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# Georgia State University plans demo for campus-connecting greenspace

*Project will require demolition of one of the school's oldest buildings, a former parking deck turned classrooms.*

By **Michael Kahn** | Oct 2, 2017, 8:00am EDT



GSU's first academic building—Kell Hall—is slated for demolition. | Google Maps

[Georgia State University](#) has been a transformative force in the evolution of downtown, though sometimes at the expense of older Atlanta buildings.

Now, the [Atlanta Business Chronicle](#) reports the school is moving forward with plans to demolish its first academic building in order to create a greenway to better connect the campus.

Kell Hall actually started life in 1925 as a “large automobile hotel”—supposedly [the first](#) parking deck in Atlanta—but the building was transformed into classrooms following WWII to accommodate the influx of students. Vehicle ramps were left in the building and remain a unique (and vexing) feature of the academic facility today.

In its place, the university plans to create a greenway, effectively extending the one-block-long Hurt Plaza to Courtland Street. The move will allow students to traverse the campus from Woodruff Park to many of the school's main academic buildings without going out of their way.

Along with Kell Hall, the raised Library Plaza would also be demolished.

The plan is not new, having first appeared in 2013 as part of the "[State of the University](#)" address. However, the announcement is not without controversy.



A view of the current termination of Hurt Plaza at Kell Hall, and the vision for the future. | [via Urban Planet](#)

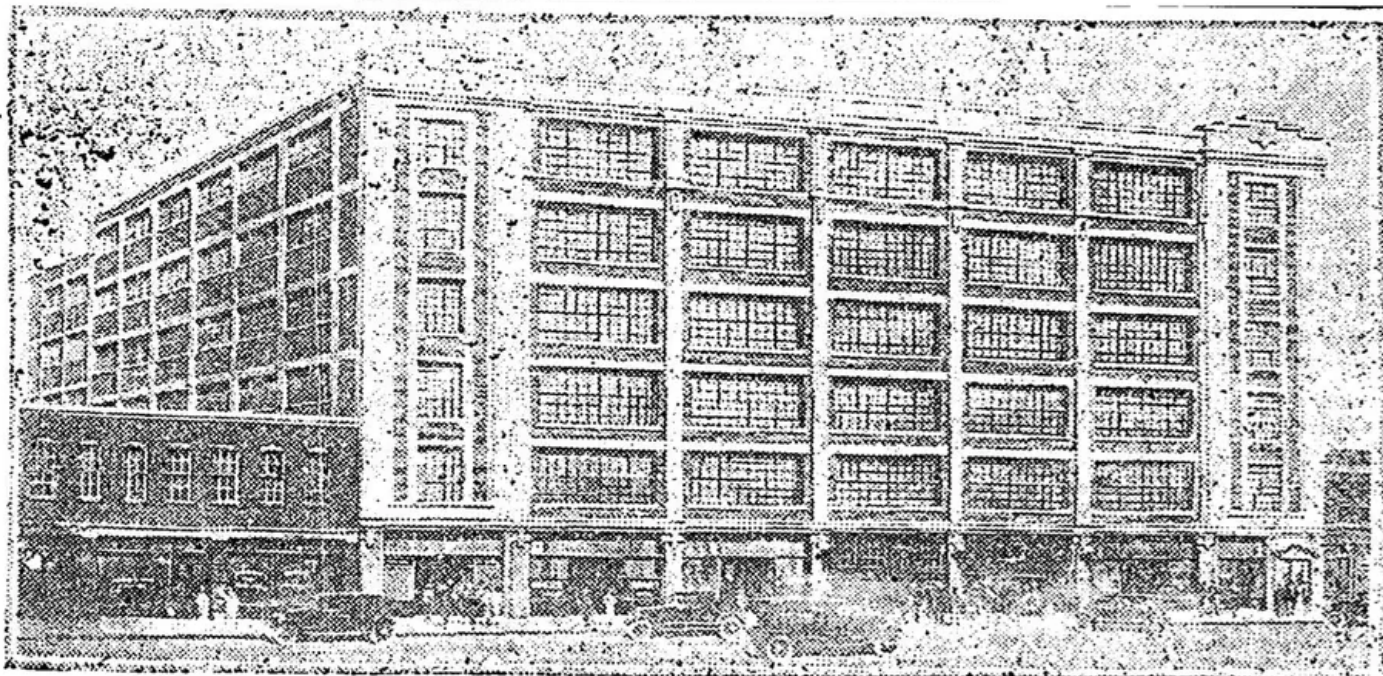
Some preservationists view the building, with its ties to the founding of the university and its heritage as an early Atlanta parking deck, as an important asset that can be retrofitted for the 21st Century.

Citing its adaptive reuse over the past 70 years, as well as the [recent renovation](#) of another early parking facility into offices, the argument goes that the building—which is far more attractive than [many other parking deck in the city](#)—should remain part of GSU.

But, with an [RFQ](#) issued for demolition services, it seems GSU is ready to finally move forward.



## *Large Automobile Hotel To Be Erected on Ivy Street*



Architect's drawing of the immense automobile garage that is to be built to house several thousand cars. The building will be erected by Bolling Jones, well-known Atlanta capitalist.

An image of the structure when it was proposed in the early 1920s. | [via Kyle Kessler, Atlanta Preservation Alliance](#)