



BRUNSWICK AND THE  
GOLDEN ISLES  
CHARRETTE  
**GATEWAYS INTO THE COUNTY**



**REPORT PRODUCED BY**  
CENTER FOR COMMUNITY DESIGN AND PRESERVATION  
COLLEGE OF ENVIRONMENT AND DESIGN  
THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA  
DESIGN CHARRETTE  
DECEMBER 05-07, 2008



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# GATEWAYS INTO THE COUNTY

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CHARRETTES ARE PRODUCT  
ORIENTED AND FAST  
BECOMING A PREFERRED  
METHOD TO SOLVE PLANNING  
CHALLENGES CONFRONTING  
AMERICAN CITIES.

## 4 WHAT IS A CHARRETTE?



CHARRETTE IS A FRENCH WORD  
THAT TRANSLATES "LITTLE CART".

Charrette is a French word that translates "little cart". At the leading architecture school in the 19th century, the Ecole des Beaux-Arts ("School of Fine Arts") in Paris, students were assigned tough design problems to complete under time pressure. They would continue sketching as fast as they could, even as the little carts (charrettes) carried their drawing boards away to be judged and graded.

Today the word "charrette" describes a rapid, intense, and creative work session, in which a design team focuses on a particular design problem and arrives at a collaborative solution.

The charrette process is a way of evaluating resources through new eyes. Fresh ideas are what help communities maintain and build their vitality. With the report and supporting materials, readers will experience the enthusiasm and commitment which comes from a broad-based group of students, faculty, practitioners, and the public.



# ARCHWAY

## UGA PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

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### **What is the Archway Partnership Project?**

The Archway Project is a new way to deliver a full range of University of Georgia resources to counties facing significant issues related to rapid growth.

### **What does the Archway Partnership Project do?**

The Archway Project promotes community economic development; adapts to assist with each region's unique, expressed needs; and provides leadership by partnering with other higher education institutions, state agencies and local communities.

### **Who does the Archway Partnership Project serve?**

Archway serves individuals, community organizations, business and industry, public private partnerships, and government entities

For more information visit:

<http://archwaypartnership.uga.edu/>



THE COLLABORATIVE  
EFFORTS PRODUCED  
BY THE CHARRETTE  
RENDER IDEAS  
TANGIBLE AND PROVIDE  
IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS  
TO MOVE FORWARD  
TOWARDS MARKETING  
AND FUNDING.



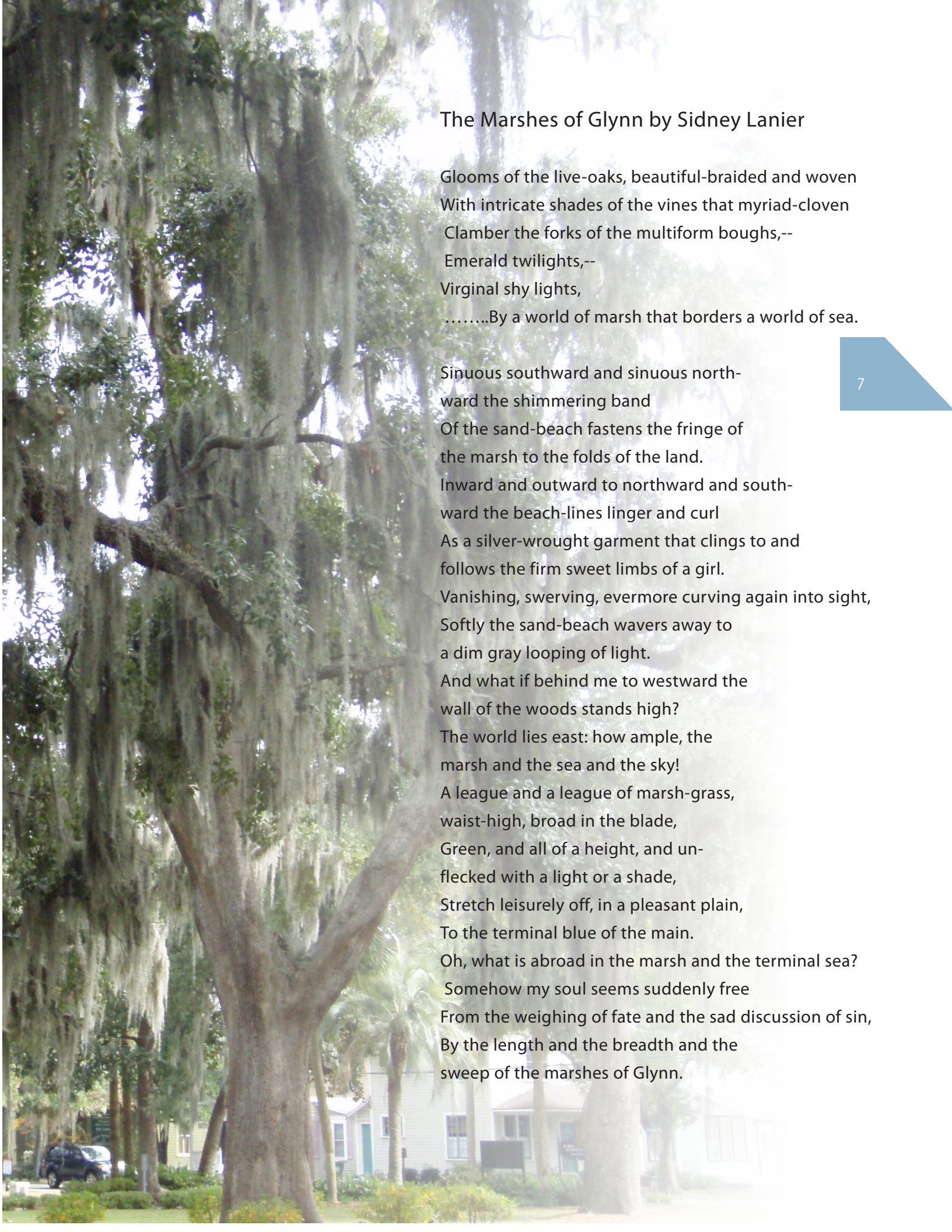
## PROJECT OVERVIEW

Glynn County is a region rich in natural and cultural resources with a distinct identity that instantly tells you have arrived in a place like no other – live oaks, marsh views, expansive porches and a shipping heritage create the vocabulary of the coastal Southeast.

The purpose of the UGA-Archway Design Charrette was to further develop a cohesive identity for Glynn County, by establishing gateway designs and enhancing the corridors that lead travelers to destinations within the county: Brunswick, Jekyll Island, Sea Island, St. Simons, and Little Si. Simons.

The charrette team recognized the area’s inherent qualities and strived to build upon existing assets in order to better distinguish the region as a collective destination.

It is our hope that our suggestions and solutions are appealing, and that the accompanying worksheets give community leaders guidance towards turning ideas into reality.



## The Marshes of Glynn by Sidney Lanier

Glooms of the live-oaks, beautiful-braided and woven  
With intricate shades of the vines that myriad-cloven  
Clamber the forks of the multiform boughs,--  
Emerald twilights,--  
Virginal shy lights,  
.....By a world of marsh that borders a world of sea.

