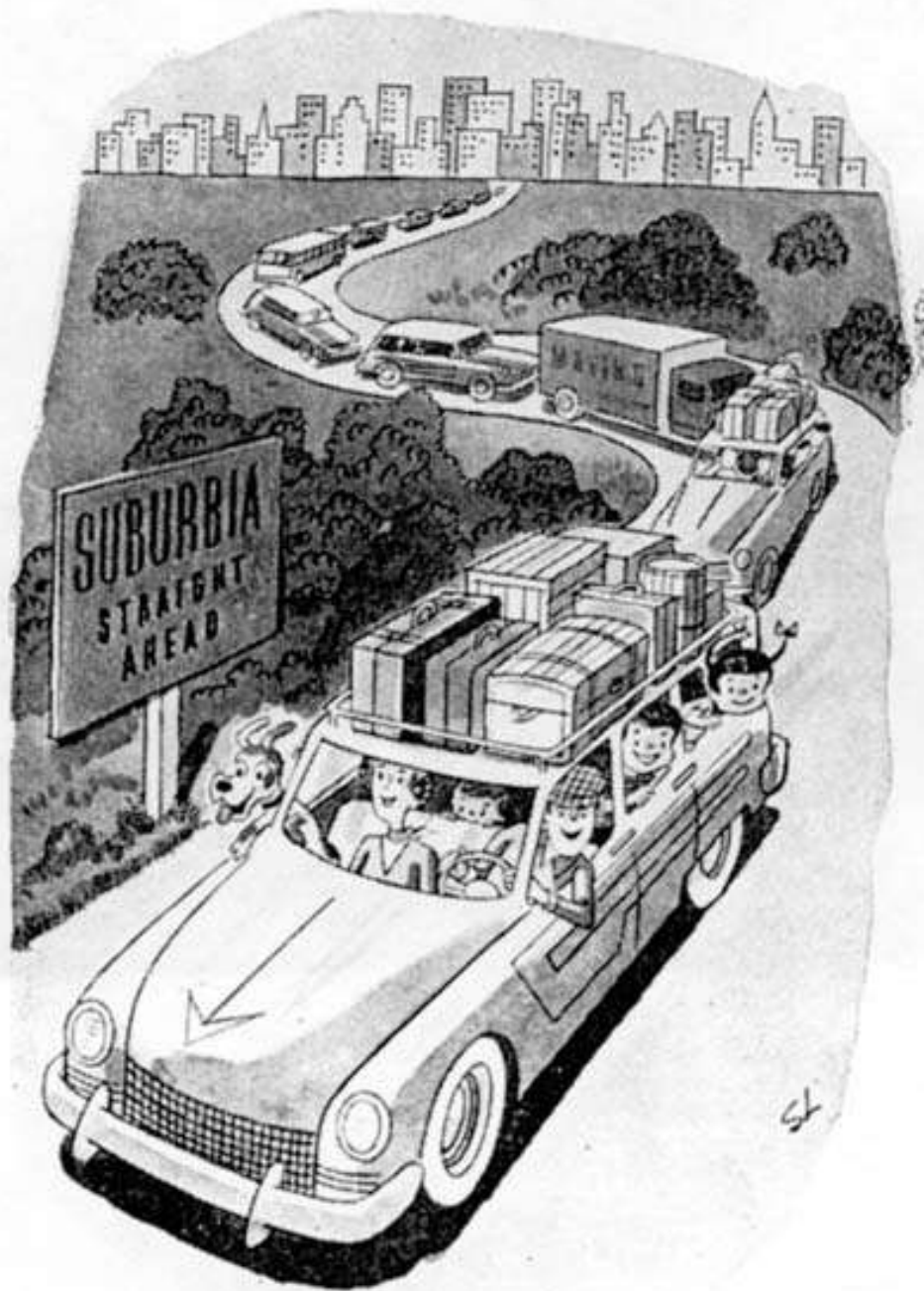


“Euclidean” zoning

- Fragmented land use
- Drive-only

. . . and the automobile . . .

