

# CEDARTOWN, GEORGIA

## 2013 STRATEGIC VISION AND PLAN



DECEMBER 2013

# CREDITS

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**CEDARTOWN, GEORGIA**  
2013 STRATEGIC VISION AND PLAN

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**HON chosen as first recipient of Polk's Industry of the Year award**

AGNES HAGIN, Editor/Assistant Editor  
 The HON Company, 807 West Avenue, Cedartown, has received the first ever Polk County Industry of the Year award.  
 The award was presented April 18 during the Polk County Chamber of Commerce Industry Appreciation Breakfast at Georgia Northwestern Technical College.  
 HON, a leader in office furniture production, was selected from five competing industries in the county. Other plants nominated for the honor were C. W. Matthews, Romtec, Pow, Meggitt and GIEO Specialty.  
 See HON page 2A



The HON Company was named as Polk County's Industry of the Year.

**Future of downtown discussed**

Several groups come together to share concerns, visions for Main Street, downtown Cedartown  
 By AIMEE H. MADDEN, Editor/Publisher  
 A recent meeting involving more than one dozen community stakeholders made it clear that when it comes to retaining merchants, bringing in tourists, and attracting responsible business owners, downtown Cedartown is lacking.  
 Gathered in the meeting room of City Hall, members of the Historic Preservation Association, Cedartown Association, Downtown Development Authority, and the Downtown Development Authority, sat down to discuss issues that will continue to challenge Main Street's business development and growth.  
 More than one gathered there expected to participate in one of the city's other visioning programs. City Manager Bill

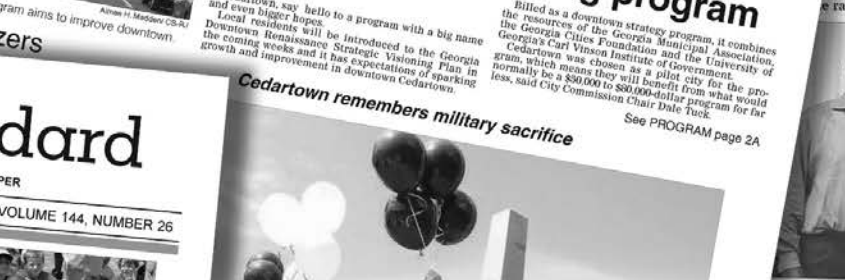


The sixth annual Parkinson's Walk took place Saturday, and 1,000 people took part in the event designed to raise awareness for Parkinson's disease. At the park, a community celebration was held for children. The event was organized by the Cedartown Association.

**The Cedartown Standard**  
 PROGRESSIVELY MEETING THE NEEDS OF A PROGRESSIVE AREA SINCE 1869 - YOUR HOME PAPER  
 WEDNESDAY, MAY 29, 2013  
 CEDARTOWN, GEORGIA  
 Region news  
 Racers roll through Rockmart as part of third annual skating event.  
 Page 3A  
 Sports news  
 Bulldogs' spring practice season ends with a bang.  
 Page 1B  
 VOLUME 144, NUMBER 22  
 8 Sections, 96 pages - 75¢

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**Cedartown selected as pilot city for strategic visioning program**  
 Organizers  
 Cedartown remembers military sacrifice



Organizers of the strategic visioning steering committee are: back row, left to right: Charles Ellis, Bill Floyd, Hal Floyd, owner of F.H.F. Hair Design; Laura Bates, director of member services for Polk Chamber of Commerce; Jordan Hubbard, owner of Studio Fitness 24/7; Edward Guzman, Cedartown administration. Front row: Rena Roper, Cedartown Junior Service League president; Tuck, community liaison and Ramona Ruark, Main Street Director.

**The Cedartown Standard**  
 PROGRESSIVELY MEETING THE NEEDS OF A PROGRESSIVE AREA SINCE 1869 - YOUR HOME PAPER  
 WEDNESDAY, JULY 3, 2013  
 CEDARTOWN, GEORGIA  
 Local News  
 Gretchen Kugler Corbin appointed by Governor Deal as commissioner for the Dept. of Community Affairs  
 Page 3A  
 Sports news  
 Nearly 50 children take the field as part of rec department's football clinic  
 Page 1B  
 VOLUME 144, NUMBER 26  
 8 Sections, 96 pages - 75¢

**City reps continue work on visioning plan**

City officials, local residents and business owners are continuing to work together with the goal of making improvements to downtown Cedartown.  
 Last month, the City of Cedartown was selected to participate in a special pilot program called the Georgia Downtown Renaissance Strategic Visioning Program. It combines the resources of the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA), the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government.  
 The 16-week program will focus on the downtown area, explained Dale Tuck, city commission chair.  
 "This is a program that will help us figure out where we want downtown Cedartown to go and then tell us how to get there. We will come out of it with a vision and a plan."  
 Through the program, faculty and students from the University of Georgia, will assist the city in developing a downtown strategy to serve as a roadmap for the city's downtown revitalization efforts.  
 A recently formed steering committee will be in charge of organizing various committees and meetings throughout the course of the program.  
 Last week, a survey was developed and will be used as a tool to gather information and feedback from both local residents and those visiting or who have visited downtown Cedartown.  
 See VISIONING page 2A

**Downtown Cedartown discussed**

From page 1A  
 "That's how you do it. An empty building is not money, for reasons I don't understand. Don't want to invest in their city, and that's a hard thing to get past."  
 'ABSENTEE' OWNERSHIP AN ISSUE  
 Main Street Director Ramona Ruark said that Cedartown has plenty of buildings that are available for rent, but many of those just aren't a viable option. "I have a list of all of the empty buildings available and, sadly, there are a lot on there that I wouldn't want to suggest because the building owner doesn't keep up the building."  
 F.H.F. Hair Design owner Hal Floyd, whose business is located in downtown Cedartown, brought several photos showing the amount of damage caused by leaks in several downtown businesses.  
 "When these buildings are shown, this is what potential buyers are seeing," Floyd said as the photos were passed around. "I hear all the time from people, 'Why can't we get down here, why I send people here from Atlanta and they don't want to establish businesses and restaurants, but when they get here, they see this.'" Floyd said, pointing to the photos. "The building owners are telling them that they have to fix these problems themselves. When they hear that, and see the shape these buildings are in, they leave."  
 Mandy agreed. "Part of the problem is absentee ownership. People that own buildings but aren't living in them are just not taking care of them other than just let them sit there."

ATTRACTING TOURISTS, YOUNGER CROWDS  
 "To say that downtowns are only for older people is completely wrong. If we're not trying to bring (young people) in, then we're in trouble."  
 — Jordan Hubbard, downtown business owner  
 Fann said that he was pleased with the results of the meeting and plans to schedule another one in the near future.  
 "This meeting was all about getting together to find solutions. We can't keep walking around the problems because they will continue to exist," Fann said. "We're headed in the right direction and we're establishing more of a cooperative attitude that will help the success of our downtowns."  
 A GOOD START  
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**City picked for pilot program**

From page 1A  
 "Since this is a pilot program, and a very beneficial one at that, there is very little city money that's going into it," Tuck said.  
 According to Cedartown City Manager Bill Fann, the actual cost to the city will be \$12,000, an amount that city commissioners will feel is a bargain.  
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 Through the program, faculty and students from the University of Georgia, will assist the city in developing a downtown strategy to serve as a roadmap for the city's downtown revitalization efforts.  
 A large portion of the process involves resident and non-resident surveys and input, Tuck said.  
 "Surveys will be distributed to local folks and also to people outside the county," Tuck said. "The surveys will include questions regarding the type of establishments and attractions that people would like to see downtown and would provide an outlet for visitors to express what they like or dislike about the downtown area."  
 The more information we get from the public, the better," Tuck said.  
 In the coming week, Tuck said a steering committee would be formed and from that, additional committees would materialize.  
 At the end of the program, Tuck said a presentation would be provided to the public and would include survey results and feedback from the program.

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**Prayer Furniture**  
 8 Sections, 96 pages - 75¢

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**CRISTOPH**  
 I am so proud  
 You have accomplished  
 enjoy the ride

**Prote**  
 I am so proud  
 You have accomplished  
 enjoy the ride

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# DOWNTOWN IN THE NEWS

*"WE CAN ALL GET ON THE SAME PAGE AND WORK TOWARDS ATTAINING OUR GOAL OF PROMOTING AND DEVELOPING THE DOWNTOWN AREA,"* --BILL FANN, CITY MANAGER

*"THE MORE INFORMATION WE GET FROM THE PUBLIC, THE BETTER."* --DALE TUCK, CITY COMMISSION CHAIR

*"WE'RE HEADED IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION, AND WE'RE ESTABLISHING MORE OF A COOPERATIVE ATTITUDE THAT WILL HELP THE SUCCESS OF OUR DOWNTOWN."* --BILL FANN, CITY MANAGER

*"WE'RE WANTING TO GET INPUT FROM A GROUP OF VERY DIVERSE PEOPLE. WE'RE EVEN PLANNING ON INVOLVING LOCAL TEENAGERS AND GETTING THEIR INPUT,"* --DALE TUCK, CITY COMMISSION CHAIR

*"THIS IS A PROGRAM THAT WILL HELP US FIGURE OUT WHERE WE WANT DOWNTOWN CEDARTOWN TO GO AND TELL US HOW TO GET THERE. WE WILL COME OUT OF IT WITH A VISION AND A PLAN."* --DALE TUCK, CITY COMMISSION CHAIR

# INTRODUCTION

## ABOUT CEDARTOWN, GEORGIA

Cedartown was incorporated in 1854 and sits northwest of Atlanta, 20 miles south of Rome and 50 miles west of Kennesaw, near the Alabama border. Cedartown is known for its beautiful, charming setting in the Georgia foothills and its rich cultural, architectural, and historic resources. Though modernization and the shift away from rural and mill lifestyles have affected many small towns negatively, Cedartown has managed to retain its small-town, cozy feel while striving to remain a place where people want to live, work, and play in the 21st century.

## RECENT PROGRESS

In July of 2013, a team from the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government, the Georgia Municipal Association, the Georgia Cities Foundation, and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs went to Cedartown to conduct a series of focus groups, one-on-one interviews, and an electronic town hall meeting. The team's objective was to facilitate open community-wide conversation about the future of downtown Cedartown. Since those meetings, the leadership, residents, and entrepreneurs of Cedartown have been actively working to make their downtown more like the place the community collectively imagines it can be. In recent months, one restaurant and one café have opened their doors and are feeding the people of Cedartown. In addition, the Historic West Theater has been remodeled, returning the historic gem to its original color and charm. All of this progress has been possible because the people of Cedartown heard and realized a collective vision, but this is just the beginning.

## RENAISSANCE STRATEGIC VISIONING AND PLANNING

In Cedartown, the Georgia Municipal Association, the Georgia Cities Foundation, and the Carl Vinson Institute of Government came together to assist the city in creating a strategic vision, plan, and short-term work program. Cedartown's strategic vision and plan was created via a three-stage process: 1) public input and engagement, 2) visioning and design, and 3) an implementable work program.





# THE GEORGIA DOWNTOWN RENAISSANCE PARTNERS IN CEDARTOWN

## CARL VINSON INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENT

For more than 85 years, the Institute of Government has worked with public officials throughout Georgia and around the world to improve governance and people's lives. From Georgia's early days as a largely agrarian state with a modest population to its modern-day status as a national and international force in business, industry, and politics with a population of almost 10 million, the Institute of Government has helped government leaders navigate change and forge strong directions for a better Georgia.



