

## Atlanta Journal-Constitution, The (GA)

July 14, 2004

**Section:** Metro News

**Edition:** Home; The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

**Page:** B1

### Allen family praises tribute Corridor to bear ex-mayor's name

*ERNIE SUGGS*

#### *Staff*

In life, former Atlanta Mayor **Ivan Allen Jr.** never wanted a street named after him. When the Atlanta City Council rename Marietta Street for him in 2001, he kindly said no.

"What very few people knew is that he didn't want to inconvenience people on the street," said Allen's son, Inman. "And he didn't want the city to incur the cost of changing the street signs."

But now, a little more than a year after his death, Allen is being honored with a street after all, and his family welcc

"This is a signal honor to the family," Inman Allen said Tuesday. "And we are most excited about the expansion of street into a major thruway."

The city will completely renovate a one-mile stretch from the corner of Ralph McGill Boulevard and Peachtree Stre down to Northside Avenue and rename the east-west corridor for Allen, who died last July at age 92.

Allen, a two-term mayor, held office from 1962 to 1970 and calmly ran Atlanta, while some Southern cities were lit burning under racial turmoil.

**Ivan Allen Jr.** Boulevard will replace the cumbersome passage that now consists of Alexander Street, Simpson S and Jones Avenue.

A.J. Robinson, president of Central Atlanta Progress, said the project will create four travel lanes throughout the e stretch, ending near the Georgia Dome and Georgia World Congress Center.

Bike lanes and landscape strips will be installed on both sides of the street as well as 10-foot sidewalks and, in so locations, raised medians.

The street also will serve as the main access to the new World of Coca-Cola Museum and the Georgia Aquarium.

"On this one-mile little street, you get to see a lot of folks," Robinson said.

Robinson said the corridor, which should be completed by November 2005, will cost \$13.3 million.

More than half of that figure, \$6.9 million, will come from state bonds, while the Georgia World Congress Center a Coca-Cola are donating more than \$4.2 million in right of way.

Atlanta will kick in \$1 million, and the Atlanta Downtown Improvement District will donate \$1.2 million to the projec

Allen died just days after another former mayor, Maynard Jackson, died June 23. The timing of the two deaths set frantic scramble by the city to come up with ways to memorialize both men. Mayor Shirley Franklin formed a comr to come up with suggestions.

Jackson, who served 12 years as mayor and was the city's first African-American mayor, received most of the attention in the debate over appropriate tributes.

The city ended up renaming Hartsfield International Airport to include Jackson's name along with that of former Mayor William B. Hartsfield, who served as mayor for six terms, longer than any other person in the city's history. The task of coming up with a memorial for Allen has been more deliberate. Beau Allen, another son of the late mayor, said he wasn't concerned with the pace of coming up with a plan.

"We are just thrilled with the way this has come about," Beau Allen said. "My father loved this city very much, and he would be honored today."

Photo: Former Mayor **Ivan Allen Jr.** had declined renaming Marietta Street for him in 2001.

Copyright 2004 The Atlanta Journal-Constitution