(and the interstate highway program, and new federal programs for homebuilding, and new rules for capital depreciation . . .)



We built highways, expanded them . . .

Lovell Road and I-40 40 years ago



Image: Bridgett Massengill, Greater
Chattanooga Regional Growth
Initiative (Thrive 2055) - 2015

... and economic development followed.

Lovell Road and I-40 **today**



Image: Bridgett Massengill, Greater Chattanooga Regional Growth Initiative (Thrive 2055) - 2015



Prime retail location (late 20th century)



"Walmart Supercenter, an archetypal big box store, in Madison Heights, Virginia."
(from Wikipedia entry for "Big-box store")





The Washington Post

Wonkblog

Poor, rural areas will be most affected by Walmart closing 154 stores

Related story: [What happens to a tiny town when Walmart disappears?](#)



S
In



Photo of rural New Jersey by Alex MacLean

Prime Residential location

(late 20th century)





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Suddenly, things are different

THE DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC FUNDAMENTALS HAVE SHIFTED



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Demographic Change



Boomers are a different kind of Senior Citizen



“Adulthood II”

Boomers not ready for the rocking chair

- Today’s retiree can live past 90
- “These additional 31 years of expected life have not been just tacked on at the end . . . Today’s 65-year-olds are starting new careers or continuing old ones, traveling around the world, and eloping with new loves, in a stage of life we are calling ‘Adulthood II.’”

- cultural anthropologist Mary Catherine Bateson,
quoted in ULI report





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Boomers and housing

Boomers are downsizing



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Millennials are different:

Your children and grandchildren



Millennials

They follow lifestyle,
not jobs.

Millennials choose
where to live before
finding a job.

Of all college-educated 25- to 34-year-olds
64% looked for a job *after* they chose the
city where they wanted to live.