Sinuous southward and sinuous north-  
ward the shimmering band  
Of the sand-beach fastens the fringe of  
the marsh to the folds of the land.  
Inward and outward to northward and south-  
ward the beach-lines linger and curl  
As a silver-wrought garment that clings to and  
follows the firm sweet limbs of a girl.  
Vanishing, swerving, evermore curving again into sight,  
Softly the sand-beach wavers away to  
a dim gray looping of light.  
And what if behind me to westward the  
wall of the woods stands high?  
The world lies east: how ample, the  
marsh and the sea and the sky!  
A league and a league of marsh-grass,  
waist-high, broad in the blade,  
Green, and all of a height, and un-  
flecked with a light or a shade,  
Stretch leisurely off, in a pleasant plain,  
To the terminal blue of the main.  
Oh, what is abroad in the marsh and the terminal sea?  
Somehow my soul seems suddenly free  
From the weighing of fate and the sad discussion of sin,  
By the length and the breadth and the  
sweep of the marshes of Glynn.

# GATEWAYS

## WHAT IS A GATEWAY?

A gateway is any point that represents the beginning of a transition from one place to another. Gateways signify a sense of arrival and importance. They should be compatible with, even enhance the natural and cultural significance of the place. Gateways can be natural, man-made, abstract, or infrastructure. They reflect the history and story of their surroundings and should mark key focal points for visitors and local residents alike.



ENTRANCE TO JEKYLL ISLAND, GA



## DEFINING THE GATEWAY CORRIDORS

From Interstate 95 there are three main exits – Exits 38, 36 and 29 – that lead travelers to Brunswick and the Golden Isles. The charrette team determined that these Exits were not the best locations to establish Gateways – DOT control would limit implementing creative solutions, and the prevalence of nondescript fast food chains and related highway sprawl does not accurately convey the true character of the area.

Therefore, the team chose to concentrate efforts in two key areas: US17 and GA341. Gateway and corridor improvements initiated away from the Interstate and closer to Downtown Brunswick will concentrate greater impacts at less generic locations.

This map highlights the project area and recommended general locations for the subsequent Gateway improvements.





### NATURAL GATEWAYS

A gateway can be a distinctive natural feature unique to a place, or a change in the landscape. Crossing a river, cresting a hill, entering a clearing, or viewing the marsh for the first time. Showcasing the natural elements of a particular place is an excellent way to integrate Ecology and Nature into gateway programs. Live Oaks covered in spanish moss and expansive views of the marsh are important attributes for Glynn County that should be highlighted in the gateway sequence.





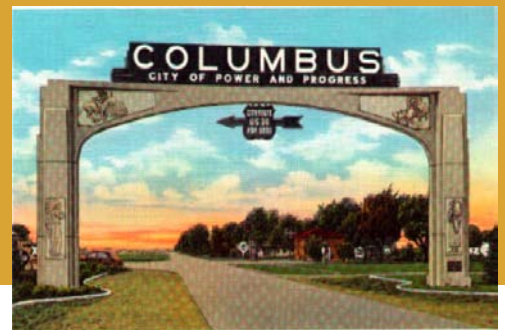
## ▶ ARCHED GATEWAYS

Gateways can also be manmade. Throughout history, arches have been used to honor significant events and emphasize a sense of arrival. Berlin's Brandenburg Gate is a historic example of an Triumphal Arch Gateway. The Gateway Arch in St. Louis is a modern spin on the traditional arch that is a globally recognizable.

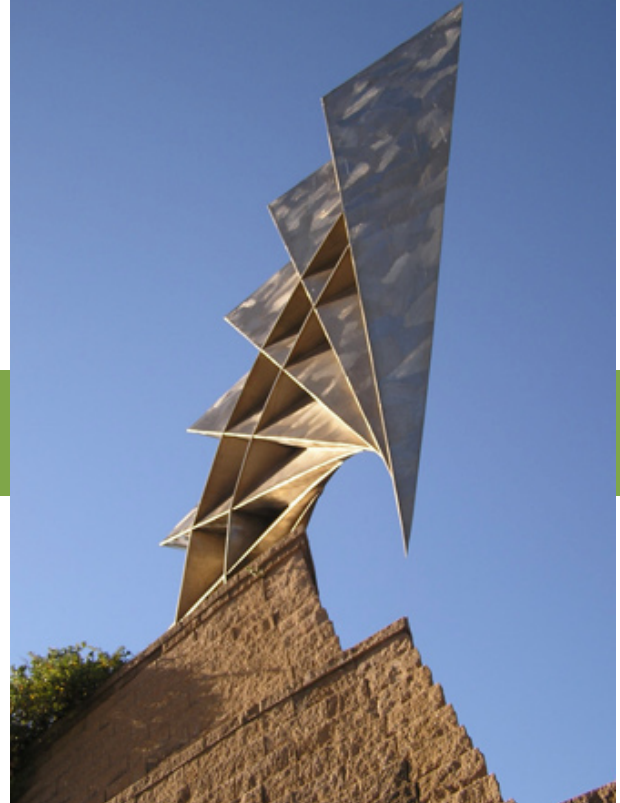
11



In many Western cities across the United States, the arch is ubiquitous as a symbol of pride and identity. They let you know, "You have arrived!"

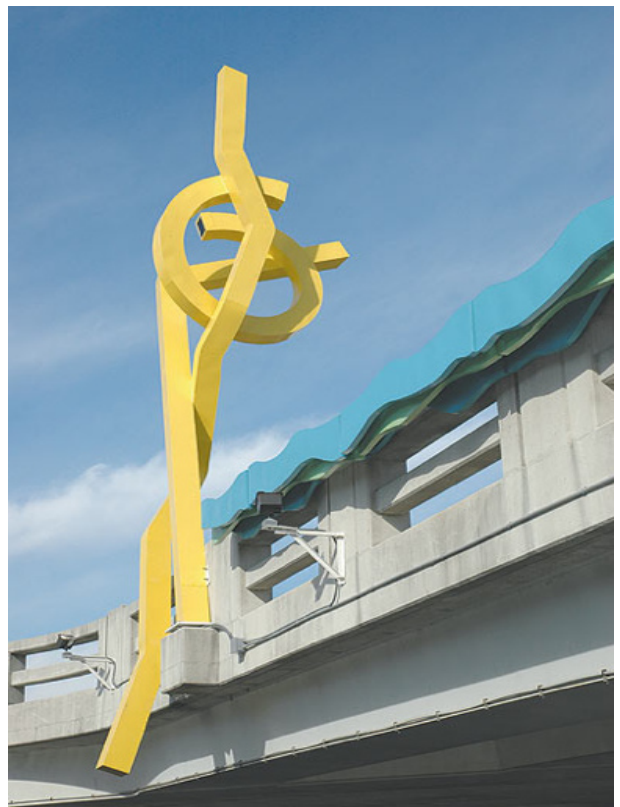


▶ THROUGHOUT THE WESTERN UNITED STATES, CITIES USED CUSTOM ARCHES AS ENTRY WAY SIGNS TO WELCOME VISITORS AND TOURISTS.



### SCULPTURAL GATEWAYS

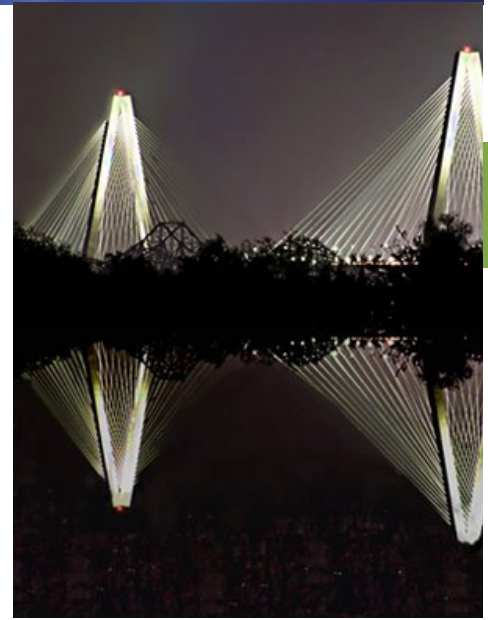
From ancient times to modern, every culture and time period has seen sculpture as gateways. They can take figural form like Buddhist sculptures found outside of religious temples in Asia or contemporary abstracted forms that can be equally creative and sophisticated. Local artists can be utilized to extract unique characteristics of the town and turn them into sculptural form, plus it strengthens the local economy.