## GEORGIA MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION

Created in 1933, the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) is the only state organization that represents municipal governments in Georgia. Based in Atlanta, GMA is a voluntary, nonprofit organization that provides legislative advocacy, educational, employee benefit, and technical consulting services to its members. GMA's purpose is to anticipate and influence the forces shaping Georgia's communities and to provide leadership, tools, and services that assist local governments in becoming more innovative, effective, and responsive.



## GEORGIA CITIES FOUNDATION

The Georgia Cities Foundation, founded in 1999, is a nonprofit subsidiary of the Georgia Municipal Association. The Foundation's mission is to assist cities in their efforts to revitalize and enhance downtown areas by serving as a partner and facilitator in funding capital projects through the revolving loan fund. Its services include the Revolving Loan Fund Program, the Heart & Soul Bus Tour, the Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Tour, DDA Basic Training, and the Renaissance Award.



## GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) was created in 1977 to serve as an advocate for local governments. On July 1, 1996, the Governor and General Assembly merged the Georgia Housing and Finance Authority (GHFA) with the Department of Community Affairs. Today, DCA operates a host of state and federal grant programs; serves as the state's lead agency in housing finance and development; promulgates building codes to be adopted by local governments; provides comprehensive planning, technical, and research assistance to local governments; and serves as the lead agency for the state's solid waste reduction efforts.



# THE RENAISSANCE STRATEGIC VISIONING AND PLANNING PROCESS

Strategic visioning is a collaborative planning and decision-making process that relies on broad stakeholder participation and a focus on asset-based development to create a shared community vision, plan, and implementation work plan.

Strategic visioning helps communities better understand their assets, more clearly identify priorities, and then use both as a basis for planning. Throughout the development of the plan, the community identifies issues that are affecting the community, articulates big-picture goals, and develops short-term and long-term strategies to address the issues.

There are **three key steps** in the strategic visioning and planning process:

1. Where are we now? It is essential to understand the current conditions of downtown Cedartown. The first step involves demographic research, plan reviews, and public engagement. Focus groups, one-on-one interviews, a town hall meeting, community-wide surveys, and a visual preference assessment reveal the community's story as well as issues and opportunities.
2. Where are we going? In phase two of the process, the community looks to the future to shape a new vision. This vision is interpreted through illustrations and design recommendations so that all can see the physical translation of the collective vision.
3. How do we get there? The final step in the strategic visioning process is to create an implementation plan that moves the community toward its vision for the future. Community input and effort form the foundation for the implementation plan, which is critical for a successful outcome.

1

## PHASE 1: WHERE WE ARE JULY & AUGUST

### SURVEY DEVELOPMENT AND DISTRIBUTION, WHICH INITIATES THE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

- Develop an electronic and hard copy survey
- Cedartown develops a Spanish version
- Launch survey (live for 10 weeks)
- Survey analysis

### DATA COLLECTION AND REVIEW

The Institute of Government team conducted a plan review and demographic analysis.

### INITIAL DOWNTOWN STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

The Institute of Government team held a kickoff session with the Downtown Steering Committee to

- Review the scope of work
- Define the project area
- Review preliminary community survey results
- Explain the Visual Preference Assessment and charge the Steering Committee with its implementation

### CONDUCT FOCUS GROUPS AND ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS

The Georgia Downtown Renaissance Partnership team led by the Carl Vinson Institute of Government conducted 14 focus groups and 10 one-on-one interviews.

### ELECTRONIC TOWN HALL MEETING

The Carl Vinson Institute of Government utilized a wireless network system to conduct a town hall meeting at Cedartown High School.

### DOWNTOWN TOUR AND VISION PROJECT SELECTION

The Institute of Government team toured the downtown and identified possible sites for remediation based on information gathered through the community survey, meetings, focus groups, and key interviews





**1 WHERE WE ARE**

Plan Review  
Demographic Scan  
Visual Preference Assessment  
1-on-1 Interviews  
Focus Groups  
Town Hall Meeting  
Survey

*the*  
**R.S.V.P.**  
*process*

**2 WHERE WE ARE GOING**

Design  
Renderings  
Visualization

**3 HOW WE GET THERE**

Work Program  
Design Solutions  
Short-term (6-18 months)  
Long-term (3-10 years)



**PHASE 2:  
WHERE WE ARE GOING  
SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER**

**VISION AND DESIGN DEVELOPMENT**

The Institute of Government's downtown and planning team spent eight weeks focused on integrating the community input into illustrative designs.

**2**



**PHASE 3:  
HOW WE GET THERE  
NOVEMBER & DECEMBER**

**WORK PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT**

The Institute of Government's downtown and planning team integrated the community input into a proposed short-term work program.

**DOWNTOWN ISSUE GROUP WORK PROGRAM AND ACTION ITEM DEVELOPMENT**

The Downtown Steering Committee established four subgroups, recruited volunteers, and developed short-term Action Items to address the work program.

**FINAL REPORT DEVELOPMENT**

The Institute of Government team finalized the plans and recommendations and laid out the document for printing.

**FINAL REPORT PRESENTATION**

The Institute of Government team, along with the Steering Committee, hosted a presentation of the final report so that the downtown volunteers and community members could see what was developed based on their input.



# PUBLIC INPUT

Cedartown's public engagement process is an exemplary effort.

- Approximately 1,250 electronic and hard copy surveys were completed.
- Cedartown took the initiative to translate and distribute surveys in Spanish in addition to English.
- Fourteen focus groups were held with strong participation: steering committee members; Polk County commissioners, administrators, and employees; community leaders; City commissioners, administrators, and employees; Chamber of Commerce employees and members; members of the Polk County Development Authority; downtown property and business owners; realtors; bankers; Downtown Cedartown Association members; Historic Preservation Commission members; Downtown Development Authority members; planning commission members; Arts Commission members; youth; and people otherwise civically engaged.
- One-on-one in-depth interviews were held with other key members of the community.
- The Town Hall Meeting used a wireless network system that made the meeting truly open, transparent, and participatory, with all voices being heard.

## Question 1: What is your general opinion of downtown Cedartown?

Cedartown's residents reported an honest and insightful set of opinions about their downtown. The recent streetscape improvements are a point of pride in the community, and the historic

downtown buildings are considered a unique asset. However, residents still reported a few concerns with the appearance of their downtown, primarily building vacancies and low standards of façade maintenance. Many reported that downtown Cedartown feels charming, peaceful, and cozy, but others feel that downtown is boring and empty. However, most respondents seemed to agree that there is growing potential for improvement in downtown, considering the recent aesthetic improvements and beautiful historic building stock. There was significant disagreement among those surveyed regarding parking in downtown: many believe that downtown does not have sufficient parking, but others think that the existing parking and traffic it breeds only cause downtown to be less pedestrian-friendly. Yet, one overarching issue that most reported was the lack of energy and activities in downtown after 5:00 pm. While downtown Cedartown holds many essential goods and services during the day, residents feel underserved in the evening and at night.

## Question 2: Why do you go to downtown Cedartown?

Downtown Cedartown is home to many festivals, community events, and seasonal events, as well as being an accessible and convenient stop for day-to-day services and goods. Many respondents, however, said they felt there was no reason to go downtown or that they only passed through downtown without lingering or visiting amenities. However, downtown Cedartown is already offering several cultural and social services to the community—there are only issues with awareness and organization of these events.



*“DOWNTOWN SHOULD BE THE FRONT PORCH OF THIS COMMUNITY.”*

--VICKI MAYES

**Question 3:** What is working well in downtown Cedartown?

Downtown Cedartown is distinguished by its interesting and valuable history, unique community events, and tight-knit and civically involved population. And while downtown is already full of many of the assets a community needs to thrive, the community and civic leadership are constantly working to facilitate beneficial investment in downtown Cedartown with programs like enterprise zones, opportunity zones, façade grant programs, and discounted liquor licenses. The new streetscape and sidewalks allow for easier and more pleasant pedestrian access to the downtown, increasing the viability of downtown as a residential and commercial hub of the city.

**Question 4:** What needs improvement in downtown Cedartown?

Downtown Cedartown needs improvement in a few essential areas: logistics (including hours of operation, signage, and marketing), lack of key draws, and general aesthetic issues. Logistically, the community feels that downtown is being negatively impacted by absentee property owners, property owners who are not willing to keep up and maintain their spaces, inconvenient hours of operation (with little activity after 5:00 pm), and high rent. Cedartown residents also mentioned the ease and presence of big box stores, which keep people from patronizing downtown businesses. Signage is also an issue. Respondents noted a lack of gateway signage, signage on the bypass, and signage designating historic downtown areas. Similarly, residents also said that Cedartown has no singular marketable identity.

While downtown Cedartown functions well from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, the community feels that it would be more dynamic with a few additions: nightlife, a place to have a beer and watch a game, a place for chance encounters such as a coffee shop, a fine-dining location, activities for children and youth, and a place for Silver Comet cyclists to stay. These would extend access to and interest in downtown to a wider population and help people get excited about going downtown.

Aesthetically, downtown Cedartown is strong, but a few issues did come up: people generally dislike the presence of big trucks passing through downtown, eye-sore properties that are not being kept up to code, trash, and vacant storefronts and second stories in buildings.

**Question 5:** What does a vibrant downtown Cedartown look like?

The Cedartown community acknowledges all of the positive attributes of their downtown but concedes that more can be done. The top ten signs of vibrancy mentioned were:

1. people walking,
2. filled storefronts,
3. family-oriented activities,
4. affordable but quality shopping,
5. a community that supports locally owned businesses,
6. a shoe store,
7. a marketing campaign,
8. a greater choice in restaurants,
9. a bed and breakfast or hostel in or near downtown, and
10. a downtown connected to and working with the Silver Comet Trail.

**Question 6:** 6. What other possibilities can you imagine for downtown Cedartown?

The community decided that the most important possibilities for downtown Cedartown are (1) more people downtown, (2) more events and activities downtown, (3) more choice in food and beverage downtown, and (4) new businesses recruited for downtown.

## DOWNTOWN'S TOP ISSUES:

HOURS **AFTER 5PM**

EXTEND THE **STREETScape**

PEOPLE, EVENTS, AND ACTIVITIES

LACK OF **YOUTH** INVOLVEMENT

**FOOD AND BEVERAGE**

BYPASS **SIGNAGE**

CODE **ENFORCEMENT**

KEEPING THE COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
**DOWNTOWN**

# CEDARTOWN WORK PROGRAM





# CEDARTOWN WORK PROGRAM

The Carl Vinson Institute of Government has created an organized and systematic approach to downtown redevelopment and revitalization modeled after the Main Street Four-Point Approach®. The process focuses on creating a downtown vision based on broad community engagement and input that leads to the development of an implementation plan with a step-by-step guide for success. The plan focuses on four program components: Coordination, Promotion, Design, and Economic Development. To be successful, communities must look to address issues and opportunities in each of the components, working with broad public support for the betterment of the community.

Across each of the four program components, there is one critical element: public input and engagement. Those who live in a place know more than anyone what is needed and what is wanted; the buy-in and support of the community are essential so that we can address issues and seize opportunities. A community must, first and foremost, meet the needs of its residents—after that, opportunities to increase tourism and other economic opportunities will follow. Cedartown has created a work program built upon the input of its residents that addresses the following components:

## 1. ORGANIZATION

Organization refers to working to establish accord and co-action among the various and diverse groups that have a stake in the downtown district. By getting everyone in the downtown district to work together toward a unified goal, the coordination of the Main Street Program can provide direct and consistent management for downtown.

## 2. PROMOTION

The goal of promotion is two-fold: creating a positive image of downtown that will both ignite community pride and improve consumer and investor confidence in a downtown. This includes advertising, retail promotion, special events, and event marketing.