Preferences: Transportation



Preferences: Housing



Preferences: Housing



Atmore, Alabama

Jonesborough, Tennessee

Bardstown, KY: C. Bedford Crenshaw,

Jonesborough, TN: User brent_nashville on flickr

Rifle, CO: User jasperdo on flickr

Rifle, Colorado



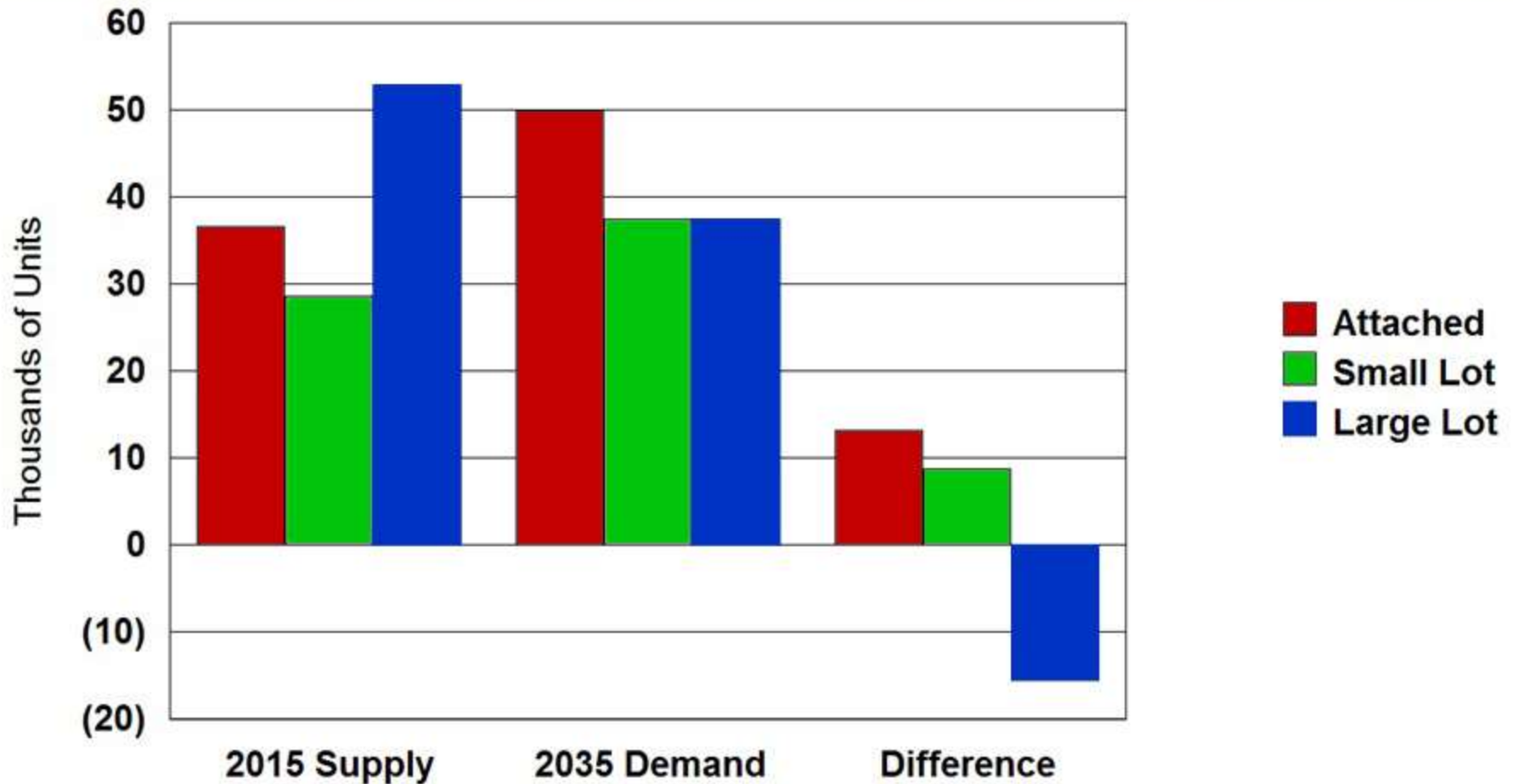
40%

We've got the wrong housing stock
for the 21st century



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Occupied Housing Demand-Supply Mismatch 2015



Economic Development Industrial Site: The grand prize of the 20th century



Economic growth

20th century vs. 21st century



“From tools and spools to eds and meds”*

Chasing smokestacks vs. Chasing talent

Manufacturing economy vs. Knowledge economy

The 21st Century Economy

Manufacturing is changing



- Smaller part of our economy
- Its nature has changed

The 21st Century Economy

- Creativity, knowledge, innovation
- Importance of networking, interaction
- Demand for skilled workers

“Talent is replacing the tax incentive as the No. 1 economic-development tool in America.”

Mark Wilson, president and CEO
Florida Chamber of Commerce

Quoted in *Palm Beach Post*,
June 9, 2016

Core Values

Why American Companies are Moving Downtown



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Making Neighborhoods Great Together

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



**CUSHMAN &
WAKEFIELD®**

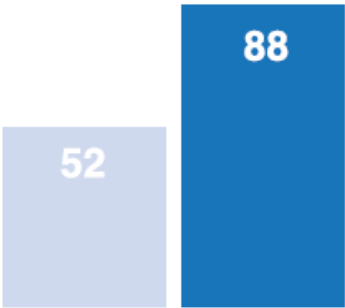
Center for Real Estate
and Urban Analysis
THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Download the report at
www.smartgrowthamerica.org/core-values



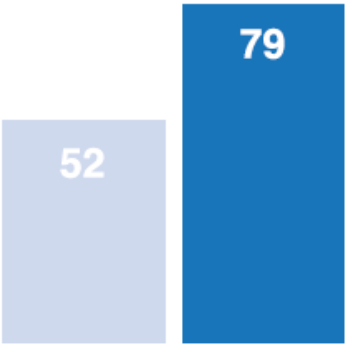
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WALK SCORE



