**Community Benefits Agreements**

**Provisions for inclusion in various contracts and agreements necessary to implement the Falcons’ Stadium**

Georgia Tech Connectivity Studio – fall semester, 2013 – a synthesis of 12 students’ current thoughts

Mike Dobbins, instructor: [mike.dobbins@coa.gatech.edu](mailto:mike.dobbins@coa.gatech.edu)

Bruce Gunter, instructor: brucegunter@prihouing.org

Guanying Li, GRA: gy.li@gatech.edu

**Introduction**

This document outlines a list of recommendations to be included in the Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) between the City of Atlanta, the West Side communities, and the Atlanta Falcons organization, including their consultants, contractors, subcontractors, and suppliers. CBAs would be negotiated among the various parties according to their various functions and resources. The numbers and percentages suggested below are for illustrative purposes, a starting point for considering provisions and targets for the proposed benefits. CBAs should ensure that Atlanta’s new $1 billion stadium positively contributes to surrounding neighborhoods just as the over $500 million public investment in the Falcons will contribute to the team’s profit and success.

While in the recent past some investment has been made in surrounding neighborhoods, the stadium has the potential to enrich a community long plagued by overwhelming disinvestment. Neither the recent investment nor the $15 million in TAD money allocated to the neighborhood prior to the new stadium plan has the power to bring the benefits these communities need and deserve. Beyond the immediate concerns of storm water runoff, parking congestion, and noise pollution, community members will be forced to deal with the complications of living next to the stadium for years to come; the CBA should ensure that these local neighborhoods benefit over the long term.

Private companies should not have access to such large sums of public money without scrutiny and clear requirements for how the local communities that are directly impacted by the project will benefit. By stipulating local benefits from publicly-dependent projects, Atlanta will serve as a national model for just development.

This CBA outlines strategies for equitable job and local business creation, continued community development, improved environmental conditions, enhanced neighborhood health and safety, and thoughtful transportation alterations along with ongoing monitoring and enforcement. . It draws on the expertise of community members, community organizations, elected officials, public agencies, the Atlanta Falcons, businesses, foundations, and Georgia Tech faculty and students, and includes analysis of all prior planning documents, most recently the APD report prepared for Invest Atlanta. It commits the city (including Invest Atlanta) and the developer (the Falcons, the GWCCA), to meet the goals, and it commits the neighborhoods to support the project through the ongoing approval processes.

**Community Development**

Whether the legacy that the stadium creates in the surrounding community is one of celebrations or of derision depends in large part on the nature of involvement in the neighborhoods surrounding the stadium and their local economies. Targeted investments of time and money by the Atlanta Falcons, the City of Atlanta, and neighborhood organizations will contribute to both a healthy business environment and a vibrant neighborhood for living and learning.

*Jobs*

(“Area residents” is defined as residents of NPUs L, K, T, V, G, and S, those NPUs whose median family incomes are at $30,000 or below, where unemployment stands at 40 per cent or above, and whose populations total over 90,000 people )

* Require that a minimum living wage of $10.10 (adjusted annually for inflation), including provisions for health benefits, be provided for all on-site jobs.
* Stipulate that 35% of all contracted jobs go to minority businesses with at least 5% going to women-owned businesses.
* Require 30% of construction, “soft cost” support (consultants), and logistics support (security, food services, administration, and temps) jobs related to the stadium go to area residents of which at least one third are residents of English Avenue and Vine City.
* Require 10% of construction, “soft cost” support, and logistics support jobs related to the stadium go to previously unemployed area residents, inclusive of people with a criminal records providing no offences in the last 6 months and no repeat offenses for the duration of employment.
* Establish a pre-apprenticeship training program (to begin training by January 1, 2014) to assist new workers in developing skills beyond the scope of this project.
* Fund a locally-based program (made up of existing training programs, like Atlanta Metro, Atlanta Tech, the AFL-CIO, Georgia Trade-UP or others, potentially located in the existing stadium or other GWCC-owned space) that screens local applicants, provides training in conjunction with stadium contractors and vendors, and connects qualified applicants with available job opportunities related to the stadium.
* Convene an advisory committee of area business and community leaders to oversee the job training and placement program and monitor compliance with CBA requirements relative to the local construction and operating contracts and small business development participation.