## 3. DESIGN

Design simply means re-creating downtown to be a safe, beautiful, and welcoming space for all who visit, work, and live there; this includes giving attention to public and private buildings, storefronts, signage, public spaces, parking areas, street furniture, public art, landscaping, merchandizing, window displays, and promotional materials.

## 4. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

(The Four- Point approach uses the term “economic restructuring.”) Economic development means building on and strengthening a community’s existing economic assets while diversifying the economic base; this can be done by using techniques to retain and expand successful businesses to provide a balanced commercial mix, sharpening the competitiveness and merchandizing skills of business owners, and by attracting new businesses the local market can support.

# ORGANIZATION

- 1. CREATE A YOUTH MAIN STREET ADVISORY BOARD:** Downtown Cedartown has an active Main Street Program with strong local government and community support, and there is an opportunity to groom future leaders with an interest in downtown. Creating a youth advisory board would benefit both the participants and the downtown: youth can be actively involved, lending new and creative ideas while helping downtown Cedartown understand how to better serve this sector of the population. This will make the younger population active downtown stakeholders, allowing them to feel invested in the success of their downtown.
- 2. FRIDAY NIGHT CRUISING:** The need for more activities was consistently mentioned. “Cruising” is already a successful event that can be expanded on. A “Friday Evening Cruise” on Main Street would cater to all ages, bring people into downtown, and relocate the youth away from the Kroger parking lot (the current hangout spot).
- 3. COORDINATE EXTENDED-HOUR EVENTS:** An overwhelming percentage of people surveyed commented on the limited store hours in downtown Cedartown, saying downtown “feels closed” after 5:00 pm. Instituting extended hours of operation for downtown businesses would populate downtown after 5:00 pm, helping transform the function of downtown from primarily governmental and business services to commercial and entertainment services. If downtown Cedartown decides to practice extended hours, then merchants can coordinate and advertise extended schedules, creating a more event-like feeling in the downtown.
- 4. CREATE FIRST FRIDAY EVENTS:** First Fridays are a way to reintroduce residents to their downtown with family-friendly activities: shops hold extended hours; food vendors are present; and live music and other festival-like activities are provided. These events would help community members associate downtown Cedartown with energy and fun, getting people excited about their downtown again.
- 5. SHOP DOWNTOWN CAMPAIGN:** Starting a “shop local” or “shop downtown” campaign, in partnership with high school students, is a way to remind community members to consider spending money locally rather than at national chains. By working with high school students, you are developing a local customer base of students and their family members. By shopping locally, money stays in the community and encourages a positive economic environment for people interested in starting small businesses.
- 6. YEAR-LONG CALENDAR ON THE CITY WEBSITE:** Public awareness of events and festivals is essential to the success of any downtown. Often community members feel that nothing occurs in their downtown even though there are various community events, festivals, and parades. Posting a full-year calendar of events on the city’s website would make people more aware of downtown happenings.
- 7. BIKE RENTALS OR PEDICABS FROM THE WELCOME CENTER:** The Silver Comet Trail is a significant asset to Polk County and Cedartown, and one of the Silver Comet’s trail heads is located in downtown. Creating a strong connection

between the Cedartown Welcome Center and the Silver Comet Trail will give Cedartown citizens easy access to this resource and, with the bike lane infrastructure in place, will also encourage those passing through Cedartown on the Silver Comet to venture into town for a meal, for a rest, or to enjoy the city’s cultural, environmental, and historic resources.

8. **GALLERY WALK USING VACANT SPACE:** There are multiple vacant storefronts in downtown. Ideally these will be filled by new or expanding businesses, but until then, the vacant windows communicate a negative image that erodes enthusiasm for downtown. Instead of remaining vacant, these storefronts can temporarily display visuals that are of interest to the local Cedartown community. For example, exhibits that feature children’s art or seasonal competitions by local civic clubs for Halloween, Christmas, or community events would draw people downtown.

9. **FARMERS’ MARKETS IN EMPTY PARKING LOTS:** Underutilized parking lots make a great space for pop-up farmers’ markets. Farmers’ markets encourage people to buy locally/regionally grown fruits, vegetables, and homemade goods; allow farmers to connect with communities; and help build a community spirit and identity. Farmers’ markets can also be SNAP, WIC, and EBT-approved so that members of the community with limited fresh food options have a way to purchase affordable and healthy foods.

10. **DINNER AND A MOVIE:** The focus groups and survey responses made it clear that people would like to have an evening of activities in downtown, but they do not feel that is currently an option. The West Theater is an incredible asset for Cedartown that is currently underutilized. Setting up “dinner and a movie” nights in downtown would give restaurants and the theater a needed boost, bring people into downtown after dark, and add some much-needed nightlife.



*Dinner and a Movie Ticket:* The ticket concept shown above is an example of what could be done downtown. The West Cinema could partner with downtown restaurants to boost sales. The restaurant could offer a discounted or limited dinner menu along with the movie pass for a special rate.





After

## THE LITTLE BIKE SHOP

### BIKE RENTALS AND BUILDING REUSE

This building is located on Main Street and currently houses the Rolling Hills Resource Conservation and Development offices. Rolling Hills has plans to move to a larger space, which will open this space up for a new business on Main Street. The digital rendering (left) shows what the building would look like if used as a bicycle shop. Its size and proximity to the Silver Comet Trail makes it an ideal location.



Before



# VACANT SPACE

## USING VACANT STOREFRONTS

The photograph (right) shows a vacant storefront on Main Street. The digital rendering below shows how it would look with Cedartown High School's football booster club posters, school logo, photographs of the stadium, apparel for purchase, and the football season schedule posted on the window. This is one of many possible solutions for filling empty storefronts temporarily until a new tenant is found, while promoting local team spirit and fundraising.



Before



After





*After:* Ideal Bakery tends to have nontraditional business hours, so this rendering shows new chalkboard signage indicating the current business hours, which could easily be changed as needed.



# EMPTY PARKING LOT

## IDEAL BAKERY AND LOT IMPROVEMENTS

Ideal Bakery and the adjacent lot are located at 509 South Main Street. Currently, the large paved lot has no landscaping, and Ideal Bakery's large metal wall is a "blank canvas" that could be used for creative signage (see photograph, right). The digital rendering below shows what Ideal Bakery and the lot could look like with some improvements. The lot, which is landscaped with plants and shade trees, is now a place where visitors can enjoy picnic tables or swinging chairs, transforming the empty lot into a public gathering space. Thus, the Main Street linear park concept is continued. The concrete retaining wall is covered in a brick veneer, and steps are inserted in the middle of the concrete retaining wall to allow easy access from the sidewalk. The Ideal Bakery building is painted with vintage-inspired signage (see rendering for more detail).



Before



After



Before



## EMPTY PARKING LOT

CLASSIC CAR SHOW & FARMERS' MARKET

Ideal Bakery's large paved lot is an opportunity to hold events such as a classic car show (shown in the digital rendering above, right) or a weekend farmers' market (shown in the digital rendering below, right). The space can serve a variety of functions other than just parking.





After



After



# DESIGN

## 1. STREET TREE OR PLANTING PROGRAM WITH STUDENTS FROM CEDARTOWN HIGH SCHOOL:

Many survey comments mentioned the lack of opportunities for youth to be civically engaged in their community. Involving local high school students in street tree planting is both educational and cost effective, and by starting a tree-planting program, students would feel involved and have pride in the beautification of their downtown.

2. **LINK ASSETS/CONNECTIONS:** Cedartown is rich in cultural, historic, and environmental resources. However, community members continue to feel as though something is missing in their town. By linking Cedartown's resources through community awareness, programming, and infrastructure, the community's unique assets would be able to work together.

3. **TRAIL OF TEARS SIGNAGE:** The Trail of Tears is an incredibly important landmark for Cedartown, the State of Georgia, and the Cherokee Nation. Cedartown should embrace this history and represent it well through directional and educational signage.

## 4. RENOVATE THE SOUTH COLLEGE STREET DOWNTOWN STRIP CENTER FAÇADE AND PARKING LOT:

Very few downtowns have access to a grocery store within walking distance of downtown housing. Cedartown has this great asset, and with improvements to the grocery store's façade and parking lot, the aesthetics of the area could be more in keeping with the character of the historic downtown.

## 5. MAKE THE HISTORIC BRIDGE A TOURIST SITE:

Cedartown has a historic bridge located downtown, but the bridge needs design attention to transform it into a noteworthy historic landmark and draw.

6. **GATEWAY SIGNAGE:** The purpose of gateway signage is to announce the presence of and entry into a city. Because of the bypass around downtown on Highway 27, one can pass by Cedartown and not even know it exists. By defining the main entrances into Cedartown with distinctive signage and a planting pattern, passersby would be more likely to recognize and access the town.

7. **BIG SPRINGS PARK RENOVATIONS:** Big Springs Park is a unique and valuable asset to Cedartown. The park is historically relevant and continues to hold importance to the community. However, the park is in need of renovation. Attention should be focused here to reinvigorate this point of pride.

8. **EXTEND STREETScape:** The new streetscape in downtown Cedartown was one of the greatest points of pride mentioned in focus groups and survey responses. However, the streetscape should be extended beyond Main Street so that the entire downtown feels uniform, maintained, and attractive. The next streetscape projects should be East Avenue from South College Street to City Hall, South College from East Avenue to the railroad tracks, and South Main, extending two blocks north and south.

9. **REAR BUILDING POTENTIAL:** Cedartown possesses parking behind many Main Street buildings, which is a valuable asset. More attention needs to be paid to the aesthetics of these parking areas.
10. **CEDAR TREE PUBLIC ART:** A suggestion from the surveys was for Cedartown to use a cedar tree art expo to build community pride and recognition (as Athens did with the bulldog statues and Gainesville did with chickens). This would also be an opportunity for local artists to display their talents broadly.







## RENOVATE THE SOUTH COLLEGE STREET DOWNTOWN STRIP

### CENTER FAÇADE AND PARKING LOT:

The current shopping center on College Street is shown in the photographs on the following page. The shopping center currently houses Dollar General, Casey's Food Store, and Rent-a-Center, whose façades look outdated and do not reflect the historic character of other downtown buildings. The parking lot lacks shade trees and greenery, and six curb cuts make exit and entry confusing and hazardous.

The rendered front elevation above shows how the shopping center's façade could be improved while retaining the present structure. With the use of a brick veneer and some new construction, the new façade fits downtown Cedartown's character. Signage has been updated, including replacing the Dollar General logo with the company's new design. Landscaping improvements are shown on pages 26-27.





After, rendered elevation



Before



Before



# COLLEGE STREET

## STRIP CENTER PARKING LOT REDESIGN

In addition to the shopping center's façade, the streetscape and parking lot also require attention. The photographs on the right show the current parking lot and College Street. The lot has no shade trees or green space, and the high number of curb cuts is unsightly and hazardous to drivers and pedestrians.

The digital rendering below shows the new streetscape and parking lot design. Curb cuts are replaced with a continuous grass buffer, and shade trees are planted. Grass "islands" are placed throughout the parking lot for shade and lot distinction.



Before



Before





# COLLEGE STREET

## STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

The photograph above right shows College Street before improvements. The digital rendering below shows College Street with fewer curb cuts, more grass buffers, and the addition of shade trees.