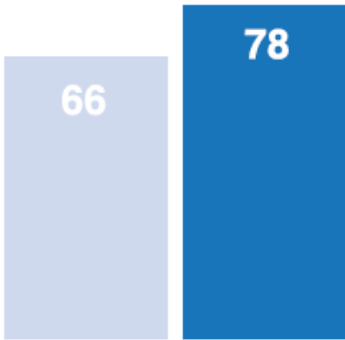
Before After

TRANSIT SCORE



Before After

BIKE SCORE



Before After



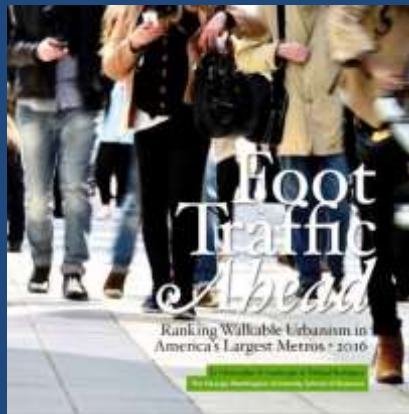
Conway, AR Chamber of Commerce



There is a price/value premium for walkable places

2016 study ranks the top 30 US metropolitan areas in walkability

Key finding: Average is 74% over their drivable suburban competition.



There is a price/value premium for walkable places (residential)

Applies to residential real estate -

Above-average walkability:

→ \$4,000 to \$34,000 more in home sales price



•Sources: "Walking the Walk" by Joseph Cortwright, CEOs for Cities and "The Walkability Premium in Commercial Real Estate Investments" by Gary Pivo and Jeffrey Fisher

There is a price/value premium for walkable places (commercial)

Applies to commercial real estate -

Greater walkability:

→ 1% to 9% increase in commercial property value depending on type; also higher incomes and lower capitalization rates



•Sources: "Walking the Walk" by Joseph Cortwright, CEOs for Cities and "The Walkability Premium in Commercial Real Estate Investments" by Gary Pivo and Jeffrey Fisher



Traditional Main Streets are back

Credit: clariontoday.com



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Communities are now in a
ferocious competition
over **place**

(whether they know it or not)



Erwin, Tennessee

Sense of place?

Not so competitive in the 21st century



Sense of place?



Sense of place!



Sense of place?



Sense of place!



Taking the Long View



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Source: Steve Price, Urban Advantage

Taking the Long View



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Source: Steve Price, Urban Advantage