## INFRASTRUCTURAL GATEWAYS

Infrastructural Gateways are functional built elements that can become iconic images of a place. Most notable are skylines and bridges. Skylines are exciting no matter how they are viewed. Their scale is overwhelming and can be highlighted with lights creating a new experience at any given time. Bridges are engineered marvels that serve as important links between cities and other places. They are beautiful and worthy of emphasis.



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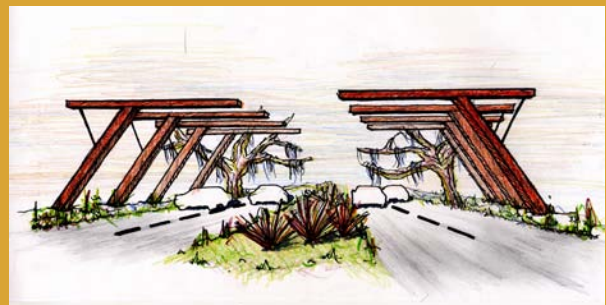
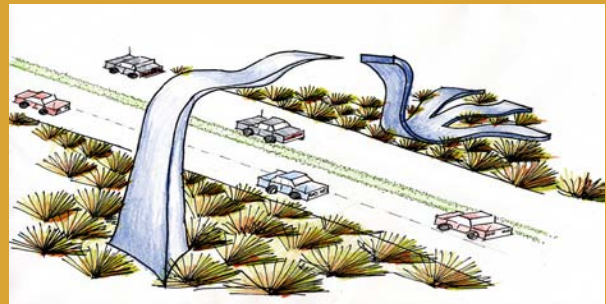
DANIEL RAVENEL BRIDGE IN CHARLESTON, SC SERVES AS A EFFECTIVE MODEL ON HOW TO INCORPORATE LIGHTING.

THE LANIER BRIDGE IS EXCEPTIONALLY BEAUTIFUL AND IS REGULARLY USED AS A MARKETING IMAGE FOR BRUNSWICK AND THE GOLDEN ISLES. WITH ITS DESIGN, SCALE, AND FRAMED VIEWS OF THE MARSH, IT IS ALREADY A GATEWAY. LIGHTING WILL ENHANCE IT.

# Gateways for Glynn

DESIGN SOLUTIONS

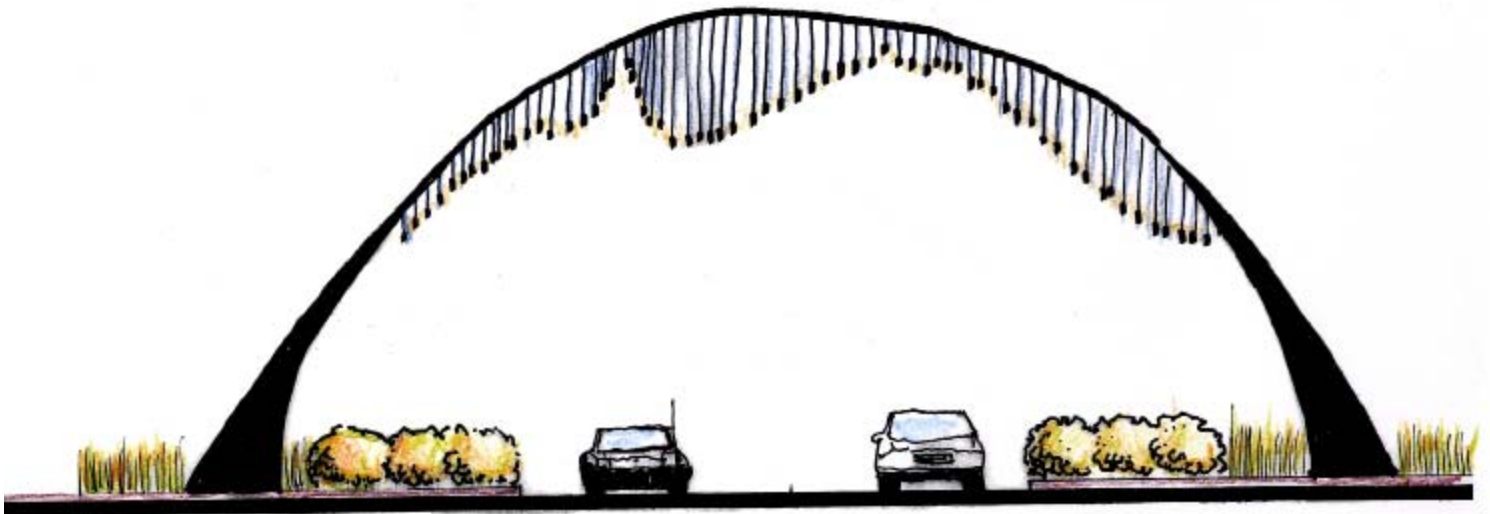
As seen in the previous pages, the charrette team identified several existing natural and manmade features that could be enhanced to serve as gateway elements. Additionally, the team designed several new sculptural gateways that reflect the nature and history of Glynn County.



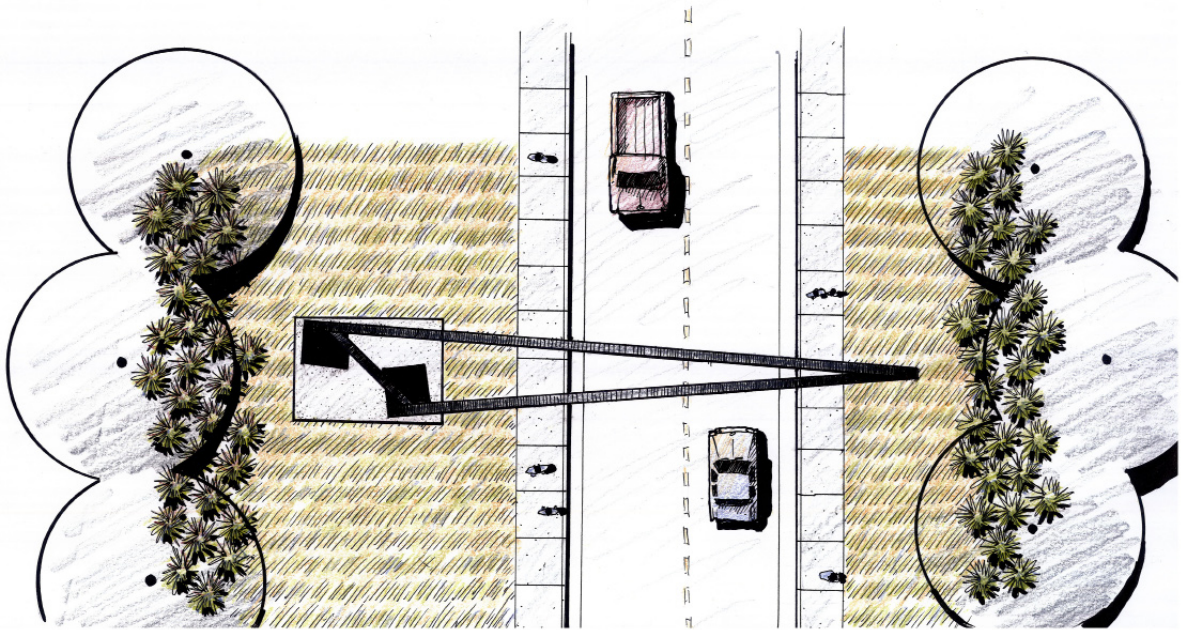
Using the natural elements that are consistent throughout Glynn County, these gateways are designed to welcome and entice travelers to visit Brunswick and The Golden Isles.



