



Oglethorpe

CHARRETTE



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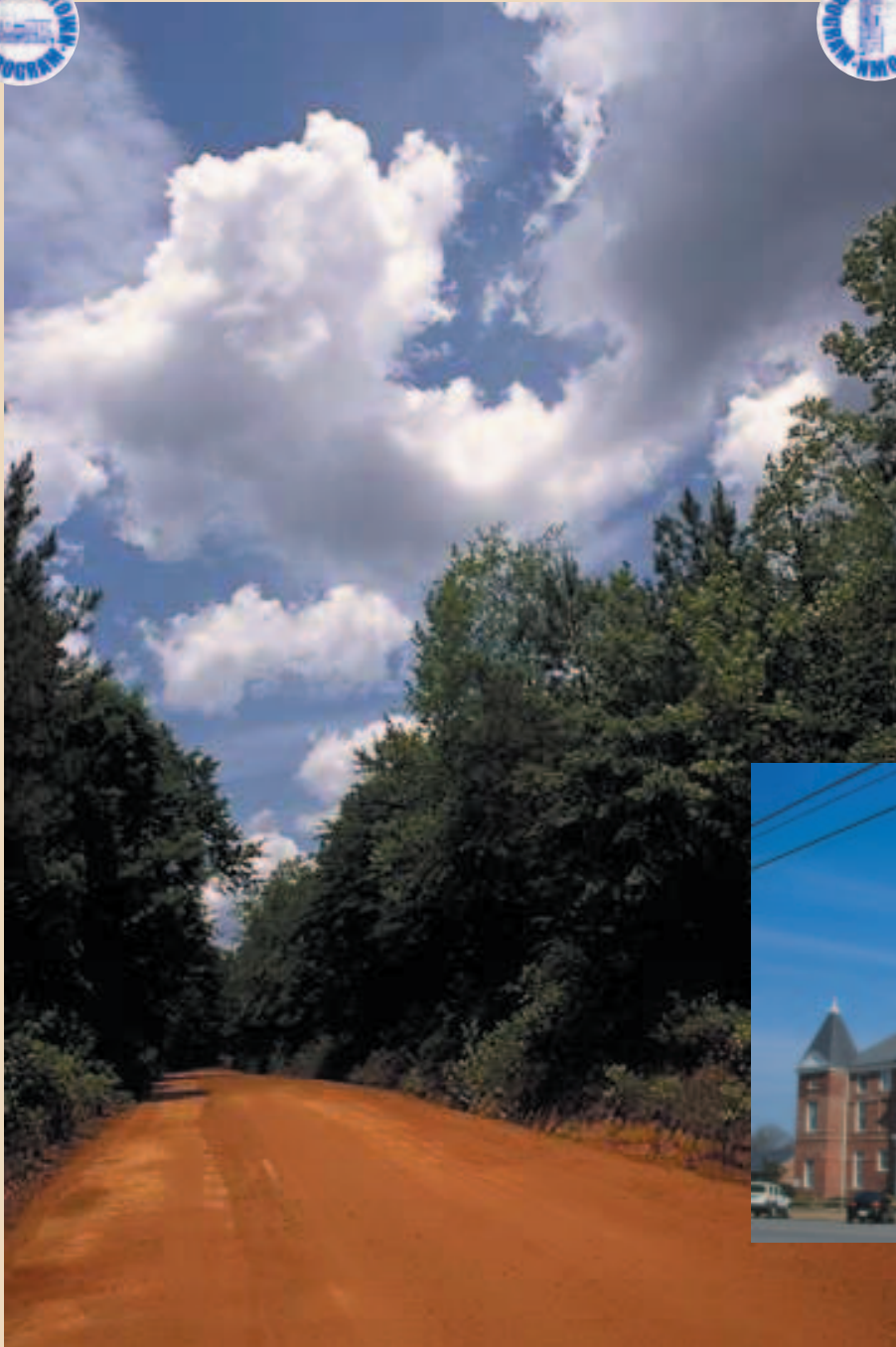
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Definition of Charrette

Legend has it that in the 19th century Parisian architectural studios at the Ecole de Beaux Arts, students were instructed to toss their assignments in a cart — a charrette — when it was pushed between their drafting tables. The assignments were to be turned in whether complete or incomplete. This idea has taken root in American design circles and is used to describe a visioning process that is conducted for a short time period in a particular location. All energy is devoted to solving a community problem and the resulting products are presented as concepts to provide guidance for decision-makers and other professionals. The charrette has come to be one of the most often used community design tools in the United States.





Oglethorpe is the quintessential small Southern town. Everybody knows everybody. Family ties are strong, as are traditions. Kids can ride their bikes from place to place, and all the adults are responsible for keeping a watchful eye. There's a sense of history, echoes of a time when people moved at a slower pace. The town center can still be explored easily on foot. People line up at four-thirty in the morning to get a taste of Grover's grits, and then they are back downtown at the Meal Ticket for lunch.

Like many small towns, so much hasn't changed, yet something is now missing. Downtown doesn't have the vitality it once did. There aren't as many stores. No one walks as much, instead taking the car most places – and usually it's to go to Montezuma to get what they need.

Many of Oglethorpe's citizens remember what life in their town was once like, and they want that life back. How can a community live in the past without standing still? How does a community grow without harvesting the highway sprawl that robs so many small towns of their personality?

Oglethorpe asked the Department of Community Affairs and the University of Georgia's School of Environmental Design to help them revitalize what they have in town, make the most of their natural resources and choose a path that will help them grow well and wisely. A community design charrette is a tool to concentrate design services and deliver a unified vision for development. The participatory process provides concepts and design ideas to guide redevelopment. DCA staff from the Better Hometown program and the Region 8 office teamed up with School of Environmental Design staff and six students from the Landscape Architecture and Historic Preservation graduate programs. Over four days, the team listened and learned together with the community, explored what made



Oglethorpe special and discovered what could make Oglethorpe better. The pages that follow present the team's solutions for Oglethorpe, including marketing the many natural and historic resources, initiating streetscape improvements for downtown and adopting zoning changes to promote good development.



History has laid the foundation for what Oglethorpe wants to be. Use this manual as a guide for what Oglethorpe can become.





History as the Premise

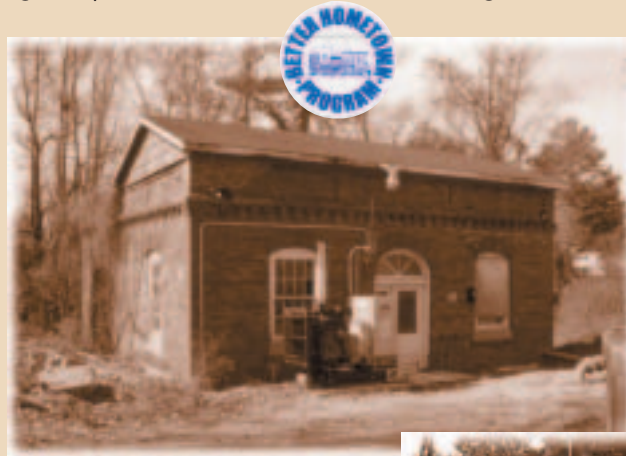
With the rich past that Oglethorpe has to offer, we began a process of relating improvements to the historic development patterns of South Georgia. Our task was made easy by a well documented and colorful

account of how Oglethorpe rose to power, declined, and will now rise again.