Meridian, MS



It's all about location



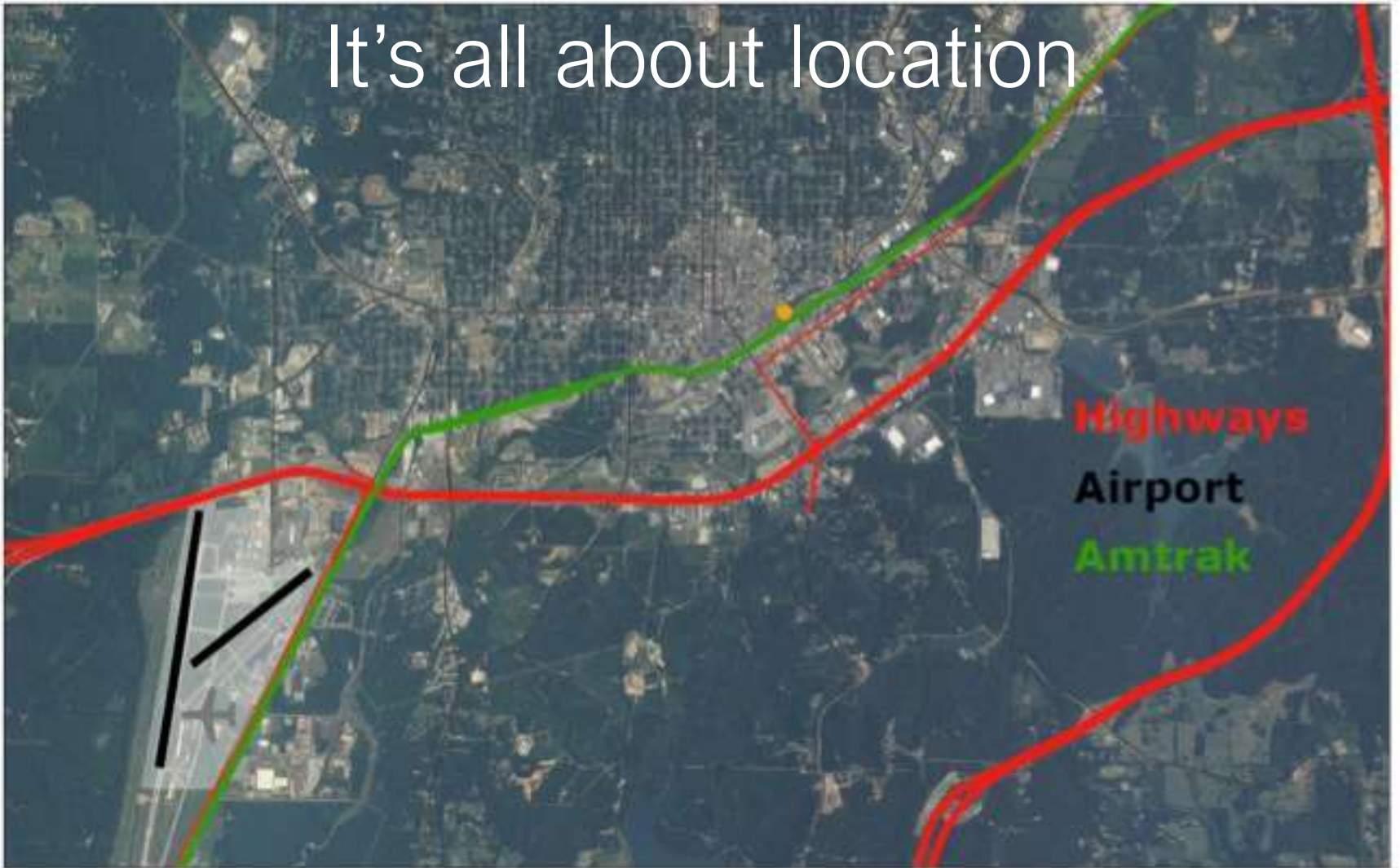
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It's all about location



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It's all about location



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Your Identity is Key

In any public project you need to know:

- Who you were in the past
- Who you are now
- And who you aspire to be



Who You Were in the Past

“Meridian, with its depots, store-houses, arsenal, hospitals, offices, hotels, and cantonments no longer exists.”

General Sherman
February, 1864



Who You Were in the Past





Marks Rothenberg Company, Meridian, Miss.