Before





# MAKE THE HISTORIC BRIDGE A TOURIST SITE:

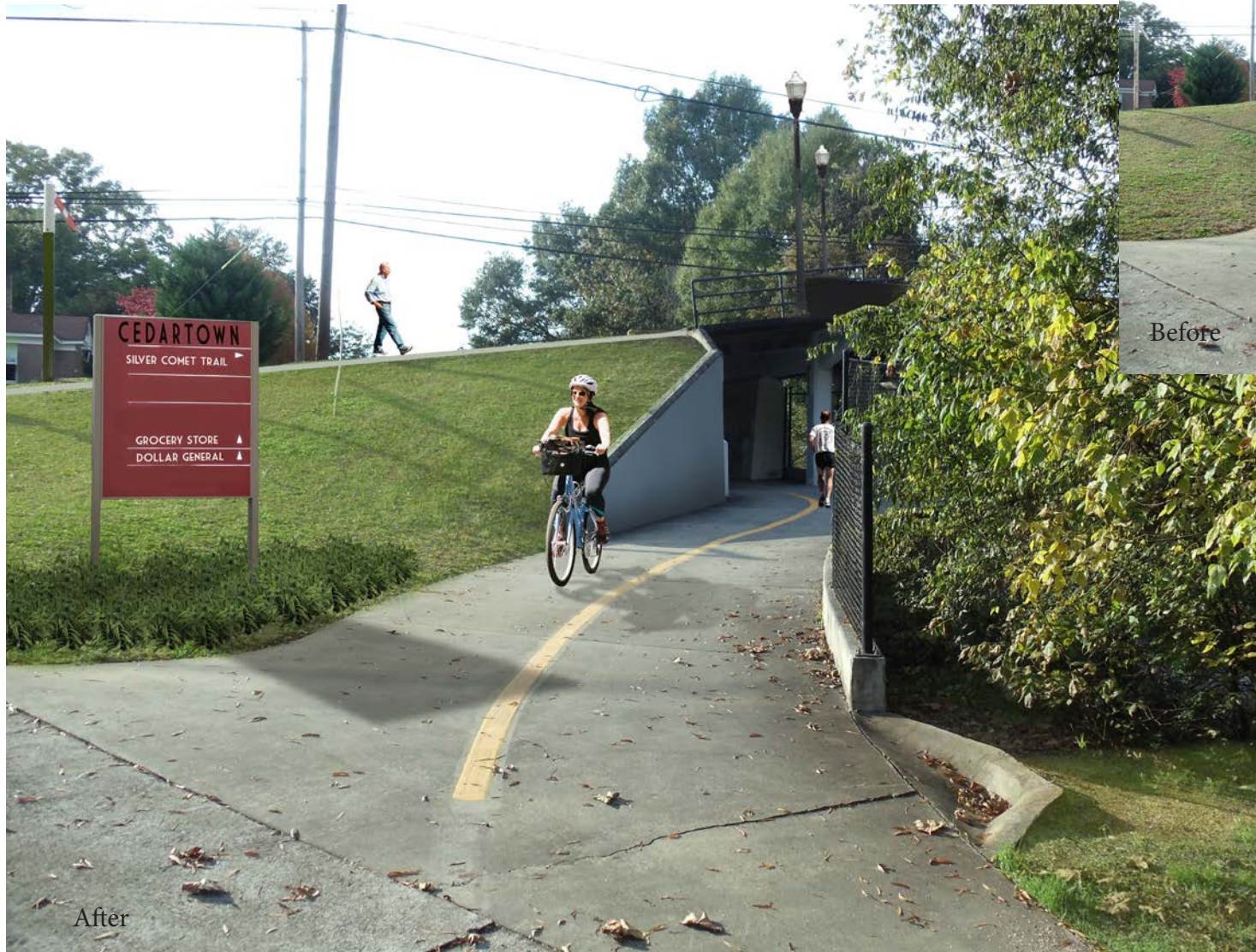
## HISTORIC BRIDGE



With a few design improvements, the cobblestone bridge located on College Street could become a historic site. The bridge needs the following upgrades: 1) Before: the sidewalk is in disrepair. 2) After: the sidewalk has been repaired. 3) Before: currently, there is no sidewalk access to the bridge. 4) After: a new sidewalk has been added to give pedestrian's access to the bridge without stepping out into street traffic. 5) Before: currently, the bridge curbing is painted an unsightly yellow, and no street lighting exists; 6) After: the bridge curbing is painted black, and (7) street lamps that match those in downtown are placed along the bridge; cobblestone is extended to the edge of the bridge. 8) Before: currently, the truck clearance signage is rusting and faded; 9) After: new truck clearance signage is added (shown in image number 10); the asphalt is removed, extending the cobblestone to the edge of the bridge; new street lamps have been added; curbs are painted black; and a crosswalk has been added.







Before

*Before:* The photograph above shows a section of the Silver Comet Trail that runs underneath the cobblestone bridge on College Street.

*After:* The digital rendering (left) shows what this section of the Silver Comet Trail could look like with new directional signage, minimal landscaping, and a pedestrian sidewalk addition providing access to the bridge. New directional signage would inform trail users about the businesses and amenities available nearby.



# GATEWAY SIGNAGE

## NORTH MAIN AND PHILPOT STREET

Gateways are important areas within downtown that welcome visitors and help to define a downtown's unique characteristics. The photograph to the right shows a proposed main gateway to downtown located at North Main and Philpot Street. Currently, no signs or streetscape elements signal that one is approaching downtown Cedartown. Also, sidewalks and crosswalks are confusing and need to be redesigned for pedestrian safety and walkability.

*After:* The digital rendering below shows what this intersection would look like as a gateway to downtown. Improvements include continuing the current downtown streetscape to this intersection (street trees along the sidewalk and grass buffers), a new gateway sign indicating one's arrival in downtown, and a reconfigured crosswalk and sidewalk.



Before



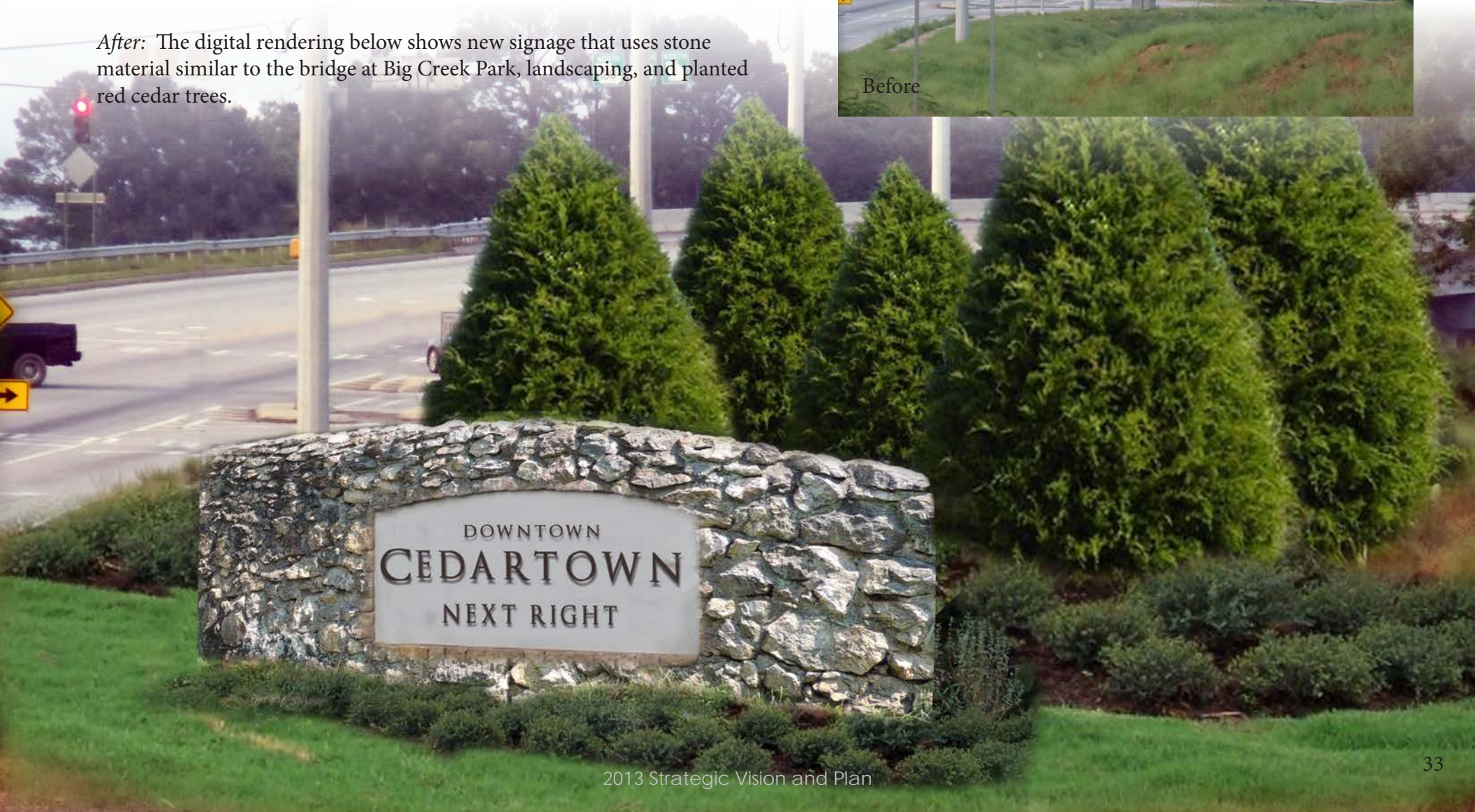


# GATEWAY SIGNAGE

## CEDARTOWN BYPASS IMPROVEMENTS

The photograph (right) shows an area located right off of the Cedartown Bypass. Currently, there is no landscaping, and directional signage is minimal.

*After:* The digital rendering below shows new signage that uses stone material similar to the bridge at Big Creek Park, landscaping, and planted red cedar trees.





# GATEWAY SIGNAGE

## SIMPLE AND CREATIVE

The purpose of gateway signage is to announce the presence of and entry into a city. Because of the bypass around downtown on Highway 27, one can pass by Cedartown and not even know it exists. By defining the main entrances into Cedartown with distinctive signage and a planting pattern, passersby would be more likely to recognize and access the town.

The signs (shown right) are in the process of being approved by the Georgia Department of Transportation for the City of Cedartown. They will help to direct visitors to the Silver Comet Trail, Welcome Center, and downtown.



Silver Comet Trail And  
Welcome Center

A green rectangular sign with rounded corners and a white arrow pointing to the left. The text is centered in white.



Historic Downtown  
Cedartown

A brown rectangular sign with rounded corners and a white arrow pointing to the left. The text is centered in white.

# BIG SPRINGS PARK RENOVATIONS

## PLAN

The newly designed Big Springs Park incorporates a wide range of improvements. A variety of native plantings concentrated on the perimeter of the site assure low-maintenance and offer year-round seasonal interest. Large boulders provide naturalistic seating, shade trees ensure future canopy coverage, and new gateways allow for additional entry points for visitors from all directions. Finally, the stream bank, in much need of repair, is renovated to prevent further erosion in a style that mimics the surrounding aesthetic.





# BIG SPRINGS PARK PLANTING PLAN, IN PLAN VIEW





# BIG SPRINGS PARK RENOVATIONS

## NORTH SLOPE

*Before:* While vegetation can be found on the north slope of the park, the plantings are sporadic, and many are diseased or dying nonnative specimens covered in invasive vines. This presents an unkempt, uncared-for image that results in future neglect or even possible vandalism.

*After:* The illustration represents what the perimeter of the park could look like with the implementation of low-maintenance shrubs, perennials, and groundcovers. Large, local boulders are incorporated for seating and interest, and a large hedge is used in conjunction with the fence around the water treatment facility to keep people from entering while not detracting from the park views.





## VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE



BEFORE

*After:* The hot, uninteresting slope at the south end of the park is transformed into an urban retreat with perimeter plantings, naturalistic boulders, and shade tree plantings. As the sunnier side of the park, the south slope accommodates a greater range of both plantings and user needs. This perspective also highlights the new entrance to the park through underutilized Spring Drive.





# BIG SPRINGS PARK RENOVATIONS

## GATE ENTRANCE

Currently used as a parking area, the main entrance to Big Springs is converted into a pedestrian gateway. Twin pylons are clad with native stone in keeping with the surrounding area's style, and the path is lined with plantings that provide a welcoming atmosphere to visitors. A splash pad with an old-fashioned crank pump is incorporated adjacent to the stream and creates excitement for park users as well as relief from the hot weather.

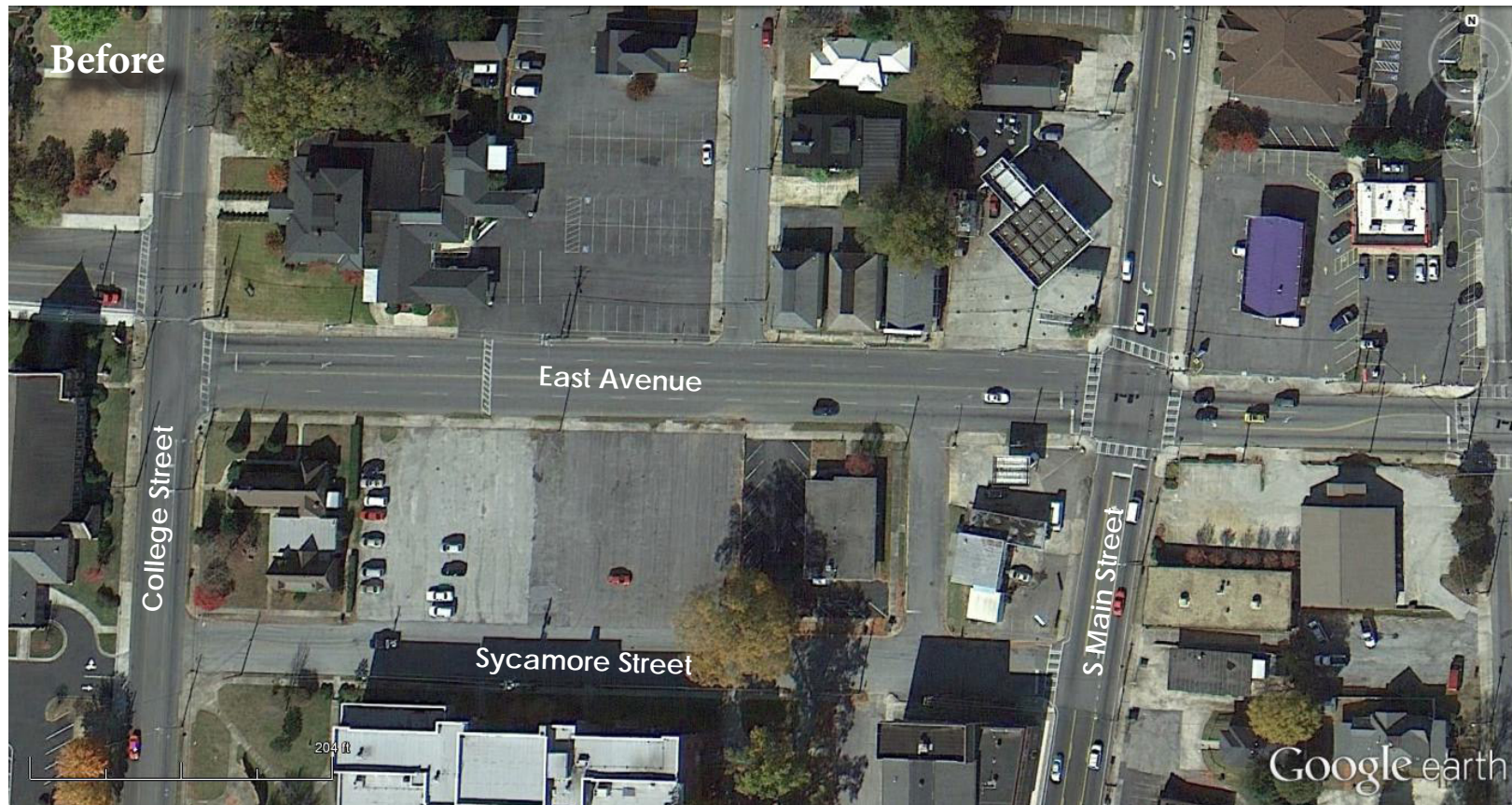




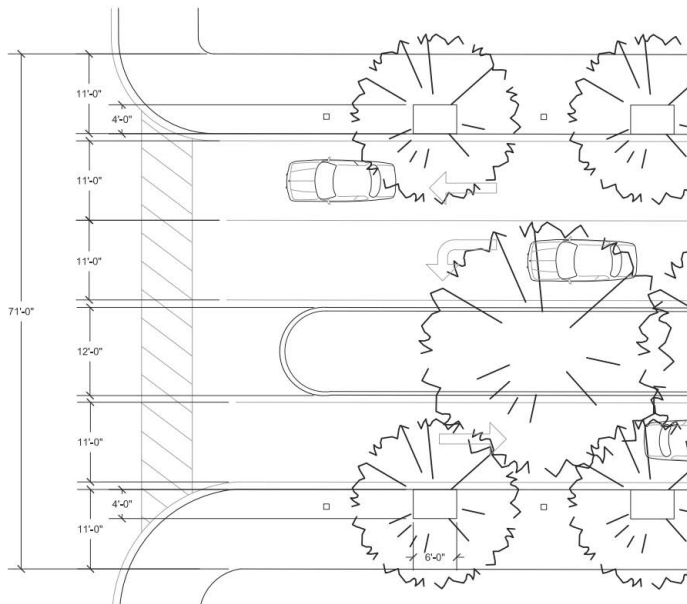
# EXTEND STREETSCAPE

## EAST AVENUE, PLAN VIEW

The East Avenue plan illustrates how Cedartown’s major thoroughfare could be reconfigured to include planted medians and street trees. Currently the area is desolate—containing large stretches of parking lots and asphalt. By incorporating street trees, the city creates much-needed shade during summer months, a reduced heat island effect, and seasonal interest throughout the year. The large parking area to the rear of the courthouse is broken up with a small public park that offers visitors and employees respite from city stresses. Finally, the median allows for the continual movement of traffic while also adding a vehicular gateway to Cedartown for visitors.



# EAST AVENUE AFTER, PLAN VIEW



EAST AVENUE AFTER,  
STREET DIMENSIONS





## EXTEND STREETSCAPE

### EAST AVENUE, BEFORE

East Avenue currently does not have the same streetscape elements as those found on Main Street. This area needs additional landscaping and a road reconfiguration.





## EXTEND STREETSCAPE

EAST AVENUE, AFTER

The perspective illustrates how the median and streetscape plantings can provide both a visible gateway for Cedartown visitors as well as shade for pedestrian activity. A pattern change in the road highlights pedestrian crosswalks for both aesthetic and safety purposes. Finally, turn lanes allow left turns without impeding the regular flow of traffic.



## REAR BUILDING POTENTIAL

### HAL FLOYD'S HAIR DESIGN

Cedartown has ample rear parking lots and rear business entry throughout the historic downtown district. Rear parking is a resource that should be fully utilized. Cedartown's rear parking lots and entrances need a face lift to encourage patrons to take advantage of this asset.

For instance, Hal Floyd's Hair Design salon is an experience of its own. Customers are welcomed into a quaint boutique salon complete with colorful artwork, wine, and chocolate-covered strawberries. With such a beautiful business interior space, the exterior of the building should match.

Hal Floyd's Hair Design is located at 305 Main Street in an old brick commercial building.

The photograph to the right shows the rear entrance of the salon. Currently, this space could use some maintenance and design help. The ivy is growing in an uncontrolled way on the building, business signage is faded and worn, trash and debris are on the ground, and there are unsightly air conditioning units.

*Before:* The photograph below shows the Hal Floyd's Hair Design salon rear entrance before improvements are made.





*After:* The rear entrance of the salon after improvements is shown in the digital rendering below. Improvements include painting the pavement in a checkerboard pattern to define the space, maintaining and controlling the ivy's growth, painting a new business logo on the wall beside the back door, providing new patio furniture for customers and employees, planting bushes and flowers, and adding vintage-inspired hair murals on the covered windows and adjacent exterior wall.





# REAR BUILDING POTENTIAL

## PARKING LOT IMPROVEMENTS

This rear parking lot and driveway is located at Stubbs Street and Herbert Street behind the buildings on South Main Street. The photograph (right) shows the lot as it is now, without landscape improvements. The digital rendering below shows what the lot and driveway could look like with landscaping improvements such as a new planted grass median with crape myrtles, additional plants in the brick corner planter, and repaved sidewalks and street.





# CEDAR TREE PUBLIC ART

## DOWNTOWN ICONS

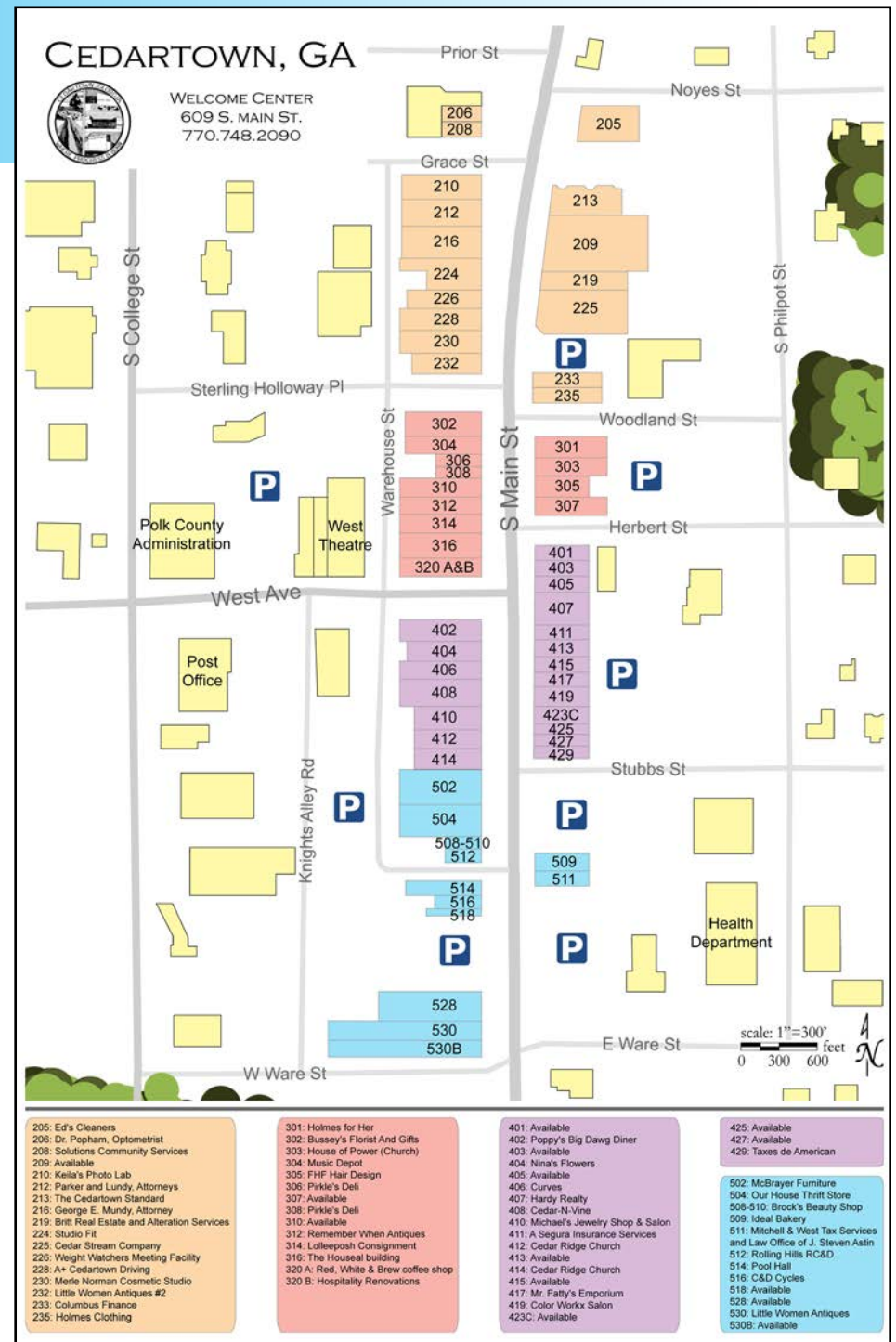
A suggestion from the surveys was for Cedartown to use a cedar tree art expo to build community pride and recognition (as Athens did with the bulldog statues and Gainesville did with chickens). This would also be an opportunity for local artists to display their talents broadly.





