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11/7/19

Request to Study the Feasibility of an Event Center in Downtown Gainesville

The Gainesville city commission asks that the county to consider and conduct a feasibility study on 3 sites in the downtown area for a proposed event/convention/conference center.

While Celebration Pointe location maybe the optimal location in the end, we ask that county consider the downtown area and study three sites. It is important that with a large use of public funds, a proper vetting of all viable sites should be done. The most vibrant conference centers/event centers are in the downtowns of communities across the country. Downtown is the heart of our community and we need to ensure that it is healthy and vibrant.

Three proposed sites (See attachments for the boundary areas):

- Depot Park/Power District
- Innovation Square
- 238 University Area

Tourism: For many people who come to this facility it will be their first time in Gainesville. It is important that people see the real Gainesville which downtown reflects, not just the Archer road area which looks and feels like any other suburban area in Florida.

Economic Impact: Locating an event center downtown will have a significant impact on small and locally owned businesses who we should be supporting. Most businesses in the Celebration Point and Butler plaza area are corporate chains, and that money leaves our community. The creation of jobs next to east Gainesville should also be a major consideration.

Innovation Square Area

Event Center Location: There are multiple parcels where the event center could work in this area.

Landholders: Majority of the property is owned by the University of Florida and one owner owns the majority of the other parcels.

Parking: There has been a push and study for a parking garage in this area. There is already a need and potential partners to build parking in the area.

Extras: Close to the University of Florida which should be a major user of the center. Area has infrastructure already laid which should reduce costs. The location would bow well for a potential UF partnership

Depot Park/ Power District Area

Event Center Location: The event center could be built on the power district area or on some of the private property to the west of the bus station. There may be other possibilities on South Main Street on Depot Park that are owned by the city and private landholders that could be good locations

Parcel Owners: Majority of the property is owned by the City of Gainesville with a few parcels to the west of the bus station owned by private owners.

Parking: Parking garage could be built on top of the bus station. There are also parking opportunities south of depot park that are owned by the city.

Extras: Climbing gym on the outside of the parking garage. The city will be putting out an ITN for the power district which will also bring substantial economic development opportunities. Next to our community's best park, Depot Park. Substantial public investment has been made on Main Street, Depot Ave, and SE 4th Street

238 University Area

Event Center Location: It could be built on the southern or northern main parcels.

Parking: A parking garage on either parcel. Also there is currently a surface parking lot on the northernmost parcel that is owned by the city.

Parcel Owners: The two largest parcels are owned by one owner. The northernmost parcel is owned by the city of Gainesville.

Extras: It is the most downtown core location. The center could have a marquee entrance on University Ave. Closest to restaurants and entertainment.