Local history was our departure point.

While the Flint River has always had a geographical presence in Oglethorpe, it has not had as significant an impact on the city as the railroad. Barnum, the individual who sited the settlement that would become Oglethorpe, used the river for his trading with the Creek Indians. However, by the time of Oglethorpe's incorporation in 1849, railroad transportation was replacing river transport across the state of Georgia. In 1851 Oglethorpe joined the transportation revolution when the Southwestern Railroad extended its line to the city. The city experienced a small population boom due to speculation on the railroad. This era of prosperity was made entirely possible by the railroad. Because of the railroad's presence, the city became the county seat in 1854, was a candidate for the Georgia State Capitol, and had several businesses, warehouses, hotels, and small outlying communities.

Oglethorpe began to decline in the late 1850s when the railroad was extended to Americus. As the city reeled from this economic blow, it was struck with successive small pox epidemics that nearly turned Oglethorpe into a ghost town. First in 1857, and again in 1862, the city lost residents to emigration and death.



Oglethorpe has been in heated competition with Montezuma for over a hundred years. The building of the upper bridge above Oglethorpe on the Flint River funneled agricultural commerce to Montezuma and spurred its growth. In the 1890s Montezuma attempted to move the county seat across the river, but the residents of Macon County banded together to keep it in Oglethorpe. The current courthouse was built after Oglethorpe had won the battle. Because Montezuma has been a dominating presence in the county for a hundred years it has attracted most of the sprawling suburban-style growth that is so destructive to small towns. This has protected Oglethorpe from a similar shortsighted fate. With smart, long-term planning and development, Oglethorpe will be able to regain its place as the leading community in Macon County.





Our Students Asked Your Students



“What makes your hometown good?”

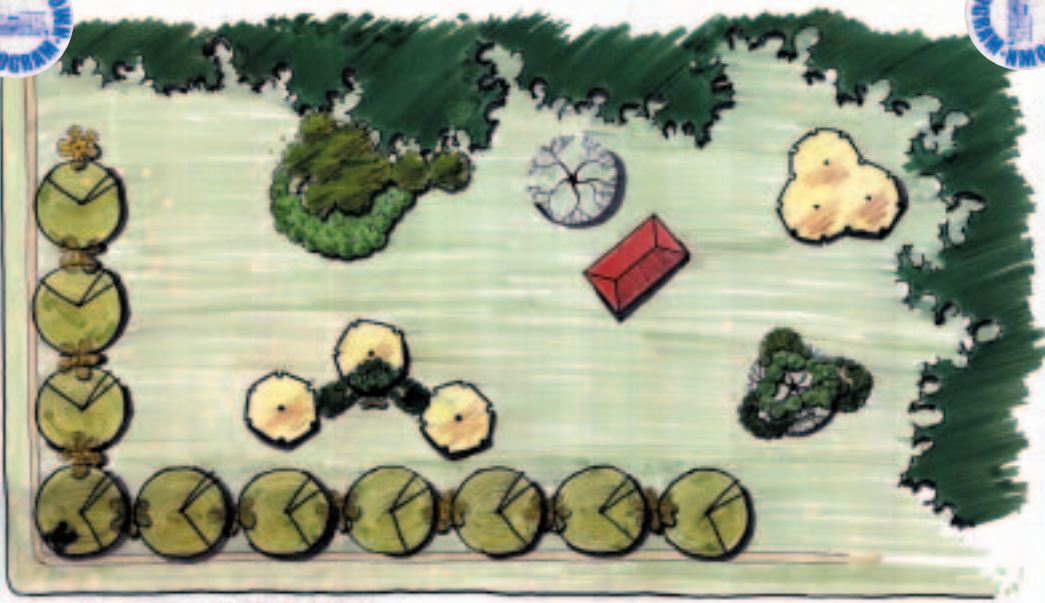
- School
- Family oriented
- Small Community
- Close neighborhoods
- May Day (field day at elementary school)
- Houses with yards
- Recreation center
- City Hall
- Good libraries, both at school and in the community
- Feeling of safety within the community, help is close when needed
- Christmas parade
- Basketball courts
- McDonald's
- New Piggly Wiggly
- Courthouse – it's a symbol of our community
- Quiet
- There are people in the town
- 21st Century (after school and summer program)



“What would make your hometown better?”

- More places to shop – shoe stores, clothing stores, music and video stores
- More restaurants
- Ice cream parlor
- Movie theater
- Effort to clean up the town, pick up garbage
- Skating rink
- Museums – history, art, science, natural history, music
- Swimming pool
- All-you-can-eat restaurant
- More parks, especially where children can play
- Amusement park, arcades, water park
- Video store
- Outdoor concert/performance center
- More places for people to work





Lois E. PAYNE PARK



12 Guiding Principles for Oglethorpe

1. The historic buildings in Oglethorpe are sacred. Every attempt should be made to unboard windows, repair parapets and avoid any more demolitions. These efforts make the town look alive. The depot can be rehabilitated using TE-21 Funds from the Department of Transportation. This space would be perfect for community meetings, museum space or other civic purposes.



2. Buildings that are introduced into an existing context should follow the lessons of their neighbors. They should have identical roof pitch, setback, materials and massing. Many of the new structures in town appear incongruous, out of place and temporary. They do not contribute to a unified look in Oglethorpe and diminish the visual character of the town. Design guidelines help steer new growth in the correct direction. A preservation ordinance and design review program can make sure that the guidelines get enforced. A façade grant or loan program makes sure people have available funding to make appropriate changes.



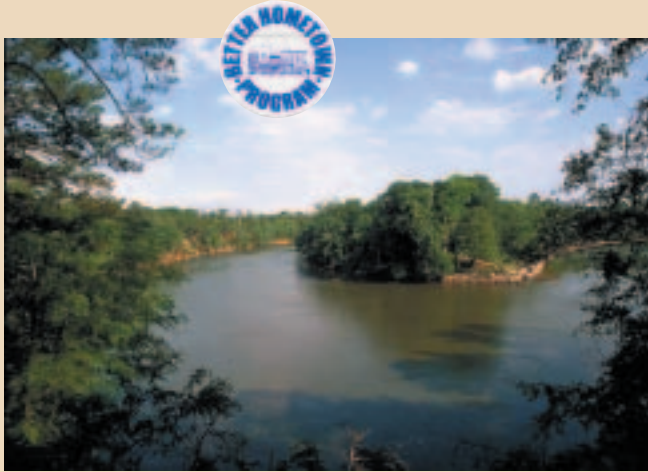
3. Two abandoned historic resources that almost everyone in town has special memories of – the old schools on Randolph Street – are being neglected and in one case demolished. Funding should be obtained to help rehabilitate the buildings for practical use as a center for aging populations, a boys and girls club or even housing. This kind of careless disregard for Oglethorpe's past should come to an end.
4. The civic organizations in town have a track record of success. Build on this record and begin attracting a more diverse constituency for all groups. Racial, gender and age diversity is needed if civic groups are to carry on the traditions they established in the last century.

5. Community meeting space and places for celebration are lacking in Oglethorpe. Any new development should include proposals for outdoor events, indoor meeting facilities or common space.

6. Sidewalks are a way to humanize the town and provide safe space for pedestrians to walk. New sidewalks should follow historic paving patterns (i.e. no bricks, bomonite or exposed aggregate). When using concrete, break paving up into scored squares – avoid using large expanses of unbroken concrete. Existing sidewalks should be repaired using identical paving materials and weeds should be removed from cracks, gutters and curbs.