# PROMOTION

1. **REGIONAL ADVERTISING:** Many survey comments mentioned the lack of opportunities for youth to be civically engaged in their community. Involving local high school students in street tree planting is both educational and cost effective, and by starting a tree-planting program, students would feel involved and have pride in the beautification of their downtown.
2. **DOWNTOWN SALES AND PROMOTION:** Regional advertising and/or “shop local” campaigns could help boost downtown sales and promotion.
3. **DOWNTOWN EVENT AND ACTIVITY PROTOCOL:** To assure consistent support for all downtown activities and events, a comprehensive protocol should be developed, administered, and adjusted as necessary to increase participation.
4. **CREATE A POINTS-OF-INTEREST MAP:** The Cedartown Welcome Center, the Silver Comet Trail, and all local hotels should have an attractive and accessible map that details points of interest in Cedartown, as well as a seasonal calendar of events. This map could easily be digitized and made available on the city’s website.



The map displays the key government and historic buildings in the greater downtown Cedartown area in a clear, easy-to-read format. Bright colors, large labels, and stream-lined features offer a broader range of use for visitors and residents alike. Parking locations and access areas to the Silver Comet Trail are shown to encourage ease of navigation throughout the city.

DOWNTOWN MAP



MAIN STREET MAP



This close-up of downtown Cedartown provides a color-coded and numbered classification of the shops and businesses along Main Street. Visitors and residents will benefit from the easy-to-read and easy-to-update format. This will allow the city to provide the most current information, either digitally or in hard copy form.



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- 1. RECRUITMENT OF DOWNTOWN BUSINESSES:** There is overwhelming public desire for a women's shoe store, a café, and other eateries that stay open in the evening and serve beer and wine. An incentives package to recruit new businesses must be developed. In addition, businesses in other similarly sized towns could be identified and recruited. An example of "recruiting locally" is the Dress Up Boutique, which started in 2009 in Dahlonega and now has nine locations around the state.
- 2. DOWNTOWN HOUSING REDEVELOPMENT:** To improve the downtown housing stock in the vicinity of the welcome center, Cedartown could engage the Rome-area Habitat for Humanity.
- 3. HOSTING A DOWNTOWN INCENTIVES WORKSHOP FOR BANKERS AND REALTORS:** Downtown already offers many incentives like façade grants, preservation tax credits, and low interest loan programs. These programs can be the critical ingredient to make downtown development deals happen. It is important that local realtors and bankers know, support, and utilize these incentives. A yearly update could kick-start this process.
- 4. OPENING A BUSINESS 101:** Making sure businesses that locate in downtown are set for success is crucial. The majority of all new businesses in America close within the first year, and if businesses open and close often in the downtown, the area can be negatively stigmatized. Coordinating with the University of Georgia's Small Business Development Center located in Rome could help ensure that new downtown businesses have a greater chance of success.
- 5. NO TEARDOWNS:** It is vital as Cedartown redevelops that efforts are made to save all existing building stock in downtown. Demolition by neglect is not acceptable in a locally designated historic district. There are tools to address demolition by neglect, and the community should become familiar with them.
- 6. INCREASE ACTIVITY AFTER 5:00 PM:** To fill the need for evening activities in the downtown, Cedartown could reduce alcohol licensing fees for restaurants located in the Downtown Development Authority district with the stipulation that they maintain certain hours of operation. For instance, a beer and wine pouring license could be reduced to \$500.00 per year if the restaurant adheres to being open Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings from 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm.
- 7. KEEP THE COUNTY DOWNTOWN:** It is essential to keep the Polk County Courthouse downtown. Polk County is an important and crucial industry that supports downtown, and the City needs to work with the county to encourage them to stay downtown.
- 8. CHILDREN'S MUSEUM:** Many citizens expressed the need for more children's activities in the downtown. One possibility is to develop an Interactive Neighborhood for Kids (INK). INK, located in Gainesville, Georgia, is a hands-on museum

*“A VIBRANT DOWNTOWN SMELLS LIKE FOOD, SOUNDS LIKE MUSIC, AND HAS PEOPLE WALKING DOWN THE SIDEWALKS AT 8:00 AT NIGHT.” — Tommy Engram*

where children can role-play and learn through practical and fun experiences about being a banker, grocery store clerk, doctor, dentist, and much more. All exhibits are designed to provide a unique experience and to actively engage young minds (not to mention, it’s just plain fun!).

- Integrate the legacy of Sterling Holloway, the original voice of Walt Disney’s Winnie the Pooh, into the children’s museum.

9. **TECHNICAL COLLEGE:** Another way to increase the vitality of downtown Cedartown would be to work with Georgia Northwestern Technical College to open a small division there.
10. **CODE ENFORCEMENT:** Code enforcement can be a difficult tool to utilize, but many of the issues raised throughout the public input process could be addressed through enforcement. A first step could be a city-owned property assessment to determine compliance with current codes.
11. **CORNER LOT INFILL:** The empty lot located on South Main Street and Ware Street is in a prime location for new construction to complete the Main Street streetscape. The new building could be mixed use and provide spaces for downtown loft apartment living, the children’s museum, technical college classrooms, and more.
12. **INCUBATOR SPACE:** The Downtown Development Association could create an incubator space in downtown Cedartown. Incubators help downtowns in several ways. First,

by filling empty commercial space, incubators make people perceive downtown as being active and full. Second, businesses ideally would move out of the incubator space and take on the full responsibilities of a small business in an available downtown location.

13. **HOSTEL OR BED & BREAKFAST:** An incentives package should be developed to create a downtown hostel or bed and breakfast that will cater to bike riders along the Silver Comet Trail.
14. **NEW RESTAURANT IN THE HOUSING AUTHORITY BUILDING:** The community desires a family-focused bar-and-grill style restaurant. By working in partnership with the Housing Authority, a possible incentive package could be created to recruit this style of restaurant. Incentives could be, for example, reduced rent until the owner recoups the costs of the restaurant build out, with the stipulation that the restaurant offers evening service and serves beer and wine.
15. **COURTHOUSE EXPANSION:** An expansion is needed in the rear of the Polk County Probate Courthouse to allow for more office space. Currently, the courthouse parking lot needs maintenance and landscaping.



# CORNER LOT INFILL

## HISTORICALLY-INSPIRED DEVELOPMENT

This site at the corner of Main Street and Ware Street is in a key location, adjacent to the Silver Comet Trail. The site has seen a lot of change over the years. The historic photograph below shows the original brick commercial building that once stood next to an active railway. Today, the lot is vacant, and Cedartown has lost one of its signature downtown buildings.

Spectrum Studio at the Institute of Government was invited to create an infill design concept. The City of Cedartown asked that the new building reflect the former building's historic character and have similar architectural features while also meeting today's needs. The new building could provide spaces for a children's museum, technical college classrooms, downtown lofts, and more.

Historic Photograph, before building was razed



Current vacant lot







*After:* This rendering shows the new design concept for infill. Historically-inspired architectural details such as the dentils along the roofline, center-placed signage, large industrial windows, and brick materials similar to the former building have been used. Though the new building has been increased to two stories to allow for commercial space on the ground level and office or residential space above (shown as loft apartments), its overall rhythm and scale mirrors that of the historic photograph. The main entry faces the corner and helps to establish a more continuous streetscape along Main Street. The sidewalk and materials reflect the existing streetscape design on Main Street. Parking and loading are located in the rear and side of the building.





Before



Before

## INCUBATOR SPACE

### BUILDING REUSE

This vacant building is situated next to a vacant lot at the corner of West Ware Street and South Main Street. The lot and adjacent empty buildings are also located along the Silver Comet Trail and are some of the first places that visitors see when they cross Main Street from the Cedartown Welcome Center. To complete the downtown streetscape, both the vacant lot and this building need to be addressed.

The vacant commercial building is of typical brick construction but is currently covered in painted blue stucco, which does not match the character of the other downtown buildings (see before photographs left). With its industrial doors and open plan interior, this building would make an excellent new or small business incubator space. Though this is only one of many possible solutions for repurposing the building, the rendering on the following page shows what this property could look like as a business incubator. The painted blue stucco has been removed to restore the building's traditional brick commercial appearance, and new signage and landscaping improvements have been added. Shade trees are planted in new grass buffer strips to provide a safe pedestrian sidewalk.



After



## HOSTEL OR BED & BREAKFAST

### HOME RESTORATION & REUSE

This historic home, located on East Gibson Street, has fallen into disrepair. Chipping paint, boarded-up windows, trash on the porch, and an unmaintained yard are among the many issues facing this home.

The rendering on the following page shows what this property could look like after being renovated as a bed and breakfast or hostel. This elegant historic home would offer a unique alternative to a typical hotel, providing visitors to downtown Cedartown an authentic place to stay. The bed and breakfast is ideally located next to the Silver Comet Trail and could be marketed to trail users who want to stay overnight.



Before





After



## NEW RESTAURANT IN THE HOUSING AUTHORITY BUILDING

### STREET SCENE RESTAURANT DESIGN CONCEPT

The beautiful, historic Houseal Building, located at 316/318 South Main Street, was constructed between 1890 and 1895. The 10,000-square-foot, two-story building was renovated in 2004, maintaining its original pine posts and hardwood floors. The second floor will be used as office space, and a restaurant and bar is one possibility for the first floor.

This design concept is for “Street Scene Restaurant,” a downtown family-style restaurant. The design is inspired by the unique historic character of downtown Cedartown and “street scenes” from 1950s small-town America. The colors and signage used in the interior draw from that era as well as the artistry of the 1950s automobile but in a modern way to appeal to the Cedartown residents and visitors of today. The restaurant’s tag line, “Local Flavor,” is meant to celebrate menu items that reflect local recipes and heritage.