*Housing*

(Items listed below refer to the English Avenue, Vine City, and Castleberry Hill neighborhoods)

* Commit 0.25% of annual Falcon’s revenue towards a revolving Housing Trust Fundfor code enforcement, rehabilitation and development of housing.
* Protect current owner-occupied housing through freezing property tax levels at predevelopment valuations for current homeowners earning 60% AMI or below.
* Provide incentives to owners and developers to rehabilitate existing housing for residents earning 50% AMI or below.
* Provide incentives to developers to construct infill mixed income housing with a minimum of 20% of housing units affordable to households earning 50% AMI or below.
* Develop a demolition strategy for unoccupied, unsalvageable, and highly hazardous properties and institute a reuse plan that will ensure all targeted properties are repurposed by August 2017.
* Engage the Fulton County/City of Atlanta Land Bank Authority to acquire and assemble parcels suitable for infill single and multi-family construction.
* Provide options for tenants in foreclosed properties to enter formal lease or purchase the property.
* Fund a Judicial in Rem Foreclosure program to foreclose upon properties with liens; ownership should then revert to the Fulton County/City of Atlanta Land Bank Authority for future consolidation and redevelopment

*Small Business*

* Designate at least 25% of contract dollars, such as construction, concessions, security, landscaping, and custodial services, to minority firms and an additional 10% to women-owned firms.
* Require at least 30% of food expenditures by Atlanta Falcons and stadium tenants be spent on food grown within 100 miles of the new stadium.
* Require at least 0.5% of food expenditures by Atlanta Falcons and stadium tenants be spent on food grown in NPUs L, K, T, V, G, and S.
* Require at least 5% of printed materials, including t-shirts, game day booklets, posters, and signage, to be purchased through printing companies located in NPUs L, K, T, V, G, and S.
* Dedicate 0.25% of Falcons’ annual revenue to a Small Business-Development Loan Fund housed within a Community Development Financial Institution for the formation and expansion of local businesses in NPUs L, K, T, V, G, and S. At least 30% of such disseminated funds should go to businesses located in English Avenue and Vine City annually
* Permit vendors to sell food and merchandise in public areas during sporting and other stadium events.
* Permit public space on stadium grounds to be used for mobile business activities, such as farmers markets, craft fairs, and other vendor events.
* Create commercial space along the street levels of the proposed stadium, of which a portion would be maintained to house a rotating “Pop-up Business” program. The program would allow small, local businesses to cultivate their business models, develop brand recognition, and establish a client base through 60-90 day rent-free cycles.

*Community Resources*

* Establish an annual scholarship to fund high school students from the target area to attend college.
* Create an internship program for high school students in area schools to shadow Falcons employees.
* Establish a volunteer program whose purpose would be to allow local residents to familiarize themselves with all aspects of the Falcons and GWCC operations with the possibility of leading toward part-time or full time employment
* In partnership with Georgia Tech, the Atlanta University Center, and Georgia State University create an endowment fund for a charter or magnet school program in the area with a specific focus on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) fields and environmental education.
* Dedicate a 50-seat stadium section for free use by local schools, community organization, and non-profits.
* Provide a locally-operated childcare facility on-site for stadium employees.
* Anticipating a future growth in population, retain ownership of local schools by Atlanta Board of Education to ensure future availability of the facilities for academic purposes.
* Require stadium ground floor retail to include a bank branch and a business that sells fresh food to ensure bank and healthy food access for nearby residents.

**Land Use and Urban Design**

The stadium development provides a unique opportunity to break down the divide between neighborhoods and downtown that has denied the connectivity necessary to knit together cohesive, mutually supportive communities. Opening up the Vine City and English Avenue neighborhoods to Centennial Olympic Park is an opportunity that cannot be wasted. Taking steps to overcome the divide that the “Gulch” represents supports and encourages the kinds of development and connectivity that the Castleberry Hill citizens have been working to achieve. And so the following steps should be incorporated into the work tasks to be undertaken by the Falcons, the GWCC, the City, and the neighborhoods.

*Comprehensive Development Plan*

* Acknowledging that change in development patterns will surely happen, review and revise the Comprehensive Development Plan to accommodate and encourage development that:
  + Prioritizes keeping existing homeowner occupied houses and their immediate environs single family in nature
  + Anticipates mid-rise, mixed use, mixed income housing along Northside Drive and at lower densities along Martin Luther King, Jr Boulevard
  + Anticitpates an environmental and parks framework through the neighborhoods as the basis for differentiating single family and town house areas from multifamily areas, the parks to be viewed as shared amenities for all
  + Require that 80 per cent of all stadium streetfronts provide for retail, service and other publicly accessible land use
  + Require all public and private spaces anticipated for tailgating activities are designed and surfaced in ways that permit and encourage their use for a variety of community serving outdoor activities
  + Prohibit the use of bridges and tunnels to cross Northside Drive or MLK Boulevard; instead, design crossings to promote pedestrian safety and street level connectivity to retail and other service activities on all sides of these major streets
  + Prepare a detailed plan for better utilization of the Vine City MARTA station, including options for intensifying development in the form of a mixed income transit oriented development that would set the guidelines for zoning and development up and down the west side of Northside Drive