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Meridian's Union Station

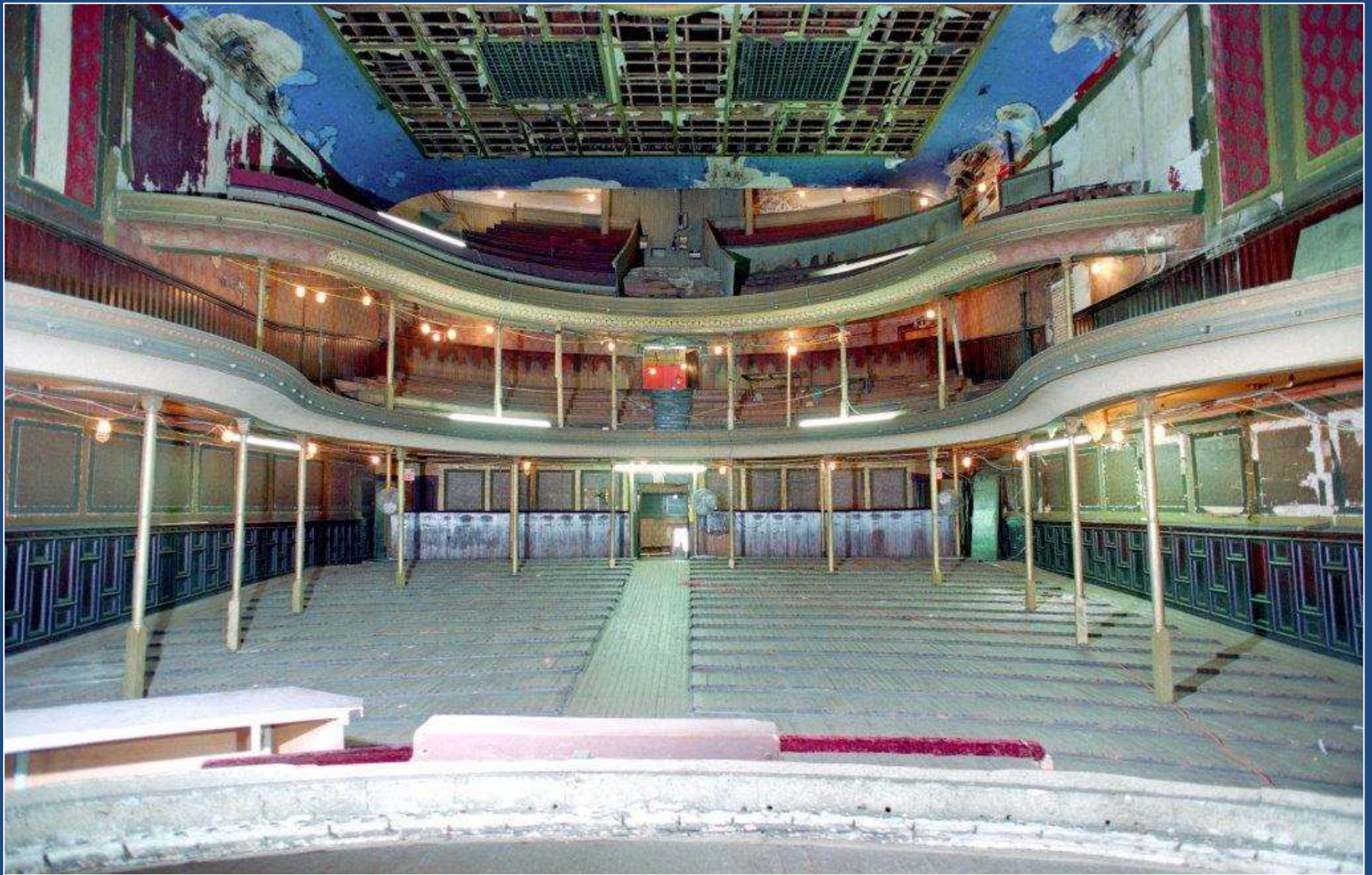


Who You Are Now