Before



Before

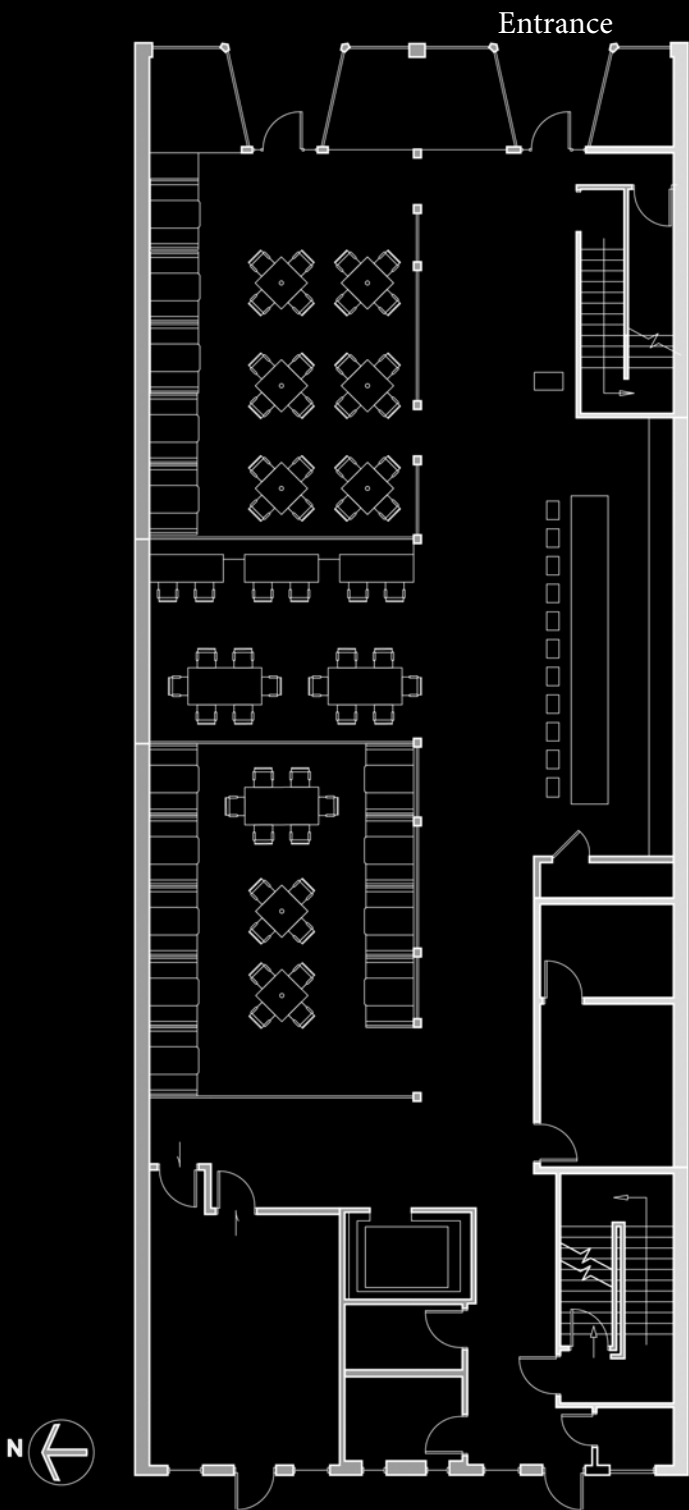


Before



After





*Floor plan:* shown left.

*After:* This digital rendering shows the view as a visitor first enters the restaurant looking toward the back of the space. Street Scene's slogan, "Local Flavor," hangs on a wall, and mood-creating artwork containing street scenes from 1950s small-town America is visible. The original pine flooring remains as well as original tin ceiling tiles and light fixtures. The exposed pine beams separate the dining and bar spaces. Restrooms are located in the back next to the kitchen.





*After:* This digital rendering shows a view from the dining area. Photographs and artwork contain images of small towns in the 1950s, reflecting much of the architecture of Cedartown's Main Street.





*After:* This digital rendering shows a view looking at Street Scene Bar. The bright green back bar with colored back-lighting serves as a focal point for guests.



*Before:* Polk County Probate Courthouse rear, shown before the addition and landscaping improvements.





## COURTHOUSE EXPANSION & LANDSCAPING

The Polk County Probate Courthouse is located at 100 Prior Street, and the rear façade faces Sycamore Street. An expansion is needed in the rear of the building to allow for more office space. Currently, the courthouse parking lot needs maintenance and landscaping (see photograph, left). The digital rendering below shows a new addition that matches the architecture of the existing building's front façade. Curb cuts in the parking lot have been reduced to improve traffic safety. Landscaping improvements include transforming the center section of the parking lot into a small green space planted with shade trees and shrubs, removing telephone poles (lines are buried underground), and adding street lamps that match those along Main Street. Sidewalk access to the courthouse has also been improved.



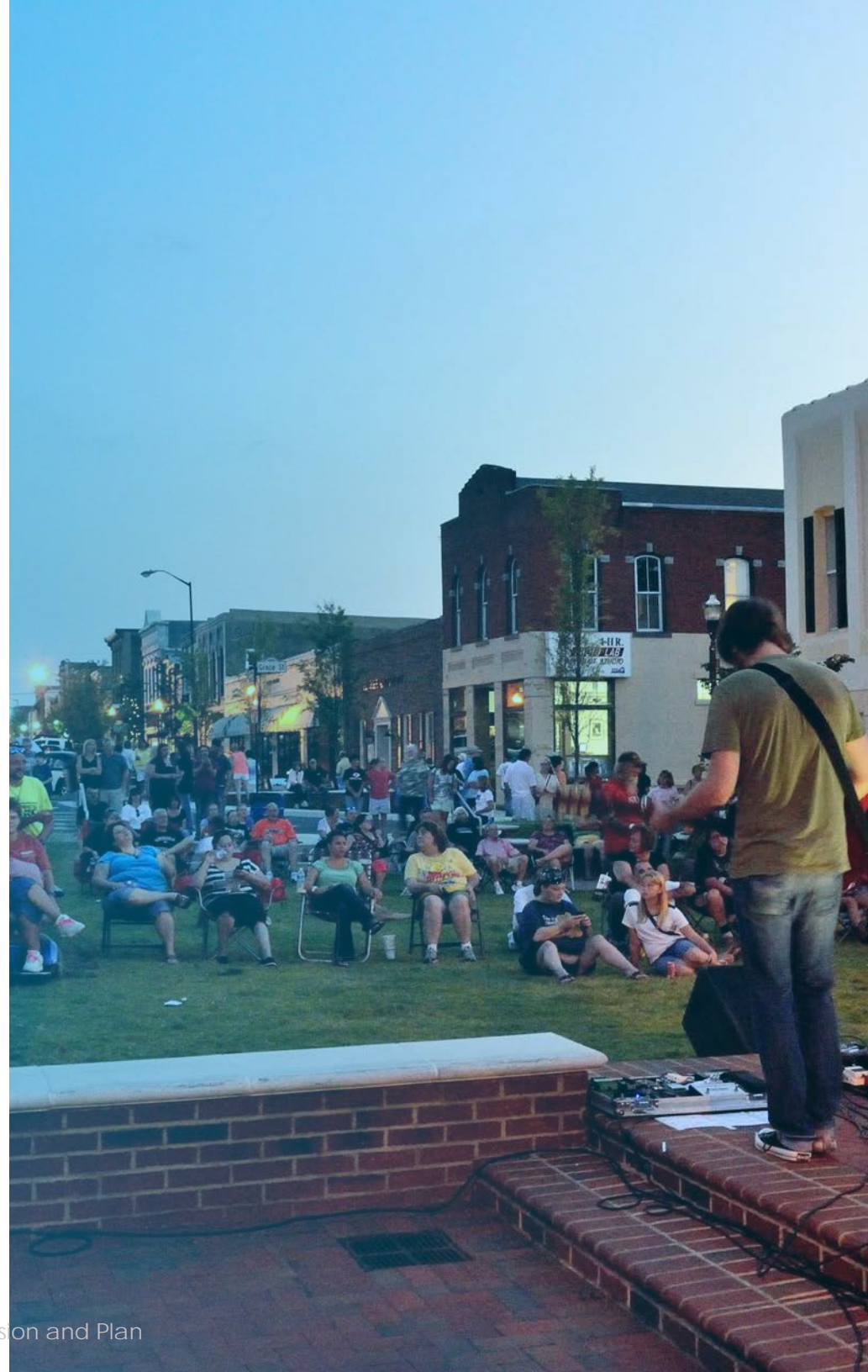
*After:* This digital rendering shows the Polk County Probate Court addition, parking lot reconfiguration, and landscaping improvements.



# LONG-TERM ISSUES

The Cedartown Downtown Renaissance Strategic Visioning and Planning process also brought to light issues that should be addressed over a longer period of time.

1. **DOWNTOWN HOUSING:** It is crucial for upper story and traditional single family downtown housing to be developed to support downtown businesses. Also, having more downtown residents will increase after 5:00 PM activities, making downtown vibrant.
2. **DOWNTOWN BUSINESS RECRUITMENT AND EXPANSION:** Assuring Cedartown has a healthy retail mix is a never-ending effort. A thorough business expansion and recruitment program is full-time commitment.
3. **STREETScape AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS:** Continuing the downtown streetscape and infrastructure improvements to downtown side streets, alleys and rear parking areas should be a long-term goal.
4. **CEDARTOWN WATER PLANT:** This is an amazing historic asset and needs to be rehabilitated and utilized.
5. **BIG SPRINGS PARK PHASE II AND III:** Once Phase I implementation, proper planning needs to take place for Phase II and Phase III of Big Spring Park.





# CEDARTOWN ACTION PLAN



## ACTION ITEM: FIRST FRIDAY

**LEAD:** Jennifer Hulsey

**PARTNERS:** Gwen Tuck, Amy Orebaugh, Regan Hice, Darice Lewis

**TIMELINE:** A First Friday event will start in the spring of 2014: March, April, and May

**FUNDING:** To be determined

**OBSTACLES:** Coordination

**STEPS:**

1. Call Anne Arnold (find out Rome's First Friday dates).
2. Schedule a meeting with Anne to ask important questions about coordination and funding for First Friday events.
3. Determine schedule.
4. Talk to business owners about time and commitment.
5. Cost? Where do we go? (Create business?)
6. What kind of entertainment?
7. John Willis, Doug Kelly (sound?)

## ACTION ITEM: GALLERY WALK

**LEAD:** Gwen Tuck

**PARTNERS:** Jennifer Hulse, Amy Orebaugh, Regan Hice, Darice Lewis

**TIMELINE:** January 10, 2014

**FUNDING:** Participants

**OBSTACLES:** N/A

### STEPS:

1. Visit [www.downtowncedartown.com](http://www.downtowncedartown.com) to view which buildings are empty.
2. Secure windows by contacting owners: who would allow us to program vacant window space? Contact Ramona Ruark if needed. (Goal is to secure three windows.)
3. Develop letter to send to Dr. Hunter, school superintendent.
4. Arrange meeting with Dr. Hunter to discuss plans to use one window to promote the Polk School District.
5. Develop letters to send to local organizations like Kiwanis Club, Jr. Service League, Keep Polk Beautiful, The Exchange Club, CRBI, etc.
6. Secure participation of these groups by phone calls, meetings, etc.
7. Develop letters to send to local businesses that might like to use a vacant window to promote a local business.
8. Secure participation of this group by phone calls, meetings, etc.
9. Develop a schedule and calendar and send to participants.
10. Assign someone to make a scrapbook with pictures of window displays.
11. Master list



## **ACTION ITEM:** YOUTH MAIN STREET ADVISORY BOARD

**LEAD:** Jordan Hubbard

**PARTNERS:** Vicki Mayes, Edward Guzman, Ricky Ensley

**TIMELINE:** 20 days

**FUNDING:** N/A

**OBSTACLES:** Student schedules

**STEPS:**

1. Run an advertisement at the high school for one week starting November 4th.
2. By Friday the 8th, have a list of potential participants.
3. Schedule initial brainstorming meeting.
4. Meet and generate top five issues.
5. Determine leadership structure.
6. Organize the members of the group. Start now.
7. Pick a project for the holidays.
8. Determine schedule and deadlines.