*Rezoning*

* Undertake comprehensive rezoning of the neighborhoods to guide the above development goals, anticipating use of MRC, MR, and modification of existing SPI classifications to achieve desired outcomes
* Provide public open space and pedestrian-friendly design at street level

*Parks and open space*

* Design the space between GWCC and the new stadium to accommodate park type uses, with water retention and reuse facilities and other outdoor activity amenities, in which tailgating can be accommodated for those few occasions when it is needed
* Provide at least one accessway to connect the neighborhoods into downtown and Centennial Olympic Park through the space made available by the removal of the dome ; coordinate this design with the PATH Foundation as part of its West Side Trail/Vine City Promenade project.

*History and culture*

* Fund the development of a program that preserves and celebrates the historic character and sites of the neighborhoods and establishes local historic and historical landmarks designation, highlighting among other sites, Martin Luther King, Jr.’s adulthood home, the Julian Bond home, the Alonzo Herndon home, Maynard Jackson’s home and the Wachendorf mansion.

**Environment**

Development of the new Falcons’ stadium has the potential to either exacerbate or mitigate existing environmental problems in the neighborhoods surrounding the proposed site. Historically, these communities have experienced severe flooding and an absence of recreational opportunities, accessible greenspace, and environmental education programs. Not only will addressing these issues in the CBA benefit the neighborhoods and those who live there, it will herald the Atlanta Falcons organization as a leader in environmentally sustainable development and community empowerment.

*Reduction of stormwater impacts from higher-elevation development*

* Develop a comprehensive stormwater management plan for the stadium site and Georgia World Congress Center which exceeds minimum standards to capture and store rainfall on-site.
* Install water retention features in the former Georgia Dome site
* Prioritize funding for projects that exceed required minimums by the City’s new Stormwater Management ordinance and use stormwater best management practices.

*Addressing stormwater inundation issues in the Westside neighborhoods impacted by the stadium*

* Perform a soil survey and a thorough hydrologic study of the Vine City and English Avenue area to identify natural water courses, soil types, and soil contamination.
* Informed by the findings of the above analysis and those of the Park Pride Proctor Creek North Avenue Study, design a series of water retention, reuse, and infiltration features that are linked by reconstructed sections of Proctor Creek tributaries that can serve as public parks and greenspace.

*Creating continuous and linked parks systems*

* Develop a comprehensive plan for a safe and accessible greenway trail system connecting existing and planned greenspace throughout the Westside neighborhoods.
* Re-craft the Castleberry Hill master plan to incorporate a series of linear parks that can connect the neighborhood to downtown to the north and to Cleophas Johnson Park to the southwest

*Providing ecological education & programming to community youth*

* Establish an Urban Ecology Center that serves the Vine City and English Avenue neighborhoods as a hands-on hub for outreach and education concerning ecological issues and principles that impact the community. The center should be run by a local environmental organization, and should be used as a venue for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) programs.
* Finance acquisition of the last two parcels (0.3 acres combined) necessary for the construction of Lindsay St. Park (1.1 acres total) to be constructed by The Conservation Fund and managed by the Lindsay St. Baptist Church. Funds should also be designated for educational programming tied to the Urban Ecology Center.
* Provide funding for establishment and support of a Proctor Creek North Avenue Watershed Task Force composed of students from Atlanta University Center and Georgia Tech that work with the City of Atlanta’s Department of Watershed Management to collect monthly water samples in Proctor Creek in accordance with the Atlanta Regional Commission’s Monitoring Plan. The task force should engage students from local schools for water monitoring and related projects.

Support a neighborhood cleanup program that hosts community-wide cleanup events.

**Health and Safety**

Reducing illegal activities and minimizing the event disturbance to neighborhoods will secure the personal and property safety of both residents and visitors. It will enhance the residents’ feelings of belonging towards their homes, unite the communities and business, and promote the positive image of the core of Atlanta. Thus, such a program will maximize the pleasant experiences for fans and visitors to the stadium and capture the full economic value of the patrons.