7. Trees can decrease temperatures, improve air quality and make the passerby slow down and appreciate the town's beauty. One of the best examples of this is nearby – the crape myrtle and camellia roadway in Marshallville. Work with the Georgia Forestry Commission to begin giving identity to Oglethorpe's roads. Historically water oaks appeared all over town. This is a durable tree that might be reintroduced to the city. Bradford Pears downtown are a poor choice for street trees in historic commercial districts due to their uniformity, small size, weak structure and unpleasant odor. They should be removed and a





suitable tree should be selected to replace them. The new trees should be given new soil and a greater surface area with tree grates to assure proper growth. The species selected in any part of town should have growth habits that will not interfere with overhead power lines.

8. Park space is sorely needed in Oglethorpe. The areas set aside for parks need to be accessible, attractive and safe. Introduce new buildings or facilities so that they will disappear into the landscape (this means no gazebos, bathrooms or large sculpture).
9. The Flint River provides an ideal attraction for eco-tourism and heritage tourism. Canoeing outfitters, nature observation and reuse of the ferry should bring tourists into town and keep them here. The city of Oglethorpe needs to reunite itself with its river. Successful connections to natural resources are now numerous across Georgia. Mistakes can be avoided by using the techniques and strategies of other waterfront improvement plans.



10. A visitor's first view and last impression of a town are important. Highway development should not be allowed to sprawl along highways leaving town. Signage should be kept low and unified. Road widening should be limited to passing lanes and the agricultural character of Macon County preserved. The character of this town is informal and rural. Open ditches, curbless streets and agricultural fields characterize Oglethorpe and should be maintained.



11. A grant should be sought, or funding secured, to make significant changes to the appearance of sidewalks, street furniture, and light standards. If an exact replica of historic street furniture cannot be found, then Oglethorpe should arrive at a contemporary yet compatible version. Phony historic themes cheapen a town's appearance and usually cost more and age poorly. Signs that have deteriorated should be repaired or removed. Many of Oglethorpe's directional signs for churches and civic club informational signs are now unsightly.
12. A market study should be done to see what kinds of businesses would thrive in downtown Oglethorpe. Incentives should be provided to attract those businesses. Ownership patterns should be analyzed to see if only a few property owners are limiting rental opportunities by inflating prices or if government is monopolizing available space. Retail and services are the preferred uses of vacant downtown buildings.



Building Improvements



Historic Buildings

Oglethorpe's historic buildings are three-dimensional postcards of its history. These buildings are as important in the telling of the community's story as the ferry is. It is imperative that no more resources are lost to demolition or neglect.

As has been proven in many successful downtowns, tourists traveling through Georgia are looking for "the real Georgia" and are drawn to historic small towns. Proper rehabilitation of the historic buildings downtown can attract the kind of unique retail the community desires. The city-owned buildings on Sumter and Chatham Streets should be marketed to a retail establishment rather than used for a civic function. Through the DDA or Oglethorpe Better Hometown, Inc., these buildings could be rehabilitated and sold to generate a revolving loan fund and get these properties back on the tax rolls.

Several buildings have been illustrated during the charrette with successful rehabilitation treatments. These include Terry's Hair Styles, the old Fire Hall, a Sumter Street



warehouse and the south side of Sumter Street Downtown (the Meal Ticket block). By referencing historic photographs, we were able to return much of the original character elements to these buildings.

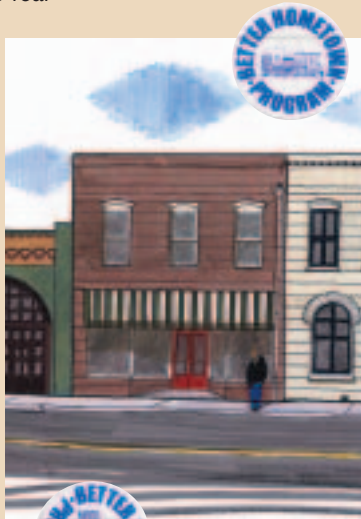
Two examples of successful preservation reconstruction in downtown Oglethorpe are shown in the charrette illustrations of the one-story corner building that was

demolished (the current State Farm location) and the missing building by the old Fire Hall. The one-story corner building is well documented in historic photographs, thus allowing for its reconstruction.

Materials and details are all reproduced to match the original structure that was removed. It is easy to see how the historic replica is much more in character with downtown

Oglethorpe than the mobile home that took its place. The illustration of the new building beside the Fire Hall reflects the style of the pre-existing building. It is similar in height, window fenestration and storefront opacity, yet with modern materials and simpler details, it is recognizable as a new building that is compatible downtown.

When selecting at-risk resources for the National Trust for Historic Preservation's *Eleven Most Endangered* list, president Richard Moe chose America's historic



schools as especially needy and worthy of preservation. Historic schools are unifying elements in communities. Many fond memories are attached to these significant buildings where we spent much of our childhood. This bond crosses generations and races. When these buildings no longer serve as schools, it does not mean they have outlived their usefulness. Historic school buildings make excellent and worthy community centers, senior centers, after-school care spaces, museum facilities, housing facilities and office spaces, to name but a few.

Many of these uses are needed in Oglethorpe, and the two historic school buildings should be strongly considered to fill these needs. A proper assessment needs to be made by a qualified preservation architectural firm to determine the best course of action for these buildings. In the least, these structures should be stabilized and mothballed to prevent them from further deterioration.

Agricultural buildings mixed within the central business district are also a distinctive character element in Oglethorpe. They typify the skyline of rural Georgia. These buildings, too, can be adaptively reused for unique meeting spaces, antique malls, museum facilities...even a public indoor basketball court!

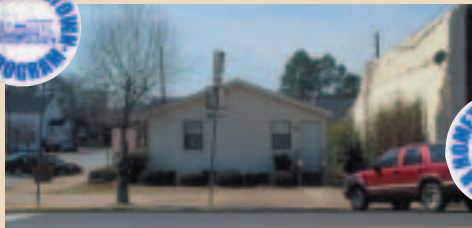


The African American neighborhood along the railroad tracks represents the quintessential Southern African American rural experience. The random scattering of all kinds of housing, churches, night clubs and garden space is worthy of recognition. The area needs to profit from the renaissance of historic Oglethorpe.

The black population can be a major player in the economic success of downtown efforts. Their connections, both physically and historically, to downtown is a major part of the Oglethorpe story.

Improved neighborhood facilities, the addition of sidewalks, the planting of street trees, the removal

of trashed cars and equipment that will be removed from downtown lots should be removed from all neighborhood lots as well. Park and playground improvements should be targeted toward this area first.



An aggressive approach should be undertaken to improve the facades of downtown buildings in order to promote economic development. A façade grant program, administered through Oglethorpe Better Hometown, Inc. is highly recommended.

Vacant Historic Resources

The city owns many vacant historic resources that are rapidly deteriorating. These include two schools, the fire hall and adjacent lot, agricultural warehouses, a train depot, and the former city hall. These resources can still provide for the community by fulfilling various needs. For example, the city of Oglethorpe needs a community center available to all citizens, not just a chosen few. The city's vacant historic schools and/or warehouses would provide a perfect opportunity to create a meeting space vital to any community. Various forms of financial assistance are available for rehabilitating historic structures, including, but not limited to, Georgia Heritage Grants from the State Historic Preservation Office.