## **ACTION ITEM:** STREET TREE/PLANTING PROGRAM WITH HIGH SCHOOL, HORTICULTURE CLASS, CLUB VOLUNTEERS

**LEAD:** Oscar Guzman

**PARTNERS:** Alex Segura, Hal Floyd, Dawn Abney, Rena Roper, Andrew Roper, Ivy Allen

**TIMELINE:** Fall installation

**FUNDING:** Clubs volunteer to clean, find out if Home Depot is willing to fund plants and planting

**OBSTACLES:** City coordination, plant maintenance

### **STEPS:**

1. Look at downtown first.
2. Speak with High School about integrating horticulture class. Could happen every semester as part of curriculum.
3. Work with the city on an understood design plot.
4. Inform Home Depot of the needs and allow funding over the span of time.
5. Clubs, keep cityscape clean through volunteer activities (4-H, FBLA).



## **ACTION ITEM:** HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE: OUR HOUSE, OLD LOLLEE POSH, ANTIQUE SHOP WINDOW

**LEAD:** Rena Roper and Ivy Allen

**PARTNERS:** CJSL, Hal Floyd, Dawn Abney, Alex Segura, Oscar Guzman

**TIMELINE:** By December 3, 2013

**FUNDING:** N/A

**OBSTACLES:** Power, alcohol license

### **STEPS:**

1. Call store owners.
2. Secure alcohol license.
3. Get supplies or decorations.
4. Contact people about festival of trees.

## **ACTION ITEM: STREETScape EXTENSION**

**LEAD:** Hal Floyd

**PARTNERS:** Alex Segura, Dawn Abney, Rena Roper, Andrew Roper, Ivy Allen

**TIMELINE:** July 2014

**FUNDING:** LMIG-Local Maintenance Grant

**OBSTACLES:** To be determined

**STEPS:**

1. Contact Bill Fann.
2. Write a request to put money into LMIG plan to redo side streets leading up to the West Avenue Bridge.
3. Submit a written request to Bill Fann on Tuesday, after last meeting.
4. Request was received and working toward goal.
5. Request will be submitted to the State in December and will be approved by February 20, 2014.



## ACTION ITEM: GATEWAY SIGNAGE

**LEAD:** Andrew Roper

**PARTNERS:** RR, Ivy Allen, CHS students, Chamber of Commerce

**TIMELINE:** By the end of 2013

**FUNDING:** County development, City of Cedartown

**OBSTACLES:** N/A

**STEPS:**

1. Confer with Cedartown High School students that are working on the signage issue.
2. Develop a partnership.
3. Add resources where appropriate.

## **ACTION ITEM: HISTORIC BRIDGE**

**LEAD:** To be determined

**PARTNERS:** Alex Segura, Hal Floyd, Dawn Abney, Rena Roper, Andrew Roper, Ivy Allen

**TIMELINE:** N/A

**FUNDING:** Keep Polk Beautiful

**OBSTACLES:** Getting city to allow lamp poles and funding (safety issue)

**STEPS:**

1. Apply for grants if available.
2. Painting (local artists)
3. Etc.



## **ACTION ITEM: PROMOTE AWARENESS AND ENCOURAGE USAGE OF THE DOWNTOWN CEDARTOWN ASSOCIATION (DCA) WEBSITE**

**LEAD:** Lynne Kuglar

**PARTNERS:** Jean Moore, Amy Madden, Ellen Hester, Penny Gaither

**TIMELINE:** November 2013—November 2014

**FUNDING:** To be determined

**OBSTACLES:** Funding, designing, distributing

**STEPS:**

1. Become familiar with DCA website.
2. Designate volunteer to oversee sandwich board construction.
3. Designate volunteer to oversee table tent project.
4. Designate volunteer to oversee "Shop Local" window decals.

## **ACTION ITEM: POINTS OF INTEREST MAP**

**LEAD:** Ramona Ruark

**PARTNERS:** Amy Orebaugh

**TIMELINE:** 4 weeks

**FUNDING:** Remaining balance on project

**OBSTACLES:** Possibly the time between final submittal of brochure layout to receiving new brochure/fun map.

### **STEPS:**

1. (Completed) Contact Kiela Beam or Amy Madden about photographing a scene from downtown that is front-page appropriate for the new Cedartown Brochure.
2. (Completed) Contact Sammy Stephens, Chief of Fire Department to inquire if the department will provide and operate a bucket truck for a photographer to take an elevated, long-range photograph of the Downtown area.
3. (Completed) Set up a time for photographer and fire department to meet downtown for the photo.
4. Insert the photo into the space provided in the brochure.
5. Submit new brochure draft to DCA Board for approval at the Board Meeting on September 12.
6. If approved by board, submit brochure layout to brochure/fun map contact for print.



**ACTION ITEM:** NEW DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE ON US 27 BY-PASS FOR HISTORIC DOWNTOWN, WELCOME CENTER, AND SILVER COMET TRAIL AT MAIN STREET, EAST AVENUE, AND MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BLVD.

**LEAD:** Bill Fann

**PARTNERS:** Georgia Department of Transportation and the City

**TIMELINE:** December 2013

**FUNDING:** City/GDOT

**OBSTACLES:** Finding the correct contact within the GDOT system

**STEPS:**

1. Discuss GDOT sign specifications with District contact, Steve Sanders (August 2013).
2. Discuss project feasibility with GDOT Director of Planning, Toby Carr (August 2013).
3. Referred to GDOT District Engineer, Dewayne Comer (August 20, 2013).
4. Referred to GDOT Assistant State Planning Administrator, Radney Simpson (September 6, 2013).
5. Referred to GDOT office of design policy and support, Daniel Pass (September 11, 2013).
6. Referred to GDOT District Traffic Operations Engineer, Donovan Tucker (September 13, 2013).
7. Received sign design and estimate for installation from Donovan Tucker (September 17, 2013).
8. Signed requisition to order signs and initiate work order and sent to Donovan Tucker at GDOT (September 20, 2013).
9. Signs scheduled for installation mid to late November.

## **ACTION ITEM:** EVENT AND ACTIVITY PROTOCOL

**LEAD:** Michelle Richards

**PARTNERS:** Donnie McKibben

**TIMELINE:** 90 days

**FUNDING:** Minimal

**OBSTACLES:** Parking

**STEPS:**

1. More advertising with local businesses
2. Advertise website and radio.
3. Yearly activity event planner
4. Face-to-face participation liaison
5. Newspaper advertising
6. Cross-promoting
7. Shop Cedartown Facebook page
8. Twitter and Instagram
9. Keep webpage events updated.
10. Organize and streamline organizations.



## **ACTION ITEM: DOWNTOWN INCENTIVES WORKSHOP**

**LEAD:** Tommy Engram

**PARTNERS:** Jason Ward (County), Kathy Carter, someone familiar with commercial and residential real estate, banking (Richard Long or Brian Holland).

**TIMELINE:** Research, Planning and Program design by November 30, 2013. Hold session in January/February 2014.

**FUNDING:** Will be some costs with putting materials together. City and Downtown Cedartown Association can assist.

**OBSTACLES:** Money for printing and online/video costs. Determining the people that need to attend (bankers, realtors, and investors).

### **STEPS:**

1. Identify target market: Bankers, realtors, etc. Those that already have successful business in the region and open place in Cedartown.
2. Identify location: time, date place.
3. Develop program materials.
4. Complete enterprise/opportunity zone expansion.
5. Publicize the program: Determine the methods of getting the word out.
6. Develop contact list of key people to invite: entrepreneurs, investors, etc.
7. Develop online version that people can access when they need it.

## **ACTION ITEM: BUSINESS 101 WORKSHOP**

**LEAD:** Britt Madden Jr.

**PARTNERS:** Todd Bussey, Kathy Carter, SBDC, Northwest Tech, Chamber, High schools (BOE).

**TIMELINE:** Deliver Program February 2014 and then online.

**FUNDING:** Approximately \$4,500.00 for materials, promotion, and online services: Downtown Development Authority and City can help with the funding.

**OBSTACLES:** Motivation of attendees. Education levels: make it for “lay” people not experts.

### **STEPS:**

1. Touch base with the University of Georgia’s Small Business Development Center about existing programs and materials.
2. Determine target market (future and current business operators).
3. Determine marketing strategy: partner with Northwest Tech and high schools (BOE) to get word out to potential attendees.
4. Inventory what it takes to start a business in downtown Cedartown: permitting, licenses, etc.
5. Create website or DVD so people can access as needed in future.



## **ACTION ITEM: DOWNTOWN INCUBATOR SPACE**

**LEAD:** Kathy Carter

**PARTNERS:** Robin Hice, Chamber of Commerce

**TIMELINE:** 60 days to develop plan

**FUNDING:** To be determined

**OBSTACLES:** Building owners and money

**STEPS:**

1. Create list of current property owners of spaces that would be appropriate for incubator.
2. Contact owners.
3. Research available funds.
4. Contact city re: what they can do.
5. Develop proposal for Trippe Foundation.
6. Develop plan to implement downtown incubator.

## **ACTION ITEM: DEVELOP A PLAN FOR A DOWNTOWN SPECULATIVE BUILDING**

**LEAD:** Jason Ward

**PARTNERS:** Eric McDonald (Polk County Development Authority), Dale Tuck (City of Cedartown), Steve Miller (Rockmart), Tamaka Hudson (Polk County Chamber of Commerce).

**TIMELINE:** February 2014

**FUNDING:** To be determined

### **OBSTACLES:**

- Political will to make downtown spec building a priority
- Requires outside partnerships
- Funding (which will compete with other economic development projects)
- Oversight
- Lack of experience in pursuing this type of project

### **STEPS:**

1. Develop outline of proposal.
2. Get feedback from primary Develop Authority partners and cities.
3. Revise proposal based on feedback.
4. Market action steps
5. Obtain feedback from Polk County Commission.
6. Revise Proposal and present to Develop Authority, cities, and county.

### **FUTURE POSSIBLE GOALS:**

1. Place Project on County 5-Year CIP.
2. Develop business vetting committee to assist CDA and RDA in downtown building investments.
3. Award funding for first downtown speculative building.



## ORGANIZATION

Ricky Ensley  
Edward Guzman  
Regan Hice  
Jordan Hubbard  
Jennifer Hulsey  
Darice Lewis  
Vicki Mayes  
Amy Orebaugh  
Gwen Tuck

## DESIGN

Dawn Abney  
Ivy Allen  
Hal Floyd  
Oscar Guzman  
Andrew Roper  
Rena Roper  
Alex Segura  
Chamber of Commerce

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Todd Bussey  
Kathy Carter  
Tommy Engram  
Robin Hice  
Tamaka Hudson  
Britt Madden Jr.  
Eric McDonald  
Steve Miller  
Dale Tuck  
Jason Ward

## PROMOTION

Bill Fann  
Penny Gaither  
Ellen Hester  
Lynne Kuglar  
Aimee Madden  
Donnie McKibben  
Jean Moore  
Amy Orebaugh  
Michelle Richards  
Ramona Ruark



**SPECIAL THANKS** TO DALE TUCK, CITY COUNCIL CHAIR,  
BILL FANN, CITY MANAGER, RAMONA RUARK, MAIN STREET DIRECTOR, & EDWARD GUZMAN, CITY ADMINISTRATION





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# APPENDIX

BEFORE & AFTER IMAGES | HIGH RESOLUTION MAPS | SUPPLEMENTARY DOCUMENTS





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