*Policing*

* Coordinate Atlanta, Georgia Tech, MARTA, AUC’s police forces and patrol coverage types throughout the day and night, including foot/bike/segway patrol in the day and increase car patrol in the evening.
* Neighborhood should strengthen community policing mechanisms like Neighborhood watch to increase community autonomy and the partners should provide assistance per request

*Code enforcement*

* The Public Works of the City should address public maintenance issues such as garbage pick up, lighting maintenance, and tree pruning
* The City should enforce strict code compliance on maintenance of sidewalk, visibility of signage and lighting, illegal dumping, and especially parking during events.
* Facilitate the Atlanta Police Foundation Housing Incentive Program

*Health Impact Assessment*

* The Atlanta Falcons should conduct a full Health Impact Assessment (HIA) of the new stadium and old Georgia Dome site. The Assessment should have a wide-ranging focus, including impacts to jobs, environment, health, transportation, and safety. The HIA should have a meaningful public participation component, and results should be made available to the public and inform the development of the stadium.

**Transportation**

The thoughtful development of transportation infrastructure between neighborhoods and activity centers can improve access to employment, access to recreation, pedestrian safety, and other quality of life components. Transportation infrastructure alterations as a result of new stadium construction should include improved east-west connectivity, multi-modal accommodations, dedicated space for small business opportunities, and a parking strategy.

*Improved East-West Connectivity*

* Maintain the exact, existing alignment of Martin Luther King Jr. Drive between James P. Brawley Boulevard and Spring Street and assimilate the thoroughfare into the new stadium’s design.
* Maintain the general, existing alignment of Georgia Dome Drive and Mitchell Street between Northside Drive and Magnum Street.
* Extend Magnolia Street eastward to connect with Andrew Young International Boulevard and consider pedestrian, bicycle, and transit (in particular, future street car or bus rapid transit accommodations) in the design of the extension.

*Multi-modal Accommodations*

* Require a “Complete Streets” analysis, based on Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) 2010 methodologies, of the road network to be affected by the new stadium in order to determine simultaneously the level of service for each of the four primary modes of transportation: pedestrian, bicycle, auto, transit.
* Post the “Complete Streets” analysis on the City of Atlanta website and the current website dedicated to the new stadium in an easily accessible location within 30 days of completion.
* Integrate real-time transit information into appropriate stadium signage and fund the incorporation of real-time transit information into nearby transit stops and stations for the convenience of transit for travel to Atlanta Falcons games.
* Modify the Vine City MARTA station to incorporate improved access to the stadium and GWCC facilities and as the anchor for new mixed use, mixed income development along Northside Drive

*Dedicated Space for Small Businesses*

* Dedicate adequate and prominent space for food trucks, food carts, and other small business incubators in areas of high pedestrian traffic and, if possible, in close proximity to existing and future transit stops near the new stadium.

*Parking Strategy*

* Fund and support the development of a parking permit program for the neighborhoods most affected by stadium event traffic and parking overflow. Provide letters of support to the City Council members and City staff when requested by neighborhood associations, provide testimony before the City Council or appropriate boards of Commissioners, and fund technical assistance in the creation of the program, including administrative staff time, enforcement staff time, and the cost of new signage.
* Minimize the visual impact on public spaces and sidewalks of parking lots and structures.

**CBA Monitoring and Enforcement**

For any of the above provisions to work, there needs to be a binding accountability structure, first thoughts on which follow,

*Advisory Board*

Community benefits agreements require regular monitoring to ensure fulfillment of all stipulated provisions. The following provides examples of how such a structure might by organized.

Regulatory oversight should involve an advisory board comprised of local representation, local government staff, the Atlanta Falcons administration, and conscientious members of the public. The advisory board members are responsible for holding each other accountable to the stipulations of the CBA, and the general public is welcome to open inquiries into the completion of the items included in the agreement.

Prior to the creation of an advisory board, a task force should be established to organize time frames for each benefit provision, outline monitoring standards, develop reporting mechanisms, and establish corrective measures for unmet CBA criteria. Once the task force has completed its assigned scope, the City Council should establish a board or commission with a similar member base as the task force to provide regular oversight and hear complaints of breaches in the CBA.

Representation on the advisory board should include one member from NPU L, NPU K, NPU T, NPU V, NPU G, NPU S, English Avenue, Vine City, Castleberry Hill, Marietta Street, Georgia Tech, the Atlanta University Center, the Atlanta Falcons, City of Atlanta staff, and City Council.

*Time Frame*   
  
The task force should establish a defined end date for the CBA, preferably an end date in alignment with the provisions of the hotel/motel tax. During this process, the task force should consider the early expiration of benefits that do not relate to the regular operation of the stadium, such as construction contracts or construction jobs training. The task force should analyze each deliverable and determine whether the activities are ongoing or require finite deadlines. Specific deadlines should apply to the Atlanta Falcons, the City of Atlanta, and community entities specifically included in the Community Benefits Agreement. The advisory board will be responsible for regular oversight of ongoing activities and completion of benefits by specified deadlines.   
  
