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MACON ACTION PLAN UNVEILS ACTION STRATEGIES FOR MACON'S URBAN CORE
First Friday, March 6, 2015 from 5:00 – 8:00 PM at Cox Capitol Theatre

I. Update on first Open House and Community Participation

The Macon Action Plan (MAP) is a community-driven plan for the future of Downtown and nearby neighborhoods – *the heart of Macon*. In October 2014, MAP invited all citizens to attend an Open House at the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame to make their voice heard and contribute their ideas to the planning process. The community responded in force to MAP's call to action.

- More than 130 visitors signed in on [Opening Night of the MAP Open House](#). Guests enjoyed Nu-Way weiners and Macon Beer Company beverages, spoke with neighbors and the planning team, learned about the plan underway, and engaged in eight different activities designed to collect public input that will inform the plan.
- Over 300 community members in total attended the Open House and participated in the activities during October and November.
- MAP received more than 550 surveys completed by Urban Core residents and employees.
- MAP's interactive [website](#) has received 1,200 unique web visitors.
- 60 community members have participated in 1-on-1 interviews or small group discussions with the MAP's planning team.
- MAP's steering committee of 21 dedicated community leaders tasked with overseeing the planning process have met six times with the planners since the project commenced in Spring 2014.

II. Vision and Goals

Thanks to Macon's enthusiastic response, MAP has reached an exciting point in the planning process, transitioning from data collection and analysis to the creation of a vision statement, goals, and proposed action strategies. The vision and goals echo the community input and provide a road map for the future grounded in the values of the people who live, work, worship, learn, and play in Macon's Urban Core.

MAP's Vision (with words from the community in italics):

"We are proud of our city, its *good bones*, *rich history* and traditions that give rhythm to community life. Our future will respect, honor and *complement our past*. We see *positive momentum* at work in our urban core, and we are ready to work together to continue this trend.

We are full of promise. We are eager to take action and grow Macon's urban core. We are ready for the heart of Macon to become Middle Georgia's flagship downtown experience. Vibrant, diverse and historic yet modern, our urban core will thrive as a unique collection of neighborhoods, a college town, and a center of culture, commerce and new connections – all nestled within the intimate, comfortable scale of a small city."

MAP's Goals:

Five goals will organize the action strategies that comprise the Macon Action Plan:

- **Create an unparalleled Urban Core experience** – action strategies will suggest improvements to parks and the public realm, events and programs to draw more residents and visitors to the Urban Core, gateway treatments that enhance the sense of arrival to the Urban Core, as well as ideas for marketing and promotion
- **Focus on Downtown living** – action strategies will outline next steps for residential development in Downtown and identify strategic opportunities in Urban Core neighborhoods
- **Support the engines of economic development** – action strategies will seek to support key institutions and large employers as well as smaller commercial and industrial businesses, striving to help existing businesses thrive and grow while also working to attract new businesses and services
- **Cultivate connectivity** – action strategies will address parking, automobile and truck access to and through the Urban Core, and active transportation opportunities to encourage walking and biking
- **Take action for implementation** – action strategies will outline ways to align leadership, capacity and funding, increase community involvement and stewardship, and update codes and regulations to promote implementation of MAP

III. MAP Party

Curious to know more about the proposed action strategies and see illustrations that bring our shared vision to life? All members of the community are invited to attend a reception at the Cox Capitol Theatre on First Friday in March to hear more about MAP's proposed action strategies for Macon's Urban Core. Guests are encouraged to come for Happy Hour, review the plan's recommendations, watch a presentation by the planning team, and, before departing, identify priorities for making our shared vision for the Urban Core become reality.

- **WHEN:** Friday, March 6, reception from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM, with a formal presentation on the proposed action strategies at 6:30 PM.
- **WHERE:** Cox Capitol Theatre at 382 Second Street

IV. Background

The Macon Action Plan (MAP) is a comprehensive planning process to envision the future for Downtown and intown neighborhoods and guide change in coming years. All members of the public are invited to help shape this plan for Macon's urban core. Facilitated by the Macon-Bibb Urban Development Authority, Macon-Bibb County, and their partners, in collaboration with the MAP planning team led by Interface Studio, the plan will incorporate thorough research, community feedback, and expert planning.

The final plan, made possible with generous funding from The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and The Peyton Anderson Foundation, is scheduled to be announced in May 2015.

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