ONE INTERPRETATION OF HOW TO EXTRACT FORM BASED ON THE NATURAL COASTAL ELEMENTS,



Live oaks and spanish moss are iconic themes which help define the character of Glynn County. The proposed gateways are meant to represent the form and personality of the live oaks at a scale that is clearly visible for motorists.

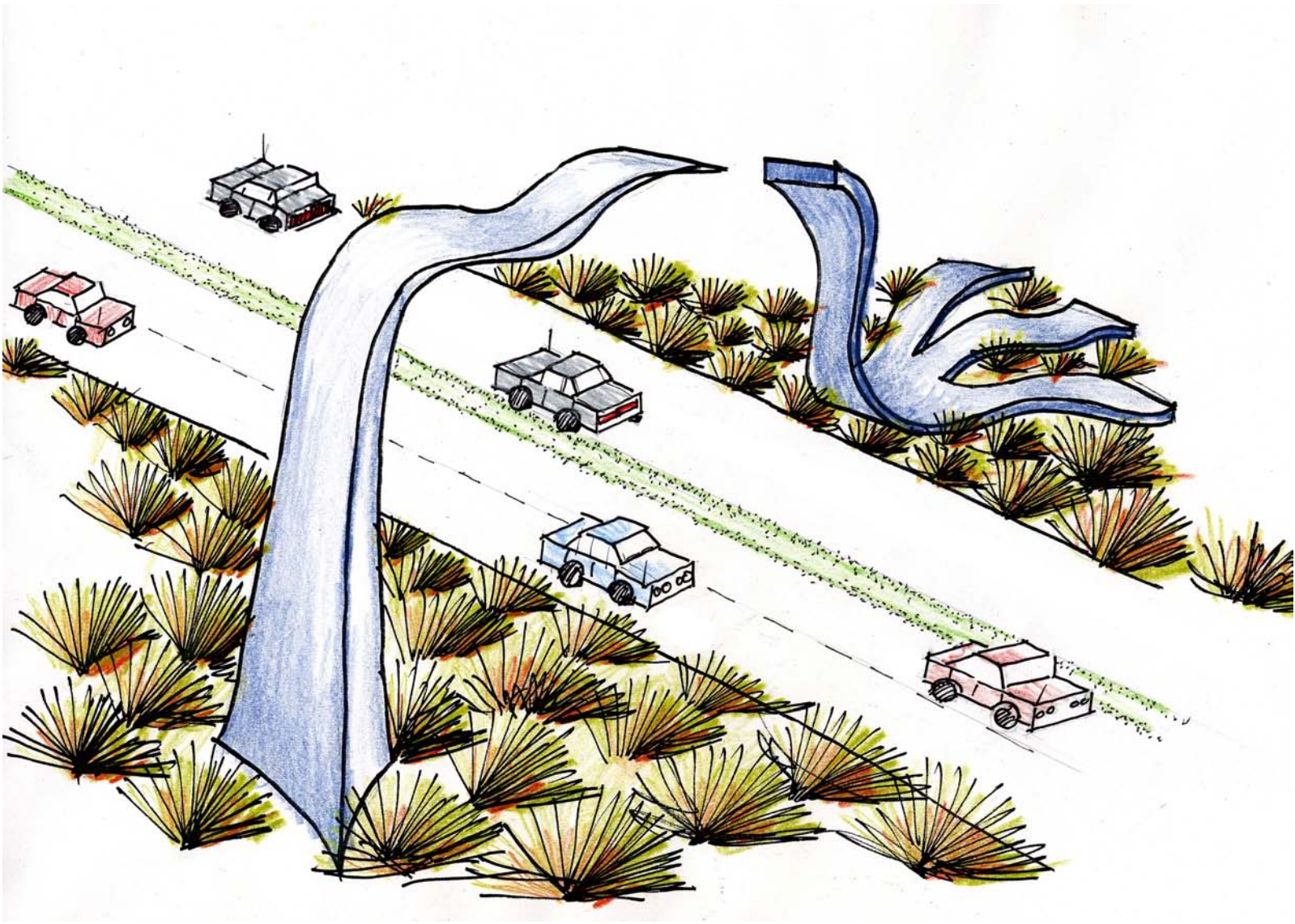
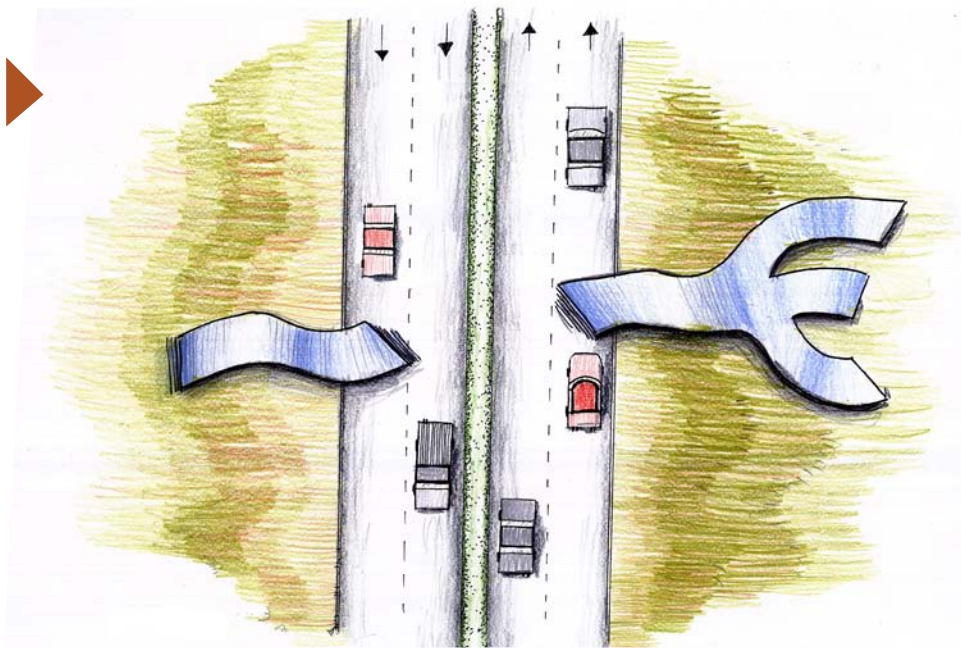


The heron represents the wildlife of the salt marshes and the coast. This interpretation in steel appeals to naturalists who may visit the Golden Isles to observe birds and also reflects the diverse ecosystem found in this region.