*Monitoring*   
  
The Atlanta Falcons and all stadium tenants should provide quarterly reports to the City of Atlanta on all action items, such as wages, hiring, contracts, job training, revenue dedication, procurement of goods and services, mobile vendor permits, signage, and internships.

The City should provide quarterly reports on its action items, such as neighborhood police patrol, solid waste collection, environmental monitoring and management, street light maintenance, and code enforcement.

Community organizations explicitly identified in the CBA should provide quarterly reports on all action items, such as Neighborhood Watch programs, volunteer community cleanups, CDC consolidation, and project support activities.

The Housing Trust Fund and Small Business Development Loan Fund should provide quarterly reports on organizational activities, such as funding allocation, training, technical assistance, and measures of success for housing and small business clients.

*Open Records and Grievances*   
  
Members of the public may request to inspect reports and/or file complaints related to lack of fulfillment of CBA items. The City should administer an investigation process for these claims and provide findings to the complainant within 45 days. If the complainant disagrees with the investigation’s findings, the complainant has the right to have the matter presented to a hearing board. The advisory board that regularly reviews CBA reports will also serve as the hearing board.

*Corrective Measures*   
  
For any breaches in the benefits provisions, the breaching party has a 60-day correction period to rectify problems. If problems are not corrected, the parties should enter a 45-day conciliation period prior to invoking a court order to complete benefits.

If any of the involved parties do not complete CBA items, the other signatories may request a court order requiring them to honor CBA commitments and the commitments of their constituent parties. .

Money damages may not be paid in lieu of completing commitments. Court orders should require completion of CBA items.

*Neighborhood Oversight for Community Funds*   
  
The Housing Trust Fund should be administered by an established foundation (one example might be the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta) with decision-making on funding priorities designated to a board comprised of residents of English Avenue, Vine City, and Castleberry Hill. An advisory board comprised of representatives of NPUs L, K, T, V, G, and S; the English Avenue, Vine City, and Castleberry Hill neighborhoods; Georgia Tech; and the Atlanta University Center should prioritize funding strategies for the Small Business Development Loan Fund. Members should have small business development knowledge and experience.

.

**Other Considerations**

In addition to the aforementioned CBA recommendations, the following list denotes supplementary items to be researched further by the Georgia Tech Connectivity Studio and that should be considered by the City of Atlanta, the Atlanta Falcons Stadium, and the West Side communities but may- or may not - fall outside the scope of the CBA. .

*Community Development*

* The establishment of a land trust by a responsible authority to provide permanent housing affordability. The trust would encourage sweat equity by existing residents to purchase homes.
* The creation of a targeted resource center that provides job training, business incubation, and social services. Businesses wishing to enter the “pop-up” business program would be required to enter a training program at the resource center prior to placement at the stadium and would enter a longer-term mentorship program following completion of their 60-90 day cycle.
* The creation of a local business aimed at repurposing stadium construction and operation waste, including game day tailgating, food, and food preparation bi-products.
* The salvage of materials from the old stadium.
* The development of a CDC consolidation strategy.
* Assist in setting up a Westside community historic tourism program, which will employ local residents as guide and for upkeep.

*Environment*

* Extension of Boone Street Green Street West to Atlanta Beltline and East to Centennial Olympic Park Drive to connect to the National Center for Civil and Human Rights.
* Have dedicated shuttles to/from tailgating areas and select points around the neighborhood.
* Incubate local urban farming initiatives to support the procurement of local foods within the stadium.
* Support the implementation of the Proctor Creek North Avenue Green Infrastructure Vision. Assist in setting up a Westside community historic tourism program, which will employ local residents as guide and for upkeep.

*Transportation*

* The creation of a “Green Lights” Committee that includes members of the Georgia Department of Transportation, City of Atlanta, MARTA, Atlanta Falcons, and other invested parties in order to coordinate resources around the new stadium construction and the Multi-Modal Passenger Terminal design on a weekly basis.
* The extension of the Atlanta Streetcar line from the planned stop at Centennial Olympic Park on Andrew Young International Boulevard to the Georgia World Congress Center, Phillips Arena, the new Atlanta Falcons stadium, the proposed Multi-Modal Passenger Terminal, the English Avenue neighborhood, the Vine City Neighborhood, the Castleberry Hill neighborhood, and the Atlanta University Center.
* The subsidization of increased MARTA rail frequency during stadium events.
* The integration of designated tailgating facilities with multi-purpose parks and potential neighborhood level control over the facility with the intention of providing employment opportunities and event monitoring by local residents.