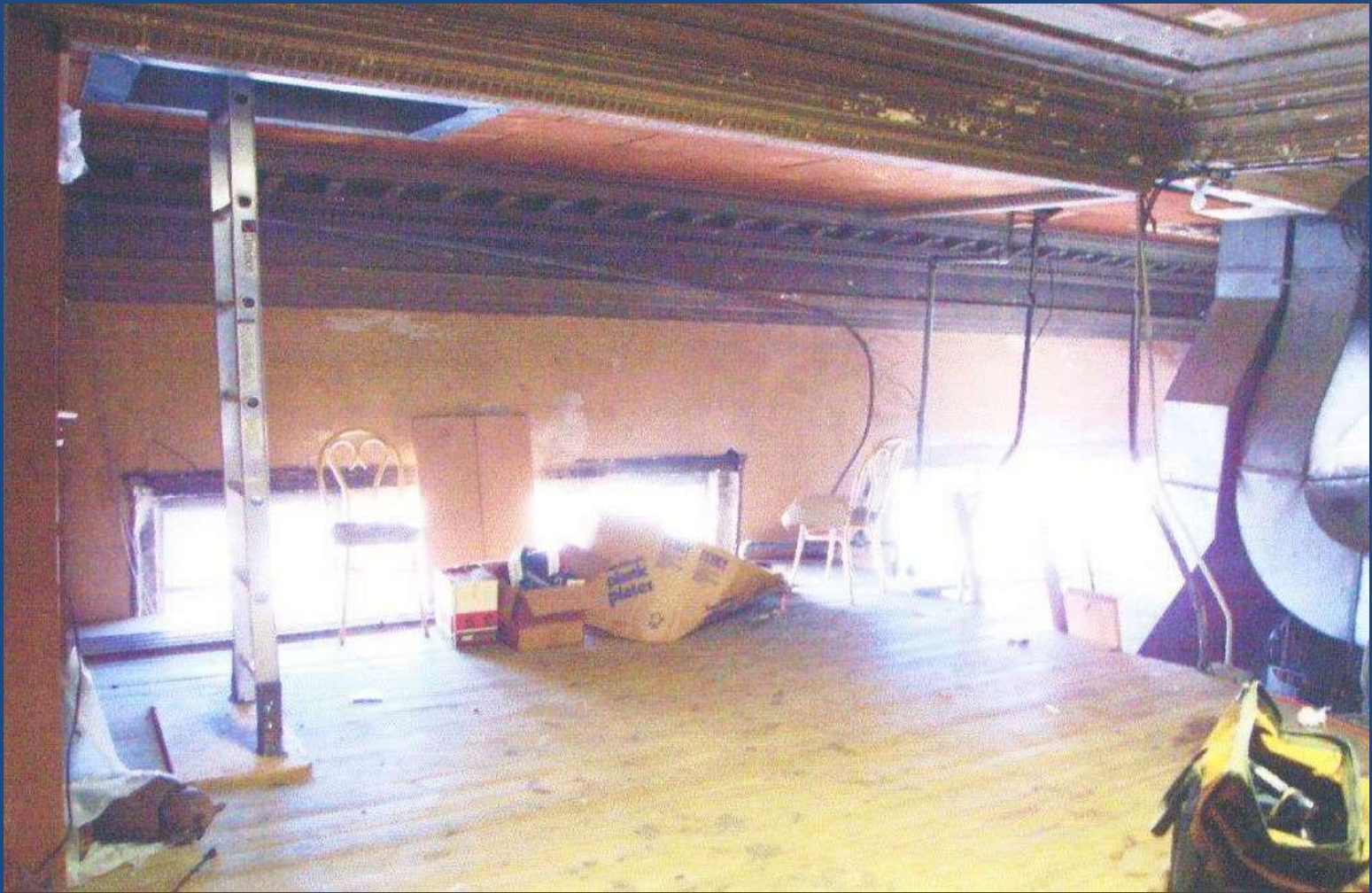




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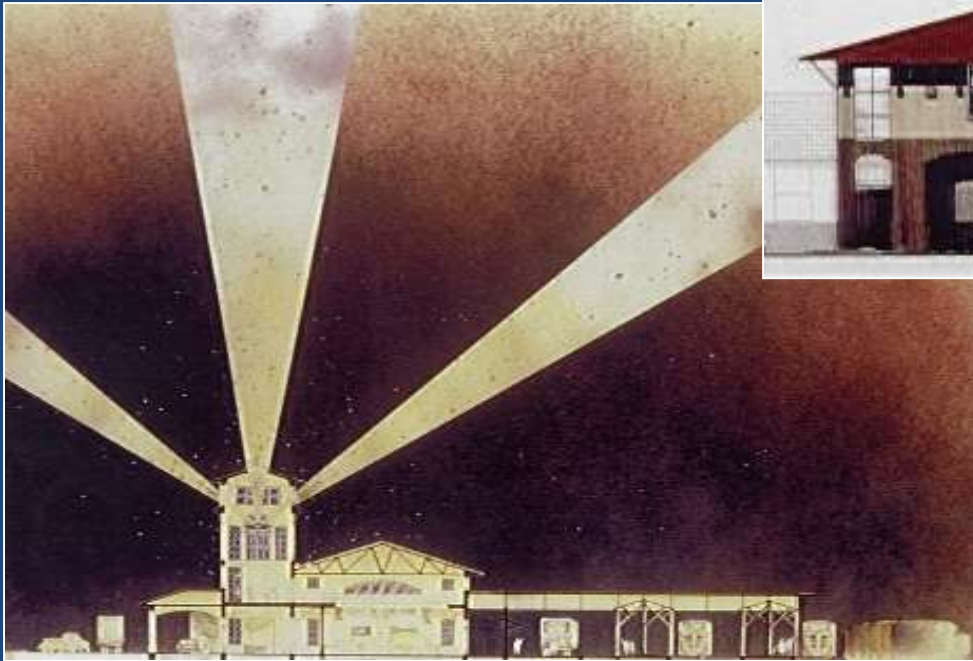