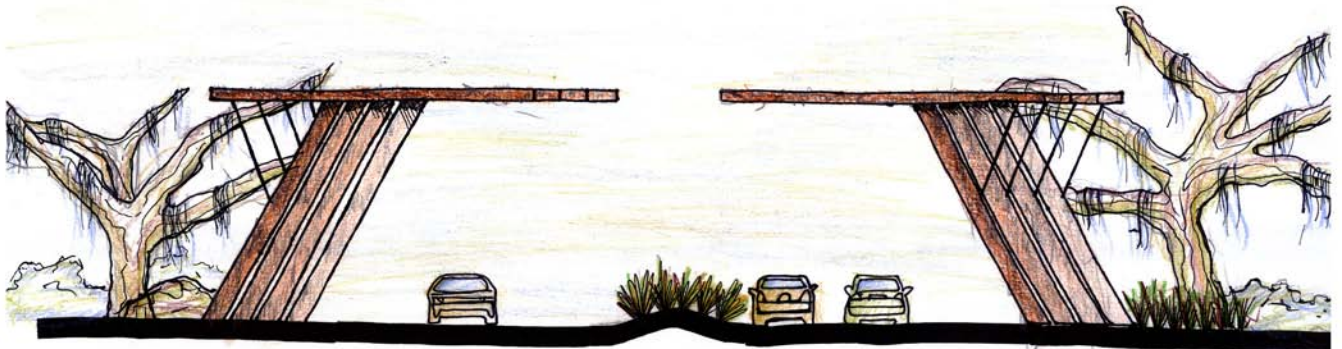
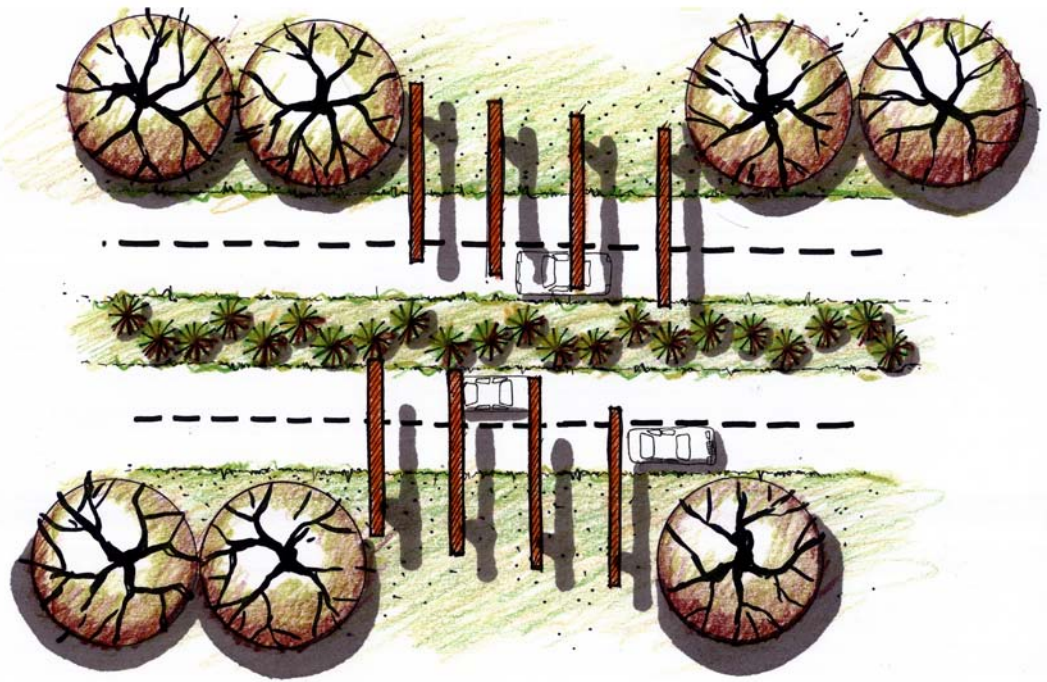
PLAN VIEW OF THE  
WAVE CONCEPT FOR A  
GATEWAY



This illustration is a perspective of the wave gateway concept. The marsh and delta region are indicative of the coastal landscape and this pays homage to this beautiful feature. Glynn County is predominately surrounded by the waterway systems and this concept serves to bring the water on land from the marsh.



The shipbuilding industry is rooted in the history of Brunswick and the Golden Isles. This design incorporates elements from dockside structures as a way to honor this maritime tradition. Built of wood or steel, this gateway demonstrates the importance of industry to this county.



Use this worksheet to express your likes/ dislikes about the previous chapter, and to facilitate discussion with a larger group as you move forward to implementing some of these suggestions.

# WORKSHEET



What features of the gateways suggestions appeal to you most?

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What elements of the gateways plan would be a challenge to implement? Why?

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Who in your community needs to be involved in implementing those suggestions?

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What do you see as the next step in making your favorite of the suggestions a reality?

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US 17

# CORRIDORS

While gateways are the beginning of a transition from one place to another, corridors are the path of transition to a destination not yet reached. Therefore they are vitally important for making a positive first impression.

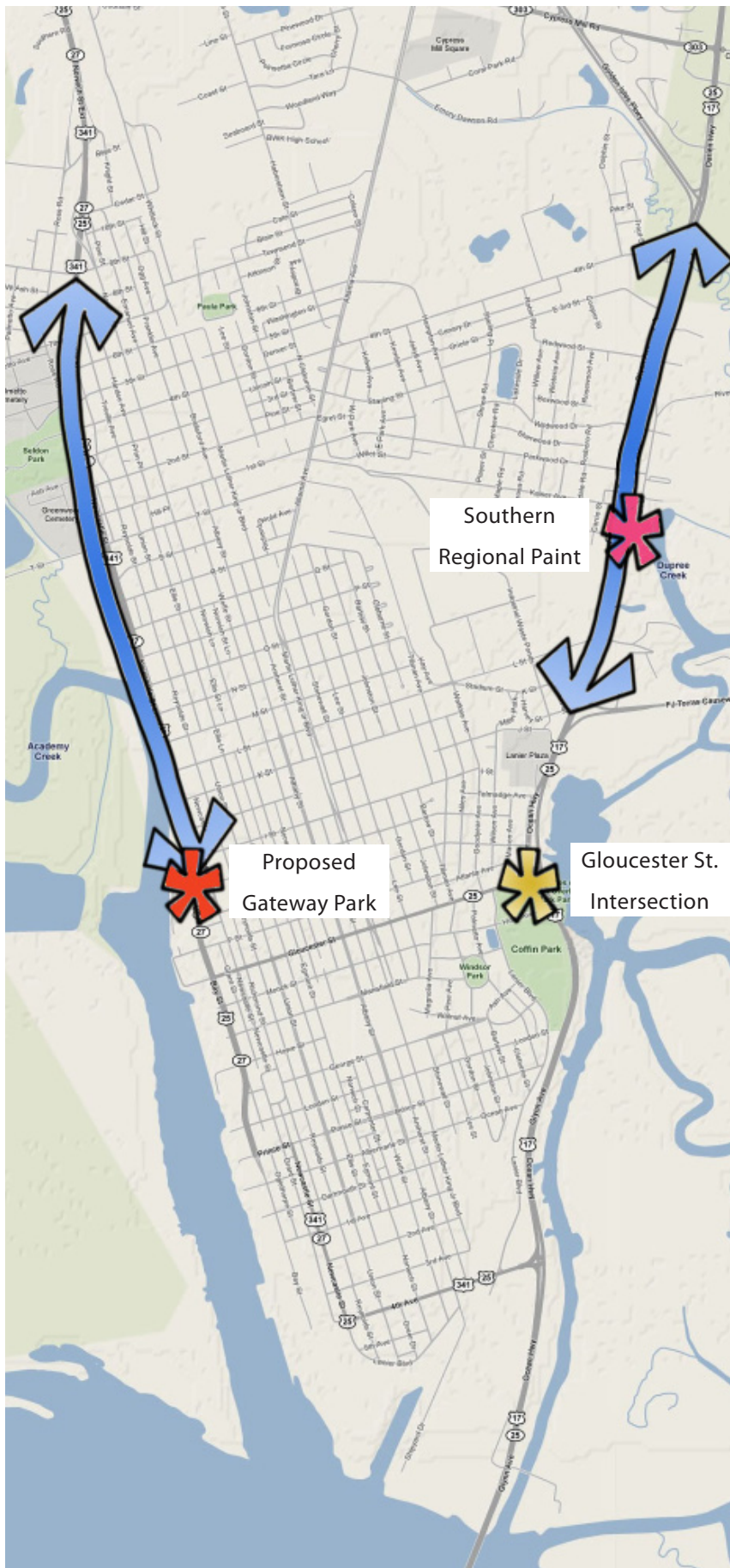
Corridors should have a consistent feel overall, highlighting natural, historic and cultural resources, with key points of interest that stand out along the route. The charrette team identified US17 and GA341 as the main corridors through Glynn County, terminating in the city of Brunswick.