The former City Hall provides a great opportunity for locating a much-needed business downtown.

Small communities need to create a niche to draw tourists and promote economic development. Oglethorpe's existence is largely due to the impact of the railroad. Combining this transportation aspect with that of the ferry could create funding opportunities for a museum to celebrate the city's history. The railroad depot is an important architectural resource in itself, yet it could also fill a void by serving as the city's museum. The depot should have an assessment study completed to see if it is feasible to rehabilitate the structure. TE-21 grant funds, available through the Georgia Department



A structural assessment and feasibility study should be conducted for the depot.



of Transportation, could be a source of funding for such a project.

The city of Oglethorpe is also in a position to market its vacant buildings in the downtown commercial business district. It is important to market vacant downtown properties as income-producing businesses that will increase the city's property tax base and make the historic ones eligible for investment tax credits. Buildings available for lease downtown should not be used for community functions, but instead should provide space for much-needed retail establishments. Rehabilitating the Fire Hall would be an excellent opportunity for the city to show its support of downtown revitalization.

Initial city support could promote local merchant involvement in façade improvements downtown. Local merchants must buy into the idea of façade improvements in order to promote the city.

Alleyway Improvements

The recommendation from the Charrette Team is to enforce existing or create new ordinances regarding trash receptacles for pedestrian and commercial use. Businesses should place such containers out of sight and preferably behind buildings. The city's overall appearance will be improved with new garbage disposal methods.

Zoning Ordinance Modifications

The City Zoning Ordinance was last updated in November of 1974. With no major changes being made in 27 years, it lacks specific restrictions that have become standard practice in zoning ordinances of towns similar to the size of Oglethorpe. The time has come to use the traditional tool of zoning in a more creative way.

Because Oglethorpe currently has no properties on the National Register of Historic Places and no locally designated

historic districts, it has no legal means to protect its historic resources. The current zoning ordinance does not address the issue of the historic nature of buildings, structures, and land in the downtown area. A district created by a preservation ordinance could be overlaid upon existing zoning. This means that the zoning would not be altered but would carry additional regulations that only apply to the newly created historic district. Additionally, the city should work with Macon County officials to establish county-wide zoning practices.

Specific Changes for Zoning:

- The maximum permissible height for any building should be two to two and half stories.
- Setbacks should be consistent and work to form a consistent street line along the highway.
- Get rid of rear-yard guidelines in central business and highway commercial districts.
- Define parameters for lot lines (i.e. parcel and building lines) in all zoning districts.
- Devise a sign ordinance for all districts as a supplement to the Zoning Ordinance.
- Incorporate a 200-foot (minimum) overlay zone/buffer on all major axes into town.
- Adopt a local preservation ordinance.

The charrette team's survey showed that many historic resources exist within Oglethorpe.





Projects & Funding



Historic Buildings Projects

- It is imperative that no more historic resources are lost to demolition and neglect
- Market the City owned buildings on Sumter and Chatham Streets to a retail establishment
- DDA or Oglethorpe Better Hometown, Inc. could rehabilitate and sell the buildings on Sumter and Chatham Streets to generate a revolving loan fund
- Reuse, not demolish Historic School Buildings
- A needs assessment should be completed for Historic School Buildings
- Preserve and reuse the Agricultural Buildings in the downtown historic core
- Improve and protect the African American Neighborhood along railroad tracks by improving neighborhood facilities, adding new sidewalks and repairing existing, plant street trees, remove trashed cars and improve the park and playground areas within this area
- Improve the facades of downtown buildings
- Establish a façade grant program
- Place all commercial and residential buildings, 50 years are older, on the National Register of Historic Places or establish a Historic District
- Establish a Preservation Ordinance to protect all buildings

Historic Buildings Funding Sources:

- Better Hometown Design Assistance
- Certified Local Government Program
- Lower Chattahoochee Regional Development Center
- Department of Community Affairs, Region 8 Office
- Department of Industry, Trade & Tourism, Region 8
- Georgia Cities Foundation

- Historic Preservation Fund Grants
- Local Development Fund
- OneGeorgia Equity Fund Program
- Preservation Services Fund
- Rehabilitated Historic State Property Tax Assessment Freeze
- Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit (RITC)
- Rural Business Enterprise Grants
- University of Georgia Business Outreach Services

Vacant Historic Resources Projects:

- Reuse and preserve the following vacant buildings: two schools, fire hall and adjacent lot, agricultural warehouses, train depot and former city hall
- Reuse a vacant building for a community center
- Rehabilitate historic depot
- House a City Museum in the depot
- Complete a feasibility study for the depot
- Market vacant downtown properties as income-producing businesses

Vacant Historic Resources Funding Sources:

- Better Hometown Design Services
- Certified Local Government Program
- Lower Chattahoochee Regional Development Center
- Georgia Cities Foundation
- Georgia Heritage Grants
- Historic Preservation Fund Grants
- Local Development Fund
- Preservation Services Fund
- Transportation Enhancement Program



Projects & Funding



Alleyway Improvements ≠ Projects:

- Enforce existing or create new ordinances regarding trash receptacles for pedestrian and commercial use

Alleyway Improvements

Funding Sources:

- Lower Chattahoochee Regional Development Center
- Department of Community Affairs, Region 8 Office
- Georgia Cities Foundation
- Local Development Fund

Zoning Ordinance

Modifications ≠ Projects:

- Update Zoning Ordinance to include standard zoning practices used in smart growth planning

- Include the following changes to the existing Zoning Ordinance:

- No building should be taller than two and half stories
- Setbacks should be consistent along highway
- Get rid of rear-yard guidelines in central business and highway commercial districts
- Define parameters for lot lines (i.e. parcel and building lines) in all zoning districts
- Devise a sign ordinance for all districts as a supplement to the Zoning Ordinance
- Incorporate a 200-foot (minimum) overlay zone/buffer on all major axes in to town
- Adopt a local preservation ordinance

Zoning Ordinance Modifications Funding Sources:

- Lower Chattahoochee Regional Development Center
- Department of Community Affairs, Region 8 Office
- Georgia Cities Foundation
- Local Development Fund

Entryway Recommendations

Two types of signs should be created to enhance entryways to Oglethorpe. The first type of sign should be placed on highways to direct visitors to downtown Oglethorpe and will feature text and graphics on both sides. The second sign style should be used to indicate historic district boundaries and should have text and graphics only upon the side facing incoming traffic. All signs should be sensitively and inconspicuously lighted during dark hours. Oglethorpe's biggest and best advertisement, the courthouse clock tower, will also be uplit at night to help guide visitors to the town center.