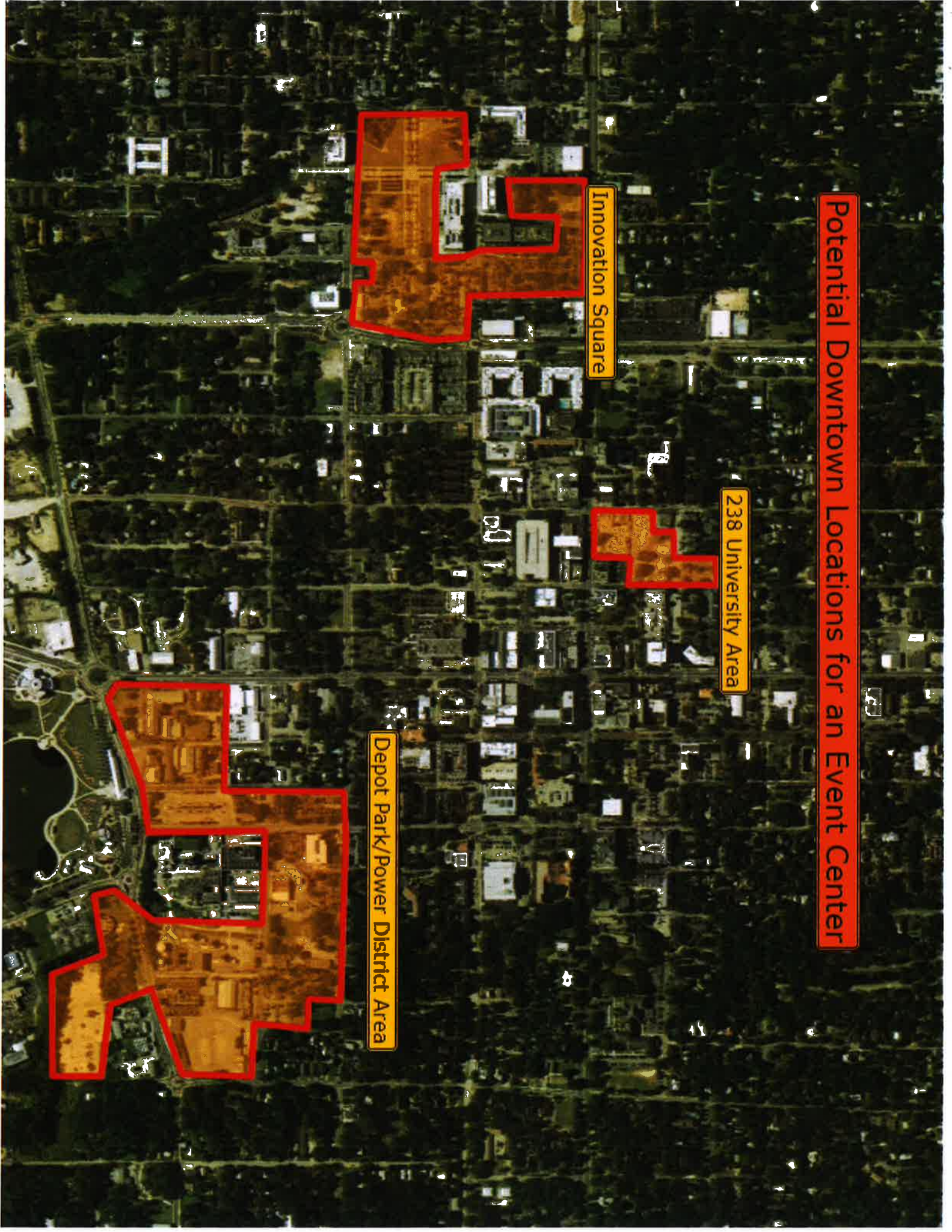
Innovation Square

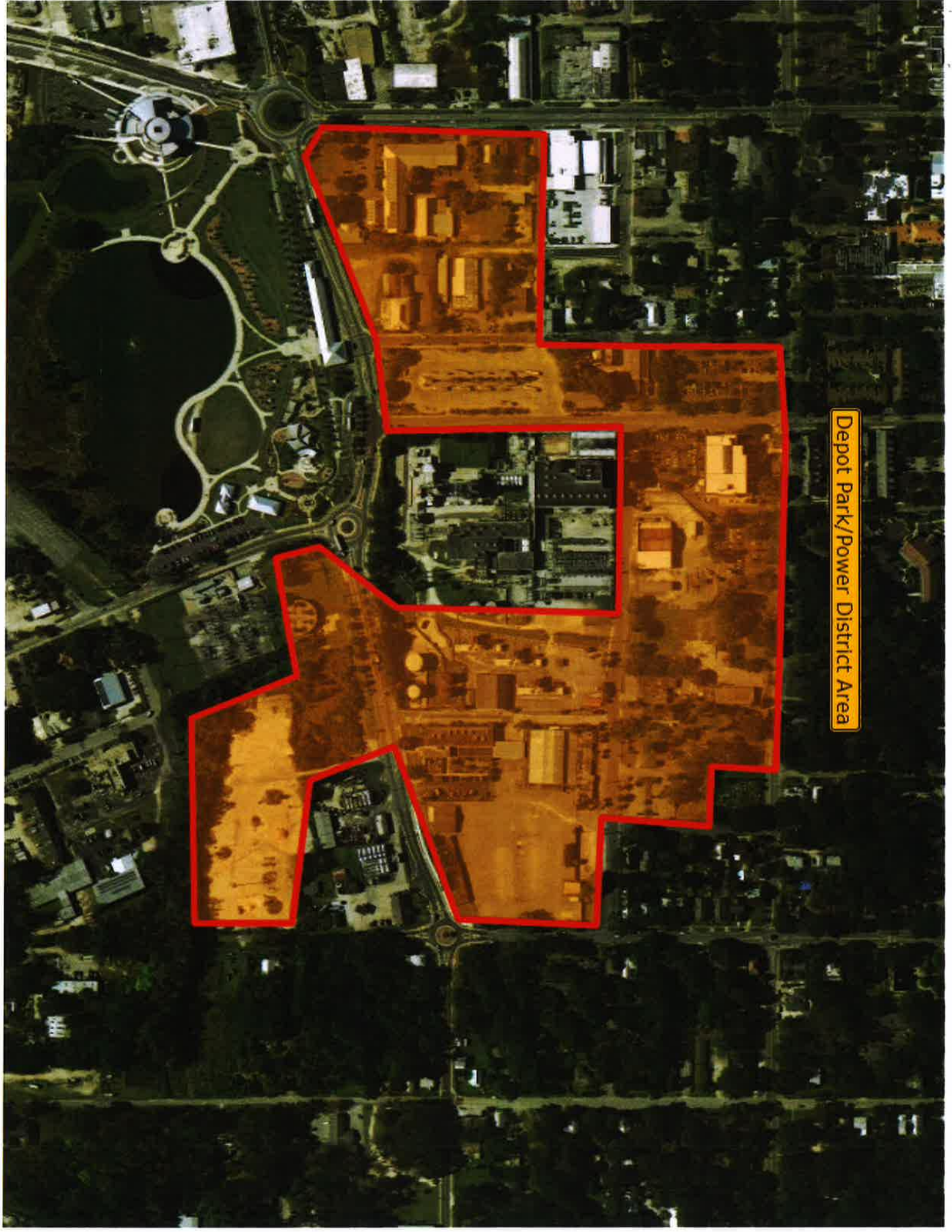
Potential Downtown Locations for an Event Center