Currently, overlay zoning exists for a stretch of Hwy 17. This is a good start towards protection, but design guidelines could enhance these regulations by creating a more specific set of examples showing both good and bad solutions. An overlay zoning district should also be applied to GA 341 from the gateway entrance at 341 and Ross, continuing to downtown historic Brunswick.

The charrette team's proposals include improving focal points along the two corridors, and using design guidelines to preserve the natural resources and cultural history that makes Glynn County so unique.

# Points of Interest

DESIGN SOLUTIONS



## US 17

Already established as an important corridor by the overlay zoning, this portion of US 17 (from the 25 junction to Gloucester Street) offers spectacular views to the marsh and surrounding islands. Inappropriate redevelopment is a constant threat and if done incorrectly, could alter the character of Brunswick forever. Vacant facilities such as the Southern Regional Point, provides an opportunity to showcase innovative redevelopment that highlights marsh views. The Gloucester St/ US 17 intersection is a terminus and should be enhanced.

## GA 341

This corridor introduces travelers to Brunswick and showcases the waterfront and maritime areas. Improvements along this road have taken place in recent years, but the efforts have been disjointed. This corridor is also somewhat threatened, due to large footprint institutional development near Downtown. Instead of showcasing historic downtown and the waterfront, many visitors' first impressions are of a large courthouse annex. This can be remedied at the terminus of GA 341.

# Southern Regional Paint

US 17 POINT OF INTEREST

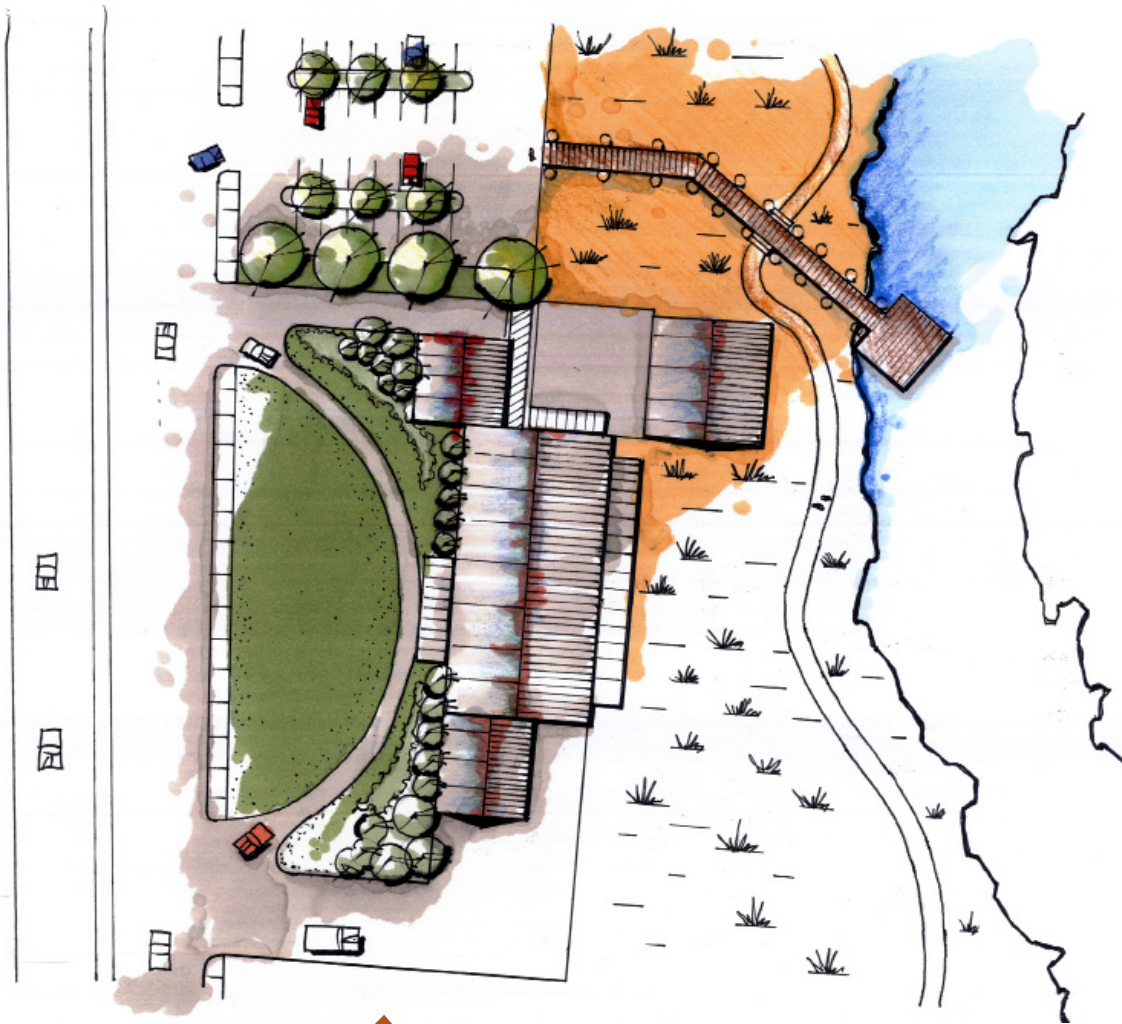
The Southern Regional Paint facility is currently vacant and no longer serving the community. Its central location (close to Jekyll and near the St. St. Simon's causeway) establishes Brunswick as a hub for Glynn County. This prime real estate showcases views to the marsh that are often blocked by large buildings along this stretch of the road.

The project could also serve as a space for environmental education and a portion of the building if opened up, would serve as a pavilion to make additional views to the marsh available from the road. EPA's Brownfield assistance programs could aid in the redevelopment of the facility as a multi-purpose community center, including art galleries and meeting space.





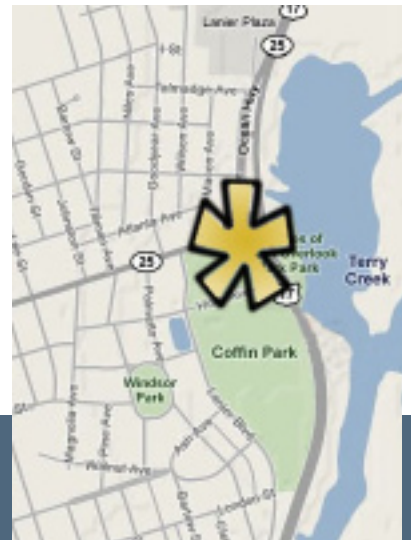
▲ CURRENT CONDITION OF THE SOUTHERN REGIONAL PAINT FACILITY



▲ PLAN VIEW OF RENNOVATED SOUTHERN PAINT FACILITY



INTERSECTION OF US 17 AND GA 25 TODAY.