Place signs to direct visitors to downtown from surrounding highways at the following locations:

- The city limits on Highway 49, north of Oglethorpe
- Intersection of Highway 49 and by-pass highway 28, south of Oglethorpe
- The intersection of by-pass Highway 28 and North Randolph Street
- The intersection of Riverview Lane and Oglethorpe/Montezuma By-pass (Highway 26)

Place signs marking historic districts at the following locations:

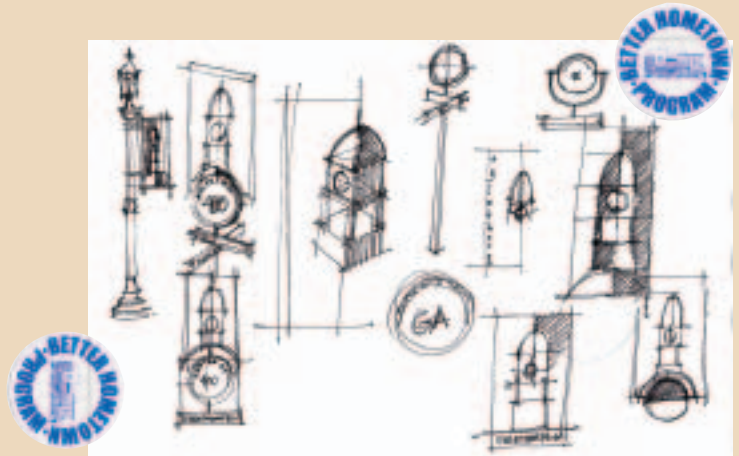
- The railroad crossing on Sumter Street
- The intersection of Sumter and North Randolph Streets
- The intersection of Highway 49 and Macon Street
- The intersection of Highway 49 and South Randolph Street

In addition to the signs, landscape improvements should be used to mitigate certain undesirable elements that detract from the visual character of entrance corridors into the downtown. In particular, plantings along the entrance way on Highway 49 South will obscure buildings that are visually incompatible with the historic character of downtown Oglethorpe. Mixed deciduous and evergreen plant material will be used to block the view of the rear portion of the Piggy Wiggly grocery store that is presently the "first impression" made when descending into the downtown from the Highway 49 bridge. The Piggy Wiggly parking lot should also be reconfigured, turning a portion of the hardscape into a planting area and creating separate entrance and exit lanes. In this location, plant materials will be used to screen the view of



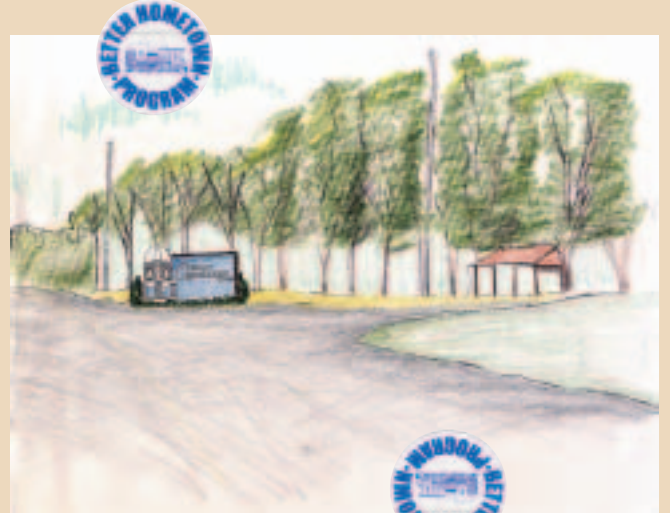
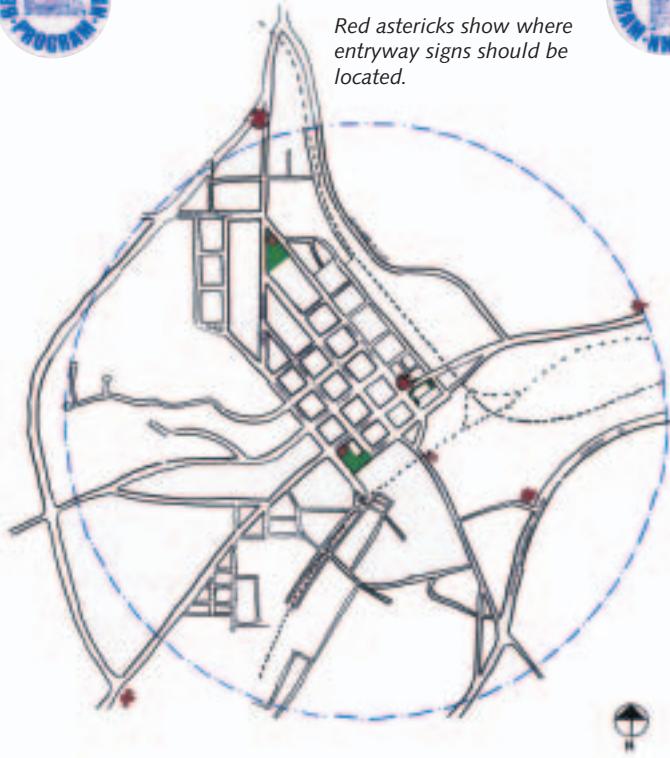
the county jail facilities and will help connect this area to neighboring portions of the downtown by use of similar plant materials, such as water oaks.

As a means of restricting undesirable development, an overlay zone should be created for corridor entrances into the city (Highways 49, 26, and 90). This zone will control building appearance, use and landscape methods. Buffers, at least 200' wide and heavily landscaped, should be created on each side of roadways. Curb cuts should be limited to avoid large expanses of asphalt and sidewalk interruptions.





Red asterisks show where entryway signs should be located.



The railroad crossing on Sumter Street.



Use evergreen plantings to screen the roof of the Piggly Wiggly from view at the most prominent entryway into town.





Projects & Funding



Entryway Projects:

- Create two types of signs to enhance entryways to Oglethorpe
 - Directional signage to get visitors to the downtown area
 - Signage denoting Historic District
- Directional Signage should be located:
 - City limits on Hwy. 49, north of Oglethorpe
 - Intersection of Hwy. 49 and by-pass hwy. 28, south of Oglethorpe
 - Intersection of by-pass Hwy. 28 and North Randolph Street
 - Intersection of Riverview Lane and Oglethorpe/Montezuman By-Pass (Hwy. 26)
- Signs marking Historic Districts should be located:
 - Railroad crossing on Sumter Street
 - Intersection of Sumter and North Randolph Street
 - Intersection of Hwy. 49 and Macon Street
 - Intersection of Hwy. 49 and South Randolph Street
- Add plantings along entranceway on Highway 49 South to screen incompatible buildings before entering historic character of downtown
- Use mixed deciduous and evergreen plant material to screen rear portion of the Piggly Wiggly grocery store
- Reconfigure Piggly Wiggly parking lot with plantings to a soften the appearance and create separate entrance and exit lanes
- Use Water Oaks to screen the view of the County jail facilities, which will connect this area to neighboring portions of downtown

Entryway Funding Sources:

- Better Hometown Design Services
- Georgia Cities Foundation
- Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program



Green Infrastructure

Green spaces benefit communities in many ways. According to the American Planning Association, “green infrastructure is our nation’s natural life support system.” They are important parts of ecology, recreation, and natural resources such as air and water.

Oglethorpe, as a part of Macon County, the state of Georgia, and even larger ecosystems, must evaluate and improve its network of green spaces. Oglethorpe’s trees, creeks, and river contribute to the quality of life of her residents and surrounding communities.

The importance of preserving, maintaining, and creating a network of green and open spaces cannot be emphasized enough. The Flint River is part of a system of waterways that is currently the topic of hot debate in the Southeast. Water quality and availability issues will become more important in the near future.