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Who You Aspire to Be





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David Barr

Union Station at Completion

- Annually, Union Station hosts 250 events and 300,000 people



Union Station Development Results

- Private development of \$165 million in surrounding area
- New life for historic structures



Restored City Hall



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(photo credits: City of Meridian) www.smartgrowthamerica.org Improving communities

Restored City Hall



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(photo credits: The Meridian Star)

Restored City Hall



Restored City Hall



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(photo credits: The Meridian Star) ing communities



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World Class Performances



50th Anniversary with Itzhak Perlman

Wynton Marsalis



Yes, we can read. A few of us can even write.

Tennessee Williams

Nevada Barr

Willie Morris

Jill Conner Browne

Barry Hannah

Beth Henley

Shelby Foote



Eudora Welty

William Faulkner

John Grisham

Margaret Walker Alexander

Richard Ford

Richard Wright

Natasha Trethewey

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From the Deep South to the top of the charts, Mississippians are music to the world's ears.

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Mississippi Arts and Entertainment Experience



Mississippi Arts and Entertainment Experience



Mississippi Arts and Entertainment Experience



Mississippi Children's Museum - Meridian





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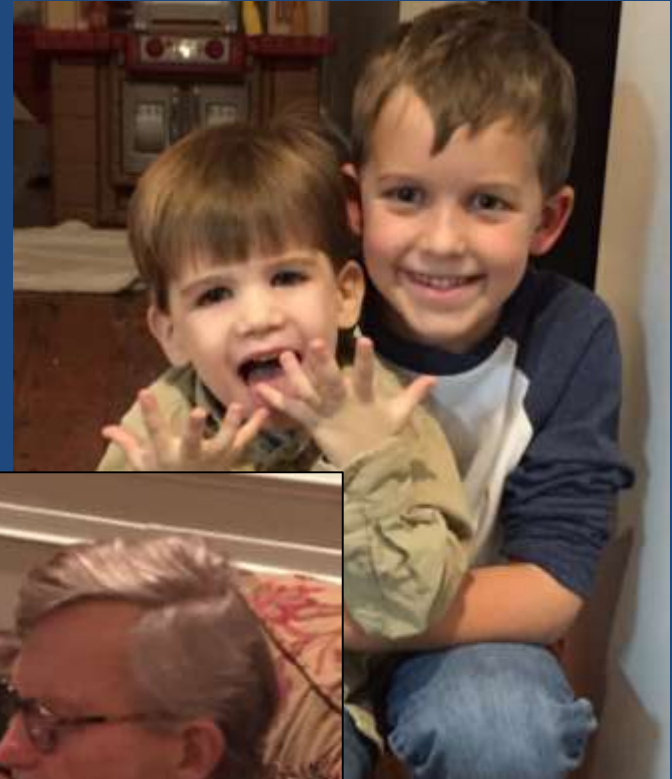
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Meridian, MS November 3, 2007
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It Is Critical to Engage Future Generations



Thank you.

For more information: www.smartgrowthamerica.org

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