Innovation Square

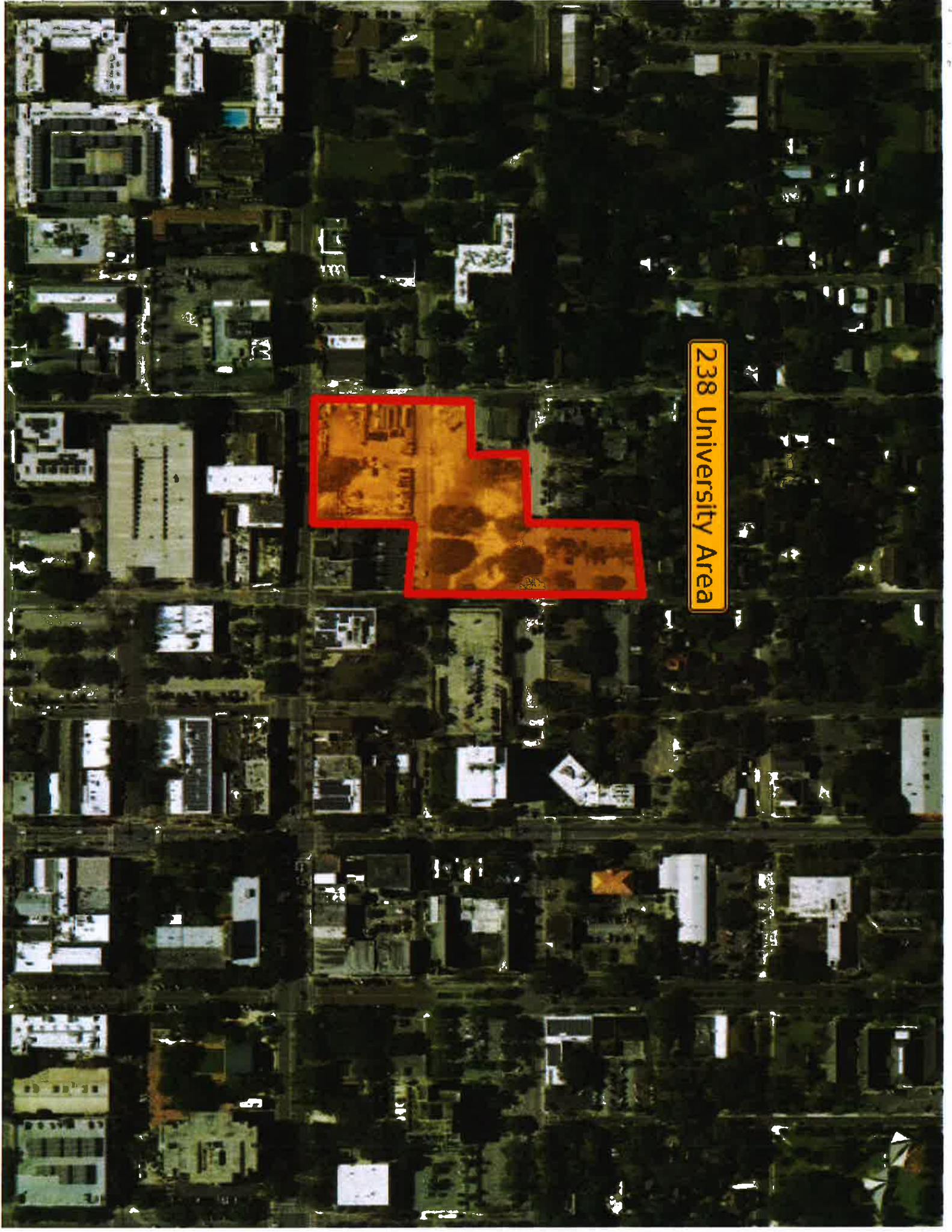
238 University Area

Depot Park/Power District Area

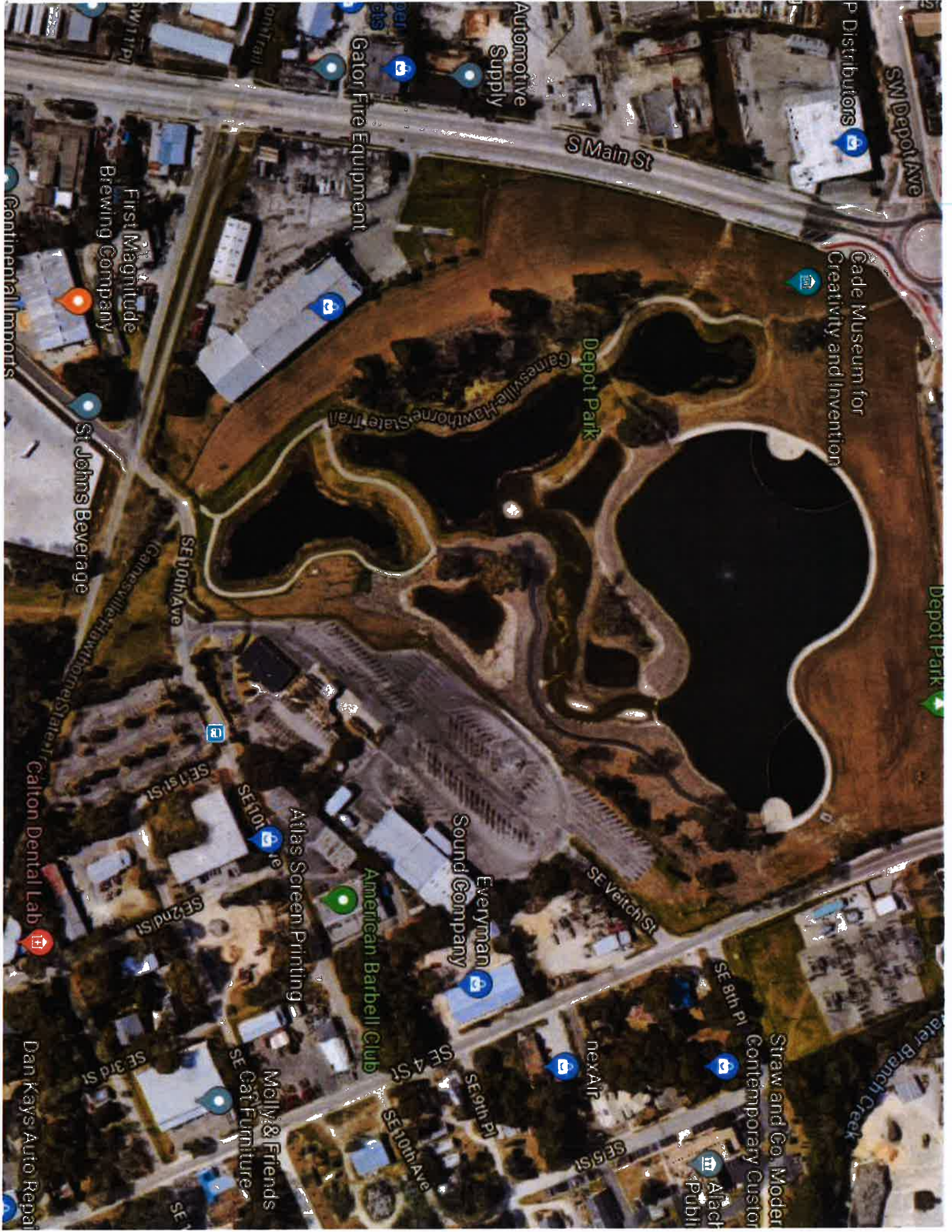




Depot Park/Power District Area



238 University Area



SW Depot Ave

Gade Museum for Creativity and Invention

S Main St

Automotive Supply

Gator Fire Equipment

First Magnitude Brewing Company

Continental Imports

Depot Park

Gainesville-Hawthorne State Trail

SE 10th Ave

St Johns Beverage

Calton Dental Lab

SE 1st St

SE 10th Ave

Atlas Screen Printing

Sound Company

Everyman

SE Veitch St

American Barbell Club

SE 2nd St

Molly & Friends Cat Furniture

nexair

SE 8th Pl

Straw and Co. Modern Contemporary Custom

Alact Publi

Water Branch Creek

SE 3rd St

Dan Kays Auto Repair

SE 4 St

SE 9th Pl

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