Our environment consists of plants, animals, soils, and water that is in constant movement. These elements must have a system in which to travel. The watersheds of the Flint River and its tributaries contain such a highway system. Oglethorpe has the opportunity to improve the health of these systems through the creation and protection of a green network. This network will also serve as pedestrian and recreational connectors. Residents and visitors should have access to the area’s natural attractions. Walking, cycling, and fishing are just a few of the passive and active recreational activities available in a local and regional system of green space. Oglethorpe contains many existing and potential activity centers. These sites, such as the elementary school, the courthouse, the river, and new parks, should become part of the green infrastructure.

The city must create protective zoning for existing and future sections of the green space, open space, and the river. Existing industrial and highway commercial zoning along crucial green corridors leaves these areas extremely vulnerable. The appropriateness of these zones in ecologically significant areas must be reexamined. New zoning should be enacted to preserve existing and potential areas for recreation, wildlife, and green space.

Oglethorpe’s agricultural heritage and other history can be a part of the green infrastructure. Railroad and river corridors are ideal for inclusion in a system of paths, waterways, and woodlands. Green corridors have the potential to connect historic sites such as pecan groves, the restored depot, and downtown Oglethorpe to natural sites like Town Creek and protected woodlands.

All new development should embrace ecological guidelines and principles. Many new theories and strategies exist to ensure that all types of development, from industrial to residential, emphasize multiple forms of transportation, historically appropriate architecture, and ecology. Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TNDs) reflect a town’s existing street and sidewalk pattern, lot sizes, and architecture, while also preserving and creating green corridors for recreation and wildlife. These conservation-based subdivisions are the key to lessening suburban sprawl containing inappropriate architecture, mobile homes, and expansive asphalt.

The key to healthy green space is planning. There are eight guiding principles for green infrastructure according to the American Planning Association that should be part of the Oglethorpe planning process:

1. Embrace green infrastructure as a framework for conservation.
2. Finance green infrastructure as public investment, i.e. highways.
3. Design and plan green infrastructure before development.
4. Linkage of green spaces is key.
5. Provide a public/private open forum for discussion.
6. Design for multiple scales and use scientific planning.
7. Engage the public with a green infrastructure plan.
8. Document the benefits of green infrastructure.













Contact Laurie Fowler at UGA’s Institute of Ecology to arrange an assessment of Oglethorpe’s environmental resources.



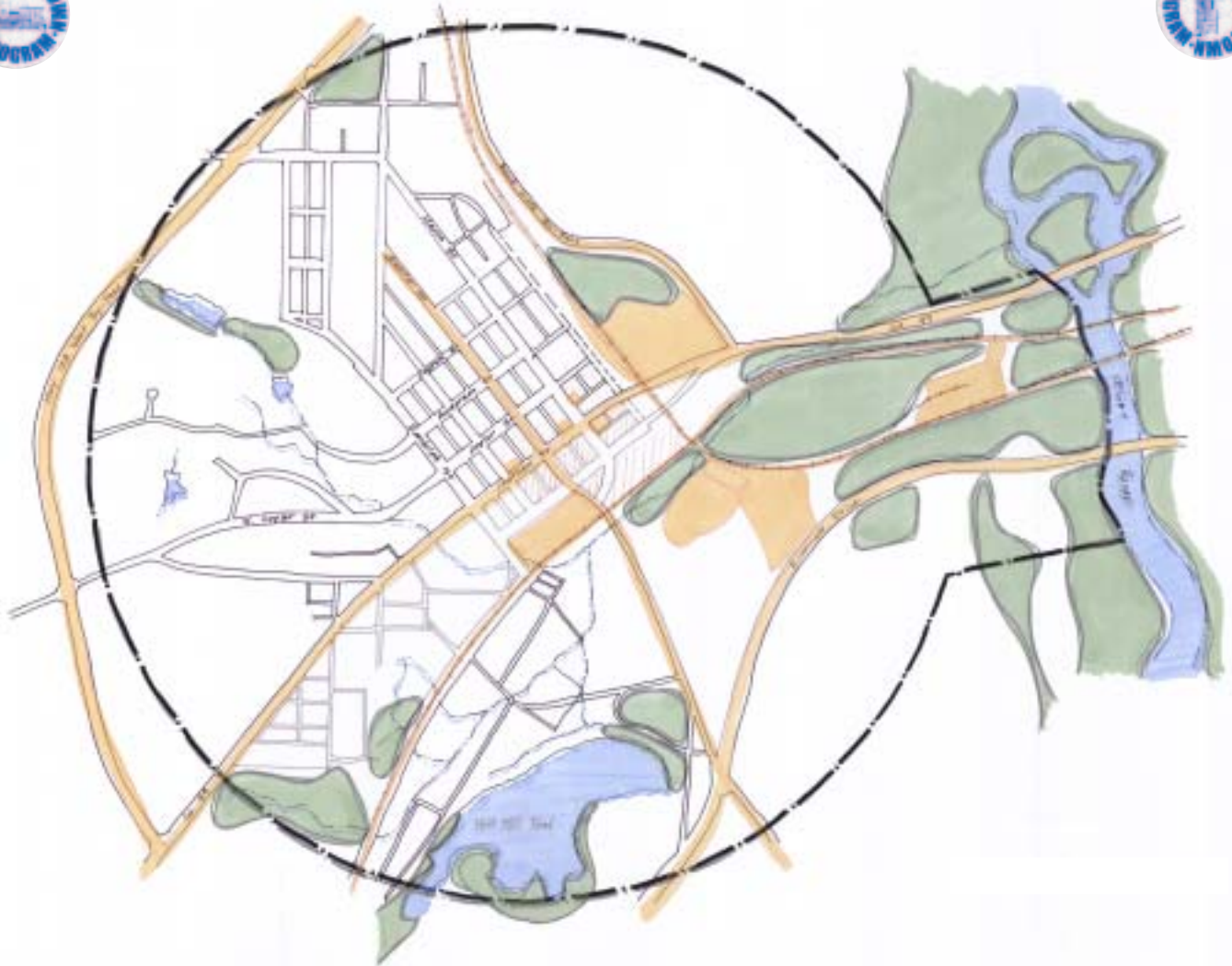


Existing Land Use

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE













- | | | | |
|---|------------------------|---|--|
|  | Oglethorpe city limits |  | agriculture |
|  | railroad |  | damages |
|  | water |  | major link |
|  | water |  | activity centers connect to network |
|  | undisturbed |  | industrial and highway commercial zones, I-1 and C-2 |
|  | built areas |  | SCALE: 1" = 400'-0" |





Existing Land Use Conflict













GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

-  Oglethorpe city limits
 -  railroad
 -  water
 -  water
 -  undisturbed
 -  built areas
 -  agriculture
 -  damages
 -  major link
 -  activity centers connect to network
 -  industrial and highway commercial zones, I-1 and C-2
 - 
- SCALE: 1" = 400'-0"





GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- | | |
|--|---|
|  Oglethorpe city limits |  agriculture |
|  railroad |  damages |
|  water |  major link |
|  water |  activity centers
connect to network |
|  undisturbed |  industrial and highway commercial
zones, I-1 and C-2 |
|  built areas |  |

SCALE: 1" = 400'-0"

Weak Zoning





GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- | | | | |
|--|------------------------|--|--|
| | Oglethorpe city limits | | agriculture |
| | railroad | | damages |
| | water | | major link |
| | water | | activity centers connect to network |
| | undisturbed | | industrial and highway commercial zones, I-1 and C-2 |
| | built areas | | SCALE: 1" = 400'-0" |

Potential Ecological Network





Projects & Funding



Greenspace Infrastructure Projects:

- Preserve, maintain and create a network of green and open spaces
- Improve access along natural attractions
- Develop walking, cycling and fishing opportunities
- Create protective zoning for existing and future sections of green and open space and the river
- Enact new zoning to preserve existing and potential areas for recreation, wildlife and green space
- New development should follow ecological guidelines and principles
- Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TNDs) should occur within the City
- Assess Oglethorpe's environmental resources

Greenspace Infrastructure Funding Sources:

Better Hometown Design Services
Department of Community Affairs, Region 8
Local Development Fund
Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program



Plant Schedule



Canopy Trees

Short Leaf Pine

Water Oak

Willow Oak

Red Oak

Pin Oak

Sycamore

Shag Bark Hickory

Hackberry

Magnolia

Short Leaf Pine

Pinus echinata

Quercus higr

Quercus phellos

Quercus rubrum

Quercus palustris

Plantanus occidentalis

Carya ovata

Celtis occidentalis

Magnolia grandiflora

Pinus taeda

Nelli R. Stevens Holly

Yaupon Holly

Eastern Red Cedar

Sweet Bay Magnolia

Magnolia Virginicus

Southern Sugar Maple

Tulip Poplar

Wax Myrtle

American Holly

River Birch

Ilex x 'Nelli R. Stevens'

Ilex vomitoria

Juniperus virginiana

Magnolia virginiana

Magnolia virginicus

Acer barbatum

Liriodendron tulipifera

Myrica cerifera

Ilex opaca

Betula nigra



The courthouse parking area could benefit from shade tree plantings.



Plant Schedule



Understory

Dogwood
Redbud
Silverbell
Black Gum
Starlet Buckeye
Staghorn Sumac
Serviceberry
Musclewood
American Beautyberry
Yellowwood
Sourwood

Cornus florida
Cercis canadensis
Halesia carolina
Nyssa sylvatica
Aesculus pavia
Rhus typhina
Amelanchier arborea
Carpinus caroliniana
Callicarpa americana
Cladratis kentukea
Oxydendrum arboreum

Shrubs

Azalea
Oakleaf Hydrangea
Sweet Shrub
Itea

Rhododendron sp.
Hydrangea quercifolia
Calycanthus floridus
Itea virginica





A Recipe for Preservation and Good Design in Oglethorpe



Commercial Area

Visual Character and Significant Design Features

The commercial area is characterized by one and two story structures with flat roofs. The buildings are all masonry and relate as secondary structures to the magnificent Macon County Courthouse. They all sit along wide sidewalks that run along wide streets. The vistas looking down Sumter and Chatham Streets are very much as they were historically. This character must be maintained. Many buildings have been demolished, and buildings with residential character (pitched roof, lawn and foundation plants, multi-paned windows, etc.) have replaced them. Inappropriate Bradford Pears were added as street trees and surface parking lots further diminish the historic character of the area.



Sumter Street Improvements



This building, occupied by the county, is shown with new windows that follow the original dimensions of the window openings.



Rehabilitated Existing Buildings

- The original character of historic buildings should be changed very little when they are improved. Every effort should be made to retain and repair rather than replace historic materials.
- Additions to existing historic buildings should not overpower the original building and should be discernable from the original.
- Utilities such as air conditioning units should be placed at the rear of buildings or other locations where they cannot be easily seen.
- Distinctive architectural features should be retained.



Restoring the original door, painting and installing new signage are the only changes this unique building needs.



New Buildings

- Maintain the alignment of buildings along streets. This is traditionally called the "setback." In historic commercial districts buildings most often have no setback. ALL new construction should maintain the same setback of the majority of its historic neighbors.
- New buildings and additions should have the kinds of windows and the same shape as their historic neighbors.
- Exterior materials covering the building should be brick.
- New buildings and additions should maintain the same roof shape as the majority of existing buildings.
- New buildings and additions should echo existing buildings in terms of size and shape and should maintain existing lot coverage standards.
- Handicapped ramps should be on the back or side of the building.



The new building fits well into the historic street facades.

Storefronts

- Awnings should be used where appropriate. Historic metal awnings should be repaired and retained. Canvas shed-style awnings and flat metal canopies are both appropriate. Awnings should be located at the transom area of the storefront and should not extend past the outer edge of the display windows. Bubble awnings did not exist historically and should not be used in a historic downtown.
- Traditional sign materials should be used. Painted wooden or metal signboards, individual letters, neon, and signs painted directly on the façade are all appropriate. Plastic, interior-lit signs are not appropriate.

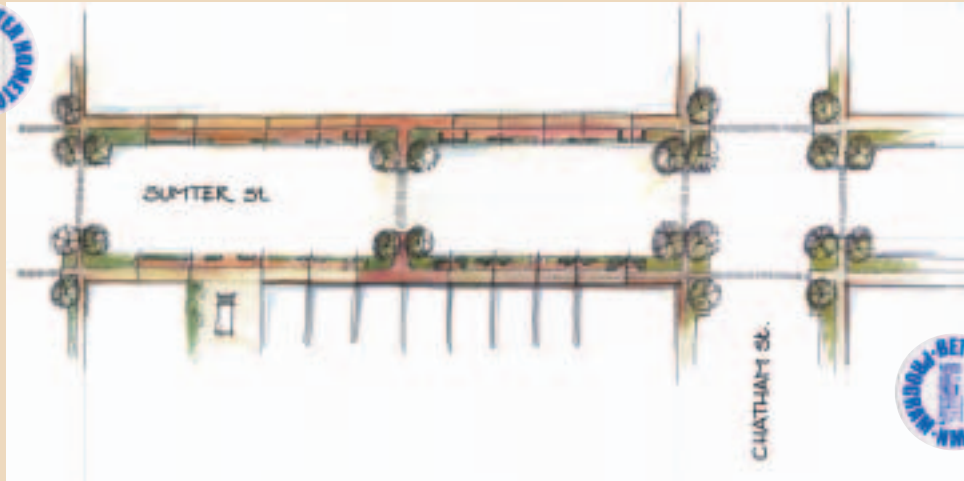
Landscape Features

- Existing Bradford Pears should be replaced with a more appropriate street tree from the Plant Schedule (included).
- Plant trees in bumpouts that extend past the existing sidewalk and are located in the street parking zone.
- New sidewalks should follow historic paving patterns (i.e. no bricks, bomonite or exposed aggregate). When using concrete, break paving up into scored squares – avoid using large expanses of unbroken concrete.
- Changes to the appearance of street furniture and light standards should be made using historic models. If an exact replica of historic street furniture and lights cannot be found, then Oglethorpe should arrive at a contemporary yet compatible version.



An original cast iron storefront downtown.





Residential Area

Visual Character and Significant Design Features

The character of the streets within the residential areas is informal and has an intact Southern rural feeling that is quickly disappearing from cities in Georgia. Every effort should be made to retain the features that give the historic residential area this special character.

Existing Structures

- Maintain and repair rather than replace existing historic materials.
- Maintain and preserve distinctive architectural features.
- Maintain and preserve original windows and doors in their original locations.
- When repairing or replacing roofs, use traditional materials.
- Avoid treatments such as sandblasting and high-pressure washing that may damage historic materials.



New Buildings

- New buildings should reflect the character of the area. Important features such as porches and informal landscapes should be continued where appropriate.
- New buildings should match existing buildings in terms of size, shape, roof shape, style, materials and lot coverage.
- Front doors should face the street.
- Additions should not overpower the original building; in general they should be located on the back of the building.
- New buildings should use materials similar to those used on existing historic buildings.