# Gloucester Street

US 17 AND GA 25 INTERSECTION POINT OF INTEREST

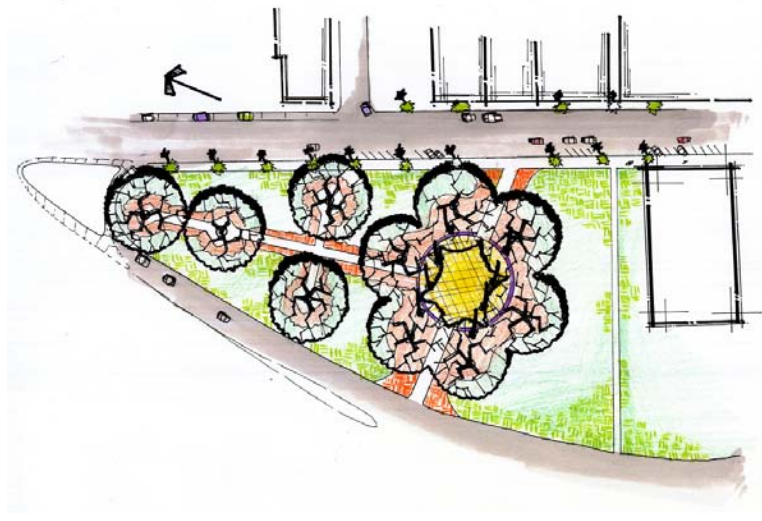
The Gloucester Intersection is a prominent corner in Downtown Brunswick. It is stark, unwelcoming and not easily accessible for pedestrian traffic. The addition of native plantings in the concrete median create a more inviting image for visitors and sets a new standard for how Downtown Brunswick should look.



A COMBINATION OF PALMS, WINTERBERRY HOLLY, AND WAX MYRTLES ARE JUST A FEW NATIVE PLANT SPECIES THAT COULD BE INCORPORATED INTO THIS PLANTING DESIGN.



PLAN VIEW OF LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE CREATION FOR THE NEW GATEWAY PARK

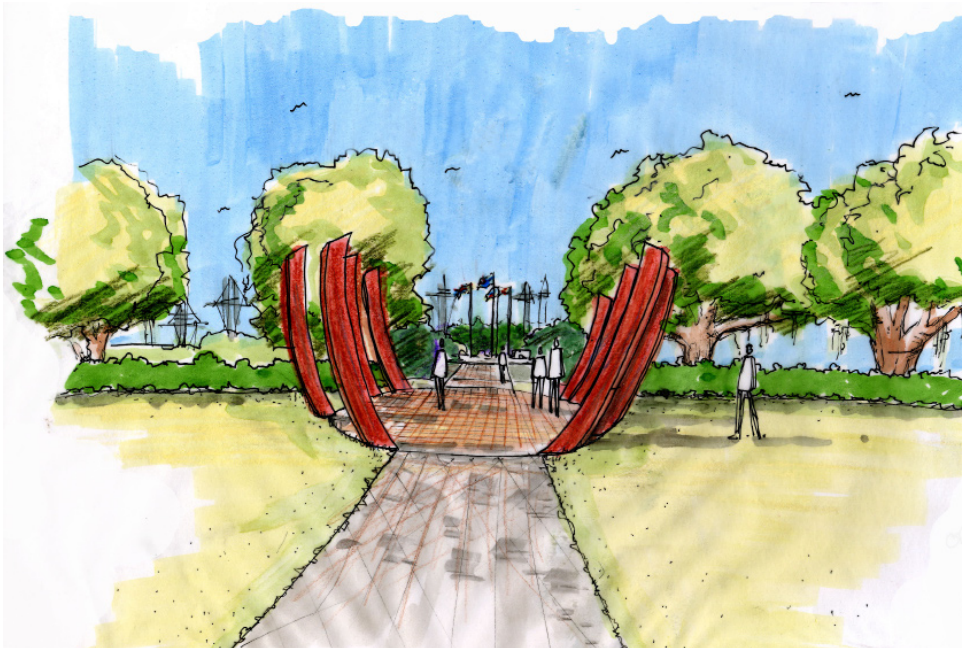


# Gateway Park

GA 341 POINT OF INTEREST

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This intersection is dominated by the courthouse annex, but instead it should orient visitors to the historic downtown and to the Golden Isles. Landscape improvements at Gateway Park could successfully highlight both of these. In front of the park is a large concrete pad that could be replaced by native plantings that serve as an introduction to downtown.



THE PARK DESIGN USES STRONG GEOMETRY TO TIE DOWNTOWN TO THE MARINA, INCLUDING OPEN SPACE SCREENED WITH NATIVE PLANTS THAT BRIDGE THE NATURAL LANDSCAPE OF THE MARSHES WITH THE DESIGNED STREETSCAPES OF DOWNTOWN. A HARDSCAPE PATH CREATES A SIGHT LINE TO THE WATER AND AN ABSTRACTED SHIP HULL REFERENCES THE SHIP BUILDING INDUSTRY.

Use this worksheet to express your likes/dislikes about the previous chapter, and to facilitate discussion with a larger group as you move forward to implementing some of these suggestions.

# WORKSHEET



What features of the Corridor points of interest solutions appeal to you most?

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What elements of the Corridor design solutions would be a challenge to implement? Why?

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Who in your community needs to be involved in implementing those suggestions?

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What do you see as the next step in making your favorite of the suggestions a reality?

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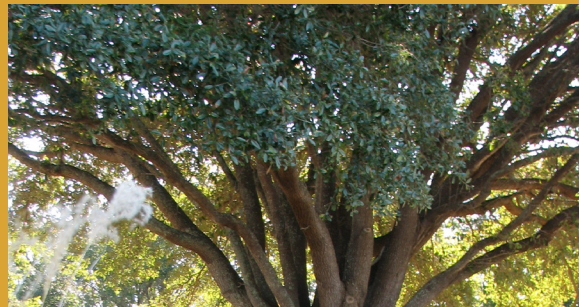
# OVERLAYS

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Common elements along the corridors can help generate guidelines for vegetation, streetscapes, sign and sculpture use.

Architectural, natural and cultural resource preservation will work towards creating a unified corridor vision for Glynn County. These recommendations are created through an appreciation and respect for the character of the area and are grouped into the following categories:

- Natural Viewshed Preservation
- Wayfinding, Signage and Art
- Landscape and Streetscape Improvements
- Architecture and Historic Character



# Natural Viewshed Preservation

DESIGN SOLUTIONS

The integrity of the fragile ecosystem flanking these corridors must be protected and views to this area preserved for all to appreciate. A plethora of endemic systems and species makes this region different from any other; this is not something that can be reversed. Any new developments or rehabilitations must emphasize these natural resources.



- Preserve the open space and views to the marsh as much as possible while adding plantings, signs and additional development. Reveal these shorelines to passerbys, most often travelling in vehicles. In accordance with environmental standards, prohibit development in fragile lands.
- Renovate existing infrastructure to reveal the salt marsh. Ideally, this change could provide an opportunity to provide educational information.
- Perform a visual inventory of viewsheds to be preserved. Record these in an official document to ensure future development does not interfere with the corridor's identity and primary asset.

Signs and Gateway Art create a common identity that should correlate with the natural and built features of Glynn County. It is important to develop a sign system with consistent appearance that minimizes the amount of stand alone and redundant messages.

# Wayfinding, Signage and Art 29

DESIGN SOLUTIONS

- Signs should be designed to blend with the character of the salt marsh landscape and the 18th, 19th and 20th century built environment.



AVOID CROWDING CORRIDORS WITH VISUAL BLIGHT.

- Use public art to identify gateways along the corridor. These gateway areas will have a high impact due to location. Work with the public arts community to generate the ideas and to implement the art.



USE PUBLIC ART TO CREATE A UNIQUE SENSE OF PLACE.

# Wayfinding, Signage and Art

DESIGN SOLUTIONS

Wayfinding is the way in which people orient themselves and navigate from place to place. As residents and especially first time visitors, it is imperative they are able to understand their surroundings, know where things are and how to locate them. This can be accomplished through graphic representation, primarily with signage.

It is important to develop a simple, yet informative system that reflects the community's personality and history. Entrances to the city are sacred and serve as an introduction to the unique assets of the place. Our solution addresses both wayfinding and creating a new "brand" for Brunswick and the Golden Isles.





Currently there is a distinction between the individual islands, Brunswick, and Glynn County. One solution for how to bridge this gap is with new signage. This solution celebrates the individuality of each component that forms Glynn County, while understanding that their true strength is when acting as one.

The branding of "Brunswick and the Golden Isles" is used frequently and should be expanded upon. These images could easily be transferred to websites, stationary and other marketing tools.



RESTORE EXISTING  
STRUCTURES IN THE  
INDUSTRIAL AESTHETIC  
TO MAINTAIN  
HISTORICAL CHARACTER  
AND CONTEXT INSTEAD  
OF IMITATIONS THAT  
REDUCE THE INTEGRITY  
OF THE EXISTING  
DOWNTOWN FABRIC.



## 32 Architectural and Historic Character

DESIGN SOLUTIONS

The rich history of this area of Glynn County provides an architectural vocabulary on which all future development should respect. The historic structures of downtown should continue to be elevated in importance and the history of industry and shipping celebrated.



- Redevelopments and new developments should enhance streetscapes and blend with the local vernacular. Opportunities to reclaim industrial sites and preserve the integrity and structure should be taken.
- Respect the historic character of architecture by eliminating designs that are imitations or incompatible with the existing style.
- Create a consistent architecture design, colors and materials along the corridors. Any fence or wall that is visible from the right-of-way should be designed as an integral feature of the principle structure.

▲  
AVOID NEW DEVELOPMENT THAT DOES NOT REFLECT THE  
HISTORY OF GLYNN COUNTY



The rich history of this area of Glynn County provides an architectural vocabulary on which all future development should respect. The historic structures of downtown should continue to be elevated in importance and the history of industry and shipping celebrated.

# Landscape Improvements 33

DESIGN SOLUTIONS

Changes to the landscape and road features should enhance the natural environment surrounding the corridors of GA 341 and US 17. A consistent identity along the corridors creates roadways with characteristics that read as a unified concept.



The following guidelines will lead to a better unified appearance:

- Use vegetation to buffer parking lot from public right of way, especially, between non-residential and residential land uses.
- Use street trees to define roadway edges and provide a separation between pedestrian and vehicular uses.
- Maintain, define, and protect pedestrian and bicycle network systems through the use of buffering plants.





AVOID THE USE OF PAVED OR MOWED GRASSED MEDIANS. INSTEAD, USE PLANTED MEDIANS WITH THE SUGGESTED VEGETATION VARIETIES TO IMPROVE CORRIDOR AESTHETICS AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH.

# LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

DESIGN SOLUTIONS

- Improve stormwater management practices by removing concrete swales and culverts adjacent to the right of way and replacing with planted swales.
- Use alternative paving surfaces to enhance “gateway” areas and increase pedestrian safety. Raised crosswalks highlight their visibility.
- Widened crosswalks of contrasting paving materials or patterns further improve safety and act as traffic calmers.
- Replace street trees and plantings as they die or become unsightly to ensure a continual presence of vegetation that reinforces the corridor character.
- Avoid excess curb cuts and share parking lots by connecting them between parcels.



USE NATIVE PLANTED SWALES ALONG ROADSIDES



USE VARIED PAVING MATERIAL TO EMPHASIZE PEDESTRIAN ACCESS.

# Native Plants of Coastal Georgia

by the National Park Service for Georgia Barrier Island Plant Communities

<i>Arundinaria tecta</i>	Switch Cane
<i>Callicarpa americana</i>	Beauty Berry
<i>Gelsemium sempervirens</i>	Yellow Jessamine
<i>Ilex cassine</i>	Dahoon Holly
<i>Magnolia virginiana</i>	Sweet Bay Magnolia
<i>Morella (Myrica) cerifera</i>	Wax Myrtle
<i>Pinus taeda</i>	Loblolly Pine
<i>Quercus nigra</i>	Water Oak
<i>Quercus virginiana</i>	Live Oak
<i>Serenoa repens</i>	Saw Palmetto
<i>Sabal palmetto</i>	Cabbage Palmetto
<i>Vaccinium arboreum</i>	Sparkle Berry



NATURALISTIC PLANTINGS ARE PREFERRED



AVOID OVERUSED AND EXCESSIVELY PRUNED RESIDENTIAL SPECIES

## ORGANIZATION AND PLANT VARIETIES

- Plant random clusters of trees and shrubs to avoid a controlled or formal appearance and to fit in with the natural feel of the surrounding environment. Preserve and enhance the existing vegetation and marshland edge.
- Avoid overuse and excessive pruning of certain plants that are more residential (Lagenstraenia Indica, common crape myrtles).
- Use native plants in groupings to create a complementary mix of deciduous and evergreen vegetation. Repeat this planting design throughout the span of the corridor.

Use this worksheet to express your likes/ dislikes about the previous chapter, and to facilitate discussion with a larger group as you move forward to implementing some of these suggestions.

# WORKSHEET



What features of the corridor design overlay appeal to you most?

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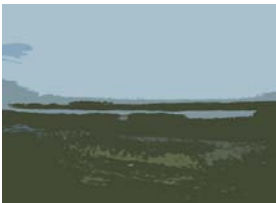
What elements of the corridor design solutions would be a challenge to implement? Why?

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Who in your community needs to be involved in implementing those suggestions?

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What do you see as the next step in making your favorite of the suggestions a reality?

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# CONCLUSION

We came, we saw, we tried to solve some problems!

Distinct identities and local character exist within Glynn County. Unique gateways and welcoming corridors will improve the approach through Glynn County towards Brunswick and on to the Golden Isles, providing a broad framework under which these separate areas can be showcased.

Many of the ideas we have presented could be implemented without much delay. The wayfinding signage could be manufactured “in house”, installed fairly readily, and would immediately give a cohesive look to the area’s corridors. Perhaps the sculptural gateway designs are appealing – bid the designs to be built or solicit new art concepts. The design guidelines build on an already established zoning overlay – its scope and breadth could be easily expanded. Lighting Lanier Bridge was once on the table – revisit the possibility of making it the nighttime beacon it was intended to be.

The worksheets are provided to solicit input from all stakeholders in order to identify which of the solutions are the most attractive and feasible, and to determine the next steps towards making them a reality. How to identify the solution that should be pursued first? It’s a favored project that can make an impact within a short time frame and with minimal impact to the budget – then go for it!

The community input design charrette process has been used in other Archway communities with great success, and we hope that this project and report will move the goals of Glynn County Archway forward.



## Special thanks to:

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This charrette was conducted in collaboration with the Glynn County – UGA Archway Partnership, and builds upon work done earlier by:

Blueprint Brunswick, downtown revitalization players in Brunswick, community groups on St. Simons and Jekyll Islands, The City of Brunswick, Glynn County, the Georgia Ports Authority and many others!



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