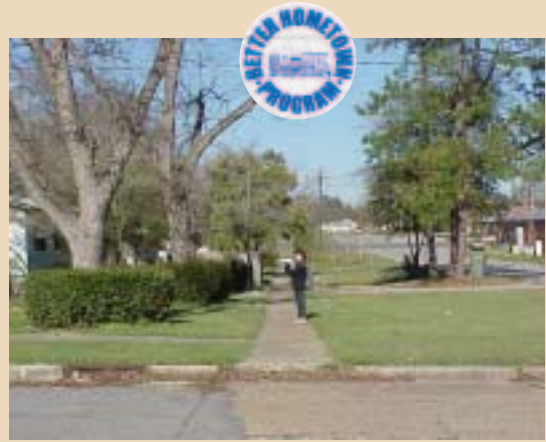
Landscape Features

- The informal arrangements of the working landscape on each lot further intensify the rural character.
- Accessory structures such as sheds and detached garages should be located behind the house or another location where they are not visible from the street.

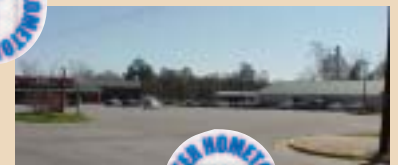
Agricultural Edges and Highway Commercial

Visual Character and Significant Design Features

Some of Oglethorpe's best features are taken for granted – endless vistas across agricultural fields, river bottom land, agricultural and industrial buildings, the dome and spire of the courthouse seen when driving into the community. There are few cities in Georgia which have not been cluttered with convenience stores, subdivisions, billboards, fast food restaurants and chain motels – Oglethorpe is one of the cities which hasn't had the inappropriate development other cities have seen. Steps must be taken to avoid the loss of Oglethorpe's identity, especially entering the community. Oglethorpe's edges are agricultural and very picturesque. These features will disappear when incompatible land uses are proposed. The first and last impressions seen by a visitor or local resident can be the most lasting. Planning and zoning regulations must protect the very vulnerable edges of South Georgia's rural gems.



Plants used for screening and lowered signage greatly improves this gas station lot.



Site Planning

- To the greatest extent possible, attractive views should not be obstructed.
- Whenever possible, buildings should be clustered and automobile accesses unified.
- All construction should be of natural materials.
- New construction should retain the maximum amount of green space on the lot; paved surfaces should be limited.
- Curb cuts along highways should be limited to maintain and enhance the character of the area.
- Parking should be confined to the rear of the building.
- Services should be co-located whenever possible.
- Signs should be constructed low to the ground, not on poles. No interior-illuminated signs should be used. Where illumination is necessary, it should be minimal and spot-lit.



Landscape Features

- Along highways, a 200' buffer should be established; this buffer should be planted with native, self-maintaining plants and shrubs.
- Where development does occur, plant buffers should be placed between structures, paved surfaces, and the corridor.
- Native plants, rather than nursery grown ornamental plants, should be used.





Projects & Funding



A Recipe for Preservation and Good Design in Oglethorpe

Commercial District Projects:

- Maintain the character of the historic vistas looking down Sumter and Chatham Streets
- Remove Bradford Pear Trees and replace with Native Tree

Commercial District Funding Sources:

- Better Hometown Design Services
- Chattahoochee Regional Development Center
- Department of Community Affairs, Region 8 Office
- Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program

Rehabilitated Existing Buildings Projects:

- Action should be taken to retain and repair rather than replace historic materials when rehabbing a building
- Additions should not overpower the existing structure
- Place all utilities in rear of buildings (i.e. A/C units)
- Retain distinctive architectural features

Rehabilitated Existing Buildings Funding Sources:

- Better Hometown Program
- Lower Chattahoochee Regional Development Center
- Historic Preservation Division

New Buildings Projects:

- Maintain alignment of buildings along streets
- New buildings should have the same characteristics as their neighbors
- Exterior materials covering the building should be brick
- Locate handicap ramps on back or side of buildings

New Buildings Funding Sources:

- Better Hometown Program
- Lower Chattahoochee Regional Development Center
- Local Development Fund
- Historic Preservation Division

Storefronts Projects:

- Install Awnings where appropriate
- Traditional sign materials should be used

Storefronts Funding Sources:

- Better Hometown Design Services
- Historic Preservation Division

Residential Area Projects:

- Retain features that give the historic residential area its rural feeling

Residential Area Funding Sources:

- Better Hometown Design Services
- Historic Preservation Division



Projects & Funding



Existing Structures Projects:

- Maintain and repair than replace existing historic materials
- Maintain and preserve distinctive architectural features
- Maintain and repair rather than replace existing historic materials.
- Maintain and preserve distinctive architectural features.
- Maintain and preserve original windows and doors in their original locations.
- When repairing or replacing roofs, use traditional materials
- Avoid treatments such as sandblasting and high-pressure washing that may damage historic materials

Existing Structures Funding Sources:

- Better Hometown Program
- Certified Local Government Program
- Lower Chattahoochee Regional Development Center
- Historic Preservation Division

New Buildings Projects:

- New buildings should reflect the character of the area. Important features such as porches and informal landscapes should be continued where appropriate
- New buildings should match existing buildings in terms of size, shape, roof shape, style, materials and lot coverage
- Front doors should face the street
- Additions should not overpower the original building; in general they should be located on the back of the building
- New buildings should use materials similar to those used on existing historic buildings

New Buildings Funding Sources:

- Better Hometown Design Services
- Certified Local Government Program
- Lower Chattahoochee Regional Development Center
- Historic Preservation Division
- Rehabilitated Historic State Property Tax Assessment Freeze
- Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit (RITC)

Landscape Features Projects:

- Accessory structures such as sheds and detached garages should be located behind the house or another location where they are not visible from the street.

Landscape Features Funding Sources:

- Better Hometown Design Services
- Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program



Projects & Funding



Agricultural Edges and Highway Commercial

Site Planning Projects:

- To the greatest extent possible, attractive views should not be obstructed
- Whenever possible, buildings should be clustered and automobile accesses unified
- All construction should be of natural materials
- New construction should retain the maximum amount of green space on the lot; paved surfaces should be limited
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- Services should be co-located whenever possible
- Signs should be constructed low to the ground, not on poles. No interior-illuminated signs should be used. Where illumination is necessary, it should be minimal and spot-lit

Site Planning Funding Sources:

- Better Hometown Design Services
- Lower Chattahoochee Regional Development Center
- Department of Community Affairs, Region 8 Office
- Georgia Cities Foundation
- Local Development Fund

Landscape Feature Projects:

- Along highways, a 200' buffer should be established; this buffer should be planted with native, self-maintaining plants and shrubs
- Where development does occur, plant buffers should be placed between structures, paved surfaces, and the corridor
- Native plants, rather than nursery-grown ornamental plants, should be used

Landscape Feature Funding Sources:

- Better Hometown Design Services
- Lower Chattahoochee Regional Development Center
- Department of Community Affairs, Region 8 Office
- Historic Landscape & Garden Grants
- Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program

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Georgia Department of Community Affairs



BETTER HOMETOWN PROGRAM
OFFICE OF DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT



The University of Georgia
School of Environmental Design
Public Service and Outreach